

**A History of:
M. P. Möller Opus 1587
Methodist Episcopal Church South of Marion/ First Methodist Church¹
Marion, North Carolina**

The third building – the first condemned due to a crack in the foundation and the second destroyed by fire – for the Methodist Episcopal Church South of Marion (MESCS)² was completed in 1908 at the corner of N. Logan and W. Fort Streets. M. P. Möller constructed its Opus 1587 for this new building in 1913. This late Gothic Revival brick building served the Methodist congregation from 1908 until they built a new church (in a new location) in the late 1950s³. After the Methodists moved out, the building was purchased by the First Baptist Church in 1959⁴ and used primarily for storage with the organ remaining in its prominent position front center.

I purchased the organ January 2, 1975 and removed it over the next several days. The building mysteriously⁵ burned ten day later. The organ casework, which was retained by the seller, is assumed to have been destroyed in the fire.

The organ was rebuilt and installed as a residence organ in the Weaverville, NC area where it remained until the property changed hands in 1985. At that time, the manual windchest were discarded and the remaining parts were placed in storage. The 16' Bourdon was later used in the Antiphonal division at Weaverville United Methodist Church. The other pipework, console and offset chests remained in storage at our facility in Weaverville, some were later discarded.

At the time of its removal from the church (1975) there remained evidence indicating that the organ was originally built with tubular-pneumatic action and an abandoned water motor was still in the basement with its “pump arm” extending up into the organ case. The organ was later rebuilt and electrified, obviously by Möller. The original ventral pneumatic (bar) windchests were fitted with Möller magnet boards and 12 pipes and a new treble chest was added to the 16' Lieblich Gedeckt to extend it for the 8' pedal Flute. This rebuild included a Kinetic blower and was probably done when electricity became available in the 1920s. The organ remained mechanically unaltered from that date until the time it was removed in 1975. No record has been located for this rebuild but the pedal key switch and console jct board are marked “Marion NC 10394” (not associated with Möller Opus 10394).

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¹ United Methodist Church records, 1784-1984: The MESCS merged with the Methodist Church (MC) in 1939.

² McDowell County, NC, Register of Deeds, property records.

³ “Historic and Architectural Resources in Downtown Marion NC”, United States Department of the Interior, National Register of Historic Places.

⁴ McDowell County, NC, Register of Deeds, property records.

⁵ There was no electricity in the building when the organ was removed – a portable generator was used to supply work lights during dismantling of the organ.