

ABOUT THE BOOK

Gleaned from personal diaries kept for fifty years, this book portrays a detailed account of the abundant life and service of J.B. Gaither. This "old time" preacher of the Gospel lived in an era of tremendous change. If you knew him, you will be uplifted by knowing him better. All will be inspired by the way he lived, loved and served The Master in the "good ole days" of the 1900's. He possessed a Christian attitude of "do all you can do and then some." He genuinely loved the Lord's church, and the church loved him back.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Sandra Gaither Pitchford is the youngest of five children of J.B. and Mary Gaither. She and her siblings constantly reminisce and share the memories of their rich heritage. Sandra attended Freed-Hardeman College and received a Home Economics degree from Harding College in 1970. She and her husband, Dave, live in Mountain Home, AR. Dave serves as an elder in the church, and Sandra enjoys teaching and helping with the Lads to Leaders program. She considers her greatest earthly blessings to be that she is a part of the Gaither legacy and her 29 years as a "stay-at-home Mom" and now a "stay-at-home Nana." They have three married children who, along with their spouses, all graduated from Freed-Hardeman University: Allison & Russell Epperson, Landon & Kendra Pitchford, and Alan & Tiffany Pitchford. The Pitchfords are also blessed with four grandchildren and a fifth one due in January, 2009.

J. B. Gaither
His Place in Time
Sandra Gaither Pitchford

J. B. Gaither

His Place in Time



I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go unto the house of the Lord.



-By Sandra Gaither Pitchford-

Published By Westview, Inc.
P.O. Box 210183
Nashville, TN 37221
www.publishedbywestview.com



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6.14 x 9.21



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J. B. Gaither
His Place in Time



By Sandra Gaither Pitchford

Even if you have already read this book,
please be sure to read
“The Final Chapter”
at the end of the book on this site.
It is a supplement written *after* publication.
You might find your name highlighted there!
The Index follows “The Final Chapter,”
but the Index only includes the original book contents.
SGP

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First Edition, September 2008
The Final Chapter added March 2010

Printed in the United States of America on acid-free paper.

ISBN 978-0-9819172-9-0

Published by Westview, Inc.
P.O. Box 210183
Nashville, TN 37221
www.publishedbywestview.com

Table of Contents

Table of Contents	iii
Dedication & Gratitude... ..	iv
John Burgess Gaither – A Man of God	1
The Early Years – Lawrenceburg, Tennessee... ..	3
New Beginnings – From Tennessee to Ohio.....	11
Full Time Ministry – Gainesboro, Tennessee	25
Years of War and Peace – Springfield, Tennessee.....	37
Mission Years: Oneida & Jamestown, Tennessee.....	47
Whitley City & Berea, Kentucky	
The Full House Years – Gallatin, Tennessee... ..	64
The Empty Nest Years – Bells, Tennessee.....	90
The Golden Years – Liberty at Fayetteville, Tennessee.....	100
“I Have Finished My Course” – The Funeral.....	110
Obituaries... ..	124
Mary Gaither – Years of Widowhood	132
The Gaither Family Today – Our Traditions.....	140
Lasting Influence on the Gaither Family.....	150
Lasting Influence on Friends – Past and Present.....	182
Sermons, Articles and Christian Education.....	198
Church Bulletin Excerpts & Favorite Songs.....	235
Stories, Jokes & Quotes.....	249
Taking Time for Clocks.....	265
Talents & Tidbits.....	281
Historical & Political Notes.....	293
His Contemporaries.....	301
Old Paths Revisited – His Children Journey Back in Time... ..	311
With All This in Mind.....	395
The Final Chapter.....	396
Index.....	422

Dedication & Gratitude...

This book is dedicated to the descendants of J.B. and Mary Gaither. That includes my siblings, Mary Frances Jones, Patricia Green, Ruby Williams and John B., Jr. It extends to our parents' fourteen grandchildren and twenty-six great grandchildren (soon to be twenty-seven). It is to each of you and to those who will come after you, that I lovingly dedicate this story of your Godly heritage.

Words cannot express the gratitude I feel towards the numerous people who have made this effort possible. First of all, I am so thankful to my husband, Dave. He has allowed me to spend immeasurable time at the computer and on the phone. He has put up with a great deal of technology frustration on my part, realizing there was no way he could help. He has agreed to several trips with and without him, pursuing my search. He has also been a continuous source of encouragement to me, because he has a genuine interest in and love for my parents' story.

My siblings have likewise been a real support. Without their memories and willingness to share, much of the data would have not been complete. There are some things only the family knows! They were always ready to make the trips back to visit these congregations when we could get our schedules to coincide. Though we are all apart in miles, we have grown even closer through this project, and that, in itself, is rewarding.

In our parents' generation, we have one aunt still living. Aunt Mary Kay Campbell and her daughter, Sherry Dearth have aided us in the Ohio quest. Another cousin, Jere Taylor has been able to contribute to the Campbell side of the family. Our Gaither cousins have supplemented facts and stories, namely Tom O'Neal, Anne Scott, Jane Brown and Margaret Lucas. Also, a cousin on our Grandmother (Gibbs) Gaither's side, John Gibbs, contributed to our family history.

We have enjoyed visits with all of these the past few years and shared so much of our rich heritage. Thank you, Aunt Mary Kay and all of our cousins!

Last, but certainly not least in importance, are all of those friends and church folks who remember our parents and have contributed any little bit of their memories. There are some things only the “church folks” know, so their input has been critical to the story’s completeness. What a joy it has been to visit with so many from our past, and to meet so many people that we have only read about on the pages of the diaries! Thank you all so very much, especially those I contacted over and over again to do research for me! Your willingness to help was so essential and so much appreciated!

To my children and their spouses, I am greatly indebted for loads of assistance they offered to my challenged computer skills. I know they are relieved that I am finally through with this project, though I’m sure there will be more questions and help needed as soon as I think of another venture to undertake!

I would also like to add a special thank you to my Publisher at Westview. Mary Catharine Nelson has helped me so much with the technology and encouraged me to keep at it to completion. When I finally had the opportunity to meet her, I felt like she was an old friend! Thanks to all at Westview who have had a part.

And thank you, Bob Chaffin for all the support and encouragement you so generously contributed!

(Some of the chapters of this book are written in first person and some in third. I want the main chapters of his biography to be filled with “JB” in stead of “Daddy” over and over. Yet some of the supplemental chapters seemed to need a first person touch. Whether he is referred to as “JB” or “Daddy,” you will understand that this book is all about J.B. Gaither, so a little mixture may keep it interesting and yet personal.)

John Burgess Gaither A Man of God...



“Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter now into the joy of thy lord,” is the text taken from the gospel of Matthew, the twenty-fifth chapter and twenty-first verse, and will serve as the basis for our consideration this evening.

That is a J.B. Gaither trademark. Whenever he began a sermon, he always let the Lord speak first, and then he proceeded with the remarks he had prepared for discussion of the text.

This detailed biographical account of the life of J.B. Gaither is only possible because of the extremely organized person that he was. He recorded his daily activities in a “Diary” from 1931 until the day before he died in 1980. Each evening before bedtime, he logged in the facts of his busy day. In addition to the daily diary, he faithfully kept a separate “Journal” that began with his first days in the ministry in 1928 and continued until his death. This journal has a section for Gospel Meetings, Baptisms, Restorations, Funerals and Marriages. Every entry includes the date, name, place and pay received, if any. For each of these events, we can then turn in his “Diary” to that date and sometimes learn more about the occasion.

With this in mind, the family sincerely hopes that you will enjoy and be inspired as you read about the man that we call “Daddy,” *and* the man that we consider a true man of God.



The Early Years... Lawrenceburg, Tennessee

Being the fourth child of Wiley Thomas and Margaret Gibbs Gaither, John Burgess Gaither was born May 1, 1901 on a farm near Lawrenceburg, in Lawrence County, Tennessee.



1906



W.T. & Maggie Gibbs Gaither, 1941
Parents of J.B. Gaither



Children's Bible Class
Lawrenceburg, Tennessee
About 1906

JB is the boy on the front row with his sister,
Maggie Belle on his left.

Second Row, 6th from left, a brother, Joseph Kennedy

In front of Joseph, Gilbert Gibbs, a cousin to JB

Third Row, second from left, a sister, Mary Elizabeth

4th from left, a brother, Earl Thomas

Back row, older man in center, T.B. Larimore,
well known evangelist who had a great influence on JB

JB's dad, W.T. Gaither, donated the lumber for a new school near Lawrenceburg. It was named "Gaitherville," and the eight Gaither children who had previously attended Crowson School and Howard School, were further educated in this building that bore their name.

The story is told that one day as some of the Gaither children were walking to school, they were frightened by the first automobile they had ever seen. They ran from the road to a fence corner until it passed.



The Gaitherville School – Built 1912 Lawrenceburg, Tennessee

JB's family called him "Burge." From the sign in the picture on the following page, he was apparently also called "Burgess." However, the family never saw his signature as anything other than:

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "J. B. Gaither". The signature is written in dark ink on a light-colored background.

In the early nineteen hundreds, providing for a large family with eight children did not come easy. To help with the cost of daily living, JB had to drop out of school to *teach* school!

It was after teaching in Lawrence County Elementary Schools at Deerfield for seven years that he finally graduated from Lawrence County High School in 1924.



“Burgess” Gaither is at back row, left
His cousin, Gretchen is on the back row right
The sign the children are holding in the photo reads:

Burgess	Gaither
Deerfield School	
Gretchen	1924
	Gibbs



John Burgess Gaither
Lawrence County High School
Senior Picture 1924
23 years old



JB was brought up in the church and obeyed the gospel under the preaching of J.E. Thornberry October 25, 1916.

At the age of sixteen (1917), he made his first talk during a Prayer Meeting at his home congregation in Lawrenceburg. A few years later, his first real preaching "appointment" was in a log meeting house at the Midway congregation near his birthplace November, 1926.



This is a recent picture of Crowson Creek which winds through the Gaither farmland near Lawrenceburg, Tennessee. This water was the site for many baptisms in those days. It is told that people would walk for miles to come to the creek on the Gaither farm for baptismal services. Part of the Gaither farm is now a part of the David Crockett State Park. In the background, you can get a sense of the beautiful rolling hills that are a part of this farm.



□ JB and Mary Campbell, possibly at Crowson Creek.

JB's parents sold the farm and moved to town about 1932. His dad, Wiley, died in 1943 and his mother, Maggie, lived until 1962.

The Gaither and Gibbs families are buried in the Mimosa Cemetery and also at Bumpas Cemetery in Lawrenceburg.



The Gaither Home in about 1909
From left: Maggie holding Polly, Joseph, Mary,
Maggie Belle, James, JB, Earl

Siblings of John Burgess Gaither:

- 1893-1990 Earl Thomas Gaither married Kathleen Tidwell
- 1896-1984 Mary Elizabeth Gaither married Edgar O'Neal
- 1898-1973 Joseph Kennedy Gaither married Dora Reavis
- 1901-1980 John Burgess Gaither married Mary Campbell
- 1903-1992 Maggie Belle married Paschal Barnes
- 1905-1976 James Hardeman married Annie Lopp & Nell Cothan
- 1909-1957 Polly Lillian married John James Pierce
- 1909-1909 Wiley Gaither, Jr. was a twin to Polly & died at birth
- 1911-1979 Frances Stribling married Hamil Adams
- 1919-1919 Charles William only lived 3 days

THREE-STAR COMMUNITIES
"Best of the Best"

Lawrence County

Major Communities
Lawrenceburg, Loretto, Ethridge, St. Joseph, Iron City

*The Lawrenceburg Public Square
includes a life-size statue of
Col. David Crockett.*



Several Notable People Have Come From Lawrenceburg Area

During his years in Tennessee, Col. David Crockett held several posts in the militia, was town commissioner for Lawrenceburg, and in 1820 began his service in the Tennessee General Assembly, as a representative of Lawrence and Hickman counties. He built a grist mill, gun powder mill, and distillery on Shoal Creek in 1820. Shoal Creek has served some nobler purposes, such as a place for baptism of some of the Gaither Family.

The Family of Wiley Thomas & Margaret Gibbs Gaither contributed many good citizens to the Lawrenceburg Area. Their farm was immediately below what is now DAVID CROCKETT STATE PARK, One-half-mile West of Lawrenceburg, on Highway 64. After entering the park (before buildings) you can see a barn on the former Gaither farm by looking left down the hill. A school was started in that area, and was known as GAITHERSVILLE.

For More Information about Lawrenceburg
Contact Mary Gilliam, P.O.Box 190, Lawrenceburg,
Tennessee 38464.

For More Information about David Crockett Park,
Telephone: (931) 762-4908
Info. About David Crockett Museum (931) 762-4911

□ Last Paragraph mentions JB's parents,
Wiley Thomas & Margaret Gibbs Gaither.

Excerpt from a recently (September, 2008) published book entitled,
"The Heritage of Lawrence County, Tennessee," pages 170-171
Submitted by Thomas Gaither O'Neal
Author's comments added in ().

*The Gaithers of Lawrence County –
From the time that Martin Gaither (JB's great-grandfather) moved to
Lawrence County in 1819 from North Carolina, having come through the
Cumberland Gap, until Uncle Earl Gaither (JB's brother) died December 30,
1990, the Gaither name was prominent in Lawrence County. Martin was one of
the signers of a petition, September 20, 1823 to the General Assembly to
establish the town of Lawrenceburg. He lived on a site that is now the present
County Courthouse. He at one time owned original Lots #61, 62, 63 which
would be the eastern half of the block on which the Stribling house and C.F.
McGee's is located, from Pulaski Street to Taylor Street. It was well known he
kept a tavern or saloon. He was contemporary with Davy Crockett, who died at
the Alamo. He and Davy each led a faction as to where the courthouse would be
erected. Martin's side won the debate.*

New Beginnings...

From Tennessee to Ohio

When the summer of 1927 came around, JB went north to visit his brothers, Joe and Jim and their families, then living at New Philadelphia and Dover, in Tuscarawas County, Ohio. His two week visit turned into five years. When he arrived on his "vacation," he found work as an office clerk at the Iron Foundry (where one of his brothers worked). In the 1931 and 1932 diaries, he mentions visiting "Penn Mold" fairly often. We have reached the conclusion that Penn Mold was the name of the Foundry where he worked prior to 1931. Below are two entries from his 1931 diary:

January 7 X
 Visit Bro. Lancaster, Sister Rogers, Bro. Barrett. Took mother's iron to Dover to have it repaired, visited at Penn. Mold. Tried to arrange for meeting at which Mary & I walked to Bible study Lesson Rev. 9.

July 31
 Up at 10:00 Spent most of day with Mother & Dad at Jim's. Had & I visited at Penn Mold. Visited again at Jim's in evening.

He worshipped at a congregation there in New Philadelphia that met at 119 Seventh Street NW. That was the time and place in Ohio that the Tennessee man met the Tennessee girl! Mary Brown Campbell was seventeen years of age. He was eight years her senior. A life changing event took place when “Burgess” Gaither, as he was then called, stepped into the picture at the church house in New Philadelphia.



Church of Christ
119 Seventh Street N.W.
New Philadelphia, Ohio

Mary was born in Hohenwald, Tennessee on November 11, 1909 to Richard Thomas (“Tom”) and Nora Campbell. When she was seven years old, her family moved from Hohenwald to New Philadelphia to find work.

When the Campbells moved to Ohio about 1916, there was no Church of Christ in New Philadelphia, so the family began attending the Christian Church where Mary was later baptized. A few years later, about 1923, her parents were amongst those who began meeting as the church of Christ. At first they met in homes, including the Campbell home. Then they rented two different

“Halls” until 1924 when the group was able to purchase a meeting place on Seventh Street N.W.



Tom & Nora Campbell

Not long after his arrival at that congregation, JB was asked to preach. His sermon was well received, and from then on, he was often teaching and preaching for the church there. As word of his ability spread throughout the area, he began to get calls from various congregations to come and help them out. At that time, there were few churches of Christ in Ohio. JB assisted in a number of mission meetings in Ohio, establishing two new congregations. Some of the places he preached in Ohio are Tippecanoe, Beach City, Birmingham, Alliance, Uhrichsville, and Newcomerstown.

Diary entry from January 17, 1931:

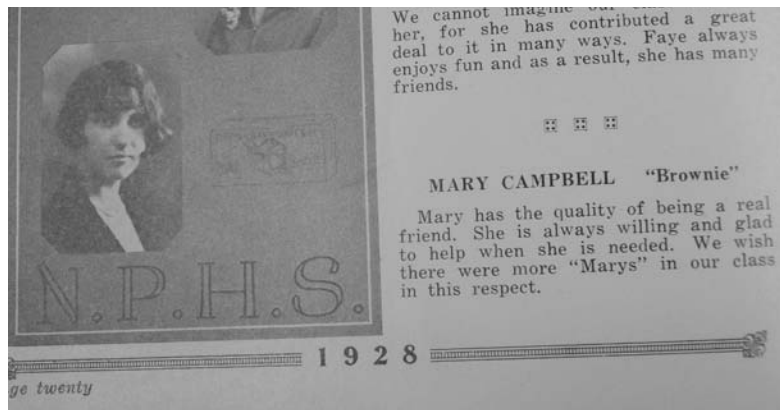
A photograph of a handwritten diary entry on lined paper. The text is written in cursive and includes the following entries:

To Uhrichsville at 9:30
Subject: "A Heroin's Fairwell"
To Infirmary at 2:30.
Subj: "Paul." To Beach
City at 7:00. Subj: "Am
I My Brother's Keeper?"
Hoshe at 9:00. Visited



Central High School
New Philadelphia, Ohio
Built 1913

In the spring of 1928, Mary Campbell graduated from Central High School. This is a section from her yearbook.



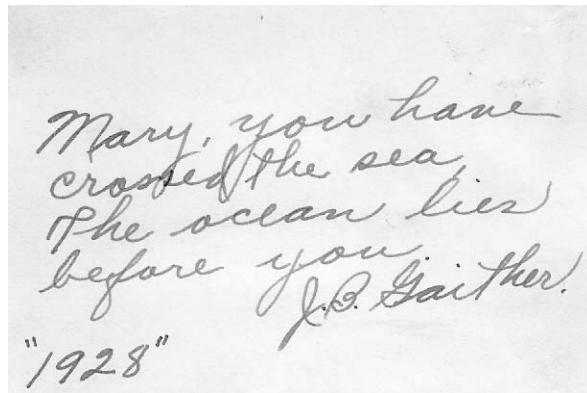
Her friends called her "Brownie" because her middle name was Brown. She was also called "Brown Campbell" which she did not like, so she began to go by "Mary B." hoping future acquaintances would not find out that "B" stood for Brown.



It was at a preaching service at Newcomerstown on August 30, 1930 that JB baptized his future wife into the Lord's church. The baptism took place in the Tuscarawas River.



JB was a genuine romantic. Love letters he wrote to Mary, even after they were married for many years, sound like story lines from an old fashioned film you might see from the 1930's.



Since this little card is dated "1928", we assume it was given to Mary at her High School Graduation.



This Valentine is not dated, but was likely given to Mary before their marriage. JB inserted a little photo of himself in the little pendant that hangs on the left.



J.B. Gaither & Mary Campbell

Mary often told that the first Sunday JB came to worship at their congregation; she fell in love with him. After he taught the class that morning, she knew he was the best teacher she had ever heard. She told him later (when it was safe), that she knew right then that she would marry him someday. She was only seventeen at the time. Her deep love and devotion never waned, nor did her opinion of him being the best teacher/preacher she ever heard, even as she survived him for nearly twenty-six years.

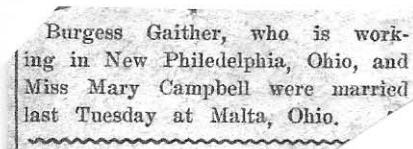


After JB and Mary dated for three years, and when Mary became “of age,” she became his wife on her twenty first birthday, November 11, 1930. He always claimed that he waited until her twenty-first birthday, because he didn’t want her parents to have to sign for her to marry.



J.B. & Mary Gaither
Married November 11, 1930

They drove to Malta, Ohio where they were married by brother Charles H. Morin at his home. They then spent their first night together in the Morin’s home!



After a honeymoon trip to Tennessee, which included preaching on at least two occasions, they returned to make their first home in this house located at 534 Tuscarawas Avenue in New Philadelphia.



Sunday, April 29, 1931
Mary, JB, Polly and Annie Gaither

Mary's dad, Tom, was an experienced wallpaper hanger and painter, and JB found himself assisting him a great deal in his work. Tom, also a good song leader and teacher, was interested in converting people to Christ. He and JB became a team, going and preaching and leading the singing wherever they could find an empty building in which to meet.

Along with the spiritual pursuits, JB found time for relaxation. He was known to go to area swimming holes with Mary, his brothers, or friends when the weather was hot.

Mary had a job at Woolworth's Five and Dime there in New Philadelphia. It started as an after school job before she graduated. Once she married, her diary writings indicate she was very discontent as a working woman. She was one who longed to be involved with the daily life of her "Burge," as she called him at that time.



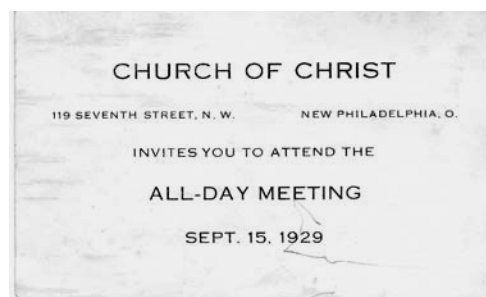
At right of photo: Woolworth's Five & Dime
123 West High Avenue, New Philadelphia, Ohio
Below: Mary's diary June 18, 1932

So bed late tonight
my last night to
work - and I glad?
Can't realize I'll be
somewhere besides
behind the counter.
It sure feels funny
so think that tonight
is my last - good-bye
dear old counter -



JB held his first protracted meeting for his home congregation in New Philadelphia in September, 1930. We learned that he had some sort of employment arrangement with the church in New Philadelphia because of the business card shown above, and also because he wrote on May 17, 1931, *My last day at Phila. Resigned at morning service. Completed 4 years here.*

Five days later, he mentions a business meeting at the church there at which his brother, Joe Gaither and William Bishop were appointed elders. From that point on, he preached in various congregations around that area. He always said Gainesboro, Tennessee was his first local work, so we know that the church in New Philadelphia was a part time ministry, supplemented part of that time by his work at the Foundry.



While living in New Philadelphia, JB and Mary and their family and friends often enjoyed picnics, fireworks and other occasions of relaxation at beautiful Tuscora Park.



An artist's rendition of the old entrance to
Tuscora Park, New Philadelphia, Ohio

August 1
Up at 9:30. Visited at
Dissis in forenoon.
All of us went to
Tuscora Park in afternoon
and took lunch. Dad &
Mother spent night
with us.

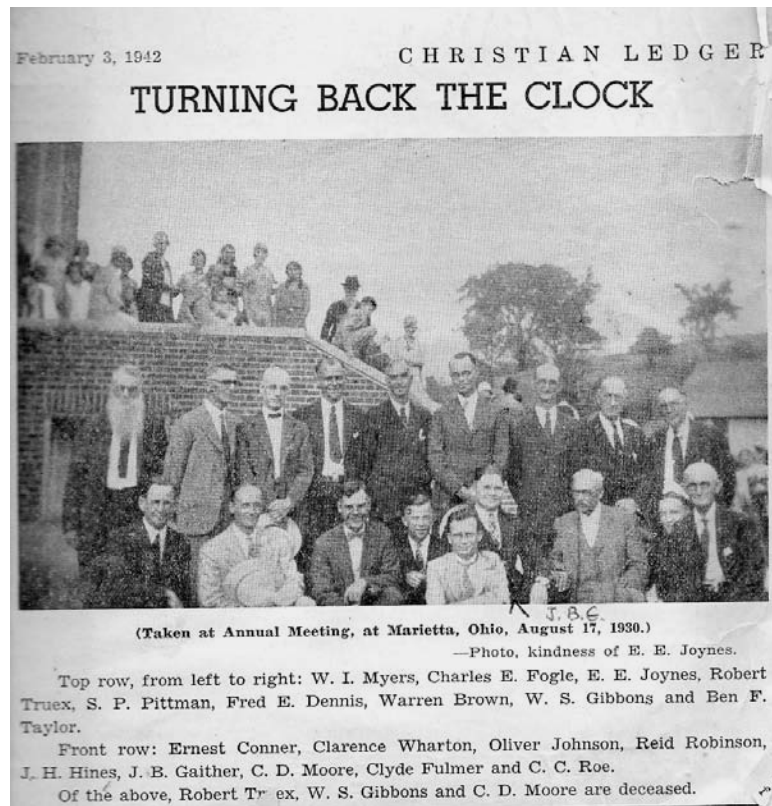
September 7
Labor Day. Up at 9:00. Canned
peaches most of day. 5/4 to
Dad, Mother, Tom, Paul & Tommy
Clem helped to garden in
evening. To fireworks at
Tuscora park at 10:00.

1931

CHRISTIAN LEDGER

February 3, 1942.

Notice in the caption that this picture was made in 1930.
Someone has marked the location of JB with an arrow.



Children of Richard Thomas & Nora Lee Daniel Campbell:

Grace Lucille (Avon) (Seloover), Charles Lamar Campbell,
Mary Brown (Gaither), Thomas Lee Campbell,
Paul Ellwood Campbell

Entries from the diary of Mary Gaither, upon their arriving at their new home in Gainesboro, Tennessee:

JUNE, 1932

WED 29	<p>Up around 8:00, my, what a job to straighten & clean up every thing. Like our house pretty good. Gainesboro is surrounded by hills - I never saw the like & such rocks. Sure don't impress me very much. People seem friendly enough but things don't here sure seem funny to us. We were all worn out when nite came</p>
-------------------------	--

JULY, 1932

SAT 9	<p>Made biscuits, weren't so bad either. Guess I'll have a time cooking like these southern people. Washed clothes, ironed, scrubbed porch & gave house general cleanup. Had lots of company in afternoon & Pally & I dirty & still working. Also washed my hair. Tired too. Wrote some letters & listened</p>
SUN	<p>on radio & tried to study lesson.</p>

General Braddock defeated - 1755.

Sun was a busy day for us all & I obtain. Con. by all day long

Full Time Ministry... Gainesboro, Tennessee

The years of the Great Depression were long and hard, but the memories that would be made in the rural hills of Jackson County, Tennessee would rank right up at the top in the highlights of the life of J.B. Gaither.

J.B. Gaither
Gainesboro
Church of Christ
In the 1930's



It was June 28, 1932 when JB and Mary moved to Gainesboro, Tennessee to work on a “half time basis” with the church there. While the economy was a challenge to most, JB rose to meet the occasion. His job might be part time, but there was nothing “part time” about his passion for preaching and being involved with people’s lives. He knew just how to supplement the income with extra speaking engagements, mainly in the form of gospel meetings.



Preacher's Home, Gainesboro, Tennessee
1933-39



JB & Mary
began their family
with both girls being
born in the house
pictured above.

The Gaithers 1937
Mary Frances
&
Baby Patricia

For a while in 1933, JB preached two Sundays a month in Horse Cave, Kentucky while their preacher was away. JB and Mary would stay in Horse Cave for a week and then go back to Gainesboro for a week.



This beautiful old church building at 105 Guthrie Street was the meeting house for the church of Christ in 1933.



This house, just diagonally across the street from the church building at Horse Cave, was their home away from home.

JB and Mary
Easter, 1933.
200 Guthrie Street

While in Gainesboro, JB helped out with local emergencies when needed. Later in life, Mary told that she had always said there were two kinds of men she never wanted to marry- a preacher or a mortician. Then she met JB who was both! He had helped out at the morgue on various occasions. It is told that he once went to the scene of an accident that killed a teenage boy and had to scrape the boy's brains up off the road. Supposedly, he, at that point, said, "Enough of that," and never could go there and do that again.

Once he was called to a fire. The lady was secured, but she was so distraught about her quilt in the closet. JB entered the closet to get the quilt, and got his shirt hung on a nail. He couldn't get loose, and during the time it took to finally rip his shirt off, he promised himself he would lay down his firefighter title.

It was while living at Gainesboro, that JB began his college education in the fall of 1934. He attended Tennessee Polytechnic Institute (TPI) in Cookeville, which is now Tennessee Tech. TPI was, in its beginning in 1912, a church-supported school named University of Dixie and popularly called "Dixie College." That accounts for the mention in JB's diaries of chapel being a part of his school day routine. Cookeville was about an hour's drive in those days from Gainesboro. Many times he had those who carpooled with him, even a Methodist preacher!

He was a thirty-three year old man by the time he started to college. His junior and senior years found him often being called upon to fill in for various professors, not only in the English department, but others as well. He even registered students and operated an office for a new Professor who was arriving late. JB was President of the English Club and had many extracurricular activities along with that responsibility. He was listed among "Who's Who Among Students of American Universities and Colleges" in the 1937-38 edition. He acquired his B.S. Degree in English in 1938.

Wednesday, June 5, 1935

156th day—209 days to come

Took finals in English, History, and French; thus completing my first year in College at Tennessee Polytechnic Institute. Enjoyed the work and association very much. Hope to continue school until I get my degree.

Graduation Day.

Friday, JUNE 3

Clear
Cloudy
Rain
Snow

154th Day—211 days to come

1938

Received my B.S. degree in English at Tennessee Polytechnic Institute. The saddest day of the four years.

This article appeared in the Jackson County Sentinel, 1937:

*J.B. Gaither
Honored by T.P.I.*

J.B. Gaither, pastor of the Gainesboro Church of Christ, has recently been honored at Tennessee Polytechnic Institute in having been nominated for the annual "Who's Who Among Students in American Universities and Colleges." The qualifications upon which students are selected are character, scholarship, leadership in extra-curricular activities and future usefulness in business and society.

Since entering Tennessee Tech Mr. Gaither has made an outstanding scholastic record. He was president of the English club last year and is an active member at the present time.

Other students included in the nomination from Tennessee Tech are: Dorothy Johnson, Lebanon; Doris Wiley, Manchester; Evelyn Walker, Crossville; Richard Mitchell, Decherd; James Corlew, Charlotte; and Lloyd Walker, Sparta.

On graduation day his diary reads,

Received my B.S. degree in English at Tennessee Polytechnic Institute. The saddest day of the four years.

Just before graduation, some of the members of the church at Gainesboro pooled their money (\$37) to provide their preacher with a new suit for his graduation. The suit was tailor made for \$40.85. It is very likely the suit that he is wearing in the graduation photo on the page to follow.



J.B. Gaither
College Graduation
1938

While attending college, JB started “The Jackson County Club” on campus. There were sixty-five members when it began March 31, 1937 and two days later, he wrote the Constitution for the organization.

It was at Gainesboro that their first two daughters were born: Mary Frances on June 24, 1934 and Patricia Jean on July 18, 1937. They were born in the preacher’s home previously pictured.

In 1934, JB conducted twenty-eight funerals. He received pay for eight of those, and the pay range was from \$1 to \$7. He presided at seven weddings, and the ones for which he received pay, ranged from \$.50 to \$1.50. The same year he preached 255 sermons in addition to being a college freshman and having a new baby. Remember, he was hired for “half time” work!

At a church business meeting on December 23, 1934, it was decided to hire him “full time” for 1935. The remaining time at Gainesboro found him preaching about that same number of sermons each year.

JB published his first church paper, “Gospel Reporter” for the church there at Gainesboro on January 5, 1935. This was the beginning of forty-five years of church bulletins that he took a great deal of pride in preparing.

Sometimes his friend, Ben H. Anderson, would come over and help him with the bulletin. Ben was a school teacher there in Gainesboro and preached here and there. JB married Ben and Lucille Elkins in 1938, and they were very close friends through the years. One week he and Anderson printed 400 copies of the “Gospel Reporter” that they then distributed all over the area.

Around the holidays, JB was found helping a couple of store owners in town decorate their windows for Christmas. From his diaries, we learn that he was quite experienced as an electrician and was called on often to help people “install” their new radios and aerials and other electrical needs. Safely hanging Christmas lights in store windows was apparently a challenge to the ordinary man back then.

One member of the church, Jonah Dudney and his wife, Bennie, became very close friends with JB and Mary. This was profitable to both couples. Jonah was, in today’s terms, “CEO” at the Jackson County Bank. They began a banking relationship that would last the rest of JB’s life. Most folks would love to be close friends with their banker, and most would cherish a close relationship with their preacher! These two were such a match. After the Gaithers left Gainesboro, all JB had to do was call and say, “I’m car shopping.” Jonah would tell him to pick out what he wanted and then let him know how much he needed. Jonah died in 1965, and JB conducted his funeral, but JB continued an account with the Jackson County Bank for the rest of his life.

In the July 1, 1936 issue of the “Gospel Reporter,” JB wrote,

*I have completed four years work in Gainesboro. Since coming here I have:
Conducted 41 Meetings
Preached 915 Sermons
Had 441 Additions*

In addition to all the preaching, teaching and singings, he still found time to be a community man. Nearly every school or community function found JB in the audience. Involvement in this small town’s schools, politics and community affairs was the beginning of a habit he would possess in all the small towns to come.

Thomas Lee Campbell, (Mary Gaither’s brother) “Tommy,” as they called him, stayed with JB and Mary for a while in Gainesboro after finishing college. JB helped him get started preaching around the county, and his first full time preaching job was at nearby Granville. Tommy married Wanda Mayfield in Abilene, Texas January 1, 1938 and brought his new bride back to Granville where JB and Mary had helped get their house furnished and ready. JB and T.L. Campbell were brothers-in-law and brothers in the Lord’s work. Tommy labored in the ministry as a preacher. Years later he became a teacher at Pepperdine College in Los Angeles, California. The college was struggling spiritually, and Tommy viewed his work there as a “mission effort.”

In September 1938 there was a business meeting at which they decided to build a preacher’s home there in Gainesboro. JB was busy nearly every day working on every aspect of the project from the dirt work and foundation to the papering and painting. During that time, he had to be gone to Ohio for two weeks to sit with his dad who, while visiting there, had become seriously ill. Two months after the business meeting about building the house, the Gaithers moved into that house, November 29! On that day, JB wrote,

Moved to new home of the church. Sure is nice.



New Preacher's Home
Murray Street
Gainesboro, Tennessee 1938

The work in Gainesboro continued for seven years, during which time he engaged in more than eighty protracted meetings, most of them in Jackson County. In November of 1935 he wrote,

Preached in Gainesboro for first time after meetings of four months.

He did, however, teach during the Bible class hour at Gainesboro on some of those Sundays before going on to his preaching appointments.

Little did he know that after leaving the wonderful area of Jackson County, he would continue for the rest of his life to return there to preach and baptize, marry their children and bury their dead. His records indicate he conducted 291 funerals in Jackson County alone. Right at half of that number was during the seven years he lived there, and the other half was during the forty years to follow.

In his lifetime, he conducted 133 gospel meetings in Jackson County, with number 100 being at Gainesboro. He often stated,

If heaven was on earth, it would be in Jackson County, Tennessee.

In 1974, JB held his 132nd meeting in Jackson County at Gainesboro. On that Sunday, October 20th, his children and their families surprised him and showed up for services. This is what he wrote:

My 132nd Meeting in Jackson County.

To church to find that our children to come before Bible study. The church took us to the café and fed us a good meal. We are so thankful. It was one of the highlights of my life to have all of them in Gainesboro which I love so much. We came back to the church building and made pictures. They left and we rested.

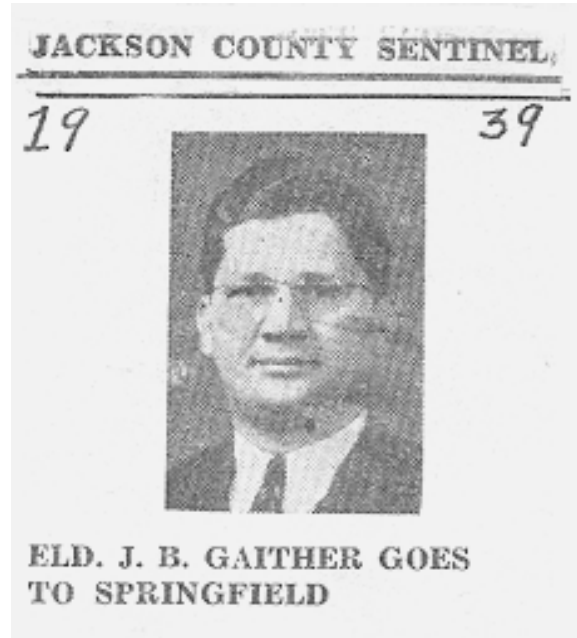
A quote from The Jackson Sun newspaper (Jackson, Tennessee), January 28, 1968 who interviewed JB:

Jackson County, of which Gainesboro is the county seat, holds more memories and deeper sentiment than any other place. This was not only the place of his first local work and birthplace of his first two children, but he continues to be called for work there in funerals, gospel meetings, and kindred work of a minister. He has conducted 124 gospel meetings in Jackson County alone. His 100th meeting in the county was held in Gainesboro in 1948. He says, "I have so many reasons for loving the people of Jackson County." He has promises for work in meetings booked there until 1971.

From the "Bells Bugle" (church bulletin) August 10, 1969, he wrote:

There can be found no more lovable people than in Jackson County.

His final meeting in Jackson County was at Burrstown, August, 1978. That was number 133.



Eld. J. B. Gaither has accepted an invitation to work with the Church of Christ in Springfield, Tennessee after having served seven years as minister of the Church of Christ in Gainesboro, Tenn.

Mr. Gaither has conducted 86 protracted meetings and has had 768 additions to the church during the past seven years. He also completed four years college work at the Tennessee Polytechnic Institute, Cookeville, taking his B.S. Degree in English. He and his family have endeared themselves to the people of Gainesboro and the County, as well as the congregation which he has served so efficiently and all regret to see them leave, but wish them continued success in their new field of labor.

A native of Lawrenceburg, Tennessee, Mr. Gaither came to Gainesboro from New Philadelphia, Ohio. He will move to Springfield about October 27th.

Years of War and Peace... Springfield, Tennessee

Peace prevailed in 1939 when the Gaithers moved to the middle Tennessee town of Springfield in Robertson County, but their tenure there would see World War II come and go. It proved to be another trying era in which faith, family, fellowship and the flag prevailed.

Many blessings came to the Springfield church when they hired J.B. Gaither. Below are some excerpts from the records of the history of the Main Street Church of Christ:

A giant step forward was taken on November 5, 1939 when Brother J.B. Gaither became the first full-time preacher. Brother Gaither immediately held a gospel meeting, November 12-19 with no additions.

With the absence of elders, Brother Gaither provided the church with very strong leadership and many things were accomplished during the years he labored with the Springfield congregation.

In February of 1940 the church purchased a mimeograph machine and in March, the first issue of the "Reporter" was published. Although the "Reporter" was primarily evangelistic, it also served as the medium by which the congregation was informed of work and progress that was made.

In May of 1940 the church building was redecorated and some repairs were made. The expenses which included: repairing the plaster on the ceiling, painting a baptistery scene, installing new light fixtures, papering the auditorium and some small repairs, was \$97.25.

A note from Brother Gaither in the bulletin stated: "The entire congregation is to be commended for the unity and co-operation in repairing our meeting house and making it a suitable place for worship. May we so unite in all things for good. It proves how easy it is to do the things necessary to carry on the Lord's work."



Main Street Church of Christ
Springfield, Tennessee
About 1940

Yet another account of their church history adds:

In 1939, Brother J.B. Gaither became the first of only twelve full-time evangelists in Main Street's ninety-one year history. Within a few years elders and deacons were appointed and the church progressed rapidly. In March 1940, the first issue of the church bulletin, the "Reporter", was published and in the next decade repairs were made to the building, new song books were purchased and book racks built for them, a Ladies Bible Class was organized and the church made plans for getting the gospel message out to others.

JB had his first church office at Springfield. The phone number was "534." He did much local advertising with cards, bulletins and pamphlets that he would distribute all over town. Thirty songbook racks were made and installed by his own craftsmanship.

Shortly after moving to Springfield, JB made his radio "debut," with a thirty minute sermon over "WHUB" in Cookeville, Tennessee August 18, 1940. A month later, he again preached over that station on September 22 and again October 10, 1947. He also preached at least three times in 1941 on "WJLB" in Detroit, Michigan. This was

just the beginning of four decades of radio preaching, a part of his ministry to which he was dedicated.

October 21, 1940 is the first mention in his diaries of “The Gospel Witness” which was a publication that Ben H. Anderson of Gainesboro, Tennessee published and edited. JB helped in the positions of Staff Writer and Circulation Manager. Ralph Snell, the second preacher at Gainesboro after JB, was also a Staff Writer. JB promoted the publication diligently there in Springfield, gaining many new subscribers.

“The Gospel Witness” was “A Non-Denominational Religious Monthly Devoted to the Encouragement of New Testament Christianity.” At the beginning, a single copy cost five cents, and a yearly subscription was fifty cents, but before the year was over, prices had gone up to ten cents for a single and a dollar for a year’s subscription. As far as we can tell from his records, “The Gospel Witness” was discontinued after one year.



Published monthly in the interests of New Testament Christianity and devoted to the defense of the gospel against all sin and error.

Ben H. AndersonEditor and Publisher
J. B. Gaither Staff Writer
and Circulation Manager.

Price, single copy, 5c; ten or more copies, 3c each; one year, 50c; ten copies or more, ordered sent to one address, 35c each per year. Congregations are invited to order this paper in quantity lots to give out to their members. Advertising rates on request. Address all communications to The Gospel Witness, c/o Ben H. Anderson, Gainesboro, Tenn., or to J. B. Gaither, Box 474, Springfield, Tenn.

LOOK!

You may now have THE GOSPEL WITNESS by the year. J. B. Gaither, formerly of Gainesboro but now of Springfield, has been added as staff writer and circulation manager. With new courage, we press forward and offer you our best in religious journalism for a reasonable sum. We hope to make it interesting and profitable to all ages.

Send us your subscription for a year; order a bundle for your congregation to hand out to others to read. Help us to accomplish good in His name.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

Single subscription, a year.....	50c
Ten or more copies, each.....	3c
Single copies, each.....	5c

Special Offer

A "Loose-Leaf New Testament and Psalms" or a "Bible" bound in leather will be sent the one sending in the most subscriptions before January 15. Your name will be printed in gold on front cover. Hurry! It isn't too late. Send all subscriptions to J. B. Gaither, Springfield, Tenn.

Publishing was a passion with JB whether it be for Bible classes, mail outs or newspaper advertising. Perhaps that drive was partly due to his degree in English. He loved literature, but he also loved to create. On one occasion he wrote,

At office most of the day printing advertising for our meeting to go into the daily paper. Printed 1,700 copies.

Anyone who knew J.B. Gaither knew he had one and only one hobby--old clocks. It is about this time in 1941 that the first hints of an interest in old clocks surface in his writings. (For more about the clock collection, see the chapter entitled, "Taking Time for Clocks.")

He notes on December 7, 1941, *Japan made attacks on the United States. Pearl Harbor*

Then on December 11, *U.S. declared war on Germany and Italy. Or rather declared a state of war existed.*

The war affected JB and Mary and their girls in several ways. They lived in a town where the military conducted maneuvers. They had "blackouts" that were frightening, especially to the children. The clocks were moved forward one hour, and they called this "War Time." They experienced food and gas rations, and JB spent much time assisting in these programs.

On February 16, 1942 he wrote that at age 40 years, 9 months and 15 days, he registered for possible military service.

The war had a great effect on all Americans. I suppose that V-J Day is one of those days that no one, then living, can forget. JB wrote this in the church bulletin October 1945:

Since publishing the last issue of the "Reporter," V-J Day has been celebrated. Thanks to God that war has ceased and that the fine boys and girls of our land are returning home to loved ones who have waited so anxiously and prayed so earnestly during such a dark, sorrowful period. Our sympathy goes out to those who died in battle. May God sustain you, may the time never come again when we will be called upon to give our sons and daughters to shed blood in carnal warfare. Jesus is our peace. Let us live for Him and help others to do so that we may never know war anymore.

At a preachers' luncheon in 1943, he spoke on the topic, "The Preacher's Work in a Small Town." Needless to say, who could have

been more qualified to expound on such a subject? His love for community involvement was evident in his life each day as he made his way around town, meeting the people and caring for them physically and spiritually.

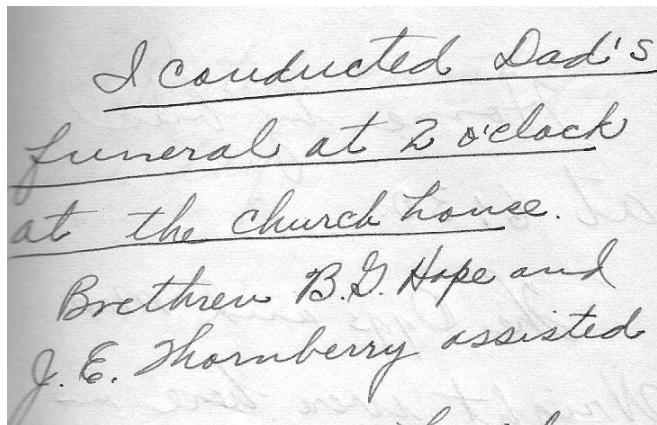
The busy life of a preacher, husband, father and provider is so evident in his writings at this time of his life. Mentioned here are a few things (other than preaching) he did with his time.

Substitute teaching in the public schools seemed to be a side job he enjoyed, making \$3.00 a day!

Farming was something he had learned as a boy, so raising chickens, pigs, and milk cows was second nature to him and a very efficient way to provide for his growing family. He also sold and traded his farm animals and milk, churned, smoked his own hams, rendered the lard, etc. In addition to the livestock chores, he always produced a nice garden.

The year of 1943 was bittersweet. The Gaithers were blessed with a third daughter, Ruby Elizabeth, born on April 13. Less than a month later, on May 11, JB's father, W.T. Gaither, of Lawrenceburg, Tennessee, passed away. JB conducted his funeral service.

Other notes of interest during his tenure at Springfield include: He attended the "Tabernacle Meetings #V" of N.B. Hardeman at the War Memorial Building in Nashville in November of 1942.



I conducted Dad's
funeral at 2 o'clock
at the church house.
Brethren B.D. Hope and
J.E. Thornberry assisted.

May 13
1943
Diary
Entry

Many special memories were made in Springfield, including the first purchase of a house in 1944.



329 Walnut Street
Springfield, Tennessee

The church there at Springfield became involved in mission work in Jamestown, Tennessee in 1943. JB worked diligently at establishing a congregation there, and more about that work can be read in the “Mission Years” chapter of this book.

February 2, 1944 JB notes that he submitted his first article entitled “Faith” for “The Apostolic Times” after becoming a staff writer at the request of the editor, James A. Allen.

In the fall of 1944, J.B. enrolled as a student at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, pursuing a Masters Degree in English that, after one quarter, was halted due to gas rations. An effort to ride the bus back and forth to Nashville grew weary with inconvenience to a family man with so many responsibilities.



J.B. Gaither
Frances, Ruby, Patricia
At home in
Springfield, Tennessee

June of 1945 is the first mention of Vacation Bible School. It lasted there in Springfield for two weeks, and according to JB's notations, they met on Monday, Wednesday and Friday the first week, and each weekday the second week.

There were many lasting friendships from the seven years the Gaithers were in Springfield. Two families in particular that grew very close to the Gaithers were the Robert Villines' and the Earl

Childers'. They shared many occasions of fellowship during the time there still so well remembered by Frances, Patricia and Ruby.

A story of the life of JB and Mary would not be complete if it did not include the mentioning of one young woman who became like another daughter to them. Leola (Toothman) Anderson moved to Springfield from West Virginia to be near her new husband, Jack, who was stationed there for maneuvers. She became a babysitter for the Gaither girls and won the hearts of JB and Mary. She often babysat Mary as well when JB would be out of town holding meetings. For some unknown reason, JB and Mary named Leola "Coco." She also had affectionate names for them. She called them "Mama" and "Daddy" the rest of her life. They truly treated her like she was a member of the family, as she lived with them for a while. When the war was over, the Andersons remained in Springfield and raised a family there. During those years they kept in close touch with the Gaithers, often spending Christmas together as well as other occasions.

When Jack and Leola Anderson's first daughter was born, they named her "Mary" Darlene after Mary Gaither.

Shortly after the Gaithers left Springfield, "Coco" wrote this little poem to them on July 29, 1948:

*Twas in the year of '43
I made my debut in Tennessee
A few weeks was all it took
To add the Gaithers to friendship's book.*

*Those were happy days with work and play
As we helped each other on life's way.
I stayed with "Mama" as body guard
But to always be brave was mighty hard.*

*As time went on, I left their home
To establish one of our very own
But the time spent there can never compare
To days I have known anywhere.*

*Over a year ago they left our parts
To work for those of kindred hearts.
We've missed them so and cannot know
Why our eyes are sad while others glow.*

*Today they left after a visit short
And left me sad beyond report.
Why must we part from those so dear?
It looks like they should always be near.*

*Life is short and friends are few
Who would do for us what you all do
Can't we persuade in any way
To bring you nearer us to stay?*

Jack & Leola
("Coco")
Anderson
1943



The Mission Years...
Oneida & Jamestown, Tennessee
Whitley City & Berea, Kentucky

While living in Springfield, JB had held two gospel meetings in Oneida, Tennessee, in 1945 and 1946. Then in October 27, 1946 he resigned from his work at Springfield to move to Oneida, located in Scott County. From October until his work was finished at Springfield in December, he made trips between Sundays to Oneida to help with the building of a preacher's home.

For that house, he raised funds for the materials, drew the plans, and did much of the work along with Price Robinson and Barney Jeffers. He mentions much of the work in his diaries from the beginnings of the foundation to the final tasks of landscaping the yard.



Preacher's Home, Oneida Tennessee
J.B. Gaither Helped to Build

Many years later in his church bulletin (November 13, 1955), he writes,

The meeting at Oneida was a very pleasant one and I hope profitable also. One was baptized (Sarah Roy). I enjoyed my association with the regular minister-- Bro. Bill Perkins--and his wife. The house in which they live is the one for which I drew the plans and helped to build when I lived in Oneida. The trees and shrubbery had grown so large that topping and re-arranging was a necessity. I was glad to be the one to do the job. It looks much better now (I think).

The new “parsonage” sat next door to the church building.



Oneida Church of Christ at right
Preacher's Home at left, 1947

The Gaithers' last Sunday with the church in Springfield was December 29, 1946. The family moved to Oneida and stayed in the Claude Terry Sr. home for about six weeks until the preacher's home was completed in March. The Terry family would remain dear to the Gaithers for a lifetime.

Another family member arrived on April 6, 1948 with the birth of a son, John Burgess, Jr. About the time John B. Jr. was born, Mary's mother, Nora Campbell, fell and broke her hip. It was then that Nora and Tom moved from their home in Ohio and made their home with JB and Mary.



The Gaithers at Oneida 1947
JB & Mary
Little Ruby, Mary Frances, Patricia

JB had committed to go to Oneida as a mission effort for a year, but as it turned out, he was there two years until December, 1948.

JB and Mary felt that Oneida, at that time, wasn't the safest and best environment for raising young children, but before we continue with the next move, there is more to be told about the two years JB worked at Oneida.



John B. Jr. arrives

Whitley City, Kentucky

JB had helped establish a congregation of the Lord's church about three months prior to the beginning of his Oneida work. That congregation was in Whitley City just about eighteen miles north of Oneida in McCreary County, Kentucky.

A twelve day mission meeting in which he preached and Ralph Kidd led the singing in September, 1946 resulted in the beginning of that congregation.

Ralph Kidd had met JB through one of JB's brothers in Ohio, and it was Ralph's influence that led JB to Whitley City, the home of Ralph's wife and family, the Harrison Bells.

The gospel meeting produced three baptisms, five restorations from the Christian Church and one who placed membership; a congregation of nine. The church met in a house in Dixie which is a "suburb" of Whitley City.

The first two that JB baptized in Whitley City were Paul and Maxine Sampson. (Maxine was a Bell and a sister to Ralph Kidd's wife, Edna). Paul and Maxine moved around a lot with his work and were also involved with the beginning of the church at Berea, Kentucky and Harrisonburg, Virginia where JB also did mission work. They also attended church at Oneida for nineteen years, so the Sampsons had many connections to JB through the years.

For part of the two years at Oneida, JB preached at Whitley City at 3:00 on Sunday afternoons. He also went there one evening a week for Bible study or song drill. Six additional meetings were held at Whitley City by JB as well as a few other preaching appointments between that beginning in 1946 and 1963. He continued to raise financial support for them as well through those years.

Dr. J.W. Phillips, a chiropractor and close friend, was the one who invited JB by letter to come to the work in Oneida. He was a great co-worker in carrying on the work at both Oneida and at Whitley City. The Phillips moved to Broken Arrow, Oklahoma about the time JB left Oneida. In his church bulletin November 7, 1954, JB wrote:

I am looking forward with joy to the meeting at Broken Arrow, Okla., where I will be again with Dr. and Sister J.W. Phillips formerly of Oneida, Tenn., where I worked before coming to Gallatin. I have known them and loved them for more than twenty years. They have been like a father and mother to me.

From “The Broadcast” bulletin at Nashville Road congregation in Gallatin, October 26, 1952,

A card from Bro. W.G. Bass thanking us for our contribution to the work at Whitley City, Ky., and stating that he has baptized six adults since he has been in Whitley City. I am glad for this report. Bro. Kidd and I helped to start this congregation in 1946. There are some of the best people there I have ever known.

In the October 23, 1955 issue of his church bulletin, he wrote,

I will be at Oneida beginning next Thursday, Oct. 27. It will be a joy to get back there. Also to be able to visit Whitley City, Ky. Whitley City has lost their faithful worker, Bro. Joel Heard. There is a good work to be done there if the right man can be obtained. Oneida and Whitley City are both still mission points in need of much work. The field is white but the laborers are few.

Also in his November 22, 1955 bulletin, these words,

If any congregation, to whom this bulletin may come, is in position to do some mission work in Kentucky, contact me and I can tell you the need and where. Then, you can do it direct. There are some congregations struggling for existence. ‘Come over into Macedonia and help us! The field is white, but the laborers are few.’ Their souls are precious.

Berea, Kentucky

Yet another area where JB helped to establish the Lord’s church was in Madison County Kentucky, in the town of Berea. Below is a quote taken from the Berea Church of Christ church history:

In the fall of 1949 Paul Sampson and his wife, Maxine, and their four daughters, Nancy, Paula, Ruth Ann and Marcia, moved to Berea from Williamsburg, Kentucky. The Sampsons could not locate a church of Christ in Madison County, but this did not deter this family. They met in homes and drove to Lancaster to worship with the Lancaster church of Christ in Garrard County.

In 1953 several families who were traveling to Richmond from Berea decided to start the church in Berea. Prior to the official beginning of the church in Berea, several families met in various places in and around Berea. For the first few months of this new congregation, these brethren met with Richmond on Sunday morning and then with the new congregation in Berea on Sunday afternoon. The meeting place for the new congregation of the Berea church of Christ was in the basement of John and Lela Barton's home, at the corner of John and Holly Streets. The first service was held in May of 1953. The names of those present for that service were: Bert and Pearl Baker, Paul and Maxine Sampson and their four daughters (Nancy, Paula, Ruth Ann and Marcia), John and Lela Barton (Ann), Marie Hart, Hubert and Sue Hardy, Arthur and Edna Pigman and their three children (Betty, Arthur and Donnie), and two students from Berea College: Evelyn Bates and Ruth Roberts. Bert Baker did the preaching and Hubert Hardy led the singing. John Barton became the regular song leader because brother Hardy lived in Estill County and could not attend all the services. Some song books, benches and communion trays were donated by the Number One church of Christ in Gallatin, Tennessee. This community was called 'Number One' because it was the first stop of the street car that ran from Gallatin to Nashville, Tennessee. J. B. Gaither was the preacher for the Number One church of Christ and held several meetings for the Berea church of Christ.

The following are excerpts from JB's Nashville Road bulletin, "The Broadcast" pertaining to the church at Berea.

1954--

February 7:

BEREA, KY IS GROWING - It was my pleasure to be at Berea last Sunday. My program after arising at 5:15 was to drive with Bro. Huston Gately to Richmond where I spoke over W E K Y at 7:15, preached at Berea at 11 and 7, also at Irvin, 27 miles away, at 2:30. In addition to preaching four times, I attended three Bible classes, and was entertained royally in two different homes. There is hospitality there. I thoroughly enjoyed the whole visit.

Lord's Day morning, we had 51 present. There is surely a great work to be done there. An effort is being made to gather sufficient funds for the erection of a basement unit in which to worship. We hope to accomplish this by spring.

Any individual or congregation who has funds to use for such could surely make no mistake there.

I called Bro. Harold Savelly as I came home Monday and he reports all well at Somerset. He has done a good work there. They likewise are in a basement unit of their house. If we can get well planted in the ground, we will grow up and out.

April 4:

BEREA - I enjoyed a busy weekend with the Kentucky brethren. I spoke four times Sunday, attended two Bible classes, helped select a lot for the approaching tent meeting in Berea and help measure a lot in view of building a meeting house. I am to be at Berea for the meeting May 10-23. Prospects there look good for a future congregation. The brethren there are very zealous.

May 30:

MEETING BERE A, KY - Our tent meeting in Berea, Ky., was handicapped by cold and rainy weather, but we put a stove in the tent which made for comfort. We made many house-to-house calls and contacted every prospect that we knew of who were interested. Results: 3 from the Christian church, 2 other restorations and 3 baptisms. There are good prospects there. I enjoyed the meeting much.

September 19:

I am to be at Berea, Ky., Sept. 26 for the opening of their new basement in which they will worship. The program will be two preaching services with singing in the afternoon. They are to be commended for their effort and success. The church is little more than a year old there.

They are still in need of financial help. If any congregation would like to help, contact me and I will give more details and their address. Eastern Kentucky, like Eastern Tennessee, has been sadly neglected as far as the gospel is concerned.

October 3: *I had a very enjoyable but full week-end visit to Berea, Ky. I spoke on the radio Sunday morning, attended the Bible class and spoke at the morning worship hour, had charge of the singing in the afternoon and preached again at night.*

I spent the nights with the John Bartons as usual, ate Sunday dinner with the Leonard Brays and supper with the Sheridan Bowmans.

The church is in their new basement house and is comfortably suited. It did me good to see them in it and to see the happy spirit that prevails among them. The next great need is for a good preacher to work full time with them. There are wonderful opportunities there.

1955--

December 2:

To Lebanon in evening to try to find support for a preacher to go to Berea, Ky.

December 3:

To Nashville in morning. Talked to Bro. Shacklett and C.L. McCollom about Berea, Ky. Have hopes through Dickerson Road.

1956--

April 23:

To Bellwood to help load old benches for Berea, Ky. We (No. One congregation) are paying for them.

1957--

Saturday, January 26:

Spent entire day with Bro. John Barton of Berea. We talked with Scobey Contractors at Nashville about plans for a new church building at Berea. Visited several church houses for inspection.

(The next day, Sunday):

Bro. John Barton left at 1 for Berea, Ky.



The basement of this building at the corner of John & Holly Streets, Berea, Kentucky was built in 1954 by the church of Christ. In 1957 the auditorium was constructed.





From
“Preachers of Today”
1959

Gaither, John Burgess, 656 West Main St., Gallatin, Tenn.;
HOME CONGREGATION: Nashville Rd. (No. 1);
BIRTH: Lawrenceburg, Tenn., May 1, 1901;
BAPTIZED BY: J.E. Thornberry, October 25, 1916;
WIFE: Mary Campbell; **MARRIED:** Nov. 11, 1930; **CHILDREN:**
Mrs. Mary Frances Sullivan, 25, Mrs. Patricia Green, 22, Ruby, 16,
John B., Jr. 11, Sandra Lee, 10;
BEGAN PREACHING: Lawrence County, Tenn., 1926;
COLLEGES: Tennessee Polytechnic Institute, Cookeville, Tenn.,
Vanderbilt University, Nashville;
CHURCHES SERVED: Gainesboro, Tenn., 1932-39, Springfield,
Tenn., 1939-46, Oneida, Tenn., 1947-48, Nashville Road, Gallatin,
Tenn., 1949--;
MEETINGS: Berea, Ky., (Mission) Highland Heights, Lebanon,
Tenn., Lebanon Rd., Donelson, Tenn., Van Dyke, Mich., Green
Hills, Nashville, Tenn.;
PERMANENT CONTACT: Earl T. Gaither, Lawrenceburg,
Tenn.;
OTHER FACTS: Twenty-eight years of local work with four
congregations. Held 114 meetings in Jackson County, Tenn., Whitley
City and Berea, Ky. Taught singing schools and led singing for
meetings; eleven years on local radio;
HOBBY: Collecting old clocks, have nearly 200.

Jamestown, Tennessee

While living in Springfield, Tennessee, JB held a month long tent meeting in Jamestown, Tennessee (Fentress County) in September, 1943 sponsored by the Trinity Lane church in Nashville. A.J. Veteto led the song service. It was during this meeting that, due to his well managed organizational skills and love for the brethren in that area, he secured a meeting place for the church. The final night of the tent meeting, there were 87 present.



September 26, 1943
Church Established at Jamestown, Tennessee
With 26 members
Back Row, Second from Left: J.B. Gaither

A history of the Jamestown Church of Christ written in 1992 by Dan L. Smith states:

A tent meeting 1943 marked the beginning of the Church of Christ in Jamestown, Tennessee. The first service was held on September 26, 1943. A large tent was erected near the public square at the present site of Wright's Store. This was a twenty-six day meeting conducted by J.B. Gaither and A.J. Veteto.

Further down in the document, it continues:

Lillie Stanford recalled, "We moved to Jamestown in March of 1943. There was no Church of Christ meeting here at that time. We were very happy when we started meeting regularly after the tent meeting. The tent was set up down town. Brother Gaither would preach over a loud speaker to the people in town during the day. At night he would preach to the people meeting in the tent. Before he left town at the close of the meeting, he told us they thought they had things worked out for us to have a building to meet in. It sure was nice to get to go to church every Sunday after that."

JB visited several congregations, obtaining financial backing for a building, and on September 30, 1943, the church in Jamestown began meeting in the building pictured below.



(JB is not pictured here, but he *was* present for that first service.)

JB and C.W. Davis finalized the signing of the deed on October 21, 1943. The auditorium was on the first floor with classrooms upstairs. Ben Anderson was the first preacher for this congregation 1943-50. JB held six additional meetings there over the next ten years.

C.W. Davis was the Superintendent of Schools in Gainesboro. JB came to know and love him and his wife, Sula, when JB was preaching in Gainesboro. Professor Davis later served as Principal at the York Institute in Jamestown and was very devoted to the work of the church wherever he was. When C.W. died on June 16, 1948, JB was at his bedside. He conducted funeral services for him at York Institute there in Jamestown and at Gainesboro. C.W. Davis was an icon in the Gaither household.

Ben Anderson, the first located preacher at Jamestown, and JB had connected in the Gainesboro days, continued their association while JB was at Springfield, and later worked together with the churches at Jamestown and Oneida. Ben was killed in a car accident near Gainesboro that injured his wife and daughter, and JB conducted his funeral on September 11, 1960.

A quote copied from the church history of the Main Street Church of Christ in Springfield:

The church, becoming more mission-minded, became involved in a month long mission meeting in Jamestown, Tennessee. There was only one small congregation in Fentress County and the Springfield congregation contributed one Sunday toward the meeting and released Brother Gaither to preach one Sunday. In October of 1943 a financial report from Scott Parrish, treasurer of the new congregation in Jamestown showed the building was paid in full, all operating expenses were paid and \$188.79 was on hand for the seats.

JB's love and concern for the Jamestown church continued on through the years. On September 15, 1950 after a preaching service at White Oak in Macon County, he traveled to Jamestown. The next day he wrote in his memoirs:

Spent the day trying to settle the trouble among members of the church. Made 12 or 13 calls.

This was one of many occasions that he went and assisted congregations with their very personal internal struggles.



The Jamestown Church of Christ built a new basement building that was completed in 1960. February 7th was their first Sunday to meet in the new basement, and JB was invited to preach both services that day. He was very happy to do so and noted that there were 143 present at the morning service. In 1963, the building was completed as pictured above.

He held other mission meetings in Kentucky (Madisonville 1952 & Pine Knot 1948); in Tennessee (Palmer's Chapel in Sumner County & Saundersville 1950, Winfield 1945, Ocala 1953, Bellwood 1953, Williams at Lafayette 1966); and in Virginia (Harrisonburg 1962).



JB & Mary Gaither – Late 1940's



The Full House Years... Gallatin, Tennessee

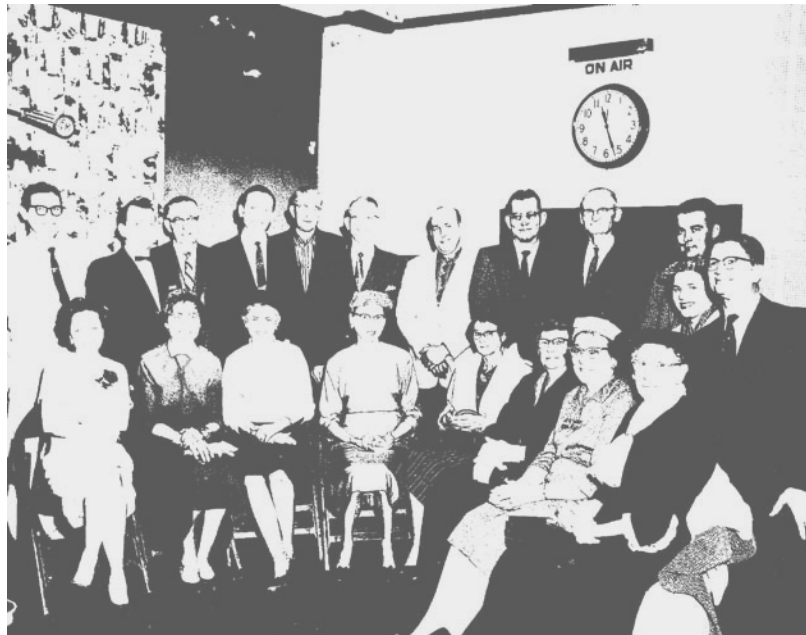
December 20, 1948 found the Gaithers calling another place “home” in Gallatin, Tennessee which is in Sumner County. JB began what would be an eighteen year ministry with a congregation at the edge of town in the Number One Community. His starting salary was \$300.00 a month.

We are told that this little community was called “Number One” because it was the first stop on the street car route from Gallatin to Nashville. From the written history of the congregation, we read:

It is believed that Number One was named by the post office, however, some do not agree.

It goes on to say that JB was instrumental in changing the name of the congregation to “Nashville Road,” because he did not like the connotation that “Number One” gave to the church. However, any time this congregation is mentioned in JB’s diaries, he refers to it as “Number One.” That is what the family has always called it.

The Gaithers moved into their home in Gallatin, and nine days later, on December 29, JB began a radio program at the local station, WHIN. He was one of the pioneer preachers on that station. He began a thirty minute radio program two days a week and the program lasted more than twenty years. The broadcast reached into Macon, Smith, Wilson, Davidson, Jackson and even as far as Putnam and Clay Counties. After he moved away, he continued that program for three years by the request of the elders who supported it.



JB's Ten Year Anniversary at WHIN, 1958

Photo taken by Harold Nelson Roney

Back row left to right:

Charlie Brewer, Ralph Kidd, Harold Roney, Sr.,
Maurice O'Neal, J.L. Minnick, W.C. Reeder,
John Brasel, Cecil Pryor, Tom Campbell,
Sam & Patricia (Gaither) Green, J.B. Gaither

Front row left to right:

Edna Kidd, Mrs. Harold Roney, Sr., Mrs. O'Neal,
Mary Gaither, Mrs. Minnick, Maggie Gaither,
Mrs. Reeder, Nora Campbell.

Radio: My tenth Anniversary
on WHIN.
21 friends gathered
to be with me. Several
spoke briefly. Harold Nelson
Honey served as M.C. He
made pictures. Had it
recorded. It was a "big" day
for me.

Diary Entry December 30, 1958 □



J.B. Gaither - WHIN Radio
Gallatin, Tennessee - About 1960

In the very first issue of his church bulletin, February 6, 1949, “NO. 1 NEWS,” JB wrote:

NO. 1 NEWS has made its genesis! What do you think of it? Do you think it worth continuing?The Name: Can you think of a better one for our church bulletin? I am open for suggestions.

Then on February 20, 1949:

This is the third time I --NO. 1 NEWS--come unto you. It may be the last! I--J.B. Gaither--do not like the name. It was given for the want of a better one. The bulletin will appear next week but probably under a new name.

REASON: “Number One” sounds too much like it is intended to exalt this congregation above some others. In the denominational world, they often use the expressions, First_____Church, Second_____Church, etc, but this should not be in the Lord’s church. Because of its untrue sound, we are getting rid of it.

Help me pick a name! How about BROADCAST, THE PROCLAIMER, TELLING THE NEWS? You suggest one.

From “The Broadcast,” February 27, 1949:

I LIKE THE NEW NAME! Do you? If not, you waited to long to make your wants known. So from now on, it will be THE BROADCAST. Let’s make it true to its name and broadcast all the news of the church and the gospel of Christ

The first year JB was with the congregation, many new and exciting works began. By February, 1949 the church had purchased an old school bus in order to pick up people from all the surrounding area for worship services. JB often drove the bus, along with other men of the congregation. In March, a mid-week service was started on Wednesday nights. It was also March of 1949 that JB began the first Sunday singings in Sumner County.

From his “History of First Sunday Singing in Sumner County, Tennessee,” JB wrote:

Our singing began at the Nashville Road, then Number One, congregation March 6, 1949. It has been sponsored by this congregation through its Minister, J.B. Gaither, who serves as master of ceremonies. Crowds have been good at most every service. On one occasion, there were forty-nine congregations of the Lord’s church represented. We usually have more song leaders than we are able to use because of time. Often, we have in attendance people from five or six counties. Singings of like nature have been started in nine other counties as a result of our program. These singings have done much good to the work in this county and elsewhere. We would commend such singings to brethren everywhere.
J.B.G.

Shortly after the Gaither’s move to Gallatin, their fifth and final child arrived. Sandra Lee was born April 4, 1949. The “Walton” like family now numbered nine, including Mary’s parents, Tom and Nora Campbell.



R.T. & Nora Campbell

A new and larger church building was one of the first things accomplished after JB began his ministry there.

From the church bulletin, June 18, 1950:

ANNOUNCEMENT

For several months, plans have been underway to enlarge our meeting house to make it adequate for our increased crowds and give some much needed room for extra classes. It was thought unnecessary to make public announcement until there was something definite to announce. We can now state that work began Tuesday on a completely new house. It will be concrete block with brick veneer in structure. The plan provides for an office, baptistery, three classrooms, and vestibule in addition to the auditorium on the main floor. It provides for a full-size basement. It will be on the same lot much enlarged.

From the church bulletin, October 15, 1950:

AT AUCTION

THE OLD MEETING HOUSE

Saturday, October 21

It will be with sadness of heart that we see our neat little meeting house, which has served us so well and is a credit to the Lord's work, go on the auction block SATURDAY, OCTOBER 21 at 10:00 o'clock a.m. BUT, we are so thankful for the new one which will be so much better as far as size and arrangements are concerned. It is definitely a milestone in the history of the church. Let us go into the new building with new zeal and determination to do more than ever before. With every blessing comes added responsibility.

COME THOU WITH US AND WE WILL DO THEE GOOD.

From the church bulletin, October 29, 1950:

LET US STRIVE TO FILL THE HOUSE NEXT SUNDAY

and then strive harder to keep it full.



Auction of the old Number One Community
Church of Christ building, October 21, 1950.
The house was sold for \$1,200.00
and was moved thirty days after the sale.



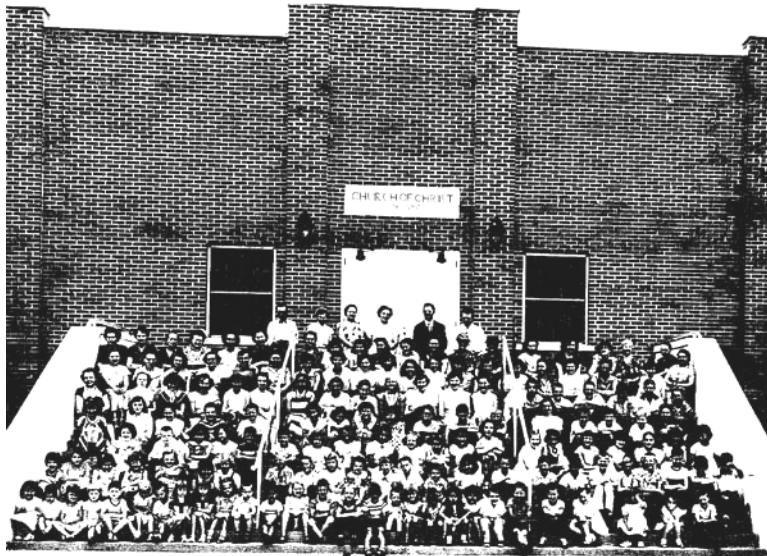


Number One Church of Christ
Old and New Buildings
1950





Number One Church of Christ
New building
First Sunday service, October 15, 1950



Vacation Bible School
About 1953

When JB's niece, Jane Pierce, made her wedding plans, JB ("Uncle Burge" to her) was asked to perform the ceremony. Jane was to marry Charles Brown, and the ceremony was to be in Arlington, Virginia in June, 1954. Frances and Patricia were asked to be bridesmaids, so the family was rather involved with this far away wedding.



Charles & Jane Brown

As you can see from the pictures, the wedding trip was combined with some family fun. JB rented a window air conditioner that cooled with ice, and all seven members of the family loaded up in the old '51 Chevrolet.



JB & Sandra at far right

These beach scenes were from a brief stop at the ocean in Wilmington, N.C.



The church owned a preacher's home at 656 West Main Street. The family moved into that residence. It had four bedrooms and one bath in addition to a living room, "parlor," dining room and kitchen.



The Gaither Home
656 West Main Street
Gallatin, Tennessee

About four years later, the Gaithers decided they would like to purchase the house from the church. The house was in need of extensive repair, so the family moved out to a beautiful farm house on Woods Ferry Road while some major remodeling took place. Mary's dad, Tom, helped JB with the addition of two bedrooms and two baths upstairs and some "rearranging" of the floor plan on the main level. Upon near completion, JB wrote this in the church bulletin February 13, 1955:

THIS OLD HOUSE - I have taken time to mend it and it is now in pretty good condition. However, the new part upstairs has a new finish on the floors and we can not walk on it. The stairway is newly painted and no one can either ascend or descend. The only way into the upstairs is a ladder through the window. No one can climb a ladder but me. Consequently, I'm alone as I prepare the bulletin this week. With few exceptions, the inside of our house is finished at least for the time being. It has been quite an undertaking in more ways than one. But, we still think we are going to enjoy it. Come to see us! Make our joy more abundant!

JB's "bulletin room" was in one end of his and Mary's bedroom. All the kids had access to the typewriter and remember the old mimeograph machine that occupied that corner. Sometimes the kids were recruited to help with the bulletin, folding and addressing and mailing. If they were very diligent they might even get their name listed on the bulletin as "Assistant."

About a year later, JB and Tom Campbell, with some assistance from others, added on a room across the back of the house that stretched the whole length of the house. It was one big room that had a concrete floor, pine paneling on the walls and served many purposes. The family called it the "back porch" even though it was a finished room. It had the back door entry, the freezer, washer and dryer, a table JB made that would seat the entire family of nine and the extra family members that came along during those years. In one end of the room, there was a small sitting area for the Campbells to enjoy working their gigantic stack of jigsaw puzzles. (Years later, a bed was set up in that end so that JB and Mary could be adjacent to Tom's bedroom during his invalid years.) With the additions upstairs and down, the house more comfortably accommodated the large and growing family. Sandra wasn't born until they moved to Gallatin, but by the time they left, she was the only one left at home. It was the only house where the family was complete, and it *was* indeed a "full house" and a "house full" of precious memories.

Tom & Nora
Campbell
at their puzzle table
in the
"back porch" room
at the Gaither
home in Gallatin.
John B. & Sandra
looking on.





The Big Family Table JB Made – About 1960
Left to right: John B., Cullen Green, Sam Green,
Sandra holding Jeff Green, Tom Campbell, Frances &
Victor Sullivan, Ruby, Mary & JB



Left to right: Victor & Frances Sullivan, Jim & Ruby
Williams, John B., Mary, JB, Tom Campbell, Sandra,
Cullen, Jeff, Sam Green – About 1962

While in Gallatin, JB was blessed to know Guy and Mary Comer, members at Number One. Guy was Chairman of the Boards of Washington Industries, Washington Manufacturing Company and National Stores Corporation and owned the downtown hotel in Gallatin, Cordell Hull. In 1946, Guy Comer and his brother, M.B. Comer, founded the Church of Christ Foundation for the purpose of providing financial aid to small churches of Christ throughout the world. The Foundation supported hundreds of congregations. Brother Guy Comer made an arrangement with JB to supplement his preaching salary. The deal was that if JB wanted to fill four appointments each month with sister congregations in Sumner County, Comer would see that he was compensated \$100 (\$25 for each appointment). JB gladly took on the work. Brother Comer also asked JB to let him know of needs of these congregations such as song books and benches, etc. He also took care of those needs as they arose.

The elders at Number One were generous, as well, with the struggling congregations in the county. They allowed JB to hold about fourteen meetings from April to October each year, most of which were in Sumner County. These meetings averaged fourteen days. JB did not necessarily preach every Sunday at these meetings. Sometimes it was turned over to the local preacher so that JB could be at Number One on Sunday. Over the eighteen years he was in Sumner County, the 247 meetings he held averaged \$186. Divided by the fourteen day average, he received about \$13 a day, sometimes preaching twice or more each day.

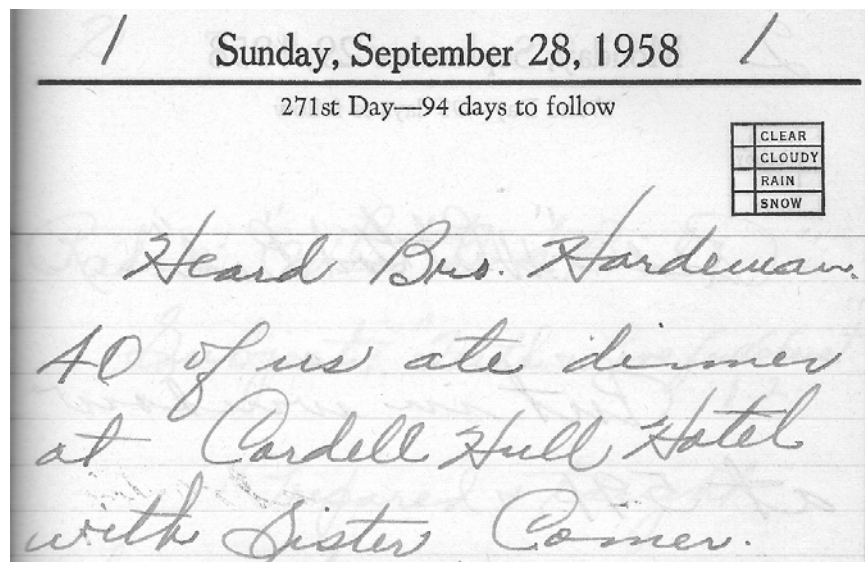
“Cooperative Meetings” were another effort in which JB spent much time. For several consecutive Monday nights, different congregations in the county would host a preaching service. Then it might be concluded with a week long meeting using a different speaker each evening. Sometimes they would meet two nights a week. This might go on for three to four months. This project that started in Sumner County was something he continued in his remaining works at Bells (Crockett County) and Fayetteville (Lincoln County). He loved to

see the brethren in the county not only know one another and share in fellowship, but also to learn to work together in a cooperative effort for the broadening of the kingdom.

He also conducted many Singing Schools at the different places he where he lived. He believed that good singing aided the worship, and he wanted song leaders to know how to lead, and others to know how to read music so they could sing the parts.

Through the years, many well known and not so well known gospel preachers found themselves at the Gaither home for a meal and/or lodging. One of the well known was Foy E. Wallace, Jr. who held a meeting at Number One in 1967 and later put those sermons in book form called "Number One Gospel Sermons."

N.B. Hardeman also held meetings at Number One in 1955, 1956 and 1958. The sermons from his 1955 meeting were published in a book called "One Dozen Sermons."



Hardeman's "One Dozen Sermons" and Foy E. Wallace's "Number One Gospel Sermons" are both dedicated to Guy Comer, who likely funded the publications.

N.B. Hardeman often preached in Lawrenceburg where JB grew up. In fact, it is told that he preached at the church in Lawrenceburg fifty-nine consecutive years in meetings and fill-in appointments. JB's dad, W.T. Gaither, and N.B. Hardeman were both horse traders. Hardeman was a McNairy County native, and the Gaithers were in Lawrence County, both southwestern counties in Tennessee. With these connections, the Gaithers were friends with Hardeman as long as JB could remember.

In "One Dozen Sermons," page 91, Hardeman says in the first paragraph:

Since Brother Gaither will not be here tonight, I want to say in his presence (this morning) that it has been to me a pleasure genuine to be associated with him in this meeting. Bro. Kidd has done his part well. All have joined him in song. It is also good to have those from Lawrenceburg. Among them is Brother Gaither's dear old mother whom I have known and loved more than 50 years. I rejoice that she is able to come and to be with us. His brother (Earl Gaither) and sister (Mary O'Neal) are also among our number.

The Ralph Kidd family moved to Gallatin January of 1952, and Ralph became the Associate Minister and Song Leader at Number One. Other song leaders at Number One that the family recalls were Bob Winstead, Hayden Miller, Robert L. Brown, Vernon Boyd, Bob Scruggs, and John Brasel.

The December 18, 1955 "Broadcast" announces:

Brother John Brasel has been engaged as our regular song leader. We are happy to have him. He will do us good. Let us co-operate in the song service and other parts of the work and worship.

There apparently *was* much "co-operation" in the congregation, as John Brasel was the song director at Nashville Road until 1973.



J.B. & Mary Gaither's
25th Anniversary, 1955
Mary Frances, Patricia, Ruby
John B. Jr., J.B., Sandra, Mary

It was in Gallatin that JB really got serious about his hobby of clock collecting. The old garage was converted into the "Clock Shop." Much about the Clock Shop and the collection are found in the "Taking Time for Clocks" chapter.



Sam & Patricia Green

On February 10, 1956, JB had his first experience of “giving away” a daughter and performing the wedding ceremony. Patricia married Sam Green at the Number One church building, and the reception was held in the Gaither home. They made their home in Gallatin where Sam owned Green’s TV Shop. They later moved out onto a farm in Portland. Sam passed away in 1993.



Mary Frances & Victor Sullivan
Barbara Jo Sullivan,
J.B. & Mary Gaither

Mary Frances graduated from David Lipscomb College in 1955 and went to work for Martha White Mills in Jackson, Tennessee. On August 10, 1957, JB united Mary Frances and Victor Sullivan of Jackson, in the Gaither home. Victor was a widower and had a teenage daughter, Barbara Jo. They made their home in Jackson where Victor was co-owner with his brother of “Mrs. Sullivan’s Southwestern Pies.”

Victor passed away in 1992.

Frances married Bill Jones of Winter Haven, Florida in 2005.

In 1959, Mary's mother, Nora Campbell, passed away and not long afterwards, Tom suffered a heart attack. His health deteriorated over the next five years, and he passed away in 1965. He remained in the Gaither home until his death, the last few years as a bedridden invalid. JB and Mary served him sacrificially through those difficult years. JB assisted in the funerals services of both Nora and Tom Campbell.

JB and Mary had many weddings take place in the living rooms of their homes throughout the years. The house in Gallatin was certainly no exception. Oftentimes, Mary, or one of the girls, would have to sign as "witnesses" on the marriage licenses.

Below are entries from his diaries of two weddings performed in the Gaither home - Top entry is July 1, 1934; lower is May 10, 1974:

Began Meeting at Cubb Creek.
Subjects at 11: 8: "Christian
Growth" + "Doing." Performed
ceremony for Norman
Gaines + Maurine Williams
at 3:30 at My residence.
Took supper with J. N. Wilson.

To Jackson to get Wedding
Napkins, Mamma to get hair-do
at 11.
We ate at Belle Cafe.
To General Home in afternoon
and night. Performed ceremony ^{\$20.00}
for Wm Carlos Crowson and
Emma Sue Moore at 7:30 at our home

On June 30, 1961,
Ruby married
Jim Williams
in the Gaither home.
They resided several
years in Gallatin.
Jim worked for
Cummins Diesel in
Nashville.
In 1972 they
moved to
Dickson, Tennessee
where they still
reside.



Jim & Ruby Williams

JB's mother, Maggie Gibbs Gaither, of Lawrenceburg, Tennessee, passed away in 1962. He had conducted the funeral service for his father, but he could not emotionally handle the conducting of his mother's service.

In 1964, JB, along with a hired helper, was cutting down a dead tree in the back yard when the tree fell the wrong way and crushed him JB *to the earth*. As he lay there on the ground, he prayed, *Into Thy hands I commend my spirit*. With these injuries, he was in the hospital two nights and not able to go to services when Sunday came around. Referring to the falling tree accident, on April 19, 1964 he wrote,

My first time to call off an appointment because of my own illness. My second time to miss the Lord's supper since I became a member October 25, 1916.

John B. Jr. joined the Army in 1967. He completed a three year tour of duty which included Germany and Viet Nam. Though JB was proud to have a son serving his country, his time in the service bore heavy on his daddy's heart.



John B. Gaither, Jr.

Leaving Gallatin after eighteen years had to be about the hardest move JB and Mary ever made. There was the emotional side of leaving behind all the friends and family that that eighteen years produces. There were many good works JB had become involved with that he hoped would carry on in his absence. Then there was the big house that had been home for nine in the beginning and was now down to three and soon to be an empty nest. Do you know how much "stuff" can accumulate in a house with seven bedrooms, living room, den, dining room, kitchen, three baths and a clock house?! An auction was held on the property, and JB was the auctioneer. Many family possessions including furniture were sold as they prepared to downsize to a three bedroom home.

Much love and happy memories were left in that old house and in Gallatin. It was the only house and congregation that the whole family could ever call "home."

January 28, 1967
Diary Entry

Had Auction sale of
Odds & Ends we didn't move
to Bells. Have 11 rooms here,
six in Bells. I cried the
sale. Amounted to about
400⁰⁰ Dollars.



J.B. Gaither, 1962 - Nashville Road Church of Christ

Sunday, January 1, 1967
1st Day—364 days to follow

CLEAR
CLOUDY
RAIN
SNOW

Howdy New Year! The clock has just struck 12 to Welcome you.

Subjects: "Some Things I Want you to Know"
"Now Brethren & Commend..."
Acts 20:28 - Jno. 14:1.

Fine dinner in basement.

Good Singing at 2:30.

Lula Davis with us.

This ended 18 years work
with Nashville Road.



Gallatin High School & Sumner County Courthouse
Photos made in the 1960's



The Empty Nest Years...

Bells, Tennessee

The new downsize of house, possessions and family was found in the small west Tennessee town of Bells in Crockett County. JB's new work began there on January 8, 1967. His beginning salary was \$750.00/week.



Bells Church of Christ
Bells, Tennessee 1967

Besides the many friends and two married daughters, sons-in-law and five grandchildren left behind in Gallatin, they also allowed their youngest daughter, Sandra, to stay behind. She was a senior in high school with only one semester left of twelve years in the Gallatin school system. Ruby and her husband, Jim, agreed to keep her for a semester, thus making JB and Mary's nest empty for the first time in thirty-three years! There were two consolations with the new location at Bells. Frances and her family were only a few miles away in Jackson, and Sandra was planning to attend Freed-Hardeman College at Henderson which is just the other side of Jackson.



J.B. & Mary Gaither
Preacher's Home
108 College Street
Bells, Tennessee



In spite of the fact that JB, already 65 years of age and already into retirement age, he started up his new work in a big way.



One of the first things he accomplished after moving to Bells was getting a county wide singing started. The Crockett County monthly Sunday singings are still being conducted.

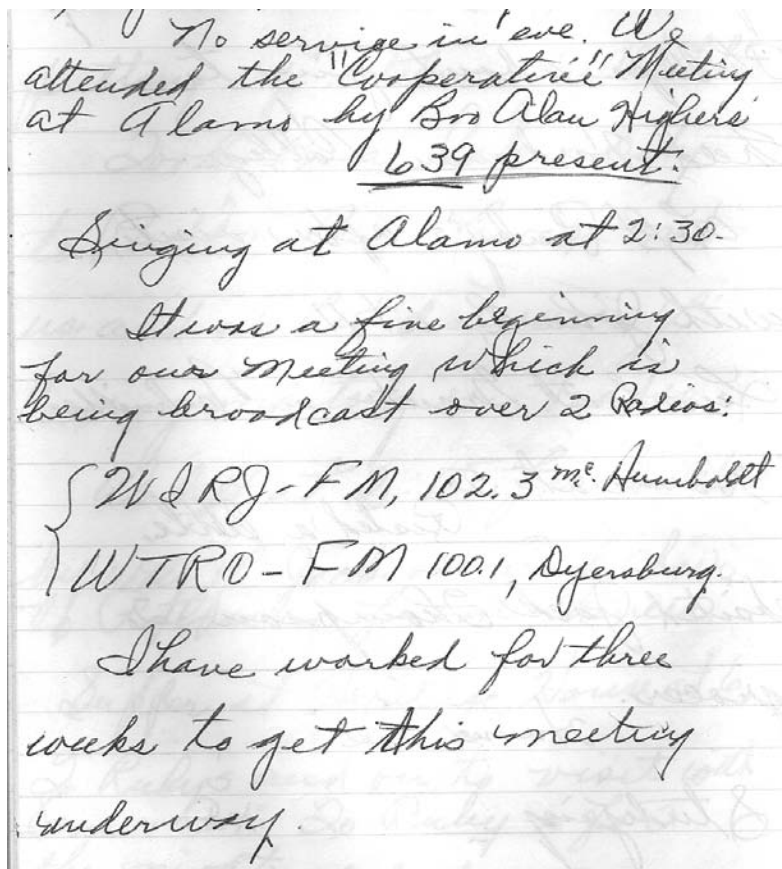
JB began a radio program in nearby Humboldt, Tennessee while he was still sending tapes back to WHIN in Gallatin for about three years.

From the Bells church history:

During 1969, four nice classrooms were finished in the attic of the church building. The church cooperates with the nine sister congregations in the county in monthly singings and a fellowship dinner each month. In February, 1970, we broadcast our monthly singing from Bells over the Humboldt Radio Station. This was the first radio program to originate with the Church of Christ in Crockett County.

In March of 1970, we cooperated in a Central Meeting at Alamo with brother Alan Highers preaching and brother Jack Forbis as singer. It was the greatest effort ever to be experienced by churches of Christ in Crockett County. Average attendance for the six nights was 592, or a sum of 3,551 for the six nights. Plans are to repeat the effort next year.

Diary entry from March 15, 1970:



No service in 'eve. We attended the "Cooperative" Meeting at Alamo by Bro Alan Highers. 639 present.

Singing at Alamo at 2:30.

It was a fine beginning for our meeting which is being broadcast over 2 Radios:

- { WDRJ - FM, 102.3 m. Humboldt
- { WTRD - FM 100.1, Dyersburg.

I have worked for three weeks to get this meeting underway.

From the "Bells Bugle" we read on June 1, 1969 that the churches in Crockett County began a fifteen minute radio program five days a week on the Humboldt station.

Part of the time that JB preached at Bells, Bill Collins, a Freed Hardeman student, served as Assistant Minister, working with the young people.

Sandra graduated from Gallatin High School in May, 1967 and began her college work at Freed-Hardeman College, Henderson, Tennessee that summer. Henderson is only about a forty-five minute drive from Bells. It was nice having Sandra closer to “home” for one school year and two summers before she transferred to Harding College in Searcy, Arkansas. There she met her husband and graduated in 1970.



David & Sandra Pitchford

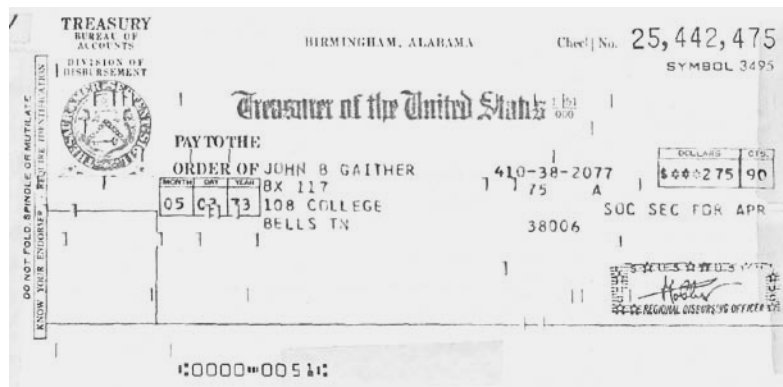
On July 18, 1969, Sandra married David Pitchford at the Nashville Road church building in Gallatin. JB and Mary’s nest was finally *truly* empty. Sandra and Dave settled in Mountain Home, Arkansas 1974 to present.

When John B. returned from his Army duty, he married Connie Baskerville of Portland, Tennessee, 1970. They made their home in Gallatin where John B. made a career with Bell South Telephone Company.



John B. & Connie Gaither

At 65 years of age, most would begin drawing Social Security, but not JB. He chose to wait. While living at Bells, he turned 72 years of age (1973), and finally began to draw his check. He had always had enough money to make ends meet, but he had never had much extra until then.



JB's first Social Security check, in the amount of \$275.90, May 3, 1973, two days after turning 72.

JB and Mary had always been generous with a little, but at this time in their life, they were able to be generous with more. Mary became a member of the Crockett County Associates, a ladies' organization in support of Freed-Hardeman College. Their interest in the college increased even more since Bells was not far from the campus and since they had a daughter attending there. JB donated his pay from at least two gospel meetings to the college in 1974 and 1975.

At about that same time, Frances and her husband, Victor Sullivan, in nearby Jackson, were very instrumental in the founding of Jackson Christian School. The Gaithers contributed generously to that effort, and the library there has a plaque that reads, "In Honor of Mr. and Mrs. J.B. Gaither." Mary did her part by creating and donating many craft items to various sales and fairs and also donating personal sales to the Christian school.

While living at Bells, JB sold his collection of clocks which had grown from two hundred fifty plus in 1961 to over five hundred. Many of them were on display in a little shop he had made from an old truck bed and set up in the backyard of the preacher's home. Once he had turned in his resignation at Bells, he began to advertise among fellow collectors who lived all across the country. He had many prospective buyers come by and make offers.

One young man, a native of Jackson County, showed an interest in the clocks. James Davis "Bruce" Watts was from a family JB had known for years and years. He and his fiancé, Lou Ann Boyd, came and spent the day with JB and Mary. Before they left, they had purchased the entire collection. That was on July 19, and one week later, JB married the young couple. He was thrilled to have sold the clocks as a collection, so they could all stay together. He was also tickled that they were in the hands of friends who seemed like family. The clocks were moved to Cookeville, Tennessee, back to the area of JB's younger years.

An editorial was written by JB in the Bells Bugle just a few months before he left there. This is what he had to say:

“This is the day which the Lord has made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.”
Psa. 118:24

Life is such a wonderful thing. My life has been a wonderful one for the following reasons:

First, I came from a wonderful family where my parents were Christians. All eight children became members of the Lord’s church; I married the best girl I could find, who has made a wonderful companion and mother; we have five fine children who have proved a blessing to us; we have five in-laws who do honor to our family; we have eleven grandchildren dear as they come. Therefore, I have twenty-two to help me enjoy life and to make it a joy for me.

Furthermore, I have labored with five congregations, including Bells that have proved a blessing to me; I have held meetings for many congregations and enjoyed every one of them; and last but not least I have enjoyed the acquaintance and association of thousands of individuals (in the church and out) who have added untold blessings and joy.

As for the future, I expect to make the most of my remaining days upon the earth and then eternally. “For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.”

Thanks to each one who has added joy to my life!

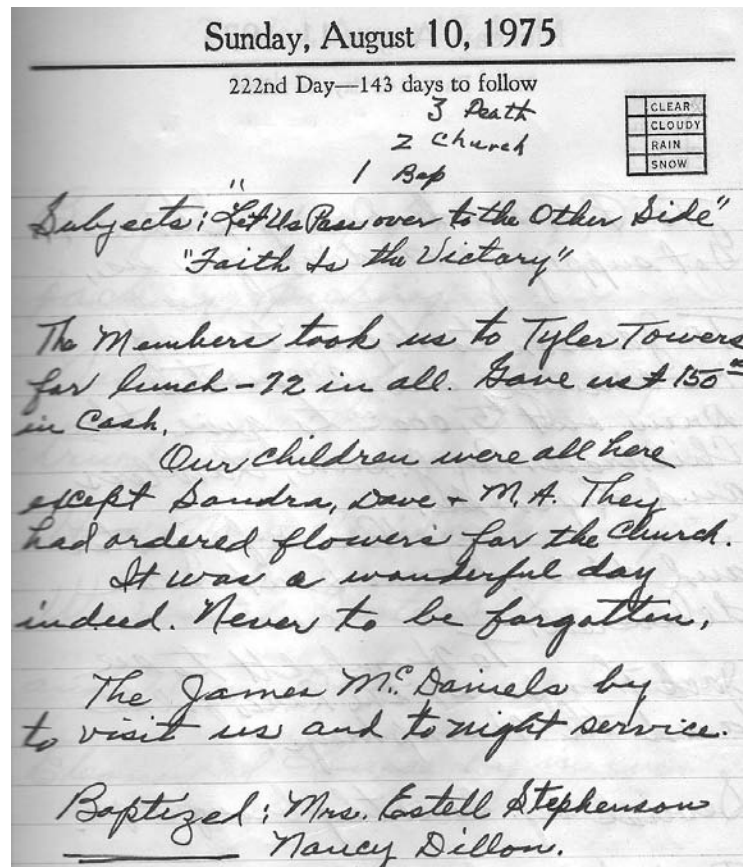
Yours in Joy and Happiness,

J.B. Gaither

Composed while driving from Mountain Home, AR to Bells, Tn. May 3, 1975

When JB was seventy-four years of age, he thought it was time to make a change before he got too old to find a job! He had been at Bells for eight and a half years and felt like he might not be able to stay there five more.

He told Mary and the family, *If the Lord will give me five more years somewhere, I'll probably be ready to lay it aside.* It wasn't long until he had a job opportunity, and he left Bells to start in a new congregation for what would be the final time.



A couple of years after they left Bells, they returned to Bells for a meeting. On March of 1977, JB wrote in his Liberty Newsletter,

THE MEETING AT BELLS last week was a joy indeed--- It was truly a spiritual Home Coming. There is no place like home---Bells is home to us. Better people cannot be found.



The Gaither Family at “home” in Bells
JB, Mary, Patricia, John B.,
Frances, Sandra, Ruby
1967

The Golden Years...

Liberty at Fayetteville, Tennessee

In searching for a new job, JB had found that not many congregations wanted a seventy-four year old man, even if he did have forty-five years of experience in located work and seemingly good health. He didn't have to search too long though, to find new employment with the Liberty congregation in Lincoln County, Tennessee at Fayetteville. It was a congregation where he had a long term relationship, having held five meetings there over the past twelve years. The folks at Liberty knew exactly what they were getting. JB and Mary began their work with the Liberty congregation on August 15, 1975.



Liberty Church of Christ, Fayetteville, Tennessee
Old Community Center at left
Where fellowship meals were enjoyed

Just six years earlier, after finishing a meeting at Liberty, JB had written in his church bulletin, the "Bells Bugle,"

This was my fourth or fifth meeting at this place. I promised to return in 1974. I have been going to Lincoln County for a number of years. The people there cannot be excelled. It was good to have Sister Gaither with me to meet and get acquainted with a people whom I have known and loved through the years.

In one of his first bulletins, JB commented

Whatever we can do to help, feel free to call on us. We want to be a “Papa and a Mama” to all of you.

One of his first tasks, so characteristic of JB, was to establish the Lincoln County First Sunday Singings. Those singings are still carried on each month.

Another typical project was to make improvements at the preacher’s home. At his suggestion, the brethren there decided to enclose the garage, converting it into a bedroom, bath, dining area and laundry room. A carport was then added to the house. In 1976, JB forfeited four paychecks and donated two meeting checks to help pay for central air conditioning for the preacher’s home. He also did a lot of landscaping on the property, taking pride in the yard and the home.



Liberty Preacher’s Home

After JB had been at Liberty about a year, McBroom’s Chapel, in Cookeville, offered him a job and higher salary than Liberty was paying. In his diary, he noted that and wrote his simple reply: *NO*.

It was at Liberty that he celebrated his 50th golden year of preaching with a gospel meeting November 7-11, 1976.

In announcing the upcoming anniversary in his bulletin, he wrote:

I am so thankful for a full life of one half century in the Lord's Vineyard. I have met so many of His saints upon the earth and hope for that grand and glorious meeting "in the air" and the eternal bliss which will be ours "over there."

We realize that

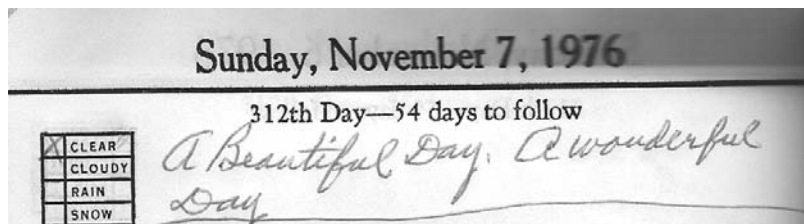
"It Won't Be Very Long."

In a later issue of the Liberty Newsletter, we read,

In thinking of the 50 years and why they affect me more than they do others, may I suggest that my Mother was merely a woman to a world of people, BUT she was more than that to me--A MOTHER! My children are no more than five other children to you, BUT to me they are precious indeed.

In an article published in the Elk Valley Times, November 4, 1976, he is quoted as saying,

I will never retire as long as the Lord gives me strength to work.



He counted the fifty years from the time of his first preaching appointment which was November 7, 1926 at the Midway congregation near Lawrenceburg. How fitting that in 1976, November 7 also fell on Sunday.



J.B. GAITHER

**Will Celebrate
His 50th Year
Of Preaching
In A
Gospel Meeting
November 7 - 11**

AT

LIBERTY CHURCH OF CHRIST

Fayetteville, Tennessee

SUNDAY

Will Be Homecoming Day
Bible Study 10:00 A.M. Worship 11:00 A.M.
Basket Dinner For All
All Evening Service 7:30 P.M.

EVAN HUDSON

Will Direct The Singing

**OUR GOLDEN
ANNIVERSARY MEETING!**

"Come Thou With Us"



J.B. & Mary Gaither
50th Preaching Anniversary
November 7, 1976

JB mailed out three hundred eighty letters of invitation to the anniversary meeting. The Golden Anniversary turned out to be a success. The attendance was a record 313. There was a good representation from each of the churches where JB had labored before coming to Liberty. There were also many visitors present from places where he had held gospel meetings.

All twenty-one of his children and grandchildren were there, and to make the day even more special, a granddaughter, Lana Sullivan, was baptized. He wrote in the bulletin the following week,

IT WAS A CLIMAX OF MY LIFE.

Less than two years later, on August 2, 1978, JB had a near black out as he lost the use of his left arm. The doctor told him that he nearly had a stroke, and that he had hardening of the arteries and some fluid buildup. He told him to stay away from fats, starches, sweets and salts, and JB heeded his advice. He always said,

If I'm going to pay a doctor to tell me what's wrong and how to get better, I'm going to heed what he says.

In spite of his obedience to the doctor's orders, a few months later, on April 25, 1979, JB had a major heart attack. After a few days in a Fayetteville hospital, he was sent to St. Thomas Hospital in Nashville for about three weeks, and while there, he had a pace maker implanted. He made a remarkable recovery and was back in the pulpit by June 17.

In his bulletin on October 28, 1979, just a few months before his death, he noted,

Sunday, I will celebrate my 53rd year of preaching. It seems but a little while. Many things have changed in many ways since then with many things connected to the work and worship. Then, meetings were almost always two and even three weeks long. Now, they are two or three days; then, the house would almost always overflow. Now, the crowds are so small. Then, everybody was making plans for the meeting and eager to attend. Now, they begin making plans for something to keep them from attending. Then, everybody came to the front of the house and sang. Now, they sit on the back seat and take very little part. Let it not happen to us!

The final year of his life, when folks would ask how he was doing, he would reply that he was doing well, because he and Mary would be celebrating their golden wedding anniversary soon, and he didn't want her to have to get a "stand-in." He was so looking forward to that occasion, but he died just six months before the date arrived.

As the last “New Year” of his life arrived (January 1, 1980), this is what he wrote on the front page of the Liberty Newsletter:

---THANKS A MILLION---

Thanks for the year 1979, and for every favor that everyone has bestowed on us. We've received so many blessings from far and near. IN A SPECIAL WAY do we thank LIBERTY as a congregation of warmth and affection you have shown us and ours for the four and one half years we have been with you. We will never forget!

May God ever add his Blessings to each of you.

The Gaithers, J.B. and Mary

This poem was chosen by him to be printed in the February 17, 1980 Liberty Newsletter. His personal note at the end seems timely with his death only three short months away.

THE ARROW AND THE SONG

I shot an arrow into the air,
It fell to earth, I knew not where;
For, so swiftly it flew, the sight,
Could not follow it in its flight.

I breathed a song into the air,
It fell to earth, I know not where;
For who has sight so keen and strong
That it can follow the flight of a song?

Long, long afterward, in an oak
I found the arrow, still unbroke;
And the song, from beginning to end,
I found again in the heart of a friend.

---Henry W. Longfellow

Oh, that I might give you something that would cause you happiness in the years to come, even when I am gone. JBG

Less than three weeks before his death, he wrote in his bulletin, *Saturday, my brother and two sisters and families will be with us to celebrate my birthday and also my sister's. Mine is the first (of May) and hers is the third. I love these birthdays! When they stop, all's over.*

The next week, he added, *It (a birthday) may not make one feel old, but it does make one realize they have been here a long time.*

In his last bulletin, JB noted, *We love our LIBERTY FAMILY. Let's just be that--the Family of God. Eph. 3:14-21*

Ironically, he also wrote that last week, *I know of no serious illness within our congregation.*

The day before he died, he had been to the doctor for a check up. He was proud that he got a good report.

JB always said he looked back with no regrets about his life; that if he had it all to over again, he wouldn't change a thing! In his 54 years of preaching, he was never asked to resign from any of the six congregations where he labored. The gospel meetings he held carried him to many locations in eleven states and the District of Columbia. It was not unusual for him to deliver two to four different lessons on any given day, especially during the days when gospel meetings often included a morning and evening service. Add a radio program, or Sunday school class, and the lessons piled up. In 1979 at the age of 78, he held three meetings before suffering his heart attack in April. He cancelled two as he recuperated. Then in 1980, he held three meetings before he passed away in May, left two pending for that year, and five meetings had already been scheduled for 1981 and 1982.



J.B. & Mary Gaither, Spring 1980
In the Backyard of the Liberty Preacher's Home
Near the spot where he died two months later

He had a sermon he liked to preach entitled, "Heaven, A Prepared Place for a Prepared People." He certainly heeded that lesson in his life by preparing every day for that final day to come.

*J.B. Gaither is a man of the past
but not yet forgotten.*

His Godly influence still speaks today.

John Jeffrey Green
&
The Silver Tree
Late 1960's



The Gaithers were about the first in Gallatin to display the amazing silver Christmas tree with revolving color wheel! They paid \$17.56 for the set in 1960 and got their money's worth the first night it was shown. Living on the Nashville highway, there was a lot of traffic. Many cars pulled over to watch the colors change. The family loved providing such awesome entertainment to passers-by!

“I Have Finished My Course”... The Funeral

At his request, JB's body lay-in-state in the church building at Liberty for family and friends' visitation the night before his funeral, which was also at the church building. E. Claude Gardner conducted the service on May 23rd. Then JB's body was moved to the Nashville Road church of Christ building (formerly Number One), in Gallatin for a visitation the evening prior to his burial.

During the last year of his life, JB had mentioned to the family more than once that what he would *love* for his body to lie-in-state overnight at *each* of the six churches where he had worked fulltime. Then he would quickly add that he realized that would be too hard on the family, so he didn't expect that wish to be granted. That desire was partly carried out since his body was overnight at two of the six congregations, Liberty in Fayetteville and Nashville Road at Gallatin.

The graveside service was conducted by Tom Holland at Crestview Memorial Park in Sumner County on May 24, 1980. JB and Mary had twenty-three descendants at the time of his death, all of which attended his funeral.

*Some glad morning
When this life is o'er
I'll fly away!*

The Funeral of John Burgess Gaither

Conducted by E. Claude Gardner, Assisted by Eugene Peden
May 23, 1980
Liberty Church of Christ
Fayetteville, Tennessee

Congregational Singing led by Evan Hudson
I Love to Tell the Story
Though I Thro' the Valley
One Day

Eugene Peden,
Preacher at the Washington Street congregation in Fayetteville

The church has lost a great worker. The family has experienced a great tragedy.

We, who have had our lives influenced by brother Gaither, have been called upon to say good bye to one that left for us an example to pursue.

I have thought oftentimes in our visiting together, my, I hope that the Lord will bless me that I will be permitted to continue to preach until I'm 79 years of age. We have been fortunate.

I would like to read that which I have heard him suggest to others; that thought that he so often entertained. I'm reading from II Timothy 4.

1 I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom;

2 Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering and doctrine.

3 For the time will come when men will not endure sound doctrine; but will heap unto themselves teachers, having itching ears;

4 And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall turn them unto fables.

5 *But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.*

6 *For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand.*

7 *I have fought a good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith:*

8 *Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the righteous One, shall give me in that day: and not only to me, but unto all them also that love his appearing.*

And there's another passage of scripture that he enjoyed that seems to have encouraged him greatly and gave to him the incentive that he needed even though he was suffering in the physical body but powerful in the spiritual. And this is the passage from the Old Testament.

1 *The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.*

2 *He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside still waters.*

3 *He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.*

4 *Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.*

5 *Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.*

6 *Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.*

Shall we pray.

Our righteous Father, with humble and contrite hearts, we who have been greatly influenced by brother Gaither's life, approach Thy throne being mindful, Father, of our weaknesses; being conscious, Father, of the need of Thy help. But first of all, we reflect upon Thee and upon what You've done for us. We're mindful that

salvation was provided through Thy son, Jesus, and we're grateful for the gospel that was given and so well proclaimed by brother Gaither; that gospel that gives to us the hope of something better than this world; and that gospel that made this life here upon the earth enjoyable. We're grateful, Father, for this family that has suffered this great loss. We ask Thee, Father, to bless each individual member of that family, and may each one turn to Thee on this occasion for strength and for help. We're grateful for this wonderful congregation where brother Gaither worked so faithfully, labored so long, so tireless. We invoke Thy blessings, Father, upon the leaders of the congregation and upon all the members, that they, upon this great vacuum that has been created, will join hands and come closer and closer and more dedicated in the work, that the work will continue to be enjoyed; that the work will continue to bear fruit; a work that will continue to have great meaning, as that which was in the heart of this one. We ask thee, Father, to bless each of us on this occasion that we turn to Thee, not only reflecting upon the future but upon the present, being mindful of the task that is before us and the vacuum that has been created among the co-workers of this community. We ask Thee, Father, to give us the strength, the insight of faith that is needed; that we will do our best to help reach those that are lost, for those that brother Gaither prayed for and taught and served. We ask Thee to bless the one that shall bring the message on this occasion. Give to each of us, Father, an insight of our duty, our responsibility; and then when we have come to the close of our lives, we can look back upon our life as this one did, and see that our lives have not been lived in vain. In the name of Christ we pray, and Amen.

Song: Take Me Home Father, Take Me Home

E. Claude Gardner

President, Freed-Hardeman College, Henderson, Tennessee

We are assembled here today to pay our last respects to brother J.B. Gaither, a great and a wonderful servant of the Lord. And we join with thousands across the land, in expressing our sympathy, our deep sympathy and love to you, sister Gaither and to these children, Frances, and Patricia and Ruby and John, and Sandra, the grandchildren, the rest of the family, sister Barnes, sister O'Neal and brother Gaither, brother Gaither's brother. We have come here to join with people from across the land to express to you our interest in this time

of your great loss. His loss is our loss, and we share in that loss with you today. The many friends who have come, elders, preachers of the gospel, these floral offerings, tell you that there are those who love and respect you and respect brother Gaither, and this good audience also suggests the same.

I invite your attention now to a passage in Ecclesiastes, chapter 12. This passage covers man's different stages from cradle to grave, in fact, beyond the grave, even into eternity. I begin reading with verse one and shall read some of the verses from this chapter.

1 Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them;

3 In the day when the keepers of the house shall tremble, and the strong men shall bow themselves, and the grinders cease because they are few, and those that look out of the windows be darkened,

4 And the doors shall be shut in the streets,

5 Also when they shall be afraid of that which is high, and fears shall be in the way,

6 Or ever the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken,

14 For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.

This chapter of Ecclesiastes, chapter 12, does encompass the great and important facts that all of us must face. They are serious and sobering facts.

Fact number one is that we live. We are born into this world, and as the apostle Paul said in the great sermon on Mars Hill, Acts 17:28, "In him, we live and move and have our being, as certain also of your old poets have said, For we are also His offspring." Then Paul says in Romans 14:7, "None liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself." We live.

But then the second great important fact or stage through which we pass, is that of death. In Hebrews 9:27 we read, "And as it is appointed unto man once to die, and then cometh the judgment."

Then in Ecclesiastes 9:5, we read, "The living know that they shall die." We know that we'll die by reason of observation, even though the Bible says that we shall die. We very often say, "Yes, I know that we shall die," but it doesn't really get into our consciousness. We need to be aware of the fact that we are alive now, but tomorrow we may die.

Then the third stage, after death, is the resurrection. Paul says in I Corinthians 15:22, "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ, shall all be made alive." Then the Lord said, by way of promise, John 5:28,29, "Marvel not at this, for the hour is coming by which all that are in the grave shall hear his voice and shall come forth; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation." We know not the hour, but the Lord has made a promise that someday he will speak the word, and all of us will be raised.

And then the next stage is that of the judgment. Again in Hebrews 9:27 we read, "And as is appointed to man once to die, and then cometh the judgment." And all of us will be there.

In II Corinthians 5:10, Paul says, "For we must all stand before the judgment seat of Christ, that everyone may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or evil." We must stand before God in the judgment.

The great Daniel Webster, the great statesman and orator said, the most serious thought that ever entered into his mind was the thought that someday he must stand before God and give an account in the day of judgment. Truly it is a serious matter.

Then the next stage is that of eternity. After the judgment, we are either going to heaven or to hell. In Matthew 25 and verse 46, in that judgment scene we read, "These shall go away unto everlasting life." (or eternal life).

In Revelation 14 and verse 13, we read, "Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord, from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them."

After this life is over; we die; we are raised; we come to the judgment; and then we spend eternity somewhere forever and forever.

I just wonder how many times that brother Gaither has recited these facts and these scriptures in various places through the country, trying to impress upon people the stages through which they will pass; trying to get them ready for eternity.

Now these five stages or five facts, I suggest, are encompassed in our text from Ecclesiastes 12.

First, there is youth. "Remember now Thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them." If a person doesn't obey the gospel in his youth, there is a strong possibility that he or she might never do it.

I talked to a lady, perhaps in her seventies, on yesterday, who has heard the truth. She was brought up in the church, so to speak, by her family, but she never has obeyed the gospel, and I sounded out a warning to her, "The longer you wait, the more difficult it will be for you to ever obey the gospel, because hardness of heart can set in."

But I am thankful that brother Gaither, when he was just a teenager, was baptized into Christ. At about the age of fifteen, he obeyed the gospel. Think about it, sixty four years of serving the Lord. And so far as I know, during those sixty four years, he never wavered one time. He never faltered at all in living the Christian life.

Then as we grow older, the body begins to decay and finally, there is dissolution. And Solomon points that out. He says, "In the day when the keepers of the house shall tremble," and "the keepers of the house" suggest our hands. "And the strong men shall bow themselves," that's probably our legs. "The grinders cease because they are few." That would be the teeth, the loss of teeth. "Those that look out of the windows shall be darkened;" that would be the eyes becoming dim. "The doors shall be shut in the streets," figuratively speaking there probably about ears; pointing out that as a person grows older; these characteristics are of the aged person. Then in a non-figurative way, he says that the aged people are afraid to venture. He says they are afraid to get on high places and that they shall be afraid of that which is high. "Fear shall be in the way."

We don't really know how long we are going to live on this earth. In Psalm 90:10 we read, "The days of our years shall be three score and ten, and if by reason of strength, fourscore years." Then he says, "If by strength there shall be labor and sorrow, and we shall fly away." We may live to be seventy or even eighty, and even in those later years there may be labor and sorrow, but eventually, we will fly away. Because it is destined for all men to die. Brother Gaither reached the seventy mark and passed, not quite eighty. But that's a long and useful life in service to the Lord.

And then Solomon points out death and this dissolution, the separation of the body, the spirit under a figure of, "A silver cord or the golden bowl." When I think of the "golden bowl," being held up by the "silver cord," and then there's the break that takes place; the separation of the spirit from the body. The next verse says, "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it." Man is a twofold being; the inner man and the outer man; the body and the spirit. And that is what takes place when we die; the separation of the body and the spirit.

And then he concludes this chapter by referring to the judgment. He says, "For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil."

(The tape ended here and had to be turned over, so there may be a thought or two missing.)

All of his grandchildren, who are old enough to be Christians, are Christians. Isn't that fine? If all of us could save our own children and grandchildren, could we not save the world? And brother Gaither baptized most of those children and grandchildren. His family loved him. More than once, I have heard brother Sullivan, his son-in-law, give high praise and speak words of admiration of brother Gaither. He loved his family.

The Psalmist said, Psalm 16 and verse 6, "I have a goodly heritage." These children have a goodly heritage. And you grandchildren have a goodly heritage. You don't have to be ashamed of your grandfather. You can hold him in esteem and respect all of your days. He left you a good name. He left you a wonderful Christian example. Yes, he gave you, not money; he didn't leave you millions of dollars, but he left you a goodly heritage, nevertheless.

And then, I think also, by way of tribute, that brother Gaither was a preacher, an effective, capable, sound preacher of the gospel. He was not a preacher and something else. Oh, I do remember that he had a little hobby of collecting some old clocks, but that was just some past time for him. Brother Gaither was a preacher, not a preacher AND something else.

He devoted fifty four years to preaching the gospel. He started preaching in 1926 at the Midway Church near Lawrenceburg, Tennessee. And brother Gaither has preached in local work a number of places through the years, and he didn't stay ordinarily in these places just a year or two. But he wore well, and the church loved him.

He preached in Gainesboro, Tennessee from 1932-39; in Springfield, Tennessee from 39-46; Oneida, Tennessee from 47-48; Number One church at Gallatin, 49-67; Bells, Tennessee from 67-75 and then here with you at Liberty from 75 until this past Lord's day.

Not long ago, I had a letter from brother Gilbert Schaeffer, who is about the same age as brother Gaither, and he said, "I only know two of us who are still engaged in fulltime local work at our age." He said, "Brother Gaither and I, the two of us." Brother Gaither has not been and was not "put on the shelf." He continued to preach the gospel in local work.

But during all of this time, he engaged in many gospel meetings. I tried to calculate the number of meetings that he may have held. I suspect he has held upwards of a thousand gospel meetings in his lifetime. How many hundreds of thousands of people have responded to the gospel invitation, I do not know. I am satisfied that many who are here today have been tenderly baptized by his hands.

But there is one county, and it's an unusual record. During his career in preaching, in Jackson County, I suspect he held about 140 or maybe 150 gospel meetings there. And that's more gospel meetings than some preachers ever hold in their lifetime. And if you go to Jackson County today, you will find some strong congregations, many congregations, and brother Gaither helped to establish and to strengthen those congregations.

While he preached at Gallatin, with the Number One congregation, he preached at every one of those congregations in the county, about twenty six in number. He's a man that not only planted, but he also watered. Paul said in I Corinthians 3:6, "I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase." Brother Gaither did both.

Brother Gaither did mission work. He helped establish the church at Jamestown, Tennessee, Whitley City and Berea, Kentucky, and he worked in those hard and difficult places. Sometimes there are younger people, even younger preachers that do not believe that any mission work took place by the church until recent years. How wrong they have been. If they only knew the history, if they could only go back and see where brother Gaither and other of these great men preached under tents and brush arbors and school houses and did the work of an evangelist and endured hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. They would really know better. I feel a very great debt, myself, to brother Gaither and others for going into those difficult places, and preaching the gospel and establishing the

Lord's church. We ought to be thankful for good and faithful and strong men like this.

Brother Gaither also was an expert in radio preaching. He preached over the radio for many many years and enjoyed that.

How many funerals he must have conducted, I have no way of knowing, but he was called on frequently, here, there and everywhere to conduct services for people.

He loved to sing, and he taught singing schools. When he would go into a county, he had the plan of starting a first Sunday singing, because he loved to sing, and he believed certainly that good singing strengthened the church. I thought a while ago, when this good singing was going on, oh how pleased brother Gaither would be if he only knew and could hear this beautiful singing today that was taking place.

Brother Gaither was ever interested in Christian education. He and sister Gaither were quite interested in our work at Freed Hardeman College, and it was a pleasure to work with them at Freed Hardeman. We're thankful to them for their encouragement and support of Christian education.

Yes, he was a faithful gospel preacher. This last Friday morning I went to the Lexington, Kentucky Cemetery and I stood before the grave of a man that helped lead the church away from the truth. It's a very sad thing. Here's the man that introduced the little melodeon in the Midway church in 1859. Here's the man that also began to advocate that maybe not all of the Bible is inspired of God. Well, brother Gaither doesn't have that to face in the day of judgment, because he was a sound faithful preacher of the gospel.

Today we have lost, the family has lost a Christian husband, a Christian father. We have lost a capable preacher of the gospel, and oh how we need more gospel preachers; an effective servant of the church. We have lost a friend; I have lost a friend. He has been a friend of mine for many years. You have lost a friend. Our community, this community and the state and the world has lost a useful citizen, and it's like David said in II Samuel 3 and verse 38 about Abner, "Know ye not that a prince and a great man has fallen this day in Israel?" We have lost a prince and a great man that in this day has fallen in Israel.

I'm glad brother Paden read from II Timothy 4, verses 6-8, in fact all of the verses preceding. I think that brother Gaither could say with Paul what Paul wrote. Paul said, you remember, "the time of my departure is at hand. I am now

ready to be offered. I am ready to go. I have fought a good fight; I have finished the course; I have kept the faith. Henceforth, there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me in that day, and not to me only, but to all them that love his appearing." Brother Gaither fought the good fight. He kept on fighting until the very end. He fought the good fight, and kept the faith unto the end, and I believe that there is a crown of righteousness for him over there.

Then one of the songs, one of his favorite songs, we've already sung, "I Love to Tell the Story." "I love to tell the story of unseen things above, of Jesus and His glory, of Jesus and His love. I love to tell the story because I know 'tis true, it satisfies my longings as nothing else can do. I love to tell the story, 'twill be my theme in glory, to tell the old old story of Jesus and his love." He loved to tell the story of Jesus and preach the Bible, a peace loving man; a man that loved peace and unity in the church. He loved the purity of the church and purity of God's love.

We're very very thankful that we could extend our words of praise and tribute on this occasion to brother Gaither, and he is deserving of all of the praise and esteem and respect that all of us have paid to him and his good life all through these years.

So now, sister Gaither, and these children and other member of the family as well as friends, I close with the words of the apostle Paul in Acts 20 and verse 32, "And now, I commend you to God, and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified."

Songs:

The Gospel Is For All
Beautiful Isle of Somewhere

His grandsons served as Pallbearers.

*"...he wore well
and the church loved him."*

E. Claude Gardner

Grave of J.B. Gaither

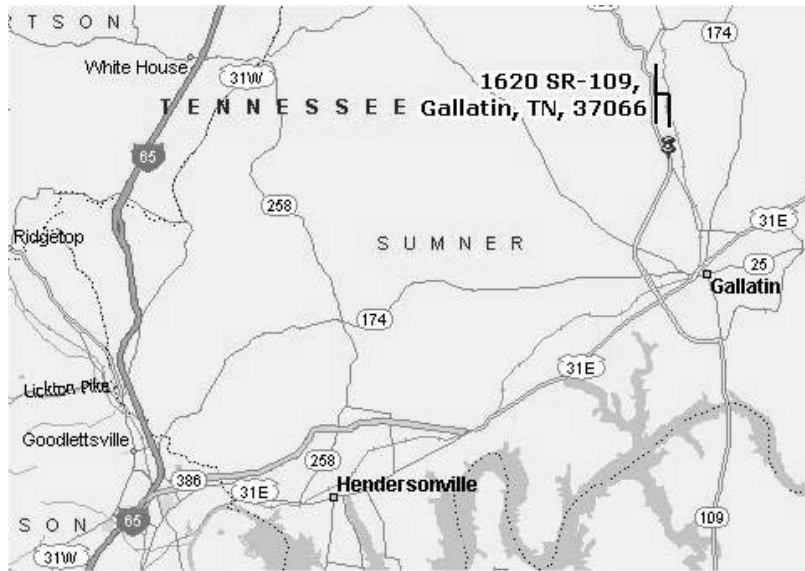
Cemetery Location Just North Of Gallatin

(Courtesy of www.TheRestorationMovement.com)

J.B. Gaither is buried in the Crestview Memorial Park. The cemetery is located at 1620 Hwy. 109N. in Gallatin, Tennessee. North of Nashville on I-65 take Exit 96/ Vietnam Veterans Parkway/Hwy.386 toward Gallatin. Go to the end of the parkway and continue NE on Hwy. 31E/6 to Gallatin. Get on Hwy 109 bypass north about 4 miles and Crestview Memorial Park will be on the right. Enter the cemetery to the right and go until the drive splits. Head to the right and begin looking to the left as you drive around you will need to look for the DRAPER monument. The next one will be the KEEN monument. Between and behind these two is the GAITHER monument.







GPS Coordinates
N36° 25. 984' x WO 86° 27. 815'
Grave Faces East/Accuracy To 15ft.

Obituaries...



World Evangelist, February 1985
“In Remembrance of a Gospel Preacher”
John Burgess Gaither, Sr.

Obituary written by J.B.'s Widow, Mary

John Burgess Gaither, son of the late Wiley Thomas and Margaret Lillian Gaither, was born in Lawrence County, Tennessee, May 1, 1901. He was reared on his father's farm and received his first schooling in a one-room rural school at Gaitherville, about two miles west of Lawrenceburg. He knew how it was to help on the farm and try to go to school. Things weren't too prosperous for a large family in those days. Before he was graduated from high school, he had to drop out and teach seven years. He enjoyed telling of his experiences while teaching all grades.

At age sixteen, J.B. made his first talk at Prayer Meeting at his home congregation in town at Lawrenceburg. From that time he was called on several times to speak and on to preaching. He soon had appointments around the county until he had his Sundays filled. He would tell people that he really didn't know when he stopped "talking" and went to preaching.

WENT TO OHIO

The summer of 1927, J.B. went North, as we called it back then, to visit two of his brothers and their families then living at New Philadelphia and Dover, Ohio. His two weeks turned out to be about five years' stay before returning to Tennessee to live. Upon arriving for his vacation, he found work at The Iron Foundry (where one of his brothers worked) as an office clerk. He worshipped at the same congregation as I, Mary Campbell, daughter of Richard Thomas and Nora Lee Campbell did, and that first Sunday I met my future husband. I just loved him from that first introduction and after he taught the class that morning, to me he was the best teacher I ever heard. I told him later (when it was safe) that I knew I would marry him someday. (I was only seventeen then.)

Not long after that J.B. was asked to preach, and his sermon was tops and from then on he was teaching and preaching a good bit for that church. But when this was noised abroad he began to get calls from various places to come help them.

My dad being so interested in converting people to Christ, and being a teacher and a good songleader himself, the two of them made a team and began through the week to go and preach wherever they could find an empty building to meet in. They took the gospel to many and as a result they were able to establish churches.

At that time, there were few churches of Christ in Ohio. Three years of steady evangelizing went on with much success.

GREAT ORGANIZER

J.B. truly was a very organized person, keeping records of most of his work, so I need only to get the ledger out and count the number of series of gospel meetings in which he preached which when counted comes to 542 recorded. This isn't including the one night appointments. Some of the places where he preached in meetings he went back as many as 10 to 15 times to preach in meetings. It was very rare he ever held one meeting only at a place.

These meetings carried him into some ten or twelve states. He loved the small churches and did work among them during all of his located work. In Jackson County, Tennessee alone he preached 133 meetings, the 100th at Gainesboro, which was a joyous one in particular.

GOOD RESULTS

Over the years, J.B. baptized 1,438; restored 841, conducted 913 funerals; and performed 203 marriages. He drove many miles to and from these appointments and seemed to be happiest when on the way to do the Lord's work.

Many were the comments about his preaching like, "You preach like the preachers did a long time ago," or "You preach more Bible than I've heard in a long time," or "That is what I call a good gospel sermon."

One lady told J.B. he just preached the scriptures, to which he replied, "How else can you preach without scriptures?" J.B. had a particular simple, plain delivery that was forceful and which attracted all who came to hear. All this made it easy to understand and to listen to him. No doubt, many souls were saved by the simple truths of God's word, which he so ably delivered to them. "Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free." (John 8:32)

GOOD QUALITIES

J.B. Gaither was not only a good preacher; he was a living example of that preaching also. He loved people and people loved him and honored him for the truth's sake. He was not only a Christian gentleman but a good citizen of the land, who was careful to obey the laws of the land. He also was a loving husband, who put his wife on a pedestal so to speak, and always treated her like a queen and she upheld his wishes as if he were the king. Being the father of five

children, we were well blessed. All that have reached the age of accountability have obeyed the Lord; this includes all of the grandchildren too.

The family often has get-togethers. When J.B. passed there were 25 in the family. To have them all together was his pride and joy. With nine grandsons we were hoping for several preachers. Our four granddaughters might even marry preachers. There is no other life like it!

J.B. was a joyful Christian, going about with a song in his heart. He started the First Sunday County Singings in Sumner County and from these it scattered all around and elsewhere. He also conducted several singing schools, and attended every one that was possible. He kept a song book close to his lounge chair and if there was any delay in getting a meal he would sit and sing. He especially liked the song, "We'll All Sing Together By And By."

RADIO PREACHING

Radio preaching was an important part of my husband's work. He had a good "radio voice." He preached the most on radio while living at Gallatin, Tennessee as he preached there 18 and one half years and when we left there he continued to have that program for some three years by the request of the elders who supported it.

At the same time, he had a program at Humboldt, Tennessee while at Bells. About four years at Fayetteville he was on the radio. Also whenever in meeting work he was always being asked to speak on various radio programs close by. He enjoyed this very much.

My husband was listed among the "Who's Who Among Students of American Universities and Colleges" in the 1937-38 edition, which was a great honor. The churches of Christ of Jackson County Tennessee, soon after his death, established a Memorial Foundation Fund in his honor. The funds contributed to this are to be used to educate gospel preachers. I have a set of the by-laws.

LIBERTY CHURCH OF CHRIST

When J.B. and I moved to Fayetteville, Tennessee so he could preach for Liberty Church of Christ, he said, "If the Lord will give me five more years to help Liberty to get on their feet, I'll not do located work any more, I'll probably be through with that." He did some of his best preaching and work while at Liberty. It seemed like everyone fell right in line. There were many restorations, some were baptized. The attendance was built back up quickly to around 150

and occasionally to 170 or 180. The contributions doubled and tripled in a short time. They were able to soon pay off the indebtedness, and four years later the church had enlarged the preacher's home, paved the driveway to the home, and blacktopped the church parking lot, did repairs and improvements in the building, and added several missionaries to support.

They gave J.B. several raises. There were big things planned in the near future when the Lord came quietly and called J.B. home to be with him forever more. He was working in his flower bed when his body fell limp and the spirit left it. He had always said he wanted to go when he was on his feet, or while still able to work, he got both wishes. Thank you dear Lord!

The Lord let J.B. preach the word of God 54 years. He preached some of his most forceful sermons near the close of his life. He felt good and was so happy at Liberty. J.B. passed away May 21, 1980 just a few days over 79 years. So much good was done throughout the county and the surrounding counties. He was called on at many community gatherings. He was a great counselor. He was called on for various things of the weightier matters. He served every place well. He was not without honor. He was dependable and his love for people was very noticeable and his love was returned.

I have decided why we were so happy at all of the six churches where we worked regularly. It was because we first loved them, by the service we rendered to them and they loved us for rendering it. Isn't this Christianity? Didn't Jesus say "Love God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and love thy neighbor as thyself"?

(Editor Basil Overton's note: I asked sister Mary to write a story about her illustrious husband. She did well. I fondly remember J.B. Gaither because he was a notable, dedicated, faithful and able gospel preacher and Christian gentleman. I was associated with him some in the mission fields of Kentucky when he preached there in meetings. I expect to greet him when I get to heaven.)

Gospel Advocate July 24, 1980

Obituary written by J.B. Gaither's daughter,
Sandra Pitchford.

John Burgess Gaither, who lived from May 1, 1901 to May 21, 1980, represents an era in history that probably brought more change and progress than we have seen or ever shall see again. He well remembered "the good ole days" when electricity was not prevalent, the horse and buggy was the mode of transportation, and a good day's pay for a boy was a half dollar.

He began his first local work as a minister about the time of the great depression, when a month's rent was \$3 and his monthly salary was \$35.

Those who knew him well, remember that he had a story or joke for every conversation. He loved to talk, and he never met a stranger. Very seldom did he forget a name or face.

He always became acquainted with the people around town. They knew him and respected him even if they never attended the services of the church.

Though he had five children of his own, there were many people, young and old, who said, "He was like a daddy to me." He did possess a "fatherly" image for so many. He had a certain magnetism to people of all ages and from all walks of life. This drawing force was real love. He loved people genuinely, and they loved him very much in return.

It has been said that behind every great man is a woman. That is certainly true in this case. Mother, Mary Campbell Gaither, has been a constant source of strength to him, supporting him continuously; she unselfishly shared him with others through the nearly 50 years they were married.

Daddy loved to worship God. I heard him countless times quote David, "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord." I once heard him preach a sermon entitled, "Heaven, a Prepared Place for a Prepared People." He believed that the more a Christian loves the various phases of worship, the more he will be prepared to enjoy heaven. He did love to preach the Word, but he

also loved to sing. He was a giving man, too, oftentimes beyond his means, but he was always blessed for it. He went to church every night when the opportunity presented itself if he was physically able. His spirit never tired of doing the Lord's work. If you knew J.B. Gaither very well, then you know the Lord better as a result - for he truly was "Christ-like" and a "Godly" man.

Had he delivered a farewell message, he would likely have chosen a passage such as Ephesians 6:10-13 which reads, "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all to stand."

Strangely enough, this was the opening scripture of his final sermon on Sunday, May 18. He also on that Sunday, quoted Paul when he said, "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day, and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." How fitting! For he was a good soldier of the cross; he did complete the course; he did keep the faith. He wanted that crown for himself, but he also desired that everyone else receive one.

He wanted to die on his feet and was granted that wish. He was working in his yard when his spirit slipped away from his earthly tabernacle into that place of eternal rest.

Truly our comfort comes from the Lord and his people who have offered so many prayers on our behalf. We do feel that our loss is heaven's gain because David said in Psalm 116:15, "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."

Gospel Advocate
September 18, 1980

Obituary written by E. Claude Gardner
President, Freed-Hardeman College
Henderson, Tennessee

John Burgess Gaither, Sr., who preached for the Liberty Church of Christ, Fayetteville, Tenn., passed away on May 21, 1980. He was born on May 1, 1901. The writer conducted his funeral services at the Liberty Church of Christ at 10:00 a.m., May 23, and his body was interred at the Crestview Memorial Gardens, Gallatin, Tenn.

He is survived by his wife, Mrs. Mary Campbell Gaither; four daughters, Mrs. Ruby Elizabeth Williams, Dickson, Tenn., Mrs. Mary Frances Sullivan, Jackson, Tenn., Mrs. Patricia Jean Green, Gallatin, Tenn., Mrs. Sandra Lee Pitchford, Mountain Home, Ark.; one son, John B. Gaither, Jr., Gallatin, Tenn.; two sisters, Mrs. Mary O'Neal, Lawrenceburg, Tenn., Mrs. Magabelle Barnes, Monteagle, Tenn.; and one brother, Mr. Earl Gaither, Lawrenceburg, Tenn., and also 13 grandchildren.

During his time of preaching the gospel, over a period of about 50 years, he served a number of congregations and in local work. In addition, he engaged in several hundred gospel meetings. He devoted a considerable amount of time in mission areas and in preaching over the radio and promoting good singing. Truly, he gave his life in preaching the gospel and thousands have been blessed by reason of his earnest endeavors. Brother Gaither was sound in the faith, powerful as a preacher, dedicated to the work of the Lord, and loved the brethren everywhere.

He enjoyed doing local and evangelistic work and demonstrated a wonderful love for his family. We shall miss him and we shall cherish his memory. We shall ever be thankful for his friendship and the wonderful good that he accomplished upon this earth.

Mary Gaither... Years of Widowhood



Mary C. Gaither

Though this book is the story of the life of JB, his “better half,” as he would say, lived on after him for nearly twenty-six years. It has been said that behind every great man is a woman. That is certainly true in this case, as she was a constant source of strength to him, supporting him continuously and unselfishly sharing him with others through the nearly fifty years they lived together. JB and Mary had a loving home where harsh words were never exchanged. It was a peaceful home, a secure place. There was no hypocrisy. As the old saying goes, “What you see is what you get.” That was the way with JB and Mary. They were the same at home as they were to others.



Mary's Home in Jackson, Tennessee

After JB's passing, Mary continued to live in the preacher's home there at Liberty until August of 1980 when they finally selected a new preacher to fill the pulpit. Houston Bynum and his family moved into the home at that time, and Mary moved into an apartment there in Fayetteville. She wasn't quite ready, at that point, to leave the church where she and JB had labored the last years together. A little more than a year later, in the fall of 1981, she decided it was time to get nearer one of her children. It was then that she purchased a mobile home and had it placed on the property of Mary Frances and Victor Sullivan's in Jackson, Tennessee.

Mary continued creating and selling her crafts to benefit Christian education for several years. Her health declined somewhat after a broken hip in 1991, but she recovered pretty well and remained active and drove a car until she was ninety years of age. In the fall of 2001, she moved in with Mary Frances who had been widowed since

1992. In 2002 she broke another hip. Once she recovered, she began to make extended visits to the homes of Ruby in Dickson, Tennessee and Sandra in Mountain Home, Arkansas. As she digressed in memory and agility, the three daughters kept her rotating through their homes every two to four months for the rest of her life.

Even though Mary had no short term memory the last few years, she was still social and pleasant most of the time. She forgot a lot of things, but she never forgot her love, devotion and adoration for her Lord and also for the man of her life, “J.B.”



Mary at the piano about two months before her death

Mary Campbell Gaither passed away at the home of Ruby and Jim Williams in Dickson, Tennessee on May 15, 2006. Her funeral was held at Family Heritage Funeral Home in Gallatin May 19th.

JB and Mary have ten grandsons, and each of them participated in her funeral service as well as serving as pallbearers. They have four granddaughters who served as honorary pallbearers in addition to a

great granddaughter, Mary Katlyn Green. A great grandson, Dan Nelson, conducted the graveside service, and the great grandchildren placed flowers on her grave as those gathered there sang “Blest Be the Tie.” At the time of Mary’s death, she and JB had fifty-eight descendants including those married into the family. All fifty-eight were present the day of her funeral.



The Children of J.B. and Mary Gaither

November 18, 2007

Crestview Cemetery

Gallatin, Tennessee

Left to right:

Mary Frances Jones, Patricia Green, Ruby Williams,

John B. Gaither, Jr., Sandra Pitchford

Remembering our Mother, Mary C. Gaither

Written by Sandra Pitchford

Read at Mary's Funeral by Landon Pitchford

The mother we all knew has been gone for a while. We will bury her today, but we have missed her for a long time. The last few years, Mama has taken turns living with three of her daughters. Oftentimes at breakfast and lunch, there were no men present, and so it became customary for her to take turns with us offering thanks for the meal. One thing we noticed was that even though our mother was nothing like the mother we once knew, and even though she had forgotten so very much, she still knew the Lord, and she still talked to Him like she always had! It was such a refreshing moment that we looked forward to letting her pray every time, just so we could witness the one part of her being that was still her.

*Mama was no longer her real self in any other way,
But Mama was still Mama whenever she prayed.*

Mama had no short term memory. Most of the time, she didn't know in whose home she was, the location, and certainly not the day or date. Every day was either Saturday or Sunday. It was either the day to prepare for worship or the day to go, and if it was any other day, she was certain there was a gospel meeting going on and therefore a service to attend. A love for the work of the Lord's church was so ingrained in her soul, and being a preacher's wife for nearly 50 years had made irremovable the responsibility to be at services every time the doors were open. Of course, the last few years she was not able to attend, but she always considered it as though she were going, only to back out when the time came. As a preacher's wife, Mama had known how to support her husband and use her talents in the Lord's work. She taught children's Bible classes for many years and ladies' classes as well. She was devoted to her teaching, but that all came to an end when Daddy passed away. She went from being the preacher's wife to being just a newcomer widow lady in a congregation larger than that to which she was accustomed. That in itself was a big adjustment for her.

*Mama was no longer her real self in any other way,
But Mama was still Mama whenever she prayed.*

Our mother was a wonderful homemaker. She knew how to keep a spotless house, and she excelled in cooking, sewing and crafts. In recent years, however, the housekeeping waned, the pleasure she once knew cooking, sewing and crafting became more of a frustration than joy. Her talents of hospitable deeds ended.

*Mama was no longer her real self in any other way,
But Mama was still Mama whenever she prayed.*

After Daddy was gone, Mama took up the habit of playing a card game called SKIPBO, and found much contentment perfecting the game. When at home alone, she passed the time playing alone on a cushion fashioned into a lap tray. When any of her family or friends came around, it was understood that we would play several games of SKIPBO before the day was over. She continued to play the game until the end, but her skills definitely diminished to the point of unfairness and missing the whole point of the game.

*Mama was no longer her real self in any other way,
But Mama was still Mama whenever she prayed.*

She was a very talented self taught piano player. She could sit down to the piano and play any song she had heard without any music. It would be near perfect with the first attempt. She maintained some ability at the piano until the end but often needed coaching to remember what songs she knew and how they started. Along with SKIPBO, the piano was her other pastime activity.

*Mama was no longer her real self in any other way,
But Mama was still Mama whenever she prayed.*

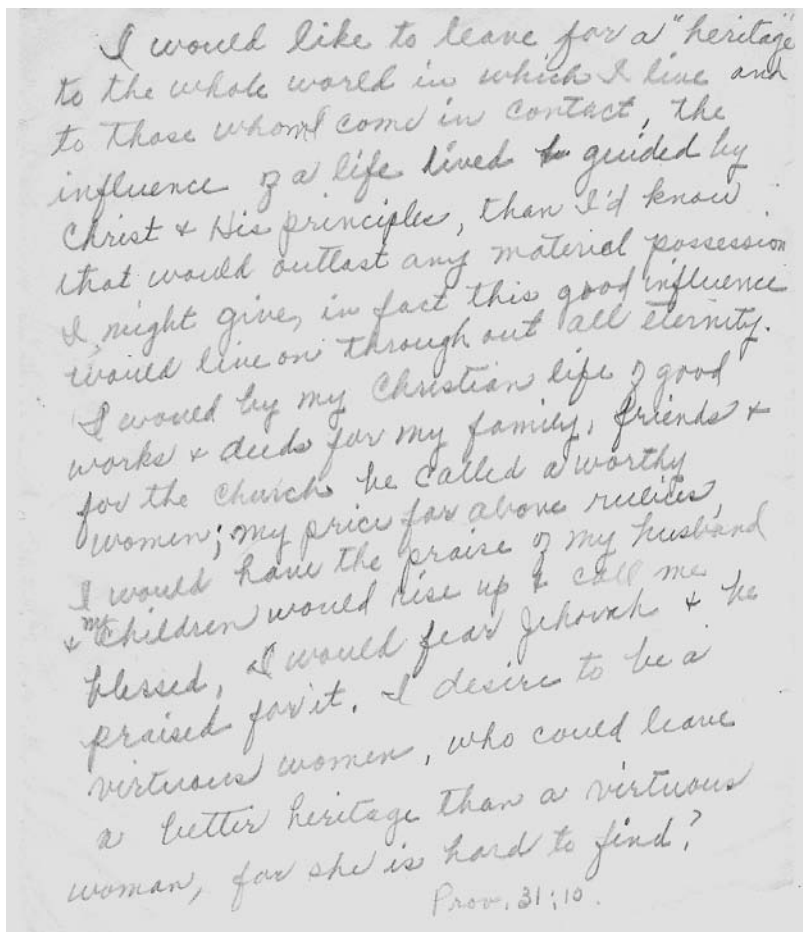
After giving up housekeeping in 2002, she often pitifully lamented, “I don’t have a home.” Oh how she longed for a home that no longer existed! Sometimes it was a home where her parents would be, and sometimes it was a home where J.B. still reigned as her life’s partner.

*Mama was no longer her real self in any other way,
But Mama was still Mama whenever she prayed.*

*And now that Mama has gone to sleep,
She has a home again and one that she can keep.*

*Now she is herself again, as she has reached the end of her way.
And all is well with her soul because Mama prayed.*

Below is her answer to a question in a Ladies' Bible Class study, probably in the late 1970's. The question was, "What would you want to leave as a heritage to your family, the church and the world?"



I would like to leave for a "heritage" to the whole world in which I live and to those whom I come in contact, the influence of a life lived & guided by Christ & His principles, than I'd know that would outlast any material possession I might give, in fact this good influence would live on through out all eternity. I would by my Christian life & good works & deeds for my family, friends & for the church be called a worthy woman; my price far above rubies I would have the praise of my husband & children would rise up & call me blessed, I would fear Jehovah & be praised for it. I desire to be a virtuous woman, who could leave a better heritage than a virtuous woman, for she is hard to find?
Prov. 31:10.

Mary's 90th Birthday



Gaither Granddaughters
Shelley (Gaither) Mincey,
Mary Allison (Pitchford) Epperson,
Robin (Williams) Nelson, Lana (Sullivan) Beard



Gaither Daughters
Sandra, Ruby, Patricia, Mary Frances

The Gaither Family Today... Our Traditions



The Family of J.B. & Mary Gaither
May 19, 2006

This photo was made at Hartsville Pike Church of Christ where we were served lunch after Mama's funeral. At the time of Mama's passing, the family numbered fifty-eight, and everyone was present. Since then, an additional birth and two marriages have brought the number in our family in 2008 up to sixty-one, with yet another great grandchild due in 2009.

Until recently, it has always been our family's tradition to get together during the Christmas holidays. When my siblings and I were growing up, and for years afterwards, our gathering began on Christmas Eve with the opening of gifts. The next morning, those who still believed and had been good received something from Santa. Santa never wrapped the gifts he brought to us. He just placed them around the

hearth under our stockings. Our stockings were more exciting to us than they would be to modern day children! We usually got an orange, a tangerine, an apple, a big peppermint stick, some crème drops, English walnuts and Brazil nuts. Those were the good ole days!

Our Christmas table was always set with simple beauty and Mama's best china. She loved to set an appealing table, and there are those, besides us, that remember that about her. I never recall her training us girls to set a pretty table, but interestingly enough, we all love to do that. It is a trait we just picked up on, and with us, it is a given.

At home, our Christmas meal always consisted of turkey and dressing with giblet gravy and several other wonderful dishes from the best cook in the world, our mother! Of course, as my sisters and I learned to cook and were married, we furnished a part of the meal to help her out. For many years now, the five of us kids have taken turns being in charge. We assign various dishes to *all* who are coming, so each has a part in the meal.

One dish that was present at every Christmas meal was Daddy's "ambrosia." For those readers who have never heard of ambrosia, it is a fruit salad made with oranges and coconut. Daddy would work diligently, not only at shredding the fresh coconut, but also at peeling the oranges and skinning each segment before he cut them into bite size pieces. In my memory, I can still see him, sleeves rolled up, with juice up to his wrists, sneaking a segment every once in a while to make sure they were good. He noted in his diary just a few years before his death that he made the ambrosia for the meal that day. Then he stated that he didn't recall ever having a Christmas meal without it! After his passing, Ruby took it upon herself to make sure we always have ambrosia, so as not to break a family tradition that seemed important to him. He also always carved the turkey, and he loved to sample it too, just to make sure it was tasty enough to serve the family!

Several years ago as the grandchildren began to have careers and families and in-laws, we started meeting about mid-December. Doing so provided a little breathing room closer to the holidays for the other sides of their families and allowing them to spend Christmas morning at home with their little ones if they chose.

Our get togethers are generally on Saturday for the noon meal and always include a time for singing and devotional. Those moments create more lasting impressions than the physical feast we share. All the young men are encouraged to lead a song or prayer and read scripture or make comments.

After the devotional, the children would open their gift, and then they would be off to play with their new “toy.” That left the adults some time for gifts too, usually indulging in the game of “Dirty Santa.” Much silliness and good times were always had on those occasions.

Because of the growth in number, several years ago we began to meet in the fellowship hall at the Walnut Street Church of Christ in Dickson. That congregation is where Ruby and Jim and their family have worshiped for many years and is a convenient location for most of the family.

The last two years since Mama died, we have met in the fall of the year at Ruby and Jim’s farm in Dickson. Some of us miss the holiday gathering, but when the holidays come, it is one less event to fit into our busy schedules. That is especially true now that some of the great-grandchildren are old enough to have jobs and their own social lives!

We are still making new traditions, discovering ways to make our times together special without the holidays (even without the turkey...but not without the ambrosia!) The more than twenty in our family who are school age and under, love having the “great outdoors” to run and play with their cousins. The openness of the

farm welcomes the majority of the sixty-one who are able to attend and offers many benefits as long as the weather cooperates.

In her last years, Mama commented that she was afraid that after she was gone, we would discontinue the annual get together. We assured her she had nothing to worry about as long as the five of us kids are around. It is our hope that even *our* eventual absence will not allow the family gatherings to cease.

The last few years we have had a slideshow that runs while we are together. It displays photos of our Christmases from as far back as 1950, and it grows each year. We are now adding our fall gathering pictures. It's a great way to reminisce when we're together, viewing hundreds of precious memories of days gone by.



The Gaither Christmas Gathering 1972
Back: Patricia, Ruby, John B., Sandra
Front: Mary Frances, JB, Mary

Most of the pictures shown on the following pages were made after Mama's funeral. It has been the only occasion in several years where we were all able to be together at once. Our parents' presence is still with us in nearly every conversation, and our wonderful memories of them creep into every gathering.



Frances' Family - May 2006

Bill & (Mary) Frances Jones, center

Left Side: Son, Randy & Beth Sullivan and sons, Taylor & Nathan

Right Side: Daughter, Lana & Brent Beard and children, Kellen & Kendra

Bill & Frances Jones

Jackson, TN

Randy & Beth Sullivan

Mayfield, KY

Brent & Lana Beard

Centerville, TN



Patricia's Family - May 2006

Sitting on Pew: Patricia & son, Cullen

Left of Patricia: Son, John Jeffrey ("Jeff") & Lisa Green, with son Lee Daniels standing at right, daughter, Mary Katlyn, sitting right front

At Left: Son, Lionel Gaither Green & wife, Karen with son, Cole and daughter Baylee sitting center front

Picture at right: Lee Daniels & new wife, Kelly

Patricia Green & Cullen
Portland, TN

Jeff & Lisa Green
Portland, TN

Lionel & Karen Green
Gallatin, TN



Lee & Kelly Daniels
Castalian Springs, TN



Ruby's Family - May 2006

Center: Ruby & Jim Williams

Standing back left: Daughter, Robin Nelson, and sons Dan & Brantley, seated wearing ties

Standing Back Center: Son, Ted & Sharon Williams, sons Caleb, middle row, Jacob & Enoch, front row wearing Kaki pants

Standing at Right: Son, Troy & Traci Williams, children seated Houston & Katie

All of the Williams' family resides in Dickson, TN



John B's Family - May 2006

Seated: John B. & Connie

Standing at Left: Son, Shane & Amber Gaither, children Zane, front row left, Keelye (right of Connie) & Peyton (left of Connie)

Standing at Right: Daughter, Shelley & Buster Mincey and children at right: Cody, Hunter (older boy front step), Tyler (to right of Hunter) & Preston (standing front)

Standing behind Connie: Son, John B. Gaither, III (Trey)

John B. & Connie Gaither & Trey - Gallatin, TN

Shane & Amber Gaither - Santa Rosa Beach, FL

Buster & Shelley Mincey - Portland, TN



Sandra's Family – May 2008

Back row left to right:

Russell, Allison & Brynlee Epperson, Alan & Tiffany Pitchford,
Kendra & Landon Pitchford

Front row: Dave holding Caden Epperson, Sandra, Landon's
children Camille & Bryson

Dave & Sandra Pitchford - Mountain Home, AR

Russell & Allison Epperson - Henderson, TN

Landon & Kendra Pitchford - Mountain Home, AR

Alan & Tiffany Pitchford - Chattanooga, TN



Gaither Family
Fall Gathering
2007



Part of the crowd during
our devotional time



All ages enjoyed
horse drawn wagon
rides over
Jim & Ruby's farm in
Dickson, TN.



Lasting Influence on the Gaither Family...

Like ripples in the water, his influence is ever expanding in the family members of his descendants.

Each child, grandchild, their spouses and the older great grandchildren were given the opportunity to express their thoughts on the influence that Daddy has had on our family. Since most of the sixty-one members of our family never knew him, it seems interesting to learn how they have been impressed by his life.

From Mary Frances (Gaither) Sullivan Jones, Daughter

When I think of my daddy, I have many fond memories. He was a great human being, a good citizen and a wonderful friend. He was unique in that he was truly a spiritual man. He never cared for worldly things, except what it took to live here temporarily. He grew up on a farm enjoying animals and growing food. He loved nature and people, no matter how poor, rich, "down on their luck," or different they were. His compassion was for the "underdog," the friendless and the afflicted.

Daddy's main interests were preaching the gospel and doing good for his family and others, in that order. He preached every opportunity he could create and was always eager to hear others proclaim the Word. He never took a vacation. We did go on two family vacations, both of which "he took us to work with him." He was still employed full time at age seventy-nine when he died.

My daddy was many things to many people. We shared him with others who needed him. He had a great influence on everyone who knew him. This is why his family celebrates his life. Like Jesus, he went about teaching and doing good.

From Bill Jones, Son-In-Law

Husband to Frances

In April 2005, I married Mary Frances Gaither Sullivan. During our marriage I have been privileged to know her mother and family. Frances has referred to her father many times, and I can see he had a great influence, not only

on her, but the whole family. Her mother was such a sweet lady, and I enjoyed her so much. Brother Gaither's family has such close ties, as Christians should have. It's a pleasure being a part of the Gaither family.

From Randy Sullivan, Grandson

Son of Frances and the late Victor Sullivan

(Age 16 when JB passed away)

I remember going to their house in Bells every summer and having HaHa take us kids around as he would run errands and then head to the church for his daily routine. I would play inside the church building while he would work. We would then walk home together in the evenings, and would often sit and play Chinese Checkers or Dominos with he and Mommo. He would even come around from time to time when we would be working on puzzles and offer his assistance with those "hard to find" pieces. I also enjoyed going out behind the house in Bells to the infamous "clock house". I didn't get to spend a whole lot of time in there due to the fact that I couldn't keep my hands to myself, and he got tired of telling me not to touch every clock. He would eventually tell me to go somewhere else if I wanted to play with things!

As many days as I spent with him and Mommo, from the holidays, to family reunions, to church functions, I never saw him or Mommo mad, except for once. He and Mommo had taken me and Lana into town for a few errands and we stopped at a Cotton gin there in Bells. Both he and Mommo got out and went inside for a minute. We were told to stay in the car. Lana and I decided to hide in the floorboard of the car under a blanket that was in the back seat. When Mommo and HaHa returned, they could not find us. After much calling and looking for us, they were starting to panic so we revealed ourselves, thinking we had hid pretty good and pulled off a good joke. Neither of them thought is was as funny as we did!! Needless to say, we had trouble sitting; we were in trouble for quite some time, and we never hid from them again, or at least I didn't!

From Lana (Sullivan) Beard, Granddaughter

Daughter of Frances and the late Victor Sullivan

(Age 13 when JB passed away)

I remember my maternal grandfather for many things. The earliest memory I have involves him laughing, smiling and poking my belly while saying "popping fresh", just like the Pillsbury Dough Boy. At some point one of my cousins even

gave him a "Dough Boy" doll. I remember going and staying in Bells with him and Mommo for a week in the summer during the church VBS. This was always a busy week and they would invite some little girl my age from church to come spend the afternoons with me. At the house in Bells, I can still in my mind see the black cat clock that hung on the kitchen wall and the drawer full of toys in the room just off of the kitchen. Every hour (and every half hour for that matter) the whole house would ring with clocks chiming. I often wonder how I ever slept with all that noise! At nights during the summer while I was there, Mommo would crush ice for Ha-Ha and me for our drinks. This was long before everybody had ice crushers and I thought that was so special. There was a pecan tree in the back yard near the clock house (which had four o'clock flowers in front of it). Since my dad had a pecan pie business, I always thought it nice of my grandfather to grow pecans for him. I was very disappointed to later learn that my dad never got pecans that way.

When I was about 8 years old, Ha-Ha and Mommo moved to Fayetteville. I thought this might as well be Alaska. I was surprised to still get to go to VBS in the summers and still see them very often. I was baptized by Ha-Ha while he lived in Fayetteville, actually while the whole family was gathered for his 50 years of preaching anniversary. I remember finding out that Ha-Ha had a heart attack and was in Nashville in intensive care. When he finally recovered, I remember that he was on a strict diet and how much weight he lost. To me he really looked so different, but his fun personality was just the same.

When he died I was in seventh grade. At the funeral I remember thinking I don't think I had ever seen so many flowers in my life. There were arrangements sitting everywhere and had been sent from people from all over. How could one small town preacher have touched the lives of so many people?

Now that I am in my 40's, I realize that he is still touching people's lives. His love of singing has come through in my son who is 14 and loves to lead singing at church. I often think of how his great-grandfather would be so proud!

From Patricia (Gaither) Green, Daughter

Being the second daughter of J.B. Gaither, I was named Patricia. I was born in Gainesboro, Tennessee, the favorite town my Daddy had lived and loved.

I can remember, as a child, when we all went shopping, Daddy would keep up with me. As we walked along, he always held the back of my neck. If we found a picture making machine, Daddy would put me in the seat, deposit the quarter, and we would get four pictures of me to surprise Mama.

I went with him to church a lot when he was holding meetings. Some were in the country which I really liked. We would go early to a member's house for supper, and the meals were always good! Most of all, I liked to visit the out house which was always very interesting to me. I especially liked the layout, the wasps, Sears Catalog, how many seats there were and the size!

As I grew older, Daddy taught me, not only spiritual things, but things we were both interested in. One day while he was plowing the garden with a mule, I got to do the same, all by myself. I was so proud.

Daddy baptized me when I was a teenager, while he was preaching at the Nashville Road Church in Gallatin.

He helped all his children with our school lessons. Music was also very important to Daddy, not only to play, but to learn the basics of music and be able to sing!

Daddy also taught me important things about cars like where to check the oil, battery, water and most of all, how to change a tire! The tire changing lesson was good, as I have tried my luck three times while traveling, and I did just fine! I could hear Daddy giving me the instructions as I assembled the jack.

My husband-to-be, Sam Green, was also baptized by Daddy several months before he married us. We had three sons, and Daddy baptized all of them.

He always said that the best thing a man can do for his children is to love their mother! He practiced that saying, as he was always kind and respectful to Mama and had her on a pedestal. Mama showed her love also for Daddy in many ways.

Daddy was really a family man and looked forward to Christmas each year, as this was a time when all the family was together to eat and visit. We always had a devotional where the young boys stood up and either led a song or read from the Bible. Daddy said one time he wished we could all live together in one building.

As a mother, myself, I really realize what my home life meant and how much my Daddy and Mama tried to make it good for all of us. Even though Daddy is gone, the love and respect I had for him is still in my heart and mind and always will be. I love you Daddy.

Cullen Green, Grandson

Son of Patricia & the late Sam Green

(Age 22 when JB passed away)

(Written by Patricia)

On May 29, 1957, I, Samuel "Cullen" Green, Jr. was the first grandchild born into the Gaither family. My granddaddy, J.B. Gaither, was really proud of me. Everywhere he went, he told them of his new and first grandchild, and they rejoiced with him.

As time went on, Granddaddy would rock and sing to me! Then I discovered a little New Testament in his shirt pocket. Granddaddy would let me look at it, showing me the little picture of Jesus in the front. Soon he was reading the twenty-third Psalm to me and teaching me to read it myself! I received a little Testament of my own and was able to find Psalms and read myself. Granddaddy was proud. I carried my Testament everywhere I went, like he did, showing what my granddaddy had taught me.

I was always glad to see Granddaddy, as he always showed interest in me! When we went to church, he would always hold me at the back after services, so I could shake hands with the congregation. When I got too big and too heavy to hold, I stood beside him, holding round his leg with one hand while I shook hands with the other hand.

As I grew older in my teens, Granddaddy baptized me. We continued to read Psalms twenty-three when we were together. I pretended I was a preacher, because I wanted to be like my Granddaddy. I even had a little pulpit in my room that I used to preach at home.

As time went on, Granddaddy passed away. When I heard, I didn't cry, but only said that he had gone to be with Jesus. When we went to the church house, where Granddaddy laid, all of the family was crying and hugging. I took my little

Testament out and read the twenty-third Psalm to my granddaddy, laying there with his hands folded in rest.

From John Jeffrey Green, Grandson

Son of Patricia & the late Sam Green

(Age 20 when JB passed away)

My memories of Granddaddy started in the early 1960's when Granddaddy and Mommo lived on West Main Street in Gallatin. Granddaddy preached for the Number One congregation now called Nashville Road. They had a large house with a building in the back yard where Granddaddy repaired clocks. Clocks of every style, size, age and value filled the clock house.

Granddaddy preached weekdays at noon live on WHIN radio. I got to go with him a few times and it was a thrill to see how everything worked.

Then in the late 60's Granddaddy and Mommo moved to Bells, TN to work with the Bells Church of Christ. I remember visiting in the summers when it was V.B.S. time. Mommo was the teacher of my age group on several occasions.

One summer Granddaddy was holding a tent meeting out in the country. It's the only tent meeting I've ever been to and it was a hot night and large crowd.

The Bells church is where Cullen and I were baptized by Granddaddy. I'll never forget the huge pecan tree in their back yard. The tree was so huge that it draped over into the neighbors' yards on two sides.

In the 70's Granddaddy and Mommo moved to Fayetteville, TN to work with the Liberty congregation. I remember going with Granddaddy and a group from church to sing at a nursing home.

The church at Liberty was where Granddaddy celebrated his 50th year of preaching the Gospel. It was a great event for Granddaddy, Mommo, and the whole family. The work at Liberty has a lot of good memories but would be Granddaddy's last preaching job.

I was 20 years old when Granddaddy passed away. I knew at the time that we had lost a loving and caring Granddaddy. The church had lost a great worker and faithful Christian.

I didn't realize at 20 years old how many lives that he had touched in such a positive way. Over the last 28 years, I've had people tell me the impact J.B. Gaither made on their life. Thru his preaching, teaching, baptizing, meetings, visiting the sick, funerals and weddings. People I know and even strangers have heart warming stories of Granddaddy's love and compassion.

Because time rolls on, those who knew Granddaddy are slowly fading away. It doesn't happen as often as it did in the past, but just a few months ago at a singing, an older couple came up to me and said, "Are you J.B. Gaither's grandson?" I was very proud to say, "Yes. I am."

My memories of J.B. Gaither (Granddaddy) and Mary Gaither (Mommo) are treasures money can't buy. I give thanks for them, for they strengthen me in Christian walk daily.

From Mary Katlyn Green, Great-Granddaughter

Granddaughter of Patricia & the late Sam Green

Daughter of Jeff & Lisa Green

(Born 8 years after JB passed away)

I proudly wear the name Mary Katlyn Green because it is in honor of my great-grandparents. The Mary in my name reminds me daily of Mary C. Gaither, better known to me as Mommo. It reminds me of her life, her example and her respectable reputation. Never an unkind word or a good deed left undone, Mommo was a Godly woman – in every sense of the word. Her dedication to all she loved is impressed upon me time and time again as I hear the stories and think of the time she took to make all her generations of children clothing, dolls, Christmas ornaments, picture books, coin collections, and anything she knew they had an interest in.

As a small child I jumped at every chance to go to Jackson to see Mommo, when she lived next door to Aunt Frances. Grumpsie (my grandmother, Patricia

Gaither Green) would take me every time she could to go spend a weekend with Mommo. I think back and so many scenes come to my mind. I see Mommo sitting at the old piano playing “Beautiful Star of Bethlehem” with me and Grumpsie singing at the top of our lungs one minute, and then halting so we could hear Mommo sing.

I still giggle like the little girl I was to think of laying in Mommo’s bed and her saying, “Shhh...be careful not to wake my baby”, and looking over to see a doll in a rocker looking back smiling. I always loved to look through Mommo’s picture books, because there were so many pictures of the entire family. There were hundreds. But I was fascinated to see her devotion not only to the church, but to her children, and her loved husband.

All of my life, I have been guided by a legacy of a man that I have never met face to face. John Burgess Gaither is a legend in my mind. He left this world just short of a decade before I was born into it. Though I never knew him, I feel like he has been by my side all these years. His example is a shadow that I can see in everyone around me, especially in my family. Rarely a day passes when Grumpsie, or my daddy (John. J Green) does not say: ‘Granddaddy would have’, ‘Granddaddy used to say:’ or ‘Granddaddy taught me that...’

I will never forget all the time I spent with Grumpsie and how everything she did, she did the best she could do because: ‘ my daddy used to say that it’s not worth doing if you’re not gonna do it right’. That line struck me then, and is an encourager to me even now. I see the same traits often in my daddy.

Many times, my daddy will be leading the congregation’s singing, and Grumpsie will tell me how much he looks, acts, and has the mannerisms of J.B. Gaither. I am in awe at how one man shaped the lives of so many different people in not only his family, but in the church and the community as well. I know that my daddy looked up to his granddaddy very much and wants to pattern his life around the things he taught. Thinking how much I look up to my own daddy, and what a hero he has been and is in my life, I cannot help to think what a man this J. B. Gaither must have been to have my daddy look up to him like he does. Every time I see my daddy open his Bible, I am reminded of the foundation I have and

how I'm blessed, because I see the picture of Granddaddy Gaither made into the inside cover of my daddy's Bible.

Older generations are so impressed to see that the Gaither family is still faithful in the Lord's church, even down to great-grandchildren. This being both Dan (my cousin, Grandson of Ruby Gaither Williams) and my second year at Freed-Hardeman University, I have built a close relationship with many people who knew our granddaddy. I have grown close to Mr. Ben Flatt in my time at college, and I could listen to him for hours tell about Granddaddy's sermons and his light temperament. He told me a story once about how Granddaddy always seemed to lay his hat upside down when he would take it off. Just in a joking manner, Mr. Flatt asked him what the reason for that was. Chuckling, he told me that Granddaddy said if anyone wanted to tip him they could just throw it in the hat, and they wouldn't have to turn it over. I thought to myself that was exactly something my daddy would do.

I know that Granddaddy was instrumental in starting the Sumner County Singings. When Daddy and I are there, I always look for John Brasel. As a younger man, he led singing for many of the gospel meetings that Granddaddy Gaither held. He tells me stories without end about singing and being around my entire family. I love to hear him tell my daddy how much of Granddaddy he sees in him and how proud of him Granddaddy would be. Every time we see Mr. John, he tells everybody in the room: 'That's Jeff Green, he's J.B.'s grandson, and he's got a set of pipes like those Gaithers too.' He tells me all the time that I have that love to sing like the Gaithers, and it never fails he will reprimand me for singing on the tenor line...I can hear him saying: 'Girl you don't have to sing tenor. Get up there on that Soprano line, you got it! You got it honest – sing up there like that Mary Campbell Gaither! You got it from her girl use it!'...No one has ever paid me a higher compliment.

I see traits of granddaddy in so many people in our family. I see his intellect every time I talk to Aunt Frances. I see his humorous side in Grumpsie. I see his willingness to work in Aunt Ruby. I see his compassion and tender heart in John B. And I see his family values in Aunt Sandra. All these traits of the man I never knew have been passed down, and for that, I am grateful. Today, I see his leadership in my daddy and Ted. I see his light jovial side in Lionel and Troy. I

see Lana passing on her love for the church to Kellen; he could lead singing before he could tie his shoes! And I see initiative and his zealous spirit in Robin. All of these people impact my life because of the impact that J.B. Gaither had on them.

Every thing I stand for, everything I truly value, and the wonderful Christian life I claim I owe to two people, J.B. and Mary C. Gaither, my foundation. For that I am grateful, and I cannot wait to sing with them one day.

From Lionel Gaither Green, Grandson

Son of Patricia & the late Sam Green

(Age 15 when JB passed away)

My fondest memories of Granddaddy would be the years they lived in Bells, TN, when I was around ten years old. Staying with them was the biggest deal for me because he had the clock house out back, and I loved to take things apart and was amazed at all of the tools and gadgets that could be monkeyed with. But as I remember, I never disassembled anything and never misplaced any of his tools or lost any parts. I was watching him work on clocks most of the time and remember the patience he had. Even if something wouldn't work, he just fixed it and would go on singing or talking to God. That's what I would think as he quoted some scriptures or sang part of a song as he worked.

When I went to a few black funerals with him, he delivered stories about the men that would send chills down your spine about that person and how he knew him and his family.

Granddaddy baptized my brothers, a wide range of others and even myself at eleven years of age. He looked up at me most of the time that we were together because there was a giant pecan tree in his back yard, and I spent a lot of time up there. I could see for miles around and also him at the bottom of the tree asking me firmly to come down.

I still ask all the older preachers that visit our church if they know J.B. Gaither. More than not, I get the reply, "He married me" or "He baptized me," and when I get one of those amazing replies, it makes me proud of who I am and proud of the life that Mommo and Granddaddy lived and what they stood for.

Thirty-five years later, I'm working for a man in another city and doing a job for his cousin laying hardwood. His cousin is an older woman, and she is sitting there watching us work when she asked what my name was. I said, "Lionel Green," and she said, "What's your mother's name", and I tell her "Patricia Gaither Green." Her eyes lit up, and she said, "Was Gaither her maiden name", and I tell her "Yes." She tells me that my granddaddy baptized her in a river in Whitehouse, a hundred miles away when she was a little girl, and "My mom and your mom baptized chickens in the back yard." Check with Patricia about that story.

Then the man that I was there with to do repairs, tells me of a preacher that preached when he was a little boy that went home with them after church to eat lunch and that he had the first glow-in-the-dark-watch. On the way back to church, it was glowing, and he was amazed. That was also my granddaddy, J.B. Gaither.

It's such a small world, and this man covered it with a lot of love and compassion.

From Ruby (Gaither) Williams, Daughter

I REMEMBER MY DAD--- J.B. Gaither (written in 1980) Tuesday, May 20, 1980 "My watch stopped...It's not the battery." These were among the penned words on the last page of J.B. Gaither's diary. (He had kept a diary for nearly fifty years.) We were reminded of the words of the song referring to a grandfather's clock, "But it stopped short, never to run again, when the old man died." Clocks were his hobby, and it seemed ironic that the song should fit so perfectly.

I REMEMBER MY DAD--for his many Christ like qualities and characteristics. It has always been easy for his children to understand the "God the Father" concept. Not only was he the epitome of a father at home, but he was a father to vast numbers of people. As he lay in state, so many who came by, through their tears proclaimed, "He was just like a daddy to me!" Some he had brought into our home only for a night, some for several nights. They came from

the places that he was preaching at the time. Since there were five of us children, with an age spread of fifteen years; there was always one of us close to the age of most any child that he could persuade to come home with him. After one visit, they would be waiting for another invitation when he was back through their area.

In contrast to his feelings for children, he also had feelings for the elderly. He and Mother took in Mother's parents to live with us, when their health prevented them from taking care of themselves. They would go far and near to church services and to hear Daddy preach the gospel, when they were not able to do much else. My grandfather lived with us nearly eighteen years before his death, after which Daddy remarked that Grandpa was his best friend, his most avid supporter, and his most respected critic. Those who knew my grandfather knew that the feelings were mutual.

The fact cannot be overlooked that Daddy loved our family get-togethers. These last years of his life, he seemed to thrive on all twenty-five of us getting together. He would plan and look forward to such an occasion for weeks ahead. Then afterwards, he was sure that was the best time yet. We all took turns having these gatherings in the different homes the past few years. We had the Christmas get-togethers on the weekend, this way we all had the opportunity of worshipping together, and with our respective home congregations. To have all of his physical family together with a part of his spiritual family in the meeting place to worship with one accord with the Lord, and with each other, seemed to be a bit of heaven on earth for Daddy. He was truly a lover of both his physical family and his spiritual family. This is just one of the characteristics that surely makes him as adaptable in his new heavenly home as he was in his old earthly home.

I REMEMBER MY DAD---for his tremendous generosity and his ambition, so it seemed, to share. His first desire was to share the truth and goodness of the Lord. But it didn't stop there. I can remember occasions where he brought people in to be fed who were total strangers. Of course, it seemed that hardly a day went by that we didn't have someone extra for at least one meal, and these were friends! But more than once, Daddy brought hitchhikers home with him after his evening preaching appointments, fed them and put them up for the night. This was, even in that day, frightening to half grown children, who were convinced that Daddy had brought home criminals to sleep in our house! Our home was located on a

main highway, and at the back of our property was a railroad track. There was a nameplate at the highway advertising that a minister lived there. Therefore, we had lots of hobo and tramp traffic, especially during the summer months. We had a picnic table in the backyard where strangers ate more often than we did.

I REMEMBER MY DAD--as a true gentleman. As long as he lived, he always opened the car door for Mother. This fall (1980) they would have celebrated fifty years of married life, but when it came to manners and consideration, the honeymoon was never over.

I REMEMBER MY DAD--for his humorous stories. He always was full of himself, as the saying goes. Every situation reminded him of some funny tale. Fifty four years of preaching had afforded him hundreds of experiences with just as many people, and most of his funny tales were actual experiences.

He truly enjoyed mealtime, and the greater excitement, and the bigger the crowd, the more he enjoyed it. There must be hundreds of people that have entertained him and some of his family in their homes for a meal. Up until a couple of years ago, I'd never known him to cull anything that had been prepared for him, though sometimes he later wished he had. Like the time he was enjoying a big meal with a family, and after eating, he moved his chair back to relax and enjoy the conversation. From this viewpoint, he could see a cabinet door ajar in the kitchen, and the water bugs were doing relays on the inside of that door. (This was one of his funny stories.) But he always considered it a high compliment to be invited out to eat. Most years when we were growing up, he averaged fourteen to sixteen meetings a summer. These meetings, unlike those of today, lasted at least eight days, lots were ten days, and that involved a lot of eating invitations! Because of the largeness of our family, the care of our elderly grandparents, and the smaller children, Mother did not try to keep Daddy's pace of going. Therefore, lots of times I can remember going with him when it was just him and me. Perhaps this fulfilled my need to be with him when I could be the only child. Through this experience, this sticks in my mind as the greatest of times. Certainly this has influenced me to love preachers of sound doctrine; to thrill at having them and their families in my home now for a meal, in order for my children to have a chance at this blessing, for it truly is a blessing.

I REMEMBER MY DAD--as a man of prayer. He said recently, "I've heard lots of people complain of insomnia and regard it as some sort of curse. Why I've put together some of my best sermons in the middle of the night when it seemed no one was awake but me and the Lord. I've talked to the Lord, I've meditated, I've recited scripture, and this type of medicine for insomnia never left me tired and draggy the next morning." Yes, he was a man of prayer, and many, many lives have been affected by his prayers and pleas to the Lord.

I REMEMBER MY DAD --as one who loved to sing and loved good music. This fact can best be seen by his file of taped recordings. Included in these are recordings of him and Mother singing in homemade quartets, small group singings of those invited into their home; county wide singings; with different leaders (Daddy actually started these monthly singings and influenced many other counties to start one.) All of his children were given music lessons. None advanced that talent very much, and perhaps that was somewhat a disappointment to him. He truly enjoyed listening to Mother play the piano. Tapes of her playing were included in his recordings, so that he might enjoy it even as he traveled in his car.

I REMEMBER MY DAD--as one who felt as the Psalmist, who said, "I was glad when they said unto me, let us go into the house of the Lord." Truly he did love to go to the Lord's house, and did go far and near at every opportunity. He never tried to shirk a service because he was not the speaker. He loved men of truth and hungered to hear the truths they preached. Occasionally, I've seen him squirm in his seat because the preacher would spend fifteen or twenty minutes on reminiscing or telling jokes or tales before he ever mentioned the "Good News" of Jesus Christ. Daddy often said the pulpit was for preaching, and his first words when he got up to preach would be the reading of the passages for the sermon that followed. The highest compliment he could receive would be to be told that he was an old fashioned preacher! Most preachers are expected to excel in some area, but I never knew of any phase of the Lord's work that he did not love to do.

Besides the things already mentioned, he loved: to visit the sick (and did so almost daily); to cheer the shut-ins, both those at home and in the nursing homes; to visit and help the handicapped; to comfort the bereaved (He always went a few hours before a funeral service he had been called upon to hold in order to talk to or befriend the members of the family, and comfort the elderly kin). In recent years he

mentioned the fact that there just weren't any old people anymore! For in his talking with them, he found that the old people were younger than he was! That didn't bother him, he said he loved every year of his life, was tickled to tell his age, for then he got to hear about how much younger he looked. He was a rare folk because for as many years as I can remember, he always gave his age as "My next birthday, I'll be ____." He got to see his 79th birthday just three weeks before his death, but he was already looking forward to living another year and seeing his 80th! And why not? For as Paul summed up his life in II Timothy 4:6-8, Daddy could truthfully make the same statements. He had led untold numbers directly to Christ, he had influenced countless others to stay on the straight and narrow, he had covered many with an umbrella of prayer. So it is no wonder to us, his family, why we did not feel much sadness at his passing. At that time, it seemed as though he had just left for another meeting, and truly he had. He had looked forward to and planned for that last earthly gathering also. It was THE family gathering of all our family gatherings. His request for congregational singing of uplifting hymns yielded some of the best singing that earthly ears could hear. A beautiful portrait was painted by his idea of lying down in his death beside two of the pulpits that symbolized his service to the Lord in his lifetime. He could not have picked pallbearers anywhere who respected and loved him more than the ones he selected--his grandsons--to carry his "old useless body" to its grave. All of these plans and requests, including those he named to speak and the beautiful tributes they paid, made it all seem so perfect. It certainly can be summed up, that he reached his goal in life and in death!

As the sum total of all of these memories flash before those who knew him best, another scripture comes to mind, "He being dead, yet speaketh." Hebrews 11:4 OUR goal now has to be to follow his great example of following the footprints of Jesus all the days of our lives!

NOTE-- As I try to write this remembrance of my dad, I find that the more I write, the more I remember! I cannot write it all down, but I can say, "Thanks be to God for the precious blessing of memory!" Let it be a reminder to us who are parents, that our lives are branded into the minds of our children, and no matter how they react to our teachings, they cannot rid themselves of it. Make it a pleasant memory, but of much more importance, make yourself a Godly memory in the minds of your family and friends. (HINT) You cannot fake Godliness to

*God--you cannot to your children either! What kind of a heritage will you leave?
I will always remember my dad! Such precious memories.*

From Jim Williams, Son-In-Law

Husband of Ruby

My first impression of J.B. Gaither was the way he answered the home phone. When I would call for Ruby, instead of the usual "Hello," he would answer, in what seemed like a very firm tone, "Gaither"! I learned to anticipate my next line, so as not to freeze-up when he answered.

Another impression was made when I wanted to ask him some Biblical questions after listening to several months of his preaching. I was not a member at that time, but his preaching had raised a lot of questions in my mind. The questions were pretty typical of a new learner:

1. *"When did the church begin?" I asked, to which he immediately quoted chapter and verse while I followed along with the reading.*
2. *"Why do you partake of the Lord's Supper weekly?" and again chapter and verse from what the Lord had commanded.*
3. *"Why is there no instrumental music?" Again he took me to the Word, not to what he thought.*
4. *"How did the church select its name?" Same source - the Bible.*

I was very impressed that there were no man made creeds, only what commandments and examples were to be found in the scriptures. He took very seriously the fact that God had given all authority to Jesus, and that therefore, that is where we must also go for our authority of the way we're to find our salvation. That put the responsibility of knowing or studying that Word for myself. Not too long after that, I was baptized into the Lord's church by brother Gaither.

He was a wonderful role model for those who had any contact with him, both as a follower of God and a family man. I felt especially fortunate to be close to him as a son-in-law. The "Gaither!" no longer startled me when I saw daily how loving and caring he was to his family in particular, but also to others. God was

number one in his life, and he had chosen a suitable mate that worked along side of him (though often in the background).

When his family got together, you could tell how excited he was to have them around him, enjoying the pleasure of each one. Those visits to his home usually included an overnight stay so we could worship together the next day. He enjoyed showing us off, particularly, the grandchildren, but our reward was getting to eat Mrs. Gaither's cooking and getting to hear him preach. I always enjoyed his sermons because they were from the Word of God, and all the main points were illustrated from the Bible. You knew the truth was going to be preached when he stepped into the pulpit.

The Gaithers raised five children. The four girls are all good cooks like their mother. They are all very close and see to it that even though their parents are no longer here, they still have all the family to get together each year. I have always hoped that my children would be that close to each other. It would make me as proud as brother Gaither was of his children.

I am thankful I have been a part of this family for some forty-seven plus years. Thanks to Mr. and Mrs. Gaither for giving me Ruby. Because of her and brother Gaither, I am a Christian today and have a Christian family. Thanks to J.B. Gaither for living a legacy that won't ever be forgotten.

From Robin (Williams) Nelson, Granddaughter

Daughter of Ruby and Jim Williams

(Age 18 when JB passed away)

The first granddaughter of J.B. Gaither is a special place to be. I have had the privilege of many years of memories, and in being one of his "firsts", obviously I lived a majority of my formative years in his physical presence. As a small child living in the Gallatin Gaither home for a time with my parents, I gave him his nickname "Ha-Ha" because each morning as I woke, he would enter the room and fondly say, "ha-ha-ha-ha-ha". That memory, shared with me often, became the story passed through the years as some of the other grandchildren referred to him as Ha-Ha. He baptized me when I was 10 years old and I remember his encouragement as I expressed my desire with words of the seriousness of my

commitment to the Lord. Watching him live life in the Lord has been a special memory in and of itself.

Spending weeks in the summer with my grandparents every year until I became a teen, has provided a plethora of memories and to try to pick specific ones has proved to be a greater task. In consideration of which to write I use the cliché coined by the generation of today “it’s ALL good!” The lessons learned from spending time with such God loving people are much easier to express. The Fruits of the Holy Spirit described in Galatians 5:22-25 came to my mind; these were evident in the lives of my grandparents, especially the man that “fed” so many the gospel of Christ. In loving, I remember his strong hug and always a kiss for me and I remember his love for the Word as each day at a specific time he read, studied, and gleaned from the Word in preparation for his lessons he so eloquently delivered. In joy, he hummed, whistled, and sang as he carried on his daily business of life, whether cooking in the kitchen, watering the flowers, or winding his many clocks. His peaceful humor was often a surprise as he rolled his laughs over the household, or when he surprisingly poked his finger in unsuspecting ribs and said “pop-in-fresh”. The kind gentle smile he shared with so many and the last time I remember seeing it at my High School Graduation just days before he left this world. He personified patience as he diligently carried out the Lord’s work, in visiting the sick and shut-ins, as well as taking me as a child. I remember being so ready to leave, as he listened quietly to stories and ailments of those we visited. I never recall any signs of anxiousness or hurriedness when he was about the work in which he was purposed. He was good and kind to people and humanity, I can not remember him ever raising his voice in anger or disgust, as he went on his way always looking for opportunities to serve others regardless of race, creed, or imperfections. He loved people and loved to listen to their stories. His greatest lesson he taught me and so many was exhibited by his faith. Faith that the Lord would take care and provide when and where and in His own time, was evident in his prayerful spirit. Strong, gentle, and patient are words that come to mind as I fondly remember my granddaddy.

I wish all of his grandchildren and great-grandchildren that were young when he passed could have spent time shadowing him. We keep him alive in our hearts by passing on his legacy and living so that we can see him again one day in His

kingdom. My live has been molded and greatly blessed by the man I called "Ha-Ha". I am thankful to God that I have been so richly blessed.

From Dan Nelson, Great-Grandson

Grandson of Ruby & Jim Williams
Son of Robin (Williams) and the late Dale Nelson
(Born 8 years after JB passed away)

Well, from what I have been told and, what is basically clear is, that J.B. Gaither was a true man of God and someone that I wish I could have met personally. I believe that because of him, he helped form the family that we are today- a loving, caring and most importantly, a Christian family.

From Ted Williams, Grandson

Son of Ruby and Jim Williams
(Age 15 when JB passed away)

GRANDDAD

*My granddad wasn't a regular guy,
I, nor anyone else, ever heard him lie.
He told it straight, as he was convicted
That the Word he studied never contradicted.*

*He never thought it was any big thing
To do his best in service to his King.
His discipline was known to those who saw,
His devotion to God and service to all.*

*His great preaching was loved by many, who heard
The Lord's message presented from His Holy Word.
With clarity his love was proclaimed and known
Throughout the brotherhood in a loving tone.*

*He married and loved a strong woman of God
Who supported and loved him in every kind of sod.
He gave her the praise and respect at every chance*

And for forty-nine years they jointly took God's stance.

*He took great pride in his family, every girl and boy,
He baptized many of us, which brought him much joy.
He taught us to love God by his example and speech,
He wanted all of us to target heaven to reach.*

*Granddad was not perfect in all he did,
But his love for God he never hid.
He was named after the disciple Jesus loved,
His heart followed the God who David served.*

*It was years after he died that I came to know
How my life was deeply blessed by my Granddad so.
The legacy he left wasn't financial wealth,
But a devotion to truth and spiritual health.*

*Because of him my heritage is precious as gold,
He pointed me to eternal life in all he told.
I look forward to the day I go to him with thanksgiving,
For loving God first and teaching righteous living.*

*In memory of John Burgess Gaither, minister of the gospel for over 50 years,
devoted husband and a wonderful granddad.*

From Troy Williams, Grandson

Son of Ruby and Jim Williams
(Age 8 when JB passed away)

I have many memories of HaHa.

1. *HaHa was at our house in Dickson Tennessee spending some time with us. It was a house that had a circular hallway system. You could leave the living room on the right hand side and go all the way around and enter on the left hand side. HaHa was sitting in the den. I liked to dress up as a cowboy and ride my stick horse around. My favorite show was the Long Ranger. I had a cowboy*

outfit, but I also had an Indian outfit because I liked Tonto. When HaHa was visiting I was riding around with my cowboy outfit and on the stick horse. HaHa mentioned how impressed he was with how well I rode that horse, but he also challenged me to find that Indian and get him. Back then all movies displayed cowboys and Indians. It was accepted as entertainment and not racist. When he told me to get that Indian I went out of the den on the right, got my Indian outfit, put it on, and entered the den on the left. I was dressed as an Indian, but on the same horse, and I said I was looking for that cowboy. HaHa said "he went that way," pointing to the right. I really tricked him and he did not know who I was. I went to the right and changed my outfit back into the cowboy. I entered the room again on the left. I told HaHa I was looking for that Indian. He encouraged me to keep after him and pointed to the right and said he went that way. Then I changed back into an Indian, and did the same thing. This happened until I got tired. To this day I am impressed on how I tricked him and he did not know that it was me who kept changing outfits. He put his arm around me on each time I came around. I knew that he loved and enjoyed talking to the cowboy and the Indian.

2. At HaHa's funeral I was 8 years old. I was having a tough time understanding the concept of death. This was the first person that I realized had died. I was trying to understand what was happening. I finally found the understanding that HaHa was not coming back. I remember the casket being open and I saw him there and was so scared. I cried out of fear of what happened to him and I saw my mama and daddy crying. That was the first time I saw them cry and I was scared. That whole time was a big learning experience for me. I was uneasy with all the crying. I was scared of death and scared I would die, or my mama and daddy would die. What would I do? I listened and observed everyone who came and talked about HaHa. I heard many great things about him. I only viewed him as HaHa. I did not realize he had helped so many people in his life. I wanted people to say that about me, but I did not want to die. I realized much when I heard the words of Uncle John B. Gaither talk about HaHa's life to someone in front of HaHa's casket. Uncle John B. said that HaHa loved his life, family, and service, which I knew HaHa did, but he (HaHa) said if he ever had the choice he would choose to die and go see God and leave all of his family rather than living. At the time that was a unique concept for me. I did not want to leave my momma and daddy. They were my security

and my life. Should I want to leave them? This event started my curiosity of understanding of preparing for death. I did not understand fully and I certainly did not want to die, but it did start my thinking. Now I think of Paul when he says "to live is Christ, and to die is gain." I did not understand the day HaHa died, but I understand it now.

From John B. Jr., Son

The spiritual stories of my father are many. While I know just how great he was in that respect, my memories are of other things that he and I were able to experience. In the summer, I had to go with my daddy when he held gospel meetings all over middle Tennessee and Kentucky. In the late 50's and early 60's, the visiting preacher would stay with church members instead of motels. At the time, I did not appreciate the fact that I didn't have summer time with my friends at home. As I have grown older, I am glad I have these memories. It seems that it was these trips that I really came to know who my daddy was. It was on these trips that I learned that my daddy could swim (in a creek). He could row a boat and shoot a gun. Once he rode a motor scooter to get some cows up. He would do handy man repairs to help people out. Daddy carried a burlap sack in his trunk to put opossums' in. He would stop the car and run after them. We ate and enjoyed them (then).

One night coming home, we came around a curve on a gravel back road. There on the side of the road, laid a man. Daddy stopped the car and got out to see about him. After a few minutes, Daddy got the man up and told him to go home. I later found out the man was drunk. And the memories go on and on.

It didn't matter what your social status in life was. You had a seat at his table, a bed if you needed it, his last dollar. And you always got his prayer whether you asked for it or not.

Daddy's riches were not in earthly possessions, but he had an abundance of richness in his love for his God, his family and his work. Often, he would hold meetings and receive a country ham or sack of sausage for his pay. Or maybe a trunk load of fresh vegetables. It made him no difference. He would go knowing he was not to receive any money.

If there was ever a father that gave his son a spotless name, it was J. B. Gaither, Sr. and I, John B. Gaither, Jr. accept it.

From Marshal Edward (“Buster”) Mincey

Grandson-In-Law

Husband of Shelley (Gaither) Mincey

Married into Gaither family 16 years after JB’s death

J.B. Gaither must have been some kind of man to have influenced his family the way he did. At every Gaither get together he has been present in one form or another from a memory someone has of him that they share, or the way they always include prayer and singing. He has touched so many people in so many ways, and I think he would be proud of the way his kids and grandkids have carried on without him not only in body, but in spirit. I feel very lucky to be a part of his extended family.

From Sandra (Gaither) Pitchford, Daughter

Being a preacher’s kid is much like growing up in an aquarium. I never thought of it quite like that while I was in the process, but as I look back, that is the best way I know to describe that part of my life. It’s not that our parents tried to make us feel that way; it’s just the way most people evaluate a preacher’s family. I know too well that onlookers didn’t always see what they should have seen in the lives of us kids, but I also know that what they saw in our parents was without exception, righteous living. They lived their Christianity at home just as they lived it in the church house or in any public place. They were genuine, and they tried to train us to be genuine as well.

Being married for thirty-nine years to another preacher’s kid who served several years as a deacon and has now served several years as an elder in the church, we have found that that “fish bowl” we remember as youth, has continued through our child rearing years. We have learned to live with it and assume it has kept us somewhat in a mode of, at least, striving to be good examples to those who may be watching.

Let me take this opportunity and space to explain how this book came to be. After the Gaither family granted Freed Hardeman University the funds for a scholarship fund in the name of our parents in 2000, my nephew, Ted Williams, who is on the Board of Trustees at FHU, was contacted by Tom Childers at Freed-Hardeman to submit a biographical sketch of Daddy for a website called "TheRestorationMovement.com."

(This site is officially owned and operated under the oversight of the eldership at the Buford Church of Christ, Buford, Georgia.)

Ted knew just who in the family to contact for such a task, and so I mustered what little computer knowledge I had and somehow submitted a single photo of my Daddy and a very basic sketch of his life telling the bare necessities. I was proud of my accomplishment for the family. Now Daddy would be remembered by all those who found this website!

About a year later, Scott Harp, Webmaster of the site, emailed me and told me that though the sketch on the site is ok, it does not do justice to the life of a preacher. He said that people want to know about these "old timey" preachers. They want to know their habits, hobbies, stories, jokes, and what they were really like. He wanted me to not only tell where and when he died, but how he died. He wanted details! I decided that I would undertake the task of writing a more detailed "biographical sketch." I told Scott that I would write it, but also that I wouldn't know where to stop once I got started. He said that was ok, and that if I wrote five hundred pages, he would put it all on there! Well, that's been about two years ago, and with something like 400 pages, I am just now beginning to feel like I have done my daddy justice with his life story.

The first thing I did was feed into the computer his story from my memory. I had recently done a pictorial life story album for my parents' grandchildren, so I knew by heart the places they lived and years spent at each location. I knew important events and special people to include in each location. I wanted to insert some pictures and having done the pictorial albums, I had a large library of photos already in the computer waiting for one more project.

It didn't take me long at all to realize that this project would not just be for a website that many would never know existed. This would be a real effort to tell

the life story of J.B. Gaither in detail for all his descendants now and to come. Since he's been gone for twenty-eight years, the descendants who knew him are in a minority.

Upon completion of the little beginning of typing my memories in and adding a few photos, I decided I needed to read the almost fifty years of diaries he had so conveniently left behind and to take notes as I went. I read and read and then read some more. Some parts, especially the years before the mid-fifties, were real confusing to me. I found that many of the people who were icons in our household had no "certain location" in my memories, and now I was finding their names spilled throughout the pages of these books as those these folks just followed my daddy around from place to place!

That's where my sisters who are older come in. I have made countless calls to them, often with a list of questions for them. What is so sad is that, oftentimes, if I ask all three of them, I get three different answers, opinions or perspectives! If I call my brother, I sometimes get a fourth!

The internet has proved to be my friend on many searches from looking for contacts at churches where he worked, phone numbers and addresses for those who might have answers, church histories, etc. and especially email. I have tried to make at least one email contact at each congregation, and I feel like some of them will be glad when I am through prodding their memories and asking their assistance in my searches!

My last and best idea came even before I finished reading all the diaries. The thought came to me that I must go and visit these churches to see for myself what I can find out and to experience, to some degree, what it was like when he lived and worked there. That was especially needful for the churches prior to Number One, my "home church." I didn't want to arrive unannounced, because I wanted anyone there who remembered J.B. Gaither to be prepared to reminisce about his life while we stood face to face with pen and notebook in hand. With this idea, the internet searches began and the summer and fall travel schedule became full.

Words simply cannot express the joy that my sisters and I experienced as we went back to these churches. We always have a good time, anytime we are together, but

this had to be the supreme experience! Daddy would be 107 if he were living, so a lot of these folks are people about our ages that were young when they were exposed to his influence. Daddy loved young people and treated every kid like they were his own. Well, maybe not quite like his own, but he was definitely a father image to many. A lot of them recall their parents serving him meals in their home; they remember being baptized by him; and many have had him conduct weddings and funerals in their families. They still remember well the stories he told and stories about him.

One thing keeps coming back to my mind, and that is that we have been so blessed by the lives of our daddy and mother. Our heritage is enormous. And then I think of the passage found in Luke 12:48, "For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required..."

With the abundant legacy our parents left behind, we have a tremendous responsibility to carry on the spiritual values we have been given. Their influence is truly comparable to ripples in the water that should never stop growing, because we should keep that Christ-like example ever stirred in the waters of our children's and grandchildren's lives.

Batsell Barrett Baxter preached the night I was baptized by my daddy back in 1960. That is only one little example of my rich heritage. Two great men of faith and me as a young girl, committing my life to Christ because of their example. I knew at twelve years of age that I wanted to live my life like my parents did...for the Lord.

It's a shame that some of us haven't realized before we're nearly sixty years of age the importance of appreciating the paths of our parents' lives. There are so many questions that will remain unanswered, that I wish I had known to ask thirty years ago. Daddy would have loved to have taken me back to his past and shared in detail all the special people, times and places of his earlier years, but I did not even think to ask. If you are fortunate to still have your parents and their minds still work well, ask now before it is too late! You will never regret having obtained those answers while there is time and opportunity.

In my readings of my Daddy's diaries, I noticed something that was rather surprising to me. When Daddy was fifty-eight years old, he began to research his genealogy. When I began this book last year, I was that same age, and so it makes me stop and ponder if it normally takes nearly threescore years for one to reflect on the roots from which they have come.

Daddy did extensive digging in library records in various places and long distance correspondence, seeking out his roots....our roots. My desire is not so much to go way back to ancestors, as it is to just try and grasp the years of my parents' lives that I missed.

Every child misses their parents' youth and what a shame! But I guess nature could not work any other way. Daddy was forty-eight years old when I was born, and Mama was nearly forty, so I missed more years than most. Daddy searched his genealogy for generations that had gone by. I am currently searching only for the one generation that was his. After meeting all the wonderful people who remember him and trying to absorb the wonderful memories they have to share, I believe I have found that part of my daddy and mother that I long to know.

All the research that I have done on my daddy's life in order to put it into writing has been an emotional high for me. The feelings that have awed me in this endeavor can be compared to the same excitement I experienced when I was pregnant for the first time. I would catch myself feeling like I was the only woman who had ever carried a baby and anticipated its birth. It was such a feeling of "I am special" that I could not believe that anyone before me had ever felt so blessed. And that is the feeling that I and my siblings have about our daddy and our mother. We all realize how very blessed we are.

All I have to do for reality to catch up with me is to visit a website like TheRestorationMovement.com and read the biographical sketches of other great Gospel preachers. Some of their stories have an eerie resemblance to Daddy's life and service. Maybe that's because they were serving the same Master in the same time frame of history.

*As Daddy would say, "Every crow thinks hers is the blackest."
And so I suppose it is only natural that we think our parents are so wonderful, but we do realize that there have been many soldiers of the cross who have led comparable lives, and we are happy for those who, too, have such a rich heritage as ours.*

My father-in-law, Doin Pitchford, who passed away recently (May 29, 2008), is one example of such a preacher. The story that he and his wife, Lozell have lived out, could be a lengthy and interesting writing covering the fifty plus years they served in the ministry. And so, my husband Dave and I, for about 40 years, have shared the legacies of both families, and it has made us better servants and has blessed our children's spirituality tremendously.

From Dave Pitchford, Son-In-Law

Husband of Sandra

J. B. Gaither lived a life that many remember, because they saw and knew that he enjoyed living the life that he lived. He experienced working in an occupation, that of preaching, that fit him perfectly. Although he was capable in other areas, he chose to work with Christians, encouraging all to work for the Lord. The Lord blessed him with family and friends, and he enjoyed them all.

I came into the family in 1969 when I married his youngest daughter, Sandra. J.B. and Mary Gaither's influence has certainly blessed my family through my wonderful wife and mother of our three, Allison, Landon and Alan.

The Gaither family values have been evident down through the years in the lives and families of their descendants.

I remember many occasions of visiting for several days at a time when J.B. and I would go off in the evenings to Gospel meetings in the area. He always seemed to know of a small congregation somewhere with a meeting or singing going on.

He loved worship assemblies and being with brethren. He always had a pleasant disposition. I don't remember a time when I saw him angry. I know at times he was disgusted about something or disappointed in someone. He would express his feelings about such, but not in anger.

He had a very pleasant preaching voice and style of delivery that was very natural. He was never at a loss for words to express his thoughts. He spoke with a real knowledge of the Bible, beginning most of his sermons with a scripture reading. He spoke with confidence and authority because he knew that came through the Word. I will always cherish the memories of my father-in-law, J.B. Gaither.

From Mary Allison (Pitchford) Epperson, Granddaughter
Daughter of Sandra & Dave Pitchford
(Age 5 when JB passed away)

I was five and a half years old when Ha-Ha died, so my memory of him is limited, but I will share what little I remember. I was probably 4 or 5 when I learned the phrase “none of your business” and unfortunately for me, I tried it out on Ha-Ha one day when we were visiting him and Mommo at their home in Fayetteville. I remember running down the hallway into the little den area by the kitchen where he was watching TV, and when he asked me what I was doing, I replied with “none of your bees wax”, a common and more sassy variation of “none of your business”. I remember him giving me a quizzical look, immediately followed by my mom taking me to a bedroom and having a long talk with me. I can’t remember if I got a spanking or not, but I do remember that I had to go back in the den and apologize to Ha-Ha which was plenty enough punishment in itself. When I told him I was sorry, he hugged me and forgave me of course, but it made a big impression on me. He was not someone to act disrespectful to, not that I could get away with it on other adults, but Ha-Ha was one of those “great men” who just naturally deserved your respect. I learned that at an early age.

I remember him working in the yard and letting us look around inside his clock shop. I remember going to church with him and Mommo in Fayetteville, and specifically him offering the invitation. Maybe I remember that part more vividly because I was a kid and knew that the invitation meant that services were almost over and I would get to play. For some reason I also remember the song “Let the Beauty of Jesus be Seen in You” being sung as a closing song, which would probably have more to do with the song leader than Ha-Ha, but anytime to this day that I sing that song in worship, I always think of Ha-Ha. I remember the phone call my mom received about his death, and I remember Troy crying at his funeral. Troy was a few years older than me, and I remember wondering if I was supposed to be crying too. My young age, his early death, and the miles between us kept me from having a close, memorable relationship with him, but his spiritual knowledge and example have kept him on a pedestal in my life and in the lives of so many others including many who never knew him. He was devoted to the Bible, and those who make studying and preaching the Word their main purpose in life are not easily forgotten.

From Russell Epperson, Grandson-In-Law

Husband to Mary Allison (Pitchford) Epperson
(Married into family 18 years after JB passed away)

Sometimes one can know someone almost as well having never known them alive than they could having spent time with them on Earth. JB Gaither's influence speaks just as loudly today as it did years ago. His love for his family and dedication to the Lord permeate the lives of his children and their daily walk with God. The legacy he left behind continues to bear fruit today in many communities across the Southeast. We should all hope to leave behind a legacy as deep and rewarding as J.B. Gaither's.

From Landon Pitchford, Grandson

Son of Sandra & Dave Pitchford
(Age 16 months when JB passed away)

I can't say that I am fortunate enough to have any first hand memories of my grandpa, J.B. Gaither; he passed away when I was only a toddler. Despite his physical absence during my lifetime, I have been blessed to hear of the many good works he accomplished in his life. I think about his successes as a Gospel preacher, and the legacy he left for us to remember him by. In some way his legacy leads me to ask myself, "How will I be remembered?" It would be easy to overwhelm ourselves by looking at the many things he accomplished during his time on earth. However, I can't help but think that even now, nearly 30 years since he passed away, he wouldn't want us to dwell on memories of his earthly accomplishments. I would even go as far as to say that he wouldn't want us to marvel at his sincere dedication to the Lord. Rather, I think his desire would be for us to let his Christian example motivate us to carry on the work of the Lord. His concern would undoubtedly be centered on the spiritual well-being of you and me. I'm confident that someday I can "catch-up" with my grandpa that I never knew. When that day comes, I can only hope that whatever legacy I leave behind will be one that will serve as a continually burning Christian light leading others to Him.

From Alan Pitchford, Grandson

Son of Sandra & Dave Pitchford
(Born 5 years after JB passed away)

I never knew Ha-Ha -- but at the same time, I've always known him. For as long as I can remember, I've always felt like I was in a special family. I'm sure most people view their family as special, but I feel a great amount of heritage that only comes from having two very Godly sets of grandparents who have served as leaders in the church. Along with this heritage comes a certain feeling of responsibility and even inferiority. I know I'll never accomplish the amount of work that Ha-Ha accomplished. I suppose one could resent such a scenario, but that would be a shame. After all, my Ha-Ha's descendants are not standing in his shadow, but rather on his shoulders. Our strength as a Christian family is built on top of his devotion -- and we know that his devotion is secure, because his foundation was Christ. Anything good I accomplish just adds to his achievements because my efforts are an extension of his. We have the same goal.

There are several passions that I have which I can only assume came from the one we call Ha-Ha. When I hear of his desire to preach and teach, I understand the joy I find in sharing God's Word. When I hear of his tedious work in designing church bulletins on his typewriter, I understand the joy I find in creating church publications and advertisements. When I hear of his frequent story-telling, I understand the joy I find in writing and sharing stories. I'm certain that I owe a great deal of imagination and creativity to Ha-Ha, and I only hope I can use what's been passed on to me in a way that will further his (and our) cause.



JB and His Children at the Beach, 1954
Frances, Patricia, Ruby, Sandra, JB, John B
Drawn by Darrah Pitchford, 2004
(Niece to Dave and Sandra)

Lasting Influence on Friends... Past & Present

Listed in this chapter are remarks friends and associates have made about J.B. Gaither. Some are comments made as far back as 1940, others date back to the time of his passing, and yet others are recent. A few entries are my interpretations of conversations with individuals, and those in *italics* are quotes.

Ben H. Anderson, Gainesboro, TN, Friend, Gospel Preacher

1940: Bro. J.B. Gaither, former minister at Gainesboro, now located at Springfield, has been in the county holding meetings. We have been very privileged to hear him a few times and must report that he still preaches the gospel as of old. We naturally think there are very few preachers like Brother Gaither. Partial, you say? Well, yes, maybe so.

1956: Whatever success I have been or will be in preaching Christ's gospel, I owe a debt of gratitude to two men, above all others, for encouraging me and giving me confidence when I first started out trying to preach, as well as in the years that have followed. I speak of Bro. J.B. Gaither, of Gallatin, Tenn., and Bro. J.W. Phillips of Broken Arrow, Okla.

John Brasel, Song Leader and Friend

(Copied from the Gospel Advocate, October 4, 1979 issue)

A Tribute to Bro. J.B. Gaither

In 1949 Brother J.B. Gaither began a series of singings in Sumner County. The plan was to have a monthly singing to encourage small congregations. Young and old were to have an active part in developing song leaders, building small congregations in the song service, and learning new songs.

On March 6, 1949, the first-Sunday singings began at the Number One church of Christ, with an overflow crowd. The singings were directed by J.B. Gaither for

19 years. Brother Gaither, a very well known gospel preacher in the churches of Christ, has driven thousands of miles promoting the first-Sunday singings in Sumner County.

Brother Gaither moved to Bells, Tenn., near Jackson in 1967 and left the supervision of the singings to a competent elder at Number One, Brother Roger Glover, now deceased. Many people attended the singings during the six years Brother Glover supervised them.

Brother Gaither planned a singing at Gallatin High School in 1963. There was standing room only and parking space was very hard to find. Seventy-two congregations were represented.

Brother Gaither was invited to come back to his home congregation at Number One on the 25th anniversary of the Sumner County singings and he did a splendid job at that singing.

The Sumner County singings have been going on for 31 years and only one Sunday was missed -in 1951 because of an ice storm.

Other county singings began from Brother Gaither's efforts. He encouraged L.D. Gillpatrick and singings were started in Macon, Trousdale, Wilson and Robertson Counties, all stemming from the plans put into motion in Sumner County. Brother Gaither has baptized more people and preached the Gospel to more people in Sumner, Jackson and Macon Counties than any other man living. He is an old-fashioned preacher and he preaches the Bible as it is written.

As a result of Brother Gaither's past influence, we recently had an annual singing at Rivergate. We had 700 in attendance and 42 song leaders from 60 congregations and 17 counties.

Mary Martin (Baber) Butler, Family Friend, Gallatin, TN

Many children and teenagers frequented our home for play, for meals and for overnight stays, but there was one who would have to take the prize for the most visits, the most meals, the most sleepovers and the most “meeting trips” with Daddy, me and others in the family.

Mary Martin Baber lived just up the street there on West Main (Nashville Pike), though she and I didn’t meet each other until we started to first grade at Howard Elementary. Mary Martin, being an only child, found that there was always something going on at the Gaither house. Our parents were so lenient at letting us spend school nights together and eat meals together nearly every evening. Our mothers even made identical dresses for us from about the third to eighth grades!



In the photo above, Easter 1960, is an example of one of many dresses Mary Martin and I had alike. Back row is John B., Mary Martin, Mary Frances, and at front is Ruby and Sandra. I can’t believe Mary Martin and I didn’t have matching Easter bonnets!

Anytime there was somewhere to go, Mary Martin and I were ready! We went with Daddy to church many nights each summer, and we especially liked it when we got to eat a meal with him at someone's home!

She was like a sister to me and like another child to my parents. She wrote the sweetest letter and handed it to me at my mother's funeral. The following words were her closing statement:

*When I think of my Christianity, your parents had such an influence. They made sure I knew of the importance of Christ in my life. Their example played such a part in the way Charles (Spears) and I raised the boys--consistency, always putting the Lord first, and loving each other.
As I read this part after having written it, I wish I had told them.
You have a rich heritage my friend.*

Houston Bynum, Preacher

Liberty church bulletin, Fayetteville, TN, May 24, 1981

My first remembrance of Brother Gaither was at a monthly preachers' luncheon in 1975. I was a young minister working with Brother Milton Irvin in Winchester, and Brother Gaither was a veteran minister who had just moved to Liberty in September of 1975. It seemed that most all of the preachers at our monthly gatherings respected Brother Gaither for the battles for the truth he had fought and for the kind of wisdom that only years of preaching can give. Brother Gaither bridged a gap back into an era of preaching that I had only read about. He spoke of preachers in our great restoration heritage. He talked about his love for Liberty. He talked about his clocks. He was filled with stories, jokes, humor, and wit that endeared him to all. Little did I realize when I met him in 1975 that I would become the minister at Liberty in August of 1980 and be penning these words in his memory.

*There is a poem, "An Old - Timer Speaks" which contains these lines:
For we have fought the battle, and we have led the van,
And made this life an easier road for many a younger man.*

And, I appreciate Brother Gaither so much for all the good he accomplished here at Liberty and for making my task easier to accomplish. "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from henceforth: yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; for their works follow with them."

Bill Dillon, Preacher, Hickory Ridge, AR

Your dad was a legend of sorts in the West Tennessee area. I had heard of him via other preachers. He was highly regarded, and his name was "much set by." I remember wanting to meet him but the opportunity never came. Johnny Polk and Mike Kiser talk about brother Gaither frequently.

Ben Flatt, Preacher, Henderson, TN

Judy (Anderson) Flatt, Wife



It was my privilege to finally meet and visit with Ben and his good wife, Judy and also to hear him preach at the Pleasant View congregation on Skullbone Road in Bradford, Tennessee. Dave, Frances and Bill were also there with me that day, August 10, 2008.

Ben is a Jackson County native who was baptized by Daddy in 1953. At that time, whenever there was a gospel meeting, his little school there in Jackson County would let out early so the kids could all attend the afternoon session of the gospel meeting. My how times have changed since 1953! Ben was baptized at one of those

afternoon services, and he began preaching just a few months later at age thirteen and by age fifteen, he was preaching every Sunday! He has now been preaching fifty-five years.

He married Judy Anderson, the daughter of Ben and Lucille Anderson who were dear friends of my parents. Judy has memories of my family as well. She recalls that she was in the fourth grade when her family moved to Oneida into the preacher's home that Daddy designed and helped build. She said that was the first house she had lived in with an indoor toilet! In fact, it had a bath and a half! She felt like she had arrived, and I guess Daddy got a lot of credit in her mind for providing such a luxury!



This photo of Ben & Lucille Anderson & Judy
Taken around 1950

In front of the Oneida Preacher's home that Daddy helped build.

Brother Ben mentioned that there are two things he always remembers about J.B. Gaither. One is that Daddy always seemed to lay his hat upside down when he would take it off. Ben asked him why he did that, to which Daddy replied, that if anyone wanted to tip him, they could easily toss the money in without having to turn the

hat over! He also said that Daddy was known for his coffee drinking. It was said that he never had to even put his cup to his mouth because the coffee was strong enough to jump right from the cup to his mouth.

He believes Daddy gave him some good advice about how to preserve your voice when you are preaching and singing. He told him to keep his voice in the roof of the mouth instead of in the throat. This makes for a clearer and more penetrating voice and prevents so much stress to the throat. He said a preacher should sing tenor rather than bass before preaching, as the bass is too stressful on the throat. Ben has practiced that advice and thinks it works as he has only missed ten to twelve sermon deliveries in fifty-five years of preaching.

Howard Gray, Elder

From the Liberty Newsletter, Fayetteville, TN, June 1, 1980

First issue after JB's death.

J.B. Gaither began his work at Liberty on the first Sunday in September in 1975. His last sermon was May 18, 1980. He passed away May 21, 1980 due to a heart attack he suffered while working in his yard. Brother Gaither was proud of a nice yard and the flowers he loved so much. He loved people, he loved the church, and most of all he loved preaching the gospel. One of his favorite scriptures was Romans 1:16, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, to the Jew first and also to the Greek." He wasn't afraid to "declare all the counsel of God," Acts 20:27. He would not compromise the truth.

Since the Gaithers came to Liberty, a great deal has been accomplished. The average attendance has grown from 100 to over 150. The contribution has increased from \$300 to over \$800 per week. We have grown spiritually as well. The congregation is at peace and an increasing love among us has brought a greater unity than ever before. We have improved our facilities by remodeling and adding to the preacher's house, adding a storage building, paving the parking lot,

enlarging the men's restroom, and installing city water. Liberty is now out of debt and involved in more mission work than ever before.

We had a very good men's training class and Brother Gaither was working on a teacher training program when he died. Our singing is at its best with so many good song leaders.

We believe that Brother Gaither's sermons the past few weeks have been some of his best. The lessons were timely and much needed. We feel that J.B. Gaither could say as Paul did in II Timothy 4:6-7, "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought the good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith." A great soldier has fallen. There is a vacuum. He will be missed not only at Liberty but over the brotherhood for a long time.

Alan Highers, Preacher

1980: I knew your father well, and worked with him in two meetings at Crockett County, Tennessee...I believe Brother Gaither visited more meetings than any other man I ever knew.

Mike Kiser, Preacher

I lived in Dyersburg, TN when your daddy lived in Bells, TN. I only knew him from a few preachers' meetings, and the closest association I ever had with him was somewhat quite comical, yet not. He was asked to come one night and lead singing for us and brother Stoy Pate was to preach. Brother Pate preached for the Airways church in Memphis for about 30 years. Now the year this happened was around 1970 or 1971. Brother Pate was probably around 65 to 68 years of age. I was only 26 or 27. I asked brother Pate if he knew your dad. He assured me that he had known your dad, having heard him preach when he was just a young boy. Now, brother Pate had a great sense of humor. Anyway, in the introductions of everyone that evening, I made mention of what brother Pate said. Everyone chuckled except your dad. When Pate got up to preach, he made some comment about it again, and this time everyone laughed except your dad. I realized then that he did not care to have this age discussed in public. For all I could tell he and Pate would have been about the same age.

Now, I do remember that your dad's name appeared often in the Gospel Advocate; that he was a very respected and dignified man. Of preachers, he is what we would call the "old school"; and that some of us younger preachers of the time could learn much about preacher decorum from him; and some of the younger ones today could learn a whole lot. If you look back through the G.A., 1940 and 50 and 60's you will see articles and reports about his work. I wish I had known him better.

Judy (Kidd) Knight, Wife of Harold Knight, Preacher
Daughter of Ralph E. & Edna (Bell) Kidd
Ralph was a preacher & song leader

"A perfect quartet". That is how I remember my parents and J.B. and Mary Gaither. They loved to sing, and they loved to do it well. When I stop to recall, I can hear them singing "The Last Mile of the Way," right now. If I had to suggest one thing that bound these people together (aside from their love for the Gospel), it was song. Brother Gaither went far and wide to preach the Gospel, and he often arranged for Daddy to be his song-leader. Brother Gaither knew the value of getting to speak to an audience uplifted by an enthusiastic song leader. I think that, in those years, a meeting held by J. B. Gaither and the song service led by Ralph E. Kidd was the ultimate.

I only wish that now I had the opportunity to hear again the many sermons that I overlooked as a child. Of course, children attending a church service every night of the week presented its own kind of challenges. Brother Gaither's daughter Ruby was near my age, and we knew that we were to behave, and we knew that we were supposed to listen intently to every word, but our giggling had a way of bubbling to the top. When Ruby and I sat together and sang together we always harmonized. (Wonder where we got that idea!) We had a knack for switching parts at the exact same time. For some reason, we thought that was funny. I hope that the "brethren" who observed us have overlooked our fun. We both feared our parents, and we knew that, if necessary, our preacher daddies would "call us down" from the pulpit, if necessary.

I was in the Gaither home often. There was usually a clock chiming. Brother Gaither collected clocks, and they were set at different times so that we could hear each distinctive chime and strike. It is a wonderful memory.

My brother Ralph has a unique memory of Brother Gaither. One night as Daddy drove home from a meeting in Smith County, with Brother Gaither and

Ralph as passengers, Brother Gaither spied a possum and asked Daddy to stop. Brother Gaither caught the possum and kept it in the floorboard under his feet until he got home.

I wish I had listened more carefully and had notes for the experiences my daddy and Brother Gaither loved to tell. Their rich laughter and enjoyment of each other are memories that I will always cherish. These days and for many years now I get to worship with the Gaither's second daughter, Patricia. We both attend Hillcrest, a small congregation in Sumner County, Tennessee where my daddy preached and where my husband Harold Knight and our son Hal now preaches. It is not unheard of for Patricia and me to get our giggle boxes turned on. She has her daddy's sense of humor and can tell stories like he could. I enjoy her and the "ties that bind" very much.

Margaret (Gaither) Lucas, Niece, Lawrenceburg, Tennessee

Many years ago, Uncle Burge would come to see us, and I looked forward to his being there. He was a happier sort of guy than my Dad at that time of life. He loved to sing. We always had a sing-along before he would leave. Then he married and brought another "Aunt Mary" into the family. I loved her immediately. Along through the years, they added a new baby to our family, and later on, a second child. By then I was old enough to go and visit them. Off to Springfield we went. I was most surprised to see Uncle Burge "washing clothes." I was taken for a ride and Uncle Burge showed me a very large tree that a storm had blown a straw through.

My Granddaddy Gaither died, and Uncle Burge preached the funeral with big tears streaming down his cheeks. That was in May of 1943.

The time came that I fell in love, and I wanted my Uncle Burge to perform the ceremony. We (family) went to Uncle Burge's, and Aunt Mary played the piano. We married in May 1946. After that, I didn't see Uncle Burge very often except for family reunions, funerals and special occasions, but he had four girls and a boy to raise. I loved him. He was my special uncle. He died on my birthday. I guess he was gonna make sure I didn't forget him.

Jim Bill McInteer, Preacher & President of 21st Century Christian
Nashville, Tennessee

Brother J. B. Gaither--what a wonderful man! This is not an idle statement nor one expected to be said, but one supported by facts. I loved that noble man--even to his first two initials!

There are things I gratefully remember. First, he beautifully supported his preaching brethren, came to every assembly possible to encourage one. We all knew, as he listened so attentively, that he knew more about the subject we were discussing than we did. Without embarrassment we knew there was a man with superior experience, superior knowledge, and superior grasp than we had--yet he listened with extended kindness.

We all, who had him visit our services, knew that whoever it was that just came in late, Brother Gaither was not in that tardiness--he was never late--usually ahead of it.

Felt for a certainty was the fact he loved to share songs, prayers, sermons--yea, even "announcements" because that meant the congregation was active.

But there was another thing about this well-married man and his dear wife. They were rearing a family to love the Lord and His church. I run into his descendants everywhere! Congregation after congregation has a child, grandchild, and now even a great-grandchild that actively is serving the Lord. Christ is first always, then will come a much loved inquiry, "Did you know J.B. Gaither?" That question is followed after the acknowledgement, "Well, I'm his _____." One immediately feels like "I'm meeting those of God's elect." The devotion to duty of this preacher of the gospel lives on in both blood by heritage and the redeeming blood of Christ. Like a man of old "he still speaks" through those of his lineage and those he won for the Lord.

Paul taught us to give "honor to those whom honor is due." In my circle of acquaintances J.B. Gaither is one of those kinsmen of the Kingdom. God bless the continuing work of that dear saint.

Thomas Gaither O'Neal, Preacher and nephew, Tampa, Florida

1 - Uncle Burge came out to the farm sometime about 1951 or 1952 and had a new Chevrolet with Power Glide which was the first automatic transmission I had seen in a car. One of the things that was interesting to me was that the gear shift lever when put in "park" was vertical (straight up to 12 o'clock) instead of being

more horizontal out toward 2 or 3 o'clock like most standard (gear shift) leavers were.

2. I remember him preaching his Genesis to Revelation sermon in 1953 at the Downtown Church when brother Rufus R. Clifford, Sr. was the local preacher. I copied down his chart. Tape recorders were just coming in at that time. I do not know if his sermon was recorded or not. Probably not. I have not been able to find a recording of it.

3. In my teen age years he gave me a copy of brother Hardeman's Tabernacle Sermons, vol. 5. Brother Comer at Gallatin had given him at least one case of them and he was giving them away. In time, I obtained all of brother Hardeman's books and have treasured them ever since.

With the one exception mentioned above, I never heard Uncle Burge preach. Since his death, I have heard a good many of his sermon on tape, a number of which I have.

Basil Overton, Editor of World Evangelist

(Editor's Note with the article Mary wrote, February, 1985 edition):

I fondly remember J.B. Gaither because he was a noble, dedicated, faithful and able gospel preacher and Christian gentleman. I was associated with him some in the mission fields of Kentucky when he preached there in gospel meetings. I expect to greet him when I get to heaven.

Doin & Lozell Pitchford, Mountain Home, AR

Preacher and wife and Sandra's In-Laws

The first time we met with the Gaithers was a few weeks before Sandra married our son, David, in 1969. We visited them in their home at Bells, Tennessee. He was a clock collector and had about sixty clocks in the house. During our overnight stay, we were surprised to hear a lot of the clocks chiming and striking on the hour, making quite a noise. We did, however, enjoy the sound of the ticking which sounded like water running over pebbles in a brook. That sound was quite soothing to us.

Brother Gaither was amusing at times. After David and Sandra married, we visited them in their home in Searcy, Arkansas. The Gaithers were also there. Sandra served us a delicious dinner. I (Lozell) remarked to brother Gaither that his daughter was a good cook. He replied, "Yes, her mother taught her to cook, and I taught her mother."

When the Gaithers were living at Fayetteville, Tennessee, Doin held a gospel meeting there at the Liberty congregation where brother Gaither was the minister. We stayed with the Gaithers during that meeting. We were the first ones to get to stay in the new guest room that had been added on to the preacher's home. Sister Gaither had it so beautifully decorated and comfortable that we gave it the name of the "Hilton Suite."

John T. Polk II, Preacher, Dover, Tennessee

It was my pleasure to associate with J. B. Gaither in the 1970's, when he lived in Bells, Tennessee, and I was preaching 13.5 miles from him. He was a man of "precision." He enjoyed his collection of clocks (which measured time), shared with me a cooperative radio program on the nearest station in Humboldt, Tennessee (which measured preaching), and he enjoyed humorous accounts of events (with measured smiles and laughter). One had to notice the twinkle in his eyes to understand how much he enjoyed his family, though. He was of the "old school" of preachers who expected anyone preaching the Gospel of Christ to be dressed for the occasion, fully prepared to discuss the Scriptures any time, and grateful for all the opportunities God granted him to teach the precious Word of God. J. B. Gaither led by example, was loved for his compassion, and deeply appreciated by many like me, who were privileged to be challenged by him. Truly J. B. Gaither "will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away. Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to your elders" (I Peter 5:4-5).

C.L. Powell, Portland, Tennessee

Written in the Gallatin Examiner May 30, 1980

Brother J.B. Gaither was one of my best friends. He had been a part of my life for so many years. In fact, since my early boyhood days, he was one of the first gospel preachers that I ever listened to. He lived in Gainesboro in the early 1930's. He conducted several meetings at the Bagdad Church of Christ which was located close

to where I lived. It was there in September of 1938 that I confessed faith in Christ along with my brother, Willie, and also a young man named Billy Brown and I am sure others. The next day being Sunday, Brother and Sister Jimmy Canter from the Cartwright community took my brother and I to Wartrace Creek and there Brother Gaither baptized us into Christ.

The footprints of J.B. Gaither will remain for a long time in the sands of memory. He loved and wanted friends, but he was never willing to sacrifice the truth to maintain them. The greatest tribute that I could give to him would be that I found him to be a Christian Gentleman.

David Sain, Fayetteville, TN, Preacher at West Fayetteville

I am glad that you are working on a book about the illustrious life of your father. My memories of him date back primarily to my childhood. We lived in Westmoreland, and I remember that Mother regularly tuned the radio to the Gallatin station to listen to your father preach. And, being nearby, I heard your daddy preach on radio hundreds of times. I remember that excellent voice and those Bible-based sermons.

And I heard my parents (Harold and Dorothy) speak often about brother Gaither. They held him in high esteem, and considered him to be a "faithful gospel preacher." Years later, while we lived in Huntsville, AL, I had the privilege of preaching in a number of Gospel meetings in Lincoln County, TN, at Northside, Molino, Liberty, etc. At one of those meetings at Northside, your father came to hear me preach -- this was while he was at Liberty. We had a few moments to chat and he was very complimentary of my sermon, and he told me of how he respected and appreciated my father as a faithful preacher. I was honored to have him in the audience that night, and thankful that I had the opportunity to tell him about hearing him during those childhood days.

A couple of years after he died, I was in Portland, TN to preach in a meeting. I was invited to "fill in" on the daily radio program that was on the same station that your father preached on. So, while at the station, I took time to go to the nearby (I seem to recall it being across the highway) cemetery where your dad is

buried, and found his grave. I stood there and recalled his great work for our heavenly Father.

Since moving to Fayetteville, I have spoken of him to various ones, and he is still remembered with fondness and respect by all who knew and heard him.

Charles F. Scott

Preacher, Missionary, married to JB's niece, Ann (Barnes) Scott
Monteagle, Tennessee

It is good you are writing about brother Gaither. Of course, Ann and I remember him and your family well. We remember being in your home when you were young. You were at Gallatin when we lived at Old Hickory from 1952 to 1957 and visited in your home different times. Of course we enjoyed being with your father and mother, and to see you children, when you were growing up.

My first remembrance of brother Gaither - - was when I preached several weekends at Fountain Head, Tennessee 1947 to 1951. I remember that when brethren in that area heard that my wife Ann was related to brother Gaither, that made us rate high, because so many people in that whole area highly regarded brother Gaither, both for being a good and faithful gospel preacher, and also for being a good singer who had promoted Singings in that area. Fifty years later, as I did some preaching in the area around Gainesboro and Celina, people there thought it great that Ann was related to J.B. Gaither.

One great remembrance that I have is hearing brother Gaither preach for an hour, when he said nothing but quote scripture. He had developed a great sermon that gave glimpses along the way from Genesis to Revelation - - from Creation to Eternity. I never heard anyone else present a great and good sermon where he did nothing but quote scripture.

Of course, we remember brother and sister Gaither's visits in our home. We especially remember singing for a long time one afternoon in our home here at Monteagle. I did have a tape of that singing, and am sorry that somewhere along the line it got lost.

Many years later, after brother Gaither began preaching for the Liberty congregation near Fayetteville, we saw brother and sister Gaither a number of times. It was good to know how highly they esteemed brother Gaither. We saw brother and sister Gaither there a number of times as I visited that congregation to tell about the churches in India where we had been, and where they were helping in the India work. While they were at Liberty, they had a big celebration in honor of brother Gaither (I think it was for his 50th year of preaching) and again so many good things were said about the great good brother Gaither had accomplished. You, as brother Gaither's children, can all rejoice to have had a father who was held in such high esteem by so many people.

James Davis Watts, Friend, Cookeville, Tennessee

My first recollection of brother Gaither was as a child when he was conducting a gospel meeting at the Davidson's Chapel Church of Christ, in the Nameless Community of Jackson County. This occurred in the late 1950's and early 1960's. Bro. Gaither would do a Bible school class 30 minutes prior to church starting. I remember very well his teachings and reading the books of the Bible.

After graduating from college (Tennessee Technological University) in March 1969, my first job was with the USDA in Columbus, Ohio. Later, in June of 1969, I was transferred to West Tennessee in the town of Bells. It was at this time that I renewed my friendship with the Gaithers. As a teenager I always had an interest in antique clocks and brother Gaither funneled that interest by showing his wealth of knowledge about clocks.

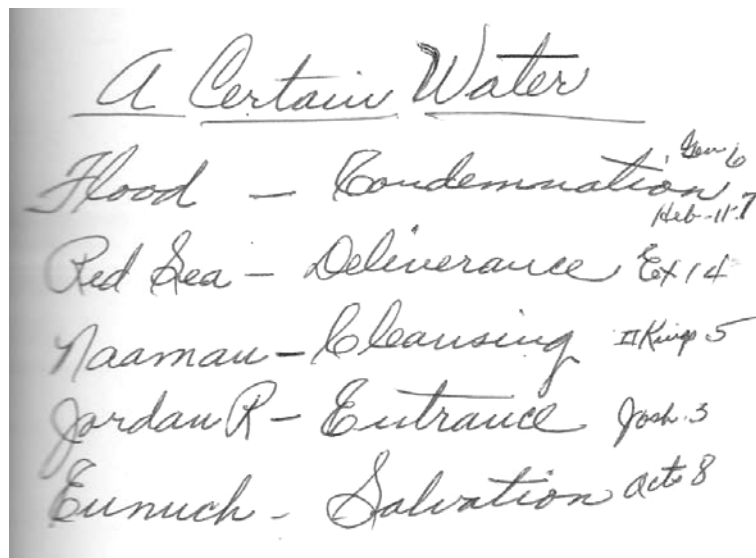
In 1975 the Gaither's moved to Lincoln Co., Tennessee (Fayetteville), and my wife Lou Ann and I were very fortunate to purchase Bro. Gaither's clock collection, which today we enjoy very much! I can't say enough good things about brother J.B. and sister Mary Gaither. He loved holding meetings in the county, preaching the gospel and putting his feet under the tables of those good country cooks!

Guy N. Woods, Preacher, Written July 1, 1980

Brother Gaither was a dear friend of mine. We shall all miss him very much indeed.

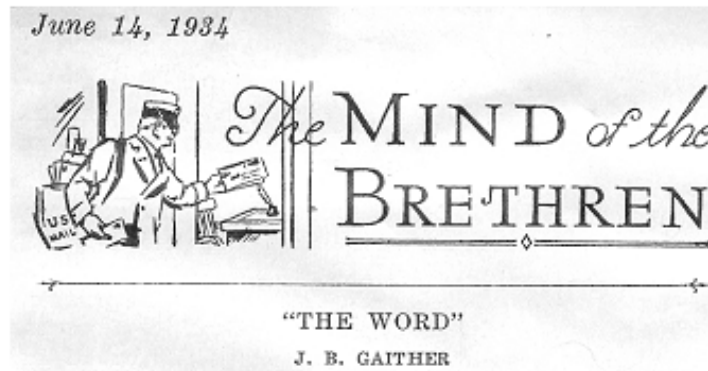
Sermons, Articles and Christian Education...

The family has many audio recordings of sermons, though most are of poor quality after so many years, some being transferred from old reel to reel tapes to cassettes. In this section, we are sharing every sermon, article and outline that we have in printed form.



A Favorite of Mary Gaither's

The Gospel Advocate



Paul, in 2 Tim. 4:2 gave a charge to a young preacher: "Preach the word." We shall attempt to study two things regarding this definite charge.

1. What is the word to be preached? We hear much said about it, but what does God, through the Scriptures, declare it to be? "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." (John 1:1.) Then, in preaching the word, we must preach him, who was even from the beginning. We must preach him, who was a companion of God and who was and is even God himself. Again, we learn from verse 14: "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth." Then, in preaching the word, we must preach the only begotten Son of God--Jesus Christ. But, one says, the Word in John 1:1 is capitalized and the word in 2 Tim. 4:2 is not; hence they cannot be the same. That is logical, I will agree; but let us consider another case found in Acts 8. In verse 4 we learn: "Therefore, they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word." Philip was one of those preaching, and verse 35 says: "Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus." Thus we learn the word that was preached in verse 4 was Jesus in verse 35.

To keep Paul's charge is to preach Jesus Christ to the world. What does preaching Jesus include? We may say that man's life is divided into three parts: (1) thoughts, (2) works, (3) deeds. Man never does more than think, speak, and act. Therefore, we are to preach the thoughts, the words, and the deeds of Christ. But how can we know the thoughts or the mind of Christ? Words, we are told, are symbols of ideas. Ideas are conceived in the mind and symbolized in words. We can know the mind of Christ by the words he spoke. We are commanded to preach the things Christ has commanded (Matt. 28:20): "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." Therefore, we can understand why the Ethiopian eunuch, though a heathen, who had known nothing of the teaching of Christ, demanded to be baptized in water when Philip had only preached unto him Jesus. Jesus said: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" (Mark 16:16.) Jesus had been preached, and he understood that he should be baptized and that water was the element. How plain matters become, even to a heathen, when Jesus is preached in the simplicity of the gospel! We can also see the need of preaching the things Jesus did while upon the earth, as in John 20: 30, 31: "And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: but these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God: and that believing ye might have life through his name." We find the word referred to in other terms, and in 1 Cor. 15, when Paul was preaching Jesus, he said: "I declare unto you the gospel." Yet, Paul said in 1 Cor. 2:2: "For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." Again, in 2 John: 9 it is called "the doctrine of Christ." We, therefore, conclude that "the word," "Christ," "the gospel," and "the doctrine of Christ" are all used interchangeably in this connection, and that to "preach the word" is to preach Christ in thoughts, words, and deeds, of which the gospel or doctrine of Christ declares.

2. Why preach the word? Why should Paul, the apostle, give such a command or charge to a preacher of the gospel? Why were not preachers sent out to preach what seemed good to them or popular in certain communities, as many preachers take the liberty to do today? My friends, the commission not only says preach, but includes the substance to be preached--“the gospel”---“whatsoever I have commanded you.” By the Scriptures let us see of we can find the reason for preaching the word. (1) It is the begetting power. We learn that Jesus said, “Ye must be born again,” in John 3:7. But we know, too, that in order for there to be a birth there must of necessity be a begetting. Now we hear James in his epistle when he said: “Of his (God’s) own will begat he us with the word of truth” (James 1:18.) Paul says: “For in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel (word)” (1 Cor. 4:15.) As a child has never been born into the fleshly family without being begotten, so has a child never been born into the spiritual family of God unless begotten, and that by the word. (2) It (the word, or gospel) is God’s power to save: “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth” (Rom. 1:16.) Then without the word God would be powerless in the salvation of sinners. It is not said to be one of the powers, but *the* power of God’s salvation to believers. (3) It saves. “Receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls” (James 1:21.) “And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures (the word), which are able to make thee wise unto salvation” (2 Tim. 3:15.) (4) It is food to children of God. “As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word that ye may grow thereby” (1 Pet. 2:2.) “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.” (Matt. 4:4.) “I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up (nourish thee and cause thee to grow), and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified” (Acts 20:32.) Temporal beings live and exist by temporal food, and so it is that spiritual beings live by spiritual food. God’s word is spiritual food for his spiritual family. Without it there would be no growth to a child of God.

(5) It is the word that produces faith. “So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (Rom. 10:17.) Then, no word, no faith. Faith is that which pleases God. “Without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him” (Heb. 11:6.) By faith we are justified (Rom. 5:1.) By faith we are saved. “But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe (have faith) to the saving of the soul” (Heb. 10:39.) Then without the word there would be no faith, no pleasing God, or salvation. (6) It is evil to preach anything else. “If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: for he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds” (2 John 10, 11.) “If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles (word) of God” (1 Pet. 4:11.) “Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine (word) of Christ, hath not God” (2 John 9.) “But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel (word) unto you, let him be accursed” (Gal. 1:8.) “Woe is me, if I preach not the gospel (word)!” (1 Cor. 9:16.) “Which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction” (2 Pet. 3:16.) “For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life.” (Rev. 22:18, 19.)

The Pierced Palm

The original drawing for this sermon outline was the actual size and outline of JB's hand. He had made notations that this sermon was preached at Columbus Hill in Jackson County, Tennessee on June 28, 1939 and at Bells, Tennessee on June 16, 1968. Apparently he only preached it twice, and the two occasions were twenty-nine years apart!



The following two sermon outlines
were found written on pages of his diary:

Chart on Board:

Mind / Purpose / Plan / Result
Salvation / Christ / Sacrifice / Savior

C - hrist	Head
H - oliness	Badge
U - nrighteousness	Enemy
R - ighteousness	Work
C - hristians	Members
H - eaven	Goal

“I Love You, God”

God’s love to us
Our love for God
Christ
Bible
Church
One another

(This is a rather lengthy outline for JB.
Often times, his entire outline might be only three words.)

Preached at Liberty at Fayetteville, TN 11/12/78

BY WHAT AUTHORITY

J.B. Gaither, Springfield, Tennessee
From *The Gospel Witness*, January 1941

The Bible is the word of God. It contains all of God's law to man regarding salvation. Man and bodies of men have worked out doctrines and put them into creeds, but no doctrine of man is reliable or even of any value at all in things pertaining to the divine. God "hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness" (2 Peter 1:3). "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (2 Tim. 3:16, 17). This leaves no place for any doctrine of men. See Gal. 1:8,9, also 2 John 9-11. It is evil to teach, practice, or aid in anything for worship or governing the church for which there is not authority in the word of God unto us.

Let us, therefore, cast off all doctrines of men and worship God "in spirit and in truth" (John 4:24). God's word is truth (John 17:17). Anything not commanded in the word of God is of man and makes our worship in vain (Matt. 15:9).

-----O-----

The Bible teaches that all responsible people must render obedience to the gospel if they are to be saved and inherit heaven when this life is over. This includes, according to the Bible, faith, repentance and baptism, then the remainder of the life spent in temperance, righteousness and godliness. We urge all our readers to take stock of their accounts with God and then do the thing needful to get right and stay right in His sight. "We ought to obey God rather than men."



The Sepulcher: Triumph Over Death

INTRODUCTION

On the night before the crucifixion Judas betrayed his Lord by selling him for thirty pieces of silver (sixteen dollars and ninety-six cents in our money). The mob into whose hands he was betrayed found him just as he had finished his prayer, "Thy will be done," in the garden of Gethsemane. After the arrest with "swords and staves," he was given a mock trial before Annas, Caiaphas, and the Sanhedrin. The Jews not being able to inflict capital punishment, he was taken before Pilate and Herod that they might pass the death sentence. He was crucified between two thieves the following day after the arrest. During the time Jesus was on the cross the earth was in total darkness from the sixth hour to the ninth hour, the veil of the temple was rent in twain, and the earth did quake sufficiently to make the centurion fear greatly and say: "Truly this was the Son of God."

JOSEPH OF ARIMATHEA

Joseph of Arimathea was a rich Jew, who was a disciple of Jesus, but had not so declared himself publicly because of the Jews. He seems to have been a member of the Sanhedrin, but he did not give his consent to the deeds of those who condemned Jesus to death. Though a secret disciple of Jesus up to this time, when Jesus was crucified in shame and many, or practically all, of his ardent followers had forsaken him, Joseph came boldly forward and begged for the body of Christ from Pilate. He was not only ready to recognize Christ as his Lord, but he was ready to care for the dead body by wrapping it in linen with the proper spices and laying it in his own new tomb. After all, Joseph was a "good man, and a just man". He proved his love for Christ by taking him from a shameful death and giving him a decent burial. Too, the hand of God worked

through Joseph in not allowing the body of Jesus to remain on the cross or to be placed in a common burying ground after the manner of those being crucified.

BURIAL OF JESUS

Jesus must of necessity have been buried in fulfillment of the prophecies. His burial was as much a matter of prophecy as was his death or his resurrection. Isaiah spoke of his grave and said he would be “with the rich in his death.”

The Grave. Much significance is seen in the grave which Jesus occupied. It was an individual grave--one “where never man had yet lain.” It was not one of the graves in a common burying ground which if found empty could have been disputed as the grave which held the Son of man. The grave was hewn out of rock, and a great rock was rolled before the door to make the body more secure. Too, the grave was that of a friend of Jesus, which caused more concern on the part of the Jews to see that it was protected. It was sealed with Roman authority and had a guard of soldiers around it continually. How fortunate it was for the body to have come into hands of friends to provoke the Jews to great precaution which later would lend to undeniable proof to the resurrection!

PRECAUTION OF THE JEWS

Had the body of Jesus been placed in some common place of burial by those crucifying him, the Jews would never have used the precaution that they did; neither could the resurrection have been so outstandingly proved from a human standpoint. When Jesus was buried by Joseph and Nicodemus, the Jews began to fear an imposture on the part of his disciples. The day after the burial “the chief priests and Pharisees came together unto Pilate.” Many times during Christ’s life his acts or words did cause different sects to come together to counsel with each other as to what should be done. The problems were too difficult for one man or one body of men to decide. The death of Christ was no exception. The chief priests and Pharisees took counsel together and then made their demands of Pilate. They remembered that he had said he would rise again the

third day. They were afraid his disciples would come by night, steal him away, and would say that he is risen, thus making the denial of the resurrection harder than the denial that Christ was the Son of God. Pilate was ready to cooperate with them by saying: "Ye have a watch; go your way, make it as sure as ye can." Here we can see the whole of the Jewish powers combined with all authority of the Romans in trying to prevent the resurrection. The chief priests and the Pharisees, acting by Roman authority, "made the sepulcher sure" by "sealing the stone, and setting a watch." The watch would prevent any friends of Christ from coming and removing the body even by night. The sealing of the stone, which was no doubt the seal of the Roman government, made it sure that the soldiers would not be bribed into opening the sepulcher and permitting the body to be taken away. Everything was done to satisfy the Jews that the tomb was sure. When the Jews killed Christ to get rid of him, they only furthered his cause. The precautions in his burial served to put the resurrection beyond human contradiction.

THE RESURRECTION

"Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week," not only assures the fact of his resurrection, but also established the time---"the first day of the week." Jesus did rise from the dead, even as he had said. He was willing to prove his resurrection by appearing to those who had known him before his death. He permitted his disciples to handle him that they might be sure that it was he and not a spirit. When Thomas had difficulty in believing him, Jesus said: "Reach hither thy finger and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand and thrust it into my side." That was sufficient proof for Thomas. Had Jesus appeared only unto strangers, it would have seemed to be only for deceiving some to believe in him. He did not do this, but appeared "unto the apostles whom he had chosen...shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs." In the resurrection he was "declared to be the Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness"; he "hath brought life and immortality to light"; he gave new hope to the apostles. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to

his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.” Our hope of future glory in Christ is dependant upon the resurrection. Paul said to the church at Corinth: “If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain; ye are yet in your sins...If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.” Oh, blessed hope we have because he is risen!

TRIUMPH OVER DEATH

The resurrection of Christ from the dead is sufficient proof that he had power over death. On Pentecost, Peter quoted the prophecy of David regarding Christ: “Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.” Here we learn that Christ’s body was not left in death long enough to dissolve to earth. Peter further said: “Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it.” It is here declared that the Prince of Life could not remain subject to the powers of death. His victory over death was necessary to prove his divinity. Had Jesus remained in the grave, he would not have been the Son of God. Christ conquered death for himself in the resurrection. We, too, are to be delivered from death even as Christ was. Our deliverance from death will be accomplished by Christ at his second coming. Christ is now reigning on David’s throne, where “he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.” When Jesus comes the second time, “all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth.” “Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?” “There shall be no more death.” Neither the power of the Jews nor the Roman authority was sufficient to overcome Christ’s power over death by causing him to remain in the grave. Our prayer should ever be: Thanks be to God, our Father, who hath given us release from death and hope of eternal life through our Lord Jesus Christ.



Christ Shows Himself Alive

Text: Luke 24:13-17, 25-35

INTRODUCTION

Jesus, after spending three and a half years with his disciples, had been betrayed by Judas and delivered unto the chief priest, was given a mock trial, and was condemned to death. He was crucified on the cross, pronounced dead by the soldiers who pierced his side, and buried by his friends.

The chief priests and the Pharisees obtained authority from the Roman government to seal the tomb with all surety, because they remembered Jesus had said he would rise again the third day. The third day had come, and, true to his prophecy, he came forth from the grave.

Several of the women had visited the tomb on the third day following his death, which was the first day of the week. There was no small stir among the disciples when it was reported that Jesus had risen from the dead. It could hardly be believed even by those who had seen the empty tomb. This brings us up to the lesson text.

13. "That same day," the day on which Jesus arose, two disciples were going to the village of Emmaus, a place some seven or eight miles from Jerusalem. One of the disciples was named Cleopas.

14. They were discussing the much-talked subject of Jesus having risen from the dead.

15. "While they communed together and reasoned, Jesus himself drew near, and went with them." This was a common thing to be overtaken by another traveler, who would join the company with them and travel together, though they be strangers to one another.

16. They took no particular note to see who he was or to make inquiry. The subject under discussion was of far superior import than the identity of a fellow traveler at this time. "Their eyes were holden that they should not know him." Mark says he appeared in another form.

17. Jesus asks them a question regarding the conversation among themselves which was cause of sadness or much concern upon their part. It seems to be the purpose here of Jesus to attract their attention to himself as a third party and to give him the opportunity to tell them some things concerning himself.

18-24. These verses are not in the lesson text, but help in giving the connection; hence, they are used. The question by Jesus caused them to wonder who he could be that did not know about this most wonderful event which had happened that day. They thought that even a stranger passing through Jerusalem would have learned of “the things which are come to pass there in these days.” When Jesus asked, “What things?” they proceeded to tell of “Jesus of Nazareth, which was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people”---how that he had been delivered before the chief priests and rulers and had been crucified. They had hoped that it was he who would deliver the Jews from the Roman rule and would “restore again the kingdom to Israel.” Their faith seemed not to have been entirely gone, for they said: “Beside all this, today is the third day since these things were done.” Cleopas seemed to have remembered the prophecy of the third day, but was not able, amidst all the excitement and confusion, to reach the truth or to grasp what truth he had. Even the report of the women, and others who visited the tomb and found not the body of Jesus, was not sufficient to awake their faith, which was so near dormant as to be inactive. These two disciples were slow to believe the record of those who visited the tomb, “but him they saw not.”

25. Then said Jesus unto them: “O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken.” Jesus reprimanded them for having been so inconsiderate of all the prophecies concerning him and for being so backward and easily given to doubt. These disciples, like many today, seemed to take no regard of what the word of God had said concerning Jesus, but were looking for outward evidences sufficient to produce faith.

26. Was it not prophesied of the Christ that he should suffer these things? Now, seeing the fulfillment of the prophecies as you do, why do you not recognize that I am he?

27. Jesus then rehearsed unto them all that the prophets said of him, beginning at Moses. Christ was not only *a* subject of prophecy, but *the* subject. “To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins” (Acts 10:43.) When Peter preached the first sermon in the church, he started with Christ from the prophecies of David. In Stephen’s defense he began with Christ in the prophecy of Moses. Philip began with the prophecy of Isaiah to preach Jesus to the eunuch.

28. When they came to the village of Emmaus, where the two disciples were to spend the night, Jesus would have gone on. He did not thrust himself upon them, but waited for an invitation from them.

29. Upon their request, this man, strange to them, but one mighty in the prophecies, went in to tarry with them. Jesus today only promises to abide with us upon the condition that we open the door and let him in.

30. When time came for the evening meal, Jesus sat with them; and, taking bread, he gave thanks or blessed it and gave it to them. He did not allow the great mystery of the occasion to keep him from expressing thanks unto God for temporal things.

31. It was at this time that they realized that it was Jesus. “Their eyes were opened, and they knew him.” Having accomplished his purpose in appearing unto them, he vanished or disappeared from their sight.

32. The disciples, now learning that it was Jesus, the great teacher who had expounded unto them the Scriptures, took new courage, and the Scriptures held a greater hope for them.

33. A hope and promise as great as theirs were at this time must be shared with others. They arose immediately to go to Jerusalem and tell the glad tidings to the disciples there. They found the eleven and others gathered together.

34. And they were saying: “The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon.” It seemed that the apostles had already obtained sufficient proof to cause them to accept the resurrection as a fact and to know Christ was alive.

35. It must have been with great delight and much satisfaction that Cleopas and his companion “told what things were

done in the way, and how he was known of them in breaking of bread.” This was additional testimony for the eleven who already believed.

CHRIST’S PROOF THAT HE IS ALIVE

In Acts 1:3 Luke says that Christ “shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.” The proofs that Christ gave were of such nature and under such circumstances as to be unmistakable. He appeared to those who knew him before his crucifixion and could identify him now. He ate with them and permitted them to handle him to show that he was not a spirit. He appeared to a number of people, about five hundred at one time. The world today does not have to take the testimony of only one or two persons that they saw Christ after his resurrection. He went far enough to allow Thomas to put his fingers in the prints of his hands and to put his hand in his side. Thomas knew him, and said: “My Lord and my God.” He also met with his disciples in Galilee, where he promised before his death that he would meet with them after his resurrection. He continued these appearances over a period of forty days. The angels at the tomb said: “He is risen” (Matt. 28:6.) Peter preached his resurrection on Pentecost. Paul says that Christ’s resurrection is the basis of our faith. (1 Cor. 15:14.) Peter declares the resurrection as the cause of a living hope. (1 Pet. 1:3.) It seems that the faith and hope of even the apostles were shaken and to some degree buried in the tomb with Christ. But after the resurrection, theirs was a living faith, strong unto the end.

May we hear the word of God and have faith to the saving of the soul.

The Gospel Advocate
About 1940

“AM I MY BROTHER’S KEEPER?”
(Gen. 4:9)

J.B. Gaither

First question on record ever asked by man.
Cain was the first, but not the last, to ask it.
To what extent am I responsible to and for my brother?

1. That there be no strife between us (Gen. 13:8).
 - (a) Abram’s motto was: “Peace at any reasonable price.”
2. That we love one another (1 John 3:11).
 - (a) With brotherly love (Rom. 12:10; 1 Pet. 3:8).
 - (b) As Christ loved us (John 13:34; 15:12).

Many are too weak to live of their own life.
The recipient of a blood transfusion lives by the life of the donor.
I must give my life as service to others (Matt. 25:31-46).
 - (c) That we take no account of evil (1 Cor. 13:5).

Love does not hunt faults, but covers them
(James 5:20; 1 Pet. 4:8).

That I restore the fallen (Gal. 6:1).

Help the destitute (1 John 3:17).

Forgive (Matt. 18:22).

To preach the gospel (Acts 20: 26-27).



“Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven” (Matt. 18:3). The subject of conversion is one of great controversy among men. Let us study it in the light of the Bible, then we can be sure.

Not Needed By Children

Christ taught the older ones that they were to become as little children. Here little children are examples of the kingdom of God. (See also Mark 10:13-16). Little children have no sins of their own; neither are they responsible for the sins of others. They need no conversion, but we as older ones need to be converted.

Needed Because of Adam

Adam’s transgression has come down to all accountable people of today--“so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned” (Rom. 5:12). Since all men have sinned, and no sinner, as such, can enter the kingdom of God, it follows that all men should be converted to become such as God wants them to be.

Needed to Enter the Kingdom

The kingdom of heaven and the church are one and the same thing. The church is also the family of God. Before one can get into the kingdom, the family of God, he must be converted or changed from what he is in sin. Jesus said, “Except ye be converted...ye shall not enter the kingdom of heaven.” No one can enter the kingdom, the church, the family of God without conversion; no one can be converted without entering the kingdom. Conversion and entrance into the kingdom, the church, are equivalent according to Jesus. (See Acts 2:37-47).

What Is Conversion?

The word convert primarily means “to turn.” When one is turned from any position of belief to believe and practice something else, he is converted. But, to be converted in such a way as to please God--to enter the kingdom, one must be turned from sin and sinful practice unto a life with Christ. Until one’s life is what Christ would have it to be, he is not truly converted to Christ.

The act of conversion is one of several steps. Let us study and see when one’s life actually accords with Christ. 1. We are taught to believe--have faith (John 8:24). But, faith alone is not sufficient (Jas. 2:24). Faith is not conversion but merely a step toward conversion. 2. We are commanded to repent (2 Pet. 3:9). While repentance is necessary, it does not put us into Christ. It, too, is a step but not conversion. 3. Christ teaches us to be baptized (Mark 16:15, 16). In Rom. 6:3 and Gal. 3:37, we are taught that baptism puts us into Christ---“For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.” Baptism is the consummating act or step that puts us into Christ, but it (baptism) *alone* did not do it. Therefore, baptism is also a step and not conversion within itself. It has to be preceded by other steps--- faith and repentance. Before one can be converted to enter the kingdom, he must believe (have faith), repent and be baptized--“buried with Christ by baptism.” He then is prepared to walk the new life with Christ (Rom. 6:4). Dear reader, have you been converted to the Lord? If not, read the New Testament and see what is required, then do it. “The gospel of Christ...is the power of God unto salvation” (Rom. 1:16).

CONVERSION OF CORNELIUS

By J. B. Gaither

Much has been said with reference to the conversion of Cornelius, and many have expressed a desire to be converted as he was, as though his conversion was so different from other conversions in the New Testament. It is for this reason that we want to learn some vital things concerning his conversion.

Cornelius was a man of fine character from a standpoint of morality and was a religious man, but his religion was not founded upon the teachings of Christ. It is said of him that he was "devout," "feared God with all his house," "gave much alms to the people," and "prayed to God always" (Acts 10:2). But, with all these traits, he was in need of salvation. The angel told him to send for Peter to tell him words that would save him and his household (Acts 11:14).

In connection with the conversion of this good moral man, three miracles were wrought. (1) The visit of an angel to the home of Cornelius, (2) The vessel from Heaven unto Peter, and (3) The outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon Cornelius and his house. No distinction is made in divine record as to which of the three was most important. Many religious teachers insist upon the baptism of the Holy Spirit as necessary to the conversion of Cornelius but say nothing of either of the two miracles which were as much in evidence. The baptism of the Holy Spirit is taught and contended for today as necessary to the conversion of all individuals, and the case of Cornelius is cited as proof. Why, then, should they not teach that the appearance of an angel to the sinner is necessary; and that before one can be saved, the preacher must fall into a trance, seeing a vessel from on high? The visit of the angel and Peter's vision had much to do indirectly with saving Cornelius, but the appearing of the Holy Spirit had none, directly nor indirectly. The angel made known to Cornelius that he was unsaved and informed him of the avenue through which he could be saved. Peter's trance gave proof unto

Peter that it would be legal for him to go and tell Cornelius, a Gentile, words that would save him. The outpouring of the Holy Spirit had no connection or power in the saving of Cornelius but was only a testimony unto the Jews to the fact that unto the Gentiles also God had “granted repentance unto life” (Acts 11:18.)

In a further study, let us notice some things the baptism of the Holy Spirit *did not* do for Cornelius and his people. (1) It *did not* produce faith. Peter said: “Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe” (Acts 15:7.) Here, Peter declares that the Gentiles received their faith or belief by hearing “the word of the gospel.” In Romans 10:17, Paul says “faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.” Again, Paul raises the question for the sake of emphasis, “How shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard”- (Rom. 10:14.) (2) The baptism of the Holy Spirit *did not* purify their hearts. Peter said, “God...put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith” (Acts 15:9.) Cornelius’ heart was purified the same way as were the hearts of the Jews---by faith. (3) It did not forgive their sins. “To him (Christ) give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins” (Acts 10:43.) Forgiveness of sins has from of old been promised by faith in Christ. (4) It *did not* save them. The angel told Cornelius what would save him. “Send men to Joppa, and call for Simon...who shall tell thee words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved” (Acts 11:13, 14.) The words that Peter preached unto him were the saving power. “The gospel of Christ...is the power of God unto salvation.” (Rom. 1:16.) “Receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls” (Jas. 1:21.) “It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe” (I Cor. 1:21.) Cornelius was saved by his belief and obedience to the word of God. The baptism of the Holy Spirit was no part of Cornelius’ faith nor of his obedience. Therefore, it had no direct effect on the saving of Cornelius.

Since we have learned that the baptism of the Holy Spirit *did not* produce faith, purify his heart, forgive his sins, nor save him; we

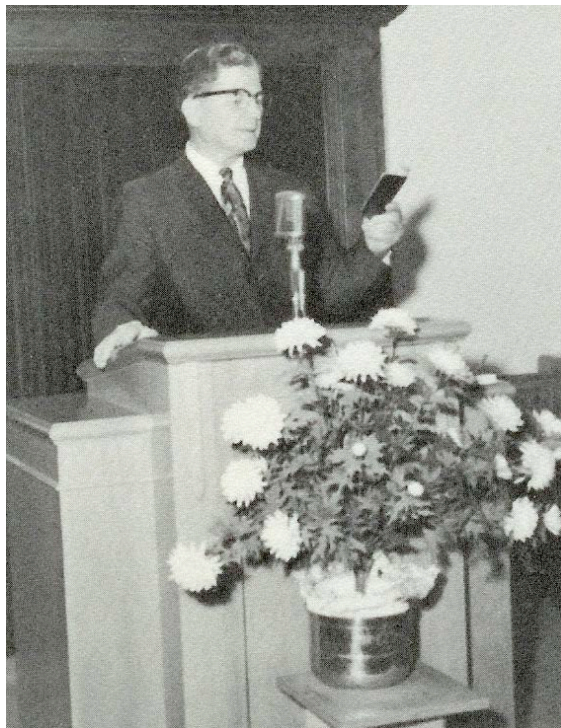
ask, what then did the baptism of the Holy Spirit do for him and his household? It was simply to bear witness to the Jews that God had accepted the Gentiles as subjects of his gospel the same as he had the Jews. “And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us” (Acts 15:8.) The Jews had in mind that the gospel was intended for them only and not for the Gentiles. The vessel Peter saw was to assure him that he might go to the Gentiles “doubting nothing” (Acts 10:20.) As further proof that it was for convincing the Jews and not for converting the Gentiles, we find the six Jewish brethren that accompanied Peter (Acts 11:12) “were astonished...because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost” (Acts 10:45.) When Peter saw the Holy Spirit come upon them, he was convinced and said, “What was I, that I could withstand God?” (Acts 11:17.) He said also, “Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord” (Acts 10:47, 48.) The apostles at Jerusalem, when they heard that Peter had gone unto the Gentiles, accused him of doing that which was unlawful. (Acts 15:1-3.) When Peter told of his trance and of the outpouring of the Spirit upon the Gentiles, it convinced the apostles, and “When they heard these things they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life” (Acts 11:18.) Never after this did the apostles question the fact that the gospel was intended also for the Gentiles as well as the Jews. The baptism of the Holy Spirit upon Cornelius and his house evidenced God’s acceptance of them but *did not* save them.

The words that Peter was to speak *would save*. Peter had not finished the words he must speak when the Holy Spirit came upon them. “As I began to speak,” says Peter, “the Holy Ghost fell on them” (Acts 11:15.)

Peter spoke after the Holy Ghost had come upon them--- “And he commanded them to be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost the same as we” (Acts 10:47, 48.) Water baptism is necessary to salvation---“He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.” (Mk. 16:16.) “Repent, and be baptized every one of you in

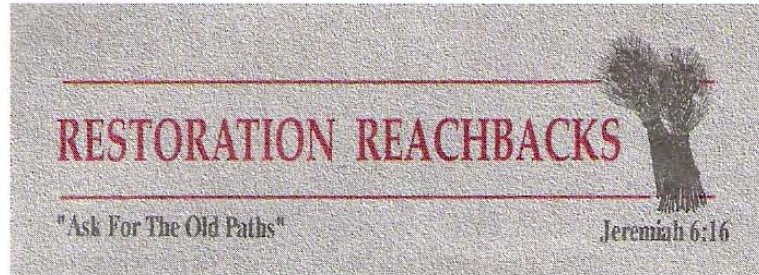
the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins” (Acts 2:38.) “Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins” (Acts 22:16.) “The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us” (I Pet. 3:21.) The above scriptures prove water baptism essential to remission of sins. After Cornelius had received the Holy Spirit baptism, Peter, who was to tell him what to do, told him to be baptized in water. Nowhere is it even indicated that Peter told him to be baptized with the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit baptism came as a surprise to Peter and *not* because he commanded it.

Cornelius’ conversion was in the same manner as all other New Testament conversions. He heard the word; he believed the word; he was baptized. “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.” Cornelius believed; he was baptized; he was saved. God has not promised us the baptism of the Holy Spirit; he has commanded us to be obedient to the gospel. Let us do God’s biddings. Then, we can expect salvation.



Bells
Tennessee

This article from The Gospel Witness, December 1940
Was printed in the
Gospel Gleaner, April-June 1997



Are We Saved Out of the Church?

J.B. Gaither

The church is built upon Christ as the foundation. When Peter had confessed Christ as “the Christ the Son of the Living God,” Christ said, “Upon this rock I will build my church” (Matthew 16:15-19). The rock of which Christ spoke was the great truth that He was the Son of God. Christ is referred to repeatedly as “the stone (rock) which was set at naught of the builders” (Acts 4:11; 1 Peter 2:6-8). In 1 Corinthians 3:11 Paul refers to Christ as the foundation. (1) The church is the institution built upon Jesus Christ. It is defined as (2) the kingdom of which Christ is King (Matthew 16:18-19). Paul writing to Timothy said, “These things write I unto you hoping to come to you shortly; but if I tarry long that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God which is the church of the living God...” (1 Timothy 3:15). (3) The church is the house of the living God. Paul, in speaking of Christ, said God “gave Him to be head over all things to the church, which is His body...” (Ephesians 1:22-23). Thus we learn that the church is the very (4) body of Christ. Jesus came to save the world, but Paul said: “Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for it” (Ephesians 5:25; Acts 20:28). (5) The church is the price of Christ’s blood. Again, Paul to the church at Rome says: “...ye should be married to another even to

Him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God” (Romans 7:4). Here he is saying (6) the church is married to Christ -- His bride, His wife. In Ephesians Paul again says, “For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the Head of the church....Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their husbands in everything...For no man yet hateth his own flesh but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church” (Ephesians 5:23-29). Here Paul shows the church to be the wife of Christ whom “He nourisheth and cherisheth.” The same relationship exists between Christ and the church that God would have to exist between husband and wife. (7) The church is also that which Christ nourisheth and cherisheth (Ephesians 5:29). In Acts 2:47, we learn that “the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.” (8) The church then is saved. Also (9) those that glorify God “Unto Him (God) be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end” (Ephesians 3:21). God is glorified only in and by the church.

Now let us reason on the nine definitions of the church given above and see if we can be saved out of it.

1. If Christ is the foundation of the church and salvation can be had outside the church then Christ is not the foundation of salvation. See Hebrews 5:8-9. Christ is the “author of eternal salvation.”

2. If the church is Christ’s kingdom and salvation can be had out of the church, one can be saved without being a servant or subject of Christ. Christ is “the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him” (Hebrews 5:9).

3. The church is the house of God. If salvation can be found outside the church, God need not have a house. “In my Father’s house are many mansions...I go to prepare a place for you.” (John 14:2-3).

4. The church is the body of Christ. If one can be saved out of the church, Christ is not his Saviour. “Christ...is the Saviour of the body” (Ephesians 5:23).

5. Christ gave Himself for the church. If one can be saved out of the church, Christ’s blood was not necessary, but was shed in

vain. We know that this is not true "...the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin" (1 John 1:7; Hebrews 9:13-14).

6. The church is Christ's bride. God had declared that if a man cleave into his wife the two become one (Ephesians 5:31). Therefore, to this extent, Christ and His church are one and inseparable. For salvation to be had out of the church would be like a child coming into life by means of only one parent. This cannot be! One might as well try to claim relationship to his father and deny any relationship to his mother as to claim salvation through Christ separate and apart from the church.

7. Christ cherisheth the church. To be saved out of the church would mean salvation without being loved or cherished by Christ. See Galatians 2:20.

8. The saved are added by the Lord to the church. Therefore it would be impossible to be saved and not be a member of the New Testament church. To do so would be for the Lord to fail to do His duty. He adds the saved to the church daily (Acts 2:47).

9. The church constitutes or includes those that glorify God. If one could be saved out of the church, one could be saved without glorifying God. "He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord" (1 Corinthians 1:31). "Therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Corinthians 6:20). We must glorify God, but it can only be done in and through the church.

We are taught in the New Testament to believe (Mark 16:16 and Hebrews 11:6); to repent (Acts 2:38; Acts 17:30; 2 Peter 3:9); and to be baptized (Acts 2:38; Mark 16:15-16; Acts 22:16). When we have completed this primary obedience, we are saved, and the Lord adds us to the church. Proof: We are baptized into Christ (Romans 6:3; Galatians 3:27). "If any man be in Christ he is a new creature" (2 Corinthians 5:17). We are baptized (buried) to be raised into a new life (Romans 6:4). This new life is in Christ; it is in His body, the church.



David Lipscomb College Lectureship
1953

The Gospel Witness
Gainesboro, Tennessee
June, 1941

SINGING AS WORSHIP

By J.B. Gaither

We are commanded to worship God “in spirit and in truth” (John 4:24). For our worship to be “in truth,” it must be prescribed in God’s word for “thy word is truth” (John 17:17). Paul commanded the church to “let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord” (Col. 2:17). In Eph. 5:19 there is a like passage. Singing is definitely a part of the worship expected by our Father. All Christians should sing hymns and praises unto God when we meet to worship.

But one may ask, “Can we not also have mechanical instruments of music, too, in our worship?” NO. That is the plainest way I know to answer that question. But the question comes again: “Why can’t we use that kind of music?” Answer: The Lord didn’t authorize it; the apostles didn’t teach it; the early church didn’t practice it. That should be sufficient for any who want to obey the Lord. Too, Paul teaches that “we must walk by faith” (2 Cor. 5:7). “Without faith it is impossible to please him” (Heb. 11:6). “Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God” (Rom. 10:17). “Whatsoever is not of faith is sin” (Rom. 14:23). Such music cannot be found or heard from the word of God; hence, it cannot be *by faith*; therefore, it is *sinful* to use mechanical instruments of music in our worship unto God. Again, let us worship him “in spirit and in truth.”

“Genesis to Revelation”

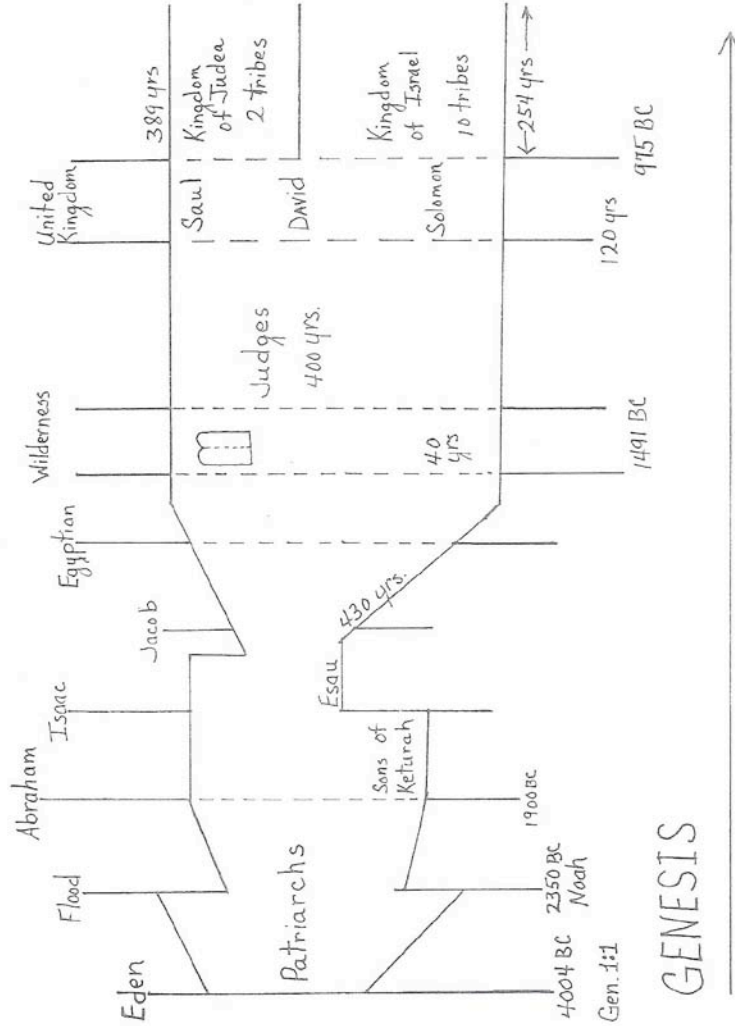
J.B. Gaither had a well known sermon he called “Genesis to Revelation.” It was displayed on a large sheet he hung up on the wall. Many congregations requested this sermon for their gospel meeting. He usually preached it on the closing night, and it took more time than the usual sermon.

In 1953 alone, below is a list of the dates and places he preached this sermon.

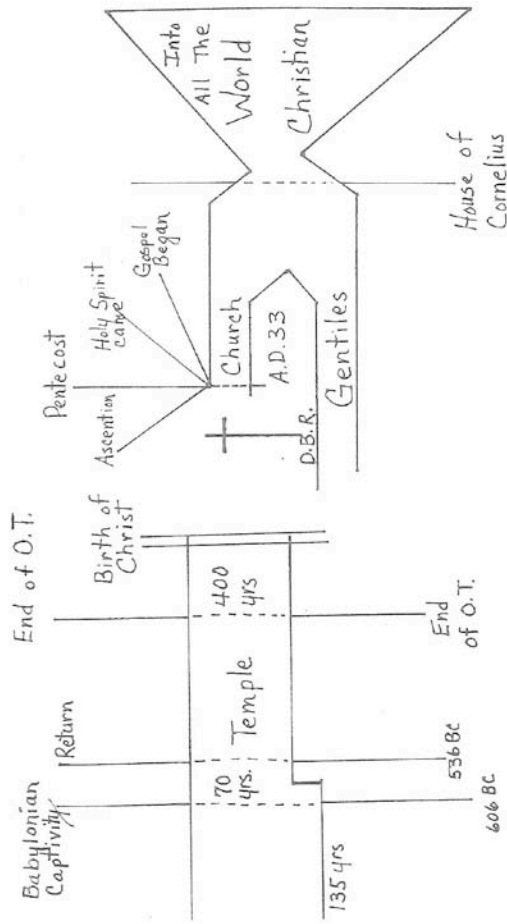
May 25 – Bellwood
June 8 – Madisonville, Kentucky
June 22 – Algood
July 22 – Mitchellville
September 27 – Big Bottom
October 19 – Antioch in Jackson County
November 15 – Old Union
November 19 – Fountain Head
November 23 – Rock Bridge
November 24 – Willette
November 25 - Downtown Church, Lawrenceburg, TN
November 29 – New Deal
December 3 – Mt. Pleasant in Macon County
December 22 – White Oak

Thanks to JB’s nephew, Tom Gaither O’Neal, we have a copy of this sermon chart. He drew it off as he sat in the audience at the Downtown Church of Christ in Lawrenceburg, Tennessee in 1953. If you have an audio tape of this sermon, the family would love to have a copy.

That chart is shown on the following two pages.



GENESIS



REVELATION



Chart by J. B. Gaither
 Nov. 25, 1953 - Doughton Church
 copied by Tom Gaither O'Neal

From the Cradle to the Grave
Earth ^{or} to Heaven

1. Innocency
2. World of Sin
3 H
4 B
5 R
6 C
7 B In faith into Christ

8 Faith
9 Virtue
10 Knowledge
11 Temperance
12 Patience
13 Godliness
14 Bro. Kindness
15 Love Heaven
16

Interpretation of Sermon Outline Follows:

From the Cradle to the Grave
Or
Earth to Heaven

1. Innocency
2. World of Sin
3. Hear
4. Believe
5. Repent
6. Confess
7. Baptism (In Faith...Into Christ)
8. Faith
9. Virtue
10. Knowledge
11. Temperance
12. Patience
13. Godliness
14. Brotherly Kindness
15. Love
16. Heaven



Bells, Tennessee

Christian Education...

Though he wasn't the product of a Christian college, JB, in the early years of his ministry, was interested and involved with Christian education. In the 1930's, he went to a meeting concerning the indebtedness of David Lipscomb College in Nashville, Tennessee and how they might pay off the sum owed. He attended the Lectureship at David Lipscomb every year, speaking at the Lectureship in 1953. On other occasions, he mentions preaching at David Lipscomb, on at least one occasion, out on the lawn.

Freed-Hardeman College in Henderson, Tennessee was also a long time interest of JB's. The fact that N.B. Hardeman was a friend to the Gaithers likely accounts for part of the interest JB showed this college through the years. Way back in his tenure at Gainesboro, he wrote in his diary that some "folks" from Freed-Hardeman College came to worship services, looking for prospective students. Through the years, the attention given to the college grew as JB had nieces who attended there. Besides their daughter, Sandra, he and Mary have now had eight grandchildren and seven of their spouses to attend, and currently three great grandchildren are enrolled. JB and Mary often attended the Lectures at Freed-Hardeman, especially after moving to Springfield and the years that they were at Bells.

It was during the years at Bells that Mary also got involved with the group of women who raise money for the school with crafts, bake sales, etc. The Freed-Hardeman Associates had a chapter in Crockett County, and she served as President of that chapter while in Bells. JB also attended debates held at the college. Occasionally he "donated" a gospel meeting to the college by sending them the pay he received.

From F-HC News and Report, December, 1975:

***J.B. Gaither Sets Example---** J.B. Gaither, who preaches for the Liberty Church of Christ, Fayetteville, Tennessee, enclosed a check for \$600 from a meeting in which he preached recently. He writes, "Enclosed is a check for the meeting I held for Freed-Hardeman this year." We have placed his generous gift in the auditorium fund. Brother and Sister Gaither have been diligent workers in behalf of Freed-Hardeman College for a number of years and we appreciate them so very much, Dr. E. Claude Gardner said.*

It is most fitting that Jackson Christian School in Jackson, Tennessee has a Library that bears the name "J.B. & Mary Gaither." JB and Mary were avid supporters of this school that Frances and her husband, Victor Sullivan, had helped to launch in the late 1970's. The Gaithers had an extra interest in the school as their two Sullivan grandchildren attended there.

Shortly after JB's death in 1980, the brethren in his beloved Jackson County decided to establish a fund in his memory that would benefit preacher students. In 1990, the funds were transferred to the family, and a grandson, Ted Williams, maintained the funds for about ten years. In 2000, an endowment was set up at Freed-Hardeman University, named the "J.B. & Mary Gaither Scholarship Fund."

Anyone interested in donating to Christian education and keeping alive the memory of J.B. and Mary Gaither, may contribute to this account by sending a gift to:

Office of Development
Freed-Hardeman University
158 E. Main Street
Henderson, TN 38340-9899



JB & Mary
In Springfield
1940's



In Gallatin
1950's

Church Bulletin Excerpts & Favorite Songs...

JB took a great deal of pride in his church bulletins. The bulletins he created over the years in Springfield, Gallatin, Bells and at the Liberty congregation in Fayetteville were bound in hardback form.

The master bedroom at Gallatin had one side of the room taken up with his old Royal typewriter, mimeograph machine, paper cutter, etc. He used one of those plastic ruler type pattern makers to stencil his designs onto the pages. He would then create borders on the pages with the typewriter, making a row of t t t t t t t t or ***** or whatever he could to form a border. He had no font choices, few ink color choices, and no easy way to correct mistakes. Oh how he would have loved modern technology for his publications!

In his 1950 bound volume at Nashville Road in Gallatin, he states these purposes for his bulletin:

It has been the purpose of the editor to report through this medium:

- 1. The program and news of the church*
- 2. To bring such bits of philosophy, based on God's truth, as will inspire its readers to higher and nobler heights and cause them to be loyal to the Lord in His church, and*
- 3. To include poems of truth, beauty, and lasting influence for good.*

Twenty-five years later, in his first issue of the Liberty Newsletter, September 7, 1975, he repeats the same message, so his purpose for a church bulletin never waned throughout his ministry.

He also noted in 1978:

I have 34 years of my church bulletins (my work) in bound volumes. They are priceless. When I began binding, they cost \$1.15 each. These in 1978 cost \$7 a volume. Is that what you call inflation?

They will be as readable ten years from now as they are at the present and much more enjoyable then. I hope you will enjoy the Liberty copies through the years.

On the following pages is some of the poetry he used in his church bulletins. Though we never knew of his writing any poetry, he truly loved it. He used it quite often in his bulletins, often without titles and rarely ever any mention of an author. Other little sayings are included as well and comments he makes about some of them.

I believe these selections, old fashioned as they are, will portray to the reader who he was and many of his values.

*In the breast of a bulb
Is the promise of spring
In the little blue egg
Is the bird that will sing
In the soul of the seed
Is the hope of the sod
In the heart of a child
Is the kingdom of God.*

From the Bells church bulletin, "The Bugle" on March 2, 1969:

The Elders had a talk among themselves about talk that is going on among some during the worship. I would suggest that the young people watch their parents and if they see them talking during worship, ask them not to do it and vice versa.

NUFF CED !

God's Will for You and Me

*Just to be tender, just to be true
Just to be glad the whole day through
Just to be merciful, just to be mild
Just to be trustful as a little child
Just to be gentle, kind and sweet
Just to be helpful with willing feet
Just to be cheery when things go wrong
Just to drive sadness away with a song
Whether the hour is dark or bright
Just to be loyal to God and right
Just to believe that God knows best
Just in His promises ever to rest
Just to let love be our daily key
That is God's will for you and for me.*

*Isn't the above beautiful and edifying?
JBG*

Blessings

*Count your garden by flowers,
Never by leaves that fall;
Count your days by golden hours,
Don't remember the clouds at all.*

*Count your night by stars, not shadows,
Count your life by smiles, not tears,
And on this and on each tomorrow,
Count your age by friends, not years.*

John R. McCrillis

JUST TO HAVE A FRIEND STAND BY

*When trouble comes your soul to try,
You love the friend who just stands by.
Perhaps there's nothing he can do;
The task is strictly up to you,
For there are troubles all your own,
And paths the soul must tread alone--
Times when love can't smooth the road,
Nor friendship lift the heavy load.
But just to feel you have a friend,
Who will stand by you until the end,
Whose sympathy through all endures,
Whose warm handclasp is always yours,
Although there's nothing he can do,
It helps somehow to pull you through.
And so with fervent heart we cry:
"God bless the friend who just stands by."*

THE WORTH OF ADVERSITY

*For every hill I've had to climb,
For every stone that bruised my feet,
For all the blood and sweat and grime,
For the blinding storms and burning heat,
My heart sings but a grateful song.
These were the things that made me strong.*

*For all the heartaches and the tears,
For all the anguish and the pain,
For gloomy days and fruitless years,
And for the hopes that lived in vain,
I do give thanks, for now I know
These were the things that helped me grow!*

The Ladder of Life

(Read Upward)

GOD

The Sod,

Death,

Aching Eighties,

Sober Seventies,

Serious Sixties,

Fiery Fifties,

Forceful Forties,

Tireless Thirties,

Teachable Twenties,

Tender Teens,

Charming Childhood.

Heaven is not reached by a single bound;

But we build the ladder by which we rise

From the lowly earth to the vaulted skies,

And we mount its summit round by round.

Once a Day

The phrase "Fear not" is found 365 times in the Bible.

That's once for each day of the year.

A religion that won't take you to worship, won't take you to Heaven.

I expect to pass through this world but once

Any good therefore that I can do,

Or any kindness that I can show

To any fellow creature,

Let me do it now.....

Let me not neglect it,

For I SHALL NOT PASS THIS WAY AGAIN.

AS THE AUDIENCE LOOKS FROM THE PULPIT----

*Have you ever wondered
just*

*what our crowd looks
like*

from where I stand?

*Sometimes there are no
two*

*close enough to talk except
on*

the back seat.

*Sometimes I dream what
it would*

*be like if we
would*

allsittogetherlikethis and thatupfront.

Let'stryitandsee!

LIKE YOU

*If all the others CAME like you,
Would there seldom be a vacant pew?
Or would the opposite be true,
If all the others CAME like you?*

*If all the others GAVE like you,
Then how much giving would the church do?
Would the bills be paid as they fell due,
If all others GAVE like you?*

*If all others WORKED like you,
How much service would the church do?
Would the Master's plan be carried through,
If all others WORKED like you?*

*God is in every tomorrow,
Therefore, I love for today,
Certain of finding at sunrise
Guidance and strength for the way;
Power for each moment of weakness
Hope for each moment of pain,
Comfort for every sorrow,
Sunshine and joy after rain.*

*It is better to walk in the dark with God,
Than to walk alone in the light;
It is better to walk with Him by faith;
Than to walk alone by sight.*

REMEMBER: *Your loyalty to Christ is measured by your faithfulness to the church.* JBG

WHY IS IT?

*That you will go to your own supper table, but not to the Lord's table?
That you will go to work in the rain, but not to church services?
That you have time to read the newspaper, but not the Bible?
That you will obey the doctor to gain better health, but not the Lord to be saved
from your sins?
That you will give money to the theater, but not to the Lord?
That you will obey traffic laws, but not the law of God?
That you will talk to your dog, but not to God?
That you will invite others to your club, but not to church?
That you will send recipes, but not gospel tracts?
That you will mention the weather in conversation, but not the Lord?
That you will give donations to the community chest, but not to spread the gospel
in foreign lands?
That you will make plans for your vacation, but not for eternity?*

WHY IS IT?

THIS IS THE WAY THE CH CH LOOKS WHEN U R AWAY.

*How would you expect to get to heaven
if you do not attend the services of the church?
Why would you even want to go to Heaven
if you do not enjoy being with God's people here?
What you say on your knees won't have much effect
unless you practice it on your feet.
Remember, "WE are workers together with God."*

THE FIFTIETH BOY

About one boy in fifty will remain after the feast and of his own accord offer to help clear the things up or to wash the dishes.

DO YOU KNOW THIS FIFTIETH BOY?

There are forty-nine boys who are seeking jobs. The job seeks the fiftieth boy. The fiftieth boy smoothes the wrinkles out of his teacher's forehead and takes the worry out of her mind.

All the frowns and sour faces brighten when they see the fiftieth boy coming, for he is brave and cheery.

The forty-nine "didn't think:" the fiftieth boy thinks.

The fiftieth boy makes a confidant of his mother and a pal of his father.

He does not lie, steal nor tattle, because he does not like to. When he sees a banana peel on the sidewalk, where it is liable to cause someone to slip and fall, or a piece of glass in the road where it might puncture a tire, he picks it up.

The forty-nine think it's none of their business.

The fiftieth boy is a good sport. He does not whine when he loses. He does not cry when he is hurt. He does not sulk when another wins the prize. He is respectful to all women and girls. He is not afraid to do right, not ashamed to be decent. He looks you straight in the eye. He tells the truth, whether the consequences to him are unpleasant or not. He is pleasant toward his sister. He is not sorry for himself.

DO YOU HAVE THAT KIND OF BOY *at your house?*

If you do not, don't complain. There are not enough to go around.

("It wouldn't hurt to have a fiftieth girl. JBG")

*If you can't be a pine on the top of the hill,
Be a scrub in the valley--but be
The best little scrub by the side of the rill;
Be a bush if you can't be a tree.
If you can't be a highway, then just be a trail;
If you can't be the sun, be a star;
It isn't by size that you win or you fail--
Be the best of whatever you are.*

D. Malloch

BENEVOLENCE-CARE FOR PARENTS

The old man had been passed about from one child to another until finally, they became tired of him. The decision was made to take him to the poor house. His oldest son, took the old man and his young son, and put them on the wagon and started off. As they came near the poor house, the wagon went to the top of the hill and they could see the institution in the distance. The small boy asked his father, "Daddy, what is that?"
"That's the poor house, son," his dad told him. "We're taking Grandpa there."
"Daddy," asked the little boy, "Is that where I am going to take you when you are old?"
The man turned the wagon around and went home.

THE BRIDGE BUILDER

*An old man going a lone highway,
Came in the evening, cold and gray,
To a chasm, vast, and deep, and wide,
Through which was flowing a swollen tide.
The Old Man crossed in the twilight dim--
That swollen tide meant naught to him;
But he turned when he was safe on the other side,
And built a bridge to span that tide.*

MARY HAD A LITTLE BOY

*Mary had a little boy,
His soul was white as snow.
He never went to Bible class,
'Cause Mary wouldn't go.
He never heard the tales of Christ,
That thrill the childish mind;
While other children went to class,
This child was left behind.
And as he grew from babe to youth,
She saw to her dismay;
A soul that once was snowy white,
Become a dirty gray.
Realizing he was lost,
She tried to win him back;
But now the soul that once was white,
Had turned an ugly black.
She even started back to church,
And Bible study too.
She begged the preacher, "Isn't there
A thing that you can do?"
The preacher tried, and failed, and said,
"We're just too far behind.
I tried to tell you years ago,
But you would pay no mind."
And so, another soul is lost,
That once was white as snow.
Bible study would have helped...
But Mary wouldn't go.*

Blake Martin

If you can read the above with dry eyes, you either don't have a child, or you have very little concern for a human soul. JBG

INTROSPECTION

*To get his goodnight kiss, he stood
Beside my chair one night.
And raised an eager face to me,
A face with love alight.
And as I gathered in my arms
The son God gave to me,
I thanked the lad for being good,
And hoped he'd always be.
His little arms crept 'round my neck,
And then I heard him say
Four simple words I shan't forget--
Four words that made me pray.
They turned a mirror on my soul,
On secrets no one knew.
They startled me, I hear them yet;
He said, "I'll be like you."*

TRY THIS:

*If you think it is hard to sit through a sermon, try preaching one.
If you think the pew is hard, try the pulpit.
If you think the singing should be better, try leading the song service.
If you think the teaching is not plain enough, try explaining the lesson yourself.
If you think the church is not friendly, try speaking to someone before he speaks to you.*

What we do for ourselves alone dies with us. What we do for others remains and is immortal. Albert Pike

THE ETERNAL LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY

Some Essential Facts

Founder	Jesus Christ	Matt. 16:18
Place	Jerusalem	Lk. 24:47; Acts 2
Date	Pentecost AD 30	Acts 2:1
Home Office	Heaven	John 14:5-7
Rate Book	The Bible	2 Tim. 2:15

Its Present Standing

Capital	Riches in Christ	Eph. 3:8
Reserve Fund	Incorruptible	I Peter 1:4
Liabilities	He accepts all	John 6:37
Surplus	Above asking	Eph. 3:20
Dividends	Hundredfold plus	Mark 10:30

How To Secure A Policy

Hearing	Faith by hearing	Rom. 10:17
Believing	On Christ	Acts 16:31
Repentance	God's Command	Acts 17:30
Confession	With the mouth	Rom. 10:10
Baptism	Buried with Him	Rom. 6:4

How To Keep The Police In Force

Pray	--without ceasing	I Thess. 5:17
Pay	--each week	I Cor. 16:1
Add	--virtues	2 Peter 1:5-7
Attend	--weekly services	Acts 20:7
Continue	--to the end of life	Rev. 2:10

From Wonder Book of Bible Knowledge

A DIFFERENCE---

*The difference between catching men and fish is that
when you catch a fish, which is alive, it dies;
But when you catch men, who are dead in sin,
it is only then that they start to live."*

Songs

All who knew JB know how he loved to sing. "I Love to Tell the Story" could have been his theme song. He loved many hymns, but these are some that come to mind when the family recalls his singing around the house.

"The Gospel is For All" is a song he liked so well he preached a sermon with that title. He could also be heard singing "Walking Alone at Eve." We have a tape of him singing solo "The Last Mile of the Way." Other favorites were "Heaven Holds All to Me," "We'll All Sing Together By and By," "Hold to God's Unchanging Hand," and "A Beautiful Life," but there is one song that, without fail, brings Daddy to our remembrance.

The Lord Has Been Mindful of Me

Written by L.O. Sanderson

*Though I through the valley of shadow,
O'er mountain or troubled sea,
And oft in the darkness have traveled,
The Lord has been mindful of me!*

Chorus

*Much more than my grief or my sorrow,
Much more than adversity,
Much more than the all I have given,
The Lord has been mindful of me!*

Chorus

*I'm rich! I am saved! I am happy!
I've health and prosperity!
I've friends! I have doors ever open!
The Lord has been mindful of me!*

Chorus

*The Lord has been mindful of me!
He blesses and blesses again!
My God is the God of the living!
How excellent is His name!*

(Used by permission from Leon Sanderson).

Daddy attended L.O. Sanderson's singing school. It is not known how well he knew brother Sanderson, but it is speculated that he esteemed him highly. The following information about the origin of that song is taken from Sanderson's autobiography.

*(Gospel Advocate, Vol. CXLVI, No. 9,
September, 2004, pages, 26-28, as re-published at
<http://www.TheRestorationMovement.com/sanderson.htm>.)*

L.O. Sanderson • "The Lord Has Been Mindful of Me"

"When I was converted in 1922, I first thought I had made a sacrifice. I left a good work, providing good pay and good friends and boosters with an opportunity to receive worthy promotion. I was involved in fund-raising for the Methodist church with a goal of \$75 million for mission work. But I left that and became a member of the church which had suffered brunts from denominationalism everywhere. But I didn't really sacrifice. I didn't miss a week's work by the change. I found so many true associations. I had a thousand mothers in spiritual Israel. I had brothers and sisters by the thousands who were nearer and dearer than flesh kin. I was led into endeavors that far outstripped what I had been doing. I decided I had been wonderfully blessed. With this feeling, I wrote "The Lord Has Been Mindful of Me." You can see this story in the lyrics. In days of

shadow, troubles and darkness, the Lord has still been mindful. More than any grief, sorrow, adversity or sacrifice, I have been blessed. I'm rich, saved, happy, in good health, prosperous in many ways, homes open to me and friends of greater value than all the wealth of the world. Indeed, God blesses and blesses again. And this was the song of my heart."

And we believe that, in addition to a very grateful heart to the Lord, that this story and an admiration for L.O. Sanderson is why Daddy chose this to be the song of *his* heart as well.

2 Sunday, May 5, 1963

125th Day—240 days to follow

CLEAR
CLOUDY
RAIN
SNOW

Subjects: "Church, Worship, Worshippers"
 "Worship God, Christ, Scriptures"
 (Rev. 11)

Had our Singing at
 High School Auditorium.

816 present. 70 Congregations.
 Largest & best ever.
 Never anything like it.
 Made tape.
 Several by after sing
 + in eve.

everywhere. But I didn't really sacrifice. I didn't miss a week's work by the change. I found so many true associations. I had a thousand mothers in spiritual Israel. I had brothers and sisters by the thousands who were nearer and dearer than flesh kin. I was led into endeavors that far outstripped what I had been doing. I decided I had been wonderfully blessed. With this feeling, I wrote "The Lord Has Been Mindful of Me." You can see this story in the lyrics. In days of shadow, troubles and darkness, the Lord has still been mindful. More than any grief, sorrow, adversity or sacrifice, I have been blessed. I'm rich, saved, happy, in good health, prosperous in many ways, homes open to me and friends of greater value than all the wealth of the world. Indeed, God blesses and blesses again. And this was the song of my heart."

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 Largest sheet ever.
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 Several by after sing
 & in eve.

Stories, Quotes & Jokes...

Some of these stories are tales he told and others are stories that have been told on him.

Daddy often mentioned the example of the man who was either not in the church or was a wayward Christian. The man kept saying, "Oh, as soon as I get straightened out, I'll come to church." Well, he did finally come to church. He came in a wooden box carried by six men, and he was definitely straightened out! A quote from one of his bulletins: *A hearse is a poor thing to ride to church in.*

Daddy told the story of a man who paid him \$1 to marry him and his wife, and less than two years later, paid him \$5 to bury her! We thought it was a made-up story, but when I was reading through all his diaries, I noticed that a woman died two years after he had married them. I went back and checked his log book for the wedding and funeral and found that this story was indeed a true one.

As a young man of 30 in 1931, Daddy had a bicycle as well as a car. He mentioned riding the bicycle to get ice. One day a boy stole his bike. He chased him down and called the police. A couple of days later he went to court to settle the matter, and the bike was soon returned to him.

One night while preaching, the small building was filled to capacity. People stood around outside near the windows or sat in their cars with the windows down so they could hear. This was before the days of air conditioning, so it was no wonder that a cat got into the church building. The cat wandered around between the peoples' feet and legs, greatly distracting from the service. As it got close to a man by an open window, he picked up the cat and threw it out the window. Unfortunately, a woman was standing just outside the window, and the cat hit her on the head. The cat and the woman both screamed, but Daddy claimed he never missed a word of his sermon.

He was preaching at a little church building near some railroad tracks. During the song service, a train whistle blew. The song leader took that as his pitch and started the song.

One day a rather large guy came forward to be baptized. Several men refused to baptize him because of his size, stating they would never be able to get him up out of the water. Finally one man said, "I can." They proceeded to the river, and after the baptizer prayed in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, he said, "Squat John."

Daddy did a lot of his meeting preaching way out "in the sticks," so to speak. He traveled down lots of little country roads. As far as we know, he never brought home "road kill," but he certainly knew how to "road steal." He carried a gunny sack in his trunk at all times. We knew it as the "possum sack." He was very good at head lighting the gross little critters and sacking them without harm to them or him. We all liked possum, as long as we thought it was roast beef while we were eating it.

One time while he was gone on what seemed like a very long out of town trip to preach, Mama, John B. and I were at home alone in the big old house at Gallatin. Our bedrooms were upstairs, but we heard something walking around up there, so none of us wanted to go up there. Days later when Daddy made it back home, he was once again our hero as he braved the steps clear up to the attic and brought down a family of possums. I guess times were hard, and he had been praying for more groceries for the table!

Possoms were not just an economic issue with him because of the large family he had to feed. For in the late 1970's, when Daddy was making a good salary and drawing a nice social security check, one of the elders there at Liberty, E.W. Brooks, brought him a possum and Mama cooked it. I can still hear him say something like, "There's no finer meat than that!"

He loved to point his finger at a child, spiral it towards them and say, "Johnny shot a crane and it flew and it flew and it landed right there!" He would touch the child just as the "crane" got to them. That would send them running or giggling, and they loved it.

When his first granddaughter, Robin, was just a toddler, the Pillsbury Dough Boy was real popular for the first time. On the television commercial, someone would poke the "Pop 'N Fresh" in the tummy, and he would laugh. Daddy would poke Robin in the tummy and saying, "Ha, Ha, Ha, Ha, Ha!" His reward for that was that Robin and several of the other grandchildren after her, called him "Ha-Ha."

He had a little finger play he would do with the young and sometimes the not-so-young:

Drink puppy, drink

Drink puppy, drink

Stand back, big dog

Let puppy drink.

When my brother, John B., was in the first or second grade, he and some other boys got into what you would call a "My daddy's job is better than your daddy's job" type discussion. (I'm guessing the one who started it had a policeman, fireman or truck/equipment driver daddy). After a couple of boys proclaimed their boasting, John B. piped in and added, "Well, MY daddy is a PREACHER, and he doesn't even HAVE to WORK!"

There is one thing that Daddy never accomplished that was a wish of his, and that was to play the piano. He mentioned in his dairy of 1933 that he had "practiced the piano." Mama was a very talented piano player, and he loved for her to play for him. Perhaps he was afraid if he really learned how, he would play *better* than her, and didn't want to outshine her there?! Once the audio cassette tape players came out, he recorded her playing, and they would listen to it when they took naps and as they went to sleep at night. (He was so

thankful for “modern technology,” such a giant step from the reel to reel Wallensak recorder to which he was accustomed!)

In his later years, he was always telling Mama that she snored. If she knew it, she wouldn’t admit it. One night he brought the little cassette recorder into the bedroom and taped her “buzzing.” The next day he turned on the recording and asked her if she knew what that was. After listening several times, she caught on to his trick. She didn’t seem to appreciate it at all!

Jeanette Dorris of Springfield told how Daddy and Earl Childers built an outdoor grill in her mother’s yard. When they got finished, the chimney, which was supposed to be in the center, was in the corner. They had to redo it. (Knowing the talents our daddy had, we know without a doubt that Earl Childers is the one who made the mistake while Daddy stepped into the house for something!)

There were remnants of a house near Springfield, Tennessee that had two brick chimneys still standing. Patricia tells that every time they passed the ruins of that house, Daddy would say that the owner burned his house down to get rid of rats!

Daddy always carried a little testament in his shirt or coat pocket. During sermons, he would hold the testament up as he quoted scripture and appear to be reading from it. Someone noticed it was upside down from the way the ribbon hung. Another questioned him because he was “reading” from the Old Testament, and she had never seen such a little Bible with both Old and New testaments in it. He taped some Old Testament passages in it so if questioned again, he could say it had Old Testament in it.

Daddy got adjustments from the chiropractor, so I guess he thought he knew how to GIVE an adjustment. He did an adjustment on Robert Villines (while living in Springfield, Tennessee). Robert was lying on the bed when Daddy “adjusted” his neck and shoulders and

the bed fell in! Their kids all heard the crash and haven't forgotten it yet.

In Gallatin, we lived on West Main Street which was the highway to Nashville. Every stranger that came through town saw the sign that Daddy had planted out front, right by the road. It read:

J.B. Gaither
Minister
Church of Christ



Needless to say, it was an open invitation to those who needed help or wanted to pretend they did. There were many times that strangers stopped, and Daddy always helped them in some way.

Mama wasn't always too happy about it, because she was rather fearful of strangers, but Daddy didn't let it stop him from helping any and all.

One afternoon, a man who looked like Kris Kringle on "Miracle on 34th Street" came to our door for help. As usual, Daddy invited him in to eat and spend the night. I was probably about fourteen years old, and the only child at home that night. I finished eating my supper and was excused from the table while the others sat around the table and talked.

I didn't believe in Santa Claus, and being the "scaredy-cat" that I was, there was just something about this man that I didn't trust. I proceeded to the bedroom where he had taken his belongings and decided to check out his possessions to see if I deemed him safe to stay with us overnight. When what to my wondering eyes should appear! He had a satchel full of knives, and I was certain that was not a good thing!

After my parents left the table, I pulled Daddy to the side to report to him of my investigative findings. I *do* believe Daddy was somewhat frightened by my findings. We all sat down in the living room to have more conversation. Daddy quizzed him about his occupation and other things until this mass murderer must have caught on to my find and told us that he was a butcher by trade! I'm not sure how secure that made my parents feel, but I didn't buy it! You can be sure that I slept in the same room with Daddy and Mama that night!

The old gentleman left the next day after he gave my parents a knife (handle first) for a token of appreciation.

Daddy and Ralph Kidd would take talcum powder with them to places they were staying during meetings that had outdoor toilets only. They called it "dry cleaning".

While attending a Christmas party at the home of some members of the congregation, egg nog was being served. Daddy jokingly asked, "Where's the stuff to spike it with?" Was he ever surprised when the hostess brought it out!

While living in Bells, he was in town one cold day and saw a man without a coat. He took his off and gave it to him.

Daddy decided to have a display of the state of Tennessee with a little scoop of soil from each of the ninety-five counties! He diligently carried little sandwich bags with him as he traveled, and at some point, he reached his goal. We don't know what became of this project, as he never completed the display case.

From the Liberty Newsletter February 20, 1977

On the day of our golden anniversary (of preaching) meeting, November 7, a highway patrol stopped a speeding car and asked, "Where are you going in such a hurry?" The reply was, "To the Liberty Church of Christ in Fayetteville." He stopped another asking the same question and received the same reply. When he stopped the third, he said, "I suppose you are going to the Liberty Church of Christ in Fayetteville."

No tickets were given, but it was known on the highway that there was a meeting at Liberty Church of Christ. It pays to advertise.

Once as Daddy headed into town, he picked up a neighbor and her little girl who were walking. They were, let's say, "less fortunate than we," and they both got into the back seat. Pretty soon the little girl said, "Maaaa-ma, do you hear that cat?" The mama said in an almost whisper, "Shut up, you don't hear no cat!" In a little bit, the girl repeated, "Maaaa-ma, do you hear that cat?" The mama replied, "Shut up, you don't hear no cat!" This went on all the way to town. Daddy could sense the woman's embarrassment that her child was so persistent. He took them to their destination and then went on about his business. When he got home, he opened the trunk for some reason, and much to his surprise, our cat *was* in the trunk!

Bob Johnson at Gainesboro tells this story involving Daddy:

There was a baptizing in the creek near Flynn's Lick.

There was a foot log constructed for crossing the creek.

The baptizing spot was a swimming hole underneath that foot log.

Bob and his cousin, Joe Johnson, were sitting up above, and Bob pushed Joe in. He landed right next to Daddy who was about to carry out the immersion. Daddy grabbed Joe by the nape of the neck and set him on the bank. When he yanked him up, his hair covered his face. Bob's parents asked him over and over, "Did you push Joe in?" He always replied, "Sometimes I think I did, and sometimes I think I didn't."

This story is reported in “Pioneers, Preachers and Patriots,” author Robert Rogers Chaffin, 2005.

While holding a funeral in a country graveyard bound by a stacked limestone fence, Brother Gaither noticed a blue tailed lizard come out of the rock fence and run for cover. Unfortunately, the darkness for which the lizard headed was up the preacher’s pant leg. Brother Gaither said, “I grabbed it with my right hand, held my Bible in my left and, held on to my wits for dear life. When I finished the funeral sermon, I simply let go and the, now dead, lizard fell out of my pants leg onto the ground. I managed to get through, but I have to say it was one of the shortest graveside services in history.”

Robert (Bob) Chaffin also told me,

His love for Mama’s fried chicken was legendary but he liked to eat light before preaching the evening sermon; and Mama (Maylean Chaffin) would hold out dessert until after the evening service was over, and then serve a little snack and dessert. She had made Coconut Pie and Aunt Ada, who lived with us, had made a blackberry cobbler, each woman trying to curry the favor of the preacher with her culinary skills. Mama came into the dining room where we were all setting around the table and said, “Would you like a piece of this Coconut pie? Or a Piece of this Blackberry Cobbler?” Bro Gaither, a wise man indeed, looked at Mama, smiled and said, “I believe I will.” She gave him a serving of each, which he seemed to enjoy with relish.

Another memory Bob recalled was being around Daddy with my Grandmother Gaither there. He said every time Grandmother called him “Burge,” he and his sister, Donnieta, would get tickled and run out of the room before it was evident. They thought that was a funny name but knew they would be in trouble for being disrespectful and giggling.

When my parents moved to Bells, Tennessee, they had finally had an empty nest and their first dishwasher. When Daddy would tell others about the preacher’s home there and improvements that had been made, he would always mention that this was her first automatic dishwasher. He then always added, *She hasn’t needed one until now, as we RAISED four dishwashers.*

Quotes & Jokes...

The following may or may not be original with Daddy, but those who knew him well, remember that he had a joke or a story for every conversation. It would often start out like, "That reminds me of the time the ole boy....." Then you would get to hear him tell it, mimicking the voices and expressions of the characters.

He loved to talk, he never met a stranger, never forgot a face or name. He had a super sense of humor and wit.

Below is just a sampling of the quotes and jokes he told. His children heard the jokes the most (over and over again through the years) until many of them have become a part of our family dialog.

What some folks would rather have than money.

It don't take much to entertain some folks.

If I'd had another dollar, I'd gotten a red one.

I'd hate to meet HIM in a dark alley.

I hate to eat and run, but it's better to eat and run than to run before you eat.

When Daddy would see a huge crowd gathered on TV or drop us off at our high school stadium for a ballgame, he nearly always would say something like,

People will drive for miles in rain or cold or hot to sit out in the elements and watch a ballgame, but they wouldn't go across town inside a nice building to hear a sermon.

One half of the world doesn't know how the other half lives.

Do what's expected or required AND THEN SOME.

Quote from one of his bulletins,
Isn't it strange how 19 drops of rain can keep 20 people away from church?

If you want to watch a good program on the television, find one with a child or animal in it.

Blessed are those who expect nothing, for they will not be disappointed.

A Christian on his knees is stronger than the devil on his throne.

Often times as we would travel on two lane roads, someone would be trailing right behind us on our bumper. When they finally got a chance to zoom around us, Daddy would say, *Go on Big Boy!*

The church is in trouble when there are no babies crying.

*If you think you're going crazy, you're not.
It's when you think everyone else is crazy, that you are.*

They're just as happy as if they had good sense.

*A man can be just as happy as he makes up his mind to be.
(Abraham Lincoln)*

This was published in his bulletin, "The Broadcast" at Nashville Road on September 12, 1954,
HELPFUL HINT - For a burn, use Clorox or Purex freely as it comes from the bottle. Apply several times immediately. It will take the fire out and keep away soreness. Do not bind or cover after using.

He often told us that and added that it would burn like crazy when you apply it, but it never would hurt again.

There will come a day when there will be no one who qualifies to be elders and deacons....because of the divorce problem in our country.

The best thing a man can do for his children is to love their mother.

A young man told his girlfriend how much he loved her, and then he said, "I'll be back tomorrow if it doesn't rain."

A girl tells her boyfriend she has a birthday coming up soon. For several days, he asks her what she wants. She always says, "I want something for my neck." So he got her a bar of soap.

A girl named Mary had a red ribbon tied around her neck. Every day her boyfriend, John asked her, "Mary, why do you wear that little red ribbon around your neck?" She always ignored the question and never would reply. After many, many times, Mary became so weary, that when he asked, she removed the ribbon and her head fell off!

At a graveside service, the audience was singing "Softly and Tenderly." Just as they lowered the casket into the ground, they sang the words, "Oh, sinner, come home."

Any job worth doing is worth doing right.

A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches.

Was your Grand mammy a monkey?

If we were at a meal where everyone had to go through the line and "thanks" had already been offered, Daddy, once he was seated and eating, would tell the others,
We're waiting on you like one dog waits for another.

Whenever a restaurant would advertise "All You Can Eat" for a certain price, Daddy would comment that it may be "all you can eat" because that's all they'll allow you to eat for that price.

Every crow thinks hers is the blackest.

A man came to the preacher for counseling and said he had left his wife. The preacher said, "Don't you remember that you took her 'for better or worse'"? The man said, "Yes Sir, but she was 'worsen' than I took her for."

There was a story he told about a discussion on the characteristics of the ideal Christian wife. One fellow came up with the formula for that perfect wife: *She's one third Mary, one third Martha and one third Marilyn Monroe.*

A policeman stopped a car with a young courting couple. He said to the young man, "Can't you use two hands"? The young man replied, "I could if I didn't have to drive."

As a young woman, I complained of some aches and pains, and he replied, *Just wait until you get up every morning feeling worse than you did when you went to bed.*

After consuming a big meal, he might say, *I enjoyed what little I ate.*

Or, *If that don't kill me, I'll eat all I want to next time.*

Since this book is written primarily for the descendants of JB and Mary, I would like to add here some of Mama's familiar quotations as well:

Beauty is only skin deep. Pretty is as pretty does.

There ought to be a law against it. This was a remark made whenever we encountered anything of excess such as a cluttered closet, etc when too much "stuff" was involved.

On the old western movies, when the guy would kiss a girl and get slapped for it, Mama would say, *You can tell she likes him.*

When leaving home on a long and tiring trip, she might say, *I had a good home and left it.*

Don't borrow trouble.

Anytime anyone dropped a spoon, fork, or knife, it was a warning that someone was coming. If my memory is correct, a knife represented a man, the fork, a woman, and the spoon, a child.

If you can't say something nice about someone, don't say anything at all.

If someone didn't "clean their plate", she would say, *I believe their eyes were bigger than their stomach.*

Mama often preferred Sprite or 7-up over colas. If she burped after drinking a 7-up, she would say, *Excuse me, but that's only one and there are six more to come.*

I gave it a lick and a promise. (Usually talking about a quick cleaning of the house).

Being an excellent seamstress and trying to please four daughters, whenever we would try on the new garment, she might say, *Whatever don't hang right on one side will hang on the other.* And for any less than perfect construction, her theory was, *It won't be noticed on a galloping horse.*

Mama claimed that Daddy always got her what she asked for. She would say, *I always get what I ask for, but I know what to ask for.*

When a conversation amongst us kids (or on TV) got a bit too personal, she would ask, *Is nothing sacred anymore?*

When she caught us being too friendly with the boys, she would let us know, *He's too familiar on short acquaintance.*

Anytime we witnessed a child walking or biking on a busy street, or doing anything potentially dangerous without parental supervision, her saying was, *I loved MY children.*



JB and Mary
At home in Gallatin, 1960's



Taking Time for Clocks...



Logo on Clockmaker's Stationery, 1959

No one seems to know what sparked the interest JB had in timepieces. Perhaps it was a quotation like the one above or a scripture about time. Perhaps it was the words of an old hymn, "Time is filled with swift transition," or "Take Time to Be Holy." Whatever lit the flame, it burned steadily and brightly from the time he was about forty years of age until his death.

He found a lot of his clocks in little junk stores wherever he went to preach. Oftentimes, they were not working, and the case needed to be refinished. He bought, traded, bartered. If the person knew him, they would sometimes just give him an old clock since it was worthless to them.

When and where he learned to repair clocks is an unknown as well. The family only knows he was self taught, learning from trial and error and experience.



The “Clock Shop”
At the Gaither Residence
656 West Main Street
Gallatin, Tennessee

The old open front garage at the Gallatin residence was enclosed and remodeled by JB about 1956 into the “Clock Shop.” He loved to give tours of the clock laden shelves that lined that old building. It was a special treat to take someone in there at noon (or even at midnight). He had a policy about perfect time, though. It was not a necessity with the clocks, as he wanted them all to strike at a different time so as not to miss hearing each one!

In spite of the constant ticking and striking, this was JB’s relaxation; a haven to relieve the daily stresses of a very busy man.

The Clock Shop was not home to all of the clocks. There were always several in the home. The Gaither household was conditioned

to sleep through constant ticking, as well as the every-quarter-hour striking, chiming and clanging.

JB planned an Open House for his Clock Shop on his birthday and the day following, May 1 and 2, 1959. He records that he had 150 guests. He likely solicited this newspaper article to promote his attendance.



For a man who has very little time to himself, J.B. Gaither of Gallatin has plenty of time on his hands.

The reason is more than 150 timepieces which he has collected over the past 20 years.

Gaither, minister of the Church of Christ in the Number One community near here, has never been schooled in horology, the science of making devices for measuring time, but he says he is able to repair just about any clock brought to him.

"All the knowledge I have about clocks is what I have gained from practical experience," he said. "Most of the ones I have are some that have been discarded and given to me. Most of them had to be reworked, so I had to learn something about them to get them in running order."

A minister, who each year preaches as many as 475 sermons, travels approximately 25,000 miles, conducts about 18 revival meetings, and teaches classes, has little time left for a hobby.

"But I find collecting these old clocks and getting them in working order gives me a certain sense of accomplishment and relaxation," said Gaither.

He admitted that on many of his trips to conduct revival meetings throughout an eight-county area in Middle Tennessee, he carries two or three of his clocks along and usually finds times between services to get them in running condition.

The collection, which Gaither values at more than \$3,000, includes clocks from Germany, France, and Switzerland. The oldest one dates back about 130 years.

He considers as the most valuable item in his collection a Waterbury striking alarm clock.

"It's just one of those kind that you can hardly find anywhere in the United States," he explained.

The minister's hobby has aroused so much interest here that he is holding open house today and tomorrow in a garage which he remodeled at his residence on Nashville road.

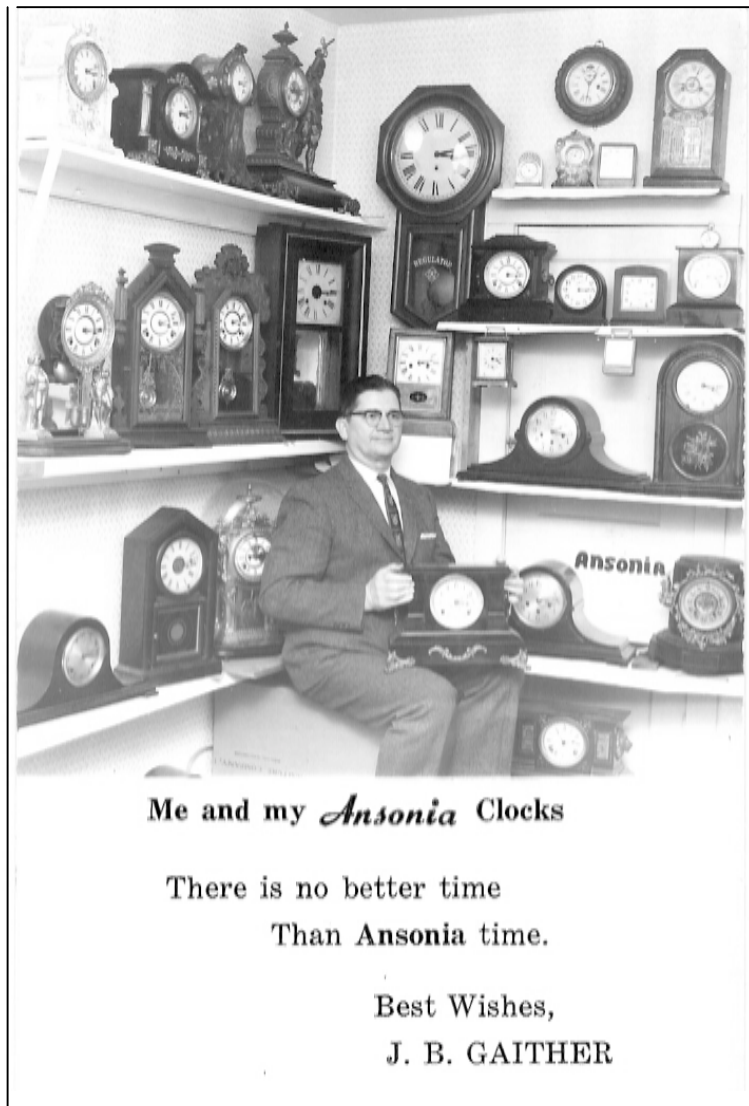
H.H. Burrum, principal of Gallatin high school, has asked to bring some of his students to study the clock collection.

"This venture of mine is certainly not a money-making project," said Gaither, "but it gives me a great deal of pleasure to share my interest with others."



—Photo by John Hinton
GALLATIN—J. B Gaither, Church of Christ minister who owns the largest timepiece collection in Sumner county, points to a prized clock which has wooden works.

Here is a picture postcard he mailed out. On the next page is the message that was sent on the back of the card:



I found my first clock June 9, 1939 in Washington, D.C. It was an ANSONIA. I was successful in getting it repaired and running. I then collected one occasionally to play with and repair. When I had 8 or 10, I conceived the idea of a collection. It went slow - 15 years later, I had only 25 clocks. The "bug" bit harder, and I started faster.

Today, Friday the 13th of Jan. 1961, I have more than 250 - all sizes from "tiny" to "grandfather." I have many different brands but somehow, somehow ANSONIA has a superior appeal. The ones on the reverse side are only a part of my ANSONIAS.

I would appreciate anything that pertains to ANSONIA history, pictures, catalogs, etc.

What do you have for sale or trade?

*The Clock Shop
656 West Main Street
Gallatin, Tennessee*



JB was a member of the National Association of Watch and Clock Collectors (NAWCC). Collectors from all over came to the "Clock Shop" to look, buy, sell or trade.



The Preacher & Clock Man
J.B. Gaither

Once upon a time, there was time.

*I am one preacher
with a hobby that I can keep
out of the pulpit. JBG*



J.B. Gaither in his "Clock Shop"
Gallatin, Tennessee

Bells, Tennessee Newspaper, 1968

Here's A Minister Who Keeps Eye On The Clock

As busy as he is, J.B. Gaither, minister of the Bells Church of Christ, has a lot of time on his hands---more than 500 antique clocks to be exact. Little clocks, big clocks, long clocks, short clocks, clocks of every description and design--Mr. Gaither has them.

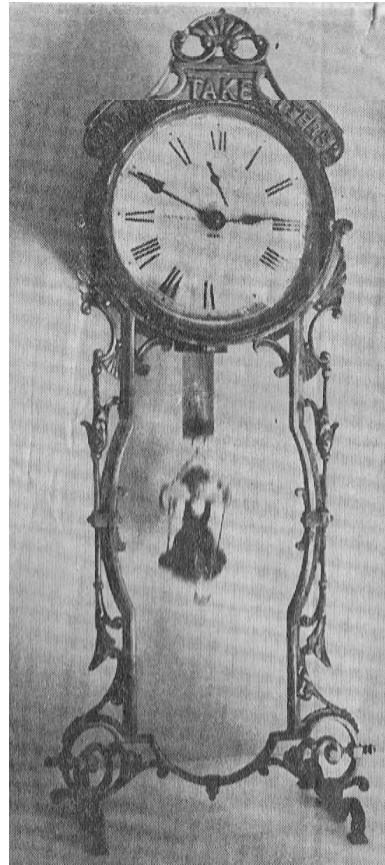


A Timeless Quality- J.B. Gaither, a collector of ancient timepieces, has more than 500 antique clocks at his home in Bells. In picture above is but a portion of his collection, most of which is still crated in boxes because he has no display room. Here he explains mechanisms of an eight-day, double steeple patented in 1845. The clock is unique in that it was activated by a wagon spring instead of the usual coil spring. The timepiece was made in Bristol, Conn.

When the 500 clocks are running--and it is a job the minister undertakes only at exhibitions--the hour mark is marked by the striking of the clocks in tones ranging from the booming base of an old Seth Thomas to the lovely tinkle of a German Music Box.

He began collecting ancient timepieces 28 years ago when a friend gave him an old clock with both doors and hands missing. The clock, an Ansonia found in Washington D.C., was easily made to run with a little cleaning and oiling. The urge to really be a clock collector did not strike him until fifteen years later when he had about twenty-five he had repaired.

Doll Dance – The camera catches the up and down movement of a doll and a spring which activates the movement of the Ansonia Bobbing Doll Clock, patented in 1886. Once the doll stops moving, the clock stops. The words over the face of the clock, “Take Dr. Petzold’s Bitters,” refers to a liquor-and-herb mixture of earlier days.



Mr. Gaither has had to do very little driving to find clocks, finding prize timepieces at auctions and stores selling second-hand wares.

He has some clocks with all wooden works which were made of apple wood before 1886.



MINISTER ENJOYS HOBBY – J.B. Gaither, minister of the Bells Church of Christ, reads the publication of the National Association of Watch and Clock Collectors Inc., of which he is a member. One of his prize clocks is the Fashion Calendar Clock patented by the Southern Calendar Clock Company about 1880. The company made about 175,000 of such clocks between 1880 and 1891.

Through the years, Mr. Gaither has gained some recognition among other collectors. He has served as president of Dixie Chapter No. 16 of the National Association of Watch and Clock Collectors. The organization has attracted members from all walks of life, including doctors, ministers, lawyers, and others in the professions. There is no age limit and many do not collect either clocks or watches--they devote their time to the collection of literature and history on clocks. Mr. Gaither served as president for five years and is still an active member.



The minister says there are more than 11,000 clock collectors in the world. By means of the organization's national Bulletin, others have heard of the Gaither collection. It is not surprising that he has had visitors from many states.

Mr. and Mrs. Gaither have lived in Bells for about three months after moving from Gallatin, Tenn., where he was minister. He now has a shortage of space for all his clocks and has about 450 of them still crated.

Mr. Gaither says he is hopeful that he will soon have ample display space so that he may have public showings of his clocks.

A DIFFERENT NAME –

Mrs. J.B. Gaither starts to wind her husband's "Grandfather's Clock,"

which originally was called a ball, or tall clock. In 1878 the song "My Grandfather's Clock" was written and gave the clock its commonly-known name. Mr. Gaither's "Grandfather's Clock" stands seven and one half feet tall and was made in Dublin, Ireland. Clocks under six feet high are called "Grandmother's Clocks."

Story by Sharon Kail; Photos by Gene Martindale

(End of Article)

A grandfather's clock was one of JB's greatest wishes for many years. That dream finally came true September 9, 1959 when he purchased his "one and only" from Forrest Finley in Lewisburg, Tennessee for \$155. This clock dates back to the 1800's and still stands tall and keeps time in Sandra's home.



J.B. Gaither & Randy Sullivan
(Grandson)
1965



Bingham Dublin
Grandfather's Clock

For some years before JB sold the collection, Mary had begged him, *Please don't leave me with that collection. I know nothing about them, have no idea what they are worth, and I wouldn't know how to go about selling them.* JB finally granted her wishes and sold the major part of the collection to James Davis Watts of Cookeville, Tennessee in 1975, just before his move from Bells to Fayetteville.

It is said that JB commented that he wanted to sell his clock collection, because he didn't want anyone else to have to "wind up" his estate.

JB enjoyed the type of music that Lawrence Welk had to offer. When the Gaithers finally had a television installed, late 1958, they watched the Lawrence Welk Show on a regular basis. He especially enjoyed hearing Larry Hooper sing. One song that Larry sang was always a favorite with JB. It may have very well been because it is about a clock! He loved the story that the song tells.

J.E. Coleman, his Clockmaker friend that lived in Nashville, apparently gave him the sheet music for that song so that Mary could play it on the piano. Inside the music, dated 1959, Mr. Coleman wrote some interesting information about what we call a "Grandfather Clock."

Many men who built "floor clocks" never knew them as "Grandfather" clocks, because that name was not applied to them until after H.C. Work wrote the song "Grandfather's Clock" about 1870. It was published in 1875.

My Grandfather's Clock
Written By: Henry Clay Work

My grandfather's clock was too large for the shelf,
So it stood ninety years on the floor;
It was taller by half than the old man himself,
Though it weighed not a pennyweight more.
It was bought on the morn of the day that he was born,
And was always his treasure and pride;

But it stopped short never to go again, when the old man died.
Ninety years without slumbering, tick, tock, tick, tock,
His life seconds numbering, tick, tock, tick, tock,
It stopped short never to go again, when the old man died.

In watching its pendulum swing to and fro,
Many hours had he spent while a boy;
And in childhood and manhood the clock seemed to know,
And to share both his grief and his joy.
For it struck twenty-four when he entered at the door,
With a blooming and beautiful bride;

But it stopped short never to go again, when the old man died.
Ninety years without slumbering, tick, tock, tick, tock,
His life seconds numbering, tick, tock, tick, tock,
It stopped short never to go again, when the old man died.

My grandfather said that of those he could hire,
Not a servant so faithful he found;
For it wasted no time, and had but one desire,
At the close of each week to be wound.
And it kept in its place, not a frown upon its face,
And its hands never hung by its side.

But it stopped short never to go again, when the old man died.
Ninety years without slumbering, tick, tock, tick, tock,
His life seconds numbering, tick, tock, tick, tock,
It stopped short never to go again, when the old man died.

It rang an alarm in the dead of the night,
An alarm that for years had been dumb;
And we knew that his spirit was pluming his flight,
That his hour of departure had come.
Still the clock kept the time, with a soft and muffled chime,
As we silently stood by his side.

But it stopped short never to go again, when the old man died.
Ninety years without slumbering, tick, tock, tick, tock,
His life seconds numbering, tick, tock, tick, tock,
It stopped short never to go again, when the old man died.

Ironically, the day before JB died suddenly, he had stopped by to see the jeweler, because his watch had quit running. He assumed it needed a new battery. This is what the last entry was in his daily diary the night before he died.

To town after lunch. My watch quit. Not battery.

Following are a couple of quotations copied from JB's church bulletins:

A Christian is like a good watch--open-faced, busy hands, well regulated, made of pure gold, and full of good works.

THE TIME YOU OWN

The clock of time is wound but once,

And no man has the power

To tell just when the hands will stop,

At late or early hour.

Now is the only time you own,

Live, love, toil with a will;

Place no faith in tomorrow, for

The clock may then be still.

To everything there is a season,
and a *time* to every purpose under heaven:
A *time* to be born, and a *time* to die...
Ecclesiastes 3:1, 2

Talents & Tidbits...

Our daddy was a man of many talents. More important than that is the fact that he *used* his talents!

“Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.” Matthew 25:21, 23

Listed below are his many abilities remembered by his children:

He was an experienced wall paper hanger-even ceilings!

He constructed furniture for his children and for their dolls.

He was a good carpenter, cabinet maker and house builder.

He constructed an outdoor grill.

He excelled in clock repair and refinishing.

He was a good and honest “wheeler and dealer.”

He had a green thumb for gardening, flowers, shrubs and trees.

He did concrete work, plumbing and electrical.

He was a store window decorator at Christmas time.

He installed glass windows.

He was a mechanic.

He hunted (especially squirrels).

He raised many, many chickens, rabbits, and pigs and had a milking cow.

He processed his own meat, rendering the lard, hanging and smoking the hams, grinding the sausage, and canning and freezing to preserve.

He was a good fisherman.

He was a school teacher for seven years before he graduated high school!

He taught as a substitute in college classes while working on his degree.

He substituted at the public schools a lot while living in Springfield, Tennessee.

He taught singing schools and often led the singing at meetings if he wasn't the preacher.
He and Mary were in a quartet that sang for various occasions.
He was a good auctioneer!
He drove a church bus for VBS.
He had high standards for his church bulletins, not only the art work, but he believed every bulletin should have some spiritual food in it.
He painted and constructed meeting signs.
He prepared the annual financial report for the church at times.
He cooked breakfast every morning he was there, and every Christmas, he made the ambrosia salad.
He could French braid hair!
He was a doctor, a nurse and a chiropractor! (to special people)
He helped Mary with canning and freezing the vegetables from the garden.
He helped Mary quilt in the early days.
He could even "tat."

One snowy day, Mama was explaining to little Ruby that God made the snow, to which Ruby replied, *I thought Daddy did it!*

There wasn't much he couldn't do. He could fix anything, including electric motors. His children were certainly convinced he was able to do *anything*.

We also felt like we would always have our daddy with us; that he could never die. Then the day came that he *did die*. Just when we realized the only thing he *couldn't* do was live forever.....we quickly realized he is able to do even that (with the Lord's help)!

Interesting Tidbits from his Diaries...

1931- There were very few church houses in Ohio, so evangelists in those days had to find places to hold preaching services. Some of the places Daddy mentioned during this time frame were school houses, store houses, the Presbyterian Church building, German Evangelical church, open air meetings and of course, tent meetings. On one occasion, he tried to obtain permission to use a Nazarene building, but they would not let him because, as he said, *I wouldn't preach to suit the Nazarenes.*

Daddy, his brother, Joe, and Grandpa Campbell built a baptismal box. On another occasion he mentioned that he baptized a man in a box at the man's home.

1933 - He bought 500 pounds of coal for \$1.00.

Also in 1933, he and Mama experienced their first "ice tea" in Gainesboro, Tennessee.

1936 - They bought an electric range for \$89.50 with \$10 trade in.

In one of his diaries written while in Gainesboro, he mentioned that he had just finished reading "Freed's Sermons, Chapel Talks, and Debates." Then he added, *The best book I ever read except the one book.*

1938 - He bought a new 1938 Chevrolet Master Deluxe Town Sedan.

1939 - He bought a dining room suite at Sears for \$111.00.

1940 - He bought a new 1940 Chevrolet Master Deluxe Town Sedan for \$325 and trade-in.



A Letter to the Sentinel

Springfield, Tenn.
October 30, 1940

Jackson County Sentinel,
Gainesboro, Tenn.

To my friends who have been anxiously concerned over recent rumors that I have been arrested as a German spy, I want to say there is no truth whatsoever to it. I am not German, have no German blood about me so far I know, neither have I been arrested nor accused by any authority.

The report may have started through ignorance, or it may have been purposely and maliciously told. The Savior was accused of being an agent of Satan. I'm sure that I am no better than the Savior, and I guess Hitler is not much worse than the Devil.

I appreciate the interest and concern of my many friends manifested by letters, telephone calls, and other inquiries.

I continue to stand 100% for all principles of our democracy and for all the word of God which is God's power to save the souls of men.

Sincerely Yours
J. B. GAITHER

During the time they lived at Gainesboro, Tennessee, he often mentions visiting brother Dicus at Tennessee Tech in Cookeville. Recently, while singing “Our God He is Alive” in worship, I noticed it was written by A.W. Dicus. I came home to see if I could match this man to the brother Dicus mentioned several times in the diaries.

On the website for Apologetics Press, I found an article written by Bert Thompson. Following are quotes taken from that article:

I suspect that many Christians—whether young or old—know quite well the beautiful and stirring hymn, “Our God—He is Alive,” by A.W. Dicus. And I suspect that most of those same people know the beautiful and stirring refrain with which the song begins: “There is, beyond the azure blue, a God, concealed from human sight. He tinted skies with heav’nly hue, and framed the worlds with His great might.”

But while the hymn itself is well known to most of us, sadly, its famous author is not. I suspect that few people, in or out of the church, are aware of the fact that A.W. Dicus is the man who, shortly prior to the Great Depression, invented the automobile turn signal!

In 1929, he was offered the job of chairman of the department of physics at Tennessee Tech in Cookeville, Tennessee—a position he held for a number of years.

Daddy and A.W. Dicus *were* indeed friends and associates.

His Christmas week always seemed to consist of getting the tree and decorating it, getting Christmas cards ready to mail, and making and delivering “charity baskets.”

In 1941 he mentions that he preached at a “colored church.” Wonder what color it was?!

He had his first telephone in a church office in Springfield, Tennessee in 1941. The phone number was “534.”

Beginning with the spring and summer of 1941, he often mentions that they went to a “hamburger fry” at someone’s house. It seems that that was a new trend. Then he began to mention a “fish fry” occasionally.

His salary for 1941 was \$1,800.00 plus \$493 for meetings.

December 4, 1942 Springfield had their Christmas “opening” in town. The Gaithers went and got to witness ten turkeys thrown from the courthouse windows!

January 3, 1942, he and some Christian brethren saw the famous Gypsy Smith perform at the Ryman Auditorium in Nashville. (Gypsy Smith was an English evangelist who lived from 1860-1947 and made some 40 evangelistic trips abroad to such countries as the U.S., Australia, and South Africa.)

On Groundhog Day, he often noted in his diary whether or not the groundhog saw his shadow.

While living in Springfield, he fired two different church janitors, but doesn’t say why.

Remember the locker plants? The Gaithers had lockers at Springfield and Gallatin where they stored their excess garden and meat produce.

In 1944, he killed an opossum in the backyard at the chicken house, dressed it and sold the hide for 40 cents. Two days later, they invited two families over for an opossum meal.

He had a 1931 Chevy in 1944 that he called his “Ooga, Ooga.”

March 17, 1944 he bought a 1936 Plymouth Coupe for \$275 and sold it October 25th for \$400.

He went to Nashville to see Ripleys' "Believe it or Not," and wrote, *Seeing is believing.*

He often advertised for meetings by driving through town with a big loud speaker. Sometimes at "open air" meetings, if rain came, he would sit in his car and preach over that speaker while the audience sat in their cars.

In 1947, while living at Oneida, he purchased his first "Bell Recording & Reproducing Machine." His primary reason for possessing such a "toy" was for taping good singing and sermons; however, it became quite a source of entertainment to all the family as we told stories and sang silly songs, etc. through the years. Daddy and Mama recorded songs with her parents and also Ralph and Edna Kidd and many other friends who loved to sing.

He wrote in his diary in 1949 about a Christian sister who had gall stones removed, telling how many there were AND to always remember how *big* they were, he drew one about the size of a Hershey's Kiss on his diary page!

He called a sofa a "davenport."

He gave Mama his funeral and wedding pay to use for whatever she desired. We kidded her that she looked forward to people dying!

They had a baby every time they moved, so that's why they stayed in Gallatin so long! It worked!

In 1949, he notes that he conducted 8 gospel meetings, preached 309 sermons, taught 134 classes, and conducted 13 funerals, resulting in 56 additions.

On Sunday, November 27, 1949 he preached four (different) sermons and taught three Bible classes. The next three days, he preached six (different) sermons and taught three Bible classes.

Daddy collected Elam's Notes and Gospel Advocate Quarterly Commentaries. He had a complete set when he passed away (1922-80). I have the collection and have continued to keep it up to date.

His cure for any digestive disorder from baby colic to nausea was a pinch of baking soda in about 3 ounces of water.

One of his sermon titles in 1951 was "Know, Go, Glow, Grow." He preached it at least twice (at Bush's Chapel & Laguardo)

He loved Chevy's and thought that was the only way to go!

January 6, 1952 he had three funerals in one day. One was in Cookeville at 10 a.m. for Lorraine Fox Brown; Fountain Head at 1 p.m. for Ida Bell Link; and South Tunnel at 2 p.m. for E.R. Lancaster.

In his Nashville Road bulletin, September 4, 1955 he writes, *Thanks to modern transportation and the Providence of God which enabled me to preach twice in Jackson County, baptize in Putnam County, preach at 6 in Sumner County, and attend Bro. Campbell's meeting in Davidson County last Sunday. Is there a limit?*

On one page in his 1956 diary, he wrote that he spent most all day taking a certain family to Nashville for a funeral at a Catholic Church. Then he adds in parenthesis, *(I know how Paul felt at Mar's Hill.)*

Also in 1956 he wrote, *Watched wrestling on T.V. Too inhuman for me. (The Gaithers did not own a television until 1958, so this viewing of the wrestling match was at the home of friends.)*

Supposedly, he used wild "rabbit tobacco" for medicinal measures. He would put it in his mouth long enough to get it wet, then apply it to a sore.

He loved poetry and literature!

In 1958, he mentions that he had to sleep in the same room with a certain man, and that *he made more racket snoring than all the clocks!*

1958 *Spent most of the day at garage getting car tuned and worked on. New plugs, distributor points, wheel bearing, tires switched and wheel balanced. About \$26 worth.*

November 21, 1958 The Gaithers got their first television, installed by Patricia's husband, Sam Green, who owned Green's TV Shop.

In 1959, the diaries mention that he was busy transferring his "wire" recordings to tape.

Summer of 1960 was when the Gaither home got its first air conditioner. It was to assist Grandpa Campbell, who was bedridden quite a bit of the time. His part of the house became a popular corner!

On August 27, 1961, he preached five sermons!

When Patsy Cline died (March 5, 1963), Daddy recorded in his diary on March 7,

To Nashville at 9:30. Stopped by Funeral Home where 3 of Grand Old Opry stars were lying in state: C Copas, Hawksshaw Hawkins, and Randy Hughes. Patsy Cline was at her home.

Copas is not a real common name, but he had in his diary a little slip of paper that had Virginia Copas and Jerry Copas listed. Makes one wonder if he perhaps knew Cowboy Copas or some of his family. Randy Hughes was a son-in-law to Cowboy Copas, so perhaps he knew him as well.

Around 1966, he had a CB radio in his car that he used occasionally while traveling. There was also a base at home that he and John B. Jr shared.

November 2, 1966 found him in a meeting at Edmonton, KY.
He wrote, *Supper with the nicest people I know - Kenneth, Barbara Jean, Mike and Martha Branstetter.*
(Hope this means something to someone reading!)

When the doctor came into the room to install a pacemaker, Daddy told him, *If that Pacemaker is not a Chevrolet, I don't want it.*
Later in a bulletin, he told the story and concluded,
He installed it, and I take it that I have a Chevrolet heart.

Believe it or not, he liked Sonny & Cher!

In February, 1979, he wrote this in his church bulletin, the Liberty Newsletter:
Last Saturday, I conducted the funeral for Mrs. Mary Manier Burgess at Granville in Jackson County. I have conducted more than a dozen funerals for the Manier-Burgess family for four generations, since 1932.
This is characteristic of how ministers work with some families through the years. In this family, there is a son named James Gaither Burgess. He is now nearing forty years of age and is called by the family, Brother Gaither. I appreciate my namesakes.

Speaking of the same family, he wrote in the "Bells Bugle" bulletin, March 16, 1969:
Last Tuesday, I conducted the funeral services for Sister Vallie Manier Agee at Bagdad in Jackson County. I had conducted a like service for her father, mother, two sisters and several other members of the family including a daughter in law. I have buried four generations of that family. I baptized five of her children.

In January, 1979 he wrote in his church bulletin,
We have found we cannot send (Christmas) cards to all. Our list has become too large. The last time I tried it, I sent 485 and half of those that sent me cards did not get one.

Daddy was privileged to hold several gospel meetings at Midway, near his hometown of Lawrenceburg, Tennessee. In July, 1977 he was invited to preach there, and he made these comments in his church bulletin following that engagement, *Our day at Midway last Sunday was a "sequel" to our GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY (of preaching) MEETING.*

It was at Midway that I filled my first preaching appointment November 7, 1926. We saw many old acquaintances and children (Now Grandparents) who went to school to me when I taught nearby (Deerfield).

He loved the Lawrence Welk Show and watched it often.

Recently at the church in Dianna, Tennessee, a lady recalled the time that Daddy was holding a meeting there and stepped off the stage while preaching. It was about an eighteen inch step, and he took the "leap" accidentally but never missed a word....just kept preaching!

The family is often asked, "Are you related to Bill Gaither and the Gaither singers?" This is the answer I now know to give, thanks to John B., who has followed up research that Daddy started on our family genealogy.

One, John Gaither, came to America about 1635 and settled in Gaithersburg, Maryland. His family quickly outgrew the area, and so some moved on to Virginia about 1650.

The Gaithers obtained land grants that developed into plantations, raising tobacco and cotton, and they possessed many slaves. Some went back to Maryland, and then JB's great-great grandfather, Burgess Gaither, moved to North Carolina. Burgess' son, Martin Gaither, moved to Lawrenceburg, Tennessee about 1820. He was the great grandfather of JB, and the family settled there up through the time of JB.



JB was the 8th generation of the original John Gaither who came to Maryland from Lamberhurst, Kent County, England.

JB's brother, Earl Gaither, resided in Lawrenceburg all his life. A sister, Mary, married Edgar O'Neal and lived there in their later years.

So the answer to the question is that ALL Gaithers in America are related. However, their forefathers had many slaves that were given the Gaither name, and so the black Gaithers are, of course, not blood related. We and Bill Gaither share the same great, great, great, great, great, great (6 greats) grandpa. This concludes that we are cousins! Do we KNOW Bill Gaither and his family? As far as I know, none of us have ever met him.

Historical & Political Notes...

JB was patriotic and very much interested in what was going on in political and historical circles. He took advantage of opportunities to witness history. Listed here are notes he made of what was going on in the world around him. He was loyal to his country and took his responsibility as a citizen seriously, and it shows in his recordings.

Clear	Tuesday, NOVEMBER 3	1936
Cloudy		
Rain		
Snow		

308th Day—58 days to come

Election Day!
Cast my first
vote, in Presidential
election, for F. D.
Roosevelt.

Rain all day.
Sat up until
1:30 listening to
election returns. F. D.
Roosevelt was elected
by the largest landslide
in the history of our country
523 - 8 electoral votes. Lost
only 2 states - Maine + Vt.

January 26, 1937

Listened part of day to the distress news of Louisville flood. Worst flood in ages. Over 200,000 out of homes.

February 21, 1939

Judge John J. Gore died at his hotel room at Nashville at 7:45 pm. I went up to the Gores and stayed until they went to Nashville at 10:30 pm.

February 22, 1939

Up to Gores all day and until 1 o'clock at night. Judge Gore lay a corpse.

February 23, 1939

Conducted funeral for Judge John J. Gore at 2 at his farm. Met a number of prominent lawyers, doctors, and judges.

Note: This Judge Gore was a brother to two single sisters who lived in Gainesboro - Nell and Carrie Gore. By my best calculations, Judge Gore was a great uncle to Senator Albert Gore, Sr. JB was friends with the Judge, Carrie and Nell Gore and Senator Albert Gore, Sr. We are not sure just how this friendship came about with Albert Gore, Sr., but he was born in Granville which is in Jackson County and later moved to Carthage. He also married a member of the church, Pauline LaFon, who was from Jackson, Tennessee. The location of Granville and Carthage being near Gainesboro, and the relation of Albert Sr. to Nell, Carrie, and Judge John J. Gore, *and* the fact that JB was a staunch Democrat, all provide speculation as to how a friendship came about between JB and Albert Gore, Sr. In later years, he returned to conduct funerals for Nell and Carrie Gore.

June 5, 1939

JB and Mary were visiting in Washington D.C.
Visited the Supreme Court and saw all Justices except two. Heard them hand down two decisions. Visited the House and Senate. Congressman Albert Gore took us in.

On that same trip, **June 8, 1939**

*Saw parade for King George VI and Queen Elizabeth.
Saw President F.D. Roosevelt and wife. Saw them good.*

On **June 19, 1940**

Italy entered the war on Germany's side. What will be next?

November 5, 1940

Roosevelt elected to third term.

January 16, 1941

In Nashville all day.

Attended Inauguration of Prentice Cooper for the second term as governor of Tenn.

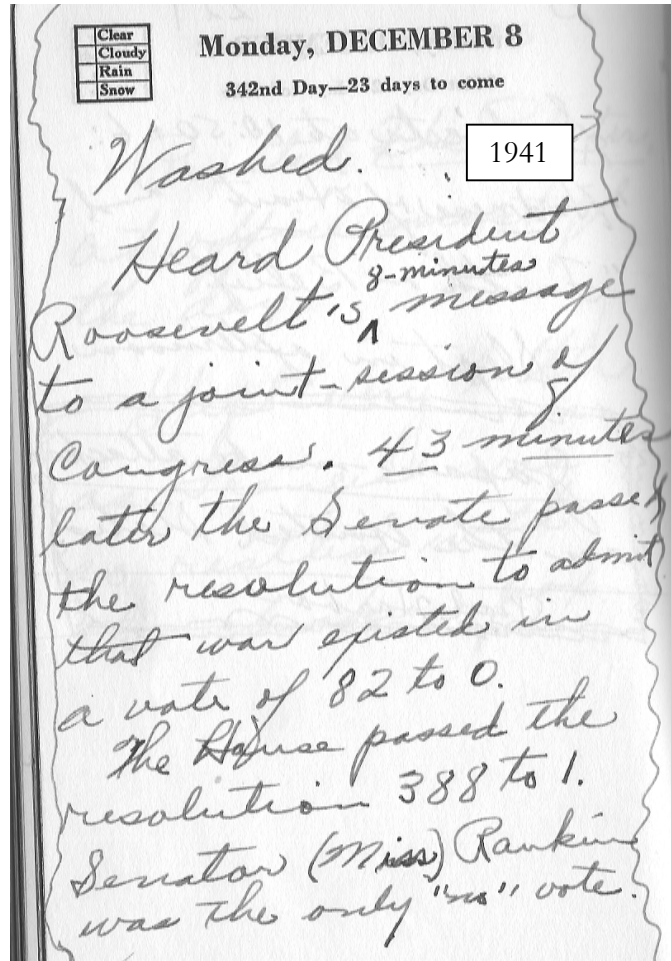
JB wrote in "The Gospel Witness," **February 1941** Edition,

Another friend of mine and yours has joined that innumerable host of those just beyond. W.A. Overton, of near Gainesboro, passed away January 15, 1941. He was born and reared in Jackson County. For a long time, he was a member of the county court. He represented his county in both houses of the state legislature. Being baptized into Christ by the writer on July 25, 1937, he became a member of the church of Christ. Sincere sympathy is extended the wife, two sons, and daughter, who mourn the passing of this good man. 'Sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.' --J.B.G.

Sgt. Alvin C. York, a World War I hero, was born, raised and died in Fentress County where Jamestown is located. Jamestown is the site of the Alvin C. York Agricultural Institute, a high school built by Alvin C. York himself. It is one of four state funded schools in Tennessee.

C.W. Davis, who was a close friend of JB's, was the Principal at York Institute in Jamestown, Tennessee back in the 1940's.

JB became friends with Sgt. York through C.W. Davis, and was invited to present a devotional at the Institute.



June 6, 1944

This is the Invasion Day. 3:32 am....Sad day.

April 12, 1945

President Franklin D. Roosevelt died at about 3:35 p.m. at Warm Springs, Ga.

May 8, 1945

V-E Day...heard Truman's proclamation.

August 14, 1945

While visiting in Jamestown, TN

V-J Day!

Did Jamestown celebrate!

August 15, 1945

Gasoline went off ration list.

October 10, 1945

Jack Sinclair and I left at 6:30 for Gilbertsville, Ky to hear President Harry Truman dedicate the dam there. Enjoyed it very much.

January 17, 1949

He witnessed Tennessee Governor Gordon Browning's Inauguration.

June 6, 1953

He watched the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth on television.

January 18, 1955

He attended the Inauguration and two hour parade of Frank Clements, elected as the first four year term Governor of Tennessee.

January 11, 1957

He served as Chaplain for the State Legislature in Nashville.

January 19, 1959

To Nashville to see Buford Ellington take oath of office as 42nd governor. Clements retired. Saw Happy Chandler of Kentucky. (Kentucky Governor)

July 13, 1960

Even though JB was a staunch Democrat, on this day he wrote in his diary, *Listened to the Democratic Convention nominate John F. Kennedy for President.*

Not me. He is Catholic.

August 4, 1960

He voted for Senator Kefauver, and he won.

May 15, 1963

Gordon Cooper in orbit for 22 trips around the world. 17,444 M.P.H.

February 20, 1962

John Glenn went three times around the world to become U.S. first astronaut.

May 18, 1963

Sandra, Mary Martin (Baber), Shirley Phillips and I went to Nashville to see President John F. Kennedy and hear him speak at Vanderbilt Stadium. He pressed button that set off dynamite at Carthage to start Cordell Hull Dam.

November 22, 1963

President J.F. Kennedy shot and killed by Lee Harvey Oswald allegedly.

Listened to reports till late.

L.B. Johnson became President.

(Note: My parents were in Nashville purchasing a new piano when news came that the President had been shot and killed. They closed the deal and came back to Gallatin as soon as they heard the news. We never have trouble remembering how old the piano is. It is now in my daughter, Allison Epperson's home).

November 23, 1963

Nation moving slowly. All T.V. programs cancelled except news and report, etc.

Regarding the dead President, and surroundings. A day of sadness.

March 31, 1968

Heard President Johnson's address and announcement that he would not be a candidate to succeed himself. It made me shutter. What will be!

April 4, 1968

Learned that Dr. Martin Luther King had been shot and died in Memphis.

A terrible thing indeed!

We listened on TV till after midnight.

April 6, 1968

Home in evening. Had an alarm saying, 'Bells was to be burned.' Too much stir about it.

(Note: I was a student at Freed-Hardeman at that time, and we heard that the blacks were marching from Memphis to Henderson in protest. It was very alarming to the students on campus!)

June 4, 1968

Listened to Calif. election news. Robert Kennedy carried.

June 5, 1968

Heard that Robert Kennedy was shot last night.

June 6, 1968

Robert Kennedy died at 4:44 a.m. New York Time.

July 20, 1969

*We sat up till 1 a.m. watching the men walk on the moon.
'There is no new thing under the sun.'*

November 3, 1970

*ELECTION DAY... Voted for Hooker and Gore to learn I lost.
Tenn. has gone Republican.*

January 22, 1973

He notes that President Lyndon Johnson died.
Then on February 1, he wrote, *Heard the LBJ Hour on TV. He is the sole President with whom I have shaken hands. In Nashville, 1964.*

July 14, 1976

Jimmy Carter nominated for President.

November 2, 1976

To Howell Hill to vote for Jimmy Carter and Sasser. Home evening. Listened to Election. To bed at 1. Carter lacked 3 votes. Heard next morning that he won.

November 7, 1978

*Voted by 10 (a.m.)
(Evening) Watched election returns.
Alexander, Rep. became Governor.*

February 12, 1980

Money Market above 12% 12.256%

February 19, 1980

*To town to check on Money Market. It will be 13.015%. Highest ever.
I have one to renew Thursday at that rate.*

April 1, 1980

*Waiting for election news.
Carter won in both states.
Reagan won in both states.
Brown quits.*

May 6, 1980

*To polls to vote for Jimmy.
(Evening) Waiting for election news.
Carter and Reagan land slide.*

May 19, 1980

Listened to violence of Miami. Terrible!

Daddy always loved attending parades. The parades in his day were wholesome, entertaining and meaningful. It was the kind of occasion you wanted your family to experience. When I was a girl, I once heard him say that he always got goose bumps when he stood and watched a band go marching by in a parade. I wasn't sure why a marching band affected him in that way, but I have never seen one since without the goose bumps, and I am sure I do know why it affects *me* that way.

His Contemporaries...

One thing that stands out as you read fifty years of diaries of J.B. Gaither is the grand host of preachers with whom he came in contact. Occasionally, his handwriting was not clear or he simply noted “brother” with a last name, so I apologize in advance for any misspelled or incomplete entries.

Some names are based on assumption by context, so if you see a name listed that is/was not a preacher, just know that on at least one occasion, this man carried on some activity that makes him appear to be a preacher in the writings of J.B. Gaither!

While such a listing may not be interesting to everyone, it is hoped it will be to some. Some of these were a generation ahead of him and some were one and even two generations younger, yet they were all contemporaries of his and I believe merit a mention.

As much as he loved to be *in* the pulpit, he also loved to *hear* good sermons. Oftentimes, after he wrote that he went to such and such a place to hear brother so and so, he would write something like, “it wasn’t my kind of preaching,” “in a fine sermon,” “these modern preachers have forsaken the gospel,” “not enough scripture,” etc.

There has been no effort to edit this list with the consideration of whether or not these men were deemed by JB to be sound or unsound. It is merely a list of all that he mentioned in his daily writings who were, at the time of his writing (and to the best of my interpretation) preachers for the church of Christ.

Preachers mentioned in the diaries of J.B. Gaither:

Adams, John	Bonnell
Adcock, Jimmie	Boone, Ernest
Akers, Roy K.	Boyd, J.D.
Allen, James A.	Bradfield, W.A.
Allen, Jimmie	Bradford, Virgil
Alley, Joe K.	Bradley, James
Almstead, H.L.	Brannam, C.W.
Anderson, Ben H.	Brannon, H.A.
Anderson, Bob	Brannam, C.W.
Anderson, James	Braswell, Odell
Askews, Paul	Brents, J.W.
Bailey, W.C.	Brewer, G.C.
Baker, Bert	Brewer, R.L.
Bankes, Walter	Bright, J.B.
Baumgardner, Walter	Broom, H.A.
Bartlett	Brotherton, Don
Barton, John	Brown, Charles
Bass	Brown, Paul
Bassham, Olan	Brown, Robert L.
Baxter, Batsell Barrett	Bryson, Bob
Beard, W.E.	Buckingham, Joe
Beck, Bill	Bucy, G.C.
Beckloff, John	Buie, Dan L.
Behel	Burgess, Roy
Bell, Dwight	Burns, Leon C.
Benson, George	Burroughs, Carson
Billingsley, Dorris	Burton, A.M.
Binkley, James	Burton, Thomas H.
Black, V.P.	Busby, Horace W.
Blackwell, Edward	Caldwell, Charles Jr.
Bloomingbird, Wendell	Calhoun, Hall
Bobo, David	Camp, Franklin
Boles, H. Leo	Campbell, C.M.
Boles, Robert	Campbell, Charles

Campbell, Thomas L.
Cantrell, Eddie
Capps
Carnahan, Ralph
Carpenter, Bill
Carr, Jack
Casey, Pat
Casey, Ralph
Cato, Willie
Cauthorn, R.V.
Chaffin, Vestal
Cheatham, Charles
Chesser, Frank
Chism, A.W.
Chumley, Charles
Chunn, Fred
Clark, A. Hugh
Clark, Wayne
Clayton, Paul
Clemens
Clevenger, Gene
Clifford, Rufus
Cobb, Charles E.
Coffman, E.O.
Cogdill, Roy
Coil, Charles
Cole, Bill
Cole, Leon
Collins, Artie
Collins, Bill
Collins, Willard
Colvin, J.R.
Conchin, Willard
Condra, Jessie
Cook, Earl
Cook, Jimmy
Cooke, W.C.
Cooper, Nat
Cope, James R.
Corlew, Jerry
Cotham, Perry
Cottrell, Danny
Cox, Albert
Cox, Jimmie
Cox, John D.
Cox, Joseph
Craddock, J. Edward
Creacy, E.G.
Christian, Ernest
Crocker, Coleman
Crouch, Charlie
Crowder, Freeman
Crowder, Herol
Cullum, Edward Gilbert
Cullum, Will
Daganhart, Charles
Daily, Clarence
Dale, John
Dallas, Jack
Daniel, Homer
Dark, Harris J.
Davidson, David
Davidson, J.C.
Davis, Ed
DeHoff, George
Decker, Floyd A
Demonbreun, Bobby
Dickens, J.C.
Dickey, B.F.
Dicus, A.W.
Dixon, H.A.
Dixon, Robert
Dobbs, Clifford
Dobson, Paul
Doran, Adrian
Dorris, C.E.W.
Doty, Lindell
Douthitt, Boone L.
Douthitt, I.A.
Duffield, Ollie

Duncan, Ray
Dunn, Frank
Dunn, Gus Sr.
Dunn, Jimmy
Ealy, Gary
Elkins, Garland
Emberton, Willie D
Emmons, E.A.
Emmons, Wayne
England, Richard
Ensor, Don
Epler, Bill
Estes, Emerson
Evans, Fred
Evans, Jack
Ezell J.Pettey
Fehrman, Curtis
Fikes
Findley, Clyde
Flannery, Ernest
Flatt, Ben
Flatt, Bill
Flatt, Charlie
Flatt, Don
Fletcher, Ron
Floyd, Eddie
Ford, Gynath
Fogarty, John P.
Forshey
Fox, John W.
Fox, Tom C.
Freed, A.G.
Freeland, E.L.
Freetly, Dean
Gardner, E. Claude
Garner, C.J.
Garner, N.J.
Gately, Huston
Gatewood, Otis
Gaylon, Paul
Gentry, Charles E.
Gentry, William
George, Malcolm
German, Tom
Gerrard, John H.
Gibbons, Pat
Gibbs (Negro)
Gibbs, Gilbert F
Gibbs, Millard
Gilly, Tolbert Franklin
Goodpasture, B.C.
Gordon
Gossett, Carl
Gower, Ronnie
Graham
Gray, Jack
Gray, Joe
Greer, James
Grider, A.C.
Groome, E.J.
Gunter
Hackworth, Jack
Haile, Chuck
Haile, Clyde
Hall, Paul
Hall, S.H.
Harbin, Jim
Hardaway, Owen
Hardeman, John B.
Hardeman, N.B.
Harding, Ben
Harper, E. R.
Harwell, James
Hawkins, Wallace
Hayes, Edwin
Headrick, Ed
Hearn, Roy J.
Hefley, Phillip
Henderson, Parker
Henley, Ralph

Herndon, Paul
Hickey, G.E.
Hester, Guy
Highers, Alan
Highers, Ernest
Hill, A.R.
Hill, Albert
Hill, Jerry
Hill, Malcolm
Hix, Woodrow
Hogan, Norman ("Toby")
Hogewood, Tom
Holden, J. Woodie
Holland, John Carter
Holland, Tom
Hollinsworth, John
Holloway
Holloway, John
Holman, Ed
Holt, R.C.
Hooten, Norman
Hoover, Kenneth
Hope, B.G.
Howell, Maurice
Huffard, Elvis
Huffard, Elza
Huffines, Oneal
Humphries, Jerry
Hunter, Willie
Hunton, Paul
Hutson, Thad
Hyde, Joe S.
Ijams, E.H.
Irvin, Milton
Iverson, John
Ivey, Curtis
Jackson, Hulon
Jackson, Robert
James, B.B.
Janes, Don Carlos
Jarrett, John W.
Jenkins
Jerkins, Ray
Jernigan, B.F.
Jhin, K.P.
Johns, O.D.
Johnson, B.W.
Johnson, Gary
Johnson, J.A.
Johnson, Leonard
Johnson, Max
Johnson, Roy
Jones, B.J.
Jones, C.C.
Jones, Charles
Jones, Joe
Jones, John D.
Jones, Warren
Joyce, Ronald
Karnes, Walter
Keeble, Marshal
Kell, Ted
Kelly, K.M.
Kenny, Jim
Kennedy, T.H.
Kerce, Arlin
Kerr, Joe
Kester, Don
Key, Bobby
Kidd, Ralph E. Jr.
Kidd, Ralph E. Sr.
Killom, Allen
Killom, Glenn
Kilpatrick, Wayne
King, Charles
Kinny, James
Kirce, Arlie
Kirkpatrick, Carlos
Kittrell, Don
Knight, Harold

Knight, Homer
Laird, Byron
Lambert, O.C.
Landiss, A.S.
Lanier, Roy
Larimore, T.B.
Lawson
Lawyer, Douglas
Lee, Glann
Lee, Irvin
Leibbrandt, Phillip
Lemons, Reuel
Lewis, Logan
Lewis, William
Lockhart, Jay
Loftis, Millard
Logan, Richard
Long, Jim
Lowery, Sewell
Lowery, S.P.
Luscombe, Manley
Lyles, Cleon
Lynn
Macon, Drake
Manchester, Lowell
Manor, Curtis
Marlin, J.T.
Marshall, George
Martin, T.I.
Master, Andy
Matthews, Paul
Maynard, E.C.
McBroom, J.H.
McCaleb
McCanless, Jack
McConnell, Roy
McCord, Hugo
McCord, L.T.
McCoy, Oscar
McDaniel, Glenn
McDonald, Charles
McDonald, J.E.
McElhiney, T.H.
McGarrity
McGaughey, C. Ellis
McGaughey, Paul
McGill, Jimmie
McGuire, Lowell
McInery
McInteer, Jim Bill
McKnight, Mid
McLean, C.L.
McNutt, J.A.
McElroy, Jack
McWhorter, Don
Meadows, Comer
Meadows, E.C.
Meadows, James
Meadows, John L.
Medlin, Morgan
Meredith, J. Noel
Meyers, J.B.
Miller, James P.
Miller, Max
Mills, Roger
Mitchell, J. Ridley
Mitchinson, Bill
Montgomery
Moore, Carroll
Moore, Joe
Morin, Charles H.
Morris, Don
Morris, Joe H.
Mosley, Fred
Mullen, Ben
Mullen, Frank
Murphy, Nat. G.
Music, Goebel
Nance, Ralph
Nance, Rudolph

Neal, W.C.
Neely, Joe David
Nesbitt
Netherland, Joe L.
Newell, L.H.
Nichols, Gus
Norris, Billy
North, Ira
Ogden, Max
Oldham, Reeder
O'Neal, Bill
O'Neal, Maurice
O'Neal, Tom
Oliver, R.C.
Orr, Tom
Ott, Roy
Ousley
Overton, Basil
Overton, Gene
Overturf, C. L.
Owen, W.H.
Owens, Delmar
Palmer, Alfred
Parker, Hollis
Parks, Jack
Parsons, Doug
Parsons, John
Pate, Stoy
Patton, Hershell
Pearson, Charlie
Peden, Eugene
Pepper, Clayton
Perkins, Bill
Phann, Brimmer
Phillips, Dabney
Phillips, H.M.
Phillips, J.W.
Pigg, John
Pinkley, Bobby
Pitchford, Doin
Pittman, S.P.
Plum, C.D.
Polk, John T.
Pope, Lewis S.
Porter, T. Coy
Powell, C.L.
Powell, Roger
Prater, Robert Hill
Presnell, Rhoden
Proffitt
Prosser, G.M.
Pryor, Cecil
Puckett, Franklin
Pullias, A.C.
Pullias, C.M
Raines, G.F.
Rainwater, Warren
Ramey, Don
Randolph, Kenneth
Reeder, W.C.
Reese, Howard
Reese, Jack
Renshaw, John
Reynolds, Joe
Rice, Ira
Richardson, William
Richie, Virgil
Riley, Steve
Ritchie, Andy T.
Rogers, Dennis
Rogers, Lee
Roland, C.P.
Rollins, Jack
Roney, Harold Nelson
Rosenbloom, Tommy
Rudd, Don
Ruff, August
Russell, Dennis
Rutherford, Raymond
Ryan, George

Sain, David
Sain, Harold
Sanders, J. Pilant
Sanders, J.R.
Sanders, Joe
Sanderson, L.O.
Savely, Harold
Sawyer, Wyatt
Scott, C.W.
Scott, Charles F.
Scott, Monroe
Scott, R.V.
Scott, Thomas
See, Howard
Sewell, Charles
Sewell, Johnny
Shackleford, Don
Shaffer, Gilbert E.
Shanks
Shappley, Dewayne
Shearer, Bustrom
Shelly, Rubel
Shelton, Virgil
Shepherd
Shoulders, J. Harding
Shoun, John
Sibert, Austin
Skelton, Carmack
Skipper, W.E.
Slate, I.G.
Smith, Carl
Smith, Charles
Smith, Colin
Smith, Garvin
Smith, Gordan
Smith, Jim
Smithson III
Smithson, John T. Jr.
Snell, Ralph
Snow, H. Leo
Sommer, David
Southern, Paul
Sowell, F.C.
Spain, Carl
Spann, Bobby
Sparks, Paul
Spivey, Prentice
Spring, Truman
Stovall, Charles
Srygley, Bill
Stacey, John
Starkey, T.N.
Starnes, Trine
Stevenson, Pat
Stout, Ralph
Street, Buford
Stroup, Dr.
Sunday, Billy
Tallman, O.H.
Tankersly, Ed Long
Tarpley, Waldon Edward
Taylor, Charles
Taylor, Frank
Taylor, H.E.
Taylor, Joe
Taylor, Robert
Terry, Jim
Thissel, Ben
Thomas, David
Thomason, A.W.
Thompson (Negro)
Thompson, Maurice
Thompson, Morris
Thornberry, J.E.
Thurman, Don
Tidwell, Charles
Tipton, Harvey
Toahty
Tolle, James
Toogood

Toothman, Don	Webb, Ellis
Totty, W.L.	Welch, Alonzo
Trevathan, Norman	Welch, William
Tucker, Johnny	Wells, James
Turner, Rex	West, Earl
Tyler, Granville	West, W.B.
Tyler, Leonard	Wheeler, Mack
Underwood, Ernest	White, Howard
Utley, Orwin W.	White, L.S.
Van Dyke, Joe Cook, Jr.	White, R.C.
Van Dyke, Joe Cook, Sr.	Wiggins, Avis
VanHooser, Calvin	Wilcox, Tipton C.
Vaughan, John	Wilkie, Wendle
Vaughan, J. Roy	Williams, Bobby
Vaughn, Frank	Williams, J.E.
Veteto, Arthur Jackson	Williams, James M.
Vincent, Clarence Guthrie	Williams, Jim
Wagner, T.J.	Williams, Joe
Wakefield	Williams, Jon Gary
Walker, D. Ellis	Williams, Silas
Walker, Raymond	Willis, John
Walker, R.C.	Winkler, H.E.
Wallace, Foy E. Jr.	Winnett, H.C.
Wallace, G.K.	Wise, Melvin J.
Wardlaw, Bill	Wiser, Marvin
Warpula, Calvin	Witt, Robert
Warren, Thomas B.	Woods, E.G.
Waters, Douglas	Woods, Guy N.
Watkins, James	Woodruff, C.W.
Weathers, L.L.	Woodson, William
Weathers, Walter	Woody, D.D.
Webb, Dan	Young, Frank

*How beautiful are the feet of them that preach
the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!*

Romans 10:15

Friday, JANUARY 31

31st Day—334 days to come

Clear
Cloudy
Rain
Snow

Spent the day at David Lipscomb College. Heard Bro. Marshall Keeble for the first time. Heard J. 2. Martin in eve on "Little Foxes".

Attended banquet there at 5:30 for preachers having preached for 40 years or more. Brethren C. M. Pullias, S. H. Wall, Cullum, Pittman, Shepherd, Davis, Allen were among the number. Also J. 2. Martin. Bro Shepherd had preached 54 yrs; Martin 52.

Bro Martin had been a member of the church 66 yrs. About 100 preachers present. A fine hour of fellowship.

Home at 11:30.

1941

Old Paths Revisited...

His Children Journey Back in Time

Once I read Daddy's fifty years of diaries and made notes, there were so many blanks to fill in. I pounded my sisters and cousins for answers, and they did supply much of the needed information, but there was still an unsettled feeling within me. My memories of the places they called "home" before my day were based on rare visits to those places as a child. My mind only held tidbits of stories I had heard, often without a name, face or place to recall. During the year 2007, my siblings and I made the rounds to the seven places (including Ohio) where our parents had lived and carried out their ministry. We also visited three congregations where Daddy invested much time and energy in mission efforts. It was impossible for all five of us to make each trip, so each trip varied in passengers. I am recording memoirs of our journeys, not in the order they were made, but in the order of our parents' lives.

I almost deleted this entire section of the book because of fear that I will misrepresent something I was told, assume more than I should, or leave out someone with whom we visited. I sincerely hope that what is reported is correct, and if it is not, that you will consider that I am human and subject to mistakes or misunderstandings of the facts! I have asked for information without technology in hand, so my brain and even my pen have been running on overload!

Lawrenceburg, Tennessee

We journeyed back to the Lawrence County soil where our daddy's roots are firmly grounded. Our trip there actually goes back to 2004. My sisters and I visited then with our Gaither cousins, sharing old pictures, stories and other memories. We had lunch at the David Crockett State Park, part of which was at one time the Gaither farm.



Margaret (Gaither) Lucas, Ruby, Tom O’Neal, Frances, Sandra

Tom gave us an afternoon tour of special places. The old home place where Daddy grew up was torn down many years ago, but the old barn is still standing and usable.



The Gaither Barn

One of the first “treasures” we found on our expedition!



This winding dirt road is the path that many folks back in the early 1900's journeyed down to have their sins washed away in the chilling waters of Crowson Creek. I named this path "Salvation Road."



Crowson Creek



We were driven by the Intersection of Highway 64 E and West Point Road to see where the old Gaitherville School once stood. There we saw what is called “Progress.” (above)



But the statue of David Crockett still stands bravely on the square, and the old jail where our Uncle Earl Gaither served as Sheriff from 1943-46 is still in tact and offers a museum to interested tourists.

We found a second cousin on our Grandmother Gaither’s side of the family, John Gibbs. John has done a lot of family research and possesses much memorabilia from the past. He was able to share a great deal of family history with us.



Sue and John Gibbs, Ruby, Sandra, Frances, Patricia
At the Gibbs' Home

After my sisters left for home, I tarried long enough to go to a nursing facility there in Lawrenceburg to look up one of John Gibb's sisters, Aleta Mitchell. What a joy it was to meet her and listen to her memories of my parents from their younger days. She asked me where I lived, and when I said, "Mountain Home, Arkansas, she immediately replied, "Oh, I have a friend in Mountain View that has daughters who live in Mountain Home and attend the church of Christ there." My first guess was Marie Cleveland, and I was right. Her daughters, Pat Caldwell and Barb Mearing and their families all worship with us. Her son, Tommy and his family lived here several years ago, and I babysat their daughter, Kate. What a small, small world! She had known the Cleverlands in Mississippi years earlier and shared a close friendship with Marie. Their husbands had served as elders together.

A few weeks later, all of my sisters, John B., Ruby's husband Jim, and my husband Dave, made a trip to Knoxville, Tennessee to help our cousin Jane (Pierce) and Charles Brown celebrate their 50th anniversary. Our parents had taken all five of us to their wedding in 1954 at Arlington, VA, so we thought it was only right to all travel together once again for this occasion.



Gaither cousins at the 50th anniversary of
Jane & Charles Brown, June 2004
Charles Brown is standing center, then clockwise: Scotty & Lowell
Scott, Sandra, John B., Jane Brown, Frances, Patricia, Ruby,
Charles and Ann Scott

Friday, June 25, 1954
176th Day—189 days to follow

CLEAR
CLOUDY
RAIN
SNOW

I went to Springtown
County Court house and
registered to perform
Marriage Ceremonies
in Va.

We drove about over
D.C. - White House, Capitol,
went up in Wash. Monument
Performed Ceremony for
Charles Brown & Jane Pierce. +20
at Springtown Church & Christ.
Left at 12:30 for Home.

Ohio

Patricia, Ruby and I made the long trip back to New Philadelphia, Ohio (along with Patricia's son, Cullen.) We have only one aunt still living, and that is where she makes her home. Mary Kay Campbell is the widow of our mother's youngest brother, Paul. She furnished lots of information and a tour of the city. We had not seen her in many years, so it was a joy to reconnect with her. Her daughter, Sherry Dearth, who lives in Georgia, was very helpful (by email) with information about the city of New Philadelphia and the church there.



Aunt Mary Kay Campbell, Ruby, Patricia, Sandra

In August of 2008, Dave and I returned to Ohio so I could do some further research. Again, we had a nice visit with Aunt Mary and discovered more history on my parents and grandparents.



After high school and a couple of years after she married, Mother worked at the Woolworth Five and Dime on the square in “Phila” as locals call it. We did research all around the downtown area trying to find the location of the old Woolworth store. There were differing stories told us, but we finally found the true location when we located the picture shown in the chapter “New Beginnings – From Tennessee to Ohio.” Below is shown a modern day picture of that old Woolworth building from the 1920-30’s era. I went inside and tried to imagine it back then. Being close to the courthouse square gave me something to imagine about what she saw when she walked around town.

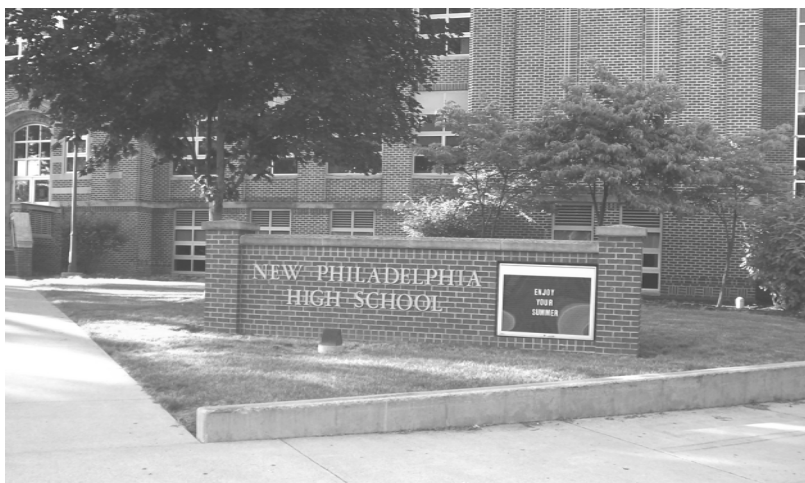


123 West High Avenue
New Philadelphia, Ohio

We also found the New Philadelphia High School where Mother graduated in 1928. There were three high school students in front of the school when I made the pictures. I knew they wondered why I was there, so I told them that my recently deceased mother graduated from there in 1928. I mentioned that she had lots of fun there and lots of memoirs. They were impressed to think that someone 96 would have been a student there and had fun within those same walls!



New Philadelphia High School
Ohio
Where Mary B. Campbell Graduated in 1928



The old Courthouse in New Philadelphia impressed us greatly, especially the clock on the top. It is a “Seth Thomas” which means nothing to most folks, but to Gaither children, that’s an almost sacred term. Daddy had lots of Seth Thomas clocks in his collection. When that old clock chimed, it sent goose bumps up our spine. We know our very young Daddy loved that noise, and so it was music to our nostalgic ear.

Tuscarawas County
Courthouse
New Philadelphia
Ohio □

The founder of
New Philadelphia laid out
the city like
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.
The Post Office pictured
below is a replica of
Independence Hall.



There is a beautiful park in New Philadelphia that was founded in 1907. It was designed to delight people of all ages and to be affordable to those of all income levels. Daddy wrote of several occasions when they had pleasurable times at Tuscora Park.



Words cannot express how taken we were with Tuscora Park. A lot about it has grown and changed since the days of our parents' time, but it is still absolutely charming and has kept its historic qualities.



There is a 1928 carousel that was installed in the park in 1940 after my parents had moved away, but I know on return trips they rode it and probably with some of my sisters who were just too young to remember. We could just picture our parents, young and in love, having an old fashioned picnic, eating on a quilt with the squirrels playing around them like the day we were there.



Dave & I had to make our own memories of Tuscora Park as we imagined the experiences of the past enjoyed by my parents and grandparents.



When Daddy first went to Ohio in 1927, he got an office job at Penn Mold which was an iron foundry. That same old building is still standing in the 400 block of Third Street, Dover, Ohio. The business presently occupying the building is Clarion Wholesale Company.



Below is a 2008 view from the back of the old foundry, showing the railway system that has aided Tuscarawas County so much in its industrial life.



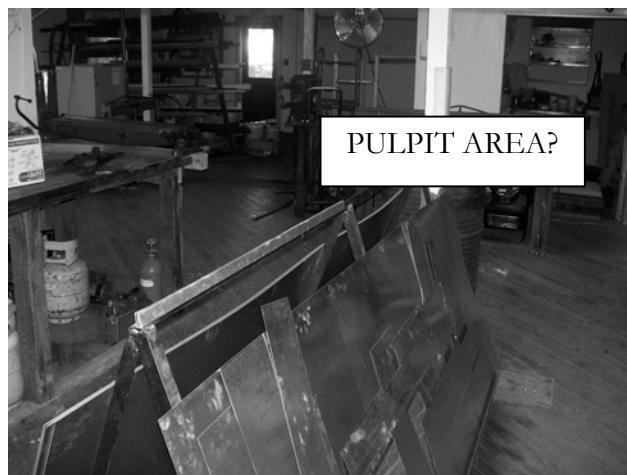


The last house our Grandma & Grandpa Campbell lived in, before moving to Tennessee, is still standing on 8th Street. It was exciting for Patricia to see the house she remembers visiting, especially remembering the time Frances was playing with matches and accidentally set fire to the curtains!





The old church building at 119 Seventh Street N.W. is still there. It housed the church at New Philadelphia from 1924-57. This is where our parents met in 1927. The building is now owned by Kelley's Heating & Cooling Inc. Joe Kelley gave us a tour of the upper level that was once the church auditorium. The front and side walls are still at the same place and the old hard wood flooring is still there. It was awesome to stand in the same room where my parents met and where I know Mama fell in love when Daddy first spoke there!





The church met at this location
335 Union Avenue N.W.
1957-72



749 Commercial Avenue S.W

It was our goal to be at each congregation during a service time. We were privileged to worship with the church in New Philadelphia that now meets at 749 Commercial Avenue S.W. and has a membership of about 250.

Tim Hatfield is the minister and was helpful with getting me a church directory that has a copy of the church history in it.

Though there was no one present who knew our parents, there were those who had heard of them and our Campbell grandparents. One of the elders, Dean Dummermuth and wife Wilma, very especially hospitable. We visited with them quite a while after services, while Janet Simmons, another elder's wife, spent much time going through the old church records to see what she might find in reference to our family. She found in the Register names of our parents, grandparents and several aunts and uncles on both sides of our family.

The most exciting entry she found was that one of the members who still worships there was baptized by Daddy in 1930!



Julia Dugan, pictured above, was baptized in the Tuscarawas River at New Philadelphia in 1930 by Daddy, who had earlier baptized her husband, George (deceased 1979). We did not get to meet Julia in 2007, but I did get to talk to her on the phone. Her comment was, *He was the nicest preacher.* At that time, Julia was still working faithfully in the benevolent room that the church there maintains.

In 2008 Dave and I made a point to go and visit her. She is the real reason I wanted to make the second return trip. Her son, Jerry and wife, Mary, live across the road from her and came over to visit as well. Julia said “Burge Gaither” also married her and her husband in 1928. When she called him “Burge,” it thrilled my soul! It was a feeling that we had truly gone back in time.

They discovered from Daddy’s log book that he had also baptized Julia’s mother-in-law, Lena Dugan in 1931.

Julia grew up in Uhrichsville, Ohio and met her husband, George, when he moved north from Hohenwald, Tennessee back during the depression. What a small world! That is where my mother’s family originated! Jerry remembered hearing of my grandpa, Tom Campbell. He had heard how the church met in their home some back when the congregation began in New Philadelphia.

Counting Jerry and Mary, I count seventeen of Julia’s children, their spouses and grandchildren in the church directory. I know she is so

blessed to have so much family not only nearby, but attending church services with her.

What a joy it was to meet Julia Dugan!



Jerry Dugan, Julia Dugan, Sandra, Mary Dugan

One of the most exciting “finds” Dave and I made on this trip was the house that Daddy and Mama moved into when they were first married. Mama had written on a picture, “Our first home in New Philadelphia, Ohio.” Ohio is a far away place from Tennessee and Arkansas, so I never thought of asking about the specific location of this old house. When Dave and I saw Tuscarawas Avenue, it dawned on me that this could be the street, mainly because Mama had mentioned something about it shortly before she died. I had no idea at that time that Tuscarawas was a county, river and avenue in New Philadelphia. Then the thought came to me about the picture she had with no address. So just for fun, we decided to drive up and down that long avenue and see if we could find a house to match the picture. We did! The house number read 534. I knocked on the door, and Randy Goddard answered. When I showed him my old photo, he immediately thought it to be the same house. The three of us stood outside in his yard and studied the architecture of the house and photo and came to the conclusion that they are one and the same! He said the house was built in the 1920’s which met my 1930 time frame. When he purchased the house many years ago, he changed up the window sizes and removed a window on the porch.

After we got back home, I was searching through the 1931 diary (since there is no 1930) to see if I could get an address or any information about the house, now that I had a location in mind. I found in his writings that they were living on Tuscarawas Avenue at the time, and that made us so happy to find! As I finished reading and went to close the book, on the very back page was an information chart for the writer to put their name, address, phone number, height, weight, stocking size etc. There it was -- “J.B. Gaither, 534 Tuscarawas Avenue” ! Now, as Daddy would often say, *It don’t take much to entertain some folks.* But when you are curious about something that is sentimental to you, this kind of find is tremendously exciting, and we did it without a GPS!

They only rented the house, but we read day after day about all the “papering” and upkeep Daddy did to the, then, rather new house.



534 Tuscarawas Avenue
New Philadelphia, Ohio

1930 Above
2008 Below



Daddy baptized Mother nearby in the Tuscarawas River at Newcomerstown, Ohio. There was a congregation and a meeting house there at that time, but it had no baptistery, so the baptizing had to be done in the river.

Thanks to Willard and Pat McCroom for the help they offered by phone as I was searching for church history and a picture of the old building where Daddy likely did his Newcomerstown preaching. Charles Newell, the preacher there, made this picture and sent it to me.



Former Church of Christ in Newcomerstown, Ohio
Built in 1908 at the corner of State and McKinley Streets.



Our stop at Newcomerstown was brief, but we did get this photo of the present church building (since 1961) at 475 S. Goodrich. There are about eighty to eighty-five members of the church there at present.

Gainesboro, Tennessee

Our visit to Gainesboro in June of 2007 was a very rewarding and inspiring one. Ruby, Patricia and son, Cullen, accompanied me there. With diaries and log book in hand, we attended the Sunday evening service. Afterwards, we were overwhelmed with those people who knew and loved our daddy so much. They all had something to tell us about the way he touched their lives. Nearly everyone mentioned that they, or someone in their immediate family, had been baptized, married or buried by him. We could quickly turn in the log book and find their name written there. Seeing their name and event recorded in his handwriting seemed to make their day! We also encouraged them to look up in his diaries any family dates of events where he was involved.



Gainesboro Church of Christ
313 South Murray Street
Gainesboro, Tennessee

John Richard Fox, one of the elders there and his wife, Helen, have been very helpful with information I have asked for, not only about Gainesboro, but all of Jackson County. John Richard did a good job of getting the word out about our visits, and Helen was the recipient of several email inquiries that she researched for me.

In her search, Helen Fox talked to Helen Hix Overstreet. She remembers Daddy well. Her father, Robert was a song leader. She recalls how Daddy collected tuning forks and how he, at one time, wanted to buy the one her father used. He did have several tuning forks, but somehow that collection didn't grow like the clocks did!

Bob Johnson told us a story that you can read in the "Stories" section. Helen Brown, a retired school teacher, remembered riding to college classes with Daddy.

Katherine Baugh Anderson also recalled riding to college with him some. She and her parents (Ben and Bessie Baugh) lived in the first preacher's home after our family moved into the new one. Katherine was thrilled to see a picture we have of that preacher's home and requested a copy as she did not have one, and the house is no longer standing. We were happy to share with her. She, in turn, had the picture enlarged for all of her parents' grandchildren and said they were thrilled to get it. She said, *I have many fond and cherished memories of your parents.* Katherine has been a lot of help with notes and phone calls to answer many questions I have had about our parents' dealings in Jackson County.

The oldest and longest member of the church there is Joy Gailbreath Brown, age 93. Daddy married Joy to Roy Brown in 1941. Her brother, Edward "Bub" Gailbreath went with the truck driver to Ohio to help with my parents' move to Gainesboro. It has been a pleasure seeing Joy and even emailing her! Who wouldn't be impressed with a 93 year old who can email?



The preacher's home in Gainesboro at the present time sits across the street from the church building. This was once the home of Jonah and Bennie Dudney. Jonah Dudney was one of Daddy's best friends (and banker). Daddy often stayed with them in this house whenever he returned for meetings. He banked with the Jackson County Bank for the rest of his life. Jonah Dudney passed away in 1965, and Daddy conducted his funeral.

We made home visits to some shut-ins who knew him well. The first visit was to Marie Clark, age 88. She is a retired school teacher who went to college with Daddy. She told us that her husband died in 1962. Daddy didn't know him like he knew her, but he came to his funeral with John Brasel who was called to lead the singing for it. She was so impressed that he came from out of town (Gallatin) without being asked to conduct the service. He came because of caring about her and not out of obligation. As it turned out, he helped John with the song service for the funeral. She added, *I never heard of anybody that didn't like him.*

Marie also told us this story: *I had made three B's in English my freshman year and was told that I would get about the same grades the following years as I*

had made the first. Brother Gaither and I had an English literature class together my sophomore year. On exam day, I just made up stuff on the exam because I thought I would still get a B like before. Brother Gaither and I both got a bad grade on the test. I thought it was funny that he studied and didn't get any better grade than I did by making up my answers.

Marie is the one who solved the mystery I read about in Daddy's diary of 1937. While attending Tennessee Tech, he started a "Jackson County Club" with sixty-five members and wrote a Constitution for it. Then he never mentioned it again in his writings. Marie remembered the picture of the club in their Tennessee Tech annual.

When Daddy died and his body lay in the Nashville Road church building at Gallatin, Marie brought Bob Johnson, Elsie Fox and Ann Draper to the visitation. She truly thought a lot of him all those years.

Leo Anderson is a brother to Marie. He lives in Chattanooga, Tennessee. I was able to visit with him by phone. He told me what a fine looking fellow my daddy was and he remembered that he did so much work for the rural churches. He said he thought the world of him and that he was very well thought of throughout that area.

Jack Meadows took us to visit two sisters who are his cousins: Rose Fuqua, 93 and Ruby Meadows, 90. They were young ladies when our parents lived across the street from them. Rose told us that Daddy once told her the back of her dress was too low! In spite of that, they both have very fond memories of those days.

Jack quoted his grandmother, Aulta Shoulders Haile, *J.B. Gaither was the best church of Christ preacher in the whole world.*

That little downtown square made me feel like we were in the good ole days for sure. If the cars were not parked there, one could feel like they were in the 1950's again. (Maybe even the 30's and 40's but I wouldn't know about them!)

We fell in love with the old Courthouse and clock. Because of Daddy's very special relationship with Jackson County and clocks, this old clock is the one pictured on the front cover of this book.



Jackson County Courthouse
Gainesboro, Tennessee

We shopped the little shops and found a nice surprise in one of them. I found a book called, "Pioneers, Preachers and Patriots," written by Robert Rogers (Bob) Chaffin in 2005. Since it had the word "Preachers" in the title, I thought that my daddy should be listed there. I turned to the index at the back and looked under the "G's" and there he was!

It is there that Chaffin tells the incident about the lizard at the graveside service. You can read that true story in the section titled, "Stories & Quotes & Jokes."

There are no motels in Gainesboro, Tennessee, so the only place to stay (besides driving to Cookeville) was a bed and breakfast called “Sher-A-Den.”



This refurbished Federalist style home built in 1890 is located at 604 S. Main Street. It was as warm and charming as it could be. The owners, Dennis and Sherry Morandi, moved to the area from Michigan around 2000 and have shared their home with many fortunate people like us who have found a cozy get-away in such a remote area. While we were there, Sherry mentioned that she puts up several trees during the holidays. That gave us the idea to return in December and to try to bring not only Frances, but our husbands with us.

The Sher-A-Den house was formerly owned by the Draper family. I read about various Drapers in Daddy’s diaries, so I did some investigating as to the likelihood that our parents would have visited this old house way back then. From what we have been told, we believe that they did, which would more than likely include Mary Frances and Patricia. We thought of that possibility as we dined in the beautiful old dining room and walked through the parlor.

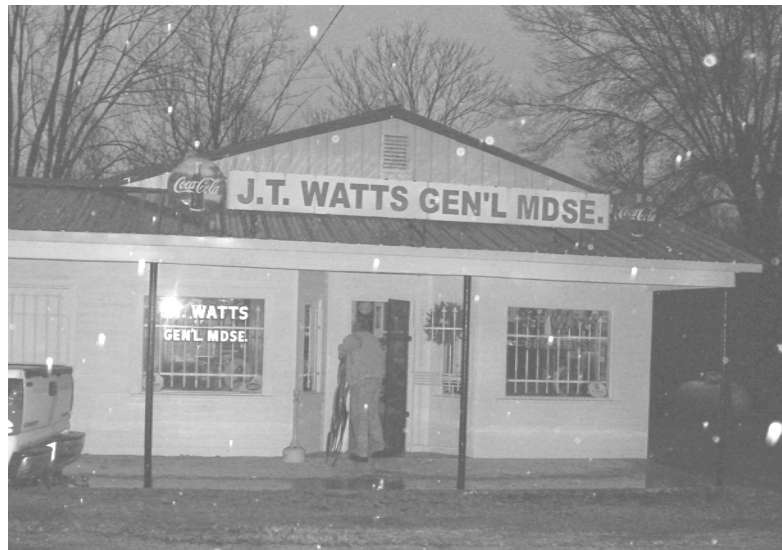
When December came around, we made another trip to Gainesboro. Mary Frances and husband, Bill Jones, Patricia, Ruby and husband, Jim Williams, and my husband and I all journeyed “over the river and through the woods” to enjoy more fellowship with the people Daddy loved and to see the holiday sights of the intriguing Sher-A-Den. We were not disappointed. The house was simply beautiful and helped us to experience an old fashioned Christmas.



We had a ball shopping downtown again with our husbands tagging along behind us. They quickly found the City Cafe where they consumed quite a bit of coffee on a cold dreary day, and we all found lunch there that day. We soon were made aware that the whole town was talking about “the four women with the men.” We think they were all hoping we would shop at their store, as the patrons in town were few and far between that winter day. As we window shopped at one store, the owner motioned and begged for us to come on in. It was a furniture store, and we knew we weren’t in the market for that, but of course they had trinkets, jewelry and Christmas decorations, so we shopped and we bought! From time to time, our husbands would move the van to another parking spot to be near the store we were in, hoping when we came out; we would get in the van. That worked when we were ready, but not before!

Davis Watts, a Jackson County boy, became good friends with Daddy when he did a banking internship at Bells, Tennessee. In 1975, Daddy sold him his clock collection (excluding a few he kept for family.)

Davis’ parents owned an old country store back in the 1950’s at Nameless, Tennessee just outside of Gainesboro. We met Davis there and reminisced about days gone by. Davis and his sister



restored it like a museum about two years ago, but it is only open two days a year. We had a wonderful time there, and he told us how Daddy frequented the store whenever he was in the area and would visit with his parents there.



Inside the J.T. Watts General Merchandise Store
Nameless, Tennessee
Patricia, Jim Williams, Sandra, Dave Pitchford, Bill Jones.
Seated: Ruby and Mary Frances

Though we didn't get to meet her, we were sorry to hear that Davis' sister passed away just recently.

Another treat was that Morgan and Evelyn Medlin from Cookeville, came over to meet us at worship services and also had lunch with us. Morgan is a Jackson County native and a retired preacher. He told us that Daddy held him as a baby. Morgan went to David Lipscomb College with Mary Frances, but they had not seen each other since college days in the 1950's. He told me that Daddy was the best loved preacher in Jackson County ever!



Left: Morgan & Evelyn Medlin, Mary Carter
Right: Frances & Bill



Sunday Lunch at Helen's Restaurant, Gainesboro
Left: Joy (Gailbreath) Brown, Katherine (Baugh) Anderson
Right: Helen Draper, Bonnie Heady and Patricia

After all the shopping we did around the square, Patricia and I failed to return to “Pappy’s Picket Fence” to get items we were considering. We talked about it late Saturday night and decided we would try to find a number for the store, call it on Sunday and see if by chance the owner was there or maybe had the calls directed to their home phone. We awakened to snow falling, and in the excitement of packing to leave, get downstairs for our delicious breakfast, and then to church services on time, we failed to look up the number call. As people arrived for services, Patricia suddenly noticed the nice lady who had waited on us at that shop the day before. She told her our wishes, and Patsy Bowman graciously opened up the shop after church services so we could purchase those much “needed” items.

Many weeks later, I learned that Patsy also works at the bank there in Gainesboro, so by email, she helped me with some questions I had from time to time.

It was so exciting to me finding the traces my parents left behind in Ohio, but it was equally uplifting to visit Gainesboro, Tennessee. It is a place that though I had been there, was not in my memory bank.

I can see now why Daddy was so charmed by this little town and all the wonderful people there and all over Jackson County. I only wish we could have visited every congregation where he held meetings there and meet all the people there as well!

As we left town, we drove down Murray Street by the preacher’s home that Daddy helped to build. They were able to move into in late November, 1938 until they moved to Springfield in 1939. The first photo on the next page is how that old preacher’s home looked then and then how it looks now. It has been bricked and had additions on each side, but it is still the original old house that was our family’s was back then. Notice the hillside hasn’t moved! Some things DO stay the same!



Above: The Gainesboro Church of Christ preacher's home that Daddy helped build 1938.
Below: The way it looks today (2007).



Our hearts were saddened when we learned a couple of weeks later that our host at Sher-A-Den had passed away just five days after our departure. Dennis Morandi was a very kind and hospitable gentleman. Sherry has since closed down the bed and breakfast.

Frances (Reed) Anderson is the widow of James Paul Anderson who served as an elder in the Gainesboro church. I visited with Frances by phone and learned a lot more about various connections in Jackson County. James Paul headed the Memorial Fund that was set up in Daddy's memory after he died. His parents, Johnny William Anderson and Ila Mae Chaffin were married October 28, 1934 at our parents' home in Gainesboro.

I also talked by phone with Ralph Carver who remembers Daddy coming to their house for Sunday dinners when he was just a boy. He recalled some Indian preacher who was also around those parts. He said the Indian preacher and Daddy would sit on the front porch after dinner and tell big tales. That's my Daddy for sure!

O'Neal Huffines and his wife, Jerldine, were very friendly over the phone. They are another couple who remember Daddy from the many return visits he made to Jackson County. O'Neal, one who preached a lot for the small congregations in Jackson County for thirty years, mentioned that he never heard anything bad about Daddy, but that he was sound and a well known preacher. The last time he saw Daddy was when they conducted a funeral together and had lunch there in Gainesboro in 1976.

Nearly every person I talked to would refer me to someone else who might know something interesting about Daddy or know the answers to my questions. Bobby Birdwell was one such referral. We didn't talk long until we discovered that his sister worships with us here in Mountain Home, Arkansas. We have known Stella (Birdwell) Anthony and her husband, Lindell, for about thirty years. Until recently, Lindell served as an elder with my husband, Dave. He also was preaching at Covington, Tennessee when Daddy was at nearby

Bells, so they were acquainted back in the 70's. Bobby was helpful to try to find out some information for me, and I truly appreciate his helpful spirit. He sent me a copy of the Antioch congregation's church history that mentions Daddy as one who preached there some.

While we were at Gainesboro for our summer visit, we made a side trip over to Horse Cave, Kentucky. In recent years, we noticed that Mother had written a note on the front of a photo that said, "Our home in Horse Cave, Kentucky, Easter 1933."

Knowing very well about the places our parents lived and worked, we were quite puzzled as to what this meant. Mother was suffering from dementia by the time we found the picture she had labeled, but she explained what she thought it might mean. It was after her death that we checked through Daddy's diaries and found her to be correct.

As told earlier in the Gainesboro chapter, Daddy preached two Sundays a month in Horse Cave, Kentucky for a while as their preacher was away. They would stay in Horse Cave for a week and then go back to Gainesboro for a week.

We were able to locate the old house that Mother had claimed as their "home in Horse Cave." The owner, Steven Smith answered the door, and invited us to come in. We showed he and his wife, Sue, our old picture, and they showed us around, explaining what changes had been made and telling us what they knew of the history of the house. They directed us across the street to City Hall to talk to Ann Matera, who knew even more about the history of the house. We learned that after a split in the congregation, the church had actually met in that house for a while.

One of the first comments Daddy made in his writings, way back in 1933 was, *The people here are very sociable*. For me, it was quite an experience to be there in our parents' "home away from home."

J.B. & Mary Gaither
200 Guthrie Street
Horse Cave, Kentucky
1933



Sandra Pitchford
200 Guthrie Street
Horse Cave, Kentucky
2008



This shows another angle of the house with the neighbors' rooflines lined up. We're not sure who the little girl is with Mary, but she is not a Gaither.



We read in the diaries about different members of the church dropping in nearly every evening that our parents were staying in the house. One Friday night, about twenty showed up with supper. As we walked around the stately old house, I could almost hear the visiting and fellowship taking place within its walls. Finding the “mystery house” to fit the old photo was one of the highlights of all of our trips. Getting to go inside the house made it extra special to me.

I visited with the preacher there, Wayne Hatcher, by phone. We were happy to know that the Lord’s church there is strong. He was very helpful in getting information for me as was Beauford Fudge, a retired preacher and one of the deacons there; Billy Bybee, an elder there; and Tom Whittington. J.A. Floyd in Bowling Green, Kentucky was also very helpful to be by phone as a very well studied man on the history of the Church of Christ in Kentucky.

This searching I have done has just proved even more to me how that we have a family everywhere we turn. A lot of the men I asked for help had never heard of J.B. Gaither; yet they were willing to seek out answers to the questions to which I thought they could answer.



Horse Cave Church of Christ
120 Cave Street
Horse Cave, Kentucky

After our return to Arkansas, I made a call to Madie Cooper. She is a contact I got from Betty Lynn in Berea, Kentucky. Madie, like Betty, attended church at Rock Springs in Clay County.

Madie said, *Brother Gaither was one of my favorite preachers....maybe THE favorite. I thought as much of him as anyone I ever heard preach.*

He ate at my house once, and Mrs. Gaither and one of his daughters was with him. It didn't take me long to check his meeting records, then his diary to find that the year was 1961, and I was the daughter who ate at Madie's that night! Though I have absolutely no recall of that, it was special to me to reconnect with someone at whose table I have been served, even at age twelve!

She told that at the funeral of Ada Johnson, (which I found to be September 15, 1962), Daddy was talking about how hard it is to lose a loved one. He made the comment, *If we didn't die when we get old, there would be no space in the world for babies to be born.* She said that meant so much to her and has stuck with her all these years.

Madie also recalled a humorous story, so typical of Daddy's wit. She was a working woman and a widow. One day, while he was in the area holding a meeting at Beech Bethany and staying down the road from her house, she came home from work to find white shirts hanging all over her garage. It didn't take her long to figure out that they likely belonged to him. That night when she got to the gospel meeting, he was waiting out front for her, and this is what he said, *Did you think the Lord sent you a husband?* He and Mama had been to the laundromat and didn't want to put his good shirts in the dryer.

This is exactly the kind of memories I have sought for in the visits I have made by phone, email and in person. This is interesting to us and is information we would otherwise never have known.

Springfield, Tennessee

In June of 2007, Patricia and son, Cullen and Ruby and I, made our visit to Springfield.

A visit to Leola Anderson was first on our agenda, and what a joy it was to see her home that Jack built before he passed away. We visited with “Coco,” and while we were there, her daughter, Dottie, who lives on the same property, came by to see us. Leola had been to see our Mother the week before she died, and though Mother didn’t seem to realize who she was, it was very touching to see this dear, dear friend come to say good-bye. She also came to the funeral home to pay her respects, along with her daughter, Darlene Watson.

About three months after we visited Leola, she passed away in September, 2007. We are so thankful for the visit we were afforded while we had time and opportunity.

During our Springfield visit, we visited 96 year old Robert Villines and his son, Van, at their home. Robert and his wife, Harriett, and their family were dear friends that spent much time together with the Gaithers during the Springfield days. After we left Robert Sr., we ventured over to Robert Jr.’s (Bobby), where we surprised him with our visit. He and Patricia had been playmates when they were young, but they had not seen each other in many, many years. They refreshed their memories on the good ole days.

Bobby commented,

Our three families were together all the time. You have to remember that World War II was going on and food was rationed, but because my Dad had a farm, there was plenty to eat at the gatherings. Milk, butter, eggs, beef, pork and, of course, in season plenty of fresh vegetables along with strawberries, watermelons and cantaloupes. And, Earl Childers would bring ice cream from his ten cent store, though we also had fun making homemade ice cream as well. There are so many wonderful memories from those days. Wish I had time to share them all.



Main Street Church of Christ
Springfield, Tennessee



We worshiped at Main Street on Sunday morning. This building is in the same location as the older building. What a thrill it was to walk in and see in their hallway, a display of all of their preachers through the years! Right at the top was J.B. Gaither, their first fulltime preacher!

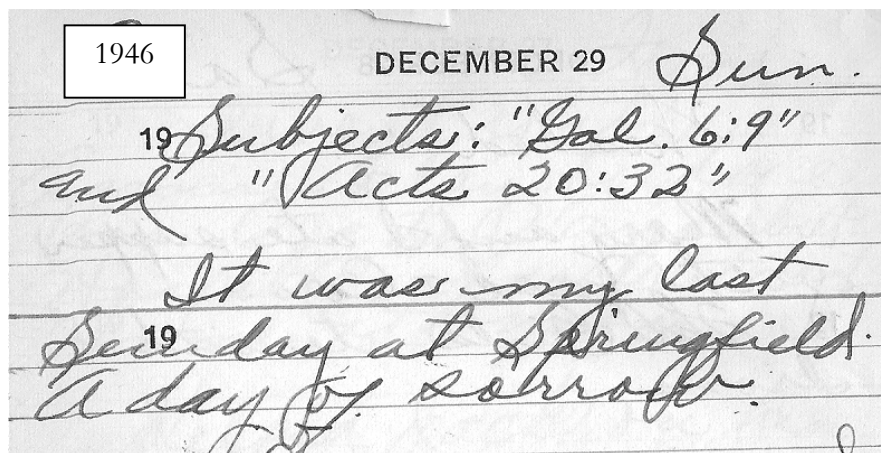
We were able to go into the church library and borrow the bound volumes of Daddy's church bulletins. Much interesting information has been taken from those books.

In the church history account, we read:

The church has published a regular bulletin since 1940. Copies of most of these bulletins are on file in the office. The original name of the bulletin in 1940 was "The Reporter." In 1954 the name was changed to "Springfield Written Worker," in 1958 it was called "The Springfield News." From 1959 till 1969 the bulletin was published without a name. In 1970 it was given the name "The Harbinger," in 1974 the bulletin was called "The Church Reporter" and in 1976 was given its original name, "The Reporter." Wow! It would be interesting to know if any other church bulletin has had so many names!

After the worship service, we got to visit with Bob Winstead who was there visiting as well. Bob was the song leader for several years at Nashville Road in Gallatin while Daddy was preaching there. He had kind words and fond memories of our family.

Before we left town, we were privileged to have lunch with the few people left in Springfield who remember our parents. We shared the log book and diaries, and they were thrilled to read about old times and recount the days when J.B. Gaither was their preacher and friend.





Back row: Jeanette Dorris, Lorelle Groves,
Faye Toothman, Alice Bedwell, Mary Elizabeth Jones
Front row: Cullen & Patricia, Ruby, Sandra

Jeanette (Frey) Dorris remembered the time that Daddy and Earl Childers built an outdoor grill in her mother's yard. They put the chimney in the corner instead of in the middle. Jeanette also brought us a clipping from the newspaper that we had never seen. It is presented in the "Clocks" section.

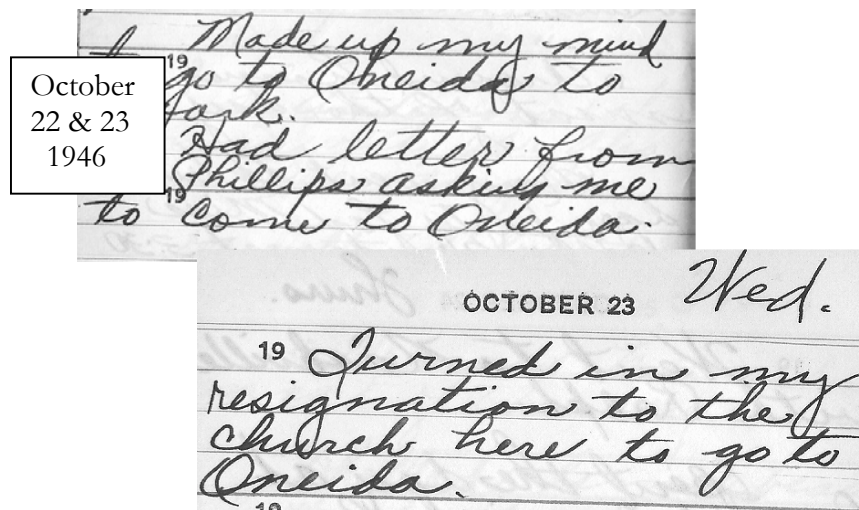
Lorelle (Dunn) Groves offered her best memory as, *His chart sermons on the church helped me to understand it better than anything else.*

Faye Toothman didn't live in Springfield when our family did. She married Don who was a brother to Leola Anderson. Because of this connection as well as Daddy returning to Springfield often in the years that followed his work there, she became very well acquainted with our family.

Alice (Hyde) Bedwell recalled, *I was about 14 years old when brother Gaither came to Springfield. I needed a father figure at that time, and he gave me real good advice. I had just been baptized. Because the Gaithers came to Springfield when they did, they influenced my life and gave me direction. After high school, I was going to leave Springfield for work, but brother Gaither encouraged me to stay, and so I did. Later, I met a wonderful 23 year old (when I was 22) and two years later married him. Then five years later, he became a Christian and remained strong in the Lord's church. I always thanked your dad for the outcome of my life.*

Mary Elizabeth (Towe) Jones whose daddy was a watchmaker, said, *What I remember about him is that when he preached, he often had tears in his eyes. Then she added, Once when brother Gaither came to see us, I had on shorts. They weren't real short, and they were made like a skirt. I was so ashamed and didn't want him to see me in my shorts, so I went and changed real quick.*

I talked to Darlene (Anderson) Watson several times. She has given me information about those Springfield days as well.



Oneida, Tennessee

Our trip to Oneida brought back very fond memories for Frances and Patricia. They were thirteen and ten years old when they moved there, so they remember much more than Ruby who was only six when they left. All four of us girls made the trip along with the three husbands, and Patricia's son, Cullen.

We were greeted at Sunday morning services by friendly faces who remember the labor of love that our daddy performed there. The congregation is still strong with a Sunday morning attendance of 115. The preacher is Randy Neal. Everyone made us feel "at home."

Jo (Jeffers) Newport had these sweet words to say, I do remember your Dad, but not from when he lived here. I was only 4 years old then. He came back over the years several times, if memory serves me right, to hold gospel meetings. His name was spoken almost in reverence.....He was a household word in the church at Oneida and throughout the brotherhood, I believe. I'm afraid the stories I can remember were of how I distracted folks around me from bearing his sermons or when I sat with my Mammaw Hines she let me go to sleep on her lap.....in fact tried to put me to sleep, so I would be quiet! I certainly wish I could give you some useful information because I know your Dad certainly was respected in our church community.

It's a small world. Jo is a sister to the wife of Ronnie Kidd, son of Ralph and Edna and friend of mine as I was growing up.



Oneida Church of Christ
Oneida, Tennessee
2007

It was a pleasure to meet Harold Jones and his wife, Patsy. Their daughter and our son both graduated from Freed Hardeman University in May, 2007. I had corresponded with him several times by email and also was glad to meet his in-laws, Ernest Billingsley, one of the elders, and his wife, Celia.

My family has always spoken fondly of the Claude Terry family in Oneida. Claude, Jr. (“Jumby,” as he is called) is one of the elders there. He was a young man off in college about the time my parents moved there, but he knew our family well.

Not long after we were there, Claude’s health became threatened. He has spent many months battling for its return.

His sister, Jane (Terry) Hoffman, and her husband Ralph, were there to visit with us as well. Jane remembers when the Gaithers first moved to Oneida and stayed with them about six weeks in the Terry home. Daddy married her to Ralph Hoffman in 1948. A year after our visit, we were saddened to hear of Ralph’s death in June, 2008.

Jane's daddy, Claude Sr., asked little Patricia what piece of chicken she would like and she asked for a breast. He gave her one, and she asked, "Is that a breast?" She remembers our mother making the statement that JB would have to go through Jackson County to get to heaven!

Jane recalls attending a Sunday night service when Daddy was conducting a meeting in the upstairs courtroom in Whitley City.

We were treated to lunch by "Jumby" and his sweet wife, Fayrene. Their daughter, Patricia Walls was also there with her husband, Robb and daughter, Amanda. There are many notations in Daddy's diaries about the Terry family. They owned a Chevrolet dealership for years, so that in itself would endear them to our Daddy!



Claude Terry Jr. with Gaither family



Patricia (Terry) Walls, Fayrene Terry
and Patricia's daughter, Amanda

Another Terry son, George A., was serving in the military at the time the Gaithers were in Oneida. On his visits back home, his mother, Paralee, was known to make him play paper dolls with Ruby! The family grew to love George A. who, along with his wife, Sarah, have lived most of their married life in Goodlettsville, Tennessee. We understand they, too are having health issues at this time.

We drove by the Oneida Elementary School to see the old bell from the Oneida church of Christ which was mounted with this inscription:

Bell Mounted by the Historical Society
In Memory of James S. Litton
The First School Teacher in the Oneida Area

Old Church of Christ Bell
Donated by Oneida Church of Christ



Oneida Elementary School
Oneida, Tennessee

We had an afternoon visit with Nora Newport and her daughter, Marielyn Hardin and husband. Marielyn lives in Chattanooga but purposely made a visit to come to see her childhood friend, Patricia. They giggled together about secrets from their past as we talked of days gone by.

Nora was very helpful with the history of the church and its preachers, because she has lived just across the street from the church building many, many years. She told us that years ago, before the building was remodeled, the door was so narrow a casket could not be taken through it. They had to take the casket in through a side window!



Front: Ruby, Mary Frances, Nora Newport
Middle: Sandra, Patricia
Back: Marielyn (Newport) Hardin

When our son, Alan Pitchford, went to Freed Hardeman University in 2003, he took up with a young man, Cliff Boyd. When spring break came along, Alan and some other boys spent the week with Cliff's family in Little Rock, Arkansas. That made a good impression on us to know that Cliff had such hospitable and brave parents (Bill and Lori Boyd), so I obtained her email address from Cliff and sent her a little note of appreciation for housing and feeding Alan for a week. He and Cliff were both interested in youth work and preaching, and so I mentioned how happy that made me, especially since both of Alan's grandfathers were preachers. I probably mentioned that I grew up in Tennessee since Freed-Hardeman is in Tennessee. In her reply, Lori asked me who my daddy was. When I told her "J.B. Gaither," she immediately knew the name.

Her dad, Clifford Reel, served as minister in Oneida 1968-73 and again 1979-97. She wrote back these words, *We lived in the house your daddy built there! I loved our house there...it was a big white frame house with*

lots of space. My sister and I had the whole upstairs with two giant rooms. It had wood floors and a big basement also. I have lots of memories from that house.

It was so wonderful to “connect” with Lori and later to meet Bill and all of their children. Lori gave me so many names and numbers for contacts in Oneida. I also visited with her mother, Jean Reel, by phone. The Reels now reside in Hendersonville, Tennessee and were able to come to Mother’s funeral.



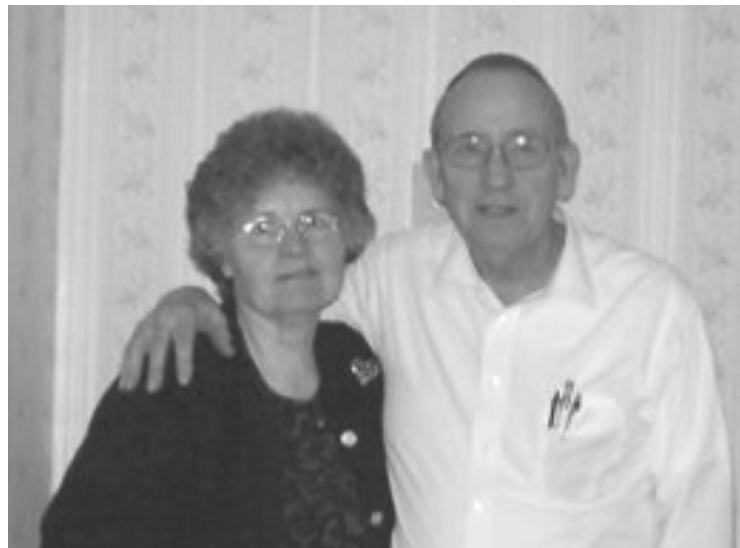
Above: Oneida church of Christ Parsonage built 1947
Below: Same house in another location 2008



Whitley City, Kentucky

Our experience with Whitley City, Kentucky seemed to be one of a providential nature. As I made my list of congregations where Daddy worked fulltime, I added to that list the three places he had helped to establish the Lord's church. The online directory of the church of Christ provided me with a few email addresses to use for contacts. About the only email request that produced results was Joe Arnold, preacher at Whitley City! His wife, Pat, promptly replied, and the results of that reply reaped eternal consequences for the church in Whitley City.

The Arnolds began their mission ministry there November, 2006. The work there is supported by the Mt. Pleasant Church of Christ in Bowling Green, Kentucky, three other congregations in Kentucky and five congregations in Tennessee.



Joe & Pat Arnold
Whitley City, Kentucky

I had emailed the Arnolds looking for history on the church there. As it turned out, she needed the history that Daddy's diaries could furnish! Because of Daddy's good record keeping, I was able to help them out with history of the early years of the church there.

As our emails progressed, I learned that the church at Whitley City was struggling to stay alive. They were down to about fifteen members. The Arnolds had requested help from the "Sojourners" for summer of 2007, but the request had been too late for 2007 scheduling.

When I became aware of that, I mentioned it to Richard and Jo Byrd, "Sojourners" that worship with us at College & North Church of Christ, Mountain Home, Arkansas. The Byrds and I put our heads together and had the idea that we could make up our own group to go! Since my husband, Dave, is an elder here, getting our idea approved was not too difficult. Three couples, besides us, went and stayed the better part of two weeks. They knocked doors the first week and followed up with a gospel meeting the second week.



Richard & Jo Byrd



Ellis & Jackie Jones



Roy & Marcy Bowers

These two couples from Mountain Home, Arkansas joined the Byrds for the mission effort in Whitley City.



Whitley City Mission Effort, September 2007
(Photographer) Richard Byrd, headed up the group

Back row left to right:

Leland Slaven, Roy Bowers, Jo Byrd, Pat & Joe Arnold, Jackie Jones

Front row:

Debbie Slaven, Marcy Bowers, Ellis Jones

All those pictured are from Mountain Home, Arkansas except for Joe & Pat, Leland and Debbie, who are members there at Whitley City.

Joe and Pat Arnold are carrying on a difficult task that needs much encouragement. They are truly earning stars in their crowns. It seems that the people in that area are just not very receptive to the gospel.

Due to two weddings in the family, we were not able to go until time for the meeting to start. Frances and Bill, Patricia and Cullen, Ruby and Jim, and Dave and I were all able to be there for two evenings of the gospel meeting in September. They had all done so much work

the week before and seemingly with very little success. However, the meeting was very profitable. They had good crowds in their small auditorium, good singing, a baptism and two restorations. The preaching, by Tim Medford of Lake City, Tennessee, was very effective and to the point. . . .much like sermons by J.B. Gaither.



Paul, Maxine Sampson & daughter, Ruth Ann Stewart

The Sampsons, now from Soddy Daisy, Tennessee were the first two members of the church that Daddy established there in 1946. They made a special effort to come to meet us and renew friendships at Whitley City during the gospel meeting in 2007. Paul passed away on February 19, 2008 in Soddy Daisy and was buried in Whitley City on February 22, 2008.

Maxine told us that not too long after Daddy baptized them, she stayed home from Sunday services to cook lunch for him. He never said a word to her about it, so she figures he knew she would learn better. She *did* learn better and never did that again!



McCreary County Courthouse
Whitley City, Kentucky

J.B. Gaither may have preached in the upstairs courtrooms of this courthouse back in the 1940's.



McCreary Church of Christ
Whitley City, Kentucky
2007



The residential house (pictured above) where the church met back in its beginning has since taken on additions resembling a church building.

The photo below is another former building used by the church of Christ in Whitley City.



Jamestown, Tennessee

We were not able to be at Jamestown during a worship service, but Patricia, Cullen, Ruby, Jim, Dave and I met with the minister, Ancil Jenkins, and two very kind ladies, Betty (Hill) Asberry, and her sister, Elsie (Hill) Pyle at the church building. Daddy ate many meals in Betty and Elsie's home when they were young girls, and in 1947, he baptized them both. Betty had some information to share with us, and she and Elsie enjoyed seeing the accounts of their baptisms in Daddy's diaries and log book. I failed to make a picture of the current church building in Jamestown, and Betty's daughter, Stacy, so generously provided me with several to pick from.



Church of Christ
Jamestown, Tennessee



Outside the Jamestown Church of Christ
Jamestown, Tennessee
Ruby, Elsie Pyle, Betty Asberry & Patricia
share information on the history
of the church in Jamestown.

Brother Jenkins offered us a great deal of information on the church history there, including pictures of former buildings and laborers. The membership there is about ninety.

Jamestown has a new preacher since our visit. Phil Adams began working with the congregation late 2007.

Malvin Roberts remembers that Daddy came to Jamestown in the summers to hold tent meetings. He told me in a phone conversation,

I remember going with my dad to help Brother Gaither set up the tent for the meeting. Brother Gaither was the best preacher I ever heard. I thought the world of him.



Church of Christ in Jamestown, Tennessee 1943 □
Same Building 2007 □



Harrisonburg, Virginia

I talked to Oscar McCoy who, in 1962, was preaching at Harrisonburg, Virginia. Daddy held a mission meeting there, staying with Paul and Maxine Sampson who had helped get the church started there in the mid 50's. Much of his ten days there were spent making visits with brother McCoy who, at that time, was a young man in his late twenties. (Daddy would have been 61). Brother McCoy and his wife, Joyce, also had Daddy in their home for meals.

Since that meeting was well over forty years ago, brother McCoy didn't recognize the name that quickly when I told him I was inquiring about J.B. Gaither. After we established that he held a meeting there in 1962, he finally asked me, *Did he like clocks?* Enough said. We were talking about the same man!

When I told him that Daddy's records indicate there was only one baptism, he replied that that was true, but that some of the visits they made during that ten days resulted in other baptisms later. He recalled that Daddy would give these people they visited the opportunity to ask questions and then he would answer them with the Bible.

As I read to brother McCoy from the pages of Daddy's diary, I read that they visited in a certain home after services one evening. He quickly remembered that Daddy talked that lady out of a clock before they left that night!

Daddy must have influenced this young preacher for the good of the Kingdom, as brother McCoy is still going strong in the work of the church. He and his wife have established seven congregations and are now living in Galion, Ohio.

Berea, Kentucky

The church at Berea, Kentucky has a written history that mentions Daddy's name, but his diaries indicate a lot more involvement in the beginning of that congregation.

My first contact was with Charles Moore, the preacher there presently. By email he informed me that there was really no one attending there at this time that was there in the 1950's. He did however have a couple of contacts of those who know him from elsewhere and who attend there now.

One was Betty (Stephens) Lynn who knew Daddy from childhood, living at Pea Ridge near Celina, Tennessee in Clay County. Betty attended church at Rock Springs and remembers hearing Daddy preach on many occasions. Rock Springs is the oldest continuing congregation of the churches of Christ in the U.S. Daddy also conducted funeral services for several of her relatives there. Betty's words were, *J.B. Gaither was a big name with the church at that time.* After talking with Betty a few times by phone, it was nice to meet her and husband, Steve. Betty helped me a great deal with contacts at Berea and elsewhere.

Edna Pigman remembers Daddy very well. Alongside her husband, Arthur, they were instrumental in the beginning of the congregation at Berea, as well as other places at other times. She now lives in Harrodsburg, Kentucky, and at 84, is still very active in the work of the church. Her daughter-in-law, Connie Pigman, drove her over to Berea from Harrodsburg for worship that Sunday morning. She reminisced about the times when Daddy came to Berea and helped the church there. She said, *He was such a sweet man; we all loved him.* When Daddy held meetings or visited there, the Pigman name is mentioned in his diaries. They showed hospitality by feeding him. To a preacher, that's about as hospitable as it gets! Edna tells that the first time he visited them she and her niece were desperately trying to get some apple butter made and couldn't leave the kitchen, as they

had to keep stirring. No problem for J.B. Gaither. He wasn't afraid of anyone's kitchen, so he and the other preacher, who was with him, just came right into the kitchen and sat down so they could all visit. Edna was somewhat embarrassed because it was a very hot kitchen and she and her niece were sweaty and dirty from the mess and barefoot! But it didn't bother him and that impressed her.

Edna remembers that Daddy liked to talk about his family and his clocks. She said the children loved to sit at his feet and be entertained by his stories and jokes. Arthur Pigman died in 1993. He and Edna have a son, Arthur Pigman, Jr. who is a gospel preacher.

Dave and I, Patricia and son, Cullen, Ruby and husband, Jim, made the journey to Berea. We found the congregation to be very friendly with a nice building that was built just a few years ago. They have what they call a "Wall of Faith" in their foyer. There are two large boards with engraved nameplates on them, portraying those who have made contributions to the building fund honoring or memorializing a loved one. After reading about it on their website, we had sent in a memorial to Daddy for Father's Day 2008, as we believed that his name should be mentioned there.

It was nice to see C.T. Huffines' and his wife, Carolyn again. She told us about one thing she remembers Mama telling her many years ago. She gave her an idea for something to keep on hand to be ready for anyone who might drop in. You take vanilla wafers and make preserves sandwiches with them, spread some cream cheese on the outside and roll them in coconut. She has never forgotten that!

C.T. stated, *J. B. Gaither was one of my favorite people.*

He lived at Hendersonville and directed the song services for many meetings with Daddy. He mentioned that he believes Daddy held more meetings in Tennessee and Kentucky than anyone else at that time. C.T. also led the singing at Nashville Road for the Foy E. Wallace meeting that is in book form, "No. One Gospel Sermons."

He told me that people always thought the best preachers came out of Freed-Hardeman College, and that since Daddy was such a good preacher, many assumed he was a Freed-Hardeman graduate. Lots of preachers came to hear his Bible filled sermons. He added, *He had the smallest Testament I ever saw, and I thought he must have really thick glasses lenses.*

Brother Huffines recalled memories of a more personal nature such as his date with Patricia and Mama's beautiful piano playing. He still has an old songbook Mama gave him that has her name and the Gallatin address written in the front. He also remembers the clocks and a visit he made to the clock house there in Gallatin; how Daddy had them all set so that they would strike or chime a few seconds apart. He wanted to hear them all separately, and C.T. reminded me how that Daddy could identify each one by their sound and tell him which one they were hearing as they all took their turn.

The church building at Nashville Road had many steps that went nearly all the way across the front of the building. He recalls Daddy carrying Grandpa (Tom) Campbell up those steps for every service after he became too weak to climb them. When asked, "Aren't you getting too old to carry him like that?" Daddy replied, "He's really carrying me."

He and Daddy went all over Sumner County on Monday nights to sing. Daddy wanted to sing every song in the book, so one Monday night they started with the first song and started down the line. Each week they would pick up with the next number, until they finally got to the end of the songbook. I remembered his wanting to go all the way through the book and being in the audience at least once when we did that, but it is a memory I would have never recalled on my own.

Brother Huffines said of our parents, *They were just the best people in the world.*



Sunday Lunch at the Dinner Bell, Berea, Kentucky

Left side front to back:

Betty Lynn, Edna Pigman, Ruby and Jim Williams

Right side front to back:

Steve Lynn, Dave Pitchford, Connie Pigman,

C.T. Huffines, Patricia, Cullen



Patricia and C.T. reminisce about the past
as C.T. looks over Daddy's writings.



Edna Pigman

4 Sunday, May 23, 1954
 143rd Day--222 days to follow

CLEAR
CLOUDY
RAIN
SNOW

Radio W.E.K.Y. at 7:15:
 Col. 3:17

Berea 11 + 8: "Heb. 10:23-31"
 "What Shall I Do With Jesus?"

Irvine at 5: "Individual Service"
 Ate dinner with Arthur
 Pigman, supper with Bartons.
 Bro. Bert Baker at Pigmans.

Meeting Closed at Berea.
 #194⁰⁰ (#1)

3 Bap. 5 Restored

Baptized Vera M. Kinney at 1:30.

Sheridan Bowman } Restored
 Mrs " Bowman } at 11.
 Elizabeth Patter }



Berea Church of Christ
357 North Dogwood Drive
Berea, Kentucky
Present Building in 2008

4 Sunday, March 28, 1954
87th Day—278 days to follow

CLEAR
CLOUDY
RAIN
SNOW

Subjects at Berea:
"Gal. 6:9" and
"Fruit Bearing"
On radio W.E. KY at
7:15: "Every Word"
At Irvines at 2:30;
"Sowing & Reaping"
Ate dinner with Miss
Marie Hart and Coopers at
Boone Tavern.
Spent night with Gately.

Gallatin, Tennessee

Gallatin was the only place all of us kids lived together, and our Sunday at Nashville Road (November 18, 2007) found all five of us together again. We also brought along with us the husbands, Bill, Jim and Dave and also Cullen. This was our “church home” for many years; the site of all five of our baptisms and two of our weddings. It is there that our daddy, at his request, lay as a corpse for an evening of visitation for friends and family.

We were greeted by James R. Spivey, one of the elders there, and a native of Jackson County who worshiped at Flynn’s Lick. When brother Spivey was a boy, Daddy used to stay in their home a lot when he would be holding meetings for them. He told us he knows more about our Daddy than we do! He has been so helpful to me in providing needed information for this effort.

He recalled that when Daddy was preaching at Sugar Creek in Jackson County, he would line up all the kids on the edge of the stage and have them sit there while he preached. During one sermon, he stepped on James’ fingers.

Brother Spivey also told us how that once when Daddy was staying with them, his dad, Eston, said, *J.B., me and the boys are going to the creek for a bath. You can wash up here or get a towel and go to the creek with us.* Daddy chose the creek even though it was 10 pm, and they all played there until midnight.

The building at Nashville Road is drastically different than when we were there. Being the preacher’s kids, we knew every nook and cranny of that building. Thanks to brother Spivey, we got a tour of the new building and discovered a lot of familiar nooks that are still there in the old building!

Daddy's office is still in the same place, now occupied by brother Charles R. Williams, who impressed us as a very knowledgeable man of the Word with good delivery. The telephone nook between the office and hallway is still there though it is nailed shut. Daddy wrote in his church bulletin on October 15, 1950 (shortly after the new building was completed), *We expect to have the telephone at the meeting house transferred...any time now. It will be located in the wall of the office and hall in such a way that it will be accessible to anyone in the church building. It will not be locked in the office for office use only.* We understand that changes are necessary, but thought it was interesting that this little spot in the building past and present is mentioned in his writings.

We are pleased to know that some things at Nashville Road haven't changed through the years. Two of the song number and attendance racks on the wall up front, and the pulpit are still the same as when we were kids.



Nashville Road Church of Christ
Gallatin, Tennessee

The basement fellowship area is one fantastic improvement! Dave and I married at Number One in 1969 and had our reception in the basement. My three sisters had all had their receptions in our home on West Main, but “home” was far away in Bells now. I recall Mama trying so hard to dress up that old basement! The concrete walls and floors were hard to overcome. She had Daddy to hang a drapery rod and drapes on one wall to make a good photo background, and we cleaned and cleaned and tried to “freshen” it up. I was totally pleased with the now refurbished basement. It is as nice as it can be. My parents would be so proud!

We found at Nashville Road that there are few members who were attending there back then. Henry and Dock Campbell are permanent fixtures though, and Dock had some interesting stories to tell:

A man at the radio station told brother Gaither, ‘You say the church is the only one that is right; the Baptist preacher says they’re right; and the Methodist does the same. I’m confused.’ Brother Gaither’s response was, ‘If you don’t believe what the Bible says, you’ll always be confused.’

A man at the store said to brother Gaither, ‘I don’t think you have to know the Bible to do what’s right. You can do what is right without the Bible.’ Brother Gaither said, ‘You can do right without the Bible, but you won’t get any credit for it.’

It was nice to see Pam (Merryman) Newby at services that day and to meet her husband, Carl. The Merrymans were members at Union Hill when we were at Nashville Road, but she came to our Vacation Bible Schools, and being near the same age, we were acquainted. Pam still remembers that Daddy preached her sister’s funeral when she was fatally injured getting off the school bus. He was a comfort to her family during that dark hour.

Pam also shared this little story with us. Ralph Kidd, Jr. told her that once when Daddy was leading the song, “Holy, Holy, Holy,” and got to the “Lord God Almighty” phrase, he sang, “Lord God this is too high.”

It was nice to see Tony Butler again after so many years. He used to ride our school bus and was not a member of the church at that time. He now serves as an elder at Nashville Road. We were pleased to meet his wife as well.

Mike Tidwell is another one we saw once again whose name is a familiar one amongst our family. His dad, Charles Tidwell, and Daddy were good friends. It was good to see him and to meet his wife as well.

Nashville Road memoirs would not be complete without mention of the late Ralph Kidd and his family. Ralph was born in Canton, Ohio and his wife, Edna (Bell), was from Whitley City, Kentucky.

The relationship between Ralph and Daddy dates back to the 1940's. I had a nice conversation with Judy (Kidd) Knight as I tried to clarify in my mind all the connections between our daddies.

Judy believes they first became acquainted through Daddy's brother, Jim, who was a leader in the church in New Philadelphia, Ohio. Daddy and Mother had been gone from Ohio several years, but on a return visit, they met Ralph and Edna.

Ralph, being some twenty years younger, was encouraged by Daddy to go to college at David Lipscomb. Ralph took his advice, and that is how the Kidds migrated to Tennessee.

Ralph interested Daddy in the work in Whitley City, Kentucky, leading to the mission work Daddy carried on there.

In 1952 Ralph and Edna Kidd and their family moved to Gallatin. Ralph became the Associate Minister and Song Leader at Nashville Road. Their oldest daughter, Judy, is Ruby's age, Ralph Jr. is about John B., Jr.'s age and Ronnie is my age. Their youngest, Joy, came along a few years later. We all have many fond memories of times spent together.

There were many occasions when Daddy held meetings, and Ralph led the singing. There were also times when Ralph did the preaching, and Daddy conducted the song service. They were quite a versatile pair!

Our parents enjoyed singing together and taping their music on the old reel to reel recorder. Daddy mentions in his diaries sending Ralph to preach here and there, or helping him get a preaching job. Oftentimes, he and Daddy held meetings together, one doing the preaching and one leading the song service. Ralph did a lot of fill in work for the small rural congregations in Sumner County as he served as Associate Minister at Nashville Road. He also led the singing for Nashville Road for a number of years.

Judy Kidd married Harold Knight who has preached at Hillcrest in Sumner County for many years. That is where Patricia worships, so she is still in close contact with Judy.

John Brasel is another Nashville Road memory. My visit with John was by phone. I saw him and his wife, Odetta, at Mother's visitation in May, 2006 for the first time in years. John, originally from Jackson County, was just a boy when he heard Daddy preach at Willette. He went to school at Gainesboro, graduating in 1949.

John was leading the singing at Lafayette and working at Lebanon when he heard that Nashville Road was in need of a song leader. Ralph Kidd, Nashville Road's Associate Minister at the time, had had John in a singing school he taught. He talked John into trying out, and John was chosen for the job in December, 1955. He got paid \$25.00 a Sunday.

He led the singing for that congregation from 1954-73. Thirteen of those years, he served along with Daddy. January 1, 1961 was the thirteenth anniversary of the Sumner County first Sunday singing as well as the thirteenth anniversary of JB's work at Nashville Road.

John told me that on that day Daddy requested songs with the number 13; 13, 113, 213, 313, 413. Daddy stated in his diary that he used thirteen men in the morning worship service!

When I asked John what was the best lesson Daddy taught him about life, he replied, *Not to give up*. John now attends at Rivergate and still attends the Sumner County First Sunday Singings when he can.

I would like to insert a note of thanks to Doug Parks at the New Deal congregation for helping me spread the word about this endeavor and soliciting information for the writing of it. This is part of his reply, *J.B. Gaither started the first Sunday Singings. A Sunday morning radio program was started on WHIN in September, 1948. I have a page from a 1954 edition of the Sumner County News that is a full page ad concerning the radio program. It has a picture of the preacher from every congregation in the county. I suspect your dad was behind that ad. I have also come across records of cooperative Gospel Meetings that took place in the early 1950's. I believe your dad was the force behind them.*

Our mother's first cousin, Jere Taylor, came from Nashville and met us at Nashville Road to worship with us. We have many good memories of Jere and his wife, Dolly, who used to come to Gallatin and sit with Grandpa Campbell so that Mama could get out of the house. A time or two they accepted the duty of babysitting John B. and me as well. Jere recently lost his second wife, Elsie, so we were glad to get to have a visit with him.

Mother's visitation (May 2007) was at a funeral home there in Gallatin, so we had the opportunity, at that time, to visit with so many friends and acquaintances from Sumner County and the surrounding area. I had no idea at that time that I would be writing this story, so I have only my memory to rely on for all the wonderful comments and memories shared with us then. There were so many people in this area whose lives touched our parents and in turn, our parents touched their lives. I wish I could recall the stories we were told on that occasion.



Pictured above are John B. and Sandra
Nashville Road Church of Christ, November 18, 2007

Shown below is part of JB's diary page on a Sunday, 1961 when he spoke 6 times. "1" at the top left is his code for number of Bible classes. "5" to the right of August 27 is his indicator of number of sermons delivered that day. As you can see, all were different topics. The 10 days prior to that Sunday, he was in a meeting at Rock Springs in Clay County, not arriving home until 11:15 pm on the 26th!

JULY 1961	AUGUST 1961	SEPTEMBER 1961
S M T W T F S	S M T W T F S	S M T W T F S
1	1 2 3 4 5	1 2
2 3 4 5 6 7 8	6 7 8 9 10 11 12	3 4 5 6 7 8 9
9 10 11 12 13 14 15	13 14 15 16 17 18 19	10 11 12 13 14 15 16
16 17 18 19 20 21 22	20 21 22 23 24 25 26	17 18 19 20 21 22 23
23 24 25 26 27 28 29	27 28 29 30 31	24 25 26 27 28 29 30
30 31		

AUGUST 27⁵
SUNDAY³⁵
239 ↔ 126

A quiet tongue shows a wise head

8:00 *Julji #1. "Preach to Every Creature"*

8:30 *"Isalms 1"*

9:00

9:30 *Bethpage: "Created Unto Good Works"*

10:00 *"1 Pet. 3: 10-12"*

10:30

11:00 *Mattie's Nursing Home*

11:30

12:00 *at 2: "Faith - Heb. 11"*

Bells, Tennessee

Dave and I visited the Sunday morning services at Bells on May 13, 2007. We had never been inside the new building they built after their previous one was destroyed by a tornado in November 2002.



Bells Church of Christ
Bell, Tennessee
2007

This building faces the opposite direction from the former building, so it seemed even more foreign as we entered. However, the people were not foreign to us. We remembered many of them, and it was so nice to see them all. They treated us like celebrities! This was actually the first visit made back to the congregations where Daddy worked, and I had not yet had the thought of letting them know ahead of time that we would be there. I don't know that any of them would have recognized us, but as soon as we mentioned Daddy's name, they seemed so thrilled to see us and to hear about the endeavor underway of my writing his life story.

Our visit to Bells was the day after our son, Alan, graduated from Freed-Hardeman, and we were surprised to see that their preacher

was a young man who graduated with Alan! Jordan Guy and his wife, Taylor impressed us as a fine young couple. We heard him present two fine lessons and think him to be well grounded in truth and well suited to the job.

The first two ladies we met were Lavelle Jackson and her sister in law, Martha Helen White. Lavelle let us know quickly that Daddy baptized her parents, Jones and Minnie Gage. She was so kind as to send me a copy of the church history, adding again, *My parents really thought a lot of your parents.*

We learned from Jane (Humphreys) Atkins that her dad, Theo Humphreys, who was an elder when Daddy was there, is now in the nursing home.

Billy Qualls is one who Daddy baptized August 2, 1970 at Alamo because the Bells baptistery was out of order at the time.

Rose Watson remembered how that not long after JB and Mary moved to Bells, her mother died. She was impressed that my parents, along with the Conleys and Mehers, went to Kentucky for the funeral.

Brother Charles Conley was an elder when Daddy was there. He is a widower now, with failing health. He was able to be there though, and it was so good to see him. I was friends with his daughter, Betty, but we have not stayed in touch. He told me that his she is in Memphis teaching school and has two grown children.

Katherine King said, *Everything about your Daddy was good.* He conducted the funerals for her husband and her mother-in-law.

Bobby and Reba Jones were certainly names I remembered hearing a lot. One of the favorite stories I received from all the inquiring I did in nine congregations came from Bobby. He said, *I think of your Daddy every Saturday morning.* I immediately thought it would have something to do with clocks. He added, *I think of him every time I wind*

my clock. He told me to “always wind the right side first.” Reba added that that was certainly true, so I guess they talk about him sometimes when the clock is being wound. I love that story, because I love the thought that he is in someone’s memory on a regular basis forty-two years later (after leaving Bells).

Jeanette Jones Holder recalls when he baptized her. She said, *He was just wonderful. He always hugged me and made me feel loved.*

When Mother died May 2006, our son-in-law, Russell Epperson, who is Human Resource Director at Freed-Hardeman University, sent out an email to all faculty and staff at FHU informing them of her death. A staff member, Sheila Buckley, contacted Russell to tell him that she had no idea Mrs. Gaither was his wife’s (Allison’s) grandmother. She recalled visiting Bells’ Vacation Bible School as a girl. Mother was her teacher and at one time, presented her with a New Testament that she still has. Shelia’s parents are Billy and Faye Edwards who attended at the Crossroads congregation back then. Now Billy is an elder at Bells. I have visited with Faye several times by phone, and she has helped me get my notes and stories straightened out about the members at Bells.

Janie Dillon said, *I can tell you he was a good man. We thought the world of him and Mrs. Gaither. They came to our house many times. Brother Gaither married our oldest daughter.*

Someone at Bells told me that Daddy regularly visited her mother or grandmother who was a member of a denomination. Before she died, she requested he take part in her funeral. I thought that was a sweet memory and so typical of my daddy. He did a lot of visiting, and many times it was to those who were not members.

Fayetteville, Tennessee

Nostalgia was overwhelming when Frances and Bill, Ruby and Jim, and Dave and I entered the front doors of the church building at Liberty, July 22, 2007. This was the place of Daddy's last work and the place where we finally faced the reality that our daddy was mortal after all. His body laid there overnight and many, many friends and family surrounded him and all of us with kind and loving words and memories that I wish I had recorded for this writing. That was near twenty-eight years ago as I write this, and many changes have taken place in the building and in the church there, but one thing remains unchanged. The first thing we saw when we entered through the doors was the clock that he prepared for the church, and it is still hanging right where he placed it.



Remembering how he died in the backyard mowing around his sunflowers after working around his rose trellis, we had purchased a basket of those same flowers to place in the building. The space on the clock shelf seemed to be just the appropriate place for the basket, so we placed it there in memory of our daddy.

We were received with so much kindness and interest in our effort. The congregation has about 115 for Sunday morning worship. Many enjoyed looking through the diaries and finding their life events recorded there.

It was nice to meet the preacher at Liberty, Richard Rogers and his sweet wife, Sarah. Brother Rogers became acquainted with Daddy when Daddy held so many meetings at Lafayette, Tennessee. Also, he was preaching in Huntsville, Alabama during the time Daddy was at Liberty, so they made contact from time to time during those years.

The Rogers live in the home that Daddy was instrumental in improving with added floor space, carport, storage house and landscaping.

During the worship service, I noticed the “Record” rack up front had 313 as the Record Attendance. I quickly recalled reading in his diary about that number being present at his 50th Anniversary of preaching, November 7, 1976! Though I would be happy to know they had surpassed that number since then, it was extra special in a selfish sort of way, to see that his 50th Anniversary was still very special in their church history. After services, several mentioned it to me, so I feel like most people remember what occasion it was that merited the record attendance. For that, we felt comforted.

We visited the church’s library where we found four bound volumes of his church bulletin. The fifth year’s bulletins, in a three ring binder was a bittersweet reminder that a project was interrupted before complete. However, we realize that as much as he loved his bound

bulletins, he certainly would not want to come back to finish out one more volume!

It was wonderful to see Peggy Higgins again after so long. She had taken the time to write this note: *I know we were very fortunate to have Bro. and Sis. Gaither working with us at Liberty. An addition was added to the preacher's home and an outside building that he used for many of his clocks. He did a great job at overseeing the work.*

The largest crowd we ever had at Liberty was for his 50th anniversary of preaching. We had lunch in the Community Building.

He married my oldest daughter, Sharon. It was a wedding in our home.

He was very knowledgeable of the Bible and a great asset to Liberty. His death was a shock to me. We loved both of them very much.

Daddy assisted Willard Conchin in the wedding ceremony for Earl Monks and Rene (Kerbo) on June 20, 1976.

Earl Monks said he can still hear Daddy, in the middle of a sermon, saying, *Are you listening?*

Rene Monks has many memories of Daddy and Mother:

When our son, Garrett, was about six to twelve months old, we were sitting about six rows from the front one Sunday morning. The baby got loud and I took him out. In the middle of the lesson, brother Gaither said, 'Don't look at that mother taking her baby out. That mother knows what that baby needs, and she will take care of him.'

I could see heads turn back toward the front. That meant so much to me. He never lost his train of thought nor changed his tone of voice.

Mrs. Gaither made a 'Quiet Book' for Garrett. It has now been used by four children and is in the second generation.

After your daddy died and your mama was settled in her apartment, we visited her, and she gave our two year old son, Garrett, one of brother Gaither's songbooks. (Garrett had led his first song on the Wednesday night before). At age twenty-nine, he still has the songbook.

Joe Swing, one of the deacons at Liberty, and his wife, Thelma, fondly remember Daddy. They told the story of how they went to hear Daddy in a meeting at McBurg and got lost on the way. Thelma said, *When we told him we got lost, he said, "Thelma, you gotta know where you're going and you gotta know the direction, or you'll never get to heaven."*

One of the elders, Tommy Sisk, led the singing when we were there. His wife, Becky, told us, *Before I came to Liberty, I was attending another congregation that had a young preacher. He made me feel unworthy and ashamed. Then I came to Liberty, and your daddy took me under his wing like a mother chick and her hens. He made me feel loved.*

We were pleased to find that the first Sunday singings Daddy started are still going on.

Lynn and Sylvia Brown were good friends of our parents when they were at Liberty. Through the years, Lynn served as a deacon and later as an elder. They now attend at the West Fayetteville congregation. We were tickled to see them at the restaurant where we had lunch. Daddy noted in his diaries so many connections with Lynn and Sylvia.

Windell and Winnie Gatlin were out of town so we missed them. They were dear friends to our parents and considered them parents.

Windell wrote, *On the day of my dad's (R.C. Gatlin) funeral, brother Gaither went up to Curtis Brown's house to get some food Faye had prepared to take to my mom's home. There were three or four inches of snow on the ground and still snowing very hard. His car slid into a tree stump and bent the door (January 19, 1978)* In Daddy's dairy, on that date, he wrote at the top of the

page, *This has been one terrible day!* And then he goes on to tell the same story Windell told.

Windell also shared, *When brother Blair Smith died, sister Ethel Smith received an envelope with a one hundred dollar bill in it from brother and sister Gaither. I don't think many people knew of that.*

He always called Winnie "Rose Bud." When he needed a refill on his coffee, he would tell her, "I can see the bottom of my cup."

When Notie Swindell would fix dinner for them, she would put a bowl of chicken and dumplings just for him at his place. He also loved catfish.

He taught Winnie the little saying and finger play, "Drink puppy drink....Stand back big dog and let the puppy drink."

When the doctor had put Daddy on a strict diet, he also told him to start walking, so he would walk back and forth to the church building. The building there at Liberty is just next door to the home, but there is a long inclined driveway. He walked that every time he needed to and at other times just for exercise. He would walk on down to services early, leaving Mother to drive herself. Then he would walk home. Winnie and Windell remember seeing him "trot" up that long uphill drive after services.

Thanks to the Gatlins for spreading the word about our visit and getting people interested in giving us memories.

Not long before our visit to Liberty, Helen Ventress was diagnosed with cancer and given just a few months to live. Her husband, James, had been an elder there at Liberty and had died in 1982. Helen wasn't up to a personal visit, but we did have a wonderful long talk over the phone. She, of course, had only praise for Daddy and all he did for the Lord's cause in that place so many years ago. Helen passed away in late August, 2007.

Helen's sister-in-law, Christine (Loftis) Poole, who lives in Taft, Tennessee, grew up in Gainesboro and has known Daddy all her life. Christine recalls that he baptized her parents, Simpson Loftis and Lucille Mayberry Loftis, her grandparents, some aunts and uncles. She commented that brother Gaither was *tops* up there, *a good one*.



Lincoln County Courthouse
Fayetteville, Tennessee
2007

And so that concludes the trips we made back to the churches where Daddy worked. What a joy it was to be able to back track in time and to reminisce about those special places in our background.

With All This in Mind...

In the Old Testament book of Joshua, we read the account of Joshua and the children of Israel as they entered the promised land of Canaan. God used His mighty hand to divide the waters of the Jordan River, so that Israel could pass over on dry ground.

“And it came to pass, when all the people were clean passed over Jordan, that the LORD spake unto Joshua, saying, Take you twelve men out of the people, out of every tribe a man, And command ye them, saying, Take you hence out of the midst of Jordan, out of the place where the priests' feet stood firm, twelve stones, and ye shall carry them over with you, and leave them in the lodging place, where ye shall lodge this night.

And those twelve stones, which they took out of Jordan, did Joshua pitch in Gilgal.

And he spake unto the children of Israel, saying, When your children shall ask their fathers in time to come, saying, What mean these stones?

Then ye shall let your children know, saying, Israel came over this Jordan on dry land.

For the LORD your God dried up the waters of Jordan from before you, until ye were passed over, as the LORD your God did to the Red sea, which he dried up from before us, until we were gone over:

That all the people of the earth might know the hand of the LORD, that it is mighty: that ye might fear the LORD your God for ever.”

Joshua 4:1-3, 20-24

Below is a poem that Daddy printed in his bulletin not long after the passing of his father, and his personal comments follow the poem.

“Old man,” said a fellow traveler near,
“You are wasting your time building here.
Your journey will end with the coming day;
You never again will pass this way.
You have already crossed the swollen tide;
Why build a bridge at eventide?”

The builder lifted his old, gray head.
“My friend, in the way I have come,” he said.
“There followeth after me today
A youth, whose feet must pass this way.
This swollen stream that meant naught to me,
To the fair-haired Youth may a pitfall be.
He, too, must cross in the twilight dim.
My friend, I have builded the bridge for him.”

Below the poem he added:

I have always treasured the above poem, and now the more, since it was read at my father's funeral. I'm glad he built the bridge for me. JBG.

(His dad died in May of 1943, not long before this appeared in his bulletin.)

Whether you call him “Brother Gaither,” “Daddy,” “Granddaddy,” “Ha-Ha,” or “Uncle Burge,” he was a man of God who had his feet firmly grounded in the truths of God's Word. He laid up these spiritual “stones” for us as a memorial that we may all may know that “the hand of the Lord is mighty; that we may reverence the Lord our God forever.”

We, his family, will be eternally grateful for his meaningful life; for his building the “bridge” and setting up “these stones” to show us the “Way” as we tread the path that leads to eternal life.

I close with another one of his favorite songs:

*If I walk in the pathway of duty,
If I work till the close of the day;
I shall see the great King in His beauty,
When I've gone the last mile of the way.*

*If for Christ I proclaim the glad story,
If I seek for His sheep gone astray,
I am sure He will show me His glory,
When I've gone the last mile of the way.*

*Here the dearest of ties we must sever,
Tears of sorrow are seen ev'ry day;
But no sickness, no sighing forever,
When I've gone the last mile of the way.*

*And if here I have earnestly striven,
And have tried all His will to obey,
'Twill enhance all the rapture of Heaven,
When I've gone the last mile of the way.*

*When I've gone the last mile of the way,
I will rest at the close of the day,
And I know there are joys that await me,
When I've gone the last mile of the way.*

"If I Walk in the Pathway of Duty"

Written by: William Edie Marks & Johnson Oatman Jr.

Public Domain

J.B. Gaither...His Place in Time
The Final Chapter
By Sandra Gaither Pitchford
February 2010

Little did I expect that the aftermath of the book would be another wonderful experience! Wherever I traveled to gather information for the book, people who remembered Daddy kept saying, "When you get this book done, I want a copy!" So I expected sales to go beyond the family members for whom it was originally planned; however, I never dreamed the sales would add up to around 350 to date. But far more exciting than the actual sales were the connections I made with so many more folks I had not yet met. They all have their memories and their stories of how Daddy touched their lives.

In this supplement to the book, I would like to record the responses received as best recalled. Also included is some information on my book signings, etc that I think might be of interest to some.

From each congregation where Daddy worked fulltime, I secured a contact that would be willing to sell books to the members.

These were my contacts to whom I am most grateful:

Gainesboro – [Katherine Anderson](#)

Oneida – [Jane Hoffman](#)

Bells – [Faye Edwards](#)

Fayetteville – [Winnie Gatlin](#)

Gallatin had books available at Perkins Drugs & Gift Shoppe, and I truly appreciate the willingness of [Ferrell Haile](#) and his employees to sell the books for me.

Books were also available in Gainesboro at Anderson-Haile Pharmacy. Thanks to [Tenille \(Chaffin\) Jenkins](#) for her generosity in handling the books for us there.

Jim Bill McInteer purchased copies for the 21st Century Christian store there in Nashville.

T.B. Sutton General Store in Granville, TN is the only store now selling my books. Both hardbacks and paperbacks are available there.

Websites:

Someone sent me an email from this site, so I checked to see if I could advertise on it and found that I needed to submit an anecdote about Daddy in order to mention the book. I did get a few orders from this site's article that you can read below.



BrotherhoodNews.com

Biography: Preacher accused of spying for Hitler

April 20, 2009

MOUNTAIN HOME, Ark. (BNc) – Preacher J.B. Gaither's youngest daughter has published a biography of his life and work.

Sandra Gaither Pitchford wrote *J.B. Gaither, His Place in Time*, a 408-page book packed with photos, sermons and articles of this "old-timey" preacher, as he delighted in referring to himself.

Gleaned from Gaither's personal diaries kept for 50 years, the book, released Nov., 2008, details the abundant life and service from 1901 to his death in 1980.



A Letter to the Sentinel

Wetzelville, Tenn.
October 24, 1909
Jackson County Sentinel,
Chattanooga, Tenn.

To my friends who have been anxiously awaiting some news of mine that I have been stricken by a certain ailment, I want to say here, in no way whatsoever to it, I am not concerned, have no Christian duty to perform so far as I know, neither have I been arrested nor accused by any authority.

The doctor says I have started through lameness, or a very bad cold, and that I have been very seriously and dangerously ill. The doctor was amazed at being so given of grace. To me that I am no better than the rest, and I guess there is not much more than the devil.

I appreciate the interest and concern of my many friends manifested by letters, telegrams, cards, and other evidence.

I realize to stand back for all principles of my denomination and for all the work of God which is being done to save the souls of men.

Sincerely yours
J. B. GAITHER.

Sandra includes many anecdotes of her father, including this letter to the *Jackson County Sentinel* in Gainesboro, Tenn., written October 30, 1940:

“To my friends who have been anxiously concerned over recent rumors that I have been arrested as a German spy, I want to say there is no truth whatsoever to it. I am not German, have no German blood about me so far as I know, neither have I been arrested nor accused by any authority.

“The report may have started through ignorance, or it may have been purposely and maliciously told. The Savior was accused of being an agent of Satan. I’m sure that I am no better than the Savior, and I guess Hitler is not much worse than the Devil.

“I appreciate the interest and concern of my many friends manifested by letters, telephone calls, and other inquiries.

“I continue to stand 100% for all principles of our democracy and for all the word of God which is God’s power to save the souls of men.

“Sincerely Yours,
“J.B. Gaither”

Gaither preached the gospel for 54 years. He conducted 542 gospel meetings, in an era when meetings lasted from 10 days to two weeks.

Much of his work was with rural churches across the state of Tennessee.

As one of eight children reared on a farm, Gaither wasted no opportunity to provide for his own family of five children and his wife’s parents who lived with them. The family knew of no time he brought home “road-kill,” but many times their meal consisted of “road-steal,” Sandra writes.

In his car trunk, Gaither kept a gunny sack called the “possum sack.” He was good at head-lighting the critters and sacking them alive. It was a tasty meal to the children as long as they thought it was roast beef. He didn’t lie to them; they just never thought to question it.

After the meal was over, Gaither would scoot his chair back a little to relax and say, "That's the best possum yet!" That's when the kids would croak.

Possums were not just an economic issue because of the large family he had to feed. In the late 1970s, when Gaither earned a good salary and drew a social security check, one of the elders where he preached at Liberty in Fayetteville, Tenn., brought him a possum. His wife Mary cooked it for him and, as usual, he proclaimed its goodness.

Gaither took great pride in his church bulletins and had them bound at the end of each year. Many of these are still in the church libraries where he preached.

He often used poetry and stories with spiritual application. He had a knack for creating ways to catch the interest of the reader and make a point.

The book is available for \$20 in paperback or \$30 in hardback. For more information, email Sandra Gaither Pitchford at dspitchford@suddenlink.net or phone 870-425-8554.

Written by [J. Randal Matheny](#)

Book Signings:

F-HU Lectureship

February 2009

My book signing was in the Bible Bookstore on Tuesday after chapel for a couple of hours. [Billy Smith](#) made a chapel announcement about the book as the family was all on the front row, and we donated a book to the University Library at that time. He had us all to stand.

Present there with me was my husband [Dave](#); our daughter, [Allison](#), and husband [Russell Epperson](#) and children, Caden, Brynlee and newborn Tessa Lee; our son, [Alan](#) and wife [Tiffany Pitchford](#); my sister [Frances](#) and husband [Bill Jones](#); my sister [Ruby](#) and husband [Jim Williams](#); their grandson, [Dan Nelson](#); my sister [Patricia Green](#)

and her son, [Cullen](#); her granddaughter [Katlyn Green](#); and my cousin [Jane](#) and her husband [Charles Brown](#).

Signing books with me was [Jack Hilliard](#) who wrote “Pain & Suffering” and “Beyond Today.” I found him to be very interesting, and we traded books.

[Hardeman Nichols](#), of Dallas, TX was there with his brother, Flavil. Hardeman held a meeting in Mountain Home a few years ago, so it was wonderful to see him again, and I was honored that he wanted a book.

[Steve Kirby](#), a former preacher at Nashville Road in Gallatin who now lives in Clarksville, TN came to the book signing. While he was attending Lipscomb, Batsell Barrett Baxter had the students to interview a preacher. Steve interviewed Daddy in Fayetteville.

[Wayne Lankford](#) of Murfreesboro, TN came by and told me that Daddy held the funeral for his grandfather, Casey Knight at Montrose Church of Christ on Memorial Day, 1949.

It was a “joy” to meet [Joy Snell Brown](#) of Florence, AL. She is Ralph Snell’s daughter. Brother Snell followed Daddy at Gainesboro.

[Bill & Lori Boyd](#) bought a book for her dad, Clifford Reel who worked with the church in Oneida after Daddy was there. [Clifford & Jean Reel](#) were at the Lectureship too, and I was so glad to meet them, though it was brief.

[Milton Sewell](#) also bought a book. He is the former President of FHU. We had several little visits with him, and also met the new President [Joe Wiley](#). We were very impressed with him and his wife.

[Karl Stauffer](#), an old friend from our young married days in Memphis, showed up. He is widowed now and lives in Coffeyville, Kansas.

Heritage Day, Granville, TN

May 23, 2009

[Davis Watts](#) of Cookeville, TN contacted me about coming for this occasion. [Randall Clemons](#) is the director of Heritage Day and is friends with Davis.

My book signing was in the Granville Museum building which was originally built for the Granville Christian Church, but later became the Church of Christ. Daddy preached there quite a bit while working at Gainesboro. They set my book signing up right behind the old pulpit that is still there where my daddy preached!

The Granville church land was purchased in 1872 and deeded to the Christian Church. In 1873 the building was erected that is presently the Granville Museum. In 1906 the church of Christ split from the Christian Church and in 1938, the Christian Church name was changed to Church of Christ. That is very interesting to me since Daddy secured a preaching job for my Uncle [Tommy Campbell](#) at Granville in January, 1938. It was Uncle Tommy's first fulltime work, and he and Aunt Wanda had just married on New Year's Day.

The building was renovated in the 1950's. The church closed in June 1987 when the building was condemned. The rack on the wall still shows the attendance as 8 on the last day the Church of Christ met there, and the offering as \$38.00.

In May, 1999 the building reopened as the Granville Museum. The pulpit and other articles still remain from the old church house as well as other artifacts from that area.

Those I can remember from my notes that came by:

[Ogeal \(Jill\) Halfacre Webster](#) was also signing her books, "Growing up on the Cumberland River." When she was 13, Daddy held a meeting at Granville, and baptized her in the Cumberland River. That was 1939.

[Rita Sloan Jenkins](#), raised at Cub Creek in Jackson County.

[Bill Halfacre](#), great grandson of Eli Henderson Eller who built the Granville Church of Christ.

Mildred Kirby & daughter Carol & her brother James Kirby
Daddy once stayed with them for a week.

Helen Davis, Lebanon, TN

Jere Taylor, Lebanon, TN (Mary Gaither's first cousin)

Robert Blackman, came with Jere Taylor

Patty Apple of Flynn's Lick heard him preach when she was young.

Doug & Carla Alsup, Lebanon, TN, friends of ours when we lived in Memphis (and who we haven't seen since about 1972) came over to see us. Also an acquaintance, Teresa (Griffin) Brooks and her husband Carlin that I went to Freed-Hardeman with.

Mary Sue Elrod Halfacre knew Daddy from the Zion congregation in Jackson County and said, "I dearly loved him."

Jeraldine Halfacre Anderson, sister to Mary Sue Halfacre
Daddy visited in her home.

James & Judy Stafford, Grandmother was Laura Wilson of Cub Creek. They or the grandmother are from Baxter, TN

Walter & Bettie Sexton, Franklin, KY

Walter & Joyce Drake, Cookeville, TN

Susie Pruett from Liberty congregation

Christine Craighand, Hensley Creek congregation

Everyone had their own memories of Daddy. Many who came were elderly ladies with a daughter about my age who drove them. The older lady would tell her story and seem so happy to meet me!

This is an excerpt from a written order I received on June 4, 2009--
"The Granville Community Club places a book in the Community Center to honor the memory of former members who are deceased.

Mr. and Mrs. Paul Savage died last fall. He took early retirement from his job to travel the United States and other countries teaching and preaching for the Church of Christ. They did this for over 20 years. We believe that they would be delighted to have your book honor their memories. We are sure their families will be touched that this is the book we have chosen to honor them.”

Patsy Yates

When my sisters and husbands returned to Granville December 2009, we stayed at the Granville Bed and Breakfast “Carter House.” We learned that the house had belonged to Paul Savage and his wife!

J.D. Watts General Store at Nameless, TN

May 23, 2009

Davis Watts of Cookeville is the son of J.D. Watts. He invited me to the Open House he has on Memorial Day Saturday at his parents’ old store that is now just a museum.

He has a few thousand guests to go through the old store each Heritage Day. He served cake, crackers, cheese, bologna and candy, moon pies and soda pop in bottles. Visiting the store is like going back in time!

These are the folks that I met at Nameless:

Geraldine Halfacre Anderson

Bobby Birdwell, Cookeville, TN

Linda Daniel of Cookeville, TN and her mother, Mabel Roberts who knew Daddy. Linda called Daddy an “icon.”

Carol Bender, Nashville, TN

Marie (Clark) Wheeler, Bloomington Springs, TN

Dr. Jack Johnson & wife, Chris, Cookeville, TN

(Jack is a cousin to Bob Johnson, see story in book, page 255)

Harding University Librarians' Conference Searcy, AR - July 8, 2009

A friend of mine, [Ann Dixon](#), is the Librarian at Harding, and each year they host a Librarians' Conference for two or three days in July. These Librarians are from Christian Academies and High Schools. This year, due to the economy, only 12 ladies showed up. Ann had asked me to come and share with them about my book; how I went about writing it and how I got it published. I was allowed about one hour to speak. So I went down for the day. After my talk, all the ladies and I were served lunch in the Home Economics Building! Since that was my major at Harding, it was great to be in the old building again.

One of the Librarians, [Mona Diles](#), noticed the Lawrenceburg, TN sections in the book and said her great, great, great grandpa, Robert Haynes, is buried in Lawrenceburg (along with my "greats").

A [Ms. Shelton](#) from Jackson Christian School in Jackson, TN recognized Daddy's name because their Library is named after Daddy and Mama! She knows my sister, Frances.

[Lisa Burley](#) from the Harding Library showed me the Bells, TN page where [Charles Connelly](#) is mentioned. He was her great uncle and had passed away the previous Sunday (July 5). Her parents were at his funeral that very day (July 8, 2009)!

[Alissa Carey](#) from Middle TN Christian School in Murfreesboro told me that her friend's dad, a brother Hawkins, preached or preaches all over Jackson County.

So, though none of the Librarians and I knew each other, four of them made some sort of "connection" with me through their findings in the book! What a small, small world!

Country Christmas, Granville, TN December 12, 2009

Davis Watts thought I should return to Granville for another book signing at their "Country Christmas" as there might be folks who

would want to purchase books for gifts. So I talked my sisters and husbands into going and staying in the Granville Bed & Breakfast.

The Bed and Breakfast has two buildings. The one we stayed in was the “Carter House.” As soon as we checked in, we had about an hour to make the rounds to beat Saturday’s busy schedule. We went to the Museum so I could show them around, and right off we met [Joe Moore](#). He is a Granville native who married [Ann Huffines](#). He greeted us when we went in the door, and I told him we were the “Gaither Girls.” He said, “Are you related to the Gaither singers?” I replied, “We are the daughters of J.B. Gaither.” Then he got excited and said, “YOU are brother Gaither’s daughter!?” I said, “All four of us are!” He was tickled to learn who we were. He immediately remembered Frances from when she was just a little girl living in Gainesboro. I believe they are one month apart in age. He also knew his wife went to David Lipscomb with Patricia! He knows a great deal about Daddy’s work around there and has written a lot of history of the area. He was big in FFA in high school and had even had his caricature on the front of Time Magazine back then. We were so happy to meet him!

Signing with me that day was [Bill Flatt](#) and his wife. He knew Daddy and had already read my book. Brother Flatt had held a meeting at Granville back in 1964.

[J.D. Watts General Store, Nameless, TN](#)

After lunch, we all journeyed out to J.D. Watts General Store at Nameless, not far out from Granville for two hours of book signing. While there, I sold a book to [Jack G. Brown](#). His deceased dad, Harvey Brown, was a preacher. Jack is a member of the church at Gainesboro.

[Art & Elayne Montgomery](#) also purchased a book for their aunt. They worship at Willow Ave. in Cookeville and know our preacher, [Ken Burton](#) and wife [Diane](#).

Saturday afternoon, at dusk, they had a Memorial Tree Lighting right across from our Bed and Breakfast. Anyone could write names of loved ones they wanted to memorialize. The board had a light

shining on it and stood beside about 5 huge cedar trees with colored lights on them. I put my parents' names on there and then [Uncle Tommy and Aunt Wanda Campbell](#) since he preached there. Dave added his dad's name (Doin Pitchford who was a preacher as well). That was very meaningful to me.

[Davis Watts](#) helped so much by providing advertising in papers and to congregations in Putnam and Jackson Counties each time I did my book signings at Granville and Nameless. I truly appreciate all he has done promoting my book.

Mail, E-mail, Phone Calls

As orders started pouring in by mail, e-mail and phone, and people kept telling me how they heard about the book and their memories of Daddy, there is one thought that kept coming to my mind. I wish I could have talked to him/her BEFORE I finished the book. Another chapter needed to be added, but that isn't possible, so I am letting this supplement be a final chapter to my copy. These calls often caught me unprepared to take good notes, so I am sure I will miss some of the good memories that were shared. I did save all mail correspondence and e-mails, so that part will be copied as is.

Mail:

Included here are just excerpts of the parts of the letters that talk about the book or Daddy.

[Katherine Anderson](#), Gainesboro, TN – 11-08

“I hope everyone who has bought the book enjoys it just ½ as much as I have. I am almost finished the 2nd time. You had an amazing daddy.”

[Old Union Church of Christ](#), Castalian Springs, TN - 11-17-08

“One hardback copy will be for the church library.....We appreciate your labor of love in compiling this book, and we know we will enjoy Brother Gaither's story.”

[Edna Pigman](#), Harrodsburg, KY – 11-17-08

“I am looking forward to your book. Hope you sell a lot. I enjoyed meeting you and your family at Berea. Hope all is well and serving the Lord. I’m doing fine for an old lady of 84 years.”

[Johnny Tucker](#), Preacher, Portland, TN - 11-21-08

“We have lived at Portland since 1979, so I know Patricia, and some of the rest of the family. I have always appreciated Bro. Gaither’s ability, dedication, and sound preaching. Since I grew up in Fayetteville, I heard his preaching early on. Thanks for writing his story.”

[Lorelle Dunn Groves](#), Springfield, TN - 11-25-08

“I know that I will enjoy having the book. I will share it with my brother and sisters.”

[Loretta Villines Winters](#), Springfield, TN - 11-28-08

“Faye Toothman gave me your address so I could order two of your books about Bro. Gaither. I’m the daughter of Robert and Harriet Villines. Ruby and I played together as very young little girls. Daddy and I are both looking forward to reading this special tribute to your dad.”

[Alice \(Hyde\) Bedwell](#), Springfield, TN – 11-30-08

“Thank you so much for the fast delivery of ‘the’ book. I have read most of it already. When I start, I can’t put it down. There are so many memories for me even though some of the years I was very busy raising my family. When your parents were in Springfield, they had only two children, Patricia and Frances. So the family did grow in each location. (It grew in Springfield with the birth of Ruby). Let me commend you for all the hard work, research, etc. You did such a good job and I’m thankful for all your efforts. I know it was a labor of love! Do come to Springfield again one day! We will have lunch again some place. My home is always open to you and your family. You are part of my heritage. I will always treasure ‘my book’ and read it often.”

[Betty \(Stephens\) Lynn](#), Berea, KY - 12-01-08

“I’m so glad you did this book in honor of your father; I’m sure he’d be very pleased also. Did he discuss it with you or the other girls? Come our way again sometime.” (The answer to that question is “NO”.....I doubt he ever had one thought about it.)

[Carolyn Meadows](#), Cottontown, TN – 12-01-08

“I was thrilled to hear about your book. I grew up hearing your dad preach in gospel meetings around Sumner County.”

[J.A. Floyd](#), Bowling Green, KY - 12-02-08

“Received the book. Have really enjoyed reading it. There were so many preachers listed that I well remembered. Grateful that I could be of some help with the book.

Conducted a Gospel Meeting at Davidson Chapel in 1964 and remember the Watts family.

While at Lipscomb, I preached in Jackson County and remembered some of those folks. They also spoke of your Dad.”

[Jere Taylor](#) (first cousin to Mary Gaither)

Lebanon, TN - Christmas card 2008

“I appreciate so much the time and effort you put into the book. I have read parts of it three or four times. I don’t know how he was able to do what he did. He was certainly the most dedicated person to the Lord I have ever known, and I just wish I could have known him better. I have many more thoughts and memories I will try to communicate to you and wish much love to you and your family.”

[Joe L. Dudley](#), Brentwood, TN – 12-12-08

“On a personal note, I would like to tell you that I have known the Gaither family for many years when we all lived in Jackson County, TN. I have loved and respected your parents and other family members for so many years and am looking forward to reading your book.”

[Morgan & Evelyn Medlin](#), Cookeville, TN – 12-19-08

“Congratulations upon publishing the book about your dad. Morgan says he knows Bro. Gaither would be happy for this accomplishment. J.A. Floyd has let us know he had received his copy and was enjoying it.”

[Coleman Crocker](#), Union City, TN – 12-24-08

“Please send me a paperback copy of the book about your dad. I only saw him once (I don’t remember the occasion) but it was in Crockett County.”

[Tommie Lou Collins](#), Fairview, TN – 01-14-09

“My husband, Bill, was an associate or assistant minister when Bro. Gaither was there (Bells). I think he is mentioned in the book. That excites me but the most exciting thing for me is that I will have a little piece of Bells and the church that was so meaningful in my life. My old school, my dad’s workplace (Moore’s Dry Cleaners), my old home, and the church building are all gone (tornado). I have no markers there when I go back to Bells so having this book will be priceless to me.

Your mom gave me my wedding shower and one of the memories that is still vivid in my mind is going to their home for breakfast during gospel meeting times. We would have a 7:00 a.m. brief service for folks before school and work and she would invite us to breakfast. She had ham and red-eye gravy. Bro. and Sis. Gaither were special in our lives. Again, thank you for sharing with us. I look forward to receiving the book.”

[Margaret Gaither Lucas](#) (my first cousin)

Lawrenceburg, TN – 01-28-09

“Can’t believe I am kin to someone that’s so smart! Haven’t read all, but I’m making good headway on it.” (She passed away in April that year and was the last Gaither in Lawrenceburg.)

[Jolene Crabtree](#), Petersburg, TN - 2-14-09

“Bro. Gaither stayed in my parents’ home several times when he held meetings at Red Oak and Friendship in Lincoln County. This would have been in the late 40’s and the 50’s. I was young but I remember him well.

My parents thought so much of him. We moved to Murfreesboro in 1962 and as far as I know none of us ever saw him after that. My mother is still living. She will be 90 in July. If you sign the book, please address it to her. She is very anxious to read it. My father was Woodard Pigg. He died in 2002. Mother’s name is Areneva Pigg. Thank you so much. I know we will enjoy the book.”

[Mary Joyce \(Agee\) Nicks](#), Nashville, TN - 2-17-09

“A few months ago, I read in the Crockett County Times about the book you have written about your dad, Bro. J.B. Gaither. I am from Bells, TN and remember your mom and dad quite well. Bro. Gaither married my husband and me on August 18, 1967 at Bells.

My parents were Leslie and Eloise Agee, and my dad was an elder at Bells Church of Christ until his death in August 1992. Our family always thought a lot of your parents, and I remember how everyone loved Bro. Gaither as the minister in Bells.

I look forward to reading the book. So many things have changed in Bells. When the tornado ruined the old building, it was so sad to go back and see it torn down. The new building is very nice, but the memories of the old building will always be remembered.”

[Annie Ruth Holland](#), Murfreesboro, TN – 03-30-09

“Sandra, you may not remember our family. We all remember your parents. My family lived in Bells, TN from 1968-1983. Our children are now ages of Mark 48, Linda 45, Jon 43, and Ray 38. Jon married Judy Faulkner also of Bells.....”

[James & Beverly Meadows](#), Knoxville, TN – 3-30-09

“We have enjoyed reading the book and recognizing names.”

[Jeanette Frey Dorris](#), Springfield, TN - 04-26-09

“I have just finished your book and thoroughly enjoyed it. You have done a great job. Your father and mother would be so proud of you. There will be an order from the church library if you haven’t already received it. I am enclosing a picture from my wedding in which Bro. Gaither officiated March 29, 1948.”

[Lois Bowman](#), Cookeville, TN – 05-06-09

“One of my earliest memories of going to church and Sunday School was at Gainesboro church of Christ, and Bro. Gaither was the preacher. He really meant a lot to my mother and father, Grant & Ola Hawkins. He came to Cookeville and preached my dad’s funeral in 1970.”

[Barbara \(Law\) Dinkins](#), Scottsville, KY – 06-02-09

“It was good to talk to you on the phone. We always thought a lot of your Daddy. We use to hear him on the radio all the time. We never

did see him but one time, but we listened to him all the time on the radio. Martha (her sister) saw him more than we did. Everyday when my grandfather was living he would tell us to turn that good preacher on as he wanted to hear him.”

[Sherry \(McDaniel\) Carlson](#), Jackson, TN - 06-08-09

Her parents and family knew Daddy and Mama as they lived in Crockett County while Daddy was at Bells.

“I’m enjoying your book so much. I’m so glad you did it. I used to listen to your dad on the radio in the 70’s. As Michael (her brother) told you, we also saw your dad at the county singings. We formed a wonderful relationship with both your parents. They were quite a couple. After your dad died, we continued to visit your mother at the trailer here in Jackson. I’ve known Frances for sometime also. We attend Campbell Street.”

[Mrs. James Hollis Gentry](#), Cookeville, TN – 06-13-09

“Your dad baptized my late husband in Jackson County, TN way back when. (He passed away 9-1-05 and his 89th birthday would have been last Wed. 6-10-09). My eldest daughter wants the book, she thinks she remembers hearing Bro. Gaither speak and I do, too. (but can’t remember when). We were in Jackson County in 1949 and 1950 and moved to Putnam County in 1957 from Michigan. She lives in Pulaski, Giles County, TN and is a retired teacher.”

A book was purchased by Robert & Evelyn Clark in Pulaski, TN on 7-6-09 to be placed in the East Hill Church of Christ Library in memory of her dad, James Hollis Gentry who Daddy baptized in 1939 in Jackson County.

E-Mails

[Robin Kidwell](#), Aragon, GA 11-11-08

“The cover looks fantastic! Did you design it? I know you are proud of it, and that many people will enjoy getting to "know him better" and others will love meeting him! Thank you so much for your hard work, I know it will be an encouragement to preachers (and wives) everywhere. Can't wait to read it.”

[Bob Chaffin](#), Lebanon, TN - 11-15-08

“It looks great. I can’t wait to sit down with it and spend some time. I will give Donnieta and Gene theirs for Christmas. Edward Anderson asked me tonight when I saw him at the funeral home if I had seen the book. He had seen a copy at Anderson Haile and was intending to get a copy the next time he is in Gainesboro. He was surprised to know we corresponded. Small World? It really looks to be a good job, and I am sure you are proud.”

[Ray Carter](#), Gallatin, TN 11-15-08 (Elder at Hartsville Pike)

“I had a meeting at church Friday night, and your mail was in my mailbox. My wife Betty works at Perkins Drugs and Gift Shoppe, she called me earlier in the day and asked if I wanted a copy of your book. I've really enjoyed it. Your Dad was a visionary. I could tell that your family was special.”

[Ted Williams](#), Dickson, TN (my nephew) 11-17-08

“The book is great, thank you for all the work you put into it.”

[Joe & Pat Arnold](#), Whitley City, KY 11-28-08

They did not know Daddy, but the family donated a book to the church library, and Joe is the preacher there.

“Thanks for the book. It went to our address in Whitley and then they forwarded it on to us in Auburn, we got it today. Joe kept telling me to come eat and I kept looking and reading. Ha! You did a wonderful job.”

[Lana Sullivan Beard](#), Centerville, TN 12-03-08 (my niece)

“Mom gave me your book over Thanksgiving and I am loving it! I have cried all the way through it. I finally had to put it up at Mom’s because my kids kept making fun of me. Thanks for doing it!”

[Nancy Blair](#), Atlanta, GA 12-05-08

“My name is Nancy Jane Blair and it was so interesting to read, in the Oneida paper, about the book you had published about your dad. Though I did not go to your dad's church I had many friends that did - the Tibbals, the Jeffers, the Terry's, the McCoy's and others.

I do not remember you but I do remember your sister Patricia. She was a good friend of mine when you dad was pastor in Oneida. I am

assuming that we were in the same grade and I was in your parents' home many times. I guess, in my memory bank, I can remember them building the parsonage - I must, because I can remember being in that house when in your parents' home.

I would love to know what happened to Patricia and where she is. I live in Atlanta and have for 32 years. You now have my e-mail address and I would love to hear from you also. I really hated it when your dad moved them and I believe I do remember that they moved to Gallatin."

Bill Dillon, preacher Hickory Ridge, AR 12-20-08

"Thanks so much for the copy of your book. It is well written and contains a treasure chest of information about a great and godly minister of the faith. This book will be an encouragement to younger preachers today and in the future. You have rendered a tremendous service to the brotherhood.

Please send me another paper cover copy (I will give it to a young preacher I know)."

Bob Watson, Normand, OK 2-23-09

(Friend from Freed-Hardeman and Harding days)

"I finished your book this past weekend and found it to be very fascinating. I thoroughly enjoyed reading it from cover to cover. I picked it up to read Friday evening and didn't put it down until 2 am. So much of your book has to do with my family and where they begin their church life.

My great grandparents, grandparents, mother, father, brother and sisters and many of my relatives are all buried at the Pea Ridge cemetery and were all church members of the Rock Springs Church of Christ. As you mentioned in your book Rock Springs is the oldest, active C of C in the brotherhood. I attended their celebration of 200 years of service on May 29, 2005. My first remembrance of going to church there was when I was about 3 or 4 years old. As I read through the history of that church and the see the names of some of the men who have preached in the Rock Springs pulpit, I really feel that I have a close connection to the Restoration Movement. Names like John McAdams, John Mulkey, Alexander

Campbell, Barton W. Stone, Raccoon John Smith and Isaac Reneau have all preached at Rock Springs.

Ken Miller is the current minister of the Rock Springs church and compiled a brief history for the 200 year celebration. In that booklet he mentions that he asked his adult morning Bible class to name preachers that had held meetings over the years and 49 names were listed. Many more names had faded into the past. However, J.B. Gaither was a name they recalled.

When I was a small boy growing up at Potter's Orphan Home in Bowling Green, KY we would attend any and all gospel meetings within an hour to 2 hour drive of Bowling Green. That would have been in the mid to late 50's and early 60's. Often times many of the churches would allow our chorus group to sing after services. If there was a church that held Gospel Meetings in that radius of KY and TN I was there. I may have heard your dad preach somewhere along the way but that's something I don't remember.

On page 23 in the "Turning Back the Clock" picture is W.L. Myers, Fred Dennis and Ben F. Taylor who were all instrumental in the work at Potter Home. Ben F. Taylor was a Board of Trustee member as well as a Superintendent of Potter. Matter of fact, I have a copy of the first known history of Potter that was written by Taylor. On page 42 your dad mentions in his diary the name of B.G. Hope. Hope was the preacher at the 12th Street church in Bowling Green where I attended from 1953 til 1958. When B.G. Hope and the elders of 12th Street decided they were no longer going to support Orphan homes the Board of Trustees moved us to the Lehman Avenue congregation. Joe H. Morris was the preacher there and is also mentioned in your book.

Also on page 64 it is noted that Harold Nelson Roney took the photo. Roney was a Board of Trustee member at Potter. On the 1st Saturday of July every year during the 50's and early 60's we had a program on the grounds at Potter with the kids speaking, quoting passages of scripture (one year I quoted Paul's speech on Mars Hill) and singing. We always had rows and rows of food and people from several states attended. It was called "Big Day" and I think written

up in the Gospel Advocate and local paper. Page 65 made me think of "Big Day".

Got to go but one more thing. How can you speak of your dad's work in Berea, KY without mentioning Allen Phy? Allen Phy was a big round man, a member of the Board of Trustees at Potter and local preacher in Berea back in the 50's.

Great book! What a treasure you have left for your family."

[Sherry Dearth](#), Woodstock, GA – 04-02-09 (my first cousin)

"I read some of it (the book) at Mom's – was really good. Not sure I knew about the Tuscarawas Avenue house. I lived in an apartment at 522 S. Tuscarawas for a year or two – just a couple houses down from there."

Another message 05-15-09

"By the way, I read your book cover to cover and enjoyed it very much. There were a lot of things I didn't know or maybe had forgotten. I don't think I ever really got to know your dad, especially since all I wanted to do was play while I was at your house, so it was nice to get to know him through your book. I think you had a lot of courage to go to those places so long afterwards and talk to folks that live where your parents lived, etc. It looks like you even contacted that place in Dover where Penn-Mold was. How did you find out who to contact?"

[Michael McDaniel](#), Caruthersville, AR – 04-23-09

"I am Michael 'Mike' McDaniel. My parents are James and Lorene McDaniel. Dad passed away on Dec 7, 2006. Mother now lives in Jackson Oaks in Jackson, TN. My sister is Sherry Carlson. Her and her husband, Ted, live in Jackson.

Growing up, we lived in Dyer, TN. I am not exactly sure how we first met your parents. It may be because of singing. My father was in charge of the Gibson County Singings in the 70's and your father may have come to them. Of course, he was also heard on the radio in Gibson County through the Humboldt station. Sherry got out a tape of a radio sermon by your dad and played it for mother last week. We loved your parents very much and visited with them in their home on the last Sunday afternoon in Bells. I remember him

explaining to me the difference between a grandfather and grandmother clock. I had never heard that before and never heard it again until I read your book! I remember seeing the tall clock and some other clocks in a front room. I guess that most of the clocks had sold by them, but I still remember him having more in one room than I had ever seen before. I can remember sitting on a couch and him sitting in a chair and I think there was a songbook near by. I can also remember him preaching that last sermon and me looking at my watch and noticing that he had preached an hour and it felt like ten minutes. That must have been the faith is the victory sermon.

I can remember how excited we were to drive all the way to Fayetteville for the 50th anniversary of preaching celebration. That is the only one of its kind that I have ever attended. I thought it was a wonderful idea. I remember how full the building was and the tremendous amount of food. My sister went to the front during the presentation and took a picture of your father in the pulpit actually receiving his plaque from an unidentified man. (Howard Gray) It would have been a great picture for your book. It was not a posed picture, and she was the only one brave enough to take. So I guess she was the only one that captured that precise moment. I was just a boy then. I am 43 now. I will be 44 on May 26th.

I seem to recall us going and visiting your mother at some location on Campbell Street, on the East side of interstate 40. Would that have been behind your sister's house? That has been a long time ago as well. I also think that the last time I saw your mother was at North Jackson. Am I right about that? Seems like I was visiting a Gospel Meeting there and saw her and brother O.D. Johns in the same night.

I preached my first sermon at Dyer at the age of 15. I graduated from Gibson County High School in 1983 and went to the Memphis School of Preaching. I graduated from there in 1985. I have preached at Samburg, Tn, Dunmor, Ky, Greenfield, Tn and am approaching my 10th year of work with the Central church of Christ in Caruthersville, MO. I serve as the moderator of a Tv program called A Bible Answer. It is seen in portions of West TN, West Ky, Southern IL, Southeastern MO and a small part of AK. It is also

seen on the internet at www.oabs.org. I serve as one of the instructors for the Online Academy of Biblical Studies. And my life is coming full circle as just this week, I began teaching part time at the Memphis School of Preaching. I taught there this morning. It is about 120 miles one way. I have been preaching regularly for 26 years.

Your dad was a tremendous preacher and a wonderful person, as was your mother. I am sure he was a positive influence on me in my boyhood years. Thanks so much for writing the book. I enjoyed it very much. I bought it at the FHU lectures and visited my mother and sister that night and as I was reading excerpts of his time at Bells, I became overwhelmed with emotion when I read pg. 97 and saw my late father name on your dad's diary page. Words cannot express how much that means to me. I am shedding tears at this moment. It is to me a symbol of dad's dedication to the church and to his encouragement of your father's work.

Thanks so much for writing and for all the work you did on the book. I went back the next day and bought my sister a copy. We will treasure them.”

[Janet Whiteaker](#), Cookeville, TN 5-19-09

“I will get a check right out to you. I believe you did a book signing in Cookeville not too long ago, but I didn't manage to get to it. My dad has been in hospital quite a bit over the last few months. I didn't know your dad, but I believe my mom knew of him. Her grandfather was one of the elders at a congregation just outside Cookeville in the early 1900s.

The minister that used to preach at the congregation where I attend in Cookeville is preaching in Mountain Home. Do you know Ken and Diane Burton?”

[Ogeal \(Jill\) Halfacre Webster](#), Hoschton, GA – 05-28-09

“It was so nice to meet you too! I am sure I was baptized in the middle of the summer of 1939. I was born in 1926 and I was 13 years old when I was baptized. We were baptized down at the end of the street where it ended at the Cumberland.

I would love to have the copy of the page of his diary if you find it.

I feel like your father baptized more people in Jackson County than any other minister. For a period of time he preached at Granville once a month.

Each summer we had a meeting that lasted about a week and brother Gaither usually was the preacher. I can remember him eating at our home when we had those meetings. Every one would try to have the "preacher for a meal." I remember that we often had fried country ham when he came. I especially remember one day he got another little piece of ham after dessert and said he had to take the sweet taste out of his mouth. He always had on a white shirt and tie, and I thought he always looked so nice. He had a very effective voice. He preached my father's funeral. He was not available when my Mother died. I can not remember but he was not in the area.

After my Daddy, Uncle Benton Halfacre and Mr. Arthur Willoughby died, they just did not have enough men to carry on the services. They had to close the church and the members remaining, mostly widows, went to Liberty to church. Of course some people had to move away from Granville because of the dam covering the area.

The church had stood empty for years and after the Dr. L. M. Freeman Bridge and the Veterans Park were dedicated; some of them had the idea for a museum. They had a meeting with some of the younger people whose parents had gone to church there and it was arranged that they turn the building into the Granville Museum. It was immediately successful. People brought in exhibits and it filled up so that they needed more space. They built the side addition for the agricultural items. It was not enclosed until this year. The state of Tennessee gave a grant to build the walls around it. They had already built the stairway to the upstairs room. I don't know if you went up there but it has some outstanding pieces that Mr. and Mrs. Joe Moore gave from the Carver and Huffines families. It has many household items, quilts, linens, kitchen equipment etc.

The side room was added and it has exhibits in it of school exhibits, sports, military and the piano that belonged to Mrs. Mary Nell Watts.

She lived in the big white house back behind the church and taught music.

The little room that I was in has been enlarged a few feet but that was the Sunday school room where I went each Sunday. Mrs. Anna Ruth Huff was always our teacher, and each Sunday we got a little card with a colorful Bible picture on one side and our lesson on the back. (How I wish I had saved them.)”

Another message from Ogeal– 06-06-09

“I just got your book and I am thrilled with it. It looks as if you have done an excellent job. I appreciate the copy of the date of my baptism, and then the next week there were three of my brothers that were baptized. I am sending a copy of the one with Taylor and Jean Halfacre to their family. Taylor is now dead but Jean still lives in Baxter. I can’t wait to start reading the book.”

Another email message from Ogeal Webster 09-11-09:

“Do you remember the Shirley family in Granville? Mr. Berry and Flossie Huff Shirley were members of the church. They had three boys [John, Paul and Berry Nelson](#). They were all much older than you. They left Granville and moved to Nashville. All of the boys went to Lipscomb. Paul made a fortune in West Knoxville Real Estate and has endowed a Christian School there with grades 1 through 12. He is about 85 now. The oldest John is 90, lives in Florida and does part time preaching and has done a lot of teaching but made his living in Accounting. Berry lives in Alabama and has a prison ministry he works in and has baptized about 100 prisoners over the years. He is a little younger than me.

I don't guess any of you or your siblings remember them but they were at Granville when your Dad did a lot preaching there.

Paul sent each of them one of my books, and John has emailed me and usually includes a little funny story. In one concerning your Dad....he has just concluded a meeting in Granville and when he went back to his congregation they ask if he had any baptisms and said ‘yes acres.’ You know our last name was Halfacre and I think that would have been two of my brothers.”

[Lora Montgomery, daughter of Art & Elayne Montgomery](#)

Cookeville, TN - 2-10-10

“My parents and I recently purchased a copy of your book that you

wrote about you father J.B. Gaither and we gave it to my aunt who was baptized by your father years ago when he preached in the Jackson County area Gainesboro, Tennessee. She has just about finished reading it and I just wanted to let you know that she has enjoyed reading it.”

Phone Calls

[Lonnie J. Hutton](#), Sparks, OK - 12-19-08

There was no info on the order about who this man was, so I took his number from the check and called him. He said he is from Lincoln County, TN (Fayetteville or nearby) and saw the book advertised in the Elks County Times. His grandfather was a preacher about the same time frame, and he wanted to read the book to be more familiar with the life of preachers at that time.

[Helen Davis](#), Carthage, TN

Helen goes to church at Rome.

Daddy baptized her mother, Gertie Hamlet 9-20-44 in Jackson County at Whites Bend church which was also the school.

He also baptized Helen on 10-9-51.

When Helen was about 9 yrs. old, waiting for school bus one day, her mama left and she asked her where she was going. She told her she'd be home when she got home from school (and didn't answer her question). She was going to be baptized. His diary states she confessed the night before and was baptized at 9 am the next morning.

[Jo Minchey Preston](#), Lebanon, TN

She said when her family moved to Gallatin in 1949 and Daddy started the radio program, her Baptist mama started listening. She got her Bible out and made the kids sit still as though they were in church every time Daddy came on the radio. Her mother studied with him over the radio and was baptized about 1950. Her husband had grown up in church in Jackson County, but had never been baptized. He was baptized in 1957. Her sister, Ruby, married a Baptist and Jo's mother converted him. He grew to be a very good Bible student and worker in the church and is now deceased.

[Gary Wilder](#), preacher Red Boiling Springs, TN

He called me one day in April '09. He had seen my antidotes about Daddy on brotherhoodnews.com and wanted to order. He ordered second time a total of 4 books.

[Roy & Frances \(Allen\) Brown](#), Sherwood, Arkansas 6-27-09

They grew up in Jackson County. The Allens lived next door to Mama & Daddy in Gainesboro, and Frances Allen was born in 1932, two years before my sister, Mary Frances. Roy said J.B. was always special to their family.

[James Dudney](#), Madison, TN 07-09-09

He is a Gainesboro native. He ordered a book from Westview after hearing about it from Granville. He remembers Daddy from when he was a kid and Daddy came back to preach meetings in the Gainesboro area. He said Daddy baptized at least a dozen Dudneys. He is distantly related to Jonah Dudney at bank. He wanted permission to copy the Gainesboro pages for his 93 year old mother in assisted living.

[Lester Bates](#), Maury City, TN 02-12-10

Just when I thought my post book comments were complete, I received a call from Lester. He is 87 and wanted me to know that he just finished the book and loved it. He and his wife met us at church here in Mountain Home once when they were headed home from Branson. I don't remember that, but I'm sure he couldn't make that up. He led the singing at Maury City for over 40 years. He said Daddy paid him a great compliment once when he told him that he could pitch a song better naturally than most leaders can with a pitch pipe. He also told me that once at a Crockett County Singing, he asked Daddy to lead a song that Lester wasn't too familiar with. Daddy said he wouldn't because he hadn't practiced it! He wonders if Daddy was just kidding him. Lester has served as an elder there at Maury City for over 50 years. The congregation is 104 years, and he's been there 51 years! His call made my day!

[Frank Wallis](#) is a journalist who writes for the Mountain Home newspaper, The Baxter Bulletin. His dad, Ralph is a long time preacher of the gospel and lives in Batesville, AR. His mother, Mary, is in a nursing home there. Knowing Frank is a fellow "p.k." as well

as a writer, I recently asked him if he would like to see my book. He kindly took it home with him, read it and purchased it for his dad. Frank told me several times that when he read the book, he felt like it was about *his* life! I have encouraged him to write his dad's story while his dad is still living and able to answer his questions. Not long ago, Ralph Wallis held a meeting for us at College & North. He is 88 years old and still has amazing ability in the pulpit and leads a very active life ministering to others. I sent Ralph a note suggesting he take notes and aid Frank in the recording of his life in the ministry. After Frank told me two or three times how my life and his are so comparable, I told him if he doesn't write his dad's story, I'll give him a cd of my book and let him simply edit the names and places!

In Memory:

We visited with so many people as I gathered information for the book. Below is a list of those that I am aware of, who have passed away since the publishing:

John Brasel, Madison, TN (April 2009)

Margaret (Gaither) Lucas, Lawrenceburg, TN (April 2009)

Charles Connelly, Bells, TN (July 5, 2009)

Marie (Anderson) Clark, Gainesboro, TN (July 6, 2009)

Rose (Meadows) Fuqua, Gainesboro, TN (2009)

Edna (Bell) Kidd, Portland, TN (August 16, 2009)

Jim Bill McInteer, Nashville, TN (March 8, 2010)

Leo Anderson, Ringgold, GA (March 2010)

I want to thank all the other folks not mentioned in this "Final Chapter" who have purchased the book. I have no way of knowing who many of you are since many books were sold through the stores. I hope you have enjoyed knowing more of his story and will pass the book along to someone who may profit from it, especially young gospel preachers.

To order a book or a CD of this entire book and “Final Chapter” or to make a comment, I would love to hear from you!

God Bless!

Contact Information:
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Mountain Home, AR 72653
Phone: 870-425-8554
Email: dspitchford@suddenlink.net
You can also find me on Facebook!

Paperbacks \$20, plus \$3 shipping
Hardbacks \$30, plus \$3 shipping
CD of book and Final Chapter, \$10 plus \$2 shipping
(Check or money order)

INDEX to original book follows:

Index

A

Adams, Hamil & Frances Stribling
(Gaither), 9
Adams, Phil, 368
Allen, James A., 43
Alliance, Ohio, 13
Anderson, Ben & Lucille (Elkins), 186
Anderson, Ben H. & Lucille (Elkins), 32,
39, 60, 181, 186
Anderson, Jack & Leola (Toothman) &
family, 45, 348, 351, 352
Anderson, James Paul & Frances (Reed),
342
Anderson, Johnny William & Ila Mae
(Chaffin), 342
Anderson, Katherine (Baugh), 331
Anderson, Leo, 333
Anthony, Lindell & Stella (Birdwell), 342
Apologetics Press, 283
Apostolic Times, 216
Arnold, Joe & Pat, 360, 363
Asberry, Betty (Hill), 367
Atkins, Jane (Humphreys), 385

B

Baker, Bert, 53
Barnes, Paschal & Maggie Belle
(Gaither), 4, 9, 112
Barton, John & Lela, 53, 55
Bass, W.G., 52
Baxter, Batsell Barrett, 174
Beach City, Ohio, 13
Beard, Brent & Lana (Sullivan), 138,
143, 150, 158
Bedwell, Alice (Hyde), 352
Bell, Harrison, 51
Bells, Tennessee, iii, 35, 77, 89, 91, 92,
94, 95, 96, 97, 99, 117, 126, 150,
151, 154, 158, 182, 188, 192, 193,
196, 202, 230, 233, 234, 254, 256,
271, 273, 274, 275, 288, 297, 337,
343, 379, 384, 385, 386

Bellwood, 55, 61, 225
Berea, Kentucky, iii, 47, 51, 52, 54, 55,
57, 117, 347, 371
Berry, Ada Belle (Chaffin), 256
Billingsley, Ernest & Celia, 354
Birdwell, Bobby, 342
Birmingham, Ohio, 13
Bishop, William, 21
Bowman, Patsy, 340
Bowman, Sheridan, 55
Boyd, Bill & Lori & family, 358, 359
Boyd, Vernon, 79
Branstetter, Kenneth & family, 288
Brasel, John & Odetta, 79, 157, 181,
332, 381
Bray, Leonard, 55
Brooks, E.W., 250
Brown, Charles & Jane (Pierce), iv, 72,
313
Brown, Helen, 331
Brown, Joy (Gailbreath), 331
Brown, Lorraine Fox, 286
Brown, Lynn & Sylvia, 390
Brown, Robert L., 79
Buckley, Shelia, 386
Bumpas Cemetery, 8
Butler, Mary Martin (Baber), 183, 296
Butler, Tony & wife, 380
Bybee, Billy, 346
Bynum, Houston, 132, 184
Byrd, Richard & Jo, 361

C

Campbell, Dock
Henry, 379
Campbell, Paul, 188, 191
Campbell, Paul & Mary Kay, iv, v, 315
Campbell, Richard Thomas & Nora Lee
(Daniel), 12, 23, 49, 67, 75, 83, 124,
160, 281, 287, 322, 325, 326, 373,
382
Campbell, Thomas Lee & Wanda
(Mayfield), 23, 33
Carver, Ralph, 342

Chaffin, Donnieta, 256
 Chaffin, Robert Rogers (Bob), 256, 334
 Charles L. Campbell, 23
 Childers, Earl & Ruby, 45, 252, 348,
 351
 CHRISTIAN LEDGER, 23
 Clark, Marie, 332
 Cleveland, Marie & family, 313
 Clocks, iii, 40, 41, 57, 95, 116, 151,
 154, 158, 159, 166, 184, 189, 192,
 193, 196, 263, 264, 265, 268, 271,
 272, 273, 274, 276, 287, 318, 331,
 334, 351, 370, 372, 373, 385, 389
 Collins, Bill, 92
 Comer, Guy & Mary, 77, 192
 Conley, Charles, 385
 Cookeville, Tennessee, 28, 36, 38, 57,
 95, 100, 196, 275, 283, 286, 335,
 338
 Cookeville, Tennessee, 196
 Cooper, Madie, 347
 Core, Nell & Carrie, 292
 Crestview Memorial Park, 109, 120, 130
 Crockett County, Tennessee, 77, 89, 91,
 92, 95, 188, 230

D

David Crockett, 8, 10, 309, 312
 David Lipscomb College, 82, 230, 338,
 380
 Davis, C.W. & Sula, 60, 293
 Dearth, Sherry (Campbell), iv, 315
 Deerfield, 6, 289
 Depression, 25, 283
 Dicus, A.W., 283
 Dillon, Bill, 185
 Dillon, Janie, 386
 Dorris, Jeanette (Frey), 252, 351
 Dover, Ohio, 11, 124, 193, 321
 Draper, Ann, 333
 Dudley, Jonah & Bennie, 32, 332
 Dugan, Julia & family, 325, 326
 Dummermuth, Dean & Wilma, 325

E

Edwards, Billy and Faye, 386
 Epperson, Russell & Mary Allison
 (Pitchford), 138, 147, 177, 178, 296,
 386

F

Fayetteville, iii, 77, 99, 104, 109, 110,
 126, 130, 132, 151, 154, 177, 184,
 187, 193, 194, 195, 196, 203, 231,
 233, 255, 275, 387, 390
 Fayetteville, Tennessee, iii, 77, 99, 104,
 109, 110, 126, 130, 132, 151, 154,
 177, 184, 187, 193, 194, 195, 196,
 203, 231, 233, 255, 275, 387, 390
 Fentress County, Tennessee, 58, 60, 293
 Flatt, Ben & Judy (Anderson), 157, 185
 Floyd, J.A., 346
 Forbis, Jack, 92
 Fox, Elsie, 333
 Fox, John Richard & Helen, 331
 Freed-Hardeman University, 89, 93, 95,
 112, 130, 157, 172, 230, 231, 297,
 373, 384
 Fudge, Beauford, 346
 Fuqua, Rose, 333

G

Gage, Jones & Minnie, 385
 Gailbreath, Edward, 331
 Gainesboro, Tennessee, 21, 24, 25, 27,
 28, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 39,
 57, 60, 117, 125, 151, 181, 193,
 195, 224, 255, 281, 283, 292, 293,
 330, 331, 332, 335, 336, 337, 340,
 342, 343, 381, 392
 Gaither, Bill, 289, 290
 Gaither, Charles William, 9
 Gaither, Earl Thomas & Kathleen
 (Tidwell), 9, 10, 57, 79, 112, 130,
 290, 312
 Gaither, James Hardeman (Jim) & Annie
 (Lopp) & Nell (Cotham), 9
 Gaither, John B. III (Trey), 146
 Gaither, John B. Jr.
 (Connie Baskerville), iv, 49, 57, 85,
 94, 130, 134, 146, 157, 169, 170,
 171, 183, 250, 251, 287, 289,
 302, 313, 380, 382, 383
 Gaither, Joseph Kennedy (Joe) & Dora
 (Reavis), 4, 9, 21
 Gaither, Margaret (Gibbs), 3, 79, 85,
 124, 312
 Gaither, Martin, 10, 289
 Gaither, Mary Frances

- (Victor Sullivan) (Bill Jones), iv, 31, 57, 82, 95, 130, 132, 134, 138, 143, 149, 150, 155, 157, 183, 185, 231, 335, 336, 338, 363, 387
- Gaither, Patricia Jean
(Sam Green), iv, 31, 57, 81, 130, 134, 144, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 287, 363
- Gaither, Ruby Elizabeth
(Jim Williams), iv, 42, 84, 130, 133, 134, 141, 145, 157, 159, 164, 165, 167, 168, 336, 363, 387
- Gaither, Sandra Lee
(David Pitchford), 57, 67, 93, 128, 130, 134, 135, 147, 157, 171, 176, 177, 178, 193, 427
- Gaither, Shane & Amber, 146
- Gaither, Wiley Jr., 9
- Gaither, Wiley Thomas, 3, 5, 42, 79, 124, 157, 190, 394
- Gaithersburg, Maryland, 289
- Gaitherville, Tennessee, 5, 124, 289, 312
- Gallatin, Tennessee, iii, 51, 52, 53, 57, 63, 67, 75, 77, 79, 80, 81, 83, 84, 86, 88, 89, 91, 93, 94, 108, 109, 117, 120, 126, 130, 133, 134, 144, 146, 152, 154, 165, 181, 182, 183, 192, 193, 194, 195, 233, 250, 253, 264, 265, 266, 268, 274, 284, 285, 296, 332, 333, 350, 373, 377, 380, 382
- Gardner, E. Claude, 109, 110, 112, 130, 231
- Gately, Huston, 53
- Gatlin, Windell & Winnie, 390, 391
- Genesis to Revelation, 192, 195, 225
- Gibbs, Gilbert, 4
- Gibbs, Gretchen, 6
- Gibbs, John & Sue, iv, 312
- Goddard, Randy, 327
- Gore, Judge John T., 292
- Gore, Senator Albert Sr., 292
- Gospel Advocate, 181, 189, 198, 205, 209, 213, 247, 286
- Gospel Gleaner, 220
- Gospel Witness, 39, 204, 220, 224, 293
- Gray, Howard, 187
- Green, John Jeffrey & Lisa, 144, 154, 155, 157
- Green, Lionel Gaither & Karen, 144, 157, 158, 159
- Green, Mary Katlyn, 134, 155
- Green, Samuel Cullen Jr., 144, 153, 154, 315, 330, 348, 353, 367, 372, 377
- Groves, Lorelle (Dunn), 351
- Guy, Jordan, 385

H

- Haile, Aulta (Shoulders), 333
- Hardeman, N.B., 42, 78, 79, 230
- Hardin, Marielyn (Newport), 357
- Harrisonburg, Virginia, 51, 61, 370
- Hatcher, Wayne, 346
- Hatfield, Tim, 325
- Heard, Joel, 52
- Higgins, Peggy, 389
- Highers, Alan, 188
- Hohenwald, Tennessee, 12, 326
- Holder, Jeanette (Jones), 386
- Holland, Tom, 109
- Horse Cave, Kentucky, 27, 343
- Hudson, Evan, 110
- Huffines, C.T. & Carolyn, 372, 373
- Huffines, O'Neal & Jerldine, 342
- Humphreys, Theo, 385

J

- Jackson Christian School, 95, 231
- Jackson County Sentinel, 30, 36
- Jackson County, Tennessee, 25, 30, 31, 32, 34, 35, 57, 95, 117, 125, 126, 185, 196, 202, 225, 231, 286, 288, 292, 293, 331, 332, 333, 334, 337, 338, 340, 342, 355, 377, 381
- Jackson, Lavelle, 385
- Jamestown, Tennessee, iii, 43, 47, 58, 59, 60, 61, 117, 293, 295, 367, 368
- Jeffers, Barney, 47
- Jenkins, Ancil, 367
- John T. Polk II, 193
- Johnson, Bob, 255, 331, 333
- Jones, Bobby & Reba, 385
- Jones, Frances (Gaither) (Sullivan), 183
- Jones, Harold & Patsy, 354
- Jones, Mary Elizabeth (Towe), 352

K

Kidd, Ralph & Edna, 50, 51, 52, 79,
189, 254, 285, 353, 379, 380, 381
Kidd, Ralph Jr., 189, 379, 380
Kidd, Ronnie, 353
King, Katherine, 385
Kiser, Mike, 185, 188
Knight, Harold & Judy (Kidd), 189, 190,
380, 381
Knight, Harold and Judy (Kidd), 189

L

Lancaster, E.R., 286
Larimore, T.B., 4
Lawrence County, Tennessee, 3, 6, 10,
57, 79, 124, 309
Lawrenceburg, Tennessee, iii, 3, 4, 5, 7,
8, 10, 36, 42, 57, 79, 85, 101, 116,
124, 130, 190, 225, 289, 290, 309,
311, 313
Liberty at Fayetteville, Tennessee, 184,
185, 187, 188, 193, 194, 196
Liberty Church of Christ, iii, 97, 99,
100, 101, 103, 105, 107, 109, 110,
117, 126, 127, 130, 132, 154, 184,
185, 187, 188, 193, 194, 196, 203,
231, 233, 234, 250, 255, 288, 387,
388, 389, 390, 391
Lincoln County, Tennessee, 77, 99, 100,
194, 196
Link, Ida Bell, 286
Lucas, Margaret (Gaither), iv, 190
Lucille (Avon) (Seloover), 23
Lynn, Steve & Betty (Stephens), 347,
371

M

Madison County, Kentucky, 52
Madisonville, Kentucky, 61, 225
Malta, Ohio, 18
Manier-Burgess families, 288
Matera, Ann, 343
McCoy, Oscar & Joyce, 370
McCreary County, Kentucky, 50
McCroom, Willard & Pat, 329
McInteer, Jim Bill, 190
Meadows, Jack, 333
Meadows, Ruby, 333

Medford, Tim, 364
Medlin, Morgan & Evelyn, 338
Midway, 7, 101, 116, 118, 289
Miller, Hayden, 79
Mimosa Cemetery, 8
Mincey, Marshal Edward (, 138, 146,
171
Mitchell, Aleta, 313
Monks, Earl & Rene, 389
Moore, Charles, 371
Morin, Charles H., 18

N

Nameless, Tennessee, 337
Nashville Road Church of Christ
Neal, Randy, 353
Nelson, Dan, 134, 157, 167
Nelson, Robin (Williams), 138, 145,
158, 165, 167, 251
New Philadelphia, Ohio, 11, 12, 19, 20,
21, 22, 36, 124, 315, 316, 318, 319,
323, 324, 325, 326, 327, 380
Newby, Carl & Pam (Merryman), 379
Newcomerstown, Ohio, 13, 15, 329
Newell, Charles, 329
Newport, Jo (Jeffers), 353
Newport, Nora, 357
North Carolina, 10, 289

O

O'Neal, Edgar & Mary Elizabeth
(Gaither), 4, 9, 112, 130, 290, 352
O'Neal, Thomas Gaither, iv, 10, 191,
225
Ocana, 61
Oneida, Tennessee, iii, 47, 48, 49, 50,
51, 52, 57, 60, 117, 186, 285, 353,
354, 356, 358, 359
Overstreet, Helen (Hix), 331
Overton, Basil, 127, 192
Overton, W.A., 293

P

Palmers Chapel, 61
Parks, Doug, 382
Parrish, Scott, 60
Paul E. Campbell, 23
Peden, Eugene, 110

Penn Mold, 11, 321
 Phillips, J.W., 51, 181
 Phillips, Shirley, 296
 Pierce, John James, 9
 Pierce, Polly Lillian (Gaither), 9, 19
 Pigman, Arthur & Edna & family, 53, 371, 372
 Pine Knot, Kentucky, 61
 Pitchford, Alan & Tiffany, 147, 178, 358
 Pitchford, Doin & Lozell, 176, 192
 Pitchford, Doin and Lozell, 192
 Pitchford, Landon & Kendra, 135, 147, 178
 Poole, Christine (Loftis), 392
 Portland, Tennessee, 193
 Powell, C.L., 193
 Pyle, Elsie (Hill), 367

Q

Qualls, Billy, 385

R

Radio Preaching, 38, 53, 55, 57, 63, 91, 92, 106, 118, 126, 130, 154, 193, 194, 287, 379, 382
 Reel, Clifford & Jean, 358, 359
 Roberts, Malvin, 368
 Robertson County, Tennessee, 37, 182
 Robinson, Price, 47
 Rogers, Richard & Sarah, 388

S

Sain, David, 194
 Sampson, Paul & Maxine (Bell) & family, 51, 52, 53, 364, 370
 Sanderson, L.O., 246, 247, 248
 Sanderson, Leon, 247
 Saundersville, 61
 Savely, Harold, 54
 Schaeffer, Gilbert, 117
 Scott County, Tennessee, 47
 Scott, Charles F., 195
 Scott, Charles F. & Anne (Barnes), iv, 195
 Scruggs, Bob, 79
 Sher-A-Den, 335, 336, 342
 Simmons, Janet, 325

Sisk, Tommy & Becky, 390
 Smith, Dan L., 59
 Smith, Steven & Sue, 343
 Snell, Ralph, 39
 Spivey, James R., 377
 Springfield, Tennessee, iii, 36, 37, 38, 39, 42, 43, 44, 45, 47, 48, 57, 58, 60, 117, 181, 190, 204, 230, 233, 252, 279, 283, 284, 340, 348, 350, 351, 352
 Sullivan, Randy & Beth, 143, 150
 Sumner County, Tennessee, 61, 63, 66, 67, 77, 88, 109, 126, 157, 181, 182, 190, 286, 373, 381, 382
 Swing, Joe & Thelma, 390

T

Taylor, Jere, iv, 382
 Tennessee Polytechnic Institute, 28, 30, 36, 57, 196, 283, 333
 Terry, Claude Sr. & family, 48
 Terry, Claude Sr. and family, 48, 354, 355
 TheRestorationMovement.com, 120, 172, 175, 247
 Thompson, Bert, 283
 Thornberry, J.E., 7, 57
 Tidwell, Charles, 380
 Tidwell, Mike & wife, 380
 Tippecanoe, Ohio, 13
 Toothman, Faye, 351
 Tuscarawas, 11, 15, 19, 321, 325, 327, 329
 Tuscora Park, 22, 319

U

Uhrichsville, Ohio, 13, 326

V

Ventress, Helen, 391
 Veteto, A.J., 58, 59
 Villines, Robert & Harriet & family, 44, 252, 348

W

Wallace, Foy E. Jr., 78, 79, 372
 Watson, Rose, 385

Watts, James Davis & Lou Ann (Boyd),
95, 196, 275, 337
White, Helen White, 385
Whitley City, Kentucky, iii, 47, 50, 51,
52, 57, 117, 355, 360, 361, 362,
363, 364, 366, 380
Whittingdon, Tom, 346
Williams at Lafayette, 61
Williams, Charles R., 378
Williams, Ted & Sharon, 145, 157, 167,
172, 231
Williams, Troy & Traci, 145, 157, 168,
177

Winfield, 61
Winstead, Bob, 79, 350
Woods, Guy N., 196
World Evangelist, 123, 192
World War II, 37, 41, 348

Y

York, Sgt. Alvin C.
York Institute, 60, 293