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The Place of the Local Preacher in Methodism

With Sketches of the Lives of Some Representative Local Preachers of the South Carolina Conference

BY

REV. JOSEPH B. TRAYWICK

An Address Delivered Before the Historical Society of the South Carolina Conference, Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in Abbeville, S. C., December 7, 1909.

The origin of local preachers and their work in Methodism, like all else in that great spiritual awakening, was Providential. The work at the Foundry in London had been inaugurated by Mr. Wesley for some time. When he must needs be away for awhile, he appointed Thomas Maxfield, a gifted layman, to hold prayer meetings in his absence. But Maxfield's exhortations proved to be preaching with great effect. On Mr. Wesley's return, he was alarmed lest he had gone too far; but the wise counsel of his mother served him well at this critical hour in the great movement. She warned John not to fight against God, as Maxfield's preaching was honored by the presence and power of the Holy Spirit. It was not long before other good men among the laymen were preaching. The results are known of all men. Today, the local preachers of British Methodism are a power for good, outnumbering the itinerants. No Methodist church or chapel is without preaching any Sunday. Bishop Galloway on his return from the Wesleyan Conference said they could use effectively as many more, although their numbers go into the thousands.

Passing to American Methodism, the same plan was pursued as in the mother country. It is a notable fact that the first three Methodist preachers of America were local preachers, Captain Webb, Strawbridge
The first two churches were founded by these men—Robert Strawbridge organizing the church on Sams Creek, in Maryland, and Philip Embury organizing John Street Church in New York. When Asbury and other itinerants began to move through the land, local preachers were licensed everywhere, and they became the "home guard" of the on-marching army of itinerants under the leadership of Asbury. But for their loyalty and faithfulness, much of the itinerants' work would have been lost. They visited the sick, buried the dead, officiated at marriages, and preached to the people, giving many churches Sunday preaching that would not otherwise have had it. All this service was given without financial compensation.

There is one fact in the early history of American Methodism that made the local preacher a necessity to the continuance and growth of the Church. The salary of the itinerant was so small that to marry was to locate. And most of good men will marry. Only a few, like Asbury, Lee and McKendree, refrained from entering into this holy estate. So it came to pass that the local ranks for the first half century contained more talent and far more experience than the traveling force. A large number of the best men were forced to locate soon after marriage. William Capers proposed to his wife to locate, but his devoted wife protested, being willing to make the sacrifice. Bishop Andrew in my hearing gave this tribute to his first wife. He suggested location to her. She said, "It will never do. Some woman must be willing to share the hardships of the traveling preacher's life, and I will be that one." The Church owes a great debt to the memory of these two noble women, Mrs. Andrew and Mrs. Capers.

An outstanding fact in connection with the influence of local preachers on the present condition of our Church in South Carolina is this, that in every place where the old time local preachers lived and worked in the formative period of our Church's history, there you will find Methodism strong; but in those sections of our State where no local preachers lived and worked, there we are weak. To prove the latter assertion, look at that part of our State extending from Barnwell to Parksville. There we are weak, and we nowhere find the footprints of the old local preacher. Then look at Marlboro and Marion, and what an army of Methodists there, where so many of the old local preachers gave their lives to the work! And their works do follow them.

The most permanent work of the local preachers has been their church planting. The tradition of many of our churches of today is that they had their beginning in the work of these lay preachers, who commenced to preach under a brush arbor or in a school house or private home, and gathered a little band. Soon the place would be taken into some circuit, the itinerant preacher giving a week-day appointment for years—the Sunday congregation hearing only the local preacher, or being served by the class leader.
The local preacher has stood midway between the pastor and the layman. He is both a layman and a preacher.

Great honor was conferred on local preachers in apostolic times. Ananias baptized Paul and received him into the church. Philip did the first real missionary work of the infant church at Samaria with signal success in the conversion of the Samaritans and of the Ethiopian statesman. And Stephen, by his great boldness, became the first Christian martyr and spiritual father to Paul. They planted the first Gentile Christian church at Antioch in Syria, as also at Rome. Let it be remembered that all those churches welcomed most gladly the Apostles to further the work. So the lay preachers of early Methodism were following in the footsteps of Aquilla, Philip and other honored ones of apostolic days.

Much is said of a "Laymen's Movement," as if it was something new under the sun. Wesleys, lay preachers and the local preachers of America, were but a "Laymen's Movement." This modern movement only presents itself under new conditions. Moses appointed laymen to prophecy, and the apostles appointed seven deacons, two of whom became powerful preachers, Philip and Stephen. The local preacher has been in evidence in every great spiritual awakening of the Church. And unless our present laymen's agitation produces a large number of strong lay preachers who will magnify the spiritual side of church work, it will surely be of short duration.

As we review the great company of local preachers, reaching from the humble, plain man from the plow, to the great and learned, such as Judge Longstreet and Governor Colquitt of Georgia, and Hugh Porter, Conrad Plyler, Mark Boyd, Dr. Moone, John Harper, Benjamin Wofford, and hundreds of other good and true men of our own Conference, we are made sad to see only a small company left. There are causes which have led to the passing of this noble, unselfish class of men. And the Church is suffering by this loss. One cause is, most young preachers aspire to be pastors, and the increased support and comfort connected with the pastorate removes the necessity of locating to make a living. Another cause, a want of appreciation of their work by the Church. They are made to feel that their work is not needed. Then, again, the charges have been made so small that they feel there is no room for them. But the main cause is a want of spirituality in the Church. Good spiritual preachers are made by spiritual churches.

I will now proceed to give a brief appreciation of a few representative men who have passed away. In this lecture, only brief reference will be made to a number of our most worthy local preachers who have given large service to the Church, because biographies of these men have been written, and have gone into the archives of our Society.

Mark M. Boyd.

First, I refer to Rev. Mark M. Boyd, of Newberry County, who passed away in 1899, in the 95th year of his age and the 57th year of
his ministry. He was perhaps the best-known local preacher in the bounds of our Conference. Having had three sons in the South Carolina Conference, he had opportunities to visit every part of the Conference. His coming was always hailed with delight in the homes of the people and in the services of the church. He thrilled more congregations in relating his experience than any one I have ever heard speak. He loved to assert, “If I can't shout I will shine.” For purity of life, zeal in the service of the Master, clearness of spiritual vision, unselfishness, and all-round Christian character, none have exceeded him in our history. His father, Rev. Nathan Boyd, was for a long time a gifted local preacher. Father and son gave together one hundred years of local preacher service to Newberry County.

**Conrad Plyler.**

Conrad Plyler, of Lancaster County, who died in 1893 after forty-eight years of faithful work, was a most original man of great mental strength, resourceful, a genius in the pulpit, deeply pious, free from all affectation and cant—a matter-of-fact man, practical in business, and successful in church work as “supply,” and in a free work of the local preacher. He planted more churches in Lancaster and adjoining counties than any other man—a builder not on other men’s foundations. While practical, his imagination was wonderful. At a camp-meeting at Pleasant Grove, N. C., some thief stole a watch from one of the preachers through a crack. This was done Saturday night. On Sunday night, Uncle Rod followed the sermon in exhortation. Retribution was his theme. He drew a picture of the eternal horrors of the guilty conscience in hell. He took up the fellow who stole the preacher’s watch. He would make the ticking of that watch sound in his ears forever, carrying him down, down for ages, then lifting him for thousands of years on the crests of the huge waves of that sea of trouble, only to hear the tick of that watch. Next morning, the watch was found hanging on the nail from which it had been stolen.

**Lucius Bellinger.**

Rev. Lucius Bellinger was born in Walterboro, S. C., in 1805, but lived the greater part of his life in Bamberg County. He was a most unique character. Born of one of Carolina’s old and wealthy families, he was raised under Episcopalian influences, but was converted at Binnaker’s Camp-meeting and became a most ardent Methodist. While he sustained the relation of local preacher to the Church, he was in reality a great traveler, preaching much in four States. He would not stay in any place long at a time, not even in his own lovely home, made delightful by his choice wife and intelligent children. He was fond of calling himself “the strange preacher,” “the war horse,” and “wandering Arab.” He was eccentric to a great degree in his life, preaching and conversation; and yet, none ever questioned the purity
of his motives. His preaching was plain, incisive, thorough. He would rebuke sin, yet he gave little offence. His greatest forte was his power of imagination. But few men were his equal. If his imagination soared high, he preached; if not, he was like an eagle with pinions cut; and, like the eagle, he would fall to the ground. The despondency that would follow a failure was dreadful. But generally his efforts were satisfactory, and he would close his sermon with a shout of victory, waving the banner of the Cross on the outer wall. But he is gone, and we shall never see his like again.

**Benjamin Wofford.**

Benjamin Wofford, who went home to God in 1850, was for a while an untiring itinerant, and then the greater part of his life a devoted local preacher. He was not only a good preacher, but was possessed of the gift of money-making. He accumulated money not for money's sake, but as God's steward to use it for a high purpose. He had the prophet's vision. He will be remembered on earth by, and receive his reward in heaven for, the college he founded. Unborn generations will bless his memory for what he did for the young manhood of our land. In Benjamin Wofford's work, the local preacher became our leader in higher education. He gave one hundred thousand dollars for the purpose of establishing and endowing a college for literary, classical and scientific purposes. Since 1854 Wofford College has stood as a monument to his liberality.

**Horatio Nelson McClenaghan.**

A most interesting character among the long list of local preachers of the Pee Dee section of our Conference was Horatio Nelson McClenaghan. He was born at Belfast, Ireland, on the 21st of October, 1805—the day of the great battle of Trafalgar, hence his name. He came to America when fifteen years of age, and settled near Mars Bluff, in what was then Marion District. He was brought up in the Church of England, but after coming to America, he became a Methodist, and a local preacher. He was connected with the Conference for two years, and for more than fifty years a faithful local preacher. He spent a few years of his life in Canada, but most of his long life was spent in what is now Florence County. He died in 1888. He was a careful reader, possessed of a strong mind, yet as guileless as a little child; a man always cheerful, true and loyal to the Church; loved to talk of the great preachers of the past. Wm. M. Kennedy and Bishop Wm. Capers were his favorites. He was a good preacher, and gifted in prayer. His whole life was above reproach, and his record is on high. Of his large and interesting family, only three children still live.

**Miles H. Joy.**

Miles H. Joy, of Darlington County, was a preacher of great earnestness and efficiency. He did not commence preaching until middle life,
but was constantly at it until the end. Death came to the tired man at seventy. He had ever been the friend of the pastor, a loyal Methodist. Every Sunday found him preaching. He was ever looking for an open door to preach the gospel. He founded a number of churches; and while in the service of his country during the Civil War, with the help of others, he conducted a number of revival meetings in camp in which a large number of souls were brought to Christ. His life has been a benediction to all who came under his influence. We are not surprised at the strength of Methodism in that section when we remember that such noble men in the local ranks have lived and labored there as William Brockington, James Windom, John Josey, John Elliott, Joseph Hendrix, McKenzie Mazingo, William Alexander, J. J. Reynold, G. W. Boyd, Aaron J. Joy and Miles H. Joy. Of all these faithful men of God, none exceeded Miles Joy in all the elements of a good citizen, useful preacher and influential Methodist.

**Henry H. Spann.**

There lived and labored on the old Lexington Circuit one of the strongest and most useful local preachers in our State. I speak of Henry H. Spann, who was born in 1808, and died in 1870. Under his ministry, three churches were organized, one of which, now on the Johnston Circuit, bears his name, Spann. He was a preacher of decided character and preaching ability. His zeal for the work was ever moving him on, preaching every Sunday and often twice. He was most helpful in camp and revival meetings. While eccentric, yet his eccentricity did not mar his usefulness as a preacher or his fraternal spirit. He was most loyal to his Church, and was held in high esteem by the itinerant preachers, with whom he worked in great harmony. He married the daughter of Mike Barre, of Concord Church, and by this marriage was related to a large number of preachers, local and itinerant. This section was greatly blessed in good local preachers, and in sending out a large number of itinerants. Mike Barre's brother-in-law, Henry Herlong, was a useful local preacher. His son, Wesley Barre, was also, and his other son-in-law, Henry Smith. A number of preachers of the Conference are direct descendants, or have married grand-daughters of this grand man who has passed long ago to his reward. But none of all these has left a better record than Henry H. Spann.

**Lewis James Crum.**

Orangeburg County has for generations been a stronghold of Methodism. It has also been the field of operations for a large company of working, loyal local preachers. I here give a brief sketch of the life of one of these faithful men. Rev. Lewis J. Crum was born in Orangeburg County in 1814, and passed away in 1896, having spent most of his life in that county. For a few years, he was a member of the South Carolina Conference. In all, he preached for sixty-three years. Scarcely
a Sunday passed without a sermon from him at some church. He aided in revival meetings, preached a large number of funerals, visited the sick. He was a good steward of God's gifts. Being possessed of much of this world's goods, he used them as not his own; and, while doing a large amount of work peculiar to the preacher, he saw to it that the preacher who served the circuit did not go to Conference unpaid. He was possessed of a most lovable spirit. To know him was to honor and love him. He was most happily married to Miss Mary M. Funches, who died only a short time before his death, each living eighty-three years, and having lived together sixty-three years. They have left among their children and grand-children some of the best people in the State.

LEWIS W. RAST.

Among the noble band of local preachers that Orangeburg County has given the Church, none stand out in greater prominence and usefulness than Rev. Lewis W. Rast, who was born in St. Matthew's Parish in 1823, and who died near Swansea, in Lexington County, in 1894, whither he had moved. For forty years this man of God went in and out as a lay preacher. A man of fine education, quite a while was spent in the school-room as a teacher, which work was a signal success. He did a large amount of surveying, and was a success in farming. And yet he had time to do a large amount of work as a local preacher without compensation. He was greatly blessed in his marriage to Miss Sarah F. Larr, who still survives him. Like Anna of old, she is still in the temple in God's service and praise. Brother Rast left a large family of sons and daughters who bless his memory, and are in their own lives and characters an honor to him. One of his sons, William Rast, of Swansea, S. C., has recently passed away.

WILLIAM H. SMITH.

I am indebted to the Rev. C. B. Smith for the following tribute to his father:

William H. Smith was born July 7, 1819, and died February 17, 1882. In early life, his principal advantage consisted of a pious home. His educational opportunities were such as were had by the country youth of that day, which he improved upon by a naturally studious mind and a great yearning to know. He was a good English scholar. When quite a young man, feeling it his duty to preach, his paternal grandfather, a man of very considerable means, offered him a collegiate training. But his pastor brought against such the then popular argument, "Education is a good thing, but saving souls is a better," which argument prevailed, and so he lost that boon. His tastes were scholarly and he studied much. He was intensely poetical.

I do not remember the year he joined the Conference, but he first served as junior preacher the Black River Circuit, then the Wadesboro Circuit, and last the Combahee and Ashepoo Mission. On this
last, his health failed, when he located. From that time on, he was in labors abundant, as his strength permitted. His passion for souls was consuming. He counted no honor like that of being an evangel of life. To carry the message of pardon and peace through Jesus Christ set his soul ablaze. Time, talent and energy he freely and without stint laid on God's altar.

His preaching was of a high order. Chaste, clear, fervent, often impassioned, the people heard him gladly. Throughout the field of his operations no man stood higher. My brother Coke, in the heyday of his pulpit power, stood small in comparison with father. I heard a man once say to Coke, "If you and your father were announced to preach a mile apart at the same hour, you wouldn't have a dozen to hear you, while the church where your father was to preach wouldn't hold the people."

There were several things operating to give him this hold on men. One was his natural gentleness. If ever there was a born gentleman, he was one. A minister once said of him that he deserved no credit for being a gentleman, for he could not be otherwise if he tried. To coarser, rougher men, this gentleness was often construed as weakness. But it was far otherwise; it was his strength. I never knew him to do a coarse, harsh thing. There was no artificial polish. He had no schooling to give him the polish of social convention. It was of the heart, in the nature of the man; and hence, he was never caught with the mask off, for there was no mask. He was intensely sympathetic. Every phase of human experience struck a responsive chord in his own soul. He thrilled to their sufferings and joyed in their joys. I have known men often to come miles to pour out their sorrows to him, and I have seen our table shadowed by the troubles of some visitor, come to get father's sympathetic help. He had keen moral perceptions. Right and wrong were to him large facts. He measured himself by God's Word. He lived in the Bible, and drew his inspiration from it. He had more of the mind of Christ than any man I ever knew. The sweep of his mind was imperial. He thought in terms of great breadth. The wonder is that, living under the limitations and restrictions occasioned by the narrow operations of his every day life, he should see and catch the meaning of principles so far-reaching as he did. His devotion to God was utter, and he sacrificed to Him his all at the altars of his church. Everything was laid there freely. God-fearing, man-loving, pure in heart and in life, his name is as ointment poured forth.

**Samuel Johnson Bethea.**

Brother W. C. Power has prepared the following sketch:

Rev. Samuel Johnson Bethea was a native of Marion County, S. C. His ancestors came from France to Virginia. Some time during the 17th century, a branch of the family moved to South Carolina, Marion County, where the subject of this sketch was born October the 22nd, 1808. His mother's maiden name was Cochran. She was of the same
county and was of Methodist stock, as were also his paternal ancestors. He was converted to God in early manhood, and soon thereafter realized a call to the ministry. He readily yielded to the divine persuasion, was licensed to preach, and at once began to exercise his gifts. In due time, he was ordained to the diaconate and then to the office of elder. He became a constant reader and devout student of the Word, making it "the man of his counsel." He found great pleasure in reading sacred history, and the biography of later fathers of the Church.

Brother Bethea had not the advantage of early intellectual training. Hence there was in his sermons a lack of conformity to the rigid rules of logic and the tests of rhetorical finish; but they were characterized by a transparent sincerity, hearty sympathy with his hearers, and the dominant purpose of saving souls, which made him at all times an acceptable ambassador of the Lord Jesus Christ. As was said of the Master: "The common people heard him gladly." In exhortation and prayer especially he was often overwhelming in his appeals to God and men. In addition to his regular morning and evening offerings on the family altar, it was his custom day by day to speak words of religious counsel and encouragement to the members of the home circle. He didn't grow old and odd with advancing years, but became more and more gentle and lovable in spirit as he drew toward the end. On a memorable evening in the month of October, 1879, as the slanting rays of the setting sun shed through an open window their softened beams upon his face, a member of his family, thinking to brace his departing spirit, said to him: "Well, father, you have given a long life of service to the Church." With a radiance of heaven lighting up his features, he replied, "I have only rendered very poorly the service it was my duty to give. As a sinner saved by grace,

"In my hand no price I bring,
Simply to the cross I cling."

One who knew him well said of him: "He set the standard of Christian living in his community." A man of stalwart frame, with a brain big enough for a bishop*had he been thoroughly educated and his life given wholly to the work of the ministry, he would doubtless have attained to an exalted position among the leaders of God's embattled hosts. He is not dead, but living in the lives of those influenced by him, and in his own glorious immortality.

WRIGHT WILSON.

I am indebted to Brother J. B. Wilson for this appreciation of Rev. Wright Wilson:

Rev. Wright Wilson was born in Wayne County, N. C., March 17, 1811. In his early childhood he came, with his father and mother, to South Carolina, and soon afterward, when about six years old, was left in orphanage, both of his parents having died near Cashua Ferry on the Great Pee Dee River. He was cared for by his grandfather and grandmother, Joseph Wilson and Maney Wilson, in Robeson
County, N. C. When about eighteen years old, he went to Clio, S. C., where he was employed by a Mr. John McCullum in a wagon and gig factory. Here he met and won as his wife Miss Susannah Medlin. In April, 1832, they were united in marriage, and lived together for fifty-five years, when he, January 29, 1887, went home to God. His conversion at old Clio Church, in August, 1837, was clear, and from that hour his life was dedicated to God. He immediately joined the church, and soon after was appointed class leader. In 1839, he was licensed to exhort, and in 1855 he was licensed to preach. He was ordained deacon in Sumter by Bishop George F. Pierce in 1863, and was ordained an elder by Bishop D. S. Doggett in Columbia, December, 1877. He began his married life a sinner and poor in this world’s goods. But after his conversion, he bought a home, worked out the money and paid for it. Then he bought again of real estate, then of slaves, prospered, lived well, dispensed hospitality unsparingly, and spent much time in preaching the gospel and visiting and helping his fellow-men. He was always in his element when in a revival, and many were the souls saved by means of his preaching. His sermons were hortatory, but earnest and effective. Through his ministry, several churches were organized and built in the country around where he lived. Zion, Berea, Providence, Oak Grove and Beulah were all built largely through his ministry. His educational opportunities were very limited; but after his conversion he subscribed for the Southern Christian Advocate and began to buy and read good books, and in this way became well-informed, especially along religious lines of thought. He, with other local preachers of that time, namely, William K. Breeden, Thomas Cook, Samuel J. Bethea and others, was a power for good. For fifty years he lived in the same community, and for thirty-two years of that time as a local preacher, and in the last years of his life he wielded a greater influence for good than ever before, and with the confidence and love of all who knew him. He was a man of great faith, and lived in close touch with the Lord.

Thomas Cook.

Shortly after the Revolutionary War, Mr. James Cook came from Pennsylvania and settled in Marlboro County, S. C. He was a Methodist, and became one of the founders of that denomination, and of Beauty Spot Church, in his new home. Rev. Thomas Cook was one of the sons born to this worthy man from his (second) marriage to Sarah McDaniel, October 10, 1802. He was married to Loretta Sparks Pearce March 14, 1825; the second time to Mrs. Nancy McLeod Sinclair, December 24, 1850. His home was about two miles from the Court House at Bennettsville; and there, like his father, he dispensed a generous hospitality, especially to his Methodist brethren and the weary itinerant preachers. Mr. Cook was converted at Zion camp-meeting, near Rockingham, N. C., in 1838. Soon afterward he was licensed to preach, and thenceforth to the day of his death, May 22, 1868, nearly thirty years, he was a most acceptable and useful local preacher. He
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was a large man, of distinguished appearance, ardent and sympathetic; gifted in song. These qualities specially fitted him for pulpit and revival work. An appreciative relative says: "When sinners were being converted and backsliders reclaimed, his great heart overflowed with joy, and he would pass among the congregation shouting aloud the praises of God." He was accustomed, on such occasions, to say, "I was born in a storm (meaning the spiritual birth and the powerful manifestations he had then received), and I want to die in a storm." He was a diligent reader and student of God's Word. The well-worn copy of his daily use has a flyleaf record of the great number of times he had gone prayerfully through it. He had also (for his time) an excellent library of standard Methodist books. Mr. Cook was a man of strong convictions, outspoken, and thoroughly reliable; impulsive, warm-hearted; binding his family and friends to him as with hooks of steel, by the most enduring as well as tender ties. But, after all, his greatest honor is that he was used of God in the early days to help plant Methodism in what is still its garden spot, the famous Pee Dee country of South Carolina.

William K. Breeden.

Rev. T. J. Clyde has furnished me the following sketch:

William K. Breeden was born in Marlboro County, S. C., 1826, and lived there until his death in 1895. He had been a member of the M. E. Church, South, from his thirteenth year, and was licensed to preach in 1864. The genuineness of his conversion was strikingly illustrated in his life of integrity, consecration and usefulness in the service of God. He abhorred sham and affectation, and was always very modest in any allusion to his own personal experiences or performances. "Uncle Billy K."—as he was affectionately called by his friends—was widely known in his native county, and highly esteemed and respected by its citizens, irrespective of denomination. The visitor in his home, and all who came in touch with him in social or business life, could not fail to be impressed that he was truly a man of God; for his religious principles dominated his whole conduct. The Bible was his constant guide and companion, and its blessed truths were reverently accepted and incorporated into his thoughts and language. As a local preacher, he was punctual, practical and faithful. As a rule, he would have two preaching appointments every Sunday, when not assisting his pastor in special meetings. He loved to tell "the old, old story of Jesus and His love," and point to the crucified Redeemer as the all-sufficient Friend and Saviour. His pastor ever found in him a willing and efficient co-worker, for he delighted to do what he could for the advancement of the cause of Christ. This was the case especially in the revival meetings, in which he gladly took part. He welcomed these as harvest days for gathering sheaves for the heavenly garner, and they called forth his supreme sympathies and efforts. And, oh! how he could pray on these occasions. Wonderfully gifted in prayer, he always
seemed to have access to the mercy-seat when interceding for the sick and penitent. With a face beaming with the emotions that thrilled his heart, he would kneel in their midst and his petitions, inspired by the exceeding great and precious promises, rose heavenward, and oftentimes immediate answers came from the throne. Nor were these seasons of refreshing followed by coldness and inactivity. On the contrary, they only confirmed his heart's desire to labor more zealously in the service of the Lord. He did not confine his labors to the regularly established places of worship, but went into the waste places, preaching in school houses and under brush arbors, and thus laid the foundations for future houses of worship and thriving congregations—some of which can be seen today in old Marlboro County. Profound reverence for God and sacred things were among his prominent characteristics. He disliked pulpit slang or any appearance of levity or frivolity in religious services. The breezy and brassy freaks of some so-called latter-day evangelists would have been classified as only fantastic tricks played before high heaven. In my estimate of his character, I have not been influenced by the mere partialities of friendship. I loved him, 'tis true, and shall ever cherish his memory, and hope to meet him on the other shore; but in this brief sketch I have only given the facts as I have observed them, and am sure the portrait does not do justice to the original. His soul is with God, and his record is on high. I deem him eminently worthy a place in the galaxy of the brotherhood of local preachers—those noble men whose lives shed lustre on the annals of Methodism, and indicated the divinity of its origin and the perpetuity of its mission.

WILLIAM G. MULLINNIX.

Rev. William G. Mullinnix was born in Spartanburg, S. C., in 1805, was brought to Pendleton District while a child, and here lived all his life. His education, which was limited, was gotten at Old Pendleton, six miles from his home, which he walked daily. He was converted when sixteen years old. He commenced his ministry at twenty-four years of age, in 1829. As "supply," he often served the charges in that part of the Conference, but most of the time labored as a local preacher, passing from deacon's to elder's orders. He baptized and married hundreds, conducted funerals, and performed all other duties of the pastor. He was a strong preacher—a thinker. He was heard gladly by the educated and refined. The purity and sincerity of his life made him a power for good. He was a builder of churches—Union, Sharon and Pendleton Churches were largely the fruits of his labors. Great revivals were had by him, and large numbers were converted and came into the Church under his ministry. I was pastor on Pendleton Circuit in 1870-2; and although he had passed to his reward some years before, yet his name was everywhere mentioned in highest terms of praise. I have never crossed the track of any man's career that seems to have left a better and more lasting impression.
I might say that that part of the State has been blessed with a large number of useful local preachers. I mention a few: Dr. Charles Galliard, Tyre Mauldin, Barnet S. Gaines and his father, Robert Gaines, Abraham Coffin, Samuel M. Green, and many others; but I am without data to give any record of their lives. None excelled William G. Mullinnix in the Master’s work.

A. G. Harmon.

Rev. A. G. Harmon was born in Abbeville County, near the Savannah River, March 26, 1824, and died at McCormick, February 6, 1898. His parents were Methodists. Their home was made pure by the influence of religion. His early opportunities for education were limited, but from the school near home, he went to a better school at Mt. Carmel, and in every way sought to improve his mind. At the age of 19, he joined the Methodist Church at Republican Church, and five years later was licensed to preach. He passed on to deacon’s orders 1853, and elder’s orders in 1871. His conversion was clear and satisfactory. He was a strong preacher. He understood the doctrines of our Church, and preached them with great clearness. He was a born Ptolemy, ready in private as in public to defend the doctrines of the Church; and yet he was deeply spiritual. For fifty years, he lived the unselfish life of a local preacher in the same neighborhood, and not a spot of wrong ever touched his character. I was the pastor of his family in 1868-9. There I found his son, G. Thomas Harmon. He was converted and joined the Church under my ministry, preached with me for one year, and entered the Conference my last year. Brother Harmon has two other sons in the ministry, one in Georgia—a presiding elder—and another in the West. He was greatly blessed in his family. He died in great peace and fills an honored grave.

There were other local preachers in upper Edgefield and lower Abbeville whose lives I would be glad to review here, but I am without data. Among them are Brothers Headwright, Billy Walker and David Walker, whose memory is blessed.

Christian V. Barnes, Sr.

Among the long list of local preachers who have lived in old Abbeville County, special mention should be made of Brother Christian V. Barnes, who was born in Charleston, S. C., in 1794, but lived most of his life at Lowndesville, S. C., and passed away in 1866. For a long period of his life, he was a preacher devoted to the Methodist Church and the calling of the ministry. While fully meeting the demands of a large family, he kept up regular appointments where there was no Sunday services. He was greatly blessed in his family. Two of his sons, C. V., and Walter Z. Barnes, were most acceptable members of the South Carolina Conference; and two of his grandsons, C. V. Hammond and J. S. Hammond, are most useful members of this Church. The name of Christian V. Barnes is held in blessed memory by the old
people who remember him. For three years, I was the pastor of his widow at Pendleton. She was one of the most saintly women I have yet met.

James Moore.

As in so many other strongholds of Methodism, a local preacher, with the energetic aid of his consecrated wife, founded our Church at Abbeville, S. C. I write of Rev. James Moore and his wife, Mrs. Ann Fisher Moore. Mr. Moore was born in Charleston, S. C., in 1796, and died in Abbeville in 1863. By all the traditions and facts of history which have come down to us, he must have been a man of great usefulness—a man of gifts and talents of a high order. He succeeded in matters of this world, and bore through life an unsullied name as a Christian. A large factor in his success as a churchman and citizen was the good woman who was his wife. The name of Ann Moore is held in precious memory along with that of her husband. She was brought up a Catholic, but after their marriage they were truly converted, and entered upon an experience of saving grace. They joined the Church at Sharon Church, and afterward built the first Methodist Church here. Mr. Moore not only preached wherever there was an opening, but was liberal in the support of the Church. Their house in Abbeville was the home of the preachers for a long time in the early history of our Church here. It was a home of refinement and purity. The intelligence, deep piety and wholesome influence of this pair had a wonderful effect on the town. In a few years after the church was built, many of the best people of Abbeville were brought into the Methodist Church largely under their influence. He was a brother of Rev. George W. Moore of the South Carolina Conference; and Rev. Henry D. Moore, D. D., was his son. All have long since gone to their eternal home.

In closing, permit me to say that in all the years of my ministry, my relations to the long list of local preachers I have been associated with have been most pleasant. They have been most brotherly and ready to help in the work when it was possible to do so. In the most unselfish way, they have contributed to my personal support.

Of all the good men God has given the Church, none exceed in pure devotion and unselfish lives in the work of the Church than the old-time local preacher.