
Grady County Historical Society – Schools

Long Branch Church

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Radar reveals 104 unmarked graves in church cemetery

Randolph H. Wind
Editor & Publisher

An effort initiated by a local church congregation has resulted in the discovery of 104 unmarked graves in the Long Branch Baptist Church Cemetery.

The members of Long Branch Baptist Church, organized in 1845, raised approximately \$7,000 to map the church cemetery using ground penetrating radar and other mapping services.

Omega Mapping Services of Woodbury, GA was hired by the church to map the cemetery in hopes of preserving a piece of Gady County history before it is lost forever.

The church cemetery measures approximately 2.866 acres and contains the graves of many local residents including 24 Civil War veterans, 13 World War I veterans, eight World War II veterans and nine Korean War vets.

Now that the 104 unmarked graves have been discovered they will be noted on digital maps of



BENJAMIN STROZIER using ground penetrating radar to locate unmarked graves in the Long Branch Baptist Church Cemetery. He and his father located 104 unmarked graves.

➤ See GRAVES, Page A7

CM 3-13-12

Graves found

►GRAVES, from Page A1

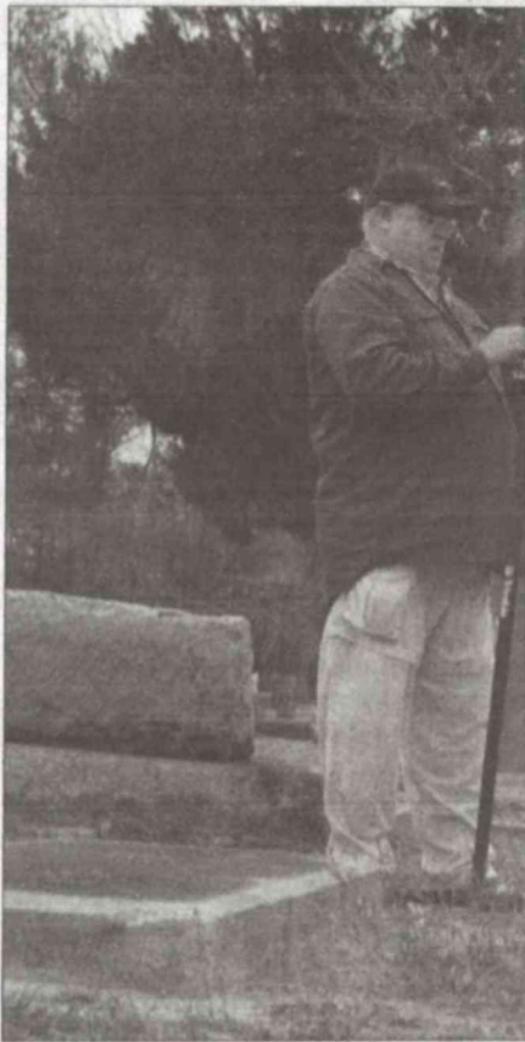
the cemetery. A cemetery roster is also being created to provide burial information from existing markers and a list of the dead in alphabetical order.

It is unlikely the identity of those buried in the newly re-discovered graves will ever be known.

Church officials will use the new found information and cemetery data to provide information for generations to come.

The project was spearheaded by the late Lewis C. Tyus and carried on by the members of the Long Branch Baptist Church cemetery committee including Larry Hudson, Jerry Carroll, Ellen Ferrell and Anne Tyus Parks.

The new digital archives will replace many old paper maps and cemetery records that have been passed on from generation to generation



LEN STROZIER of Omega Mapping device to document information from and he types in names from headstones and date of birth and death.

1/28/2004

**HISTORICAL SOCIETY
MEETING FEB
10, 2004**

By: Latrelle Gilliard

Carolyn asked me to tell about the Missionary Baptist and I will try to tell you of some of the things I learned while researching the church history of Long Branch Church in 1993 since Long Branch was 150 years old in 1995. Joe Cragmiles is in the process of printing this Church History.

In using the book written by the Georgia Baptist Historical Society in 1988 they stated that one or two Baptist came to Ga. January 15, 1733, along with other faiths, on the ship with Oglethorpe in Charleston, South Carolina. William Calvert is known as the earliest known Ga. Baptist on record.

As more territory was added to the frontier

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of Ga , the ministers of the Ga. association assumed the obligation to encourage itinerant preaching and organization of new churches. The last frontier of new land was opened in 1832, the Cherokee Nation of Northwest Ga. Association shared in sending preachers to organize churches among the new settlers.

Luther Rice, who had recently returned from India, a Baptist convert and Missionary, visited Savannah, Ga. in December 1813. He sparked a fire for foreign missions. In May 1814 a Savannah Baptist pastor, William B. Johnson, was one of the 33 delegates who met with Rice in Philadelphia to organize the general Missionary convention of the Baptist Denomination in the United states for Foreign Missions.

They met every three years and was known as The Triennial Convention. Ga. Baptist were represented, served as officers and contributed liberally to the five national societies until 1845. Southerners were visible but the actual government was under Northern rule by local boards. The South complained because the American Baptist Home Mission Society was negligent in appointing Missionaries for their

area and because the South was sending more money to the society than was being returned in the form of Missionaries. Ga. and the South were in favor of centralized convention rather than a society structure. Both claims were true, which helps to explain the 1845 division that brought on the Augusta meeting of the Southern Baptist convention.

Because of abolition of slavery abolitionist dominated the meeting. Due to this the Va. Baptist Foreign Mission Society took positive action calling for a convention to meet in May in Augusta, Ga.

During this period of discontent William Gullein Johnson, pastor of Columbia, South Carolina Baptist Church and immediate past President of the Triennial Convention, decided to take a trip to Tallahassee, Fla.. On January 25, 1845 he journeyed south from Augusta, to Louisville by Tallahassee Road to Mount Vernon, Uvalda, Hazelton, Thomasville and then into Tallahassee. After his visit to Tallahassee he began his return trip. He visited Baptists along the way to Bainbridge, Blakely, Ufaula, Alabama, and Columbus, Ga. on back to Augusta. There was no cairo at this time.

Along the way he discussed the actions that had been taken and others thought this called for a definite course of action. A meeting was to be held in May in Augusta. Johnson had visited seven of the fourteen Baptist Associations..

We have no proof that Long Branch was organized due to this visit of Johnson through Thomasville, down to Tallahassee and back up to Bainbridge, but it is very likely some Ministers and members of the Baptist (Primitive) faith believed in Mission work and he was a well informed, persuasive speaker and could very well have persuaded some people to constitute Long Branch church. We do know that all records indicate Long Branch is indeed the oldest Missionary Baptist Church in the Grady County Association. It would have been in the path that Johnson traveled on his way to Tallahassee. In the archives in Tallahassee I found the 1851 Assoc. minutes of the Fla. Assoc. and Long Branch had joined them with 24 members and Bartley Wynn from Thomasville as Pastor. In Mercers records of Ministers in the Florida Assoc. Rev Wynn was listed from 1846 through 1850 with a

Thomasville address, since there was no Cairo at this time. It does not list the church the Pastors were with but surely it was Long Branch, since Wynns name was in the 1846 list and was still pastor when they joined the Fla. Assoc. in 1851. At that time all Baptist were just called Baptist and once the Missionary Church started the other Baptist were called Primitive Baptist. (Also Hardshells). Also Bartley Wynn was one of the people that needed to pick up mail from the Thomasville Post office with a due bill of one cent. 20 years later in 1865 Rev. Wynn helped constitute Pleasant Grove Church. He died in 1867. He lived near Woodland church. He had 8 children by his first wife Rebecca and 7 children by his second Gatsy Ann. He is also the gentleman who hosted a meeting at his home to organize and tender service of a Volunteer Company on July 27, 1861 at the start of the Civil War with a total of 76 volunteering in the H.C. Bowen Company known as the 17th Patriots. Five Gilliard brothers joined due to this meeting and were in the Bowen Company.

I will give you some information I found in my research.

ous, L.C. Davis, W.E. Cannon. In a special conference on September 26, 1882, they

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The first 37 years of minutes were missing including the ones during the Civil War. The first church of Long Branch was in the corner at Cannon Ford Branch and Long Branch Road probably built in 1845. There are bricks that we think were the foundation of the church still in the dirt there. Also Thomas Hatcher said when he was first in Long Branch a man told him the church was in this spot. We had no records of this. In April 1902 a committee was elected to see how much money could be raised to rebuild the church. By June they had \$348. In July they were ready to haul lumber and begin working on church house. In 1907 they took a collection to finish paying for the church. This is the building in the picture here. This church building was used until 1963 when the present building was built. It has been added to several times.

No record books were found until September 16, 1882 and the first minutes concerned whether or not we rebuild our house of worship. The decision was unanimous to rebuild and the building committee appointed were O.P. Baggett, W.M. Moore, MBT Maddox, M.G. Mcmanous, L.C. Davis, W.E. Cannon. In a special conference on September 28, 1882, they

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reported that they had made a swap of some land to rebuild on from Robert Browning. This was the Barber descendants. The land is where the present church is located.

In the 1882 minutes a brother was accused of dancing and a committee appointed to see to this. Another sister expelled from the fellowship of the church. A brother charged for drunkenness. At next meeting the brother stated that he had been drinking and was sorry for the act and promised to do so no more. Over the early years of the clerk records we have much of the minutes covered members who did acts not tolerated by the church such as dancing, misunderstanding to each other, fornication - was excommunicated, making fraudulent purchases, dancing and having dancing in his house (frolic), drinking too much intoxicating spirits, uncivil and unchristian conduct, non attendance, marrying another womans husband, being drunk and using unchristian language and adultery (expelled).

In Assoc. minutes of 1868 G. T. Hurst was pastor and S.A. Roddenbery was church clerk. There were 55 white members. In a paper written by S.A. Roddenbery he stated "In 1868

Dr. S.A. Roddenbery and his wife, Martha A. Braswell Roddenbery joined Long Branch and were Baptised together." Long Branch was the mother church of the present First Baptist Church, which was established by a group of Long Branch members in 1874. In First Baptist Centennial book they state by Mr. R.S. Roddenbery, that his father Dr. S.A. Roddenbery and wife, Dr. D.H. Wilmot, Joshua Martin, Robert H. Harris and wife, George T. Hurst, W.T. Rigsby, and several others of 12 charter members.

I borrowed microfilms from Mercer University of former Bowen Baptist Association Yearly meetings which we were a member of at one time and found lots of statistics in them.

In researching which Associations Long Branch was a member of I found they joined Florida Assoc. in 1851. With no records after that the Bowen Assoc. was organized in 1856 and Long Branch probably joined them at this time because in the first minutes we have available in 1883 there is mention of sending deligates to the Bowen Asso.. They stayed with them until the Taylor Assoc. was organized in 1912. Then the Grady County Assoc. was

organized in 1936.

In 1870 Long Branch had 80 white members. In 1868 Mitchell county association had 1059 whites and 130 colored. In two years there were no more colored listed in the Assoc. None of the records showed Long Branch ever had any colored members. After the Civil War the colored had all gone to colored churches. Churches met only one week end per month. Preachers usually were the preacher of four different churches and preached at one of them each week. Meeting were on Saturday and Sunday. Preachers and visitors from a long distance from the church were housed with members of the church they were visiting. The preachers mostly traveled by horseback or a buggy to each church. A lots of the members liked for the visitors to stay with them and this way they could keep up with all the news because most people did not do much visiting other than near their home and church was the center of their world.

From 1878 through 1880 Rev. Robert H. Harris was pastor of Long Branch. In 1878 Long Branch had 70 members. In 1879 membership had risen to 119. 49 members in one year.

Then in 1880 there were 137. Rev. Harris was a very unusual man. He was a Minister, School Principal, went to Mercer University, joined the Confederacy as a Private, Congressman, Mayor. He was the founder of the public school system at Cairo in 1876. Professor of Theology in Southern Female College., A professor at Cox College, Chaplain of the Ga. Legislature. In 1914 he wrote a History of Mercer Baptist Association from 1874 thru 1914. This is a very thorough book about the churches and the people who attended these meeting. I will be telling you more about this book later.

We surveyed the church cemetery and Carolyn has this in the Library. The oldest graves we found were of two Slaughter children, one in 1816 that lived 1 yr 18 mos, and another who lived one day in 1818, also Lorinda Bartlett Born in 1775 and died 1862, and Agnes Cannon born 1802 and died 1862.

Money was not mentioned much in the first minutes but in 1897 55 cents was collected. In December 1913 there was 24 cents in the Treasury. In February 1916 \$7.25 contributed to Pastor for last years work. In 1937 Rev. Thomas was paid \$15 in produce and \$4 in

money for preaching at the Protracted meeting. Protracted meetings lasted two weeks some times. All these meetings were in the day time. Baptisms were usually done in a nearby creek and lots of Long Branch baptisms were done in the Cannon Ford Branch which was beside the first original church.

"On one occasion, at a general meeting of the Anti-Missionaries, one of their best and most prominent ministers, who, if the impression of the writer from information received be correct, was present for the purpose of announcing his decision, on conviction, to unite with the regular Baptists, was in the presence of a number of other preachers, when suddenly one of them arose and with a loud voice said, 'I will not be a member of the Anti-Missionary Society, but I will be a member of the regular Baptist Church.'"

These are some interesting things Robert H. Harris wrote in his Mercer Baptist book.

In 1874 influence was very great in the country occupied by the The Mercer Association, "The members and adherents of the "Anti-Missionary", or so-called "Primitive" denomination, many of them excellent people, among whom were some of the very best in the land, were utterly opposed to Sunday Schools and it is easy to infer that numbers of their relatives and friends in the regular Baptist churches were more or less affected by their views on that question. Relationships, in various degrees, between people of the two denominations were often closely and intricately

interwoven; but, strange to say, while the feeling of our people toward the Anti-Missionaries were friendly and even cordial, theirs toward our people were different. To illustrate the latter part of this observation, two incidents will be here narrated:

"On one occasion, at a general meeting" of the Anti-Missionaries, one of their best and most -prominent ministers, who, if the impression of the writer from information received be correct, was present for the purpose of announcing his decision, on conviction , to unite with the Missionary Baptist, was sitting in or near the pulpit with a number of other preachers, when suddenly one of them arose and without provocation exclaimed "I SMELL A WOLF". Then turning upon the "renegade," as he doubtless considered the intended withdrawer, he "turned loose, the vials of his wrath" in a style that astonished the congregation. The "renegade", who it seems was disappointed in his desire to withdraw from his former associates with kindly feelings on all sides, said nothing, but, later, went away and joined the detested "Missionaries": nearly the entire church of which he was a member and the pastor going with him, in a body,.

On another occasion, and in a different community, at a "general meeting", a prominent minister was present, who for awhile had affiliated with the "Missionaries", but seeking restoration to the fellowship of his co-religionists was sitting in the pulpit among the preachers, when one of them rose up, laid his hand upon the offenders head, ruffled the gray hairs with his fingers and then raising his cupped palm to his nose, gave a disgusted sniff, and sneeringly said, "You smell like a goat! You've come back amongst the sheep, but you've been mixed up with the goats so long that you smell like 'em."

On the subject education, perhaps the old idea dominated their minds, that it was not necessary for men to do anything in the way of preparation for The Lord's work, but that the Lord could and would use preachers and people in the carrying out of His purposes, regardless of ignorance and lack of training. Perhaps some of them had, in common with many out-spoken antinomian Anti-missionaries, mistaken the language of Jehovah God to Israel, in warning against idolatry, in the 81st Psalm, "Open wide they mouth and I will fill it". This writer once heard an "uneducated" Missionary Baptist

minister say, of himself, that when he felt called to preach", he settled the question of his ignorance as a hindrance, upon that very idea. Said he, "I thought that all I'd have to do would be to get up in the pulpit and ther'd be a sort of a spiritual funnel on top of my head, with the Spirit reaching down, through into my mouth, an' then The Lord would pour the words that He'd want me to speak into the hopper o' the funnel an' they'd run down through the spout into my mouth an' I'd let 'em fly. Well, I got up in that pulpit and sure enough the funnel was there. But the wrong end of it was up!" That man stopped trying to preach until his wife had taught him to read and he had learned, after a fashion, to write. At the very next meeting education was brought up and Mercer University is a result of this.

... is in the process of
 History.

... the book written by the Georgia
 Historical Society in 1958 they stated
 that two Baptist came to Ga. January 15,
 along with other faiths, on the ship with
 in Charleston, South Carolina.
 Calvert is known as the earliest known
 Baptist on record.

As more territory was added to the frontier

*July Church
Period 1800-1860 B3*
TELEPHONE
YUKON 5-4557

Small Claims Court
of Colquitt County
Moultrie, Georgia

churches

*Re Long Branch Baptist Church
then in Thomas Co. now in 1906 in Colquitt*
October 22, 1966

Dear Julien:

You asked me to write the wording for a presentation of that Long Branch Church commemorative plate. This was not easy and it required considerable thought. I know how you try to stay in the background, but it is necessary to tell how and why you got the plate and why it is being given to the First Baptist Church.

Perhaps you should have this copied in blacker type, and better centered on the page of the paper. Certainly it should bear your signature in permanent black ink. And by all means it should be framed, with a simple and narrow black molding. You say there is a wire rack on which the plate can be set for display. I have seen such racks. The presentation statement should hang or set beside, behind or above the plate. I can't figure that out.

Before you discard the idea of this sort of presentation, or change it in any way, I want you to bear in mind that what is here stated is absolute fact and all the dates are absolutely correct. It is recorded that your father was 5 years old [in 1867] when he witnessed the baptizing of his parents at Long Branch; and it is further recorded that Cairo Baptist Church was constituted in 1874. The statement of service and contributions over a period of 99 years keeps it from appearing that this plate was given to you solely on account of your more recent gifts. We know that our grandparents served and contributed liberally to the support of Long Branch Church and it is reasonable to believe that Dr. Roddenbery continued to do so (perhaps in a lesser way) as long as he lived. Then too, I am sure your father made various contributions to that Church, as well to numbers of others.

I think it fortunate that this plate was given to you. This affords an opportunity to make known to the present generation and to preserve for posterity quite a number of things. First, it records that Long Branch Church was established 121 years ago, in 1845; and that Cairo Baptist Church was started in 1874 by members of Long Branch Church. Then, also, it stands as a constant and lasting reminder that our grandparents were moving spirits in the establishment of the Cairo Baptist Church. So this is an opportunity we would not have had if that plate had not been given to you.

To be historically correct, we must use both names of the Cairo church, first the Cairo Baptist Church and now the First Baptist Church of Cairo. But in reality, it is not the first, and I believe recent corporate limit extensions now place Long Branch inside the City of Cairo.

Decide for yourself on the time and place of this presentation; and how you will get it recorded in the Church Minutes.

Your cousin,

*This about a plaque given me
Commemorating Long Branch Church
Constituted 1845*
R.S.R.

Dear Allen:

October 18, 1966

Re: Long Branch Baptist Church
organized 1845

Yours of yesterday. Our book "Genesis of Cairo" will show that nearly all the charter members of Cairo Baptist Church were former members of the Long Branch Church. My sketches on these two churches were written and approved some months ago. Much of what I wrote is from information given by Papa, some of it from Mercer University library and other places, and some from the book written by Dr. R. H. Harris. In every instance, my final sketches have been checked and approved by Papa; and I think practically all of them have been checked by you.

Without going back to my files now, I know that Cairo Baptist Church was organized by members of Long Branch Church. Though I tried, we have not been able to get a full list of the original members of Cairo Baptist Church. There is no such roster in existence. But, in addition to our grandparents, we know that George T. Hurst, Dr. D. H. Wilmot, and others I will not here take time to mention, who were members of Long Branch, organized and established the Cairo Church. So you may say that Long Branch was the "mother church" of the Cairo Church. However, it would not be correct to say it was a "mission" of the Long Branch Church.

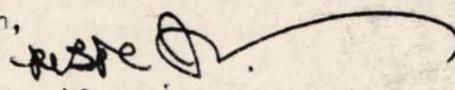
The Methodists had "missions" in those days and still do. But every Baptist church, however big or little, was an independent organization. They are still independent, but that independence has in late years been somewhat modified by adherence to rules and regulations of "associations" and to the Southern Baptist and Georgia Baptist conventions. But back there, there was no Home Mission Board or anything of the kind; and every church got its support from its own members.

Back in those days, and today, members of an established church would obtain "letters of dismissal" for the stated purpose of organizing another church of like faith and order, naming the church being organized. That is what happened in the organization of the Cairo Baptist Church. But the Cairo church never got any financial support from Long Branch. There were doubtless a few other Baptists in the Cairo village who did not belong to the Long Branch Church and who joined in the organization of the Cairo Baptist Church, but they could be counted on the fingers of one hand.

As you know, our grandparents were baptized into the Long Branch Church. Before then, Grandma had been a "hardshell", but Dr. Roddenbery had never joined a church (though his father Robert Roddenbery was a Missionary Baptist belonging to the Friendship Church (about a mile southeast of present Metcalf), the oldest missionary Baptist church in Thomas County). Dr. Roddenbery was Church Clerk of Long Branch immediately before organization of the Cairo church.

It was a splendid gesture for them to give you one of those commemorative plates [commemorating the 1845 establishment of Long Branch Church] and I believe it would be proper for you to give it to Cairo Baptist Church with the distinct understanding that they are to keep and preserve it as a memorial of their own "mother church". The plate should be so identified with the proper writing attached or near it, and put in a conspicuous place. And I believe you should publicly present it at a church service, or at a regular conference meeting, and let the present membership know where they came from. Few of them know it now. If they knew, I believe they would appreciate it.

your cousin,



R. S. Roddenbery, Jr.

The proper identification of this plate should be recorded in the Minutes of Cairo Baptist Church.

I have a newspaper clipping of the obituary of our grandmother Roddenbery telling of her baptism into Long Branch Church and also naming her as the moving spirit in the organization of the first Womens Missionary Society of the Cairo Baptist Church.

49

98
Re Long Branch Baptist Church
Trade-Size Stagecoach
on road in 1840
built here in 1986

October 17, 1966

MEMO TO RSR, JR.

The Long Branch Missionary Baptist Church on the Bainbridge-Thomasville Stagecoach Road, about a mile and a half west of our Cross Roads was re-built entirely, in fact, the old one torn down in 1963. We made a fair size donation, for there was a sentimental interest in it.

Mr. L. G. Tyus, who is a deacon and maybe the treasurer, brought in to me a plate about the size of a dinner plate on which was painted, or printed it is, of course, a picture of their church and it was a rectangular without a steeple, didn't look good. Underneath it, it gave the name of the church and "1845 - 1963." He said he thought I might want it, and of course I told him yes. They had bought 100 of them and that was the last one, but wanted me to have it. There is a wire that it can be set up on the wall.

It isn't something I can take the scarce and valuable space in a Library for, and anyway we shouldn't start it. ~~It~~ If we ever have an office with plenty wall space, I might put it in our office with an explanation sticker typed underneath it, that this was the church Dr. and Mfs. S. A. Roddenbery were members in up to the time they moved down to Cairo, to the Baptist Church here.

Now the main thing is, I would like for you to ask Uncle Bob if the Cairo Church was formed considerably or largely by members from that Long Branch Church, or was it formed just by Baptist having come here from all directions? We call it now a "mission," that is, when one church starts another one, I believe. Usually it is a split off because of disagreement among we Baptist, you know, but not always.

Does he know if our church was a mission church, or a friendly split off from the Long Branch Church? I don't know of another old Missionary Baptist Church near Cairo, but he may.

If such as the above were true, I might put something underneath this, or paste it on it and give it to the Baptist Church for them to put in their study. That is, if they would want it, and they might not want it.

It's not as nice looking as some churches, for I guess it was a poor community. I've seen some churches, and one near Beachton, that had a nice steeple, reasonably nice entrance.

We played your Moultrie team on Friday night, October 7th and it was a fine football game. We were ahead up to the middle of the fourth quarter but a field goal put them two points ahead and then in our opening up to try and score, they made another touchdown. However, I see that Moultrie was massacred by Valdosta, and I wouldn't be surprised that the hard game that we gave them put them not in best of shape. It has been working the other way, for several times we played Moultrie, namely, their manpower, they beat us up pretty bad. Four years ago they put three of our boys out of commission and they hurt our season. This time, however, our boys stood it all right. You have nearly two good football players to our one, so our one good team can't interest a large school like Moultrie and Valdosta, and we play them infrequently. We have a good team and our last two games, Thomasville and Bainbridge, and if we can win those two games we will be the South Georgia champion

10/17/66

and will have to play a team from over around Savannah, and then a North Georgia team if we win that one.

I hope Uncle Bob is getting along well.

While writing, I still have memorandums I have had on my desk for several months to go to Thomasville and Bainbridge, as well as the Cairo Messenger here and get you some information about Grady County, for there is a lot of it that's interesting, and I will let you pick out what you want to use. As I understand it, that's the last thing you expected from me.

JBR

MERCER UNIVERSITY

MACON, GEORGIA

June 18, 1965
June 21, 1965

Robert S. Roddenbery, Jr.
Small Claims Court of Colquitt County
Moultrie, Georgia
Mr. Daniel Lamar Metts, Jr.
Mercer University Librarian
Macon, Georgia

Dear Mr. Metts:

Thank you and Mrs. Overby very much for your letter of June 18 with comprehensive information on Long Branch Baptist Church and the first four years of Cairo Baptist Church.

With the data submitted by you and information already in hand from other sources, I have prepared a tentative sketch for incorporation in my soon to be published "Genesis of Cairo". It is hoped that this may spur others to delve more thoroughly into the history of this Long Branch Church.

I am enclosing a copy of this tentative sketch and you may want to file it with your records on the subject pending publication and distribution of Genesis of Cairo.

Daniel Lamar Metts, Jr.
Sincerely yours,

Daniel Lamar Metts, Jr.
Librarian

R/S

R. S. Roddenbery, Jr.

enc.

MERCER UNIVERSITY

MACON, GEORGIA

June 18, 1965

Robert S. Roddenbery, Jr.
Small Claims Court of Colquitt County
Moultrie, Georgia

Dear Mr. Roddenbery:

Thank you for your letter of June 14 concerning the Long Branch and Cairo churches. The American Baptist Register for 1852 does not list the Long Branch Church, but it is listed in the Taylor Association minutes as having been organized in 1845, as you thought. I am enclosing a copy of a report by Mrs. Overby of our staff giving what information we could find on both churches. I hope this will be of some help to you.

Yours very truly,

Daniel Lamar Metts, Jr.
Daniel Lamar Metts, Jr.
Librarian

M/w

enc.

June 14, 1965

Librarian
Mercer University Library
Macon, Georgia

Re: Cairo Baptist Church
and
Long Branch Baptist Church

My dear Sir:

Long Branch Church, situated a mile north of Cairo, is believed to be the oldest missionary Baptist church in Grady County, and present members say they believe it was constituted about 1845. The church (with old cemetery) is still in its original location, which was in Thomas County before 1906 when Grady County was formed and organized. Certain members of Long Branch Church (including my paternal grandparents) organized and constituted the present Cairo (First) Baptist Church in the 1870s.

It is my desire to know the exact date when Cairo Baptist Church was constituted and organized, the names of its original members, and names of its pastors (in order) prior to 1900. Of equal importance is my desire to know (as nearly as possible) the exact date when Long Branch Church was constituted, and names of its pastors prior to 1875.

The foregoing information is needed for incorporation in an abbreviated history of Cairo and vicinity (prior to 1900), which I am publishing under the title of "Genesis of Cairo" and which is nearing the stage for printing.

I am enclosing copies of two letters to me, from Messrs. Arthur Hinson and W. J. Carswell under respective dates of May 6 and June 11, 1965, from which it will be seen that I am entirely dependent upon you.

If there is expense connected with this research, please advise and I will gladly pay same.

Sincerely,

R. S. Roddenbery, Jr.

SAVANNAH, GEORGIA

June 19, 1965

June 11, 1965

Mr. Julien B. Roddenbery, Sr.
Cairo, Georgia

Re: Cairo Baptist Church
Long Branch Baptist Church
Barnett's Creek Baptist Church

Judge Robert S. Roddenbery, Jr.
Small Claims Court, Colquitt County
Moultrie, Georgia

Dear Julien:

I have gotten some valuable information from the Library of Mercer University. I will work this up into the proper shape very soon but here are some few of the important matters.

Cairo Baptist Church was organized and constituted in 1874 and J^{oshua} Martin was its first pastor. We know from other sources that Dr. Roddenbery and wife and others from Long Branch Church constituted its first membership.

According to records of the Taylor Baptist Association, Long Branch Baptist Church was organized in 1845 (which is the date we had been told). The earliest record of names of pastors and clerks for Long Branch Church shows that G. T. Hurst was pastor and S. A. Roddenbery was clerk in 1868 and in 1872 James H. McAfee was pastor and S. A. Roddenbery still clerk. In 1874, the year Cairo Baptist Church was organized, G. W. Hall was pastor and L. A. Clay was clerk of Long Branch. Another interesting fact is that for the years 1878 through 1880 R. H. Harris is shown as pastor of Long Branch.

Other information furnished me shows that Barnett's Creek Baptist Church was one of the earliest in what is now Grady County. I don't have the date of its organization but in 1879 Barnett's Creek had 187 members and Long Branch had 173. Another interesting thing, in 1899 Long Branch had a membership of 172 and Bainbridge only had 171 (one less).

I have your letters regarding Colonel William J. Powell and ^{Wright} and Browns drug store about which I will write later.

Yours sincerely,

Sincerely,

W. J. Carswell

R. S. Roddenbery, Jr.

Savannah Baptist Association

SAVANNAH, GEORGIA 31401

313 Harris Street, East

Phone 233-3085
(Area Code 912)

W. J. CARSWELL
Missionary

Cooperating with
Georgia Baptist Convention
and
Southern Baptist Convention

June 11, 1965

Judge Robert S. Roddenbery, Jr.
Small Claims Court, Colquitt County
Moultrie, Georgia

Dear Judge Roddenbery:

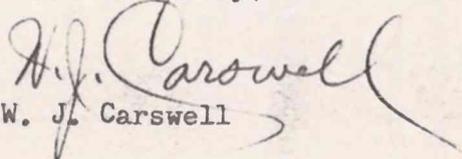
Your letter of June 9, 1965 has been received, also a copy of the letter from Arthur Hinson of May 6 to you.

I regret to have to say that I have no information on the Long Branch Church near Cairo. There is need for Baptist historical research in all sections of our state. I am glad to know that another person is interested in this work. Some good work has been done in this line, but we need many more who will do real spade work.

If you or someone else wishes to search this out, I suggest an examination of the minutes of the associations of which this church has been a member, tracing the church from the younger bodies to the older ones. This might lead back to contemporary evidence on the date of the constitution of this church. The clerks of those associations should have files of the minutes. The library of Mercer University has a relatively complete collection of minutes of the various Baptist associations in Georgia. These may be consulted.

I am sorry that I cannot be of any immediate help to you. I trust that you will be successful in finding the desired information. If there is anything further in which you think I might be of service to you, please call on me.

Yours sincerely,


W. J. Carswell

Associational and City Missions — Sunday School — Training Union — Woman's Missionary Union
Brotherhood — Church Music

"Unto All the Nations, Beginning from Jerusalem"

The Executive Committee



The Baptist Convention of the State of Georgia

SEARCY S. GARRISON, Executive Secretary - Treasurer

BAPTIST BUILDING • 291 PEACHTREE STREET, N. E. • ATLANTA 3, GEORGIA

ARTHUR HINSON
ASST. EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

May 6, 1965

Judge Robert S. Roddenbery, Jr.
Small Claims Court, Colquitt County
Moultrie, Georgia

*Long Branch Church
1845*

Dear Sir:

This letter is in response to yours of May 3, 1965, to Dr. Searcy S. Garrison. Dr. Garrison has requested me to respond to your letter due to my responsibility with the History Committee of the Georgia Baptist Convention.

We have searched the records here in Georgia Baptist Convention Office for any information concerning the organization of Long Branch Baptist Church. Neither the Minutes of the Georgia Baptist Convention nor the Histories of the Georgia Baptist Convention give any information about the Long Branch Church.

We did find in the Encyclopedia of Southern Baptist Convention, published a few years ago, that the Grady County Baptist Association was organized at Long Branch Church, November 22, 1911. This is recorded in Vol. 1, p. 549 of the Southern Baptist Encyclopedia.

It is altogether possible that the Library at Mercer University has some history or historical sketch in the Associational Minutes that could help you. If there was a Centennial History of the Association, a copy of this should be in the Library at Mercer.

The files of the Christian Index are not indexed and almost impossible to locate any news item or historical account in the early years.

You might write to Rev. W. J. Carswell, 313 East Harris St., Savannah, Georgia, and see if he could help you with this information. He is perhaps the best informed person on Georgia Baptist History. He also has considerable historical material.

We regret that we have not been able to find more information for you.

Dr. Garrison asked me to thank you for writing, and to give you his sincere greetings.

Sincerely,

Arthur Hinson

AH:sw

5/3/65

JBR: In re: Long Branch

I talked with Mrs. Tyus again. She said the oldest records she has only goes back to 1903. It seems some records were burned in a church fire once, and then too, not having a place to keep records they had not been preserved.

She found two old minute books being thrown away and saved them is why she has the two books at her home now.

Mr. Hatcher is church clerk but he only has the current minute book.

She will inquire to see if anyone else has better information.

- - - -

In our (Presbyterian) church we have a Historical Foundation at Montreat N. C. where we could likely get such information. Wouldn't the Baptist Church likely have a foundation at headquarters for the Southern Baptist Convention, or whatever the name is?

- - - - -

Also, is it likely that the historian of First Baptist Church in Cairo might have names of those who withdrew from Long Branch to organize Cairo church?

MCA

Sincerely yours,

E. S. Holladay, Jr.

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*Long Branch Church
1845*

April 30, 1965

May 3, 1965

Dr. Searcy S. Garrison
Executive Secretary
Georgia Baptist Convention
Atlanta, Georgia

Long Branch Church

Dear Sir:

Within the next few weeks I will publish a short history of the earliest days of Cairo, Georgia, and vicinity under the title "Genesis of Cairo", covering the period from about 1860 through 1905 when Grady County was created. Cairo became an incorporated town in 1870, and in 1872 my father (now 97 years old) and his family moved into the town from their home 4 miles northwest of town. So most of this story is largely within the memory of my father, who is collaborating with me in the work.

Long Branch Baptist Church was then and is now located about 2 miles north of the present Grady County courthouse and most of the founding members of the Cairo Baptist Church, including my grandparents, were former members of Long Branch Church.

It is my information that Long Branch Church was constituted in 1845 and is perhaps the oldest missionary Baptist church in Grady County. I would like this confirmed, or corrected. But I particularly want to know the names of pastors of Long Branch Baptist Church between 1860 and 1875. At the time of their centennial observance I understand your office was furnished with, or obtained, some detailed information about the organization and constituting of this Church, with names of its original officers and members and earliest pastors. I will appreciate as much detailed information as possible in this regard and I am enclosing a return addressed envelope for your convenience.

You may not remember me, though I have had the pleasure of meeting you, and, in 1932, I made the commencement address at Ochlochnee High School while your father was principal thereof.

Sincerely yours,

R. S. Roddenbory, Jr.

Long Branch Church
1845

April 30, 1965

MEMO TO RSR, JR.

As things come to me I will pass them on at once, for I know you have a file to put such information in and can make use of it when you are ready for it. So I enclose herewith a memo that Mrs. Myrtle Allen, my secretary, has gotten for me.

You will note that Long Branch Church was organized 1845 and that sounds maybe about right. Since the pastors they mentioned are of recent modern times, I am sure you wouldn't use the name, for instance, Mr. Taylor. I remember Mr. Taylor and he was no outstanding man. And his daughter was Mrs. Hugh Cannon who Uncle Bob will remember. If we used pastors names that late, unless they are in connection with our own church, you would have dozens maybe to mention. But all of this will be up to you.

Taylor was the pastor a good long while ago but it was 37 years after the organization so there were no doubt several pastors between 1845 and 1882.

JBR

In the period during the Civil War and afterwards to 1900, Long Branch Church had one of the largest memberships in the Synod Association. In 1879 the Association churches had a total of 2,104 members (11 of which were Negroes); Barnett's Creek Church had 137 members and Long Branch had 173. In that year Long Branch led with 44 baptisms. 20 years later, in 1899, Long Branch led in membership with 172, while Bainbridge was a close second with 170 members. Note that this was 25 years after the Cairo Baptist Church was organized.

Dr. A. A. Roddenberry had never joined any church and his wife had been raised a Primitive Baptist. In 1867 their eldest son, then 5 years old, was baptized and united with the Long Branch Baptist Church, and from 1868 to 1874 (when Cairo Baptist Church was organized) Dr. Roddenberry was the church clerk. He was succeeded as clerk by L. A. Clay and he was followed by S. N. Hamilton.

From 1868 to 1871, George T. Havel was pastor of Long Branch Church and was succeeded in 1871 by James K. Miller, who served 1 1/2 years and was succeeded by G. W. Hall for one year, and he was succeeded by S. A. Proctor for two years; and in 1877 James K. Miller was again pastor for one year. From 1878 to 1880 K. A. Harris was the pastor. James K. Harris, who was principal of the Cairo school, was ordained a minister in the Synod Association in 1878 and, while still a teacher, he was pastor of both of these churches. In 1880 Dr. H. Moore became clerk of Long Branch Church.

Though Long Branch Church has continuously functioned for 120 years to the present, and is still a dominant force, we leave it for others to obtain and record its full history. A. S. Barnett's Creek Church, mentioned herein, was established on the old Thomasville to Bainbridge stage road, just east of Barnett's Creek and near Vanderpost Bridge, and it is still in Thomas County. Bold Spring Church is west of Barnett's Creek in Grady County and about two miles north of the old Thomasville to Bainbridge stage road.

R.S.R., JR.

W. H. ...
JUN 21, 1965

Long Branch Baptist Church

Long Branch Baptist Church

Long Branch Baptist Church, constituted in 1845, ranks with the oldest missionary Baptist churches in what is now Grady County. It was the mother church of the present First Baptist Church of Cairo which was established by a group of Long Branch members in 1874. For some seven years after the coming of the railroad and commencement of the new town of Cairo, Long Branch was the only Baptist church in that vicinity and quite a number of the founding fathers of the present city of Cairo were members thereof. The graves of some of the oldest settlers are in this church cemetery. Long Branch Church, still in its original location, is now just outside the northern city limits of Cairo. When established it was in the far western edge of Thomas County, situated on the old Thomasville to Bainbridge stage road and about a mile east of what is now known as "Roddenbery Cross Roads", and half or more of its members then resided in Decatur County. Its history prior to the Civil War is obscure, but it is listed in the minutes of the Taylor Baptist Association as having been organized in 1845. Names of first pastors not of record.

In 1858, Long Branch Church was admitted into the Bowen Baptist Association (comprised of churches in a half dozen counties) and remained therein until the Grady County Baptist Association was organized, which organizational meeting was held at Long Branch Church, Nov. 22, 1911. See Vol. 1, p. 549 of the Southern Baptist Encyclopedia; also, pp. 8 through 11 of "A Brief History of the Bowen Association, 100 Years of Progress, 1856-1956", in Mercer University Library.

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From 1868 to 1872, George T. Hurst was pastor of Long Branch Church and was succeeded in 1872 by James H. McAfee, who served two years and was succeeded by G. W. Hall for one year, and he was succeeded by S. S. Proctor for two years, and in 1877 James H. McAfee was again pastor for one year. From 1878 to 1880 R. H. Harris was the pastor. ~~Robert H. Harris, while principal of the Cairo school, was ordained a minister by Bold Spring Baptist Church and, while still a teacher, he was pastor of both of these churches.~~ In 1880 W. M. Moore became clerk of Long Branch Church.

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Original

Revised
JUN 21, 1965

Robert H. Harris, while principal of the Cairo school, was ordained a minister and, while still a teacher, he served as preacher and pastor for both the Long Branch and the Bold Springs Baptist Churches. In 1880 W.M. Moore became clerk of Long Branch Church.

Churches
The Cairo and Long Branch
during the last 2/3 of 19th century

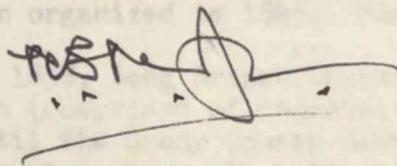
Sherling Printers

116 NORTH MAIN -- PHONE 985-3908
MOULTRIE, GEORGIA

Dear Julien:

This should about "wrap up" the story on Long Branch Church. The stated names of pastors and clerks is authentic from records in library at Mercer University, but there our name is spelled Roddenbury.

Please comment on sufficiency or insufficiency of this sketch. This particular sketch will followed by one on Cairo Baptist Church, which will not be more than half this long.



June 21, 1965

In the period during the Civil War and afterwards to 1900, Long Branch Church had one of the largest memberships in the Bowen Association. In 1879 the Association churches had a total of 2,144 members (11 of which were Negroes); Barnett's Creek Church had 187 members and Long Branch had 173. In that year Long Branch led with 44 baptisms. **20** years later, in 1899, Long Branch led in membership with 172, while Bainbridge was a close second with 171 members. Note that this was 25 years after the Cairo Baptist Church was organized.

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HES

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It was admitted into the Bowen Baptist Association (which covered a half dozen counties) and remained in the Bowen Association until the Bowen Association was organized, which was in 1911. See the history of Long Branch Church, Nov. 22, 1911. See the Encyclopedia; also, pp. 8 through 11 of the publication, 100 Years of Progress, 1856-

War and afterwards to 1900, Long

Sherling
JUN 21, 1965

CHURCHES

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W. H. Roddenbery
JUN 21, 1965



MEMBERS OF THE W.D. Mitchell Camp of Sons of Confederate Veterans fired a salute to veterans during a program at Long Branch Baptist Church, Saturday afternoon, honoring "The Defenders of Freedom". (Staff photo)

Long Branch celebrating an historical milestone

Long Branch Missionary Baptist Church, one of Grady County's oldest churches, has been celebrating its 150th anniversary, this year, with a series of special events and programs, the latest being a memorial service held Saturday afternoon honoring Confederate veterans and all other military service veterans buried in the church's cemetery.

Graves of twenty-three Confederate veterans plus those of veterans of the Mexican War, World Wars I and II, Korea, Vietnam and peacetime military service have been identified and marked in the Long Branch cemetery, identification information coming from a variety of sources.

Confederate veterans buried in Long Branch Cemetery include Joel Albritton, William Allen, William R. Baggett, William Barwick, J.S. Bodiford, William E. Cannon, Lucious A. Clay, Jasper N. Davis, John W. Davis, L.C. Davis Sr., William B. Dunlap, Ancel L. Ferrell, Burrell H. Griffin, Thomas P. Levar, Bartley J. Mathis, J.E. McManus, Reed Napier, Edgar E. Reynolds, Edward F. Richter, Lewis Johnson Rigsby, Wiley Taylor Rigsby, Edward E. Sholar and E.R. Willis. Although not buried at Long Branch, G.W. Wynn, who was killed at Gettysburg, was also among those honored.

Saturday's service at the cemetery included marking veterans' graves with flags, the firing of a salute by representatives of the W.D. Mitchell Camp of Sons of Confederate Veterans; and the blowing of taps by Jaclyn Voyles and Laura McCorkle.

The prior program inside the church included a welcome by Long Branch pastor, Rev. A.C. Gilliard, presentation of the United States, Georgia and Confederate flags by Gary Hatcher, Patrick Outzs and Joe

Cragmiles; lighting of the candles by Gwendalyn Clark and musical selections by Steve Clawson, minister of music at Dawson Street Baptist Church in Thomasville.

Brief reviews of America's military activities from the Revolution to the Persian Gulf were presented by Myrtice Tyson, Gene Radney, Kenneth McLendon, Ruth Albritton, Patricia Gainey, O.B. Hughes, Lewis Tyus, John Tillis and Jim Carver.

Special activities to mark Long Branch Church's sesquicentennial began last December with celebration of an old fashioned Christmas by church members.

In June, Homecoming was observed with a service and dinner on the ground, many members adding to the experience by dressing as earlier members would have been dressed. Prior to the service, about sixty "middle aged" members and former members gathered for an evening of conversation and reminiscing, a very special and enjoyable event for those participating.

In October, a brush arbor revival meeting was held with preaching on three nights, then a Sunday service. The 150th anniversary observance will conclude with another Old Fashioned Christmas this year.

At every regular service during the year, some feature relating to the special anniversary has been emphasized.

Although no documents have been found to provide the proof, members of Long Branch Missionary Baptist Church are convinced the church originated during the early 1845 visit of Rev. William Gullin Johnson, pastor of Columbia (S.C.) Baptist Church, to this area.

For three months, beginning in late January, 1845, Rev. Johnson met with seven of the fourteen Baptist Associations in the Thomasville/

Tallahassee/Bainbridge area to preach on missions.

Church papers and church history indicate the strong possibility that Long Branch was organized during this period, a period that experienced much controversy between what is now known as the Primitive Baptist Church and the newly organized Missionary Baptist Church.

Because many people in the area believed in missions, Long Branch was organized as a Missionary Baptist Church.

It is a matter of record that, in 1851, Long Branch was a member of the Florida Association and had twenty-four members being served by Rev. B. Wynn from Monticello, Fla. as pastor.

It is believed that the church building was first located on the banks of Little Tired Creek where the Thomasville-Bainbridge stage road crossed the creek at Cannon Ford. The present church building is located just a short distance from Cannon Ford on property given to the church by W.T. and Ruth Barber.

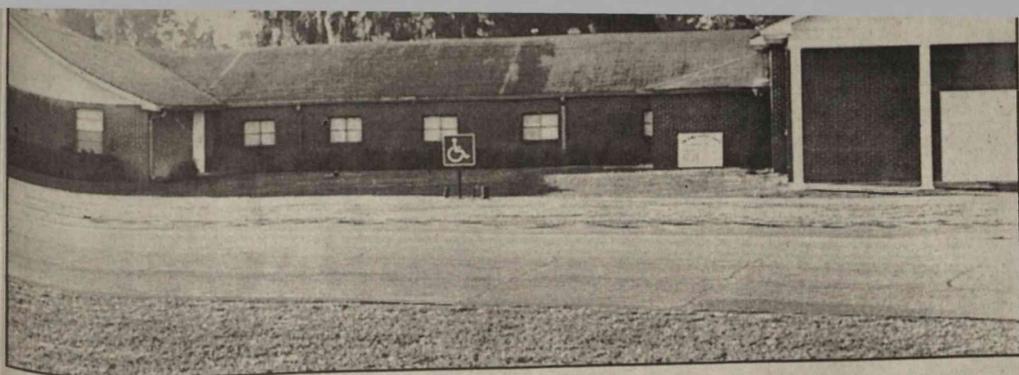
By 1853, the church had grown to 33 members. Between that year and 1867 few records have been found relating to its history. It is known, however, that the church had one of the largest memberships in the Bowen Association, which it joined in 1858. By 1870, the church membership number 80; a Sunday School with thirty "scholars" and four teachers superintended by J.P. Smith; a Bible Class; and a library that had seventy-eight books and fourteen copies of "Childs Delight".

In 1867, with the coming of the railroad, a new town, Cairo, began developing around a depot about two miles south of Long Branch Church and, seven years later -- in 1874 -- twelve members of the church asked for their letters in order to organize the Cairo Baptist Church (now First Baptist). Among them were Dr. S.A. Roddenbery and members of his family, Dr. D.H. Wilmot and Rev. Joshua Martin, a former Long Branch pastor.

Other earlier pastors of the church were Rev. George T. Hurst, Rev. James H. McAfee, Rev. G.W. Hall, Rev. S.S. Proctor, Rev. Robert H. Harris, Rev. James Albert Smith, Rev. George F. Taylor (who served for 20 years), Rev. J.P. Swann and Rev. F.O. Oates.

Long Branch also contributed to organization of another Cairo Church -- Eastside Baptist. In 1937, Long Branch pastor, Rev. Williamson, saw the need for another church in the town so he made plans to begin one in the Morningside community. He resigned and several families asked for their letters from Long Branch to join him in establishing the new congregation in Cairo.

According to records on hand, Long Branch followed very strict rules during the early years, requiring members to follow them or face



Long Branch Missionary Baptist Church (Staff photo)

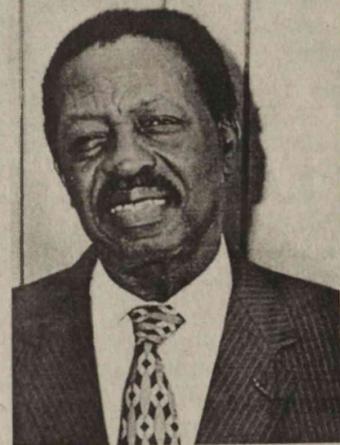
and all other forms of behavior the church considered unacceptable.

As the church has grown in membership and activities, its physical plant has also grown from the plain double-doored frame structure originally on the present site to the current modern brick church and its annexes.

Long Branch Missionary Baptist Church currently has 330 members. Rev. A.C. Gilliard has served as its pastor since 1979. During this 150th anniversary year, the Long Branch congregation has added a new steeple to the church building on Long Branch Road, extended the front of the building, added a porch and constructed a drive-through at the end of the church annex.

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YOU
VOTERS
OF DIST. 1**



I truly appreciate your vote of confidence in me. I will work diligently to uphold that faith.

As your city councilman, please feel free to call on me anytime that I can be of assistance. No problem is too large that through team work we can not solve.

I look forward to serving the good people of not only District 1, but the entire City of Cairo!

SAMPSON BELL, JR.

Happy Thanksgiving!



As we gather together this week to celebrate Thanksgiving, the directors and staff of Cairo Banking Company would like to take this time to say thank you for banking with us.

Cairo and Grady County's oldest financial institution continues to serve the local community and has been successful because of our valuable, loyal customers.

Thanks for being a part of our banking family. We hope your holiday is a meaningful one for you and yours.

CAIRO Banking Company

ESTABLISHED 1900

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you had ONE PERSON to handle your INSURANCE needs?

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**Belton Dykes
Neal Bagget
Wally Smith**



HELPING YOU is what we do best.
AUTO • HOME • LIFE

This memorial plate, commemorating the 1845 establishment of Long Branch Baptist Church, was given to Julien B. Roddenbery, Sr. in recognition of

service and contributions to that Church by the Roddenbery family over a period of 99 years, dating back to the time when Dr. Seaborn A. Roddenbery and his wife were baptized and became members of that Church in the year of 1867.

This recipient believes that this commemorative plate should be placed in the keeping of the First Baptist Church of Cairo as a memento of the fact that this Long Branch Baptist Church was and is the mother church of the Cairo Baptist Church which was constituted in 1874.

In that year of 1874 a group of members of the Long Branch Baptist Church, including the aforesaid grandparents of this recipient, organized and established the Cairo Baptist Church, now called the

First Baptist Church of Cairo. And so, in this year of 1966, this plate is presented and placed in the keeping of this offspring Church.

from an old picture and

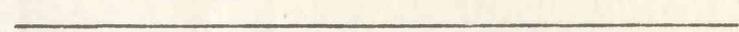
at the time of a complete remodeling & enlarging of the old church as a historic memento of the early days of this church. Many present members has duplicates of

The Seaborn A. Roddenbery
The Board of Deacons of the Cairo First Baptist Church accept the

plate as a memento to commemorate the fact that this Long Branch Baptist Church then in Thomas family

(including Dr. Seaborn A. Roddenbery & his wife who were baptized & became members in 1867)

This plate was made in 1966



LONG BRANCH BAPTIST CHURCH

Both Mrs. Gwen Tyus and Mr. Rob Hinson told me the church was organized 1845. They had reason to check this up about two years ago and that date was established.

Neither knew names of first pastors, but both mentioned that Mr. George Taylor (father of Mrs. Hugh Cannon) was a beloved pastor for 28 years.

Mrs. Tyus found that Mr. Taylor was pastor until September 24, 1910, and then Mr. J. P. Swann became pastor on Oct. 21, 1910. This would mean that Taylor began his pastorate in 1882.

MCA

Long Branch Baptist Church , Grady County (formerly Thomas County)
Taylor

According to information given to the ~~Bowen~~ Baptist Association dated 1916 the date of organization given the association by the church is 1845.

This church was a part of the Bowen Baptist Association which was organized in 1858. We do not have the minutes for this association for the years 1858-67, 1871, 1882-86, 1888.

The churches in the Bowen Association came from the Bethel Association as listed on attached sheet. We find no record of this church in the minutes of the Bethel association before 1885 or after that date. We also checked an Associational history for Bethel Association and there is no mention of Long Branch Baptist church here. The dates of the history cover from 1833 and on.

I have also checked a History of the Bowen Association with a history of the churches and it is not listed there either. Of course, this would include the churches that were still in the association at the time the history was written. (A Brief History of the Bowen Association, 100 Years of Progress 1856-1956.)

In the Georgia Baptist Convention minutes for 1847 is a chart of the Associations and also a list of the churches in each association, county church located in, as well as other information. This church is not listed in this issue.

The following is a list of pastors and church clerks with the dates listed according the material in the Bowen Baptist Association. Our file on this association is incomplete.

	Pastors	Clerks
1868	G.T. Hurst	S.A. Roddenbury
1869-	not in our file	
1871	not in our file	
1872	James H. McAfee	St. Ann Roddenbury
1873	J.H. Mc	the rest of the page torn out of minutes
1874	G.W. Hall	L.A. Clay
1875	S.S. Proctor	L.A. Clay
1876	S.S. Proctor	G.W. McMillan
1877	James H McAfee	G.W. McMillan
1878	R.H. Harris	G.W. McMillan
1879	R.H. Harris	G.W. McMillan
1880	R.H. Harris	W.M. Moore

Bowen Baptist Association was taken into the Ga. Baptist Convention in 1869.

A Brief History of the
Bowen Association
100 years of Progress

1856 - 1956

OUR CHURCHES

- | | |
|----------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Milford (B) | 8. Antioch (D) |
| 2. Union (B) | 9. Hopewell (Ter) |
| 3. China Grove (M) | 10. Philadelphia (B) |
| 4. Mt. Olive (M) | 11. Blue Springs (Mil) |
| 5. Cypress Creek (B) | 12. Mt. Gilead |
| 6. Morgan | 13. Bethel (D) |
| 7. Mt. Carmel (D) | 14. Bainbridge (D) |

1856 These fourteen churches got their letters of dismission from the Bethel Association at Blakely on November 1, 1856, for the purpose of organizing the Bowen Association. Some days later thirteen of them did meet at Union Church in Baker County and perfect an Associational Organization.

- | | | |
|----------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 15. Pleasant Grove (T) | 53. Pelham (M) | 92. Hillside |
| 16. Macedonia | 54. Spring Hill | 93. Springfield |
| 17. Spring Creek (D) | 55. Union (Worth) | 94. Franklin |
| 18. Union (Mil) | 56. Whigham | 95. Cyrene |
| 19. Bethel (B) (Hard-Up) | 57. Pleasant Grove (T) | 96. Reno |
| 20. Barnett's Creek (T) | 58. The Groves (D) | 97. Macedonia |
| 21. Benevolence (E) | 59. Pleasant Hill (M) | 98. Pleasant Hill |
| 22. Cool Spring (Colquitt) | 60. Saloam (T) | 99. Faceville |
| 23. Cool Spring (T) | 61. Mt. Hebron (M) | 100. Jakin |
| 24. Camilla (M) | 62. Newton (B) | 101. Pilgrim's Rest |
| 25. China Grove (M) | 63. Oak Grove (D) | 102. Beulah Thomas |
| 26. Evergreen (M) | 64. New Salem | 103. Corinth |
| 27. Harmony (M) | 65. County Line (B) | 104. Cool Spring |
| 28. Hopeful (C) | 66. Bethany (B) | 105. Attapulus |
| 29. Lons Branch (T) | 67. Calvary (Ga.) (T) | 106. Pleasant Home |
| 30. Magnolia Springs (T) | 68. New Sardis | 107. Flat Creek |
| 31. Mt. Olive (M) | 69. Climax (D) | 108. Pine Grove |
| 32. Mt. Pleasant (D) | 70. Providences (D) | 109. Reynoldsville |
| 33. Mt. Piaga (D) | 71. Good Hope | 110. Ebenezer |
| 34. Mt. Zion (M) | 72. Forest | 111. Benevolence |
| 35. New Hope (Colquitt) | 73. Iron City | 112. Calvary (Bainbridge) |
| 36. Red Bluff (D) | 74. Colquitt | 113. Salem-Seminole (Bainbridge) |
| 37. Pine Hill (D) | 75. Brinson | 114. West Street (Bainbridge) |
| 38. Pleasant Hill (D) | 76. Eldorado | 115. Live Oak |
| 39. Salem (D) | 77. Donaldsonville | 116. Midway (T) |
| 40. Bethany (D) | 78. Shady Grove | 117. Spence Bridge (T) |
| 41. Friendship (M) | 79. Pleasant Hill | 118. Pine Level (T) |
| 42. Concordia (Florida) | 80. Mt. Olive (D) | 119. Antioch |
| 43. Hebron (Mil) | 81. Mt. Zion (D) | 120. Black Jack |
| 44. Notchaway (B) | 82. County Line (B) | |
| 45. Pleasant Spring (D) | 83. Bartlett's Creek | |
| 46. Gin Town | 84. Bovkin (Mil) | |
| 47. Fish Pond (D) | 85. Magnolia | |
| 48. Union (T) | 86. Union Springs | |
| 49. Summerhill (M) | 87. West Bainbridge | |
| 50. New Hope (D) | 88. Lela | |
| 51. Cairo (T) | 89. Hebron | |
| 52. Mt. Zion (M) | 90. Fountain Head | |
| | 91. Fowistown | |

CODE OF COUNTIES:

- (B)—Baker
(M)—Mitchell
(Mil)—Miller
(D)—Decatur
(T)—Thomas
(E)—Early

1874
County and Cairo in Thomas County (now Grady) were received.

In 1875 we met at Mt. Enon in Mitchell County. Two hundred and one (the first to pass the two hundred mark) baptisms were reported. Mt. Carmel, whose pastor was Rev. W. H. Hoggard of Camilla, led with twenty-five.

In 1876 we met at Salem in Decatur County. Spring Hill applied and was accepted, while Olive Grove, also a new applicant, was told to wait a while.

1886
The Pelham Church joined us when we met at Mt. Carmel in 1877. Once more Bethel, whose pastor was Rev. J. N. Jones, led in baptisms with twenty.

In 1879 at Camilla, Long Branch led with forty-four baptisms. We reported eleven colored members in five churches, 2,144 members in all. Barnett's Creek had 187 members; Long Branch had 173.

In 1884 the Association met at Concordia, Florida.

We met at Notchaway in Baker County in 1886, and Colquitt, Spence Bridge, and Pine Level were received into the Association. The Sabbath School Convention, comprising twenty-two flourishing schools, met early Sunday morning.

In 1888 we met at Calvary, Georgia, then in Decatur County.

We returned to Long Branch in 1891, where Bethel once again led in baptisms with twenty-three.

In 1892 we met again at hospitable Mt. Carmel, and Newton, Oak Grove, and New Salem all joined us.

We met at Magnolia Springs in 1895, and seven churches joined us, as follows: Bethany, Calvary, New Sardis, Climax, Providence, Goodhope, and Forest.

In 1896 Iron City and Pine Forest joined us, due in large measure to the efforts of our first Associational Missionary, Elder L. J. Crutcher.

Colquitt joined us again in 1898. For the first time the Bainbridge Church led in membership with 171 and in gifts with \$48.15.

✓ In 1899 Long Branch led in membership with 172, while Bainbridge still had 171. Only sixty-six baptisms were reported this year. Mt. Pleasant led with sixteen.

In 1900 "the letter from the Bainbridge Church failed to reach the Association on account of Brother C. C. Cliett's having taken sick on the road. He was enrolled as a messenger and stated that the letter and the funds would be forwarded, the letter to the clerk and the money to the treasurer." This year three churches sought the next meeting of the Association, with Bethel getting the nod over Barnett's Creek and Whigham.

There is copy of pages 10 and 11 from "A Brief History of the Bowen Association 1856-1956, but since the copy I made is not legible, I type it as below:

(from bottom of page 10)

The Association met at Pleasant Spring in Decatur County in 1874, and two new churches, Summerhill in Mitchell

(continued on page 11)

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