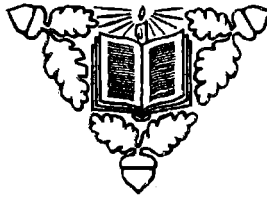
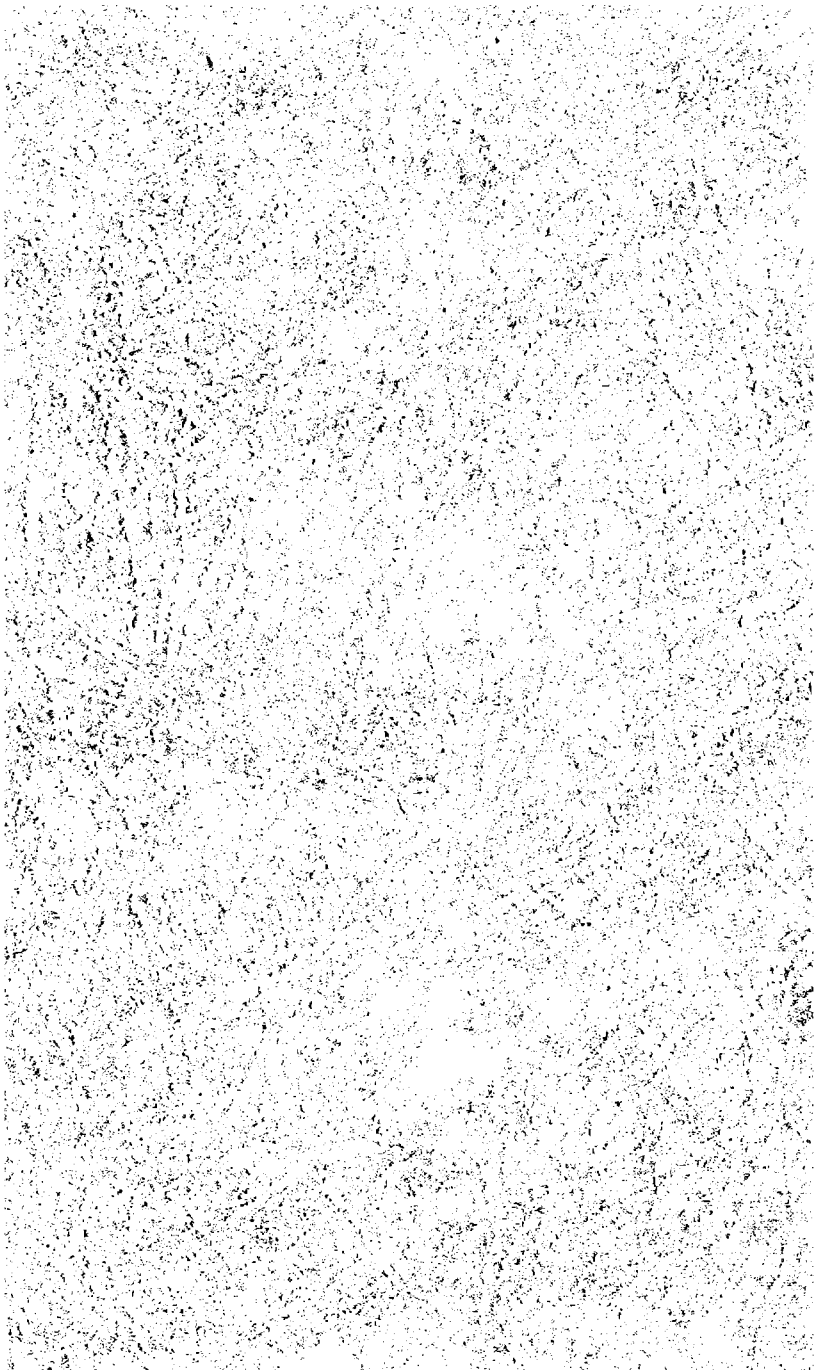


# COX'S CREEK BAPTIST CHURCH

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## HISTORY





LATER PASTORS

WALTER E. BRYANT 1936-1943

EDGAR COOPER 1943-1947

WM HUNDLEY 1948-1950

ROBERT MIZELL 1950-1953

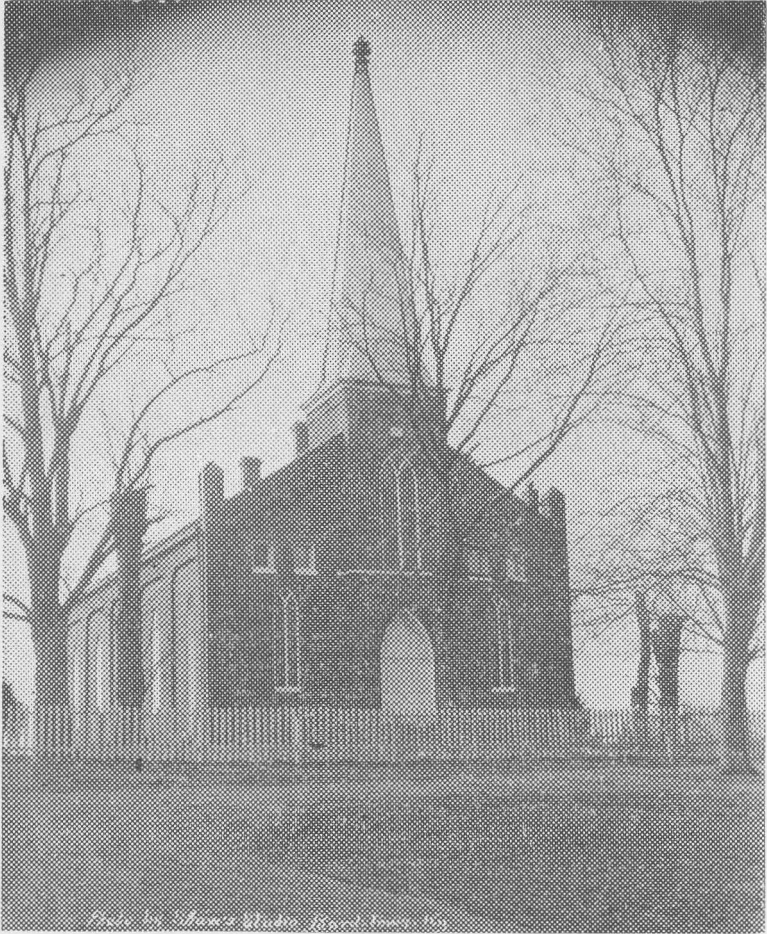
WALTER E. BRYANT (2<sup>nd</sup>) 1953-

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Building destroyed at 4:15  
P.M. March 16, 1942 by  
tornado. Rebuilt in 1942  
+ 1943.

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Presented by  
Walter E. Bryant  
11/19/1955



*Photo by Francis Studio, Grand Island, N.Y.*

**COX'S CREEK BAPTIST CHURCH**

April 17, 1785

April 17, 1935

# HISTORY

of

## Cox's Creek Baptist Church

Written on the Occasion of the  
One Hundred and Fiftieth Anniversary  
of Its Constitution

By

RAY H. WRIGHT

and

ELSIE SOUTHWOOD WRIGHT



Published by  
L. S. CHAMBERS  
Cox's Creek, Kentucky  
1935

## PREFACE

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It has been our aim in this history not so much to write an article for publication as to furnish what is probably the only history of Cox's Creek Church giving a view of the history of that Church from its beginning up to the present time. It is not so complete as it would be my desire to make it if time were available to exhaust the sources which it might be possible to bring to hand. Neither is it so well written as would have been possible had more time been available for the work. Nevertheless, we believe that the main facts of interest in the history of Cox's Creek Church have been presented. We have found it impossible to state these facts in as few as three thousand words. We have therefore taken the liberty of writing what we could from the facts available without regard to the number of words in the final product. It is our hope that you or any other one who may be interested in the history of Cox's Creek Church may find this work a valuable source of information. An effort has been made to prevent the occurrence of errors both in subject matter and in expression.

RAY H. WRIGHT,  
ELSIE SOUTHWOOD WRIGHT,

2733 West Main Street,  
Louisville, Ky.  
April 14, 1935.

SOUTHERN BAPTIST  
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY LIBRARY  
2825 LEXINGTON ROAD, LOUISVILLE, KY 40203  
History of Cox's Creek Baptist Church

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On April 14, 1935 is to be celebrated the One-hundred-fiftieth Anniversary of the constitution of Cox's Creek Baptist Church. This church, located about six miles north of Bardstown, is said to be the third oldest Baptist church in the State, only Severn's Valley, now Elizabethtown, and Cedar Creek, about six miles south of Bardstown, being older. Others were founded before Cox's Creek, but they have, for one reason or another, disbanded.

As early as 1784 Rev. William Taylor had settled on Cox's Creek and was preaching in the cabins of the settlers. The church was constituted April 17, 1785, by Rev. William Taylor, assisted by John Whittaker and Joseph Barnett. This was seven years before Kentucky had a constitution and two years before any newspaper was published in the State. Louisville, at that time was only a small village. In the constitution were sixteen members, including Mr. Taylor and his wife. By the last of the following October there were ten more members. Mr. James McMahan seems to have been the first clerk.

Since that time the church has grown, and has numbered among its members many of the prominent citizens of Nelson County, the Kings, the Mays, and the Coxes among others. Rev. William Taylor was chosen the first pastor, and occupied that position until his death in 1809. His son, Isaac Taylor, served as pastor for many years, and is buried in the cemetery at Cox's Creek. Since the beginning there have been Taylors among the membership. At the present time there are three generations of Taylors attending the church; Mr. J. H. Taylor, who has been a member more than half a century and has served much of that time as church clerk; Mr. J. D. Taylor, who is faithful and regular in his attendance; and a son of Mr. J. D. Taylor, who is being reared in the traditions of the family. In 1885, one hundred years after its founding, one hundred of William Taylor's posterity had gone on to Glory through this church.

Twenty-three pastors have served the church since its founding. Among these, two, Rev. William Taylor and Rev. Preston B. Samuels, served nearly a quarter of a century each. Mr. Taylor held the pastorate probably somewhat longer than Mr. Samuels. One pastor, Rev. William Henry Tew, occupied the position during two separate terms, 1923-24, and 1932-34. Four pastors, Rev. William Taylor, Rev. Isaac Taylor, Rev. P. B. Samuels, and Rev. W. H. Tew, have died in office. Two,

Isaac Taylor and W. H. Tew, are buried in the cemetery at Cox's Creek.

Cox's Creek has been the birthplace of two associations of Baptist churches. On Saturday, October 29, 1785, four Regular Baptist churches met at Cox's Creek, by their delegates, to form an association. The other three churches were Severn's Valley, membership 37; Cedar Creek, 41; and Beargrass, 19. The result was Salem Association, the second oldest association of Baptist churches in the Mississippi Valley. It embraced the first two churches established in Kentucky. At this time only Regular Baptist churches were included in the Association. Later, in 1801, the Regular and Separate Baptists united to form the United Baptists. Much later, toward the end of the nineteenth century, after missionary work had taken a prominent part in the activities of the church, the name was changed, not without opposition, to the Missionary Baptist Church.

In 1849 Cox's Creek, Bloomfield, Bardstown and others called for letters of dismission to form a new association. Again, September 28 and 29, 1849, the delegates met at Cox's Creek, and formed Nelson Association. At that time Cox's Creek had a membership of 343 out of a total of 1,495 for the association, and was probably the leading church in that association. During these early years Cox's Creek gave roughly a third of the support to missions and other enterprises fostered by the Association. In 1929 it was still reported one of the leaders in this work.

The minutes of the church for the first seven years have been lost, tradition says burned, probably in the house of William May. The first authentic record we have is of the appointment, February 17, 1792, of a committee to complete the building of a meeting house, which had previously been begun. Thus for the first nine years the church was without a building in which to meet. **This first building was of logs and was used for about twenty-five years.** The second building was of brick, unplastered on the inside, and with a pulpit, seven feet high and approached by steps, in the side of the building. It was built at heavy expense to the brethren, and stood as a monument to their memories for fifty-three years. The present building was erected at a cost of \$8,550 in the fall of 1870 and dedicated at a special service on January 1, 1871, on which date the pastor, Brother P. B. Samuels, announced that the last dollar due the contractors had been paid. This building is forty feet by seventy feet in size, and, after more than sixty-four years of service, is in good condition today. In



1929 it was remodeled to furnish nine Sunday School rooms. The Church has bought about thirteen acres in addition to the Church lot. In 1879 a parsonage was built and a pastor was called for full time service. When this first parsonage burned in the fall of 1926 the present building was erected. The Church also maintains a well-kept cemetery, in which a great many of the former members of the Church are buried.

Among those who have gone from the Church as special ministers of the Gospel are Moses Pierson, Samuel Anderson, Isaac Taylor, James Craig, Silas Garret, Willis Pierson, William Hobbs, J. Taylor, Thomas Foxworthy, W. Eugene Sallee, Mamie Sallee, Hannah Fair Sallee, Roy Helton, and Lewis, a "black brother" slave. Moses Pierson, ordained January 21, 1804, preached in the church one Sunday each month until 1809, when he became pastor. William Hobbs was licensed in 1846 and ordained about 1850. J. Taylor was ordained in 1840, but did not consider that he had been called to preach. Of the Sallees, all three became missionaries in China. Eugene Sallee died only a short time before he had promised to hold a meeting at Cox's Creek. Marie and Hannah Fair continue their labors on the foreign field. Roy Helton, licensed October 6, 1927, is the latest minister to go out from this Church. He is now in college at Georgetown. The licensing of the slave, Lewis, in July, 1853, was not considered an uncommon procedure. Besides those who have been mentioned, others have gone out from the Church to serve their Master in many walks of life. Several entered the ministry after leaving the Church, and at least one is today President of a Baptist College.

In 1858 the Church had grown until it numbered on the roll 369. This is the greatest enrollment it has ever reported. During the dark years of the Civil War and following the membership declined until in 1893 it had fallen to 176. This decline was partly due to a depression in religion, but also to withdrawal of members to form new churches. Bloomfield Baptist Church is said to have been founded by thirty members who withdrew from Cox's Creek Church. In 1891 River View Church was organized by former members of Cox's Creek.

Another cause for this decrease in membership after the freeing of the slaves was the gradual withdrawal of negro members to churches of their own color. Many withdrew to Fairfield, though as late as 1913 we read of the exclusion of a negro member, possibly the last, because, for a number of years, he had not communicated with the Church. During these early years the negro membership of the Church was

considerable, sometimes approaching half. In 1860, when the roll was revised, 135 colored members were reported. The story is told that in 1881 a colored man being baptized in the creek where the ice had been broken, was frightened when, as Brother Sallee started to immerse him, his foot came up through the ice. Breaking away, he started running down the creek, and it was necessary to bring him back to complete his baptism.

The number of members enrolled has fluctuated from year to year, rising in years of revival and decreasing in years of depression. In periodic protracted meetings many have come into the Church both by confession and baptism and by letter. Sometimes families would come for miles and camp with their slaves on the Church grounds. During the first fifty years of its existence 1,000 were added to the Church, many of whom were colored. In 1801, 122 members were added; in 1810, 100. Then thirty-six were baptized in 1854; fifty-four in 1858; thirty-five in 1868, forty-three in 1929; and forty in 1934. At the close of 1934 the enrollment was close to 300.

In the early days discipline was more strict than at present. In 1860, twenty-six were excluded, and in 1871, twenty-three. Sometimes members accused themselves, and, if they did not give satisfaction to the Church, were excluded. Some of the causes for exclusion follow:

Un-Christian conduct; cursing; pilfering; driving a wagon, to and from Louisville on the Sabbath; playing cards; drinking; dancing; refusing to shake hands in public; playing fives; non-attendance; raffling a watch; purchasing lottery tickets; refusing to return a hat gotten through mistake; nailing a shoe on a horse on the Sabbath; suing at law; playing the fiddle; betting a bag of salt; pitching quoits on the Sabbath; going away without a letter of dismissal; selling a negro on the Sabbath; and other forms of immorality.

While at the present time discipline is by no means so strict, the roll is sometimes revised, and those who have not been heard of for a specified time are dropped.

The effect of the Civil War on the Church was not so great as might have been expected, though the meeting of the Association was omitted one year, and in one of the reports the distressful condition of the country was referred to. The attitude of the Church seems to have been to pay little attention to the war. The Church was engaged in a greater and more noble battle, the battle against sin. The World War did

have an indirect effect on the Church in that in the fall of 1919 and spring of 1920 the Church doors were closed on account of an epidemic of influenza.

During the fall of 1873 there seems to have been some hard feeling over the selection of a pastor to follow Brother T. H. Coleman. Parties were formed in the interest of several different ministers and much electioneering was done among the members. However, some good came out of this period of dissention in that some members who had not attended the services for months were found in their pews. The matter apparently ended in the selection of Brother J. M. Coleman as pastor.

In 1890 occurred what was probably the most serious disagreement in the history of the Church. The trouble started, apparently, over the position of the organ. After charges and counter-charges with bitter accusations on each side the Church was so hopelessly divided that two letters were sent to the Association. The Association appointed a committee consisting of T. T. Eaton, J. A. Booth, and J. B. Moody to settle, if possible, the differences of the brethren, who, they said, were quarreling over mere trivialities. The committee recommended that both parties withdraw the objectionable things they had said and that the members of both parties mutually forgive one another. The committee also recommended that the Pastor resign and that the trustees, clerks, and moderators elected by each side resign and that new officers be elected at a meeting of which due notice had been given. The fellowship of the Church was to be restored to those from whom it had been withdrawn. The members who felt that they could not live peaceably in the Church were to withdraw quietly. Several withdrew and contributed to the founding of River View Church in 1891. A few years later some of those who had withdrawn returned to labor valiantly in the cause of the Master. Thus again God had used even strife and dissension to bring glory to Himself. The Church suffered for a few years, both financially and in attendance, but it soon regained its wonted prosperity.

Among the occasions celebrated by Cox's Creek Baptist Church was the Centennial Celebration of the Organization on April 17, 1885. The day was warm, and a crowd of 700 people were present. A number of Baptist ministers assisted in the celebration. A brief history of the Church was written for this occasion by Brother J. M. Sallee, pastor at that time. There were a number of speakers. It is worthy of note that this year, 1935, which is the One-hundred-and-fiftieth Anniversary

of the founding of the Church, is also the One-hundred-and-fiftieth Anniversary of the founding of Salem Association, which was organized at Cox's Creek.

Another kind of celebration, which was not uncommon during the early history of the Church, was kept in fasting and prayer. On Saturday, the usual day for such exercise, December 25, 1814, the Church kept a day of fasting, humiliation, and prayer at the request of Salem Association. Again, January 12, 1815, was kept in fasting and prayer at the request of President Madison. March 24, 1815, was kept in a similar manner at the request of the Governor of Kentucky.

Throughout its history the Church has been a bulwark for Christianity, a fort from which the relentless battle against sin has been fought, and a tower of moral strength for the community. In the early days refusal to strive to live up to the moral code meant exclusion from the fellowship of the Church. In 1856, Abner King in a "Circular Letter" exhorted to right living, calling attention to the want of faithfulness on the part of church members and to the low state of religion everywhere prevalent. He urged faithfulness to God and the cultivation of a forgiving spirit. He called attention to the need of religious training in the home and to the sinfulness of "little oaths." He called upon the people to live near to God.

The Church long ago took its stand on scriptural baptism and alien immersion, stating in resolutions adopted March 2, 1878, the qualifications of an administrator of baptism and opposing the acceptance of any other baptism in a Baptist Church. A copy of these resolutions was ordered to be sent to the Western Recorder, in which at that time, a conflict was raging over these principles.

From its beginning this Church has opposed drinking and gambling. For many years it has taught temperance, and most of its members gave hearty support to the Prohibition Amendment. On February 10, 1924, we find the Church adopting a resolution asking Honorable J. W. Martin, Representative, and Honorable Henry S. McElroy, Senator, to use their influence against race-track gambling.

For nearly one hundred and fifty years the pastors and their helpers preaching at Cox's Creek Church have urged mightily the awfulness of sin, the reality of Hell, the certainty of the judgment and punishment of the sinner, and the willingness of Christ to save.

The influence of Cox's Creek Church has been felt not only in the home community in which it is situated, but also in foreign lands. June 1, 1844, the Church first arranged to give

to missions, particularly among the Indians. In 1850 the Association collected for the General Association of Baptists in Kentucky, the Indian Mission Association, and the Kentucky and Foreign Bible Society. At this time Cox's Creek was contributing about a third of the total amount contributed by the Association. In April, 1847, Cox's Creek, in conjunction with New Salem, organized a Bible Society for the purpose of furnishing the heathen with the Bible. In 1884 a marked advance in missionary work was noted. In 1889 the Pastor was preaching also at High Grove, and again, in 1929 or 1930, a Sunday School was being held at High Grove schoolhouse. River View Church was started as a mission from Cox's Creek. It has also been noted that Bloomfield Baptist Church sprang from Cox's Creek. The early pastors, particularly William Taylor, considered it their duty to carry on missionary work among the settlers. At the present time the Church contributes to missions through the denominational channels. In 1929 Cox's Creek was reported to rank third in missions in Nelson Association.

For many years the Church had preaching by the pastor only twice each month, though often some member of the Church would preach when the pastor was absent. In 1879 a parsonage was built and Brother J. M. Sallee was called for full time work. Since that time it has been the practice of the Church to have preaching every Sunday. In recent years, services have been held both on Sunday mornings and on Sunday nights, except during bad weather.

The Sunday School has existed only a little more than half as long as the Church. January 3, 1854 a motion was passed to endeavor to keep up a regular Sabbath School. In 1869 it was reported that all churches in the Association had Sunday Schools: and in 1870 Cox's Creek reported forty scholars in a Sunday School operating through the summer months. By 1881 the number of scholars had jumped to seventy, and there were nine officers and teachers. The school was in session for twelve months. In 1895 there were three schools containing 150, with nineteen officers and teachers. Besides the school at Cox's Creek the Church was also operating one at Murray's Run and one at Plum Run. The next year, 1896, the enrollment was reported as 175, the highest it has ever been. Two of the schools were soon dropped, but the enrollment of the main school increased to 117 in 1899. In 1926 the enrollment was 130. In 1929 there were 140 enrolled, and a study course was taught. The enrollment in December, 1934, was reported as 169, with an average attendance of 109.

A partial list of the superintendents who have served follows: Abner King; J. H. Taylor; A. M. Cartwell; S. B. Jones; Joe Ludwick; J. O. Manning; Orville Hobbs; and Ray M. Wright, who is the present incumbent.

The B. Y. P. U., now B. T. U., was organized only about ten years ago. It was started at Cox's Creek by a school teacher who, with his wife, was teaching at Cox's Creek School. In 1926 there were fifty members reported in a senior union. In 1929 there were two B. Y. P. U's, senior and junior, with an enrollment of seventy-nine. A study course was reported that year. At the present time the B. T. U. is thriving, and has a membership of around eighty.

A prayer meeting has been maintained at various times and has, at times, been well attended. The existence of a prayer meeting is mentioned in 1889. Often, the meetings have been held in the homes of the members. The prayer meetings are now held at the Church house, and are better attended than similar meetings in many larger churches.

The Women's organizations have been functioning for many years and have done much, largely in the way of contributions to missions and to orphans' homes. In 1905 the first official report of Women's work in Nelson Association was made at Cox's Creek. However, as early as 1889 the Woman's Missionary Union of Cox's Creek Baptist Church was reported doing well.

The Church has probably done more than any other factor to cultivate an appreciation for music in the community. The singing has been considerably better than that found in most country churches. At times a singing teacher has been employed to instruct the choir, and regular rehearsals have been held. The musical phase of worship has been somewhat neglected in the late years.

The Church depends for its support upon voluntary contributions from its members, most of whom are farmers. Thus, when farmers are prosperous the Church is likely to have the money to carry on its work, while a farm depression is likely to depress also the preacher's salary and the amount given to missions. In the early days there was very little money, and so church dues were paid in labor and produce. The preacher was probably paid in tobacco; and whiskey and grain were reported among the contributions. Up to the time of the Civil War the budget was very small. Contributions were taken for special objects, and the response to these collections was often very liberal. After the Civil War the salary of the pastor

was increased from time to time, and the general budget of the Church slowly increased until, in 1890, it was something over \$1,000. In 1914 and during the years of the World War the contributions increased until in 1920 there were \$3,812 divided between home expenses and the Co-operative Program of Southern Baptists. It was in this year that the Church paid the greatest salary, \$1,250 to the pastor. Subsequently, contributions fell off until, by 1932, the Church found difficulty in paying the pastor. So acute had the depression become in 1933 that the Church ceased to pay the pastor a regular salary, but promised him half of the regular collections, part of the other half going to pay a debt incurred by borrowing money for current expenses. After the death of the pastor in January, 1934, the Church remained without a pastor until September, in order to retire the church debt. There is now no debt on any of the church property. The method of paying the present pastor is unique in the history of the Church. He is guaranteed fifty dollars per month, and given seventy-five percent of the remaining collection. On account of partial return of prosperity to the farmers and on account of the energy of the pastor, the collections have been much more than enough to pay him the guaranteed salary.

The Church has been engaged from time to time in building and other improvements on the Church property. For the first nine years the Church was without a house, but in the first authentic record which we have, February 17, 1782, we find Benjamin Fryc, William King, and William May appointed as a committee to have the meeting house finished, which had previously been begun. This was a log house, and was paid for by contributions of property, grain, and such other things as the brethren could spare. One citizen, not having money, gave whiskey, which was sold for the benefit of the Church. In these early days there was often danger from Indians, and the trusty musket was frequently in evidence.

This house stood for about twenty-five years. On March 1, 1817 twelve brethren were appointed to ascertain the cost of erecting a new building. On the report of the committee the Church decided, on April 5, to build a new brick house, seventy feet by forty feet in size. On May 3, 1817, three trustees, Micajah Glasscock, Jesse Stone, and Abner King, were appointed to superintend the building of the new house. January 31, 1818, the old building was reported sold to William Ricks for \$72.50. The new house, built on the same lot, was ready for service about the close of 1818. It was built of brick that, tradition says, were burnt on the site. It was unplastered on

the inside, and had a pulpit seven feet high in the side of the building. This pulpit was approached by steps. The house, built at heavy expense to the brethren, stood for approximately fifty-two years.

On December 4, 1869 a committee was appointed to advise as to whether the old house should be repaired or a new one should be erected. This committee reported, January 15, 1870, that the walls of the old building were unsafe and that it therefore recommended a new building 40 feet by 70 feet in size, and with an 18-foot ceiling. On the same day the Pastor, P. B. Samuels, was appointed to solicit funds on a basis of \$5,000 total, no subscriptions to be collected until that amount had been promised. Abner King and O. F. Cox were appointed to assist the Pastor. On June 4, 1870, Elisha Wells and G. W. Forman added to the committee. Two women were also appointed. On the Saturday before the first Sunday in July, 1870, a building committee, consisting of Rev. P. B. Samuels, George W. Forman, Abner King, Elisha Wells, and Abe Crawford, was appointed with discretionary powers to contract for and have erected a suitable building. On August 26, 1870, a contract was closed with Messrs. Davis, Storts and Company, Louisville, Kentucky, to build the new church house. The last sermon was preached in the old house on September 4, 1870, and on September 13 the wrecking of the old building was begun. On December 15, only three months later, the new building was completed. This building is the one which is being used to-day, and, after more than sixty-four years of service is still in good condition. The total cost including extras, was \$8,550. At the dedication, January 1, 1871, the Pastor announced that the last dollar owed the contractors had been paid.

On December 3, 1870, the Church, meeting at the school house, set aside January 1, 1871, as the date for the dedication of the new house. The day of the dedication was an unusually fine day for January. The sun shone brightly and the weather was warm. The Pastor, Rev. P. B. Samuels delivered the sermon. Rev. Mobley and Rev. John H. Spencer, the latter being author of one of the best histories of Kentucky Baptists, were also present. At the close of the sermon Rev. J. H. Spencer outlined the history of the first four Baptist Churches in Kentucky. This was a day of great enthusiasm and seems to have marked a period of great prosperity for Cox's Creek Baptist Church. In the years which followed, other improvements were made.

It seems that the roof was unsatisfactory, and a rebate of \$65 was obtained from the Company for repairs. Also, \$15 was obtained to defray half the expense of spire caps. In Septem-



ber 1871, the Church benefitted by a bequest of \$1,500 left by William Gilbert. The interest on this fund still forms part of the support of the Church.

In May, 1872, it was reported that the penciling of the walls had been done at a cost of \$36. In 1873 a cistern was completed. The same year twelve acres of land lying in front of the Church house were bought from Albert King at a cost of \$30 per acre. The question of a road connecting with the Fairfield-Samuels pike had been discussed for several years, and this purchase made it possible to build a road directly through the Church property to that pike. This tract of land was subsequently rented to the former owner for pastorage at \$20 per year. In 1876 it was enclosed with a rail fence at a cost of \$114.31.

Up until this time the Church had not had a full-time pastor, but about the beginning of the year 1879 there was some agitation to build a parsonage and call Brother J. M. Sallee for full-time work. On March 1, 1879 a committee was appointed to determine the "chances" of borrowing money, not to exceed \$1,200, to build a parsonage. March 7, 1879 the committee reported that \$1,200 could be borrowed, and that the Pastor could be boarded until the parsonage was ready. Two propositions had been received to furnish board. A building committee was appointed, consisting of O. N. Cox, T. S. Foxworth, P. Manakee, Abner King, and P. Wayne Wells. On April 5, 1879, Brother J. M. Sallee began his work as Pastor at a business meeting. On October 4, 1879 the building committee reported that, on March 17, 1879, a contract had been entered with a Taylorsville Company to construct the house and outbuildings, including a barn, for the sum of \$1,340. An additional \$22.77 was spent for extras. On May 31, 1879, the last of this amount had been paid. Notes of the individual members had been given to cover the \$1,200 borrowed. The remainder had been collected in cash. A well, later changed to a cistern, was dug at the parsonage.

In 1889 a meeting house was reported built near High Grove, where the Pastor had been preaching for about eighteen months. A few years later what is now River View Church was established here. In 1890 the Church must have been infested with mice for a committee was appointed to "stop the mice out." This "mouse" committee was continued for several months.

In 1904, while Rev. J. R. Johnson was Pastor, about \$1,000 was spent for paint, a new roof, and new pews. About 1914 a carbide lighting system was installed, and in 1918 this was replaced by an electric plant. This plant is the one in use

to-day. The cells have been rebuilt at least once. In 1923 a strip of land was bought from A. D. King for the purpose of enlarging the cemetery. In 1926 the traditional organ was changed, not without some opposition, for a piano. This instrument, purchased second hand at a cost of \$165, is giving excellent service.

In 1926 the parsonage, which had stood for about 47 years, burned to the ground. It is thought that the fire started from a defective kitchen flue. The day was clear and warm with a north-west wind. The fire, catching on the north-west corner, spread quickly over the shingle-roof and was, almost from the first, beyond control. Men came from all directions, but few of them arrived in time to do any good. Only a part of Brother Shearer's furniture and books was saved. Almost immediately plans were made to put up a new house. A two-story building, larger than the first parsonage, was erected. During the building, the Pastor and his wife stayed with Mrs. Ella Woodford. January 1, 1927, the amount reported to have been contributed to the building fund was \$1,035.50. On February 5, 1927, the trustees were authorized to borrow the amount necessary to settle with Grigsby and Company, contractors of Bardstown. The trustees were also to insure the parsonage for five years for \$3,000. The brethren contributed of their own time and energy to put the new home into a livable condition. Paint and shades were bought, and a telephone box was contributed by Dr. Charles McClure. After the completion of the building it was found necessary to lay a pipe to drain the water from the basement. The next Pastor, called in June, 1928, found a part of the cost of this parsonage still unpaid, and it was one of his first concerns to retire the debt. In a year or so the debt was paid and the Church was ready to embark on a new building program.

The grading of the Sunday-school had created a need for additional Sunday-school rooms, and so, in 1929 a committee were appointed to superintend the work. On this committee were: Rev. J. H. Knight, Pastor; John Wolf, Chairman; Ray M. Wright, Secretary-Treasurer; P. J. Stoner; J. O. Manning; E. T. Hobbs, J. H. Taylor; and Tom Crume. The plans were drawn largely by Ray M. Wright, and provided for nine rooms, four below and five above, with a double stairway, one on each side of the church, leading to the upstairs rooms. The height of the ceiling of the church building was such that two stories could easily be built into the original structure. The lower rooms have been made with double doors separating them from the main auditorium. On occasion these doors can be opened throwing the whole main floor into the auditorium and giving

a capacity in excess of that which could be utilized before the improvements were made. The committee reported a bid received on June 16, 1929. A contract was entered with Grigsby and Company of Bardstown, Kentucky, for \$1,214. Work was begun July 8, 1929, by Joe Hamilton, employed by Grigsby and Company. The total cost, including extras, was \$2,205.37. Other improvements included patching and painting the walls and having the cistern cleaned. Mr. Gabbard, of Perryville, painted a picture of a river on the wall back of the pulpit. On Thanksgiving Day, when the dedication service was held, nearly all of this money had been subscribed.

In November 1929 was held a combined Thanksgiving Service, Home-coming Service, and Dedication Service. All the former pastors and all members and former members with whom the Church could get in touch were invited. The day was cold, with snow and sleet, but in spite of the inclement weather and perhaps because of the abundant physical nourishment furnished in addition to the spiritual food, there was a large crowd present. The Pastor presided. Brother C. K. Hoagland, a former pastor and now Superintendent of the Kentucky Baptist Children's Home at Glendale, preached the Thanksgiving sermon. Another former pastor, Rev. W. S. Shearer, now Pastor of a Church near Frankfort, led the devotion for the Home-coming Service. Several of the pastors and laymen of surrounding churches gave short talks. Brother R. Inman Johnson, son of a former pastor and now teaching music in the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary at Louisville, contributed to the occasion in song. Dr. A. K. Wright, a former member of the Church and Pastor of Baptist Tabernacle in Louisville, preached the Dedicatory sermon. Two aged deacons, both now gone to their reward, Albert D. King, the largest single contributor to the building, and Joe T. Ludwick, for many years a faithful member of the Church, gave their testimony. It was a great occasion and marked the climax of a period of revival in religious activity.

Since the completion of the Sunday-school rooms perhaps the greatest piece of work done to improve the physical equipment of the Church has been the work done in the cemetery. For years the cemetery had gone the way of most country cemeteries. Weeds, and, worse still, a variety of myrtle had so overgrown the place that it was a fitter habitation for ground hogs and rabbits than for the mourned and beloved dead. As a matter of fact it was inhabited by all three, living (or dead) in such proximity that, in at least one instance, the ground hogs had brought up bones taken from some body long since buried. The brethren contributed many days of work

over many months, grubbing, hauling, plowing, and straightening up grave stones. At the present time the work, pushed to completion under the energetic leadership of Mr. Ray M. Wright, has progressed to such a point that the cemetery not only is one of the best kept country cemeteries, but is also better kept than many of those in the towns around. The Church has sown the cemetery in grass, and has purchased a power lawn-mower to keep it cut.

Still more recently two stone pillars have been built at the entrance to the grounds, and a double gate has been hung from these.

Following is a list of the pastors who have served the Church, with the dates served by each:

William Taylor .....	1785 —	1809
Moses Pierson .....	1809 — Mar. 5,	1825
Isaac Taylor .....	April 7, 1825 — Mar. 13,	1842
Smith Thomas .....	June 4, 1842 — Sept. 30,	1843
V. E. Kirtley .....	Jan. 1, 1844 — Feb. 4,	1849
Preston B. Samuels .....	Mar. 4, 1849 — Jan. 1,	1872
T. H. Coleman .....	Jan. 13, 1872 — Dec.	1873
J. M. Coleman .....	Dec. 27, 1873 — Feb. 1,	1879
J. M. Sallee .....	Oct. 5, 1879 — Oct. 4,	1890
A. J. Ashburn .....	Jan. 1, 1891 — Jan. 1,	1892
G. C. Cates .....	Mar. 5, 1892 — Sept. 5,	1897
J. B. Hunt .....	Nov. 6, 1897 — Jan. 1,	1901
J. R. Johnson .....	April 8, 1901 — Jan. 1,	1907
S. H. Tabb .....	Mar. 2, 1907 — Jan. 1,	1908
J. W. Long .....	Aug. 1, 1908 — Feb.	1910
O. J. Cole .....	Dec. 31, 1910 — Jan. 1,	1913
O. H. L. Cunningham.....	Mar. 1, 1913 — Jan. 6,	1914
S. M. McCarter.....	Jan. 3, 1915 — Feb.	1916
C. K. Hoagland .....	Apr. 1916 — Nov. 19,	1922
W. H. Tew .....	Feb. 1, 1923 — June	1924
W. S. Shearer .....	Nov. 1924 — Apr.	1928
J. H. Knight .....	June 24, 1928 — May 1,	1932
W. H. Tew .....	July 1, 1932 — Jan. 22,	1934
L. S. Chambers .....	Sept. 1, 1934 —	.....

An account of the lives of the first three pastors of Cox's Creek Church may be found in Spencer's "History of Kentucky Baptists," volume I, pages 69 to 76. William Taylor was born in New Jersey and later moved with his parents to Virginia. During his early years in the ministry he was easily embarrassed, and on one occasion, perceiving some disorder in the congregation, he said, "You are so wicked that I cannot preach to you," and abruptly left the building. Soon after he had moved to Kentucky and settled on Cox's Creek he established Cox's Creek Church. For the first fifteen years of its life he was the leading minister in Salem Association. He was earnest and diligent in the work of the Lord and did much missionary work, as long as he was able to go, among the early

settlers. His absorption in his work is illustrated by the following anecdote told of him. On the day that Cox's Creek Church was constituted he and his wife had gone to the Church, both riding one horse. After the meeting Brother Taylor was on his way home when a neighbor hailed him with the question:

"Brother Taylor, where is your wife?"

"Ah," he replied, "I forgot her."

Riding back half a mile, he found her wading Cox's Creek with her shoes and stockings in her hand.

As the time approached for his death Mr. Taylor could feel that the time for his departure was at hand. He put his affairs in order and, in 1809, calmly yielded up his spirit. He was buried about four miles north of Bardstown and two miles south of Cox's Creek, but the exact spot in which he is buried is not known.

Moses Pierson, a son-in-law of William Taylor, had been ordained in the Church in 1804 and had preached there once each month thereafter. On the death of William Taylor he was chosen Pastor and continued in that office for seventeen years and three months. Even after his resignation he still continued to preach at the Church once a month for several years. Mr. Pierson was an eccentric man, tall and strong. It was said to be his habit to wake at daybreak and, running to the barn in his single night garment, do the chores before dressing for the day. On one occasion, hearing a chicken squall in the night, he rushed out of the house and, in jumping over a fence, ran a snag of an apple tree into his abdomen. It was necessary for him to call his family to his assistance before he could be released. At one time sixty feet of tapeworm was taken from his intestine, but enough was left to trouble him for the remainder of his life. Mr. Pierson was not well educated, and from his frequent use of the word peradventure, which he pronounced incorrectly, he gained the name of "Old Peradventure." His harsh voice, which the settlers imagined to resemble the noise of a splinter on the fence vibrating in the wind, earned for him the name, "Old-Splinter-on-the-Fence." For all of his peculiarities Moses Pierson did much good at a time when the harvest truly was plenteous and the laborers were few. It is rumored that after he resigned as Pastor of the Church he moved to Indiana and engaged in tavern keeping, and that in his latter days he drank to excess.

One of the most beloved Pastors Cox's Creek has ever had was Isaac Taylor. Particularly was he loved by the young people. He is supposed to have married about two thousand couples. He spent much of his youth in vain amusements,

one of his common occupations being betting on his ability to hit a mark with his rifle. Perhaps he was only an illustration of the common opinion that preachers' boys are bad, for he was the son of William Taylor. In 1801, however, after he was close to thirty years of age, he was converted and labored as zealously for God as he had previously labored for the Devil. In 1811 he was licensed, and in 1813 ordained. He was called to the pastorate of Cox's Creek Church, April 7, 1825, and labored in that capacity without a stipulated salary until his death in 1842. He lived in an almost continuous revival, baptizing twenty converts only five days before his death. On March 13, 1842, he preached at Cedar Creek, and after the services went to the house of James Rogers where he took dinner. Toward dusk, at the solicitation of the family, he lay down. He continued his conversation for a few minutes. Then something in his manner of breathing attracted attention. He drew a few more breaths; then he was gone. Having labored one month less than seventeen years on this field, he was ready and willing to go. He is one of the two former pastors buried in the Church cemetery.

Smith Thomas was called in 1834 to preach one Sunday each month. After the death of Isaac Taylor in 1842 he was called as the regular Pastor. He served fifteen months and resigned, though often he returned as a speaker and evangelist. He was considered a good orator.

Rev. V. E. Kirtley was elected by private ballot September 30, 1843. He preached his first sermon at Cox's Creek on December 7, 1843 and took up his duties as Pastor at the first of the year, 1844. He was paid \$100 per year for preaching one Sunday each month. After one year he was employed two Sundays each month at a salary of \$150 per year. He was earnest in his work, and stirred up the Church on missions. He resigned February 4, 1849. He was an energetic supporter of Baptist principles and was an enthusiastic evangelist. However, his zeal was misunderstood, and he was called the "monied preacher."

Preston B. Samuels became Pastor in March, 1849. This was one of the most fortunate connections which the Church has ever made, for it was prosperous during the whole of his pastorate. He had lived many years in the community, and was another example of the power of God to transform lives. Much of his youth was spent in sin and worldly amusement. However, after his conversion, he turned to the pursuit of Godliness, and became a power in the Kingdom of God. Until 1857 he preached one Sunday each month at a salary of \$100 per year. In April of that year he was employed for two

Sundays each month at a salary of \$200 per year. He was called yearly until 1863 when, on December 5, he was given an indefinite call. In the twenty-second year of his pastorate the present meeting-house was built. One year after its dedication the Pastor was dead. He had had a faithful ministry and was beloved by all. At his death the pulpit and Bible were draped in mourning. A funeral discourse was given both at Cox's Creek and at New Salem by Rev. J. H. Spencer.

Rev. Thomas H. Coleman preached his first sermon at Cox's Creek, February 24, 1872, at a regular Church session. He was a very satisfactory pastor and when, in September, 1872, it was rumored that he might not stay another year, the Church began to discuss ways of keeping him. On October 26, 1872 the Church extended him an indefinite call at \$100 increase in salary, making his salary now \$400 per year. He accepted. The next fall Brother Coleman did resign, the resignation to take effect January 1, 1874. After Brother T. H. Coleman's resignation there were parties formed in the Church in the interest of several different preachers. There was much electioneering for various candidates. However, at a Church business meeting on December 27, 1873, while T. H. Coleman was still Pastor, Brother James M. Coleman was selected as the new Pastor. He accepted and began his labors on February 27, 1874, at a salary of \$400 per year. He was faithful in his ministry.

About the beginning of the year 1879, the Church became desirous of having full time preaching, with Rev. J. M. Sallee as Pastor. When this desire was made known, Brother J. M. Coleman resigned and the Church prepared to build a parsonage. Brother Sallee became Pastor in April, 1879. A few months later he moved into the new parsonage. Brother Sallee was greatly beloved both by the members of Cox's Creek Church and by surrounding pastors. He took sides in the disagreement in the Church in 1890 and thus restricted his effectiveness as Pastor. He resigned the same year. Three of his children have gone to China as missionaries. He has written a Life of Christ in verse.

Brother A. J. Ashburn served only one year, from January 1, 1891, to January 1, 1892, resigning at the end of that time.

Brother G. C. Cates was called on March 5, 1892, for a period of six months. On August 5, 1892, he was called for one year, and on August 4, 1894, he was given an indefinite call. He resigned September 5, 1897. Brother Cates has done a large part of his work as an evangelist, and has been successful in that work. He has also done much to relieve the poor and to care for the orphaned.

J. B. Hunt served from November 6, 1897 to January 1, 1901. He was a Godly man and made good use of his talents in his preaching.

Brother J. R. Johnson, called April 8, 1901, resigned January 1, 1907, having served about six years. He was considered a good business man.

S. H. Tabb served less than one year. He accepted the pastorate March 2, 1907, and resigned in December of the same year. He was considered a good preacher.

J. W. Long came to the pastorate on August 1, 1908, and resigned in February, 1910.

O. J. Cole was a stoutish man, baldheaded, and the father of numerous offspring. He began his ministry at Cox's Creek, December 31, 1910, and resigned January 1, 1913. His boys were traditionally bad, and it is told that on one occasion they drove the cow through the hall. His hogs must have been mischievous also, for in the Church minutes for January 4, 1913 we find a motion passed to notify Brother Cole to confine his hogs in the lot until he could ring them. Nevertheless, Brother Cole was a Godly man and labored faithfully, if not brilliantly, for the Master.

Rev. O. H. L. Cunningham was a tall, slim man, addicted to fishing, chewing, and coffee drinking. He served from March 1, 1913, to January 6, 1914, less than a year. He was energetic in the work of the Lord and was at least a fair preacher. He had daughters who contributed not a little to the success of his ministry at Cox's Creek.

Brother S. M. McCarter was a young man and an excellent preacher. He accepted the pastorate January 3, 1915, and resigned in February, 1916. His wife was one of the most saintly women who had ever come into the community. His love for her was perhaps too great for his own good; for when she died his grief was so great as to prevent his remaining as Pastor. Rumor has it that, after a period of mourning, he married a second wife as much like his first one as he could find.

Brother C. K. Hoagland began his work at Cox's Creek Baptist Church in April, 1916. For more than six years he preached the Gospel in all earnestness and sincerity. Truly it can be said of him that he was faithful to the end. Without fear and without equivocation he preached the doctrine of sin and hell and held up for all to see the salvation of Jesus Christ. His wife was a faithful helper and taught in the Sunday-school during all the time he was Pastor. Brother Hoagland believed implicitly in the authority of the Scriptures and constantly cultivated his faith by prayer and study. He resigned on November 19, 1922. He went to Ninth and O Bap-



tist Church in Louisville, and was Pastor of that Church during a marvelous period of growth. He is now Superintendent of the Kentucky Baptist Children's Home at Glendale, Kentucky.

Dr. William Henry Tew was Pastor of the Church during two separate terms. During his first term, from February 1, 1923, to the last of June, 1924, he was a student in the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary at Louisville. Dr. Tew was perhaps the best educated man who has ever occupied the pulpit of Cox's Creek Church. He was a school teacher before entering the ministry and it has been rumored that he had a "trunk-full of diplomas." He was unusual as a pulpit orator, and could hold the attention of the most reluctant audience. Often in his sermons he would quote long passages of Scripture from memory. Dr. Tew went from Cox's Creek to the First Baptist Church at Richmond, Kentucky. After a split in the church he became pastor of a small group of followers in that city. In a short time he left this pastorate to become Pastor of the Baptist Church at Ravenna, Kentucky. It was from this church that, on July 1, 1932, he returned to Cox's Creek. His ill health and his aversion to mingling with people prevented his making such a success as his unusual gifts along other lines would have made possible. His health continued to fail, and on January 2, 1934, he passed forever from the pain, the sin, and the suffering of this world. He was the second Pastor to be buried in the cemetery at Cox's Creek.

On September 7, 1924, a unanimous call was extended to Rev. H. D. Burnes. He rejected the call, and the Church continued its search for a pastor. On the second Sunday in October Brother W. S. Shearer preached, was called, and accepted. He was a very tall man, somewhat awkward in movement. Nevertheless, he was a Godly man, honest, sincere, and safe. What he did accomplish was likely to be lasting. Nobody doubted his sincerity. He was very fond of fishing, and spent much of his time in that sport. He was a faithful and loyal friend and truly had the good of the Church at heart. It was during his pastorate that the old parsonage burned and the new one was built. He lost many of his books and some of his furniture in the fire. Brother Shearer is now the successful Pastor of a church near Frankfort, Kentucky.

The following account of John H. Knight is taken from the November 3, 1929, issue of "The Church Courier" published at Fairfield, Kentucky.

"J. H. Knight was born and grew up on a farm near Carrollton, Ga. Received his early education in the local Public and High School. Later attended Bowden College.

Entered the teaching profession quite early and followed it for some years, teaching in the Graded Schools of Carroll County, Ga. He was married to Miss Mattie Huggins, 1913. To this union there have been born three children, Marie, Lunell, and John, Jr.

Feeling a definite call to the Gospel Ministry, he was ordained and set apart to this work in January, 1921. He was called to the pastorate of Providence church in the community where he was reared and served as pastor until the fall of 1925. Feeling the need of better preparation for his life's work entered the Seminary at Louisville, Ky., in the fall of 1925. Driving through from Georgia to Kentucky he stopped, by invitation, at Parksville, Ky., and preached. This church extended him a call whereupon he accepted and served as pastor for three years. After completing the courses pursued in the seminary in 1928, Cox's Creek Church extended a call for his service. He accepted and moved on the field at once and took active charge of the work."

Brother Knight was one of the most energetic men who has ever been Pastor of Cox's Creek Church. One of the first things he did when he moved on the field was to work for the payment of the debt on the new parsonage. It was only a few months until the debt was paid. He saw that the Church needed Sunday-school rooms, and in less than two years they were built and the money was promised to pay for them. He found that his salary was not sufficient to give his family the advantages which he wanted them to have, and he began to raise chickens. Later he drove the school bus, and thus earned extra money to take care of his expenses. Brother Knight and his wife were both very fond of singing. Lunell could play the piano well and lost no opportunity to demonstrate her skill. Brother Knight was constantly alert for any opportunity to preach the Gospel to the unsaved. So constantly active and alert was he that one of his close friends at the Seminary always refers to him as "Ficety Knight." Brother Knight resigned in April, 1932, going to Rossville, Georgia, where he has had a very successful ministry.

Rev. L. S. Chambers began his work at Cox's Creek on the first Sunday of September, 1934. On the same day he started a protracted meeting, during which about forty souls were added to the Church. We hope that Brother Chambers will continue to serve this historic old Church for many years to come and that he will make for himself and for his God a record equal to that of any of those who have labored so faithfully in the past.



Rev. L. S. Chambers    Rebecca    Mildred  
Dorothy Ann    Mrs. L. S. Chambers

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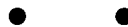
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