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EARLY CHURCH HISTORY.

The people of Madisonville and of the whole County at the early period of settlement turned their attention more or less to spiritual affairs. The Methodists were perhaps the first to have a regular organization. Very soon after Madisonville was made the County seat and even prior to this time, Methodist Circuit riders came here and organized classes and later these were formed into congregations that in time built houses of worship.

History states that in 1828 there was an organization with regular preaching which was held at the homes of people who were willing to have the meetings in their houses. The present site of the Methodist church on South Main was bought in 1835 from John W Younger. The first building was of wood, then later a brick, then another brick which was displaced in 1901 by the present building. The first presiding elder was Marcus Lindsay. There have <sup>since</sup> been 20 presiding elders on this work since. The first preacher of which there is any record who served the church was Charles Halliday in 1828. Since then 53 different men have served the congregation.

The Disciples, as they were then called, but now Christians, were also early to be on the ground. A man by the name of Robert [ts] preached at the court house during the forties. He was a man of ability, Elder Orvill Collins, is supposed to have been the first regular pastor. He began his work in 1849. He was followed in time by <sup>Elder d</sup> Godloe, Dinnitt and others whose names are well known to many of our people.

The deed to the property of the Christian Church was made by a man by the name of Kelly, who was a wheelwright. The first building was of wood. Later a brick church was erected and this was replaced by the present modern building which was erected in 1910.

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While there are no records in reference to the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, now the Presbyterian Church, U.S. prior to about 1830, yet there is evidence that these people were in the field at an earlier date. The first house erected was in 1849. In 1869, John F Wilkins and wife deed<sup>ed</sup> to the church a lot on North Main Street upon which the second church now stands. Soon after the deed was made a brick church was erected when about 20 years ago the present building was erected.

On March 19th 1870 thirty one Baptists met and organized a church at Madisonville. The supposition is that these people were members of the church at some other point in the County, as the Baptists were known to be among the early settlers of this portion of the state. The Baptist built a brick house on North Main street. At one time this was the largest house of worship in Madisonville. Last year a new building was commenced and very soon it will be completed and ready for occupancy.

The Cumberland Presbyterians, though the church has been divided are still with us. In this short article it is a difficult matter to trace the Cumberland Presbyterians, or separate them from the other branches of the Presbyterian Church. These people who failed to go with the other presbyterians are now erecting a house of worship on West Center street.

It is to be regretted that very few churches have anything like <sup>a</sup> complete record that reach<sup>es</sup> back more than a generation. Hence it is a difficult <sup>task</sup> matter to do all these organizations justice in the matter of early history.