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Old Cokesbury in Greenwood County, South Carolina: Religious and Educational Center in Nineteenth Century

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OLD COKESBURY
IN
GREENWOOD COUNTY,
SOUTH CAROLINA

RELIGIOUS AND EDUCATIONAL CENTER
IN NINETEENTH CENTURY



BY
JOHN W. MOORE

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About The Sketch

The sketch in this booklet was written at the request of The Index-Journal of Greenwood by John W. Moore and was published in The Index-Journal in three installments, appearing on Aug. 12, Aug. 26 and Aug. 27, 1954. The author, who now makes his home at Mount Pleasant, S. C., first wrote a shorter sketch about Cokesbury which was published in two installments in The (Charleston, S. C.) News and Courier in February, 1954.

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BIRTHPLACE OF AUTHOR—John Washington Moore, grandfather of the author of this sketch, had a large plantation to the north and northeast of Andrew Chapel and Cokesbury, where he built this home in 1844. Here the author and his father James Cobb Moore, were born, both in the same room, and on Oct. 29. The home was later owned by William Henry Moore, the eldest son of the builder. The condition of this once-handsome house gives an idea of the decay and ruin which now mark many of the old homes in and near Cokesbury.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

The author of this sketch was born in 1878 on a plantation near Cokesbury. In 1900, he was graduated from The Citadel, where he was first captain of cadets in his senior year. In 1913, he received the master of arts degree from the College of Charleston, his thesis being in the field of South Carolina history.

Between his graduation from The Citadel and his return to that institution during the session 1905-06, he taught in the Fitting School of Furman University, the University School in New Orleans, and the Greenwood High School. At The Citadel, he was assistant professor of political science and history.

While in the latter position, he served as a member of the South Carolina Historical Commission. He was also adjutant of The Citadel 1908-17 and commandant of cadets 1917-20. He was headmaster and then superintendent of Bailey Military Institute in Greenwood 1920-23, and was superintendent of the city public schools of Florence from 1923 until his retirement in 1946.

During World War I, he held the rank of major of infantry, and was retired as lieutenant-colonel of cavalry. During World War II, he was director of Civilian Defense of the Sixth Congressional District.

He and Mrs. Moore now make their home in Mount Pleasant, S. C.

FOREWORD

Much that is related in this article the writer learned from the lips of his parents and grandparents and their contemporaries in Old Cokesbury, who had in their younger days received much of their information by word of mouth from their elders, and so on back to 1800 and earlier. However, it would have been impossible to produce this article without benefit of the researches of Editor Harry L. Watson of the Greenwood Index-

Journal made over many years and published under the title "Our Old Roads", and of the Rev. C. E. Peele made in connection with the celebration in 1934 of the hundredth anniversary of the founding of the Methodist Conference School in Old Cokesbury and published under the title "An Address Before the Historical Societies of the Upper South Carolina Conference and the South Carolina Conference." Other sources of information are mentioned as the narrative proceeds.

John W. Moore



COKESBURY METHODIST CHURCH, built in 1837, was the central institution of the village, for the community has been described as "Methodist from center to circumference". This historic old structure was torn down in 1952 because it was badly in need of repair, and a new church building was erected on the same site. (Photo by Carl Julien).

OLD COKESBURY

BY

JOHN W. MOORE

Cokesbury was named in honor of Thomas Coke and Francis Asbury, the first two bishops of the Methodist Church in America. That the Tabernacle Society of the Methodist Church, in which Andrew Chapel and Cokesbury Methodist Church, both three miles from Tabernacle and three miles from each other, had their origin, was visited by Bishop Asbury as early as 1800 and on occasions thereafter is shown by entries in his Journal; but research has not produced any authentic record supporting the tradition that the Society was visited by Bishop Coke when he was in South Carolina in 1786, whatever the probabilities of the matter might be.

Dr. Peele did considerable work in an effort "to determine the exact time when the Society of the Methodist Church was organized in the vicinity of old Tabernacle in Abbeville District". He quotes from a letter written by the Rev. A. H. Mitchell, the first rector of the Cokesbury Conference School in its new plant, and published in the Southern Christian Advocate October 9, 1838, as follows: "According to the best information I can obtain, a society was formed here by Humphrey between fifty and sixty years ago. This church (Old Tabernacle), for a long time was a kind of rallying point for Methodism in this country, in consequence of which it has been visited by most ministers of age and eminence of other days as well as the present. Here the mild, persuasive voice of the venerable Asbury has been heard; here the thundering strains of the immortal Hull burst on the listening multitudes; over these plains darted the piercing eyes of the sainted Dougherty; here once stood the majestic forms of Tarpley and Russell; while a host of others who labored

here have quit the field of toil and entered into rest." Referring to the data in this quotation, Dr. Peele says: "So according to his (Mitchell's) information, this church must have been organized some time between 1778 and 1788."

The entries in the Journal of Bishop Asbury concerning his two visits to the Tabernacle Society in 1800 clearly indicate that at that time the church was a well-organized, going institution. Of the first visit, it is recorded, "Runners were sent out to give notice of a night meeting at which Brother Whatcoat (an Englishman, later Bishop) preached, and considering the coldness of the night and the shortness of the notice, it was well-attended". Of the second visit, it is recorded, "I preached on December 16 from Philippians 1:27 at the quarterly meeting of Bush River Circuit in the meeting house near George Connor's." There are also entries in the Journal concerning visits to the section in November, 1802 and January, 1809.

On the occasions of his visits to Old Tabernacle, Bishop Asbury was entertained in the home of George Connor, Sr., near which stood the school house as well as the meeting house, both log structures, according to tradition. Since George Connor was chairman of the school trustees as well as leader in the church, it is not improbable that both the church and the school house were built by the same people at the same time. By 1820, both log structures had been replaced by frame buildings. The church building stood until about 1873, when it was torn down and the lumber in it used in the construction of a parsonage in Greenwood.

It is noteworthy that the three known teachers of the Tabernacle School were all Northerners. First

there was a Mr. Doolittle, a man of some gifts as an artist, the term of whose service is not known; then came the great Stephen Olin, a graduate of Middlebury College in Vermont, who taught 1820-24; and finally there was a Mr. Tilden who taught in 1825, the last year school was held at Tabernacle. What the sentiments of Northern-

ers Doolittle and Tilden were concerning the people of the Tabernacle community, we do not know; but we may hope that they were not different from those of Olin, who wrote a friend, "I live among a very pious and prosperous people, Methodist after the strictest sect, whom I love and from whom I receive every friendly attention."

TABERNACLE SCHOOL MOVED TO MOUNT ARIEL

Olin's work as a teacher of Tabernacle School was of such a high order and gave the school "such a great reputation for thoroughness of scholarship and spirituality of religion" that the South Carolina Conference "agreed to recommend the school," and approved steps which would make it possible for one of its members to serve the school as rector. The trustees and patrons thereupon decided to move the school three miles to the north to a beautiful location on an oak-covered, sandy ridge known as Mount Ariel, said to be the highest ground between Augusta and Greenville; and proceeded to erect two buildings, one to house a male academy and the other to house a female academy. Dr. Joseph Travis, an M.A. of the University of Georgia, who had served the district as presiding elder, was chosen to head the school in its new location. Later Miss Aurelia Hale was put in charge of the school for girls.

DEVELOPMENT OF COKESBURY

The work of Mount Ariel Male Academy was so outstandingly successful under Dr. Travis and his successor, Samuel D. Mitchell, that in 1833 the South Carolina Conference decided to found a school of its own, a boys' school with a manual labor feature that would be preparatory to Randolph — Macon College (in which the South Carolina Conference was participant with the Virginia Conference) or any other college; and appointed the five presiding elders of the Conference a committee to select a site within the bounds of the

In his autobiography, Dr. Travis says, "Upon the adjournment of the Conference of 1825, I went to my new home at Mount Ariel, where I found lots were being laid off and sold; people were moving in — some from quite a distance. . . . As soon as we opened we had a rush of students from various directions. Throughout the entire year, it continued to increase. . . . In 1826, I was still at Mount Ariel — the school yet flourishing. . . . The good work continued, and during my stay there (1825-31, inclusive), seven men from the seminary entered the itinerancy." Years after his departure from Mount Ariel, Dr. Travis had this to say of the village: "I left friends at Mount Ariel whom I ever loved. James Shackelford, father-in-law of our beloved and highly esteemed Dr. Wightman, was a man whom I sincerely loved. There were also Dr. Francis Connor, Dr. Cottrell, and Brother Marion, in whose society I always delighted."

Conference. As all eyes were turned toward Mount Ariel, the first step of the committee was to instruct Malcolm McPherson, the presiding elder of the district in which Mount Ariel was located, to get an offer from that place. Mount Ariel offered the two academy buildings with all lands connected with them and \$6,000 cash. This offer the committee recommended to the conference, which accepted it at its 1834 meeting. Of the action of the conference, Dr. Peele says, "Mount Ariel being a place of culture and piety, it would have been

impossible to have made a wiser selection of a locality in which to train the youth of the church in the South Carolina Conference."

The name of the school was definitely fixed as the Dougherty Manual Labor School of the South Carolina Conference in honor of the Rev. George Dougherty, who arose at an early time (1798 - 1807) in the Methodist Church in South Carolina to espouse the cause of education. Provision was made for a Board of Trustees of eleven members, seven from the clergy and four from the laity, with power to do all things necessary to have the school ready to begin operations by January, 1835.

The Board, consisting of William Capers, James Dannelly, Bond English, William M. Kennedy, Malcolm McPherson, Nicholas Talley, and William Wightman, from the clergy, and Dr. Francis Connor, Gen. George W. Hodges, James Shackelford, and Thomas W. Williams, from the laity, organized at Mount Ariel on May 16, 1834, with Capers as chairman and Wightman as secretary. On the same day the citizens of Mount Ariel came together and changed the name of the village from Mount Ariel to Cokesbury. Tradition has it that the name Cokesbury was suggested by William Wightman, who, as the son-in-law of James Shackelford, had spent much time in the community. The post office of Mount Ariel, which had been established November 24, 1825, with Thomas Smith as postmaster, was changed to Cokesbury March 17, 1835, George Connor, Jr., being postmaster at the time.

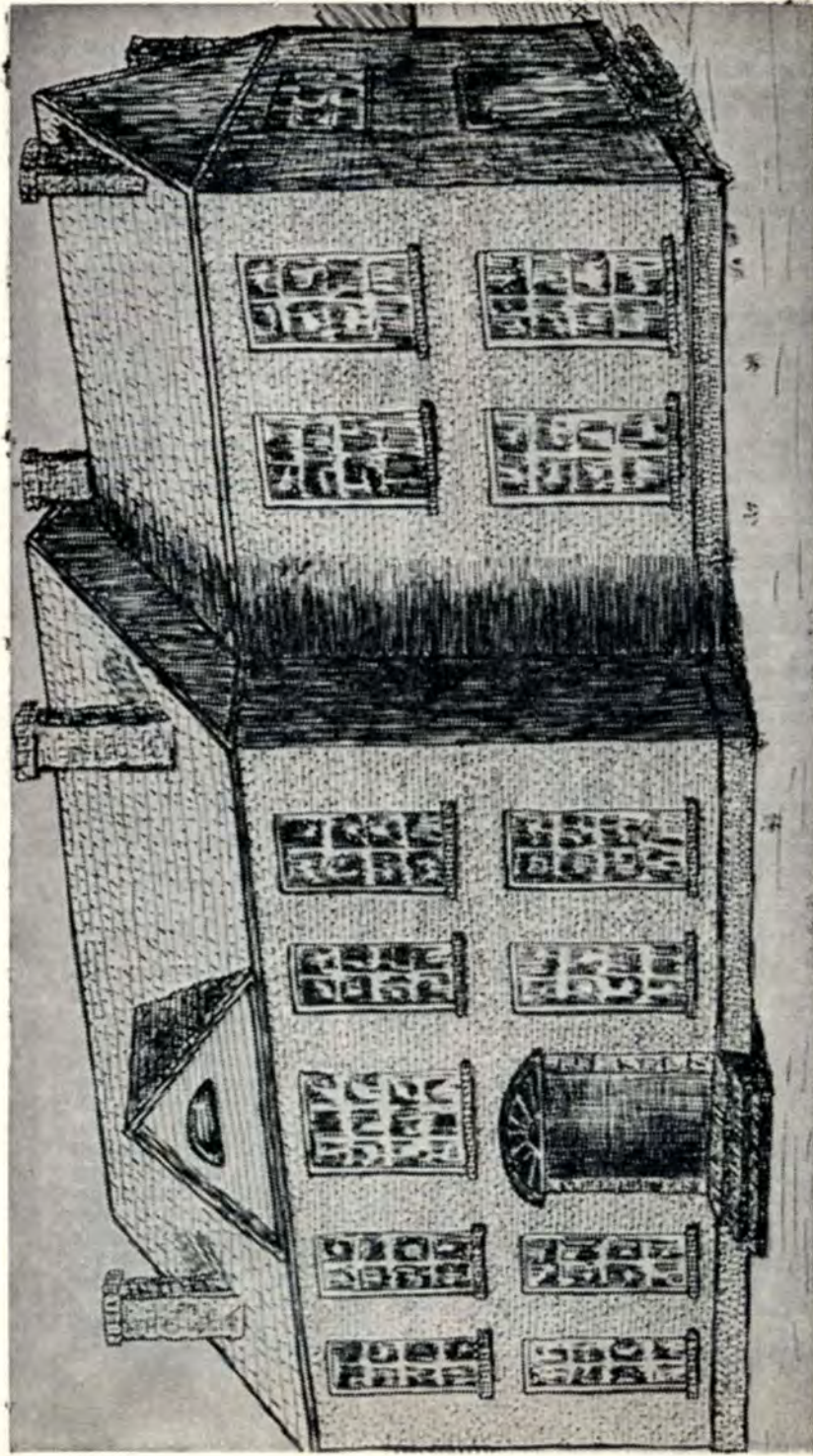
On May 19, the Board of Trustees, having completed plans for the school plant, appointed a building committee consisting of Malcolm McPherson, the presiding elder of the district, and the four lay members. The building committee took over the property donated by Mount Ariel, i.e., the two academy buildings and the land connected with them, bought a thousand acres of additional land, and proceeded with the construction of the plant.

It having become obvious that it

would not be possible to comply with the instructions of the Conference to have the new plant ready by January, 1835, it was decided to go ahead with the opening of the school at the time scheduled, using the old academy buildings and such other buildings as might be available. Upon the recommendation of Dr. Stephen Olin, the Board selected Austin P. Merrill of Wesleyan University, Connecticut to head the school and he continued in charge until the school moved into its new plant. Actually, the new buildings consisting of a two-story brick structure fifty feet square with a wing thirty-four feet by forty feet, a rector's house, a teacher's house, a steward's house, six cottages for students, a mess hall, and a barn were not ready until March 1, 1836, when the Dougherty Manual Labor School proper was formally opened. By 1837, a small hospital had been built, and the old building of the Male Academy had been moved to the campus and fitted up as a chapel.

Such was the Conference School plant until 1854, when, because of the need of extensive repairs, and possibly for other reasons, the student dormitories and mess hall were discontinued, the residents of the village having indicated a willingness to receive students into their homes as boarders. The old chapel building, deemed temporary from the beginning, was replaced with a brick building. Of these changes Dr. Peele says: "The condition of the Cokesbury Conference School in 1854 presents a study in contrasts. With no dormitories, a central boarding place was no longer practicable. A brick chapel with two wings for classrooms was being built in the midst of beautiful oaks on a knoll in the center of the campus. A little distance away to the south in full view was being erected the Masonic Female College, into which was going some of the materials from the Conference School buildings that were being torn down."

In 1837, just a year after the Conference School opened in its



COKESBURY CONFERENCE SCHOOL BUILDING — Artist's drawing from a cut appearing in an article by J. D. B. DeBow, alumnus of the Cokesbury Conference School and founder of DeBow's Review, famous Southern literary magazine, in the issue of September,

1860. Completed in 1836, the two-story brick building was 50 feet square with a wing 34 by 40 feet. In 1853 the building was condemned as unsafe and was torn down. The next year, a chapel and two class rooms were built from materials of the original structure.



SCHOOL CHAPEL, LATER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH—This structure, built in 1854 from some of the materials in the original Cokesbury Conference School, was used as the school chapel for a number of years. About 1876 it was acquired by a group of Presbyterians in Cokesbury and the building served as a Presbyterian church until the congregation in that community became too small to support a church.

new plant, the handsome Cokesbury Methodist Church building was completed. The Rev. James Dannelly was in charge while the building was being erected. The first preacher to serve the new church was the Rev. Joel W. Townsend, who was succeeded in 1838 by the Rev. Samuel Dunwoody, a native of Pennsylvania and a very scholarly man. Dr. Dunwoody, after be-

ing super-annuated, returned to Cokesbury and made his home there, as did several other Methodist ministers, notably the Rev. Henry Bass (a native of Connecticut), the father of W. C. Bass who became the sixth president of Wesleyan College at Macon, Ga. Both Dr. Dunwoody and Dr. Henry Bass are buried in Tabernacle graveyard.

PROS AND CONS OF MANUAL LABOR SYSTEM

When the Dougherty Manual Labor School (commonly called from the very beginning the Cokesbury Conference School) first opened its doors, the manual labor system of education, under which a school would operate a farm using students as laborers and crediting on their expenses the wages they earned, was still in the experimental stage. It was, therefore, natural that the manual labor feature of the new school at Cokesbury should be watched with great interest. At the end of a year the Visiting Committee had the following to say in their report: "The farming operations are in a highly prosperous condition; lands have been cleared and good crops produced the past year, all of which has been done with a cheerful spirit on the part of the students." But that there was already criticism is shown by this later paragraph in the report, "That spirit which is abroad in our country in opposition to manual labor institutions, arising from fear that our young men may be rendered dull by being subject to labor, is altogether untenable upon principles of reason or experience. Our greatest men have sprung from the laboring classes." The report of the Visiting Committee of 1838 contained the following: "In the general appearance of the students we clearly perceive one of the many advantages of the manual labor system of education. The farm will compare favorably with any other farm in the state." Yet in the Southern Christian Advocate of January 14, 1839, the editor refers to "the objections being raised concerning the amount of labor required to be done in manual labor schools and especially at Cokesbury", and then raises some questions himself. Meantime Rector A. H. Mitchell in a report to the trustees had gone into a very strenuous defense of the manual labor system. He pointed out that the allotted time for preparation for college after languages were taken up was two years, and said that

students who had remained at Cokesbury the full time had been given advance standing in college and that some who had not remained the full two years had been accepted without conditions. He closed his remarks as follows: "These are no vague surmises nor wild speculations but stubborn facts; and it is to be hoped that a few examples of this sort will silence forever the oft-repeated opprobrium that manual labor schools necessarily involve loss of time from studies. As to the utility of the system there cannot be a remaining doubt." But the doubts persisted and the criticisms increased with the result that in 1842 the manual labor system passed out of the Cokesbury School.

When it is recalled that in 1856 the school was re-chartered under the name the Cokesbury Manual Labor School of the South Carolina Conference, one may wonder if there were still those who were hopeful that the manual labor feature might be revived. Those who attended the school under this system apparently had no criticisms of it. It has been said of them that they cherished the memory of the school as they knew it with deep devotion. "Most conspicuous in this group," says Dr. Peele, "was perhaps Holland N. McTeiryre, founder of Vanderbilt University, who writes about no other school with the devotion and enthusiasm with which he writes about Cokesbury." The same feeling and enthusiasm are manifested in the writings of J. D. B. DeBow, editor of DeBow's Review. Both Bishop McTeiryre and Editor DeBow were students of the school under Rector A. H. Mitchell. In a letter dated December 26, 1896, to the Rev. J. C. Chandler, then pastor of the Cokesbury Methodist Church, Dr. Mitchell said: "I was successful in getting up among students the idea that they were largely responsible for helping to keep down vice and evil of every kind; and no school can be properly disciplined without this sentiment prevailing among students. I got this idea from Dr.

Olin who wielded this influence beyond any man I ever knew." One may suppose that Students McTeiryre and DeBow accepted fully the kind of responsibility described in this letter.

Notwithstanding the unpopularity and discontinuance of the manual labor feature, the school in other respects was highly successful, achieving fame that extended far beyond the borders of South Carolina. The quotations which follow speak of its academic excellence. In 1837, the Visiting Committee in its report said, "We venture this assertion without fear of contradiction that few examinations have occurred in the most celebrated academies in the country where an equal degree of proficiency has been manifested." In 1853, the Board of Trustees was able to say, "However it may have been in other institutions, no student from Cokesbury has been rejected on his application to any college in the country." Unquestionably, the high tone and peculiar culture of the community had much to do with the popularity of the school.

Then too there were the band and the military company, both of which added distinction to the institution and to the community. Editor Watson, in his description of the laying of the cornerstone of the Masonic Female College, says: "Cokesbury had the only brass band in this immediate section and it was always in demand for celebrations. It may be accepted as certain that it did its full duty during the day. Also there was the smart military company of the Conference School. 'The Cokesbury Fencibles', organized and trained by Major Matthew J. Williams, a graduate of West Point, which, if active at the time, no doubt had a part on the program."

Be all these things as they may, it is a simple statement of fact to say that when the war clouds appeared in 1860 the Cokesbury Conference School had for years been accepted as a superior institution of learning in superior surroundings, widely known as "the

famous Methodist school for boys in famous Old Cokesbury."

Editor Watson, in his "Our Old Roads" gives the following description of the commencement exercises of 1860: "The top ranking commencement of the Cokesbury Conference School was that beginning July 17, 1860. A long account was given in the Abbeville Press of July 20, 1860. The committee in charge of the exercises was Rector R. W. Boyd and two alumni, the Rev. J. W. Wightman and S. A. Webber. Distinguished alumni from this and other states were present. The exercises were held in the village church, and near the pulpit were the following dignitaries of the church, the Rev. Messrs. Talley, Boyd, Gamewell, McSwain Leard, DuRant, Round, and Meynardie. These and others made addresses. The principal address was delivered by Col. Felix J. Walker, of Union. A sumptuous dinner was served in the grove under the supervision of J. N. Cochran, S. A. Hodges, and others.

"That night another meeting was held in the church and Francis A. Connor presided. He 'called out' some of the prominent alumni for talks. The first was J. D. B. DeBow, who made a touching speech of reminiscences. Other alumni speaking were: F. J. Walker, W. S. Dogan, J. Foster Marshall, W. L. Hodges, H. A. Jones Charles Smith, R. W. Boyd Sterling E. Graydon Dr. Paul Connor, Dr. F. F. Gary, and the Rev. J. W. Wightman

"The next day was graduation day and the exercises were held in the chapel of the Masonic Female College. There were eleven graduates, viz: H. P. Spain, Richland; W. A. Hodges, Cokesbury; J. M. Trout, Rutherfordton N. C.; J. H. Hulet, Edgefield; J. L. Stoudemire, Lexington; F. M. Green, Colleton; W. M. Wilson, Abbeville; and J. E. Penny, Itawamba, Miss. C. W. Boyd delivered the address before the Erosophic Literary Society. The anniversary address was delivered by Joshua Martin, Esq., of Laurens; and the valedictory was delivered by H. L.

Garlington, of Laurens."

This top commencement unquestionably marked the high spot in the life of the Cokesbury Conference School, which between 1835 and 1860 attained high rank as a preparatory school, with the attendance at one time going above one hundred. Not again would there be such a commencement as that of 1860; not again would the enrollment reach, much less exceed, one hundred. So adversely would the institution be affected by the War Between the States that it would never be able to recover, though continuing to operate until 1913.

The connection with the school

and the community of the family of Bishop William Capers is noteworthy. He was the first chairman of the Board of Trustees; his half brother S. W. Capers was financial agent 1835-36; his daughter Sarah was the wife of the Rev. George W. Stone, rector 1847-50; his oldest son Francis W. was rector 1850-54; his daughter Emma was the wife of Col. Sam B. Jones, rector 1857-59 and 1865-67; his sons Ellison and Henry attended the school under their brother-in-law Stone and their brother Francis W.; his son, W. T. was living in Cokesbury in 1868, and was teacher of a class in the Methodist Sunday School.

MASONIC FEMALE COLLEGE

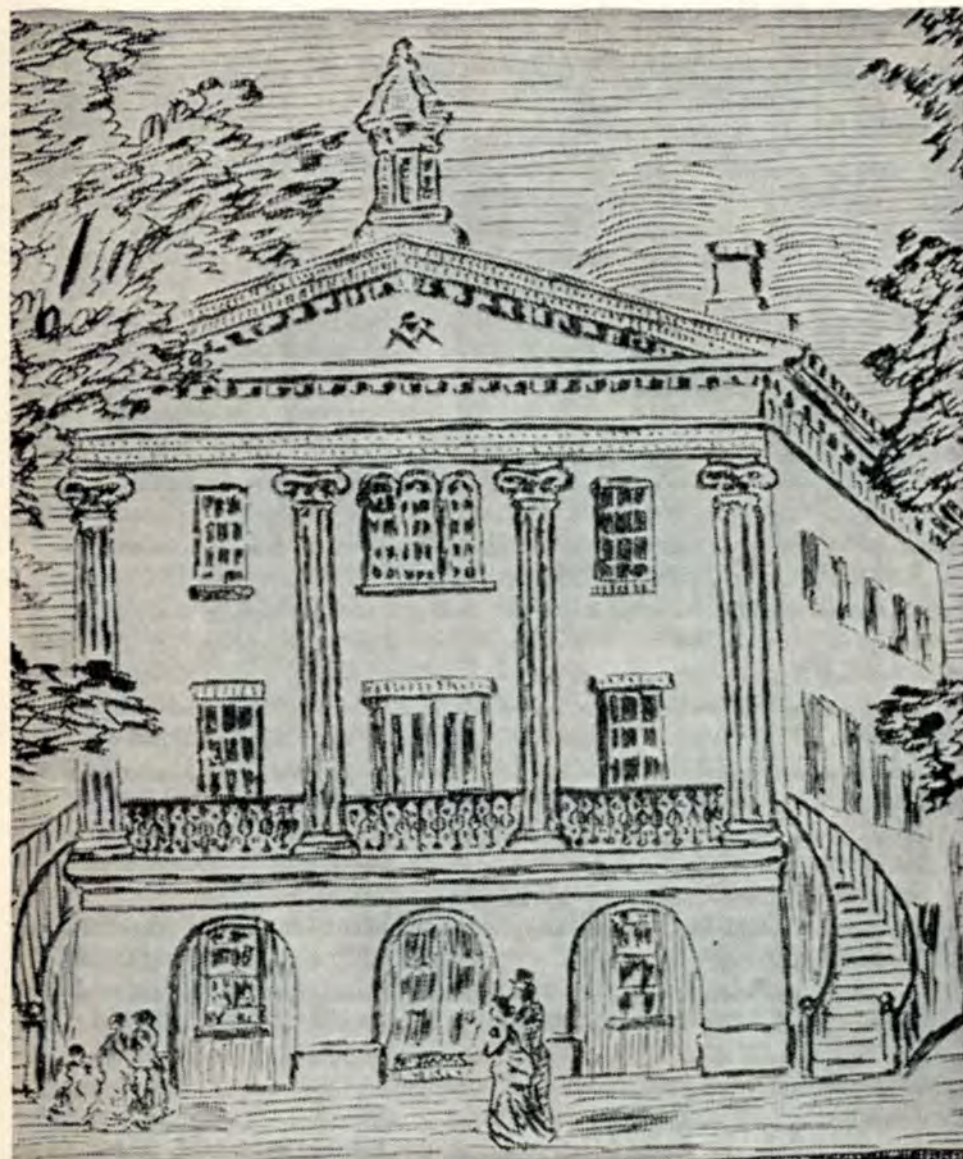
From 1825, when the Tabernacle School Board provided separate facilities for boys and girls at the Mt. Ariel location, until 1882, when the Conference School opened its doors to girls, there was no co-education in Cokesbury, though frequently teachers in the school for boys would teach classes in the school for girls, using identical courses in the two institutions.

It appears that after a year or two under Miss Hale, the Female Academy passed to the control of Dr. Thomas Cottrell, a native of Maryland who had been an Episcopal clergyman in Virginia but had transferred to the Methodist ministry in South Carolina. The Female Academy ceased to operate in 1834, as did the Male Academy, when all the Academy property was taken over by the representatives of the South Carolina Conference. The next school for girls in Cokesbury was the Female Institute which was launched by a Mrs. Wilson, and opened its doors to girls at the same time that the Conference School opened its doors to boys. The last principal of the Institute was Silas L. Heller, who during his residence in Cokesbury took a very active part in community affairs. In 1853, the property of the Institute was transferred to Bascomb Lodge No. 80, A. F. M., the Masonic body of Cokesbury and surrounding coun-

try, which had committed itself to the task of founding and operating a Masonic Female College in South Carolina.

The plans of the Masons called for a handsome brick building of three stories, with four recitation rooms and four music rooms on the first floor, a large hall with stage, which could be used as a chapel and for public exercises on the second floor, and rooms for Bascomb Lodge on the third floor. The collegiate department was to have three classes and there was to be a preparatory department. Each session was to begin on January 1, or as soon thereafter as practicable, and was to run nine months. It was hoped that the new building would be ready for use in 1854; but there were delays with the result that the college was operated in 1854 and 1855 in the old Female Institute building. Francis A. Connor, the honor graduate of the first class to finish at Randolph-Macon, was chosen as the first president. The teachers under him for the session 1854 were: T. E. Wannamaker, academic subjects; G. Jaeger, music and modern languages; and Miss Mary E. Salat, painting and embroidery.

Monday and Tuesday, June 26 and 27, 1854, the days chosen by Bascomb Lodge for the activities and ceremonies incident to the lay-



MASONIC FEMALE COLLEGE, ARTIST'S SKETCH—In 1854 the cornerstone was laid for the Masonic Female College, a school for girls which was established in Cokesbury by Bascomb Lodge No. 80, A. F. M. This artist's sketch of the Masonic college building appears at the top of the diploma issued to Mary Sue Waldrop, mother of the author of this sketch. The cupola and front of the building were changed between 1887 and 1890 because they needed repair and it was too expensive to restore them.

ing of the cornerstone of the college building, proved to be noteworthy ones. The Masonic committee of arrangements consisting of J. K. Vance, F. A. Connor, and Dr. F. F. Gary arranged for a public Masonic meeting to be held on the evening of June 26, and announced that the principal address of the occasion would be delivered by a brilliant young native of the village, Martin Witherspoon Gary, who had just arrived home from his graduation at Harvard. A special train was run from Abbeville and a very large crowd attended the exercises of the evening. Young Gary's address proved to be sensational. He opposed sectarian education, contending that it was not adapted to either sex and was doomed to ultimate failure. Naturally, the speech was not well received by the citizens of Cokesbury, the Conference School being the most important asset of the village; but there were those who condoned it on the ground of the youth and inexperience of the speaker.

The following day, Tuesday, June 27, has been called Cokesbury's "Big Day." Again a special train was run from Abbeville, and there was also a special train from Newberry, which left Newberry at 5:30 a.m. and arrived at Cokesbury Junction (Hodges) at 8:30 a.m. It is said that there were two thousand people in the village when the hour arrived for the ceremony of the laying of the cornerstone. Promptly at 11:00 a. m., the Masonic procession, which was formed in front of the home of Col. B. Z. Herndon, moved in the following order: students of the Conference School, faculty of the same, trustees of the same, civil officers of the State, the reverend clergy, and last the different kinds and degrees of Masonry. Of the Masons a spectator said, "The Masons made a grand and beautiful display in the procession, challenging our highest admiration. In this work of female education they are engaged in a noble cause."

Col. W. H. Campbell, of Greenville, the orator of the day, was

introduced by J. K. Vance, president of the board of trustees of the college and, according to the newspaper report, "made a capital address in which he stressed the superiority of religion over every other consideration in the training of the youthful mind for the high duties of life and the solemn issue of death." By some, Col. Campbell's address was regarded as an answer to the position taken by the young speaker of the preceding evening.

Following the ceremony of laying the cornerstone, dinner was served in the grove on the campus of the Conference School. Of this, a newspaper reporter said, "The dinner was abundant and excellent and we saw no one who seemed not disposed to appreciate and to do justice to it. In the crowd, estimated at not less than two thousand, there was not a drunken man, nor any form of dissipation, which certainly spoke well for Cokesbury and should be reassuring to parents who may wish to send sons and daughters to Cokesbury to be educated."

A newspaper account says that at the end of the 1854 session of the Masonic College, there were three graduates who prepared graduating compositions. They were Miss Victoria Gary who had the honor of preparing the "Salutatory"; Miss Boulware whose subject was "Three Eras in the Life of a Bachelor"; and Miss Mary Hodges whose subject was "George Washington". As it was not considered good form, or even permissible, for young ladies to get up and read before a public audience, it was necessary for each of the young ladies to get an elderly gentleman to read her composition for her. The commencement exercises of this first graduating class of the college were held in the new chapel of the Conference School, which it was reported, was "brilliantly lighted and crowded with beauty and chivalry".

The exercises incident to the laying of the cornerstone of the Masonic College fell within the commencement season of the Confer-



MASONIC FEMALE COLLEGE AS IT APPEARS TODAY—After having been operated as the Masonic Female College for about twenty years, this building became the home of the Cokesbury Conference School in 1876. When the Conference School was discontinued in 1918, the building was acquired by Cokesbury School District for a public school which was conducted here until 1954.



COL. FRANCIS A. CONNOR, FIRST PRESIDENT of the Masonic Female College, built this home about 1850 in Cokesbury, opposite the Methodist Church. Members of his family have lived in the home since it was built, the house now being occupied by Col. Connor's daughter-in-law, Mrs. G. L. Connor and her daughter, Miss Frances Legare Connor.

ence School. On Sunday, June 25, the day before the address by young Martin W. Gary, the sermon to the graduating class of the male school was preached by Dr. Wm. M. Wightman, then of Charleston, who had been chosen to be the first president of newly-established Wofford College. On the following Thursday, the address before the Erosophic Society of the Conference School was delivered by James H. Carlisle, who had been chosen to be the first professor of mathematics at Wofford and who was destined to serve the institution as president 1876-1902.

In 1857, the enrollment of the college was 78, and the following were graduated at the commence-

ment in October: Misses Sue Townsend, Claudia Andrews, E. A. Pasley, E. C. Klugh, Annie Connor and Mary Browne. Miss Edwina Hodges was the valedictorian.

In 1858, the Board of Visitors, made up of representatives of the various Masonic Lodges of the State, expressed themselves as highly pleased with the work of the college and advised the addition of two teachers.

The college was in financial difficulties from the beginning, there being a mortgage on the building for construction costs and the tuition fees being too low to provide adequate funds. Having exerted

great efforts to remedy this situation with only measurable success, President Connor resigned at the end of the 1858 session. He was succeeded by the Rev. B. Johnson, rector of Trinity Episcopal Church in Abbeville. President Johnson served one year and was succeeded by J. C. Williams, M.A., a Presbyterian minister who had been a member of the faculty for several years. The Abbeville Press of March 1, 1860, gave the following as the faculty then serving under President Williams: the Rev. George H. Round, Prof. Oscar Aichel, and Misses Sue Wilson, V. D. Haldeman, and Eliza Pelot. It has been said that the sessions of 1859 and 1860 were the banner years of the college. The student body numbered one hundred twenty-five in 1859 and there was a graduating class of sixteen. Judged by newspaper accounts the session of 1860 was equally as successful.

How long the Rev. Mr. Williams served as president is not known. He was followed by the Rev. Ferdinand Jacobs, who was succeeded by Col. Sam B. Jones. It is

believed that Col. Jones was succeeded by J. L. Leslie. The president the last two years of the college's existence, 1873 and 1874, was W Christie Benet, a graduate of the University of Edinburgh. There is no question that beginning in 1861 under President Williams and continuing to the end of the administration of President Benet, the War Between the States and its aftermath steadily added to the difficulty of operating the institution. Small wonder that after the graduation exercises of 1874 (which were held on September 16) the institution gave up the struggle. Thus and there ended the undertaking of Bascomb Lodge No. 80 A. F. M., of Cokesbury, to give South Carolina a Masonic College.

In 1876, the college building passed into the hands of the South Carolina Conference and was used thereafter by the Conference School. But the people of the village continued to speak of the building as the "college", the assembly hall as the "college hall", and the bell in the tower as the "college bell".

REMINISCENCES OF JUDGE BENET

Judge Benet begins his "Reminiscences of Old Cokesbury", published in 1925, with an account of his friendship at the University of Edinburgh with a group of young Southerners, among whom were Wistar, Sam, and William Vance, natives of Cokesbury. (Dan H. Thompkins who had attended the Conference School and whose parents had lived near Cokesbury for a time was also a member of the group.) Judge Benet says: "Out of this friendship grew a determination to visit the Southern States and especially Cokesbury. Thus it was that I a young Scotsman, happened to come to the little village in the fall of 1868. Cokesbury was a lovely place with its streets embosomed in shady groves of state-ly trees and lined with handsome homes surrounded by beautiful flower gardens, as lovely a place as Goldsmith's 'Sweet Auburn,

loveliest village of the plain.' There were only three public buildings, the handsome building of the college, the excellent building of the famous Methodist School, and the stately edifice that was the Methodist Church. (In the steeple of the church was a bell which the Cokesbury people believed had the sweetest tone of any bell ever cast.) The homes of the farmers and planters in the surrounding area were well-built and comfortable, Major Vance's home 'Sandy Glade' and Col. Aiken's home 'Stony Point', for instance.

"Cokesbury was a pleasant place to live in those days. The people were well-to-do and the whole community seemed to carry on like one happy family. For social pleasures, there were hot suppers, picnics at the Sulphur Springs, and musical parties. The men had whist parties which were purely

tests of skill with no money at stake. There was much hunting of all kinds, including fox-hunting, which I liked best.

"Cokesbury can justly claim the honor of having organized the first baseball team in South Carolina. A young man who had been at school in the North brought the game to Cokesbury. (The name of the young man was Bob Round and he had learned the game at Yale.) It is proper to state that the game had been played by Yankee soldiers in Columbia, but, of course, 'that doesn't count'."

It is perhaps proper for the writer of this article to give the reader information which evidently had not come to Judge Benet's attention when he claimed the baseball honor for Cokesbury. In 1903, the Rev. Thomas E. Morris, in a story he gave the newspapers, expressed the belief that the Cokesbury baseball team of 1873 was the first organized baseball team in South Carolina. Thereupon a Wofford College professor came up with a challenge to Cokesbury's claim, saying that in the session of 1869-70 Wofford had two teams that played each other on the campus. Referring to the statement by the Wofford professor, Editor Watson says, "But Cokesbury was pretty close to first." In the newspaper story, Mr. Morris gave the following interesting information: "Bob Round played first base. Other players were Ernest and Frank Gary, both fine players. Ellis, William, and Govan Graydon were all three great players. Our crack pitcher (not named) is now a professor in the College of Charleston. Mr. Benet, who had been teaching in Cokesbury for several years, also played and I played center field. The members of the team did not think they were playing well unless they scored from twenty to forty runs in a game."

Returning to Judge Benet's "Reminiscences", I quote, "But it was not all peace and pleasure in our little village in those days. That was the period of so-called 'Reconstruction', during which Cokesbury was not without its incidents.

It happened that I found myself involved in the first incident. Two white deputies from the sheriff's office in Abbeville, accompanied by a posse of Negroes, appeared at the home of Dr. Newton Sims with a warrant for his arrest. Landon Connor and I were next door, and went to the assistance of Dr. Sims. For a time, the situation was anything but pleasant; however Connor's smiling coolness and bravery convinced the men of the unwisdom of the undertaking upon which they were engaged, and they departed without their prisoner."

The white people of the village believed that the attempt to arrest Dr. Sims had been incited by a "scalawag", who, though not a Cokesbury man, was then living on the outskirts of the town; and two young men, one of whom had been a boy-soldier in the Confederate Army and the other of whom was then a student in Wofford College, took it upon themselves to rid the community of the presence of the "scalawag". From this came stark tragedy. A Negro leader was killed. The two young men, upon the urgent advice of their elders, took their immediate departure from the State, never again to make Cokesbury their home.

A Negro constable later served a penitentiary sentence for some of his activities during the exciting days, one of the charges against him being the false arrest of a leading white citizen. Tragic as the incidents and their consequences were, they might easily have been worse. That they were not worse was due, it has been said, as much to the cool and wise heads among the Negroes as to the calmness and fearlessness of the white leaders. So far as this writer knows, these incidents constituted the only interracial conflict in Cokesbury during the entire "Reconstruction" period, or as for that matter the only interracial conflict ever to occur in Cokesbury.

Judge Benet closes his "Reminiscences" with the following list of the names of the older people whom he had known best in Old Cokesbury: Francis A. Connor, Dr.



ONE OLD HOUSE RECENTLY RENOVATED—One of Cokesbury's fine old homes was renovated in the summer of 1954 and is now occupied by its new owners, Mr. and Mrs. Norman A. Harrison of Greenwood. This was originally the home of Dr. Franklin Fincher Gary, a son of Dr. Thomas Reeder Gary and like his father, a prominent citizen in the community. Dr. F. F. Gary's oldest son, Eugene B., became chief justice of the South Carolina Supreme Court, and his other two sons, Ernest and Frank B., became circuit judges. All were born in this house.

Frank F. Gary, Dr. Paul Connor, Col. Ben Herndon, Major J. K. Vance, Dr. J. W. Norwood, Charles Smith, Mrs. Gary (the mother of Gen. Mart Gary), Mrs. Evans (the widow of Gen. Evans), old Mrs. Hodges, Mrs. Glass, Mrs. Waldrop, Mrs. Allen, Presiding Elder Julius Mood, Col. S. B. Jones, the Rev.

Joel Townsend, Squire Sterling Graydon, Mat Graham, Col. John Cunningham, Dr. Newton Sims, Col. D. Wyatt Aiken, F. Marion Godbold, William A. Moore, Wistar Sharp, "my dear old friend Harp Vance", the Rev. Forster Smith, M. G. Zeigler, Tom Johnson and "Doe" Connor.

COKESBURY IN THE '80's and '90's

Life in Cokesbury in the 80's and 90's was not very different from the life in Judge Benet's day (1868-74). The men still played whist and found sport in different kinds of hunting. There was always a baseball team of sorts. Groups of women had dinner parties. Often

the group would be made up of those who had been schoolmates in the old Masonic College. Men and women, boys and girls, all together enjoyed picnics at the Sulphur Springs. There would be evening gatherings with piano music and singing. At such gatherings, the

older people sometimes danced the quadrille, the polka, and the schottische, while the children played games out of doors. Such parties were never arranged in advance. Neighbors would call one another and the group would grow as it proceeded to its destination. On such an evening, one might call at home after home to find the front door open and the hall lamp burning with nobody at home. When there was a planned dance — and this was rare indeed — the music was furnished by Ned Murphy, who played the violin, his son Foster, who played the cornet, and his son, Bill, who played the bass-violin. Ned was a person of distinction in the community being a dancing teacher and one of three Cokesbury Negroes said to have voted for Hampton in 1876. The waltz and two step were first danced in Cokesbury in the summer of 1897 but were looked on with disfavor in some quarters, and did not become popular. At times, roller-skating in the college hall would be the popular pastime. There were no hot suppers in my day, but there were ice cream festivals. For a dime, one could get a saucer of custard ice cream and a slice of cake. If the custard had been scorched and the cake was "sad", one needed only a nickel with which to buy refreshments.

In the 80's, if in the early morning one heard the doleful notes of a cow's horn with the baying of hounds, sometimes near and sometimes far off, one knew that a fox-hunt was under way with "Dod" Herndon as the M. F. H. (master of the fox-hunt). "Dod" was the oldest son of Col. Herndon who had been the M. F. H. in Judge Benet's day. In the 80's, if between sundown and dark one heard the doleful notes of the cow's horn followed by the ringing of the college bell, one knew that N. B. Goodman, tiler of Bascomb Lodge, was reminding the brethren that a communication of the Lodge was to be held that night. Some time during the 80's the notes of the cow's horn were heard no more in the morning or in the evening. The fox-chase had departed, never to

return; and Bascomb Lodge had held its last communication.

In my day, Cokesbury was still first and foremost a Methodist community. Everybody went to the services in the Methodist Church—preaching, prayer meeting, and Sunday School. As for that matter, everybody went to the monthly service in the Presbyterian Church, which was always held when the Methodist minister was at one of the other churches of his circuit. The first Presbyterian minister whom I recall was the Rev. W. G. Neville, who married Miss Virginia Aiken, a Cokesbury girl of the Presbyterian persuasion. He was followed by the Rev. John G. Henderson who married Miss Rebecca Caldwell, likewise a Cokesbury girl of the Presbyterian persuasion. Mr. Henderson's pastorate ended about 1900 when the church was closed. The building, which was originally the chapel of the Conference School, is still standing, almost completely hidden in a grove of oaks.

The first two years of my school life were spent in a private school for small children conducted by Mrs. Glass. I believe she taught me the first year and her daughter Miss Julia (later Mrs. W. H. Palmer) taught me the second year. In the fall of 1887, I found myself in the Conference School with Mrs. C. C. Reed, the wife of the rector, as my teacher. Mrs. Reed before marriage was Miss Eugenia Connor, and was called "Miss Jennie" by the pupils of the school and other young people of the community. Mr. Reed, to whose room I was promoted after three years, was a strict disciplinarian and an excellent teacher. My other teachers in the Conference School were Mrs. Mildred Nowell who taught me English and history; C. R. Spencer, rector, who taught me Latin, mathematics, and science—1892-93, and S. M. Rice, rector, who taught me Latin mathematics and science, 1893-95. There were two music teachers, first, Miss Alma Wickliffe (later Mrs. Joel S. Aiken), and after her Miss Florence Tucker. In those days, the public exercises of the school always had musical features—piano

playing and singing, mainly group singing.

Following are the names of the pupils of the Conference School during the years I was in attendance:

AIKEN, Jessie, Nannie
 ARIAIL, Emma, Milton
 ARNOLD, Abner, Erskine
 BOYD, Eula
 CALDER, Agnes, Rae, Sam, Zach
 CAMPBELL, Ollie
 CONNOR, Herndon, Ethel, Godwin, Alice, Whit, Katie, Parker, Janie Agnes
 DAGNALL, Will, Atticus, Mary
 DANTZLER, Jennie, Gertrude, Lewis
 DAVENPORT, Eugene
 DuBOSE, Mac, Agnes
 FRANKLIN, Lou J., Ben
 GRAHAM, Grimke, John, Georgia
 GODEBOLD, Asa, Vance, Corrie Bell, Willie
 GOLDEN, Newt
 HART, Clara, Rosa, Brantley, Claudia
 HENDERSON, Edward, John
 HODGES, Bennett, Helen, Mitchell, Emory, Bessie, Georgia, Parker, Lud
 JONES, Snowbird, Hannie Lee, Belle
 LEA, Carrie, Orrin
 MABRY, Eugene, Ernest, Lou Ella
 MANNING, Laura
 MCGHEE, Zach, Sam, Julia,

Helen, Frank
 MERRIMON, Evelyn, Raphael, Jena, Maud
 MCKENZIE, Boyd, Israel, Cora, Will

MCCORD, James Henry, Will Ed, Robert, Jim Ed, Will Andy
 MOORE, John Howard, Sadie, Rosalie, Emma, Waldrop, John W.
 MUNNERLYN, Ben
 NANCE, Xina
 NICKLES, Ozie, Mac, Laura
 NOWELL, Roland
 ODIORNE, Mabel, John, Sybil, George
 RILEY, Walter, Lidie, Nonie
 SMITH, Louie, Douglass, Mai, George, Charlie, Walter
 STEVENS, John
 TINSLEY, Cad
 TOWNSEND, Milton, Joel, John, William

VAUGHAN, William, Gregg
 WRIGHT, Herman

The quotation which follows is from Dr. Peele's address. "Measured by high Christian idealism it would be hard to find a school with a more illustrious career than the Cokesbury Conference School. One year there often made impressions upon students that went with them through life. Old students in every walk of life cherish her memory with a devotion which is beautiful. How sad to think that the old school had to pass out with the years!"

MANY DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AND CITIZENS

A stranger visiting the Cokesbury of today with its old buildings in a condition of decay or ruin and with its vacant residential sites, which were once occupied by handsome homes, all built between 1825 and 1860 and many of them architecturally imposing, would know that the old place had seen better days. If he should make inquiries as to what families had lived there and what the place had been, he might, at best, be directed to the Tabernacle graveyard and the Andrew Chapel graveyard. In Tabernacle he might see the tombs of two generals of the Confederacy and in both Tabernacle and An-

drew Chapel the tombs of an impressive number of others who during their lives attained measurable prominence; but he still would have but a faint idea of the historical significance of Old Cokesbury.

Let some of its citizens, many of them native citizens, and some of those who trod its streets as officials and teachers and students of its schools be named, whose deeds brought renown to the old village, and let the nature of some of their achievements and services be indicated.

D. Wyatt Aiken, Confederate colonel, congressman.
 Wyatt Aiken, congressman.



THE CEMETERY OF OLD TABERNACLE METHODIST CHURCH, near Cokesbury, is the resting place of many members of Cokesbury families. In this plot are buried two major generals of the Confederate Army, Gen. Mart W. Gary, whose monument is at the left, and Gen. N. G. Evans whose marker is on the right.

W. C. Bass, president Wesleyan College.

W. C. Benet, rector Cokesbury Conference School, president Cokesbury Masonic Female College, circuit court judge.

R. W. Boyd, Confederate colonel, rector Conference School.

Ellison Capers, Confederate brigadier general, secretary of state, Episcopal bishop.

Francis Withers Capers, rector Conference School, professor The Citadel, superintendent The Citadel, professor Transylvania College.

William Capers, first chairman board of trustees Conference School, Methodist bishop.

F. A. Connor, president Masonic Female College, member "Wallace House".

Thomas P. Cothran, associate justice Supreme Court of South

Carolina.

J. D. B. DeBow, founder DeBow's Review, published in New Orleans and for years a leading publication of the South.

Peter Cuttino Dozier, president of college in California.

William Gaillard Dozier, lieutenant-commander U. S. Navy, Officer Confederate Navy.

John Gary Evans, governor of South Carolina, president Constitutional Convention of 1895.

N. G. Evans, Confederate major general.

Hugh L. Farley, adjutant and inspector general of South Carolina.

Ernest Gary, circuit court judge.

Eugene B. Gary, lieutenant-governor of South Carolina, chief justice Supreme Court of South Carolina.

Frank B. Gary, speaker of House,

U. S. senator, circuit court judge.

F. F. Gary, Confederate brigade surgeon, president South Carolina Medical Association, member Democratic State Convention 1860.

M. W. Gary, Confederate major general.

W. T. Gary, Confederate major, judge Georgia Superior Court, U.S. district attorney.

Herndon Glenn, attorney general of Alabama.

Thomas A. Graham, first treasurer Greenwood County, member of House.

William N. Graydon, state senator from Abbeville County.

B. Z. Herndon, lieutenant-colonel South Carolina Militia, member Democratic State Convention 1860.

L. E. Hinkle, head department modern languages North Carolina State College, author, lecturer.

J. W. Hinton, founder Methodist Review.

George Connor Hodges, rector of Conference School, superintendent of education of Abbeville County, a leading layman of the M. E. Church South.

George W. Hodges, lieutenant War of 1812, general South Carolina Militia, sheriff of Abbeville County, member of House.

Samuel A. Hodges, sheriff of Abbeville County, treasurer of Abbeville County.

S. B. Jones, Confederate colonel, rector Conference School, president Masonic Female College, president Columbia College.

Joseph Brevard Kershaw, Confederate major general, circuit court judge.

John C. Kilgo, president Trinity College (now Duke University), Methodist bishop.

J. C. Klugh, circuit court judge.

W. D. Kirkland, editor Southern Christian Advocate, editor Sunday School literature.

William Lander, North Carolina delegate to Democratic National Convention at Charleston 1860, same at Baltimore, member Secession Convention of North Carolina, member Congress of Confederacy from North Carolina.

John Moore Mars, mayor of Ab-

beville, member of House, State senator from Abbeville County.

Samuel Hodges McGhee, cotton mill president, newspaper editor State senator from Greenwood County.

W. Zach McGhee, educator, author, Washington correspondent of Columbia State.

Holland N. McTelyre, founder Vanderbilt University, Methodist bishop.

John Howard Moore, member of House, State senator from Abbeville County.

W. J. Moore, U. S. commissioner, first master Greenwood County, member of House.

W. C. Norwood, doctor of medicine, who became nationally famous as the discoverer of Veratrum Veredes, a medicine used in connection with childbirth.

Stephen Olin, first president Randolph - Macon College, president Wesleyan College in Connecticut.

S. R. Pritchard, head Department Electrical Engineering V.P.I.

Benj. G. Shields, congressman from Alabama, diplomat.

Charles Forster Smith, distinguished scholar and educator, author, editor, president American Philological Society.

J. P. Smith, professor Paleontology University of California.

Landon F. Smith, president Chapel Hill College in Texas, dean of girls Southwestern University, professor history Lander College.

W. W. Smith, Confederate captain, associate justice Supreme Court of Arkansas.

A. N. Talley, president Medical College of South Carolina, president South Carolina Medical Association.

Dan H. Tompkins, secretary of state.

J. Wofford Tucker, judge Florida Superior Court.

J. K. Vance, Confederate major, first president board of trustees Masonic Female College, member of House.

William Vance, attorney general of Louisiana.

W. H. Wallace, Confederate brigadier general, speaker of

"Wallace House", circuit court judge.

John Gary Watts, adjutant and inspector general of South Carolina.

W. M. Wightman, first secretary board of trustees Conference School, first president Wofford College, Methodist bishop.

Matthew J. Williams, teacher mathematics and rector Conference School, professor Mathematics University of South Carolina.

The foregoing is only a partial list. The names of a larger number of Methodist ministers could be added. In Dr. Peele's address we find these words: "Now we are not surprised to read that in 1858 forty-seven ministers of the South Carolina Conference received their literary education at the Cokesbury Conference School. This was about thirty per cent of the active ministers of the Conference at that time."

The names of many teachers could be added. Of them Dr. Peele says: "Teachers went out from Cokesbury in great numbers into many of the schools and colleges of the State and beyond the borders of the State. Who knows to what extent Cokesbury lives today in that which is finest and best in the education of our Southland?"

On the foregoing list, in addition to the thirteen lawyers identified as judges, attorneys general,

etc., the following were lawyers: Peter Cuttino Dozier, John Gary Evans, Martin W. Gary, William N. Graydon, William Lander, John Moore Mars, Samuel Hodges McGhee, and John Howard Moore. Also Atticus H. Dagnall and Ellis G. Graydon were outstanding in the legal profession.

Doctors whose names do not appear on the list were:

Doctors of Medicine — James Amaker, W. Lewis Anderson, Francis Connor, George Connor, Sr., George Connor, Jr., George Legare Connor, Glenn Benson Connor, J. Wesley Connor, Paul W. Connor, Leonard F. Dozier, Thomas P. Gary, Thomas R. Gary, Willie T. Jones, W. Townes Jones, Henry G. Klugh, Orrin Lea, J. S. Marshall, James Raiford, James Rainey, and A. K. Watson.

Doctors of Dental Surgery — P. B. Connor, B. C. Hart, Robert McCord, Will Ed McCord, and Newton Sims.

Many alumni of the Conference School became prominent in the business world. Of these, the most out-standing were perhaps Lewis W. Parker, president of a chain of cotton mills, and Aug. W. Smith, banker, merchant prince, and cotton mill president. And there were those who combined business with farming, or practiced farming alone, with noteworthy success.

OUTSTANDING IN CONFEDERATE SERVICE

Among the Confederate officers whose names do not appear on the foregoing list were: Colonels—H. L. Benbow, Olin S. Dantzler, S. M. G. Gary, Foster Marshall, John V. Moore, W. G. Rice, and F. J. Walker; Lieut. Colonels—A. M. Smith, and M. G. Zeigler; Captains — Thomas H. Adams, J. N. Cochran, John Hillary Gary, W. Ludlow Hodges, J. Frank Hodges, J. Fletcher Hodges, George Jones, A. W. Moore, D. C. Moore, Charles Smith, Milton Townsend, James M. Townsend, John Fletcher Townsend, Alpheus Watson, A. Olin Watson and E. Wesley Watson. And there were doubtless those of the rank of lieutenant and probably others of the higher ranks.

Before becoming a captain in the army of the Confederacy, John Hillary Gary was captain of the company of South Carolina College cadets that participated in the operations in 1861 which prevented the relief or evacuation of the Union forces in Fort Sumter. His brother W. T. Gary, who became a major in the Confederate army, was a corporal in this cadet company.

One may wonder if there was another community in the South, which, in proportion to population, contributed more to the cause of the Confederacy than did Old Cokesbury. In his "Sketches and Reminiscences", Dr. Charles Forster Smith, one of the most renowned American scholars of his

generation, writes: "Of all the boys and young men, some twenty-odd of them, who went into the Confederate War from there (the Andrew Chapel neighborhood of the Cokesbury community) only seven returned. Of these, four had been wounded and one had been a prisoner of war. Of those who did not return, three died in hospitals, two in prison and the rest on the battlefield. As I looked (in 1918) at the grave of "Doe" Moore (one of the seven who returned) my mind traveled back and I could see the different ones of my playmates, as they fell in the "Bloody Angle", at Chancellorsville, at Mayre's

Heights or Gettysburg or Manassas, or in one of the battles on the western front; for some of their bones lie on each of these fields."

In a list prepared by the late James F. Davis of Greenwood, of the names of men from what is now Greenwood County who were in the armed forces of the Confederacy, there are the names of one hundred twenty men from the Cokesbury community (Cokesbury, Hodges, Andrew Chapel), ninety-eight of whom have not heretofore been identified in this narrative as Confederate soldiers. Of the one hundred twenty, there were four by the name of Connor, five by



JEFFERSON DAVIS SPENT NIGHT HERE—This house, next to the Methodist Church in Cokesbury was built by Dr. Thomas Reeder Gary, father of Gen. Mart Gary. Confederate President Jefferson Davis spent a night in May 1865 here when he and his cabinet were fleeing from Richmond to the Deep South. The house, much altered in later years, is now the home of Mr. and Mrs. John Townsend.

the name of Gary, (actually six; Mr. Davis failed to list Thomas P. Gary), seven by the name of Graham, eleven by the name of Hodges, five by the name of Jones, twelve by the name of Moore, ten by the name of Sharp, four by the name of Smith, and five by the name of Watson. And so far as I have been able to check, I find that the other established families of the community were all represented in the Confederate forces by from one to three men. It might be said that the service of William Z. McGhee, William H. Moore, and Charles L. Smith, whose names are on the list prepared by Mr. Davis consisted of their participation as members of the battalion of cadets of The Citadel in the military activities in the vicinity of Pocotaligo

Creek (between Charleston and Savannah) in December, 1864.

In this connection, it is interesting to note that when President Jefferson Davis was on his "Flight into Oblivion", he and the members of his party spent the night of May 1-2 in and around Cokesbury and Cokesbury Junction (Hodges), the President himself spending the night in the home of Mrs. Thomas Reeder Gary, the mother of Gen. Martin W. Gary, who was a member of the military escort. The following is a quotation from Hanna's "Flight Into Oblivion": "Tilghman said they passed some very pretty houses with elegant gardens on the way into Cokesbury. Young ladies were out on the porches to bow and wave their handkerchiefs. Bouquets were giv-



WHERE DAVIS GAVE COIN TO NAMESAKE—This house, destroyed by fire in 1951, was the home of William Andrew Moore III and stood on the road between Stony Point and Cokesbury. In the last days of the Confederacy, when the President and his cabinet were fleeing before the Federals, Jefferson Davis stopped here for a drink of water and presented a gold coin to a namesake, little Jefferson Davis Moore.

en to us, and we marched gaily on."

The President planned to hold a meeting of the leading men of his party the next morning, but the reported nearness of Union troops caused him to abandon the plan and leave for Abbeville in the early hours of the morning of May 2. Thus it happened that the so-called last meeting of the Confederate Cabinet was held in the Burt mansion in Abbeville on the afternoon of May 2 instead of in the Gary

house in Cokesbury on the morning of that day.

Of the hurried departure from Cokesbury and the "Council of War" in Abbeville, Hanna says: "Learning from their scouts that the Federals might not be more than ten miles distant, the Confederates left Cokesbury for Abbeville early the next morning. In Abbeville, President Davis was entertained in the home of Major Burt where he assembled what he called a 'Council of War'."



SAMUEL A. HODGES-L. D. CONNOR HOME—This house, originally the Female Academy building, was bought by Samuel A. Hodges and moved from its location near the Methodist Church to a site east of the Conference School chapel (later the Presbyterian Church) and converted into a residence for his family. The property later passed into the hands of L. D. Connor and for seventy years has been known as the "Doe" Connor home.

CULTURE, GOODWILL MARK COMMUNITY

Whatever else the War and Reconstruction did to Cokesbury, they left no lasting bitterness or hostility between the white people and the Negroes. If, in my day, there was any fear, distrust, or ill-will on the part of either group for the other, evidence of such feelings was wholly lacking. To the best of my recollection and belief, race relations were invariably characterized by friendliness, neighborliness and mutual good-will.

A native of Cokesbury, who had been justice of the peace of Cokesbury township for twelve or more

years and intendant of the town for an even longer period, was able to say in his old age that in neither office did he ever have before him a resident of the village charged with a crime. He would say: "Cokesbury people were a superior people — better educated than most people and refined and genteel. They were a proud people, but proud of the right things — the fine things in the past of the old town, their own past. The Cokesbury that I knew was a pleasant place to live. The people enjoyed one another."



LEDBETTER-CALDWELL-HENDERSON HOUSE—This large frame house is on the hill to the east of Cokesbury. After turning into the Cokesbury road from Highway 254, coming from Greenwood, it is the first house on the left. Built by or for the Rev. Henry W. Ledbetter who married Belinda Dorothy Herndon, this place later was owned by William Caldwell and was long known as the Caldwell house. The Rev. J. G. Henderson married a Caldwell daughter and the place became the Henderson family home. It is now owned by a Henderson son and daughter, John and Sara Henderson.

The families of Cokesbury were a closely knit group, and it is conceivable that a strange family would have found it difficult to acquire the sense of belonging. But there was never a strange family, except the new Methodist minister and his wife and their children; and it goes without saying that they were always received with open arms.

In the summer, the town would be full of visitors, people who had ties with the old place, usually family ties. Most of them might have come for reasons of love and affection, but always there was the reason of renewing or improving health by drinking the water of the Cokesbury Sulphur Springs, which every loyal native would recommend for every ill to which the flesh is heir.

Of the summer visitors, it is natural that I should remember best the families with young people of my age, or somewhat older or somewhat younger. Among the most regular visitors were Captain and Mrs. Parker Ewan and their son, Parker Connor, and Justice and Mrs. W. W. Smith and their daughters, Denny and Frances, both families from Arkansas. The Ewans visited the home of Mrs. Ewan's father, Col. Frank Connor; and the Smiths divided their visit between Justice Smith's father, Capt. Charles Smith, and Mrs. Smith's father, Col. Frank Connor.

Dr. and Mrs. E. C. Jones and their daughters Helen, Louise, and Ethel, or some of them, came every year to visit Mrs. Jones' parents, Mr. and Mrs. L. D. Connor. Then there was the Barnett family from Alabama. Mrs. Barnett, before her marriage to Dr. Agusta W. Barnett, was Della Connor, daughter of Dr. Paul W. Connor; and she and her daughters Annie and Euna (Eugenia) and her son Reese were frequent visitors in the home of her brother, Mr. Whit Connor, and the home of her sisters, Mrs. C. C. Reed and Mrs. W. J. Kirk. Mrs. Barnett had a beautiful voice, and her contemporaries were wont to say of her singing that it was the most beautiful they had ever heard or expected to hear. In later years, her daughter Annie, who, like her mother, was gifted

with a voice of extraordinary beauty and who studied at the Boston Conservatory of Music, delighted the residents of the village with her singing, as her mother had done before her.

Before becoming permanent residents of Cokesbury in the late '90's, Mr. and Mrs. John S. Fair and their daughters Lily and Phoebe and their sons Sims and Herndon were often summer visitors in the home of Mrs. Fair's father, Col. B. Z. Herndon and her brother Stephen F. Herndon and also the home of her sister Mrs. William M. Calder. Also among the summer visitors were Mr. and Mrs. John Orrin Lea and their daughters Mamie and Hattie Sue, who visited in the homes of Mrs. Lea's sister, Mrs. Whit Connor, and Mr. Lea's brother, Dr. Stephen Lea.

Probably half the people I knew in Cokesbury were descendants of two couples: one, Dr. George Connor (born 1729, died 1827) and his wife Anna Woolfolk Connor; the other, Major John Hodges (born 1765, died 1834) and his wife Frances Anderson Hodges. Moreover, there had been during the century much inter-marriage of the members of the two families. It is therefore not surprising that frequently the summer visitors would be related to several families and would visit in several homes.

Of course, there were other visitors than those of the Connor and Hodges clans, among them Dr. and Mrs. R. D. Smart and their son Richard, who visited in the home of Richard's grandfather, Col. D. Wyatt Aiken, and Mrs. Mikell and her daughter Jennie, who visited in the Goodman home. Naturally, I am able definitely to recall visitors in the William A. Moore and William Henry Moore homes, and also visits in the '80's and early '90's of members of the Vance family, sometimes from as far away as Louisiana, to the Godbold family, the RIVERS family and (until our home was burned) my own family.

By the end of the '70's, the Garys had all moved from Cokesbury to Abbeville or Edgefield or elsewhere; but occasionally some member of the family would return to the old home town. I recall a conversation I had with Chief Justice Gary, in which he told me that some thirty

years after he left Cokesbury as a young man, he returned, taking his saddle horse in order to be able easily to visit the Sulphur Springs and other scenes of his boyhood pleasures. He said he found little need for the horse, as the distances were so much shorter than over the years he had thought of them as being. To this he added, "And the stream Sandy Run was smaller and the waterfalls between the Herndon home and the Caldwell home were lower and the two homes were closer to one another than in my memory and imagination they had always been." Doubtless, every older person who may read this has had an experience which matches this one of Justice Gary. I have — in and around Old Cokesbury.

Today, the road to the Sulphur Springs is obliterated, and there isn't a trace of the attractive shelter that once covered them or of the seats that once surrounded them; and, were it not for the old soapstone basins, one would not be able even to locate this spot so dear in the recollections of one's childhood. It is perhaps not strange that the old Herndon home and fifteen or more others would have disappeared and fallen into decay and ruin since the turn of the century; but why should the falls in Sandy Run, the scene of so much romance, have so shrunk in size; and why should the stream itself be so different from the sparkling, gurgling, hurrying water that is the Sandy Run of one's memories?

The peculiar culture that made the old Methodist town what it was, began to decay during the War Between the States, and was almost gone by the end of the nineteenth century. It might be said that the closing of the Conference School in 1918 marked the end of Old Cokesbury. Today, the evidences that such a culture and such a place ever existed are fast disappearing. Tombstones that once stood in Tabernacle and Andrew Chapel graveyard and in family burial grounds have fallen to the earth to become covered and lost. Each recurring visit to the community finds another of the old homes burned or otherwise destroyed — another landmark gone.

Editor Watson says of Old Cokesbury: "It was Methodist from center to circumference, always a place of high moral tone with a distinctly intellectual atmosphere and strong convictions and opinions — a truly remarkable community."

When I think back to the Cokesbury of my day there, the last twenty years of the last century, I realize that most of its glory had departed ere I came on the scene; but I see, or think I see, "a truly remarkable community" with a peculiar culture — a culture about which there was something exceedingly fine. I see a little band of Presbyterians, a much larger band of Methodists, and a few others, not many in all, but all alike proud of the traditions and history of the old Methodist village, and all alike influenced by them and in some measure upheld by them.

One wishes that Old Cokesbury might have endured.

To close this narrative of Old Cokesbury, I quote from the remarks made by "The Man on The Monument" to an Index-Journal reporter on the occasion of the visit of Marshal Ferdinand Foch to Greenwood December 9, 1921.

Said the marble soldier (he stands in front of the Court House in Greenwood): "Cokesbury, the quietest place in America except Due West on the Sabbath, is excited today as it hasn't been since the peace of mind of its citizenry was disturbed by the proposal to build a railroad through the quiet village.

"Cokesbury is preparing to emigrate. Citizens of that village where one has nothing to do but reflect, who have not stirred from their ancestral homes in a decade, are planning a pilgrimage. Just yesterday afternoon, I heard Deputy Sheriff W. C. Townsend of Cokesbury say that every man, woman, and child in his village would be going to Greenwood today to see Marshal Ferdinand Foch.

"Marshal Foch hardly realizes what an honor this is. He is not yet acquainted with Cokesbury. If he knew the traditions of the town,

he would present Cokesbury with a flag or decorate its oldest citizen.

"Cokesbury revels in its placidness. From the time when the village was stirred to furor by the proposal to profane its sacred stillness by the puffing and tooting of locomotives until today, Cokesbury has basked in the bliss of the undisturbed luxury of peaceful contemplation. Today Cokesbury is again moved with unwonted excitement and journeys to Greenwood to see the commander of all the Allied armies.

"Le marechal Foch is honored."

When the marble soldier indulged in this gentle banter, now almost thirty-three years ago, there was still in the land of the living a considerable number of the sons and daughters of Old Cokesbury, most of them no longer residents of the old village. Whether their memories went back to the 1850's or the 1870's or the 1890's or just to the first decade of the twentieth century, they all were able to see the truth underlying the jocose remarks of "The Man on The Monument"; and, strange as it may seem to those who never knew Old Cokesbury, they were pleased with what they saw.

APPENDIX A

Rectors Cokesbury Conference School

Austin P. Merrill	1835-36
A. H. Mitchell	1836-38
Rev. Clough S. Baird	1838-41
Maj. Matthew J. Williams	1841-47
Rev. George W. Stone	1847-50
F. W. Capers	1850-53
Rev. George H. Round	1853-57
Rev. S. B. Jones	1857-59
Rev. R. W. Boyd	1859-63
Alpheus W. Watson	1863-64
J. H. Sturtevant	1864-65
Rev. S. B. Jones	1865-67
J. L. Leslie	1867-69
W. C. Benet	1869-72
Rev. George H. Round	1873-74
J. L. Jones	1874-76

George Connor Hodges, Sr.	1876-78
J. P. Pritchard	1878-82
C. C. Reed	1882-92
C. R. Spencer	1892-93
S. M. Rice, Jr.	1893-96
J. B. Game	1896-98
Rev. Peter Stokes	1898-99
Rev. W. S. Stokes	1899-1901
W. M. Melton	1901-03
G. B. Duke	1903-09
J. S. Jennings	1909-11
L. E. Hinkle	1911-12
Rev. G. F. Clarkson	1912-13
F. W. Dibble	1913-14
E. R. Fickling	1914-18

APPENDIX B

Bascomb Lodge No. 80 A. F. M. Officers 1867

Francis A. Connor	W.M.
S. B. Jones	S.W.
W. A. Moore	J.W.
B. Z. Herndon	Treasurer
W. Z. McGhee	Secretary
J. Frank Hodges	S.D.
M. B. McGee	J.D.
Landon F. Connor	Steward
T. J. Johnson	Steward
John Carter	Tiler

Past Masters to 1867

Dr. F. G. Thomas
Dr. John A. Stewart
B. Z. Herndon
J. K. Vance
Dr. Newton Sims
M. Strauss
Dr. F. F. Gary

Members to 1867

(Some members lived twenty or more miles from Cokesbury.)

Adams, J. J.; Agnew, E.; Agnew, Samuel; Aichel, Oscar; Allen, G. A.; Anderson, R. K.; Armstrong, W. M.

Bass, W. G.; Black, J. B.; Blackwell, J. P.; Blake, W. S.; Boyd, Rev. R. J.; Boyd, R. W.; Brooks, Congressman Preston S.; Burnside, A. E.

Caldwell, R. W.; Caldwell, W. E.; Calhoun, John, M.D.; Calhoun, M. C.; Cannon, W. D.; Carter, John;

Carter, William; Chatham, J.;
Clanahan, J. B.; Clardy, B. S.;
Clark, H. B.; Clark, Hiram; Clark,
J. Lee; Clinkscales, J. W.; Cobb,
Andrew; Cochran, J. N.; Connor,
G. W.; Connor, Dr. P. W.; Connor,
J. H.; Connor, Landon F.; Cook,
John H.

Darracotte, A. N.; Donnal, D.
L.; Dyke, S. E.; Eichelberger, H.
M.; Eisenmeier, H. M.

Fisher, C. D.; Fooshe, James;
Franklin, W. W.; Franks, H. T.;
Funk, A. W.

Gaines, William B.; Gary, Dr.
F. F.; Gary, Gen. M. W.; Gary,
Col. S. M. G.; Gary, Thomas P.;
Gary, Dr. Thomas R.; Gillam, Gen.
James; Godbold, F. M.; Graydon,
G. W. A.; Griffin, R. C.; Griffin,
T. C.; Griffin, W. M.

Hart, Dr. B. C.; Harvey, C. K.;
Herndon, B. Z.; Higgins, H. G.;
Hill, J. C.; Hodges, G. M.; Hod-
ges, J. Fletcher; Hodges, J. Frank
Hodges, W. C. C.

Jaeger, G.; Johnson, T. J.; John-
son, William; Jones, Rev. S. B.,
D.D.

Keels, R. F.; Kelley, Rev. J. W.;
Kennerly, J. C. W.; Klugh, H. G.;
Klugh, W. C.

Leard, Rev Samuel; Lesley, J.
W.

Mahon, Thomas; Martin, F.
G.; Mattison, Gabriel; McCants,
David W.; McCants, Thomas W.;
McGee, A. H.; McGee, J. S.; Mc-
Gee, Michael; McGee, M. B.; Mc-
Gee, W. H.; McGee, William P.;
McGhee, W. Z.; McGilvary, Rev.
A. B.; McKellar, W. B.; Milton,
G.; Moore, A. W.; Moore, John
W., Sr.; Moore, William A., III.
Norwood, Dr. W. C.; O'Neill, G.

P.; Parks, John T.; Pasley, Dr.
J. C.; Pelot, Charles M.; Power,
Rev. W. C.

Rankin, E. E.; Raysor, G. W.;
Reynolds, L a r k i n; Richardson,
James W.; Richardson, William;
Roberts, Thomas J.; Ross, M. G.;
Roten, William G.

Scurry, Doury V.; Sharp, James
C.; Sharp, Marshall; Sharp, W.
E.; Sims, Dr. Newton; Singleton,
J. S.; Smith, James; Smith, J. R.;
Smith, R. F.; Smith, W. B.; Smith,
W. S.; Stansell, R. L.; Stokes,
Joseph H.; Strauss, Maurice; Ste-
wart, Dr. John A.; Suber, John
W.; Suber, Henry.

Tarrant, John R.; Thomas, F.G.;
Townsend, F. A.; Townsend, James
N.; Townsend, J. F.; Townsend,
Milton, J.

Vance, J. Harp; Vance, John C.;
Vance, James K.; Vance, J. Wistar.

Waller, Guilford; Wannamaker,
Rev. T. E.; Ware, W. A., Jr.;
Watson, Casper W.; Webber, Rev.
S. A.; White, R. M.; Wightman,
Rev. J. W.; Williams, Rev. J. C.;
Williams, W. A.

Young, James V.

Zeigler, M. G.

APPENDIX C

Presidents Cokesbury Masonic Female College

Francis A. Connor	1854-1858 incl.
Rev. B. Johnson	1859
Rev. J. C. Williams	1860- ?
Rev. Ferdinand Jacobs	? - ?
Col. S. B. Jones	? - ?
J. L. Leslie	? -1872
W. Christie Benet	1873 and 1874