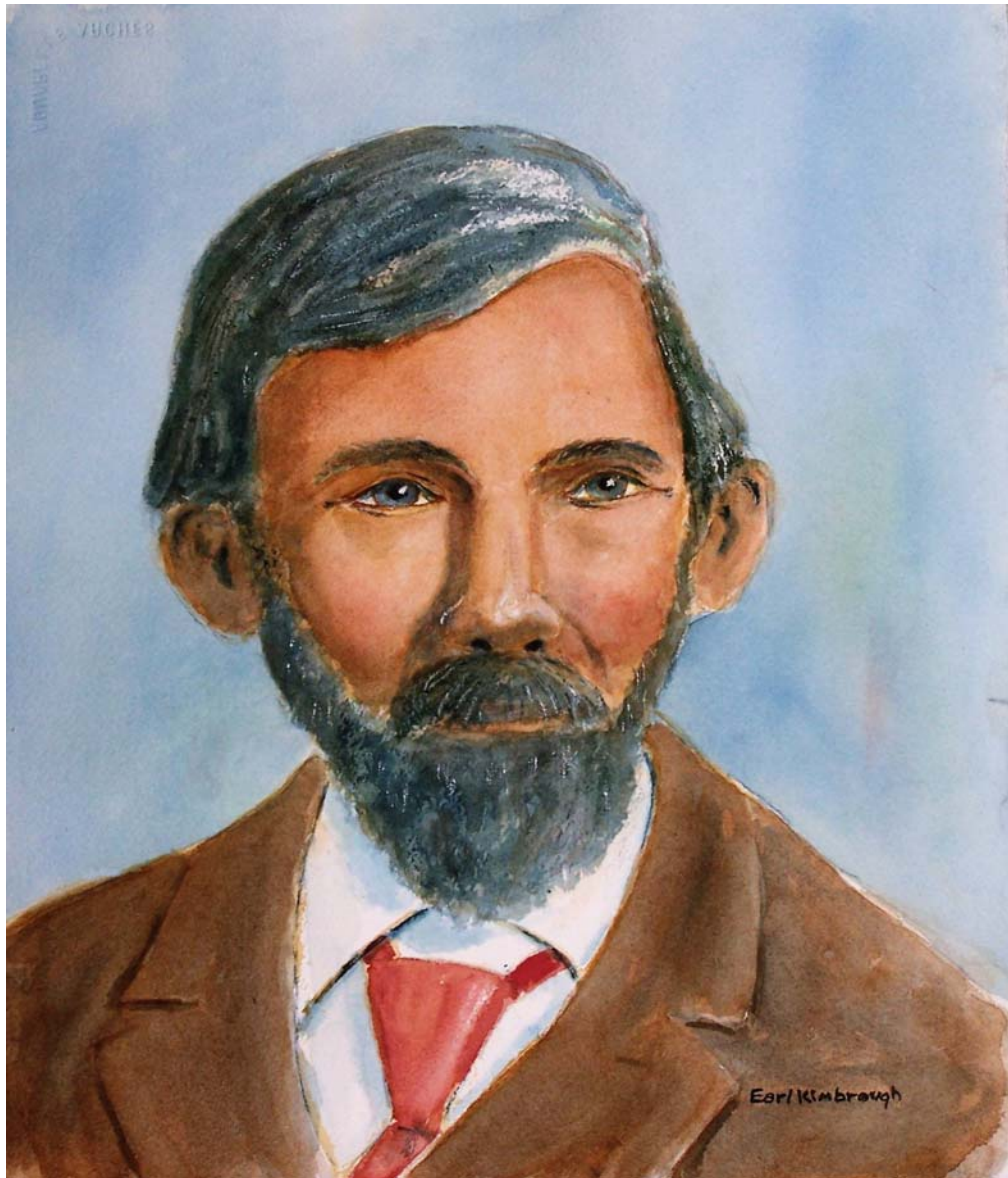


The Alabama Restoration Journal

An Historical Perspective of
Churches of Christ In Alabama



Virgil Elisha Randolph
1847-1906

VOLUME 2

ISSUE 4

December 01, 2007

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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OUR COVER

Earl Kimbrough has done another excellent cover for this issue. This painting of Virgil Randolph is from the only known photograph of Virgil. If you would care to order a print, you may contact us at **(256)668-3135** *LEW*

The Alabama Restoration Journal

An Historical Perspective of churches of Christ in Alabama

"Stand in the ways and see, And ask for the old paths, where the good way is," Jer 6:16



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Volume No. 2 Issue No. 4 Date December 01, 2007

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THE RISE OF A NEW GENERATION

V. Glenn McCoy

In *Judges 2:10-12* we read *"..and there arose a new generation after them who did not know the Lord or the work which he had done for Israel. And the people of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the Lord and served the Baals; and they forsook the Lord."* A new generation did not have the same appreciation in faithfully serving the Lord as did the previous generation.

The rise of a new generation has always presented numerous problems insofar as keeping alive God's true religion in the hearts of men. Even the rising of a new generation of Egyptians caused serious problems to God's people. They fared well until *"there arose up a new king over Egypt which knew not Joseph"* (*Ex. 1:8*). A study of the many times the Israelites fell away will reveal how hard it was for men to be true to God over a long period of time. We find a period where the Israelites were faithful, only to be followed by a period where they rebelled against God. As you read their history you scratch your head and ask "Why couldn't these people learn from their own history?"

When we come to the New Testament we find the faithful church of the Lord of the first century, but shadows of apostasy were already evident. The study of the history of the years following the completion of the New Testament church reveals the apostasy gaining momentum and finally culminating in a complete departure from the church we read about in the New Testament.

Then we read of the Reformation and following that the Restoration Movement. Men such as Barton W. Stone, Thomas Campbell, Alexander Campbell, Walter Scott, "Raccoon" John Smith, and many others called the people back to the Bible. The results were amazing. By 1860 there were at least 192,323 Christians who were part of the Restoration of the New Testament church! Kentucky alone had an estimated 45,000 members!

After seeing the tremendous success of those who called people back to the "ancient order," it is heartbreaking to see how a new generation arose who didn't have the same respect for the authority of the word of God as the generation before them. The American Missionary Society arose to evangelize the world. The advocates of this readily admitted that this was not the New Testament way of evangelizing, but they argued that the New Testament method just wasn't working. They

introduced instrumental music in worship. They couldn't justify the use of the instrument by the authority of the New Testament, so they took the approach that they could do anything that wasn't forbidden in the New Testament. This approach allowed them to introduce just about anything that they wanted to do.

Among the Restorers, the more faithful students of the Bible maintained, and rightly so, that we must have authority from the Scriptures for what we teach and practice in religion. The gulf between those who believed in the Bible as the only authority in religion and those who believed they could do anything not specifically condemned became wider and wider. The U.S. census in 1906 recognized a difference between the church of Christ and the Christian Church, who took the liberal view. But the division had actually existed at least twenty (20) years before that time. At a later point the Christian Church and the Disciples of Christ split over the extremely liberal views of the Disciples. About twenty years ago the Disciples of Christ announced that they were no longer a part of the Restoration. They did not believe that the Restoration of the church of Christ of the New Testament was necessary or even the right thing to do. This is the ultimate result of the approach that the Bible is not our authority in religion.

It is heartbreaking to see a new generation arising today who are advocating some of the same basic things that split the church in the late 1800's. We hear of those of the new generation who advocate the "New Hermeneutics." "Hermeneutic" is the science of interpreting the Bible. What these men are doing is not "New" but the same old approach that some of our brethren took in the 1800's that split the church. Their position is that the New Testament does not provide us with a pattern, but we can do anything that isn't condemned. Doesn't that sound familiar? It should. It is the same philosophy that split the church of the last century. It is also the same old approach that has been used by the denominations for centuries.

Why can't these brethren let the church alone and allow it to remain faithful to the Word and to continue to grow? What is there about some of God's people that they cannot stand peace and harmony? What is there about some gospel preachers who need to be recognized as having discovered some new truth that nobody else before

them has discovered.

God's people can be faithful to him from generation to generation if they will do as God directs, but we must be aware of the ever present danger of repeating history and digressing from the New Testament pattern.

It is God's will today that his word be proclaimed faithfully by faithful preachers and teachers. *"Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you"* (Matt. 28:18-20). Paul told Timothy *"And what you have heard from me before many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also"* (2 Tim. 2:2). Preachers and teachers of today must realize the responsibility that is theirs in faithfully declaring the Word. Paul warned Timothy *"..Some will depart from the faith by giving heed to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons"* (1 Tim. 4:1). We all must earnestly *"contend for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints"* (Jude 3).

Editor's Note: One of the best articles on the subject we have seen in a while...Brother McCoy nails it!...LEW

News & Notes

WELCOME

Kenneth Randolph

We are delighted to announce that brother Kenneth Randolph has agreed to submit an occasional article to the Journal, the first of which is in this issue. Brother Randolph is a distinguished professor of Bible at the V.P. Black School of Biblical Studies at Faulkner University. He is a well known and respected gospel preacher, conducting several gospel meetings each year, all in addition to being a member of one of the noblest of families in the Restoration Movement in Alabama.

Bobby Graham

We also are thrilled to welcome brother Bobby Graham to our pages. Brother Graham has also agreed to submit an article from time to time. He is an excellent writer and has been an avid supporter of the Journal from its beginning. He teaches at Athens Bible School and preaches for the Old Moulton Road church in Decatur, Alabama. In addition he conducts several gospel meetings each year and is well known by brethren throughout the State.

Both these good men are welcome additions to the writers for the journal and we look forward, with anticipation to their future contributions and we are certain our readers will agree, after reading their excellent articles in this issue.....LEW

In This Issue

Brother Wayne Kilpatrick leads this issue with an article on tElisha Randolph. He titled it **Elisha Randolph-Life & Legacy**. *Larry* follows with Elisha's oldest son, **Jeremiah Randolph**. *Brother Kenneth Randolph*, a descendant of Elisha Randolph, graces our pages with an article on another preaching son of Elisha, **Lorenzo Dow Randolph**. The **Pioneer Letters** column carries a letter from *Matt Hackworth*, a young preaching disciple of Elisha, on the work in Morgan County. *Brother Earl Kimbrough* has a touching piece about the struggles of Jeremiah Randolph in Walker County which he named **All Kinds of Evil Against You Falsely**. *Brother Earl* follows with this issue's **Women of The Restoration** column with an article about Martha McCaleb Randolph, wife of Virgil Randolph. *Larry* pays tribute to one of our biggest supporters and friend, **Horace Randolph**. From the *Gospel Advocate* of 2/26/1931, the venerable *H. Leo Boles* tells the story of one of God's heroes, **Virgil Randolph**. The **Where The Saints Met** column is a wonderful reminiscence of the Haleyville church of days gone by. It is followed by a copy of the children's flash cards which many of us remember so fondly from the Bible classes of our childhood. Thanks *Brother Earl* for the memories. Ah, such sweet memories...*Uncle Isaac* has a special interview with someone we all will recognize, firing his usual cannon shots. *Brother Bobby Graham* makes his first contribution to the Journal with a great article on another close associate of the Randolph family of preachers, **Nichodemus Hackworth**. A re-print of an article by *brother Willard Collins* in a 1955 issue of the *GA*. Tells us about a wonderful family from Walker County, **The Jabe D. Evans Family**. *Earl Kimbrough* has the third and final chapter in his series on a great pioneer preacher titled **The Alabama Trials of James A. Butler**. *Larry* has an article that he has titled **Holy Union: Troublesome Times At Berea**. This concerns a difference between the leadership at Berea and the Randolph family over Union Baptist church. It is followed by a companion piece call **Shakin 'em In**. *Earl* has an article on **Robert Logan**, one of our favorites. He was the great grandfather of our own Hilda and Lavaga Logan. Our **Gathering Home** column for this issue deals with three of the noble families that served the cause in days gone by, **Taylor, Smith & DeVaney**. A poignant yet humorous piece by *brother Earl* about an abandoned baby titled **Dear Ma an Pa An Brothers**, will touch your heart. Our final article is *brother Scott Harp's* offering about one of the great preachers, **G.C. Brewer**. *Larry* has the final say...Hope you enjoy.....LEW

Our Website

<http://alabamarestorationjournal.com>

ELISHA RANDOLPH: Life And Legacy

C. Wayne Kilpatrick

In a desolate valley ravaged by time and man, at the foot of Randolph Mountain in Fayette County, Alabama, lie the remains of one of the unsung heroes of our Restoration Movement – Elisha Randolph. He was one of the earliest preachers of New Testament principles in Alabama. His legacy lives on in a swath of counties, from Morgan and Blount to Marion and Fayette. Many of the original congregations organized by him no longer exist, but his work and memory live on in the churches established by those early converts. Very little has been written of this godly man's work, but he is still remembered in name in Northwest Alabama.

Elisha Randolph was born in North Carolina in 1785. He moved from the Carolinas through East Tennessee and on to Warren County in the mountain district of Middle Tennessee. He is listed, along with John and Robert Randolph, as living in Warren County in 1808. John and Robert were probably Elisha's brothers. This fact can be established by a statement made by Carroll Kendrick to Jeremiah Randolph (Elisha's son). Kendrick mentions Robert as being Jeremiah's uncle (*G.A.* Sept. 2, 1891, p. 547). Lorenzo Dow Randolph (also Elisha's son) mentions going to Morgan County from Blount County on business for his father Elisha. On the morning of his return, one of his uncles gave him a packet to take to Elisha. This suggests more than one uncle in Morgan County (*G.A.* June 3, 1891, p. 339). These three men – Elisha, John and Robert – were all listed near the same community in Warren County (*Tax List -1808-1810*, Warren County, Tennessee). They lived on Hickory Creek, where a revival started in 1808 resulting in the establishing of the Old Philadelphia church of Christ. The Randolphs must have been a part of this revival or at least influenced by it, since Elisha was already preaching when he came to Morgan County and Robert was listed as a minister in November, 1827 by James E. Matthews in the *Christian Messenger* (*C.M.* Nov, 1827, p.21).

The religious revival at Old Philadelphia taught the people to take the "Bible alone" as their only religious guide, and that is what Elisha was preaching when he came to Morgan County, Alabama in the early 1820's (*G.A.* June 3, 1891, p. 339). Elisha and Robert had not learned their teachings from Barton W. Stone, nor Alexander Campbell. Lorenzo Dow Randolph wrote:

As early as 1820 they were contending for the "Bible alone" and best as they knew at the time, the divisive influence of creeds were hardly known. The brethren were not, at the time, called "Campbellites", but were called "Newlights" or "Schismatic" (*G.A.* 1891, p.339).

According to Dow's own words these early

preachers were independent restorers, because they knew only the "Bible alone". They learned of Campbell's and Stone's work through interaction with other preachers, who passed through their region of the state, especially Morgan County, Alabama. One such exposure to Barton W. Stone's movement may have come from James Evans Matthews, who grew up in a family which was very active in the Restoration Movement. Matthews moved to the Trinity Hills area of Morgan County, Alabama in 1818 (Terry Cowan and Harry Shetrone, *A Matthews History*, p. 260). Matthews moved on to Lauderdale County, Alabama before July, 1824, according to an unclaimed letter at the Somerville Post Office in Morgan County. By law, the unclaimed letter's owner's names had to be published in a local paper. *The Alabamian* of Huntsville printed the list July 15, 1824, thus indicating that Matthews had probably already moved. This brief interaction between the Randolphs and Matthews established a life-long friendship. Matthews kept returning to Morgan and Blount counties to work in camp meetings with Elisha and his sons.

Elisha's work first began to take root in the Gandy's Cove area of Morgan County, Alabama. It began to spread to other communities in that county and then on to surrounding counties. In the fall of 1825 a camp meeting was held in Morgan County, according to Dow's sketch in the *Gospel Advocate*. In 1827, James E. Matthews wrote of one such meeting, "In Morgan County we experienced great opposition, yet six or seven were added to the church" (*C.M.* Nov. 1827, p.17).

This opposition that Matthews spoke of was still raging bitterly in 1830. Elisha wrote Stone:

The prospects of religion are brightening a little among us. Four were baptized last evening, and some more are expected today. We have great opposition by the reputed orthodox, but we think their opposition will be of little avail, for the truth will prevail (*C.M.* Dec., 1830, p.286).

This opposition did not stop Elisha and his co-laborers from working in this region. Other camp meetings were held in Morgan County. Matthews mentions one in the first week in October, 1830 in which several were baptized. He remarked again about the opposition in Morgan County: "We have experienced great opposition at that place, but I think that the truth gained ground at our last meeting" (*C.M.* Dec., 1830, p.285). Much of this opposition to Elisha's work was because he had influenced Nick Hackworth, who preached among the Baptists of Morgan County. The Baptists fought back with resolutions against "Campbellites" and "preaching from his Testament" (Holcombe, p. 172). Nick

Hackworth was of little use to the Baptists, “as he went off with the Campbellites” (Holcombe, p.179). He aligned himself with Elisha and Jeremiah Randolph in their work in Morgan and Blount counties.

Other meetings were arranged by Elisha and his son Jeremiah. Carroll Kendrick recalled one meeting in 1838. He wrote:

Well do I remember that Blount County camp meeting.... As I remember it, father Williams (James A. Williams) and wife raised thirteen children – two of them orphans. They were all married, and they, and their husbands and wives, and children that were old enough – were all Christians, and all on the camp-ground, perhaps forty or fifty. I remember when the last granddaughter old enough, came forward to confess the Savior, how the grandfather rejoiced, how, after dismissal, he went round the camps exhorting to faithfulness, how glad songs, holy prayers and exhortations enlivened the camps, and sweetened the toils of the meeting and the suggestion of father Williams that his family would never be together again on earth.

Kendrick also mentioned James R. Collinsworth being baptized during this meeting (*G.A.* Sept. 2, 1891, p.547). Collinsworth became a powerful gospel preacher, then fell away and eventually was ordained as a Methodist minister. It is possible that Matt Hackworth was baptized by Kendrick during this meeting. Hackworth wrote of his being baptized during the period within 1838-1839 (*The Christian Preacher*, May, 1839, p. 119). This meeting was probably the greatest meeting in this region.

Sometime after 1833, Elisha moved to Blount County, since Campbell had him listed in Morgan County (Campbell’s *Subscription List-1833-1837*). While in Morgan County, Elisha had established congregations near “Old Blount” and Hanceville in the early 1820’s. He decided to work from a location in Blount County. He must have moved either at the beginning of 1833 or by mid-summer. Alexander Campbell’s subscription list (1833-1837) shows Elisha at the beginning of his entry as living near Somerville in Morgan County in 1833.

Elisha didn’t spend a long time in Blount County because he is listed by Barton Stone as living in Walker County, Alabama (*C.M.* April, 1834, p.128). Dow said that he moved to the Sipsey Fork of the Warrior River, about 16 miles east of Jasper. He established churches in Walker County and worked with them for a few years before moving to Fayette County due to unhealthy conditions in Walker County in 1841. We know that Elisha continued to establish churches in Fayette and Marion Counties. We do not have many specifics on his work in the latter counties; however, his influence continued for the remainder of his life and even beyond in this area of Alabama.

His labors came to an end on September 23, 1856. He was buried near the mountain that bears his name. His obituary appeared in the March issue of *Gospel Advocate* in 1857 as follows:

Mill Port, Fayette County, Alabama

Oct. 8, 1856

Elder C. Kendrick: - Dear Brother,- My father, Elder Elisha Randolph, fell asleep in the lord on the 23d.ult. He lived and died a Christian.

From my first recollection of him to the day of his death, his life was exemplary. It was his soul's delight to live out the holy injunctions o the Lord. As a father, a companion, a citizen, a disciple, an elder of the church and a minister of the gospel he lived for the Lord. He was 71 years old. No more of earth, he is at rest.

In the Lord

L. D. Randolph (*G.A.* March, 1857, p. 64)

Carroll Kendrick wrote the following about Elisha Randolph:

... it will remind many, as it does me, of scenes in the past full of interest, and of our common mortality. May it lift our expectations and affections to the better land!

Father Randolph was one of the most lovely (sic) men I ever knew. His very memory mellows my feelings, and makes me more religious (*G.A.* March, 1857, p 64).

May his name and legacy last until time is no more.

Why Not?

Some time ago, the dean of the University of Alabama told a large gathering that, “The churches cannot preach the same gospel to its children now that they did 40 years ago and expect the same kind of children.”..... *Herschel Patton*

Rock Creek Philosophy

As I see it, one reason for fine buildings is that they can be seen with the eye, while true spirituality is of the heart and can be seen only by the Lord....*F.B. Srygley*

JEREMIAH RANDOLPH

Larry Whitehead

Jeremiah Randolph was the oldest son of Elisha and Mary Evans Randolph. He was born in Roane County, Tennessee in 1808. Jeremiah's father, Elisha, began to preach and would later become an associate of Barton W. Stone of neighboring Kentucky. Over the next several years, Elisha made several moves until he settled in Morgan County, Alabama near Gandy's Cove and Somerville. He was an agent for Stone's paper, *The Christian Messenger*. Elisha, John Mulkey, James E. Matthews, Robert Randolph and possibly Ephraim Moore, held a series of camp meetings in the Morgan and Blount (now Cullman) County areas and were successful in establishing a few small congregations in about 1825.

Young Jeremiah became acquainted with some of the great preachers in the church of this time period. Among these and in addition to those named, would be Nicodemus Hackworth and his son Matt as well as the lamented Tolbert Fanning. It is not known when Jeremiah preached his first sermon, but it is likely that it was in Morgan County. The old Cedar Plains church was established in the early 1830s near Falkville and over the next 30 or 40 years he would conduct several gospel meetings for these brethren. It must have been evident early on that Jeremiah was an exceptional speaker with the power to move audiences. He became one of the most popular preachers in Northwest Alabama over the next half century. Ironically, he did not consider himself to be a gospel preacher, yet he was one of the most successful of his day. One of his closest friends was John A. McCaleb from the Morgan County days. McCaleb was an excellent preacher in his own right and the two held numerous meetings together. On one such occasion, in Aberdeen, Mississippi in 1867 they baptized 57 souls in a one week meeting. He would also work with his younger brother, Lorenzo Dow Randolph and at one such meeting at Berea in 1867 it was reported that 46 responded to the invitation under his preaching. He was also close to John Taylor and Green Haley, two pioneer preachers in Northwest Alabama.

H. Leo Boles would write of him many years after his death; "He married Miss Courtney Billingsley, November 1, 1829, and to this union nine children were born—six boys and three girls. He first settled in Walker County, Ala., and later moved to Fayette County. He was a lifelong friend of John Taylor and Carroll Kendrick, and did much preaching in his early days with Brother Taylor. He preached all over North Alabama and much in West Tennessee. For the first four years of his life as a preacher he traveled much. He rode horseback and sometimes went on foot long distances to preach the gospel. He had to hunt for places to preach, as prejudice was so strong against him because of his opposition to the denominations.

He

preached to large congregations and to small ones. In some places he would find the people anxious to hear the truth, and large audiences would assemble and listen attentively to him for two hours; at other places he could get only a family, or one or two families, together. It mattered not to him whether he had a large or small audience. He preached the truth with a burning zeal and much enthusiasm to all who would hear him. He preached with no earthly promise of reward and with very little encouragement from earthly sources; yet he was happy in those years of toil. However, he considered this the most useful period of his life, as he considered these years of suffering and sacrifice as best qualifying him for other duties." *Biographical Sketches of Gospel Preachers-1932*

Soon after the move about 1831 to Walker County, he established a congregation called Lost Creek near present day Jasper. This became his "home" congregation for the next several years. He would start several other congregations in the county over the next few years. He continued to preach in camp meetings and for churches in the areas around Walker County when called upon.

Once again, H. Leo Boles; "Many came into the church and started out for usefulness in the Christian life under his preaching. He formed acquaintances with many communities and established churches all over North Alabama. He began preaching in Walker County and lived there for a few years and then moved to Lamar County. He next moved to Fayette County, and he lived in this county thirteen years. He preached and established congregations in Marion, Walker, Winston, Jefferson, Blount, and Fayette Counties. He also did some preaching in Northern and Eastern Mississippi. He held a camp meeting in Blount (Cullman) County, Ala., in 1839, and another camp meeting in the same county in 1855." *Biographical Sketches of Gospel Preachers-1932* This last camp meeting was held near present day Garden City, a few miles south of Hanceville.

Jeremiah and Green Haley worked together in two or three gospel meetings at the Cedar Plains church in Morgan County. He also worked with Jesse Turner Wood in a few meetings as late as the 1880s. His meetings were almost always successful with many responses. Most of his preaching life was spent as a traveling evangelist as opposed to located work, with a few exceptions.

The last years of his life were spent in the home of his son, Virgil in the New River community in Fayette County. He died quietly on 4/24/1894. His funeral was conducted by James Wade and James S. Wood, both of whom were friends of many years. He is buried in the cemetery at New River church of Christ.

LORENZO DOW RANDOLPH
Kenneth Randolph

Lorenzo Dow Randolph was the son of Elisha Randolph who was one of the first restoration preachers in Alabama. Lorenzo Dow was born in Warren County, Tennessee in 1816 and was nine years old when Elisha and his family moved to Morgan County, Alabama, in the Falkville area by 1823 (A son of Elisha born in 1823 wrote that he had lived in Alabama all his life). The states of Alabama and Mississippi were together known as Mississippi Territory since 1804 and were divided in 1817, with the eastern region known as Alabama Territory. In 1819 the United States Congress passed a bill granting Alabama statehood with William Wyatt Bibb as governor. The capitol was Cahaba in Dallas county until 1826, when it was moved to Tuscaloosa where it remained until 1846, when it was moved to Montgomery. Therefore, only four years after Alabama became a state, Elisha had brought his family into Morgan County. Between 1823 and 1832, Elisha also lived for a period of time in Blount County, and was among the first of those who established congregations in Morgan and Blount counties. In 1832 Elisha moved to Walker County and in 1841, to Fayette County where he remained until his death, September 23, 1856.

When Lorenzo Dow was about 14 or 15 years old, his father sent him to Morgan County on business and when he started home, one of his uncles gave him a bundle of pamphlets for his father. On arriving home, his father, Elisha, upon examining the papers, said to his wife, "Polly, here are the writings of the great Campbell." Lorenzo Dow said that was the first time he had heard of Alexander Campbell, which would strongly suggest that the original influences upon Elisha to plead for a restoration of the New Testament order came from the Stone movement or perhaps influences independent of both Campbell and Stone.

Lorenzo Dow had an older brother, Jeremiah, (born in 1808) and sister, Anne Mariah (born in 1813). Jeremiah was a faithful preacher throughout much of north Alabama, Tennessee and Mississippi and particularly in the Walker, Fayette and Lamar counties area. He had three sons who preached, one of whom was Virgil, who lived at New River in Fayette County and did much to strengthen the church in that area.

Anne Mariah married Jephtha Billingsley of a Billingsley family that had lived in Warren County, Tennessee, where Elisha's family lived, and had migrated to Alabama in 1815. Anne Mariah and Jephtha married in Blount County, Alabama in 1831. In the 1850 Census, Jephtha was 41 and Anne Mariah was 36 and they had 8 children ranging in age from 19 to 3 years old. They later had two more. Their first 5 sons enlisted in the Confederate Army on the same day, April 28, 1862, in Fayette County. One of the sons was wounded and took

the Oath of Amnesty, one was hospitalized in Richmond, Virginia, one was captured and died as a prisoner of war at Camp Douglas, Illinois, and one lost a leg. Two of the sons became preachers including the one who lost a leg in the war.

Lorenzo Dow also had two younger brothers, Simeon (born about 1823), Benjamin Evans (born 1825) and a younger sister, Orpha T.C. (birth date unknown). Lorenzo Dow was married in 1841, probably in Walker County, to Eliza Jan Stokes, and they had 8 children. They made the move into Fayette County about the time that Elisha did and, when Lamar County was formed out of portions of Fayette, Marion and Pickens counties, they were living in Lamar County. (Lamar County was established as Jones County in 1867, re-established in 1868 as Sanford County, and the name was changed to Lamar in 1877). He remained in Lamar County until the early 1890's, at which time he and Eliza Jane moved to Fulton County, Arkansas, where a son, Barclay lived, and Eliza Jane died there in 1894. Dow later moved to Alvord, Texas, where he lived with his grandsons until his death in 1901. Lorenzo Dow preached about 50 years in north Alabama and Mississippi. He and his brother Jeremiah were co-laborers with other noble preachers in establishing the church throughout that region. In writing about John Taylor, a close friend and co-laborer of the Randolphs, F. D. Srygley, in Larimore and His Boys, said:

The moral courage and self-sacrificing zeal and devotion to convictions exhibited by the grand old man and his few co-laborers in North Alabama in the early days of the reformation, beggars all powers of description. Shoulder-to-shoulder with him in those days which tried men's souls, stood John McCaleb, of Fayette County, Jerry Randolph and his brother Dow, Mat Hackworth and a few others. These were all men of courage and convictions, and each the equal of John Taylor in every respect.

The first account of Dow's preaching is 1846, when Tolbert Fanning wrote that "Brother L. D. Randolph, of Alabama, says he 'had but one talent but gained two others in a trip of twelve days preaching.' This is doing well. ••." In 1860, Matt Hackworth spoke of he and L. D. Randolph holding a meeting four miles below Columbus, Mississippi where they preached day and night in a Pine brush arbor and had an ingathering of fourteen noble souls. In 1867, writing from Millport in Lamar County, Dow said "I have calls continually to destitute places, but owing to my extreme poverty, I am compelled to work on the farm. An incalculable amount of good could be done in this county had we time to devote to preaching. I am the only public man (that is, preaching) laboring for the Bible alone, in 35 miles of this point." Soon after this, he was called and employed to travel and preach by the brethren

of Antioch, Luxapalila, Berea and George Creek churches, within their bounds, which resulted in the addition of 82 to the Lord within a year. His pay was \$300 a year, a mite under a dollar a day. In 1870 Dow said there were 3 churches in the county numbering about 150 members.

We must remember the churches then did not have the "located preacher" practice of our day, but a preacher would usually labor in a wide vicinity and strive to build up all the churches within that area. He also would travel to other places, such as into Mississippi, and hold meetings. Meanwhile, to make a living, he would have to farm or work in some other enterprise. In addition to farming, Dow also taught school at Bethel, near Vernon and at Hickory Grove, near Millport. The strong churches and faithful Christians of that part of north Alabama owe a great debt of gratitude for the self-sacrificing preachers and their families.

Lorenzo Dow and Eliza Jane have numerous descendants in the Lamar County area who yet remain faithful to the Cause for which he labored. And scattered through the land are faithful Christians, elders, deacons, and preachers, who trace their lineage back to them.

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Pioneer Letters

Editors Note: *The letter that follows was written by Matt Hackworth who would later become one of the great preachers in the early days of the cause in Alabama. His father, Nick Hackworth, was one of the leading preachers in the Baptist church until he learned the truth and obeyed the gospel, likely under the preaching of Elisha Randolph or one of his associates. The Hackworths were members of the Cedar Plains church near Falkville. The letter was published in the "Christian Preacher" edited by D.S. Burnet.....LEW*

STATE OF ALABAMA, Morgan county, April 22, 1839.
Dearly beloved brothers Johnson and Burnett, grace, mercy and peace, be multiplied you.

Brother Burnet: I received your prospectus, by which I learned you were desirous that I should get subscribers for the Preacher, which I have done, or rather tried to do, I have only succeeded in getting one, and that is brother William Stringer. He will be a very prompt paying one too; and you are to direct his Nos. to *Somersville Post Office, Morgan County*. You are not to be assured that I do not think of paying for my Nos., far be it from me—we blush to look at your *receipts*. But I would that you should know that I have only received four or five of the Nos. of Vol. 3. I cannot tell whether it is four or five, they being loaned out; and then in a very irregular manner, though I hope, since you have received your new and beautiful type (for it is beautiful print,) your issue will be more regular and prompt; and we hope to be as prompt in remunerating your labors. But because of the present derangement of our currency, we just at this time cannot send you that, that is justly yours; but, we beg you, brother Burnet, to have patience with us, and we will try and do our duty.

I believe I have not, at any time, given you an account of our situation and numbers; though there are few of us, I know that it is pleasing to children of the same parent, to hear from each other. There are two little congregations of us in this county, numbering in all, between 40 and 50 members, 25 of which number have been immersed within the two last years; 22 of them by brother C. Kendrick, by whom I was immersed; and three of them by myself. We have two elders and two deacons. Brothers J. Medford and R. Cutch, are our elders; Brothers P. Cutch and D.C. Conway, are our deacons. There are also three of us speakers: brother J. Collinsworth, my father, and myself. All the brethren appear, with some few exceptions, to be alive to the cause. We meet two Sundays of every month at each congregation. May the good Lord assist us to faithfully discharge our duty.

Yours truly,
JAMES M. HACKWORTH

“ALL KINDS OF EVIL AGAINST YOU FALSELY”

Earl Kimbrough

Those unfamiliar with the work of the pioneer gospel preachers of Alabama during nineteenth century do not realize the depth of the bitterness that was felt and expressed by enemies of the truth against any man who dared to say that sinners must be baptized to be saved. Yet, none could say it more plainly than Jesus did in Mark 16:16. Some people in those days were of a mind to create and circulate wild tales designed to prejudice people against those preachers whom they delighted to call “Campbellites.”

Asa Plyler told about one of the most vicious tales ever concocted against an Alabama preacher who simply preached the gospel as Peter did on Pentecost. He said it was in the summer of 1925, when he and John T. Lewis took dinner with Jack Townley, then an old man living in Walker County. Townley, a coal mine operator for whom the town of Townley was named, told them the story, which Plyler related as an example of the kind of falsehoods gospel preachers had to contend with in



Asa Plyler pioneer times. Those men knew by experience what Jesus meant when he said his disciples would be persecuted and that the persecutors would falsely “say all kinds of evil against” them because they taught his word. (Matt. 5:11.)

As Plyler remembered it, Townley said: “One day Jeremiah Randolph was having some land cleared and that brother Randolph had a little boy that was too small to help in that work, but like all boys, he wanted to be with the grownups and the men. The little fellow slipped away from his mother at the house and came down to the woods where they were cutting trees. The workmen knew nothing of his presence, and as the tree they were cutting fell, a limb struck the boy and he was killed. Brother Randolph took the child up in his arms and did all that he could to bring him back to life. He took him down to the creek, which was near by, and bathed his face in hope that he might recover, but all to no avail.”

Townley further told Plyler and Lewis that one day sometime after that tragic event he was standing with a group of men on the street of a small town in that vicinity. He was listening as the men were talking about religion, and the Campbellites were not being ignored. One man said: “Oh yes, they think just so a man is baptized he is safe for heaven; if he is not he is sure for hell.” Then the man added: “Old Jerry Randolph baptized his little boy after he was dead.”

Jeremiah Randolph was one of the earliest gospel

preachers who labored for the cause of Christ in Fayette, Marion, and Walker Counties. When the falsehood about Randolph was introduced, Townley, who was then a robust young man, said at that point he stepped into the conversation and asked how the man had heard this tale. The man said a certain preacher told it as the truth and he



John T. Lewis gave the preacher’s name. Townley knew the preacher and knew where he lived. He told the man to “stay right here till he could locate the preacher and settle the matter.” When he returned shortly with the preacher in tow, he said: “Now what was it that you heard this preacher say about Jerry Randolph baptizing his little boy after he was dead?” The man stuck to his tale, saying: “Yes I heard him say that very thing.” The preacher then admitted to having told such a tale, but claimed he was at a loss as to how he got the information.

Townley said: “The preacher was promptly told that he would straighten up that lie or else take a beating for not doing it.” Plyler did not identify the man who threatened to clean the preacher’s plow if he did not straighten up his false tale about Jerry Randolph. It was very likely Townley himself, given his respect for Randolph and his interest in correcting at once the falsity of the preacher’s tale. It happened that Townley himself was present at the tree cutting when Randolph’s son was killed. “He said he was the second person to reach the little boy, and that they bathed his face trying to bring him back to life.” (Adapted from, Asa Plyler, *Historical Sketches of the Churches of Christ in Alabama: Walker County*, 6-8.)

F. B. Srygley said: “There is no way to stop error except by showing that it is error.” (*Gospel Advocate*, Aug. 27, 1936.) That is no doubt true, but sometimes, as Jack Townley believed, it is necessary to first get the false teacher’s attention. The child in the story, named Walter Jeremiah after his father, is buried somewhere in Walker County in a little grave, the site of which is now unknown and forgotten.

Rock Creek Philosophy

If God’s people would think less about human authority in the church and more about the authority of Christ, the head, it would be better for all concerned.

MARTHA McCALEB RANDOLPH

Earl Kimbrough

Reading the "At Rest" column in the *Gospel Advocate* from about the 1920s to the early 1940s makes us aware of how close the lives of some of us are to the pioneers of the Restoration Movement in Alabama, and elsewhere. Several of the pioneer preachers who were active in the Lord's work in Alabama, passed away during this time, including Virgil Randolph, J. D. Tant, and F. B. Srygley.

A 1934 "At Rest" column carried a brief notice by Gus Nichols of the death of Martha Randolph, the wife of Virgil Randolph. Virgil Randolph was one of the five Randolphs who were pioneer gospel preachers in Fayette County Alabama, beginning in the early 1830s. His grandfather, Elisha Randolph, was one of the first men to bring the ancient gospel into north Alabama. Elisha Randolph's work at first centered in the region about Somerville in Morgan County as early as 1825, where he held camp meetings and established three small churches. He moved to Fayette County in about 1831.

Elisha Randolph had three sons who also became gospel preachers: Jeremiah, Lorenzo Dow, and Simeon. Virgil was a son of Jeremiah. These men, especially Virgil's father, were coworkers with John Taylor who first preached the gospel plan of salvation in Fayette County and established the Berea church shortly before the Randolphs migrated to that region. Martha Randolph was a granddaughter of Hugh White McCaleb and a niece of Jennie McCaleb Logan, the wife of Robert Logan, the progenitor of another pioneer Christian family in Northwest Alabama.

Nichols wrote: "Martha Randolph, widow of Virgil Randolph ... was born October 29, 1846, and passed away from earth and love ones December 15 [1934], being eighty-seven years of age. She was baptized in early life by her father-in-law, Jeremiah Randolph, and lived a beautiful life to the end. She leaves one brother (A. J. McCaleb), two sisters (Margrete Hollingsworth and Bashie McCaleb), four children, twenty four grandchildren, and twenty-six great-grandchildren to mourn her departure. She was buried at New River Church. Chester Estes, Huston Haney, and the writer spoke words of comfort to the relatives and friends." (*Gospel Advocate*, Jan. 4, 1934.)

I was eight years old when Martha McCaleb Randolph died. Of course, three more generations have come after me, which farther separates some from the pioneers, but the lives of the older of us who are yet living today (2007) overlap those of many of the Alabama pioneers in the faith.

HORACE CLIFTON RANDOLPH

Larry Whitehead

Horace Randolph was a Christian. That is the highest compliment that can be paid to a mortal. He was also a



descendant of Elisha Randolph, through his son Jeremiah and his son Virgil. He was a descendant of Hugh White McCaleb, one of the charter members of Berea Church of Christ in Fayette County. His great grand- mother's obituary is in the column to the left of this one. Horace was a cousin of your editor,

as is his widow, Martha. He loved genealogy and spent countless hours researching the Randolph and McCaleb family lines. This allowed him to be a great source of information for those of us who write for the *Journal* as well as genealogists all around the country.

The Randolph family of preachers and ordinary Christians were some of the earliest pioneers to bring the old Jerusalem gospel to Alabama. Two of Elisha's sons, Jeremiah and Lorenzo Dow, working with such men as John Taylor and John A. McCaleb, probably as a group, baptized more penitent believers and started more congregations of the Lord's church than any other group in this state's history.

Horace was well aware of the grand legacy of this noble family of Christians and was extremely proud of his heritage. He was looking forward to this issue of the *Journal* featuring his family. The last conversation I had with him was just a few days before his untimely death after I had sent him a copy of the cover painting Earl had done of his great grandfather, Virgil. He was well pleased with brother Earl's handiwork.

Horace supplied us with letters and other documents that he had accumulated over many years, from family members and others, that have been of great help in our research of this wonderful family and their contribution to the cause of Christ. He was a big supporter of the *Journal* and was one of our earliest subscribers and encouraged others to subscribe.

Death came unexpectedly in the form of a massive heart attack on the morning of October 07, 2006. A testament of the high esteem with which he was held in the community was shown at his funeral which was held at White's Chapel church of Christ. Many friends waited for over an hour to get into the building to pay their respects and still many others could not get in because of the overflow crowd that came to say goodbye.

To Martha, their daughters, Pam and Melissa and their families, the staff of the *Journal* extends our deepest sympathies and condolences. Horace was buried in the cemetery at Berea.

VIRGIL E. RANDOLPH

H. Leo Boles

The Gospel Advocate, February 26, 1931

In Northern Alabama the cause of Christ was planted and cultivated by such men as Tolbert Fanning, John Taylor, and Jeremiah Randolph. These pioneers labored much in preaching the gospel and refuting denominational error which had taken deep root in the minds and lives of the citizenry of that country. The progress was necessarily slow for several years. Jeremiah Randolph reared a large family, and among his sons do we find the subject of this sketch. Virgil E. Randolph was born on July 12, 1847, in Lamar County, Alabama. He was taught the way of life by his father and became a Christian in 1854 (?) at the age of seventeen. He was baptized by his father. His mother was Mary Courtney Billingsley.

Virgil E. Randolph had no advantage of an education. He was a lover of books and read all that he could get, but there were few books in that country at that time. There were no books published by the disciples of Christ in that section of the State. The other books were very expensive and worth but little to one who had determined to follow the New Testament as his guide in his religious life. Necessarily young Randolph was forced to read the Bible, and especially the New Testament, for all his information and instruction in the way of life. Again, his father was not an educated man and did not see the advantages of encouraging his children to get an education. There were but few schools, very few books, and no vision of the power and influence that an education would give; consequently young Randolph grew up amidst poverty and with but little advantage for the training of a gospel preacher. The distressing period of the Civil War also had its influence on the life of young Randolph. The distressful condition of affairs in the South forced the Randolph family, already in meager circumstances, into the direst poverty.

In 1869, Virgil E. Randolph was married to Martha (Caroline) McCaleb, the daughter of Andrew McCaleb. Nine children were born to this union, and all lived to be grown, except one, which died in infancy. (Andrew McCaleb's wife was Leah McCollum. Young Randolph, handicapped with poverty, with no education, and with a rapidly growing and increasing family, had a hard struggle to provide the necessary things of life for his family. However, he felt the need of preaching the gospel to his neighbors. The example of his father impressed him deeply and encouraged him to make the sacrifice and preach as he had opportunity. There were very few churches at that time, but there were a number of scattered disciples in almost every district, and these were not meeting regularly for worship.

Brother Randolph saw the condition and began with his father to encourage the scattered disciples to meet on the first day of the week to break bread. Another drawback was the lack of church houses. There were no church houses accessible to the disciples, and the few brethren in the community were too poor to build church houses. The denominations were so bitterly opposed to the disciples that they would not let them use their church houses. There were very few schoolhouses in which they could meet, and oftentimes those who controlled the schoolhouses were so prejudiced that the disciples were refused the use of them. Therefore, they were forced to meet in their own houses for worship. The great work of Virgil Randolph was to organize scattered disciples into small congregation. for worship in their own houses and to instruct them in the way of the Lord more perfectly. It seems that God has always raised up a man to do the work most needed at the time. Virgil Randolph was needed, and he wrought nobly for the Lord. The disciples were not taught to contribute of their means for the support of the gospel. Brother Randolph knew that the members of the church had but little to give, and he himself did not expect them to give him anything for his work among them. He would work on his little farm and make a crop, and then in the summer and fall would go into the community and build an arbor and hold a meeting. Many times he would spend two weeks in a meeting and never receive anything for his service. He was known to give the entire summer to this kind of work and receive no more than fifty cents for his services among the people. He did not complain, for he expected nothing. He was happy in the work because he was sacrificing for the Lord. He preached in Fayette and Lamar counties in Alabama. Oftentimes he would go into adjoining counties when the door of opportunity was open to him. After he had developed into a strong preacher, he was called into Mississippi, and he made a number of trips to that state and established several congregations.

Oftentimes he had no way of conveyance to his appointments except to walk, He walked many hundreds of miles to preach the gospel. He did not wait for an invitation from a community, but when he saw the need of that community and had the time, he would go and build an arbor and begin preaching. The people learned of his meeting and began to attend. The news of his meeting would spread and his audiences always increased. People would attend his meeting by walking, riding an oxcart, and on horseback. Virgil Randolph baptized many people, but he was best suited to instruct the members of the church in the way of righteousness. Brother Randolph was a splendid singer. He had a melodious voice, and he

studied the rudiments of music, so that he was a good teacher of song in the church. He sang only such songs as conveyed Scriptural sentiment and gospel truths. He preached the gospel in song. Many who were not so interested in his preaching were interested in hearing him sing. People were known to sit and weep while listening to him sing the triumphs of the Christian faith and wonderful love of Jesus for fallen man. Many times when he would go to town on business, the people would gather around him and ask him to sing "one of the songs of Zion". After singing to them a while, he would then preach or exhort them to a pious life in the service of God. He was known in North Alabama as the "sweet singer" of the disciples.

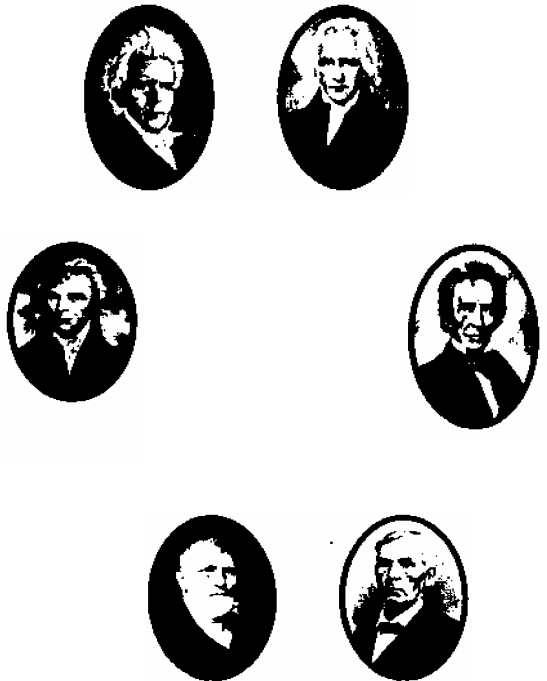
Another important item should be noticed in the life of Brother Randolph. He taught piety in his home. Possibly he was not conscious of the blessing which he himself received while training his family. It was his custom when at home to gather his children about him before retiring and sing the praises of God, read the Bible to them, and then all kneel in prayer before God. None of the family were permitted to retire until the family worship was over. Again, in the morning, just after breakfast, another chapter was read to the family and prayer was offered for the guidance through the day, and after the prayer he would sing the song and ask his family to join him in praising God, "from whom all blessings flow". In training his family in this way he grew in grace and in the knowledge of the truth and was better prepared to go out and help his brethren and sisters live as the Lord teaches his children to live.

Brother Randolph was afflicted for many years with stomach trouble. As he grew older this affliction became more acute. He sought relief, but found none. He suffered two months with acute pain without relief. He died in the hospital at Birmingham, Ala., September 9, 1906, on Lord's day morning at nine o'clock. He was buried in New River Cemetery, where he had preached for a number of years. Services were held by Brother James Wade. James Wade was his brother-in-law, having married Catherine McCaleb.

So ended the humble, modest, faithful life of one of God's heroes.

On Excuses

A man inquired of Mark Twain about using his axe. Twain replied, "you can't. I'm having soup tonight." Puzzled, the man asked, "what does your having soup tonight have to do with my borrowing your axe?" Said Twain, "when you don't want to loan your axe, one excuse is as good as another."



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THE HALEYVILLE CHURCH

Earl Kimbrough

Christians in Alabama have come a long way from the early days when they met as congregations in old log meeting houses or simple frame buildings, with clapboards covering the outer walls. If anything, perhaps they have gone off in another direction by placing emphasis on a physical plant that has become much more than an auditorium connected with a few Bible class rooms. Kitchens, gymnasiums, chapels, and “family life centers” have all but overshadowed the humble places of assembly for worship. Who is to say that we have not lost much spiritually in what we have gained materially in this transition? Whatever may be said about the changes in our places of worship, much can be said about the old time meeting houses and the beloved saints, with all their peculiarities, who assembled there week after week to worship God “as it is written.”

We are reminded of this in a lovely article written by Joann Holdbrooks about her childhood memories of the Ninth Avenue building where the Haleyville church met in the early part of the twentieth century. A 1929 church directory says the church in Haleyville was the outgrowth of “the Mineral Springs church of Haleyville.” The Mineral Springs meeting house served the church until 1913, “when the congregation decided that the demands were sufficient to justify the erection of another house.” The church continued to meet in the house on Ninth Avenue until the middle of the century. It is this old house where the church met from 1913 to 1949 that is the subject of Joann Holdbrooks’ childhood memories. The following excerpts are from the article she wrote for a collection of stories for a Winston County, Alabama, History. The article is entitled: “Childhood Church Memories of the Church of Christ in Haleyville (Ninth Avenue).”

“Voices blended as the Ninth Avenue Church of Christ sang in harmony ‘I’ll Meet You In the Morning.’ Mrs. Ethel McAfee could be heard over everyone. Her lovely soprano voice seemed to glide freely over the notes and the alto, tenor and bass were enmeshed perfectly. Tom Greenhaw stood in his usual place on the right side of the communion table. His right hand went up and down and across as he led the old song with his scraggly voice. He would rise to his tiptoes in a rhythmic manner as he sang. I sat by my grandfather, Anson Lee and listened to his perfect tenor voice as he sang his favorite song. He would pat his foot and keep time with the melody. He was worshipping God in his entirety. He seemed totally unaware of his surroundings. As I watched him I was aware of how safe I felt sitting close to him and my grandmother, Daisy Lee. She sang in a low but sweet voice and much more aware of what was going on around

her. She was in constant attention to the squirming child that sat beside her....”

“We usually sang a song or two and then each individual responded and went to their respective classes, when the roll was called. In class we were handed a small card with Bible verses and stories. The teacher, usually, Mrs. Verna Parson, would read the story and talk about the lesson. After 45 minutes we were dismissed into the auditorium to begin worship services.”

“These services were always too long for me. I just wanted to get out of there and go home to play. Many a time I was pinched or was taken outside behind the telephone office next door, to the hedge bush. I would scream and yell. Then Mama would dry my tears and take me right back in. I can remember how new shoes burned my feet.

How much I wanted to talk to Jeanette and Benny Joe. As I waited painfully for the services to be dismissed I would count the decorative tiles on the ceiling. I would watch as the sun filtered through the stained glass



windows and presented *Old Haleyville Meetinghouse* a rainbow of colors. I looked at the women's hats and couldn't wait until I was old enough to wear one. Finally the last amen was voiced and I hit the door. There was usually a crowd that would stand and talk after church, but not me. I was in the car with Daddy waiting on Mama and the rest.”

“The old church building is still a vivid image in my mind. It does not exist now, having been torn down for progress, as it was called. There was a concrete area in front of the church that led to the steps. Then there was the porch and the double doors that led into the church. On top of the building was a steeple with a huge iron bell inside it. This was home to dozens of pigeons and town sparrows. Sometimes their singing, cooing and chirping was as loud as the singing inside. I never heard the old bell ring or chime. As you entered the double doors at the back of the church everything was in full view. There was no vestibule. The pews were dark mahogany. So were the pulpit and the communion table and the Jacobean chairs that sat on each side of the pulpit. There were six cathedral shaped windows (three on each side). Around the perimeter of these windows was stained glass squares of

dark blue, amber, red, and green. There was a baptistry behind the pulpit with dark green curtains covering the opening. The pews were arranged in three equal rows in the church with two aisles. In front of these pews were three rows of smaller pews turned laterally. Six ornate light fixtures hung from the ceiling by chains and beside these fixtures were ceiling fans to cool the air during the summer months. The communion table stood in front of the pulpit. It was always covered by an immaculate white table cloth with lace insertion. The lid to the wine tray had a silver cross that protruded, causing a tent effect. Many times I have seen this cloth removed and the Lord's Supper served to the congregation."

"Baptisms occurred regularly. It always made me nervous because I was an afraid the person would drown. I would sit all tensed up and with widened eyes as the lights were turned out for the baptism. Every one would rejoice and sing: When the person was raised up from the water. I couldn't image what they were rejoicing about because the person was always dripping wet and looked uncomfortable."

"Sometimes I wish I could go back to those innocent days of childhood. I realize that these events integrated with other life experiences have made me the person I am today. I thank God for God-fearing parents and grandparents."

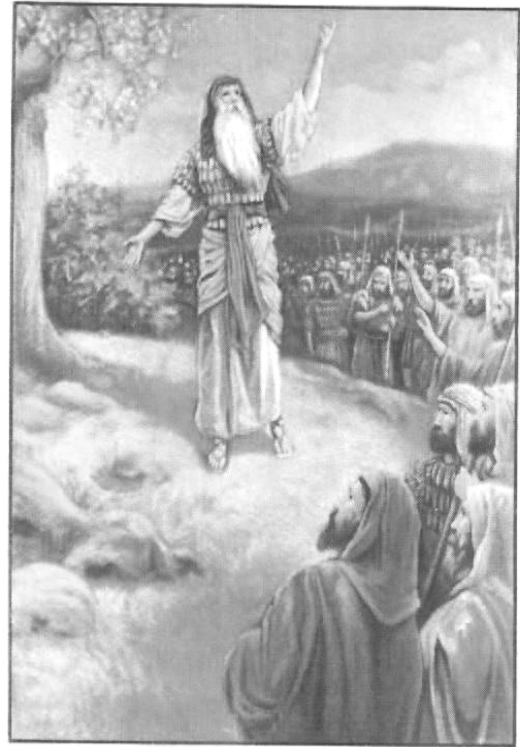
I love Joann Holdbrooks' remembrances of worship in the old meeting house at Haleyville. It quickens my mind to the varied places where Christians in ages past could assemble for worship. From time to time, as opportunity is provided, in our desire to preserve the history of the churches of Christ in Alabama prior to World War II, we want to present other stories about places "where the saints met."

Editor's Note: Joann referred to the cards used by her Bible class teacher. How many of you remember these cards from your childhood? They were used by many of the churches into the 1950s and maybe the 1960s.

The teacher, usually a lady, would teach the entire lesson from one of these cards. I guess you could call them early visual aids or a forerunner to power point.

The copies in the next column show both sides of a typical card. These were issued for the 4th quarter lessons and specifically for November 21, 1926. Of course, they had more visual impact in color than as reproduced here. I remember them (not the 1926 version) and also the Gospel Advocate Quarterly Sunday School dated materials for teenagers as well as adults.

Thanks to Brother Kimbrough for sharing this wonderful bit of nostalgia with us and thanks to both Earl and Joann for taking us back to a wonderful time.....LEW



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JOSHUA RENEWING THE COVENANT

Golden Text: "Choose you this day whom ye will serve . . . but as for me and my house, we will serve Jehovah. Joshua 24:15."
*Copyright Nelson 1901

LITTLE BIBLE LESSON PICTURES.
Published Quarterly.

Vol. 38. 4th Quarter, 1926. No. 4—Part 8.

Nov. 21, 1926. Joshua 24:14-25.

Sometimes the people of Israel forgot God's great goodness to them. They even forgot that he had said that they were to worship no one but him. And so there came a time when Joshua, their leader, gathered them all together and had a long talk with them. He reminded them of all that God had done for them, and then he said, "Choose you this day whom you will serve. As for me and my house we will serve Jehovah." And the people answered, "We will serve Jehovah." Joshua was standing under a great tree, and he took a large stone, and set it under the tree. "Behold," said Joshua, "this stone will help you to remember what you have just promised." And the people went back to their homes, and they served Jehovah all the days that Joshua was their leader.

- What did the people of Israel forget?
That God had said that they were to worship only him.
- What did Joshua tell them?
That they were to choose whom they would serve.
- What did the people say?
We will serve Jehovah.

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Uncle Isaac Sez



In my dream, I climbed to the top of the golden stairs. A kindly, white mustachioed old gentleman said. "I'm J.D. Tant and I'm ready for the interview. Drag over a cloud and have a seat." I was nervous and began fumbling with my recorder and he just smiled and said. "No rush son, I've got plenty of time. All eternity in fact."

Isaac: "Brother Tant its been close to 80 years since you made your last preaching trip through Northwest Alabama. You were kind of rough on some of the brethren there, don't you think?"

Tant: "Yeah I was. When folks at The White House church couldn't tell me who was the oldest, Adam or Abraham, I got upset. But that bunch at Bear Creek really got my dander up. They called me all the way from Texas for a meeting and when I saw the spiritual condition of the church there, I came down pretty hard. They got mad and said they couldn't pay me. I wrote 'em up in the papers. I told the whole world that they couldn't afford to support the preaching of the gospel but they could buy tobacco on mule credit. But I guess it all came out alright in the end. I see a few of them walking around heaven from time to time. They're friendly folk and don't seem to bear me any ill will. I love 'em all."

Isaac: "Brother Tant, you've been gone from us nigh on to 66 years. There have been a lot of changes in the Lord's church since you left. What are your thoughts on these changes and what do you think the future holds for God's people?"

Tant: "It concerns me greatly. The worldliness in many of the churches is shocking. You know I was warning the brethren about a 'preacher class' way back in the early 1900s. All the college boys got riled up at me then. All I was doing was pointing out that we were setting up preacher factories in our schools and would be turning out preachers that were in it for all the wrong reasons. When Lipscomb notified the census in 1906 that we were leaving the liberals, there wasn't 20 fulltime gospel preachers among us and we had less than a 100,000 members. We had some powerful preaching though. Those ole farm boys would work all week providing for their families and preach their heart out on Sunday and any other time they could. The church had its greatest growth over the next 20 or 30 years. These boys did the work for the right reasons. They not only loved the souls of their fellowman but they felt it was their God required duty. Many of these boys today are doing it for the paycheck. They're more interested in the fancy titles and other perks of the profession, than preaching the old Jerusalem gospel. They don't know what dedication is. It's just another job. Before God, I can't

believe some of the namby pamby sermons I hear of. We used to have a sayin in Texas ' he's all hat and no cattle.' That would fit some of these boys nicely. I'd be ashamed for such palaver to come from my lips. I wouldn't preach some of this silliness for any amount of money. Why ole Ben Bogard would preach circles around many of 'em and you know what he was and where he likely is."

Isaac: What about the leadership in the church today. I'm talking about elders and deacons?"

Tant: I call many of 'em 'pretty elders.' Pretty popular, pretty successful, pretty ordinary and pretty ignorant about what God's word teaches. You might add 'pretty sissy' to the list. Many are afraid to stand up against error, so they just look the other way. Heard recently where one said, when asked about marking and withdrawing from someone who was clearly running with the devil, 'oh, that's not done any more.' Before God man, what is a fellow like that doing calling himself an elder in the Lord's church? These pretty elders have stood by and let the liberals and modernist wreak havoc amongst many of the churches. Judgment will be rough on them for it.. They must understand their duty when they accept the position. Many of 'em have worked themselves into a trap. They've got big mortgages on these fancy buildings and entertainment complexes they've built and they have to look the other way when some of their members start running after the devil. They've got to have their contribution. Can't afford to run 'em off. So they just wallow in the mire with the sinful pigs and let the Lord's precious body be corrupted with every kind of false doctrine and sin imaginable." This applies to the preachers as well. There is nothing worse than a sissy preacher whose afraid to preach the truth for fear of losing his paycheck. Like I said. They're in it for the wrong reasons.

Isaac: What are your thoughts about this move by some of the brethren to unite with the Christian church?"

Tant: " If it wasn't so sad, I'd say it was the silliest thing I ever heard. But that's what happens when folks lose all respect for God's word. Many of the so called churches of Christ are Christian churches already. They've adopted most of their silly practices. They ought to just go ahead and jump in 'whole hog.' I'm afraid that the church is headed to apostasy again, just like it did in the late 1800s. Brethren get all educated and think they're smarter than God Almighty and they can find a better way of doing things and they always fail. Look at the children of Israel. They did it time after time. Instead of these brethren moving on out and building their own sandbox to dabble in, they are bent on destroying God's work. These brethren, over the last 50-60 years, have softened their preaching and raised a generation or two 'that know not God.' We're seeing the fruits of this lack of hard, Bible preaching and teaching today. When it's

all over, the loyal, God fearing brethren will just have to pick up the pieces and start all over again. We've done it before and they can do it again. It will be a lot harder this time, I suspect. We don't have as many 'walking Bibles' now as we had back then. Those old heads knew the truth and weren't ashamed to tell it. Folks nowadays wouldn't know the truth if it slapped 'em in the face and if they did, they'd be afraid to say it lest some one might call 'em 'judgmental.' Never thought I'd see the day when God's people would be ashamed to 'own their Lord.'

Isaac: "Brother Tant, what do you think of the trend in recent years, among the churches, to have a designated minister for every facet of the church's work? You can't even keep up with all the ministerial titles?"

Tant: "Just like I said earlier, this is part and parcel of the preacher class. Everybody is trying to belly up to the trough. Remember the old adage 'get it while the gettins' good.' That's what it's all about. Some of the good sisters have jumped in the deal. Wherever there's a dollar to be made. I sometimes think our brethren are the most gullible folks in the world. Was it P.T. Barnum that said there's a sucker born every minute? Gotta give all these college boys a job. If the churches don't have one, they create one. Besides, the bigger churches have to have somebody to manage all these schemes they're into. With all the festivals, carnivals, fish fries and other fund raising activities, they need a big staff to manage it all. It's just another example of the 'good ole boy' network at play. Same thing the denominations call 'pastoring.' Our folks just haven't got the brass to call it that yet. Just give 'em a little more time though. You know, I always said 'brethren, we are drifting.' It was true then and is even more so today."

Isaac: I'm sure you are aware of some of our brethren experimenting with instrumental music and choirs in the assembly. Any thoughts?

Tant: We've always had an element in the Lord's church that is envious of the denominations (I always called 'em 'half baked converts).' They want to be just like 'em. Never mind the Lord saying 'come ye out from among 'em.' This bunch has always dilly dallied with every foolish idea to come down the pike. What I never could understand and can't even today, is why they don't just go ahead and jump in with 'em and leave God fearing folks alone. The whole idea that we are to be a distinct people, different from the world, just drives these folks crazy. Ole brother Keeble said it best when he said "they're warming by the devil's campfire." Well, this bunch has now crawled in the devil's tent and they're sleeping with him. They use the youth as their excuse for bringing this foolishness in. "we're losing our youth so we've got to let a little bit of the world in," they tell us. If I was a youngster,

I'd resent being made the goat for the schemes and desires of these apostates.

Isaac: "Do you see many of your old friends from the old days?"

Tant: "Yeah I do. Fact is, I'm going fishing in the crystal river this afternoon with Gus Dunn, Carroll Kendrick, Uncle Dave Lipscomb and Minnie Belle Ehl. (Don't tell anybody, but I think she finally forgave me for that sermon I preached on snuff dipping at New River in 1920.)" Gotta run. You boys keep up the good work with the Journal. See yah."

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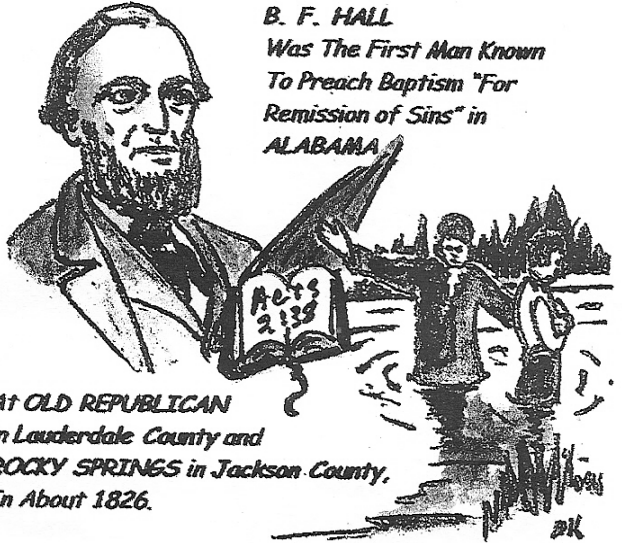
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ALABAMA
RESTORATION TRIVIA by Earl Kimbrough



B. F. HALL
*Was The First Man Known
To Preach Baptism "For
Remission of Sins" in
ALABAMA*

AT OLD REPUBLICAN
*in Lauderdale County and
ROCKY SPRINGS in Jackson County,
In About 1826.*

dk

NICHODEMUS HACKWORTH: AN EARLY LAMP OF TRUTH IN NORTH ALABAMA

Bobby L. Graham

“It should always be a great consolation to us, to know, that our dear old Father was not in death more than two or three minutes. His mind and strength was equal to his days for which he always prayed. He was laid at our old Church, Mount Pleasant. He died at his mountain home where he delighted to stay.”

These words were handwritten concerning the February 9, 1853 death of Nichodemus (spelled Nicodemus in some records) Hackworth by his daughter, Sarah “Sallie” Ann Hackworth Morris, in her journal.



Nick Hackworth, Sr. (??)

Outside the area of North Alabama where Hackworth lived and labored for the Lord, few knew of his efforts; and fewer still today have heard. It is our intent that more shall know and appreciate what this one has done, for we today are his spiritual beneficiaries.

Birth and Early Years

Born June 2, 1779 in Virginia in Bedford County, where his father had received a land grant for his help in Indian Wars in Virginia, this son of Augustine Austin and Ruth Hackworth, in 1800 was in Tennessee and in 1821 in Alabama. He moved to Tennessee, where the older Hackworth again received grants of land on the French Broad River and on the Clinch River for his service in the American Revolution. Here in Knox County, Tennessee Nichodemus and Mary Catherine “Polly” England, who had been born in South Carolina in 1784, married November 5, 1800. His first child Ann Clark Hackworth was born in Rhea County, Tennessee, in 1801; and he was listed on a Tax List of Rhea County in 1808. Still later he moved to Morgan County, Alabama with his wife and early children. Hackworth joined the Baptist Church as early as 1821 and helped to organize a church but was not then preaching.

His Move to Alabama

Nichodemus and Polly Hackworth moved to Alabama as some of the early residents—that is, within very few years of its gaining statehood (1819). He was the only Hackworth of his generation in the family to make the move to Alabama. Here they would live the balance of their lives, and here most of their eleven children were born. Their children’s births ranged from 1801 to 1826. Hackworth is recorded in the 1830 and 1840 U.S. Census of Morgan County, Alabama. For some reason his name is not found in the 1850 census, but he is on record in 1852 in Morgan County as applying for his father’s pension due

for his service in the Revolutionary War. An early Morgan County Land Record Map places the Hackworth property of forty acres, granted in 1848 in the southwest quadrant of the county in section 28, Township 8S, Range 4W, close to neighbors named Wallace, Raley, McCaleb, Morris, Fuller, Wilhite, Speegle, and England, some of whom supplied spouses for the Hackworth’s children. This location is in the area of Cedar Plains. After the passing of the older Hackworths, their granddaughter Mary Ellen (Wallace) Patterson and her husband Robert Daniel Patterson owned the Hackworth farm. The Pattersons continued as members of the Cedar Plains Christian Church for many years, supplying the grape wine, bread, and china plate for communion and trips to nearby Falkville to pick up the preacher on Saturday, when necessary.

Nichodemus Hackworth took his place among the many honorable preacher-farmers of that and future generations. How many were there who toiled in their fields to “keep body and soul together” before the days of modern, labor- and time-saving equipment? How often did they have to work long hours on the farm, only to spend hours at the end of the day reading and studying their Bibles to prepare their lessons or to travels short distances to preach at some appointed location? How often did they leave farm work and home duties for family members to share so they could travel longer distances to preach the pure gospel for several days or weeks? They frequently then returned home with tired bodies, anxious minds, and empty pockets, because the people who heard them, even brethren, had little or nothing to give them for their labors. Without such support they continued to do what was dear to their hearts—preach the saving gospel in the interest of eternity-bound souls—and to work at their farm work to support their preaching, with no crop insurance or agriculture subsidies coming from the government. Little were they then appreciated by their contemporaries, and possibly even less so today by us who are separated from them by almost two centuries and an understanding of the realities of their existence!

Hackworth’s Days as a Baptist

His years as a Baptist member and preacher are worth noting here. Information concerning Hackworth’s Baptist connections noted here comes from *The History of the Muscle Shoals Baptist Association*, written in 1891 and covering the years from 1820 to 1890, and from *History of the Baptists in Alabama*. Though we do not know the exact year when Hackworth brought his family to Alabama, there is evidence of his affiliation with the Spring Hill Baptist Church as early as 1821, even before he began preaching. He was early associated with the Mt.

Pisgah Baptist Church at what was later called Cedar Springs (and even later Flint Baptist Church), located about seven miles south of Decatur near Flint City. *The History of Flint Baptist Church Sesquicentennial (1824-1974)* informs us that “Elder Hackworth” was on the Pastors List as the sole pastor in 1827, after being received by letter as its second member on May 8, 1824, in its organizational session and serving as one of its messengers taking a letter of application for membership in the Muscle Shoals Baptist Association in 1824. Here he also was mentioned in the minutes as being moderator of church business sessions a few different months in 1824 and was ordained to the ministry in November 1825. In October 1828, the minutes record, “Brother Hackworth makes application for a letter of dismissal (sic) and was granted.” His wide fame as a Baptist preacher is attested by minutes of the Muscle Shoals Baptist Association in Northwest Alabama, which often commended his work, before he defected from the Baptist Church. He left the Baptists to proclaim another doctrine, less popular than the first, associated in many minds with Alexander Campbell and Barton W. Stone. He was leaving “the faith of his fathers,” including its insistence upon God’s absolute sovereignty as demonstrated in the doctrines of total inherited depravity, unconditional election, limited atonement, irresistible grace, and perseverance of the saints (sometimes summed up in the T-U-L-I-P acronym). In fact, during these same years, the Baptists themselves in North Alabama were experiencing their own problems over the extent to which election intruded on man’s free will and the Holy Spirit’s role in providing the elect some experience of grace, as reflected in their association minutes. It is probable that the preaching of the Disciples, which was growing more clear, intense, and widespread during these years, was responsible for these internal agitations among the Baptists; Hackworth’s defection was simply another manifestation of these internal problems.

Because of his defection, later Baptists histories speak disparagingly of his work: “Afterwards they ordained Mr. N. Hackworth, who was of no advantage to them, rather an injury, as he went off with the Campbellites.” In fact, the minutes kept by the Muscle Shoals Baptist Association, probably not unlike those of other Baptist associations in certain parts of the South, reflect the grave concerns of many leaders concerning the following seven areas: (1) how to treat members influenced by Campbellism; (2) Baptist preachers’ baptizing people who had no intention to become Baptists (probably honest souls wishing baptism for forgiveness of sins, in view of the current climate); (3) close communion; (4) communing with Pede-Baptist churches (Methodists, Presbyterians, Episcopalians, and Lutherans); (5) whether election by God was particular (held by hyper-Calvinists) or general (held by Arminians); (6) active missionary work, even to the extent of using missionary organizations outside the churches, which were opposed by some; and

(7) coldness and apathy in Baptist churches. So great was the concern over Alexander Campbell’s influence that a special resolution was included in the minutes of the Eleventh Annual Session of the association in 1830, to educate, warn, and guide churches in treatment of this agitator. In the Fifteenth Annual Session in September 1834, a committee was appointed to investigate irregularities creeping into the churches and then report their findings. In these problems it is rather easy to see the state of agitation in which the Baptists found themselves and their attempts to salvage what they could. Somebody was proclaiming a message that stirred up these concerns.

These were days when camp meetings were held across the northern tier of counties of Alabama, all the way from Lauderdale to Jackson, and sliding to the south to Morgan and Blount, even occasionally to Fayette and Marion, including the southern section of Morgan County (which then extended into the northern part of present-day Cullman County, then named Blount County). Men like Elisha Randolph, James E. Matthews, Ephraim D. Moore, and John Mulkey spoke at such meetings, with Mulkey and Randolph preaching at one at Lacon Mountain around 1825. Churches adhering to this doctrine were begun at Somerville and Lacon (Old Log Church/Old Hickory Log Church) in Morgan County and at Brushy Creek in Blount County/now Cullman County. Randolph’s descendants later fervently preached the New Testament message, converting many, and then moved into other counties of Alabama to spread the same gospel and form congregations after the New Testament order, thereby extending the influence of such camp meetings.

Like many others of his time, Hackworth likely heard from Randolph or one of the other preachers or read from Stone’s *Christian Messenger* or did both, because Elisha Randolph, the first adherent of this “new doctrine” recorded in Morgan County, was listed as a representative for Stone’s paper in Somerville, which was the county seat in eastern Morgan County until 1891. He then must have turned to his Bible to find that what he had read and heard was correct concerning salvation and the church taught in the New Testament. Assuming that Hackworth was a Baptist for all of his adult life, we believe his Baptist years actually constituted the larger part of his life (1800-1837), because he lived only sixteen more years after his conversion, dying in 1853. On the other hand, from the records of the Muscle Shoals Baptist Association in Northwest Alabama, already referenced, we see that his last few Baptist years were years of dissent, as his understanding of New Testament teaching was maturing and his faith and conviction growing more solid. He spoke out against prevailing teaching and practice and in behalf of the doctrine of Christ, based upon a conscience being informed and formed by the Bible. Hackworth did not have to surrender all beliefs that he had before this turn in his life, for even then some truth characterized his preaching and practice; but he did yield to Jesus Christ all

that would have been gain for him, resulting in his surrender of whatever conflicted with the will of Christ and an acceptance of all that Christ enjoined. Because of his surrender to Jesus Christ, he became a lamp of truth in North Alabama. A much maligned lamp among his former associates, but foremost and always a lamp of truth! “A troubler of Israel,” some would then have called him, and even many today in an age that loves its ease, luxury, and soft preaching. Need we to remind ourselves that the preaching required by Christ and carried out by His first preachers, the apostles, and all today who would follow their example, comforts the troubled and troubles the comfortable? Would Hackworth himself have learned the truth, if his teachers had “pulled their punches” or “trimmed their sails,” as too many do to make for smoother sailing through choppy waters? If Hackworth had done the same, would his family and others have learned the truth? Surely we owe much to Hackworth (and others like him), who was a lamp of truth in North Alabama.

Hackworth No Longer a Baptist

The decision to become a simple Christian after the New Testament order by this man of conviction and courage had its effect in his own family. Members of the Hackworth family were among the earliest Christians in Morgan County and helped to form one of its earliest congregations of the Lord’s people at Cedar Plains. Members then variously referred to as Disciples or Christians formed two different Morgan County churches in the southern part of the county, one at Cedar Springs (a few miles west of Falkville) and the other at Piney Grove (a few miles east of Falkville at what was previously called New Hope Campground). Was this latter one the one mentioned at Somerville earlier? We do not know with certainty. Nichodemus was baptized at Cedar Plains, which began in the fall of 1837 with him as one of its first members. Other family members who soon confessed Christ and were immersed were William, Polly, and Sallie Ann Hackworth. Thomas J. and his wife Jane Rebecca (Hackworth) Wallace and Ann (Hackworth) Raley also were soon added. June 24, 1838 saw other family members being baptized into Christ: Austin Hackworth and Lisa Ann Hackworth; in November 1839, Owen Raley, Chellissa Raley, and Narcissa Wallace obeyed the gospel. We mention all of these family members to demonstrate the influence of the gospel and the influence of Nichodemus Hackworth in his own family. Much of our information comes from the *Cedar Plains Christian Church 150th Anniversary Book*.

Preachers whom this early congregation in Morgan County heard in its early years were T. J. Randolph (sometimes given as T.F.; it seems to have been Jerry), G. M. Haley, Tolbert Fanning, and other pioneer preachers who converted many to this “new way,” as many were

calling it.. One of its first buildings was a cedar log building in 1849 or 1850. Situated in a cedar grove, it served until 1884, doubling as a school house. The Cedar Plains Christian Church continued using Bible class literature published by the Gospel Advocate Company as late as 1895, as shown in an invoice pictured in the 150th Anniversary Book. Its last “conservative preacher” was Jesse Turner Woods, who returned to this area in the early 1860’s. After his death in 1894, the influence of the progressives, led by men like O.P Spiegel, determined its course as one of further departure from the New Testament way. The group continues meeting in the same area, but it affiliated itself with the modernistic Disciples of Christ (Christian) Church a number of years ago.

Hackworth also provided to the kingdom of Christ children who were its citizens, including a son who preached the gospel, James Matthew (Matt) Hackworth. His work is on record in Morgan County, Marengo County, and Lauderdale County Alabama. While living in Morgan County in 1839, Matt wrote a letter to D.S. Burnett, claiming two congregations in the county having a total of forty to fifty members. (More will be written of Matt Hackworth in a coming article.) Children married into other families like the McCaleb family, which later provided firmness to the cause of the Lord in Fayette and Marion County in Alabama, and the J.W. Chism family in Texas. There is no way to determine how many people learned the simple truth of the New Testament through this family’s influence.

There is an unfinished aspect to our reporting of the life of Nichodemus Hackworth—the location of his burial. All that we know is what Sallie Ann recorded in her journal, “He was laid at our old Church, Mount Pleasant.” Where was Mt. Pleasant? Because no church or cemetery by that name remains in Morgan County or in that part of Cullman County which was once in Morgan, history has lost its location. Its name implies at least a small mountain, of which there are many in the southern part of Morgan County. Was it Cedar Plains Cemetery, located about a mile southwest of the Cedar Plains Christian Church building on a small pine-covered mountain, with some of his relatives? Was it Roundtop Cemetery, associated with Roundtop Community Church, also located just a few miles from Cedar Plains on a hill? Or was it somewhere on Lacon Mountain, in connection with the “old hickory log church,” which might have also been called Mt. Pleasant? We simply do not know. Of this much we can be sure: “The Lord know those who are His” (2 Tim. 2:19). We also can be sure that though few knew of him in his own day, and even fewer in our day, we now know of him and have reason to appreciate him. Though a “lower light,” he was a lamp of truth in North Alabama!

Editors Note: The photo accompanying this article is thought by some to be N. Hackworth, Sr. No proof.

The Jabe D. Evans Family

Willard Collins

Gospel preachers who have preached in the area of Jasper or Oakman Ala., remember Jabe D. Evans, Sr., and the pointers he has whittled, polished, and given away to aid others in preaching the gospel. At eighty one, he is still on the job.



Brother and Sister J. D. Evans have been blessed with eleven children. Ten of these are still living and all are faithful members of the church. Three sons-in-law are well known gospel preachers; C. A. Brannon, Akron, Ohio; Pervie Nichols, Pensacola, Fla.; and Curtis Flatt Florence, Ala.

One son, J. D. Evans, Jr., Pensacola, Fla., has been preaching part time in Akron, Ohio, but is presently teaching in the public schools in Pensacola.

Another son-in-law, C. M. Karrh, is assistant principal of the Walker County High school in Jasper, Ala., and is an elder of the Jasper congregation.

Other children include Mrs. Stachie Odom, Birmingham, Ala.; Ezra Evans, Mrs. Grady Nicholson, and Sam Evans, a businessman and one of the song leaders in the church, Jasper, Ala.; and Robert Evans, Oakman, Ala.

TEN FAITHFUL CHILDREN-A GREAT ACCOMPLISHMENT

In this world, it is certainly a great accomplishment to rear ten children and have all of them faithful members of the church. This family has believed in and practiced daily Bible reading and prayer. For example, the entire book of Hebrews was read at one sitting, while all the children were at home.

Brother and Sister Evans were baptized by the late C. A. Wheeler, when she was fifteen and he was twenty-four. He has averaged reading the entire Bible through at least once each year, for the past thirty-seven years. In addition to the Bible, he reads the Gospel Advocate and other gospel papers. He does extensive study on his weekly Bible lessons. They continue to engage in a daily family Bible reading and prayer.

Jabe Evans was, six years old when his father died. He was reared on a large farm near Oakman, Ala., and lived in

the same community for seventy-seven years.

Since he was an orphan and deprived of education, it was his desire to see that his children be given the advantage of an education and Christian training, he and Sister Evans were constant patrons of Walker County schools for thirty-nine years. They remember that for a number of years it took a barrel of flour per month in their home.

In February, 1951, these Christian parents moved to their present home near Jasper Ala., and at the present time he is an elder of the McArthur Heights Church near his home.

He was also a member of a large family of ten boys and four girls. Five of the children are still living. Their ages range from seventy-five to ninety-three. One of his brothers, Tom Evans, a gospel preacher, was killed in Madisonville, Texas, while reading in his home. His murderer was infuriated over the advertisement of a gospel meeting.

Sister Jabe Evans is the former Lurania Mullinax, of Tuscaloosa County, Ala. She was a member of a family of nine children.

FORMER STUDENT OF J. D. PATTON

Brother Evans, is a student of the former J. D. Patton, a well known music composer and instructor. After this study, he taught several schools and later wrote the music to the song, "The Hope of the Soul," which was published. He has also written many poems. One of his favorites, written February 15 1954, is "Hear the Tiding"

Hear the tiding of salvation
It's better than all our dreams
They bid us make preparation - -
to cross over death's dark stream
They tell of the glory waiting
For the faithful trusting soul
And, too, they tell of Christ's coming,
When his glory shall unfold
Yes, when the nations all gather
In the coming judgment morn;
At the thought it makes me ponder
Where, oh where, will be our home.

Such people as the Jabe D. Evans family are the "salt of the earth." Those who have been in their home recognize that they love God and are living to serve him and his Son. Their children and sons-in-law, as gospel preachers, elders, and faithful workers in the church, are exerting tremendous power for Christ and his church. Brother and Sister Evans still love to attend the services of the church and go to gospel meetings in their area with great regularity. They try to "live well each day," and they believe that the tomorrow is in the hands their God.

ALABAMA TRIALS OF JAMES A. BUTLER

PART THREE
Earl Kimbrough

RESTORATION VIEWS

In a letter to John T. Johnson, co-editor of *The Christian Messenger*, James A. Butler, at the time he embraced the restoration ideal, wrote: "I am irresistibly forced into the current of reform. In my investigation of Brother Campbell's writings, (I have them all) I tugged at the 'ear' of prejudice. But in my onward march, lighter and lighter my burden grew. As sure as God reigns, *that* man's views are misrepresented, either through *motive* or *ignorance*. I am situated in the bosom of a large, wealthy and intelligent community, with not one auxiliary, save God and the bible. (I allude to pulpit aid.)" (*Christian Messenger*, Sept. 1833.) Campbell's writings to 1833 included seven volumes of the *Christian Baptist* (1823-1830), three volumes of the *Millennial Harbinger* (1830-1832), and three debates (Campbell-Walker, 1820; Campbell-Maccalla, 1823; and Campbell-Owen, 1829).

While the word "reformation" was frequently attached to the Restoration movement by its proponents, it was not just a reform of the evident errors of denominations that motivated the pioneer Restorers, but they looked to a complete restoration of New Testament Christianity. Moses E. Lard, one of the most knowledgeable advocates of the restoration ideal, in an editorial entitled, "The Reformation—What Is It?" said: "... the final end to which the reformation should look is a complete return to primitive Christianity, in doctrine, in practice, and in spirit ... Hence, the reformation proposed was to be marked, positively, by accepting, as matter of faith, what, and only what, the holy Scriptures teach; practically, by doing every thing and only what they enjoin, and, negatively, by rejecting every thing which they do not sanction. Such was the reformation proposed by Mr. Campbell and his brethren." (Moses E. Lard, *Lard's Quarterly*, Sept. 1863.)

The works of Campbell that so effectively influenced the thinking of Butler represent the Sage of Bethany at the heart of his restoration work. Lin D. Cartwright, a former editor of the *Christian-Evangelist*, in writing about the *Christian Baptist*, said: "It was through its pages that [Campbell] hammered out the cardinal ideas which were to determine the course of the Disciples for a century to come." (Lin D. Cartwright, *The Influence of the Religious Journal*, Unpublished.) The restoration literature that molded the ideals of Butler's ministry thus came directly from Campbell at the height of that reformer's vigorous appeal for "a complete return to primitive Christianity." Butler apparently read Barton W. Stone's *Christian Messenger*, but his journalistic correspondence was almost exclusively with Campbell in the *Harbinger*.

His unconcealed admiration for Campbell and his obvious reflection of Campbell's views clearly show that Bethany was the restoration stream from which he drank, although its source was far removed from Central Alabama.

While Butler, like Campbell and others, used the words "reform" and "reformation" to describe his work, restoration idealism permeate his writings. In the introduction to volume one of *The Disciple*, the editors wrote: "There is now progressing in these United States and in Europe, a religious reformation, which aims not at the altering of a creed, the remodeling of a sect, or the forming of a new system, but a perfect and entire restoration of primitive Christianity.... The Disciples, coming out of all the different clashing denominations of religion and different classes of society, now form a large portion of the professing community; and having no discipline but the Bible, seek through it 'the unity of the Spirit.' Composing one body, animated by one spirit, called unto one hope, acknowledging one Lord, contending for one faith, they worship one God, their common Father." (*Millennial Harbinger*, April 1836.)

Continuing, they said: "As the union plead for by them must succeed the demolition of all party establishments, they meet with almost universal opposition from the self-styled orthodox churches. Their hope of triumph rests on the force of truth, the decision of the intelligent and candid, and the prayer of Him who intercedes with the Father for oneness.... One thing we will just remark, that no reformation has ever been affected without animadversions upon existing wrongs in theory and practice; and it cannot be expected that we will plead for a restoration of original Christianity, without showing the errors and corruptions which justify the plea.... We have been for some time in this state remonstrating against corruptions in the christian community, and urging a return to primitive ground." (Ibid.)

THE JOHN THOMAS EPISODE

In about 1836, Butler's posting address was Bragg's Store, about fifteen miles east of Carlowville in Lowndes County, or Tuscaloosa, where *The Disciple* was published. His work was attended by success, he said, because "the ice of sectarianism and orthodoxy is at last, in this part, broken. But opposition and persecution continued to follow his preaching. In 1836 he told about "a Baptist rural *vocal* musician, with his band boisterous minstrels, actuated by previous determination to sing down

reformation, (which is a new *modus operandi*, in opposition to the good cause.)” They met Butler at one of his appointments “for the sole purpose of discomfiting” his efforts to preach. Butler said he “awaited on the *gentleman* until 12 o’clock, and then took the pulpit, with a proposition to the musician, that, to prevent *discord*, I would delay until 1 o’clock, provided he would then desist. But “*No!*” was the stern reply. I was bound by my engagement to preach. I introduced the subject amid the broken intonations of discord. The singing choir left, in a few minutes, the *tranquil* auditory; and I preached the Christian’s gospel.” (Ibid., Oct. 1837.)

At times Butler was “threatened with brute lectures of *mob* incivilities.” But he took his persecution with grace, saying: “Am I worthy thus to suffer for Messiah’s cause? I am determined, God helping, to act prudently, demean myself as a Christian, give no offence to Jew nor Gentile, nor church of God; and with this life, amid all vituperation, slander, and contempt, to preach the ancient gospel. I know in whom I have trusted.” (Ibid.) But as zealous and faithful as Butler was to uphold the truth in the midst of persecution and opposition, he made a severe blunder that brought him into direct conflict with Campbell.

In 1837 Butler, with good intentions, but in poor judgment, got involved briefly in the controversy between the *Millennial Harbinger* and the *Apostolic Advocate* over the speculations of Dr. John Thomas of Virginia. Thomas used the *Advocate* to advance his erroneous opinions about such things as the Trinity, the soul, the state of the dead, the destiny of the wicked, and eternal life—ideas that culminated in the establishment of the Christadelphian sect. Campbell first tried to dissuade the doctor from his mistaken views, but finally, realizing that he could not be turned from his false teaching, he denounced him as unworthy of Christian fellowship. In a *Harbinger* “Extra” Campbell dealt at length with Thomas’ false teaching. Near the end of that essay, he said: “Some of our good friends have injured the Doctor by telling him of the exceeding novelty and rarity of his doctrines, and of his singular ability to manage those who oppose him in a way peculiar to himself. Some have spoken of his ‘noble and independent spirit’ ... Thus my efforts to correct his wanderings have all been neutralized by such sayings.” One of these “good friends” who had encouraged Thomas was James A. Butler. Campbell did not call his name but said: “Another excellent brother in Alabama now says of (Thomas’) late discussion, ‘I now beg that you collect and collate all your defense on *this subject* as materials for your next Extra. I will take 50 additional copies. Do comply.’” (Campbell’s quote from Butler is from the *Apostolic Advocate*, 4/212.)

Campbell realized that Butler and others following this course were “excellent men—liberal, noble-minded,” who were acting on a flawed principle. He wrote: “Their

motto is, ‘*Free discussion, no matter what the subject*’—‘*Free trade and sailors’ rights.*’ But I venture to say that they have not considered the tendency of this course.” (Ibid., Extra. No. 1, New Series, Dec. 1837.) Butler felt the sting of Campbell’s words and, apparently seeing the folly of his deed, wrote to Campbell, saying: “I did request brother J. Thomas to ‘collect and collate his defense of the new subject as materials for his next Extra. But I ask the *Harbinger* deck passage until I visit my brethren on an explanatory tour.” Butler then pled that his actions be weighed “in the scale of motive.”

In explaining his encouraging letter to Thomas, Butler wrote: “My motive was to call the whole matter, as far as brother Thomas had labored on the subject, before the brotherhood, knowing that the redeeming spirit was in the body of Christ; for I neither approved of the spirit and style of the *Harbinger* nor *Advocate* on this subject. I knew that there was an ill-timed ardor and zeal about brother Thomas in this as well as other subjects; and I really thought that the *Harbinger*, with his intimate acquaintance with Noah Webster’s Dictionary ... might in some instances have made a more judicious selection of words. But if I erred in writing the letter referred to ... it was with a hope of terminating a controversy which has furnished food enough for a forty days’ meal to those ungodly *Christians* whose heaven is the improprieties of my brethren.” (Ibid., Mar. 1838.) Butler’s motive, as he further explained it, was primarily to promote peace between brethren who were at conflict, in this and other matters among brethren. But, his mistake was in condemning equally the one who defended the truth and the one who advocated error. However, Campbell’s words were sufficient, for Butler concluded: “If God pardons me for this, no more will I depose, further than preach Jesus and the Resurrection and the Life. Others may wrangle if they please; but to the Barnabases, here is my hand and heart in Christ’s kingdom and cause until death.” (Ibid.)

In the fall and winter of 1838-1839, Campbell made a tour of the South, reaching Montgomery by way of Georgia in January. He reported: “No sooner had we arrived at Montgomery, Alabama, than we were met by brother Butler, so well known to our brethren as the herald of reformation in this state.” Campbell preached in the court house at Montgomery and at Braggs Store in Lowndes County, where Butler then lived, and at several places in that part of Alabama. “Under the conduct of our indefatigable and truly magnanimous brother Butler,” Campbell wrote, “we passed a few days very comfortably in the state of Alabama, not only enjoying his hospitality and kind assistance on our journey, but also the hospitality of his fellow-citizens and brethren wherever we went.” Butler’s indiscretion regarding Dr. Thomas’ teaching, perhaps in part because of his contrition in the matter, did not alter Campbell’s view of him. Of the conclusion of his tour in that part of the state, Campbell wrote: “We parted

with our much esteemed and beloved brother Butler on the morning of January 16.” (Ibid., May 1839.)

Campbell added: “The Baptists of Alabama have been somewhat leavened with the doctrine of reformation, principally through the liberality of brother Butler, who has dispersed thousands of dollars worth of books and pamphlets among that community and their friends, superadded to his own labors, and those of brother [Alexander] Graham and others.... But the want of biblical knowledge is so general, that little can be expected, until the people learn to read the Bible.” (Ibid.)

Butler remained in Alabama until about 1850, except for about a year in the North, and preached in Mississippi for the next eight years, reporting constant increases in church membership. While his preaching was effective and fruitful, he harmed his influence by vigorously and openly opposing slavery in a slave-constructed society at a time when feelings for disunion were high. Not long before the War Between the States, the aristocratic and wealthy Butler found it necessary to leave the South because of his anti-slavery activity. After the war he gave eighty acres of land in Arkansas for the establishment of a school for former slaves. Butler’s courage and generosity, evidenced in these acts, were no less helpful to him in advocating New Testament Christianity, at a time when that cause was despised and persecution was abundant.

CONCLUSION

Few men living today can appreciate the constant warfare necessary to the pioneering of New Testament Christianity, nor the severe persecution experienced by those who carried the Restoration plea to the people of America. James A. Butler’s tireless work in Alabama from 1833 to 1850, carried out amid trials that would have felled lesser men, prepared the groundwork for the later successes of churches of Christ in central Alabama. He and his contemporaries were not perfect. They made mistakes, some of them serious, and they recognized this. Barton W. Stone, near the end of his life, believed that his brethren generally had failed to evidence the fruit of the Holy Spirit in their lives, and he agonized over this and other perceived shortcomings of his brethren until the day of his death. But these men were on the right track. They embraced correct principles of unity and restoration, and if they failed to perfect them in their generation, they made it possible for those who came after them to at least stand on higher ground. How well their successors did in carrying on the work they so nobly began is a story of both successes and failures, for each generation has had its own spiritual problems.

SOUNDS GOOD WITH A FIDDLE

Cled E. Wallace

I recently watched a congregation of Christians wrestle with one of those syncopated, jazzy, tongue-twisting songs, in which alto, tenor, bass, and soprano play furious hide-and-seek. It is an accomplishment to get through a stanza without a collision or a wreck. A wreck was narrowly averted on this occasion.

At the end of the stanza, Brother Oldtimer, who was sitting behind me, laughed audibly and remarked: “It would sound good with a fiddle, wouldn’t it?” It possibly recalled some of the wild experiences of his youth.

Christians should teach and admonish one another with psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in their hearts unto the Lord. Better songs are needed in many congregations in order to have better singing.

How’s that, again?

J.D. Tant introduced his sermon by stating, “I have been through several insane asylums, but, before God, I never saw people act crazier than your children do here. They don’t know how to get into the church house, how to act when in, or how to get out”.... *Gospel Guardian*

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HOLY UNION: Troublesome Times At Berea

Larry Whitehead

Most local historians agree that Union Baptist church was probably the first church of any kind in Fayette County. Some records are available from 1825. It has been known by several names over the years, notably Union, Wade and New River Baptist. It ceased meeting in the late 1800s. There is today a Primitive Baptist church meeting a few miles away known as Old Brand. The Berea church of Christ was started, or a group that became Berea, about 1830. Over the next fifty years, naturally, conflicts arose between the two groups. Many families had members in both camps and the differences sometimes became sharp.

The effects of the Civil War had been devastating to both groups. Berea had recovered from these effects and within a year or two had over a hundred members. Union had not recovered as fast. Brother C.S. Reeves of Columbus, Mississippi received a call to conduct a gospel meeting at Berea in the Summer of 1868. Reeves was a well-known and seasoned evangelist, much respected among Christians in Mississippi and Northwest Alabama. Berea was undergoing some internal conflicts at the time. They had recently withdrawn from one of their elders, Simeon Randolph. To make the matter worse, Simeon was the younger brother of Jeremiah and Lorenzo Dow Randolph, men who were much respected and beloved by most of the members at Berea. This had caused a rift between the leadership at Berea and the preaching Randolph brothers. With this as the background, the following report was submitted by Reeves to the *Millennial Harbinger* in the Fall of 1868:

But, "thanks to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ," the best is yet to be told. Since the meeting at Caledonia, I have visited the brethren at two of their places of worship in Fayette Co., Ala. And (as I cannot communicate all the good results with pen and ink) will say, I commenced preaching at night to the brethren of Berea, on New river, near Dublin, in Fayette Co., as before; continued over Lord's day, -audiences increased in size from the beginning. On Saturday evening a Baptist brother came in and was introduced, who arose and stated (he was a preacher, and said to be a most excellent man) that the Baptists from his congregation, some four miles south of where we then were, had sent him up to invite me down on Lord's day to preach for them. The invitation was accepted, and after morning service at Berea, 1, with the congregation at Berea, went down to preach for the Baptists at 4 o'clock P. M. A very large audience' assembled, for a country meeting, I arose and sung, "Let Christians all agree and peace among them spread," knelt and prayed, arose and read the 17th chapter of John, and spoke an hour and a half, urging the union of Christians upon the foundation laid in Zion-the first article of the Baptist "Confession of Faith", --at the close of which a proposition to this effect

was submitted, viz.: to throw away to the moles and bats all partyism and human creeds as bonds of union and communion among Christians, and unite in fact on the foundation of prophets and apostles. Descending to the floor from the pulpit, an aged Baptist arose with tears running thick and fast down his furrowed cheeks, -"I give you my hand and my heart to this work," said he; "I have long prayed for it, and believed Christians ought to be united, but could not see how it could be done, until you explained the difference between faith and opinion." So saying, he extended his hand. Next came the preacher; then a perfect rush of all the Baptists, numbering, I judge, some 60 or 75 persons, including males and females. All came forward and extended the hand. Then our brethren, all shaking hands and actually hugging each other. Never but once have I witnessed such a scene. Some shouted, some laughed, others cried. And "I too wept, though not to weeping given." To prove their sincerity in this glorious union movement, the Lord's Table was spread (at Berea) at night, and there around one common table they met and ate and worshipped together. Oh! surely, no one present will ever forget this meeting! And if there is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, what a commotion was then created among those heavenly messengers. The Lord grant that this may be the commencement of one grand and yet more glorious movement for union between our brethren and the Baptists in Alabama! I left them Monday morning trying to agree upon another union meeting, to come off some time between this and the coming Fall. Some of the other brethren there propose to give you other particulars, which, will obviate the necessity of my extending further this already too lengthy epistle.....

It is not known how many of the Union members united with Berea at this time, but it is certain that James M. Wade was one who did. It is likely that Wade was the Baptist preacher that Reeves referred to in his report as being sent to invite him (Reeves) to speak to the Baptist the next Sunday. Jim Wade married Leah Catherine McCaleb that same year and would become one of the most beloved and respected gospel preachers in the church of Christ in Northwest Alabama. It is also likely that several others became members at Berea as the growth of the Berea church grew to near 200 members over the next few years and many family names that were identified on the Baptist rolls earlier, would show up later as New Testament Christians at Berea.

The Committee Of Five

Simeon Randolph evidently did not take the discipline from the Berea church kindly. He must have waged a campaign to persuade his brothers and close friends that he had been wronged and that the leadership at Berea was corrupt and selling out to the Baptist. In April of 1870, a year and one half after Reeves report, the

following appeared in the *Millennial Harbinger*:

In view of the publication in the *Millennial Harbinger*, No. 8, for 1868, of a letter by C.S. Reeves, containing some of alleged misstatements, of facts, a meeting of brethren of different localities, from both Baptist and Christian churches, was held at Union church Ala., on Saturday before the third Lord's day in April, 1870, at which the whole matter was submitted to a committee of five, all members of the Church of Christ, who reported as follows:

"We, the committee, after duly considering the whole matter presented to us, for our consideration and report, beg leave to submit the following, viz:

"1. We think it due to Elder R. Adkins in particular, and to Union church in general, and also to the whole Christian brotherhood, to state that the publication in the M.H., referred to, when *facts* are referred to, is wanting of truth in the following specification, viz:

"2. 'To throw away to the bats and moles, all partyism and human creeds, as bonds of union and communion, among Christians, and unite IN FACT on the foundation of Prophets and Apostles.' But when corrected, the proposition was to 'all present, who were willing to *pray* and *work* for a union to come forward and extend their hands.' The Union church, with Elder Adkins, are represented as having imbodyed or 'joined' him. But the FACT is, Union church and Eld. Adkins *are Baptists* yet, and have never been other than Baptists.

"3. 'To *prove* their sincerity, in this glorious union movement, the Lord's table was spread, at Berea, at night, and there around one common table, they met, and ate, and worshipped together'

"In the above quotation, the *whole church* is represented as communing with the Berea church!! The fact is, *but two* of Union members met with those of Berea.

"4. ' But could not see *how* it could be done, until you explained the difference between faith and opinion.'

" The above quotation represents the 'old brother' to say things which is wanting of truth; i.e., he did not say, *he could not understand how it could be effected until you explained the difference between faith and opinion!!*

" All of which is respectfully submitted.

J. Randolph, J. Hyde, J. N. Smith,
P.W. Thornton, L.D. Randolph,

The report of the committee of five did not say who authorized the committee of five to investigate the matter, nor did it explain who submitted the "entire" matter to them for investigation, nor why some eighteen months passed before the report was published in the *Harbinger*. It is interesting to note that the only member of the Berea church on the committee was P.W. Thornton, a nephew of the Randolphs being the son of their sister Orpha Randolph Thornton. It is also worthy of note that the committee meeting was held at Union church and in secret

as the next report reveals, with Simeon Randolph and the Baptist Elder Adkins as the only witnesses named. Thus, Berea's response, signed by several members, follows.

Berea's Response

Brother W.K. Pendleton---*Dear Sir*:---In the July number of the Harbinger, current volume, our attention has been called to the publication of a "Report of a Committee" of brethren touching a certain letter published by our brother C.S. Reeves in the Harbinger, in the summer of 1868.

We feel it due to Christian character and standing of Bro. Reeves, and due to ourselves, as brethren professing a common Christianity, to make a short statement of facts notoriously true throughout this region of country.

1. WE HEARD Bro. Reeves preach the discourse, a synopsis of which was published as an item of news in the Harbinger.
2. NOT ONE of the committee whose names appear appended to the "report," were present when the discourse was delivered.
3. We also read carefully Bro. Reeves' letter to the Harbinger, and without hesitancy say that Bro. Reeves published a *faithful* and correct report of said meeting in *substance*, and we have not the remotest idea that Bro. Reeves *intended* to mislead or misrepresent any body or any thing in said publication; neither do we think that any member of the committee thought so when they made out their "Report."
4. Brother Reeves character is above reproach in this country, and we do believe that we but reflect the sentiments of nineteen-twentieths of all the Christians of his acquaintance when we say, that we all love him very much for his work's sake.
5. With regard to the main proposition relative to the Union of Christians on the Bible alone, to which the Baptists and would be representatives of the committee object; we affirm that the *very words* they reject are the words used by Bro. Reeves in submitting the proposition for Christian union.
6. Bro. Reeves asked no one to join or embody him, but distinctly avowed repeatedly that he had no church of his own, only claimed to be an humble member of the great family of God on earth.
7. The brethren composing the committee being entirely self constituted, represented nobody but themselves, acted without the knowledge or consent of any congregation, so far as we have been informed, and were in reality a discontented, disconnected faction, only *one* of them, viz., P.W. Thornton, being a member of our congregation at the time, and he acting without our knowledge and *much against our wishes* in making out said report. We do not think that brethren Hyde and Smith, whose names are attached, were identified with any church as members at the time the report was

made; and we do verily believe, much as we regret to say so, that the brethren Randolphs did what they did in the matter more to gratify spirit of revenge and retaliation upon the church at Berea, for withdrawing from their brother on account of unchristian conduct, than for any other cause.

8. This is the oldest congregation of Disciples in this region of country, has numbered over 100 members, some of us whose names are annexed have been Christians almost half a century, some have lived *here* more than 40 years, one an elder and preacher for more than a quarter of a century. If our hearts deceive us not, we yet love the Lord and his cause more than all else beside, and it grieves us to see his cause trodden under foot of men on account of divisions in his body.

We therefore believe it to be our Christian duty to defend the character of our brethren when misrepresented, and thought it proper that these facts should be made public. And we would further state that there were but 10 or 12 persons all told in this famous meeting of both Baptists and Christians, who kept their meeting, as we were informed, a profound secret of both Berea and Union churches, for the purpose of allowing parson Adkins, a man of great prejudice and very weak judgment, and Simeon Randolph, an excluded member from the Christian church, privilege to render in their one sided evidence.

By order of the church in conference assembled, December 11th, 1870.

ELD. JOHN McCALEB
ANDREW McCALEB
NEWTON McCOLLOUGH
A.C. McCALEB
MARGARET McCALEB *
J. PINKNEY WHITEHEAD
BEREA CHURCH, Fayette Co., Dec. 11, '70

This put an end to the matter, at least as far as the public record reveals. The stinging indictment of the Randolphs, accusing them of harboring "a spirit of revenge and retaliation" against the brethren at Berea, did not reflect well on the Randolphs as a family or as Christians. They had been an important part of the effort at Berea almost from its beginning. To be upraided publicly was a blow to their reputations among the brethren. However it proves the old adage that "blood is thicker than water" and it also points up the fact that these were men with the human frailties that are common to us all. As far as is known, Simeon never corrected his estrangement with the church at Berea. He moved on to Arkansas, where he died some years later. The damaged relationships were healed and the preaching Randolphs, Lorenzo Dow and Jeremiah were back at Berea in a few years conducting meetings and in years to come were closely associated, once again, with the McCalebs. The Union Baptist church did not fare so well. It appears that they

may have divided over the issue with a large group leaving and forming a church, also called Old Union, in the western part of the County. The Ward family was the mainstay of this group. They were one of the most influential families at Union. Willis Ward, the progenator of the clan, had been a member at the original Union church almost from its beginning. The Union church ceased meeting in a few years and was replaced by one several miles from it that meets to this day.

*Margaret McCaleb was the great grandmother of this writer. She likely wrote the letter, as she was a school teacher and her command of the King's English is apparent.....

SHAKIN EM' IN Larry Whitehead

The practice of accepting converts from the Baptist church on a confession of their faith and the fact they had been immersed, was not uncommon among churches of Christ in the early days of the Restoration Movement. However, as the movement grew and the practice became more accepted, some brethren objected to it. David Lipscomb and most of the writers for the *Gospel Advocate*, saw nothing wrong with the practice.

Austin McGary, a Texas preacher became so aroused over the issue, that he began publication of a paper that he named *The Firm Foundation*, a paper whose main purpose was to oppose the practice. He stated in the opening issue in 1884: "*to oppose every thing in the work and worship of the church, for which there was not a command or an apostolic example or a necessary scriptural inference.*" McGary's argument was that "salvation begins at the moment of baptism. McGary asserted that a further condition of salvation lay in the believer's knowledge and acceptance of this idea at the moment of baptism, so that baptisms occurring outside of this condition were invalid." McGary and his staff of writers immediately went on the attack against the *Advocate* whom they accused of promoting the idea of "shakin em' in.

No doubt, there was some resentment among the *Advocate* staff toward this "upstart" from Texas daring to question the "Old Reliable." The debate became heated and such men as J.D. Tant and McGary himself went after the *Advocate* boys with a vengeance. Tant engaged in a debate with the venerable James A. Harding on the issue. The feelings ran so high that Lipscomb became alarmed at the personal feelings on display and felt compelled to dismiss the caustic T.R. Burnette from the *Advocate* staff as a result of his personal wranglings with some of the Foundation writers. Thankfully, cooler heads prevailed and the issue cooled down and eventually faded from the pages of the journals. The practice continued sporadically, generally in some of the larger urban congregations, but it seems over the years that the *Firm Foundation* view became the accepted view among churches of Christ. The Texas influence was strong among brethren in Alabama, especially the Northwest section and among the rural churches.....

ROBERT LOGAN

Earl Kimbrough

Robert Logan is an example of some men and women who became members of the church of Christ in Northwest Alabama in pioneer days, whose spiritual progeny continues throughout Northwest Alabama and the nation. He taught the truth to his children and grandchildren. They became faithful members of the church of Christ and settled in different sections of Northwest Alabama. Robert was born in Kentucky in 1800, most likely in Logan County, where he met Jane "Jennie" McCaleb when he was about twenty. The McCaleb's lived in Logan County for a short time, primarily to dispose of a sizable tract of property that had been inherited by Hugh White McCaleb, "Jennie's" father. When the McCaleb's moved south to Warren County, Tennessee, and then on to Morgan County, Alabama, young Logan followed them, most likely because of his interest in their daughter. He and Jennie were married in Morgan County in 1822.

Morgan County was the scene of early preaching by Elisha Randolph who settled at Sommerville in the early 1820s before migrating to Walker/Fayette County. Others preaching in Morgan County at the time were James E. Matthews, John Newton Mulkey, and Robert Randolph. These men conducted a series of camp meetings in Northwest Alabama, including Morgan County. It is believed that it was in one of these camp meetings that inquisitive young Logan, a devout Presbyterian, was converted. Through his influence, the McCalebs also heard the ancient gospel and became Christians. Elisha Randolph organized a church of Christ in the Mountain Community on Lacon Mountain, where it is believed that the Logans and McCalebs worshiped and began a lifelong relationship with the Randolphs. Jennie's niece Martha married Elisha Randolph's grandson Virgil, who also became one of the pioneer preachers of Northwest Alabama.

Hugh McCaleb, along with the Randolphs and several other families, moved from Morgan County to what was then Marion County, Alabama, at or near the same time. Robert Logan and his family also made the move and settled near the Randolphs and McCalebs in the Berea Community, where they evidently became early members of the Berea congregation in the early 1830s, soon after it was established by John Taylor. John A. McCaleb, Hugh McCaleb's oldest son and Robert Logan's brother-in law, soon began preaching. Elisha Randolph and his son Jeremiah also moved to the same community and preached in that region.

Robert Logan continued to live in the Berea Community until 1860. War clouds were looming and a division of sentiment between Union Loyalists and Secessionists was already exploding with violence. Logan,

a Union Loyalist, moved his family north to Yampertown in Marion County where he felt that his family would be safer. He opposed slavery after becoming a Christian, as did most of his McCaleb in-laws, and both freed their slaves. The Logans had eight boys. All of them, except the oldest, joined the First Alabama Calvary USA, a voluntary unit made up of Union sympathizers of Northwest Alabama. The oldest son, unable to join the army, built bridges for the Union Army. There is no doubt that Robert Logan and his family suffered persecution for their stand during and after the war, as did so many of their neighbors.

Larry Whitehead writes of Robert Logan: "There is no way to count the numbers of people today that are Christians because of the desire of this good man many years before in Morgan County, to hear and obey the truth. As far as is known, he never preached a sermon, yet he affected the lives of countless numbers because of this action as well as the life he lived. An example would be in the Birmingham area where there are approximately 65 congregations. One would be hard pressed to visit any one of them and not find a Logan or McCaleb descendant in the membership and in many instances they are found to be elders and deacons. Robert Logan and his wife Jennie truly left a grand legacy." (Larry Whitehead, *Robert Logan*, Unpublished Manuscript.) This legacy reached into Franklin County and Russell's Valley. J. P. Logan, a grandson of Robert Logan, and his family were members of the church of Christ in that region.

No headstone marks the graves of Robert Logan and his wife in the little cemetery on a hill near Yampertown. They believed that since Christ's grave had no marker it would be wrong for them to have one. But God knows their resting place.

Unity

"God has but one people on the earth. He has given to them but one Book, and therein exhorts and commands them to be one family. A union such as we plead for—a union of God's people on that one Book—must, then, be practicable.
"Raccoon" John Smith

Wanted A Miracle

Two drunks walked into the building where Gus Nichols was conducting a gospel meeting and announced that they wanted to see a miracle. Nichols invited them to be seated. In a few minutes, they interrupted again with the demand to see a miracle. A big, burly deacon rose and grabbed the two by the collar and as he escorted them from the building he said "we don't perform miracles, but we do cast out demons."

TAYLOR, SMITH, AND DEVANEY
Earl Kimbrough

“Home” is one of the sweetest words in the English language. The thought of the scattered members of a devoted family gathering home for a holiday, to celebrate an anniversary, or for some other special occasion, conveys one of the sweetest scenes that this world can behold, or that we can experience. But beyond this world, Christians by faith can see the souls of the redeemed gathering to their heavenly home “By the side of the river of life.” When we think of the righteous dead, not only as they served the Savior in this life, but of their “gathering home,” we see the fullness of the gospel of Christ. It is not to make a name for ourselves in this world, or to have our way in the church, but it is to find eternal redemption through the blood of Christ. As we think about, study, and learn from the faithful Christians in ages past, well known and little known, let us remember that a Restoration Movement that fails to focus on an eternal reward is worth but little in this world. Think about that as we read the following lines.

ALLEN HALEY TAYLOR

Allen Haley Taylor was the sixth child and fourth son of **John Taylor**, pioneer preacher of Alabama, and his wife **Mary Prisock Taylor**. He and his next older brother, Evans Randolph Taylor, were named for Alabama pioneer preachers with whom their father labored from the early years of the nineteenth century. Randolph was named for **Jeremiah Randolph**, or for him and his brother **Lorenzo Dow Randolph**, and Allen Haley was named for **Green M. Haley**, who was converted by John Taylor after Haley had threatened to shot him for baptizing his wife. Allen, known as **A. H. Taylor**, became a gospel preacher, while Evans Randolph is describe in a family history as the “Prodigal Son.” But he was a “prodigal” only in the sense that he “strayed farther from is father’s fold” than did the other boys in the family. He settled in **Berryville, Arkansas**, just before the Civil War, in about 1860.

Allen Haley Taylor was born March 15, 1844, near **Frankfort in Franklin County, Alabama**, and died at **Belmont, Mississippi**, July 25, 1940, at the age of 96. He was baptized by his father early in life and preached in Northwest Alabama and Northeast Mississippi. He is described at the time of his death as “one of the oldest members of the church and a picturesque character.” A **Confederate** veteran, Taylor “continued active, and did not cease hunting squirrels until the very close of his life.” He is buried at **Pleasant, Alabama**. (*Gospel Advocate*, Oct. 17, 1940.)

WALTER HENRY SMITH.

Brother Walter Smith, born September 18, 1881, was a son-in-law of **Virgil Randolph**, one of the last pioneer gospel preachers of Alabama. His wife was Virgil Randolph’s daughter **Mary**. They were married December 24, 1905. At the time of Brother Smith’s death, February 9, 1932, **Chester Estes** wrote of him: “He became a member of the church in 1918 under the preaching of **C. R. Nichol** and was a faithful member until the end. He reared a fine, obedient family. He was devoted to them and they loved him greatly. He is survived by a wife, four sons, three daughters, one grandchild, two brothers, two sisters, many friends and near relatives. His loss is great to us.... ‘We are going down the valley one by one.’—Chester Estes.” **Gus Nichols** and Chester Estes conducted the funeral in the church building at **Winfield, Alabama**, and he was buried in the cemetery near by. (*Gospel Advocate*, April 13, 1933.)

SISTER ROBERT DEVANEY

Granville W. Tyler wrote an obituary for one of those noble souls who were little known outside the region where she lived, but whose life made a large contribution to the cause of Christ. Tyler wrote: “On the morning of March 13, 1941, Sister Robert (Brown) DeVaney, **Russellville, Ala.**, at the age of sixty-seven years, passed quietly to her reward. For fifty three years she was the faithful wife of **Robert DeVaney**, during which time she became the mother of sixteen children. Thirteen (all except one are Christians) survive her. She was a devout member of the Lord’s church for many years. Her interest and love for the church increased with the passing years. During her illness (as was characteristic of her life) she never complained, but was kind, patient, and always thoughtful of her family. Her faith in God never wavered and the assurance of heaven grew stronger unto the end. All of us have sustained a great loss in her going, but the members of the family who loved her so dearly realize more keenly this loss.” (*Gospel Advocate*, April 24 1941.) It was my good fortune to grow up, as it were, in the congregation where the large DeVaney family were faithful members, filling their places in the worship with regularity. One of Sister DeVaney’s faithful daughters was **Violet DeVaney**, who served several years as the secretary of **H. Leo Boles** and afterward served in a similar capacity for **B. C. Goodpasture**, longtime editor of the **Gospel Advocate**;

“DEAR MA AN PA AN BROTHERS”

Earl Kimbrough

Jeptha Billingsley married Anna Mariah Randolph, a daughter of Elisha Randolph and a sister of Jeremiah, Lorenzo Dow, and Simeon Randolph, all pioneer gospel preachers in Fayette County, Alabama. The Billingsleys for several generations had mostly boys. Jeptha and Anna Mariah had nine sons and one daughter. His son William Elisha Billingsley had six sons and one daughter. His grandson Charles Burl Billingsley had seven sons and no daughters. Holly Billingsley, one of the last seven, said that in his youth he knew a lot of Billingsley boys, but only three Billingsley girls.

William Elisha Billingsley moved to Tishomingo, Mississippi, after the Civil War, but returned to Millport, Alabama, in Lamar County, when his oldest son was “old enough to be married.” Three of William Elisha Billingsley’s sons moved to Texas in the 1890s. Holly Billingsley writes about two of these who apparently settled near Anna and Van Alstyne, Texas, north of Dallas. These were Frank Billingsley and his wife Nannie and Lonnie Billingsley and his wife Laura. Holly Billingsley has possession of an interesting letter written by Nannie Billingsley from Anna, Texas. The letter was written on New York Life Insurance stationary, supplying insurance for “Texas and the Indian Territory, Van Alstyne, Texas.” The letter was undated, but apparently was written about 1898. Holly Billingsley says: “I quote a letter written from Anna, Texas to Grandpa and Grandma Billingsley about their finding a baby on their steps...Aunt Nannie wrote as follows” [copied as written]:

“Dear pa an ma and Brothers, I will indever this eavnin to answer your kind and welkom letter we receved a few days ago and found us all well an do hope when theas few lines arrives to you distan hand they will find you all well. Well dear ones I have nothing sterang to rite. ma this maks the third letter we have rote to you all an told you aBout our BaBy and you all have got nary one of thim. I am going to tell you aBout it Again. It will soon Be seven weeks sence it was put heare. ma I kep it five days an I teas Lonnie and lara a hep aBut it an thin I give it to thim. It was A pittyful looking littel ting when it was first Brought. I let it nurse as long as I kep it, it was just Abut ded when we found it. We had not Ben gone to Bed long. Frank had dozed off to sleep an me and Sis heard it and shuck him and told him that they was somting at the door and frank though it was A little puppy and we told him to get up that woulden do for no puppy an he got up and open the door But it shock him so that he diden pick it up. I had to pick it up. I set down with it By the fire and warmed it up, dress it and work with it all knight. It was a great eal Better the next morning. We had it puBlished and Lonnie hurd it an hear he come. I told him he could

just go back for I diden have But one girl an he was not going to get hur. He went Back and told lara ABout it an she diden sleep any that knight an thin thay Both come down an we teased thim a whil an told thim thay mite have it. Thay was the proudes to people I ever saw in my life. we was down to see thim last Sunday. thay call self pa an mama to the BaBy. Lonnie will say this is pas little daughter an that will nearly tickle Frank to death. We lafe at thim A heap. Well I will close the Baby suBject an rite somting elce. ma what ar you dong theas days. have you got A good garden. ma I have got A Better garden this year than I had last year. ma I do wish we could.....

Billingsley said: “The rest of the letter is missing. I have a picture of the child when she was about two years old. Uncle Lonnie died in Texas and my family never knew what became of Aunt Laura and the child. Uncle Frank and Aunt Nannie and Sis came back to Alabama, raised their family, and lived out their lives near our home [at Millport, Alabama].” (Holly Billingsley, *Billingsley Family Tree*, 27,28.)

The baby was evidently left on Frank and Nannie’s steps in the late 1890s. They “didn’t have but one girl” at the time; that was Maude, born in 1898. Nannie was still nursing a child at the time. Lonnie and Laura seem not to have had any children when the baby was found. Their first child was born in 1900. The mystery as to what became of Laura and the little girl may remain. But it is reasonable to believe that somewhere in the great Lone Star State, there are people living today because some Christians from Alabama were willing and even anxious to welcome a “pittyful looking little” waif that was just about “ded” into the warmth of their hearth and hearts.

Piloting The Strait

by Dave Miller



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Biographical Sketch Of The Life Of G.C. Brewer

Gussie Lambert: Adapted by Scott Harp

Grover Cleveland Brewer was born December 25, 1884, at Pulaski in Giles County, Tennessee. His parents were Hiram and Virginia Arietta Brewer. He had two brothers, Charles R. Brewer, gospel preacher, and teacher at David Lipscomb University for a number of years and Robert Larimore Brewer.

Schools he attended included Kimberlin Heights, Nashville Bible School, University of Texas, Austin College, where he received the B.A. degree. Later Harding College and Abilene Christian College each awarded Brewer with a LL.D. degree. He was also honored later with the Carnegie Medal.

On October 24, 1911, he married Mary Elizabeth Hall. To this union, one girl, Virginia Elizabeth, was born.

He began preaching at the age of 16 in Florence, Alabama, and also preached in a number of congregations around Florence. His ministry took him to many churches in many States. Some of the churches where he preached were: Chattanooga, Tennessee; Columbia, Tennessee; Winchester, Tennessee; Austin, Texas; Cleburne, Texas; Sherman, Texas; Union Avenue in Memphis, Tennessee; Jackson Avenue in Memphis, Tennessee; and Central in Los Angeles, California; and Lubbock, Texas. He preached in all the States in the Union except the States along the Canadian border.

Brewer was, by nature, a controversialist and he enjoyed and felt at home in any sort of controversy. He ranged through its whole field and ever acquitted himself as a champion whether his opponent was the worldly-wise Judge Ben Lindsay (whom he debated many years ago in Memphis on the subject of Companionate Marriage), or D. N. Jackson, the skilled Baptist debater, or some of the hobby-riding brothers among us. For more than 40 years, his booming voice and his trenchant pen were employed in the defense of that which his great heart and active mind believed to be right. In the pulpit, on the lecture platform, and in the classroom, he was equally at home. He ever exhibited that rare quality of being able to differ with others and, at the same time, to respect and love them.

During his last years, and until almost the moment of death, he was chiefly active in, and found his greatest satisfaction from, editing the Voice of Freedom, a paper designed to awaken the people in and out of the church to the threat of Catholicism and Communism, both religiously and politically inclined. It is our conviction

that the stature of G. C. Brewer will continue to increase with the passing of the years; and that he will take his place, in the final estimate of history, among the greatest of recent generations.

Brewer had an excellent speaking voice and, in most places where he worked with a congregation, had a weekly radio program. Some of the places were KFYO in Lubbock, Texas, and WHBI in Memphis, Tennessee. In addition to his regular local work with a congregation, he usually held about twelve meetings each year. He was a prolific writer and some of his books included "The Model Church," "Brewer's Sermons," "Contending For the Faith," "As Touching Those Who Were Once Enlightened," "Forty Years On The Firing Line," and many pamphlets and other books.

Brewer wrote an autobiography during the last months of his life. He died June 9, 1956, at Searcy, Arkansas. He is survived by one daughter, Mrs. Perry Mason, two grandchildren, six great-grandchildren. Funeral service was conducted by George S. Benson of Searcy, Arkansas, and brother Ijams of Memphis, Tennessee. Funeral was held in Memphis, Tennessee, and burial was in the Memorial Park in Memphis.



G.C. Brewer

Editor's Note: *Brother Brewer spent his formative years in Alabama, living in Florence, We carried an article about his first gospel meeting in an earlier issue and plan on more articles about him in the future.....LEW*

The Final Say

Present Dangers: A Sad Prophecy

Churches of Christ today face two principal dangers with reference to the plea of speaking where the Scriptures speak. **One is that we allow modernism to slip in as uninvited but tolerated guest.** Such a guest would strive to change our thinking fundamentally; it would rob us of our faith in the Bible as an authoritative revelation from God and would lead us to doubt whether there is actually a pattern for a New Testament church capable of being restored. This has been the fate of the Christian Church; it could be ours.

A second danger is that we pay verbal allegiance to the concept of speaking where the Scripture speaks while we betray the plea in actual practice. Illustrations are: (1) "Let brotherly love continue." Do we speak where the Scriptures speak? It would seem today that brotherly love is almost a lost art among brethren in Christ, and that bitterness, strife and a party spirit prevail in its stead. Instead of admonishing in a spirit of love, some brethren appear to reserve their choice bits of bitterness for brethren in the Lord, hurling invectives in the battle for personal victory. (2) "Love not the world." Instead of speaking as the Bible speaks and standing against worldliness in the church, we allow it to go unchallenged and unchecked, damning and destroying as it spreads. (3) "Withdraw yourself from every brother that walketh disorderly." God has provided discipline as the means for preserving the purity and holiness of the church; but it is now a rare day when any church withdraws from anyone for anything.

Let us actually speak where the Bible speaks—in theory and in practice.

Bill J. Humble (The Preceptor, Jan. 1952)

Now That Is A Sermon!

O what a sermon! I never heard any thing more eloquent- From first to last, it was a complete success. Each sentence seemed a pearl strung on a silver thread; each had a golden clasp, and the thoughts "like apples of gold in pictures of silver." *Christian Herald 1865*

We know a few preachers that believe this description would fit every sermon they preach.....*LEW*

HOLD OUT FOR MORE

Then there was that preacher who one day came to a deacon in his congregation considerably agitated over an encounter he had had with a wealthy parishioner. Seems this man of wealth had offered the parson \$1,000 if he would resign. "Don't you accept it," said his friend, "you can get more."

LOVE - AMERICAN STYLE

Three typical American kiddies decided to play house. Said the first, "I'll be the papa." Said the second, "I'll be the mamma." Said the third, "And I'll be the lawyer who arranges for the divorce, Now we'll discuss my fee."

MARK TWAIN SAID IT

"Most people are bothered by those passages in Scripture which they cannot understand but as for me, I always noticed that the passages in Scripture which trouble me most are those which I do understand." —*Mark Twain*

“Listen”

On a beautiful Lord's day morning recently in the city in middle Tennessee that some refer to as Old Jerusalem – USA, a congregation of a thousand came together at the appointed time for worship. As it was announced that a young lady had been baptized earlier that week and as she was asked to stand and be recognized, the entire congregation arose and gave her a standing ovation. Soon afterwards, another young lady arose and sang a couple of solos. As the Lord's supper was being served, and a choral group sang what was deemed to be an appropriate song, a middle eastern group chanted some folk chant common to their culture. All of this as several sisters served the emblems commemorating the Lord's death as several members of the faculty of the University bearing the name of one of the greats of the restoration looked on approvingly*LISTEN, IS THAT A STIRRING IN LIPSCOMB'S GRAVE.....*

Hard Preaching

"I can remember when preachers wore cuffs attached to the sleeve by a device of some sort, stiffly laundered cuffs But some of the early preachers preached with such force that they would send a stiffly laundered cuff sailing out over the crowd! It is a bold contrast with some of the milquetoast elocution heard in pulpits today I do not believe in croaking out insults against people, but I do believe in the kind of preaching that draws the issue, and draws the blood when the occasion requires it" (*Foy E. Wallace--Bulwarks of Faith, page 92*).

Life's Darkest Moment

"When the fellow you've been inviting to church for so many months finally comes, and then calls up the next day to find out why you weren't there."

BOOKS ON CD

Below is a partial listing of some of the great books of The Restoration Movement. Brother Bennie Johns has spent countless hours scanning this material and making it available to the public.

*We have ordered several of these works and have no reservation about recommending them to you. This is a way to build a tremendous library without the cost. Many of, if not all of these wonderful works, are out of print...
..LEW*

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