



**State of Tennessee  
Department of State  
Tennessee State Library and Archives**

**CANE CREEK CHURCH of CHRIST  
(MARSHALL COUNTY, TENN.)  
LEDGER BOOKS,  
1822-2005, bulk 1842-1977**

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**COLLECTION SUMMARY**

**Creator:**

Cane Creek Church of Christ (Marshall County, Tenn.)

**Inclusive Dates:**

1822-2005, bulk 1842-1977

**Scope & Content:**

Cane Creek Church of Christ ledgers are a series of accounts of the church's functions as congregation and its activities. The church is physically located in Marshall County along Highway 431 and junction of Highway 129, just northwest of Petersburg, Tennessee. The location was considered Lincoln County until the formation of Marshall in 1836. The congregation's rich history represents the changes in the Restoration Movement of the United Baptists, Christian Churches, and Churches of Christ, of the early 1830s and 1840s. Volume I, page one, begins with their "Declaration of Sentiment," which describes their worship of Christ through the use of the "holy scriptures alone."

Through its history and function as a congregation of the Church of Christ, the elders as leaders continue the process of maintaining minutes, rolls of membership, contributions, and distribution of church funds. The nine ledgers comprising this collection represent the congregation's function as religious leader in the community, funding of mission work, Sunday School education of members, and many other activities.

Some of the ledgers overlap, and dates are somewhat jumbled. This reflects a recordkeeping style of separating contributions and expenses in one section of the book, minutes in a second section, and membership lists, baptisms, and notes in a

third section. Volumes II and III titles dates overlap. Church members believe that one or possibly two ledgers are missing for the years of 1878-1882.

Included in these nine books are the separate lists of “brethren” and “sisters.”

Also included are some members’ birth dates, death dates, and functions within the church. Lists represent baptisms, membership transfers into and away from Cane Creek, and dismissal of unruly members from the group. A “special note;” the written term “supper was eaten” is a quick reference to Communion or “The Lord’s Supper” each Sunday worship service. The list of funds and payments in the financial pages can complete an almost full account of preachers who served the congregation. Many are well known in Church of Christ history, such as T. B. Larimore, David Lipscomb and others; they include late 20<sup>th</sup> century ministers such as Ted Kell and Tom Holland, and local members such as B. F. Hart and W. H. Dixon, who also served as preachers.

**Physical Description/Extent:**

9 volumes; 3 folders

**Accession/Record Group Number:**

Mf. 2064

**Language:**

English

**Permanent Location:**

Mf. 2064 (available only on microfilm)

**Repository:**

Tennessee State Library and Archives, 403 Seventh Avenue North, Nashville, Tennessee, 37243-0312

## **Administrative/Biographical History**

The Cane Creek “disciples of the primitive apostolic gospel of Jesus Christ” left a brief account of their beginning as a Baptist Church of Christ. Cane Creek is listed in the Richland Creek United Baptist Association Minutes of 1822. The Association organized the Baptist congregations of Bedford, Lincoln, Marshall, Giles, and Lawrence Counties. It disappears from Association membership lists in the 1830s examples of minutes. (1)

The changed name, Church of Christ, is recorded one time in the Cane Creek’s Minute Book I (1842-1877), page 9; and again in the church’s Minute Book II (1882-1890), page 62. Even though Cane Creek referred to itself as Church of Christ, the church’s history is found in the history of Christian churches in Middle

Tennessee. Her ministers (B. F. Hart, W. H. Dixon, and others) preached in Christian churches, and preachers from Christian churches preached at Cane Creek, such as T. C. Little, David Lipscomb, J. D. Floyd, John Richardson (the blind preacher), T. W. Brents, and others. Cane Creek used the name Church of God once in the minutes. There is no reference to the name Christian Church in Cane Creek's ledgers.

A regular column "News from the Churches" in the Christian Review of 1846 gave a brief update on Cane Creek. "The church on Cane Creek, Marshall Co. was organized three years ago by Bro. McDonald. Present number 45, 17 heads of families, 7 servants. H. Tally Elder. G. Woodward, S. Tally, Deacons. They meet once a month to hear a discourse and occasionally break bread. No weekly contribution. No family worship as far as I could learn." Written by A.G. Branham, Fiskburg, Kentucky, January 15, 1846. (2)

Goodspeed's History of Tennessee From the Earliest Time to the Present (1887) describes a partial list of the beginnings of Christian churches in south central Tennessee from 1830 to 1850, and is consistent with the Richland Creek Baptist Association Minutes. (3) Don Jeter, Marshall County Historian, tells more of the Richland Creek Baptist Association composed of 32 churches in the early 1800s. One by one these churches broke away from the Association and became known as Christian churches. (4)

Goodspeed continues to define the churches as; "Two of these churches [Christian churches] were organized as early as 1816, though probably as Baptist churches. [Then came] the church at Bethlehem, and at Wilson's Hill Globe Creek, Marshall County, in 1823. Liberty church, Marshall County, separated from the Richland Association of United Baptists for communing with Christians and assisting to set apart a deacon in the church. At that time, it had 126 members; in 1846, it had 450." *This history continues to give the beginning of other Christian churches in surrounding Tennessee counties as different years.* "... in 1841, a church at Blackburn's Fork and at Cane Creek in Lincoln County (in 1836 Lincoln became Marshall County), and the Torny [*Tory*] Fork church in Marshall County were organized." (5)

The second reference in Goodspeed's History of Marshall County, 1886: "According to an authority at hand, what is now Cane Creek was separated from the association of United Baptists in 1823. Another authority has it much later. The membership in 1844 was 126. On the expulsion of Rev. Willis Hopwood from the Baptist Association; all the heads of the families, except John England and John Blackwell, left the Baptist church. The members followed Hopwood and built a new church, called Liberty, about one half mile from the old church. A great revival was held in 1851, by Rev. C. R. Collinsworth, at which time there were 156 members added to the church. The present membership [1886] is reported at 80." (6)

In the 1860 Census, District 7, Marshall County, there is listed a James R. Collinsworth, age 45, a “C. P. Minister.” A Brother Jas. H. (R.) Collinsworth is mentioned in the Cane Creek minutes in June 1847, September 1848, May 1849, August 1849, and August 1850. He is a member of the congregation and preaches in protracted meetings in August 1849 and August 1850. From other sources Collinsworth career is interesting and diverse. Collinsworth was baptized as an infant by a Methodist minister; apparently immersed into a Christian church before 1847; preached at Cane Creek and elsewhere; left the Christian church about 1855, joined the Cumberland Presbyterian church in 1858, and was ordained as a licensed minister. He spent much of his time lecturing against his former positions. In the 1870 Census, James R. Collinsworth, 56, is a “minister of Gospel” in Wilson County, Tennessee. Also listed is a son named Tolbert Collinsworth, age 19. (7) He is probably named for Tolbert Fanning, an outstanding preacher and educator among the Christian churches. It is a consistent reflection of his influence of the Restoration Movement on Collinsworth in the 1840s. Collinsworth was born in 1814 in Blount County, Tennessee, and died in Hartsville, Tennessee, in 1892.

Willis Hopwood as a forceful New Testament minister encouraged several congregations to leave the Baptist denomination (and Richland Association) and function in worship as independent congregations of the Church of Christ. His work was more affiliated with the Liberty congregation but he preached at Cane Creek, McBurg, and other local events. (8)

B. F. Hart served as minister at Cane Creek and as an elder as well. He is consistently represented in the membership lists and service activities of the congregation during the last half of the 19th century. He served as officiating minister for the marriage of W. H. Dixon and Mattie Logan Dixon. (9).

William H. Dixon also served as minister for Cane Creek and considered it his home congregation. He lived and preached in the Marshall, Lincoln, and Giles counties area. Dixon served in the 41<sup>st</sup> Tennessee Infantry, C.S.A., during the Civil War and was a prisoner of war at Camp Morton, Indiana, for brief period of his service at the end of the war. (10) His story is told in Biographical Sketches of Gospel Preachers by H. Leo Boles, a well-known author among Churches of Christ. (11)

Cane Creek records reflect the history of the community with generations of same families continuing with the activities of the church, for example, family names such as the Talley, Hart, Ellis, McAdams, Pigg, Crabtree, and others recur in the church activities. The records also reflect major changes. In 1866 Cane Creek built a brick building. The books include a list of donations and expenses for the new structure. (Front Cover of volume 8, 1956-1962) See also the loose document “1866 Expense of Building Brick Church at Cane Creek.” In keeping with the trends of the late 1890s and separate from worship, a formal Sunday School program was established in 1895. The ledgers include extra notes and lists of

various classes and participants. A second, frame, building was constructed in 1912; Sunday School rooms were added to this structure in 1961. Additions and continued renovations complete this congregation's small but well-kept meetinghouse through today. The congregation carries on in the tradition of simple New Testament gospel and worship.

### **Notes**

- (1) 1822 Richland Creek Baptist Association Minutes, Richland Creek Baptist Association, Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives.
- (2) "*The Christian Review*" Ed., Tolbert Fanning, Nashville: Franklin College. 1846, Volume 3, pages 68-71.
- (3) 1835 Richland Creek Baptist Association Minutes, Richland Creek Baptist Association, Jacob Wright Papers, 1800-1887; Tennessee State Library and Archives. Accession Numbers: 72-055, 72-081, 72-128
- (4) Interview of Dan Jeter, Marshall County Historian, by Thomas Russell, spring 2015.
- (5) *History of Tennessee From the Earliest Time to the Present*; Goodspeed Publishing Co., Nashville, TN; 1887, p. 703.
- (6) Goodspeed, *The Goodspeed Histories of Maury, Williamson, Rutherford, Wilson, Bedford & Marshall counties of Tennessee*, 1886, p. 900.
- (7) 1870 United States Federal Census, Wilson County, Tennessee. *1870 U.S. Census, Population Schedules*. NARA microfilm publication M593, 1,761 rolls. Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, accessed Ancestry.com, December 12, 2015.
- (8) "*Obituary of Willis Hopwood*," *The Christian Magazine*, Volume 5, page 288.
- (9) Confederate Widow's Pension Application, Mattie Logan Dixon, Widow of W. H. Dixon, W-9480, Filed 1929. Tennessee State Library and Archives.
- (10) Ibid.
- (11) W. H. Dixon, *Biographical Sketches of Gospel Preachers*, Boles, H. Leo. Nashville, TN: Gospel Advocate, 1932, P. 296.

## **Organization/Arrangement of Materials**

Ledgers are arranged in chronological order. One or possibly two ledgers may be missing for the years of 1878-1882. The miscellaneous files of loose papers, compiled research notes, and a few recent members' notes follow in folder order.

## **Conditions of Access and Use**

### **Restrictions on Access:**

No restrictions.

**Restrictions on Use and Reproduction:**

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**Index Terms****Corporate Names/Organizations/Government Bodies:**

Cane Creek Church of Christ (Marshall County, Tenn.) -- History --  
Sources

**Subjects:**

Churches of Christ -- History -- Marshall County (Tenn.) -- Sources  
Churches of Christ -- History -- Lincoln County (Tenn.) -- Sources  
Richland Creek United Baptist Association -- History -- Tennessee --  
Sources  
United Baptists -- History Tennessee -- Sources

**Geographic Names:**

Cane Creek (Tenn.) -- History -- 19<sup>th</sup> century -- Sources  
Cane Creek (Tenn.) -- History -- 20<sup>th</sup> century -- Sources  
Lincoln County (Tenn.) -- History -- 19<sup>th</sup> century -- Sources  
Marshall County (Tenn.) -- History -- 19<sup>th</sup> century -- Sources  
Marshall County (Tenn.) -- History -- 20<sup>th</sup> century -- Sources

**Document Types:**

Ledgers (account books)  
Membership Lists  
Minute books

## **Acquisition and Appraisal**

### **Provenance and Acquisition:**

Collection was loaned to Tennessee State Library and Archives by congregation elders Sam Hart and Ellis Pinkston on December 15, 2015. The collection was microfilmed and returned to the donor.

## **Processing and Administrative Information**

### **Preferred Citation:**

Cane Creek Church of Christ (Marshall County, Tenn.) Ledgers, 1822-2005, bulk 1842- 1977, Tennessee State Library & Archives.

### **Processing Information:**

The collection was reviewed and prepared by Carol Roberts, Conservator at Tennessee State Library and Archives. Thomas Russell, minister and church historian, also assisted in preparation of the congregational history Fayetteville, Tennessee. December 2015.

### **Existence and Location of Originals:**

The original materials are maintained by Samuel F. Hart, elder of Cane Creek Church of Christ, December 2015.

### **Related Archival Materials:**

Richland Creek United Baptist Association Records, 1822, 1831, 1843, Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives, Nashville, Tenn.

## DETAILED COLLECTION DESCRIPTION

### CONTAINER LIST

<b>Contents/Item Title</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Volume</b>
Minutes, Membership lists, Expenses, Book July 3, 1842 – January 1877	1842-1877	1
Minutes, Expenses, also includes a compiled membership list beginning 1842. April 1882 – December 1891	1882-1891	2
Minutes, Contributions, Expenses, Sunday School class lists. January 1890 – October 1898	1890-1898	3
Minutes, Membership, Sunday School Classes January 1892 – December 1914	1892-1914	4
Minutes Membership Contributions April 1906 – September 1925	1906-1925	5
Minutes, Contributions, Expenses, Membership July 1915 – December 1938	1915-1938	6
Minutes, Contributions, Expenses, Membership May 1939 – December 1955	1939-1955	7
Minutes, Contributions, Expenses, Membership January 1956 – January 1962	1956- 1962	8
Minutes, Contributions, Expenses, Membership January 1962 – September 1966	1962-1966	9
<b>Contents/ Item Title</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Folder</b>
Minutes, Typed April – May 1977	1977	10
Miscellaneous papers, recent members	2005	11
Miscellaneous research notes on neighboring congregations, ministers' biographies compiled by Thomas Russell	1822 -1960	12