

# "Mountain Springs Church, old and new" by Ellen Rogers

The following article is combined from two articles by Ellen Rogers and published originally on August 17, 1983 in The Estill County Tribune.

## The old Mountain Springs Church

Perhaps this church is too audacious an undertaking for one to attack, but this article I hope will recall pleasant memories of bygone days for some and it will also serve to awaken others to an awareness that the present and the future begin in the past.

The imprint of the original foundation of the (old) church may be found and seen within the cemetery. It was built from hewn logs by the hands of our forefathers -- had one door and two small windows on each side.

I am unable to find its original date, but I deem it proper without a reasonable doubt that this log church was there in the 1820s and had become defunct by the early 1900s because it was too small for the fast growing congregation. Many people congregated at this sacred site on the headwaters of Millers Creek. There is some unwritten history here, but the number of graves speak louder than words of the nature of our ancestors.

*"The heritage of the past is the seed that brings forth the harvest of the future."* A Washington, D.C. statue on the left of the main entrance to the National Archives of the United States bears this inscription by Wendell Phillips.

A monument was erected for Elder William "Billy" Rogers, born 1 August 1797, died 7 January 1869. Revelations 14:13. Ordained to preach October 1834, married Abigail Larrison 19 July 1813. I do not know, others told me many years ago, that he did preach here.

I also found where C.W. Russell in 1878-9 wanted the church corner that joined Isaac T. Rogers' corner. I am aware of the ownership of land in this vicinity by Hiram and Malinda "Milly" Witt Rogers in 1847, John P. and Mary Townsend Rogers in 1839 and Abigail Larrison Rogers in 1839.

The oldest grave in the Mountain Springs Cemetery with a bought marker is Jesse Adams, born 1 March 1788, died 12 June 1851.

## The new Mountain Springs Church

John W. Rogers Sr. and his wife, Susan Watson Rogers, executed a deed in favor of the officers and their successors of the (new) Mountain Springs Christian Church, July, 1906. A place agreed on for a meeting at a certain time. Denominated as the Mountain Springs Christian Church, this small tract of land was adjoining a cemetery where some less than a thousand persons have been buried, and a great number of them were relatives. The very earliest part of the cemetery consists of field stones; many without initials, names or dates.

The description of the church house site is as follows. Beginning at a small



Mountain Springs Christian Church and School in 1983 (photo by James Crowe)

white oak bush and set stone on the east side of the country road -- North of church house running a west course of sixty feet, to a double blackjack, thence south one hundred eighty feet to a set stone, thence an east course of sixty feet to a set stone in the edge of the county road, thence a north course with the original line between John W. Rogers Sr. and James C. Lowery to the beginning with these considerations that it is to be used for the erection of a house for the purpose of worshiping God, and it is not to be used for worldly institutions and whenever it ceases to be used for the purpose for which it was donated, then the property is to revert back to the owner or his heirs. This deed was executed in 1906. It was not recorded until 26 June 1965, a period of fifty-nine years between the date of execution and the date it was recorded.

All these fifty-nine years the deed was held in possession of the Lowery family. (But never recorded or given up to someone else to be recorded until 1965) Why, why, why? The mystery of the hidden deed?

Within this period of time there was confusion among some of the congregation that created a 'split'. So a portion of the members went over on the next or nearby ridge, on the Frazier tract of land, and built another church and called it "The Church of God." Its life span wasn't very long. It became defunct. The Rogers clan, or most of them, remained at Mountain Springs Church. *"And if a house be divided against itself, that house cannot stand."* Mark 3:25

Today, 1 August 1983, the old Mountain Springs Church still stands erect but silently forlorn. Three years ago, during the winter months, all of the beautiful antique yellow poplar handmade benches disappeared. The craftsman had made them and put them together without one nail or screw. They would have to be seen in order to know their beauty and workmanship.

After Grandma Susan died on 8 June 1909, Grandpa John W. let his youngest child, #12, Samuel H. and his family move in with him. Grandpa died 1 February 1920. Uncle Sam got the farm. Uncle Sam was killed instantly, 21 February 1921, while cutting down a tree for fire wood. His wife, Aunt Nettie, and infant baby, died 28 May 1921. Once again the land fell into the hands of their seven heirs. Eventually, as they reached adulthood, they sold their portion to Elmo Rogers. So, the church ceased and the old century "Style Block" was dismantled and our heritage was at an end. A suit followed.

Estill County Judge Jim Wolfenbarger on the 7th of August 1967 ruled the land and the church had ceased to be used for the purpose which it was donated and the property was to revert back to the owner or his heirs. So again this property fell into the hands of his heirs and ended up in a commissioner sale to the highest and best bidder. It fell into the hands of a very young man and later was sold to the C. H. Joerlings. Mr. Joerling has built a beautiful home on this land. He has also been most gracious to the community by permitting the use

of this sacred church building for worshiping, gathering, family reunions and homecomings. The reminiscings cannot and must not be forgotten.

## Nine Civil War Veterans

(As mentioned in last week's article, there are nine Civil War veterans buried there, including Hiram Rogers)

Hiram Rogers married Abigail Jane Rogers 21 September 1852 at the home of her father, John P. Rogers. Witnesses: David Adams and James Townsend. They were married by William Rogers, minister of Mountain Springs Christian Church.

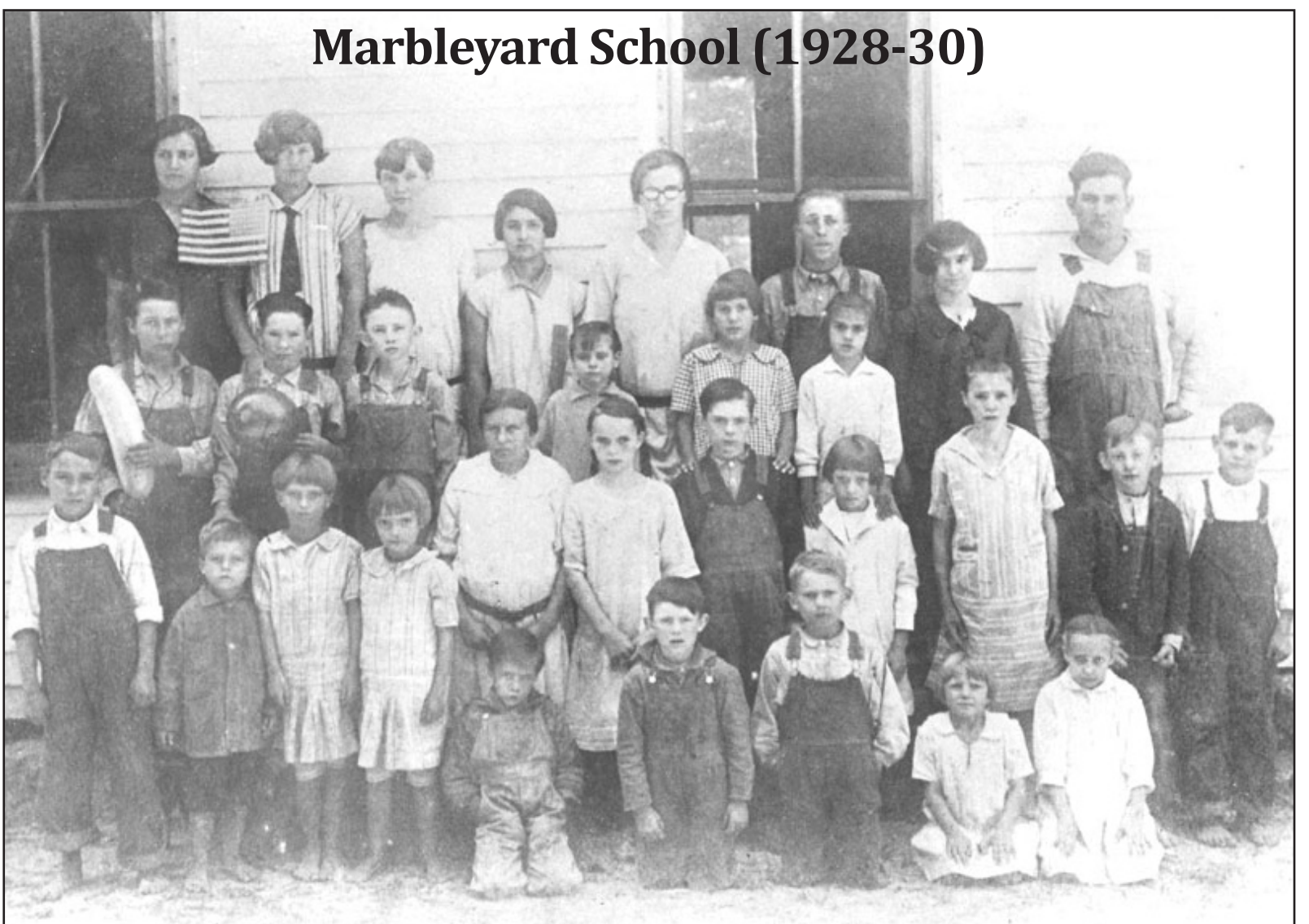
Hiram entered the Civil War as a private, 15 February 1864, Co. I, 47th Kentucky Infantry, commanded by Simon Cockrill. He became a 2nd Lieutenant. He was 50 years old, 5 ft. 11 in., complexion dark, black eyes and hair. He fell in line of duty in Estill County near Cottage Furnace on 20 November 1864 while on a scouting trip from Mount Sterling to Irvine by way of Cottage Furnace. He received severe injuries of the right hip and shoulder by falling over a cliff with his horse. He was treated by Dr. Ancil Daniels of Irvine. Hiram was discharged from service 12 April 1865.

George E. Lemon of Washington, D.C., acted as Hiram's attorney. He drew twelve dollars a month and died 1 February 1899. After his death, Aunt Abby Jane was paid at the rate of thirty dollars on 4 March 1925.

So, out of love and respect for the hardships endured by our early loved ones, we want to honor them and their families.

Left to right, with (age), front, sitting, Herman David Tipton (8), Unknown and Reese Baber (9), Dessie Baber (Johnson) (6), Mattie Clay Tipton Wells (11). Second row: Henry Watterson Marcum (10), Raymond Tilman Wise (6), Mildred Wise (Yates) (9), Vivian Dursia Wise (Lutes) (8), Zeffie Marie Tipton (18), Stella Marie McIntosh (Puckett) (11), Cornelius "Doc" Adams (15), Freda Baber (Snowden) (8). Third row: George Marten Tipton (16), Abney (Gordon?), Wesley James "Russ" Walters (13), Hazel Walters (Tipton) (8), Hazel Marie Baber (Rogers) (11), Bethel Marie Walters (Pasley) (11), Ida Walters (Ballard) (15), Robert Lee Pasley (10), Edd Marcum (11), Esther Adams (West) (19), Hershel Marcum (20). Back row: Nellie Marcum (Tipton) (16), Ethel Abney (McIntosh) (17), Mary Elizabeth "Mary Liz" McIntosh (Barnes) (16), Mary Anna Marcum (Bannister) (14), Hattie Tipton (teacher), Hubert Lester Marcum (16).

Photo courtesy of Nellie Marcum Tipton in 1983



Marbleyard School was located on the road to the Cottage Furnace. A school was likely operated there as early as the late 1800's because of work at the furnace. During early 1900's there were workers in the oil industry in the Furnace area and at Pitts. There are five photos of Marbleyard School in the *Schools of Estill County* book.