

THE
KENTUCKY BAPTIST
HERITAGE



HARRODSBURG BAPTIST CHURCH

KENTUCKY BAPTIST HERITAGE

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HISTORY OF HARRODSBURG BAPTIST CHURCH: 150th Anniversary Edition

by W. Robert DeFoor, Pastor

This history of the Harrodsburg Baptist Church has been prepared in conjunction with the 150th Anniversary of our church and the annual meeting of the Kentucky Baptist Historical Society on July 21-22, 1989, which will meet at the Harrodsburg Baptist Church, Harrodsburg, Kentucky.

The church was asked to prepare a history for presentation at the annual meeting. Several persons were asked to do so, but none were available. Thus, I undertook this task, with appropriate fear and trembling. Others knew more history and others could do a better job. However, . . . since I had agreed to furnish a history for the Historical Society, I had to produce a history for the meeting.

Frances Board Keightley had already written at least two histories of the church, both covering approximately the first 125 years. With her permission, I have used her material through page nine, paragraph seven. Some editorial changes and additions have been made. Credit me for any mistakes, and give her proper credit for her well-researched and readable work covering the first 125 years of our church's history. From that point, I have attempted to tell the story of the last 25 years. As a first-hand participant in the last ten years, some information comes easy; however, objectivity may be difficult to maintain.

I have chosen to follow Keightley's pattern of looking at the history through the time-frame of different pastors. Space prevents so much that could be said. Yet, it has been my privilege to re-read old church minutes, feel something of the pain and excitement of previous years, and then write out of a deep respect for those who have gone before us. I thank the Lord for this opportunity and pray that it will be useful.

HISTORY OF THE HARRODSBURG BAPTIST CHURCH

Baptist pioneers came with the earliest permanent settlers. One day in May 1776, a crowd of worshippers had gathered in the shade of a huge elm tree near the Big Spring. Each man had his rifle and sentinels were posted to guard against a surprise attack by Indians. This was the spot where Captain Harrod and his men had made their principal camp just two years before.

Thomas Tinsley had been conducting the meetings but this day he held out his Bible to William Hickman and said, "You must preach today." Mr. Hickman, who had recently arrived from Virginia, was a new Baptist convert. He rose to his feet, opened the Bible to the 23rd chapter of Numbers, the tenth verse, and delivered a stirring sermon on "Let me die the death of the righteous and let my end be like his." Thus began the recorded witness of Baptists in Kentucky.

At this time, Harrodsburg consisted of a "few dirty, smoky cabins," if we are to trust Mr. Hickman's description in his autobiography. This milestone in the religious advance on the frontier of American colonial life is commemorated by an historical marker on the north side of Lexington Avenue just east of the present high school.

For some reason, it appears that the early Baptists were slow to organize a church in town. Though Baptist witness was strong enough for Luther Rice to visit here in 1815, no church ever formed until 1839.

The Rev. William Vaughan, one of the great theologians of his day, was making his way through Kentucky on horseback, preaching at the different settlements when he visited Harrodsburg. He found a number of Baptists living in and around the town. When he had preached to them, they asked that he lead them in constituting a church. The first church had twelve members, though the exact founding date is uncertain.

Thomas M. Vaughan, the son who edited the Memoirs of Wm. Vaughan, says, "At their unanimous solicitation, he agreed to serve them as pastor for one Sunday a month. Included in the membership of this church were the Slaughters, the Burfords, the Alexanders, etc., all staunch and godly persons and unsurpassed by any members in the state."

The first home of the Baptist congregation was the former Republican Meeting House which had been erected in 1827, at the instigation of the Methodists. It was to be used by all denominations as "a house for the worship of God." By 1840 the Baptist congregation had grown to about 30 members. They were able to purchase the building with Gabriel S. Slaughter, Samuel Alexander, Robert Alexander, Moreau Pulliam and Elijah Burford acting as trustees.

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Following Mr. Vaughan were a succession of ministers who served part time. They were the Reverends Milligan, Allin, William Combs, C. E. B. Armstrong and R. L. Thurman. At one time, Dr. Thurman was the co-editor of the Baptist Banner and later, the collecting agent for Indian Missions.

Dr. A. W. LaRue was the first full-time pastor of the church, taking up his duties in 1853. He came to this church after a successful period as co-editor of the Baptist Banner, the forerunner of the present Western Recorder. During his ministry, he started a Sunday School, one of the first in the state.

We do not know whether this Sunday School was continuous from 1853 to 1863, but from 1863 we have the records. The first superintendent, Mr. T. C. Bell, served 35 years; next was his son, Mr. Paul E. Bell; then Mr. E. I. Bruner. At his death in 1917, Mr. Glave Vivion succeeded to the office, and was an inspiration to all until his death in 1965.

Dr. LaRue was followed by Dr. George C. Lorimer in 1859, one of the great preachers of America. Born in Edinburgh, Scotland, where his father had charge of the famous theatre in that city, he grew up under circumstances that made it natural for him to become an actor. In early life he came to the United States. He attended a church service during a stay in Louisville, was converted, and later studied for the ministry. At Harrodsburg, his first pastorate, he was ordained.

While here, he married Miss Arrabella Burford, the daughter of Deacon Elijah Burford. On leaving Harrodsburg he held pastorates at Paducah, Walnut Street Church in Louisville, Albany in New York, Tremont Temple in Boston and the First Baptist Church in Chicago.

Between the years 1860-1862, the church was served by Dr. A. C. Graves. He may be best remembered for his books, LaRue's Ministry of Faith and Addresses and Sermons.

While Kentucky was in the throes of the War Between the States, the church held together without a pastor for four years. It had already identified with the Southern Baptist Convention in 1845 and made numerous donations to support it. There is no doubt that the feeling of the church as a whole was one of sympathy for the Southern cause.

Beginning in 1866, several ministers came and stayed only a short time for emotions ran high. These men were: Rev. H. T. Tilford, Dr. J. M. Frost, Sr., Dr. Jonathan Bow and Dr. W. P. Harvey. Dr. Frost was the father of the founder of the Baptist Sunday School Board.

Dr. Henry Allen Tupper, a former chaplain in the 9th Georgia Regiment of the Confederate Army, was pastor from 1879 until 1884, when he resigned to go to the Broadway Baptist Church in Louisville. His daughter, who was born in the old Baptist parsonage, (the brick building located on the northwest corner of Factory and East Streets), later

became the wife of General George C. Marshall, Secretary of State for the United States.

The minutes of the business meetings of his pastorate are a constant recital of needed repairs to the old building. The roof leaked, the tower was becoming unstable, new guttering on the west side was a must and the interior had begun to look shabby. Numerous committees were appointed and the work, in order of necessity, was carried through as funds became available. It would take years, but the stage was being set for a new building.

On April 1, 1883, as evidence of the esteem in which the church held Dr. Tupper, he was asked to remain as pastor indefinitely at an annual salary of \$1,200.00 payable quarterly and in advance. He was later appointed Consul to Mexico during the administration of Woodrow Wilson.

The life and ministry of Dr. E. Y. Mullins is familiar to Baptist historians and theologians. He was one of our finest leaders. Dr. Mullins came to the Harrodsburg Church as his first pastorate in 1885. He was ordained by the church and served for three years. He was married while serving as pastor here.

During the early part of his ministry, we have the first mention of the women's work in the church. Miss Eliza S. Broaddus, in her manuscript written a few years before her death in 1931, has this to say of Harrodsburg, "The Young People's Society of Harrodsburg. . . just ten months old . . . was prepared, when Brother E. Y. Mullins married, to present him a nice set of furniture; his room was handsomely carpeted, then a bookcase was needed and forthcoming; then new curtains. Beside this, most of the members made individual gifts; and if they had not done this they feel they would not be worthy of the noble pastor God has given them."

The love and esteem in which Dr. Mullins was held by the church, its pride in his achievements in the world of religion are golden memories of the past. Dr. Mullins rose to the presidency of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary (1899-1928). He was President of the Southern Baptist Convention (1921-1924) and served as president of the Baptist World Alliance (1923-1928).

Dr. Mullins was followed by Dr. J. M. McCollum, who later went to Japan as a missionary.

Then came Rev. W. H. Borum. In August 1891, it was recorded that Rev. Borum had held protracted meetings at Moore's Schoolhouse in Salvisa and at Burgin, organizing in the latter a church reported in a "flourishing condition." Records of our church reveal that it early began to mother other congregations.

Rev. W. B. McGarity was installed as pastor July 1, 1893. The minutes reveal that by September he was asking for a report from the

Sunbeams at the regular business meeting. This is the first indication of such mission work with boys and girls. At the same meeting, Miss Artie Alexander, whose name appears often as a devoted member, reported the old organ was sold for \$73.00 and carpet finally paid for. In May of 1894, a meeting was called at the close of the morning service to discuss the building of a platform for the choir. They (the choir) would pay the expense incurred. The business was approved.

On February 19, 1899, with Rev. J. Frank Williams leading, the church voted to accept a lot offered by Mr. J. A. Shuttleworth. A building committee of seven members was appointed to proceed with the plans for the construction of a building. From the records of the minutes of July 18, 1899, "Motion carried that plans for the new building be returned to Architect R. H. Hunt and that he be requested to furnish plans and specifications for a church to cost not over \$12,000.00 complete and furnished with lights, pews, furnace, etc. ready for occupancy." The church was constructed for \$15,700.93.

The dedication of the new building was a grand affair. Dr. George C. Lorimer returned to preach the dedicatory sermon on April 27, 1901. An account carried two days later in the Louisville Courier Journal headlines the column thus: "Dedicated--Opening of Harrodsburg's new Baptist Church--the town's finest building." It is further described as the handsomest and costliest building in the city. "It is a monument to the enterprise of its pastor and his congregation."

J. Frank Williams was succeeded by W. M. Wood in 1902. Brother Wood was a man of untiring zeal with a keen sense of humor, a Sunday School builder, and an evangelist. He later was to become the State Secretary of Missions. During his ministry, the Sunday School had an enrollment of about 200 and the church membership was 457.

In 1902, there was a Ladies Aid Society, but no organized Woman's Missionary Union. Miss Eliza S. Broaddus and her sister, Mrs. A. T. Robertson were spending a few days at Beaumont College. When they learned that there was no missionary society here, they asked some of the women to meet with them. They did organize and Mrs. Lee Currey was chosen president. However, they met only a few times, became discouraged and gave it up.

The Rev. J. M. Roddy followed the Rev. Wood. Mr. and Mrs. Roddy were very missionary-minded. One day, Mr. Roddy announced from the pulpit that he was embarrassed as he went about the state that his church had no Woman's Missionary Society. He stated that on a certain day that week the women who were interested would meet and organize. Five women came to this meeting. They were: Mrs. J. M. Roddy, the pastor's wife, Mrs. W. I. Allen, Mrs. I. C. James, Mrs. Mattie Bell and Mrs. J. H. Morgan. Mrs. Morgan was elected president. The Harrodsburg Woman's Missionary organization has met regularly since that day in September of 1908.

An outstanding orator and scholar, the Rev. Ralph E. Bailey, came to the church in 1912.

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The Rev. Fred F. Brown served from 1913 to 1915 during which time he married. A great preacher and leader, as time has revealed, he later held pastorates in some of the largest churches of the South, and served as president of the Southern Baptist Convention.

The Rev. W. H. Brengle was the pastor from 1915-1916; then the Rev. T. H. Athey, who led the church to purchase the parsonage at 486 Beaumont Avenue for the sum of \$5,000.00 with the sale completed by church action in October 1917.

Dr. C. W. Knight served as pastor from January 1922 until his death in 1932. Dr. Knight is remembered for his orthodoxy and preaching of missions. He held revivals in schoolhouses throughout the area and conducted many tent meetings. He also served mission stations at Bohon, Braxton and Calvary. The latter point was organized into the Calvary Church following Dr. Knight's death. Much loved by the congregation, Mrs. Knight remained in the community, teaching piano to many, until her death in 1957.

Reorganization of the training and educational work of the church, an enlarged youth program and the introduction of a unified budget were all effected under the leadership of Dr. G. Whitcomb Ellers. Dr. Ellers served as pastor from 1932-1944. A mission of the church in the Davistown area of Harrodsburg was named for him, now known as Ellers Memorial Baptist Church.

He instituted a successful church music program which included an intermediate choir that was known throughout the state. The work at the Davistown neighborhood house was organized and carried forward by this many-gifted man. He gave a helping hand to the Woman's Missionary Union and once described it as being "for many years among the best" in the state.

Dr. John M. Carter, in 1944, came from the Ninth and O Baptist Church, Louisville, to lead the congregation. The Sunday School was enlarged, the building fund grew and prayer meeting attendance increased while he labored here. Sunday School classes met in the church building, as well as the old Opera House and the Courthouse. A building program was imperative.

After Dr. Carter left to become president of Campbellsville College, in December of 1947, the church called the Rev. Evans T. Moseley. Having served five years as chaplain during World War II, Colonel Moseley was a man well suited to lead the church through the many problems and decisions of building an educational unit. With his guidance, the present educational building with more than 80 rooms was erected and dedicated debt-free. The estimated cost was \$197,493.17, but it was constructed for \$182,112.18. The dedication was a three-day celebration of joy and thanksgiving.

To build the educational building, it was necessary to tear down the old Republican Meeting House. Since 1827, that historic house of worship had sheltered some sect of the Protestant persuasion. Since 1840, it had been owned and used continually by the Baptists. Remodeled to meet the change of passing years, it had gained a tower and then lost it. Its once new metallic roof leaked through its many coats of paint. Rooms had been added and repartitioned. The shaky old balcony with the Sunday School rooms opening from it was pulling away from the wall. The memories surrounding this landmark were sharp and clear in the minds of those who worshipped there. Nostalgic emotions made this a poignant occasion for there still echoed within the walls the stentorian tones of William Vaughan, the elegant rhetoric of George Lorimer mellowed by the sweet reasonableness of Dr. Mullins. But a burgeoning membership must be cared for, so the walls of the old came tumbling down to make way for more than eighty rooms in which to operate the Sunday School, the Missionary Society, the Training Union, a modern kitchen and dining room and the pastor's study.

The purchase of an additional lot was necessary. This was located directly to the rear of the sanctuary of 1901 and owned by Mrs. Sallie VanArsdall. The price was \$8,000.00. That would permit further expansion as new challenges would unfold.

During Dr. Moseley's ministry, the church inaugurated a week-day devotional radio broadcast and resumed publication of The Messenger, a church paper which Dr. Ellers had begun. The staff was expanded to include a minister of music and an educational director.

When Dr. Moseley was called to Ponca City, Oklahoma in 1954, the church turned to Dr. C. R. Daley, professor of Old Testament at Georgetown College. Dr. Moseley presently is retired, living in Ponca City, having returned to the church to which he went in 1954.

On June 7, 1954, the Harrodsburg Baptist Foundation was incorporated. Growing out of the pledge by Ott Elliott, in which Ott vowed that if the Lord would see him through the financial problems of the depression, then he (Ott) would give everything back to His work, the Foundation became a vehicle which provides support for our children's home ministry, scholarships for ministerial and missionary students and a tithe of the earnings to the local church. A perpetual fund, the Foundation is not an official part of the church, but its board is made up of church members and its purposes are consistent with the missionary mindset of the congregation.

From the June 1989 report of the Foundation, \$34,850.00 was given to our children's home work, the same amount was earmarked for \$1,000.00 scholarships to deserving students, and \$7,744.49 was given to the Harrodsburg Baptist Church. The assets of the Foundation total \$962,220.46 as of June 15, 1989.

Dr. C. R. Daley's ministry strengthened all phases of the church life and opened the way toward realization of the sanctuary. The north-

east corner property occupied by Avalon Inn and adjoining the old sanctuary was offered for sale. It was bought for \$39,500.00. In three and one-half years the entire debt was paid.

Throughout the years our church has been close in ministerial ties to the Western Recorder. Some of our pastors who were editors are Dr. A. C. Graves, Dr. R. L. Thurman, Dr. A. W. LaRue, and Dr. W. P. Harvey. That tradition continued with Dr. Daley. The church, with regret, accepted the resignation of Dr. C. R. Daley when the call to the Western Recorder came. He continued in the office of leadership bringing dignity, erudition and flashes of wit to the editorial pages with his "Daley Observations" until his retirement in 1984.

The church was without a pastor the summer of 1957. In December the Rev. Wallace H. Carrier came to assume the pastorate of the Harrodsburg Baptist. Behind him was the nine-year pastorate, with two building programs and expansion of the organizations and stewardship, of the First Baptist Church of Rockwood, Tennessee. His building experience and versatile understanding of all areas of church life enabled him to provide the impetus and guidance for bringing the dreams for a new house of worship to definite form in steel and concrete.

When the present sanctuary building was partially completed, the dismantling of the 1901 sanctuary began. Once again, all ties with the past as related to brick and mortar were to be severed. The concluding service was held as a memorial. Tribute was paid to those, who through conscientious stewardship, had preserved not only the structure of the church, but had amplified it in a multitude of ways. There were few in the congregation who were not emotionally stirred as they realized an old era was passing.

The present building was finished in November 1961, at a cost of \$554,262.38. From its roots deep in the earth to its sky-reaching spire, the present house of worship stands, carved in faith, molded by love, the symbol of the unity and steadfastness of the congregation for 123 years.

The old Akron architecture has been replaced by the pure lines of Georgia Colonial; the dark amber glass has given way to pale pastel; the faded grey carpet to one of bright cherry red. A new phase in the life of the church was about to begin.

The rotating system of deacons, approved by the church during the period of being without a pastor in 1957, was put into effect during Carrier's first year. A fully graded Sunday School with an enlarged organization, the enlistment of more leadership, the calling of full-time minister of education and full-time minister of music, and a unified stewardship program were indications of the alertness and progressive ministry of the church as it moved into expanded quarters.

In 1964, the church celebrated its 125th anniversary. The membership totaled 2,028 with an average Sunday School attendance of 775.

Income for the year totaled \$120,618.00 with the Cooperative Program receiving \$18,478.00, representing 15 percent of the total. To put the mission giving in perspective, the 1964-65 Cooperative Program giving was the 16th highest among Kentucky Baptist churches that year.

Harrodsburg Baptist lost one of its dearest and most respected members when Glave Vivion died November 1, 1965. At 28 years of age in 1917, he became Sunday School superintendent and continued in that position until his death, spanning 48 years of service. Ordained as a deacon in 1918, Glave Vivion was eulogized editorially in the Western Recorder and personally by so many for his great contributions to the cause of Christ.

The church hosted the state Woman's Missionary Union annual meeting in 1965. In that same year, the church gave the Carriers a trip to the Holy Land as an expression of their love and appreciation for them.

A much discussed item since the 1961 sanctuary was built was air-conditioning. The building did not have air-conditioning. However, almost five years of experience led the congregation to vote in May of 1966 to air-condition the sanctuary building. In June of that same year, Miss Emma Watts, a missionary nurse to Nigeria, returned to the church because of deaths and needs in her family. The field of her service had changed, but her commitment to serve the Lord and His people brought great inspiration to the church.

Mission interest continued as the church gave greater amounts to all the mission offerings as well as direct aid to Mary Neal Morgan in Japan. Efforts in the Ellers Chapel ministry in Davistown continued. Cooperative Program receipts increased to 23 percent in 1967.

In 1968, the deacons reaffirmed a commitment made more than a decade earlier, and asked every organization to maintain an openness to persons of any color or creed.

Rev. J. E. Darter, a retired Baptist minister with deep ties to Mercer County, became "Minister at Large" in January 1969, a position he held until he moved to North Carolina ten years later. A child care center was established in 1969 which lasted for two years.

In December of 1969, Wallace Carrier resigned as pastor to accept the position of editor of adult administrative materials for the Baptist Sunday School Board in Nashville, Tennessee. A saddened congregation accepted his resignation and bid them farewell in January of 1970. Representative of Carrier's esteem in the community, Earl Dean, Chairman of the Board of the Harrodsburg Christian Church, wrote a letter of appreciation to W. J. Hatchell, Deacon Chairman, in which Dean wrote that "no person has contributed more to the best interests of Harrodsburg and Mercer County." Today, the Carriers live in Nashville, Tennessee, with Wallace having retired from the Sunday School Board but also pastoring a congregation in his "retirement."

In the interim before the call of a new pastor, the church discussed the parsonage on Beaumont Avenue. Purchased in 1917 for \$5,000.00, the house had served well but needed much repair. After much discussion and without unanimous support, the church voted to tear down the old building and replace it with a new house. In June of 1970, the church also purchased property in Davistown for the building of Ellers Chapel.

In August 1970, Rev. Samuel Clelland Gash was called as pastor. Gash was a native of Harrodsburg, having been baptized in the church at 11 years of age, licensed to preach here in 1949 and ordained in 1954. His background included military chaplaincy, pastoring Baptist churches and serving on the staff of the Bellevue Baptist Church of Memphis, Tennessee.

In January 1971, the long-term mission project in Davistown culminated in the constituting of Ellers Memorial Baptist Church. By 1989, the congregation had 375 members and an operating budget of \$70,000.00.

In 1973, the church purchased the old VanArsdall Apartment property at the corner of Chiles and Office streets for \$38,000.00. This opened the way to address one of the most serious problems facing the modern church--parking. The decision was made to build a parking deck which was finally completed in 1975.

Gash's evangelistic preaching and ministry made immediate impact on the church. The 1972-73 associational letter reported 52 baptisms and 66 other additions with Sunday School averaging 612. Cooperative Program receipts totaled \$38,711.00. In February of 1973, a television ministry was begun in Lexington, a ministry that would continue about three years.

A highlight of American history was the 1976 bicentennial celebration. Harrodsburg church joined in that by hosting a celebration of 200 years of Baptist preaching in Kentucky. Thomas Tinsley and William Vaughan were the 1776 preachers of record, and 200 years later, Baptists from across Kentucky gathered for a celebration in April of 1976. Dr. R. G. Lee, the fabled orator and pastor from Memphis, Tennessee, was the featured speaker.

Gash's ministry came to a close after eight years in November 1978, when he resigned to accept the pastorate of the Pittsburgh Baptist Church of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. During his ministry here, 328 persons were baptized, having accepted Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. Presently, the Gashes are in Memphis, Tennessee where he is the director of the Baptist Center at Millington Naval Base.

Church life in the mid-to-latter part of the twentieth century consists of fairly familiar features. Attendance emphases, stewardship promotions, revivals, regular and routine activities--these all are familiar to modern readers. They may not make headlines, but they are the basic "meat and potatoes" of church life. Day by day, week

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by week, these continue to be the human vehicles of churches to reach people, develop believers, enjoy Christian fellowship, be involved in missions, and live the Christian life. A casual or an intense reading of The Messenger, the church weekly newsletter, reveals much continuity as well as sufficient diversity over the years.

At Thanksgiving of 1979, a deacon and his family had family guests from Atlanta, Georgia. As his guests talked about their church, Varner Lester asked for the name of their pastor. Writing his name on a piece of torn napkin, Lester then turned the name in to the pulpit committee. That name was added to an impressive file of prospective ministers, but under the providence of God, the pulpit committee was led to recommend "the name on the napkin." Dr. W. Robert DeFoor, pastor of the Druid Hills Baptist Church, in Atlanta, Georgia, came to serve as pastor on April 15, 1979. He had previously served Kentucky churches in Boston and Glendale and was a graduate of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville. DeFoor's wife Sandy was a registered nurse and they had three children, Jennifer, Bobby and Stephanie.

As in other periods of church life, many routine events took place. However, some would stand out as more significant than others. For instance, in August of 1980, the church voted to affirm believers' baptism and to accept anyone who had been scripturally immersed, without having to be re-baptized. After much discussion in two successive business meetings, the motion from the deacons passed by secret ballot, with 88 percent voting in the affirmative.

In 1982, the church adopted the deacons family ministry plan as the visitation plan for deacons. In April, the church hosted the annual meeting of the Woman's Missionary Union of Kentucky, registering almost 1900 guests. In October, a Mother's Day Out program was begun, offering pre-school care for children on Tuesday and Thursday.

Several projects dominated 1983. The church borrowed \$125,000.00 from the Harrodsburg Baptist Foundation, to be paid back at prevailing interest rates. A new church bus was purchased, a new roof was placed on the educational building, a new sound system was installed in the sanctuary, and a garage and back porch were added to the parsonage.

The church continued its strong mission commitment also. Previously, the church had established missions that became churches in the area--Calvary, Fellowship, Pioneer and Ellers Memorial. Now attention focused on the Kentucky-Ohio Partnership. In December 1983, the first of several attempts were made to start or assist churches in Ohio. Finally, in 1984, the church began supporting Rev. Lee Warf, just recently on the staff of the Burgin Baptist Church, in developing new work in Ada, Ohio. By 1986, Jackson Center Ohio, was added as an additional site of Ohio work, and youth mission teams have gone there the last four years. In 1987, adults formed mission teams to teach Bible clubs and vacation bible school in Pike County, Kentucky and have gone back in 1988 and 1989.

In 1984, the church revived its television ministry, video taping the morning worship service and replaying it over the local cable system. Church and community response were quite positive. By October 1985, the church voted to develop a local ACTS board and the local cable company allowed a channel for ACTS. The church presently televises Sunday services, including the Gladhand Sunday School class and replays church services several times during the week.

Music has always been a large part of this church's history. Trained and paid music leadership was evident in church records dating to the 1800's. The wife, then widow, of Dr. C. W. Knight, pastor from 1922-1932, taught many children music and piano before her death in 1957. In honor of her, the church established a piano fund, bought and then dedicated a new Steinway grand piano in 1985. Mrs. Knight's influence continues through one of her pupils, our present pianist, Mrs. Imogene Freeman. Not only the music department of the church, but also the entire church was saddened in December 1985, with the death of David Morris, our organist for 12 years.

The church newsletter, The Messenger, replaced church minutes as the most informative source of church news in the 1940's. Church minutes still record the bare, and sometimes most significant facts, but with so much work taking place through the ministerial staff and elected leadership, not many items come to the church for business meeting action. Especially, and unlike the minutes that record meetings of earlier years, cases of church discipline have not been presented for years. In September 1985, The Messenger was dropped as a separate paper and was published as the back page of the Western Recorder. The church saved considerable money and then was also able to include every church family on the Western Recorder/Messenger mailing list.

In 1986, the church voted to tear down the custodian's house facing Chiles Street and the property has been converted to parking. In that same February church conference, the church voted to ordain a product of our local church and community, Rebecca Cunningham, if and when she became a chaplain through the United States Navy. Though Miss Cunningham has not pursued that career, and thus was not ordained, the vote to ordain a woman was historic.

In February 1987, Dr. DeFoor was asked to leave a deacons meeting. At that time, the deacons discussed and then later proposed that the church sell the parsonage and allow the pastor to live in the house of his choice. Much discussion developed, with a significant division of opinion. When the issue was finally voted on May 10, 1987, by secret ballot, 165 voted to sell the parsonage and 128 voted against the sale. Debate on the church floor was "decent and in order" and the property was eventually sold in February 1988.

In 1988, the church entered the computer age, with intentions of having computers available for all office work. The new technology now includes two computers with plans for additional computer equipment.

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As the church moved into 1989, some trends were encouraging, others were not so positive. Mission giving had almost tripled in ten years. In the 25 years since the 125th anniversary, Cooperative Program receipts have totaled \$1,402,412.00. Church membership now stands near 2,100 and the budget for 1989 is \$485,272.00 with 28 percent earmarked for the Cooperative Program. The church continues to be near the top of Kentucky Baptist churches in mission support.

On the other hand, Sunday School attendance has slipped, somewhat paralleling a decline in the number of students in the Harrodsburg Independent School System. For instance, Sunday School in March 1959 averaged 887. Ten years later, the average was 668. In March 1979 it was 483 and in March 1989 Sunday School averaged 496. Sunday School has remained fairly constant in average attendance for about the last 15 years. Couples classes and single adult classes and ministries have been built, while children, youth and some senior adult classes have declined. Much work has been attempted and much still needs to be done to establish new growth directions for the Sunday School.

The development of a professional ministerial staff is a twentieth-century phenomenon, receiving strong encouragement through the ministry of Rev. Marshall Black in the 1950's. During the last 25 years, many people have served in staff positions but most were short-tenured. Rev. Steve West, minister of youth, 1981-1987, and Rev. Bob Blankenship, 1982-1986 served longer than most and added much stability to the church ministerial staff. Currently, Rev. Eddie Russell is minister of music and Rev. Scott Garren is minister of youth and education. Both came in 1987. Though the efforts of these persons are not spotlighted, these co-laborers in ministry have helped create and carry out a more diverse and challenging ministry in and through the church.

As the church celebrates its 150th anniversary on July 23, 1989, there are several ways to chronicle her history. This report has focused on the years of her pastors. However, pastors would be the first to remind all that the real history of the church is written by lay persons who build up the church through their constant, day-by-day, commitment to God and His people. It would be impossible to identify their efforts individually, but the Lord surely knows the efforts of persons named Burford, Alexander, Bell, Vivion, Watts and many others. Through persons like these, history has been made and a confidence for whatever remains in our future continues to grow.

Harrodsburg Baptist Church has a noble past, a meaningful present, and a promising future. "To God be the glory, great things He hath done."

REVEREND ROBERT SALLEE JAMES
or
BAPTISTS, BOOKS AND BANDITS

by W. Terry Martin

The year was 1839 and Georgetown College was beginning its eleventh year as a struggling collegiate institution in the "West." The Baptists of Kentucky were being asked to send their sons and their dollars to Georgetown College by President Rockwood Giddings. One of the young men who responded not only to Giddings' call to become an educated gentleman, but also to the call to the Baptist ministry was Robert Sallee James.

Mr. James first appears in the records of the college on May 20, 1839. He is listed as being from Russellville, Kentucky, age 21, and residing with John W. Mimms, guardian. Mr. Mimms was married to Mary James, sister of Robert. After their parents died in 1827, Robert evidently lived with his sister's family until he came to Georgetown College. During the January Term, 1830 of the Logan County (KY) Court, John W. Mimms was appointed guardian of Robert. Robert's father, John James, had been a bivocational Baptist minister/farmer (Beams & Pullen, 1981, p. 9).

On May 1, 1839, Robert S. James was licensed "to exercise his gift in exhortation or preaching" by the Union Baptist Church, Logan County, Kentucky. The church clerk was D. W. Poor, uncle of Robert (original license on display at the James' Farm, Kearney, Missouri).

The minutes of the 1839 annual meeting of the Bethel Baptist Association (KY) indicate the Education Society as having \$55.00 on hand. A resolution was passed that the money be sent to the president of Georgetown College and used for the support of "brethren James and Gardner who are . . . from this association." W. W. Gardner was a long-time member of the Baptist clergy in Kentucky and a member of the same graduation class as Robert S. James.

Complete records of Robert S. James' academic achievements and college activities have not survived. It is possible, however, to reconstruct a reasonably accurate record of some of his activities during his college experience between 1839 - 1843.

During his college days James was cited only nine times in the reports of the weekly faculty meetings. Seven of these citations came between November 1839 and December 1840. The offenses, absences from chapel, study hours or campus, were considered minor. None required his being reprimanded publicly in chapel or given a probationary sentence as was the custom for major offenses.

In June 1842, the faculty voted to examine James for completion of junior class requirements at the beginning of the next session. The meaning of this action is not certain. It could represent James already having been dismissed from the college for preaching purposes. A note in the list of matriculates indicates that at some point he was given permission to leave campus for preaching. H. I. Hester reports that during the summer of 1842, James was a very effective evangelist in Clay County, Missouri. He then returned to the college in the fall and completed requirements for his degree in June 1843 (Hester, 1969, p. 22).

College activities in which James was engaged include giving a speech on December 24, 1841, as part of an exhibition given by the sophomore and junior classes. His speech began the program and was entitled "Personal Liberty Must be Restrained," an interesting topic considering James was married a few days after this speech was given.

James joined the Adelphi Society, signing the constitution on October 6, 1841. This society of religious inquiry was organized by several ministerial students and was greatly encouraged by then college President Howard Malcom.

Debate was a very popular form of entertainment at Georgetown College. The first debate and literary society organized was the Tau Theta Kappa Society. At its first called meeting, May 20, 1840, Robert James was initiated (Acton, 1918, p. 7).

The courses of study at Georgetown College during the period James attended "embraced all those usually pursued in the best Eastern universities." For Robert James and the sophomore class of 1840-1841, requirements would have included classes in Greek language and literature, Latin language and literature, geometry and trigonometry. Readings in Greek would have included 1,800 lines of Homer's "Iliad" during the spring semester (Semi-annual Report to the Trustees, June 30, 1841).

According to the Georgetown Baptist Church records, Mr. James joined this congregation through transfer of letter on February 8, 1840. No mention is made of the church which provided his letter. On May 21, 1843, the Georgetown Baptist Church granted James, at his request, a letter of dismission.

On December 28, 1841, Robert S. James and Zerelda E. Cole were married. The wedding ceremony was performed by the Rev. Younger R. Pitts, a local minister and trustee of Georgetown College. An uncle and guardian of the bride, James Madison Lindsay, gave permission for the marriage of his sixteen-year-old niece (Scott County marriage records, Book A).

Robert James graduated from Georgetown College, having completed all requirements of the four-year classical course, on June 29, 1843. His degree was the Bachelor of Arts. According to the faculty records, final examinations for the senior class were completed on May 24, 1843. Robert James is listed as having tied for third place honors in the class. For this accomplishment, he was awarded the opportunity to present an oration at the commencement exercises.

James evidently moved near Liberty, Missouri immediately after completing final examinations. He is listed on the commencement program as living in that city and was graduated "in absentia." According to Hester (1969, p. 22), Mrs. James had remained in Missouri during the 1842-1843 school year living with her mother.

James later received the Masters of Arts degree from Georgetown College. His original diploma is the property of the James' Farm, Kearney, Missouri. During the mid-nineteenth century, the Master's degree was awarded three years after graduation to individuals who had completed the classical course of study. Occasionally, some evidence of continued study was presented by the recipients. No records exist to indicate any work done by Robert James. College records list the degree as being awarded "in course" in 1848.

After graduation from college James was an active minister and promoter of Christian higher education in the area near Liberty, Missouri. In August 1843, he became the pastor of the New Hope Baptist Church, Clay County, Missouri. The church had twenty members in 1843; by the end of James' first year that number had increased to ninety-four. In 1850, when he left Missouri for California, the church had 280 members (Hester, 1969, p. 22). In February 1849, William Jewell College was chartered by the State of Missouri. One of the twenty-six charter trustees named was Robert James (Hester, 1967, p. 17).

Early in 1850, Robert James left Missouri for the gold fields of California. Newspaper accounts of his death indicate he died in the mining town of Rough and Ready (The Weekly Tribune, Liberty, Missouri, 1850, October 25 and 1851, February 14). He was survived by his wife, two sons and a daughter. His estate's inventory of personal property, as listed in the Clay County, Missouri Probate Court Records, included six slaves, household items, farm implements, several head of stock and a personal library of at least fifty-one books.

Robert James' accomplishments were significant. He came from a modest background, but was able to achieve a college education. He had a thriving ministry on the American frontier and participated in the establishment of a successful Baptist College. His life ended with his having crossed the continent during the great California Gold Rush. However, to most individuals, he is an unknown man. To others, he is known only as the father of Frank and Jesse James, boys of seven and two when their father died.

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L. E. WHITLOW

A KENTUCKY PREACHER

by Larry Douglas Smith

The early Baptist preachers in Kentucky grew from the same soil as the early inhabitants themselves. Farmers were the earliest white settlers in Kentucky; the earliest preachers were also farmers. They came over the mountains and down the Ohio River to establish themselves and hopefully prosper as farmers. These early preachers worked their land during the week. On weekends they worked for the Lord. Some were regularly ordained ministers of the gospel, but the majority were only licensed.

Since the earliest preachers preached the gospel, educational facilities in Kentucky have greatly increased. One reason for the rise was the need for an educated clergy. With the establishment of Georgetown College, Western Theological Seminary and the relocation of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Kentucky, many have forgotten about the preachers who worked at a trade, profession or other occupation in order to support themselves and their families so that they could spend Sundays preaching. One of these ministers was L. E. Whitlow.

L. E. Whitlow was born February 6, 1880. His father was George Whitefield Whitlow of Green County; his mother was Mary Renolds. His father tended the farm, while his mother kept the house, cooking on a wood-burning stove and washing the clothes with home-made soap. The family attended a Baptist church regularly. L. E. was the oldest of nine children, five boys and four girls. As the oldest he was given some responsibilities for the others, especially when his father was absent and there was farm work to be done. There was not much time for hunting and fishing, for there was usually farm work to be done and firewood to be cut. At age eleven, he began to plow the fields alone.

He attended public elementary and high schools in the area, graduating from Buffalo. The school days were long, lasting from 8:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M. Students received a lunch break, when they got to eat whatever they brought. Those without lunches went without lunch. During lunchtime and at recess, boys played townball (a game much like baseball), horseshoes and marbles.

Family devotions were irregular in the home but attendance at church was a regular part of his early life. The family attended the Holly Grove Baptist Church which then had about 160 members. It was one of many churches which had part-time preachers, so there would not always be a Sunday sermon, but there was always Sunday School. The preacher usually came twice a month to Holly Grove during this period.

In 1905, Whitlow married Effie Whitlow, a distant cousin. They had grown up in the same area and gone to school together. He moved off his father's farm to begin working his own about 1906. This farm was located on the line between Green and Hart counties. They lived there for four or five years and then moved to White City in Larue County, about three miles east of Hodgenville. One daughter was born in 1912, but the couple had three children who were stillborn.

L. E.'s time was mostly spent on his farm during these days. He planted sugar cane, meadow hay, oats and wheat, but his principal crops were corn and tobacco. During this period, before his call into the pastorate, Whitlow was a Sunday School teacher.

Whitlow fought his call to ministry for a long time. He realized that the Lord had something for him to do but he didn't want to do that. He loved farming and wanted to continue. Neither did he want to leave his family. At this time most churches were quarter-time churches, which meant that preachers came once a month. Preachers lined up several of these churches and traveled each week to a different congregation. The difficulties of travel and the necessities of ministry often required that ministers leave Saturday nights and did not return home until Sunday nights or even Monday mornings. Longer times were necessary for revivals and other special services. Whitlow did not think that he could leave his wife and daughter alone for such lengths of time.

One day while Whitlow was plowing corn on a hillside not far from his home, something drew his attention to his house. There he saw his wife and daughter come outside. At that moment he thought he heard someone speak to him. The voice told him that they were his, leaving Whitlow the impression that they could be taken away from him. This convinced Whitlow that he should yield to the call of the Lord.

Whitlow was licensed in 1919, by the Pleasant Grove Baptist Church and soon began preaching in the surrounding churches. Soon he began regular work at Aetna Union and Pikeview, both in the Lynn Association. These churches soon requested his ordination, which was performed by the Hodgenville Baptist Church in 1921.

Although he knew he needed additional training to help his ministry, Whitlow, now forty-one, could not drop everything to attend college or seminary. So beginning in 1923-24, he and several other men began studying with Rev. E. H. Blakeman, pastor of the Hodgenville Baptist Church. Dave Drun, Manly Tolly and a Mr. Puckett were some of his classmates. In the morning the group studied the Old Testament, beginning with Genesis and working toward the end, while in the afternoons they studied the New Testament, beginning with Matthew. This course of study lasted three years. He supplemented this study with correspondence study through the Moody Bible Institute.

The Rev. Mr. Whitlow held many revivals during his years as a pastor. Most were in nearby churches, but his efforts extended from the far western part of Kentucky all the way to Georgia. The length of each revival was determined by the interest in the community. As long as people responded, the revival would continue. Most churches usually had two services a day, one in the morning and one in the evening. Each service lasted about an hour.

The usual Sunday went something like this. Whitlow would arrive at the church building before Sunday School so that he could meet the people as they came from Bible study. During Sunday School he would either teach or go over his sermon. Between Sunday School and church there was usually a deacons' prayer meeting. After the church service he was generally invited to one of the church member's homes for lunch. There he would visit until time to return for the evening service. After the service, he would return home. Thanks to the increasing use of automobile and better (though hardly "good") roads, he was able to get to his churches without having to spend Saturday nights away from his family.

An accompanying chart at the end of this article shows the churches which Rev. Whitlow pastored.

In the late 1920's, Whitlow moved to Campbellsville where he pastored Palestine, Muldraugh Hill and Mt. Gilboa. He lived in two different places there because the first house that he rented was sold and the new owners forced him out. Palestine and Muldraugh Hill were half-time churches. He pastored Mt. Gilboa, a quarter-time church when he first began, "on the side."

The Palestine church was located about six miles outside Campbellsville. The church met in a frame building which was both heated and lighted with kerosene. Even with the kerosene lights, however, the building was so dark during the evening worship service that Whitlow would have to memorize his sermon text and notes. Before service one Sunday, Whitlow called up deacon Davis and asked him to read the Scripture. He could not do so. Then Whitlow called up deacons Fisher and Smith, but none could read the Bible in the poor light. Mr. Davis said, "Boys, I'm going to put in Lalie lights this week and you can help me if you want and I'm going to do it this week." And it was so. A battery-operated light system was installed which allowed the person reading Scripture from the pulpit to read at night.

Whitlow usually preached from notes. He planned his sermons, at least in outline, ahead of time and typed the notes himself, using the seek and find method he learned after his call to ministry. Many of the pastors in this area of Kentucky have never used notes for their sermons. Whitlow, however, found notes extremely handy, especially when there were unexpected disturbances in the congregation.

Muldrough Hill was located between Springfield and Lebanon. He traveled the 12 miles from home in a 1928 Chevrolet, until he traded for a Model A Ford. During most of his ministry, Whitlow sold cars in order to supplement his pastoral income. While he was still living in White City, Mr. Funk approached him about selling cars. If your members need a car, Funk told him, tell them you can supply them. This will help all concerned. Although not as many people were buying during the Depression as when he began, Whitlow continued selling for many years. In addition to Funk, he sold cars for Donohue Ferrill and Fred and Winford Beard.

Though he lived in Campbellsville, Whitlow was too busy to take any classes at the college, which was only a two-year school then. He occasionally led college devotions there, but had no opportunity to study there.

Around 1938, Whitlow moved to Springfield. The Bethlehem Baptist Church, located between Springfield and Danville, called him to be their pastor. It was the first full-time pastorate for Whitlow. He resigned his work at Palestine and Muldrough Hill, but continued his work at Mt. Gilboa. The former pastor of Bethlehem had had trouble with some people in the small town of Texas (where the church building was located), so Whitlow decided to live elsewhere. The church rented the parsonage and applied that to Whitlow's rent. As happened in Springfield, he lived in two places there, because the first house was sold. He would drive to Campbellsville to pick up new cars which he would then drive to Springfield to demonstrate. He received 7% commission on cars which averaged about \$860 each.

While he was at Bethlehem, the old brick building was replaced with a new structure. The foreman on the project was Berry Coppenhauer, a member of the church. The new building had a full basement and other advantages.

Whitlow usually visited twice a month, often with Clay Braddy, chairman of the deacons, or with other deacons. As the church rolls indicate nearly a hundred additions to the church's membership, visitation must have been effective.

By 1942, Whitlow was living in Louisville. He continued to pastor the Mt. Gilboa church, which became a half-time church, until 1947. In Louisville he worked as a laborer at Cave Hill Cemetery for some years. He also pastored the New Washington Baptist Church across the Ohio River in Indiana and worked on behalf of temperance.

Whitlow was a man without formal training in ministry, but who used his God-given talents for the advancement of God's kingdom. He is only one of an unknown number of such men who have been the backbone of Kentucky Baptists since they first came over the mountains and settled here.

No finer testimony to his ministry and those like him than an event which occurred near the end of his life. During his early ministry the responsibility of paying the preacher was divided among the members of the congregation. At each service in which he preached, several members were to contribute their share of Whitlow's salary. Invariably this meant that often the preacher had to wait for his full salary and that often he would not receive it. This happened a number of times to Whitlow, as it did to other preachers of that time. When he was 96 years old and living in a Louisville nursing home, Whitlow received a letter of apology from one who had not had the money to pay his share of the pastor's salary over forty years prior. This person then paid his part and more. It was not the money, but the thought and the expression of those kind thoughts that indicate the sensitive ministry Whitlow and others have worked in the churches of Kentucky.

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<u>Church</u>	<u>Association</u>	<u>Membership</u>	<u>Salary</u>	<u>Receipts</u>	<u>Preaching</u>	
Living in White City, Larue County						
1922	Aetna Union	Lynn	171	----	43.00	----
	Pikeview	Lynn	260	180.00	360.00	----
1923	Aetna Union	Lynn	179	----	82.50	1,4
	Mt. Tabor	Lynn	336	200.00	604.00	1,4
	Pikeview	Lynn	269	200.00	316.00	1,4
1924	Aetna Union	Lynn	184	144.00	----	1,4
	Mt. Tabor	Lynn	338	200.00	803.18	1,4
	Pikeview	Lynn	277	180.00	605.00	1,4
	Three Branchs					
	Bacon Creek	Lynn	266	200.00	472.50	1,4
1925	Not available					
1926	Mt. Tabor	Lynn	344	240.00	----	----
	Bethel	Severns Valley	27	----	----	----
	Barren Spring	Severns Valley	323	----	474.16	----
	Big Springs	Severns Valley	83	----	401.80	----
1927	Mt. Tabor	Lynn	344	240.00	740.94	2,4
	Youngers Creek	Severns Valley	168	480.00	631.10	1,3
1928	Mt. Tabor	Lynn	347	240.00	302.13	1,2,3,4
1929	Moved to Campbellsville, Taylor County					
1930	Three Springs	Liberty	104	300.00	514.01	2
1931	Three Springs	Liberty	99	265.00	350.50	2
	Mill Creek	Severns Valley	159	180.00	290.33	1
1932	Three Springs	Liberty	106	180.00	371.94	2
	Mill Creek	Severns Valley	160	150.00	339.70	3
	Muldrough Hill	Central	307	325.00	555.55	----
1933	Palestine	Russell Creek	266	200.00	338.11	----
	Muldrough Hill	Central	317	433.75	557.75	2,4
1934	Muldrough Hill	Central	339	400.00	629.15	2,4
	Palestine	Russell Creek	264	300.00	554.73	1
	Salem	Russell Creek	105	180.00	261.14	3
1935	Muldrough Hill	Central	250	525.00	625.00	2,4
	Palestine	Russell Creek	265	300.00	668.31	1
	Salem	Russell Creek	113	227.40	----	3
1936	Muldrough Hill	Central	365	625.00	813.00	2,4
	Palestine	Russell Creek	287	300.00	571.08	1
	Salem	Russell Creek	114	150.00	260.60	3
	Gilboa	East Lynn	100	123.61	163.20	4
1937	Muldrough Hill	Central	386	600.00	1,476.00	2,4
	Palestine	Russell Creek	285	600.00	871.98	1,3
	Gilboa	East Lynn	100	110.00	241.28	4

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<u>Church</u>	<u>Association</u>	<u>Membership</u>	<u>Salary</u>	<u>Receipts</u>	<u>Preaching</u>	
Moved to Springfield, Washington County						
1938	Bethlehem	Central	350	1,200.00	2,183.57	1,2,3,4
	Gilboa	East Lynn	99	128.00	210.22	4
1939	Bethlehem	Central	436	1,300.00	2,616.79	1,2,3,4
	Gilboa	East Lynn	99	120.00	252.94	4
1940	Bethlehem	Central	433	1,600.00	5,804.92	1,2,3,4
	Gilboa	East Lynn	109	125.00	274.23	4
1941	Bethlehem	Central	443	1,600.00	2,268.86	1,2,3,4
	Gilboa	East Lynn	115	250.00	606.94	2,4
Moved to Louisville, Jefferson County						
1942	Gilboa	East Lynn	113	400.00	986.77	2,4
1943	Gilboa	East Lynn	114	500.00	1,080.58	2,4
1944	Gilboa	East Lynn	109	525.02	725.64	2,4
1945	East Lynn Associational Table not available					
1946	Gilboa	East Lynn	106	690.00	1,558.00	2,4
1947	Gilboa	East Lynn	113	656.00	1,970.00	2,4

HOW OLD IS THE SOUTH ELKHORN BAPTIST CHURCH?

by

Larry Douglas Smith

Some time ago I became interested in the history of the South Elkhorn Baptist Church. My curiosity began during a 1983 meeting of the Kentucky Baptist Historical Society honoring the church's bicentennial anniversary. My interest was aroused because I knew that Spencer wrote that the present church was not related to the one established in 1783.

Spencer quite explicitly rejected any notion that the present South Elkhorn is a continuation of the original. He stated that the original "became extinct" and "has long since dissolved. . . Another church has risen near her ancient site and taken her venerated name."¹ Caught between the authority of Spencer and the excitement of the church, I decided to investigate the question.

Put succinctly, the question is thus, is the church that now exists over 200 years old; or is it just over 129 years old? Did the present church begin in 1783 or 1859? The answer should be simple, just look at the records. But church records do not exist to cover most of what the present church historian calls "the missing years," from January 1832 to 1859. The problem of the records and the continuity of the church relate to the Campbellite controversy that affected the church in the late 1820's and early 1830's.

In 1831, the Elkhorn Association, to which the church belonged, excluded South Elkhorn because of the church's adherence to Campbellite doctrines and the continued use of a heretical preacher (Jacob Creath, Jr.). A seven-man committee, appointed at the 1830 meeting of the association, made the following report to the association:

"Being satisfied that the church at S. Elkhorn has departed from the doctrine and practice of this association, and further, that they countenance persons professing to be ministers of Christ who have proclaimed open war with our constitution and who have heretofore been excluded from our correspondence for heresy, we feel ourselves called upon in the perpetuation of good order to drop said church from our correspondence."²

South Elkhorn was one of many Baptist churches greatly affected by the reformation led by Alexander Campbell. Both Jacob Creath and Jacob Creath, Jr. joined the Campbellite forces and brought many of their Baptist church members with them. By 1830, the majority at South

Elkhorn became participants in Campbell's reform movement. As part of the general movement to stamp out Campbellism, the Elkhorn Association expelled South Elkhorn in 1831. The majority, now calling themselves Disciples of Christ, continued meeting in the meeting house, alternating with the minority Baptists. Some time after 1835 the Baptists faded from sight.

Phyllis Mattingly argued in the bicentennial history of the church that a tiny group kept alive Baptist practices until they and others were reconstituted in 1859. She cited only one secondary source as part of her evidence for the continuity of the church. She included three other arguments that supported the continuity of the church. First, the name remained the same (South Elkhorn Baptist Church of Christ) as when Lewis Craig founded it in 1783. Second, the South Elkhorn Baptist Church and the South Elkhorn Christian Church (which is the Campbellite church descended from the original South Elkhorn Baptist Church) have a "special bond" of fellowship which implies a common history. Older members remember this, and church minutes indicate that in 1925 the Baptist Church lent its communion set to the Christian Church. This friendship implies an historical link between the Christian and Baptist church. A third evidence is that the community views the Christian and Baptist churches as having a "peculiar connection."³

Ms. Mattingly realized her evidence is not conclusive and that many questions remain to be answered. Some answers are forthcoming with the introduction of new sources, the Baptist papers of that period.

The editor of the Baptist Banner wrote in 1838 the following account:

"Not far from where we now write (Lexington), the first altar of the true religion was erected, and the first hymn of praise to the Redeemer was chanted in the west. At S. Elkhorn, some five or six miles from Lexington, amid the wilderness and while yet the "red man" roved in terror through the country, the first Baptist Church and first worshipping assembly was constituted in the mighty west. The history of this mother church is one of mournful interest, and teaches an instructive moral to the "new lights" of the age. After many years of uninterrupted prosperity, a blight first came over this church in the shape of schism by the "Particular Baptists." This was succeeded years afterwards by the Campbellite mania, which inflected the remainder of the church. The consequence is that the "candlestick" of this church has been removed, and the spiritual desolation and darkness prevail where the candle of the Lord was first lighted in the west. We are told that a handful of Particular Baptists, who have a name to live and are dead, occasionally meet,

as if in mockery and contempt of the religious feelings and deep-toned piety which once prevailed there. The Campbellites have suspended all operations in that neighborhood. It is said they never meet. "They sowed to the wind, and have reaped the whirlwind." Their boasted reformation has proved but a moral pestilence and mildew upon religion in that region; and such has ever been the consequence where their sentiments have met with little or no opposition. They are religious salamanders, and live only in the fire of strife and contention. For the present we drop this subject, but shall resume it anon."⁴

The same editor corrected himself in a letter written four days later to the effect that the Campbellites met once a month with Jacob Creath, Jr. as their bishop.⁵ The evidence, therefore, indicated that the only Baptists worshipping there were Particular Baptists, who had, prior to the Campbellite schism, broken off from the main body at South Elkhorn. As this group had separated from the main body prior to the Campbellite schism, it cannot be used to provide continuity from the earlier to the later church.

Two reports from John L. Smith give further evidence that the present congregation is not related to the earlier body of believers. Smith wrote the Western Recorder December 1, 1859, with the following account of the origins of the new South Elkhorn Church.

"On the 28th day of August, 1859, Bro. Wm. M. Pratt and myself commenced a meeting in a sawmill, on South Elkhorn, at a place called Slickaway. The meeting continued three weeks with large and well-behaved congregations. The Word was preached in plainness and simplicity, and God's Spirit rendered the truth effectual in the salvation of many precious souls. During the meeting twenty-three were baptized in South Elkhorn, according to the Apostolic mode, 'Because there was much water there.'

"This little band of disciples, being some six miles from a Baptist Church, upon deliberation resolved to constitute themselves into a Baptist Church; and on the 11th day of November, 1859, Bro. Pratt and the writer met with them and, after hearing their Church Covenant read, they were there presented with a synopsis of the doctrines held by the Apostles and the Baptist denomination, with a short explanation of their mission, followed by prayer to God for his blessings to rest upon them. They have raised some \$1600 for the erection of a house of worship, and have commenced the work. They have also called a pastor to preach to them twice a month."⁶

In a letter a year later, Smith wrote that ". . . there had never been preaching by a Baptist minister in this neighborhood. . . ."7 Smith, who was then pastor of the church, should have had some idea regarding the continuity of the present and ancient South Elkhorn. If he had known about the continuity of the two bodies, he surely would have informed readers of that.

In 1860, the Elkhorn Association received the South Elkhorn Church into the body. The minutes read like this:

"An opportunity being offered, the South Elkhorn Church, constituted since the last session of the Association, and composed mostly of new disciples of Christ, requested admission into the Association as a member of the body, and presented the history of her organization and the articles of her belief."

The congregation had 37 members. The church was listed last in the statistics, indicating that it was the newest congregation in the association.⁸

The membership records of the newly established South Elkhorn Baptist Church indicate that no member of that congregation was a member of the South Elkhorn Baptist Church of 1825. The later congregation has only one family name identical to the earlier church. As that name is Jones, it is difficult to even make a case for family continuity.⁹

The theological evidence also indicates that two different churches existed. Baptists govern their churches through democratic rule. As long as the congregation wishes to be associated with Baptists, it remains so. If the congregation wishes to withdraw from its Baptist connections, a vote of the membership will decide the issue. The South Elkhorn Baptist Church's majority voted to become Campbellite. To argue that some minority maintained Baptist sentiment is, of course, permissible (even though no evidence supports that position), but to claim that the minority position represents a continuous church line destroys congregational church government. One argues from bad theology if one asserts that the South Elkhorn Baptist Church of today is continuous with the pioneer mother church of central Kentucky.

In summary, the evidence indicates the following historical facts:

1. Contemporary records indicate only a Particular Baptist church in that area from 1835 to 1859.
2. The majority of the South Elkhorn Church became Campbellites in 1831. What happened to the rest is not demonstrated.
3. The Elkhorn Association did not recognize a splinter group from the South Elkhorn group after the church was removed from the association.

4. Pastor Smith believed that the church constituted in 1859 under his leadership was new and that no previous Baptist work existed in that area.
5. The Elkhorn Association believed that they were admitting a congregation in 1860 that was comprised mostly of new converts. Hence, they could not have been members of the pre-1831 South Elkhorn Baptist Church.
6. When admitted to the Elkhorn Association in 1860, the associational clerk listed the church last in its table, indicating that it was the most recent church to join the association.
7. Evidence from the membership rolls demonstrate that no person was a member of the South Elkhorn Church in 1825 and also in 1859.
8. Campbellite historians believe the church went over.
9. The Baptist belief in congregational polity argues against continuity.

In conclusion, the historical and theological evidence overwhelmingly indicates that there have been two congregations located along the South Elkhorn and having the same name, one constituted in 1783 and one in 1859.

NOTES

- ¹John Henderson Spencer, A History of Kentucky Baptists (Cincinnati: J. R. Baumes, 1885), I, 43.
- ²Elkhorn Baptist Association, Minutes, 1831.
- ³Phyllis Mattingly, A History of the South Elkhorn Baptist Church, 1783-1983 (Lexington, KY: P. Mattingly, 1983), 107-8.
Frank Mariro Masters, A History of Baptists in Kentucky, (Louisville: Kentucky Baptist Historical Society, 1953), 30.
- ⁴Baptist Banner, IV (June 6, 1838), p. 2, c. 2.
- ⁵IBID.
- ⁶Western Recorder, XXVI (December 12, 1859), p. 2, c. 8.
- ⁷IBID, XXVII (November 3, 1860), p. 2, c. 8.
- ⁸Elkhorn Baptist Association, Minutes, 1860.
- ⁹Ward Russell, Church Life in the Blue Grass, 1783-1933, (privately published), 64, 69-70. Robert Peter, History of Fayette County, Kentucky with an outline sketch of the Blue Grass Region, ed. by William Henry Perrin, (Chicago: O. L. Baskin & Co., 1882), 529-30.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF SUNDAY SCHOOL WORK
AMONG BAPTISTS IN KENTUCKY

Compiled and written by
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This brief history has been prepared as a special feature of the 1987 State Sunday School Convention and the Sesquicentennial of the Kentucky Baptist Convention observed in this same year. We hope that this will give you an adequate overview of what the Sunday School program has meant to hundreds of thousands of Kentucky Baptists during this significant period of our history.

When Baptist churches were first established in Kentucky, the Sunday School institution had not yet appeared on the world scene, and it was many years later before Sunday Schools were developed in Baptist churches in Kentucky.

In fact, little was done to develop Sunday Schools west of the Appalachian Mountains until after the organization of the American Sunday School Union. Even then, Kentucky Baptists delayed the full adoption of the new work until they could satisfy themselves that such schools would be "for the glory of God, as well as the temporal good of men."

The man most instrumental in giving Sunday School life among Kentucky Baptists was Dr. William Vaughan, agent for the American Sunday School Union in northern Kentucky. Serving from 1831 to 1834, Vaughan organized about 100 Sunday Schools. Vaughan was born in Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, February 22, 1785. Three years later, his Baptist father, John Vaughan moved the family to Scott County, Kentucky.

In 1810, at the age of 25, he was baptized. He was licensed in 1811, ordained in 1812, and began preaching in 1814. Following a series of pastorates in Kentucky and Ohio, he returned to Kentucky and finally in 1831 accepted the position of general agent of the American Sunday School Union for northern Kentucky.

Interest in Sunday School continued to be maintained in towns and cities, but it took twenty more years before Sunday School became generally popular among the Baptists over the state. In 1854, the General Association "set forth" the following statement:

"From the best information we can obtain, we are of the opinion that Sunday Schools are not appreciated among our

churches; that a very small proportion of the churches (probably not one-fourth) have Sunday Schools and many of them are in a very sickly condition, scarcely maintaining an existence."

In 1856, the same body passed the following:

"Resolved, that we recommend to our churches the importance of organizing Sabbath schools wherever it is practicable."

"Resolved, that pastors of churches use their influence, by presenting to their respective congregations, the subject of Sabbath school, and aid in organizing a healthy and efficient system."

These two resolutions would be just as pertinent in 1987 as they were 131 years ago except that we use the term "Sunday" rather than "Sabbath."

As Sunday Schools grew and developed in Baptist churches, there became an increasing dissatisfaction with the materials produced by the American Sunday School Union. So, in order to develop suitable literature, a new Sunday School society was organized. It was called the Southern Sunday School Union and was established in 1858 and headquartered in Nashville, Tennessee.

In 1859, the General Association of Kentucky Baptists responded to this new Society by adopting the following resolutions at the meeting of the General Association.

"Resolved, That while we recognize the excellence of the Sunday School Union Libraries, in the main, we feel the defect of an entire silence on many points of divine truth, essential to the duty of Christians, and to the union of God's people."

"Resolved, That we approve the principle of supplying all our libraries with a literature entirely scriptural, and expressive on all points of duty, both of doctrine and policy."

"Resolved, That we recommend the patronage of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Union."

So, some of the issues facing Kentucky Baptists more than a century ago continue to be the center of discussion and debate today.

Elder L. B. Fish was appointed the Kentucky agent for the new Sunday School society in 1860. But his successful endeavors in promoting the work of the Sunday School were soon stopped by the onset of the Civil War. And in 1861, the society ceased operations.

Sunday Schools in the churches during the Civil War years endured hardship and the lack of material and human resources because of the demands of the conflict. But while the work struggled, it did not die. It survived until a dynamic leader surfaced to lead it out of the darkest days of the war and on into the postwar period. This leader was William S. Sedwick, who, according to J. H. Spencer, "was probably the most active and useful Sunday School worker that has ever labored among the Baptists in Kentucky. His whole nature seemed to be consecrated to this special calling. His eminently godly mother had 'dedicated' him to the Sunday School work, in her solemn prayer to God, while he was yet a small boy."

Sedwick accepted the position of Sunday School agent for Kentucky under the auspices of the General Association of Kentucky Baptists when he was only nineteen (that is, if his date of birth is correct). He was ordained about the same time in Jeffersontown, Kentucky. Even though he served in this capacity only about two years, Spencer says that the amount of work he performed "was wonderful."

He was especially effective with children. It was said that "he would call together the children of the village or country place, and within an hour after they met, would have a Sunday School well organized, and the children singing at the 'top of their voices,' songs they had never heard before. He died when he was thirty years of age.

In May of 1871, the General Association created "a separate Board to control the Sunday School interests of that body." This nine member board was located at Georgetown. J. J. Rucker was elected chairman. L. B. Fish was appointed State Superintendent of the Sunday School work. In 1872, he reported that not more than one-third of the churches even had Sunday Schools, and that he had instituted nineteen new schools.

In 1877, the Sunday School Board was abolished, and it became the responsibility of the Executive Board of the General Association to promote the work. In 1880, a State Sunday School Convention was formed to take charge of the work. A. C. Caperton, editor of the Western Recorder, was chosen president of the Sunday School Convention. The General Association considered:

"How best to advance the Sunday School work in Kentucky,

How to interest the Church in the Sunday School, and

The Importance of Teaching our Peculiar Doctrinal Views in the Sunday School."

The most complete Sunday School statistics ever gathered in the state up to this time, revealed that there were 317 Sunday Schools in the state, with 17,808 scholars and an average attendance of 8,950.

Although A. B. Carter had been employed as General Superintendent and was doing good work, there were those who believed that a separate organization was an unnecessary duplication of machinery. So the office was dissolved in 1882. The General Association then appointed a Sunday School and Colportage Board of 12 members to be located in Lexington. Rapid new growth occurred in the Sunday Schools across the state as a result. W. P. Harvey was appointed General Superintendent of the work. Sunday School reports in 1884 indicated there were 667 Sunday Schools, with 1,373 officers and teachers, and 15,770 pupils of whom 326 had professed "religion" during the year.

Information on Sunday School activity is sketchy in the late 1890's and the early 1900's. However, the Western Recorder continued to report the work of Kentucky Baptists. In the January 2, 1902 issue, we find an editorial response to a newspaper article.

"The Chicago Tribune tells of a region of Kentucky given up to lawlessness. It is the strip of land lying off Hickman and in the county of which that is the county seat. It is the Kentucky end of a Tennessee peninsula in the Mississippi River. It is very fertile, but has according to the Tribune, no sheriff or constable and representative of the law.

"In one feud there it is said already 40 men have been killed. Escape is so easy for criminals that sheriffs seldom visit there. Now we are unwilling to believe that any part of Kentucky is as bad as this Chicago newspaper represents. We hope, however, the matter will be looked into and if the facts are anywhere in the neighborhood of the representation, our State Board should send a missionary at once, and our State Convention should take hold of the situation with a strong hand."

What an opportunity for new work, new Sunday Schools, initial mission projects, and a "Hickman connection" for Kentucky Baptists.

In the minutes of the 1906 General Association meeting, it was announced that a new "Chair of Sunday School Pedagogy" had been added to the curriculum of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, filled by Dr. B. H. DeMent. Dr. E. Y. Mullins wrote concerning the establishment of this chair, "Such experts in Sunday School matters as Marion Lawrence, Secretary of the International Sunday School Association, have said that the establishment of this chair in our seminary was the greatest step forward in Sunday School work, which has taken place in the last one hundred years. . . From all over the United States have come words of similar import, that the establishment of this chair introduces a new era in Sunday School efficiency. . . The class last year numbered about one hundred and was full of interest from beginning to end."

In the years prior to the involvement of the United States in World War I, the Sunday School work went through many changes. The position of Secretary for the State Sunday School Department had a number of short-term officeholders, and the work was adversely affected in many ways. But new Sunday Schools continued to be established and enrollment increased. J. T. Watts became the new State Sunday School Secretary in January of 1906 and served for one year. He was succeeded by W. J. Mahoney in 1908, who in turn was followed by J. Dean Adcock, who served only a short time in 1910.

In 1911, Mr. Louis Entzminger of Lakeland, Florida, was called to direct the work. The committee on Sunday Schools reported that no man in the South, within the last three years, had excelled Brother Entzminger in the amount, or far-reaching scope of work done. In his report of 1913, Mr. Entzminger stated: "Our schools need better equipment. It has been our aim all along to stimulate our people to erect buildings better adapted to Sunday School work, and to equip them with the needed facilities for effective teaching." When Mr. Entzminger resigned, the work was entrusted to three men who took parts of the state until a permanent leader could be secured. These were N. T. Barnes, J. J. Gentry and Leonard O. Leavell. In September of 1913, Mr. J. J. Gentry was elected Secretary. In 1913, Secretary Gentry emphasized in his report that his chief aim had been: "A SUNDAY SCHOOL IN EVERY BAPTIST CHURCH IN THE STATE; EVERY SCHOOL GRADED, EVERY TEACHER TRAINED, AND EVERY ASSOCIATION ORGANIZED INTO A SUNDAY SCHOOL CONVENTION." These are still bonafide goals in 1987.

He also noted, "The Sunday School is . . . the one great means by which it is practicable to carry out the second half of the Great Commission, viz: 'Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.'

We would not close our report without making mention of the unselfish labors of the great host of Sunday School teachers. Many have given much time and hard study in teacher training studies, in weekly preparation of the lessons and daily visiting the homes of pupils and prospective pupils. Their faithfulness is worthy of the highest praise. They 'shall shine as the brightness of the firmament'," so remarked J. J. Gentry in 1915.

Mr. Gentry ended his service as secretary in 1914 and W. L. Brock was elected to the position and began work in January of 1916. He resigned in 1918 and was succeeded by J. R. Black who served through 1920.

In 1921, Rev. W. A. Gardiner became the State Sunday School Secretary. In his first report to the General Association, he said, "When we came to Kentucky in April, we found that the Sunday School work had been put on a most excellent basis by our predecessors. Although

six months had elapsed since Brother Black resigned. . . yet we found a fine interest and many volunteer workers giving much time to the Sunday School work. . . So great has the interest grown, that we are overwhelmed with calls for Training Schools."

The thirty-one years he served in this capacity saw the greatest expansion of our Sunday School work. It was a period characterized by great change from the depression years to World War II, to the post-war boom all across our nation and the State of Kentucky. His influence on Sunday School work is unparalleled in our history, not only for the long tenure of service, but for the expansion and improvement of the program.

In his 1940 report to the General Association, he noted that, "The formula for teaching people is as follows: Know your possibilities; Secure more workers; Train your people; Provide ample space; Have regular visitation; and Pray!" During the dark days of World War II, he said, "WHAT YOU DO IN A CRISIS ALWAYS DEPENDS ON WHETHER YOU SEE YOUR DIFFICULTY IN THE LIGHT OF GOD, OR GOD IN THE LIGHT OF YOUR DIFFICULTY." In 1949, he began his report thus: "In spite of these encouraging features, we face destitution everywhere. Two million people in Kentucky are not in Sunday Schools: 1,621 churches did not have training during the year and too many of the Sunday Schools are poorly run."

Rev. Gardiner was succeeded by Rev. Roy Boatwright in 1952. Most of the old-timers in Sunday School work today first became aware of the State Sunday School program when Brother Boatwright led this department. His span of service covered 25 years, a time of significant change in our nation, state and society. We went from the rapid expansion of the 50's to the tumultuous 60's and then into the new era of the 70's. It was a time of rapid numerical growth in Sunday School enrollment, of many organizational and structural changes in the Sunday School program. It was a time of innovation and reemphasis on the traditional approaches.

Quotes from the Sunday School reports presented by Mr. Boatwright reflect the thrust of the times. "Outreach for the Unreached" is not a matter of choice for KY Baptists, but a matter of Divine compulsion. Numbers, when related to the Sunday School enrollment, are important, for each number represents an individual. The more persons a church can enroll in Sunday School, the greater its evangelistic potential. The Sunday School Department of the Baptist Sunday School Board cooperated in training nearly 100 men to assist churches as they plan for changes in the 70's through the "Shaping the 70's" Conference. During these years, the program of Sunday School work expanded and diversified. Renewed emphasis was placed on Vacation Bible Schools, Training, Reaching the Standard, Cradle Roll, Homebound Adults and Adults Away. Major new growth and enlargement concepts were developed and implemented. New ministries were developed to reach Single Adults and Senior Adults.

In 1976, Rev. Fred Halbrooks, Jr. succeeded the retiring Roy Boatwright. He led our work into the 1980's through the preparation and implementation phases of the 8.5 by '85 Campaign. This convention-wide effort set as a goal to reach a total enrollment of 8.5 million in Southern Baptist Sunday Schools by the end of September, 1985. During the five-year emphasis, Kentucky Sunday School enrollment increased by over 10,000. The work of the State Sunday School Department focused upon Enrollment/Enlargement Campaigns, Adult Growth Workshops, Associational Training Schools, Summer Assemblies, Vacation Bible Schools, Worker Study Course Awards and ministry by the Department staff.

An example of the scope of the work during these years is the Vacation Bible School report for 1985. Mr. Halbrooks reported that, "Two thousand and seventy-one Vacation Bible Schools were held. Enrollment in these was 187,784 and there were 1,900 professions of faith." Dr. Halbrooks retired in 1985.

In 1986, Rev. Charles "Chip" Miller was appointed the Director of the Sunday School Department. Rev. Miller had served churches in Kentucky, Alabama, Georgia, Florida and North Carolina prior to his appointment. Brother Miller will close out this brief history with some comments on current and future directions for Kentucky Sunday Schools:

"Your current State Sunday School Department is committed to the historical record of excellence our forefathers have set for us. We are proud of the many who have gone before us serving on the church, associational and state level. We believe the Great Commission is our mandate. In the Sunday Schools of our churches is the corps of lay leadership who can reach our state for Christ and His church.

"Sincere aggressive outreach and warm-hearted, quality teaching go hand-in-hand to shape our churches and touch the thousands across this commonwealth with Christ's love. The present staff consisting of Jewell Nelson, Jack Palmer, Wally Miller and Chip Miller are available to you and the leadership of Kentucky Baptist churches."

LEADERS OF SUNDAY SCHOOL WORK IN KENTUCKY

1863 - 1866	W. S. Sedwick - Superintendent
1868	N. C. Pittit - Superintendent
1870	Sunday School Work under 9-Member Board
1871 - 1873	L. D. Fish - Superintendent
1874	J. Pike Powers - Superintendent
1874 - 1880	Nine-Member Board Dissolved and S. S. Assigned to Executive Board
1881	A. B. Carter
1883 - 1885	W. B. Harvey - Superintendent
1886 - 1905	N. A.
1906	J. T. Watts - Secretary
1908 - 1909	W. J. Mahoney - Secretary
1910	J. D. Adcock - Secretary
1911 - 1913	Louis Entzminger - Secretary
1913 - 1914	J. J. Gentry - Secretary
1915 - 1918	W. L. Brock - Secretary
1918 - 1920	J. R. Black - Secretary
1921 - 1951	W. A. Gardiner - Secretary
1952 - 1975	Roy Boatwright - Director
1976 - 1985	Fred E. Halbrooks, Jr. - Director
1986	Charles "Chip" Miller - Director

We wish to pay tribute to the many associate workers in the Sunday School Department down through the years. Their work has been exemplary and they have made an invaluable contribution to Sunday School work. Let us not underestimate the significance of their work.

TABLE OF SUNDAY SCHOOL STATISTICS

Because of space limitations and the scarcity of information in the earlier years, we will list information as available for the pioneer years and every five years in the Twentieth Century.

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>ENROLLMENT</u>	<u>No. of SUNDAY SCHOOLS</u>
1880	17,808	317
1887	23,279	560
1912	87,861	1,181
1915	115,546	1,309
1920	-	1,311
1925	217,000	1,443
1930	174,393	-
1935	219,925	-
1940	275,989	-
1945	240,238	-
1950	353,235	-
1955	419,715	-
1960	425,138	-
1965	412,208	-
1970	376,953	-
1975	367,898	-
1980	366,254	-
1985	374,949	-
1990	?	-

References and resources used for this article:

Frank Masters, A History of Baptists in Kentucky, 1953, (Kentucky Baptist Historical Society, Louisville).

J. H. Spencer, A History of Kentucky Baptists, Vol. I, 1886.. Cincinnati.

Minutes of the General Association of Baptists in Kentucky, selected years, Louisville.

Minutes of the Kentucky Baptist Convention, selected years, Middletown.

Editorial Page 8, January 2, 1902, Western Recorder, Louisville.

Special thanks to Doris Yeiser, Archives Room, for her assistance in gathering information for this article and to Ms. Julia Neal of Bowling Green for her editorial help.

THE ANTI-SLAVERY MOVEMENT AMONG KENTUCKY BAPTISTS

by W. T. Moore

(This article was read at the November, 1988 meeting of the Kentucky Baptist Historical Society in Owensboro.

It should be remembered that these were the circumstances in the 1800's and is now history, which is the reason for printing it in The Kentucky Baptist Heritage. We hasten to say today's circumstances are much improved and many Kentucky Baptists once again welcome and share their churches' services and worship with our black Christian friends.)

--The Editor

Time: September 28, 1807

Place: Ebenezer Baptist Church, Mason County, (n.e. Ky.) Kentucky.

Occasion: First meeting of the Baptized Licking-Locust Association, organized the month before in Woodford County (west of Lexington).

Portion of a message by moderator Carter Tarrant which was ordered printed.

"To the churches in union with us--grace and peace be multiplied! We are now distinguished from our former brethren, by reason of our professed abhorrence to unmerited, hereditary, perpetual, absolute, unconditional slavery--a system of oppression by which one part of humanity assumes a right of domineering over another part, as if the latter had been designed by their common creator, to support the crimes of the former. We cannot accept a system whereby our brothers and sisters are bought and sold, denied the rights of humanity and the comforts of life. We cannot accept a system whereby men, women and children are tormented, afflicted and abused at the discretion of the wicked. No crime can possibly be committed by anyone, which can warrant punishment equal in degree and duration to the sufferings of these people, which they are forced to endure without the shadow of a crime and without any cause that we know of. This system was introduced by wicked men and sanctioned by wicked men. This nefarious system is an outrage which we abhor. It is a sin against God, and every citizen is in duty bound to testify against it.

"Strange as it may appear to future generations, there are professors of christianity in Kentucky who plead for slavery as an institution of the God of mercy. It is truly disgusting to see what pains they take to drag the holy scriptures of truth into the service of iniquity. They appeal to Noah's curse, as if that prophecy had been designed by the almighty, as a foundation of the African slave trade.

Some plead the case of Onesimus the servant of Philemon, as if they did not know that he was also a brother beloved, both in the flesh and in the Lord. Nor have they concealed their attachment to this wickedness. They have published it as on housetops, in their annual associations of Bracken, Elkhorn and North District, for several years past in their cruel censures against the Friends of Humanity. Blinded by covetousness and intoxication with the cup of Babylon, they call evil good and good evil. In perverting the scriptures to favour oppression, they cause division and offenses.

"But God has made their wrath to terminate in our existence, as a distinct society of Friends of Humanity separated from the friends of oppression. Blessed be God, for his gracious interposition on our behalf, and the unexpected success he has granted to our feeble efforts in his own cause. How zealous ought we to be in our opposition to every appearance of evil. May we grow in grace and in the knowledge of our redeemer. Amen."¹

The foregoing is a condensed version of Carter Tarrant's message, which included 33 scripture references.

Roger Williams probably made the first pronouncement against the slave trade in the colonies. After the revolution sentiment against slavery began to develop in Pennsylvania, Virginia, Kentucky and elsewhere, inspired considerably by large numbers of slave conversions to Baptist churches in the frontier revivals. In a petition to the Virginia legislature from Cumberland County, Baptists were charged with having held nightly meetings of slaves for instruction without the consent of their masters, which produced very bad consequences, according to the petition. Several Baptist associations resolved to make use of every legal means to remove the horrid evil of slavery from the land.

The first reference concerning slavery on the public records of Kentucky Baptists was a query sent from the Rolling Fork Church, of Nelson County, to Salem Association in 1789. "Is it lawful in the sight of God for a member of Christ's Church to keep his fellow creature in perpetual slavery?" The association "judged it improper to enter into the matter at present."² The church was dissatisfied with that reply and soon withdrew as did Mill Creek church in Jefferson County. Joshua Carmen and Josiah Dodge constituted probably the first church formed with emancipation goals in the mid 1790's near Bardstown.

Elkhorn Association approved a resolution in 1791 on "Religious Liberty and Perpetual Slavery." It was evidently anti-slavery. The churches disapproved and in what must have been a special session in December of that year, the association rescinded the resolution.³

Kentucky became a state in 1792. Slavery was permitted but there were provisions for allowing voluntary emancipation, restrictions on the slave trade and certain protections for slaves. A vote to not

allow slavery lost in the constitutional convention 25 to 16. Six ministers in the body voted for emancipation. They included three Baptists: James Garrard, who twice was governor, John Bailey and George Smith.⁴

Another effort to abolish slavery was made in the legislature in 1799 but it was defeated so decisively that the movement waned for a time. It was revived by further results of the frontier revivals. A number of converts in those revivals freed their slaves.

Carter Tarrant and John Sutton led in organization of a church about 1805 in Woodford County called New Hope, which was dedicated to emancipation.

In 1805 the Elkhorn Association passed a resolution that it was improper for ministers, churches or associations to "meddle with emancipation." Several anti-slavery churches from Elkhorn, Bracken and North District Associations then withdrew.

The "Baptized Licking-Locust Association, Friends of Humanity," organized August 29, 1807 at New Hope in Woodford County. It numbered 9 churches with 190 members.⁶ They prohibited members from being slave owners with certain exceptions such as allowing very young, very old or handicapped slaves who were dependent on the owner. Exception was also made for women whose husbands opposed emancipation and certain other cases. In some cases, such as very young slaves, the church was to say when they should be set free. These rules were authored by Carter Tarrant and became known as Tarrant's rules.

Besides Carter Tarrant, David Barrow was the other outstanding leader of the anti-slavery group. Though considered their best preacher, Elkhorn Association expelled him for his anti-slavery actions in 1806. They even went so far as to send a committee to his church to insist that they expel him. The association revoked their action against Barrow the next year but he had already joined the Friends of Humanity. In 1808 the Licking-Locust Association formed a separate Abolition Society. They met in 1816 under the name, "The Association of Baptists, Friends of Humanity." They may never have numbered over 12 churches and 300 members. Carter Tarrant became a chaplain in the War of 1812 and died during the war. David Barrow died in 1820 and with his death the Kentucky Friends of Humanity was dissolved.⁷

These early Baptist emancipationists believed in gradual, compensated emancipation and had little connection with the later, more militant abolitionists. Indeed the Kentucky group criticized a Baptist association in Miami, Ohio for corresponding with Kentucky Baptists who took no stand on slavery, while the Ohio group objected to the Friends of Humanity for the exceptions they made concerning slave holding.

Kentucky Baptist historians William Nowlin and J. H. Spencer both judge the Friends of Humanity a failure and an evil. However, questions may be raised about that view. Though Baptists in Kentucky became increasingly pro-slavery, how much of a lingering influence of the Friends of Humanity caused an anti-secession view to prevail in Kentucky when the Civil War broke out? How much may such an influence have helped Governor Magoffin succeed for over a year with a neutrality policy recognized by the Federal government and the Confederacy alike? Though few in number the leaders of the Friends of Humanity were outstanding preachers and had an influence far beyond their numbers.

We can be reasonably certain of an influence they had outside the state. Friends of Humanity groups sprang up in Illinois. The first such group there adopted the Kentucky group's rules (Tarrant's rules), which mostly dealt with slavery. The Illinois Friends of Humanity lasted longer, were larger and played a more important role than their Kentucky forerunners. A state referendum on slavery was held in 1818, the year of Illinois statehood. J. M. Peck, renowned Baptist home missionary and Bible Society agent, crusaded against slavery. He was closely associated with the Friends of Humanity and he credits the Bethel Friends of Humanity Church (earlier called Cantine Creek) for the victory in the slavery referendum. He wrote an account of their movement. Other historians give strong credit to Peck for the victory which was won by the anti-slavery forces 6640 to 4972. Peck was castigated by the pro-slavery forces for meddling in politics. We cannot conceive what the course of American history would have been had Illinois entered the union a slave state. The little group of Kentucky Baptists called Friends of Humanity indeed cast a long shadow.

FOOTNOTES

¹W. W. Sweet, Religion on the American Frontier (Henry Holt & Co., New York, 1931) pp. 566-570.

²J. H. Spencer, History of Kentucky Baptists, 1769-1885, Vol. I (Cincinnati, 1885, J. R. Baumes, Pub.) p. 184.

³Spencer, p. 184

⁴J. M. Brown, The Political Beginnings of Kentucky, n. p., p. 230

⁵Sweet, p. 81

⁶Sweet, p. 564f

⁷Sweet, p. 83f

⁸Sweet, p. 570

⁹Sweet, p. 95

Other Sources:

William D. Nowlin, Kentucky Baptist History, 1770-1922 (Baptist Book Concern, Chicago, 1922) pp. 71-77.

Charles Kerr, Ed., History of Kentucky (American Historical Society) V. I, pp. 283, 542-543.

O. K. & M. M. Armstrong, The Indomitable Baptists (Doubleday & Co., N. Y., 1967) pp. 143-144.

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ASSOCIATIONAL ANNIVERSARIES - 100 YEARS

East Lynn
East Union

Ohio Valley
Upper Cumberland

CHURCH ANNIVERSARIES - 1990

Total - 84 Churches

<u>Anniversary</u>	<u>Church</u>	<u>Association</u>
200th - 1790	Long Run	Long Run - C
175th - 1815	Mt. Gilead Old Panther Creek Providence Bardstown Steubenville Holly Springs	Bethel - S Blackford - W Laurel River - SE Nelson - C Wayne - SC Miscellaneous
150th - 1840	Pleasant Hope Flemingsburg, First Station Locust Grove Chadwick Creek Sinking Creek Shady Grove Meadow Creek Friendship New Hebron Missionary Barnetts Creek Friendship Providence Pleasant Hill New Bethel Mississippi Paducah, First	Blood River - SW Bracken - NC Daviness-McLean - W East Union - SE Greenup - NE Laurel River - SE Liberty - S Mt. Zion - SE Muhlenberg - W Muhlenberg - W Ohio County - W Ohio River - SW Russell Co. - SC Taylor Co. - SC Ten Mile - NC West Kentucky - SW West Union - SW
125th - 1865	Roseville Providence, Winston Middleburg Glenville Liberty Mt. Vernon (1886 ?) Drip Rock Olive Belmont	Blackford - W Boones Creek - NC Casey - SC Daviness-McLean - W Enterprise - NE Franklin - NC Jackson - SE Lincoln - SC Nelson - C
100th - 1890	Howards Mill Pleasant Hill Mt. Roberts	Boones Creek - NC Caldwell-Lyon - SW East Lynn - SC

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<u>Anniversary</u>	<u>Church</u>	<u>Association</u>
100th - 1890	Geneva	Green Valley - W
	Rocky Ridge	Little River - SW
	Fourth Avenue	Long Run - C
	Immanuel	Long Run - C
	Burgin	Mercer - SC
	Cornishville	Mercer - SC
	Dunmor Missionary	Muhlenberg - W
	Erlanger (1889 ?)	Northern Kentucky - NC
	Coalport Missionary	North Concord - SE
	Swan Pond	North Concord - SE
	New Columbus	Owen - NC
	Cedar Hill	Wayne - SC
	75th - 1915	Hensley Chapel
Moss Chapel		Bell - SE
Creswell		Caldwell-Lyon - SW
Carpenter		East Union - SE
Emily Northup		Greenup - NE
South Shore, First		Greenup - NE
Piney Grove Missionary		Lynn Camp - SE
Stearns, First		McCreary County - SC
Fort Thomas, First		Northern Kentucky - NC
High Street		Pulaski Co. - SC
Evarts		Upper Cumberland - SE
50th - 1940		Emmanuel
	Allendale	East Lynn - SC
	Durbin Memorial	Elkhorn - NC
	Mt. Liberty	Gasper River - S
	South First Street	Graves Co. - SW
	McKee	Irvine - SE
	Letterbox	Jackson - SE
	Valley View	Long Run - C
	Trinity	Northern Kentucky - NC
	Berean	Three Forks - SE
	Sunshine	Upper Cumberland - SE
25th - 1965	White Plains	Allen - S
	Tyrone	Anderson - C
	Henderson Memorial (1963 ?)	Christian - SE
	Southside	Elkhorn - NC
	Woodland Avenue	Elkhorn - NC
	Woodland	Long Run - C
	Bethany	Nelson - C
	Emmanuel	Ohio River - W
	Calvary	Simpson - S
	Clarksville	Tates Creek - SC
	Linden Street	Tates Creek - SC
	Harris Memorial	Tates Creek - SC
	Green River Memorial	Taylor County - SC
Meadowview	Taylor County - SC	

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FUTURE MEETINGS

of

HISTORICAL COMMISSION AND SOCIETY

The Kentucky Baptist Historical Commission will have its organizational meeting Tuesday afternoon, December 12, 1989, at the Kentucky Baptist Building, 10701 Shelbyville Road, Middletown, Kentucky. The meeting will begin at 3:00 P.M.

The Commission's annual meeting will be held in conjunction with the meeting of the Kentucky Baptist Historical Society in Upper Cumberland Association in observance of their centennial celebration. The meetings will possibly be held with the Loyall Baptist Church and the Harlan Baptist Church on July 20-21, 1990, however, the places are not yet definite.

CHURCH HISTORY WORKSHOP - 1990

The Commission is planning a Regional Church History Workshop for the Central Region to be held at the Kentucky Baptist Building, Middletown, Kentucky, Saturday, October 20, 1990, from 10:00 A.M. through 3:00 P.M. The audience will be church history committee members, church clerks, church secretaries and others interested in local church history. Conference leaders will be Andrew Rawls, Southern Seminary; Karen Smith, Southern Seminary; Ronald Tonks, Historical Commission, SBC, Nashville; and Doris Yeiser, KBC Archivist. The Commission approved a \$10.00 registration fee which will include lunch.

ARTICLES NEEDED FOR THE HERITAGE

The Society officers and the editor are anxious to talk with those persons interested in submitting articles for publication. This is the third year we have published only one copy of THE KENTUCKY BAPTIST HERITAGE. Please write the Editor at P. O. Box 43433, Middletown, Kentucky, 40243, if you or a friend are interested in submitting articles for publication.

FUNDS FOR PUBLISHING THE HERITAGE

Another reason we have published only one copy of the HERITAGE is lack of funds. We do not charge a subscription fee other than your membership fee and that is not sufficient to cover the full cost. Monetary contributions are acceptable.

BAPTIST RESOURCES

The purpose of this page is to furnish our readers with the Title and Author of books which reflect the history of Baptists.

John Gano, Biographical Memoirs of the Late John Gano of Frankfort (New York: Southwick and Hardcastle, 1806).

William Hickman, A Short Account of My Life and Travels, For More Than Fifty Years: A Professed Servant of Jesus Christ (originally published 1828, republished 1873 and this typed copy 1969).

George C. Ranck, The Travelling Church (Louisville, Kentucky: Baptist Book Concern, 1891).

George C. Ranck, A History of Lexington, Kentucky.

John Taylor, A History of Ten Churches (Cincinnati, Ohio: Art Guild Reprints, Inc.).

Gladys Bond, Dixie Froman, John L. McDonald, History of Ghent Baptist Church.

A. H. Newman, A Century of Baptist Achievement (Philadelphia, 1901).

J. H. Spencer, A History of Kentucky Baptists (Louisville, 1886: Reprinted Lafayette, Tennessee - Church History Research and Archives, 1976).

Robert Baylor Sample, History of the Baptists in Virginia (originally published in 1810, revised in 1894, reprinted in 1972, Polyanthos, Inc., New Orleans, 1972; reprinted by Church History Research and Archives Affiliation, Corp., Lafayette, Tennessee, 1976).

Encyclopedia of Southern Baptists (Broadman Press, 1958).

William Cathcart, Baptist Encyclopedia (Philadelphia, 1883).

Frank M. Masters, A History of Baptists in Kentucky (Louisville, Kentucky, 1953).

David Benedict, History of the Baptist Denomination (first published in 1813, reprinted in 1971, Books for Libraries Press, 1971).

The Lancaster Woman's Club, Patches of Garrard County (Danville, Kentucky: Bluegrass Printing Co., 1974).

Twelve writers, Baptists in Kentucky 1776-1976 (edited by Leo T. Crismon, Louisville, Kentucky, 1975).

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MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

OR

RENEWAL OF APPLICATION

TO THE

KENTUCKY BAPTIST HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NAME _____ DATE _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ ZIP CODE _____

Desiring to be a member of the Kentucky Baptist Historical Society, I hereby make application for membership.

It is my understanding that upon the payment of annual dues I will be entitled to receive all the publications of the Society for the corresponding year, as well as its other privileges.

Signed _____

MEMBERSHIP FEES were increased at the March 20, 1987 meeting as follows:

Regular Membership

Associate Membership

Individual \$10.00 per year
Family 12.50 per year
Life 50.00

\$10.00 per year

NOTE: Renewal notices for Individual, Family and Associates will be mailed on or near the anniversary date of joining the Society.

MAIL TO: Kentucky Baptist Historical Society
Kentucky Baptist Convention
P. O. Box 43433
Middletown, KY 40243