

## **DENNY'S MEMORIAL METHODIST CHURCH**

There was a church called Denny's Memorial Methodist Church that was located on Indian Creek Road in Putnam Co., TN. The GPS location is: N36°08.343' W85°45.962'. The church was called Denny's Memorial Methodist Church, named after Virgil Timothy Denny who donated the land for the church. He was care taker, built fires in winter and others pitched in if work needed to be done.

Virgil Timothy Denny, Luther "Luke" Alexander Shanks and Walter Shanks were the pillars of Denny's Memorial Methodist Church. Virgil Timothy Denny used to teach Sunday school class and people came from all over to listen to his lessons. Miriam Shanks Gwaltney daughter of Dona & Luke recalls the revival meetings in the summer starting at night at Denny's Memorial Church. People would gather from all around the area, many arriving in wagons pulled by mules. The Shanks family would hook up their buggy pulled by their horse named 'Snip'. The church would be filled with people many standing outside listening through the open windows to the sermon inside. Dona would bring small pillows and her children would stretch out on the front row when they got sleepy. James Pete Nichols recalls that they raised money by selling names on quilt pieces. "My wife, Imogene Carr Buckner Nichols quilted this quilt and I have it now", says Pete.

Miriam remembers when WWII started and military maneuvers were held all around Little Indian Creek, Putnam Co., TN on the Virgil Denny farm. The troops were camped on Virgil's property near Denny's Memorial Methodist Church. The soldiers were

preparing to go to Italy to fight the war. The terrain in the valley was similar to Italy so the soldiers could practice their maneuvers there.

The Buffalo Valley Presbyterian Church had always felt that its existence carried the responsibility of sharing the gospel with other communities. In earlier years, its members established several outpost worship services. The first one at Denny's Seminary a school house on Indian Creek. John R. Herndon preached at Denny's Seminary once a month in 1893 and 1894. That led to the development of Denny's Memorial Methodist Church where Sunday School lessons were taught.

All that is left now of this community church is its foundation and many memories of good country gospel experienced by all that attended.

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(total word count: 382) (1 photo)

Caption: Entrance to the Denny's Memorial Methodist Church: L to R: top row: Luke A. Shanks & Virgil Timothy Denny, second Row: Walter Warren Shanks, George Shanks, Dorothy Ann (Shanks) Fike & Robert Anderson Shanks third Row: Doris & Anna T. Leftwich, Carolyn (Shanks) Huddleston & Miriam (Shanks) Gwaltney. Picture by Harding Studio, Cookeville, TN, 30 May 1944.

Sources:

Putnam County Herald, January 14, 1954: 'Buffalo Valley Presbyterian Church.'

Carolyn (Shanks) Huddleston's accounts of the Denny's Methodist Church.

Miriam (Shanks) Gwaltney's accounts of the Denny's Methodist Church.

James Pete Nichols' accounts of the Denny's Methodist Church.

Research by Michael & Audrey J. Lambert

Denny's Memorial Methodist Church: **N36°08.343' W85°45.962'**

Herald Newspaper, TN: 9 February 1933, Buffalo Valley, Putnam Co., TN:

Mr. and Mrs. Harold Denny and family who have been residing near Denny's Memorial for 9 years have moved to the home of Roscoe Bartlett near Hopewell. They will be missed by their neighbors.

Putnam County Herald, 14 January 1954: Buffalo Valley Presbyterian Church.

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Source: Notes of Audrey June Denny Lambert. In October 2004 my husband Mike and I went to conduct our genealogy research in Putnam Co., TN and surrounding counties. One of my projects was to find the location of the Denny Seminary school. We were led to the spot by Ted and Carolyn Huddleston. The school building was totally gone. Carolyn told us that the school house was used to store hay, it caught on fire one day and burned to the ground. I remembered seeing it when I was a child. My parents took us to this area on vacation every summer. I don't ever remember going inside the schoolhouse. It was located close to the road and near it was Denny's Memorial Methodist Church. All that is left of this church is its foundation. **Denny's Memorial Methodist Church: N36°08.343' W85°45.962'.**



Entrance to the Denny's Memorial Methodist Church

L to R: Top: Luke Shanks & Virgil Timothy Denny.

Second Row: Walter Warren Shanks, George Morris Shanks, Dorothy Ann (Shanks) Fike & Robert Anderson Shanks.

Third Row: Doris & Anna T. Leftwich, Carolyn (Shanks) Huddleston & Miriam (Shanks) Gwaltney.

Picture by Harding Studio, Cookeville, TN:  
30 May 1944



Pictured is the foundation of the old Denny Memorial Methodist Church. Carolyn (Shanks) Huddleston attended this church as a child. She is pictured walking up the steps to the entrance of the church. This was a beautiful church attended by the surrounding community. Virgil Denny, Luke Shanks, and Walter Shanks were the pillars of the Denny Memorial Methodist Church.