



## Kerr Kronicles Volume XI

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*Peek into the Past:* The years 1843-1855 held difficult days for the Philadelphia congregation. Only one short pastorate brought much encouragement. From 1843 to 1849 there were five were supply/interim ministers. In every strata of life, tension prevailed. Nationally the acrimonious debates concerning the institution of slavery and the theory of states rights enveloped the Congress. The large plantation owners along the coast were often at odds with the small farmer in Clear Creek and Morning Star. In many ways the Mecklenburgers were more isolated than they had been in Colonial days. The great wagon road was no longer filled with prospective settlers.

In 1846, there were 230 members of the church which included 50 black members. In 1848 membership decreased to 194 which included 49 black members. (*The Presbyterian Gathering on Clear Creek*)

*Interesting Fact:* A member of Philadelphia, Sugar Dulin (1763-1845) is buried in the old south cemetery. He wrote in 1837 that he "lived with one wife going on 51 years & we Have Raised Five Sons & five Daughters & we this Day counted our Grand Children & we make them 94 that our Sons and Daughters has had & we Counted 13 great grand Children. This 20<sup>th</sup> of March, 1837." (*The Presbyterian Gathering on Clear Creek*)

*A Musical "Note":* A favorite hymn, "What a Friend We Have in Jesus", was written in 1855 by Joseph M. Scriven to comfort his mother who still lived in Ireland. (*Source: Internet*)

*Educational Facts:* In 1839, Mecklenburg County approved an act for public education to be financed by taxes. The vote was 950 for and 578 against. The budget for schools in 1850 was \$3,449. Before this, most instruction was given at homes where the parents could read and write. The leading textbooks were Webster's Blue Back Speller, Davie's Arithmetic and Smith's Grammar. Discipline was strict and enforced with the "hickory switch". (*The Presbyterian Gathering on Clear Creek*)

*National Event:* 1845–1847: Ireland is ravaged by the Great Famine, spurring one of the great migrations of people to the U.S.