

# I Remember Old Tuscaloosa

By Fred Maxwell

HELP!

When I agreed to write a few articles for Graphic I stated that they would be "off the cuff" type from memory and were not to include any research. One item I thought to be of interest and not be too difficult to verify—I well remember early in my life that I was told one of the churches in Tuscaloosa was in the process of having a church bell cast. The foundry men told them that a quantity of silver mixed in with the bell metal would give the bell a soft and mellow "silver tone." A group of church members got up a purse of about 300 silver

dollars and shipped this coin silver to the factory for inclusion in the bell metal.

Well, for the life of me I cannot remember which church was involved. Either the Methodist or Presbyterian Church seems to ring a bell in my memory.

In an attempt to set the record straight I've called many older citizens, deacons, elders and others and have found out many interesting things regarding our church bells but no one seems to know about the coin silver that went into the bell in question.

Included in the information that

has come to light at this time, I find that the bell in the original First Methodist Church in Tuscaloosa was cast by Paul Revere, a famous copper and silversmith of Philadelphia—also famous for his night ride on horseback calling "the British are coming."

I was also told that Mrs. Belle Harrison, sometime later, wrote the Paul Revere foundry for certain information about the bell and was told in substance that Paul Revere made only three church bells. They knew

7 GRAPHIC Feb. 4, 1971

where two of the bells were located; that the third bell was sent to Mobile for shipment by river boat "somewhere," having never heard further about this third bell they had assumed the riverboat had sunk and that the bell was in the bottom of the river.

I hope some good reader can give me some authentic information regarding the "silver toned bell" so that it can be added to its church history.