

THE ROCK SPRINGS METHODIST CHURCH
Rock Springs, Putnam Co., TN
Newspaper unknown

CHURCH IN THE WILDWOOD: The Rock Springs Methodist Church, located half-way between Highway 70 at Chestnut Mound and Buffalo Valley was unique...inasmuch as the day the church building was completed the church was paid for and without debt.



Work on this beautiful country church was begun early in the year 1914, progressing for almost the entire year, with much work performed by members-to-be. Lumber, nails, seats...even the bell that would hang in the tower, were donated by the inspired workers who manifest the desire to have their own church of worship in their own community.

So it was that late in the year 1914 the first organizational meeting was set with the devout to come from both Smith and Putnam counties. The Rev. J. L. Smotherman was called to preach the sermon and be the church's pastor. It is said that nearly 100 persons attended the service to hear this inspired man of God bring a message that was not soon forgotten.

The Rev. Smotherman had a strong voice that could be heard clearly out in the churchyard, and indeed it was needed as every seat was taken early and some had to be content to listen from out-of-doors. The worshippers came in buffies and horseback and the success of the church, which was to meet every second Sunday in the month thereafter, was immediate. The church name was tendered to the Methodist Conference in the year 1914...and accepted.

It is interesting to here note that the land on which the church would stand was donated by Bradley Maddux and in the year 1930 the Ladies Aid Society of the church purchased an additional acre of land adjoining for a cemetery. Today many former members of the church rest in this well-kept parcel of hallowed ground.

Few modern contrivances have been added to the church since its conception in 1914. Electricity has taken over as the power to light, but the pot-bellied stove in the center of the chapel still is used to warm the church goers on cold days.

Only a few charter members are around today to attend occasional services at the church. Jack Amonette, who will celebrate his 93rd birthday soon, is a charter member and as in

early days, lives close to his church. There were other charter members to be remembered, like Mr. and Mrs. J. P. Nichols, Mr. and Mrs. John Denney (they were the mother and father of the present-day Tamer Denney, who is today superintendent and a leader of the church), Mr. and Mrs. Alex Huddleston and many others of the Huddleston name, Mrs. Toy Denney, the Amonettes, including Mr. and Mrs. T. N. Amonette (parents of Thomas Amonette, Smith County Clerk and Master), the Jareds, Mr. and Mrs. W. S. Sanders, Pauline Huddleston and others.

Following the Rev. J. L. Smotherman there were other fine preachers to pastor the church, like the Rev. J. Paul Williams, who later was to become pastor of the Carthage Methodist Church, the Rev. Dow Ensor, the Rev. Wesley Holden. The Rev. Joe Elledge of Dowelltown is presently the pastor of the church.

Interest in this fine church is fading and there has been talk that the church will soon be no more. Sunday services have not been held for several weeks and Sunday School has not been held for a like period of time. Many of the church members are now attending services at Pleasant Grove Methodist Church at Gentry on Highway 70, a few miles nearer Cookeville.

There are still several who would find much grief at the closing of this imposing house of God in the wildwood. Persons with memories of better days, when the shouting preachers would fill the very rafters with booming words from the Bible, their gravely-toned echoes trailing through the widows before fading away into the valley mists.

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