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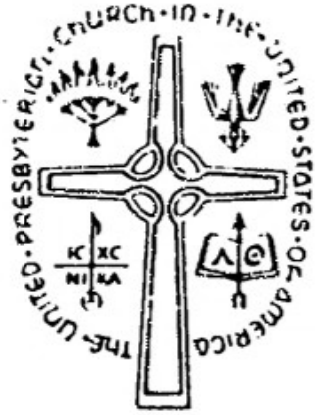
The History Of

Presbyterianism

In

Morgan County Illinois

1827 - 1967



Prepared for the 140th Anniversary Celebration by the First Presterian Church in cooperation with the Northminster and Woodson esbyterian Churches and the Congregational Church.

Jacksonville, Illinois

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NORTHMINSTER PASTORS

Antonio De Mattos
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Hugo Mc Kee
Charles Barton
George W. Mc Wherter
Hiram A. Stinson
Roger F. Cressy
J. W. Elzholtz
W. E. Spoonts
R. W. Burton
Harry Lothian
George Albright
C. Frank Janssen
Bernard Jeffries
James S. McClymont

MINISTERS AND MISSIONARIES FROM NORTHMINSTER

MINISTERS
John F. Dagama
Robert Lennington
Fred Lennington
Emmanuel Meline
Joseph Cherry
Henry Vieira
Robert Bpptist
E. C. Pires
Ernest Fernandes
George Souza

MISSIONARIES
Manuel G. Santos
John Ornellas
Joseph Da Rhaunde
Antonia Estagne
Mary Ferreira
Belle Ferreira
Laura Pires
Elnor Pires
Rev. Antonia Seete

WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

For several decades after 1818 when Illinois became a State, the question of slavery was not only a political problem but also an ecclesiastical one. Deeply religious people differed as to whether or not the church should be involved in social or political issues. The Synod of Illinois made clear its position against slavery but the majority of Presbyterians in Jacksonville did not concur.

On April 13, 1860, thirty-five members who had withdrawn from the First Presbyterian Church gathered in the newly-erected Congregational edifice on West College Avenue and were constituted as the Westminster Presbyterian Church. The new congregation and the Congregational Church [illegible] supported the abolition of slavery. A bond of common [illegible] was formed and cordial relationships continued through the years. The newly organized Westminster Church purchased two lots at the corner of College and Westminster Streets and erected a brick structure which was replaced by a stone edifice in 1899.

WESTMINSTER PASTORS

David H. Hammilton	*1860-1872*	Edward B. Landis	*1916-1921*
Henry D. Nevius	*1872-1874*	Thomas Smith	*1921-1924*
Samuel M. Morton	*1874-1890*	Hodson K. Young	*1924-1928*
David S. Schaff	*1890-1897*	Frederick B. Oxtoby	*1928-1929*
Charles M. Brown	*1897-1907*	*(Stated Supply)*	
Leonidas H. Davis	*1908-1915*	William C. Meeker	*1929-1946*
		Arthur F. Ewert	*1947-1952*

MINISTERS AND MISSIONARIES FROM WESTMINSTER

Ministers:
Thomas W. Smith
James Russell
Augustus Ayers
James Duer
Otis Ironmonger
Everett R. Martin

Home Missionaries:
Mary Russell
Martha Duer Lamb
Edward Laurie

STATE STREET PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

In 1884 the First Presbyterian Church had the misfortune to lose its second building by fire. While a new structure was being built on the northeast corner of Church and State Streets, the congregation worshipped with the second Presbyterian Church. The erection of a new house of worship in 1885 completed the "four churches corner" for which Jacksonville became known. When the new building had been completed the congregation of First Church invited the members of Second Church to merge with them and to call to the pulpit the newly-elected pastor of Second Church. The majority of the members of both groups voted for the plan and the name "State Street Presbyterian" was chosen. A minority in Second Church rejected the merger and took the name "Central Presbyterian Church," continuing as such until 1897 when the church was dissolved and the building sold to the First Baptist Church which used it until it was demolished by fire in 1966. The State Street congregation merged with the Westminster Church in 1952 and their edifice was sold to the Central Baptist Church which used it until its demolition in 1967. The removal in 1967 of the State Street Presbyterian structure which originally completed "four churches corner" ended the same historic configuration of church buildings at the intersection of Church and State Streets.

FIRST CHURCH PASTORS

John Brich	*1827*
John M. Ellis	*1828-1832*
Alfred Dashiel	*1835*
Ralph W. Gridley	*1837*
William H. Williams	*1842*
Livingstone M. Glover	*1848-1880*
J. H. Sutherland	*1882-1884*

SECOND CHURCH PASTORS

Dr. Andrew Todd
J. V. Dodge
Robert Allen
W. W. Harsha
A. B. Morey

A NEW WAVE OF PRESBYTERIANS

Among the churches in Jacksonville, Northminster can claim the noblest origin. In 1838 Dr. Robert Reed Kalley, a Scottish physician under a commission of the Free Church of Scotland, started a mission voyage to India. His wife became so ill aboard ship that he decided to land at the first port touched by their vessel. This happened to be Funchal on the Island of Madeira. Dr. Kalley was convinced that this occurrence was providential and he determined to make Madeira the place of his life work.

The Madeirenes were of the Roman Catholic faith but as Dr. Kalley treated their diseases he also gave them the spiritual teaching of Protestantism. Under his preaching a considerable number were converted. The government, at first tolerant of his activities but later alarmed as the movement grew, resorted to brutal persecution. These heroic people in May 12, 1845 organized the Portuguese Presbyterian Church, under the Free Church of Scotland, the first such church in the whole world. Some of the members were martyred, some seriously maimed, but a group of 350 managed to escape to the West Indies. The American Hemp Company urged the exiles to travel to New York for eventual settlement near Island Grove in central Illinois. The Hemp Company failed to make arrangements and the hapless refugees were stranded in New York.

When the church people of Jacksonville heard of their plight, Dr. Sturtevant, the Chairman of a committee representing the two Presbyterian Churches and the Baptist, Congregational and Methodist Churches, wrote a letter inviting them to come to Jacksonville at once, assuring them that they would be cared for and put into a position to earn their own living. Ruling Elder M. P. Ayers, a Jacksonville banker who

travelled to New York on business, helped clear arrangements for the journey westward. The new wave of Presbyterians from Madeira arrived in Jacksonville in the fall of 1849, some of their number going on to Springfield and Waverly.

NORTHMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Services were held in various churches until 1853 when a beautiful new England style building was erected on the corner of Kosciusko and Jordan Streets. Reverend Antonious Mattos was the first pastor and the church remained under the Free Church of Scotland until 1856. The "Old School" "New School" controversy caused two divisions of the congregation resulting in three separate churches. In 1900 the groups reunited forming a congregation which was subsequently named "The Northminster Presbyterian Church". The cornerstone was laid for the present building at the northeast corner of West Court and Fayette Streets.

The Northminster Presbyterian Church

The roll of ministers and missionaries testifies to the faithful Christian witness of Northminster members through the years.

$27,063.25. Meanwhile, Northminster members anticipated the settlement of an even larger estate in 1976, the proceeds to be used for establishment of a home for the aged.

BRIGHT PROSPECTS

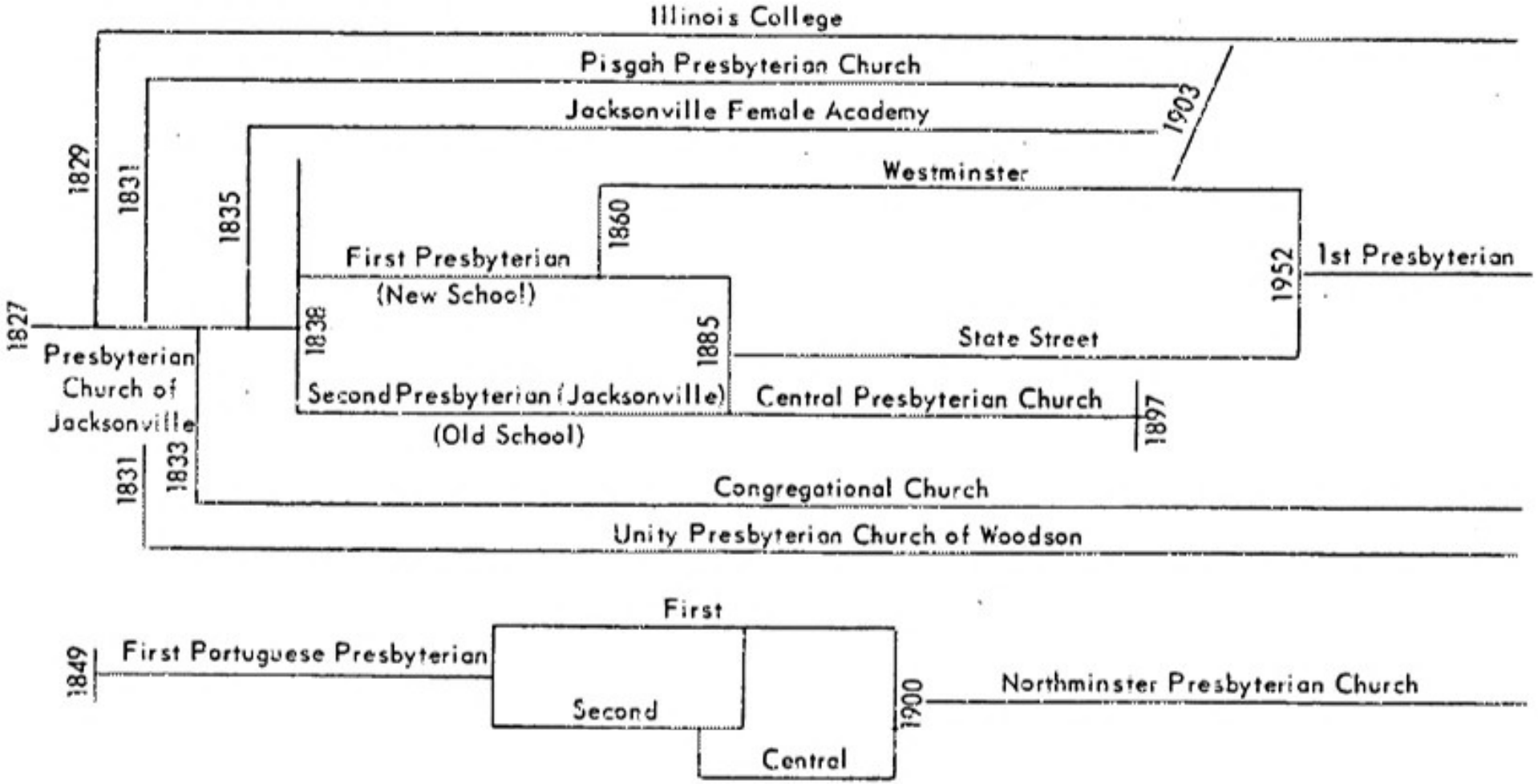
In mid-1967 the prospect of growing usefulness in Christian service by Morgan County Presbyterians was bright. The Woodson and Northminster Churches cooperated under the faithful and diligent leadership of the Reverend James McClymont. The First Church reflected harmony and enthusiasm under the pastoral care of the Reverend Dale Robb. Material resources for improvement of facilities and expansion of ministry stood at an unprecedentedly high level. Goodwill and active cooperation was evident among the several congregations. Thus, as the one-hundred fortieth anniversary was celebrated, the Presbyterians faced a promising era of opportunity.

FIRST CHURCH PASTORS

Joseph Baus	*1952-1958*
Frederick Tyrrell	*1959-1962*
Dale Robb	*1963-*

MINISTERS AND MISSIONARIES FROM FIRST CHURCH

Robert Walker
Kenneth Dobson -- *Thailand*
Donald M. Stewart

The First Presbyterian Church

140 YEARS OF PRESBYTERIANISM IN MORGAN COUNTY