

St. John's Episcopal Church
Academy Street
Madison, N. C.

Historical Survey
By: Shirley Reid Webster

ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH - MADISON, N. C.

The first Episcopal Church to be organized in western Rockingham County, other than Leaksville's Church of the Epiphany, built in 1844, was St. John's Episcopal Church in Madison.

Organized in the 1880's, the small Episcopal congregation used the facilities of the Methodist Church until 1890 when their Church was built. Mr. and Mrs. John M. Galloway also provided a church meeting place by opening their home on Academy Street to Sunday School, and Choir practice, with Mrs. Galloway acting as organist.

It is said that Mrs. Galloway's New York friends helped her in acquiring altar furnishings, and a three-foot high marble baptismal font for St. John's Church.

The land for the Church was sold for \$50.00 by Joseph M. Vaughn and wife, Cassandra, to the Episcopal Diocese of North Carolina, with Mr. and Mrs. John M. Galloway acting as Trustees. The date of the land transaction was February 25, 1888. The dimensions of the lot, which faced Academy Street, were 111 feet x 198 feet.

St. John's Episcopal Church was reported to have been unique in its heating facilities. It is said that the Church's central heating system, with the basement furnace and heat vents, was the first system of its kind in Madison.

The Church was first served by the Reverend James Henry Williams (from 1891-1899), who also served at Leaksville's Church of the Epiphany. According to old records of Diocesan Conventions, reports state that the minister's salary of \$150.00 a year, was paid by Mr. John M. Galloway.

Local historians say that the Reverend Williams had been a Confederate soldier whose health had been impaired through a period of imprisonment. He had married a widow with children whom he put through college after Mrs. Williams' death. Reverend Williams organized a vested boy's choir and taught a subscription school for a year or two.

Among the leaders of the Church were the John M. Galloways and the T. R. Pratts (who from 1891-1920's kept boarders, mostly transient school teachers and Episcopal ministers). Later church members were: Mrs. J. J. Van Noppen (Mrs. Pearl Pratt Van Noppen) and family; son, Mr. Tom P. Van Noppen was Church Treasurer in 1938. Dr. and Mrs. John Alexander Roach (Senior Warden in 1938), Mrs. (Dr.) Paul C. Carter and girls; Mr. and Mrs. Patt Williams and family.

In 1898 Reverend Williams began serving other Episcopal Churches that he helped to organize, with guidance from Bishop Joseph Blount Cheshire of the Episcopal Diocese of North Carolina. Organized September 26, 1897, Mayodan completed construction of Grace Episcopal Church (later called Church of the Messiah) in 1898. Stoneville's Emmanuel Episcopal Church was also completed late in 1898. Thereafter, all Episcopal Churches in this area of Rockingham County; and Walnut Cove, and Germanton (Stokes County) were served by one minister, through a rotation system of visits.

The following is a list of ministers who succeeded the Reverend Williams:

The Reverend Messrs. Frederick A. Fetter, Alfred R. Berkley, 1904-1911; Henry A. Willey, 1911-1916; Edgar Edwards, 1916-1917; Reginald J. Mallett (later became Bishop in Indiana), and Samuel W. Hale, 1918-1920; Henry de C. Mazyck, 1920-1925; Daniel W. Allen, 1929-1931.

During the Depression years the ministers serving this area were: The Reverend Messrs. W. Hurst, Robert E. Roe, Ernest M. Winbourne. In 1936, the Rev. George H. Henry (later became Bishop of Western North Carolina Diocese) served briefly. He was followed by Rev. Harvey A. Cox, 1936-1945.

In the 1940's the small congregation of St. John's either began attending other Madison Churches or went up to Mayodan's Church of the Messiah.

The Church stood empty until it was torn down in the 1950's, and finally sold by the Episcopal Diocese to Mr. Siewers Wall in 1960. Mr. Wall built a laundromat on the site.

Compiled by Shirley R. Webster