

Chapter 23 The Meeting House and Gethsemane Church

The Bethel, NC conference in 1829 at Bay River of Free Will Baptist Church ministers lists several churches in Craven County, among them, a church on Bachelor Creek. It was not identified as the Liberty Meeting House, however there were no other churches known to the Bachelor Creek area.

A conference in Martin County in 1853 lists ministers, among them Jeremiah Heath, Abram Taylor, and R. A. Wetherington. In 1856, the conference minutes indicate all ministers credentials passed examination except for R. A. Wetherington, a controversial minister for his day. Jeremiah Heath lived in the Core Creek area, and Abram Taylor, lived in Tuscarora. R. A. Wetherington's lineage and homeplace is unknown.

A conference in 1860 at Post Oak, Craven County decided R. A. Wetherington's credentials would be examined by committee and he subsequently refused to submit to the committee during the 1861 convention at Gum Swamp in Pitt Co.

A Confederate military map from the Civil War places several homes in the Tuscarora area and the Liberty Meeting House. During the Civil War, an 1864 Baptist conference meeting at Elm Grove in Pitt County names the Liberty (Meeting) church at Tuscarora, but no delegates from the church attended the conference due to the war.

Tradition has the old Liberty Meeting House located on or beside the site of present day Gethsemane cemetery. The building was used by both Methodists and Baptists congregations until the Methodists erected a church in Tuscarora about 1890.

In 1887, Oliver and Nannie Wetherington conveyed a tract to the Methodist church. ¹ An article from the New Bern Weekly Journal in March 1887 states that Rev. D. W. Porter, Methodist minister, preaches at Liberty Church once a month.² By the 1960s the small Tuscarora congregation had dwindled and also due to better transportation, members moved to other, larger churches in Craven County. Located on the Tuscarora- Rhems road, the church has been incorporated into a residence.



Figure 48
The Tuscarora Methodist Church

With the construction of the Methodist Church in the late 1880s, the Liberty Meeting House became a domain of the Free Will Baptists.

In 1884, the New Bern Weekly Journal reveals: ³

The Free Will Baptists held their quarterly meeting at Liberty last Saturday and Sunday. Elder Slaughter was present and conducted the meeting.

In 1885, the New Bern Weekly Journal reveals: ⁴

There is a small Sunday school here (Tuscarora), twas visited by our energetic Disciple friend, Dr. Harper, on last Sunday, who of course imparted a great deal of spirit and life in the exercises. Though it is just beginning, we have great hopes of its increase and prosperity. (Unknown religious denomination).

Also in 1887, Mrs. Bettie Charlton was teaching public school at the Liberty schoolhouse in Tuscarora. ⁵ This building was built in 1884 and also called Liberty.⁶

In 1890, Thomas E. and Mary Brinkley Outlaw (Thomas was a grandson of Solomon Wetherington 1761-1840) conveyed a tract of land in Tuscarora to William Tull Civils, Trustee for the Free Will Baptist church.⁷ The fate of the old Liberty building is unknown. Tradition has it was moved and incorporated in the present day Gethsemane church building, but the actual facts have not been determined.

The deed of 1890 is considered the starting date of the Gethsemane Free Will Baptist Church. Apparently the Baptist membership of the Liberty church rolled over in the new Gethsemane church. No records or membership roll of the Liberty church are known to exist.

The earliest church records for the Gethsemane church are Sunday school rolls from the 1890s, where the lists abound with Wetheringtons and their relations.

The first church adult membership list is dated 1916, but the list appears to have been annotated afterwards with death dates, etc., so the list likely represents the period around 1916 and not an enrollment at a specific date but an ongoing listing.



Photo courtesy of Lelar T. Speight

Figure 49 *Group at Gethsemane Church, circa 1914*

Abner B. Wetherington is kneeling at the left on the front row.



Photo by R. Allen Humphrey 2002

Figure 50 *The Gethsemane Free Will Baptist Church, 2002*

From The Gethsemane FWB Church Records ⁸

The membership roll dated 1916 listed only the names and a few death dates. The list had been annotated below with further detail on the members.

Details on the September 23, 1916 Revised List of 44 male members: ⁹

Archibald Adams – resident of Tuscarora and father of William Allen Adams. Buried in the Stewart cemetery.

Cannon Lee Adams – son of William Allen Adams and Octavo Smith.

D. F. Atkinson – Frank Aktkinson, farmer in 8th Township in 1920.

Fred Leon Ball – husband of Della Wetherington.

Brice M. Bratcher – son of Harvey T. Bratcher and Elizabeth Wetherington and a Tuscarora resident. Married Mary Magdalen Vandiford.

William Tull Civils – died 1920 – Trustee of the church, represented the FWB church on the church land deed of 1890 from Thomas E. and Mary Outlaw.

Leon William Cook – Tuscarora resident and husband of Henrietta ‘Retta’ Wetherington, daughter of Abner B. Wetherington.

W. T. Flowers – A farmer in Tuscarora 1910 census, born in England.

John Quincy Adams Flybus – Tuscarora resident and son of William Flybus and husband of Challie T. Moore. John and Challie are buried in the Moore family cemetery in Tuscarora.

James R. Howell – Rollover Creek Road resident and 2nd husband of Nettie Eubanks McCoy Howell. James and Nettie are buried in Cedar Grove cemetery in New Bern.

Levi Humphrey – d. 1924 – son of William Humphrey and Susan Watson and husband of Kitty Moore Humphrey. Levi was buried in the Stewart cemetery.

Richard Irwin Humphrey – a Drymonia Road resident, brother of Levi Humphrey and husband of Caroline Moore. Buried in the Moore family cemetery.

Luke Jones, Ruling Elder - husband of Verna Register, daughter of William D. Register, resident of Tuscarora.

Clifford E. Moore - son of Wiley A. Moore and Nancy Stewart, married Gertrude Register.

Willie Thomas Moore – son of Wiley Moore and Nancy S. Stewart, Willie married Bedie P. Register. W. T. and Bedie are buried in the church cemetery.

Ferney Register – Son of James M. Register and Annie L. Mercer. A Tuscarora resident, he never married. Buried in the church cemetery.

James Albert Register – Tuscarora resident and son of William D. Register and husband of Laura J. Moore. Buried in the church cemetery.

James Monroe Register – brother of William D. Register of husband of Annie L. Mercer. James and Annie are buried in the church cemetery.

William D. Register – Born in Sampson county, NC. Married Elzie Mercer Register. Buried in the Stewart cemetery.

W. W. Register

Rev. Cannon Smith – son of Cannon Smith and husband of Frances Ann Stewart, born in Tuscarora, also resided in Carteret County, and buried in Morehead City, NC.

Daniel L. Stewart – son of John C. and Delila Smith Stewart of Clarks.

Floyd W. Stewart – son of John C. Stewart. Floyd married 1st Minnie Register, daughter of William D. Register, 2nd Ella D. Moore and 3rd, Alice Mills.

George R. Stewart, Ruling Elder – son of John C. Stewart, husband of Annie Moore Stewart, operated a general store and post office at Clarks, buried in the Cedar Grove Extension cemetery in New Bern.

Herman Eason Stewart – son of John C. Stewart and a Tuscarora resident, he later moved to New Bern. Herman married Lillian Wetherington, daughter of Abner B. Wetherington. Herman and Lillian are buried in the Greenleaf cemetery.

James Haywood Stewart - son of John Stewart and Benita D. Wetherington. Married 1st Wealthy Civils and 2nd Susan Bratcher.

John C. Stewart, Deacon – son of John Stewart and Benita Davis Wetherington, husband of Delilah Stewart, resident of Clarks, all are buried in the Stewart cemetery.

Leroy Stewart – son of John C. Stewart and Delila Smith.

John Edward Taylor - son of Stephen Taylor and Rebecca Wetherington, a resident of Rollover Creek Road and husband of Wealthy (Welthana) Taylor. John, Wealthy, and Rebecca are buried in the church cemetery.

Louis G. Taylor – resident of Clarks, never married, son of James O. and Sarah Taylor. Buried in Craven County Industrial Park.

Abner B. Wetherington – Treasurer - son of Amos Wetherington and husband of Beneta (Beneter) Jane Eubanks, a resident of Rollover Creek Road, buried in the church cemetery.

Amos T. Wetherington – Clarks resident and son of Amos Wetherington and brother of Abner B. Wetherington. Married Nancy Virginia Eubanks. Amos and Virginia are buried in the church cemetery.

Duffy S. Wetherington – Clerk – son of William H. Wetherington and Mary L. Civils. Lived on the south side of Rollover Creek and all are buried in the Stewart cemetery.

James Lemuel Wetherington – discontinued – husband of Serena Taylor , infant child buried in Stewart cemetery, was the son of Lemuel T. Wetherington and Celia Ann Taylor. His parents are buried in the church cemetery.

John Edward Wetherington – husband of Mary Daly Wetherington and son of John Herring Wetherington.

Josephus S. Wetherington – Tuscarora resident later moved to Baltimore about 1930. Son of Abner B. Wetherington and Beneta Jane Eubanks. He married 1st Amy Register and 2nd Mabel Baker.

Leon R. Wetherington – son of John Edward Wetherington and Mary Daly.

Noah Wetherington – Tuscarora resident and son of Abner B. Wetherington. Noah married Letha Moore. Buried in the Stewart cemetery in 1919, he was reinterred in the New Bern Memorial cemetery with wife Letha.

Richard H. Wetherington – son of John Herring Wetherington and husband of Luetta Ann (Etter) Garner Wetherington.

Royal Wetherington – Abner Roy Wetherington, son of Abner B. Wetherington and Beneta Jane Eubanks, married Lorena Manning.

Talmadge Johnson Wetherington – son of Charles H. Wetherington and husband of Julia Elizabeth (Bessie) Daugherty.

Wardie Wetherington – son of James L. Wetherington and Cerenia Taylor.

Further details on the September 23, 1916 Revised List of 74 female members:

Annie Adams – Annie Wetherington, wife of Robert O. Adams.

Octavo Smith Adams – daughter of Cannon Smith and Frances Ann Stewart and wife of William Allen Adams. William and Octavo are buried in the Stewart cemetery.

Rella Adams – daughter of Octavo Smith Adams, later married -?- Carr.

Mary V. Arthur

Bettie D. Atkinson - wife of D. Frank Atkinson

Daisy P. Atkinson – daughter of D. F. and Bettie Atkinson

Bertha Stewart Avery – daughter of John C. Stewart and Delila Smith. Married Joseph Rhem Avery.

Della M. Wetherington Ball – wife of Fred L. Ball, daughter of Samuel S. Wetherington and Bettie Civils Wetherington.

Caroline Bratcher –daughter of Lewis Bratcher, sister of Harvey Thomas Bratcher, never married.

Mary Magdelene Vandiford Bratcher – wife of Brice M. Bratcher.

Alice R. Carmack – wife of Henry Carmack, lived in Clarks where he was a brickyard worker.

Perlie Cayton – wife of C. A. Caton and daughter of David C. Taylor

Mariam Waters Cook – wife of William W. Cook.

Retta (Henrietta Wetherington) Cook –daughter of Abner B. Wetherington and wife of Leon William Cook. Buried in New Bern Memorial cemetery.

Ethel Cox - wife of Grover C. Cox, a farmer in Perfection.

Sarah M. (Baum) Dillon – mother of Thomas A. Dillon, Thomas was postmaster in Tuscarora.

Linister Dixon – wife of Robert E. Dixon, farmer of Jasper.

Dollie Register Eubanks – daughter of Joseph E. Register and wife of Guy C. Eubanks.

M. L. Eubanks

Montress Register Eubanks – daughter of Joseph E. Register and Senia Mercer Register, the wife of Elijah Eubanks.

Lula Taylor Eubanks - wife of Earnest A. Eubanks, the son of Thomas E. Eubanks and Sabra J. Stewart.

Ella Flowers – likely daughter of W. T. and May Flowers.

Gennie Flowers - likely daughter of W. T. and May Flowers.

Challie T. Moore Flybus – sister of John Clayton Moore and wife of John Q. A. Flybus, buried in the Moore family cemetery in Tuscarora.

Mamie Register French – daughter of William D. Register.

Lovie Wetherington Griffin – wife of Charles H. Griffin of Tuscarora, daughter of William H. Wetherington and Mary L. Civils.

Debbie Ann Wetherington Herring – daughter of John Herring Wetherington and Siddie Daugherty. Married J. A. Herring.

Nettie Eubanks Howell – daughter of Thomas E. Eubanks and Sabra Jane Stewart. Wife of James R. Howell, buried in Cedar Grove cemetery.

Caroline Moore Humphrey – daughter of John Clayton Moore and wife of Richard Irwin Humphrey, lived on Drymonia Road. Likely buried in Moore family cemetery.

Daisy Humphrey – daughter of Levi Humphrey and Kitty Moore. Married Earl S. Weeks, relocated to Elizabeth City, NC.

Kittie Moore Humphrey – Daughter of John Clayton Moore and 2nd wife of Levi Humphrey, lived on Drymonia Road.

Verna Register Jones – daughter of William D. Register and wife of Luke Jones, later moved to Norfolk, VA.

Eula Lawrence – the daughter of Bateman F. Lawrence and 1st wife, Laura.

Nona M. Register Lawrence – daughter of Joseph E. Register and Sena Mercer Register.

Bedie Pearl Register Moore – daughter of William D. Register and wife of William T. Moore.

Emma Moore - likely the daughter of John Moore and Richelda Taylor and sister of John Clayton Moore.

Gertrude Register Moore – daughter of William D. Register and wife of Clifford E. Moore.

“Nannie” Nancy Stewart Moore - Daughter of John Stewart and Benita Davis Wetherington and wife of Wiley A. Moore.

Madie Bell Moran

Julie Powell

Annie L. Mercer Register - wife of James M. Register, buried in church cemetery.

Elzie A. Mercer Register – wife of William D. Register. Buried in Spring Garden cemetery.

Laura J. Moore Register – daughter of Wiley A. Moore and Nancy S. Stewart. Married James Albert Register.

Lula C. (White) Register - wife of Mark Wayne Register.

Sennie Mercer Register – wife of Joseph Elijah Register. Buried in the Beech Grove Methodist cemetery.

Fannie (Frances) A. Smith – the daughter of John Stewart and Benita Davis Wetherington. Married Cannon Smith.

Annie Moore Stewart – wife of George R. Stewart, Clarks resident and daughter of John C. Moore. Buried in Cedar Grove Cemetery.

Delia Smith Stewart – daughter of Cannon Smith and wife of John Clemmie Stewart of Clarks.

Mamie Stewart – daughter of James T. Stewart and Alice Wetherington

Lillian Wetherington Stewart – daughter of Abner B. Wetherington and wife of Herman E. Stewart. Buried in Greenleaf cemetery.

Mary Henrietta Smith Stewart - daughter of Cannon Smith and Frances Stewart, and wife of Jesse P. Stewart.

Minnie M. Register Stewart 1887 -1921 - daughter of William D. Register and 1st wife of Floyd W. Stewart.

Susan Bratcher Stewart d. 1922 – daughter of Lewis Bratcher, wife of James Haywood Stewart.

Clara Ann Bratcher Taylor died 1920 –widow living with her sister, Mary Bratcher Webster.

Dora Taylor

Weltha (Wealthy) A. Wetherington Taylor – daughter of Amos Wetherington and Mary Owens. Wife of John Edward Taylor. John and Wealthy are buried in the church cemetery.

Mary E. Bratcher Webster – died 1922, daughter of Durant Bratcher, wife of John Webster, Tuscarora resident.

Ammie (Amy) Register Wetherington d. 1928 – daughter of William D. Register, wife of Josephus S. Wetherington.

Beneter (Benita) Jane Eubanks Wetherington – Daughter of Thomas E. Eubanks and Sabra Stewart. The 2nd wife of Abner Wetherington, buried in the church cemetery.

Bessie Estelle Wetherington - daughter of John Ed Wetherington and Mary E. Daly, married William Franklin Daugherty.

Bettie Civils Wetherington – daughter of Stephen Civils and Ann Anderson, wife of Samuel S. Wetherington, died in 1920.

Carrie Wetherington – daughter of William H. Wetherington and Mary L. Civils, married Luby S. Powell in 1920.

Cerena A. (Taylor) Wetherington – discontinued membership – wife of James Lemuel Wetherington, their infant child was buried in Stewart cemetery

Dessar Register Wetherington – wife of Oren C. Wetherington and daughter of William D. Register – their infant son was buried in the church cemetery.

Letha Moore Wetherington – daughter of Wiley A. Moore and Nancy S. Stewart. Married Noah Wetherington. Buried New Bern Memorial cemetery.

Luetta A. Garner Wetherington – wife of Richard H. Wetherington, the son of John Herring Wetherington.

Mary (Mamie) Catharine Wetherington – daughter of John S. Heath and wife of Edward Wetherington.

Mary L. (Civils) Wetherington – daughter of Stephen Civils and Ann Anderson, widow of William H. Wetherington. The mother of Duffy S. Wetherington, buried in the Stewart cemetery. Lived on the south side of Rollover Creek.

Mollie (Mary D.) Wetherington died 10-17-1918, the wife of Elex (Alexander) Wetherington. Mary was buried in the church cemetery.

Nancy Virginia Eubanks Wetherington – daughter of Thomas E. Eubanks and wife of Amos T. Wetherington.

Nannie Wetherington - possibly the wife of Charles H. Wetherington.

Maggie Whitley - wife of James H. Whitley of Tuscarora

Martha Whitley – daughter of Martha and James H. Whitley

Erma O. Eubanks Yancy – died - daughter of Thomas E. Eubanks and Sabra Stewart. Married H. M. Yancy in 1901.

Last Name	First Name	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	00	01	02	3-5	06	07	08	09	10	13	14	15	16	17
Bratcher	George	X	X																				
Bratcher	Gertrude	X																					
Bratcher	Harvey Thomas	X	X			X	X	X	X	X													
Bratcher	Mamie											X											
Bratcher	Mary	X	X				X	X	X														
Butchard	M.				X																		
Charlton	George											X	X	X	X								
Civils	Etouna					X																	
Civils	Myrtle					X																	
Cook	Clarabell																		X	X	X	X	X
Cook	George S.																		X	X	X		X
Cook	Leon W.														X		X		X	X	X	X	X
Cook	Louise																		X	X	X	X	X
Cook	Mary																		X	X	X	X	
Cook	Sam											X							X	X	X		X
Daugherty	Carrie		X																				
Dillon	J. E.	X																					
Dillon	R. A.	X																					
Dillon	Ralph																		X	X	X		
Eubanks	Ezekiel				X																		
Ewell	Charlie																		X	X	X	X	
Flowers	Ella																	X	X	X			
Flowers	Ginnie																	X	X	X			
Flowers	Robert																X						
Flowers	W. T.																	X	X				
French	Mamie Register						X		X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X				
Grady	George																			X	X		
Grady	J. C.																						X
Grady	Mary																					X	X
Grady	Mrs.																			X			
Grady	Olive																			X	X		X
Griffin	Geneva																	X	X	X	X	X	X
Griffin	George																			X	X		
Griffin	Gladys																	X	X	X	X	X	X
Griffin	Harvey							X															
Griffin	Myrtle																					X	X
Griffin	Vance							X															
Griffin	Willie																				X		X
Henderson	E. S.											X											
Humphrey	Daisy													X				X	X	X	X	X	X
Humphrey	Frank	X	X		X	X						X											
Ipock	Addie																			X			
Ipock	Addie Laura																			X			
Ipock	Berches																			X			
Ipock	E. T.																			X			

Last Name	First Name	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	00	01	02	3-5	06	07	08	09	10	13	14	15	16	17
Ipock	G. T.																		X				
Ipock	Katie																		X				
Ipock	Raymond																		X				
Jackson	Alice																						X
Jackson	Ashley																						X
Jackson	Marvin																						X
Jackson	Ollen																						X
Jackson	Robert																						X
Jackson	Robert																						X
Jackson	U. S.																						X
Jones	Clarence											X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Jones	Luke								X	X			X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Jones	Susan Mary														X	X	X						
Kilpatrick	Jane																		X				
Lamm	Solomon															X	X						
Manning	Damie																						X
Manning	Ernest																					X	X
Manning	Letha																					X	X
Manning	Lorena																					X	X
Manning	Willie																					X	X
Moore	Annie					X	X		X			X											
Moore	Clifford E.					X	X		X	X		X	X			X	X	X			X		
Moore	Clyde																		X	X	X	X	X
Moore	Gladys													X									
Moore	Gradie																	X					
Moore	Herbert																			X	X		X
Moore	Larie																			X	X	X	X
Moore	Laura					X	X	X	X	X	X	X							X				
Moore	Leon															X		X	X	X	X		X
Moore	Luther								X		X	X	X										
Moore	Mattie													X	X								
Moore	Maud																				X		X
Moore	Nannie Vic																		X	X	X	X	X
Moore	Royce																				X		X
Moore	Shepard N.															X	X	X	X	X	X		X
Moore	Tethermore														X								
Moore	Walter											X	X	X	X								
Moore	Wiley												X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Moore	Willie T.					X	X	X				X	X	X	X		X	X					
Osteen	Richard C.									X													
Osteen	Willie									X													
Phillips	Eligah/Elisah			X		X																	
Potter	Annie													X									
Potter	Bettie													X									
Potter	Dempsey													X		X	X						

