

THE KENTUCKY BAPTIST HERITAGE



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A Newsletter Of
THE KENTUCKY BAPTIST HISTORICAL SOCIETY
507 Byers Avenue, Owensboro, Ky. 42301
(Return Requested)

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VOLUME I PAGES 33-40 MAY 15, 1971
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Membership Report ----- 102
(May 15, 1971)

ANNUAL DUES \$2.50
(Personal and Institutional)
LIFE MEMBERSHIP \$25.00
(Personal and Institutional)
Send Membership Applications to
address given above

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MORE PORTRAITS PRESENTED

On Monday evening, May 3, 1971, the Kentucky Baptist Historical Commission formally presented to the Kentucky Baptist Convention the portraits of Corresponding Secretaries Jonathan Gaines Bow (1901-1907) and Oscar Eugene Bryan (1917-1921). Monographs of each man were presented by Wendell H. Rone, Sr. and Dr. Leo T. Crismon, respectively. Photographer William L. McQuary of Brandenburg, Ky., prepared the pictures for the portrait painter. Dr. John R. Claypool, President, received the portraits for the Convention.

There were no representatives of the Bryan family present, but word of thanks came from the widow of O.E. Bryan, Jr., recently deceased.

Mrs. S.M. (Virginia Bow) Nuckols of Louisville, Ky., spoke concerning her grandfather and expressed the family's appreciation for this gesture of good will in memorializing Dr. Bow (1848-1932). O.E. Bryan's dates are (1873-1934).
Presentation was at Cedarmore.

KENTUCKY BAPTIST HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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Wendell H. Rone, Sr.
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The Historical Society is the popular organization to which any person may belong who is interested in Kentucky Baptist history.

The Historical Commission is the official agency of the Kentucky Baptist Convention responsible for gathering, preserving, and disseminating our history.

KENTUCKY BAPTISTS' FIRST CHURCHES
(continued. 1791 and after...)

<u>NAME</u>	<u>TYPE OF BAPTISTS</u>	<u>DATE ORGANIZED</u>	<u>COUNTY THEN</u>	<u>COUNTY NOW</u>
SIMPSON'S CREEK*	Regular	March 12, 1791	Nelson	Nelson
GREEN CREEK	Regular	April 23, 1791	Bourbon	Bourbon
COVE SPRING	Regular	1791	Mercer	Mercer
STRODE'S FORK+	Regular	1791	Fayette	Clark
TAYLOR'S FORK	Regular	1791	Madison	Madison
CEDAR CREEK#	Regular	1791	Lincoln	Lincoln
PITMAN'S CREEK	Separate	1791	Nelson	Taylor
BRUSH CREEK	Separate	1791	Nelson	Green
LICK CREEK	Regular	1791	Nelson	Nelson
CUMBERLAND	Regular	1791	Tennessee	Robertson
CHENOWITH'S RUN**	Regular	June 16, 1792	Jefferson	Jefferson
SUGAR CREEK	Regular	1792	Mercer	Garrard
INDIAN CREEK	Regular	1792	Bourbon	Harrison
LULBEGRUD	Separate	March --, 1793	Clark	Clark
BRACKEN	Regular	June --, 1793	Mason	Mason
MILL CREEK	Regular	Dec. --, 1793	Nelson	Nelson
GRASSY LICK	Regular	1793	Clark	Montgomr
MILL CREEK	Regular	1793	Jefferson	Jefferso
FLAT LICK	Regular	1793	Bourbon	Bourbon
SPRINGFIELD	Regular	1793	Washington	Washngtn
FOX RUN***	Regular	Jan. 24, 1794	Shelby	Henry
ELK CREEK	Regular	April 27, 1794	Jefferson	Spencer
BULLITTSBURG	Regular	June --, 1794	Scott	Boone
MOUTH OF LICKING++	Regular	Oct. --, 1794	Harrison	Campbell
SPENCER CREEK	Separate	1794	Clark	Montgmry
FORKS OF LICKING°	Regular	June 24, 1795	Harrison	Pendleton
McCONNEL'S RUN°°	Regular	Sept. 27, 1795	Scott	Scott
CARTWRIGHT'S CREEK	Separate	1795	Washington	Marion
BLUE ASH°°°	Separate	1795	Montgomery	Montgmry
OTTER CREEK	United	1795	Madison	Madison
STONE LICK	Regular	March 1, 1796	Mason	Mason
OLD UNION	Regular	1796	Logan	Warren
BEECH CREEK	Regular	1796	Shelby	Shelby
GOOD HOPE	United	1796	Green	Taylor
DEEP CREEK	Separate	1796	Mercer	Mercer
DREAMING CREEK+++	United	1796	Madison	Madison

* Now Bloomfield
 + Later called Stony Point
 # Now Crab Orchard
 ** Now Cedar Creek
 *** Now Eminence
 ++ Now Cold Springs, First
 ° Now Falmouth
 °° Now Stamping Ground
 °°° Later called Bethel
 +++ Later called Mt. Nebo

The names of the above churches, and those given in the previous paper from 1781 to 1791, have been gleaned from the minutes of the Elkhorn (1785); Salem (1785); South Kentucky #1 (1787); Tate's Creek (1793); Mero District (1796); Bracken (1799); and Green River (1800) Associations; as well as Asplund's Register and Spencer's History of Kentucky Baptists.

THE REGULAR AND SEPARATE BAPTISTS IN KENTUCKY

BECOME UNITED BAPTISTS IN 1801

Many of our people of the present time do not understand what is meant by "United Baptists," as the term long since has fallen into disuse.

In the early history of Baptists in Kentucky they were divided into "Regular Baptists" and "Separate Baptists," which, as Doctor Spencer says, "was a distinction without a difference," very largely. These distinctions continued for some years, but effort after effort was made until a union was finally effected.

I use here a part of an address by Dr. W.M. Pratt, and published in Jubilee Volume 1887 (p. 46).

"The early Baptist churches in Kentucky had troubles within.

"First. To secure unity between the two classes of Baptists - the Regulars and the Separates.

"The Separate Baptists had their origin in New England about the middle of the last century as the result of the great revival under the ministry of Jonathan Edwards and George Whitfield. Those who withdrew from the 'Standing Order' (Congregationalist) were called Separates or New Lights. Among their number was Shubal Stearns, who subsequently, on investigating the Scriptures, united with the Baptists and was baptized by Elder Wait Palmer at Tolland, Connecticut, and was ordained to the Baptist ministry by Elders Palmer and Moore. He felt impressed that his work in the ministry was to be outside of New England, as in 1754, together with his wife, sons, and his two brothers and their wives, his brother-in-law, David Marshall and wife Joseph Breed and wife, Enos Steinson and wife, and Joseph Polk and wife, he left for the South, and located on Sandy Creek, North Carolina, and immediately formed a church of these members of his household. David Marshall and Joseph R. Breed were appointed by the infant church to assist the pastor in his ministerial work. On his way to North Carolina he stopped for a short time in northeast Virginia and formed acquaintance with two churches in that region. The spirituality of the Christian religion was then untaught, and only in isolated instances was unknown in that region. The most wonderful effects resulted from the preaching of these men of God, and the spirituality of this little church on Sandy Creek, Guilford County, North Carolina, in the middle of the state, and about forty miles east of the Yadkin River, where Daniel Boone resided, at the time when he explored Kentucky. Doctor Cathcart says, 'The parent body in a few years had 606 members, and in seventeen years from its origin it had branches southward as far as Georgia, eastward to the sea and the Chesapeake Bay, and northward to the waters of the Potomac. It has become the mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother of forty-two churches, from which 125 ministers were sent out as licentiates or ordained clergymen. And in after years the power that God gave Shubal Stearns and his Sandy Creek Church in North Carolina with resistless force brought immense throngs to Christ and established multitudes of Baptist churches.' (Baptist Encyclopedia). Probably no one minister in America has exerted so extensive and permanent influence. George Whitfield was Calvinistic in his view, so was Shubal Stearns. A peculiar feature of his church was a refusal to formulate articles of faith. They merely had a written Church Covenant, and took the Bible alone as their rule of belief. He possessed the spirit and activity of the early Methodists, and communicated the same to his disciples.

"The large majority of the earlier ministers of Kentucky were baptized by Separate Baptist ministers, imbibed the spirit and pursued the course of Shubal Stearns, traveling to distant fields of evangelical labor, organizing churches and becoming themselves pioneers in church enterprise. The Philadelphia Association was constituted 1707, and at one time comprehended nearly all the churches from New England to South Carolina. She was the originator of Eaton's Academy at Hopewell, N.J., and Brown's University in Rhode Island, and her ministers were of considerable culture. She adopted and published her creed in 1742. (Printed by Benjamin Franklin, Philadelphia, 1743). This was the 'Confession of Faith' by Baptists in London and the country in 1689. This mother of Baptist Associations in America exerted a most conservative and wise influence over these newly formed churches in the South. She commissioned her wisest men to visit the settlements, and to give wholesome instruction to the churches and their ministers. The churches connected immediately with her body were called 'Regulars,' and those which arose from this new movement were termed 'Separates.' As a result of this judicious course most of the early ministers who came to Kentucky and established churches adopted the 'Philadelphia Confession' as an exponent of their faith. The churches south of Kentucky River mostly organized on the original platform of Shubal Stearns, with simply a church covenant. The associations of the Regular Baptists, both in Virginia and Kentucky, made overtures to the Separates for a union, which, after some delay, was consummated in Virginia, August 10, 1787, and in Kentucky, partially in 1797, and fully in 1801, under the name of 'United Baptists,' adopting in both states the Philadelphia Confession of Faith, with certain 'explanations.' Thus the Baptists of Virginia and Kentucky possess the two-fold elements of Calvinistic faith of the oldest association in America and the holy fervor and boundless zeal of the Separates - a most excellent combination. The two classes are so thoroughly wedded, that for years past not only party names dropped, but the word 'United' also, and 'Baptist' alone remains to indicate our distinctive views." This shows that the union was effective. Benedict (page 812) in speaking of "The Regulars and Separates in Kentucky," says: "These distinctions which we have described under the head of Virginia, the Carolinas, etc., began early to appear in this western region; the parties which maintained them, were lineal descendants of the same people in the east, and here again we find the successors of Stearns, Marshall, and other New England New Lights.

"The Elkhorn and South Kentucky Associations embraced the substance of the two parties in the early movements of the Baptists in this new region, and by these bodies a reconciliation and union was effected similar to those which have been described in Virginia and North Carolina.

"The meeting for this purpose was held at Howard's Creek, M.H., in Clark County, in 1801. A. Dudley, J. Price, J. Redding, D. Barrow, and R. Elkin represented the Regulars; D. Ramey, Thomas J. Chilton, M. Bledsoe, S. Johnson the Separates."

THE TERMS OF UNION: The terms of the union as given by Benedict (page 821) are: "We, the committees of the Elkhorn and South Kentucky Associations, do agree to unite on the following plan:

- "1. That the scriptures of the Old and New Testament are the infallible word of God, and the only rule of faith and practice.
- "2. That there is one only true God, and in the God-head or divine essence, there are Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.
- "3. That by nature we are fallen and depraved creatures.

"4. That salvation, regeneration, sanctification, and justification, are by the life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ.

"5. That the saints will finally persevere through grace to glory.

"6. That believers' baptism, by immersion, is necessary to receiving the Lord's Supper.

"7. That the salvation of the righteous and punishment of the wicked will be eternal.

"8. That it is our duty to be tender and affectionate to each other, and study the happiness of the children of God in general; to be engaged singly to promote the honor of God.

"9. And that the preaching CHRIST TASTED DEATH FOR EVERY MAN, shall be no bar to communion.

"10. And that each may keep up their associational and church government as to them may seem best.

"11. That a free correspondence and communion be kept up between the churches thus united.

"Unanimously agreed to by the joint committee. Ambrose Dudley, Joseph Redding, Robert Elkin, John Price, David Barrow, Daniel Ramey, Thomas J. Chilton, Samuel Johnson, Moses Bledsoe."

Benedict says "This was the last body of the Separate Baptists which relinquishes the appellation by which they had been distinguished about fifty years." For a short time the term "United Baptists" was used, but it soon dropped out of use and our people were known simply as "Baptists," until the split over the mission question, (about 1832), and then we were called "Missionary Baptists" to distinguish us from the Anti-missionary Baptists. However, as the Anti-missionary Baptists have about disappeared the term "Missionary" is not now necessary in connection with the name "Baptists" as we are now called. Our churches today are known simply as Baptist churches, which is quite sufficient, since other bodies using the name "Baptist" use some designating term as, "Freewill," "General," "Old School," etc. Our denomination is put down in history and in statistics simply "Baptists."

-- Dr. William Dudley Nowlin
Kentucky Baptist History,
1770-1922, pp. 66-70.

KENTUCKY BAPTISTS AND

THE EMANCIPATION RUPTURE, 1807

Though the agitation of the emancipation of slaves began in 1789 in the meetings of Kentucky Baptists the rupture did not occur until 1807. "The first reference to the unlawfulness of slavery, found on the public records of Kentucky Baptists, is contained in the following queries, sent from Rolling Fork Church, in Nelson County, to Salem Association, convened at Cox's Creek Church in the same county, on the third of October, 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 question was answered thus: 'The association judge it improper to enter into so important and critical matter at present.' This answer gave no relief to the church." ("History of Kentucky Baptists," Vol. I, p.183.)

The question of slavery, however, was already agitating our brethren in Virginia. Semple's History of Virginia Baptists, Revised

Edition, (p. 102), says: "The next General Committee met at William's meeting house, Goochland County, Friday, the seventh of March, 1778. The date here evidently should be 1788, for the meeting just prior to this was 1787, and the one just following was August, 1788. It seems that the committee met oftener than once a year. Doctor Semple then adds as the third item of business, "Whether a petition should be offered to the General Assembly, praying that the yoke of slavery may be made more tolerable. Referred to the next session." It seems from the account of the next meeting, which was held at Dupuy's meeting house, August 11, 1788, the question of slavery was not taken up, but at the next meeting held in Richmond, August 8, 1789, the matter came up as follows, says Semple (p. 105): "The propriety of hereditary slavery was also taken up at this session, and after some time employed in the consideration of the subject the following resolution was offered by Mr. Leland and adopted. (The Rev. John Lelan Nowlin). Resolved that slavery is a violent deprivation of the rights of nature and inconsistent with a republican government, and therefore recommend it to our brethren to make use of every legal measure to extirpate this horrid evil from the land; and pray Almighty God that our honorable Legislature may have it in their power to proclaim the great Jubilee, consistent with the principles of good policy." Then on page 393 Semple says: "In 1787, the lawfulness of hereditary slavery was debated in the association. They determined that hereditary slavery was breach of the divine law. They then appointed a committee to bring in a plan of gradual emancipation, which was accordingly done."

Thus it will be seen that the early Baptists in Virginia expressed opposition, in unmistakable terms, to slavery, as early as 1787. Our Kentucky associations were in correspondence with the Virginia associations, both by letter and messengers, and were therefore advised as to their actions. So it is no surprise to see the matter coming up two years later, than the above Virginia action, in a Kentucky association - the Salem. Elkhorn Association, at its meeting in August, 1791, says Spencer, (Vol. I, p. 184), "Appointed a committee of three to draw up a memorial to the convention to held on the third day of April next, requesting them to take up the subject of Religious Liberty, and Perpetual Slavery in the formation of the constitution of this district, and report at the Crossing, on the eighth of September. Eastin, Garrard and Dudley were the committee. At the meeting at Great Crossings, in September of the same year, the 'memorial on Religious Liberty and Perpetual Slavery was read and approved.' This action of the association did not meet the approval of the churches. Accordingly, the next association, which met at Bryants, in December of the same year, and which was probably convened, in extra session, for this express purpose, 'Resolved that the association disapprove of the memorial which the last association agreed to send to the convention, on the subject of Religious Liberty and the Abolition of Slavery.'"

After this, it seems that the question of slavery did not come up in the association for several years. But the preachers were preaching on the subject and it was being discussed in the churches. Emancipation parties were formed in many churches, which was a source of confusion and disturbance. The association finally had to act on the question of the emancipation of slaves. "Elkhorn Association, during its session at Bryant's, in 1805, again took up the subject and passed a resolution, that, 'This association judges it improper for ministers, churches or associations to meddle with emancipation from slavery, or any other political subject, and as such, we advise ministers and churches to have nothing to do therewith.'

"This resolution gave great offense to the emancipators. They became much more active and determined in their opposition to slavery. Even the earnest and laborious William Hickman was carried beyond the limits of prudence. On a fast day of that same year, he preached at Elkhorn Church, of which he was a member, and the pastor. His text was Isa. 58:6: 'Is not this the fast I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke?' This sermon, says Theodrick Boulware, 'was disingenuous and offensive. The speaker declared non-fellowship for all slave holders. A few days afterwards he wrote a letter to the church, declaring his withdrawal.' Whether he went into the constitution of an emancipation church, or not, does not appear. John Shackelford was called to the care of Forks of Elkhorn Church for one year. Before his time was out Mr. Hickman returned and gave satisfaction to the church, and, when the year was out, resumed its pastorate." ("History of Kentucky Baptists," Vol. I, p. 185).

This gives us some conception of the disturbance in the Elkhorn Association caused by the question of emancipation. About this same time John Sutton led off a party from the Clear Creek Church, which united with a faction led out of Hillsboro Church by Carter Tarrant, and formed an emancipation church, called New Hope, located in Woodford County, "the first emancipation church in this part of the world," says John Taylor. ("History of Ten Churches," p. 81)

The question of slavery caused a division in the North District Association in 1807. Spencer says, (Vol. II, 119 f): "In 1804, Thomas J. Chilton, from a party of South District Association, which afterwards took the name of South Kentucky Association, presented to North District, charges against Jeremiah Vardeman and John Rice. As the party represented by Mr. Chilton was not recognized by the association, the charges were not entertained. But the next year, the same body entertained five charges against David Barrow, the ablest preacher in their body. These charges were presented by the messengers from Bracken Association, and pertained to Mr. Barrow's sentiments on the subject of slavery. The association, after hearing him, in his own defense, decided that his explanations and apologies were sufficient. Some of the churches, however, were determined to get rid of him; and new provisions were made for his expulsion. 'Providence and Boone's Creek Churches inquire how a church shall deal with a minister who propagates doctrines that are unsound or pernicious to peace and good order? The association advises that a church, in such cases, withdraw all the power they gave such preacher; and (that) two preachers may suspend, or stop such preacher from preaching until he can be tried by a council of five ministers, whose decision, in such case, ought to be obeyed, until reversed by the association.' This rule, however, unbaptistic, was applied to Mr. Barrow almost immediately after the association adjourned. At the next meeting of the body, in 1806, the following proceedings were entered on its minutes:

"A committee or council of five ministers reported: That, agreeable to provision made last association, for the trial of ministers, they had been dealing with Brother David Barrow, for preaching the doctrine of emancipation, to the hurt and injury of the brotherhood. And the association, after considering the foregoing report, and hearing what Brother Barrow had to say, in justification of his conduct, on that subject, and Brother Barrow manifesting no disposition to alter his mode of preaching, as to the aforesaid doctrine, they proceeded to expel him from his seat in this association,' They also 'appointed a committee to deal with Brother Barrow, in the church

at Mount Sterling, at their next monthly meeting, and report to next association.'

"Immediately after Mr. Barrow's expulsion from North District Association, he commenced arranging for the constitution of an Emancipation Association. A meeting was called to convene at New Hope, in Woodford County, on the twenty-ninth of August, 1807. Eleven preachers and nineteen other messengers were enrolled as members of the meeting. Preliminary steps were taken, for the organization of an association, which was constituted of nine churches, aggregating 190 members, the following September. This association, which took the name of Licking Locust, will be noticed in its appropriate place.

"North District Association saw the injustice of her rash act when it was too late to counteract its evil effects. At her annual meeting, in 1807: 'The association proceeded to annul and revoke the act of last association, in expelling Elder David Barrow from his seat in the association. But she had already lost at least three churches and two preachers by the transaction; and they did not now choose to return. The subject of slavery continued to be agitated, in the bounds of the association, nearly twenty years."

The foregoing shows that the agitation was long and bitter in this association. We are told by Spencer (Vol. I, p. 186) that "The excitement extended all over the settled portion of the state. Several churches in Bracken Association fell in with the emancipation scheme. Among these were Licking Locust, Lawrence Creek, Gilgal and Bracken. Among the churches that united in the movement from North District, were Mount Sterling and Bethel. These and a number of other churches effected an organization, in September, 1807, under the name of 'The Baptized Licking-Locust Association, Friends of Humanity.' At their next meeting they resolved 'that the present mode of associations, or confederation of churches, was unscriptural. They then proceeded to form themselves into an 'Abolition Society,'** In 1816 they met at Lawrence Creek meeting house, in Mason County, under the name of 'The Association of Baptists, Friends of Humanity.' The following churches were represented: Bracken, Gilgal, Lawrence Creek, Mount Sterling, Bullsken and Bethel. No account was received from New Hope in Woodford County.

"The preaching was by Jacob Maham, Moses Edwards and Alexander. The Lord's Supper was administered by David Barrow and Thompson. There is a manifest tendency to 'open communion' and other signs of decay, exhibited in the meager journal of their proceedings. The body kept up a feeble, withering existence till about the year 1820, when it was dissolved.

It seems from this time on the emancipation question gave the churches in Kentucky little or no trouble. We are unable to understand why the agitation died down, and Emancipation Association disbanded, unless the leaders came to realize that they were fighting a hopeless battle; and that their energies could be more profitably spent along other lines.

From the history we have of the emancipation movement it accomplished little, or no good, and a vast amount of harm. It disturbed Baptist churches and associations in Kentucky for a period of more than thirty years, and passed away, leaving no permanent breach.

--Dr. William Dudley Nowlin
Kentucky Baptist History,
1770-1922, pp. 71-77.