

One Century — One Calling

BY DIANA HARDIN

It seems difficult to imagine what Madison, Tennessee must have looked like 100 years ago. Charged by their own convictions, educators Edward Sutherland and Percy Magan resigned their positions at the college in Battle Creek, Michigan to establish a work in the South. So it was that Ellen White, Sutherland, Magan, and a few others ended up on the Cumberland River near Nashville,



Percy T. Magan

Tennessee on her son Edson's river steamer, the *Morning Star*, in the Spring of 1904.

On the first day of their journey, there was a breakdown of the boat's machinery, and Edson anchored at Neely's Bend and Larkin Springs in Madison, Tennessee. W. O. Palmer took Mrs. White up on the bank of the river and pointed out to her an adjoining plantation. Sutherland and Magan had already disregarded this property as a suitable location for their school, based upon its limestone rock, its location, its size, and its cost of \$12,700.00.

White persisted, and with uncertain hearts, the men decided they could not proceed in the Lord's work unless they accepted his will. Mrs. White agreed to serve on their board to help them. It was the only time she agreed to become a member of the Board of Trustees of any institution, and she remained on the board of Madison Sanitarium and Hospital

and Madison College until 1914.

In 1906 a church company was organized in the Old Plantation House parlor of the Madison Institution. Percy T. Magan served as the first pastor. By 1941 the church held the largest membership in the Kentucky-Tennessee Conference. In 1971 the church moved into its present sanctuary on Larkin Springs Road.

In 1908 Mrs. White stated that if the Madison plan were properly expanded and faithfully carried out, "we as a people would be a spectacle to the world, to angels, and to men." The Lord led in his establishment of the work in Madison, and from this hill, a light was shining.

The Madison *project* today also includes Madison Campus Elementary School, Madison Academy, Middle Tennessee School of Anesthesia, and Tennessee Christian Medical Center. Today, with a membership of 1400, the members of the Madison Campus church (MCC) mimic the desire of its founders one hundred years ago, to proclaim, reclaim, and sustain the ministry in this community. Such was the goal in opening MCC's new family life wing in the summer of 2005.

On Sabbath, March 11, 2006, exactly 100 years to the day, MCC will hold a weekend Centennial Celebration of Praise and Thanksgiving. Weekend festivities are scheduled to include keynote speakers, current senior pastor, Lynn Schlisner, and James

Nix of the Ellen G. White Estate. Also scheduled are the children of Madison Campus Elementary dramatizing the history of the Madison project, music and worship, food, fellowship, and a display of records and archives from the original Madison fellowship.

From God's simple farm to God's gracious design, from the *Morning Star* to a beacon on the hill, God's work will not be halted. The founders of the Madison project stepped out by faith on the word of the Lord. Not by sight could they see in this worn-out, impoverished farm the promise of that magnificent institution-to-be, with its schools, sanitarium and industries, outschools that were to come from it, and its influence around the world.

More information about Madison Campus Church's Centennial Celebration, as well as a list of pastors for the past 100 years and archival documents can be found at www.madisoncampus.org.



Old Plantation House