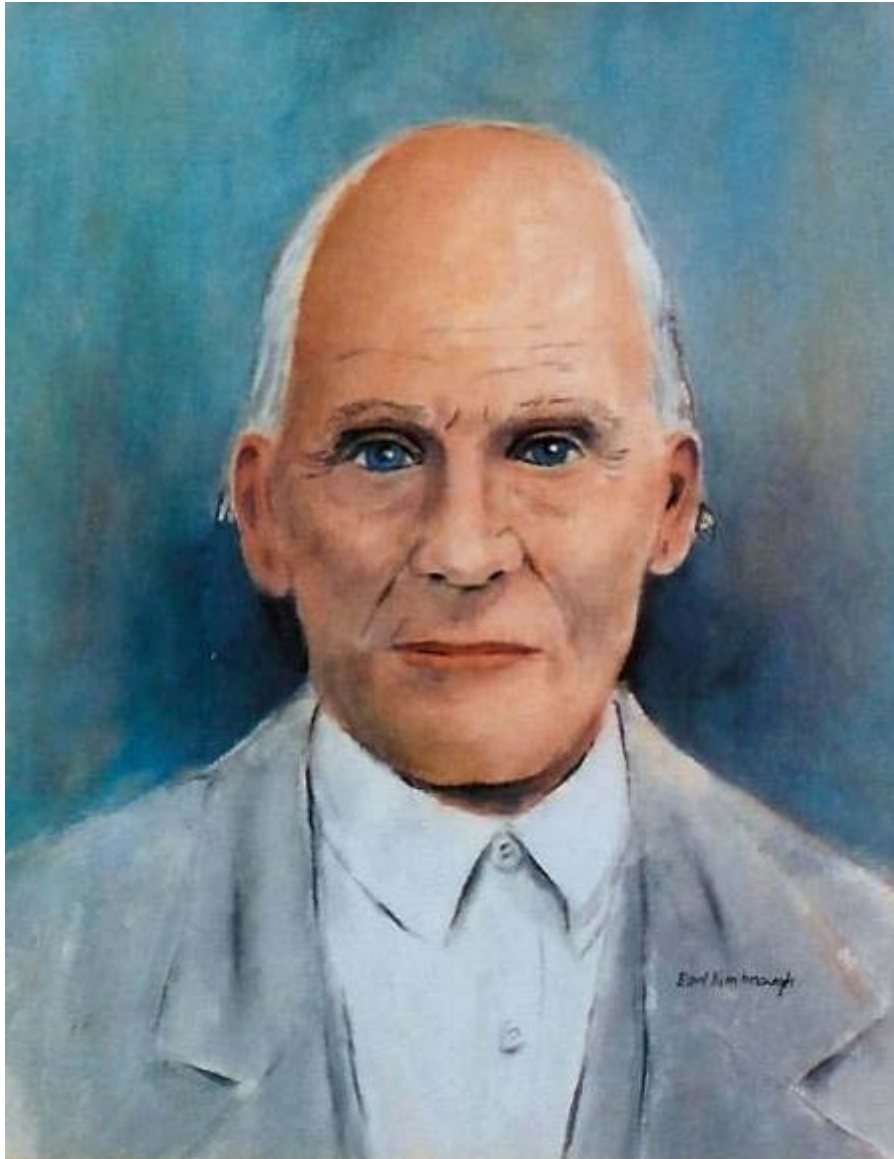


The Alabama Restoration Journal

An Historical Perspective of
Churches of Christ In Alabama



John Taylor
1808-1885

VOLUME 3

ISSUE 2

August 01, 2008

STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLE

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The Editors

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OUR COVER

Earl Kimbrough has done another splendid job on this cover, Painting brother Taylor in his later years makes the rendering even more special. If you would care to order a print, you may contact us at (256)668-3135 or write us at

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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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"PARSON" JOHN TAYLOR

Larry Whitehead

When Alabama restoration movement historians get together to discuss their latest finds, some names inevitably are brought into the conversation. Such men as B.F. Hall, Tolbert Fanning, the Randolphs, Elisha, Jeremiah and Lorenzo Dow, James and Mansell Matthews and the Kendrick brothers, Carroll and Allen and the Hackworths, Matt and his father Nick, represent the first generation of great gospel preachers who pioneered the work in Alabama. Justus M. Barnes, T.B. Larimore, the Srygleys, F.D. and F.B, Joe Holbrook, Jesse Turner Wood, John A. McCaleb, J.M. Pickens, are some of the second generation, while John T. Lewis, Gus Nichols, G.C. Brewer, R.N. Moody, J. Pettey Ezell, and a host of others, built on the foundations laid by the first two generations.

Near the top of anyone's list of great workers in the kingdom, would of a certainty be John Taylor. Affectionately known by many as "Parson John," Taylor's life and work began during the labors of the first generation and carried over through most of the second. There is no way to accurately account for the numbers of congregations that he started in northwest Alabama and northeast Mississippi nor how many hundreds, yea thousands, of souls he brought to the truth of the gospel of Christ. He was a tireless worker and the stories abound of his walking many miles or riding a mule to his preaching appointments. If he was a tireless worker, he was also fearless in his stand for truth against the onslaught of denominational attacks against him, his character and the truth that he espoused. Some of his greatest work may very well have been during the war between the states when many, if not most of the congregations in North Alabama were torn apart by the terrible conflict. Nowhere on the continent, was this havoc more prevalent than in northwest Alabama; the area of Taylor's influence. Many historians believe that he singlehandedly held many of the congregations together and had it not been for his persistence and faith, many the churches would have been almost destroyed in the chaos that surrounded it. Taylor

would cross the Union lines at least once a month to preach for the Stony Point church located above Florence as well as others, such as the Union church in Marion County. It is likely that he took no side in the war, at least publicly. Some members of his family however, joined the Confederate army while at least one daughter was married to a Union man. Thus his family, as were so many others in Northwest Alabama, was divided in their loyalties.

The story of Taylor's conversion to the truth of the gospel, is a wonderful story, told elsewhere in this issue by brother Kimbrough. His determination and dedication to this gospel is equally a wonderful chapter in the story of the restoration movement in our state and in our nation, being one of only 5 men of whom it can be said that he started his own restoration movement. Were it not for F.D. Srygley's book, *Larimore and His Boys* and the writings of F.B. Srygley, Taylor's story may have been lost to future generations. The Srygleys chronicled many of Taylor's exploits and preserved them for us.

Brother Taylor has a special place in my heart because I believe he was responsible for starting the congregation that came to be called Berea, in Fayette, County. My maternal ancestors moved to that area in 1829/30, having been converted by Elisha Randolph or one of his associates in Morgan County in 1825. When brother Richey baptized my granddaughter, Lora Whitehead in 2006, she became the eighth generation Christian descending from those ancestors who labored with brother Taylor at Berea in Fayette County. This alone, makes this wonderful man very special to me. To say that my family's association with brother Taylor, gives me a great deal of pride, would be an understatement.

Brother Earl Kimbrough is now working on a biography of this Godly man, to be published soon.

Like so many of his peers, he was a great man and was unaware of it. His life and the lives of so many others, should be an inspiration to all of us.

Changes

You will note major changes in the print fonts in this issue, Last month, we changed the font type with the view to making the type easier to read. This issue we have increased the type size on most of the articles to add to better readability. We have also improved the photo quality as well as the size. Here's hoping the improvements will aid you in your enjoyment of the Journal. Our new Copy Editor, Bennie Johns, is responsible for these changes.....

Friends Of The Restoration

Most of our staff attended the recent lectureships at Faulkner University. Several of our readers also attended. Our own, Earl Kimbrough, delivered a marvelous presentation on F.B. Srygley and his impact on the church in Alabama. Earl continues to amaze us with his vast knowledge of Restoration history and his easy style in presenting it to an audience. It is our prayer that we can have him for many more years of service in the Kingdom and to the Journal.

We enjoyed seeing his delightful family again and meeting his wonderful wife, Rosemary. We spent some time with Kenneth Randolph and his lovely wife, Janice. We are looking forward to further articles from Kenneth.

Wayne along with Bobby Graham and Eugene Britnell were there and we visited again with Ancil Jenkins.. Hilda and Lavaga Logan, our right and left arms, were in attendance. Carl Cheatham spoke on J.M. Barnes and Paul Tarence spoke on Gus Nichols, each giving us insights into the lives of these great preachers.

It is always great to meet and associate with those who share our love of Restoration history. Hopefully, our young people will develop the same feelings about our history that we share. It is always thrilling to hear the stories of yesteryear with the trials and tribulations that our forefathers engaged in. We owe these great men and women so much. We must never lose our appreciation for them and their accomplishments as well as their sacrifices.

A great time was had by all and we are looking forward to next year's lectures.

Next Issue

Our next issue is our long awaited special on the Civil War, or depending on your point of view, The War Between The States or the extreme The War Of Yankee Aggression. Seriously, It will be a great Issue.

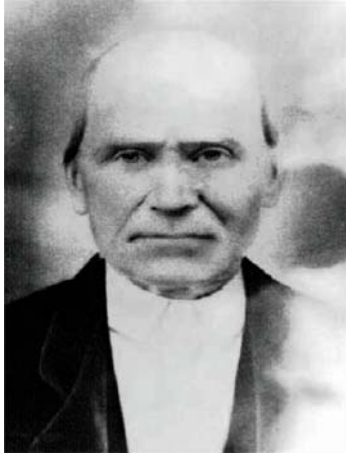
In This Issue

Larry opens with an article on his personal appreciation of "**Parson**" **John Taylor**. *Earl* has an in depth offering chronicling **Taylor's Restoration Movement**. This is a marvelous story of his struggles with Calvinism and his conversion from the same. *Wayne* follows with the story of the marker for Taylor's grave with a piece called **John Taylor's Tombstone**. *Earl* has as his second offering, part one of a series on **John Taylor, The Pinelog and Chimney Corner Preacher**. These articles will give us some insight into this great and Godly man. Our **Voices From The Past** column is from the pen of "**The Prince of Writers**", **Cled Wallace**. Cled has a humorous piece on the lamented J.D. Tant and also on preachers and the brethren. Cled is one of our favorites. Once again, *Frank*, has **The Poets Corner** with a beautiful and powerful poem; **Just Go To God In Prayer**. Take an extra moment on this one; truly some wonderful thoughts. *Larry* has a few words about one of his favorite people, Fred McCaleb, in a piece called **A Special Friend**. *Uncle Isaac* takes out the old muzzle loader and fires a few shots at the brethren as usual. *Earl* does his usual great job with his regular column; **Restoration Ramblings**. "*Tip*" *Grider* writes a biographical piece for our **Pioneers** column, on an old soldier of the cross from South Alabama, Fred Little. This is a reprint from *Sound Doctrine*, 1941. *Earl* takes a light hearted look at "**A Call To Preach.**" Most of us have heard the infamous stories put up by our denominational friends on the call. *Bobby Graham* returns to our pages with a follow up to an earlier article on the Hackworth family. This one is an excellent piece entitled **A Tale Of Two Hackworth Sons**. The "**Gathering Home**" column carries the death notice of one of the most beloved preachers in the Florence area from the last century. From the *Gospel Advocate*, August 16, 1934, *G.C. Brewer* reminisces about **The Work In Walker County**. Brother Brewer was one of the young preachers who did exceptional work in that county in the early days of the 1900s. *Wayne* follows with part two of his series on **James C. Anderson**, one of the unsung heroes of the early days of the Restoration. *Scott Harp* has a great offering (a companion piece to the Gathering Home Column.) This is taken from his excellent website www.restorationmovement.com on a wonderful old soldier of the cross from Lauderdale County, **William Behel**. *Earl* has a short, but excellent piece on **Holy Ghost Religion**. His final offering for this issue is an article titled **Lorenzo Dow In Alabama**. The legendary preacher toured the State several times. **Keeble Said It**; a few quotes from this grand old preacher. The **Nostalgia Page** should be interesting and *Larry* has **The Final Say**. Enjoy.....

JOHN TAYLOR'S RESTORATION MOVEMENT

Earl Kimbrough

In 1827, when they were twenty and nineteen respectively, John and Mary Taylor migrated to



John Taylor

Alabama from South Carolina. They first settled in Marion County, in the upper Sipsey River region of what is now the northern part of Fayette County. Their home was southeast of Glen Allen, where they lived for about ten to fifteen years, before moving north to Franklin County. They apparently settled in Franklin County between 1837 and 1842, probably after 1840. It was while living in Marion County that John and Mary became Christians after learning from the Bible what they must do to be saved.

John, at the urging of his wife, had first tried to find salvation as set forth in the then current theology of the Primitive Baptists. But he could obtain no "experience of grace," such as the Baptists required, no matter how hard he tried. So he gave up, concluding that he was eternally damned. He took to drinking to drown his grief at his inability to obtain salvation. But when the Baptists began their summer revivals, Mary begged her husband through many tears to try again to obtain salvation. So he attended the services and heard a Baptist preacher quote Acts 2:38.



Mary Taylor

He at once saw as plain as day that he could obtain salvation upon the promise Peter made to the Jews on Pentecost. With some difficulty, he found a Baptist preacher who agreed to baptize him upon a confession of faith in Christ for the remission of sins.

There being no New Testament church any where in that country, Taylor joined the Baptist Church and soon began preaching, but he preached the gospel plan of salvation rather than the

experimental religion of the Baptists. One of the oldest Baptist Churches in the vicinity where Taylor lived was the Old Union Baptist Church, which was also known at times as the New River Baptist Church. However, the church where he learned what to do to be saved and with which he was associated before his expulsion for preaching the truth, has not been positively identified.

When John Taylor was turned out of the Baptist Church, notwithstanding the fact that he had not been regularly taken into it, he was not certain that he should continue preaching. He had an appointment to preach in the next county, but he did not know whether he should keep it. F. B. Srygley left a record of Taylor's decision, including its cause and immediate effect. He writes: "He went to see his brother in the flesh, 'Big' Mark Taylor, to get his advice about filling his appointment. Mark Taylor was not a member of any church, but he was considered a man of good judgment. This Baptist Church had not only turned John Taylor out of the church but it had cancelled his license to preach. Mark said: 'John, go on and preach the Bible to them. If you were fit to preach before they cancelled your license to preach, you are fit to preach yet.'"

Srygley said: "Taylor went to his appointment and preached on 'What Must I Do to Be Saved?' At the close of the sermon a young lady came forward for baptism. Brother Taylor told the audience that he had been turned out of Baptist Church, that he now belonged to no church, and said: 'If I baptize her, since I am not a member of any church, she will be in no church.' The father of the girl spoke up and said: 'She will be in the kingdom, and that will be good enough.' Taylor said: 'We will think about this for a month; and when I return, we will make some disposition of the case.' He went back and preached several days, and baptized thirty-nine people in the same creek. And this was the first New Testament church, unmixed with human tradition, in that community." (*Gospel Advocate*, Dec. 10, 1936.) Reflecting on the father's words, Taylor said "it appeared to him that the church is the body of Christ, and if one is in the kingdom, he is evidently in that body; and if in the body, he is in the church." (*Ibid.*, April 24, 1930.)

After baptizing the young girl and many others on that occasion, Taylor "taught them to be Christians only and to worship as the New Testament directs." Regarding the beginning of this independent church based on baptism for the remission of sins and the

Bible as their sole guide in religion, Srygley said: "At that time Brother Taylor had never heard that there was such a man living as Alexander Campbell, neither did he know anyone that held to the position which he had learned from the New Testament; but he continued to preach as the New Testament teaches and other churches were established in that part of the State of Alabama." (Ibid.) Taylor saw the truth a little at a time, as the blind man who first saw "men as trees, walking." But with the Bible as his guide, he came to see the apostolic order and became a great influence for New Testament Christianity in Northwest Alabama in the nineteenth century.

Srygley did not identify the first independent church started by Taylor, nor did he give the date of its beginning. But there is reason to believe that it was the Old Berea church of Christ in Fayette County, or possibly a forerunner of that church, and that the time of its beginning was about 1829-1830. This conclusion is based on some established facts. Berea is acknowledged as the oldest church of Christ in that part of the state and in the region where Taylor did his earliest preaching. This region was in the vicinity of Hubbertville, along what was then the Marion-Fayette County line that was later changed and may very well have been in the "next county" from where Taylor then lived. If there was a church that close to John Taylor preaching baptism for the remission of sins about the time he was excluded from the Baptist church, it is inconceivable that he would not have known of it.

Elisha Randolph preached and established churches of Christ in Morgan County as early as 1825. Some of his converts, including the Robert Logan and Hugh White McCaleb families, moved to the Berea community in about 1830-1831. Elisha Randolph moved his family there a little later, in about 1832. A letter from some members of the Berea church to the *Millennial Harbinger* in 1870 said: "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* [emphasis theirs] more than forty years, one an elder and preacher for more than a quarter of a century." (*Millennial Harbinger*, Dec. 1870.) The clear implication is that some of these were Christians before moving to Berea and some had been there for more than forty years. This would put them in the Berea community as early as 1830.

Another piece of evidence is a statement by J. M. Pickens in 1874. He had recently preached at Berea and wrote: "Berea is an old church, planted

many years ago, and chiefly by the labors of John Taylor, John McCaleb, Jeremiah Randolph and others." (*Southern Christian Weekly*, Aug. 20, 1874.) Since John Taylor was instrumental in starting the Berea church and it had been in existence since 1830, it is evident that it began at about the time Taylor was excluded from the Baptist church, and shortly before the Christians from Morgan County moved there. The independent church started by John Taylor began before he had any contact with others who taught baptism for the remission of sins. Thus it was started before the McCalebs, Logans, and Randolphs moved to that country because they were already Christians when they came there. Further, if Berea is not the independent church started by Taylor, then there was another church of Christ in close proximity that began before Berea. It is therefore reasonable to conclude, based on these facts, that the independent church started by John Taylor was either the Berea church or a nearby church that became the Berea church, and that very near its beginning, he was joined in that work by the Logans, McCalebs, and Randolphs. This alone seems to fit all the known facts.

Taylor's conversion, his preaching the plan of salvation in the Baptist Church, his first preaching after his exclusion from the Baptists, and his establishing of an independent church on Bible principles within a few weeks of his exclusion from the Baptist Church marks the beginning of his restoration work, which continued in Northwest Alabama for more than fifty years. When he established the first New Testament church in that country, he did not know that there was another such church anywhere on earth. He was not aware that such a thing as the Restoration Movement existed. He actually started a restoration movement of his own in Fayette County with one New Testament church, before he knew anything about the work of Barton W. Stone and Alexander Campbell. He was doing the very sort of thing that Campbell, Stone, and many others were doing: attempting to leave denominational names and creeds and to return to the divine order established by the apostles in the New Testament. He was preaching baptism for the remission of sins in Alabama at the time that Walter Scott was preaching it with great success on the Western Reserve of Ohio.

Rock Creek Philosophy

Friendship is a good thing when we can hold it and preach the truth, but it is a great evil when we have to compromise the truth to hold our friendship. This is too great a price to pay for friendship...F.B. Srygley

JOHN TAYLOR'S TOMBSTONE

C. Wayne Kilpatrick

You may ask yourself: "Why would anyone bother to write about a tombstone?" The truth is that grave markers, to the student of history, are a kind of written record, just as documents in the courthouse. They can tell, in many cases, a lot about the person. It may reveal that he or she was a doctor, a nurse, a school teacher, etc. In our case, John Taylor's marker reveals a lot about the pain, suffering, and persecution he endured as a minister. These markers endear us to the person whose remains rest beneath those lonely sentinels.

This thought was suggested in an article written by G.W. Sweaney to Gospel Advocate in 1903. Sweaney explained that a year before, J.R. Bradley, a "Mars Hill Boy", returned to his old home congregation at Iron City, Tennessee and found the old Wade Cemetery completely taken over by briars, thorns, and bushes. Bradley challenged the men to meet him on an appointed day and clean the cemetery to show respect and honor to the departed loved ones. The call was answered and the cemetery was cleaned. As Sweaney wrote about this event a year later he said:

Certainly we cannot hope to better or in any way change the fate of those who have left time's shores, but by caring for their graves we manifest our respect for, and remembrance of them (G.A. Oct. 22, 1903, p. 687).

John Taylor was well worthy of this kind of honor and respect. The real story in this article is that the respect and honor shown by a grave marker was long in coming to this great soldier of the cross and the great effort made to correct the situation.

The saga began in the spring of 1890, when J.H. Holbrook visited one of the most remote areas of Franklin County, Alabama. He had come near Frankfort to hold a Gospel Meeting. While in this region, he travels a few miles to a lonely hilltop to visit the grave of his old friend, John Taylor. His soul was stirred with remorse to find the grave still unmarked after more than five years (Taylor had died in February, 1885). This prompted Holbrook to write an article to Gospel Advocate in which he said of Taylor:

He labored longer and harder, and endured more persecution and hardship, and received less in the way of remuneration than almost any man I ever knew. After having preached for about a half century, he sleeps in an unmarked grave with not even a slab to mark the spot where his ashes now repose (G.A. July 9, 1890, p. 437).

Someone had informed Srygley of the situation and described it as follows:

...his grave is in the woods, near a humble country church in the mountains of North Alabama, and that it is not marked at all (F.D. Srygley, Ibid).

Srygley continued: "in a few years it will be impossible to identify it if it is not marked (Ibid).

Holbrook decided to raise money and place a tombstone at Taylor's grave. He began by writing the following appeal:

Now I wish to make this one appeal to all who have been blessed by his labors and to all who have read of him and loved him, to contribute something to help put a respectable little stone at this head. (J.H Holbrook, G.A., Ibid).

He further wrote about the type of stone to be suitable for Taylor. He stated:

His friends here think that if Uncle John had been consulted he would not want anything very costly (Ibid).

Holbrook proposed a cheap, but neat stone. He believed that this would have pleased John Taylor very much. He encouraged the brethren "...please don't wait and think that we are sure to get enough without you, but send a part of the amount yourself" (Ibid). He suggested that the money either be sent to him at New River, Alabama or to Gospel Advocate in Nashville, Tennessee.

The money began to trickle into the fund and Andrew McCaleb of New River Alabama sent the first five dollars. John T. McCaleb of New River also sent five dollars. T.B. Larimore sent a contribution to F.D. Srygley at the Advocate along with the following note:

While the modest movement erected by you in the book 'Larimore and His Boys' to perpetuate the name and fame of faithful John Taylor - 'Brave Brother of Blessed Memory' - is worthy of more appreciation than a thousand massive monuments of snowy whiteness each tall enough to cast a shadow 'from the rising to the setting of the we contribute cheerfully, gladly and liberally to the fund Brother Holbrook is raising, to mark our dear, departed Brother's grave (T.B. Larimore, G.A. Aug. 20, 1890, p.542).sun', duty demands that

The church in Russellville, Alabama, in a letter

written to F.D. Srygley by W.D. Harris, stated that it would “contribute liberally” to the fund. Srygley stated from Harris’ letter that he (Harris) “will undertake to convey the stone from Russellville, the nearest shipping point, to the lonely grave ten miles back in the hills and set it up (Ibid).

W.T. Sandlin of Cherokee, Alabama, whose family was connected to the Srygleys through marriage, sent the vital statistics to be displayed on the stone, such as birth, marriage, and death dates. Sandlin also collected some money for the fund (Ibid). With co-operation of the brethren the stone was soon purchased and placed at the head of John Taylor’s grave.

A fitting tribute was inscribed by the stone cutter’s chisel that read:

In great poverty and through bitter persecution, John Taylor preached the Gospel in Ala. and Miss. From 1830 to the time of his death. This stone is erected by his brethren in the Lord, as a token of their appreciation of his labors as a faithful minister in the church of Christ.

These lines are reminiscent of J.H. Holbrook’s words penned nearly a year before, that stated:

He labored longer and harder and endured more persecution and hardship, and received less in the way or remuneration... (July9, 1890, Ibid).

After more than 120 years (to date) of wind, rain, sleet, and snow, John Taylor’s tombstone is in danger. An ugly crack has etched itself into either side of the monument at the very point where the tribute begins. Repair or replacement is badly needed, so that future generations may visit this good man’s grave and be encouraged by his life and labors.

One footnote to the above account is most fitting. During this discussion about John Taylor’s grave, we have said nothing about Mary Taylor, the beloved wife and companion to John Taylor. She endured the same persecutions and hardships as did her beloved husband and just as her husband’s grave was unmarked until 1890, so was her grave unmarked. The same marker that identifies John’s grave, now identifies Mary’s grave. The same marker that bore her husband’s inscription and tribute, also bears her inscription. One might wonder why Mary’s grave went unmarked from 1868 until 1890. Why did John and the Taylor family not mark her grave? Let us remember that John Taylor lived in poverty, as did the rest of his family and neighbors. This area was one of the most impoverished regions of the entire south. No doubt if those good people could have afforded the head

stones, they would have been placed at these graves long before 1890. We close with the following lines:

Come To My Grave

*Come to my grave when I shall rest
From all life’s cares forever!
When the ties that bound us here are rent
Which death alone could sever!*

*Come, when around my lowly bed
The flowers I love are springing;
And when a requiem, soft and low,
The birds are sweetly singing!*

*Then come, when o’er me softly fall
The twilight dews of even;
And when the stars look gently down
Like angel eyes from heaven!*

*Then kneel and pray, as oft we’ve prayed;
And strength will still be given,
By Him who is the mourner’s friend-
Till we shall meet in heaven!*

These portions of a much longer poem have been used to accent this account of John Taylor’s grave and headstone. This poem was written by a sister from Nashville, Tennessee, known only as Mary. The poem was written for the Bible Advocate in 1843 (B.A. July, 1843, p. 184). John Taylor probably read this very poem, as he was a subscriber to the Bible Advocate.



JOHN TAYLOR, “THE PINELOG AND CHIMNEY CORNER” PREACHER OF NORTHWEST ALABAMA

Part One
Earl Kimbrough

John Taylor’s Early Life

Thomas Jefferson was nearing the end of his second term as president when John Taylor was born in South Carolina on February 20, 1807. John’s parents were poor and unable to provide him with schooling, but he was blessed with a good mind, a strong body, and a determined will. He learned much “from observation, conversation and social intercourse with his neighbors.” Like many born in pioneer poverty, he was impressed from his youth with the value of humility, truthfulness, and honest labor. He married early in life and his young wife, Mary “Polly” Preisach, helped him learn to read.

In 1827, at twenty and nineteen respectively, Mary and John migrated to Alabama. They settled in Marion County in the upper Sipsey River region of what is now the northern part of Fayette County. Their home was southeast of Glen Allen where they lived about fifteen years before moving to Franklin County. Nine children were born to John and Mary—Mary Ann, Elizabeth, John Abraham, James William, Evans Randolph, Allen Haley, Martha Rebecca, Sarah, and Absolum David. Three sons were named for pioneer gospel preachers. John Abraham was named for him, Allen Haley for Green Haley, and Evans Randolph, for Jeremiah Randolph. Other members of the Taylor family may have come to Marion County when John and Mary came. John’s brother, Mark Taylor, lived in the same area where he first settled.

It was while living in Marion County that John Taylor became a Christian and began preaching. He moved to Franklin County in about 1842 and settled on Lost Creek, west of Frankfort, then the county seat. The Lost Creek region was within the Chickasaw Nation. The boundary line ran between Frankfort and Lost Creek where the Taylors lived. An 1832 treaty with the Chickasaws added the portion of their land that lay in Alabama to Marion and Franklin Counties. This was done by the state legislature before the Indians were removed in 1837. “By 1836, the Chickasaw land in northwest Alabama was surveyed and placed on sale. As was typical when new lands were offered for sale, the demand was great. After the initial rush, the demand subsided somewhat. Much of the Indian land in Franklin County was sold in 1836. Sales continued intermittently thereafter until 1859.” (Richie Hester, *Forefathers of Franklin County*, 23.)

The 1850 Franklin County census shows that Taylor’s son Evans Randolph Taylor, who was born in the county, was eight years old. Thus he was born

there about the time the family settled there. Taylor was a blacksmith and a carpenter by trade, but he also farmed and worked as a cobbler. However, our main interest in him centers in another calling, that of a gospel preacher. While he continued to support himself and his family mostly by his own labor, he was primarily a gospel preacher. In the 1850 census, he is listed as a farmer, but in the later censuses he is described as “a Minister of the Gospel.”

John Taylor’s Conversion

Most religious people in the community where John Taylor was reared were Primitive Baptists. His parents were of that persuasion, as was his good wife. When he took an interest in his eternal welfare, it was natural that he should seek salvation after the manner of current Baptist theology. Baptists then taught that only the elect among alien sinners would be saved and that they must be specially called of God before their salvation. There was nothing the sinner could do to effect such a call, other than to plead for it and to wait for it; but when it came, it would be attended by an unmistakable sign, described as “an experience of grace,” as evidence that the call was genuine. There were Baptist churches in the area and they had annual revivals in summer and fall. Taylor attended these, seeking salvation. One of the oldest Baptist churches in the area where he lived was the Old Union Baptist Church. However, the congregation in which Taylor learned what to do to be saved and with which he was associated before his expulsion, has not been positively identified, although it was most likely Old Union.

To join with the Baptist Church in that day, one was required to relate an “experience of grace,” which could be accepted or rejected by the church. The “experience” might take many forms, such as “a small still voice in the night,” a peculiar formation in the clouds, or some extra-ordinary event; but it was always subjected to the scrutiny of the church. If the applicant received a favorable vote from the congregation, he was accepted into fellowship upon his receipt of water baptism, as a token of his salvation. But even though the Baptists then subscribed to the doctrine of unconditional election, they depended on the “mourner’s bench” for making converts in their revivals.

John Taylor had been taught that, if he were among the elect, the Holy Spirit would operate on him in a miraculous way and he would receive such a

“measure” of the Holy Spirit as to leave no doubt in his mind that he was saved. He did what the Baptist preachers told him to do, but failed to get the promised experience. He obtained a Bible and, with Mary’s help, learned enough to know what sin is and that he had to get rid of it to be a Christian. But he did not know how to get rid of his sins and the remedy the Baptists gave him brought no assurance of salvation. F. B. Srygley, who knew Taylor well and heard him recount his conversion many times, gave an account of it.

Taking up the story here, Srygley said: “He then fell back on the old doctrine of unconditional election, and told his wife that he had decided that there was no salvation for him. Like many foolish ones in that day, he got him a jug of whiskey in order to drown his troubles with drink. At the time he was working at the cobbler’s trade. He kept his jug covered with sole leather, and he kept just as drunk as he could be and work at his trade. His wife cried with him and begged him not to drink. The preachers, many of them, were interested in him, and the best part of the community prayed for him; but he still thought his best chance was to drown his troubles in drink.”

“The winter passed, and ‘big-meeting’ time came around again, and the day was set at the Baptist Church for their annual meeting, in which they were to make a special effort to save the unconverted. Through persuasion of his wife, he promised to make another effort to find the Lord. He read his New Testament almost continually till the day arrived for the meeting to begin, and he and his wife were on the ground early for the meeting. John Taylor took a front seat, and the preacher began his discourse. During the sermon the preacher had occasion to refer to the second chapter of Acts. He quoted the question of those inquiring Jews when they said: ‘Men and brethren, what shall we do?’ The preacher continued farther and quoted the answer which Peter gave: ‘Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.’ John Taylor said that he began to reason on that case, and he thought: ‘If those wicked Jews could receive the remission of sins on those terms, why can I not do the same and get the same results?’”

“From the preacher’s reference to that passage he saw the truth on that point, and Taylor said it was as clear as the noonday sun. He said it was so plain to him that he began to clap his hands and shout: ‘Glory to God!’ The preacher stopped and said: ‘Thank God, John Taylor has got religion at last!’ But Taylor answered: ‘No, I have not got it; I only see how I can get it. I see exactly what to do for the remission

of sins.’ This answer brought a rather difficult question before the preacher and that Baptist Church. They tried through the meeting to convince John Taylor that he was already saved, and all he had to do was to acknowledge it and join the Baptist Church; then, upon an experience of grace, they would receive him into the church after baptism. At the close of the meeting, they called a session of the church, and Taylor told them he could not relate a Christian experience, because he had no experience as a Christian; but he was willing to confess that he believed that Jesus Christ was the Son of God, if they would baptize him on that confession. The preacher was willing to baptize him, but the church was not willing for him to do so, and they threatened to prefer charges against the preacher if he baptized him. Thus the meeting closed and nothing was done about it.”

“Some time after that, Brother Taylor went to the home of a Baptist preacher, who lived about six miles away; and when he reached the preacher’s home, his brother-in-law was there on a visit. Taylor asked the preacher if he would go with him to water and baptize him on a confession of faith. The brother-in-law said: ‘Brother William, that is a scriptural request, and I think you should baptize him.’ But the preacher said: ‘If I do, it will get up trouble in the church.’ But the preacher promised Taylor that if he would meet him at a creek some distance away at midnight, he would baptize him, and they would say nothing about it. Taylor and his wife rode their only horse about four miles to the place designated, and they sat there on the bank of the creek till daylight next morning, but the preacher did not come. Afterward he told Brother Taylor that it looked so much like stealing that he backed out; but he said: ‘If you will meet me at the church on the next preaching day, I will put your case before the church; and if the church refuses to give its consent, I will baptize you and take the consequences.’ They had the meeting, and it broke up in a row, and the preacher went with Taylor to the creek and baptized him.” (Gospel Advocate, Dec. 10, 1936.)

Paralee Annie Gassaway, a granddaughter of Taylor, who was ten years old when he died, told me in 1965 that after her grandfather was baptized, he then baptized the Baptist preacher who baptized him.” (Paralee Annie Gassaway, Interview with Earl Kimbrough, July 28, 1965.) Taylor’s conversion took place in Marion County not long after he came to Alabama, evidently in about 1829. This was near the time that Walter Scott began preaching baptism for the remission of sins in Ohio. Taylor depended on the New Testament alone to learn what to do to be saved. This is not remarkable in view of the plainness

of the Scriptures, but it is unusual in view of the religious tenor of the times and the prevailing sentiment that salvation is a miracle effected by God separate and apart from his written word, and that there is nothing man can do to be saved until God is ready to operate on him by his miraculous power.

According to Taylor's own testimony, he had never heard of Alexander Campbell, or what people called "Campbellism," at the time of his conversion. Nor did he then know of any people anywhere that called themselves Christians only and who took the Bible alone as their guide. He had simply learned for himself from the Bible, as many others have before and since, what one must do to be saved and he insisted on doing it, in spite of the difficulty and opposition it aroused. It was not until some time after his conversion that he learned about others who were striving to follow the New Testament apart from human names and creeds. This, too, was prior to his removal to Franklin County. By the time of his conversion, there were already New Testament Christians and churches of Christ in the northern part of the state, but he had not heard about them.

Association With The Baptist Church

Strangely, in view of the controversy surrounding his conversion; John Taylor was received into the fellowship of the Baptist Church, under a rather liberal application of their terms of membership. He attended their meetings and soon began to preach, but his preaching, like his baptism, was "unorthodox" by Baptist standards. A clash was inevitable. Baptists were not the sort of people to sit idly by while their cherished beliefs and practices were called into question and opposed as error. Nor was Taylor the kind of man to fail, for the sake of acceptance, to preach his honest convictions once firmly thought out and set in his mind. As his understanding of the Scriptures grew, he increased the vigor with which he set forth the New Testament plan of salvation and opposed whatever he considered to be contrary to it. Sectarian preachers of that day were usually vulnerable from the standpoint of Bible knowledge and he took advantage of the opportunities this gave him to expose and correct their misunderstanding of God's word. This intensified his unpopularity with the denominational churches, especially the Baptists.

Due to his constant application to Bible study, Taylor became well-versed in the Scriptures. When the Baptists began to charge him with heresy, he proposed to give book, chapter, and verse for all that he taught, but that failed to pacify them. The Baptists of frontier times looked at the Bible strictly through John Calvin's glasses and anything contrary to what

they called "Baptist usage" was considered heresy by them, regardless of what the Bible said. When they measured Taylor by that yardstick, he was a heretic. So they finally called a meeting and turned him out of the Baptist Church for heresy.

F. D. Srygley who traveled and preached with Taylor in Northwest Alabama, writing in 1889, four years after Taylor's death, recalled the old preacher's account of his expulsion from the Baptist Church. He said: "He had long tolerated error and excesses in the guise of religion, because he neither wished to be an agitator against time-honored traditions, nor saw any definite way to correct them; but once the issue was fairly made and the conflict openly begun, he gave himself wholly and unreservedly to the support of his cause. The first move was to exclude him from the Baptist church for preaching Campbellism. 'And before God, brethren,' the old man would say in his earnest manner in after years, 'I had never heard of Campbellism nor of Alexander Campbell before in all my life.' That was way back when Campbell first began to preach. The truth is, he learned Campbellism from the New Testament and was excluded from the Baptist church for preaching it in North Alabama before he ever heard of Alexander Campbell or his teaching." (Srygley, Smiles, 37.)

FIFTEEN MILES FROM HEAVEN

Earl Kimbrough

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Cled Wallace was one of the great writers of days gone by. He was the older brother of Foy E. Wallace, Jr. Both these brothers had deep roots in the hill country of Alabama. Their grandfather, Thomas Knox Wallace was likely a member of the old Cedar Plains church near Falkville in Morgan County, before moving to Texas after the Civil War. They were likely kinsmen of the Srygley's from Rock Creek who were descended from the Wallace (Wallis) family also. Cled was witty in his writings and was a master of biting sarcasm when necessary to make a point. He was truly a prince of writers. Two examples of his style follow: *LEW*

BROTHER TANT'S PICTURE

I discover in these last days that I am coming to the front. I now have a letter from Foy E. Wallace, Jr., begging me to write an article of fifteen hundred words and send my photo to put in the Advocate: but I still write the same kind of articles I did when Jim Allen was put out, and I had ten in the office then too common for publication. --**J. D. Tant, in Firm Foundation.**

Cled's Resonse

Well, it looks like we all have to make a few mistakes. If Foy asked for Brother Tant's picture and a fifteen-hundred-word article to go with it, that's Boner Number One for him. If he is guilty, I'll help razz him for trying to put a raw deal like that over on the readers of the Gospel Advocate. It would be a pity to disfigure such a fine looking paper in any such fashion. It's a safe guess that Brother Tant will never again be subjected to the annoyance of an Advocate editor "begging" him for anything. "Little Foy," our considerate "young editor," will have to learn that trying to be nice to a rantankerous old maverick like Brother Tant is a waste of time and an imposition on others. Love him, of course, but do it prudently and from a safe distance. If you ever feel equal to putting a bridle on him and using him--why, be careful. Approach him for the fore, not the rear, as you would a mule, or else he'll kick you clear over the corral, as he appears to have done in this instance. Not much harm done, and you'll know better next time, Little Brother. I could have told you this time if you had asked me. -- Cled E. Wallace, *Gospel Advocate*, Vol. 75, No. 36 (September 7, 1933):844.

Preachers And Money

If preachers did not marry, raise children, eat and wear clothes they might get along very well without money. As it is most of them manage to get along some how

without much. Some brethren are rather fond of saying that preachers are financial failures and have no sense in the use of money. Some of them must be rather shrewd manipulators to get along on what they get. They are on the mercy of brethren who are at times rather short on mercy. I am one of the old-fashioned kind who goes where he is called, asks no questions about the money, and wouldn't tell what he wants even if he were asked, except in extreme cases. The brethren do the deciding, usually without consulting the preacher. They often debate the case in a closed session and I often wonder why they never think to call the preacher in and consult his needs. Were he bold enough to suggest an amount, it would probably be far from extortionate. Many of the churches should practice quitting the miserly way they have of putting capable and hard-working preachers on a mere sustenance dole. They make an ox of him to tread out their corn and secure him with a muzzle that a mosquito couldn't wiggle through. It would make sordid reading if some preachers were to frankly tell of their financial treatment at the hands of some churches. There is nothing personal in this as I'm getting along very well even if I'm not uneasy over being picked up for evasion of income taxes.



Cled Wallace Preachers as a rule are a liberal lot. They give according to their ability with a ready mind. For this they receive a blessing. They also do some involuntary giving they will, I fear, get no credit for. For instance some brethren may decide without consulting the preacher what he should be paid for his services. Then without consulting him they decide to pay him somewhat less because they have had to repair the meeting house, install some fans, build a sidewalk or buy some songbooks. They did not ask him if he wanted to make a contribution, they just **took** it out of his check. The amount they took without asking is usually more than anybody else gave. What can the preacher do about it? He might do several things but my advice to him is to do exactly **nothing**. He had better just thank the Lord they didn't take it all, and go on his way rejoicing. You may get a healthy lift from an unexpected source at some other place.

It often happens that somebody who controls the purse of a church justifies himself for short-checking the preacher by observing that "it's as much as I make." If anybody ever hears of somebody in the

church who makes lots of money insisting that the preacher be paid as much as he makes, write me about and I'll send it to Ripley. Somehow the preacher manages to get along, even if he is paid as **little** as somebody else makes instead of occasionally **as much** as some prosperous member makes.

As much as I like preachers and sympathize with some of them, I cannot resist the temptation of poking fun at some of them. The kind for instance who takes no physical exercise, eats like a draft horse as often as he can get his nose in the feed bag in and out of season, grows a big front, breaks down considerably short of old age, and wails that he "has wore hisself out in the service of the Lord." *The Bible Banner*, Vol. II, No. 2 (Sept., 1939): 29

The Poet's Corner

Just Go To God In Prayer

When the trials of life seem tough and unfair,
And the days are filled with worry and care,
When problems persist and solace resists,
Just go to God in prayer

When loved ones cause disappointment and pain
And discouragement fills your days.
Pray that you might bear the darkest despair,
Just go to God in prayer

When those that you love turn their backs on you
And their lies leave you weary and stressed,
To Him you can cleave, for He'll never leave
Just go To God in prayer

When your sin is a burden that you bear each day
And guilt fills your heart at night,
Ask Him to forgive and your life for Him live,
Just go to God in prayer

When sickness and grief take their toll on you,
And your soul is weary and worn.
When life seems unfair, with the burdens you bear,
Just go to God in prayer.

When death of a loved one burdens your soul
And you feel all alone with grief.
In anguish you sigh, turn to God on high,
Just go to God in prayer.

Just go to God in prayer
Before the throne on high.
Every burden you bear, tell to God in prayer
For We know that He is nigh.

Frank Richey

A SPECIAL FRIEND

Larry Whitehead

My grandmother told me when I was a youngster, that if a man could go through this life and be able to count his true friends on the fingers of one hand, he was a fortunate man indeed. Thankfully, I can count Fred McCaleb of Fayette County, Alabama as one such friend. Fred is in his ninth decade of life and other than the physical frailties common to a man his age, he is as "pearl" as ever.



Fred McCaleb

Some twenty five years ago, I became interested in my family history. Almost everyone I talked to would ask "have you met Fred McCaleb?"

Fred, realizing that I was a "green horn," adopted me as a special project and showed me the ropes. He shared with me his almost fifty years of genealogical research on our common ancestors and kinsmen. His gracious generosity gave me the start that I was looking for.

Fred and his wife, Betty, traveled over the country, visiting courthouses and archives searching for family records for many years. He did it the old fashioned way, before the age of computers. Today he is recognized as a top genealogist and historian. He is contacted by people all over the world with questions about their family tree research. He is recognized as the premier Hallmark family researcher (his maternal ancestors) and has done more work on the McCaleb family than anyone I know. Several years ago he did most of the research and much of the writing for Louetta West Wilson's book, *"Newman McCollum of Fayette County"*. This is the most definitive work on the McCollum family available. In addition to this, he is considered the unofficial historian of Fayette County. He has written extensively about life in the County from the old days to the present. He has compiled and written several congregational histories of the churches of Christ in Fayette and surrounding counties, We have drawn from his work on several occasions for some of our articles.

Fred graduated from the famed Berry College near Rome, Georgia with a degree in chemistry. He was working for NASA in the 1950s when he played a major role in the development of the fuel for the rocket that propelled John Glenn, America's first astronaut, into space, a tremendous contribution to his country.

Fred was attending a gospel meeting at Mt. Olive church of Christ in the early 1930s, when he went forward in obedience to his Lord's commands and obeyed the gospel. He was baptized by Lou Allen Fowler, long time preacher at Mt. Olive, in a nearby pond. He has been a member of the Lord's church for nearly 75 years.

Any day, you will likely find Fred at his computer, surfing the genealogy sites, searching for that lost ancestor. Thank you, Fred, for being a very special friend.....

Uncle Isaac Sez



Heard a sermon the other day on church discipline and maintaining the purity of the Lord's Church. Thought to myself the young preacher was treading on thin ice. We don't hear those kinds of sermons anymore. Might upset the brethren. Church discipline seems to be a thing of the past.

As one elder was heard to say "that's not done in this day." I guess the Apostle Paul must have forgot to tell us in his instructions about discipline, that there was a time limit.. With all the divorces and other worldliness amongst the brethren, if the churches withdrew from all of the members that needed withdrawing from, some congregations would probably lose half their members. The budget would be a disaster and the elders would probably commit hari-kari or at least attempt it.

Sister Hilda was telling me that Miss Polly Sparks started 'em out young in her Sunday school class at Russellville. If you came to class 3 weeks in a row, she added you to the roll. If you missed 3 weeks in a row, she dropped you from the rolls. Makes sense..Some of the congregations never drop "em from the membership directories even when they haven't darkened the door in years. If they would just send in a contribution now and then, some elders would keep "em on the rolls forever.

Now comes a denomination in Florence that advertised during last Easter that they would have a "Resurrection Bunny" on hand to help celebrate the risen Savior." Meanwhile, one of "our" churches announced that they were having an Easter egg hunt with your average everyday ordinary ole bunny rabbit. We can't have this. We are losing ground folks. We can't let the denominations get ahead of us. I'd almost wager a candy Easter egg that next year our brethren will have something to meet the competition. May we suggest Bugs Bunny or maybe Daffy Duck....Yeah! Let's go with Daffy. The name fits.

An old but chilling word has been creeping back into the vernacular of members of the church as of late. That word is "progressive." This is the word that the "Digressives" chose to call themselves over a hundred years ago as they sought to bring the Missionary Society and instrumental music into the church. In a recent article in a bulletin we received, one of the local "forward looking" preachers, spoke about the progressive movement in the church. He chose not to tell us what they were progressing into. I'm afraid I know and it chills me to the bone. Brethren, tell me history does not repeat itself. The same arguments that were used by the "digressives" then, are now being used by the "progressives" today. I figure it takes the Devil about fifty years to educate a class of these

progressive "hot shots" to forget about scriptural authority and lead the church into digression. It seems every half century, or so. the battle must be fought again. Some of the "stuff" (that's what it is, STUFF) that's going on in many of the so called churches of Christ is appalling. The Quail Springs church in Oklahoma, following the lead of that bastion of spirituality, the Richland Hills church in Dallas, just announced that they would begin using instrumental music in the worship. Some of our good brethren are wringing their hands and asking, "how could they?" If they couldn't see it coming over the last many years, they must have been blind. Bro. Josh says since the progressives and the digressives are the same, why don't we just call both of 'em "gressives." Sounds good to me.

This reminds me of the story involving the lamented Jno. T. Lewis. Seems one of the more "well to do" older widows in the church at Ensley, married a much younger man. The marriage didn't work out and the new husband left. One of the sister's friends was telling Lewis that the sister was distraught and was saying, "he must have just married me for my money." Lewis retorted, "what in the Sam Hill did she think he married her for?" So the question for these "hand wringers" is, Where in the Sam Hill did they think all this foolishness that has been going on in the churches for the last several decades, was going to lead? Many abandoned "a thus saith the Lord" 50-60 years ago. In the maddening rush to "denominationalize" the church, authority had to be thrown out the window. After that was accomplished, everything else was easy. Today the term "scriptural authority" has no place among many of the movers and shakers in the church. The only authority needed is whether or not it will draw the crowds and be entertaining. Ah yes! It must be entertaining.....

So the question comes to mind, what is the lot of those who stand for the old paths, who believe in a "thus saith the Lord?" They are branded as old fogeys, legalists, wild eyed nuts, radicals, do nothingsers, fanatics, antis and many other wonderful expressions of brotherly love. If you want to see real brotherly love in action, just tell one of our brethren that he is wrong about anything. He'll likely turn on you like a rattlesnake. Some of us have been there before, don't you see.....

One of "our" churches in North Alabama is promoting "Upward Soccer." If you're into "spiritual" sports, you can register at their gymnasium, which by the way, serves as their meeting house. You can rent the thing if you need a gym. Kinda lets you know where their priorities lie, don't you think? If you are into soccer, this is about as forward looking or "gressive" as you can get....Lord come quickly, Even so, come, Lord Jesus. ...Til next time...Isaac

Earl Kimbrough

HE NEVER RODE A TRAIN

John Taylor preached the gospel among the mountains of Northwest Alabama from about 1829 to near the end of his life in 1885. He suffered and sacrificed much to lead thousands to the Lamb of God. He commonly rode a horse and walked to his appointments. Although the Memphis and Charleston Railroad passed within a few miles of his home, he never set foot in a train. F. D. Srygley said of the aged Alabama pioneer: "The old man spent his last days in the supreme happiness of living as a father among his children in all that country, and of preaching to his heart's content among the many churches he had so long and earnestly labored and prayed to see established. But he never, to the day of his death, rode on a train. Brethren tried to get him to take just one trip on the train, and offered to pay all expenses; but the old man would lean on his staff and gaze after it meditatively as it rushed by him and then, hobbling off, he would gravely shake his head and say: 'No, brethren; it runs too fast. Why, God bless you, I might faint. If I had to go to New York I would rather walk than get on that thing.'" (F. D. Srygley, *Smiles and Tears*, 46.)

NO DEFENSE FOR MEN

F. B. Srygley, who was reared along with his brother F. D. Srygley, at Rock Creek, Alabama, told about a debate he had before 1900, in which his brother served as his moderator. He recalled the event in explaining why he never defended anything written by men. He said: "I remember on one occasion, my opponent tried every way, it seemed to me, that he could think of to force me to defend something that some of the brethren had written. Some of these things he read were true, but I disregarded them and kept on telling what the apostles said. My reply was the same to everything he quoted from any uninspired man. Many of the things which he quoted were doubtless true; but if they were true, they needed no reply; and if wrong, I could not defend them. He read from Brother [David] Lipscomb, but I still stuck to my position. He even quoted from my brother who was present and

was my moderator, and yet I declined to defend him. I told the audience that I was raised with him, and I was sure he had been wrong in some things, but the Bible was wrong in nothing. I still believe this is the best way to debate. Two or three plain statements from the New Testament will whip any error, if we stay with them." (*Gospel Advocate*, Feb. 11, 1937.)

A TRAVELING SALESMAN

In his "Tour to the South" in 1839, when Campbell made his first visit to Alabama, he compared his mission in selling the ancient gospel as somewhat like a traveling salesman. Writing to his wife Selina from New Orleans where he arrived from Mobile, Alabama, after a "pleasant passage safe voyage" through the Gulf of Mexico, Campbell said: "Through the unceasing kindness of our Father in heaven we are safely arrived in this great commercial emporium of the South and Southwest. But we have brought a poor article to this market; few bidders and no buyers inquiring for drafts on the Bank of Heaven. Bonds drawn on the richest bank in the universe and at the cheapest price are unacceptable and uninteresting to this community. 'Buy wine and milk without money and without price.' I am to offer my wares and merchandise this evening at the Congregational meeting-house . . . But the population is of all castes but the right one, and everything is more in demand than the things of heaven." (Robert Richardson, *Memoirs of Alexander Campbell*, 2/454,455.)

Rock Creek Philosophy

I am getting old enough to dislike to see good old things destroyed, especially when they must give way to something not so substantial..... F.B. Srygley

Don't Be Late

Do not wait till death has claimed some acquaintance, and then indulge in regrets that you failed to speak a word of encouragement or appreciation.-C. R. Nichol.

Good Advice

It may cost you a good deal to do right, but be sure it will cost you more not to do it....F.B. Srygley

FRED M. LITTLE
W. T. "Tip" Grider

Fred M. Little was born April 15th, 1881, in Bledsoe County, Tennessee. Brother Little was educated at Peoples College, Pikeville, Tennessee; Burrett College, Spencer, Tennessee, and at Potter Bible College, Bowling, Ky.

Brother Little became a Christian at the age of eighteen, while in Burrett College. Brother Elam was doing the preaching. He began preaching early after his baptism making his talk the following Sunday.

He was married December 18th, 1903 to Miss Kathryn Hutchenson, who was teaching in Burrett College. Spencer, Tennessee. To this union were born three children: Mrs. J. W. Roberson. Chattanooga, Tennessee, Don C. and Jean of Montgomery, Alabama.



Brother Little spent many years teaching school and preaching, devoting the vacation from school work to preaching. He preached over most of Tennessee in this way. He also worked with Algood, Celina and a number of other places while teaching. He moved to Cleveland in about 1913 and began work with the Eastside Congregation

W.T. "Tip" Grider which numbered eight members, and assisted in building a good one during his work there.

Brother Little was minister of the Catoma church of Christ, Montgomery, Alabama for seven years. It was during this time the writer learned to know him. During those years I was engaged in evangelistic work over South Alabama. Brother Fred M. Little always gave me all the cooperation and encouragement possible. He assisted me in planting the cause in Elba, Troy, and any place where he could be of help. He was always unselfish and ready to work whether he was in lead or pushing someone else. During those years we were associated in publishing the *Gospel Messenger*, a religious paper. He being editor and I publisher. We ran the paper for three years.

Brother Little established the Capitol Heights Church and was its minister for a number of years,

and during this time the church grew, a large lot was bought and a nice frame building was erected, with the plans to later erect a nice brick house, which has been done. Brother Little devoted a number of years after his work at Capitol Heights to evangelistic work which carried him over South Alabama, West Florida and part of Mississippi. His evangelistic work was successful, many new congregations were established. *and* old ones revived. Many congregations in this section were made stronger through his efforts. For much of this very little remuneration was given him. His purpose and heart's desire was to save souls. He was always cheerful and never complained of his lot. But like Paul in whatever state: he was content. Brother Little's friends in South Alabama are numbered by the thousands. His labor was so effective that eternity alone can place the true estimate.

I consider Brother Little one of the most humble, earnest, unselfish Christians I ever knew. I loved him because he loved the Lord and his church best of all.

The last three years of Brother Little's life were very sad ones as he was almost an invalid. Having been so active it must have been hard to wait for the end, which came this spring. Yes I can say with Paul. "He being dead yet speaketh."

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A CALL TO PREACH

Earl Kimbrough

Religion flourished in the pioneer community of Rock Creek. Thirteen preachers attended the spiritual needs of about twenty families when James H. Srygley first settled there several years before the Civil War. Camp meetings and revivals were common, but religion mostly followed the old "mourners' bench" system, characterized by "rousing exhortations" from the pulpit and "ear-splitting yells of strong-lunged brethren and soul happy sisters." The lone Rock Creek meetinghouse was used by all religious faiths and also served as a schoolhouse. Describing the structure, F. D. Srygley said: "At first it was a log house, perhaps about twenty-four feet square, but as it proved to be entirely too small for the audiences that assembled there, an addition of about the same dimensions was made to it. The pulpit was set in the side of the house, and right where the old and new parts of the building joined. The pulpit was a sort of box, about ten feet long by probably six feet wide, one side and one end of which were open.... The book board extended the full length of the side which fronted toward the audience. In depth this box-like pulpit was about four feet, so that a very short preacher, when standing, was only visible to the audience from the shoulders and upward, while all preachers, of whatever size, were alike invisible when seated." (Srygley, *Smiles and Tears*, 22.)

Further describing the pulpit, Srygley said: "In those days it was thought to be a good thing for preachers to take a little wine for their stomach's sake and for their often infirmities, and most of the preachers in that country seemed to have had stomach trouble and infirmities of one sort or another. They had discovered, too, that other spirits acted more effectually than wine upon their peculiar maladies, so that there seems to have been a sort of fitness in the box-like pulpit which concealed them, when seated, from the scrutinizing gaze of the vulgar audience. Thus concealed, they did not receive, indiscriminately, every kind of spirit; but they tried the spirits while the congregation was engaged in singing. Do you think this a thing incredible? While such a thing now [1889] seems unreasonable, it was then no unusual occurrence for preachers to try the spirits." (Ibid.)

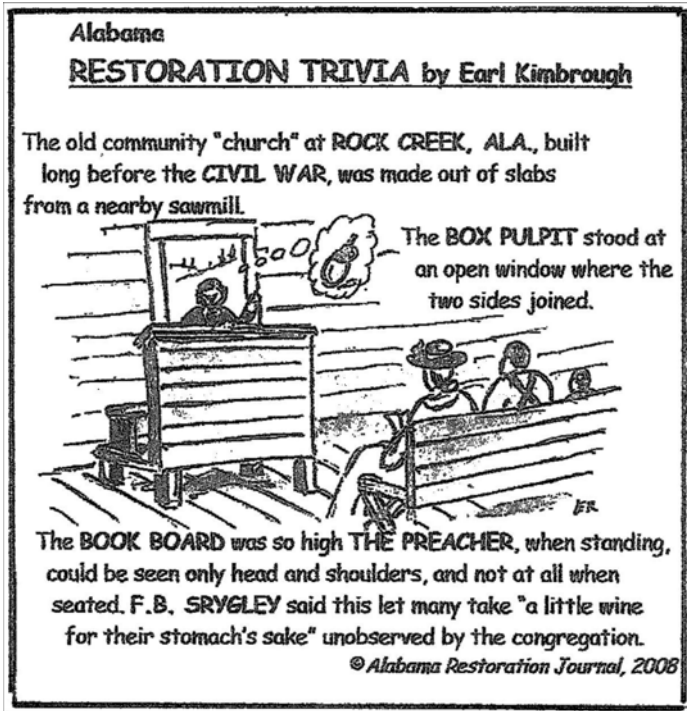
Even the dogs of Rock Creek seem to have been religious; at least they attended services about as often as their owners did. Once kept for hunting, the dogs remained after the wild game was mostly gone. "And being entirely useless, they were carried about whithersoever their masters listened, and not infrequently found their way to church whether

anybody listened or not. To a stranger, so many dogs in church might have seemed out of place; but to those accustomed to their presence they seemed appropriate enough. A stranger might even have suggested that so many dogs in church would disturb public worship; but those good people could hardly have seen how that could be possible. Who that appreciates preaching and really wants to hear a good sermon, they thought, could be disturbed by a living pyramid of fighting dogs in the open space about the pulpit? Such a thing might attract the attention of frivolous girls and fun-loving boys; but what does a real worshiper care for a dogfight so long as there is no disposition among the owners of the dogs to take up the quarrel? A stuck-up preacher might have felt it necessary to suggest that the dogs be put out of the church, but those people would have wanted to know very promptly what the preacher had to do with the dogs. Was he not there to preach the gospel? What right had he to take part in a dogfight anyhow?" (Ibid., 20.)

The following incidents show the nature of pioneer religion in that mountain region in antebellum Alabama. In those days, one usually did not preach unless he felt called of God in some mysterious manner. The fact that a man failed to sleep well at night might be taken as a call to preach, while another might see the death of a favorite child to be an indication of such. Srygley said: "One incident of those days, often related and generally believed to be true, will serve to illustrate how so many men were called to preach. A man named Walker heard a powerful voice in the distance which seemed to say to him very distinctly—'Walker—go preach—go preach—go preach!' Now Walker had been greatly troubled in spirit many days to decide whether God had really called him to preach, and was just discussing the evidence with Jesse Stanford, a notorious sinner, when that voice, clear and distinct, awakened the echoes in the stillness of the night. Jesse said, 'Do you hear that? God is calling you now.' No longer doubting his call, good Bro. Walker began at once to preach, and continued to the day of his death. The value of such calls to the ministry may be inferred from the fact that Jesse Stanford always contended that Walker's call was simply the braying of John Taylor's donkey!" (Ibid., 25.)

Srygley also said: "They had camp meetings in those days, and such revivals as modern times have never witnessed. The way they could preach and pray and exhort may be inferred from a few facts and incidents, gathered from those who were eye-

witnesses of the glory of those good times of old....The incidents related refer to a comparatively small territory in the hill country of North Alabama. In point of time, they cover a period from about 1840 to ... 1868." (Ibid., 28.) This was near the time when the church of Christ began at Rock Creek. The incidents referred to mostly antedate the beginning of that church.



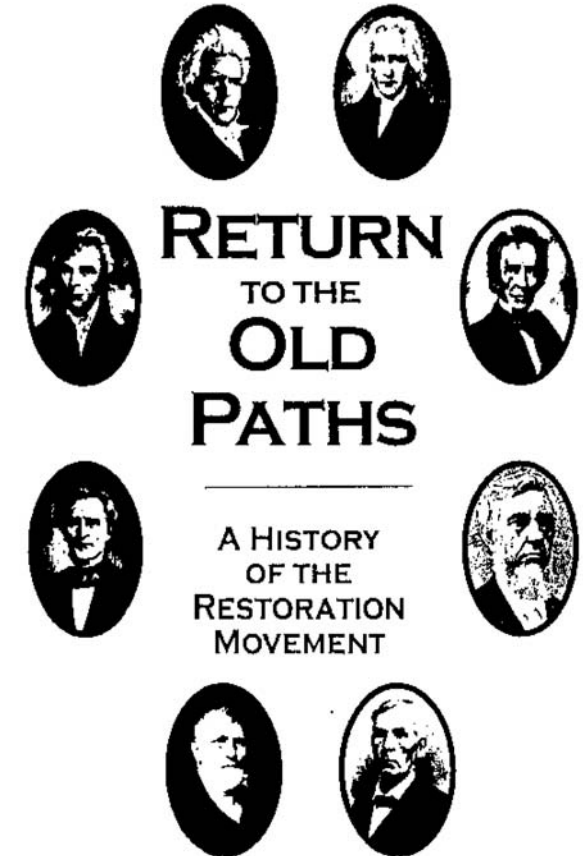
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A TALE OF TWO HACKWORTH SONS

Bobby L. Graham

An earlier article focused on the life and work of Nichodemus Hackworth, former Primitive Baptist preacher who learned the primitive New Testament gospel and turned from his Baptist roots to become a Christian and to sow the precious seed of the kingdom of God in the early 1830's (All early Baptists in Alabama were Primitive Baptists—"hyper Calvinists," as some called them—with divisions in doctrine coming a little later, primarily over their missionary society, because of the then minority view that God would signify to the elect who they were, without the need for trying to preach to them). An interesting bit of information about Nichodemus learned by this writer since the writing of that earlier article concerns his subscribing to Alexander Campbell's *Millenial Harbinger*, because he appears on Campbell's list of subscribers in Alabama from 1833 to 1837. Among his eleven children were the two whom we highlight in this article--James Matthew ("Matt") Hackworth, born in Tennessee in 1810 and Nicodemus ("Nick") Hackworth, born in Morgan County, Alabama, in 1816.

We sometimes wonder about the divergent paths which fleshly brothers choose, especially when their involvements are so diametrically different as those of these two sons of Nichodemus Hackworth, of whom we now write. One of them preached the unsearchable riches of the pure gospel which came from Jerusalem in the long ago. The other one, calling himself an infidel, denied that gospel, the Christ who died to make it possible, and the very existence of God,

James Matthew Hackworth

From early records we know that Matt was born February 10, 1808, in Knox County, Tennessee, before the family moved to Alabama. He later married Elizabeth Raley from the Cedar Plains community in Morgan County, Alabama February 13, 1832. He was one of the early members of the Cedar Plains Christian Church and preached both at home and elsewhere. His preaching work is a matter of historical record in Morgan County, Marengo



County; Lauderdale County, Alabama; and in Tippah County and Lowndes County, Mississippi. Some of his family later was in Texas, figuring rather prominently in the work of the gospel

there. His picture appears in *Ligon's Portraiture of Gospel Preachers* on the left side of center, sixth row, as the sixth picture from the left margin.

A letter of his written from his home in Morgan County, Alabama, to D.S. Burnett in 1839 (reproduced as written), appearing in the *Christian Preacher*, published monthly from 1836 to 1840, provides valuable insight into the work in Morgan County, Alabama:

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. Coutch are our elders; Brothers P. Coutch 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

Another letter from Hackworth, dated December 26, 1842, appeared in the *Bible Advocate*, a Tennessee paper published for a few years by John Howard. It was directed to "Dear bro. C.H. Gist" and was an appeal to brethren to come to help in teaching and preaching in Marengo County, Alabama, where he had been some time and discovered some interest. He referred to the hard sayings of the opposition against "Campbellism," calling it "dangerous doctrine." He further appealed to brethren to consider coming to help in Alabama's Greene, Marengo, and Perry counties, instead of areas like Russellville, Alabama, and Columbus, Mississippi, where much work had already been done.

"On pages 44, 45 of the Bible Advocate, I see a pressing invitation for bro, J.T. Johnson to visit Russellville, North Alabama and Columbus, Miss. Query: Why send men such as bro Johnson to places where there is comparatively nothing to do? Why not send them where the people need the Bible? These places, particularly Russellville, have been taught the Bible, and excel any congregation in the State of Alabama in living up to its precepts. Then if you have mechanics send them where there is materials to work upon."

He also spoke of the rough experiences he had had, including debating with the Mormons with some success.

Tolbert Fanning's *Christian Review* includes reports from Matt Hackworth in 1844 and 1848. At those times he was working in Lauderdale County, Alabama.

A later undoubted reference to Matt Hackworth occurs in a letter by Carroll Kendrick in reply to an earlier letter from Jeremiah Randolph (another Alabama preacher who had moved with his family from Morgan County, Alabama to Fayette County), both of them published in the *Gospel Advocate* in 1891. As a former preacher who had worked much in North Alabama, Kendrick was much acquainted with the early efforts to advance the ancient gospel in that area. His mention of various names is quite interesting: "How I am reminded of Crockett McDonald, D.G, Ligon, Hackworths (surely Nichodemus and Matt, son of Nichodemus, BLG), J.E. Matthews, E.D. Moore, Thacker V. Griffin, Tolbert and J.M. Fanning, L. D. Spain, the Hendersons and others, including my dear brother, Allen Kendrick. They are all gone! But 'their works do follow them.' ...You and I and the rest of that old brigade will soon 'rest from our labors.'" Kendrick also mentions the Blount County camp meeting, which he thought took place in 1838 or 1839. Given the time of Nichodemus Hackworth's departure from the Baptist Church and turn to the way of Christ in the 1830's and his and his family's place in the Cedar

Plains Christian Church as early as 1837-1839, it is unthinkable that the whole Hackworth family was missing from that entire meeting at a site in the adjoining county (Blount County then occupied most of what is now Cullman County, extending to Lacon (a distance of some 6-7 miles from the Hackworth farm). Lacon is known as the site of one such camp meeting in Blount County in those years.

Matt Hackworth is also prominently mentioned a few times in M.F. Harmon's *History Of The Christian Churches (Disciples of Christ) in Mississippi*. Claiming to have spent much time with Hackworth from 1852 to 1856, B. F. Manire reports in the same work: "*Dr. J. M. Hackworth was a dentist, a physician and a preacher. He sometimes traveled and practiced dentistry, and then for a time he would locate and practice medicine; but whether traveling as a dentist, or located as a physician, he always availed himself of every opportunity to preach on the Lord's day, and frequently held protracted meetings.*" The following quotation provides insight into his method: "*He was very fond of debate, and in all his discourse always had a man of straw before him, whom he never failed to demolish. He would often lay down a proposition that was startling even to the brethren; but in the end he would come out all right.*" Manire also reports, "*He was a hard reasoner, and could preach two hours and five minutes every time without looking at his watch.*" (This last information is reported here in case some present-day congregations wish to call one of his descendants to get their money's worth in some preaching, BLG.) We learn of his humility in the following statement: "*He was painfully aware of his own weaknesses and faults, and frank to acknowledge them. He often told me that it was a hard struggle with him to live the Christian life. I have heard him say in the pulpit that his life was so imperfect that he did not presume to preach to Christians, that all his discourses were to sinners, which he felt that he had done what they had not done, and was earnestly trying to do what they were not trying to do.*" Manire further claims that Hackworth had Indian blood and was a peculiar man. Among the churches where he labored in Mississippi were Thyatira (located in eastern Tate County, dating from 1842, and remaining among the "Non-progressives," respecting the missionary society, when Harmon wrote in 1929) and Union Valley (located several miles to the west from the Aberdeen/Palo Alto area).

The location of Matt's grave, like that of his father Nichodemus, remain a mystery. Editor Larry Whitehead has stated his desire to find the grave. Any information concerning it should be sent to him.

Dr. Nick Hackworth

Nicodemus "Nick" Hackworth was born in Morgan County, Alabama, December 22, 1816. He died in the

same county December 15, 1893, and was buried at Roundtop Cemetery just a few miles from the Cedar Plains church building in Southern Morgan County, where most of the Hackworths worshiped. It is what happened in his life between those two dates that sets him far apart from Matt. He first married Marthy Turrentine in Morgan County, Alabama, and later he married Laura Petty, who was 32 years younger than he, according to the 1880 U.S. Census of Marengo County, Alabama, where they then lived in the Nanafalia community. He spent much of his life in Marengo County, Alabama, where he worked as a dentist and a nursery man. The Hackworth Apple, which is named for him and still available today, was not entirely his work, I have been told, because he took some stock from Georgia and cultivated it till the Hackworth Apple was the result. He also is chronicled as a grape grower and wine maker in *The Heritage of Marengo County, Alabama* (p. 7, 19-20). He had a license to distill the grape juice and make the wine, storing it in the basement of his house. He was reported to have "found ready sale" for the product. His large one and a half-story house, pictured in the same article, was located in the Pin Hook community on Lock Three Road just off Highway 28. As late as 1860-61 he appears in the *Marengo County Directory*.

Part of what we know about Nick's life between his birth and death comes from a letter which transmits the story told by "Sallie" Ann and which was written by Judda Mae Speegle Presley, the granddaughter of Sarah "Sallie" Ann Morris, a sister of Nick and daughter of Nick's Nichodemus. Having been passed down through generations and vouched for by family members still living, this letter remains in family hands and also appears in *The Heritage of Morgan County, Alabama* (p. 620). Because of its relevance to this article, we reproduce it entirely:

Nick and his sister Sallie Ann Wathan Hackworth were sent to the University to school. While there the young men were to have a debate on "Whether or not there is a God?" Nick happened to get chosen on the negative side. He was a fine Christian young man having been reared in a Christian home. All of his people were Church of Christ and had been taught nothing but the truth without any adding to or leaving out any of the scriptures. However he read all the infidel books he could find in order to get points to win his side of the debate. But, Alas! he became an infidel and remained one till the day of his death. His family grieved over this so much more than if he had take sick and died. His mother would write long letters to him quoting scriptures to read and send him articles cut from The Gospel Advocate and The Firm Foundation. But to no avail. He never came

home after graduating, but lived in south Alabama, all his long life and became a wealthy man. Just before he died, he had a great longing to again visit the old home where he was raised. This home was in Cedar Plains west of Falkville. So Uncle Nick and his wife Aunt Laura came on the train to Lacon and was met and brought to the old home place. That night Nick was taken sick with a severe cold and was never able to get up any more. His cold developed into pneumonia and he lived only a few days. His last words, just before he died, were these "O God, if there be a God! Then remember me and have mercy on me." It hurt so much to witness the sorrow and anguish that Grandmother and Aunt Laura suffered.

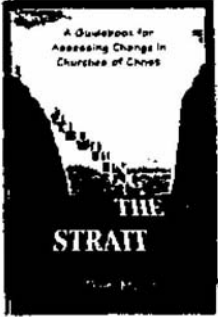
The University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa is the one referenced, but it did not then admit females. Actually, Sallie Ann studied at a female seminary in Tuscaloosa. University records do not include the name of Nick Hackworth (*A Register of the Officers and Students of the University of Alabama, 1831-1901*), but the book admits that early records (from years when Nick would have studied there) were incomplete and often illegible. In view of the letter's strong place in family history and in view of its consistency with known family history at the time, we accept its claim concerning Nick's being a student there as genuine, as well as its account of his infidelity.

History often clearly delineates the what, where, when, who, and, sometimes, the why. Did Nick go the way of unbelief and Matt the way of faith because of different treatment from parents, or was it because of different influences and their consequent attitudes after leaving home? These are questions which we cannot answer, just as history sometimes does not tell us why certain things happened the way they did or why certain individuals did what they did.

Some have thought that Nick did some preaching, because of reports signed as "Nick Hackworth" and sent to some of the papers in the early 1840's. I have excerpts from two such reports, dated in August and December of 1842, reporting on gospel work done in Gallatin, Lebanon, and Hartsville, Tennessee, for John Howard's *Bible Advocate*. Was this Nick the son or Nick the father? Apart from these reports, this writer knows of no evidence that the son preached. It might also be significant that there is no record on the "Church Roll, 1837-1988" in the *Cedar Plains 150th Anniversary Book* that the son Nick was ever a member of the Cedar Plains Christian Church, though this roll surely is incomplete because of its length. However, other family members are included on that roll, along with several other early members. A third line of evidence that he did not preach is the lack of mention of such in the family letter earlier quoted in

this article, where reference is made to his being "a fine Christian young man." This writer's conclusion is that Nick probably did not preach the gospel, because of a lack of definite evidence verifying that he did, either in the family letter or in the papers known to this writer, and because of a lack of record of his being a member at Cedar Plains. He concludes that the Tennessee reports were those of his father, whose story was earlier told in Alabama Restoration Journal (Vol. II, Issue 4). He would like to see any evidence which conclusively shows that Nick the son preached the gospel, if any reader knows of such.

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Rock Creek Philosophy

Men who are enjoying the benefits of the gospel, unmixed with human error, are enjoying these benefits because our fathers fought for the truth...*F.B. Srygley*

HANDWRITING ON THE WALL

Earl Kimbrough

Answering a letter from Chester Estes in regard to the church at Cleveland, in Fayette County, Alabama, F. B. Srygley told about some experiences he had on a preaching tour that he made with John Taylor in 1882. Srygley was just beginning his evangelistic labors, while his venerable old companion was nearing the end of his. The journey, Srygley's first of that kind, came immediately after he graduated from T. B. Larimore's Mars' Hill College near Florence, Alabama. On another occasion, Srygley also spoke of that memorable journey, saying: "I went with Brother Taylor, at his earnest solicitation, into the counties south of us, where he had spent the greater part of his life." (*Gospel Advocate*, Dec. 3, 1936.) [Taylor spent the greater part of his life in Franklin County: 1842-1885.]

Estes sent Srygley a copy of a brief history of the Cleveland church that he had found fastened to the wall of the meetinghouse. The history said: "The church of Christ at Cleveland was established the year of 1876 by Jerry Randolph and J. A. [J. H.] Halbrook. The church site was given by W. A. Hyde, and the building was built the year of 1877." Estes said the building at first was "an old log house," which was replaced in 1926. The history included the names of several preachers of Northwest Alabama who had preached for the church.

The letter prompted Srygley to say: "While my name is not mentioned in this bit of history, which was found tacked to the wall of the old Cleveland Church house, it must have been in that house that I held a short meeting in the fall of the year 1882. I only remember it as being in the meetinghouse in the neighborhood where John and Bill Hyde lived. Their father, old Brother Hyde, became a member of the church perhaps during the meeting held by F. D. Srygley and Brother Halbrook in 1876. I went to that part of the country with John Taylor in the fall of 1882. Joe Halbrook then lived not far from the New River Church, perhaps in the same county. On our way to New River we stopped on what was then called the [Gen. Andrew Jackson] Military Road. We preached in a school-house where F. D. Srygley had preached, perhaps six years before, from the text: 'Fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man.' Some schoolboy had been so impressed with the text or the sermon that he had written with chalk in large letters on the walls of the little building near the ceiling this entire passage. The effect of this Scripture before the eyes of the school continually had no doubt a great influence on the entire community." (*Gospel Advocate*, Sept. 3, 1936.)

Such a divine message on a schoolhouse wall now, in the twenty-first century, would most likely require the hand of God himself. Even so the courts of the land might try to expunge it.

GATHERING HOME

Earl Kimbrough

I first heard the name of William Milton Behel many years ago when I was interviewing Chester O. Stout of Russellville, Alabama, regarding his life and work as a Christian. He told about some of the earlier preachers of that region and among them he mentioned "Brother Behel." He spoke affectionately of this man of God and talked about his preaching at Frankfort many years before. It was Brother Behel that baptized Lillian Miller, the girl who became Brother Stout's wife. Behel was one of those men whose evangelistic labors reached several states but were largely limited to North Alabama. He preached at a time when much sacrifice was required to uphold the truth. More than once, he knew what it meant to baptize a person literally under the threat of gun in close proximity. A poignant account of his life is told in, *A Brief Sketch of the Life of William M. Behel*, written by himself in 1937 and completed about a year before his death. The following is the account of his death given at the time by J. M. Gainer, his close friend and one who was well acquainted with his ministry.

"William M. Behel. William M. Behel was born September 10, 1872 [in Perry County, Pennsylvania]; departed this life December 26, 1938. Brother Behel was baptized about the year 1888 [Behel gives the date as August 17, 1888], at Mars' Hill, Ala., by T. B. Larimore. He was married to Martha Jean Clemons, February 21, 1892. To this union were born nine children, six now living and three dead. Brother Behel also has five brothers living and one dead, and one sister living and one dead. He also has twenty-two grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. The funeral was held at Lone Cedar Church [Lauderdale County], where he had preached so much, and near his home, on December 27. He had planned the entire service, having selected his undertaker, and some years ago planned to have his lifelong friend, M. E. Gibbs, conduct the service. The song service was conducted by Brother Quillen and his sons, singing the songs that Brother Behel had already selected for the occasion. Also, Brother Quillen read a poem that Brother Behel had been saving for the occasion. The prayer was led by J. M. Gainer, a close friend of Brother Behel's.

"Interment was at Mount Zion Cemetery where A. D. Behel, a nephew, led the closing prayer. The great floral tribute was touching as a manifestation of the esteem in which Brother Behel was held by many

friends. The great throng of people both at the funeral service and at the interment showed how much the entire section had appreciated his labors throughout the many years. Brother Behel's labors covered almost the entire northern part of Alabama, some sections of Mississippi, parts of Florida, and Giles, Wayne, and Lawrence Counties, Tenn. [He also held meetings in Arkansas, Texas, and Kentucky.] Brother Behel unhesitatingly went to any section where he found an opening for preaching the gospel, much of it being done in destitute places. His preaching was fearless, positive, and true to the Book, yet with all kindness, meekness, and love. His condemnation of sin was plain, yet no sinner could feel that he was not interested in his soul and that all his teaching was for the purpose of leading him to Christ.

"He was a constant student of the Bible. His memory was most excellent, and he was always careful to be giving the exact teaching of God's word without any opinions of his mixed in. He was a faithful friend of all preachers, especially young ones, encouraging them in every way, making appointments for them in such places as would develop them, and often giving up work he had started so that he might get someone else farther along. He did much to stop false teaching in various communities, opposing it in kindness, yet definitely with the Bible; and if he felt that some brother could do more than he could, off he went for that man to come and take up the labor. He rejoiced in the victories for the truth, regardless of who did the work. —J. M. Gainer, Florence, Ala." (*Gospel Advocate*, Jan. 12, 1939.)

This obituary by Brother J. M. Gainer is one of the most informative and heartwarming death notices, for its length, that I ever remember having read. It capsulates the life of Brother Behel, a humble and faithful preacher among the hills of Alabama at a time when preaching was hard, financial support meager, and opposition to the truth aggressive, and often dangerous. Every gospel preacher today, young and old, should be encouraged by his example. There are no doubt many within the range of his labors, even today, whose souls were saved and lives made better by the direct or indirect impact of his preaching.

Rock Creek Philosophy

My idea is, when a lot of preachers get together with nothing else to do, they will naturally turn to building machinery....*F.B.Srygley*

THE WORK IN WALKER COUNTY, ALABAMA

G.C. Brewer

Twenty-eight years ago I held my first meeting in Walker County, Ala., which was the second meeting of my life. I baptized my first person, said my first marriage ceremony, and had my first debate in that county in 1906. Recently I assisted the brethren in a meeting in Jasper, which is the capital of the county. Many and almost marvelous have been the changes that have taken place in these twenty-eight years. I rejoice to recount the many improvements, and I thank God and take courage when I see so many splendid Christian men and women who have grown



G.C. Brewer

up since I first knew the county. But many of those whom I knew when as a "boy preacher" I spent the summer preaching and baptizing in that county—for I baptized a host of people that first summer—have gone the way of all the earth. The man with whom I held my first debate has been dead many years. The first individual that I baptized is dead, though I baptized five on that occasion and four of them are still living. The groom of that first marriage is dead, but his widow and two daughters are all living, and there are two or three small grandchildren. Most of the men who were bearing the responsibility of the churches in that day have gone to their reward.

Twenty-eight years ago Walker County was a backward county and still had some of the customs and manners of a primitive country. Many of the people and customs described in "Seventy Years in Dixie" could still be seen in that county. There were no automobiles, no paved roads, and not so many buggies in use there then. The people came to church afoot, on mules, and in wagons—some of them in ox wagons. I myself rode to and from church in an ox wagon at Liberty Hill with good old Brother John Gurganus, who has now gone to that better world. Tall pine trees lined the roads and surrounded our church buildings in that day, and they sighed and whispered their lonesome cadences as we rolled through their dark lanes in our slowly moving ox wagon. The night air was redolent with their exhilarating breath, and the moon streamed through

their needles as through a sieve and flecked the road with silver. They, with other huge trees, covered the county.

Now this timber has been cut out, paved roads traverse the county, and automobiles speed to and fro and befoul the air with their hot breath and sickening smell. The Alabama Power Company has built its huge plants with their marvelous machinery on the Warrior River, and this power city is known as Gorgas.

Tall towers are strung across the hills and power lines stream out from Gorgas, carrying that mysterious energy that can turn night into day, rend the rocks, and move a mountain. Many people who live in the country may now have electric lights, fans, radios, and electric refrigeration in their homes.

Twenty-eight years ago there were but few churches in the county, and they were small and poor and doing nothing. There was then only one church in the county that had a Bible school that used classified literature. That was at Oakman. There was then but one preacher in the county that lived of the gospel, or who drew his whole support from preaching, and he did not spend all of his time in the county. That man was James K. Hill, who has long ago gone home. He lived at Oakman and preached for two or three churches, and in the summer went "into all the world" and preached the gospel. He it was who sent me into Walker County and started me out. He and C. A. Wheeler and Tom Evans and Brother Simpson, from Highland Home, were the only preachers that were doing any work at all in that whole section when first I knew it. But the older brethren were still talking about Joe Holbrook and F. D. Srygley, and some of them had children named for them, although it had then been twenty years since these brethren had preached in that country.

When I was challenged for a debate, I had not the remotest idea of how to word or frame a proposition for discussion—didn't even know what to discuss. But John Gurganus still had some propositions that were written by Brother Holbrook and submitted to a Baptist preacher before I was born—for I was then still in the teens—and I used these in my first debate.

But soon after I "blazed the way" in that country, other preachers began to come in there, mainly from Texas. This was through the influence of Tom Evans, I think. Among those who came as "big preachers order on" and *paid in money* (but not too much), I mention C. R. Nichol, G. A. Dunn, Joe S. Warlick, J. D. Tant, and John T. Hinds. These brethren preached

and debated and did much good in that field. They did me good, although I never met them there, and it was many years before I ever saw some of them. They taught the brethren to support the preacher, and this was not in their theology when I first preached to them; and even after these preachers had come, the brethren figured that about one-tenth of what they paid Nichol and Dunn would be enough for me—and it was. I got all I deserved, I am sure.

There are now about thirty-two congregations in Walker County. There are some ten or a dozen preachers in the county, but only two or three of these are supported for full-time work, and their support is not what it should be. But the churches have made many improvements. Nearly all of them have Lord's-day Bible school and use the helps. Many brethren in the county read the Gospel Advocate, and some of them have sent and are sending their children to the Christian schools. And I have never seen a finer "crop" of young people than we have in that country. There are enough there to fill a Christian college if only their parents were financially able to send them all away to school. Years ago (I have been going back into the county through the years) I could hardly preach there for the bawling babies, but those babies are now splendid Christian young people who come up to the front and make the welkin ring with their excellent singing.

Twenty-eight years ago the church at Jasper had just gone "digressive"—it is still the only "digressive" church in the county—and it at that time still claimed to be "one of us." There were a few faithful souls in Jasper who would not go into digression, and these few arranged for the "boy preacher" to hold a tent meeting in that town. The "digressives" claimed the meeting, and "wined and dined" the "boy preacher" in royal style; but he did not compromise with them, but contended against their error as best he could. That was before Brother Kurfees' book was written, or the Briney-Otey debate was held, and the literature that we now have on digression was not then extant. The "boy preacher" had not seen what was then available. He knew but little, but he clung to the chapter-and-verse slogan and kept in the negative and demanded that the "digressives" cite proof for their practices. That only annoyed and angered them, except those who attempted to laugh it off, and the "boy preacher" saw then that they had abandoned the "Bible proof," chapter-and-verse principle; and since that was his whole strength, hope, and reliance in his preaching, he knew he could not go with that crowd, though they baited and tempted him sorely.

Those few faithful ones at Jasper moved away, and for many years there was no faithful church in

that town. The "digressives" had it all to themselves for a long period, but they did not grow. They are not as strong either numerically or financially now as they were twenty-eight years ago. They have a beautiful church building, but it is covered with debt and is overshadowed and its glory is eclipsed by a Methodist church hard by. A brother visited a "revival" at the "digressive" church last spring, and he said the night he was there they had an audience of thirty-four persons, including choir and preacher.

We now have a good church at Jasper. They have a good brick house, well located, and the church is growing. In our recent meeting—held out of doors—our audiences ran between eight hundred and a thousand each night.

Gus Nichols deserves much credit for the success of the work at Jasper, and also for the success of our meeting. He is a prayerful, consecrated man, and a hard-working, faithful gospel preacher.

I shall always love Walker County, Ala.



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JAMES CLARK ANDERSON
PART TWO
C. Wayne Kilpatrick

In February of 1835 Anderson and Griffin were riding in a new circuit in Middle Tennessee. One or both of them had been regularly preaching on this circuit. Some had been added to the Kingdom. We do not know the exact number. In October, Anderson and Griffin had held a meeting at Winchester, Tennessee and Baptized thirteen souls. It was during 1835 that a report of the death of James Anderson of Sparta, Tennessee appeared in the Christian Messenger. This was James Anderson, son of Joel Anderson. This James was also a gospel preacher who had labored diligently in the Sparta area. No doubt the report raised anxious hearts for many who knew James C. Anderson. We have no other reports of Anderson's labors until July 28, 1838. Anderson and A. Craig held a meeting at Joshua K. Speer's home congregation of Lasea in Maury County, Tennessee. The meeting lasted five days and eleven made the good confession and were baptized. We can only speculate that Brother Anderson continued to do the love of his life - preaching the Gospel during this "silent period" from 1835 until 1838. That was his very nature and passion. Another gap in our information, concerning his labors, occurs between the years 1838 and September, 1841.

In a letter dated September 3, 1841, James A. Butler of Bragg's Store, Lowndes County, Alabama wrote Alexander Campbell that the churches in his vicinity had desired the preaching services of James C. Anderson. Butler stated: "The brethren have made a call on Brother James C. Anderson to evangelize for 1842. They will support him liberally. We do not know for what reason he declined the request, but all reports in the journals showed him still in Middle Tennessee in 1842. The fact that the brethren of South Alabama had requested J. C. Anderson to come and evangelize for them speaks volumes about the love and respect they had for him.

In January, Tolbert Fanning got James C. Anderson to study the subject of Christian Cooperation with him and Andrew Craig and Robert C. Foster (the latter two were Baptists, at that time). Fanning said other brethren met with them for seven days in Nashville and "took sweet counsel together". Their subject was: "The Teachings of the New Testament Regarding Christian Cooperation". Fanning said the reason for such meetings was that they "were everywhere threatened with division" The missionary societies were causing division in almost every religious body in Tennessee at this time. Anderson and Fanning, along with Craig and Foster,

who later became disciples, all stood throughout their careers, against the societies.

By the end of 1849, the Disciples of the Northern churches had met in Cincinnati, Ohio and established the American Christiana Missionary Society with Alexander Campbell being elected its first president; although Campbell was not at the meeting. Fanning, Anderson, Lipscomb and other Southern brethren, along with Benjamin Franklin of Indiana, vehemently opposed such cooperation as unscriptural.

While on a preaching tour to Nashville, 'Anderson wrote to Alexander Campbell concerning Christian worship. Anderson said some people were comparing it to Synagogue worship. He wanted Campbell to elaborate upon this subject in the pages of the Harbinger. In the same letter dated May 21, 1842, he challenges Alexander Campbell over a statement that Campbell had made about "Elders ordaining Elders." He wrote:

"Would you not do well, Brother Campbell to reconsider a saying of your in the April number of the Millennial Harbinger on Christian organization? You say Elders ordained Elders (that is, Bishops ordained Bishops.) You may find this a hard proposition to prove. I have been in the habit of thinking this was the principal leg on which popish and other successions stood".

Campbell, at that time, never bothered to answer Anderson's challenge. This shows his keen wit and scholarship concerning Biblical matters, and also his convictions. Before we leave this year behind, there is one personal note on James C. Anderson. He had met a young lady in his vicinity by the name of Lucinda Newsom. He was sixteen years her senior. As we have noted earlier in this sketch, he was married before 1830, but apparently his first wife died. He had remained single for over ten years.

On January 29, 1843, James C. Anderson is married to Lucinda Newsom of Williamson County Tennessee. They had 5 children in their marriage, two sons and three daughters. Their older son - William became a very popular teacher and preacher in Middle Tennessee. Their younger son James Clark Anderson, Jr. also became a preacher and he died at age 28 while on a preaching tour. In December James Anderson bought 200 acres of land for a sum of \$1500.00. He was finally acquiring a place to settle permanently. He continued to make preaching tours throughout 1843. In September J. B. Ferguson reports of one such tour. Ferguson told of seven meetings in which Anderson, along with Rice, Elly,

Day, S. E. Jones and Ferguson had cooperated in Middle Tennessee. He said 90 persons had been baptized.

It was reported by a committee of W. H. Wharton, James C. Anderson, and Tolbert Fanning that the brethren of Middle Tennessee had met at Rock Springs, Rutherford County, Tennessee on September 18, 1843. The main purpose was to establish a periodical. Since Stone's Messenger had been moved to Illinois, the south needed a journal of its own. It was "unanimously resolved, a journal advocating the interests of the church of Christ should be established in Nashville, commencing January, 1844.

"W. H. Wharton, J. C. Anderson and T. Fanning, were requested to procure the aid of competent brethren in several of the States, as Corresponding and Reporting Editors; to make the necessary arrangements for publishing such a paper as they might think the times demand, to act as a reviewing and Revising Committee, and take the general superintendence of the work. The Christian Review will be devoted to the cause of the Bible, embracing first principles, organization of churches, order of worship, perfecting of Christian character, the union of saints, the study of prophecy, religious education, and every other topic which will contribute to render Christians more intelligent and spiritual". Anderson, Wharton and Fanning were chosen to be the Publishing and Superintending Committee. Of all of the men present at that meeting, these three were chosen for the editorship of the new journal. This, again, demonstrates the confidence the brethren had in these three men. The journal would begin with success, in January of the following year.

In January of 1844, The Christian Review appeared. Campbell said the following concerning the journal:

"Amongst the new periodicals I see a very respectable looking stranger, very handsomely dressed up, and called the "Christian Review", conducted by Brother W. H. Wharton, of Nashville, J. C. Anderson, and T. Fanning, all of that vicinity. The work is got up in good taste, and, as far as I have glanced at its contents, proposes to be a faithful and able auxiliary in the cause of gospel reformation. The Table of Contents exhibits good selection, and a considerable variety of useful matter. I have carefully read only two or three articles, amongst which is a very sensible essay on immortality, from Brother Anderson.

This was a great commendation for the Review, and also for Brother Anderson's article on immortality.

Anderson continued to go on preaching tours, in spite of his new editorial duties. One such tour was made to Todd County, Kentucky.. He traveled with Ferguson, Day, and Jones of Tennessee and P. G. Young of Illinois. Ferguson reported that there had been "some 68 additions to the good cause". He further stated that they were greatly refreshed and entertained by the visit of Brother Young. This reveals a new area of work by Anderson that was not previously known. In January of 1845, we find Anderson still listed as an editor of the Christian Review. His name in volume 2 appears ahead of Wharton's and Fanning's names.

For nearly three years we have no record of Anderson's activities, except for his editorship with the Review. However, on November 19, 1847, he sold 200 acres of land for \$10,000.00. On December 8, he then buys 385 acres in the same vicinity on South Harpeth River and pays \$10,000.00 for it. It appears that Anderson sold one tract of land to pay for the other. It is also noticed that he made \$8500.00 on his original tract. B. F. Hall and John Smith supported their work, at least in part, by land speculation. Maybe Anderson had been doing this in order to survive and also to give him time to preach on tours. According to Goodspeed's History, Anderson was also a farmer "... in connection with his ministerial duties". The fact that his widow was still living on the farm in 1886 shows that part of the family economy was farming.

From 1847 until 1853 we know Anderson was still preaching, writing and farming. But sometime in the late part of 1853 Brother Anderson became ill. Fanning said that he lingered in illness for some four years. We have another report on him in 1856. R.B. Trimble reported: *"...I paid a visit to my Father in the Gospel, James C. Anderson, who resides on South Harpeth; I found him in an improved state of health."* Trimble said that he spent one day and two nights with the Anderson family, before leaving. He Said: *"My spirit was much refreshed while I tarried with him and his affectionate family..."* This is the last known written record on Anderson before his death.

Rock Creek Philosophy

Brotherly love is a principle that controls action, rather than a sentiment that would withhold truth from a brother.....F.B. Srygley

William M. Behel

The Preacher Who Gave His Train Fare On Behalf Of A Sick Boy



America's storied past is filled with true-to-life adventures of outlaws, cutthroats and legendary war heroes. But there is an important link in the fabulous past, which, for the most part, has been overlooked by noted historians. I speak of none other than the dedicated circuit-riding preacher, he who braved all kinds of weather; and was sometimes shot at while performing the duties of his God. He was a man who let nothing keep him from delivering a fire and brimstone message.

William M. Behel was one of the best known and most respected of those old-fashioned preachers. During his long and totally dedicated career, Behel encountered many problems . . . like baptizing a young lady while her father stood on a bluff with a shotgun, demanding that the girl not be baptized; like walking 35 miles to baptize a lady who was on her death bed, only to discover that her husband would not permit the dying woman to be baptized; like holding services in the middle of a public road when no building was available; like riding a train to preach a sermon, then walking home because the congregation had no money to pay his fare back home.

W.M. Behel was born in Perry County, Pennsylvania, September 10, 1872, the son of William and E.T. Behel. At the tender age of four he began his education, attending the common county schools. In March of 1884 his family moved to Baily Springs, Alabama, near Florence. Like most kids of that era, young Behel did back-breaking work on his daddy's farm during all the days of his childhood.

On February 21, 1892 he married Martha T. Clemmons, an orphan girl who had been reared by extremely strict people who demanded much of her. Before the couple exchanged vows they were baptized by T.B. Larimore at Mars Hill. Brother Larimore, one of the respected men of the country, encouraged young Behel to start preaching. The following night Larimore's words kept popping up in Behel's thoughts time and time again. Finally he made the decision. He would try to be one of the best informed and most knowledgeable preachers in the

south. Since he had very little education, he would be forced to study long hours at night after most people retired. Behel advanced rapidly. Within a few years he was generally recognized as one of the most sought-after preachers in the neighborhood. People from all walks of life and from all denominations were eager to hear him preach the word of the Lord as only Behel could preach it. It was at this point, though, that frustrations began to creep into the picture.

A Difficult Situation

One of the first and most serious obstacles came on a warm Sunday morning at Tabernacle Methodist Church near Green Hill, Alabama, where he had been scheduled to conduct a meeting. Brother Behel described the scene in his diary: "Upon arrival at Tabernacle, I saw several little squads of folks here and there talking. It was evident they were not in the best humor.

"I hitched my horse and walked to where one of these squads was standing. Think of my surprise when I was told that the preacher in charge had forbidden my using either the building or the lot on which it stood. "Surprised, and hurt, because several members of that place had repeatedly invited me to hold a meeting, I went to the preacher who was standing in the front door and asked him if we could use the building for this sermon only, since the crowd was already assembled. "He said, 'No, but don't feel hard at me about it. The decision was made by the General Conference.' "I then realized that if something was not done, trouble would surely develop. As angry a set of folks as you would ever see at a religious meeting was determined to hear me preach." "I saw that some fighting was likely to take place if something was not done quickly. I jumped upon a stump and announced that preaching would begin in thirty minutes in Mrs. Dial's front yard, a good Methodist who lived about a quarter of a mile away." Brother Behel led the way. Everybody in the congregation except the preacher, who was left locking the door, followed. After the services a young man offered brother Behel a place to build an arbor. The ground was located directly across the road from the forbidden grounds. "I gracefully accepted," Behel said, "and requested the people to meet me Sunday morning for the purpose of building an arbor." When Sunday morning came Behel arrived on the scene. A man was waiting with a sad message. He was instructed not to build an arbor because the man who offered the land had been told by his wife and daughter he must leave home if he permitted brother Behel to preach on their land. The hour and congregation arrived. Brother Behel

tossed his hat to one side of the Andrew Jackson Highway and exclaimed: "My friend, I guess I own as much of this road as any man in the country. "Now just make yourselves comfortable on the road bank." He then stepped a few feet forward and began one of his typical sermons. At the close of the road services, a young farmer offered brother Behel the use of a tool shed to conduct services. He happily accepted the offer, and immediately began a two-week meeting, during which time 62 persons obeyed the gospel.

Because of Behel's dedication and determination a new church building was constructed. He named it Shiloh. The building stands to this day as an everlasting monument to his memory.

He Got The Fare

Behel's work was just beginning. He was forever on the move. He once conducted a meeting where the meeting, a saw mill, and a brandy still were going on at the same time. Standing in the pulpit, Behel could see the men at work in both operations. On another occasion he went to an isolated community to conduct a meeting. After two weeks with no funds in sight, he wrote his wife, asking her to send him money to pay his fare back home. Then one Sunday he was enroute to Giles County, Tennessee, to conduct a series of meetings. Upon arrival at the Tuscumbia depot, a woman who said she wanted to get to Decatur to visit a sick son, was trying to borrow money. A kind man passed the hat around and brother Behel tossed all his money into the hat, save one thin dime. Having already purchased a ticket to Decatur, he boarded the east-bound train, confident of being able to find some way to get from Decatur to Pulaski. "I felt embarrassed," brother Behel penned in his diary, "not knowing how I could get money to pay my way further. "At Decatur I paced the floor nervously. I was worried sick about being in such an uncomfortable position. "Approximately 30 minutes before the train was due, I noticed a man eyeing me very carefully. After a few glances at me, he walked up to me saying, 'Did you ever hold a meeting at Rock Creek, Alabama?' I told him, 'Yes, two years ago.' "A smile boarded the stranger's face. 'I thought I knew you. When you held that meeting I intended to give you a dollar, but found that I did not have it. Here it is. I'm glad I located you I really meant that you should have that dollar.' "A grateful brother Behel told the man how nice the money came in, thanked him, then purchased a ticket to Pulaski. Both men went their separate ways, never to see one another again.

A Sad Experience

One of his saddest days came when he walked 35 miles through blistering heat to baptize a woman who was on her death bed. All during the long journey Behel kept thinking he might not arrive in time. When he

arrived at the woman's house, neighbors helped to carry her to the water. But when they reached the creek bank, the lady's husband came to the scene, refusing to let the woman be baptized. The poor woman died a few days later. She had not been baptized. It is said that her husband always regretted his extreme actions.

More Difficulties

In another community, a young woman had tried to be baptized on three separate occasions. Each time, her husband refused to let her go to the water. Finally the woman asked brother Behel to baptize her. He said, "Sure I'll be happy to baptize you. " A bystander interrupted: "Sir you are asking for trouble, for her husband is a mean customer. He will never stand for her being baptized." Brother Behel, in his own quiet way, said: "Now, people, don't say a word, and you will see what happens. I will baptize her. The reason she has not been baptized is because you have been too overbearing about the matter. He probably said you can't baptize her. You probably said, 'We will baptize her,' and he was just bull-headed enough to have his way about it. "Now, keep quiet, and watch me baptize her this afternoon." Behel then went to the water, where he found the lady waiting. He baptized her with her husband sitting on a log so close to the preacher that he could touch him . . . he never uttered a word in rebuttal.

Brother Behel once baptized a woman who weighed 364 pounds. People had been trying to persuade the lady to be sprinkled, explaining that no living man could baptize her. Brother Behel baptized her without difficulty. Morrow Massey had gone to the water to help, but he was not needed.

Encounter With A Young Preacher

In 1925 and 1926, Behel enjoyed some of the most happy days of his life, while living in Rogersville and preaching to folks in Lauderdale and Limestone counties. "I loved these people and the work there. They appreciated me, because I preached the word of the Lord, the truth with clearness, in a plain straightforward manner. "Once during a meeting, brother Behel apparently stepped on some highly-educated young preacher's toes. After the sermon, the young man approached Behel and said: "Sir, I suppose you did not realize that you were speaking to a man who can speak seven different languages. "Seeing that the young man was bent on an argument, brother Behel said, "No, I did not, and furthermore, I don't care for I spoke nothing but the truth, which no man can truthfully deny." "Yes sir," said the stranger, "I know that---it was the truth. "I carry a diploma from a Bible college, but you have me skinned three city blocks when it comes to knowing and quoting scriptures. "I have attended a college, taking the course prescribed, but was so busy with church history, athletics, etc. that I had little or no time for Bible study.

Brother Behel told the young man that he had been to school since he was 12 years old, where Christ was the principal. He learned his lesson well.

His Memory

In the last few years of his life, friends would approach brother Behel and tell him what a wonderful memory he had. The dedicated preacher would always give the same answer: "Your memory is as good as mine. I simply trained my mind to contain scripture. I studied while others wasted time. The sweet now and now (not the sweet by and by) is all the time you can truly claim yours. "We pass this way but once and soon our journey will be done: please don't waste your time. Use it profitably by studying, reading God's word daily, praying and with regularity."

His Death

In 1936 brother Behel's health began to fail. By early 1937 he was unable to work. One of his last official acts was preaching a dedication sermon at the new Lone Cedar church building near Florence, Alabama. Brother Behel had helped build the meeting house and he was determined to preach at the first services in it. This he did, even though he had to be carried into the building on a stretcher. There were few dry eyes in the church when brother Behel finished his final sermon. He died in 1938.

-Price Parker, World Evangelist, Vol. 9 No. 1, January, 1981, pages 10,11

Few There Be

While attending a gospel meeting conducted by N.B. Hardeman, J.D. Tant was approached by a good sister who complained about Hardeman's preaching. "Brother Hardeman is so narrow. He believes our little crowd are the only ones that will go to heaven." Tant responded, "brother Hardeman is wider than I am, I don't believe all of 'our crowd' will make it." *Farris J. Smith*

Say What?

Frank Puckett was preaching in a tent meeting in an AL community. The local preacher's small boy (8-10 yrs old) occupied a folding chair in the front row each night. One evening brother Puckett read or quoted Matt. 16:13-18 (KJV) re. Jesus' promise to build His church. Following the reading of the text, brother Puckett asked the rhetorical question: "What did Jesus promise to do?" The little boy, not recognizing a rhetorical question, piped up and said: "He promised to build His church in spite of hell!" It brought the house (or tent) down!..... *Hugh Fulford as told to him by Franklin Camp*

"HOLY GHOST RELIGION" Earl Kimbrough

It is difficult to imagine the people of Northwest Alabama persecuting Christians as they did even up to the first part of the twentieth century. In 1913, John T. Underwood held a gospel meeting under a tent at Pleasant Site in Franklin County. He preached five days in August, with thirteen added to "the one body." In reporting the meeting, he felt that it deserved "more than passing notice." Explaining, he said: "On the fourth night of the meeting some fellows who believe in Holy Ghost religion cut every rope around my tent and cut my rubber blackboard into strings. The next night, which was the last night of the meeting, we had nine confessions. The sister of the Methodist preacher who lives there came to the water the next morning to make the confession and be baptized. She came to where I stopped to make a talk before baptizing. Her mother took her stand on one side of her, and her brother, a brother of the Methodist preacher, took his stand on the other side of her, with a large knife open in his hand, to keep his sister from confessing her Savior. Seeing this she backed off a few steps and began to cry. A pretty good example of Holy Ghost religion." (*Gospel Advocate*, Oct. 16, 1913.)

Underwood did not say whether the woman ever obeyed the gospel. The implication is that she did not. Incidentally, Pleasant Site is the same place where, fourteen years later, O. C. Dobbs held a gospel meeting, also under a tent. The sectarians were so aroused that they tried to stop the meeting. They filed civil charges against the Christians, claiming that the tent was over the line on another man's property. They had several of the brethren arrested, including Dobbs.

LOOKING BACK: 1941

Adolphus J. Rollins. Athens, Ala. "Meetings among churches of Limestone County are about over for the summer. The number of baptisms is off some from the last year or so. About two hundred thirty-five were baptized. This brings our total for the past five summers to sixteen hundred baptisms. Thirteen new congregations have been started—eleven in the county, one in Tennessee, and one in Louisiana.... Five new buildings have been erected, and one is under construction." (*GA*, 10-9-1941.)

LORENZO DOW IN ALABAMA

EARL KIMBROUGH

One cannot go far in early American history without encountering the name of Lorenzo Dow (1777-1834). This Connecticut Yankee was one of the best known and most picturesque of the early Protestant preachers in America. The countless stories connected with him from all regions of the country where he traveled make him a legendary folk character. After a youth troubled by religious speculations, Dow was converted to the Methodist Church at Hartford, Conn., in 1792 by Hope Hull. He soon became a circuit riding preacher of that denomination while he was still in his teens. He was given circuit assignments on a trial basis, but he failed the test because assigned stations "did not correspond with the expansive fields of his dreams."

In 1799, soon after he began preaching, he felt called to preach to the Roman Catholics in Ireland, where he believed they were the strongest. So he made the first of two or three missionary voyages to Europe against the authority of the Methodist Conference. Upon his return to America, he resumed his efforts to ride a circuit, but still on a trial basis. Anson West, in a history of the Methodist Church in Alabama, says Dow was never ordained to the Methodist ministry and received no authority from the Conference "to administer sacrament or organize churches." He held to the doctrinal principles of the Methodism, but without any church influence or allegiance. He was thus free to preach as he pleased. The Methodists disclaimed responsibility for Dow's renowned antics. West said: "He was a force, but uncertain, unreliable and inefficient." Once when asked about his faith, Dow replied: "I am Methodist chain and Quaker filling."

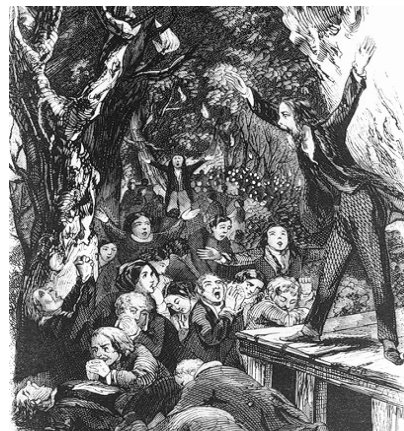
In addition to voyages to Europe and the West Indies, and journeys into Canada, Dow made preaching expeditions to all parts of the United States as then constituted. He attracted large crowds by his eccentric manner, his incredible eloquence, and his unvarnished attitude in dealing with sinners. His travels took him from New England to the extremities of the country for at least from fifteen to twenty times. Some have estimated that during the thirty-eight years of his public life, Dow traveled something like 200,000 miles. Except for sea voyages, most of this was on horseback or on foot, with the latter being his common mode of travel.

Witnesses almost exhaust the vocabulary trying to describe Dow's strange ways. John Warner Barber said: "For if ever there was a man who feverishly rowed his boat through the waters of life with only one oar in the water, it was 'Crazy Lorenzo' Dow." He was unkempt in appearance and careless about his cleanliness. He was as peculiar in visage as he was in behavior. He is said to have preached in a harsh, raspy voice and with jerky movements and gestures. One who heard him preach when he was about thirty years old said: "He was thin and weather-beaten, and appeared haggard and ill-

avored, partly on account of his reddish, dusty beard, some six inches long." His long straggly hair and beard were depicted as having never met a comb. "He parted his hair in the middle and wore it hanging down his neck and shoulders and his face was radiant with kindness."

Dow usually owned only one set of clothes and wore that until it was so badly frayed and full of holes that some sympathetic person would give him another set, which seldom fit his skinny form properly, further adding to his strange appearance. He cared nothing for material possessions. He carried no luggage with him in his travels, except when he had a box of Bibles for distribution. He often shared his scant income with those in need.

Yet, for all his outlandish ways, Lorenzo Dow was far from being unbalanced. One said that despite his



Lorenzo "Crazy" Dow

unattractive qualities, he had a remarkable, intuitive understanding of the tastes, prejudices and weaknesses of common, country people; and he possessed an unerring knack for adapting his style to such audiences. The ambitious journeys he took into the most out-of-the-way regions of the land, often through hostile Indian Territory and along wilderness trails infested with highwaymen, indicates that he was totally committed to saving souls. Further, he was absolutely indefatigable in the pursuit of that mission and brilliantly ingenious in devising effective methods of bringing the word to the fallen world in places where he traveled. Some have suggested, not without justification, that the Dow legends probably circulated as far and long as they did because people secretly admired the man more than they publicly ridiculed his behavior. He has been called one of America's most talented and effective traveling salesmen.

Dow's preaching was as unconventional as his manner of life. He began preaching near his New England home at Coventry, Conn., and very early developed a reputation as a charismatic, hell-fire-and-brimstone orator. After being written off by the Methodists, he went where he wanted to go, said what he wanted to say, and stayed as long as he wanted to stay, which was usually for a short time (unless the people were sufficiently aroused by his preaching to make his sojourn even shorter than he intended). His peculiar speaking mannerisms were said to be like nothing ever seen or heard before among the church-goers of the time. It is reported that: "He shouted, he screamed, he

cried, he begged, he flattered, he insulted, he challenged people and their beliefs. He told stories and made jokes.” He often preached in the open air to assemblies of 10,000 people or more and held them spellbound.

Charles F. Browne wrote about one of the tricks of show-manship for which Dow became “world famous.” He said that on one occasion Dow read a text from Paul, “I can do all things.” He then paused, took off his spectacles, laid them on his open Bible, and said, “No, Paul, you are mistaken for once; I’ll bet you five dollars you can’t, and I stake the money.” He took a five dollar bill from his pocket and laid it on his Bible and then took up his spectacles again, and read: “Through Jesus Christ our Lord,” “Ah, Paul!” exclaimed Dow, snatching up the money and returning it to his pocket, “that’s a very different matter; the bet’s withdrawn.”

Dow’s sermons were not popular with many and he was often persecuted for his unwelcomed reproofs of their sins. He at times was forcibly run out of a community where he preached, and was often pelted with “stones, eggs, and rotten vegetables” while speaking. But that never stopped him for long; he simply went on to the next town and gave the people there the same sermon. Church buildings were often closed to him, but he simply used whatever was available—the court house, a barn, or an open field.

Our interest here in this peculiar pioneer preacher rests in his work in Alabama, and his being contemporary with the beginning of the Restoration Movement. Lorenzo Dow is the earliest recorded preacher to visit the Alabama frontier. He first entered the state from Georgia in 1803 through the Creek Indian Nation that then embraced much of Alabama and Georgia. This required permission from the Georgia governor, which he readily obtained before making a 400 mile trek, no doubt along the Old Federal Road that ran from Milledgeville, the Georgia capital, through Montgomery to Fort Stoddard, north of Mobile in Alabama. He ministered to settlers along the Tombigbee and Tensaw Rivers in that part of what later became the twenty-second state.

While Dow’s preaching was not the message of the Restoration preachers, yet it carried an element of independence and reformation that resembles the work of the pioneer gospel preachers. They also shared with Dow a kindred persecution because of their preaching. It is not known whether Dow had any personal connection with Restoration preachers; but given the nature of his work and the range of places he went, as well as other inklings, it is likely that he did. He is said to have visited Kentucky at about the time of the great western revivals in that state.

It is possible that he heard Stone and others preach in those meetings. They at least shared common experiences and apparently knew some of the same people. While Stone was waiting to be ordained as a Presbyterian preacher, he taught at Succoth Academy

near Washington, Georgia. The school was founded in about 1790 by Hope Hull, the father of Methodism in that state. Hull had sympathized with James O’Kelly in his rebellion against Francis Asbury, but did not leave the Methodist Church. So Stone became closely associated for a time with the man who converted Lorenzo Dow. Dow is said to have witnessed the strange behavior of the converts in the Kentucky revivals, but he gave a more reasonable explanation for the phenomenon than Stone, who believed they were acts of God. Dow is described as “a shrewd observer who realized that exhorters like himself produced these strange gyrations.”

An Alabama connection with Dow is seen in the fact that Elisha Randolph, one of the first pioneer preachers of the church of Christ in North Alabama, named one of his three preacher sons after the famous maverick Methodist. This was Lorenzo Dow Randolph, the brother of Jeremiah and Simeon Randolph. It would be interesting to know the reason for this. Did Elisha Randolph know Lorenzo Dow? H. Leo Boles says Jeremiah Randolph before becoming a Christian was searching for authority to join the Methodist Church. This fact does not fit what is known of Jeremiah Randolph, in view of the fact that his father was already preaching the gospel in Alabama as early as 1825. The family did not move to Fayette County, Alabama, until about 1831. It is likely that Boles’ reference is confused with Jeremiah’s father, Elisha, if not the father of Elisha. If Elisha Randolph did not know Dow, he apparently thought enough of him to name a son after him, as did thousands of people on the American frontier.

Nina Leftwich, in a history of Muscle Shoals, Alabama, writes: “Lorenzo Dow, the great wilderness preacher, with his pretty wife, Peggy, sometimes rode down the [Natchez] Trace, to preach to a people hungering for the word and eagerly waiting for the promised ‘two years from today I’ll be back, brethren.’” She said he customarily made such appointments to return again to preach at a place exactly one year from that day. Further, he kept his promise “and that there would always be a great crowd present at the designated time and place to hear the ‘mighty proclaimier of the Words of Life.’” (Nina Leftwich, *Two Hundred Years at Muscle Shoals*, 24, 140.) Since Leftwich’s history is of Northwest Alabama, is apparent that Dow’s preaching included places along the Natchez Trace where it cuts through Northwest Alabama. Her reference to him announcing a preaching appointment a year or more in advance, and then showing up on that exact day, is mentioned in several records of Dow’s life. This was a remarkable feat given the prevailing means of travel and the scope of his rambling ministry. His timing was exceptional!

Dow’s meager income came mostly from preaching. However, he published some books and may have received a little income from these. But he was poor most of his life, and from what money he had, he

bought Bibles to give away. It is said that he preached the same message to Methodists, Baptists, Quakers, Catholics, and atheists. Dow stayed but a short time when he first came to Alabama in 1803, but during the next nine years he made at least ten more visits to the state. He established some churches along the Tombigbee, including one at McIntosh Bluff, whose building served to house Aaron Burr the first night after his capture by federal troops from Fort Stoddard in 1807.

One writer, after describing Dow's success in Alabama, says: "He was not so successful in St. Stephens, the former Territorial Capitol. It seems that his fervent preaching and condemnation of local sinners escalated to the point that they 'tarred and feathered' Dow and vanished him on a raft down the Tombigbee River. As he floated away downriver he was heard to say, 'I curse this place! Very soon it will be home only to bats and snakes.'" At the site of St. Stephens today one can find scarcely more there than rats and snakes in this once thriving historic Alabama community.

Lorenzo Dow's autonomous style, his barbed censure of the prevalent sins, and his distribution of Bibles, together with his fierce dedication to what he believed to be right, were in the same spirit that motivated the early restorers in the state. And his work may have helped to open doors for the independent and controversial preaching of the first Christian preachers who brought the ancient gospel in areas where Dow traveled. We should not hesitate to give credit to fearless and free-spirited preachers like Dow for the work they did in helping to tame the immorality of an unstable wilderness population, for pressing the importance of God's word in the lives of the people, and for scattering Bibles to the people where they preached. (The material in this article is taken from several accounts of Lorenzo Dow, including, Anson West's, *History of Methodism in Alabama*, John H. P. Noland, *Sketches of Prominent Citizens of 1876*, Kenneth Randolph, *The Randolphs of Alabama*, etc.)

LOOKING BACK: 1932

G. W. Hall, Jasper, Ala. "C. A. Wheeler, Jasper, Ala., now recovering from pneumonia, asks the prayers of the Lord's people. His doctor says he is the oldest person he ever knew to recover from pneumonia, and gives instructions that he stay close in during the winter months to avoid a relapse. Brother Wheeler has been very active in this part of Alabama, and elsewhere during the past fifty years, preaching wherever he could. Many of the congregations now worshiping in Northern Alabama and Tennessee owe their existence to his preaching. He says if all the people in Alabama that he has baptized would send him would send him fifty cents each, he would be comfortable fixed during the coming winter months. May his many friends who know him send a word of encouragement and a contribution." (GA, 2-4-1932.)

Keeble Said it

The following quotes are from the book "Marshall Keeble - "His Hand and Heart" by Willie Cato



"Weren't Nothing No way"

"I was in Alabama in a meeting and was sitting on the front porch when a lady came down the street crying and shouting. I asked the lady where I was staying what was the matter with that woman. She told me that she was crying because they had let her out of her church. I went out to the sidewalk and started a conversation with the lady, and she told me the same thing. I said "Lady, you go back down there and thank that preacher for turning you out, 'cause you weren't in nothing no way.' Before I left that town, I baptized her into Christ."

Marshall Keeble

The Right Name

"Jesus called Lazarus by his name. He didn't call anybody else. Jesus is coming back after His church, and He'll call it by its name. Be sure you're in the one that has His name. If you're not, He'll call you later. He could call all of them --I said, He could, I didn't say He would."

Just Working

"God will wake us up one day just to send us to a place that we worked for. If you worked for Hell, He'll send you there. If you worked for Heaven, He'll send you there."

The Right Church

"I want to die in the Church that Jesus died for, not the one your momma died in. I want to die in the one bought by Jesus, not in the one started by man."

On The Baptist

"John, the Baptist, died and never got up. I don't want to be in any man's church who can't get up. The man who owns the Church I'm a member of laid down His life and took it up again. He had more power than before. He had ALL power! Jesus is coming back again. John ain't never gonna come back."

The Final Say

SOUND SPEECH AND INCONSISTENCIES.

G.C. Brewer

We have seen that the church belongs to Christ, and may be therefore consistently called the church of Christ. But we have seen also that the church is not a denomination or party of believers; it includes all believers. It should not be referred to in any way that implies that it is a sect or denomination. Some brethren do not seem to have a clear grasp of this point; and their lack of understanding is betrayed by the use of the name church of Christ. Some illustrations were given in a former article, but the following examples will further illustrate the point: "What does the Church of Christ teach on divorce?" "He set forth the doctrines of the Church of Christ." "I want to show the difference between what the Church of Christ believes and what the Christian Church teaches." It would seem that any half-informed child of God ought to be able to see that such expressions are unscriptural, but some of them do not see it. *Excerpted from Gospel Advocate June 25, 1933*

67 Years and Still True

"I shall seek to avoid the two extremes manifest today in press and pulpit. One extreme is to avoid offending anyone, but just to preach and write so that no one will have cause to take issue with you. That is positively dangerous, deadly to the soul."

"The other extreme is to imagine that we are unsound unless we are humiliating someone by holding him up to ridicule before our hearers or readers."

As for me, I shall try for the rest of the journey, to write and speak in the spirit of my Master, to be patient with those who are honestly in error, but to offer no quarter to the willful perverter of, or deflector from God's eternal truth." *T. Q. Martin, The New Christian Leader, Vol. 1, No.2 (January 21, 1941): 4.*

From Moses E. Lard

"The churches of Christ in the whole land owe it to themselves, and to the high and just ground they have taken, to guard with sleepless vigilance against even a semblance of an innovation on the practices and usages of the apostolic church. Apostasies begin with things that 'have no harm in them,' and end in ruin. At first they creep, but in the end they stride continents at a single step. Finally, we say, Watch, Beware!"..... *Lard's Quarterly, 1864*

Union Services

R.L. Whiteside

Question

Do all the churches of Christ in towns dismiss their prayer-meeting services at Thanksgiving in order to take part with the sectarians, and is it right to do so? It looks to me like if it is right to dismiss one service and have a union meeting, it would be all right to dismiss any time or meet with them all the time. I believe in loving and being kind to everyone, but never at the expense of truth. I may be wrong, but it hurts me to see God's people, as you say, "swapping courtesies with their enemies."

Answer

All religious denominations exist contrary to God's will; they are outlaw organizations; they blind the eyes of the people, and cause many souls to be lost. When a church of God joins with them in arranging and holding any sort of religious program, they must do so as equals.

They certainly would not unite in a religious service with what they regard as an unscriptural, or outlaw, body. If they think those denominations are approved of God, they have a poor understanding of God's teaching. If they think the denominations are not approved of God, then they show disrespect for God by approving that which they know God does not approve. *Excerpted from Gospel Advocate-June 12, 1941*

That Filthy Weed Again

Was it John O'Dowd in a meeting somewhere in Alabama who said: "Sermonettes are preached by preacherettes to a bunch of Christianettes who can hardly wait to get outside to smoke their cigarettes."

Truth

The man who refuses to give honest consideration to teaching on any subject, must (1) believe that he is incapable of learning, or (2) think that he knows all there is to know on the subject, or (3) knows that he is wrong and does not intend to change. In our search for truth, may we be free from: (1) the cowardice that shrinks from new truth, that is, new to us; (2) the laziness that is content with half-truths; and (3) the arrogance that thinks it knows all truth already.' (*Eugene Britnell-The Sower, Jan. 1978, p. 2.*) "



Meetinghouse of the Russellville Church ca. 1920