

INDEX CARDS

J. S. Murrow
Church Organized 1869
Norfolk Town
Atoka

Etta D. Mason, Interviewer
Indian-Pioneer History
August 3, 1937

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From interviews by the interviewer, Mrs. Etta D. Mason, and also by letters copied from old manuscripts preserved by the church.

Persons interviewed were Mrs. McBride, Reverend Mr. Henry Owen Morris, Mary Rogers, Mrs. Inge, and Mrs. Murrow.

To this country Dr. J. S. Murrow came, settling in Atoka in the year 1867. On the first Sunday in May, 1869, he organized the First Baptist Church with seven charter members. Here is what Mrs. Clara McBride, daughter of Dr. Murrow, wrote:

"My father is a native of Georgia. His grandfather, William Murrow, was one of the immortal Marian men of Revolutionary fame. His maternal great-grandfather held a patent from George III to Sullivan Island in Charleston Bay in South Carolina. His father, John Murrow, married Miss Amelia Sadger. Six children were born to them. My father, the youngest, was born in Jefferson County, Georgia, June 7, 1836.

"In 1854 my father united with the Green Fork Baptist Church and the following year was licensed to preach. He entered Mercer University then located at Penfield, Georgia, in 1856. He was ordained in

September, 1857 at Macon, Georgia, and was then appointed by the Domestic and Indian Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, and supported by the Reheboth Association as a missionary. He came to the Indians in the west, arriving at Old North Fork town now Eufaula on November 13, 1857. My father proposed to return after the Civil War to his work among the Creeks and Seminoles. When in 1867, he was returning from Texas to this field of labor God in His providence settled him among the Choctaws in this place, which he afterwards named Atoka, 'A place of much water.'

"Since that date our church has had an interesting history. Its first location was west of Sandy. After several years it was moved to the lot now owned and occupied by Mayor Williamson. In the year 1915, it was moved to its present place of worship. The first house of worship was a one room building and so was the second. Now the church owns a beautiful brick building and an annex. The church also owns a parsonage with a beautiful lawn where services are held during the summer months.

Our church had a small beginning for there were

only seven charter members, but God has richly blessed its influence. There are now about 300 resident members.