

**Nesbitt-Union Chapel Ruins
c. 1880**

In 1886, Mr. & Mrs. R.T. Nesbitt sold Union Chapel to the church's trustees. The deed specified it was to be used by all Christian denominations and by schools and agricultural societies. As this was a rural community, various clergymen preached here on a rotating schedule. The stone building, which featured double-hung Gothic arch-styled windows, was sustained by donations and fundraisers and was still in use in the 1910s. The chapel eventually fell into a state of ruins with three of four walls and roof that had collapsed. Chapels such as this were important social as well as religious gathering places for local residents before radio, television and broad newspaper coverage of events.

Sources – Nesbitt-Union Chapel Ruins

Friends of Nesbitt-Union Chapel Inc. Meeting held with Susan Knight Smith, Greg Linton and Julie Martin on March 4, 2007. (In footnotes this reference will be referred to as “Friends”.)

Hadley, Blair. “Chapel Controversy.” *Marietta Daily Journal*, March 23, 2004. (Georgia Room, Cobb County Central Library.)

Marietta Journal. Various dates. (Copies obtained from Friends or from the Georgia Room, Cobb County Central Library. In footnotes this reference will be referred to as “MJ”. The specific date(s) of the article(s) being referenced and the source will also be given.)

St. James Episcopal Parish Records, Vestry Minutes, Volume 2. Various dates. (Information obtained from Friends in the format of a typed summary of notes containing entries specific to Union Chapel.)

Nesbitt¹-Union Chapel Ruins c. 1880²

In 1886, Mr. & Mrs. R.T. Nesbitt sold³ Union Chapel to the church's trustees.⁴ The deed specified it was to be used by all Christian denominations and by schools and agricultural societies.⁵ As this was a rural community⁶, various clergymen preached here on a rotating schedule⁷. The stone building, which featured double-hung Gothic arch-styled windows⁸, was sustained by donations and fundraisers⁹ and was still in use in the 1910s¹⁰. The chapel eventually fell into a state of ruins with three of four walls and roof that had collapsed¹¹. Chapels such as this were important social as well as religious gathering places for local residents before radio, television and broad newspaper coverage of events.

¹ The deed for the chapel shows the spelling of the last name as "Nesbit". All other sources reviewed showed the spelling as "Nesbitt".

² MJ 5/21/1885 discussed upcoming meetings to be held at the chapel. MJ 7/15/1886 and 8/26/1886 referred to the rebuilding of the chapel. The 12/20/1886 deed (described below) included a description of the measurement of the surrounding acre of land using the front door of the chapel as a reference point.

³ Per the deed, the amount paid for the chapel and land was \$10.00.

⁴ Cobb County Deed, Book J, Page 22. (Copy obtained from Friends.)

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ MJ 6/30/1911, P. 9 under the heading of "Nesbitt" described the importance of country churches. MJ 9/29/1892 under the heading of "Union Chapel" described activities by local farmers and "the drive out here from town". (Copies obtained from Friends.)

⁷ St. James: notes from 1894/5 regarding their rector speaking at Union Chapel, note from May 14 (unknown year) referred to a Presbyterian pastor who gave a good sermon; MJ 5/9/1889 referred to the scheduling of two different reverends to speak on designated Sundays. (Copies obtained from Friends.)

⁸ Photograph of Albert Henry Lester, son of Grace & George Lester at Union Chapel c. 1920s showed the chapel wall and windows in the background. Photo of girl at pulpit (described below) showed two windows. (Copies obtained from Friends.)

⁹ MJ 7/15/1886, 8/26/1886, 9/9/1886, 6/12/1887, 6/23/1887, 9/29/1892, to name a few. (Copies obtained from Friends.)

¹⁰ MJ 7/28/1911 discussed church business; MJ 6/30/1911, the article about country churches under the heading of "Nesbitt" was written (copies obtained from Friends); MJ 2/21/1913, obituary of R.T. Nesbitt mentioned his funeral was conducted at Union Chapel. (Georgia Room, Cobb County Central Library). No further articles were found beyond 1913 so the exact time when the church ceased being used is unknown.

¹¹ Photograph of girl behind pulpit (wife of Bobby Thomas as a teenager) taken in mid 1940s showed light streaks on the walls coming from holes in the roof; photograph of Virginia Duncan Hogan's niece and nephews (winter 1945) showed portion of church in background that appeared to be intact; photographs from the 1950s showed cracks in the walls, and 3 walls standing with roof, bell tower and fourth wall gone. (Copies obtained from Friends.) Hadley, P. 1A showed a 2002 photo of the last standing (front) wall of the church in which two sections met in an arch over what was the front door, and the (2004) photo showed one remaining section as it looked after the interrupted bulldozing of the ruins.

Interview with Friends on 2/25/2007 in which they described church services and visits to the site prior to the implementation of the 2004 restraining order which prohibits all interested parties on both sides of the current ownership dispute from going to the site.