Red River Cumberland Presbyterian Church, 1948-1992 (MSS 258)

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ORGANIZATIONAL HISTORY

Between 1785 and 1789 a “Society of Presbyterians” organized themselves into a church “on the headwaters of Red River.” This was the first church of any denomination in the western half of the territory that would become the state of Kentucky in 1792. A log building was constructed on a rise near Morton Maulding’s fort, southeast of present-day Russellville in Logan County. In 1800 the Red River Meeting House, as it was known, was the site of the beginning of the Great Revival of 1800. Rev. James McGready had come to the area in 1796 as pastor to the Red River, Muddy River and Gasper River churches. On the third Sunday in June 1800 McGready invited all three of his congregations to a joint communion service at Red River. Over a period of several days, and with other ministers assisting, a spirit of religious fervor swept among the more than 300 men, women and children in attendance. Many people came to witness this manifestation and soon the spirit of revival and renewal spread to other areas of Kentucky and the southern United States. This assembly at Red River is considered by some historians to be the first camp meeting.

The original church structure had completely collapsed by 1856. A second structure had been erected in 1847 and was razed in 1935. Records indicate that the building was auctioned in 1930. Several years after the church was torn down the Red River Memorial and Cemetery Association was organized to commemorate the events of 1800 and care for the church cemetery. The cemetery contains the graves of veterans of the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812. In 1953 a monument constructed of foundation stones of the two early churches was placed on the spot of the original structure. A replica of the early building using hand-hewn logs and hand-made boards for the roof was completed in 1959. It was destroyed by an arson fire in 1992 but rebuilt in 1994. Although regular worship services are no longer conducted there, a homecoming is held annually and the church is available for special events.
COLLECTION

This collection is devoted entirely to material related to the history of the Red River Cumberland Presbyterian Church and the preservation efforts of the Red River Memorial and Cemetery Association and the Old Red River Meeting House Association. One folder includes partial minutes of the Red River Memorial and Cemetery Association, 1951-1977. Another folder contains partial minutes of the Old Red River Meeting House Association’s annual reunions, 1968-1978. The remaining folders deal with the history of the church and its important role in the Great Revival of 1800. One includes a brief history written by Martha B. Cheek entitled “A Resume of the History of the Old Red River Meeting House”; one contains a list of all the people buried in the church graveyard as of 1948; and one includes a number of news clippings related to the church’s history and its annual homecomings.

SHELF LIST

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BOX 1</th>
<th>1948-1992</th>
<th>80 items</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Folder 1</td>
<td>Inventory</td>
<td>2 items</td>
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<td>Folder 2</td>
<td>Minutes of the Executive Board Meeting</td>
<td>Sept. 9, 1961</td>
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<td>Folder 5</td>
<td>Letter concerning the sale of the Old Red River Church House</td>
<td>1970</td>
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<td>Folder 6</td>
<td>Copy of a Christmas card picture of the Old Red River Meeting House</td>
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<tr>
<td>Folder 7</td>
<td>“A Resume of The History of the Old Red River Meeting House” by Martha B. Cheek</td>
<td>n.d.</td>
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<td>Folder 8</td>
<td>Question and answer program from Red River Church</td>
<td>n.d.</td>
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<td>Folder 9</td>
<td>Morning and evening church services agenda</td>
<td>Sept. 10, 1961</td>
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</table>
Folder 10  Old Red River Graveyard – A list of the people buried there  April 1948  2 items

Folder 11  Historical information concerning the Old Red River Church – Newspaper clippings  1955-1992  44 items

**CATALOG CARD**

MSS   RED River Cumberland Presbyterian 1948-1992
258  Church

Copies of items related to the history of the church; items detailing the preservation efforts of the Red River Church Memorial and Cemetery Association and the Old Red River Meeting House Association; 1948 list of those buried in the Old Red River Graveyard. ½ box. 11 folders. 80 items. Photocopies. 1981.73.1 K/15

**SUBJECT ANALYTICS**

Cemeteries – Logan County  F10
Cheek, Martha (Butt), 1892-1987  F7,10
Cumberland Presbyterians – Logan County
Churches – Logan County
Logan County – Cemeteries  F10
Logan County – Churches – Cumberland Presbyterian
McGready, James, 1758-1817 – Relating to  F4,7,8,11
Red River Memorial and Cemetery Association  F3
Revivals – Logan County – 19th century – Relating to Old Red River Meeting House Association  F4,11

**CHRONOLOGICAL CARDS**

1948-1950
1951-1975
1976-1992

sl - 1; me - 1; sa - 10; chrono - 3

Lile/Jeffrey  05/26/2009