

SKETCHES
OF
BETHESDA PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
and
BETHESDA COMMUNITY
York County, South Carolina

(Copied from articles which appeared
in the Yorkville Enquirer)

Kindness of:

Miss Irene Starr
Hampton Street
Rock Hill, South Carolina

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Log of the Green Chevrolet As It Voyages Over More of York County
(Sketch of Bethesda Church and Community)

Sometime ago, at the invitation of the York County Historical Society, Mrs. R. M. Bratton, resident of Yorkville, a native of Bethesda township, prepared a brief sketch of Bethesda church. To be sure she had to leave out much that could have been written about Bethesda church, Bethesda township and the people who made that community what it was and is. A big book could be written about Bethesda and its people, but in the paper prepared by Mrs. Bratton to be read before the Historical society, of course much that could have been written, and most interesting matter, had to be left out and very properly was. I asked Mrs. Bratton to loan me that history, as I wanted to get some of it for these sketches. I shall not try to use all that Mrs. Bratton wrote. Haven't the space. But will try to hit the high spots.

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What is known as "Bethesda" is a section of the county about 16 miles square, eight miles southeast^a of the county seat. Its original population were chiefly immigrants from the North of Ireland, mostly Presbyterians and a few^{Roman}/Catholics; some came from Pennsylvania and other parts of the United States and a few from the lower part of South Carolina. The number of families composing the community between 1765 and 1780 numbered about 140, and among the names to be found in the records of that day as living in what is now known as Bethesda are:

John and William Adair, Adams, Atkins, Ashe, Adrain,

(Sketches of Bethesda Church and Community, con't)

Arthur, Baird, Barry, William Berry, Thomas Black, Thomas Boggs, Colonel William Bratton, Hugh, Thomas, Samuel and Robert Bratton, William Burris, Robert Brown, Edward Byers, John and Thomas Carroll, John, William and Thomas Carson, Capt. John Chambers, Thomas Clendenin, Charles Curry, John Cooper, William Davidson, Dickey, Drewery, William Erwin, John Dennis, Robert and Elijah Fleming, John Fonderson, Gallagher, Gibson, Robert, James, Thomas and Arthur Gill, Daniel Givens, William Guy, Glover, Giver, Joseph Gaston, David Gordon, William and James Hanna, James and John Hemphill, Hillhouse, Hetherington, John Harris, William Henry and four sons, William, Malcolm, John and Alexandria, Keenan, Samuel Kilsey, John Kidd, Kirkpatrick, Matthew and Samuel Kuykendal, Lathan, General Edward Lacy, David Leach.

Colonel Andrew Love, William Lewis, James McElwee, William Manahan, Captain James, John and Andrew Martin, McLain, John McCaw, McCrowley, James and Edward Meek, Captain James Mitchell, John Miller, James McElhenny, John Murphy, Charles Mills, Marley, James McNeel, Captain John McConnell, Reuben McConnell, James McLure, Major James Moore, Alexander and William Moore, John Moore and his sons, Nathan and William Norman, Samuel and Thomas Neely, Pagan, Porter, Quinn, Palmer, George Ratchford, Robeson, James and William Ross, David and Richard Sadler, Silliman, Thomas, Samuel and Benjamin Rainey, Henry Ray, Joseph Steele, Christopher Straight, John Swann, Arthur Starr, Smith, Stallions, Frail, Captain James, John and Thomas Wallace, Waters, Williams, James Williamson and

five sons, John, Adam, Samuel, George and James, Wiley, Young.

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Practically all of these families lived in the bounds of Bethesda church, and many of the original settlers are buried in the cemetery there. Quite naturally such a community of families, with their religious instincts and education, of necessity had to have a place of worship. And to this end a church building, a log structure, was reared in 1760. It was plain, but substantial. This was about one mile east of the church present building, and close by was the graveyard where the dead of the community were buried. Just at present there are only three gravemarkers at this place, two of them being at the graves of members of the Neely family.

This building was destroyed by fire in 1780, the result of a blaze in the nearby woods. The next church building was a frame structure, with sides of split boards and stood just a few feet from where the present brick edifice now stands. This was used for 40 years or more as a place of worship.

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It was in 1820 that the present brick structure was erected at a cost of \$5,000. The land on which this stands, seven acres, was donated to the church by John Fonderson. Later two tracts of five acres each were bought from Richard Straight and John Swan, and Dr. J. R. Bratton and John M. Lindsay donated five acres each, making a total of 27 acres of church lands.

John Swan, Sr., was the architect and drew the plans for

the building on the present site, and Dr. John S. Bratton, Robert Cooper, John Starr and Samuel Rainey were the building committee. Twenty years later, due to defects in the construction, two of the walls were taken down and rebuilt.

It was in 1857 that additional repairs and alterations were made to the edifice. The brick floor was taken out and replaced with one of wood, and the antique "wine-glass" pulpit was replaced by an arch, with tall, slender windows on either side. To the rear was built a session room, well lighted and comfortable, with fireplace and an outside entrance. The rostrum was carpeted and handsome pulpit furniture was installed. To be sure the furniture, ~~the~~ carpeting and the communion table, and chairs on either side, matching the pulpit furniture, were the gifts of the women of the church, as was the handsome chandelier that adorns the center of the room. It was about this time that the pewter communion service, used many years, was replaced by a silver service, also the gift of the women.

Fifty years ago the church offerings or collections were taken by the deacons, using long slender poles to which were attached little velvet bags. These were carried along and pushed into each pew space so that each communicant could be reached and none escaped at least the opportunity of placing contributions in the collection bags. To be sure these bags have long since been replaced by the more conventional collection plates in common use today.

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Lest we become too modern, let's go back previous to the War

Between the States and take a look at Bethesda. It was in 1859 that a large arbor was built on the church grounds to accomodate the large crowds who gathered there for the annual camp meetings, which dated back to the early part of the century, and continued until towards the close of the war when changes in customs and conditions rendered continuance of the camp meetings no longer desirable and practicable. The last camp meeting at Bethesda was held in 1864.

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When the camp meetings were discontinued, the "wooden tents" that had been used for housing the folks attending the services, and which dotted the church grounds, were gradually removed. These camp meetings continued for weeks at a time, were attended by great crowds, and the tents were occupied by the families all during the time of the meetings, and gave the church grounds the appearance of a permanent village. It was in 1879 that the arbor was sold to the late John S. and N.B. Bratton and removed from the grounds to their respective plantations. Because of the many precious memories woven into that arbor and the years it had served as a place of worship, the Bethesda people parted with the arbor with much regret.

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Next issue I will give a little more of the history of Bethesda church, but of course shall not try to give all of the interesting information that Mrs. Bratton has in her splendid history of the church.

Good day.

-- A. M. Grist

Source: Yorkville Enquirer, date unknown

Copied from: Onward and Upward, Bethesda, courtesy of
Miss Irene Starr, Rock Hill, S.C.

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Just A-Rolling Along the Way

Log of the Green Chevrolet As It Voyages Over More of York County

(Sketch of Bethesda Church)

In my story in the issue of December 19th I closed the Bethesda church story with the removal in 1879 of the arbor used for the camp meetings that has been held here for many years previous to that time. Now, using Mrs. Bratton's historical sketch, I will go back and briefly review the story of Bethesda from its founding down through the years, but of course not giving the history, long and honorable in full detail.

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The church records available place the founding of Bethesda church in 1869, five years later than the founding of Bethel, and along in the same ^{year} as Ebenezer and Bullocks Creek churches, if I remember correctly. However, there had been more or less frequent preaching services held in the Bethesda community long before 1769, and of course these preliminary services and preaching occasions gradually led up to the founding of the organized church. From the best records available the organization of Bethesda church was effected by Rev. William Richardson, while he was stationed at the famous old Waxhaw church in Lancaster county.

Rev. Richardson was an Englishman. Coming to America he prepared for the ministry under Rev. Samuel Davis of Virginia, who was later president of Princeton college. Mr. Richardson, ordained in 1759, was sent as a missionary to the

Cherokee Indian tribes of North Carolina. In 1761 he became a member of the South Carolina presbytery and began his ministry at Waxhaw, where he labored until 1771, extending his services to the surrounding territory, including Bethesda.

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Among the earliest ministerial supplies at Bethesda of which there is record, included Rev. Hezekiah J. Balch and Dr. James Alexander, Rev. Balch was from Hartford county Md., was ordained in 1770 and shortly afterwards came on a mission to the southern states. He was present and had an important part in the famous Mecklenburg convention of May 20, 1775. His early death cut short a promising career.

The history of Bethesda for the next 25 years is rather remarkable. During this period it had the ministerial services of many men, some of them men of brilliant minds and much ability and sturdy patriots but not any of them became pastors of Bethesda church.

* * *

Rev. Dr. James Alexander of Bullocks Creek, ardent Revolutionary patriot, and educator, frequently filled the pulpit at Bethesda. Rev. John Simpson, pastor of Fishing Creek, also preached at Bethesda more or less often and in 1774 divided his time with Bethesda regularly, this arrangement continuing for a number of years. He too was an active patriot and his privations and losses suffered at the hands of the British are of historical record.

It is interesting to note that the membership of Bethesda church, and in fact the whole community was a unit in the matter

of resistance to British tyranny. Although there were a few of the type classified as half-Loyalists, and then were not connected with Bethesda church, and because of this fact the peace of the Bethesda community was never imperiled by what was a prolific source of trouble in other churches of that period.

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The first pastor of Bethesda was the Rev. Robert B. Walker, who was ordained as pastor in 1794. He continued as pastor for 40 years. He came to the church in a dark period of the history of the community and the nation as well. The demoralizing effects of the bloody war for independence were yet visible. The energies of the people were yet paralyzed. Under the leadership of Rev. Walker the church was lifted to prosperity and it made rapid growth.

Mr. Walker was a native of this state and he began and ended his ministerial labors at Bethesda and left a great monument to himself in the work he accomplished. He was succeeded by Rev. Cyrus Johnson^t, whose labors for five years were most fruitful. Among other things he instituted a systematic study of catechism. He divided the congregation into wards and these were regularly visited by the pastor and elders, and on these occasions all were catechized by the pastor.

* * *

Rev. Harper Caldwell was the next pastor of Bethesda, his pastorate continuing for seven years and became known as the period of "Bethesda's afflictions". There were four years of continuous sickness within the bounds of the church, causing

many deaths; the severe drought of 1845 fell in this period, and there were many of Bethesda's communicants who migrated to western states. The youthful pastor became discouraged and having caught the spirit which transferred so many of his flock to other states, he followed the trend and removed to Mississippi.

It is interesting to note just here that in the period of 1795 to 1846, 52 years, Bethesda had but three pastors, Revs. Walker, Johnson and Caldwell, with one of them continuing for 40 years.

* * *

Rev. Pierpont Edward Bishop in 1847 removed from Ebenezer to Yorkville, and then began serving Bethesda as stated supply, alternating with the Yorkville church until 1851, when he was installed pastor of Bethesda. He continued as Bethesda's pastor for nine years not only preaching, but teaching as well with a pronounced degree of acceptability, love and success until ^s pastoral relations were dissolved and he moved to Bennettsville.

~~Still~~

A few months later John ^{Still} Harris, student at Columbia Theological seminary, began serving Bethesda as stated supply. Six month later he was installed as pastor. He served with efficiency until November, 1864 when the relationship was ended by death. He was a brilliant young man of outstanding strength of character and so beloved that his untimely passing was a tragedy of the day. He married a daughter of Dr. John S. Bratton and thus was the more closely identified with the Bethesda community. His remains lie buried in Bethesda cemetery.

During the last and prolonged illness of Mr. Harris, Bethesda was supplied by Rev. Joseph H. Martin. For twelve years he had been a pastor in Knoxville, Tenn., but because of his ardent support and sympathy for the Confederate cause he and his family were forced by the Federal authorities to leave Knoxville. Leaving Knoxville, he and his family were permitted to take with them only such things as could be packed into a single trunk. For three years of his stay at Bethesda he and his family occupied ^{one of the wooden} tents used by attendants on the camp meetings. He was comfortably supplied with the necessities of life by the spontaneous offerings of the congregation. In 1867 he removed to Virginia.

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A few months later the services as stated supply of Rev. Robert B. Anderson, then living in Yorkville, president of the Yorkville Female college, were secured. He would have been called to the pastorate of the church, except for the fact that he let it be known very clearly that he would not accept such a call.

Perhaps no pastor who ever served Bethesda church ever left a deeper impress on the congregation and the community than did Dr. John Lowry Wilson. He served the congregation as pastor for 16 years, and many of the Bethesda people living today carry their first knowledge of pastor of this church back to Mr. Wilson.

Mr. Wilson was born in northern India of missionary parents. At the age of 5 years, he with four brothers were brought by *their* mother to America to be educated. The journey on a sailing vessel required seven months. At the outbreak of the Civil

war, young Wilson, then a student in Tennessee, enlisted and served the Confederate cause with distinction, only quitting after he had received four wounds in battle and the loss of a limb that incapacitated him from further service.

In 1866 he entered Columbia seminary and in 1869 was installed pastor of Bethesda, just 100 years after the church was organized. He was the sixth pastor of the church and the first in its second century.

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As difficult as was the period of Bethesda church following the ^{WBTs} Revolutionary war was the pastorate of Rev. John Lowry Wilson probably covered the darkest and most trying period of Bethesda's long and honorable history. The War Between the States had hardly closed. Many of Bethesda's sons had given up their lives in that struggle; many fell on the battlefields while others died of diseases contracted in camps or Federal prisons; not a few came back maimed and crippled by disease and wounds. They came back to desolated homes and people impoverished by the fortunes of war.

A dark period was just ahead -- a period almost as dark as war. The state government was in the hands of scalawags and carpetbaggers, with ignorant negroes, with a new freedom, running rampant; martial law had been proclaimed, dangerously armed military bands were prowling about and terrorizing the community -- all was chaos. Many substantial people, thoroughly discouraged, moved to more favored sections of the country.

But despite these discouraging features under the pastoral leadership of Rev. Wilson, Bethesda church continued to grow in numbers and spiritual power, and maintained her relative

position and influence among the churches of York county.

Dr. Wilson continued as pastor of Bethesda until 1886, when he resigned and moved to Abbeville, and continued there until his passing in 1909. He left an indelible impress on Bethesda church and township. Among the eulogies written upon his passing this one probably describes the man as fully and completely as it is possible to describe him: "He lived for others. Eternity alone will reveal the service that this man rendered in the name of his Master. He was one of the crown jewels of the King."

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Space forbids giving sketches of pastors following down the line from Dr. Wilson. They can only be briefly mentioned here as follows:

Rev. Benjamin Palmer Reid -- 1887 to 1893. Deceased.

Rev. James K. Hall -- 1894 to 1909, Resides at Belmont, N.C.

Rev. James K. Harrell -- 1910-1912. Deceased.

Rev. John A. McMurray -- 1912-1916. Now pastor at Ocala, Fla.

Rev. Frank H. Wardlaw -- 1917-1924. Now pastor at Harrisonburg, Va.

Rev. P. W. Wilson, stated supply -- 1924-1925. Now pastor in Virginia.

Rev. John Knox Johnston, stated supply.

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The present pastor of Bethesda church is Rev. Walter G. Somerville, native of Culpepper, Va. Attended Virginia Polytechnic school and Davidson college. In business for five years. Enlisted in infantry service for the World War. Rose to the rank of major. Most of his active service was in training draftsmen at Camp Hancock, Ga. Was preparing for overseas

service when the armistice was signed and he was honorable discharged.

Mr. Somerville entered Union Theological seminary, Richmond, Va., and received his degree as Bachelor of Divinity in 1920. Was installed pastor of Bethesda Sept. 19th, 1927. He has been serving the church most acceptably as pastor and is beloved by all who know him. -- A. M. Grist

Source: The Yorkville Enquirer, date unknown.

Copied from: Onward and Upward, Bethesda, courtesy of
Miss Irene Starr, Rock Hill, S.C.

Just A-Rolling Along the Way

Log of the Green Chevrolet As It Voyages Over More of York County.

(Sketch of Bethesda Church)

The story of Bethesda church would not be complete without telling of some of the big religious revivals that have occurred in the congregation in the years long gone by. Strange as it may seem, the first big revival meeting held at Bethesda had its inception in Kentucky and Tennessee. This was in 1800, according to the history as written by Mrs. Bratton and kindly loaned to me for this sketch.

The Rev. R.B. Walker, pastor of Bethesda right in the beginning of the last century, 1800, had heard of a great religious awakening in Kentucky and Tennessee. He didn't get this information by radio, telegraph, or the newspapers, but evidently it came to him by word of mouth as some traveler passed through from Kentucky and Tennessee, and perhaps stopped over for a visit to this energetic Bethesda pastor. Certain it is that Rev. Walker was interested in what he had heard and wanted to know more about this great religious awakening.

He saddled old Dobbin and equipped with saddlebags and other traveling paraphernalia and clothing that he might need for a few weeks, he made the journey of several hundred miles to the section where the religious awakening had taken place, and perhaps was then in progress. He remained in Kentucky for some time -- long enough to get into full sympathy with the conditions, and then returned to Bethesda.

* * *

Shortly thereafter Mr. Walker began a protracted meeting and it was at this time that the first of the series of camp meet-

ings was instituted at Bethesda. Neighboring ministers were invited to aid in the evangelistic meeting, and many people came, some of them as far as 30 or 40 miles to attend the services which lasted for weeks, and its influence for years.

It is said that "the people were moved as the trees of the woods are moved by the wind." The record says that this first camp meeting is known in the church history as "the Old Revival," and resulted in the conversion of more than 300.

The next extended revival at Bethesda came in 1817, and as the result of this meeting at "least 200 souls were added to the Lord."

It was in 1832 that the Rev. Daniel Baker, acting evangelist for South Carolina, visited Bethesda church and conducted a meeting, and his preaching aroused the community to an appreciation of Divine things. A great many were received into the church and for years afterward many pointed back to this meeting as the time of receiving their first impressions of things religious, if not conversion.

* * *

Nearly fifty years later, 1881, Bethesda again had a wonderful experience in an evangelistic meeting, though in the interval from 1832 to 1881 there had been many special meetings held at the church. This meeting in 1881 began with the fall communion service, an event of importance then and later, and continued for a period of two weeks. Rev. F. L. Leeper of Fort Mill, was the preacher who conducted the meeting. He was a more than ordinarily able man and was filled with the evangelistic spirit. No matter how dark the nights might be, no matter how hard it might have been raining, or how cold the

weather, the building was filled to capacity night after night by throngs of men, women and children. Even the gallery was filled with negro hearers at the services. The people came from distances of six, eight and ten miles in buggies, wagons and on horseback and even on foot for considerable distances. The people were evidently hungry for the -Gospel messages- they were earnest and eager worshippers.

As a result of this meeting new life was infused into the church and 52 members were added to the communion. This meeting is yet known and referred to as "the great revival of 1881."

* * *

The influence of Bethesda church has not been confined to its own immediate bounds as great as that influence has been. During its long years many men have gone out from it as ministers and missionaries and traveled to the far corners of this nation and to foreign lands as well.

Rev. James McElhaney was born at Waxhaw, but came to the Bethesda community when 10 years of age. He lived there until he entered the ministry. His brother, Rev. John McElhaney was also reared in the Bethesda congregation. Other Bethesda men who became ministers were Revs. John and Samuel Williamson, the latter becoming president of Davidson college, where he served for 16 years.

The Rev. George Washington Boggs, another Bethesda man, was graduated from Princeton seminary in 1830 and two years later sailed on the Black Warrior for India, as a missionary under appointment of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions.

Others going out from Bethesda included Rev. Lossing Clinton, Rev. A. P. Sullivan and Rev. C. J. Sullivan. The latter went as a missionary to the Indians in Arkansas in 1855. He contracted TB and went to an early grave in Texas while trying to reach home.

* * *

Rev. Thomas M. Lowry was another of Bethesda's young men who became a minister. He united with Bethesda in 1872 in his 18th year. Five years later he was licensed to preach and at once went to Aberdeen, Miss. He spent most of his years as an active minister in the west, but was also a pastor at Shelby N.C., for several years. He died Feb. 2, 1927 and is buried in Rose Hill cemetery, Yorkville.

* * *

Rev. Samuel Rainey Hope, a son of the late Robert S. Hope and a grandson of Allison Hope, both of them ruling elders at Bethesda, was for fourteen years a missionary in Japan. He is now a resident of Asheville, N.C.

Rev. Paul H. Moore, also a Bethesda product is now pastor at Pendleton, S.C.

* * *

But as many ministers as have gone out of the loins of Bethesda congregation, they are few as compared with the number of its sons who have turned to that other profession that serves humanity -- medicine. The list of Bethesda doctors includes the following:

Dr. Josiah Moore, who began practice in 1798; Dr. William Bratton, Dr. A. Gibson, James Davidson, Charles Hanna, Haslett

Clendennin, John S. Bratton, William Moore, Alexander Clendennin, Nathan Marion, L. O. Williamson, M. A. Moore, John Hall, Samuel Dale, William McNeel, Stuart Starr, William Hemmingway, Calvin P. Sandifer, (of whom the Bethesda church records make this note: "He might justly be termed the Luke of Bethesda, its beloved physician.") He died Dec. 3, 1882.

Drs. J. Stanhope Moore, R.H. Hope, S. Edward Bratton, Washington McNeel, James Rufus Bratton, J.F. Lindsay, H. S. Moore, R. L. Love, ____ Ratchford, R.C. Hanna, John McNeel, Thomas A. Crawford, William M. Love, Walker Moore, Clarence Bratton, S. Glenn Love, Daniel Moore, James P. Crawford, Wilson McConnell, Harvey McConnell.

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We cannot give here a list of names of Bethesda's soldiers who have played their parts in all the wars in which the United States has had a part, but suffice it to say that out of the Bethesda congregation -- founded before the Revolutionary war -- there has always been a proportionate part of Bethesda's soldiers in every war, as any one can easily find out by visiting the church cemetery and noting the many grave markers reciting the fact that many soldiers are buried there.

* * *

But as much as have the men of Bethesda contributed to the ministry and to the medical world, and also to the military field, there has been no lack of noble women in the Bethesda congregations through the years who have contributed their full share to every neighborhood, county and state activity. Fact of the matter is, we suspect that

much of the long and honorable history of Bethesda church, extending over 164 years since its actual organization as a church body and before that as a meeting place, is largely due to the activities of the women of the community, as close observation has long ago convinced us that without the women actively engaged in church work, churches would not very actively exist.

* * *

The Ladies' Aid Society of Bethesda church was organized in 1887 with its first president being Mrs. N. B. Bratton. She came to Bethesda just after the war from Washington, D. C., a war bride, and although an Episcopalian, and in which church she retained her membership as long as she lived, she identified herself with the religious life and activities of the church of her husband, Bethesda, and for fifty years was one of the most loyal workers for Bethesda as well as for the community in which she lived. Later on the Ladies Aid Society became the Womans Missionary and Aid Society and then the Womans Auxiliary, but still the women's organization continues to be one of the strong factors in the religious life of Bethesda church and community.

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To be sure the three brief sketches that I have been able to write with the aid of Mrs. Bratton's manuscript, is not a complete history of Bethesda church. Its history cannot be condensed in so small a compass as six newspaper columns. But perhaps some one interested, will take the foundations laid by Mrs. Bratton in her researches and build thereon

a complete history as there should be and as I certainly hope there will be.

Good morning.

- A. M. Grist.

Source: The Yorkville Enquirer, date unknown.

Copied from: Onward and Upward, Bethesda,

courtesy of Miss Irene Starr, Rock Hill, S.C.

Tuesday, March 26, 1935

Just A-Rolling Along the Way

Log of Yorkville Enquirer's Reporter As He

Journeys Here and There in York County

by A. M. Grist

If you will pardon me, just this once, I am going to "fudge" a bit, and take advantage of Brother W. W. Pegram, editor of The Chester News, who is writing many interesting historical sketches very much along the same line as are the "Rolling Along" sketches in The Enquirer, and every now and then one of Editor Pegram's stories has a York county angle, and the following taken from his issue of March 18, has this angle.

It appears that one of the readers of The News wants to question a statement concerning a certain thing in connection with the battle of Kings Mountain, and Editor Pegram sets him straight. The following letter to The News from T. J. Robbins of Lowrys gets things going:

On Friday paper the D. A. R's William Martin preached a sermon that inspired the men to the Kings Mountain battle, which was the turning point in the Revolutionary war.

"This certainly was a new thing to me. They should tell us where this sermon was preached and when. If the report is correct of this William Martin it would be well for them to examine his reputation.

"The Presbyterian history of the Presbyterian church of South Carolina, tells us that Dr. Joseph Alexander of Bullocks Creek, S.C., made the patriotic talk that inspired the men of this section to gather and sent them on to Kings

Mountain.

"I have 'The Battle of Kings Mountain', the official record of the war department of the United States, which gives a full description of this battle. This battle was made up of men from Virginia, North and South Carolina and Georgia.

"The North and South Carolinians were commanded by Col. Williams, who was wounded and died the next day. Ferguson forgot to take into consideration that he was to battle with Scotch-Irish Presbyterians.

"Rev. Joseph Alexander was a great preacher and patriot, launched a classic school at Bullocks Creek and educated Andrew Jackson, president of the United States. I am only writing to try to keep the record straight."

* ,* *

"Our good friend Mr. Robbins, states that 'he wants to keep the record straight', and herein the writer thoroly agrees with him, says Mr. Pegram. However, we feel sure that Mr. Robbins has not been studying enough of our local Revolutionary history. The History of the Presbyterian church, which he alludes to, is fine insofar as it goes, but it is confined mostly to Presbyterian history. Unfortunately not much of the Covenanter history of Chester county has been preserved, but the writer has delved into what records he could find during the past several years, compiling them into readability form, visiting various sections of Chester county and through historical documents and manuscripts of authentic nature, and has arrived at the conclusion that Rev. William Martin, Covenanter preacher, was an outstanding man of his day.

"Mr. Robbins says, 'It would be well for them to examine

his (Martin's) reputation.' The writer has done just that and is in a position to state that at times Rev. Martin was intemperate. Catholic Presbyterian church in Chester county let him go as pastor on account of having imbibed too freely of spirits. However, some of our old Presbyterian elders were also on the carpet from time to time answering like charges and the writer can place his hands on a record where a man was elected to an eldership in Bethesda Presbyterian church near McConnellsville, and some of the members objected to his election because he did not own his own still. In other words, one would infer from the record that "all substantial" church officers in that day were expected to own stills.

"Mr. Robbins wants to know when and where Rev. Martin preached his inspiring sermon to the men which sent them forward to Kings Mountain. His war sermon was after Buford's defeat, and its effects are graphically described in 'The Women of the American Revolution', Vol. 3, at page 124. The British put William Martin in chains in Winnsboro. They burned his church on Rocky Creek in Chester county in 1780 and they made things hot in general for Rev. Martin, but he was a patriot and up and down this section he went inspiring the men to go forth to battle. The writer, with the help of a fellow-townsmen, has located the grave of Rev. William Martin, also his old home site and the spring nearby, and we could go right along with citations of his patriotism and we can name you numbers of old settlers in Chester county who had Rev. William Martin baptize their children and many a child was named for him, which would indicate that his personal acquaintances must have thought well of him, else they would not have tied his name onto their

children.

"The writer admits that Rev. Martin at times partook too freely of the spirits but that he was for all this a God-fearing man we quote from his will, we having seen the original: 'In the name of God Ame^Nr. I, William Martin of Chester District and State of South Carolina, being in common health and of perfect mind and memory, thanks be given unto God for all his mercies, calling unto mind the mortality of my body and knowing that it is appointed for all men^once to die, do make and ordain this my last will and testament, that is to say, principally and first of all I give and recommend my soul unto the hands of ^Almighty God that gave it to me and my body I recommend to the earth to be buried in a decent Christian manner, nothing doubting but at the General R_esurrection I shall receive the same again by the Almighty power of Almighty God.'

"With this information we trust our friend Mr. Robbins will realize that Rev. Martin, along with Rev. Alexander, was a God-fearing man as well as a patriot. The writer would not attempt to uphold Rev. Martin in his intemperance, nevertheless we would not detract from the noble things for which he manfully stood in trying days. Thus may the record be kept straight.

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From the foregoing, it is probable that Mr. Robbins is referring to the fact that Rev. M^artin had somewhat of a reputation as a drinker of a little too much brandy on

occasion, and for that reason suggests that "it would be well for them to examine his reputation." As Editor Pegram explains fully, in that far day respectable and well-to-do people were expected to have their own stills, and everybody was expected to drink toddy more or less frequently, and ^{neither} preachers, elders, deacons, stewards or vestrymen refrained from partaking of whisky on any and all social occasions when such was considered seemly.

Dr. Maurice Moore, in his Reminiscences of York, tells this about Rev. Mr. Walker, a one-time pastor of Bethesda Presbyterian church, and a son-in-law of Dr. Joseph Alexander of Bullocks Creek academy fame. In part Dr. Moore's reference to Mr. Walker follows:

"I recall one Friday, when Mr. Walker stopped at my father's gate on his way to Chester. He refused the invitation to come in and take a social glass. My father, 'on hospitable thot intent', proposed to bring out the decanter to him, as he sat on the horse. 'No! no! as you insist, I'll go in -- not take a drink on horseback.'

"He was going to see a crimiaal who was to be hung on the following Friday -- a man named Floyd who had killed the sheriff of Chester district, Colonel Nunn. My step-mother was much interested in the man's case and begged her preacher to call as he returned, and tell her if the man seemed penitent and to have laid hold on the precious promises held up for his acceptance. He kindly promised he would gratify her.

"About an hour before sundown, I, with my father, was under

the shade of a big chestnut tree which stood near the barn, he riving boards and I piling them, when Mr. Walker hove in sight at a full gallop. As the horse neared the gate, expecting to be checked up at the frequent stoppingplace, he fell into a long trot, which almost caused the rider to lose his perpendicular, but urged on he resumed the canter. Mr. Walker righted himself; for with the smoother gait he could retain the proper equilibrium -- and passed with a dignified 'Good afternoon, 'Squire'.

"I lifted up my head, big with discernment for a lad of ten. 'Never stir! father, if Mr. Walker wasn't drunk!' My father turned sternly: 'Let me ever hear of you saying such a thing as that again, sir and I'll give you such a whipping as you never had in your life!' Mum, was the word after that.

"In a few moments my father threw down the frower and walked to the house. I followed, for my task was done when he stopped work. He walked thru the hall where my stepmother and sisters were sitting at their sewing, and went into his own room. 'Katie!' he called, and his wife followed. I crept near the door. and heard him telling the mournful tale. How hard I felt it, I might not repeat my knowledge, gained too, thru my penetration, to the girls; but the interdict was too heavy, and when my stepmother came out with a face a yard long, I could only hug myself with sterile complacency that I knew, too.

"Day after the next being the Sabbath, in the pulpit the good old man confessed his fault with tears to the congregation, who wept with him in sympathy and love. Nor was there

one to whom he was less dear or respected from the humiliating avowal; freely was his sin forgiven and forgotten, and not for one instant was his usefulness injured. I might, after this, tell the other urchins what I'd seen; but the information had lost its zest, and I wondered vainly why my father issued so stern a mandate, when after all, Mr. Walker told about it himself in the meeting house."

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