

HISTORY OF THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
GEORGETOWN, TEXAS

The First Presbyterian Church of Georgetown, Williamson County, Texas is located on Block 10, in the Glasscock Addition of the City, and more particularly, its sanctuary is centered on Lots 7 & 8 of that Block, where it has stood since its completion in September 1873. Additions to the building in recent years have now covered and put to use Lots 1 and 2 and parts of Lots 3, 5, and 6. Plans are currently being set in motion to erect an education and administration building on Lots 3 and 4, and the congregation has adopted a long-range plan which envisions a large new sanctuary on Lots 5 and 6, parallel to the existing sanctuary.

Although it is among the oldest continuing organized congregations in Williamson County, and its building is the oldest house of worship in Georgetown, still, this is not its first building; it was not always at this site, and, indeed, it was not always in Georgetown.

By 1839, settlers were moving into what would, in fewer than ten years, become Williamson County, establishing themselves first along Brushy Creek near present day Round Rock, and quickly thereafter north to the San Gabriel River near what would become the county seat community of Georgetown. Along with their plows and guns and dreams, these first hardy settlers brought their faith. Almost as quickly as they sought to constitute themselves into civic communities, they began to bind themselves together into communities of faith. The first church established in the new county was a Missionary Baptist Church meeting in a log structure about a mile north of Round Rock. It was organized in 1848, the same year as the county, but it disbanded in about 1852 because "the congregation was so scattered."ⁱ Although intrepid traveling preachers and faithful laymen would continue to evangelize and hold "meetings" in the area, and although denominational authorities began to consider establishing work in the new county, no subsequent congregation is known to have been established as a successful ongoing church until 1854, when what would become the First Presbyterian Church of Georgetown met and was organized.

On May 26, 1850, the First Presbyterian Church of Austin, Texas was organized by Rev. William Mumford Baker, the son of a noted Presbyterian missionary and evangelist, the Rev. Daniel Baker. On June 12, 1854, Rev W.M. Baker held a meeting near Round Rock in the home of Richard Sansom (1826-1880) and his wife, Mary Agnes (Cooper) Sansom (1829-1906), and there he organized an "old school" Presbyterian Church.

Volume I of the minutes of the Session of First Presbyterian Church, Georgetown, Texas begins with a brief history and reflects the names and origins of membership of the ten charter members:

Dr. Thomas Barbee, from the Presbyterian Church (N.S.) of Hickman, Ky.

Mrs. Sarah Frances Tyler, from the same.

Miss Letitia Ann Barbee, from Bethel Presbyterian Church (O.S.), Ky.

Alexander W. Morrow, from the Presbyterian Church (N.S.), Richmond, Mo.

Elvira Morrow, wife of Alex Morrow, from Cumberland Presbyterian Church.

Richard Sansom, from the same.

Mary Sansom, his wife, from the same.

Mrs. Fanny M. Foster, from the Presbyterian Church (O.S.) Austin, Texas

Neal McGaffy, church not shown.

Mrs. Margaret Ann Deane, from the Presbyterian Church, Richmond, Mo.

The organizational meeting included a sermon by Rev. Baker. The Sacrament of the Lords Supper was observed, and an infant child of the Sansomⁱ was baptized. Richard Sansom and Dr. Barbee were elected Elders.

The "Old School" (O.S.) and "New School" (N.S.) designations were important at the time because they were terms commonly applied to differentiate two separate denominations, both with the same name: The Presbyterian Church in the United States of America. This was occasioned by an early split in the denomination, which continued until after the Civil War.ⁱⁱ

Where was Richard Sansom's house in which the church was organized? Sansom family recordsⁱⁱⁱ show that Richard and his wife came to Texas from Tennessee in 1850, and Williamson County land records reflect that by 1854, he owned five parcels of land along Brushy Creek to the north and east of Round Rock. One of those parcels was in what was called the David Currey headright, just to the north of the original site of Round Rock, and it included what would become Chisholm Trail, the old Road leading from Round Rock north to Georgetown. Current Sansom family members point to a location on the northeast corner of the present intersection of Sam Bass Road and Chisholm Trail Road, just to the east of Interstate Highway 35, and they say that is the place pointed out to them by their forebears as the location of Richard Sansom's house.^{iv} Indeed, an early two story stone house stood on that site until it was demolished in the 1980's. Family members say that the house was pointed out to them as having been the home of Richard Sansom and his family until they moved to Georgetown in 1868. A photograph of the house

(identified in the files of the Texas Historical Commission as "The Cole House") is set forth as attachment (1). A photograph of Richard Sansom is set forth as attachment (2).

The early history of the congregation recorded in the Session minutes indicates that *For some months after the organization, the church did not enjoy regular preaching. ... About the last of November 1854, Rev. Robert M. Overstreet from Muncie Presbytery (O.S.) Indiana, settled in Georgetown and took charge of our church after which we had regular preaching.*

Early church records clearly show that the new church was organized and known as the Round Rock Presbyterian Church, but at an early and not clearly defined date, all activities of the new congregation were taking place in Georgetown, and no activities were transpiring in Round Rock. Overstreet purchased a half block of land in Georgetown in Jan 1855^v. That land was only two blocks from the site of the original location of the Church. A school, perhaps Georgetown's earliest, was held in the Church, and Overstreet, in addition to his pastoral duties, was also a schoolmaster.^{vi} A further indication of Georgetown's being the preferred place for the church is found in the list of names of the earliest families who became members: Seymour, Hanna, Morrow, Shell, Clamp, and Talbot – all Georgetown families, and all members by 1861. Indeed, by March 1868, Richard Sansom and his family had moved to Georgetown.^{vii}

The early Church records do not often show the place where meetings of the Session took place (Richard Sansom was Clerk of the Session). But in November 1856 it clearly met in Georgetown, "where Presbytery was in session", and on June 10, 1858, it is clearly stated that the Session met at Sansom's residence. It might be presumed that it also met at Sansom's residence in June 1859 when

Monroe & Dolphia, Servents [sic] of R. Sansom were received into the church [and] they and their infant child were also Baptized.

The most salient clue as to the motivation and time frame for the move is found in the fact that on November 2, 1856, Christian Augustus Daniel Clamp (1827-1915) and his wife, Asenath Christina (Davis) Clamp (1831-1917), who had been residents of Georgetown since October 1851, became members of the church. A Photograph of C.A.D. Clamp is set forth as attachment (3). On January 5, 1856, Clamp and the Trustees of Round Rock Presbyterian Church (Old School) executed a deed instrument whereby Clamp sold to the Trustees for the sum of \$1.00 a certain parcel of land whereupon *the said Trustees have commenced a Church.* This parcel of land, measuring roughly 240' by 240', was sited and fully described in Book 8, page 185 of the Deed Records of Williamson County. Although the deed was executed on January 5, 1856, it was not filed with the County Clerk until May 16, 1860. The parcel was located at about what is now the northeast corner of the intersection of 4th and Myrtle Streets in the City of Georgetown.

It is not known who built the church building (although Clamp, himself, was a builder), and there are no photographs or other representations of the building, but it has been described as being a wood frame structure with a chimney and a gallery. The building housed not only the young congregation, but also one of Georgetown's earliest schools, The Georgetown Male & Female Academy.

The church was fortunate to gain not only C.A.D. Clamp with his building and musical skills, but also his daughter, Kisia Elizabeth ("Lizzie") Clamp (1851 – 1880) who not only was active in the church, but who also was a student at the Male & Female Academy, married the schoolmaster and next minister, John McMurray, and kept diaries telling of her life and the times in early Georgetown starting when she was about 13 and continuing to her death in Taylor, Texas.

The Session met only thirteen times between June 1854 and August 1865, primarily to receive or dismiss members, to administer sacraments, or to elect commissioners to Presbytery. During that time, although the minutes contain no mention of the fact, the Civil War occurred, and this church, like the rest of the churches in the South, became a part of the Presbyterian Church in the Confederate States of America.

On April 17, 1866 we learn – not from Church records, but from Lizzie's diary entry – that Rev. Overstreet and his family left Georgetown to move back up North. She also noted that:

He had a large drove of Beeves to take back and sell.

DIVISION

With the end of the war, the "mother church", the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, called on the southern churches to return to the fold, stating that their secession had been *unwarranted, schismatical, and unconstitutional*. The call was largely ignored, and, instead, the southern churches formed a new denomination, the Presbyterian Church in the United States.

Thus, in 1866, the Georgetown church found itself a member of Central Texas Presbytery of the new denomination. Not all were content with that situation, and at the Spring 1866 meeting of Presbytery, Richard Sansom introduced a resolution which would have returned all the churches of Central Texas Presbytery to the Presbyterian Church U.S.A. It was soundly defeated.

In late July 1866, two Presbyterian Ministers, Thaddeus McRae and John McMurray came to the Georgetown Church to hold "meetings" and preached on the 27th through 29th. The Church records contain the minutes of the first recorded meeting of the congregation of the Georgetown Presbyterian Church [sic] since its organization. It was held "at the place of

worship" on July 28, 1866. Rev. John McMurray was elected Moderator and A.W. Morrow was elected Secretary. Elder Richard Sansom offered the following resolution for consideration:

Whereas the Presbytery of Central Texas has wrongfully undertaken to withdraw the churches within its bounds from the lawful control of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, AND

Whereas the members of this congregation do not recognize the authority of the Presbytery, under the circumstances, as lawful according to the constitution of the Church, AND

Whereas said Presbytery cannot be induced to abandon its scismatical course, Therefore resolved that we the members of the Georgetown Presbyterian Church in congregation assembled, do hereby renounce all connection of our church with said Presbytery and do place our church under the care of the Board of Domestic Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America.

On motion, the resolution was adopted by a vote of nine to one. The one opposed was Sidney Seymour, who had been elected and ordained an Elder on November 9, 1861. Seymour moved that all members, even those not present at the meeting, be allowed to have their votes recorded as For or Against the resolution. His motion passed. When the subsequent recording of votes was counted, the results were sixteen in favor and four opposed to the resolution. Whereupon Seymour announced that he and those acting with him "could not and would not sever their connection with the Presbytery of Central Texas." At the Fall 1866 meeting of Central Texas Presbytery, the members of the congregation that had voted to retain their connection with the Presbytery were acknowledged to be the Georgetown Presbyterian Church. The members that had voted to rejoin the "mother church" were quickly accepted back by The Presbyterian Church in the United States of America and were assigned initially to the oversight of the Synod of Kansas. (They participated, however, with the churches in Austin and Galveston in the formation of the new Presbytery of Austin in August 1868.) Thus by the end of 1866, there were two congregations in Georgetown, a town with a population of fewer than 300, each considering itself to be the "true" Georgetown Presbyterian Church.

The Northern Church

Although their long time minister, Rev. Overstreet, was gone, and their numbers were slightly reduced by the split, still the northern congregation enjoyed effective congregational leadership and had the advantage of owning a place of worship. In January 1867 the congregation voted to call Rev. John McMurray (1829 – 1912) as their stated supply pastor at a salary of \$300 per year. He was also to be the principal of the Georgetown Male and Female

Academy, and as a "home missionary" for the Presbyterian Church U.S.A., he would also hold services away, preaching in Georgetown about once a month. On the Sundays when he was "away", the Presbyterian Church/schoolhouse was utilized by other denominations – the Methodists, the Baptists (who organized there on November 14, 1868), and, by 1870, the Southern Presbyterians. McMurray arrived in Georgetown on February 4, 1867 and started teaching school the next day. He took room and board with the Clamp family and on July 3, 1867 he married Lizzie, the oldest of the Clamp children and, until then, one of his students. A photograph of John and Lizzie McMurray is set forth as Attachment (4). In her journals, Lizzie not only recounts events in the life of the church, but also in the school which was held in the church building. On April 30, 1868, she recorded the following related to one of the more famous students, Andrew Jackson Houston (1854 – 1941), age 13 at the time, son of the late Sam Houston.^{viii}

Yesterday Mr. McMurray kept Andrew Houston in a playtime to get his lesson over (Andrew has caused Mr. McMurray more trouble than four such boys ought to for his size and age). After he was kept in awhile Mr. McMurray let him go to his dinner but he had sent for some switches, and had threatened to whip him. So Andrew came back to school in the evening [afternoon] armed with a revolver. He told Neely [Lizzie's brother] that if his brother (meaning Mr. McMurray) had of went to have whipped him, that he would have had a _____ brother, he said that after school was out with a wave of the revolver. Mr. McMurray did not know of his having such a thing there. He kept it hid. When Mr. McMurray found out about it last night, he of course saw about it the first thing this morning. He made Andrew give it up, and on account of that and his impudent talking, sent him home, telling him that he had done all he could for him, had tried to do the best he could by him, then for him to cut up in that manner. We don't have any idea that Mr. Morrow (Andrew's brother in law) knows any thing about Andrews having a revolver at school. Mr. McMurray went at Noon to see him about it. It is a pretty come out for such a thing to occur. Mr. McMurray thinks there was'ent [sic] any danger of his trying to use it, but not much telling what he might have done, had he known he was going to be whipped. He threatened around at a terrible rate among the boys what he would do to Mr. McMurray if he did go to whip him. Oh! Nobody scarcely knows the trials of a school teacher, unless they are one themselves.

On May 4, 1868, Lizzie reported:

*That Andrew affair I recon is all settled now, at least [I] hope it is.
Mr. McMurray saw Mr. Morrow about it. He gave Andrew a severe whipping,
and made him make satisfactory aknowled[g]ments, and promises to
Mr. McMurray, that he would do better hereafter, so Mr. McMurray took him
back in school.^{ix}*

The Rock Church

At a Congregational Meeting on April 2, 1870, a committee was authorized "to devise ways and means to get a more secure house of worship." Book 12, Page 222 of the Deed Records of Williamson County reflects that on June 18, 1870, the church purchased Block 10 of the Glasscock Addition to the City of Georgetown from John N. McFadin for the sum of \$300. On April 5, 1871, it was reported to a Congregational Meeting that a building, 30' x 43', with a basement would cost \$3520.00. The congregation approved construction with the use of lumber from the old church "as far as it would go," and requested \$2000 in aid from the denomination. On August 28, 1871, they voted to build the new building in the center of the northwest quarter of Block 10, named a building and finance committee, and voted to sell the church's existing land to Mrs. Amanda Talbot for \$100. From her vantage point across the street in the McMurray home (still standing at 611 Church Street) Lizzie wrote that

*The digging of the foundation to basement of our new church was
commenced last Monday. [That would have been September 5, 1871.]*

A contract was let to H.L. Jones to do the masonry work, and in January 1872, Lizzie observed that "the workmen [including her brother, Will Clamp] are hammering away at the rock for the church building." The carpentry contract to

include the building of the beginning of a cupola was let to a Mr. Bunker, although Lizzie further noted in February 1873 that her father, Elder Clamp, himself, was putting up the rafters for the church as well as tearing down the old church building.

Work on the building continued, although not as rapidly as hoped. On May 1, 1873, Lizzie wrote:

*Times are so hard the prospects for completion of the building are discouraging.
A disease is killing many horses. Lumber hauling from [the railhead at] Manor for
the church is being held up.*

The delays provided additional time for the finance committee to continue solicitations including an effort to arrive at some agreement with the Southern Presbyterians whereby they would come

up with sufficient funds to enable completion of the building in return for having use of the new building part of the time. Alas, the Southern congregation was unable to raise sufficient money. Work continued, however, with the congregation worshiping in the Courthouse. Finally, on Monday, September 1, 1873, Rev McMurray opened a school for sixteen girls in the basement of the new church building, and on Sunday, September 7, 1873, Lizzie reports:

Sunday School was held for the first time in the new church.

A copy of the earliest known photograph of the new church is set forth at Attachment (5). It is believed to have been taken sometime between 1881 and 1884, based on comparisons between written records and what is and is not shown in the photograph. Clearly shown atop the belfry is the bell purchased in January 1877 for the sum of \$69.15. It has been in regular use ever since.

It would appear then that things were going well for the northern congregation at the end of 1873, with a larger membership and a new church building. But in actuality, that was not to prove the case. The times were hard indeed, and money was scarce. Over the next thirteen years only 30 new members were added to the rolls, and there were significant losses. In order to sustain themselves financially, the congregation sold the eastern ½ of Block 10 for \$500 to J.C.S. Morrow on February 28, 1883.^x

It was precisely the difficulties of those times that led John McMurray to resign as Stated Supply Pastor effective on July 1, 1873. He continued to live and work in Georgetown as a teacher, home missionary and sometimes surveyor until September 1875 when he moved his family to become superintendent of the Gilleland Creek Academy near Manor, Texas.

For about a year, from April 1874 to April 1875, Rev. W.G. Bell was Stated Supply Pastor, and in October 1876, a young German, Rev. Otto M. Schultz became Stated Supply, remaining only until early 1877, but long enough to woo, win, and wed the church's choir director, Miss Lucy Anderson. Rev. John Creath became Stated Supply in June 1877 and remained until about 1879 or 1880, preaching in Georgetown and also at the newly organized Presbyterian Church in Taylor, Texas. By March 1880, Rev. W. Howell Buchanan was Stated Supply, remaining in the pastorate here until late 1881. Rev. J. W. Miller became Stated Supply in Jan 1882, remaining until sometime in 1883. Rev. J. Y Cowhick became Stated Supply minister on January 19, 1884, but despite significant accomplishments during his pastorate – a manse was erected, and the church spire was completed – things were winding down for the Northern congregation. Rev. George R. Scott came to serve the congregation beginning in January 1886, but the last meeting of the Session was held in March of that year. Soon after that meeting, the Congregation was dissolved, and on January 28, 1887, acting under the authority of

Austin Presbytery, the Trustees executed a lease agreement passing use of the church building to the Southern congregation.

A significant addition to the church leadership in those years was Dr. William Parke Fleming, (1838 – 1922) and Mrs. Fleming, who joined on April 11, 1875. Dr. Fleming, a Union Veteran and pioneer Texas Physician, was ordained and installed a Ruling Elder on November 16, 1877. He served as Clerk of the Session from March 1880 until March 1886. On April 22, 1893, he and his wife became members of the Southern Congregation, and on September 10, 1893, he was elected and installed Elder of that body and served as Clerk of Session of the Southern Church from July 16 1896 until February 27, 1921, not long before his death in 1922. He was the only person to serve as Clerk of the Session of both the Northern and Southern congregations. He lived in a house that stood where the church fellowship hall now stands. A copy of a steel engraving of the likeness of Dr. Fleming is set forth as Attachment (6)^{xi}

A loss to the congregation occurred when Richard Sansom and his wife, Mary, were dismissed at their request on October 22, 1876 to join the Southern church. Southern Church records confirm that on October 23, 1876, Richard Sansom was received into membership. But his wife did not join him in seeking membership in the Southern church, and her name appears no more in the church records. Indeed, not all were taken with the idea of joining the Southern church. When the Northern congregation dissolved in 1886, the Flemings moved their membership to a San Antonio church before finally affiliating with the Southern church in 1893. The Clamps moved their membership to First Presbyterian Church in Austin, Texas, and while they remained quite active in worship and fellowship with the Georgetown Presbyterians, they never joined the Southern church.

The Southern Church

Although each congregation truly believed that the other was in error, still there are no indications in church records of acrimony between the two. On the contrary, the minutes of each Session contain numerous references to having invited Elders of the other Congregation to sit with them in meetings as "visiting brethren." There were joint committees appointed to work on such matters as establishing and staffing a Union Sunday School, and when one of the congregations was temporarily without a pastor, it would meet in worship with the other.

No discussion of the Southern Congregation can progress far without calling to mind Elder Sidney Seymour (1818 – 1889). Born in New York, Seymour was present in the County as early as 1855, operating a mill near what would become Florence, Texas.^{xii} He was married to Maria Louisa Morrow (1824 – 1890) and lived about two miles north of Georgetown. The Seymours joined the Georgetown Presbyterian Church on April 14, 1856, transferring their

membership from another [unknown] Presbyterian Church. He was elected and ordained Elder on November 9, 1861. Seymour stood almost alone in trying to prevent the congregation from returning to the "mother church" in July 1866, and when he was unsuccessful, he shepherded the small minority into becoming a Presbyterian Church in Georgetown in its own right, but one that remained a part of the Presbyterian Church in the United States. He served as Elder and Clerk of the Session of the Southern congregation from its beginning until his death in August 1889. The Session minutes following his death contain glowing tributes to his Christian character and devotion to his church, mentioning that he represented the Presbytery at the meeting of the General Assembly of the church in Charleston, S.C. in 1880. A photograph of Sidney Seymour is set forth as Attachment (7). Seymour and his wife are both buried in the Presbyterian Cemetery in Georgetown.

Where the Southern congregation met in its earliest days is not clear. Sessional Records show meetings in the Courthouse, in Price's Hall, and at the home of Elder Seymour. Rev. Levi Tenny was Stated Supply at first in early 1867, but by July of that year, Rev. W. A. Smith had taken up that task. In 1873, Rev. M. C. Conoley was serving as Stated Supply when the Northern Congregation was seeking financial help from the southerners to finish their new building. Rev. H.B. Rose succeeded Conoley in 1874, and in August 1875, Rev. W.F. Gillespie succeeded Rose. Initially he was a Stated Supply minister, but from April 1877 until October 1881 he was the first regularly called and installed Pastor. While Gillespie was still Stated Supply, the records indicate, the Southern congregation was able to use the Northern congregations new rock church upon several occasions.

Then, in March 1876, the congregation gained the use of a church building. It was a structure that had been erected on Lot 8, at the northwest corner of Block 17 of the Glasscock Addition (immediately to the east of and behind the "rock church". The date of the building is not known, but the land was conveyed by G.W. Glasscock, Jr. to the Christian Church (Stephen Strickland, Trustee) on July 6, 1872^{xiii} On March 12, 1877, the Southern congregation bought the building for \$100 "in a week or two," \$100 due in six months, and \$125 due on January 1, 1878.^{xiv}

In the minutes of a Congregational meeting on October 25, 1879, it was reported that a gift of land to be used as a cemetery had been made by Mr. John Sparks, a prominent Georgetown attorney and rancher. The cemetery, still in use, is located on the south side of Georgetown between 20th and 21st Streets at Page Street. This land, about two acres in size, was at one time a part of Sparks Ranch, and it contains the grave of Sparks' first wife, Rachel, who died in February 1879. John Sparks subsequently left Georgetown, moved to Nevada and, in 1902 was elected to

the first of two terms as Governor.^{xv} Financing the upkeep of the cemetery was eased considerably in 1933, when Mrs. Agnes Brinklum bequeathed the church 148 Acres of farm land east of Georgetown, the income from which is still used as she directed "to maintain and keep cleaned and improved" the Presbyterian Cemetery.

In October 1881, Rev. Gillespie resigned, and on January 1, 1882, Rev Hillery Moseley became Stated Supply. By July of that year the two congregations were meeting jointly with Rev. Moseley pastoring both congregations. This arrangement was halted by the Northern congregation in December 1883 perhaps because the Southern congregation was getting all the new members. Also in December 1883, Rev. Moseley died. He is buried in the Presbyterian Cemetery.

Over the next few months, several ministers, including Rev. C.H. Dobbs and Rev. James D. McLean, supplied the need of the church briefly.

Then, in August 1884, the Rev. W. T. Spears became regular Supply Pastor. His work must have pleased the church, for on June 21, 1885, the congregation voted to call him as the regular minister. Rev. Spears asked the Session to allow him to hold the call in abeyance until the next meeting of Presbytery, and also for some time to visit in Kentucky. He also raised the issue of some back pay that was due him. The Session conferred and agreed to Rev. Spears' requests. He then departed, presumably on his trip to Kentucky, but he was never seen nor heard from again.

On January 3, 1886, the Reverence M. C. Hutton (Unk – 1926) became Stated Supply minister. In April of that year he was called to be the regular pastor at a salary of \$800 per annum plus free use of the manse. He was installed on May 9, 1886 at a service which found that

The Church was far too small to hold the people, and many had to leave for want of room.

Thus would begin a ministry that would continue for more than thirty-five years until his resignation owing to poor health In March 1921. And following his resignation, Rev. Hutton became the only pastor to be elected *Pastor Emeritus* in which capacity he continued to be active in church affairs until his death in 1926. A photograph of Rev. M.C. Hutton is set forth as Attachment (8).

It was soon after Hutton came on the scene that the Southern Church leased the rock church from the now essentially defunct Northern congregation. On March 12, 1894, acting under the authority of the Presbytery of Austin, the Northern Church trustees sold the church building and property to the Southern Church for \$1500, liquidating the remaining debt owed by the Northern congregation to their denomination. With this action, recorded in Vol 68, page 370

of the Williamson County Deed Records, the Northern congregation ceased to be. The split in this church of some 28 year duration, occasioned by the strong feelings following the Civil War, was ended. Nationally, it would be another 89 years before the Northern and Southern Churches were reunited on June 10, 1983 as the Presbyterian Church (USA).

Although the official records, surprisingly, make no mention of the matter, some changes were made to the church building. Several informal, unpublished, and undated histories and parts of histories exist in the church archives. They generally point to a time frame ranging from 1894 to "the early 1900's" as the time of these alterations. The entry was changed to a single (double) door, and the style of the windows and doors was changed from rectangular to "gothic" surmounted by pointed arches. At least two stained glass windows were installed, and a vaulted ceiling was installed in the sanctuary. The belfry and bell were removed, and the bell was mounted on a framework beside the church. A photograph of the church building after these changes were made is set forth as Attachment (9). In about 1913, further changes were made. Several more stained glass windows were installed, and again the front entry was changed with a small vestibule surmounted by a belfry and steeple added to the front, as well as high and more narrow stone front steps. This is the appearance of the church which many of the oldest members remember and which was to remain as it was for some forty more years. A photograph is set forth as Attachment (10) Perhaps some of these changes were financed, at least in part, by the sale in November 1897 of the Southwest Quarter (Lots 5 & 6) of Block Ten. The Church received \$1500 for the land from N.M. Wilcox^{xvi} This left the Church owning only the ¼ Block upon which it rested. In another fifty years, they would begin the expensive process of re-buying Block Ten.

When Rev M.C. Hutton became pastor, the Church membership was about 60 persons. It reached a high in his pastorate of 160 in 1917. The years from 1922 through June 1949 were times of struggle and maintenance for the church and for the community. Membership fell to a low of 103 in 1939. Through good times and bad though, the Church was able to continue its ministry through the dedication of its ministers and lay leaders and members. Those who served as pastors were:

A.H. Perpetuo, Stated Supply Pastor from July 1922 to September 1924. He was also Professor of Hebrew at Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary.

Michael MarYosip, Pastor from July 1925 to September 1928. A bachelor, he was the son of Lebanese Christians, came to the United States for his education, intending to return home as a missionary. However all his family in Lebanon was killed in World War I, so he stayed as a minister in this country.

James Waite, Stated Supply Pastor from September to December 1929, and Pastor from December 1929 to September 1932. He left rather abruptly, asking for six months leave without pay before his resignation was effective. However the congregation voted to accept his resignation effective immediately.

Robert F. Jones, Pastor from June 1934 to July 1936. He later served as the long time minister at First Presbyterian Church, Ft. Worth.

Alexander Gray, Stated Supply Pastor from January 1938 to October 1939, and Pastor from October 1939 to January 1942. During this time the Church had great difficulty in gathering sufficient funds to pay the minister's salary.

Robert P. ("Manny") Douglass, Stated Supply Pastor for a part of 1942 and to at least January 1943. Records of the period are inadequate to be more precise.

H. Addison Woestemeyer, Stated Supply Pastor from October 1943 to an unknown date. Records of the period are inadequate to be more precise.

Earl Brandon, Stated Supply Pastor from March 1945 to February 1946.

Albert Smith, Pastor from March 1946 to August 1948. He was Pastor when the Church purchased an electric organ and when the Fall 1947 meeting of Presbytery was held at Georgetown.

Time passed with no regular minister until June 1949, when Jan McMurray became Pastor. He would serve for ten years until June 1959. From November 1953 to April 1954 a construction project was under way wherein a narthex was added at the front of the church, a two story education wing at the back (which included space for an office), an enlarged chancel and choir loft, and a kitchen in the downstairs "fellowship hall". On June 12, 1954, the congregation celebrated its centennial with a service of dedication of the new additions. In January 1956, the church roll was reviewed, many were placed on the retired or inactive rolls, and the actual membership was determined to be 132. Rev. McMurray left to become Pastor of the Presbyterian Church in Fredericksburg, Texas, where he served until his death in August 1960.

W. Jack Lewis was Stated Supply Pastor from May 1959 to May 1960, and Eddy Cartwright, a student at Austin Seminary came to serve the church until October 1960.

James B. VanVleck was Pastor from October 1960 to August 1963. His pastorate was marked by an ecumenical spirit with a number of union services and endeavors including allowing the newly organized Crestview Baptist Church to use our facilities. It was also a time of turmoil and new directions in the area of race relations in the land and particularly in the South. A committee of the church was appointed to study the matter and in February 1962, the Session

voted that *no person, because of color, would be denied the privilege of worship at First Presbyterian Church.*

It was during the pastorate of VanVleck in December 1962, that the church received a plaque of recognition from the State Historical Survey Committee, the predecessor to the Texas Historical Commission.

Davis Taylor served as Pastor from March 1964 to June 1966. During that time, in February 1965, Carl Liese was elected Ruling Elder Emeritus to honor his long and dedicated service. He was one of the six faithful leaders who have been so honored. The other five are: Marsh F. Smith (1955), Thomas P. Hughes (1955), Howard T. Johnson (1960), John N. Ellyson (1979), and William R. Stump (1992). Following his retirement, Davis Taylor and his wife, Anne, continued their participation in the life of this church.

Warren R. Hall served as Pastor from Sep 1966 to Aug 1975. Following his retirement, Warren and his wife, Evelyn, remained in Georgetown, participating in the life of the church. While he was pastor, a rotation system for church officers was adopted and implemented. A benevolence formula of 16% of the total budget became Session policy. Church membership increased to 159. The newly formed San Gabriel Christian Church was allowed to use the church facility for worship and study. Rev. Hall died in September 2001.

David C. Duncan became pastor in September 1975 and continued until May 1987. First Presbyterian Church as well as Georgetown and much of the Central Texas area entered upon a time of unparalleled growth. By August 1979 it became necessary to have two Sunday morning services, and in 1986 a second educational wing including classrooms and an expanded office suite was added at the back of the sanctuary. Lots 1, 2, and 3 of Block Ten were purchased for future church expansion. The Church was instrumental in the forming of community charitable works including Meals-on-wheels, The Caring Place, the Georgetown Youth Recreation Association. This church supported development of a new Presbyterian Church in Round Rock. The Church employed a secretary as well as a choir director and an organist, and Rev. Jack Ware began the first of his several periods of service as Parish Associate. David Duncan served a term as Moderator of Presbytery, and in 1978 he was a delegate to the General Assembly. In June 1979 the Church celebrated its 125th anniversary.

Following David Duncan's departure, the Rev. James Mahon served as Interim Pastor from Aug 1987 to Aug 1988.

Dr. Michael A. Roberts became Pastor of First Presbyterian Church, Georgetown in September 1988. A photograph of him is set forth as Attachment (11). For the past fourteen years the church has continued to enjoy phenomenal growth, not only in membership (from 369

to a present figure of 676), but in budget (from \$134,000 to \$604,824). In addition to the regular budgeted giving, the congregation has undertaken four major capital fund campaigns wherein a total of nearly two million dollars was pledged, but well over two million dollars was received. Some twenty-nine new programs serving a broad spectrum of the membership and the community have been added. Paid full time and part time staff has increased from five to seventeen. A major construction project took place in 1994, adding classrooms, meeting rooms, kitchen, dining, meeting rooms, and offices at the east end of the property -- and then in 1998, it was enlarged. A pen and ink drawing by Georgetown artist, Kay Patterson of the church as it appears today is set forth as Attachment (12) In addition to regular budgeted benevolence for local and denominational causes, the church has supported targeted mission projects within the Presbytery and internationally to the extent of \$71,198 and additional charitable works to the extent of \$40,000. The church has been instrumental in shepherding into being a second Presbyterian Church in Georgetown – San Gabriel Presbyterian Church, chartered in 2002.

Much of this success may be attributed to the leadership of Dr. Roberts, and to the dedication, imagination, and hard work of the membership, the officers and the staff. And much may be attributed to good economic times and the growth and success of the community and region. But as we prepare to observe our Church's 150th anniversary, we are mindful of those dedicated souls who preceded us and who stayed the course in good times and in bad, in times of turmoil and in times of despair. And we are conscious of the truths to which we have cleaved and which we proclaim and of a loving God Who has, and Who will continue to be our guide, our comforter, and our friend.

Prepared by:

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First Presbyterian Church, Georgetown, Tx

ENDNOTES

ⁱ Land of Good Waters p. 114.

ⁱⁱ A Brief History of the Presbyterians. (Third Edition), by L.A. Loetscher. Westminster Press. Philadelphia. 1978

ⁱⁱⁱ Records in possession of Ray L. Sansom, Jr., 2002 Gabriel View Dr., Georgetown, Tx.

^{iv} Interview with Karen S. Wilson, and Fred Cooper Smith, Jr., Weir, Texas (June 2002)

^v Book 6, page 131, Deed Records of Williamson Co. reflect the purchase of the North Half of Block 26 on 11 Jan 1855. That was the only land owned by Overstreet at the time and was presumably his place of residence.

^{vi} History of Texas together with Biographical History of Milam, Williamson, Bastrop, Lee & Burleson Counties ... p.297. In an article concerning Dr. John E. Walker, he was quoted as saying that when he came to Georgetown in 1858, there was "one Church, the Presbyterian, ... The school house was also situated at one end of the church, and was taught by well qualified and good instructors ... [and] among them were ... Rev. R.M. Overstreet."

^{vii} Lizzie Clamp Diary March __, 1868

^{viii} Sam Houston died in 1863. His widow, Margaret Lea Houston died in 1867. Their five youngest children, including Andrew, came to live in Georgetown with their oldest sister, Nancy Elizabeth, wife of J.C.S. Morrow. (Land of Good Waters p.193)

^{ix} Andrew Houston grew up to be a prominent Texas, gathered a troop of "Rough Riders" for Theodore Roosevelt, was a U.S. Marshall, and twice ran for Governor. He was appointed to fill an unexpired term as U.S. Senator shortly before his death at age 87. He is buried in the Texas State Cemetery in Austin. (The Handbook of Texas Online, FH069, Texas State Historical Association)

^x Williamson County Deed Records Book 31, page 67.

^{xi} History of Texas together with ...etc. p. 543

^{xii} Land of Good Water p. 162.

^{xiii} Williamson Co. Deed Records, Book 13, p. 742.

^{xiv} Williamson Co. Deed Records, Book 18, p. 574. It might be noted here that the building was subsequently sold to the Swedish Evangelical Lutheran (Brushy) Church, and they sold it to the fraternal order of Woodmen of the World. The WOW moved it to a point near the juncture of the North and South San Gabriel Rivers where it continued in use until the early 1990's, at which time it was demolished.

^{xv} Land of Good Waters p.214.

^{xvi} Williamson Co. Deed Records, Book 83, p. 47.

First Presbyterian Church, Georgetown, Tx

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Statistical Summaries, unpublished, (1988-2002) by Dr. Michael A. Roberts, Georgetown, Tx.

First Presbyterian Church, Georgetown, Texas

ATTACHMENTS / ILLUSTRATIONS

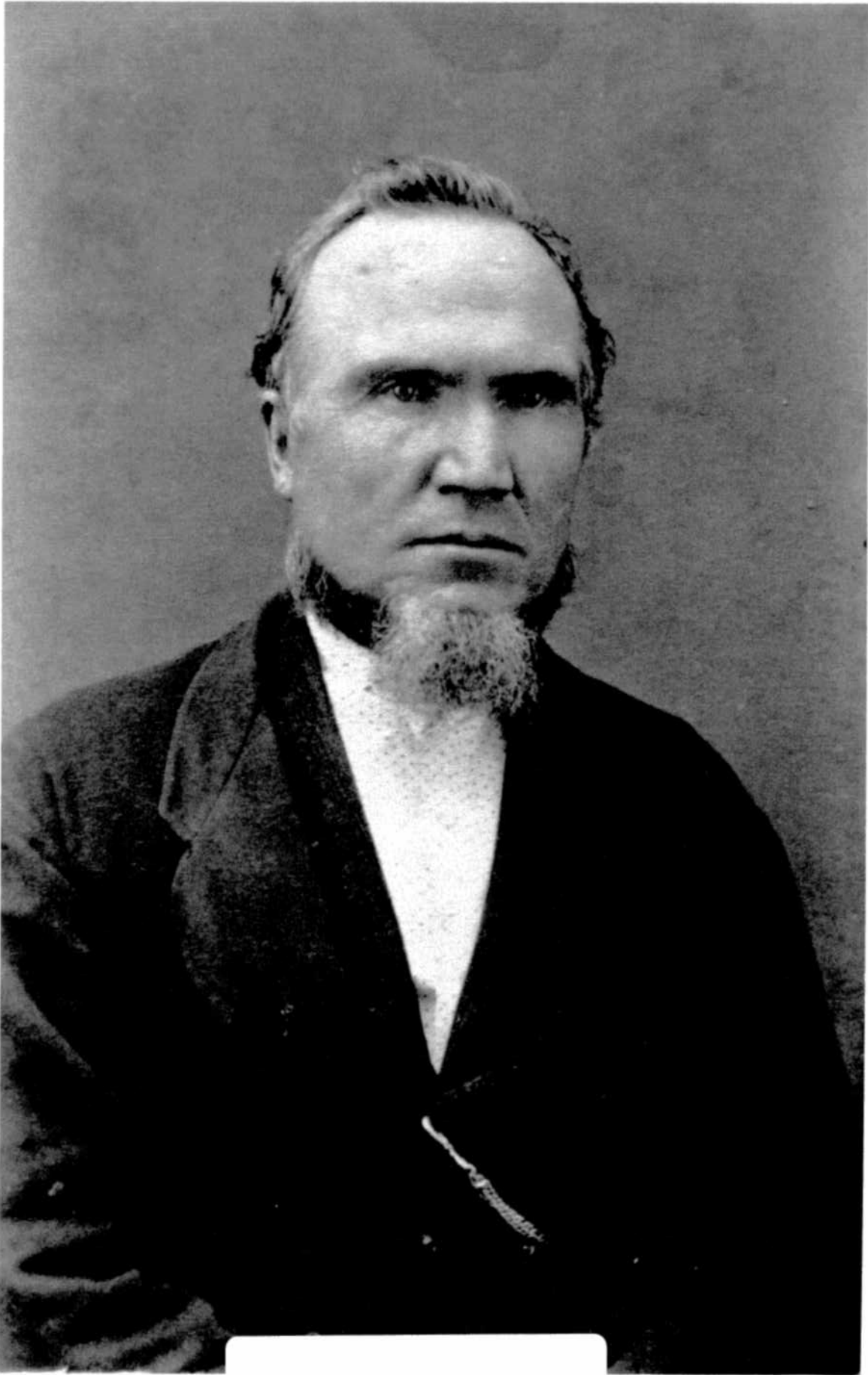
1. Richard Sansom's home where church was organized June 12, 1854. (This photograph is from the Texas Historical Commission files and is described by them as the Cole House. It was made in about the 1980's)
2. Richard Sansom (This photograph is from the files of the Georgetown Heritage Society. They obtained it from the Masonic Lodge where Sansom was Grand Master in the 1850's. It shows him as he appeared in his 30's or early 40's – much as he must have looked when the church was founded.)
3. Christian Augustus Daniel Clamp (This photograph is in the possession of J.C. Johnson, Jr. It depicts C.A.D. Clamp at about age 40 – about 1867.)
4. Rev. John McMurray and "Lizzie" Clamp McMurray (This photograph is in the possession of J.C. Johnson, Jr. It was taken in Austin, Texas in January 1868. McMurray is 39. Lizzie is 16.)
5. "The Rock Church" (This photograph by an unknown photographer at an unknown date is in the archives of First Presbyterian Church. It is believed to have been taken between 1881 and 1884.)
6. Elder William Parke Fleming (This drawing is found of the book History of Texas together with .. etc listed above. He appears to be in his 50's – about 1888.)
7. Elder Sidney Seymour (This photograph was graciously given to the church by Seymours distant kinsman, J. M. Peterson, of Bayou Vista, Tx. Seymour appears to be in his 60's – in the early 1880's)
8. Dr. Milton C. Hutton (This photograph, now in the church archives, was in a scrapbook maintained by the late "Snookie" Sansom. Dr. Hutton appears to be in his late 40's or early 50's – date not known.)
9. The Church after some remodeling. (This photograph is in the church archives. Its date and the photographer are not known. It is estimated to be in the 1890's or early 1900's.)
10. The church with vestibule and steeple (This photograph is in the church archives. It was taken after 1913 and before 1954.)
11. Dr. Michael A. Roberts (from the 2001 Church Directory)
12. The Church as it appears today (A pen and ink drawing owned by the church, it was done in 1995 by Georgetown artist Kay Patterson.)



Attachment # 1



Attachment # 2



Attachment # 3



Attachment # 4

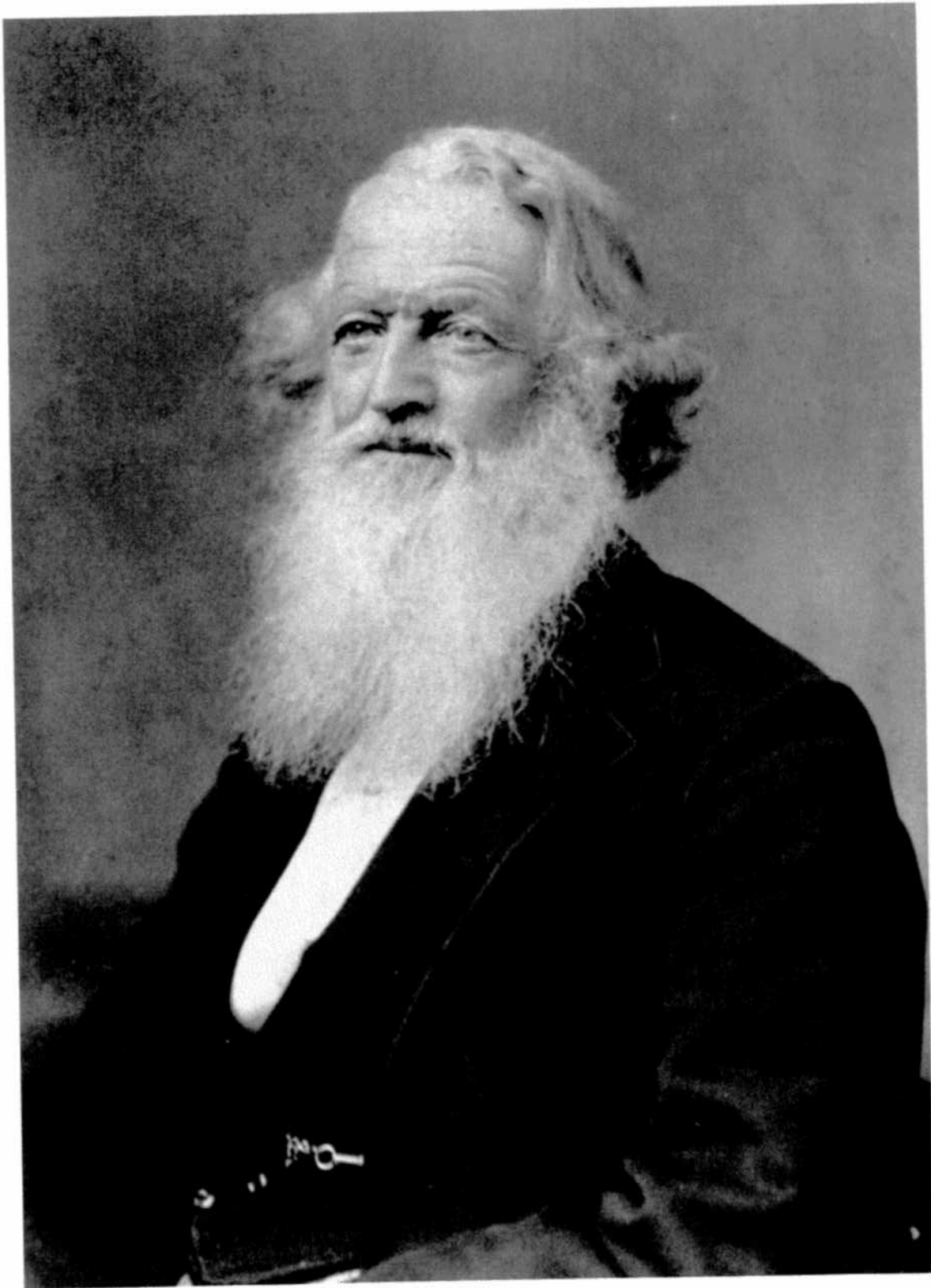
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Attachment # 5



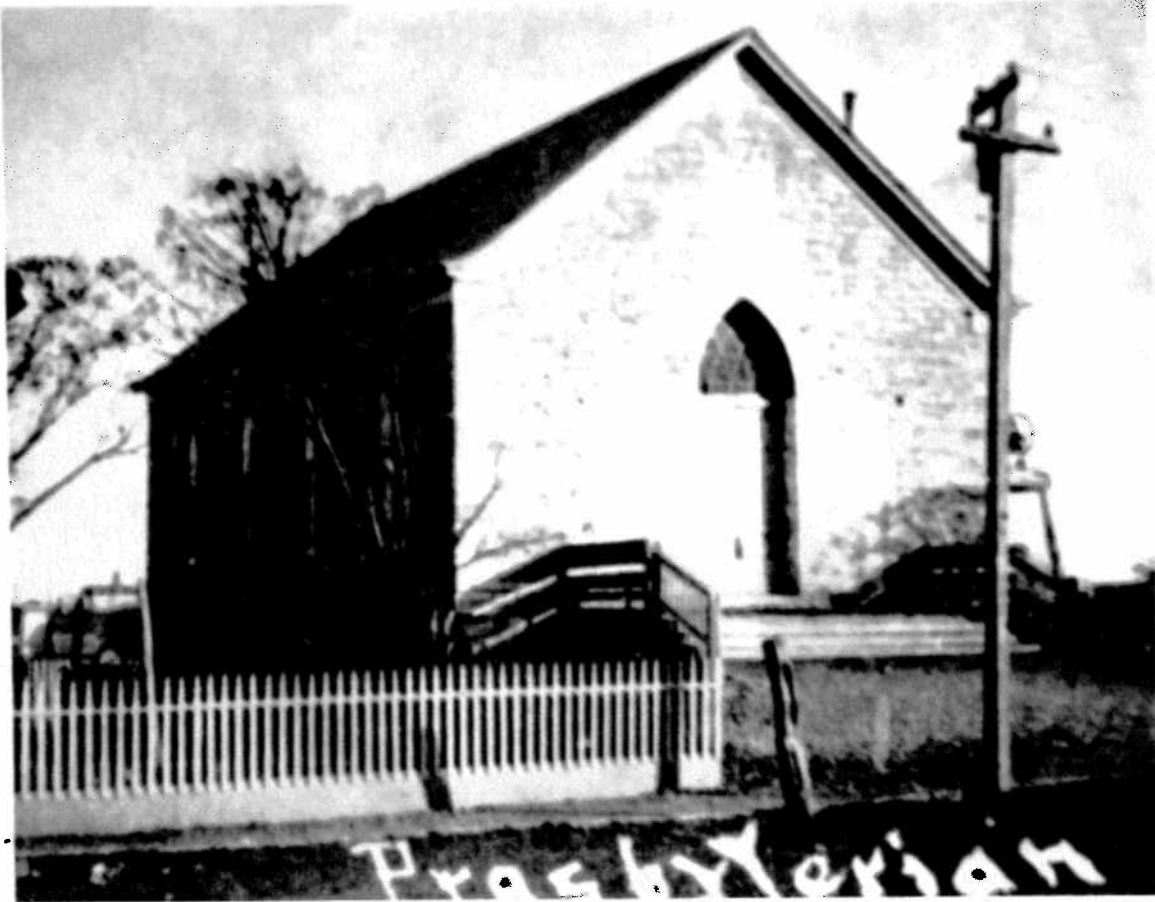
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Attachment # 7



Attachment # 8

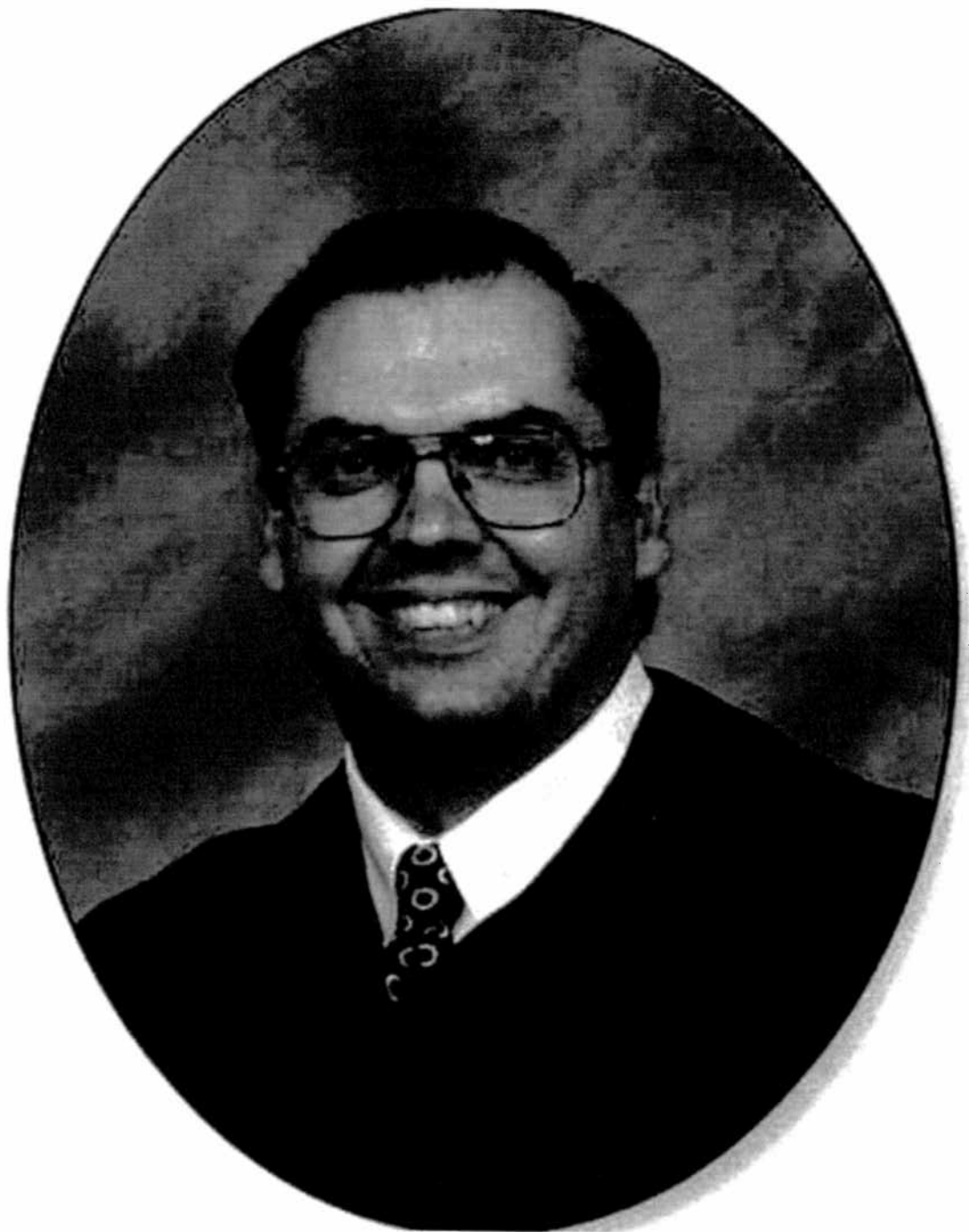


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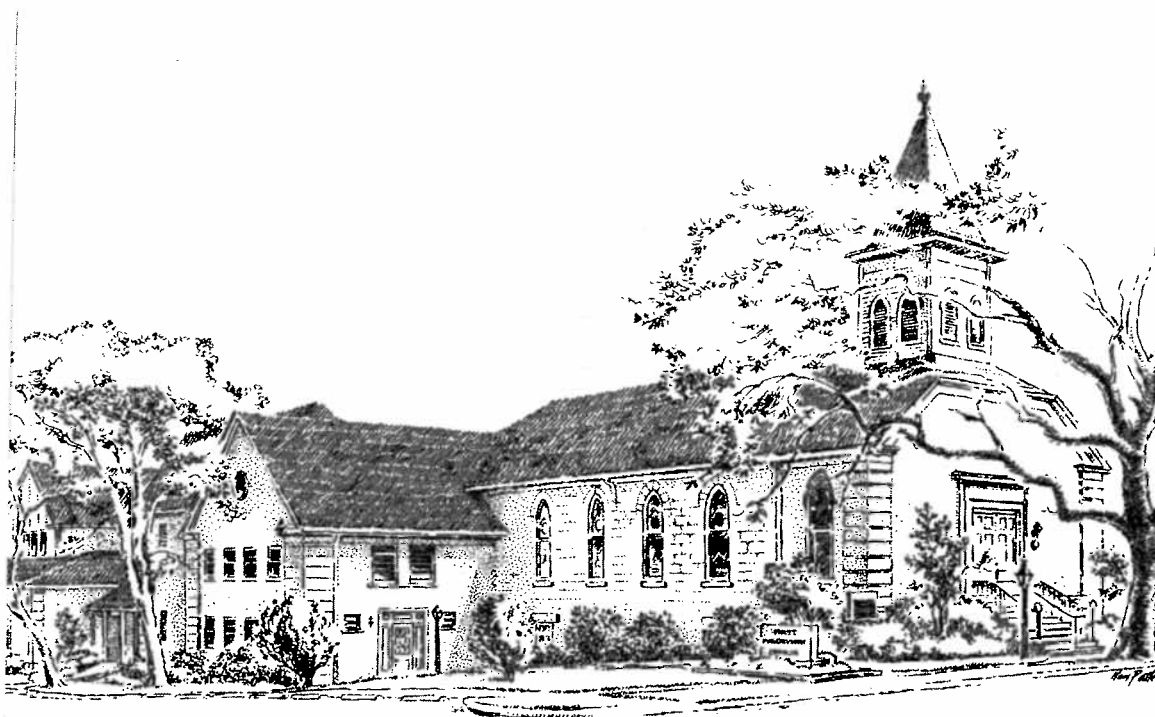


Attachment # 10

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Attachment # 11



Attachment # 12