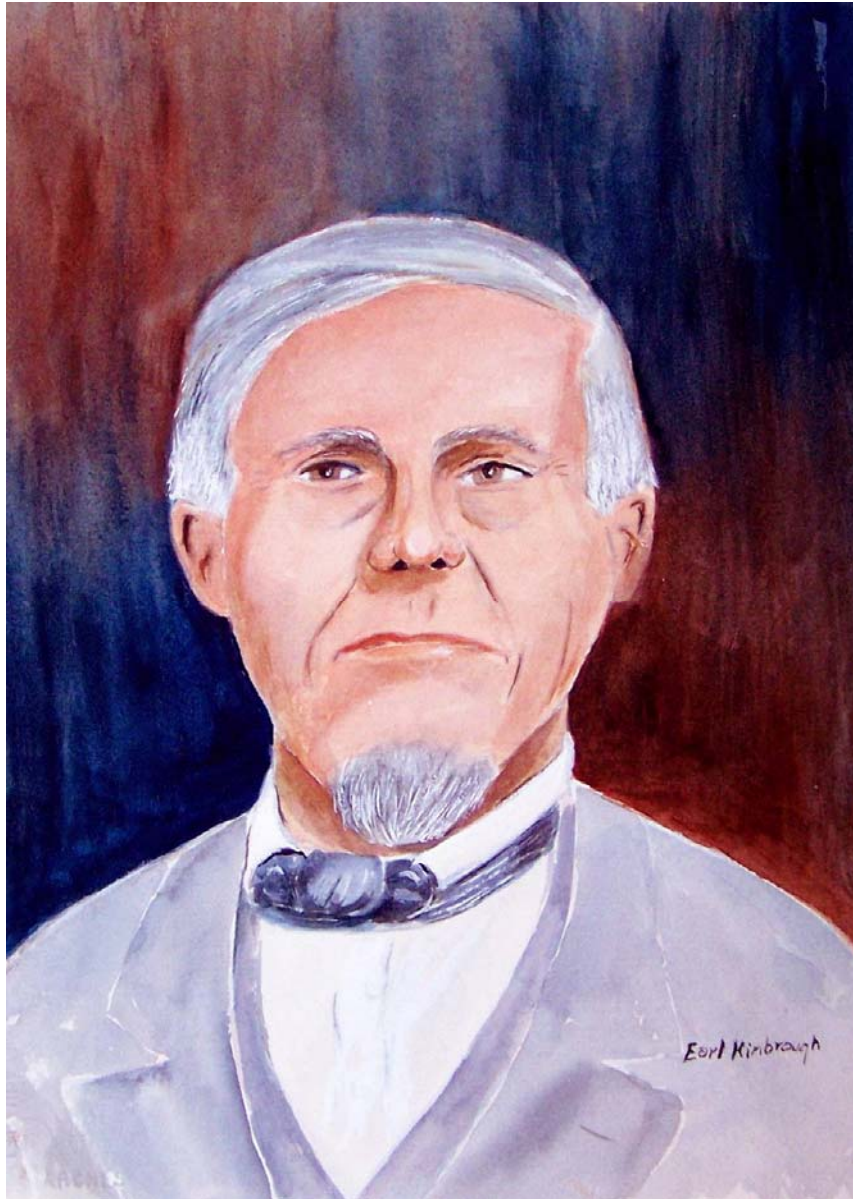


The Alabama Restoration Journal

*An Historical Perspective of
churches of Christ In Alabama*



GREEN MONROE HALEY

VOLUME 1

ISSUE 1

November 01, 2005

A STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLE

The object of The Alabama Restoration Journal is to preserve and disseminate an historical record of the Restoration Movement primarily as it functioned in Alabama prior to World War II.

Brotherhood controversies as they unfolded in the years following this period are not included in this history, not because they lack historical validity, but because they do not fall within the frame of our primary time and area of coverage and because our interest is basically in our common roots.

Some articles and items may extend beyond our borders of state and time period, when the editor deems them pertinent to the main objective, when they are reflective of, or connected directly with, earlier history, or when they are purely of a human interest nature.

The Journal is not a "church paper" and is not designed to teach doctrine as such. It will not promote any hobby, controversy, or theological point of view that does not fall within the scope of the Restoration ideal within the time and area of primary interest.

The editor and contributing editors are responsible for keeping the material they submit for publication, whether written by them or selected from other sources, in keeping with the objects of The Journal.

The editor will retain the right to make the final determination of whether an article, or a portion thereof, fits the objective of The Journal.

No editing of material, other than routine editorial work, will be made on any writer's work without his prior knowledge and consent.

All historical material submitted for publication must be verifiable by documentation. Any opinions or conclusions based in part or whole upon supposition, while valid, will be given as such and not as historical facts.

Simple documentation may be supplied within the articles published, but it will be our purpose generally to omit footnotes.

The editors may not agree on all aspects of New Testament Christianity as currently practiced, but they have a common interest in Restoration history that transcends other differences, hold one another as brethren in Christ, and consider each other as committed to and capable of representing the Restoration ideal of speaking where the Bible Speaks and being silent where Bible is silent.

The writing of a particular story or the recording a particular event should be understood as reflecting the editor and associate editors perception of history and not necessarily as reflective of their own personal view.

Every effort will be made by the editor and writers to record history as it is and not to rewrite it as they might like for it to be. Historical revisionism is not the object of The Journal and will be excluded to the extent of our ability.

Source information for all articles will be available for those who request same.

The Editors

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

We have contacted the Alabama Historical Commission concerning their rules regarding a Historical Marker at Berry commemorating the Alabama Christian College of Berry. The marker would be placed on the site of the school. The City of Berry has given their permission. The marker is a metal sign (many are at historical points around the State) and will give a short historical sketch of the school. The cost is about \$1,350.00. If you would like to make a contribution, send your check to Hilda J. Logan, 204 High Street, Russellville, Alabama 35653 and it will be applied. We will list all contributors and the amount they contributed in future issues.

OUR COVER

Green Haley was a respected preacher and a legend of sorts in Marion/Winston County during the Civil War. The cover was painted by our own multi-talented Earl Kimbrough. Thanks to Earl for this portrait. Here's hoping we can get him to do more in the future....LEW

The Alabama Restoration Journal

An Historical Perspective of churches of Christ in Alabama



Editor
Contributing Editors

Larry E. Whitehead
Earl Kimbrough
C. Wayne Kilpatrick
Frank Richey
Scott Harp

Volume No. 1 Issue No. 1 Date November 01, 2005

Introduction

This is the premier issue of this journal. We will, depending on the interest shown, publish four issues per year. We will concentrate on the history of God's people in Alabama, their struggles and trials and their dedication to restoring New Testament Christianity and bringing the same to the people of this region. While we need to keep in mind that the people we will write about were not inspired, nevertheless; their stories are inspirational. Bother Kilpatrick is fond of saying "we are standing on the shoulders of giants." How true!

The writers for the journal are men most of our readers will recognize. Earl Kimbrough was born and raised in Russellville, Alabama. He has been preaching the gospel for almost 60 years. He is a prolific writer and has written several books. His current offering is "Fifteen Miles to Heaven," a series of one hundred short stories about the men and women of the restoration. It is a delightful book that will bring both cheer as well as a tear to your eye. He is currently working on several books, among them are, a biography of F.B. Srygley and a History of the Church in Russell's Valley."

C.Wayne Kilpatrick is an eminent church historian as well as a noted gospel preacher. Wayne is the head of the history department at Heritage Christian University in Florence. He conducts seminars on restoration history and makes several presentations on the same for various churches of Christ each year. He is in constant demand for these meetings and is recognized by the brethren as a truly excellent historian. In addition, he does missionary work in various countries. We are fortunate to have a man of Wayne's unique abilities to write for the journal.

Frank Richey is a well known gospel preacher in North Alabama. He preaches for the River Bend church of Christ in Florence. Frank is an excellent historian and writer. He was born in Florence and has been preaching the gospel for about thirty years. He does missionary work in Central America and the Philippines in addition to his work with the River Bend Church. He conducts several meetings a year as well. He is an excellent student of restoration history and we look forward to his offerings.

Scott Harp was born in Haleyville, Alabama. He currently preaches for the church in Fayetteville, Georgia. Scott is an excellent student of the restoration and historian in his own right. He publishes the *restorationmovement.com*, a website devoted to restoration history. This is, beyond doubt, the best website for restoration history. He does an outstanding job. We are delighted to have Scott as one of our writers and look forward with anticipation to his articles.

Your editor has been a student of history most of his adult life. Over the last twenty years, he has spent many hours in Northwest Alabama researching genealogy and the history of the area. He has written extensively about the area and its people. Included in his research is the involvement of his ancestors in the restoration movement.

Sister Hilda Logan of Russellville, Alabama has volunteered to assist in the typing and paste up of the publication. She is a native of Russellville and is well known to church members in the area.

From time to time we will bring to you for your pleasure, or discomfort, the gems of *Uncle Isaac*. Isaac has a unique style that incorporates both wit and seriousness as well as a touch of sarcasm to his writings. He writes in a homey style mixed with some country humor. Isaac's views are his own and his commentary does not

necessarily reflect the views of the editors.

We will reprint articles dealing with history, from some of those that have gone before. We should all keep in mind that "*They being dead, yet speaketh.*" There is a treasure trove of letters and articles that were written by these great men and women that we all will find of interest.

It is the hope of all involved that you will find these articles both inspiring and enjoyable. While we will concentrate on the church in Alabama, we will occasionally offer an article from "*Beyond Our Borders*" as we determine it to be of interest.

We invite your comments and suggestions about how to improve the paper. If you have any congregational histories that are well documented that you would care to share, please send them to us. Our address is listed below.

Our email is: lw3000@bellsouth.net. This issue is being sent to you at no charge. If you like what you see and would care to subscribe, the price is \$10.00 per year. Please send your check and current address to: Clay Publishing, P.O. Box 398, Russellville, Alabama, 35653. Thank you. Larry Whitehead, Editor.....

In This Issue....

We carry an article by Larry Whitehead on Alabama Christian College of Berry. This school only lasted ten years but had a profound impact on the area and especially the students that attended there. Another article by your editor is about his maternal grandparents and their struggles in the early 1900's entitled *Minnie Belle Goes to Worship*. Earl Kimbrough has four articles. The first entitled *The Conversion of Green Haley*. This is a great article about someone who is well known in the NW section of Alabama and fondly remembered. There are many stories concerning Haley and his exploits during the Civil War and the great good he accomplished as a gospel preacher. The second article by Brother Kimbrough is one of the best we have ever read. We carry it under the heading of *Beyond Our Borders*. It is entitled *Sister Reynolds Letter*. This article includes the clearest statement of the New Testament order of things and the whole scheme of redemption that we have ever seen. This article should also thrill the ladies as it shows they had a major role in the restoration movement. A column under the heading of *They Being Dead Yet Speaketh* is a biographical sketch by Bro. Harp, which was published on his website, of one of the great preachers of yesteryear, Joe Holbrook. We carry a companion piece entitled *The Value of A Horse* by Bro. Kimbrough. Frank Richey has a wonderful article on the *History of the church in Huntsville*. Bro. Richey carries us back to the beginning of the work there. Wayne Kilpatrick has an article on the *History of the church in Mooresville, Limestone County, Alabama*. We know of no one more familiar with the church in this area than Brother Kilpatrick. An article under the column heading *Pioneer Letters* is an exchange between Bro. James Butler and Alexander Campbell that you will find most interesting. Bro. Kimbrough's final offering is a tribute to one of the great Elders of the church at Russellville entitled *One Worthy of Remembrance*. During Bro. Stout's time as an Elder, the Russellville Church came to be one of, if not the most influential churches of Christ in the state. Uncle Isaac opines with his comments about some of the goings on among some of our brethren. This issue's congregational history is the old Rocky Springs church in Jackson County. Should be an interesting read...Enjoy...LEW

**Alabama Christian College of Berry, Alabama
June 1912 - June 1922**

Sometime around 1911, John T. Lewis, O.C. Dobbs and others determined that a college with emphasis on the Bible was needed in North West Alabama. They decided on the small village of Berry in southern Fayette County. The closing of Mars Hill School in Florence in 1891 left a void for such a school. Families that could afford to, in this part of the State, were sending their children to Highland Home college, South of Montgomery, in order for them to obtain a "Christian education". This proved unsatisfactory to many because of the distance involved as well as the expense. However, it too would soon close its doors. With all these factors in play, the decision was made to charter the school. The necessary papers were filed and its official name was to be "Alabama Christian College Of Berry."



G.A. Dunn ca. 1905

The school was officially founded in June 1912. Trustees were: J.C. Shepherd, John Tomlin, M.P. Bailey, and O.C. Dobbs. Shepherd was a banker and leading businessman in Berry. Dobbs was a respected gospel preacher, known throughout the area.

The first President of the school was Gus A. Dunn of Texas, also a well known gospel preacher. Early faculty members included S.I. Jones, Minnie Hammond, Alice Ezzell, T.L. Jackson, G.I. Burlson, Vera Smith, Emilie Burlson, R.B. Clements, Elbert Deason, Virgie Johnson, Dovie Johnson, Bessie Reeves, Lois Johnson, and Addie Bailey. The first session began October 1, 1912, with over one hundred students. Five months of this session were held in the meeting house of the local church of Christ. The college building was completed and the remainder of the session was taught in the new building.



Alabama Christian College of Berry, Alabama 1912-1922

President Dunn would bring to the school as teachers, J.B. Nelson of Texas (Nelson would later become the Chairman of The Board of Regents of Pepperdine College in California.) and Frank Baker, also of Texas. Later Hal P. McDonald of Texas would serve the longest period as President. The Texas influence was established. The college was coeducational. A girls' dormitory was a big white two-story house on the north side of the campus. Mr. and Mrs. J.B. Johnson were house parents. Boys were boarded in private homes in town. Board cost from \$11 to \$15 per month.

The College building was located where the present High School now stands. It was a two-story brick building. Four classrooms were on the first floor with wide cross halls having wide entrance doors at each end. Two winding stairways opened into a large upstairs auditorium. Two classrooms were located at the rear

of the auditorium. A unique, sweet-tolling bell weighing 2,300 pounds rang daily. The bell was a gift from "Grandma" Shepherd and was in use until the building burned in 1933.



Some ACC Sudents 1918

The College was composed of a Primary, Intermediate, Academic, Collegiate, Music, Expression and Art Department. Emphasis was placed on the teaching of the Bible with every student attending a daily class. In the advanced classes, Latin, Greek, French and Philosophy were offered along with English, History and a complete business course. Tuition ranged from \$12 for Primary to \$20 for College, per term.

On the east side of the building were several big springs emptying into a small lake. The students were allowed to use the lake for "health and pleasure."

Due to a previous commitment, Dunn left at the end of the session in 1914 after serving as president for the first three years. The trustees had agreed to these terms in the beginning. *(G.A. Dunn must have developed a strong affection for the people of this region as he came back almost every year for the rest of his life and conducted gospel meetings all over Northwest Alabama, baptizing hundreds and maybe thousands)* J. Paul Hanlin was appointed to serve as president for the 1915 term. In July of that year the following announcement was published in several brotherhood papers announcing the change and advertising the excellence of the school.

ALABAMA CHRISTIAN COLLEGE.

J. Paul Hanlin.

The Alabama Christian College of Berry, Alabama, was opened in October, 1912 and has enjoyed three years of very successful work.. During this time Brother G. A Dunn has been its president. and with the assistance of a most excellent faculty he has been able to bring about a steady growth of the school. The success and progress of the work is very gratifying to the Board of Trustees who have spared neither means nor effort that the school may prove a worthy and commendable institution.

Brother John F Smithson of Fort Deposit, Alabama, and the writer, of Sheffield, Alabama, both of whom are graduates of the Nashville Bible School, have undertaken this work for the coming session and are glad to report that the prospects for the school seem to be exceedingly good. We are to have as our coworkers, several experienced teachers who will be an honor to the school and a blessing to those who come under their teaching. if you are interested in getting an education or in giving your child an education under wholesome, Christian influences write J. C. Shepherd, Berry, Ala. and he will be glad to send you a catalogue of the school and any Information you may desire.

Hal P. McDonald was hired as president in 1916. McDonald had made somewhat of a name for himself as a preacher and teacher in Texas. His tenure continued until the school closed its doors in 1922. He was known to be an excellent teacher although

somewhat eccentric. McDonald introduced the concept of an annual lectureship after he took the reins in 1916. Each year prominent preachers from over the country were invited to present lessons during lectureship week and the general public was invited. Such men as J.C. McQuiddy, C.M. Pullias, E.A. Elam, John T. Lewis and J.D. Tant were invited, among many others. These sessions were well attended and were popular with the students. Asa Plyler would relate, many years later, that while a student there, he was called to fill in for no less than J.C. McQuiddy, who for some reason was not able to keep his appointment.

All indications are that the school was excellent academically and the Bible department was recognized as first rate. Several students that graduated there became gospel preachers. Gus Nichols attended for four years and went on to become one of the best known preachers in the brotherhood. His brother Cary C. Nichols also attended and became a preacher of some note as did such men as Asa Plyler. Young women were provided excellent courses in business and were prepared for careers if they so chose. The school flourished for several years until about 1920. For some reason, not known today, the enrollment dropped off and the school began to suffer financially. Possibly the war had an impact, especially on the male enrollment. The following article may give some additional insight into the problem. Since the beginning of the school, male students had to board in private homes in the community. J.D. Tant in an article in the Gospel Advocate, June 28, 1922 stated "*Quite a number are asking about our Bible college,*" at Berry, Alabama. *I will state that it is a thing of the past. At the time of my last meeting there, Brother Shepherd agreed to cancel his sixteen thousand dollar mortgage against the school property, provided the brethren there would build a dormitory. An outsider promised to give the lumber with which to build it if the brethren would cut and haul the logs to the sawmill, but they were not interested enough to do so.*" Shepherd evidently then sold the property to the County and it was used as a part of the Berry High School. The building burned in 1933.

Thus the Alabama Christian College of Berry came to an end. The loss was to the young people of Northwest Alabama. Some years later a school was started in Montgomery by several brethren that carried the name Alabama Christian College until a few years ago and it is now Faulkner University. Ironically, Asa Plyler, a graduate of the original Alabama Christian College, served for a number of years on the Board of Trustees of the Montgomery School.....**LEW**

Uncle Isaac Sez....

Times, they are a changing...I got to thinking the other day that there have been more changes in the Lord's church in my 64 years than in most of the last two hundred...Not all of 'em good...Saw in the paper the other day where one of the big churches in NW Alabama was havin a monthly fish fry. Chargin for it, mind you...The reporter was interviewing some member (must have been the Minister of Cuisine), and he was ravin bout the multitudes that was attending...Not one word about the gospel, let alone the work or worship of the church. These brethren apparently haven't read about the Lord feeding the multitudes only twice. Could it be he decided that was the only reason they came?... One of the big churches in central Alabama has added yoga to their list of ministries.. ..Wonder what they call this minister, the Mahareesha?.. One of the churches in the area has a Baptist financial guru conducting seminars on how to make money off your investments. I can remember when a Baptist in

good standin, would'nt be caught dead in a Campbellite meeting house much less teaching them how to make money.. Still another congregation recently had a "christian rock band" give a concert in the building and charged \$12.50 per couple cover charge at the door....Reckon these good folks have found a better way of providing for the church's needs than the freewill offerings of its members ...Sure beats givin as we purpose in our hearts ..Someone told me about another congregation that has "Elvis appreciation night." That's fitting as Elvis was the king of the rockers and our brethren don't want to be caught not showin the king the proper respect....What with the entertainment craze, and all the new translations of the scriptures about these days, maybe one should change Mark 16:15 to " Go into all the world and socialize, he that is entertained shall be saved, he that don't have a good time, won't." ..One of the churches in B'ham has added the word "Ecumenical" to their name and dropped "of Christ." I congratulate them for having the courage to recognize that they no longer are worthy of wearing the simple name of Christ and embarrassing the rest of us. Maybe some others will follow suit...One that comes to mind is one that celebrated Passover the week before Easter and invited a reformed Rabbi to fill the pulpit...Ole Brother Marshal Keeble used to say "they're warming by the devils fire."...Surely no truer words were ever spoken...Can't believe the casual way some folks dress to go to worship these days.....Almost like they just dropped in on the way to fun and frolic...It is not unusual to see both men and women dressed in knee shorts and tee shirts in the worship service, mind you...I remember ole Bro. Jno. T. Lewis saying that "when we're in the Lord's house, the Lord has said he would be there and we ought to dress to meet him." Kinda reflects a casual approach to worship, don't you know?. Maybe even a flagrant disrespect for the Lord and the worship service. Heard Bro. James Watkins say recently that "these folks surely wouldn't attend their mother's funeral or their sister's wedding dressed in such a way." Reminds me of the young man that was assisting at the Lord's table one night, dressed in a pair of blue jeans and a Budweiser Tee-shirt.. His mama tried to crawl under the pew. .Don't blame her...See where some of the brethren in Florence are having a "Spiritual Salute to Jazz" as part of the W.C. Handy musical festival this year. Their choir, ahem... pardon me, chorus, will perform spiritual jazz numbers. ..Shame they don't have a Bourbon Street in Florence to make it all like that bastion of spirituality, New Awlins, where jazz was born... .Speakin of festivals, I went to a country festival last year. It was a warm day and I was settin under the local church of Christ tent, eating a church of Christ hot dog and drinkin a big ole church of Christ belly wash. I was just about through eating when one of the good sisters came over and talked me into buying a church of Christ fried apple pie. I sat there just eatin my pie and watching folks walk by. The way some folks dressed (or undressed) was absolutely scandalous.. There ain't nuthin like a 250lb woman dressed so scantily that things are showin that ought to be hid for all eternity.. Men are just as bad.. Heard a preacher say one time that "you could be dressed and still be naked." I say amen to that...One of the biggest problems in society and I'm sorry to say in the church, is we have forgotten how to blush. .Bro. J.D. Tant used to say "Brethren we are drifting...Amen and amen...Til next time.....Isaac

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The Case Of The Forgotten Glasses

We have heard this story from several different sources over the years with each one slightly different. Bro. John T. Lewis conducted a men’s training class on Sunday afternoon at Ensley for many years. At the end of one of his classes he informed a young man that he would be expected to make a short talk at the next class. Bro. Lewis was an intimidating personality and the young man was terrified. All week he worried about the upcoming event. Finally, toward the end of the week he came up with what he thought was a brilliant plan. He would deliberately leave his glasses at home. When called upon by Lewis, he would simply say that he left his glasses at home. When the time approached as the class proceeded, Bro. Lewis forgot to call on the young man for his talk. At the end of the class, Lewis realized his mistake, apologized and called on him instead to dismiss the group. The young man was so nervous and anxious he blurted out **“I can’t, Bro. Lewis. I left my glasses at home.”**.....LEW

Rock Creek Philosophy

“God’s word has never needed as much explanation as some people think it does.”....F.B. Srygley

Back To Basics

“I have been driven many times to my knees by the overwhelming conviction that I had no where else to go. My own wisdom, and that of all about me, seemed insufficient for the day.”..... Abraham Lincoln

Mad Sister in law

Chester Estes recalled when he was a child, attending a local Primitive Baptist church. A lady in the community would “try out” for membership every time they would meet. She was always “turned down” by a single vote of her sister in law who didn’t like her.....Faith That Overcomes-Chester Estes

North Alabama Meetings

J.D. Tant made a preaching tour through Northwest Alabama in 1921. Tant, not known for his diplomacy, wrote the following report to the Firm Foundation in July of that year detailing the progress or lack thereof, in the meetings.

“My last two meetings were in Alabama. Held one meeting at Bear Creek, Alabama, with ten baptized and two restored. Don’t think I ever found a congregation so little in accord with the word of God as Bear Creek. Envy, malice, evil speaking, evil surmising, adultery, whiskey drinking, no love, and neglect of worship, seemed to be the order of the day. No laying by in store upon the first day of the week, as God ordained, was once thought of among them. As a result they were unprepared to support the meeting, and failed by half to



J.D. TANT

fulfill God’s command to support the preaching of the gospel.

“Some of my brethren think it no wrong to call a man 600 miles from home to hold them a twelve to twenty day meeting, and then declare they would like to support him, but do not have the money. At the same time they are buying their tobacco on mule credit, for if they are not responsible for their debts, they will put a mortgage on their mules to buy their tobacco. At the same time these brethren seem to think they are doing God’s will and will get to heaven. For such I have no hope.

“From Bear Creek I went to Barnes’ Creek and preached ten days, baptized five; one hundred members who had been running with the devil made a strike against him, and confessed their wrongs, coming back to the Lord and promising to do better work for him. One day during this meeting I went down to White House congregation, eight miles away, and persuaded seventy-five members there also to quit the devil and confess their wrongs and go to work for the Lord. I started them to work in a good Bible school at each place, and each congregation hopes to have a Bible class taught this fall to learn more about the Bible that they may be able to do more good.

“Never in my life have I found as much ignorance of the Bible as I found on this trip. Faith, repentance, baptism, and skin the sects, seems to be all they know. At Barnes Creek, with two hundred members, I put the question to the entire church: Did God make Abraham or Adam first? They were unable to tell. Yet they were sure the Baptists and Methodists would go to hell because they had Sunday School and taught their children the bible, and could not see like we see. Brother Willcut and Brother Wyley, both able preachers and among our best men, made this meeting a success by their continual work and help in the same.” (Firm Foundation, July 26, 1921)

Tant was not too disheartened, for he was back the next year and held meetings at several locations in Northwest, Alabama including New River in Fayette County and Berry, also in Fayette County....LEW

THE CONVERSION OF GREEN HALEY

Green Monroe Haley was an old man nearing the end of his life when F. B. Srygley first met him on a preaching journey with “old Brother John Taylor” in 1880. Srygley and Taylor traveled through Franklin, Marion, and Fayette Counties in Northwest Alabama preaching in places where Taylor had labored in the gospel for many years. Chester Estes, a native of Marion County, in a letter to Srygley in 1930, mentioned Green Haley in reference to the old White House church of Christ. The White House church is located ten miles southwest of Haleyville, Alabama, a city named, it is said, for one of Haley’s sons. Estes said the White House church, the oldest in the county and one of the oldest in the state, had been started through Taylor’s efforts. Srygley replied: “I remember well the meetinghouse near Buttahatchee River. Brother Taylor and I held a week’s meeting in the White House on that same trip of which I spoke in my first article about John Taylor. Brother Green Haley was living then, but he was in feeble health and

was able to attend the meeting only a time or two.” (*Gospel Advocate*, May 29, 1930.)

Haley was born March 13, 1820, in Kentucky it is believed. He came to Marion County in the 1840s and bought a large tract of land, about 1,000 acres, on Buttahatchee River near the site of of the White House church and at the place later known as Haley’s.



Green Monroe Haley 1820-1882

There are conflicting accounts of Haley’s conversion to New Testament Christianity. One says he was a Christian when he came to Alabama, and that he established a congregation on the corner of his property, which is the White House church. Another account is given by J. Waller Henry, which he no doubt heard from his father, Dr. A. C. Henry, who preached in Northwest Alabama in the last two decades of the nineteenth century. The younger Henry said of Haley that he was “converted under (T. W.) Caskey and the Kendricks (Allen and Carroll) “who were pioneer preachers in that region in earlier times. (*Alabama Christian*, March 1906).

However, Srygley gives a different account of Haley’s conversion, which he learned from John Taylor, who was the preacher that converted him. After telling about Haley’s feeble condition about two years before his death, Srygley said “Brother Taylor told me of Brother Green Haley’s opposition to the truth as preached by him”. Taylor began his ministry in Marion County, not far from New River in the 1830’s before

Haley came to Marion County. He, Jeremiah Randolph, Matt Hackworth, and others were preaching the gospel plan of salvation in that country before they had ever heard anything about the work of Barton W. Stone or Thomas Campbell and Alexander Campbell.

Srygley writes: “Brother Taylor said that many years before (that journey) he was preaching in that community when Sister Haley, the wife of Green Haley, made the confession, and they set the time for her baptism on the afternoon following her confession. At the meeting next morning, Mrs. Haley told Brother Taylor that Green said he would shoot the preacher that tried to baptize her. He was so prejudiced against what he called ‘Campbellism’ that he felt that he would be justified in killing anyone who would dare undertake to baptize his wife. Mrs. Haley asked Brother Taylor to go home with her and try to persuade Green to allow her to be baptized.

“The old man went, and he said that when he got there he ‘found Green sitting on his back porch with his gun near him, reading his Bible.’ The old man said that Green never came near him, neither did he come to the table to eat his dinner. Mrs. Haley and Brother Taylor sat down to the table and ate their dinner. Soon after dinner the time came for the preacher and the frightened wife to go to the water to attend to the baptizing. Brother Taylor said he went out where Mr. Haley was still reading his Bible, and said: ‘Green, you do not propose to stand between your wife and a command of God, do you?~ Green Haley did not answer him, but called his wife and asked her if she believed that the Bible commanded her to be baptized, and she said: ‘I most certainly do, Mr. Haley.’ Then he said: ‘Go on, then, and do it.’”

The rest of the story, as Srygley related it from John Taylor’s own account, has a happy ending. “They left the house together, but left the husband still reading his Bible. As I remember it, before the meeting closed he came and demanded baptism upon

a confession of his faith. Green Haley afterward became a preacher of the gospel, and Brother Taylor told me that he was one of the most logical men he had ever heard in debate. He was brave as a lion and was always ready to defend the truth with any adversary. I am certainly glad to know that his descendants stand for the faith which was so dear to their father when he learned it from the New Testament.” (*Gospel Advocate* May 29, 1930)

Green Haley was associated with and was

Juliette Wright Haley 1835-1876 encouraged in his preaching by Caskey and the Kendricks, who were preaching in Alabama near the beginning of his ministry. Henry said that Green Haley “became a great preacher and a powerful influence for good in the Northwestern section (of Alabama) planting many strong congregations” (*Alabama Christian*, March, 1906) He was a successful businessman,



buying and selling horses, which provided his support while he preached the gospel.

The little church at Buttahatchee River near Haley's home was one of John Taylor's preaching stations well before and for many years after the Civil War. In an item in the Gospel Advocate, written on the eve of the war, Taylor stated that the congregation at Buttahatchee had a "very efficient preacher in the person of Green Haley." (*Gospel Advocate, September, 1860*)

Through their joint efforts thirty persons were added to the church there in 1860. The two preachers became close friends and one of Taylor's sons was named Haley, evidently after Green Haley. Taylor also named another son after Jeremiah Randolph, another of his early companions.

Scott Harp adds some significant side lights about Green Haley. He writes "During the Civil War the area of Marion and Winston Counties held strong support for the Union. Many thought that the confrontation between North and South was a rich man's war. People from the area were generally poor, having no slaves to work their small farms. Haley did own slaves until the Emancipation Proclamation by President Lincoln (September 23, 1862). Though earlier in life, he was an avid supporter of slavery, his conscience had been admonishing him to changes in his way of thinking. "The Emancipation Proclamation facilitated him the opportunity to clear his conscience by freeing his slaves." It was commonly known in the community that Haley's sympathy laid with the union. He was only forty years old when the war began, but he never donned the blue or the gray uniform. Books, such as, *Southerners In Blue*, by Don Umphrey, and *Tories Of The Hills*, by Wesley S. Thompson, histories of the area in time of histories of the area in time of the war, recount the colorful involvement of Green Haley fighting against the rebellion of the south. He found volunteers to join the union forces. Because of his successful business, he then provided sustenance to wives and children of volunteers who were left behind. He was nearly put to death for 'treason' on different occasions during the conflict." (*Scott Harp, Green M. Haley, TheRestorationMovement.com.*)

Such were the men who pioneered apostolic Christianity in the mountains of Northwest Alabama in the years preceding, during and after the Civil War. The area is to this day a stronghold for the ancient order of things....**Earl Kimbrough**

Scriptural Singing

We recently attended the annual singing at the old White House church in Marion County. We were reminded of the following story told about the venerable J.D. Tant. It seems that Tant was to start a gospel meeting sometime in the late 1920's at the White House. As was the custom then, and still is in many places, the brethren had a big singing the Sunday afternoon that the meeting began. As each song leader tried to outdo the previous one with one fast paced song after another, Tant became visibly irritated. When Brother Gus Nichols got up to lead, Tant said in a voice heard all over the building, "**Brother Nichols if there is a scriptural song in that book, by the grace of God lead it!**".....**LEW**

"The Bible is so simple, you have to have help to misunderstand it.".....**V.E. Howard**

Beyond Our Borders

SISTER REYNOLD'S LETTER

The reformation carried out by Alexander Campbell among the Baptists between 1815 and 1830 resulted in an acrimonious state of religious warfare within that communion. The Reformers sought to turn the Baptists back to the Bible, while the Loyalists were determined to maintain their Baptist traditions. The hostilities did not cease until in each troubled Baptist congregation one side or the other gained the ground and the rest withdrew to meet and worship independently. Most often the Reformers were in the minority.

A reform church of six members was organized in Manchester, Vermont, in June 1830, after a brief verbal skirmish in the Baptist church at that place. The leader of the Reformers was W.P. Reynolds, a man of "good character and standing among the Baptists" before he espoused the cause of reformation, but who was 'much persecuted by them afterward.' His little band of disciples soon grew to twenty-eight and was still increasing a year and a half later. In the meantime, Reynolds established another reform church at Pawlet, Vermont, with eight members that had grown to twenty-nine members.

On February 4, 1830, four months before the reformers at Manchester withdrew from the Baptists, Reynolds' wife, Emma, wrote a letter to "the Baptist Church in Manchester." In the letter she repeated a request she had made in writing to the church the previous fall for a "church letter" stating her standing with the church. But she had received no reply, and being unable to attend the services because of poor health, she wrote the second time. Her husband, already in trouble with the Baptists for teaching reform ideas, had been refused a letter of good standing, but she wanted to know why one was also denied to her. Referring to her first letter, Emma said: "I knew not at that time that any had aught against me." Since then someone had informed her that the Baptists had voted to grant the letter she requested, but immediately rescinded the vote, she said, "at the suggestion of one sister who said it would be wrong to give me a letter and withhold one from my husband, if I thought as he did on the subject of communion."

She apparently did think as her husband did, for she continued: "On that subject I am willing to say, I find nothing in the Bible to prohibit immersed believers, who live godly lives in the world, from uniting together in commemorating their Savior." The Baptists practiced "closed communion" in which only qualified Baptists were permitted to partake of the Lord's Supper with them.

Emma did not wait three months without receiving a reply to her first letter, nor, she said, "Has any member of the church intimated to me any difficulty with me on account of either my conduct or my views." So she took the imitative, in her second 'letter, to bring the issue to a head. "I am unwilling," she wrote, "to think that my brethren intentionally neglect even a feeble sister, but that you may be relieved from the trouble of conjecture and have no embarrassment on your minds relative to my views, I will state them in some particular as plainly and briefly as I can."

However, she prefaced her statement by saying: "My brethren cannot think that I have been an indifferent observer of those things that have transpired during the past season. While I have listened to the arguments on the one hand for reform, I have

heard for continuing the established customs of the Baptists, and have been led to examine for myself as faithfully as I could.” Then she stated her belief in an extended but clear paragraph. She wrote: *“My present convictions are as follows: That all sectarian religion is unscriptural, and at variance with the Christianity of the Bible. That the churches of Christ, in calling themselves by any other name, or assuming any other titles than those applied to them in the scriptures, are carnal, and doing those things which Paul in his first letter to the Corinthians (3rd chapter) reproves and condemns. That the churches of Christ should be governed by the inspired writings, in the manner, form, and connection in which they were delivered to the saints, exclusive of every other creed, rule, or confession whatever. That the bond of union among Christians is faith in Jesus Christ, and the ground of fellowship obedience to his commands. That the faith of Christians comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. and is the belief of the testimony God has given of his Son. That there is no example, rule, or commandment given in the Bible authorizing any one to tell his mental agitations, of the sorrows or joys he has experienced, in order to baptism; but that with repentance, and an honest and hearty confession of his belief in the Lord Jesus, he should be baptized for the remission of sins (through the blood of Jesus) and the reception of the Holy Spirit, as declared by Peter on the day of Pentecost. And that believers in Christ, so baptized, should first give themselves to God and to one another for his sake, and choose from among themselves men possessing such qualifications as are pointed out in the scriptures for overseers and servants of the church; and assemble on every first day of the week, if possible, for the social worship of God, and for their own edification by reading the scriptures, preaching, teaching, prayers, praises, exhortations, breaking of bread in commemoration of the Saviour, and contributing according to their ability and the necessities of the congregation.”*

Emma concluded her letter, saying: “And now, brethren, after hearing this brief statement of my views, if you can give me the letter I requested, I should receive it as a favor; but if not, and you think me wrong in any particular, I sincerely desire you would condescend to a feeble sister, and point out wherein in writing, and by scriptural arguments set me right; for *I* wish above all things to obey Christ and to do his will, and to see my brethren and sisters walking in the truth as it is in him.

Neither Alexander Campbell nor Barton W. Stone in their prime had a better conception of the basic principles of the Restoration Movement than Emma Reynolds, a physically fragile servant of the Lord in Manchester, Vermont, if her letter fairly represents her views. No contemporary writing of comparable length by any restorer could state the case for New Testament Christianity as nearly accurate and complete on all essential points.

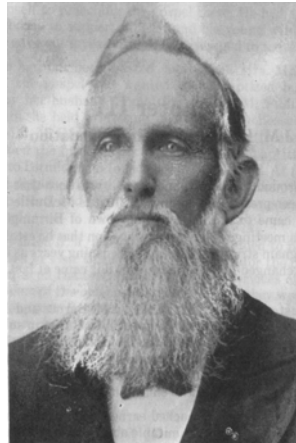
Campbell evidently cherished the sister’s letter. He published it in full, along with “an exact copy” of a reply to it written by a Baptist deacon more than a year after her first letter to the church. The Baptist reply was wordy and weak. Campbell made no answer to it, simply saying: “I will not offer so great an

indignity to the intelligence of the reader, as to make a single remark on the degree of intelligence in the scriptures, and of devotion to the Saviour and his intentions, exhibited in the letters of this sister and the Deacon. It is a fair average of the times on both sides, and will serve for the meridian of every synagogue, from Vermont to Florida!” (*Millennial Harbinger*, January 1832).....*Earl Kimbrough*

Brother Barnes’ Better Plan

The Christian Missionary Cooperative of Alabama began at Selma in 1886. This was the first missionary society organized by disciples of Christ in Alabama. Many voices from all parts of the state were raised in opposition, with the voice of Justus M. Barnes of Montgomery County being one of the strongest. Naturally, the society forces were interested in winning the support of this influential preacher and educator. So when he attended the society’s convention at Anniston in 1890, a private meeting was arranged between him and S. B. Moore, a prominent society man. Barnes’ friend, David Adams of Pineapple, Alabama, was also present. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the scripturalness of the society. Barnes sought a public debate on the question, but the private discussion with Moore was the best the society brethren would agree to.

In later reporting what happened in that meeting, Barnes wrote: “The trio met, a solemn conclave. I asked brother Moore for Bible authority for his work. He cut the work short by saying, ‘Brother Barnes if you have a better plan of work than ours, we will examine it, but if you have nothing better to offer I have no time to lose in talk.’ I offered him the Bible, but he grew more angry. I then suggested that the best human plan I knew was the Methodist economy.



Justus McDuffie Barnes

Bible plan for the organization, work, and worship of the New Testament church. Before many years passed, those who went with the society opened the door of human wisdom a little wider and most of them eventually lost their identity as simple New Testament Christians. The Lord has a plan and we must follow it. If we add to his plan devices of human origin, we go beyond the teaching of Christ and have not God (2 John 9,10)...

.Earl Kimbrough. "Fifteen Miles From Heaven"

MINNIE BELLE GOES TO WORSHIP

On December 15, 1900 at the home of their Mother, Marguerite Ann McCaleb Hollingsworth, Henry Clay Hollingsworth gave his sister, Minnie Belle Hollingsworth to Christopher Columbus Ehl in marriage. This set in motion a clash of cultures and backgrounds that would have future consequences. Minnie's background was in the church Of Christ. Her maternal grandfather was Andrew McCaleb, a charter member and longtime elder of the Old Berea church. Her paternal grandfather, John Hollingsworth, was a member at New River. Her uncle was John Tyler McCaleb, elder and preacher at the New River church of Christ. Another uncle was Virgil Randolph and still another uncle was Jim Wade, both well known gospel preachers in Northwest Alabama.

Christopher "Lum", on the other hand, was from an equally strong Baptist family. His aunt was married to a prominent Baptist preacher and his maternal family had been leaders in the Baptist church for generations. His maternal grandfather, Jim Ford, and his great grandfather, Daniel, had been members of the Old New River Primitive Baptist Church going back eighty years. The acrimony that existed toward the "Campbellites" was made even more so when Minnie's uncle, Jim Wade, a respected preacher for the Baptist, switched and became a member of the church of Christ.

Minnie's mother, Margeurite McCaleb Hollingsworth, was bitterly opposed to the wedding. Marguerite knew the potential troubles that lay ahead for the young couple. Living in the same community as the Ford's and Ehl's, she knew Sarah Jane Ehl, Lum's mother, and how determined she could be. She also knew the strong feelings that Sarah Jane had against the church of Christ. Minnie was equally determined to proceed with the wedding, thus the stage was set for what followed.

Sure enough, Sarah Jane determined to steal Minnie away from those "evil Campbellites," whatever the cost. To convert Minnie, the granddaughter of Andrew McCaleb, to the Baptist Church would be payback for them stealing Jim Wade. She began her diabolical plan by convincing Lum to donate the land for the local Baptist church some 200 yards from his and Minnie's home, shortly after their marriage. Lum made the decision, at his mother's insistence, without letting Minnie know. When Minnie found out what had been done, she was furious. It was to no avail however. The deed was done.

When the building was complete, Sarah Jane activated phase two of her diabolical scheme. Each Sunday, she would bring the preacher, Josiah Starnes Shirley and his family to Lum and Minnie's for Sunday dinner. This was made even worse for Minnie as Josiah Shirley's wife was an aunt of Minnie's.

After two or three of these sessions, Minnie had had enough. She decided to refuse to prepare the meal and when the entourage arrived, which included not only Josiah and his family, but his brother Leonard, also a Baptist preacher, and his wife who was Sarah Jane's sister and Lum's aunt, Minnie was sitting on the porch reading her bible. Sunday dinner went unprepared to the chagrin of her husband and mother in law.

Lum and his mother were somewhat put out with his young wife and Lum decided to teach her a lesson, no doubt at Sarah Jane's suggestion. For a wedding present he had given her a surrey with two matched black mares to pull the surrey.

Each Lord's day he would catch the mares and brush them down, hitch them to the surrey and drive Minnie to New River for the worship services. He would wait outside until the services were over and drive her home. The next Sunday he went to the barn to hitch the mares for her and decided not to do it. Without the surrey, Minnie would have to stay at home and miss the services at New River. When he didn't bring the surrey around to the house, Minnie



Lum, Raymond & Minnie ca.1903 went to the stables and soon realized what was up. Lum was sitting on a log whittling and it was evident that he had made no effort to catch and hitch the horses. When he refused to catch the mares and hitch them for her, he stepped inside the stable and Minnie seized the moment and locked the door behind him, thus locking him in the stable. She then caught the mares and hitched them to the surrey and drove herself the two miles to New River for worship. Lum had to sit in the stable for several hours until she returned. Lum never again tried to keep her from going to worship.

Twenty five years later at a gospel meeting conducted by Gus A. Dunn at the church in Winfield, Alabama, Lum came forward, gave his hand to Brother Dunn and was buried with his Lord in baptism. Minnie's steadfastness had paid off and Sarah Jane's plans had failed.....**LEW**

Taking a Shortcut

Granville Tyler tells the story of how he and his wife Frances decided to go hear his brother, Leonard, preach one night at a small country church. As Granville tells it, "We were running late and I knew the country and I decided to take a back road shortcut." Frances said "it looks like nobody has traveled this road in a while." I said "Oh yeah this is a good road. We traveled a few more miles and a tree was across the road. Frances said "I knooow nobody has traveled this road." I said Oh yeah, the wind probably blew the tree down. I got out and moved the tree and we went on. Next we came to a rather wide creek with no bridge. Frances said, I knoooooooow nobody has traveled this road." I said "we'll just have to ford it. We started across and the car drowned out. I said "I'll have to go for help. Frances said "you're not leaving me here." I got her on my back and started wading across the creek. She started laughing at the situation. The further we went in the water the harder she laughed. I said, if you don't hush up, I'll drop you right here in this creek. She hushed, too."

Only the beloved Granville Tyler, he of sainted memory, could make a funny story out of his miserable situation.....LEW

**Rocky Springs church of Christ
Jackson County, Alabama**

It is generally conceded that the Rocky Springs church is the oldest in the State of Alabama. Most researchers believe that it was started by members from the Old Philadelphia church in Viola, Tennessee. Most records would indicate the first formal congregation actually met in 1810-11. The following history is taken from the church's website and they obviously disagree as to the starting date. Never the less they are indeed the oldest congregation of the church of Christ in the State.....Editor

According to the old church records, we find life quite different from our life today. There were few comforts of any kind. There were dangers from hostile Indians for this was Indian territory. Cherokee Indians were abundant in the area, the Indian removal was not until 1828. It was said that men members of the church were posted on the outside of the building during services to guard against the Indians. Russell Cave National Monument is located about 5 miles away where archeologists have found remains of Indians dating back to 6,000 B.C.

In the year 1807 Thomas Jefferson was President of the United States and we had slavery. There was no Jackson County, Alabama. Our new nation was just 31 years old. It was prior to the war of 1812. It is stated in the old records of the congregation that valiant men served with honor in all the wars of our country.

Early in the 1800's, a number of Presbyterian and Episcopalian pioneers had moved from North Carolina and Virginia into the Tennessee Valley River Valley and adjoining areas of Tennessee, some of them founding a community in Warren County, Tennessee, which became known as Old Philadelphia. These were religious people, without a preacher, and they studied the scriptures together. Soon they were worshipping as one body, calling themselves Christians and the church only as the church of Christ.

A post road from Knoxville to New Orleans was opened in 1805 and some two years later, when the territory of Alabama, then largely occupied by the Cherokee Indians, was opened to white settlers, among the first to arrive and settle in North Alabama was a group from Warren County, Tennessee. Some of these people located near the post road at the foot of a mountain and built a community called Antioch. This was in 1807.

Among these white settlers were William J. Price, baptized in 1811 at Old Philadelphia, Tennessee, and his wife and a slave named Moses. They selected a home site near a spring they found by following a game trail, and named the place Rocky Springs. It was a plantation located a little over a mile south of Antioch. W.J. Price was a prominent leader in the church until his death in January 1868. His grave lies just across the street from the church building in the Rocky Springs cemetery.

A community grew up around the Price home on the post road to Rocky Springs. A post office, trading post, a tavern, and stables for changing horses on the stage coaches were all built here.

On June 12, 1847, the congregation moved into a new building at Rocky Springs and 82 members all committed themselves to the Lord. W.J. Price had deeded the property to the church where, even to this day, it still stands. The records

recognized the elders: Elisha M. Price, William King and Andrew Russell. In June 1851, the congregation had grown to 130 members. Deacons and elders were present in the church at this time.



The Rocky Springs church of Christ - Today

The Civil War was most disastrous to the church. A letter written by Washington Bacon pointed out that there were ten widows with thirty-five children in the congregation and they were destitute. Many of the men of the church had been called to fight in the war and most all were killed. In the winter of 1864, the church building was burned by the Union Army. Most of the remaining members were scattered, but some returned in 1865 and resumed worship and slowly began to rebuild, completing the building in 1870. By 1875, the church had out grown the building and still larger one was built. The present building was erected in 1912 and additions have been made since then.

As a point of information for those who mistakenly suggest that the church of Christ was founded by Alexander Campbell, it may be shown that Old Philadelphia Church of Christ came into existence not later than 1810, that the Antioch (Rocky Springs) church began in 1807, that Campbell arrived in America September 29, 1809 and did not preach his first Gospel sermon until July 15, 1810 at Washington, Penn., and that Campbell did not cease to work within association of the Baptist church until 1827. Thus congregations of the church of Christ were in existence in America for at least 19 years before Campbell laid aside his denominational ties and also began to worship according to the New Testament pattern.

Today, the Rocky Springs church is a small congregation of about 40 people. Several surrounding towns like Bridgeport, Stevenson, and South Pittsburg have drawn many of the members from Rocky Springs. The new four-lane Highway 72 comes within 100 yards of our building. If you are driving on Highway 72 near Bridgeport, please stop and worship with us. We have signs directing you toward our building. Turn North on County Road 209 and the building will be on the left about 100 yards up at the intersection of County Road 209 and 574. We would be glad to have you as our honored guests.

They Being Dead Yet Speaketh.....

Joseph H. Holbrook

Joe Holbrook was one of the most successful gospel preachers in North Alabama. He moved to New River ca.1880 and New River became his "home congregation." He was likely a kinsman of Elizabeth Holbrook McCaleb, wife of Hugh White McCaleb, a charter member of Old Berea church in Fayette County. He was probably a great nephew. He preached regularly for the church at both New River and Berea. The following sketch is taken from several sources....LEW

In this sketch of the life of Joseph H. Holbrook we have another lesson in the struggles in poverty and obscurity to prominence and usefulness in human society; also a lesson how one struggles from the bondage of superstition and denominationalism to the light and liberty in Christ Jesus. These lessons ought to encourage any one who may be handicapped by the circumstances of life. Any one who wills to become good and useful may do so.

J. H. Holbrook was born on December 14, 1841, in Perry County, Tennessee. His parents moved to Hickman County while he was quite young. His parents were accustomed to hard work and poverty. Young Holbrook learned the lesson of economy and self-denial in childhood. He knew what it was to be pinched with poverty and endure hardships in this life. He had very few opportunities for an education. The school terms were short, and he never had the opportunity to attend a full session. There were very few churches of any kind in his younger days, and the preachers were not educated.

Young Holbrook's mother was a member of the Primitive Baptist Church. His father was one who waited for the "call." His mother had deep convictions and entertained the preachers of her faith in her home with a hope that her husband would receive the "call" that he was one of the elect. Young Holbrook loved his father and knew that he was a good man. He could not understand why his father, who, wanted to go to heaven and who was deeply interested in religion, was not chosen. Much of the preaching that he heard was only the relation of experiences. The preachers always started in relating their experiences with the fact that they were very wicked in their former days, but that God had saved them. Young Holbrook could not understand why the Lord would call to be his children the extremely wicked men, but would not call his father.

On December 14, 1862, J. H. Holbrook enlisted in the Confederate Army. He was twenty-one years old the day that he enlisted. He made a good soldier, as he was used to the hardships of poverty and self-denial. He was captured by the Federal Army at Nashville, Tenn., December 15, 1864. He was carried as a prisoner of war to Camp Douglass, at Chicago, Ill., and remained a prisoner till the war closed. When he was mustered out of service, he returned home with very little clothing, almost naked, and was seventy-five dollars in debt, with not a penny to pay his indebtedness. He returned home too late that year to plant a crop. He had courted a sweet girl before he enlisted in the army; and so, when he returned in such dire circumstances, he borrowed two dollars with which to buy his marriage license and borrowed a coat in which to get married. He married a girl, to use his own language, "who had nothing but a pure heart and a good stock of religion." His wife was a member of the church of Christ. She began to teach him the way of the Lord. She had a godly influence on him and soon brought

him to see the light which is revealed in the New Testament. He had not been married long before he was baptized by E. A. Land, who was preaching in that country. Brother Holbrook was



anxious for his neighbors and relatives to learn the truth, so he began trying to preach. He knew but little about the Bible and had no opportunity to, associate with any preachers who were well informed from whom he could learn. He was forced to study the New Testament. He did this, and within a few years, no other preacher in that country

Joseph H. Holbrook knew more of the word of God than did J. H. Holbrook. He was industrious and exercised good judgment with his economy and bought a little farm. He paid for this farm and accumulated some property. However, his desire to preach the gospel was so great and urgent that he decided to sell his farm and go to school. He did this, and he entered school at Mars' Hill, near Florence, Ala. The justly famous T. B. Larimore was operating the school at that time. Brother Holbrook was older than Brother Larimore, his teacher. He remained in school there two years and preached as he had opportunity in North Alabama.

After leaving school, he moved to Fayette County, Alabama. He had nothing left of his farm, save a horse and buggy and his good wife. He lived in Fayette County sixteen years. He preached throughout the counties of Fayette, Lamar, Tuscaloosa, Walker, Marion, Lawrence, Franklin, and Colbert, all in Alabama. He traveled over the mountains and hills and plains on horseback and preached in schoolhouses, under the trees, in private houses, in courthouses, along the highways, and wherever people would assemble to hear him. He was very successful as an evangelist and baptized thousands of people.

One day, while he was preaching, he was interrupted by a man, who said to him, "Parson, water baptism may do for such folks as you; but if I am ever baptized, I want it to be with the Holy Ghost." Brother Holbrook was not in the least excited or disturbed, but calmly said to him: "Well, now, my brother, you had better take such as you can get. Any preacher can baptize you with water, but God only can baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and he may not consider you of sufficient importance to require such special attention." At another time he was interrupted by another man, who said to him, "If you have not been baptized with the Holy Ghost, I would not give much for your religion." Brother Holbrook replied, "It is of no concern to me whether you would give much for my religion or not. I did not come here, anyway, to auction off my religion; I came to tell you how to live so that you might have a religion of your own. My religion is not on the market." He was asked at one time by one who was interested in the Alabama Christian Missionary Society how much could be raised in his field for missionary purposes. He replied, "I do not know how much can be raised in my field for missionary purposes this year. I have planted my field in cotton, and it is too early in the season yet to tell how it will pan out, but all it makes is for missionary purposes."

Brother Holbrook was so successful as an evangelist that his services were in demand in other States. He preached

extensively in Tennessee, Mississippi, Alabama, Arkansas, Missouri, and Texas. There are prosperous churches in all of these States now which are the result of his preaching. He seldom went into a new section that he did not establish a congregation there. The joy of his life was to plant churches in new territory. Many prominent citizens in the various callings of life today were baptized by J. H. Holbrook. In his latter days he moved from Alabama to Levy County, Florida. For a number of years he was in bad health, but preached as he had opportunity. He was a good man, and lived to do good, loved to do good, and did good all the days of his life. He died at his home in Florida on October 1, 1905. Human society is better because J. H. Holbrook lived on earth; the cause of Christ has spread and reached the hearts of thousands because he has lived; and many of the redeemed of earth will rejoice at the judgment because J. H. Holbrook influenced them for good while upon the earth.

His wife preceded him some years, and Brother Holbrook left his property so that one or two young men could be educated in the Nashville Bible School, now David Lipscomb College. He not only did good while he lived, but made such arrangements for his property to do good after he was gone. What a beautiful example for others!

A note of interest concerning Brother Holbrook should be mentioned here. While in Walker County, Alabama, a young man who came under his influence, and was baptized by him was none other than Charlie Wheeler. Wheeler baptized 6000 people in his lifetime. One of the young men Wheeler taught and converted was Gus Nichols, who in turn baptized over 12,000 people in the course of his own life. Consider the powerful influence of this great man of God!

Another young man who came under Holbrook's influence and was baptized by him was F.B. Srygley at Rock Creek, Alabama. Srygley also became known as a great gospel preacher.

Scott Harp & TheRestorationMovement.com & Biographical Sketches of Gospel Preachers, H. Leo Boles, pages. 317-321

The Value of A Horse

The close of the Civil War found Joseph H. Holbrook a Federal prisoner at Camp Douglas, Illinois. Upon his release, he returned to his home in Tennessee and married a fine Christian girl whom he had courted before enlisting in the Confederate army. He was not a Christian at the time, but Margaret soon converted him and before long he began to preach. Seeing his need for an education, he sold the farm he had acquired through hard work to enroll in T. B. Larimore's school at Mars Hill, near Florence, Alabama. After two years at Mars Hill, he and his wife settled at New River, in Fayette County.

While living at New River, Holbrook farmed for a living and preached through Fayette and the adjacent counties of Northwest Alabama, making extending tours in the less busy farming seasons. All he had left from the sale of the Tennessee farm were a horse and buggy. These were his means of carrying the gospel to the remote areas of that rough hill county. F. D. Srygley said of Holbrook at the time: "Except for the tours to Missouri, Arkansas and Texas, he has traveled almost exclusively on horseback and in buggy." (*Smiles and Tears.*)

Not long before the Hobrooks moved to Florida in 1890, a tragedy befell "Poor, pure Bro. Holbrook," as one sympathetic

brother expressed it. His horse died and he was without means of obtaining another. The attitude manifested by this godly Christian couple concerning their loss, which under the circumstances was a devastating blow, shows the kind of men and women that upheld the plea for apostolic Christianity in the latter years of the nineteenth century.

News of Holbrook's loss reached Nashville and was reported in the *Gospel Advocate*, the reporter saying: "J. H. Holbrook, of New River, Alabama, had the misfortune to lose his only horse by death recently. This leaves him entirely without conveyance. He had made all his arrangements to spend this year in evangelistic work in destitute fields, and the misfortune will greatly hinder this good work unless the brethren come speedily to his relief. We know Bro. Holbrook to be a worthy man and a good preacher. He has established many churches. He has spent his life preaching in destitute places, and mainly at his own expense and at great sacrifice of the comforts and even the necessaries of life. We trust that he will be enabled to continue this good work. (*Gospel Advocate*, Jan. 29, 1890.)

That issue of the *Advocate* hardly reached New River before Holbrook wrote a letter disclaiming any desire for public help. His letter, strangely enough, reached Nashville in time to appear in the next week's edition of the paper. He wrote:

"While my loss is almost irreparable, for me, and while I thank you a thousand times for your kindness, I think I can get along without making a public appeal for help, and it is so humiliating to me to ask the brethren for help. I hope you will, make no more mention of me in the *Advocate*. Bro. John McCaleb has kindly proposed to loan me his mule till I can do better, and I think I can get along some way."

However, some money had already been forwarded to Brother Holbrook, and while the *Advocate* agreed to say no more on the subject, two subsequent letters from Margaret Holbrook were published in that paper. In the first, she said: "I am not going to give up. If the Lord will only bless us with common health, I hope we will be able to do more for our blessed Lord than we have ever done before. It may be for our good to suffer loss. When we see earthly things fast passing away, we draw nearer to God, ever trusting in him. Mr. Holbrook is off on a trip to Walker County, though not very well! It is as you say, We are laboring in a hard place, but the power of the gospel is needed here if anywhere. You know the cause has been long established here, but not faithfully practiced. If we would only go to work in earnest, all of us, the cause of Christ would run and be glorified. Did you ever know of anyone who was in the habit of reading the Bible every day and of carrying every~ thing to God in prayer, ever going astray?"

If Joseph and Margaret Holbrook's letters are a good commentary on a humble preacher and his devoted wife, laboring for the Lord under grueling circumstances, they are also a good commentary on others as well. In spite of Brother Holbrook's sincere protest, and their evident willingness to bear their burden alone, brethren came to their assistance. In a February issue of the *Advocate*, Margaret reported that some money had been received and said: "We will buy a horse pretty soon if the Lord wills." They did and the Lord's work continued.....**Earl Kimbrough "Fifteen Miles From Heaven."**

Pioneer Letters

Brother Butler Learns The Truth

CARLOWSVILLE, *Alabama*, May 27, 1833.

Brother Campbell.

AFTER a prayerful and deliberate examination of Scripture facts, as arranged and developed in your voluminous compositions, and the attendant reasons for such developments, I am necessarily and satisfactorily brought to acknowledge the high benefits which their truths have afforded me.

Before God, angels, and men, I have no other motive in the espousal of *the ancient order of things*, as contended for by you in your labor of love, than the honor of my King, the benefit of others, and peace of my own soul. I have not come to a conclusion upon the merits of your writings, without a minute and critical examination of them with my Bible (blessed book!) before me, and my God in my mind. I assure you, that in the examination of your views, I was not hurried forward to a favorable conclusion by any prepossessions either for you or them. No; far from it. The first circumstance which led me to an investigation of your writings, was a *sui generis* encomium [warmly enthusiastic praise] passed upon your debate with Mr. Walker, by a brother Baker of Alabama. He remarked to me that he had seen a blow at the root of infant sprinkling, by Alexander Campbell who, he was sorry to learn, was a schismatic; "but," said he, "if they were the sentiments of the devil, they are true."

The next information was from a Presbyterian preacher, who seemed to be agitated at the very mention of your name, (though I did not see the finger, yet I knew the pigeon was touched from the fluttering of its wings,) who deposed and said, that "one Alexander Campbell, an evil doer, was turning the Baptist world upside down." He did not even add, that "if it be of the Lord 'It will prosper.'"

The next information was from sundry witnesses in Kentucky, in 1828, all of whom deposed—some against, and many for the accused.

In October, 1828, I returned to Alabama, and for two successive years, under a misguided zeal for my creed, (nature, hush thy mur-murings, for it is truth!) I prayed the Lord's anathemas upon you, for I thought you loved him not. But in reflecting upon my conduct toward you, I felt occasionally a compunction of heart; and my only quietus was, that old brethren, who professed to be guided by charity, (darling attribute!) emitted the same. I finally examined an old adage, which was this, that "it was the office of ignorant and corrupt men to censure without evidence." At once I determined to read your views for myself. I have now to conclude by adding, that, in my opinion, he who reads them most will esteem them highest.

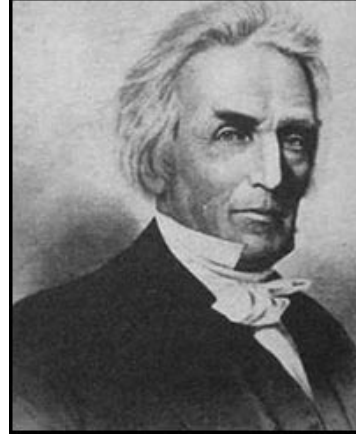
I must shove a thousand things out of my way, and sign myself your brother in the hope of immortality,

JAMES
A. BUTLER.

(Note: Carlowville—Carlowsville—is in Dallas County, Ala.

Next page.....

The following item is Campbell's response to Butler's letter (EK)



Alexander Campbell

brother to the good cause. The salvation and happiness of every man is alike important in itself; but when we see men of wealth, talent, and standing in society, cordially embrace the ancient institutions, and devote themselves to their spread and prevalence in the world, with all their powers, we have reason for more joy and gratitude because of the means of doing good which the Lord has bestowed on them. May the Lord make the life and labors of this much esteemed brother a blessing—a great blessing to many!—Ed.

Millennial Harbinger, Vol. 4, No. 7, July 1833, 324,325.

Texas Ox

It was in December, 1905, that the noted Methodist preacher, R. H. Pigue, met Bro. Joe S. Warlick in debate in Henry County, Tennessee. Both men had considerable reputation in the field of religious debating, and a huge crowd had gathered for the opening encounter. Pigue spoke first. Looking disdainfully down at Warlick, he said, "So this is the great Goliath of Campbellism, whose staff is like a weaver's beam, the long-horned ox from Texas who has never been lassoed, the wild bronc who has never been ridden! Well, this time he is going to be lassoed, curried, tied, and ridden." Warlick jumped to his feet, grabbed Pigue by the collar, and retained a firm grip on him while he roared to the audience, "Ladies and Gentlemen, if what this man says is so, then we have here a positive violation of God's ordinance in the Old Testament. I am teamed up with this man in a religious debate; he says I am an ox. But the Bible plainly declares that you shall not yoke the ox and the ass together!"...*Vanguard 1982*

Rock Creek Philosophy

"Ah, brethren, when people start off after the world, the flesh, and denominationalism, there is no telling when they will stop, if, indeed, they ever stop." *F.B. Syrgley*

THE CHURCH OF CHRIST AT MOORESVILLE, LIMESTONE COUNTY, ALABAMA

The Mooresville church has a storied history. It is the oldest building built by our brethren standing in the State. It begs to be restored. The value to restoration history in Alabama as well its significant value to the history of the State of Alabama demands its restoration and preservation.....lew

Mooresville is a beautiful village that sits on the Tennessee River in southeast Limestone County, Alabama. When one enters this small village, it is as though he has taken a step back a hundred years in time. The people of Mooresville themselves have had great interest in preserving the village, intact, for posterity.

It was in this beautiful village that J. H. Hundley began reading the writings of Walter Scott's journal, **The Evangelist**. By August 1839, he was convinced that he should be "immersed for the remission of sins." He wrote a letter to the brethren in Tuscumbia, requesting that they send someone to Mooresville to immerse him. They sent Carroll Kendrick, who preached several sermons there and by May 1, 1840, had helped the Mooresville congregation to form and grow to seventy in number. The work continued to thrive at Mooresville until 1844 when the followers of Dr. John Thomas began to take their toll upon the small band. The Thomasites, as they were called, believed in new revelations from God, thus they were sometimes called the "New Revelation Sect." Tolbert Fanning stopped at Mooresville on September 19, 1844 and preached to the brethren.



Up until 1846, the Mooresville church had been meeting in a "free house of worship," a building built for all religious groups to use. Sometime in the early spring the Presbyterians had shut out the brethren from the building.

Mooresville church of Christ ca 1870 By this time the church was in a deplorable condition at Mooresville. One reason the church was in a sad condition was the fact that there was no regular minister at Mooresville. By 1849, J. H. Dunn had moved into the county, near Athens, and was now frequenting the Mooresville brethren with preaching visits. He tried to solicit a preacher who could teach in the community school, the idea being that the preacher could support himself while he preached at Mooresville, since the brethren could not support him. Fanning tried to make the situation look appealing by pointing out that the school patronage and aid of the churches would doubtlessly give a "handsome support."

For the next two years the brethren struggled along without the aid of a full-time preacher, depending solely upon Brother Dunn's visits and a frequent visit from some brother passing through. One such visit came when J. J. Trott stopped and preached at Mooresville in May of 1851. He wrote concerning

the work in that place:

They have a very good brother for an overseer, but have suffered much for want of 'regular preaching.' We could not stay long enough to do much good. Nothing less than two or three continued efforts, in my judgment, can bring about a reaction for the better.

Another reason the brethren were suffering was because they had no regular place in which to meet, except the member's homes. They were in the process of raising funds for a meetinghouse to be shared with the Sons of Temperance. Later that year on December 14, 1851, Trott stopped, while on his way back to Nashville. He fully intended to preach several times, but, after one sermon, he returned to Nashville because of cold weather. In the months of November and December of 1852 J. H. Dunn baptized nine persons at Mooresville.¹¹

For the next two years growth was slow but Dunn kept encouraging the brethren in their work for God's kingdom. They managed to build a building by 1854. The land had been purchased in October 29, 1851 for a sum of \$20.00 from James Clement. They shared their meetinghouse with the Odd Fellows and Sons of Temperance. November 22, 23, and 24, 1856, J. H. Dunn preached three days, Saturday, Sunday and Monday to the Mooresville church. One was restored and six were immersed. He was joined in this effort by Crockett McDonald of Moulton. In the last week of May 1857, he held a three-day meeting and four more were added to the Mooresville church. At this point several members of the Presbyterian Church had united with the brethren. No wonder the Presbyterian minister said "that the church of Christ down on the corner was hatched out under the mud sills of Hell, from an egg laid by the Devil."



Mooresville church of Christ today

On Thursday, November 26, 1857, Tolbert Fanning came and preached four sermons and left the following day. One person was baptized at this time.

While Fanning was at Mooresville, he had to deal with an unpleasant situation. The brethren felt that they could not worship God unless the service was conducted by "officers." The brethren finally agreed to attend their own worship as "Christians," and to dispense with "official service." The leading figure at Mooresville was J. H. Hundley, its first charter member, and the man really responsible for the establishing of the Work at this place. It was upon his insistence that Carroll Kendrick came to baptize him. His baptism made him the first

Christian in Mooresville. Brother Hundley wrote a book, *The Plan Of Salvation*, in 1858.¹⁷ The book contained eighty-eight pages and was acclaimed to be one of the best on the subject. It was Hundley who had guided the congregation thus far. One is only left to guess what the source of trouble at this congregation was; but, in spite of Fanning's teaching on the subject and Hundley's leadership, the old problem was at work again. In July of 1860, O. P. Miller of Washington, D.C. had come to hold a meeting. At the very outset of the meeting trouble arose. Miller, being a mature minded gospel preacher, dealt with the problem and continued his meeting for ten days. Ten souls were added to the church, some of whom were "the influential of the community."¹⁸ The meetings, according to Miller, were well attended and the whole community seemed "ready to hear the truth."

Shortly after this meeting, the Devil was at work at Mooresville once more. The Old "official worship" question came about again. On October 2, 1860, Fanning came back and confronted the problem again. The older members seemed inclined to believe the need for "officials" in the service. Fanning said most of his time was spent restoring peace. Fanning did baptize a "Baptist friend" who wanted to be baptized for remission of sins, while at this place. The year of 1860 had been one of the better years for Mooresville.

The year of 1861 brought sorrow in two ways. The Civil War would come to this area and one of the younger members, Johnny Tucker died in the prime of life. He was nearly twenty-three and had been a Christian for four years. It was in the younger men like him, that the hope of the future Mooresville church lay. The war brought much hardship upon this area around Mooresville. Union soldiers camped near here and often made forages into the village, seeking food, horses and anything else they could take. During the Union encampment, James A. Garfield, a Union general and gospel preacher was invited to come preach to the Mooresville brethren. In a letter to his wife he wrote:

"There is a church in the village of Mooresville near by and they have sent up inviting me to speak to them on Sunday. If I am not too unwell I have a notion to speak to them."

Apparently he was well enough to speak. The brethren of Mooresville boast, even today, of him having spoken in their building. One can even look upon the Bible, said to have been used by Garfield.

After the war, J. M. Pickens came to north Alabama to work. In September of that year he was called upon by the brethren at Mooresville for a meeting. He found a handful of war weary Christians. They had lost most of their money, food sources, and other things that make life livable. The congregation had gone into the war with twenty-five members,²⁴ even after the good year of 1860, in which they increased in number. It was these sad conditions that prompted J. M. Pickens to write:

"There is great destitution and want among many of the people of North Alabama."

Mooresville was truly in destitution, both spiritually and physically. For five years, silence seemed to fall upon the work in this place and no reports were made during this period concerning the Work there.

Finally the silence was broken on April 17, 1872, by a brother W. G. Martin in a letter to David Lipscomb. The

question of a woman leaving her husband over mistreatment had arisen at Mooresville. Lipscomb promptly pointed the brother to Matthew Chapter 19. For nearly two more years silence once



David Lipscomb

again fell over the Work in this place. Then in the last week of June 1877, T. B. Larimore held a meeting at Mooresville, resulting in eleven additions to the church. He paid the small band a very high compliment in writing:

"When they invite a teaching brother to visit them, the understanding is not that he is to labor 'for' them, but 'with' them. They work while he works and sometimes they work while he sleeps."

In the first week of July 1880, E. A. Elam, who had just been graduated from Burritt College a year before, came and held a four day meeting with three additions. After Elam's meeting nothing further is written concerning Mooresville until October 27, 1888, when A. R. Moore reported that he was to hold a meeting at Mooresville but was prevented from holding it due to a yellow fever epidemic, six miles away at Decatur.

Mooresville had reached its peak and was now left to struggle for survival. The future did not look very bright. By 1906 a total of 722 Christians were to be found in Limestone County, Alabama. Of all the Christians found in Limestone County, only a handful were located at Mooresville.

Looking back, one wonders how the work at Mooresville endured, since they have never had a fulltime preacher. Their problems over "official service" and the taint of the "New Revelations" sect hindered their growth at times when other churches were growing. The opposition from their Presbyterian neighbors never was a major problem but did cause some concern at times. They did manage to survive however, even when other surrounding churches were dying during the Civil War. With the determination to survive without permanent preaching, one is left to wonder how the work would have grown with a fulltime preacher.**C. Wayne Kilpatrick**

Modesty and Baptism

Baptistry's and baptismal robes were largely unheard of, except in the large city churches, until the 1930's. A local pond or creek was usually used. . It seems that at one of the larger rural churches in Oklahoma, a rather stout young lady presented herself for baptism. As the crowd gathered at the creek, the young lady arrived, chastely clothed in a rain slicker. As she stepped a few feet into the water, she suddenly stopped and tossed her rain slicker to the bank. There she stood resplendent in a three or four sizes too small bathing suit. Needless to say, this church was the first in the state to lay in a supply of baptismal garments.... *Vanguard 1982*

“ONE WORTHY OF REMEMBRANCE”

“Brother” is not generally recognized as a title among New Testament Christians, but it fits some men so well that it practically

becomes a part of their name. Such a man was Chester O’Neal Stout of Russellville, Alabama. Brother Stout was born November 6, 1891, in Franklin County, near the old town of Frankfort a few miles northwest of Russellville. He spent most of his life in the region of his birth. His natural parents were not members of the church of Christ, but



his step-mother was and through her godly influence he attended the services of the church at Frank fort. He was baptized there in 1907 when he was fifteen by evangelist John T. Underwood.

Early in life, Brother Stout took an interest in gospel singing. He attended singing schools, including some conducted by W. A. Sandlin, a teacher of singing among churches of Christ in the Mid-South, as well as Professor J. D. Patton, “A Franklin County boy who taught the South to sing.”

Brother Stout married Lillian Miller of Frankfort. They moved to Russellville in 1922 and united with the Russellville church of Christ about the time the new meeting-house on Washington Avenue was finished. Although a young man of thirty-one at the time, Brother Stout is listed in the church record that year simply as “Bro. Stout.” He and Lillian were members of the Russellville church (now Washington Avenue) until her death, March 2, 1970, and his removal to Searcy, Arkansas, a decade later, after he was ninety. He spent his final years in Arkansas being lovingly cared for by his only surviving child, Rheba Berryhill. His other daughter, Bernice, died suddenly when she was a senior at the Russellville High School.

Brother Stout’s roots ran deep in Restoration history, even though his field of labor was largely confined to Franklin County and adjacent regions. The old Frankfort church where he obeyed the gospel was constituted before the Civil War largely through the efforts of the pioneer evangelist John Taylor. Taylor is memorialized by F. D. Srygley in *Larimore and His Boys* and in frequent references by F. B. Srygley in the *Gospel Advocate*. Due to their peculiar interest in John Taylor, we know much about his sacrifices, persecutions, and labors among the hills of Northwest Alabama. Taylor was baptized for the remission of sins and began preaching the gospel plan of salvation before he knew anything about the Restoration Movement. He was turned out of the Baptist church for preaching “Campbellism,” when he at the time had never heard of Alexander Campbell or Barton W. Stone.

The Frankfort church fell into disarray during the chaos of the Civil War, but was reorganized by James M. Pickens in 1866. It was Pickens school at Mountain Home in Lawrence County that gave T. B. Larimore the motivation for founding Mars’ Hill Academy. Pickens probably did more than any other preacher to revitalize the churches of Christ of Northwest Alabama after the war. John T. Underwood was a student of Larimore at Mars’ Hill

for three years (1878-1880). He, too, is memorialized in Srygley’s tribute to Larimore. And the Russellville church, where Brother Stout led singing for sixty years and served as an elder for fifty years, was established in 1842 by Tolbert Fanning.

C. O. Stout, as he was commonly known, built on the labors of these and other pioneer Christians of Northwest Alabama. He no doubt worked harder for the cause of Christ, exerted more good influence, and did more to preserve apostolic Christianity than any Christian in the history of Franklin County. Whenever error threatened the peace of the Russellville church, he stood fast as a faithful shepherd to protect the flock from wolves. For this he was some-times mistreated and misrepresented, but in the face of such persecution, he remained undaunted in his devotion to scriptural authority. Eternity alone can reveal the full effect of his godly life in Franklin County during the twentieth century.

Brother Stout was a rural mail carrier by occupation, but he was first of all a Christian. He diligently studied the Bible and was an able Bible teacher. For many years, he led a quartet that included his wife and two other men that sang for funerals throughout the Russell’s Valley area for both members of the church of Christ and others. I once asked him how many funerals he had sung for. He thought for a moment, and then said: “O, it would be in *the thousands.*” “Did you receive any remuneration for that?” I asked. He again replied deliberately: “No; *none at all.*” It was a labor of love! Thousands of grief-stricken citizens of Russellville and many miles around found comfort in their sorrow from the tender songs of consolation and hope unforgettably rendered by quartets under his lead. I have been with them on several occasions when we traveled far out into the county to conduct funerals. Brother Stout always carried a variety of well-worn songbooks so they could comply with any requested hymn at a moment’s notice.

His unique way of leading singing was a characteristic of the Russellville church where I grew up. I have never heard another song leader anywhere who came close to leading singing in a comparable manner. Many a time in later years, and even now, while singing one of the old songs of Zion that he so often sang, I imagine that I hear his powerful and melodious voice drifting as it were from ethereal plains to express the words with every ounce of his being. If any man ever gave the full measure of body, soul, and spirit to singing in worship, it was Brother Stout. The good man selected his songs after learning the preacher’s subject, often minutes before the services began, and they always suited the theme. He also had a way of opening his book and discreetly humming the first bars of the invitation song as the preacher was winding up, or, some believed, when he thought a ceaseless sermon should cease, and perhaps to encourage that eventuality.

When I began preaching, none encouraged me more than Brother Stout. He took me to numerous appointments, which he had made for me, to preach and teach Bible classes before I had transportation of my own. He led the singing in some of the first gospel meetings I ever held. I loved him as a father and regard him today as one of the noblest specimens of true Christianity I have ever known, or ever expect to know this side of eternity. He was leading, “Are You Coming to Jesus Tonight,” when as a boy of twelve, I went forward to obey the gospel of Christ.

Brother Stout died in Arkansas, June 29, 1985, but his earthly remains rest beside the grave of his beloved wife in the hallowed soil of his beloved Franklin County. His gravestone bears the simple but fitting words: “**One Worthy of Remembrance.**”
Earl Kimbrough

The Church of Christ In Madison County, Alabama During The Nineteenth Century

The history of the Church of Christ in Madison County, Alabama is a segment of church history that has been overlooked by restoration historians. The oversight is, perhaps, not as a result of a lack of interest, but a lack of information. From sources in my library and from computer Internet sights, several isolated events have been stitched together to give the reader some semblance of the history of the church in Madison County, Alabama.

Alabama was the new "Promised Land" of westward expansion in the early 1800's. In 1805, Huntsville was founded when John Hunt built his cabin at the Big Spring, in Madison County. A town soon flourished and was the largest in the Alabama Territory by 1819. Huntsville became the land office for the territory and soon many people from Kentucky, Tennessee, Georgia, and North Carolina, were heading to Huntsville, Alabama for good farmland sold at a low price. With this influx of settlers, it was only a matter of time before folks claiming to be "Christians only" would settle in North Alabama.

The churches of Christ were firmly planted in North Alabama, many years before Alabama gained statehood in 1819. The first churches were established long before Alexander Campbell left the Redstone Baptist Association and attempted to restore New Testament Christianity. Therefore, Campbell was not an early influence in the establishing of the church in Alabama. Nor were the first churches in Alabama influenced by Barton Warren Stone, who, by 1805, had left the Presbyterian Church in the pursuit of the church of the New Testament. The first churches in Alabama were the result of independent movements; that is, without the influence of Walter Scott, Barton W. Stone, or the Campbell's (Thomas and Alexander). Independent movements were the result of individuals, on their own, coming to the conclusion that the New Testament pattern must be restored, and then attempting to restore the church to the original.



Old Philadelphia Meeting House, Viola, Tennessee

Two independent movements were important in the establishment of the church in North Alabama. One was the result of the Old Philadelphia church, near Viola, Tennessee. Viola was located at the intersection of two early highways, the Lexington, Kentucky to Florence, Alabama highway, running

from north to south, and the Knoxville to Memphis Post Road, running from east to west. Near this intersection a community developed. About 1805, a church came into existence. Since there were people from various religious backgrounds, they found it necessary to build one building to accommodate all beliefs. Someone suggested that they meet together and take the Bible and just do what it said. Before long, the people at the Old Philadelphia Meetinghouse realized they were teaching and practicing the same things that were being taught and practiced in many churches in Kentucky. These Kentucky churches had been influenced by Barton W. Stone to shun all denominational ties and simply practice New Testament Christianity. Some of the early members of this church were the Price family. The following is a quote from the website, therestorationmovement.com/oldphilhist.htm "In 1811, William J. Price, (1793-1876) who had been baptized at Philadelphia the same year, moved to Northern Alabama near present day Bridgeport and founded the Rocky Springs Church of Christ in the Antioch community. Since Elisha M. Price was listed as an Elder at Rocky Springs in 1827, he apparently left Warren County after 1820, joining William V. Price in Alabama. The Rocky Springs Church is Alabama's oldest restoration church. Elisha Price (1770-1876), John Price, who died at 110 years of age and William J. Price (1793-1868) all lived long and active lives in service to the restoration movement and, along with Brother Hugh Price and their offspring, contributed greatly to the stability of the early congregations in Warren County (Tennessee) and later in Northern Alabama where most of them resided in later years. Many of their progeny maintain an active role in Church of Christ affairs in modern times."

The second independent movement that affected the establishment of the church in North Alabama perhaps preceded the Rocky Springs church. The story of this movement is the story of Revolutionary War hero, hunter, explorer, and preacher, Captain Benjamin Lynn. Lynn is often referred to as the Daniel Boone of Southern Kentucky.

Ben Lynn was born in Chester County, Pennsylvania, in 1750. As a youth, he enjoyed spending time in the woods, hunting and trapping. He became a fine marksman and spent long periods in the wilderness. *The Filson Club History Quarterly*, April, 1946, p. 37, says: "When he was seventeen, he spent seven years away from his people, traveling into the Ohio wilderness and as far west as the Mississippi River and as far south as Natchez. He lived among the Shawnee, Delaware, Maumee, and Kickapoo Indians for several years, becoming familiar with their languages and customs." Because of his knowledge of the wilderness and its inhabitants, he was employed as a spy for General George Rogers Clark, and served throughout the Revolutionary War. Lynn was rewarded for his service with a 1,000 acres of land in Kentucky, near Harrodsburg. Soon after the war, Lynn aligned himself with the Baptists in that area and became a preacher, but by 1805, Lynn came to the conclusion that he could no longer accept Baptist doctrine on baptism. He believed baptism to be for the remission of sins and not merely as a sign of membership in the Baptist church. It was about this time that Lynn walked eighty miles to Cane Ridge, Kentucky, and requested that Barton Stone baptize him for remission of sins.

In 1810, Lynn and his family moved from Kentucky to Alabama; the land of opportunity in the westward expansion.

Lynn settled in Madison County, Alabama. Lynn's two married daughters and their families also made the move. These daughters of Lynn were Esther Chisholm, wife of John Chisholm, and Rachel D'Spain, wife of Marshall D'Spain. The Chisholm and D'Spain families would later play an important role in the establishment of the church in North Alabama and in Texas.

As a gospel preacher, it is certain that Lynn would see the need to preach in the new land into which he came. If Ben Lynn began preaching in Madison County in 1810, he would have probably been the first preacher in Alabama, and probably established the first church in Alabama, in Madison County. Lynn died in Madison County in 1814, and according to a letter written by his son-in-law, John Chisholm, Lynn died at the age of 56, and "was buried in the churchyard of the Christian Church near Huntsville", a church that Lynn had organized. [Christian Church and Church of Christ were terms that were used interchangeably throughout the nineteenth century.] (Letter from John Chisholm to John Barbee, son of General Elias Barbee of Green County, Kentucky, dated September 16, 1847.) We therefore, have conclusive proof of a church existing in Madison County by 1814. Wayne Kilpatrick, professor of Restoration History at Heritage Christian University, believes that Lynn settled in the Normal area of Madison County, in the approximate location of present day Alabama A&M University.

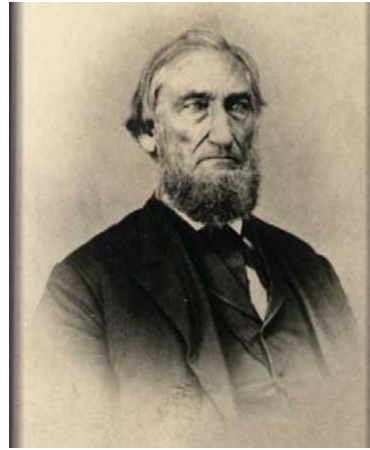
In 1816, the family of Benjamin Lynn moved to Lauderdale County, Alabama. Until this time, the U. S. Government refused to allow settlers in Lauderdale County. One of the most unusual forts in America was built in western Limestone County, near Elk River. This fort, Fort Hampton, was built for the purpose of protecting Indian lands and keeping white people out of Lauderdale County. But by 1816, Lauderdale County was opened up for settlement. John Chisholm, the son-in-law of Ben Lynn, was the son of John Chisholm, Sr. who served as Chief Doublehead's agent, and rented land on Doublehead's Reserve, which comprised most of Lauderdale County. When Lauderdale County was opened up for settlement, John Chisholm, Sr. knew Lauderdale County well, and directed his son and his Lynn in-laws to land north of what would become Florence, Alabama. A road bearing the Chisholm name is one of the major arteries into north-central Lauderdale County today.

With the removal of the Chisholm and D'Spain families from Madison County, it is not known whether the church that Benjamin Lynn established in Madison County continued. Nothing else is known of this church.

Benjamin Franklin Hall, who married Dorinda Chisholm, the granddaughter of Benjamin Lynn, tells in his autobiography (unpublished) of camp meetings in Madison County. Although Hall does not give the dates, if his autobiography is in chronological order, he preached in Madison County about 1825. (However, from reading the quote below, especially his reference to the design of baptism, this may have been about the time of, or after the winter of 1825-1826, when Hall said he came to understand that baptism was for the remission of sins.) Hall mentions meetings at McNuttystown and Meridianville in Madison County, and elaborates on an incident at Meridianville. The following is in Hall's own words:

"After the Globe creek meeting, I went further south to attend

some camp meetings in North Alabama: one in Gandies' cove,



in Morgan County; another in Honey Comb valley, and another at McNuttystown in Madison County. As my resources were about exhausted and my clothes well worn; and as I had received but little if any remuneration for my labors; I taught a three-months school in the winter, and occupied my leisure time studying medicine."

B.F. Hall

"An incident occurred in Alabama, which I will

here relate. I, at a meeting above Meridianville (sic), delivered a discourse on the design of baptism and invited persons to confess the Lord. One young lady came forward, and desired to be immersed forthwith. Her mother was dead. Her father, had been a Baptist preacher, but had become an apostate and a wicked man. As we were yet talking about the best place to immense in a stream nearby, the old man came up to me, and shaking a large hickory cane in my face, told me I must not baptize his daughter. I inquired: "Why not?" He answered huffishly: "That is none of your business; but"—shaking his cane again at me, his eyes looking daggers—"you had better not attempt to baptize her"—and his large frame shook with rage. Turning to the young lady, who sat weeping, I asked her if she still desired to be baptized? She said she did. "Then I will baptize you at all hazards." I said, and, turning to the audience, designated the place where we would administer the rite. The old man, turning to his daughter, said: "If you are baptized, you shall never enter my house again while you live." The poor girl, looking up at me through her tears, said: "I want to be baptized." An old brother Griffin, a man well to do in the world, who stood near by, walked up to the agonized girl, and said: "My daughter, you shall have a home at my house." We repaired to the water, and I baptized her, the old man offering no resistance. The young lady got into mister Griffin's carriage, and went home with her. (sic) A few days afterwards, her father sent for her to return home. She sent him word she would not go then; but if he would bring a horse and saddle the next Friday, and take her down to a meeting to be held at McNuttystown, she would go home with him after the close of the meeting."

"Accordingly, on the day designated the old gentleman rode up to brother Griffin's, leading a horse with a lady's saddle. The young lady was soon in the saddle, and she and her father were on their way to the meeting."

"The next day I preached and gave the usual invitation to penitent believers to confess the Lord. The old gentleman who was sitting directly in front of the stand, arose instantly and came forward weeping, holding the same big cane in his hand. His daughter sprang to her feet, and uttering an exclamation of joy, rushed forward, and threw her arms around her father's neck and sunk down upon her knees by his side! It was a touching scene to see the father and his motherless daughter clasped in each other's arms weeping—the one shedding tears of bitter grief and penitence; the other tears of joy."

“Had not the young lady resolutely obeyed the Lord, brooking the bitter opposition of her wicked father, both would doubtless have gone to perdition together; but now, hand in hand, they were treading the pilgrims pathway to the city and home of God. It is always right for one to do his duty—to obey God. In such cases, all results well.”

The next mention of the work of the church in Madison County in printed literature is found in Barton Stone’s, Christian Messenger, in a letter dated August 18, 1827. James E. Matthews, an agent of the Christian Messenger, probably wrote this letter, written from Florence, Alabama. In this letter is a record of an annual conference meeting held at Antioch, Jackson County, Alabama of Thursday, July 26, 1827. The letter reports, *“Our annual meeting commenced, at Antioch, Jackson county (sic), Ala. on Thursday, 26th of July, 1827, under the most convincing evidence of divine favor, and continued until the 31st, at 1 o'clock. During that period, there were devotional exercises, in some way, almost without intermission. I have been trying to preach 20 years, have attended many Conferences and Campmeetings (sic), but thankfully acknowledge the one at Antioch, far surpassed any thing of the kind I ever beheld. Prejudice, partyism and sin, seemed to fall prostrate before the Ark of God, while the assembled multitudes were pierced to the heart with the darts of truth. The laboring brethren seemed to have lost sight of defending the truth, and to content themselves with letting the truth defend them. Multitudes professed faith in Jesus, and about 30 were baptized in his name. I had the pleasure of administering the supper on the Lord's day (sic), about 10 o'clock, P. M. It was one of the most heavenly scenes I ever witnessed—there were about 600 communicants.”*

The letter goes on to mention several of the preachers in attendance at the meeting. The list is a “Who’s Who” of restoration preachers in the South. Attending this meeting were Elisha Price, John H. Parkhill, Elisha Randolph, Mansel W. Matthews, John M’Daniel, Thacker V. Griffin, Isaac Mulkey, William Clap, Crocket M’Daniel (sic, McDonald), Robert Baits, Jonathan Wallis, James E. Matthews, Reuben Mardis, E. D. Moore. Wm. J. Price, Mm. W. Wilson, Andrew Russel, Jonathan Parker. This author does not recognize any of these men as being from or preaching in Madison County. Elisha and William Price are associated with Rocky Springs in Jackson County; James and Mansel Matthews, along with E. D. Moore, were preaching in Lauderdale County; Crocket McDonald preached in Lawrence County; Isaac Mulkey’s work was in Tennessee and southern Kentucky; and Elisha Randolph lived at Gandy’s Cove in Morgan County. No one from Madison County is mentioned.

However, Madison County is mentioned in this letter. It was reported that the next annual meeting would be *“held at Hurricane, Madison County, the first Lord’s day (sic) in February, 1828. Hurricane was located just south of New Market, in Madison County”*. There must have been a church meeting in that community and they must have had a house to meet in, if the conference chose to meet there the next year.

The next year, a listing of Agents for the Christian Messenger was published in the Christian Messenger. Those agents listed in Alabama, were *“Elders Js. E. Matthews and Eph: D. Moore, Florence; Elder Wm. I. Price, Doyal's mill;*

John Cawart, Bellefonte; Grant Taylor, Brownsboro; Maj. Tho: Brandon, Huntsville; Joseph Griffin, Meredianville.” It is interesting that two agents, Matthews and Moore, were from Lauderdale County, two agents, Price and Cawart, were from Jackson County, and three of the agents, Taylor, Brandon, and Griffin, were from Madison County. All of the agents for the Christian Messenger were from extreme North Alabama. From this posting, we find, in addition to Hurricane, the mention of three more communities in Madison County; Brownsboro, Huntsville, and Meredianville (sic, Meridianville). Barton Stone would have chosen men (as agents) in whom he had confidence spiritually. Perhaps these men were all preachers in Madison County at the time. They would obviously have been men of influence since their purpose as agents, was to sell the Christian Messenger and gain as many subscriptions as possible. Even though there is no documentation, it is possible that there were six churches in Madison County by 1827, located in the areas of Normal, New Market, Brownsboro, Huntsville, McNuttys town, and Meridianville.

In 1834, the venerable “Raccoon” John Smith made a preaching trip to Madison County, Alabama. John Augustus Williams, in his book, Life of Elder John Smith, relates an incident about Smith as he traveled from Mount Sterling, Kentucky, to Huntsville, Alabama. Smith stopped to eat breakfast one morning at an inn in Sparta, Tennessee. The landlady received him politely and prepared his breakfast. A conversation with the lady commenced. She, upon finding out where Smith was from, said that she had heard from travelers of a strange sort of people up in Kentucky called Campbellites, and asked Smith about them. Williams records the following dialog:

“Yes, madam,” replied he, “there are some in my own, neighborhood.” “You have seen some of them then?” said she.

“Yes, madam, but they don't like that “Raccoon” John Smith name.” “Well, how do they look?” said she. “Do tell me, sir.”

“Those I have seen look pretty much like other people.” “I would really like to see one, so much,” said she, musingly; “I'd give more to see one of those people than any show. I'm told that when anybody wants to join them, they just put them under the water, “and then let them go. One man told me that they, would sometimes take people by force, and drag them down into the water; that they even chased after people, and ran them down; that they once took a fancy to a poor fellow, and 'ran him five miles before they caught him, and then, after putting him in, they just left him there to get home, or to heaven, the best way he could.” “That was a very long-winded fellow, ma'am,” interrupted Smith, “to run five miles before the Campbellites caught him.” “I don't know what I wouldn't give to see one of them,” said she, pouring out a cup of coffee, and handing it to her guest, who had taken his seat at the table with far more appetite than humor. “How do you think a Campbellite would look?” inquired Smith, after breaking his fast a little.



"Well," said she, "I imagine they have a sort of wild, fierce, fanatical look about them." "I think I can manage for you to see one," said Smith, as he received his second cup from her hands. "I'd give any thing almost, if you would, sir," said the lady. "Madam," said he, laying down the knife and fork which he had plied with more than usual assiduity, and raising his bland, good-natured face upon her, "look right at me, and you will see one! But don't be afraid," continued he, seeing her start, and then blush with confusion, "I am a civil Campbellite, and will not chase you into the water."

Having finished his meal, he withdrew from the table, and re-assuring her of his perfectly civil disposition, requested her to take a seat and listen to what he had to say about those singular people. He told her what they believed and preached, and corrected all the wicked stories that had been told against them!

Smith had lived in Madison County twenty years before, and Madison County was they place where Smith lost two children and his wife to death, and he himself almost died. John T. Brown's, Churches of Christ, 1904 tells the following about Smith: "*The Lord prospered him, and he was persuaded by the advertisements of land in Alabama that it would be right for him to sell his farm and get land near Huntsville, Ala. As the second war with England was nearing a conclusion the land would rise in value in a few years, and then he would be able to preach the gospel without money and without price. He was doing that any way, but with this increase of means he could leave his family in comfortable condition while he would be away in the Lord's work. As the result of the enterprise he lost all, or nearly all, he had. While he was away from home, and his wife was administering to the sick, his house burned and two of his children. Here his theology gave him trouble. If that dear boy and girl were not among the elect then they were lost forever. And it is quite evident that his views on election began to change with this misfortune. The wife waned, sickened and died. He was stricken with the cold plague, and lay for months at the point of death. When he recovered, he returned to Kentucky and began again to build up a little hope of home for his children in the future. His strength was shattered and, perhaps, the shaking palsy, from which he had a long and severe trial in later years, was contracted in Alabama.*"

When Smith was in Madison County from 1812-1814, he was a member of the Baptist church. Some want to associate Smith with the establishment of the Mooresville church in eastern Limestone County, only a few miles from Madison County. However, at the time, Smith was a preacher for the Baptist denomination. The Mooresville congregation did not come into existence until about 1840, after J. H. Hundley (who founded the church) came to the conclusion that baptism was for the remission of sins.

No doubt this preaching trip to Madison County brought back many sorrows for Smith. Though not mentioned in the literature, one would think that Smith visited the graves of his first wife and children. The following is the letter that Smith wrote from Mount Sterling, Kentucky on August 22, 1834, to brother John T. Johnson, co-editor of the Christian Messenger:

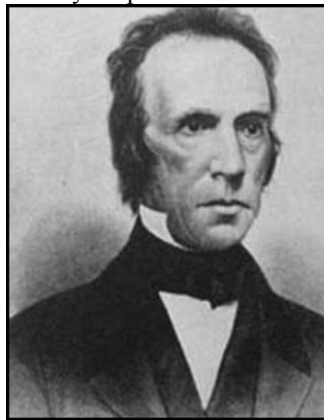
Mount Sterling, Ky. August 22, 1834.

Bro. J. T. Johnson,

A few days since, I returned home from a tour of 32 days length. In which time I passed through several counties in this State as

far down as Wayne, and Cumberland. Thence through 6 or 7 counties in Tennessee. Thence into Madison co.(sic) Alabama. I can now assure you that the christians in this section of the country, see but a small corner of the field, which loudly, loudly calls for laborers. In those parts, through which I have recently travelled (sic), there are thousands of people who never have heard the gospel proclaimed in its primitive purity, and simplicity. The sects are completely buried in the rubbish of their own traditions; and sinners do not know what they must do to be saved, and (in many— very many places) there is no one to tell them. Hundreds are begging for some one to visit them, and teach them. I did not reclaim long enough at any one place to deliver more than one discourse except in two cases; and of course had not an opportunity of gathering much fruit. Notwithstanding all the disadvantages, 35 made the good confession in my tour. If you wish to see a complete moral waste, take a journey through that part of the country; and I think your spirit will be stirred within you, to see the people wholly given to sectarianism. Still the prospects for doing good are abundant and flattering. The great body of the people would hear and obey, if they had the opportunity.

Smith points out the pathetic state of the church in Madison County in particular. It is entirely possible that the church in



Walter Scott

Madison County, which began in 1814, had all but died out by 1834. However, another letter written in 1834, by Dr. W. H. Wharton, of Tuscumbia, Alabama, to Walter Scott, editor of The Evangelist, mentions the church in Huntsville. In mentioning Huntsville, Dr. Wharton points out the ill treatment he endured and the lack of a building in which to meet in Huntsville.

He expresses his appreciation for being allowed to use the

theater for preaching. From this we see that while the church was flourishing in other parts of North Alabama, there was not a meetinghouse for the church in Huntsville in 1834. The following is the letter from Wharton as it appeared in The Evangelist.

BROTHER SCOTT,

I am a resident of Tuscumbia Alabama, I have an introductory letter to you from Bro. E. A. Smith of Ky. who passed through our place some six weeks since. It was my intention to have called to see you; but as it is a little uncertain whether you have returned from your excursion to Virginia, and I am in great haste to proceed eastward, I have concluded to defer it until my return, five or six weeks hence.

Brother Smith was in Huntsville in January, and preached some eight or ten times; the weather being exceedingly unfavorable he had but few hearers; he excited a good deal of enquiry as well as much opposition; two or three weeks after he left I visited that place by the particular request of some of the brethren there and remained a week. I was denied the use of all the meeting houses of the place, but was permitted by the Officers of Justice to occupy the Court house, an old and

inconvenient building; having once been a resident of that place and being personally acquainted with most of the citizens, after my first appointment I had quite a respectable audience, which continued to grow in number as long as I remained, and indeed we were compelled to adjourn to some other house; but as no other could be procured, although several of their; Churches' were unoccupied, we were permitted by the kindness of the Thespian Company to occupy the Theatre. I had the pleasure during my absence of introducing two into the kingdom of our Lord. The public mind is at this time much excited upon the subject of this great salvation; at that place as well as at other parts of North Alabama every form of misrepresentation and opposition has been used; but our trust in the living one is, that the veil of prejudice which has been thrown over the minds and hearts of people will be rent in twain, and truth, radiant truth, majestic and sublime, will shine into their hearts and give to dying mortals the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus the anointed one. The boat in which I am going on will stop only a couple of hours and I am in great haste. I did desire greatly to see your face and shake your hands in gratitude to God our Heavenly Father who through the instrumentality of your labors has imparted to me so much favor and mercy, joy and peace in believing the gospel concerning his Son. I was formerly an elder in the Presbyterian Church and for obeying Peter, into whose hands the keys of the kingdom were given, I have been discarded, called a Campbellite, opposed, calumniated, mis-represented, abused, denied entrance into houses consecrated to the worship of the only living and true God as an authorised teacher of the living Oracles; but although I have been cast down I am not destroyed; though opposed, not overcome; but in the midst of persecution I have enjoyed more of the blessedness of believing, more of the comforts of the Holy Spirit, peace of conscience and joy of heart than I had ever hoped to attain to in this life.

Farewell Bro. Scott, may the Lord bless you and yours, with all the fullness of the blessings of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, both your Saviour and mine.

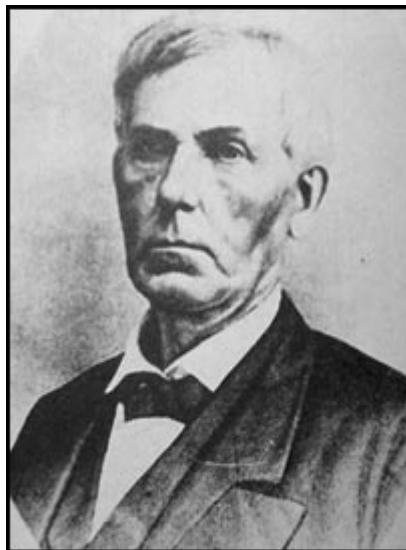
WM. H. WHARTON.

Still, another reference to Madison County, Alabama is made in the Millennial Harbinger in 1834, in volume V, page 192. One of the shortest, if not the shortest message to appear in the Millennial Harbinger is included in this issue. It simply says, "BROTHER Daniel Olds, of Madison county, Alabama, and the disciples around him, should, in my judgement, meet every Lord's day to keep the ordinances of the Saviour." While this statement may, on the surface, seem insignificant, the problem was significant enough for Alexander Campbell to address. This is probably a reference to the keeping of the Lord's Supper every first day of the week. One of the issues of that day was whether a church could have communion without "officers" of the church, i.e., an ordained preacher administering the communion. Evidently, it was customary among many of the churches in North Alabama to refrain from the Lord's Supper in the absence of the minister. In a letter written by J. A. Butler, of Carlowsville, Alabama, on September 6, 1834, to the Millennial Harbinger, Butler said, "The disciples here, break the loaf once a month—it being as often as I can attend with them, on Lord's days." (MH, vol. V, p. 522) On December 29, 1835, Corbley Martin, of Lebanon Ohio, wrote the Millennial Harbinger. His

letter appeared in the February 1836 issue. In this letter, he responded to J. A. Butler's statement about the Lord's Supper." Martin said, "you say, 'The disciples here break the loaf once-a-month, it being as often as I can attend with them on Lord's days.' Here you state an interesting fact—'The disciples break the loaf once-a-month.' You assign a reason why they do not break the loaf more frequently, say every Lord's day—perhaps it is a sufficient reason—'it being as often as I can attend with them on Lord's days.' Now, dearly beloved, some of us in these regions request you to assign the reason of this reason. Query—Why cannot the brethren break the loaf in brother Butler's absence as well as in his presence?" (MH, vol. VII, p. 96)

We know this was a hot topic in the church at Mooresville, Alabama, located near to Madison County, in Limestone County, Alabama. Wayne Kilpatrick's article, *The Church of Christ At Mooresville, Limestone County, Alabama*, published in The Journal of Muscle Shoals History, Vol. XI, p. 87, points out that on two occasions, Tolbert Fanning came to Mooresville to deal with this issue; once in 1857, and again in 1860.

Perhaps a story of interest to students of the restoration is the letter written by Dr. L. C. Chisholm, and published in James Scobey's book, Franklin College and Its Influences. L. C. Chisholm was a young man in Russellville, Alabama when Tolbert Fanning made his 1842 trip from Nashville through Lauderdale County, Alabama (his boyhood home), and on to Russellville. Fanning preached in Russellville one night and had no success and determined to travel on to Columbus, Mississippi. However, a mile or so south of Russellville, his carriage broke down, and Tolbert and his wife, Charlotte, were forced to return to Russellville. While his carriage was being repaired (a part had to be ordered), Fanning gave notice that he would preach each evening at "candle lighting", and in a short time had converted two-thirds of the heads of the families in the community. Among the converts was young L. C. Chisholm. In 1843, Chisholm entered Fanning's Franklin College. It was customary for college students to take trips with different professors to study or perform as the case may be. The story of the young men from Franklin College performing in Huntsville, Alabama is the story we shall relate"



Tolbert Fanning

"Among the young men were the pick of the musicians at the college, who gave a free concert at every town or village we passed. The people were so carried away with the music that they gave us an abundance of supplies all along our route (for we camped under a good tent every night). When we reached Huntsville, Ala., we pitched our tent hard by the city, and announced a free concert in the courthouse that night (Friday). We had a fair

audience, and the young men did full justice to the occasion. The next morning a committee of gentlemen came to our tent and notified us that the city authorities had arranged with the two hotels for our accommodations free of charge while we remained there. The professors gladly accepted. Our camp equipage was taken in charge, and we were all assigned rooms in the two hotels."

"Announcement was made at once for a free concert at night. In the meantime the professors, who were all young men, began to be introduced to the young ladies of the city; and the boys followed their example, till the city was all aglow with promenades, flowers, and bouquets. The boys seemed to be on stilts, and at night the courthouse was jammed, while flowers showered like meteors upon the musicians."

"On Sunday, Professor Barnes preached a big discourse, and all the afternoon and night was spent by the young men in gallanting his (sic-their) lovely Huntsville girl (sic-s). On Monday morning we were to move on, according to our programme; but another committee waited upon the professors, J. F. Demoville being the speaker, insisting upon a concert for the special benefit of the old people, in which an anthem, "The Earth is the Lord's (sic) and the Fullness Thereof," must be rendered. It took but little suasion to carry the point. On Monday night the old people of Huntsville had the front seats, and two courthouses could not have seated the crowd. Professor Cook, with all his boys, felt the magnitude of the occasion, and surpassed themselves on all former occasions, to the delight of all present.

"On Tuesday morning we had to leave early to reach a barbecue which we had been notified would be given us at Savannah, Ala. When the time came, nearly every student and professor had a sweetheart that he must tell good-by. Huntsville girls did not rise in those days in time for calls from young men and give them a very early start; but there was no use in grumbling, for that call had to be made by the professors especially, if it consumed half the day. For a time the boys had no leader, till young Carmack, of Mississippi, assumed the role of leader and sent messengers all over the city to find the professors. Finally he got them "rounded up," and we all had to "double-quick" to make the barbecue. From **that time on the interest in geology seemed to fag.**"



John T. Johnson

Johnson was encouraged by the writings of Alexander Campbell to accept New Testament Christianity. He and John Smith represented the Campbell Movement, when the Stone and

In a letter dated September 4, 1845 to editor Alexander Campbell of the Millennial Harbinger, we find G. W. Ellery of Lexington, Kentucky, planning a preaching trip to the region of Huntsville, Alabama. Ellery states, "On the 8th inst brethren J. T. Johnson, W. Morton, and myself, expect to leave home for the Huntsville region of North Ala, on a preaching tour, and we trust in the Lord for the success of the truth. May the Lord help us!" John T. Johnson was one of the great

Kentucky preachers of the day.

Campbell Movements united in January 1832, at the old Hill Street Church, in Lexington, Kentucky. John T. Johnson had served in the U. S. House of Representatives before becoming a gospel preacher. His brother, Richard Minton Johnson, served as U. S. Senator from Kentucky, and as Vice President of the United States under President Martin Van Buren. Richard M. Johnson was also a hero of the Indian Wars, and is credited with killing the Shawnee Chief, Tecumseh with a single shot from his pistol as Tecumseh attacked him with a tomahawk. Johnson himself was severely wounded in the battle.

In 1848, The Christian Register reported a census of Christian Churches. In the 1848 census, there is no mention of a church in Madison County, Alabama.

There is, however, a reference of a gospel meeting in Trianna, Madison County, Alabama, in the Millennial Harbinger, in April, 1853. Brother J. H. Dunn wrote that he had held meetings in Mooresville and Trianna, with nine additions at Mooresville. "These additions were made during the occasional visits of Bro. D. in the months of November and December." This reference would give rise to the speculation that there was, at that time, a church at Trianna.

It seems that the churches in Madison County had fallen on hard times. Looming on the horizon was the Civil War, which

lasted from 1861-1865.

The Civil War wrecked churches in many areas where male leadership went off to war, and many never returned. The economic devastation in the South, after the war, reduced most of the people to a bare existence. As society suffered in the South following the war, the church also suffered.

Perhaps Theophilus Brown Larimore laid the solid foundation for the church in the twentieth

century, in the nineteenth

century. It seems that T. B. Larimore had a concern for the church in Madison County for many years. F. D. Srygley wrote the following about Larimore in his book, Smiles And Tears:

"One who wrote of Mr. Larimore's work after he passed away, called him "a builder of churches." He was not only a builder of churches, but a builder of meetinghouses in which churches meet. In looking over his diaries and note books a few days ago, I noticed that in 1866 he was deeply interested in securing funds to help the brethren in Huntsville, Alabama, to build a church home; and the very last thing he wrote, I'm sure it was the last time he had pen or pencil in his hand, was an appeal for help to build a meetinghouse in Fullerton, California. He wrote that the day before he went to bed sick with influenza, in Los Angeles, expecting to talk with the leaders of the Fullerton congregation about it the next Sunday, when he should resume his preaching there, and submit the appeal for their consideration. His sickness, his fall and consequent injury prevented that appeal's



T. B. Larimore

(sic) being made.

Over the sixty-two years between his work for the Huntsville church in 1866 and the appeal he wrote in the closing days of 1928, he had helped and encouraged many, very many, churches to build meetinghouses, always urging the brethren to make sacrifices to secure a church home, and trying to stir in the hearts of all a desire to have part in that good work. He always advocated the building of as good, commodious, comfortable and convenient a house as the congregation was able to build, deploring the tendency some brethren exhibit to "bore with a gimlet," as he expressed it, instead of "boring with a big augur."

As a twenty-three year old preacher in 1866, Larimore was unknown and had little influence, if any, among the brethren. He had a desire to help the church in Madison County, but with little ability and money, he could not do much. However, by the late 1800's, Larimore was, perhaps, the greatest preacher of the day. Testimonies of his greatness are numerous. Emma Page Larimore, T. B.'s second wife, wrote in Life, Letters, & Sermons of T. B. Larimore, this quote from A. G. Freed, about Larimore: "T. B. Larimore was both grand and eloquent. He was an orator of the rare type, truly an eloquent man. To my mind, one of the greatest things in the life of this man of God is the fact that later in life he suppressed his oratorical powers, lest people might be moved by his oratory rather than the word of God." John T. Brown reported in his book, Churches of Christ (1904), that "He has probably preached more sermons, baptized more people, and established and set in order more churches than any other man of modern times." F. D. Srygley said, "I have seen him sitting at his desk with a thousand invitations to hold meetings, and tears flowing down his cheeks because he could not go." Larimore, tied to his work as president of Mars Hill College in Florence, Alabama, would soon close the doors of the school that trained hundreds of gospel preachers, to go into the world to preach the gospel.

The year 1880 was an important year for Larimore. He preached at the Macedonia Baptist church in rural Lauderdale County, Alabama, and when he finished, they changed the name to the Macedonia church of Christ. Srygley, in Smiles and Tears, reports that about that time, Larimore received a letter from a lady in the town of Madison, Alabama. Srygley writes: "The same year he was requested by a Presbyterian lady to preach in the little town of Madison, Madison county, Alabama. Brothers Herrin and Elam, two of his pupils, accompanied him to Madison, as did also his wife. "We had a few members there; but no effort had ever been made to establish a church, nor had any of our brethren ever preached there. The meeting resulted in several additions to the church, and steps were immediately taken to build a house. In a few months we had a good house and a good church there."

It is believed that this church, established with the help of Larimore, Herrin, and Elam, was the Berea church. The Berea church was built on the highway from Huntsville to Florence. A few years later, a new road was built to the north of this road, and the old road became known as Gooch Lane. A new church building replaced the old one and the church became known as the Gooch Lane church of Christ. A few years ago, a new building was built in front of the Gooch Lane building on the corner of Hughes Road and Gooch Lane. That church is known today as the Hughes Road at Gooch Lane church of Christ.

Srygley goes on to say, "About this time he visited Huntsville, Alabama, and delivered a series of sermons. This was the beginning of a work, which resulted in the establishment of a church in that city. In later years, when it was decided to build a house of Worship in Huntsville, he took the field and traveled several weeks to raise funds to help complete the house."

This church would become the Randolph Street church of Christ, which still meets today in downtown Huntsville. The cornerstone on the building says "Established 1887." The building, located at 210 Randolph Avenue, Huntsville, is of gothic architecture with a large steeple and stain glass windows. It is one of the beautiful old buildings from the nineteenth century that grace downtown Huntsville.



Randolph Street church of Christ

From Srygley's writings, we know that T. B. Larimore was instrumental in helping the brethren of Madison and Huntsville establish churches and places of worship. Many churches in Huntsville grew out of the church on Randolph Avenue.

The East Huntsville church of Christ dates back to 1902, when members of the Randolph Street congregation began conducting Bible classes in a store building located on what is now Andrew Jackson Way.

In the beginning only a few dozen people attended, but the numbers increased. In 1907, a lot was purchased at the corner of Humes and Dement Street where a small frame building was erected. The building still stands. In 1943, the present property was purchased. In 1950, a brick building was completed. It had classrooms and a seating capacity of 350. Growth continued until in 1962. Additional lots were purchased and a new auditorium was built in 1965, seating about 900.

In 1903, a congregation began in West Huntsville, but because of problems in the downtown church (Randolph Street), there was little support, if any from this church. S. H. Hall writes, in his book, Sixty-five Years In The Pulpit, "It was about 1903 when Brother Lon Welch, who formerly lived at Gurley, Alabama, asked me to conduct a mission meeting under a tent at West Huntsville, Alabama. There was only one congregation in

Huntsville at the time, and the congregation had been in trouble over Brother Daniel Sommer's "Evangelistic Authority" and "Anti-Bible College Ideas." Sommer had been there, the doors locked against him, and he broke in, which precipitated a lawsuit. It was during his trial that our meeting had its beginning, and Brother Sommer attended one or two of our



S.H. Hall

services — my first time to meet him. Because of the trouble in the up-town congregation, I agreed to conduct the meeting with the distinct understanding that the congregation up-town was to have nothing to do with it. I knew nothing about the merits of their trouble and wanted neither side to have any controlling influence in our meeting, but let it be understood that members from both sides of the fuss would be treated respectfully if

they attended, yet none of them was to be used in our services. Enough said about the circumstances under which I went to Huntsville." Hall says more about the establishment of the church in West Huntsville, and then concludes with this statement. "So much for the beginning of the work at West Huntsville, Alabama. I helped to establish the church at Merrimac Mills village, and also in Dallas Mills section. I wish space would permit my giving our readers the great part that J. D. Tant played in that work. Brother Jenkins, the brother-in-law of J. I. Jones, had much to do with establishing the church and its subsequent growth. We give (sic) the building when finished in which John E. Dunn conducted the first revival, and I have conducted several since it was established. They now meet in a brick building with all conveniences."

The early 1900's saw growth in the Huntsville churches with churches built in East and West Huntsville, Merrimac Mills village and Dallas Mills section. May 1923 marked the beginning of the Church of Christ in Huntsville, Alabama for the Black population. The Leadership of the Randolph Street Church of Christ realized that there was a need to have the Gospel preached to the "colored people" and were instrumental in securing Brother Marshall Keeble, the dynamic evangelist of Nashville, TN, to hold a two week gospel meeting. The meetings were very successful with more than 50 souls baptized into Christ. Sister Amanda Vincent was the first person baptized into the Body of Christ in Huntsville.

Since those that were baptized lived in different areas of the city, they began wondering what would happen to them when Brother Keeble left. However, there were other black ministers in the neighboring cities whom Brother Keeble asked to come at various times to try to hold the group together. They had no place to meet for services. Finally they formed a committee, which met with the city officials who gave them permission to

use the only school for blacks, Council High School, for their services, free of charge. Brother

Keeble promised them that he would return, as Paul promised the churches that he established. Mean while, several of the white ministers in Huntsville preached for the congregation. They held services in the high school until they



Marshall Keeble

were able to buy a lot and build a meetinghouse. Sometime later, other black ministers came to encourage the work in Huntsville.

On March 5, 1925, they purchased a 1/4-acre lot at Franklin Street for \$790. Two years after purchasing the lot, several members who owned their homes mortgaged them to get the church building started. In 1927, the meetinghouse, located at 822 Franklin Street, was completed. Sister Era Brake was the first person to be baptized in the Franklin Street building. The building still stands and is presently serving as a dental office.

From the time that Benjamin Lynn built the first primitive building of worship in Madison County at the turn of the nineteenth century, the church in Madison County has endured hardships, experienced heartache, disappointment, trial, and faced virtual extinction, But the story is also one of the determined men and women who labored to plant the seed of God's word. Many have lived to see the fruit of the labors of those who have gone before them. Today, almost 200 years after Benjamin Lynn came to Madison County and established the first New Testament church, the churches in Huntsville and Madison County are numerous. Today, The Yellow Pages list over 40 churches of Christ in the Huntsville area...

Frank Richey

Brutally Honest

We are constantly amazed at the frankness with which some of the old pioneer writers would sometimes write. The following is an example taken from an old issue of *Vanguard*.

Moses E. Lard in his paper *Lard's Quarterly*, wrote the following in an obituary of a deceased brother.

"His face was unfortunate and did him an injustice. It was pinched and dull. It was the face of a third rate Presbyterian preacher."So much for comforting the family! ..LEW

Logic

"A thing that isn't in the word of God cannot come from it." *C.M. Pullias,..1933*

The Final Say...

From time to time, we will publish tidbits, such as those below that were left over or that we think might be of interest.....Editor

Quick Thinking

A couple of years ago, we were attending a family reunion. We met a nice lady from Russellville and found that she was a long time member of the church. During the course of the conversation, we related the story, told earlier, in this journal about J.D. Tant's trip through NW Alabama in 1921. When we came to the part about Tant referring to the Bear Creek church as being ungodly and living on "mule credit," a look of shock came on her face. She said "my father was attending Bear Creek at that time." We instantly knew we had let our mouth run over so we said, "when you get to heaven you can ask them both about it.".....LEW

Yogi Said It

We get a kick out of some of the Brethren bragging in the brotherhood papers about the huge numbers they have in attendance. They might want to think about the following quote from one of our all time favorite sports figures, Yogi Berra. "Nobody goes there anymore because it's too crowded."...LEW

I Don't Like History

We were speaking to a younger brother the other day about the Journal. He said he wasn't interested. Said he, "I don't like history." We were reminded of the famous quote from someone who said "If we don't know our history, we are bound to repeat it," or something akin to that. We like another variation from Yogi. "If you don't know where you are going, you will wind up somewhere else."...LEW

Speaking of Modesty

Reading Uncle Isaac's comments about immodest dress reminded us of the following: J.D. Tant was in a gospel meeting in one of the "big city" churches in one of the warmest Summers on record. In those days of no air conditioning, Tant would remove his coat before beginning his sermon. One of the "good sisters" was offended by this and confronted Tant, telling him "that it was beneath the dignity of a gospel preacher to appear before the congregation in such way." Tant let his eyes travel slowly from her sheer stockings to her frilly dress to her low cut blouse. Then he said, " Why sister I can pull my pants off and have more on than you."...LEW

Telling It Like It Is

We have been somewhat put off by some of our politicians telling us that Islam is a peaceful religion. Sir Winston Churchill wrote the following in 1899. He realized then what we are beginning to find out.....

"How dreadful are the curses which Mohammedanism lays on its votaries! Besides the fanatical frenzy, which is as dangerous in a man as hydrophobia in a dog, there is this fearful fatalistic apathy. The effects are apparent in many countries. Improvident habits, slovenly systems of agriculture, sluggish methods of commerce, and insecurity of property exist wherever the followers of the Prophet rule or live. A degraded sensualism deprives this life of its grace and refinement; the next of its dignity and sanctity. The fact that in Mohammedan law every woman must belong to some man as his absolute property, either as a child, a wife, or a concubine, must delay the final extinction of slavery until the faith of Islam has ceased to be a great power among men. Individual Moslems may show splendid qualities - but the influence of the religion paralyses the social development of those who follow it. No stronger retrograde force exists in the world. Far from being moribund, Mohammedanism is a militant and proselytizing faith. It has already spread throughout Central Africa, raising fearless warriors at every step; and were it not that Christianity is sheltered in the strong arms of science, the science against which it had vainly struggled, the civilisation of modern Europe might fall, as fell the civilisation of ancient Rome." *W. Churchill 1899*

Lies and More Lies

We like the following admonition from Isaac in one of his earlier writings. "Remember, live your life so that the preacher won't have to tell a bunch of lies at your funeral." *Uncle Isaac*

Old Friends

C.R. Nichol was traveling by train through Little Rock, Arkansas. He decided to stop by and visit his old friend, Ben Bogard. Nichol and Bogard had debated many times. Bogard was thought to be the ablest debater that the Baptist put forward. The two men had much respect for each other. When Nichol arrived at Bogard's office, he asked the receptionist, "Where's Ben?" She replied, "Oh, didn't you know? Brother Bogard passed away." Nichol replied, "Then I know where he is!"

This wraps up the first issue of the journal. We sincerely hope that you enjoyed this issue as much as we enjoyed putting it together.....Tell your friends and don't forget to subscribe.....LEW

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