

DOUBLE SPRINGS.

DECORATION DAY DRAWS 1,200 TO 1,500
PEOPLE TO A TIME-HONORED
CHURCH.

In the southern portion of Lincoln was located 78 years ago Old Double Springs church. In 1819 Mr. J. L. Gooch, grandfather of Hon. L. G. Gooch, gave four acres of ground upon which a house of worship was to be erected, the building, of course, to occupy only a limited portion of the area. The structure then erected, after the manner of Solomon's Temple, noiselessly, stands there to-day, with the same old 78-year-old flooring, pinned down by wooden pegs made by hands now silent in the cold grave, while the roof still has the wooden pins that followed gimlet holes to their present position—think of it, 78 years ago. In Southern Lincoln there are hundreds of people that tenderly love Old Double Springs church. Within its walls many hundreds, may be thousands, have been made to see the error of their way through the foolishness of preaching and been made to rejoice by finding Him who taketh away the sins of sinners.

Within the shadow, almost, of this church the interesting services and ceremonies were conducted Sunday that drew an assembly estimated at 1,200 to 1,500. At 9 o'clock the Masons met at Masonic Hall, in New Waynesburg, marched to Old Waynesburg Cemetery a half-mile distant, decorated graves of deceased brothers, thence to Double Springs Cemetery, of a similar distance, where flowers were also in rich profusion strewn upon the graves of those who had joined the silent throng beyond the mystic river of death. In the latter city of the dead sleeps the first Worshipful Master of Waynesburg Masonic lodge, J. W. Griffin, the tombstone of whom tells that he died in 1851. At his grave the remarks of Rev. W. R. Davidson, master of ceremonies, were peculiarly touching.

The decoration ceremonies through with, the great throng swayed to the speakers' stand in the beautiful woodland near the church, where seats to accommodate only about 500 had been arranged, and hence several hundred had to sit on the ground and let their legs hang over. Rev. A. J. Pike, of Brodhead, who was to have delivered an address on Masonry, was not present. Rev. W. R. Davidson briefly spoke of the oldest of Orders, stating that he never knew how proud he was of being a Mason until he had visited the Masonic Widows and Orphans Home at Louisville. In a speech of about 20 minutes he stated some beautiful truths pertaining to Masonry, as did Rev. Ira Partin, of Preachersville, and Rev. Dr. J. Wendell Blackburn, of Monticello. The great crowd seemed to catch every word of each speaker and were apparently regretful that each speech on so excellent a subject was not prolonged.

The dinner on the grounds was superabundant. It was no "close communion" business, but bread was broken together, regardless of age, sex, previous or present condition, and if any man, woman or child went home hungry 'twas because he or she was too bashful to accept what was handed to her or him.

After dinner the old folks' meeting was held, and the "Old Time Religion" sung by gray-haired grandmothers and grandfathers in a manner characteristic of the long ago, when moral worth was held higher than royal blood. Rev. Buck Taylor, of Somerset, preached the sermon for the old folks, and as he is in the 70s, he stated at the outset that it would probably be his last sermon to that people, whom he loves. As he warmed up to his subject and feelingly referred to his pastorate at this old church some 20 years ago, many handkerchiefs became visible and good old Christian women and men shed tears of joy, the commingling being touching in the extreme. When finally the good old preacher requested that "Am I a Soldier of the Cross?" be sung and the hand of brotherly love extended, all sought his friendly grasp and a general hand-shaking followed, during which tears trickled down the wrinkled faces as freely as I ever saw them at a gathering of Christian people.

Rev. Dr. Blackburn then preached a sermon about 20 minutes in length from the subject "Just a Little While" which was indeed a practical one and which I am sure every one will remember who heard it. He was born in Richmond, Va., sufficiently long ago to be in possession of silvery locks and has almost traveled the wide world o'er. He says something, as the saying goes, every time he opens his mouth and is entertaining in the highest degree. He is a first cousin of the illustrious Jo C. S. Blackburn.

The music of the occasion was splendid. On the stand were the choir and organ and the good songs that were made to so melodiously ring must be still reverberating in the adjacent hills and dells. Miss Eva Gooch, a strikingly handsome young lady and an accom-

plished musician, daughter of Mr. Steven Gooch, was the organist, while Mr. George F. Thompson lead the singing. The three beautiful daughters of Mr. E. B. Caldwell, Jr., sang two songs as a trio, which only has to be heard to be appreciated. Each of them is peculiarly gifted in the incomparable accomplishment of song, or art divine, while at the same time they are pictures of health and loveliness. He must be very proud of them, as well as of his boys. Among the hospitable people of Southern Lincoln, Bro. Caldwell stands in the front row. He is what the people designate a practical Christian and is very popular as a necessary consequence. He is Master of the Waynesburg Masonic lodge.

In reverting to the old church I will state that the first pastor there, 78 years ago, was Rev. Stephen Colyer. The membership now numbers 302 and Rev. W. R. Davidson is pastor. The new church at New Waynesburg is now the place of worship, but the old building should be allowed to stand unmolested for the good it has done.

At the old folks' meeting I noticed closest to the stand the gray hairs of Messrs. Jonathan Aker, Henderson Young, Ellison Padgett, Marshal Morgan, L. F. Reynolds, Willis Padgett, D. O. Gooch, Logan and Green Reynolds, Clark Reynolds, Mesdames Ermine Padgett, Aaron Singleton, N. S. Reynolds, Isaac Hubble, Hardin Singleton, and many others.

Every portion of the county was represented and a blind man couldn't have helped seeing just lots of pretty girls. Among the handsome ladies from Kingsville I noticed Mrs. J. M. McCarty, who is one of the most magnificent specimens of womanhood I ever saw.

Mr. Bud Reynolds, deputy sheriff, and the excellent Waynesburg correspondent of this paper, was making himself generally useful the whole day through, not in keeping order, for better never prevailed, but in extending courtesies in the lavish manner characteristic of him and the name of Reynolds.

There are in Double Springs church section about 150 Gooches and fully that many Padgetts.

Among the graves in New Waynesburg Cemetery are those of Littleton Salliers, who fought in the revolutionary war; Wm. Stringer in the war with Mexico, and George Williams, in the war of 1812. The latter was the father of Mr. Reuben Williams.

Taken as a whole, the day was one of the biggest in the history of Southern Lincoln. The drive of nearly 40 miles the round trip thither was through scenery surpassingly beautiful. The hills and dales, covered with wild flowers, present a variegated hue, while music-throated birds entranced the listening air. As we passed by the famous Halls Gap, down the steep cliff of which Larken Edge, the "Flower of the Yearth," 4 horses and a stage full of passengers tumbled 24 years ago, I recalled the incident and still wondered why nobody was hurled into eternity that dark night, though no one was hurt. This circumstance will be remembered by three-fourths of the people of Lincoln. It was impressed upon their minds by a graphic description at that time in the INTERIOR JOURNAL, of which Mr. F. J. Campbell was then editor. If Artist A. J. Earp, or some other good sort of a fellow, could put on canvas the picture now presented from the summit of Halls Gap, with the miniature mountains on either side and Stanford, Lancaster and Danville in the background, everybody in this and adjoining county would want one. It would be a magnificent ornament in any household.

That Baptist flock toward water like ducks, was practically demonstrated in the way they gathered around the sparkling, cool, crystal waters of Double Springs all the day long Sunday.

One of the "talkinest" women in the world is Mrs. Isaac Hubble, mother-in-law of Mr. E. B. Caldwell, Jr. I presume the fact could be easily established that she talks in her sleep—I know she never halts a minute while awake. It is refreshing to be in her presence. She makes the most of life and seems happy as the birds of the air.

Mr. and Mrs. Garland Singleton had the prettiest baby on the grounds Sunday. Speaking of babies reminds me that the good people of the Double Springs section are especially obedient to the Biblical injunction to replenish the earth. Babies were abundant and the soothing lullaby of an affectionate mother in many instances prevailed, while the child itself seemed to have a voice in the matter.

Remembering the expression of the late Judge W. O. Hansford, during a heated political campaign, when in a speech he said that "democrats are so thick in Lincoln that you can shake any bush you will and many will fall out," I am persuaded to state, since Sunday's meanderings, that the same expression can be applied in reference to Masons the whole world over.

The hospitable people of Southern Lincoln enjoy life, are among the best this great laud of ours produces and politically or otherwise, what they ask for they should receive.

JOE F. WATERS.