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"CANAN CHURCH HOUSE"

When the Moravian brethren began their missionary labors in the Cherokee Nation, soon after the beginning of the forties of the 18th century, one of the first buildings erected was the Canaan meeting house. It was completed about 1841, according to best information procurable and was altogether the handiwork of native Cherokee work-

men. Large forest trees were felled and symmetrical logs procured. These logs were selected to desired dimensions and when a sufficient number had been prepared were built into the meeting house.

As a large room was desired the logs were joined at the ends with great skill, and as a result a room sixty feet in length and about thirty feet wide was built. The interior was carefully finished,

the roof was covered with durable boards, probably made from white oak or yellow pine timber, windows were added and after seats had been supplied the Moravian minister often preached to the natives of the hills and forests. It was the

desire of the Moravian minister to locate their missions in populous Indian settlements, no matter how rugged or isolated the place might be. Consequently the Canaan meeting house was situated in an out of the-way-section, miles northeast of the small town of Tahlequah, the Cherokee capital.

Something more than sixty years after the close of the Civil War, there returned for a visit to the site of the old Moravian station at Caks, an old man, the son of one of the pioneer missionaries. This man recalled very clearly the appearance of the Canaan meeting house, and that it was built by Cherokees. He further recalled that the large building had been destroyed during the progress of the Civil War, when there was much destruction of houses by burning.

The Canaan meeting house is mentioned in historical records of the Moravian board, which was the first Protestant denomination to engage in missionary labors among the Cherokees, having begun in the original nation east of the Mississippi river at the beginning of the nineteenth century.