Florida's oldest Presbyterian church

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ARGYLE --- At a point five miles south of here, on State Road 183 stands Florida’s oldest Presbyterian Church. It’s called the Euchee Valley church and was organized on May 26, 1828 (although a sign on the church grounds indicates the institution dates back to 1827). Argyle is on U.S. 90 near DeFuniak Springs in the: Florida Panhandle.

Once upon a time, during the early territorial days of the state, a colony of Scotch Presbyterians settled here and peacefully co-existed with the Euchee Indian tribe. In fact, according to regional historian E. W. Carswell, the early settlers came upon invitation of Euchee Chief Sam Story, whose real name was Timpoochee Kinnard. He was the son of a gentle scotchman, Timothy Kinnard, and a Euchee Indian woman. At the centennial of the church in 1928, the pastor said the church founders were imbued with the Scotch faith and perseverance. "They believed that what is to be will be, provided they brought into pass."

At first there was a log cabin church erected and it served the little settlement to about 1847 when a large frame building was erected. The latter, which was 50 feet wide and 100 feel long, had galleries on either side and one of them was reserved for the use of the local slaves. This, Carswell recorded, was the custom in Holmes Valley in those days. The building served the congregation for about 40 years, the slaves in the meantime having been freed and established their own churches.

The old Euchee Valley Cemetery behind the church reveals the antiquity of the graveyard. The first grave was for Peter McCaskill, a native of Scotland, who was buried here in 1827.

The larger building was torn down in the 1880’s, the population of the valley having declined and was replaced by a smaller one which still serves today with additional reconstruction and alterations.