

Weldon G. Cannon History Files

EULESS PRESBYTERIAN

In this folder donated to the City of Euless, labeled EULESS PRESBYTERIAN, are a few key documents and other materials from files donated to The University of Texas at Arlington for the Weldon G. Cannon Euless Collection in the Special Collections of the University Library. Following is a brief summary of materials in 1 folder under this subject that were donated to UTA.

1. EULESS PRESBYTERIAN

Folder Contents

Narrative history of the Euless [Cumberland] Presbyterian Church; narrative history of the Estelle Cumberland Presbyterian Church; research materials copied from the archives of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, Memphis, TN, and the Presbyterian Church, USA, Philadelphia, PA.; correspondence; newspaper and journal articles.

EULESS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

By Weldon Cannon

Introduction

In the mid-20th century, longtime Euless, Texas, residents, people whose memories reached back to the 1880s and 1890s, told about a Presbyterian Church that met in the Grange Hall in Euless, sharing Sundays and space with a Methodist congregation. A few references in the ARLINGTON JOURNAL mention a Euless Presbyterian Church in about 1900. A study of Cumberland Presbyterian Church records reveals much more. These documents are primarily the MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE CUMBERLAND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, MINUTES OF THE GUTHRIE PRESBYTERY, and MINUTES OF THE RED OAK PRESBYTERY, at the archives of the Presbyterian Church (USA), Philadelphia, PA. and the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, Memphis, TN. The following is a rough draft, a work in progress. The final, finished document will come later.

Cumberland Presbyterians established a congregation in the present City of Euless, Texas, in 1873. Originally known as Union Cumberland Presbyterian Church in the Guthrie Presbytery of the Synod of Texas, the church changed its name to Euless in 1895 to identify its location in the town of Euless that was officially established in 1886.

The Cumberland Presbyterian Church was organized in Tennessee in 1807 because of theological issues and practices in which they differed with other Presbyterian groups. Strongly evangelical, the Cumberland Church sent preachers to Texas in the mid-19th century, garnering many converts and establishing numerous churches. Among those early mission efforts was the Union Church, first mentioned in the minutes of the semiannual Guthrie Presbytery meeting on September 10, 1873, in [?Denton?]. All congregations in the presbytery were listed in the minutes of each meeting. No church named Union was listed in minutes of either the spring or fall 1873 gatherings, but on the second day of the September meeting, "W. C. Dobkins from Union appeared and took [his] seat," according to the minutes. William Calloway Dobkins (1841-1928) of the Bear Creek community, now part of the City of Euless, was a well-known physician, businessman, farmer and civic leader.

Elsewhere in the same record is this notation: "The following petition was granted, Whereas the Union Congregation has had the ministerial services of the Rev. Hayter of the Red Oak Presbytery for the year 1873 and desires his services for the ensuing year, Resolved therefore that: the petition of said congregation be granted. The above was approved." The Rev. Andrew S. Hayter (1818-1900), a Cumberland Presbyterian minister and a surveyor, settled in Tarrant County in 1869. He platted a new town on the Texas and Pacific Railway between Dallas and Fort Worth in 1876, originally named Hayter, but later renamed Arlington. Hayter established several other congregations in the

Arlington area besides Union. The Guthrie Presbytery lay north of the West Fork of the Trinity River, encompassing the north half of Tarrant County, the northwestern quarter of Dallas County, and a large area of Texas that lay to the north and west. The Red Oak Presbytery was south of the West Fork, covering southern Tarrant County and southwestern Dallas County. Although the new Union congregation and the Rev. Mr. Hayter's home were in different Presbyteries, only six miles separated them.

Exactly where the church first met for worship is not known. But after 1877, the Union Cumberland Presbyterians worshipped in a Grange Hall when the National Grange of the Patrons of Husbandry, nicknamed the Grangers, built a meeting place in the center of what is now Eules. Dedicated to improving farmers' lives, the Grangers opened the hall for community use, including a school. Also worshipping there was a Methodist Church, established in 1876.

The Guthrie Presbytery always listed the Union Church as a member congregation at the semi-annual meetings after 1874, but rarely recorded a representative. In 1879, 1882, and 1886, however, Joseph W. Weatherly (1822-1894), another Bear Creek (Eules) resident, represented the congregation at the presbytery meeting. The minutes of the General Assembly of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church also always listed the Union Church as part of the Guthrie Presbytery.

At the fall presbytery meeting in 1879, the Rev. D. R. Bell [Bells, Bull, Bill, Ball] reported that he had recently preached at Union with 54 "professions," 27 "accessions," 17 adult and 2 infant "baptisms." He also accepted a missionary collection, and the congregation elected two elders and one deacon. In 1882 the church reported 40 members.

In 1888, the presbytery clustered small congregations in groups of three or four if they were small, charging each group with responsibility of calling and paying its own minister. The Eules fellowship also included nearby churches at Grapevine, Estelle, and Albert's Chapel. In 1895 the Union congregation changed its name to Eules. Among congregational leaders in the 1890s -- as reflected in the office of clerk of the session or representative to the presbytery meeting -- were J. E. Evans, Eules storekeeper and postmaster 1892-1901; W. F. Calahan, [is this correct?] and S. P. Shaffer.

At the April 1898 presbytery meeting, the Eules congregation presented a petition, signed by 22 members, requesting transfer from the Guthrie to the Red Oak Presbytery. As the southernmost congregation in the presbytery, Eules was in "isolation from the heart of the [Guthrie] Presbytery" and near "strong Presbyterian influences in the Red Oak Presbytery." It had particularly strong ties to the Arlington, Johnson Station (south of Arlington), and West Fork (in the Watson community between Arlington and Grand Prairie) congregations. The presbytery approved the change.

Among ministers in the late 1880s to the early 1900s were C. H. Smith, J. D. Boone, W. L. Brewer, W. C. Rushing, W. B. Fitzhugh, and J. M. Wilshire. All served more than one congregation simultaneously since few churches were large enough to support a full-time minister. A Presbyterian minister preached no more than once a month

at Euless. Nevertheless, Presbyterians met each Sunday in the Grange Hall with Methodists. The Euless Methodist Church (named the Grange Hall Methodist Church until 1895) was on the Grapevine Circuit, so a Methodist preacher also preached at Euless once a month. Regardless of who was in the pulpit, the two churches had a joint Sunday School each Sunday.

The shared arrangement ended when the rapidly growing Methodist church constructed its own building across the road (now Euless North Main Street), facing the Grange Hall, about 1891. According to one tradition, the Presbyterians asked the Methodists to leave the Grange Hall, accusing them of proselytizing their members. The Presbyterians now had the Grange Hall to themselves, but their numbers were small and the church gradually dwindled. Furthermore, the decrepit Grange Hall was about to fall down. Although the Patrons of Husbandry was no longer active, the building was still used as a community center, a meeting place for the Presbyterians, and for overflow classes from the nearby school, which had erected its own building nearby in 1894.

Postmaster Evans represented the Euliss [sic] church at the fall 1899 presbytery meeting. The Euless church was not represented at the August 1902 presbytery meeting, but it was recorded that the clerk of the session for Euless was Mrs. Susan Weatherly. Out of 48 church session clerks listed, she was the only female. Her husband, Joseph W. Weatherly, had died in 1894, and by 1902 she apparently was the mainstay of the church. Her nature is reminiscent of her mother, Mary Ann Whitson Trigg, a widow who migrated from Bedford County, Tennessee, to Tarrant County, Texas, in 1868 with several of her children and others. Mary Ann bought 200 acres, farmed, and built a cotton gin and the Grange Hall on her property. Another daughter, Judy Ann Trigg, married Elisha Adam Euless, who also moved from Bedford County at the same time. He purchased his mother-in-law's property in 1879 and 1880 and operated the gin and a general store. The community that grew around his businesses took the name Euless.

The Trigg family and their related branches, including the Euless family, had strong ties to the Euless Cumberland Church. Within a short time, the church was organized (1873), the Euless Grange established (1874) and the Grange Hall erected (1877) on the property of Mary Ann Trigg. Her sons and other family members were organizers and leaders in the Euless Grange for many years. When Adam Euless died in 1911, he was eulogized by the minister of the Hemphill Street Presbyterian Church in Fort Worth, a Cumberland Church before 1907. Mr. Euless lived in Fort Worth when he was Tarrant County Sheriff, 1892-1896, and again the last few years of his life. Susan Trigg Weatherly and Priscilla Trigg Calahan, wife of W. F. Calahan, were sisters of Judy Ann Trigg Euless.

The last extant account of the Euless Church meeting for worship is dated April 1901 when an Arlington newspaper article reported that the "Rev. W. B. Fitzhugh occupied the pulpit at Euless last Sunday." The Rev. Mr. Fitzhugh lived in Arlington, where he was pastor of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church (now the First Presbyterian Church of Arlington), but also preached at West Fork and Johnson Station. He had strong ties to Euless. In 1903, he performed the marriage ceremony for Dr. Luther F. Rhodes,

prominent Euless resident who was also a Rock Island Railway physician and official Tarrant County Physician, and Maggie Calloway, an orphan who had been reared by her uncle and aunt, Joseph W. and Susan Trigg Weatherly. In 1908 Mr. Fitzhugh delivered a memorial address at the erection of a monument for recently deceased Joe Calloway, Maggie's brother, at Calloway Cemetery in Euless.

Meanwhile, the fragile Grange Hall was on its last legs. On particularly windy days parents rushed to the Hall to pick up their children, fearing it would collapse. It was finally torn down about 1900 or shortly thereafter. The Presbyterians were now without a regular meeting place. In 1905, the minutes of the General Assembly of the Cumberland Church listed a church in Euless with six members, but there was no report from it and no clerk of the session, although the minister in charge was J. M. Wilshire. In 1906, the church was listed with 10 members, but there were no congregational report, clerk, or minister in charge. The Tarrant Baptist Church, about two miles away, purchased the Grange Hall site from Adam and Judy Trigg Euless in 1910, described as the lot "formerly known as the Presbyterian Church," and soon moved there, changing its name to Euless Baptist Church, now the First Baptist Church of Euless.

The Euless Cumberland Presbyterian Church and the national Cumberland Presbyterian Church came to a critical point in their respective histories about the same time. The Cumberland membership was concentrated in the Southern United States. By the early 20th century, many members thought there was no need for a separate Presbyterian denomination and that they should be part of a larger fellowship. Hence, the denomination merged with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in 1906, although a sizeable minority refused to join and reorganized a new Cumberland Presbyterian Church. The Euless Cumberland Presbyterian Church officially passed into the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), and is listed in records of that denomination for 1907 and 1908, with the notation that the listing and statistics were based on the previous year's report. Apparently, the last time the Euless church submitted a record to any denomination was in 1904.

Thereafter Euless was without a Presbyterian Church until 1963, when the First Presbyterian Church of Euless was organized. It briefly met in a school and in 1964 constructed a building on Simmons Dr., now in J. A. Carr Park. The congregation relocated to Bedford in 1976 and is now Emmanuel Presbyterian Church. As of today, there is no Presbyterian Church in Euless. Nevertheless, the Presbyterian Church made its mark in Euless in the last quarter of the 19th century and has left a lasting heritage.

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{Handbook of Denominations; Campbell, Thomas, Cumberland Presbyterian Church in Texas; Brackenridge, Douglas, Cumberland Presbyterian Church in Texas; Minutes of the Guthrie Presbytery of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, microfilm; "Alexander Dobkins Cemetery," Texas Historical Commission, Austin.}

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{Minutes of Guthrie Presbytery; "Andrew S. Hayter," Texas Historical Commission, Austin, Texas; Brackinridge .}

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{"Elisha Adam Euless," "First United Methodist Church of Euless," Texas Historical Commission, Austin; "The Grange Movement in Texas, 1873-1900," SWHQ 42 (April 1939).}

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At the fall presbytery meeting in 1879, the Rev. D. R. Bell reported that he had recently preached at Union with 54 "professions," 27 "accessions," 17 adult and 2 infant "baptisms." He also accepted a missionary collection, and the congregation elected two elders and one deacon. In 1882 the church reported 40 members.

{Guthrie Presbytery Minutes.}

In 1887, the Cumberland Presbyterian, official weekly publication of the denomination, brought attention to the congregation by publishing reports from R. W. Stanfield of “Union Congregation” or “Enless” (official, but misspelled post office designation for the community), about revival meetings held by the Rev. A. W. Rogers in Eules, Smithfield (now in North Richland Hills), and Easter (now in Grapevine). In 1888, the presbytery clustered small congregations in groups of three or four, charging each group with responsibility of calling and paying its own minister. The Union fellowship in Eules also included nearby churches at Grapevine, Estelle, and Albert’s Chapel. The Union congregation changed its name to Eules in 1895, the recognized name of the community, U. S. Post Office records notwithstanding. About the same time the Grange Hall Methodist Church and the Woodlawn School District also changed their names to Eules. Among congregational leaders in the 1890s -- as reflected in the office of clerk of the session or representative to the presbytery meeting -- were J. E. Evans, Eules storekeeper and postmaster 1892-1901, W. F. Calahan, and S. P. Shaffer.

{The Cumberland Presbyterian; Guthrie Presbytery Minutes; “Eules Methodist Church,” “Eules School,” Texas Historical Commission, Austin.}

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{Guthrie Presbytery Minutes; Red Oak Presbytery Minutes; the Guthrie Presbytery was renamed the Denton Presbytery in 1904 and the Red Oak Presbytery renamed Fort Worth Presbytery in 1903, Brackenridge, Voice in the Wilderness, p. 114.}

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The shared arrangement ended when the rapidly growing Methodist church constructed its own building across the road (now Eules North Main Street), facing the Grange Hall, sometime between 1891 and 1895. According to one tradition, the

Presbyterians asked the Methodists to leave the Grange Hall, accusing them of proselytizing their members. The Presbyterians now had the Grange Hall to themselves, but their numbers were small and the church gradually dwindled. Furthermore, the decrepit Grange Hall was about to fall down. Although the Patrons of Husbandry was no longer active, the building was still used as a community center, a meeting place for the Presbyterians, and for overflow classes from the nearby school, which had erected its own building nearby in 1894.

{“Eules School,” Texas Historical Commission; “First United Methodist Church of Eules;” Interviews, esp. Joe Cannon; Arlington Journal.

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{Minutes of the Red Oak Presbytery; “Elisha Adam Eules;” Green, George, “HEB, Heart of Metroplex.”}

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{“Elisha Adam Eules;” Fort Worth Star Telegram/Record.}

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official Tarrant County Physician, and Maggie Calloway, an orphan who had been reared by her uncle and aunt, Joseph W. and Susan Trigg Weatherly. In 1908 Mr. Fitzhugh delivered a memorial address at the erection of a monument for recently deceased Joe Calloway, Maggie's brother, at Calloway Cemetery in Euless.

{Arlington Journal.}

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{Minutes General Assembly CPC; Tarrant County Deeds; History First Baptist Church of Euless; Interviews.}

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{Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A.; Brackenridge; Campbell; Handbook of Denominations.}

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{Records of Emmanuel Presbyterian Church, Bedford, Texas; Mid-Cities Daily News.}

ESTELLE CUMBERLAND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

By Weldon Cannon
2012, Revised 2018

The Estelle, Texas, Cumberland Presbyterian Church was a thriving congregation in the late 19th century. Estelle (sometimes Estill) was a rural community on the county line of northwestern Dallas County and northeastern Tarrant County from the mid-19th century until the mid-20th century. It had one of the earliest post offices in the area, dating from even before the Civil War. Today, the site of the community is within the boundaries of DFW Airport between Dallas and Fort Worth and in the city limits of Euless and Irving. Besides the Presbyterian Church and the post office, there were a Methodist Church and Cemetery, both named Minters Chapel. A general store, gin, school, Masonic Lodge, doctor's office and blacksmith shop were also located in the community. Scattered around the neighborhood were numerous farm and dairy families. The Cumberland Presbyterian denomination was organized in 1810 in Tennessee over differences with other Presbyterians in matters of faith and practice. Cumberland Presbyterians were exceedingly evangelistic, sending out missionaries across the country, and by 1890, they constituted more than half of all Presbyterians in Texas. The Estelle Church was first listed in Cumberland records in 1887 at a meeting of the Guthrie Presbytery, made up of churches in North Central Texas. It was also credited with having a Sunday school. In 1888, the Presbytery grouped Estelle with Union (renamed Euless in 1895), Albert's Chapel, and Grapevine Springs churches, giving them responsibility for selecting and paying the salary of their own minister. The Estelle Church probably met in the Estelle Masonic Lodge, established in 1883; the Union/Euless Church always met in the Grange Hall at Euless after it was built in 1877. S. E. Williams was listed as the representative of the Estelle Church at the Presbytery gathering in 1888. The following year, the congregation was represented by William Calloway Dobkins, 1841-1900, a well-known physician, businessman, farmer and civic leader in northeastern Tarrant County. He had represented the Union Church at the Presbytery meeting in 1873 when it was admitted to the Presbytery. Also in 1889, the Estelle Church, along with Union and Mount Zion churches, asked that the Rev. J. A. Coker preach for them part-time. Thereafter, the congregation was never represented at Presbytery meetings, and in April, 1896, it was officially dropped from church rolls and never mentioned again.

(From research in archives of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in Memphis and the Presbyterian Church (USA) in Philadelphia. Also see history of the Union (Euless) Cumberland Presbyterian Church. By Weldon G. Cannon, Temple, Texas)