



The Early History of South Central Conference

1863-1945

South Central Conference Archives
R. Steven Norman, III, Director
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South Central Conference



Since 1946 the South Central Conference has served the states of Alabama, Mississippi, Kentucky, Tennessee and the panhandle of Florida. How did the South Central Conference develop?



First Steps Toward Freedom

1863 - January 1 Lincoln issues Emancipation Proclamation

1863 - Seventh-day Adventist Church is organized to preach truth that frees.

1865 – Civil War ends

1865 – Education Movement begins



Education Movement

- May 20, 1865 – The first school for Blacks south of the Mason Dixon Line was established in Lexington, Kentucky.
- 1865 the Methodist Episcopal Church allocated \$10,000 for the education of Negroes and immediately opened the Central Tennessee College in Nashville.



Education Movement

- Other denominations opened
- Fisk University and Meharry College in Nashville.
- Tougaloo College in Tougaloo Mississippi
- Lane College established in Jackson, TN
- Morris Brown in Atlanta



Ellen White Calls for Work in South

- In 1865, just after the close of the Civil War, Ellen White counseled the Church to begin working in the South.





GC Votes to Work in South

- The General Conference voted:
- Action: Resolved, that a field is now opened in the South for labor among the colored people and should be entered upon *according to our ability*.
- Other actions indicated that the Civil war had retarded the work in the south.
- Action: “Resolved, . . . we solemnly consecrate ourselves anew to this great work to which God has called us.”



Elbert B. Lane

The First Seventh-day Adventist Minister in the South



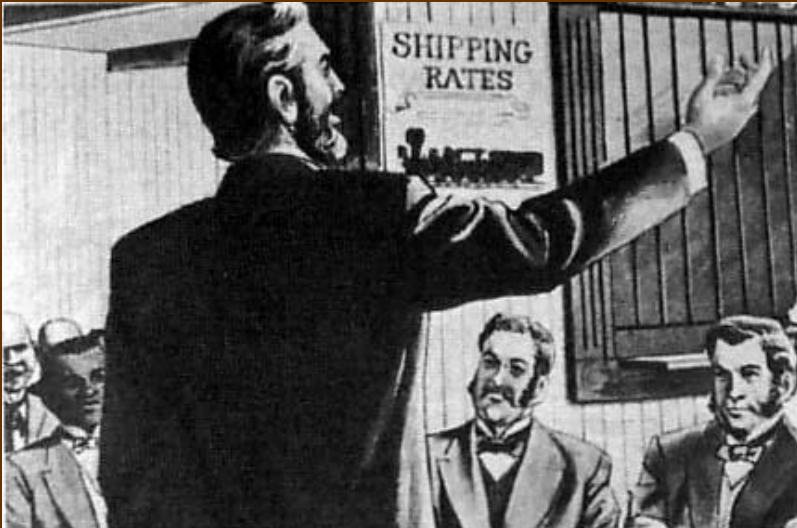
- In 1865 Lane married Ellen S. Edmond of Washtenaw County, MI. Ellen Lane became the first Seventh-day Adventist woman to receive her license to preach in 1868.



Church at Edgefield Junction



Lane preached for several weeks at the Edgefield Junction L&N Railway Station in 1871 and left a company there.



In 1873 he returned and organized the Edgefield Junction Church, the first Seventh-day Adventist Church south of the Mason Dixon line.



Harry Lowe

EDGEFIELD JUNCTION.

A thriving village of 400 people, located on the Cumberland river in the northern part of Davidson county, and the point of junction of the St. L. & S. E. Ry, and the L. & N. and G. S. R. R., 10 miles north of Nashville. It has a steam grist and saw mill, some smaller industries and 3 stores, a Roman Catholic church, Colored Baptist church and a common school. Corn, wheat and other grain are marketed. Settled in 1864. Telegraph, Western Union. Express, Adams and Southern. Mail daily. James Galvin, postmaster.

Business Directory.

Barbe, J. W., stock dealer.
Barnum & Peyton, nursery and apiary.
Bass & Cunningham, general store.
Cantrell, Nathan, blacksmith.
Crunk, E. W., horse trainer.
Donelson, John C., General Store.
Egan, Daniel, ferryman.
Farleigh, James, telegrapher.
Fife, Bedford, stonemason.
Galvin, James, General Store and Hotel.
Gibbs, Flem, carpenter.
Gileaves, G., cattle dealer.
Green Bros., Millers.
Grizzard, K. W., physician.
Gunn, J. T., carpenter.
Hall, Riley, plasterer.
Hall & Bro., fruit growers.
Hetherington, John, R. R. section foreman.
Jamison, A. B., wagonmaker.
Lowe, Rev. H. (Baptist.)
Payne, J. Adam, Stock Dealer.
Payne, J. A. jr., town clerk.
Pride, Rev. S., (Methodist.)
Raymer & Bro., fruit growers.
Remley, J. A., Express and Station Agent.

Edgefield Junction profile—1876.

- Reverend Harry Lowe, who is listed under the businesses, was an African-American Baptist minister in Edgefield Junction. He attended Lane's meetings and became one of the Seventh-day Adventist ministers to serve the Seventh-day Adventist Church. He worked along with Charles M. Kinney and Alonzo Barry.



First Black Adventist Churches

Based on Charles M. Kinney Chronology

- 1883 – Edgefield Junction, TN
- 1890 – Louisville, KY
- 1891 – Bowling Green, KY
- 1892 – New Orleans, LA
- 1894 – Nashville, TN
- 1894 – Memphis, TN
- 1894 – Lexington, KY
- 1895 – Vicksburg, MS
- 1896 – Birmingham, AL

C. M. Kinney
The First Black Church

the Colored People.
August 1878 Eld. J. W. Dougherty sent
me Reno Nevada
Sept I kept my first Sabbath
Reno Church paid \$200 for first sanctuary

1883 - Healthbury College Reno paid for
on my second years schooling

1885 California Conference gave \$25000 sent
to Edgefield to begin
Nov 1885 Edgefield church organized by Eld. J. W. Dougherty
9 members

July 16, 1890 Soursell church organized by Eld. J. W. Dougherty
8 members

June 13, 1891 Bowling Green Church 11 members
June 4, 1892 New Orleans " 10 members

Sept 15, 16, 1894 Nashville " 10 members
Fall of 1894 Eld. White began work in Memphis
Thru work began for year

June 19, 1896 Birmingham Church 15 members Eld. H. H. H. H.



1883

First Black Adventist Church



The Jonathan Allison family were among the charter members.

In 1883 the blacks in the Edgefield Junction Church were organized into a separate company called the First Colored Seventh-day Adventist Church by Elder Samuel Fulton. It officially became a church on November 9, 1886. Some were disappointed with the separation and left church.

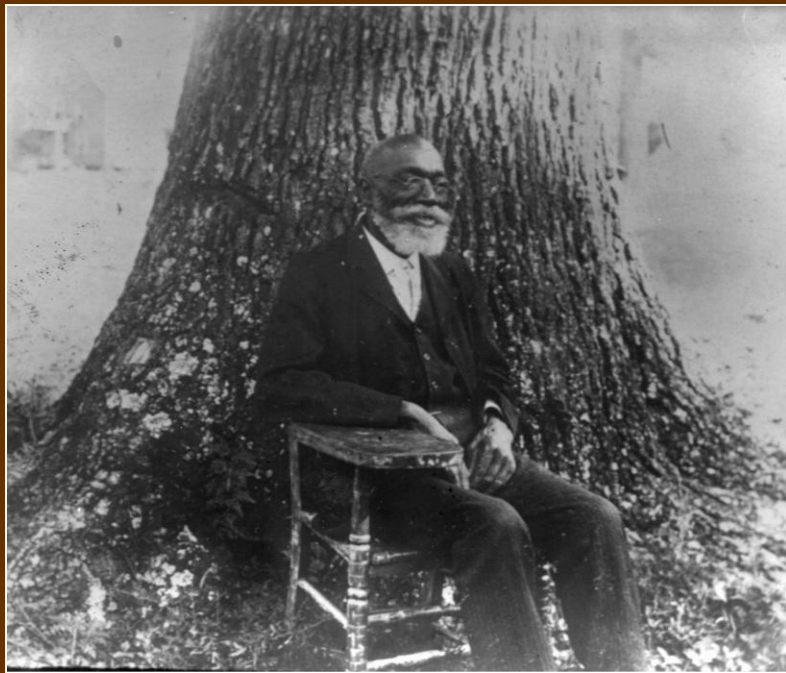
The first colored camp meeting was also held at Edgefield Junction in 1901.



1890

Magazine Street Church

Second Black Adventist Church



- The Louisville Church was organized by Elder Alonzo Barry in 1890.



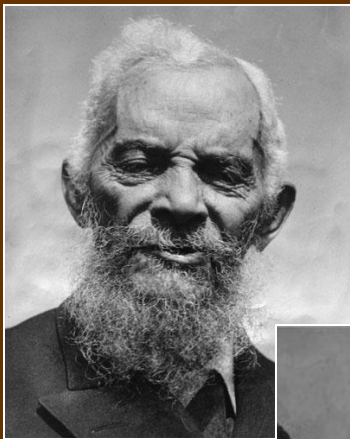
Oldest Member in the South Central Conference



- Maggie Hopper was born January 9, 1900. She is now 106 years old.
- She began attending the Louisville Church in 1911 and was baptized in 1914 by Elder Joseph H. Laurence.



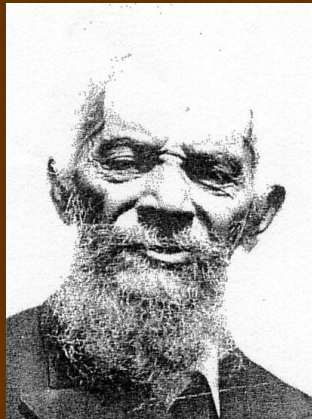
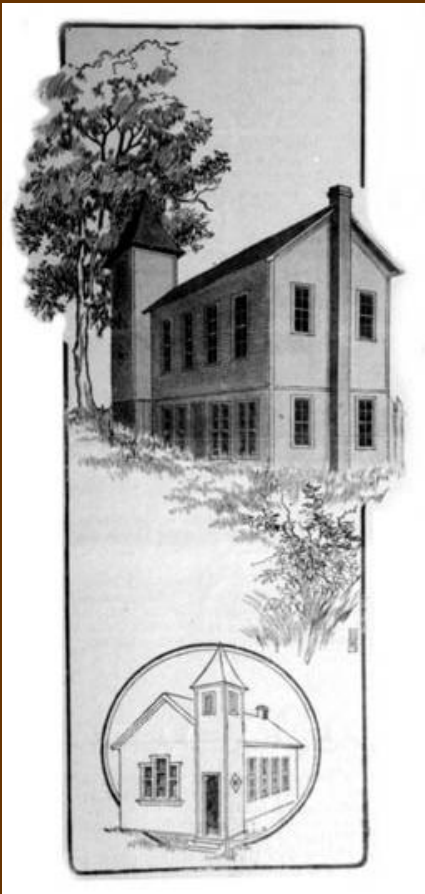
Charles M. Kinney



- 1889 Kinney becomes the first Black ordained Seventh-day Adventist minister.
- 1891 Kinney organized the church in Bowling Green, KY.



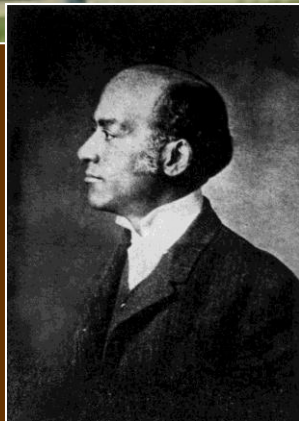
Seventh-day Adventist Church #2



This church was organized on September 15-16, 1894 by C. L. Boyd. Ellen White visited this Church in 1904 while Charles M. Kinney was the pastor. The church started on Winter Street, moved to Meharry Boulevard, and is currently called the Hillcrest Church on 25th Avenue.



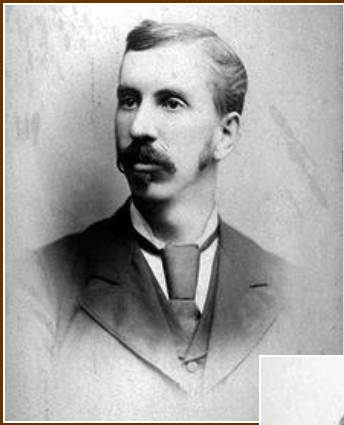
Lexington, KY Church



- Barry also organized the Lexington Church as a company around 1894.
- Two of the charter members were Attorney J. Alexander Chiles and Dr. Mary A. Britton.



James Edson White Decides to Go South



- After a talk with Dr. J. E. Caldwell; Edson wrote to his mother, “I have been thinking of going down into Tennessee to work among the colored people . . . I shall go to work in the spring . . . I still hope and trust in God, and am sure He will care for me. I have proved my own way and it is a poor way. I now want God’s way, and I know it will be a good way.”



Morning Star Steamboat

Edson had a steamboat built which he called the Morning Star. He then traveled from Michigan and down the Illinois and Mississippi Rivers to Mississippi.





Edson's Productive Ministry

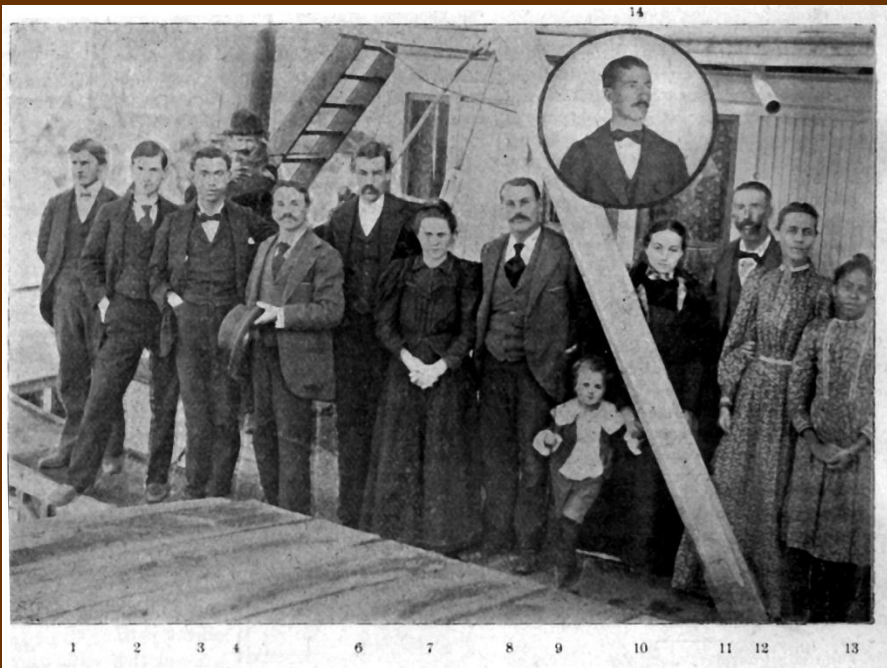


Edson worked in the South for eight short years, 1895-1903, during which time God blessed him to open

- Approximately 15 schools and churches
- The Gospel Herald Publishing House and
- the Nashville Colored Sanitarium



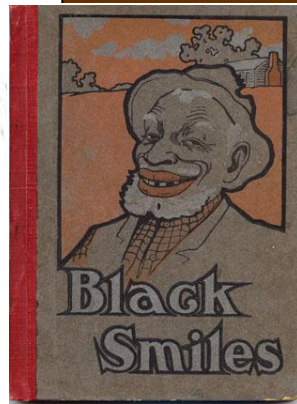
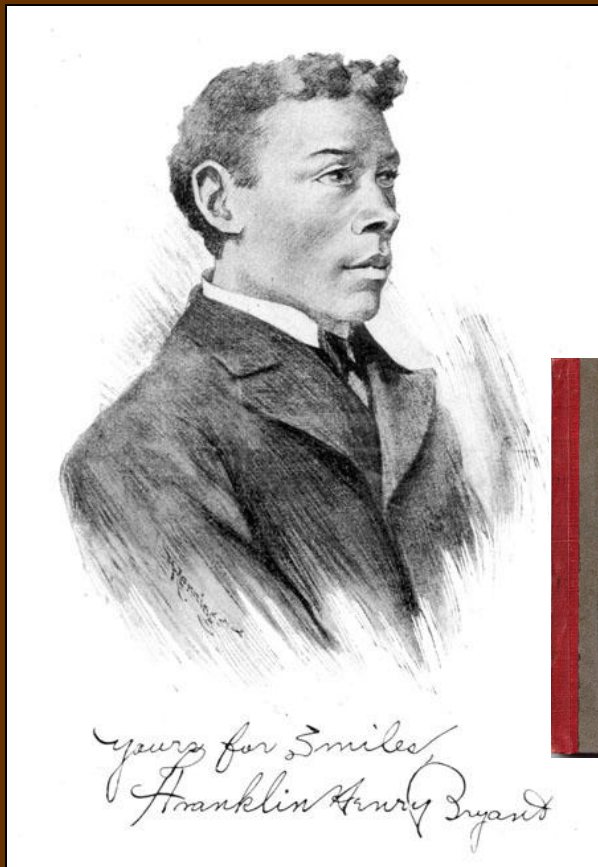
Morning Star Boat Staff



- 1. **Isaiah Moore** of Pulaski Iowa.
- 2. **S. W. Trump** from Salem New Jersey, printer and pressman in the Gospel Herald Publishing office on board the Morning Star.
- 3. **Frank H. Bryant** of Yazoo City, Mississippi. (More about Frank Bryant on next slide)
- 4. **J. R. Moore** of Vicksburg, Mississippi boat pilot.



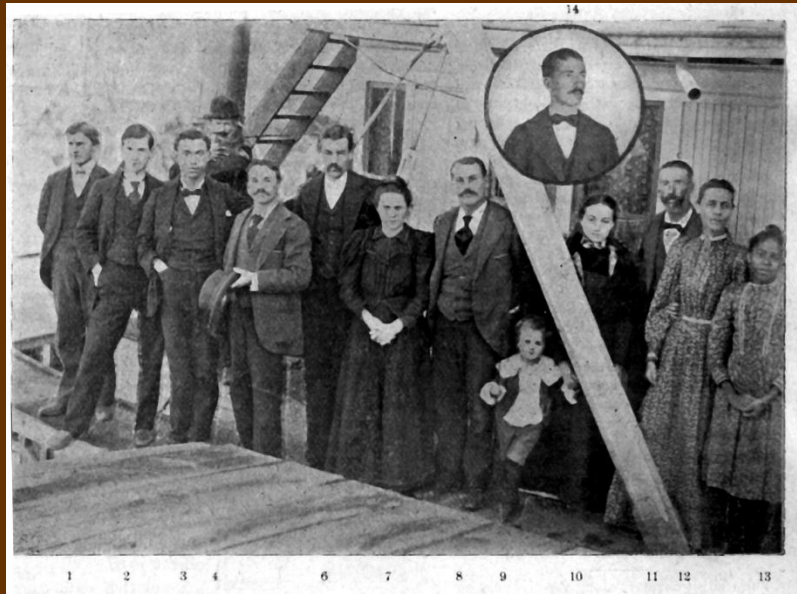
Franklin H. Bryant



- **Franklin H. Bryant** of Yazoo City, Mississippi. Stenographer and later a teacher in Hickory, NC. He also published a book of poetry called “*Black Smiles*” the first book published by a African-American Seventh-day Adventist.



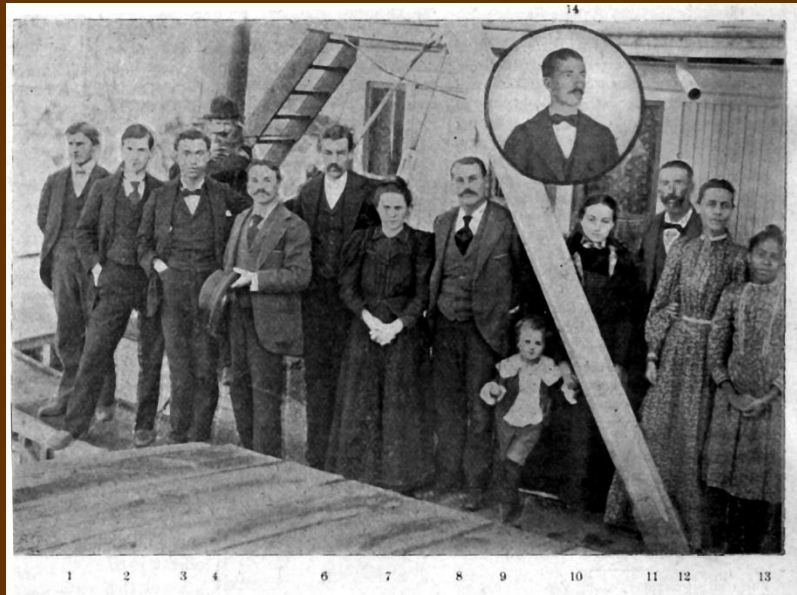
Morning Star Boat Staff



- 5. **Dan G. Stephenson**, a photographer from Tchula, Mississippi. He gave up his business and became the teacher at the Calmar School.
- 6. **Fred W. Halladay** of Ottawa, Illinois. Joined boat in summer of 1894. Holds ministerial license and is a Bible worker.
- 7. **Mrs. I. C. (Wekell) Halladay**, of Farlington, Kansas. Served as Bible Worker and teacher.
- 8. **Fred R. Rogers** from Walla Walla, Washington. Served as principal of school in Lintonia.
- 9. **Chester Rogers**, son of Mr. and Mrs. Fred Rogers.



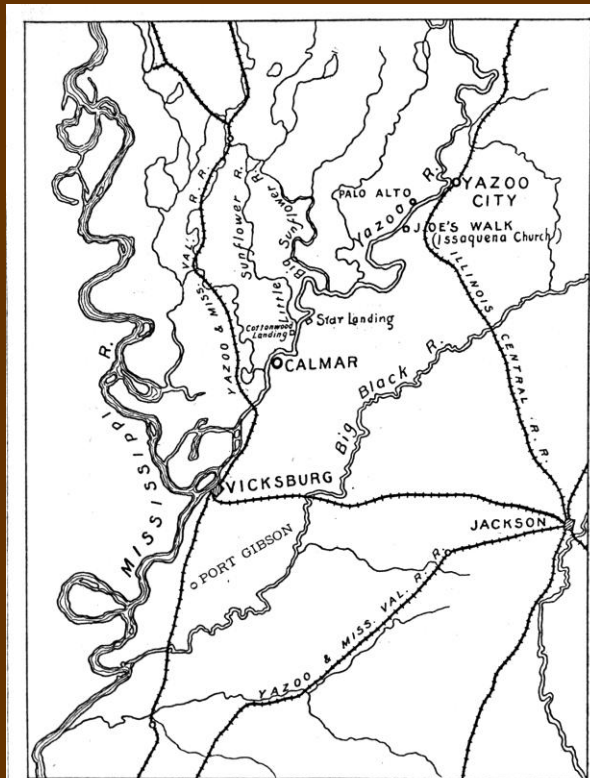
Morning Star Boat Staff



- 10. **Mrs. Fred R. Rogers**, assistant teacher in and Music teacher in Lintonia.
- 11. **James E. White** from Battle Creek, Michigan.
- 12. **Mrs. Emma McDearmond White**. Teacher and Edson's wife.
- 13. **Anna Slaughter** of Yazoo City. Assistant in kitchen work on boat.
- 14. **F. H. Schramm** of Grand Rapids, Michigan. Bible Worker and teacher. He was also the photographer, pressman, and superintendent of the food work.



Map Showing Edson's School's



This map shows the present field of operation of the Southern Missionary Society, as mentioned in articles in this paper. In addition will be seen Star Landing, a piece of wood land bought as a fuel station for the "Morning Star," and Cottonwood Landing, the home of Albert Jones, who first took the truth to Calmar.

Now that we have met the Morning Star staff, let's visit some of Edson's School along the Yazoo River.

- Vicksburg (2)
- Calmar
- Palo Alto
- Joe's Walk
- Yazoo City
- Lintonia
- Wilsonia – A floating school



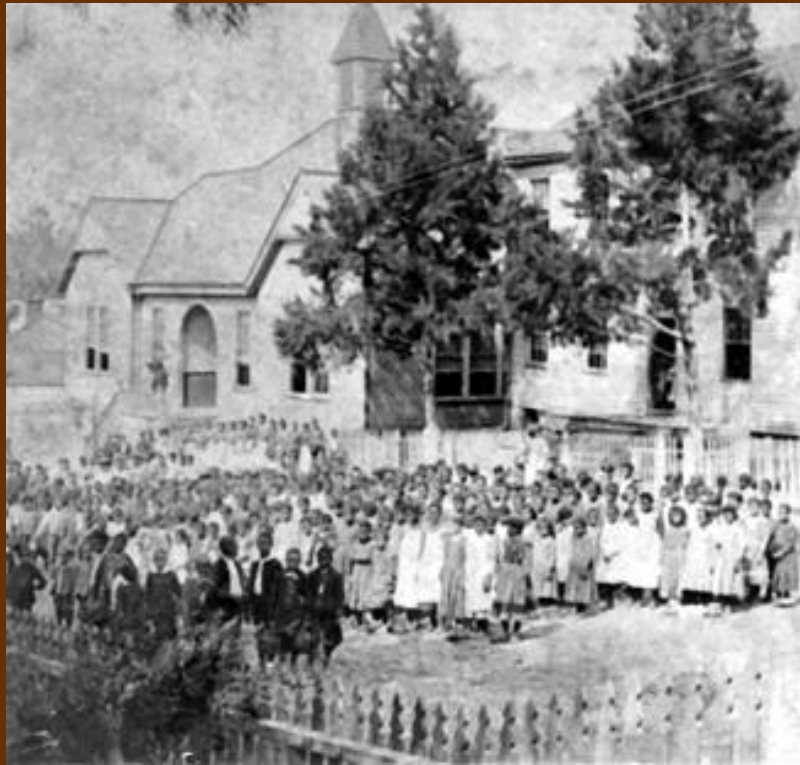
Edson's First School The Walnut Street School



Edson opened his first school in Vicksburg on the corner of Walnut Street and East First Avenue in 1895. He purchased three bells in Battle Creek. One was on the roof of this school.



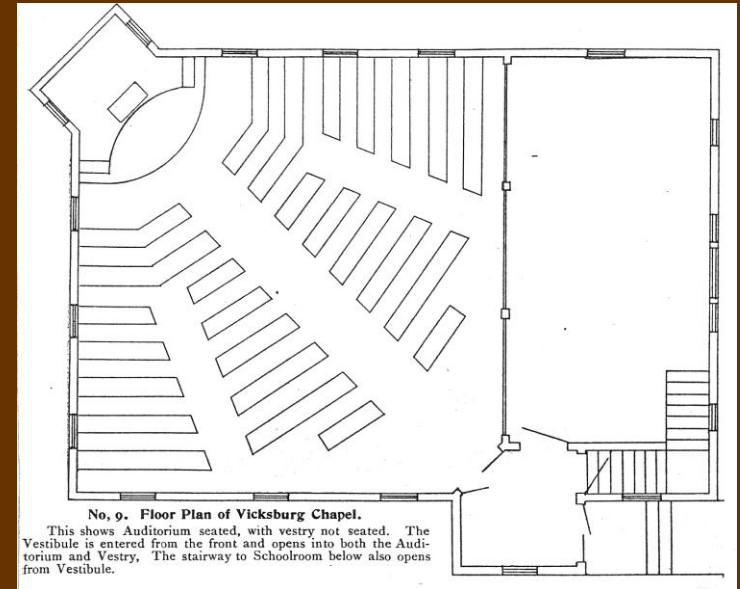
Vicksburg Mission School



The Mission School was moved from Walnut Street to 209 Fayette Street. It was designed by W. K. Loughborough. Ellen White preached the dedication sermon for this school and chapel on March 18, 1901.



Drawings of Vicksburg School





Morning Star Church



- The original church was destroyed by a tornado in the early 1950's. It was replaced with this building which has recently been renovated.



Redwood, Mississippi

- At Redwood - Franklin Warnick leaped from a train to escape a lynch mob that was called to kill him. Warnick was the grandfather of the Simons family.



F. R. Rogers, wife, and boy.

R. T. Nash, wife, and boy.

Franklin G. Warnick.

No. 14. Day School at Lintonia.



At Calmar, Mississippi



CHAPEL AND PARSONAGE, CALMAR, MISS.

- In Calmer is the Ballground Plantation where N. W. Olvin was whipped and his wife shot because of their commitment to keep the Sabbath.



Yazoo City



No. 13. Movable Chapel and Recent Addition.



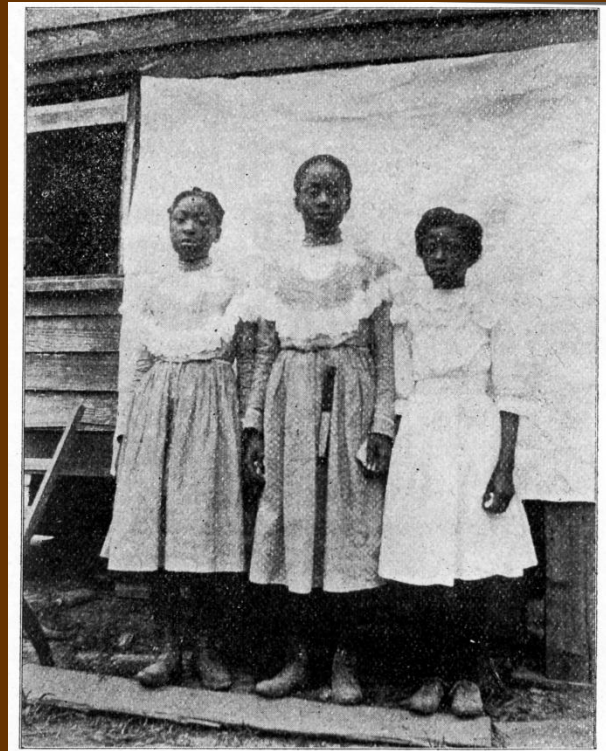
This school was opened in 1897. It was first a moveable chapel but was rebuilt in 1906. It is believed to be the oldest original Adventist building in the South.



Wilsonia Floating School



This barge was used for the Wilsonia floating school.



Lelar Knighton, Rosa Jones, Olive Knighton.

These are three scholars in the Wilsonia School. They are supported in school by "our babies' money," sent by Mrs. F. M. Arnold, mentioned on next page.



Southern Missionary Society

- Edson established the Southern Missionary Society on September 13, 1898.
- Mission: “To carry the principles of Christian education to the people of the South.” Gospel Herald, December 1899, p. 5.
 - First Headquarters in Yazoo City, Mississippi
 - The Dixie Food Company
 - The Herald Publishing Company
 - The Nashville Colored Clinic
 - 28 Mission Schools with 1,000 pupils (October, 1908)
 - In 1901 it became a branch of Southern Union



Gospel Herald Newsletter

THE GOSPEL HERALD.

VOL. 1. YAZOO CITY, MISS., MAY, 1898. NO. 1.

THE "MORNING STAR."
 MARCH 10, 1894, the work of building the southern missionary steamer, "Morning Star," was begun at Allegan, Michigan, on the banks of the Kalamazoo River.
 In July she was completed, and the



falling waters compelled her to run down to Douglass, a harbor of Lake Michigan. In August she crossed Lake Michigan to Chicago. From this point she passed down the Illinois and Michigan Canal to LaSalle, thence down the Illinois river to the Mississippi, and down this river to the city of Vicksburg, which she reached Jan. 10, 1895.

Connected with the steamer was a company of young men who canvassed the principle cities on the route for the "Gospel Primer," which accounts for the long time taken to reach the field of work.

When first built the "Morning Star" had but one cabin deck, as shown in the first picture. She was seventy-two feet long over all, with a hull twelve feet wide on the bottom.

During the first year in the field she was owned by W. O. Palmer and J. E. White. At the end of the first season W. O. Palmer was called to fill an important position in another branch of the work, and his interest was purchased by his partner, J. E. White, who thus became sole owner.

Not being considered suitable for the work to be done, she was rebuilt the following winter, being lengthened to 102 feet over all, with a width of hull of nineteen feet on the bottom.

An upper cabin was built as shown in the second engraving, and a pilot house eight and one-half feet square placed on the hurricane deck.

A brief description of the interior of the boat may be of interest. On the lower deck, beginning at the bow, comes first the boiler room, with an upright, submerged flue, steel marine boiler, fifty inches in diameter and nearly ten feet high, which is allowed 200 pounds steam pressure by the government inspectors.

Back of the boiler room comes a room 12x16 feet. This was once used as the main cabin of the boat, but is

now the type setting room of the GOSPEL HERALD.

Back of this is the press room. In this room are two steam power presses. One is an 8x12 Challenge Gordon press, which has been on the boat for two years, and has done good service

in printing announcements of meetings, lesson leaves for Bible and school work, etc. The other is a large Chandler and Price Gordon, on which the GOSPEL HERALD is printed, four pages at an impression. These presses will be run by a six-horse power auxiliary engine.

Back of this come three commodious and well appointed staterooms, occupied by the missionary workers who accompany the boat. Next come a dining room 9x12 feet, and a kitchen 7 1/2 x 13 feet.

In the stern of the boat are the bath room, store room, and engine room.

On the upper deck, again beginning at the bow, the study of the owner comes first. This is a room about 9x10 feet, with nine windows and two outside doors, fitted up with study desk, book shelves, etc. Next come the cabin, 12x12 feet, stateroom 7 1/2 x 12 feet, and bath room of the owner.

Back of these is the business office



of the boat, 10x12 feet. This is also the photographers' room, opening out of which is a small but well appointed dark room for developing photographs of scenery and making stereoscopic slides.

Next comes the new main cabin of

- In 1898 Edson launched the *Gospel Herald* to inform Adventists about the work in the South.
- The first nine issues were printed on the Morning Star. Subsequent issues were printed in Battle Creek and Nashville, TN.



Edson Moves to Nashville



- The Nashville Office for Edson White. It opened in 1900 and was probably located at 1908 Grand Avenue.



- The Edgefield Junction home of Edson White



1901

Nashville Colored Sanitarium



FRED M. YOUNG, Superintendent.

FANNIE M. YOUNG, Matron.



NASHVILLE COLORED SANITARIUM.

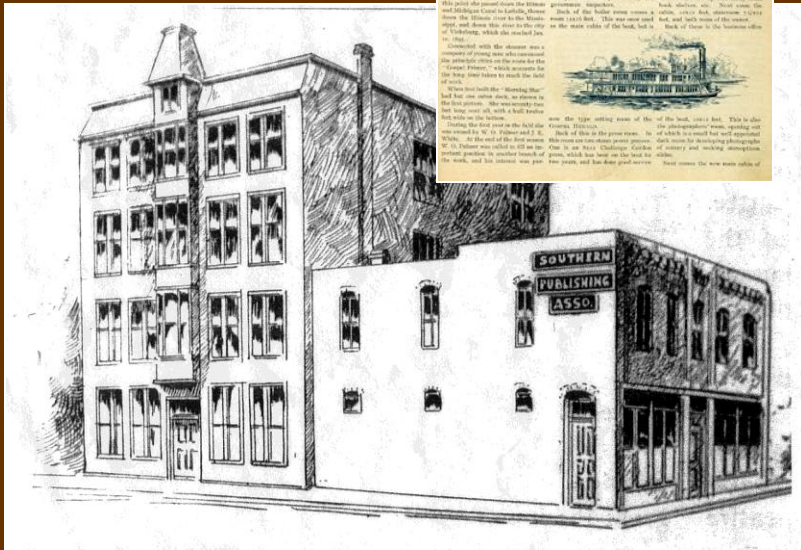
The Nashville Colored Sanitarium was managed by Fred and Fannie Young, a Black couple who came to Nashville from Illinois. They were joined in 1902 by Dr. Lottie Isbell Blake.



Gospel Herald Publishing Association



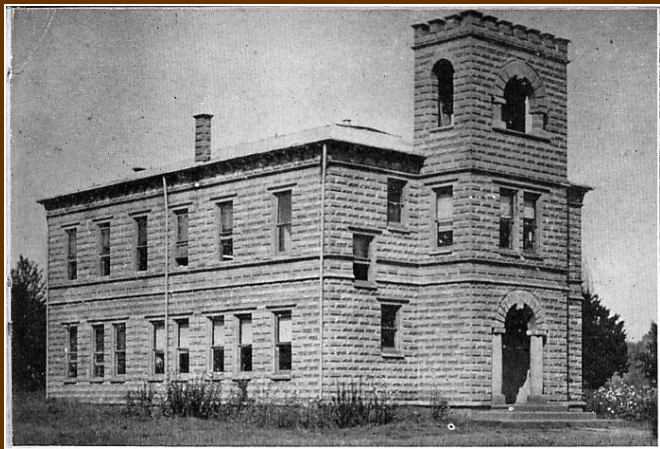
The headquarters for Edson White's printing company was at 1908 Grand Avenue and then 1025 Jefferson Street. *The Gospel Herald* was published here.



This building later served as the office for the Southern Publishing Association and the Southern Union Conference.



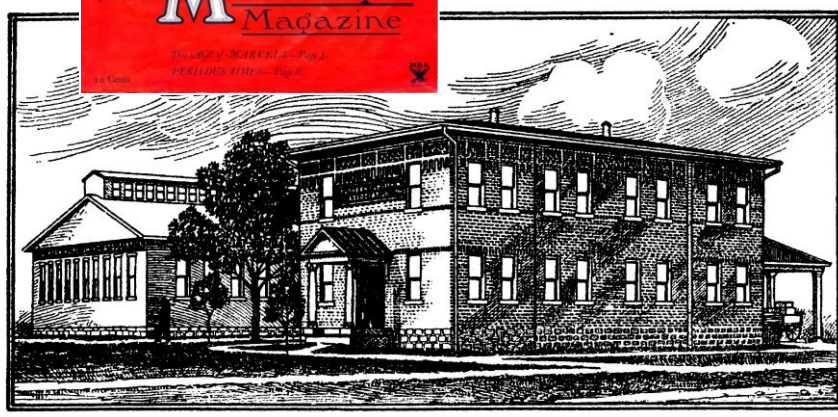
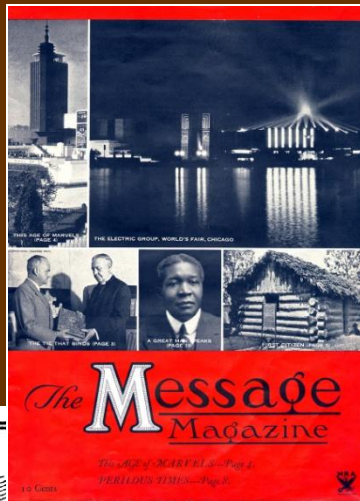
Oakwood College



- Oakwood College opened on November 16, 1896 in Huntsville, Alabama with sixteen students.



Southern Publishing Association



The Atlanta office of the Review and Herald was moved to Nashville and incorporated on June 4, 1901. The 25th Avenue location shown here was purchased from Edson White in 1905. The *Message* magazine was first published here in 1935.

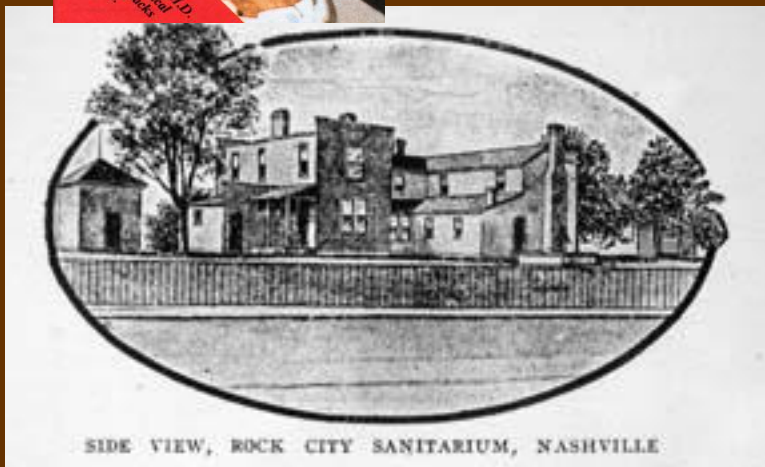


Dr. Lottie Isbel Blake

Rock City Sanitarium



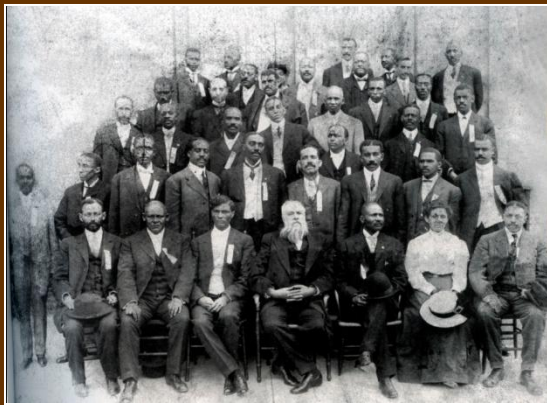
The Rock City Sanitarium was opened by Drs. David and Lottie Isbell Blake on Foster Street in February 1909. It closed because Blacks were not ready to accept alternative medical treatments such as hydrotherapy.





Dr. Mary Britton

Physician, Suffragist, Witness, Civil Rights Activist



- Britton became a charter member of Lexington Church when it was organized around December 1894.
- 1901 she became the first black female physician in Lexington
- She fought the Separate Coach Bill
- Her great-nephew is Dr. Benjamin Hooks, former national president of NAACP



(Courtesy of the Berea Special Collections and Archives)



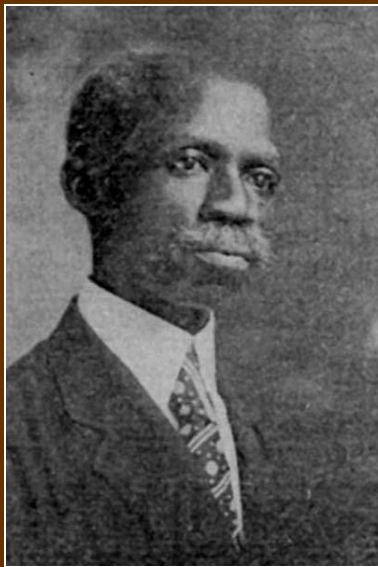
Riverside Sanitarium



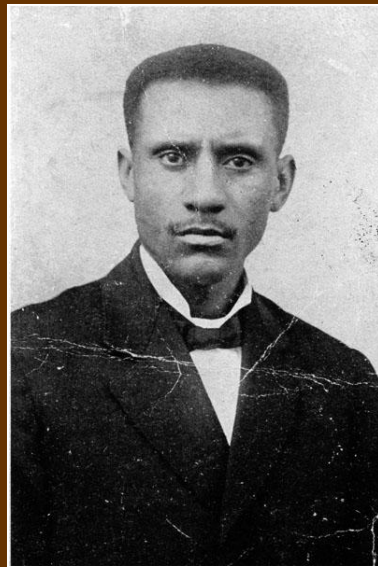
Opened by Nellie Druillard for Blacks in 1927, the Riverside Hospital served the Nashville community for more than 50 years. Dr. Carl Dent served as Medical Director for many years. It was sold in 1983.



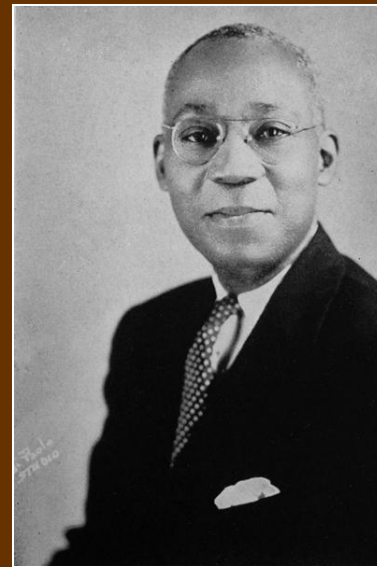
Early Evangelists



A. C. Chatman



Sidney Scott



J. H. Laurence



M. C. Strachan



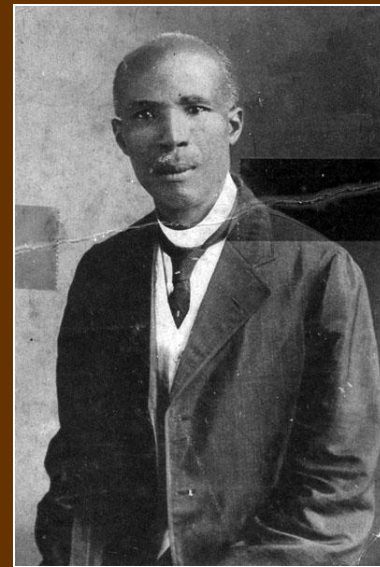
Early Evangelists



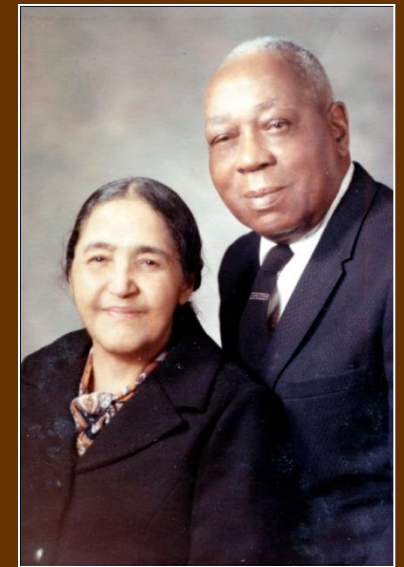
J. G. Thomas



W. H. Sebastian



John Crichlow



B. W. Abney



Anna Knight

Missionary, Educator, Nurse, Administrator



- From Soso, MS
- First Adventist woman to serve as a missionary in India.
- Served Southern Union in Education, Health and Youth Ministry.
- Served on the Colored Survey Committee that recommended formation of the South Atlantic and South Central Conferences in 1944.



Morning Star Adventist Heritage Tours



Morning Star Adventist Heritage Tours are available by appointment by calling the South Central Conference Archives at 615-226-6500, ext. 136 or 133.



Other Tours



- Nashville Adventist Heritage Tour – by appointment
- Graysville Tour – by appointment



We Need Your Help

The South Central Conference Archives is dedicated to researching and preserving the history of Seventh-day Adventists. If you have historical information, records or photos that you wish to share; they will be greatly appreciated. Historical records and financial gifts may be brought or sent to:

The South Central Archives

715 Youngs Lane

Nashville, TN 37207

615-226-6500, Ext. 136 or 133