

**Partners in Missions
and Ministry**

**A History of
Flat River Baptist
Association**

RAYMOND HARGUS TAYLOR

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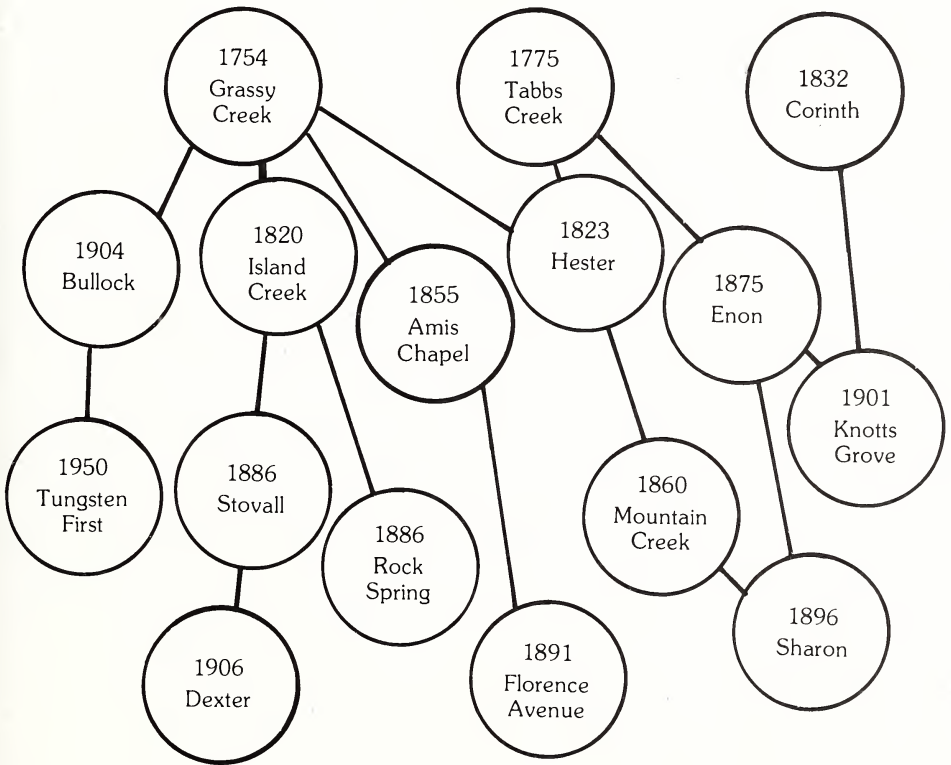
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Partners in Missions and Ministry

A History of Flat River Baptist Association



RAYMOND HARGUS TAYLOR

1782
Concord

1823
Brassfield

1840
Fellowship

1840
Mount
Zion

1848
Oxford
Baptist

1895
Creedmoor
First

1858
Pleasant
Grove

1882
Olive
Grove

1910
West
Oxford

1959
Delrayno

1972
Union

1850
Tally
Ho

1858
Poplar
Creek

1865
Mount
Olivet

1887
Peace's
Chapel

1948
Butner
First

1907
Providence

Cover Design

Created by Peggy Capps, Poplar Creek Baptist Church, Henderson, North Carolina, the configuration of circles which constitutes the design on the front and back covers of this volume represents a genealogical "Family Tree" of churches affiliated with Flat River Baptist Association—to the extent that such lineage can be traced from extant records.

Prominent on the front cover are Grassy Creek (1754) and Tabb's Creek (1775) churches, with those several congregations which lay claim to direct lineal descent from one of these two "mother" churches in the region. It is probable that another line could be extended from Grassy Creek to Tabb's Creek to Corinth, although such direct lineage can no longer be traced with certainty.

Many of the churches represented by the configuration of circles on the back cover either originated quite independently of an "arm" or "branch" relationship to any other earlier congregation; in connection with churches which are not affiliated with Flat River Association; or from churches which are no longer extant.

About the Author

Raymond Hargus Taylor is Chairman, Department of Religion and Philosophy, Chowan College, Murfreesboro, North Carolina—an institution related to the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina with which he has been affiliated for thirty years. Prior to appointment to this current position, he served as Chaplain to the College, 1963-1990, and as Assistant to the President, 1990-1991.

A native of Kentucky, Taylor holds degrees from Cumberland College (A.A.), Carson-Newman College (B.A.), and The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary (B.D., TH.D.). Interest in Baptist history was witnessed the following earlier publications from his pen: *The Baptist Church at Cashie: 1770-1970*; *A Century and A Quarter of Service: A History of Murfreesboro Baptist Church, 1848-1973*; *Seventy-Five Years of Loving, Sharing, Caring: A History of Winter Park Baptist Church, 1913-1988*; and *The Heritage of a Century: A History of Chadbourn Baptist Church, 1890-1990*. He has also been a contributor to the *Encyclopedia of Southern Baptists*, *Mercer Dictionary of the Bible*, *Dictionary of North Carolina Biography*, and *Hertford County: The First Two Hundred Years, 1584-1789*.

A professional interest in church history, in general, and in Baptist history, in particular, is pursued through his classroom teaching responsibilities; and through membership in the American Society of Church History, Southern Baptist Historical Society, North Carolina Baptist Historical Society, and the Virginia Baptist Historical Society. He currently serves as Chairman, Historical Committee of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, and as President (1993-1994) of the Southern Baptist Historical Society.

Married to the former Doris Tittsworth, of Knoxville, Tennessee, he and his wife of thirty-nine years are the parents of two children—David Warren Taylor, and Marcia Taylor Thompson—and of three grandchildren: Jessica Lynn Taylor, William Avery Taylor, and Nathaniel Edward Thompson.

Partners in Missions and Ministry

A HISTORY OF FLAT RIVER BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

Raymond Hargus Taylor
1993

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Foreword

When first approached several years ago about writing a history of Flat River Baptist Association, the author of the narrative which follows concluded that such an account would prove to be of greatest value if released in conjunction with a significant anniversary occasion. More specifically, the 200th Anniversary—the Bicentennial of this union of churches—appeared to be the most appropriate occasion for directing her constituents and other friends to a focus upon heritage.

Research was undertaken, copious notes compiled, a schematic outline or design projected, and the initial chapters of the work which follows completed. Meanwhile, other more immediately pressing research projects consumed such time as the author could afford to devote to avocational interests, while attending to those duties and responsibilities which are incumbent upon an educational administrator at a church-related college.

But anniversaries have a way of arriving and accumulating rather hurriedly and unannounced. Time becomes an increasingly fragile and precious commodity—especially to a researcher who finally has a deadline to meet! Thus, much of the past year has been spent in sorting through “ancient” notes and supplementing them with more recent discoveries; in reshaping the contours of that earlier schematic design, which proved more ambitious than the constraints of time and space would allow; and in bringing this project to completion, even while hoping to discover additional data which might have served to enrich its character and/or complement its text.

Accordingly, *Partners In Missions and Ministry: A History of Flat River Baptist Association* is now presented as one attempt at recounting and recalling the heritage of a particular group of Baptists and Baptist churches as they enter upon their Bicentennial Year, 1993-94. It is hoped that this narrative will contribute to the celebration of and appreciation for that heritage, in spite of any errors by way of omission or commission which the observant reader may detect herein.

To accord acknowledgements to some, without whose assistance the writing of such a history as this would not have been possible, is to run the risk of neglecting others who are equally deserving of credit. Nonetheless, mention must be made *at least* the following: (1) John Raynor Woodard, Jr., and the staff of the Ethel Taylor Crittenden Collection in Baptist History, Wake Forest University; (2) Librarians and other professional staff personnel at the Richard Thornton Library, Oxford; (3) Staffs of the Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and the North Carolina Library and Archives in Raleigh; (4) the Reverend Robert Henry Wainwright, Director of Missions, and Mrs. Gerald Rene H. Frazier, Secretary and Clerk to the Flat River Association; and (5) the numerous local church historians of the Association—past and current—whose sketches of their particular churches have proved invaluable to one less familiar with these local congregations.

Finally, two additional acknowledgements: one professional and the other, personal. Much gratitude is due Dr. Andrea E. Eason, Director of Academic Computing, Cho-

wan College, whose expertise has saved and/or rescued this computer novice from many a blunder. Similarly, personal gratitude beyond measure is owed my wife, Doris Tittsworth Taylor, for her understanding, encouragement, and support throughout the recent long days and nights which occupied my time while bringing this account to its completion.

Partners In Missions and Ministry: A History of Flat River Baptist Association is commended to its readers, with the earnest hope that each will derive pleasure and benefit from its contents, while acknowledging that much which might—or should—have been included herein must await further reflection and research on the part of some future historian.

Raymond Hargus Taylor
September 1993

I. BAPTIST LIFE IN THE REGION PRIOR TO 1794

Duly elected messengers from several associated churches will gather in the sanctuary of Peace's Chapel Baptist Church, Fishing Creek Township, Granville County, North Carolina, on the afternoon of October 18, 1993. At the appointed hour, the presiding officer will call the assembly to order with the pounding of his gavel, declaring the 200th annual meeting of the Flat River Baptist Association "now in session." Were the Clerk of the Association to follow earlier precedent by calling the roll of churches eligible to be "represented" in the deliberations of this body, the names of some thirty-three churches would be called. The vast majority of respondents to such a roll call of churches would be found to represent a Baptist presence in various towns, villages, and rural districts of Granville County—a geographical territory embracing some 543 square miles.¹

At the time of her greatest geographical extension, however, this same association of churches served the interests of Baptist constituencies scattered throughout an expansive region more than ten times the size of present Granville County. Her member churches had been gathered and were located within the geographical bounds of the present North Carolina counties of Warren, Vance, Franklin, Wake, Granville, Person, Durham, Orange, Caswell, Alamance, Guilford, and Rockingham—a territory which embraced in excess of 5,750 square miles.²

Any proper understanding of and appreciation for the origins of the Flat River Baptist Association of churches necessitates, therefore, a brief look at the early settlement of the region in question; the origin and development of Baptist congregations within that region; and earlier attempts at fostering union and communion among these several congregations, as expressed—especially—in the life and ministries of her immediate forebear, the Roanoke District Baptist Association.

A. Settlement of the Region

The earliest settlers in the eastern piedmont section of the Granville District³ had made their way into the region immediately following the Tuscarora Wars, 1711-13. By 1746, this "frontier" territory had grown sufficiently populous to justify the creation of Granville County out of the "upper part" of Colonial Edgecombe County. At the time of its formation, this new county encompassed a territory which extended—approximately—from the eastern boundaries of the present counties of Warren and Franklin to an indefinite point westward. With the subsequent formation of Orange County in 1752, however, Granville County lost claim to "frontier" territory, in the strictest sense, as settlers pushed further into the central piedmont and beyond.⁴

Four general routes of migration into the region are traceable, as follows: (1) south and west from Tidewater Virginia; (2) north and west from the Coastal Plain of North Carolina; (3) north and west from the lower Cape Fear region; and (4) along a more directly north-to-south route through central Virginia, but with immigrants whose origins are traceable to the colonies of the northeast and mid-Atlantic. Lands were claimed and homes established along the Roanoke River, the Dan River, and their tributaries; along the upper reaches of the Neuse and Tar rivers; and along Haw River, its creeks and streams. Settlements were sparse in population and widely scattered.⁵

B. Origin and Development of Baptist Congregations

Undoubtedly there were Baptists—or those who would be inclined to Baptist sentiments—among the very earliest settlers who inhabited the region which would later become the geographical territory served by the Flat River Association. Itinerant preachers from among the General Baptists who had founded churches in the north-eastern Coastal Plain of North Carolina had journeyed at least as far west as the present Warren County prior to the constitution of the Reedy Creek Church in 1745.⁶ In less than a decade after her constitution, this church had “branch” congregations worshipping within the bounds of the present Granville County—congregations which were to be constituted later as the Tar River and Grassy Creek Baptist churches.⁷

The earliest mention of these congregations comes from the pen of the Reverend Hugh McAden, a Presbyterian minister who traveled through the region in 1755 and 1756. McAden noted in his *Journal*:

Being sent for and very earnestly entreated to go to Tar River, I took my journey the same evening [Tuesday, August 12, 1755], with my guide and rode to Bogan’s, on Flat River, twenty miles. Next morning, set off again, and rode to old Sherman’s on Tar River, and preached that afternoon to a small company, who seemed generally attentive, and some affected.⁸

On August 14, McAden traveled sixteen miles north from Tar River to Grassy Creek, “where [there] was a Baptist meeting-house,” and preached to a congregation whose members “seemed very inquisitive about the way to Zion.” He then accompanied his host (a Mr. Lawrence, presumably from Grassy Creek) to the Baptist Yearly Meeting at Upper Fishing Creek [Reedy Creek, in Warren County], where he preached to “large and deeply interested audiences,” on Saturday, Sunday, and Monday, August 16-18, 1755.⁹ Returning towards home through Granville County, he rode to Mr. Sherman’s on Tar River, where he preached on the afternoon of August 19, to “a middling congregation, who appeared very devout, and some of them much affected.”¹⁰

On a return trip from the southeastern part of the colony one year later, McAden preached to a Baptist congregation at the meeting house on Upper Fishing Creek [Reedy Creek] on August 18. On that occasion, “many came to converse with him about their experience.”¹¹ Also, on that occasion, he was hosted by a certain Joseph Linsey, who had heard him preach. The entry in McAden’s *Journal* notes: “He insisted very hard upon me to stay at Nut Bush, and give them a sermon, as they were very destitute and out of the way. I went home with him, about twenty-two miles, it being pretty much in my way, and preached.”¹²

But it was the arrival of Shubal Stearns and his little band of Separate Baptists in 1755 which was to have the major impact upon the growth and development of numerous Baptist congregations throughout the larger region. While Stearns and his party settled in the neighborhood of Sandy Creek (in what is now Randolph County), and constituted a church there by that same name, they and their converts traveled far and wide in their zeal to proclaim the Gospel to all who would hear.¹³ That congregation which had been worshipping for some years at Grassy Creek was re-vitalized and re-constituted, becoming—at first—an “arm” or “branch” of the Sandy Creek Church.¹⁴

Churches were soon gathered also in the neighboring Virginia border counties of Mecklenburg, Halifax, and Pittsylvania.¹⁵ These, along with the Tar River and Grassy Creek churches, were eventually instrumental in the gathering of various other Baptist congregations in the North Carolina counties of Rockingham, Guilford, Caswell, Orange, Person, Granville, and Wake.¹⁶ By 1788, those counties which would later define the geographical “territory” of the later Flat River Association contained at least fifteen Baptist churches, with numerous “arms” or “branches.”

To facilitate intercommunion among these widely scattered churches and congregations, the General Baptists had fostered a Yearly Meeting, such as that one attended by the Reverend Hugh McAden at Upper Fishing Creek [Reedy Creek] in 1755. Unfortunately, no records related to the structure and function of these meetings among North Carolina Baptists have been preserved. The Separate Baptists, on the other hand, had formed an association of those churches gathered through their preaching and witness within three years after their arrival at Sandy Creek. By 1770, this Sandy Creek Association embraced churches and congregations from Fauquier County, Virginia, to Richland County, South Carolina. Likewise, the Regular Baptists in eastern North Carolina and Tidewater Virginia had formed the Kehukee Association in 1769, after earlier affiliation of several of their churches with the Charleston (South Carolina) Baptist Association.

Most of those churches who owed their origins to the witness of the Separate Baptists maintained a relationship with Sandy Creek Association.¹⁷ The loss of associational records, 1758-1805, however, makes it impossible to speak with certainty of the strength and stability of these connections. Those churches, on the other hand, which had been constituted (or re-constituted) by the Regular Baptists were affiliated with the Kehukee Association. Thus, of the fifteen identifiable churches within the geographical bounds of the region under consideration prior to 1788, at least four were affiliated with the Kehukee Association;¹⁸ one with the Strawberry (VA) Association;¹⁹ one with the Middle District (VA) Association;²⁰ and nine were either affiliated with the Sandy Creek Association, or—perhaps—not affiliated with any association.²¹

C. Churches In Union with the Roanoke District Association

The Separate Baptist Association which had been organized by Stearns and his associates in 1758 remained intact until 1770, embracing numerous congregations in Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina. An early historian of Virginia Baptists has indicated the factors which led to the first division of this body, as follows:

The churches had now [i.e., 1770] become numerous, there being a considerable number in each of the three States. It had been usual with them to do nothing in Association but by unanimity. If in any measure proposed there was a single dissentient they labored first by arguments to come to unanimous agreement; when arguments failed, they resorted to frequent prayers, in which all joined. When both these failed, they sometimes appointed the next day for fasting and prayer, and to strive to bring all to be of one mind. At this session [i.e., 1770, at Grassy Creek Meeting House] they split in their first business. Nothing could be done on the first day. They

appointed the next day for fasting and prayer. They met and labored the whole day, until an hour by sun in the afternoon, and could do nothing, not even appoint a Moderator. The third day was appointed for the same purpose, and to be observed in the same way. They met early and continued together until 3 o'clock in the afternoon without having accomplished anything. A proposal was then made that the Association should be divided into three districts, that is, one in each State. To this end there was an unanimous consent at once.²²

The North Carolina association retained the name Sandy Creek. The association of churches in South Carolina took the name Congaree. Virginia churches assumed the designation General Association of Separate Baptists (or, sometimes, the Rapid-Ann Association).

By 1773, the General Association had been further sub-divided into northern and southern districts, with James River serving as boundary line between the two. Meetings of the southern district—to which Grassy Creek and any of her branch congregations would have sent delegates—were convened in Halifax County, Virginia (May 1774) and Amelia County, Virginia (October 1774).²³ The northern and southern sections then met in joint sessions at Dover Meeting House, Goochland County, Virginia (May 1775); at DuPuy's Meeting House, Powhatan County, Virginia (August 1775); and at Thompson's Meeting House, Louisa County, Virginia (August 1776).²⁴

The General Association disbanded in 1783, with a General Committee instituted in its stead. This General Committee, which met annually until 1799, was to be composed of no more than four delegates from each of the district associations. These district associations—with the James River, again, serving as boundary between the upper and lower districts—had been provided for with the dissolution of the older General Association. Churches on the south side of James River organized themselves into the Middle District Association in 1784.²⁵

By 1788, the churches comprising the Middle District Association had become too numerous and too geographically widespread to assemble conveniently. Accordingly, it was agreed "to strike off the upper churches to form a new Association, which was called Roanoke."²⁶ After holding an organizational meeting at Watkins' Meeting House²⁷ in October 1788, the first regular session of the Roanoke District Association was appointed for May 16-18, 1789, at Grassy Creek Meeting House, Granville County, North Carolina. It was with this first session of the Roanoke District Association that it becomes possible to obtain a clearer picture of the state of those North Carolina churches which would be constituted as Flat River Association five years later.

The *Minutes* of the Roanoke District Association, May 16-18, 1789, note the presence of delegates from three churches which would later become members of the Flat River Association: i. e., Grassy Creek, Flat River, and Buffaloe.²⁸ In addition, it appears that the church called Tar River had participated in earlier deliberations with the infant association; or, at least, had requested "helps" from her sister churches in the region. The *Minutes* contain the following account in this regard:

Messrs. Read, Pickett, Vass, Roberts & Rucks being appointed by last assn. to wait upon Tarr River church, they attended agreeable to appointment, but were disappointed in restoring peace and harmony.—The unity of the

Spirit and bond of peace being very desirable, and believing there are many precious souls in said church, in spiritual Distress, Therefore [we] are induced and move to appoint the same brethren, with the addition of Henry Lester to wait on them again,—strive for things that make for peace, and make report to our next assn.²⁹

The delegates who were present from these churches included some who would assume positions of leadership and influence in the Flat River Association in later years. Among these were Thomas Vass and Charles Harris, of Grassy Creek; George Roberts and Millington Blalock, of Flat River.³⁰

Earliest indication of the comparative strength of those North Carolina churches which were in union with the Roanoke District Association may be gained from the *Minutes* of that body for the session of June 12-15, 1790. *Grassy Creek Church*, in Granville County, reported a membership of 122. During the preceding year she reported: 12 baptized, 3 received by letter, 1 deceased, and 64 excluded from membership. *Flat River Church*, Person County, reporting a total membership of 148, had received 26 by baptism and dismissed 2 members by letter. *Country Line Church*, Caswell County—the largest of the North Carolina churches—had received 46 persons by baptism during the preceding year, while reporting a total membership of 160.³¹ *Flat Creek Church*, which had been constituted in 1789 by some of the former members of Tar River Church, made no report of her membership to this session of the Association.³²

The number of churches in union with Roanoke District Association had grown from four in 1790 to 15 in 1794, when the Association convened with Catawba Church, Halifax County, Virginia, October 11-13. The question of the wisdom of further division within the body had first been broached a year earlier during the annual meeting at Hart's Chapel, Caswell County, only to be referred to the next meeting. When the Association then met with Bluestone Church, Mecklenburg County, Virginia, May 3-5, 1794, the question of a division was raised again—and again deferred—to the Autumn session of the body.³³

Clearly, however, the time now seemed ripe for the creation of another district association. The fifteen North Carolina churches reported a combined membership of 1,150.³⁴ Accordingly, the following action was recorded as taking place on Monday, October 13, 1794:

Reference from last Assn. respecting a division of this district—agreed that we divide by the state line, between Virginia and N[orth] Carolina; and that north of that line continue to be called Roanoke; and that part south of the line Be called by the name of Flat River.³⁵

Prior to adjournment appointments were made for the next meetings of these two district associations, with that district to be known as Flat River “to be holden at Flat River Meeting-house in Person County, on the second Saturday in August 1795.”³⁶

Thus, Flat River Baptist Association was created through an amicable division within the Roanoke District Association, and for the convenience of those churches located south of the Virginia-North Carolina border. After 1794, no North Carolina churches—

save one—are listed as affiliates of Roanoke District Association.³⁷ Nonetheless, those churches which joined in union with the new Flat River Association continued to maintain close ties with the parent organization through the interchange of Corresponding Letters and Fraternal Delegates, or Messengers, for several decades thereafter.

ENDNOTES

¹Of the thirty-three churches affiliated with the Flat River Association in 1993, only seven are located outside the geographical bounds of Granville County. These are: Island Creek, Poplar Creek, Rock Spring, and Tungsten, First, in Vance County; Mt. Olivet, in Franklin County; and Olive Grove and Union, in Wake County.

²The Association had reached the limit of her geographical extension prior to 1806, when ten of the westernmost churches were dismissed to form Country Line Association. It should not be assumed, however, that all the Baptist congregations located in the counties mentioned had previously been in union with Flat River Association. Some were affiliated with the Sandy Creek (1758), Kehukee (1769), or Raleigh (1805) associations in North Carolina; some, with the Strawberry (1776) or Mayo (1798) associations in Virginia. Some churches probably remained unaffiliated with any district association.

³The Granville District referred to that portion of the Colony which had been allotted to John Carteret, Earl Granville (1690-1763), one of the Lords Proprietor who had refused to sell his interest to the Crown in 1729. Originally, the District included a strip of land, approximately 60 miles in width, lying immediately to the south of the Virginia line. By 1766, the southern border of this vast District had been extended to Rocky River, in Chatham County. The District was lost to the Granville estate in the wake of the American Revolution. Cf. William S. Powell, *The North Carolina Gazetteer* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1968), p. 198.

⁴Moving geographically from east to west, the earliest settlements were somewhat as follows: *Warren County* (est. 1779)—early pioneers, perhaps, before the Tuscarora Wars, 1713-15; settlers along Shockoe Creek and Roanoke River by 1730. *Franklin County* (est. 1779)—English, Irish, and German settlers from Pennsylvania, Virginia, and eastern North Carolina, after 1740, along Tar River and its tributaries. *Vance County* (est. 1881)—Joseph Pearce and wife, Sarah, settled between Kittrells and Snow Hill in 1713; settlements along Nutbush Creek after 1740. *Wake County* (est. 1770)—earliest settlers in the 1740s. *Granville County* (est. 1746)—streams of settlers by the 1730s, coming from southeast (Bath Precinct) and northeast (Virginia). *Durham County* (est. 1881)—first settlers c. 1750. *Orange County* (est. 1752)—English, Scotch, and Dutch settlers by 1740; coming down from Pennsylvania and Virginia. *Person County* (est. 1791)—settlers as early as 1740 in the vicinity of Payne's Tavern, four miles south of Roxboro. *Caswell County* (est. 1777)—settled at least as early as 1752. *Alamance County* (est. 1849)—German immigrants trickling in as early as 1720; colony of Pennsylvania Quakers at Snow Camp by 1740; Scotch-Irish to the east and north of Haw River. *Rockingham County* (est. 1785)—English and Scotch-Irish along Dan River and its tributaries after 1750. *Guilford County* (est. 1771)—settlement of Pennsylvania Quakers at New Garden by 1754; German and Scotch settlers arrived from New England and Pennsylvania around the same time. See appropriate sections in Bill Sharpe, *A New Geography of North Carolina* (Raleigh: Edwards & Broughton, 1954ff.), I, 4, 330, 412, 487-88; II, 788, 809, 976; IV, 1752, 1837, 1856, 2141, 2184.

⁵According to one eighteenth century tract, the number of "taxables" in the district known as Granville County in 1750 was just over 1,000. A "taxable" was any male citizen, 18 years of age or above, who was capable of bearing arms.

⁶The contributions of General Baptists (who had established churches in eastern North Carolina as early as 1727, and who—theologically—are forerunners of the modern Free Will Baptists) in the evangelization of North Carolina have been disparaged by the early Baptist historians of the region. Much fuller accounts of Baptist labors were preserved after the mid-1750s, when most of the General Baptist ministers and their congregations were "reformed"—theologically and ecclesiologically—through the instrumentality of missionaries from the Philadelphia Baptist Association. See George Washington Paschal, *History of North Carolina Baptists* (Raleigh: The General Board, North Carolina Baptist State Convention, 1930), I, 123ff., for an appreciative account of these General Baptist pioneers.

According to Morgan Edwards, Reedy Creek Church (Upper Fishing Creek), originated from the early Kehukee Church, Halifax County, and remained a General Baptist Church, 1745-55. See George Washington Paschal (Ed.), "Morgan Edwards' Materials Towards a History of the Baptists in the Province of North Carolina," *The North Carolina Historical Review*, VII (July 1930), 375. Hereafter referred to as Edwards, *Materials* . . . , along with the pagination in the Paschal edition cited above.

⁷Edwards identified [Upper] Fishing Creek as the "Mother of Tar River [Church]." The conjecture that the congregation worshipping on Grassy Creek may also have been an arm, or branch, of [Upper] Fishing Creek is made by Paschal.

⁸Quoted in William Henry Foote, *Sketches of North Carolina, Historical and Biographical, Illustrative of the Principles of a Portion of Her Early Settlers* (New York: Robert Carter, 1846), p. 166. Hugh McAden (c. 1720-1781) had been licensed by New Castle Presbytery in 1755 and sent on a missionary tour among Presbyterian settlements in North and South Carolina. He ministered for some ten years after 1759 in Duplin County before removing to Caswell County, where he spent the remainder of his days. McAden was at the home of a Mr. Anderson, on Eno River, at the time he was entreated to come to Tar River.

⁹*Ibid.*

¹⁰*Ibid.*, pp. 166-67. John Sherman and his wife were charter members of Tar River Church at its first constitution c. 1749. The place of meeting was referred to as “Sherman’s Meeting House” until the early years of the nineteenth century. See Edwards, *Materials* . . . , p. 380.

¹¹Foote, *op. cit.*, p. 174.

¹²*Ibid.* Nutbush Creek, which is shown on the Moseley Map of 1733, rises within the present town limits of Henderson, North Carolina, and flows northward into Kerr Lake. Cf. Powell, *op. cit.*, p. 358.

¹³The story of Stearns and the Separate Baptists in North Carolina is recorded in Edwards, *Materials* . . . , pp. 383ff. A fuller account and an evaluation of their lasting influence is that of William Latane Lumpkin, *Baptist Foundations in the South. Tracing Through the Separates the influence of the Great Awakening* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1961).

¹⁴R[obert] I[ra]h Devin, *A History of the Grassy Creek Church, from the Foundation to 1880, with Biographical Sketches of Its Pastors and Ministers* (Raleigh: Edwards & Broughton, 1880), p. 52, indicated that William Marshall, of Sandy Creek, was “without question here [i.e., Grassy Creek] on a preaching tour in 1756.” Grassy Creek appears to have continued thereafter as a “branch” of the Sandy Creek Church until her constitution in 1762, under the pastoral care of James Read. Devin, however, conjectured that Grassy Creek must have had an independent constitution as early as 1757 or 1758, since he was acquainted with a tradition that Read had attended the organizational meeting of the Sandy Creek Association in 1758 as a *delegate* from Grassy Creek Church.

¹⁵The following churches had been constituted in these counties prior to the organization of the Roanoke District Association in 1788: Dan River, 1760 (Pittsylvania); Falls Creek, 1770 (Pittsylvania); Mill, or Birch Creek, 1770 (Pittsylvania); County Line, 1771 (Pittsylvania); Bluestone, or Bethel, 1772 (Mecklenburg); Catawba, 1773 (Halifax); Upper Banister, 1773 (Pittsylvania); Malone’s, or Geneto, 1773 (Mecklenburg); Mayo, 1774 (Halifax); Hunting Creek, 1775 (Halifax); Buffaloe, 1776 (Halifax); Winn’s Creek, 1776 (Halifax); Buffaloe, 1778 (Mecklenburg); Musterfield, 1779 (Halifax); Arbor, 1785 (Halifax); Millstone, 1787 (Halifax); Childrey, 1783 (Halifax); and Birch Creek, 1787 (Pittsylvania). With the exceptions of Dan River and Falls Creek, the names and dates given are those of Robert B. Semple, *A History of the Rise and Progress of the Baptists in Virginia. Revised edition by Rev[erend] G. W. Beale* (Richmond: Pitt & Dickinson, 1894), pp. 303ff. The dates of constitution for Dan River and Falls Creek are those of Morgan Edwards, *Materials Towards a History of the Baptists in the Province of Virginia*.

Dan River Church had an “arm,” or “branch” meeting on Hogan’s Creek, Caswell County, North Carolina, with Thomas Mullen ministering to the congregation there. Falls Creek, which was a daughter of Dan River Church, also had an “arm,” or “branch” meeting on Country Line Creek, Caswell County, by 1771. Mayo Church [or Reedy Bottom], which originated as an “arm” of Falls Creek Church, had a “branch” congregation meeting in Person County, North Carolina, called Bethel, or Head of Mayo, by the late 1770s.

¹⁶North Country Line, 1772 (Caswell County); New Light, 1775 (Wake County); Tabb’s Creek, 1775 (Granville County); Wolf Island, 1777 (Rockingham County); Flat River, 1777 (Person County); South Country Line, or Waters of Haw River, 1783 (Orange County). The names and date are those of John Asplund, *The Universal Register of the Baptist Denomination in North America, for the Years 1790, 1791, 1792, 1793, and Part of 1794* (Boston: John W. Folsom, 1794), pp. 36ff.

¹⁷Grassy Creek Church is an exception. After the division of the Sandy Creek Association in 1770, Grassy Creek chose to affiliate with the General Association of Separate Baptists in Virginia.

¹⁸These were Reedy Creek [Upper Fishing Creek], Warren County, admitted in 1772; Sandy Creek, Franklin County, admitted in 1776; Swift’s Creek [Three Creeks], Wake County, admitted in 1776; and Tar River, Granville County, admitted in 1777.

¹⁹Matrimony Creek, in northwest Rockingham County. The stream from which this church gained its name was said by William Byrd to have been so designated "by an unfortunate marry'd man, because it was exceedingly noisy and impetuous." See Powell, *op. cit.*, p. 316. Asplund dated the constitution of Matrimony Creek Church as 1780.

²⁰Grassy Creek Church.

²¹These churches were New Light, Flat River, Tabb's Creek, North Country Line, South Country Line (Waters of Haw River), Tanner's, Wolf Island (Rockingham County), Mill Pond (Gardner's Meeting House, in Warren County), and Gile's Creek (Franklin County).

²²Semple, *op. cit.*, pp. 68-69.

²³*Ibid.*, pp. 78ff. It was at the October 1774 meeting that the district elected and set apart Samuel Harris to the office of "Apostle" among them. Semple notes that his work was to "pervade the churches; to do, or at least to see to, the work of ordination, and to set in order [the things] that were wanting . . ." This experiment in restoring the New Testament office of the Apostle proved to be short-lived and quite controversial. After only one year, it was agreed that "the office of apostles, like that of prophets, was the effect of miraculous inspiration and did not belong to ordinary times."

²⁴*Ibid.*, pp. 82-86.

²⁵*Ibid.*, pp. 92, 255.

²⁶*Ibid.*, p. 256.

²⁷Watkin's Meeting House [or Miller's Ferry], on Dan River, was located in Halifax County, Virginia. Later called Buffaloe, it is not to be confused with another church of the same name in Mecklenburg County, Virginia, to which further reference is made below.

²⁸This Buffaloe Church, a daughter of Grassy Creek, is located just north of the North Carolina line in Mecklenburg County, Virginia. Buffaloe remained an affiliate of Roanoke District Association until 1811, when she asked for dismission to unite with the Flat River Association "for convenience sake."

²⁹*Minutes of the Proceedings of the Roanoke District Association, Virginia, Convened at Grassy Creek Meeting House, May 1789* (Hillsborough, North Carolina: R. Ferguson, Printer, [n.d.]), p. 8. While there are only scattered issues of the printed *Minutes* extant for the early years of the Roanoke District Association, the manuscript Minute Book, 1789-1830, has been preserved. It is from this Minute Book that further quotations are taken, and referred to as *RD Minutes*, with the date indicated.

The "disorder" in Tar River Church had not been resolved by the time this committee made its report in October 1789: "The presbytery appt. to wait on Tarr River church report they attended agreeable to order, though some certain circumstances forbid their finally settling the affair, yet the prospect of their being reclaimed and joining the union was very hopeful."

This committee, being continued, reported as follows at the next session of the Association: ". . . They attended according to appointment; that a great majority are reclaimed, appear to be orderly members, and have actually joined Flat Creek Church in union with us." *RD Minutes*, October 1789, p. 23; June 1790, p. 37.

³⁰Brief sketches of some of these individuals will be found in Devin, *op. cit.*

³¹Flat River Church, Person County, was first represented by a delegation at the meeting of Roanoke District Association, October 24-26, 1789. Country Line Church, Caswell County, was first represented as an independent congregation at this session of the Association, June 12-15, 1790. For several years previously, Country Line had been an "arm," or "branch," of Fall Creek Church, Pittsylvania County, Virginia.

³²The date of the constitution of Flat Creek Church is given in Asplund, *op. cit.*, p. 59. This church was dissolved in 1792, presumably with the restoration of peace and harmony among the members of Tar River Church.

³³*RD Minutes*, October 1793; May 1794.

³⁴These fifteen churches, with their respective memberships, were: Eno(e), 150; Flat River, 87; Grassy Creek, 150; Haw River, 78; Hogan's Creek, 52; Island Ford, 56; Lick Fork, 52; Lower South Hico, 38; Nut Bush, 82; North Country Line, 79; South Country Line, 124; Tabb's Creek, 20; Tar River, 55; Upper South Hico, 67; and Wolf Island, 80.

Of these churches, Nut Bush and Eno(e) are not included in Asplund's *Register* of 1794. "Enoe River," in Orange and Granville counties, is listed, however, in the earlier *Register* of 1791, with James Hefferlin (Heflin) listed as minister (in 1790). A further notation indicates that Hefferlin (Heflin) had been excommunicated by the church in 1791.

Eno(e) first appears among the churches of the Roanoke District Association in May 1793. There is an indication, however, that she had previously been in union with the short-lived Dan River District Association (1791-92). The *RD Minutes* for May 1793, p. 85, note: "Brethren Pickett, Roberts, Dorriss & Vass were appointed a committee to visit Tabb's Creek and Eno churches, who have absented themselves from us, enquire into circumstances, and reasons for their neglect, and make report to next Assn."

Nut Bush is probably to be identified with that congregation under the pastoral care of Thomas Gardner, meeting at Mill Pond Meeting House (Asplund) in the northern section of Warren County. See Thomas J. Taylor, *A History of the Tar River Association, 1830-1921* ([n.p.; n.d.]), pp. 128-29, 133, 151, 155-56, for accounts of the early interrelationships among the congregations worshipping at Brown's, Gardner's, Mill Pond, and Tanner's meeting houses (Warren County)—all under the pastoral care of the Reverend Thomas Gardner.

³⁵*RD Minutes*, October 1794, p. 110.

³⁶*Ibid.*

³⁷The one exception is the church on "Head of Mayo" (Bethel, in Person County) which continued to be affiliated with the Roanoke District Association until 1825. Affiliation with the Virginia association was probably maintained because of the close connectional ties and the geographical proximity of the "Bethel" congregation to Mayo Church (Reedy Bottom), Halifax County, Virginia. Reuben Pickett served as pastor to both these congregations until his death in 1824.

II. PERPETUATING UNION AND COMMUNION AMONG THE CHURCHES, 1794-1844

From a long series of experiences, We the churches of Jesus Christ, being regularly baptized upon the profession of our Faith in Christ, are convinced of the necessity of a combination of Churches, in order to perpetuate a union and communion amongst us; and preserve and maintain a correspondance(sic) with each other in our union: we therefore, propose to maintain and keep the orders and Rules of an Association according to the following form of government.¹

Thus, reads the Preamble to the earliest extant Constitution of the Flat River Baptist Association. To “perpetuate a union and communion” among the churches continued to be the primary objective of the Association throughout the first half-century of her history. This particular “combination” of churches fostered this objective at her annual meetings² through preaching and exhortation, through attention to certain Queries and other concerns raised by these churches, and through the exchange of Corresponding Messengers with sister associations. In addition, those persons³ who comprised the assembly of delegates appointed to each annual associational meeting sought to ensure union and communion among their fellow Baptists “back in the churches” by drafting and appending a Circular Letter—either doctrinal or practical in import—to the records of their annual proceedings. Occasional “Sectional Meetings” were also scheduled as a means of extending the kinds of benefits provided by the annual meeting to a wider circle of Baptists among the scattered churches of the Union. Yet, harbingers of change for the future life and structure of the Association—those objects which a later version of the Constitution would encompass under the rubric of “benevolent objects”⁴—were in evidence from the earliest extant records of her proceedings. These became increasingly significant as the Flat River Baptist Association approached the conclusion of her first fifty years.

A. A New Combination of Churches

The Roanoke District Association had dismissed her North Carolina member churches in October 1794 in order that these might form the Flat River Association. The first session of this new body was appointed for August 8-10, 1795, at Flat River Meeting House, Person County. However, tradition has it that a preliminary organizational meeting was held at Gardner’s Meeting House, Warren County, in late 1794, with the following ten churches represented: Grassy Creek, Tabb’s Creek, Sherman’s [Tar River], Tanner’s, Gardner’s, Eno, Camp Creek, Lock’s [Concord], Cedar Creek, and Neuse [New Light]. The combined membership of these ten churches would have been approximately 650.⁵

Earliest extant records for a meeting of the Flat River Association are those for the session of 1805, when delegates from eighteen churches convened at Wheeler's Meeting House [Upper South Hyco Church], Person County, November 9-11. Unfortunately, the names of those churches which were represented by delegates, or messengers, in 1805 were not recorded.⁶ It was at this particular session of the Association, however, that the Clerk noted:

At the request of several churches, by their letters and on account of the length of our district, we have agreed to divide by a line from Jones' Bridge on Hico [River] along the road by Person Court House and Pain's(sic) Onrey(sic) to Hillsborough, the lower part to retain the name of Flat River, . . . and the upper part to be cald(sic) Country Line Association.⁷

A later tradition claimed that those "several churches" noted above were ten in number, representing the westernmost congregations then in affiliation with the Flat River Association. Moreover, that same tradition maintained that ten churches remained in union with the Flat River Association following the agreement to this division. Thus, the Flat River Association would have been comprised of twenty affiliated churches in 1805, with an approximate total membership of 1,800.⁸

By 1844—the end of the period now under consideration—Flat River Association reported seventeen churches, with a combined membership of 2,215. Of the ten churches which had been represented at the organizational meeting of the Association in 1794, only four continued in communion in 1844: Concord [Lock's Meeting House in 1794], New Light [Neuse in 1794], Grassy Creek, and Tabb's Creek.⁹ The additional churches, with the date of the admission of each into associational fellowship, were: Buffaloe, 1811; Island Creek, 1821; Brassfield's, 1823; Hester's, 1824; Mt. Moriah, 1824; Bethel, 1825; Olive Branch, 1832; Corinth, 1835; Floyd's [Poplar Creek after 1844], 1840; Fellowship, 1840; Mt. Zion, 1841; and Shady Hill, 1841.¹⁰

On the basis of limited data available, certain conjectures may be made with regard to the internal strength of these churches during the first half-century of the life of the Association. The decade of the 1790s appears to have been a season in which the churches declined in vitality, if not in terms of actual memberships—a condition which was prevalent throughout the young nation. Ministers of the region characterized the state of religion in their midst in terms of "the grate(sic) Declention(sic) of Religion";¹¹ "a cold and languishing time in Religion";¹² and "in some places melancholy and truly lamentable."¹³ The letters of the churches to the annual meeting of the Association in 1798 were reported to be "full of complaints" regarding the languishing spiritual conditions prevailing among them.¹⁴ Such languishing conditions were not to continue, however, far beyond the end of that decade.

In a letter to Isaac Backus, dated February 6, 1797, Elder Thomas Gardner had pled with his New England brother:

Pray for us in North Carolina that the Lord(sic) would rain down Righteousness from heaven upon us, that his poor sion(sic) mont(sic) once more travil(sic) and bring forth sons and daughters for god. . . .

Within the span of two years, there were indications that the “fare better day”¹⁵ towards which Gardner had implored the prayers of his fellow minister was beginning to dawn. “. . . we have some time past had a blessed Revival of Religion amongst us,” Gardner wrote in early 1799, “and at the present some are under powerfull(sic) Convictions and are day and night Crying for Mercy.”¹⁶ Similar reports of revival, or impending revival, were also echoed in the correspondence of some of Gardner’s contemporary ministers in the Flat River Association, including George Roberts,¹⁷ Josiah Rucks,¹⁸ and Thomas Vass.¹⁹

In 1801-02, a report was communicated from Caswell County of a “glorious revival” taking place in that section of North Carolina. While originating among the Presbyterians and Methodists, the fruits of revival were soon in evidence among the Baptists as well. That Great Revival—of which glowing accounts had been received from Kentucky and Tennessee, especially—was now affecting the older sections of the country also.²⁰

To the extent that baptismal statistics are indicative of spiritual vitality, the years 1820-24, 1830-32, and 1839-41, also appear to have been particularly significant ones in the life and ministry of the churches. Associational statistics for 1823 noted 264 baptisms among the fifteen affiliated churches during the course of the preceding year. Moreover, the constitution of several new churches within the bounds of the Association would indicate a period of exceptional vitality of Christian witness during the early years of the decade of the 1820s. Island Creek (1820), New Bethel (1822), Brassfield’s (1823), Hester’s (1823), and Mt. Moriah (1823) were all constituted as independent churches and added to the associational roster during the span of four years.²¹

Grassy Creek Church reported 104 baptisms in her annual letter to the Association in 1832. In that same year, Hester’s reported 56 baptisms; Mt. Moriah, 39; Olive Branch, 29; and Island Creek, 24.²² Several of the churches reported significant additions in 1839-40, led by New Light with 53.²³

By 1844, eleven of the seventeen associated churches could report memberships in excess of 100. The largest of these were Hester’s, 287; Grassy Creek, 277; and Buffaloe, whose membership totaled 259.²⁴ Eleven different ministers were engaged in pastoral labors among these churches, with their ministrations supplemented, increasingly, through the itinerancies of missionaries and other agents under the employ of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina.²⁵

B. Preaching, Praise, and Exhortation

It was by design, not accident, that the early sessions of the Flat River Baptist Association were scheduled to encompass the Christian Sabbath, or Lord’s Day. The assemblage of ministers at the annual associational meetings guaranteed the provision of preaching on the Lord’s Day, not only at the site of the Association itself, but also at meetings which were appointed for these ministering brethren throughout the immediate countryside. Preaching, praise, and exhortation were considered vital to the union and communion of those who gathered in occasional association from the widespread churches. These same elements were deemed to be especially valuable for that larger assembly of the curious and/or inquiring, for whom the annual associational meeting represented a major religious and social event of the year.²⁶

Preaching

The “Rules for the Government” of the Association called for the meeting to be opened and closed with prayer.²⁷ As a matter of common practice, however, the preaching of an Introductory Sermon generally preceded the official “convening” of the delegates who had been appointed by their respective associated churches. The preacher for the Introductory Sermon was selected a year in advance, and—usually—was one whose years of experience in the ministry entitled him to the hearing and respect of the assembly. Thus, of the twenty Introductory Sermons for which there is record of appointment between 1805-1844, William Hill Jordan was appointed to preach six such sermons. Thomas Gardner, Zachariah Allen, and Willoughby Hudgins were chosen to deliver Introductory Sermons on two occasions each. Others were preached by Reuben Pickett, Balaam Ezell, Thomas Crocker, Abner W. Clopton, James Ferrell, Allen S. Wynne, James King, Samuel Wait, and William Jones.²⁸

After organizing for business with the selection of officers,²⁹ “seating” those chosen to represent the several churches in association,³⁰ and recognizing the presence of any Corresponding Messengers from other Baptist bodies, the Association then proceeded to the appointment of preachers for services on the Lord’s Day. It was not until then that a committee was named to arrange an agenda of business matters to be considered on Monday, following the day of worship.³¹ The impression was given that divine worship was scheduled, deliberately, as both prelude to and preparation for any matters of business which were to be conducted during the associational meeting. No business was ever conducted on Sunday!

Preaching on the Lord’s Day usually afforded occasion for the congregation(s) to hear visiting brethren from sister associations; or—at a later date—agents or representatives of various Baptist institutions. Thus, of the fifty-nine ministers whose names are recorded among those “appointed to preach on the Sabbath,” 1805-1844, thirty-nine of these were Corresponding Messengers and/or other visitors to the Association. Among the more popular visiting preachers were Thomas Crocker and James Dennis, frequent messengers from Raleigh Association;³² Stephen Pleasant, from Beulah Association;³³ and John B. Smith, from the Meherrin and Concord (VA) associations.³⁴ William Hill Jordan and James King were also frequent Sabbath Day preachers from among those who ministered to churches within the bounds of the Flat River Association.³⁵

Praise

In addition to indicating the Biblical texts on which the preachers based their sermons, associational clerks often took occasion to comment upon the impressions made upon the congregation(s)—or on the Clerk—during these services of divine worship. The Clerk might also express the hope that a divine blessing would yet ensue from the exercises of the day. Of the Sunday services in 1840 it was written: “During the whole services, we had a *very* large and attentive congregation, and at the close, several came to be prayed for. We hope that much good will be accomplished from that day’s labors [*italics in the original*].”³⁶

Again, in 1842: “Assembled at the stand. . . . We have never witnessed a larger or more attentive congregation; we pray that a blessing may attend the labors of this day.”³⁷ A young observer who had attended portions of the 1817 session of the Association was even more descriptive. Regarding the message of the Reverend William Brown, a visitor from Country Line Association, he noted: “[It was] fraught with truth, dressed in simplicity, & expressed in power suited to alarm sinners, edify Christians, & comfort distressed souls.”³⁸

On the other hand, the Clerk could be somewhat more restrained in his comments. Thus, Abner W. Clopton—himself one of the preaching appointees for Lord’s Day services—wrote in 1819: “The congregation was very large and in part orderly and attentive.”³⁹ The associational Clerk in 1830 noted: “The day was unpleasant—there was no particular excitement; yet we hope some good will result.”⁴⁰ In the following year, however, the Clerk reported:

The Brethren appointed to [preach at] the stage met a large concourse, who were entertained, first by Elder Philemon Bennett, from the 107th Psalm and seventh verse, ‘And he led some forth by the right way, that they might go to a city of habitation.’ . . . We hope from the zeal of the preachers in connection with the promise of God, that the seed sown, will in due season produce a plentiful harvest.⁴¹

Exhortation

The reference above to the “Brethren appointed to preach at the stage” directs attention to another feature of early associational meetings which illustrates the importance of worship on such occasions. Since the host meeting house could not begin to accommodate the large crowds who were attracted to these annual gatherings, a “stage,” or “stand,” was erected—often within the protective shade of a nearby grove of trees—from which preachers delivered sermons and exhortations⁴² to the congregations assembled on the Sabbath. But this same stage or stand also served a useful purpose beyond that of providing a platform and pulpit for the conduct of services on the Lord’s Day.

During the course of the Association—that is, while appointed delegates from the several churches were busily engaged in conducting matters of business—a succession of ministers would mount the stage to address the larger crowds who had gathered and were mingling around the meeting place. Since such exercises were not part of the official transactions of the Association, infrequent mention is made of them in the record of annual associational *Minutes*. One such reference, however, was made by Abner W. Clopton, Clerk of the Flat River Association in 1819: “It must not be omitted, that while the Association was engaged in business Elder Holt and brother Jacob Creath preached at the Stage.”⁴³ That lone reference is probably indicative of the practice which prevailed for several decades.

C. Corresponding Messengers and Circular Letters

Upon certifying those delegates (messengers) who had been appointed by the several churches in their union, the Association turned to the recognition of Corresponding Messengers who were present from sister associations. An appropriate brother was then selected to prepare a Circular Letter which was to be appended to the official records of the transactions of the body.

Correspondence

Corresponding Messengers to the annual Association certified their appointment through the presentation of a Corresponding Letter and/or the presentation of copies of the *Minutes* of that body which had appointed them. Upon proper certification, such correspondents were invited to “sit” with the Association, and to join in the deliberations of the body—but without the privilege of voting on those deliberations.

Corresponding Messengers were usually chosen from among the ministers serving churches within an association’s geographical borders. It has already been noted that such visiting brethren were called upon frequently to provide preaching and exhortation during these weekend meetings. But, a Corresponding Messenger might also be called upon to deliver the Introductory Sermon in the absence, or delay, of the minister previously appointed to that task.⁴⁴ Or, he could be prevailed upon to serve the body as Moderator.⁴⁵ In the case of a particularly difficult or sensitive issue, he could also be called upon to serve on a committee charged with the task of seeking a resolution to that issue or question.⁴⁶

A common heritage, geographical proximity, and continuing “union” in doctrine and/or polity were the primary contributing factors involved in both the initiation and maintenance of correspondence between associations of churches. Accordingly, it was a foregone conclusion that the “parent” and “grandparent” associations to the Flat River—i.e., Roanoke Association and Sandy Creek Association—would be among those who would be most frequently represented at sessions of the Flat River Association through the presence of Corresponding Messengers. Likewise, those “daughter” associations—composed, in part, of churches which had formerly been affiliated with the Flat River Association—would maintain continued union through correspondence with their “parent” organization. Thus, Raleigh Association (1805), Country Line Association (1806), Tar River Association (1830), and Beulah Association (1833), were generally represented by their correspondents at the annual meetings of the Flat River Association.⁴⁷

Just as each session of the Flat River Association welcomed those Corresponding Messengers in attendance, and cherished their contributions to her deliberations and her worship, so she was careful to reciprocate by appointing correspondents to represent her at the annual gatherings of sister associations with whom she was in communion. Such Corresponding Messengers were expected to report on their “appointments” at the succeeding session of the body whom they had been delegated to represent. Moreover, just as the delegates and visitors assembled for any annual meeting of the Flat River Association were treated to the preaching and exhortations of visiting ministers

in their midst, so her sister associations often called upon correspondents in attendance from Flat River to provide preaching and exhortation during their annual meetings as well.⁴⁸

However, correspondence between associations was sometimes disrupted or discontinued altogether. The decade of the 1830s—with its increasingly bitter division and dissension among Baptists over the propriety of theological seminaries, missions, Sunday Schools, etc.—witnessed the occasional severance of correspondence.⁴⁹ Yet, as long as this practice was maintained, it proved to be a suitable and fruitful means of extending acquaintance, union, and communion beyond the bounds of the local, or district, association.⁵⁰

Circular Letters

While the exchange of Corresponding Messengers served to facilitate intercommunion *between* associations, the practice of appending a Circular Letter to the annual *Minutes* of the Flat River Association was designed to foster greater union and communion among the several churches *within* that particular union. The writer of the annual Circular Letter, having been appointed for his task a year in advance, was given considerable liberty on the selection of a subject, or theme, on which to expound. However, each such letter had to have the approbation of the assembled delegates before it was ordered to be appended to the official *Minutes* which were to be distributed among the churches.⁵¹

Subjects treated in such Circular Letters ranged from the exposition of some doctrinal theme to exhortations on the importance of maintaining family worship, the duty of supporting the ministry, or the causes and consequences of backsliding.⁵² Whenever it seemed appropriate—or, if the appointed writer failed to complete his assignment—Circular Letters might be borrowed and/or adapted from other sources.⁵³ In 1830, the Association decided to “insert in lieu of a Circular Letter, the Constitution and Rules of Decorum with sundry Amendments, which amendments are offered to the Churches for their approbation.”⁵⁴

Sentiments which were expressed and disseminated by means of the Circular Letter—whether doctrinal or hortatory—represented a means of “edifying” the churches, and of uniting them more closely in thought and practice. By the same token, such letters accorded their authors a forum for expressing their understandings of various elements or aspects of the Christian’s faith, life, and duty, far beyond the local congregation(s) to whom they regularly ministered. However, as the Association shifted its major emphasis more and more towards the promotion of the benevolent objects of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, the use of a Circular Letter was soon abandoned. No reference was found to the preparation of a Circular Letter among Flat River Baptists after 1845.

D. Queries From the Churches

An assembly of delegates from churches of like faith and order afforded an excellent forum for the discussion of complex or controversial issues which had not been, or possibly could not be, resolved by the local congregation. Such issues were submitted

to the Association in the form of “Queries,” or formal questions, with certain guidelines imposed for the conduct of associational deliberation thereon.⁵⁵ Answers or resolutions offered to such queries—while strictly advisory in nature—served to instruct local congregations in their further deliberations on the same, or similar issues. Such answers represented a broad consensus of opinion which had been arrived at by brethren whose approach to the issues in question presumably combined a breadth of knowledge, experience, and some measure of objectivity which might be lacking within the bounds of any local church fellowship.

Theological Issues

As strange as it might appear, theological issues were seldom the subject of Queries which were deliberated in associational gatherings. Or, at least, major theological issues—on which there might be justifiably differing opinions among Baptists—were seldom admitted for discussion on the terms which the “Rules of Government” dictated for the admission of such Queries for open discussion. It was probably the case that such discussion was considered the prerogative of the local church, rather than of the association as an advisory council. Moreover, theological discussions could prove to be divisive in a way that ethical and disciplinary issues were not.

However, Queries were raised occasionally relative to some puzzling theological teaching, as was the case with the following which was proposed by a “Select Committee” in 1811: “Is any Minister in our connection justifiable in publickly(sic) and positively asserting that the soul of Christ was in hell during the time his body lay in the grave?” This particular Query was answered in the negative.⁵⁶

Ethical and Disciplinary Issues

However, the vast majority of those queries which were introduced and debated during the annual sessions of the Flat River Association were related to matters of appropriate Christian obligation, conduct, or discipline. Thus, the following query was introduced by Thomas Halliburton, delegate from Bethel Church, in 1830: “Is it right for a minister to continue to preach, who has been tried by his church for immoral conduct, and forgiven by a majority, but a respectable minority remains grieved?” The Association responded, “We think not.”⁵⁷

Or again: “Is it consistent with Christian principle, for professing christians(sic) to attend balls or dancing parties?” Answer: “We consider such conduct to be wrong and entirely inconsistent with the spirit and principle of the Gospel.”⁵⁸

In some cases, appeal was made for associational guidance in matters which could affect the harmony existing between two sister churches. Thus, the matter of union between two such churches was addressed in response to the following query which was submitted by the delegates from Concord Church:

Will a church, under any circumstances act correctly, to receive an excluded member from a sister church, without said member first obtaining fellowship with the church from which he or she were(sic) excluded?

Answer: "We think to preserve union, the matter had better be brought before the Association, before the member is received into any other church."⁵⁹

Regrettably, the official associational records give only the wording of a Query and the consensus at which the body finally arrived, without indication of the nature, extent, and character of the debate which such a question had prompted. Nonetheless, it may safely be assumed that rather spirited discussion often ensued upon the introduction of certain queries, the principal features of which would have been common to issues which had been deliberated in the periodic conference sessions of each of the associated churches.⁶⁰

E. Sectional Meetings and Standing Presbyteries

Two additional features of the life of the Flat River Baptist Association during her earlier years pertained to provisions for occasional Sectional Meetings and for a Standing Presbytery to serve at the call of the churches during the interim between annual meetings. Originally designed to extend the benefits of associational fellowship to the largest possible circle of individuals and churches, the Sectional Meeting was a forerunner of the later Ministers' and Deacons' Meeting⁶¹ and/or the Union Meeting.⁶² The Standing Presbytery enjoyed a checkered existence until 1838, at which time the provision for such a body was deleted from the Constitution of the Association.

Sectional Meetings

The scheduling of Sectional Meetings within the broad geographical bounds of the Flat River Association appears to have originated in the 1820s, although the parent Roanoke District Association had been "appointing" such occasional meetings for several years previous to this date. The earliest reference to such meetings in the extant Flat River records is found in 1828, with the brief notation of the associational Clerk, Willoughby Hudgins: "Appointed section Meetings, and brethren to attend them, etc." —⁶³

The *Minutes* for the following year, however, reflected the general pattern of designating the geographical sections, or divisions, and the churches located in each; the time and place for each scheduled Sectional Meeting; and those ministers who were appointed to attend these on behalf of the larger associational body:

Brethren were appointed to attend the Section Meetings at the following times and places (*viz*)—Elders W. H. Jordan and W[illoughby] Hudgins, to attend the Northern Section Meeting to be held at Grassy creek(sic) on Sattuday(sic) before the fourth sunday(sic) in May; Elders James Ferrel(sic) and Thomas Freeman, to attend the eastern section meeting, to be held at Tabb's Creek, on Sattuday(sic) before the second sunday(sic) in August; Elders Z. Allen and James King to attend the western section meeting, to be held at Eno, on Sattuday(sic) before the third sunday(sic) in August.⁶⁴

The *Minutes* for 1830 arranged the roster of sixteen affiliated churches according to one of four geographical "sections" to which each had been assigned, as follows: Western Section—Eno, Camp Creek, Mt. Moriah, and New Bethel; Southern

Section—Neuse, Lock’s (Concord), Cedar Creek, and Tar River; Northern Section—Bethel, Buffaloe, Grassy Creek, and Hester’s; and Eastern Section—Tanner’s, Island Creek, Tabb’s Creek, and Brassfield’s.⁶⁵

Those ministers who were appointed to attend each of these Sectional Meetings were expected to report on their attendance at the succeeding annual session of the Association; or, if not, to give satisfactory reason for their failure to attend. Although no records of such Sectional Meetings within the bounds of the Flat River Association has been preserved, it is probable that the agenda for such gatherings reflected an “association in miniature.” If so, then considerable time would have been devoted to preaching, exhortation, praise, and the discussion of queries, or other matters of concern relative to the continued spiritual growth and welfare of the congregations represented.⁶⁶

It might have been expected that the scheduling of such occasional meetings would have met with ready acceptance and good attendance on the part of the churches within each Section. However, the case appears to have been otherwise. The Association dispensed with further appointment of Sectional Meetings in 1839, upon vote of the delegates assembled for that session of the body.⁶⁷ Division of the churches into geographical sections was resumed by action of the Association in 1841. However, associational records indicated no further appointments for Sectional Meetings after 1838.⁶⁸

Standing Presbyteries

Unlike the occasional Sectional Meetings, the Constitution of the Association made specific provision for a Standing Presbytery, and delineated its role or function. Article 15, Section 7 stated:

They [the associational delegates] shall have power. . . . To appoint a presbytery who shall be authorized to attend to the calls of the churches at all times untill(sic) the next association, to ordain preachers or constitute Churches, without putting the said presbytery to any inconvenience.⁶⁹

The primary objectives of the presbytery were to assist the churches in judging the gifts and qualifications of candidates seeking ordination to the pastoral office, and to preserve “good order” among the churches.⁷⁰

References to a request for a presbytery, or for other associational judgment with regard to the propriety of ordaining a particular ministerial candidate are to be found in the *Minutes* for 1805, 1812, and 1819, respectively. However, the earliest reference to a report of a Standing Presbytery, and to appointment of another to function during the ensuing year, is not found until 1828: “Brethren composing the Standing Presbytery reported satisfactory(sic), proceeded [to appoint] another for the present(sic) year.”⁷¹

One year later, the following action was taken: “*Resolved*, that we request the churches composing this Association, to certify in their next letter, whether they approve or disapprove of a Standing Presbytery.”⁷² The subsequent report of the churches in 1830 showed ten in favor of the continued appointment of a Standing Presbytery, three churches opposed, one “silent,” and one whose opinion would be “submitted to [that of] the majority.”⁷³

At issue was a matter of polity which had implications for the autonomy of the local church. Does the appointment of a Standing Presbytery, which is *answerable* to the Association and *provided* for the churches, threaten to usurp the authority of the local church, whose prerogative it is to call and ordain? Should presbyteries be formed *only* upon call, or request, of the local church? Regardless of the good intent of the Association in providing for the services of a Standing Presbytery, it is evident that some of her affiliated members looked upon the appointment of such associational bodies as an infringement upon the liberties and prerogatives of the local churches.

No reports of a Standing Presbytery are found after 1832. A notation to the Constitution and Rules of Government—inserted in the *Minutes* of 1838 in lieu of the usual Circular Letter—observed: “The clause [in the Constitution] authorizing a Presbytery is omitted, as a Presbytery has long been dispensed with by the Association.”⁷⁴

By 1842, however, the Association had reaffirmed her interest in the rite of ordination, while acknowledging some prerogatives of the individual churches in this matter. Upon proper motion, it was:

Resolved, That whenever it shall be the case that a church shall wish that any of her members [are] to be ordained to the work of the ministry, such persons shall be sent to the Association to be examined before them, and if in the judgment of the Association he shall be found qualified for ordination to be ordained by a Presbytery appointed for that purpose, *either* in the Association *or* at the church which sends up the candidate for ordination, as the church may prefer[italics not in the original].⁷⁵

While both the Association and her several churches were served ably by succeeding occasional presbyteries under the terms of this resolution, the continued provision of a Standing Presbytery—constitutionally authorized to act on behalf of the Association—probably implied an ecclesiastical authority which seemed too “high church” for many of these independent minded Baptists.⁷⁶

F. Harbingers of a New Day

The newly established *Biblical Recorder* took note of the annual meeting of the Flat River Association, October 18-20, 1834, with the editor adding the following comment:

We judge from the proceedings that these brethren are in peace among themselves, and that they are moving onward in the work of the Lord. *We should have been pleased, however, to have seen in their operations a little more of the spirit of the age* [italics not in the original].⁷⁷

By “the spirit of the age,” the author meant a more decidedly positive and unequivocal concern for the advocacy of missions, education, and other related benevolences which were then claiming the attention of the recently constituted Baptist State Convention of North Carolina.

Yet, while editor Thomas Meredith may have thought that progress toward such concerns was being evidenced too slowly, it was clearly in evidence. The Association, its patrons and churches, had previously become acquainted with such mission agencies

as the North Carolina Baptist General Meeting of Correspondence, the North Carolina Baptist Society for Foreign and Domestic Missions, the Baptist General Convention (Triennial Convention), and the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina. Their relationships to such institutions constituted harbingers of change towards a new day—a day which would add a major new dimension to associational business and concerns after 1845.

General Meeting of Correspondence

If experience had dictated the wisdom and necessity of perpetuating union and communion among those churches within the bounds of a particular association, why not extend such benefits throughout a union of associations? A proposal to this effect, originating in the Chowan Baptist Association in 1809, led to the formation of the North Carolina Baptist General Meeting of Correspondence. The initial session of this organization was eventually held at Falls of Tar River Baptist Church, Nash County, June 7-9, 1811. Meetings of this union of associations were scheduled and conducted annually thereafter through 1821.⁷⁸

Those representatives of the Flat River Association who had attended the initial session of the General Meeting in 1811 placed copies of the *Minutes* of that body into the hands of those delegates assembled for the annual meeting of the Association at Eno(e) Meeting House, October 25-27, 1811. Whereupon, the delegates in attendance:

Resolved, That the Churches which compose this Association be consulted thereon until next Association. In the mean time, brethren James Ferrell and William W. Farthing to be appointed [our] delegates to next General Meeting. . . .⁷⁹

Letters received from the churches the following year indicated disapprobation of the proposed constitution of the General Meeting. At this point, however, the delegates suggested several amendments to the proposed constitution, recommending its adoption—as amended—to the churches.⁸⁰ Three ministers and one layman were then named to represent the Flat River Association at the General Meeting scheduled for 1813.⁸¹

Although official associational representatives had been appointed to attend the first three sessions of the General Meeting, the division of sentiment among the churches issued in the Association's refusal to name such messengers during the years 1814, 1815, and 1816. However, these years found the General Meeting attended by visitors from the Flat River Association, who gave assurances of considerable sympathy with its aims and objectives.

Roland Cooke, pastor of Lock's [Concord] Church, and James Weathers, pastor of Neuse [New Light] Church, were present and invited to sit with the General Meeting of 1814. Moreover, the Proceedings of the Meeting noted:

The Flat River [Association] sent Elder Weathers as a visitant (and a letter was prepared but did not come to hand) to show their friendship to it [i.e., the General Meeting], altho' they could not see eye to eye with us as to become a member of this Meeting at present.⁸²

Again, in 1816:

A friendly letter from the church at Tabb's Creek, Granville County, was handed in by brother Hester with \$0.60 cts. as a bounty to the fund of this meeting, which was thankfully received and the brother invited to a seat.⁸³

The Minutes of the General Meeting of 1816 also recorded the following:

A letter was handed in by Elder Thomas Vass, from the Flat River Association, informing us that she had requested the Churches composing that Association to signify in their letters to the next [Association], whether or not they would agree to adopt the Constitution of this Meeting, and unite with the same; recommending Elders Vass, Gardner, and Battle as helps to sit with us; . . .⁸⁴

Thereafter, Flat River Association appears to have identified herself, officially, with the aims and objectives of the General Meeting, despite the continued objections of some of the members within her ranks.⁸⁵

Society for Foreign and Domestic Missions

More immediately related to the promotion of the missionary enterprise at home and abroad was the North Carolina Baptist Society for Foreign and Domestic Missions, organized at Shell Bank Meeting House, Edgecombe County, March 19, 1814. Its operations over the succeeding dozen years served to acquaint Baptists—including those among the churches in union with Flat River Association—with the claims of missions, and to enlist their support on behalf of those claims.⁸⁶ A few individuals and churches within the bounds of the Association were numbered among the leaders of the Society.

Foremost among those individuals who were actively engaged in fostering the work of the Society for Foreign and Domestic Missions were Elisha Battle,⁸⁷ pastor at Grassy Creek and Tabb's Creek; Abner Wentworth Clopton,⁸⁸ a member of Mt. Carmel Church and—later—a pastor in Country Line Association; William Watkins Farthing,⁸⁹ pastor of Eno and Mt. Moriah churches; Thomas Crocker,⁹⁰ pastor at Lock's [Concord]; and William B. Worrell,⁹¹ pastor at Grassy Creek and Island Creek churches. Missionary societies, auxiliary to the North Carolina Society, had been formed at Eno and Mt. Moriah prior to 1824, with various other churches and/or individuals within the bounds of the Association listed as subscribers to the work of the Society.⁹²

Baptist General Convention

Upon the formation of the Baptist General Convention for Foreign Missions in 1814, its Agent—Luther Rice—conceived the plan for enlisting each association of Baptists throughout the United States in correspondence with that Convention. Accordingly, Rice attempted communication with each association in an effort to realize his goal. He was able to report the name of a Correspondent in the Flat River Association by May 1815.⁹³ Thereafter, correspondence was maintained between the Association and the Board of Managers of the Baptist General Convention for at least the next ten years.⁹⁴

Moreover, Rice's travels on behalf of the Convention brought him within the bounds of the Flat River Association on at least five different occasions, although he appears to have been present at only one meeting of this body of churches. His reception at that particular meeting is recorded in a communication with the Corresponding Secretary of the Board of Missions, as follows:

At the *Flat River Association* whose last meeting was in Mecklenburg county, Va., on the 27th of April [1816], opportunity again invited me to deliver a missionary sermon, and a public collection was taken up for missionary purposes. Had circumstances been such as to have permitted me to remain on the Sabbath, no doubt the collection would have been better. Taken as it was at the opening of the session, the people unapprised of it before hand, the amount, as well as the fact itself, exhibits pleasing evidence of the disposition of the Association, and of the people of the neighborhood, to assist the benevolent and evangelical operations of the Board [italics in the original].⁹⁵

Not only were the interests of the General Convention presented through the itinerancy of her Agent and through the Annual Reports of the Board of Managers, they could also be read about through the pages of those literary publications which began to be circulated under the auspices of the same Board, its patrons and supporters.⁹⁶

Baptist State Convention of North Carolina

While no one from those churches in union with the Flat River Association had been present at the organizational meeting of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina in 1830, the purposes and objectives of the Convention grew in increasing favor with these churches during the succeeding years. In 1832, Samuel Wait, General Agent of the Convention, "had an interview with the Flat River Association, and explained to that body also the business in which I am engaged."⁹⁷ During the following Winter and Spring, he also had occasion to present the interests of the Convention before most of the churches in Granville County, presumably being accorded a cordial hearing. The session of the Convention for 1833 enrolled delegates representing three churches, or missionary societies, within the associational bounds.⁹⁸

Moreover, many individuals from among the churches assumed positions of leadership with the Convention or its auxiliaries. Particularly prominent among these were William Hill Jordan, pastor of Island Creek Church (1826-33, 1840-45, 1857-60), who served as Corresponding Secretary of the Convention, 1836-43; was named to the Board of Managers in 1834; served a thirteen-year stint as a member of the Board of Trustees of Wake Forest Institute, beginning in 1835; and was an officer of the North Carolina Baptist Bible Society, an auxiliary of the Convention which was formed in 1836.

Other individuals who played significant roles in the affairs of the Baptist State Convention during her earlier years included such pastors as John Purify (Purefoy),⁹⁹ Thomas Crocker,¹⁰⁰ Allen S. Wynne,¹⁰¹ James King,¹⁰² and William Jones.¹⁰³ Among the more prominent laymen, mention should be made of Thomas B. Barnett,¹⁰⁴ and Robert D. Bumpass.¹⁰⁵

The earliest session of the Baptist State Convention to be held within the bounds of the Association was the session of 1839, when Grassy Creek Church hosted the annual meeting of this body. Elaborate preparation had been made for the occasion.¹⁰⁶ Moreover, the records made it apparent that the churches of the Association were well represented, both in the number of their delegates who were present and in the deliberations of the Convention.¹⁰⁷

Nine years after having expressed the desire that the churches of the Flat River Baptist Association might act a little more in accord with the "spirit of the age," Thomas Meredith had occasion to visit the annual session of the Association. Commenting upon their deliberations, he observed:

This is now a purely missionary body. For several years these brethren, like many others in the State, allowed themselves to be held in bondage by the prejudices and caprices of others; and sacrificed their privileges, and in some degree perhaps their duty, to their love of peace, and their hope of conciliating opposers. They saw, however, at length, that sacrifices offered at the altar of Anti-Missionism, were of all others the most unavailing, and finally resolved to throw off the yoke, and act in accordance with their own convictions of duty.¹⁰⁸

Henceforth, those "convictions of duty" would find the Flat River Association openly aligned with the interests and objectives of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina and her related agencies.

ENDNOTES

¹“Preamble” to the Constitution of the United Baptist Association, Called Flat River, which is appended to the manuscript *Minutes of the Association for 1828-29*. Hereinafter, references to the official Proceedings of this body will be noted as *FR Minutes*, with the appropriate years indicated.

²Like the parent Roanoke District Association, the churches comprising the Flat River Association originally conducted two meetings annually. The records of Wheeler’s (Upper South Hico) and Flat River churches—both of whom were dismissed from Flat River Association at the formation of Country Line Association—indicated the dates and locations for both Spring and Fall sessions of the Flat River Association, 1795-1805. Moreover, the *First Annual Report of the Baptist Board of Foreign Missions for the United States* (Philadelphia: William Fry, Printer, 1815), p. 48, noted statistics for the Flat River Association, meeting at Grassy Creek Church, April 22-24, 1815.

An entry in Luther Rice’s *Journal* for Saturday, April 27, 1816, noted: “Near Buffaloe Meetinghouse, Mecklenburg Co., Va.: “Go to Buffaloe Meetinghouse, 2 miles—preach ‘faithful saying’— Flat River Association opens—invited to a seat—Go to Mr. Greenward’s, 5 miles, in company with Br. Currie, a Presbyterian & br. B(?).”

In a later report to William Staughton, Secretary of the Baptist Board of Foreign Missions, Rice wrote of this meeting: “. . . opportunity again invited me to deliver a missionary sermon, and a public collection was taken up for missionary purposes.” See Letter of Luther Rice to William Staughton, June 19, 1816, in *Second Annual Report of the Baptist Board of Foreign Missions for the United States* (Philadelphia: Anderson & Meehan, 1816), p. 74.

Extant associational records, however, make no mention of such Spring meetings. They probably ceased with the rise of “Sectional Meetings” in the 1820s.

³Article 1 of the Constitution provided: “The association shall be composed of members chosen by the different Churches in our union, and duly sent to represent them in the association, and they shall be those whom they shall judge best qualified for that purpose, producing letters from their respective churches certifying their appointment, when they shall be entitled to a seat.”

Article 7 provided that each church could be represented by a maximum of three (3) members.

⁴See Constitution and Decorum, adopted in 1862.

⁵An estimate based upon the available 1794 statistics of the Roanoke District Association, and the 1793 statistics which are recorded in Asplund’s *Register*.

⁶The 1805 *Minutes* of Flat River Association have been preserved in the manuscript Minute Book of Country Line Baptist Association, 1806ff., which is now on permanent loan to the Ethel Taylor Crittenden Collection in Baptist History, Wake Forest University. George Roberts was chosen Moderator; Barzillai Graves, Clerk.

⁷*FR Minutes*, 1805, pp. 5-6.

⁸The source of information regarding the number of churches dismissed in 1806 to form Country Line Association was Robert I. Devin, who delivered a “Centennial Address” before the Flat River Association in 1893. Devin also indicated the membership statistics for the ten churches of the Flat River Association which met at Tanner’s Meeting House, Warren County, in July 1806. There may be some confusion in these statistics, however, since Devin’s statistics for 1806 are identical with those reported by the same churches in 1811. See *FR Minutes*, 1893, p. 15.

⁹Of the constituent churches, Camp Creek was last reported in the Association in 1837, at which time a majority of the delegates [to the annual associational meeting] rejected a letter from Camp Creek Church objecting to the receipt of Letter or Corresponding Messengers from Beulah Association, and objecting to any further correspondence with Beulah, “or any other association which fellowships the Beulah Association.” See *FR Minutes*, 1837, p. 11.

Cedar Creek Church, which had been represented only once in associational gatherings since 1829, was reported “dissolved” in 1840, following destruction of the congregation’s meeting house by fire. Note had been taken of this church’s “destitution” at the annual meetings in 1832, 1838, and 1839.

Eno(e) and Tar River churches were expelled for disorderly conduct in 1840, "by absenting themselves from this body, without a letter of dismission." Tanner's was dismissed in the same year, "agreeable to her request." See *FR Minutes*, 1840, pp. 2, 4.

No further reference was found to Gardner's as an independent church, apart from the membership statistics for 1806, as reported in Devin's "Centennial Address." The old Gardner's Meeting House was probably used, occasionally, by "branches" of Tanner's and Brown's churches (the latter being constituted in 1831. Tar River Association met at the old Gardner's Meeting House in 1842.

Devin's "Centennial Address" also noted that four churches had been "split asunder" in 1830 over the question of Missions. These were Camp Creek, Cedar Creek, Eno(e), and Tar River. See *FR Minutes*, 1893, p. 16.

Pritchard's (Mt. Carmel), which had united with Flat River Association upon her constitution in 1803, had been dismissed in 1827 to unite with Sandy Creek Association.

¹⁰The absence of extant associational records, 1820-27 and 1833-35, makes an exact dating for the admission of churches constituted during these years somewhat conjectural. Dates given in the text for the admission of Brassfield's, Corinth, Friendship, Hester's, Island Creek, and Mt. Moriah are the *earliest* possible dates following the constitution of each.

¹¹Letter of Thomas Gardner to Isaac Backus, dated February 6, 1797. Since this and one additional letter are the only extant writings of this pioneer Baptist minister, it seems appropriate to include it here in its entirety:

North Carolina Warren County
Honoured and Dear Brother:

The unseen yet beloved tho I am the unworthiest of all that is Meat(sic) to be caled(sic) a Minister of the Gospel of Jesus Christ yet I am desirous to contract an acquaintance(sic) with all the labourers in the Lord's Vineyard, and as I have a chance to write to my Elder brother I hope you will receive it at the hands of brother Brame. In which I inform you of the grate(sic) Declention(sic) of Religion in our parts which is a grief to the souls of the godly, but yet I look for a fare(sic) better day than this. I mean the latter day glory when all shall be taught of the Lord and grate(sic) shall be the peace of his people. O my brother Pray for us in North Carolina that the lord(sic) would rain down Righteousness from heaven upon us, that his poor sion(sic) Mont(sic) once more travail(sic) and bring forth sons and daughters for god. O my brother I feal(sic) determined through grace to go on [;] tho afflicted I bless the Lord [;] not forsaken I yet feal(sic) in my soul to love Jesus [.] O my brother stir up the brethren to come and visit us in our State. Pray my brother write to me by brother Brame and you will oblige your affectionate tho unworthy brother in Gospel bonds—Thomas Gardner.

¹²Letter of George Roberts to Isaac Backus, dated January 11, 1797. The context reads: "I live in a very remote part from you, and of late too much so from the fountain of all happiness. It has been but a cold and languishing time in Religion in our parts and the Churches of my acquaintance for a considerable while paste(sic). Some years ago we had a happy ingathering, in which the Church grew from about 50 or sixty to upwards of 200, but alas(sic) now our harps are hung on the willows."

¹³Letter of Thomas Vass to Isaac Backus, dated February 25, 1799.

¹⁴Letter of George Roberts to Isaac Backus, dated February 26, 1799. Roberts wrote: "I wish I could transmit to you some pleasing account of the like [i.e., revival] in our parts, but alas(sic) it is otherwise, not only in one but most of the congregations in our district. The letters of the different churches to the last faul(sic) Association were full of complaints of this kind. We are ready to say with the Prophet the harvest is over and the summer ended, & many souls not saved."

¹⁵See full text of Gardner's letter quoted above.

¹⁶Letter of Thomas Gardner to Isaac Backus, dated February 12, 1799.

¹⁷Letters of George Roberts to Isaac Backus, dated June 8, 1898, and May 4, 1801. Roberts had written in the earlier letter: "We have had no extraordinary revival. Since I wrote to you by Bro' Brame, a few have been gathered in last faul(sic) and winter under the ministry of Bro' Wm. Brown about 15 or 16 miles above me. . . . I am glad to hear of a work in any part of the country and should be truly rejoiced to see the happy times commence once more in the place where I labor."

In the latter letter he noted:

I am still indeavouring(sic) to labour in my poor Manner in that worthy cause I embark'd on near 30 years ago, but I am not so happy as to enjoy a revival of late, as have other places where Divine Goodness is pleased to work. . . . I think I was reviv'd as much as I have been lately a few weeks ago, as I was riding from a meeting I met a man lately from Kentucky who said he saw 28 baptis'd in a day some small time before & there had been 68 baptis'd in one day. O that it might spread into every Dark and destitute place."

¹⁸Letter of Josiah Rucks to Isaac Backus, dated February 15, 1799. This Granville County pastor wrote:

O that you and I may live to see the outpouring(sic) of the Spirit in a plentiful(sic) manner. I rec'ved Letters from several parts yesterday that informed me of Hundreds, getting Converted of late [.] Churches appears(sic) to be in union & more ingag'd(sic) than formerly & ministers preach with more zeale(sic) & less Reflections than formerly.

Rucks then added in a postscript: "The Church where I formerly lab[ore]d about 30 baptised lately [.] where I [now] have the care about 7."

¹⁹In his letter to Backus of February 25, 1799, Vass had written: "As to the state of religion among us, it is in some places melancholy and truly lamentable, Tho' blessed be God, of late I hear there is(sic) some revivals."

In a letter to Backus dated April 30, 1801, Vass noted: "There has been and still remains to be a gracious work in Virginia, North Carolina—and the western countries(sic) from us. From accounts the work has appeared to be most among the younger people."

²⁰John Rippon, *The Baptist Annual Register for 1801 and 1802, Including Sketches of the State of Religion Among Different Denominations of Good Men at Home and Abroad* (London: Button and Corden, [n.d.]), p. 1058, published the following extract of a letter from the Reverend Drury Lacy, Prince Edward County, Virginia, dated January 22, 1802:

Permit me to add here an abridgement of a letter I lately received from John Chavis, Caswell County, North Carolina, December. He informs me that there is a glorious revival in that State, almost equal to the accounts from Kentucky—that he never expected to see the Spirit of God poured out in so miraculous a manner upon the guilty sons of men; that at three Sacramental Meetings at which he had been present one hundred and eighty had been hopefully converted; that hundreds are under impressions; that the work [has spread] through seven congregations since the last of August; . . .

²¹*The Columbian Star*, January 10, 1824, reported that the 1823 session of the Flat River Association had been held with Island Creek Church, commencing on October 18. A statistical abstract reported 15 churches, 19 ministers, 264 persons baptized, and a total membership among the churches of 1,841.

One year earlier, this same newspaper contained the following entry in connection with its report on the 1822 session of the Charleston (SC) Association: ". . . there were received by baptism, into the Flat River Association, during the last year, 708 members, of whom 556 were admitted into one church. . . ." This information had been conveyed by the Corresponding Messenger from Sandy Creek Baptist Association. See *The Columbian Star*, February 22, 1823.

Correspondents to *The Columbian Star* in 1822-23 reported prospects for or seasons of revival at New Light, New Bethel, Flat River, Friendship, and—especially—Enoe. Elders James Ferrell and William W. Farthing are credited with being two of the "honoured instruments" in the revival among churches in Chatham, Granville, Orange, and Wake counties. See *The Columbian Star*, March 9, 1822; March 16, 1822; April 27, 1822; July 20, 1822; August 23, 1823; and October 11, 1823.

²²*FR Minutes*, 1832, p. 2. The churches of the Association had baptized a total of 329 persons in 1831-32. Bethel and Neuse (New Light) had reported record baptisms of 30 and 57 persons, respectively, in the previous year.

²³*Ibid.*, 1840, p. 1. Other churches reporting significant gains by baptism included: Brassfield's, 36; Concord, 48; and Corinth, 30. Hester's reported 42 baptisms in 1841-42; Tabb's Creek, 74 in 1843-44.

²⁴*Ibid.*, 1844, pp. 3, 4.

²⁵Samuel Wait, John Purefoy, Malthus D. Freeman and James Dennis were among these early Agents of the Convention whose itinerancies took them throughout the bounds of the Flat River Association, seeking increased support for the infant convention, her objects and interests.

²⁶The Association generally “sat” on Saturday and Monday, with Sunday reserved as a day of solemn worship. Experiment with a four-day session—beginning on Friday and concluding the following Monday—had been attempted in 1827. Such practice was not to be resumed, however, until 1843. Thereafter, the annual meeting continued to be a four-day affair until 1858, when the practice of scheduling the meeting over a weekend was discontinued altogether.

An interesting account of a preaching appointment made in conjunction with the annual associational meeting comes from the pen of Iverson L. Brookes, a student at the University of North Carolina, 1816-19. The Flat River Association was in session at Mt. Carmel Meeting House, two miles southeast of Chapel Hill, in 1817. Appointment had been made for the aged Elder Thomas Vass to preach in the college chapel. Brookes wrote as follows of his impression of Vass on that occasion:

. . . his countenance indicated the boldness of a lion; his gray locks demanded respect; his manner of address claimed attention. Complete silence at first pervaded the audience which was afterwards broken by sighs & lamentations which burst forth involuntarily from a few individuals of this large crowd which filled the chapel. The old gentleman spoke with great liberty and not only astonished the great ones that came out through curiosity to hear the old Baptists, but even made his brethren gaze with astonishment. . . .

See letter of Iverson L. Brookes to his father, John Brooks, dated October 19, 1817. The letter is included in the Brookes Materials, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

²⁷The Rules of Government of the Association provided: “As we believe it to be our indispencable(sic) duty to bind ourselves under certain obligations in conducting the affairs of the Association, we make the following Resolutions: 1. The Association shall be opened and closed by prayer.”

²⁸Thomas Gardner, Thomas Vass, and George Roberts were probably called upon frequently to preach the Introductory Sermons during those early years for which records are no longer extant. The practice of beginning the annual session with an Introductory Sermon was retained until 1916.

²⁹The earliest Constitution provided for the offices of Moderator, Clerk, and Treasurer. In practice, however, the position of Clerk/Treasurer was filled by the same person until 1862. See Historical Tables, Appendix E, for a roster of those who have served in the Flat River Association in these capacities.

It should also be noted that officers were elected at the *beginning* of each annual session, to preside over the business pertaining to that session, only. The current practice of electing officers “for the coming year” dates from a constitutional change which was adopted in 1923: “*Resolved*, That article 3 of the constitution be so amended as to read as follows: “The officers shall be a moderator, a clerk, and a treasurer, who shall be elected by ballot at one annual meeting to serve at the next.” See *FR Minutes*, 1923, p. 19.

³⁰Article 1 of the Constitution provided: “The association shall be composed of members chosen by the different Churches in our union, and duly sent to represent them, and they shall be those whom they shall judge best qualified for that purpose; producing letters from their respective churches certifying their appointment, when they shall be entitled to a seat.”

The Rules of Government, Article 6, added: “No person shall abruptly break off, or absent himself, without obtaining liberty.” The Clerk enrolled the names of the Delegates and “called the roll” as often as requested by the body.

³¹The practice of appointing a Committee on Arrangements prior to the annual meeting did not prevail until after 1845.

³²Crocker was appointed to preach in 1828, 1829, 1831, 1832, and 1842; Dennis, in 1830 and 1841.

³³Stephen Pleasant preached in 1830, 1836, 1838, 1839, and 1840.

³⁴Smith was appointed to preach in 1831, 1838, and 1839.

³⁵Jordan preached on the Sabbath in 1828, 1831, 1832, 1837, 1841, 1842, and 1843; James King, in 1837, 1838, and 1840.

³⁶*FR Minutes*, 1840, p. 3.

³⁷*Ibid.*, 1842, pp. 4, 5.

³⁸Letter from Iverson L. Brookes to John Brooks, October 19, 1817.

³⁹*FR Minutes*, 1819, p. 3.

⁴⁰*Ibid.*, 1830, p. 3.

⁴¹*Ibid.*, 1831, p. 3.

⁴²A distinction was made between “preaching” and “exhortation.” The *FR Minutes* for 1811 noted: “preaching” by Reuben Pickett and Balaam Ezell; “exhortation,” by Elder Vass. The *FR Minutes* for 1812 recorded: “preaching” by Jesse Read and Reuben Pickett; “exhortation,” by Balaam Ezell. In 1839, William Jones “concluded [the Sabbath services] with exhortation.”

“Exhortation” was defined by one popular theological dictionary of the period as “the act of laying such motives before a person as may incite him to the performance of any duty. It differs from suasion, in that the latter principally endeavors to convince the understanding, and the former to work on the affections. It is considered as a great branch of preaching, though not confined to that, as a man may exhort, though he do(sic) not preach. . . .” *Buck’s Theological Dictionary*, as quoted in Jerry L. Tarver, “Exhortation Among Early Virginia Baptists,” *The Virginia Baptist Register*, 1966, p. 288.

⁴³*FR Minutes*, 1819, p. 3. Preaching “at the stage” or “at the stand” continues to be the practice at the annual meetings of some Primitive Baptist associations.

⁴⁴Thus, Thomas Crocker (Raleigh Association) was called upon to preach in 1819 in the absence of the regular appointee, Thomas Gardner.

⁴⁵George Roberts (Country Line Association) was chosen Moderator in 1819.

⁴⁶Thus, in 1819, George Roberts, William Brown, and John Chavis (all from Country Line Association) were named to a committee to examine charges which had been preferred against the moral character of the Reverend Roland Cooke.

⁴⁷The available records of the Flat River Association note the presence of Corresponding Messengers from Roanoke Association in 1811, 1812, 1819, 1829-32, and 1836; from Sandy Creek Association in 1819, 1830, 1832, 1836, 1837, 1841, and 1844; from Raleigh Association in 1812, 1819, 1829, 1831, 1832, 1837, and 1838-44; from Country Line Association in 1819, 1828-30, and 1832; and from Beulah Association, 1836-41 and 1844.

Other associations which were represented less frequently were Kehukee, 1812; Meherrin, 1832; Concord, 1836, 1838, 1839, 1842, and 1844; Tar River, 1836, 1838, 1839, and 1841-43; and Dan River, 1844.

⁴⁸Messengers were appointed almost annually to attend and report on the meetings of Roanoke, Sandy Creek, Country Line, Raleigh, Beulah, and Tar River associations. Appointments were made less frequently for attendance upon the stated meetings of such other associations as Kehukee, Meherrin, and Concord. Correspondence with the Country Line and Kehukee associations was finally terminated due to the anti-missionary stance of these two bodies.

⁴⁹For example, correspondence between Flat River and Country Line associations ceased with the formation of Beulah Association in 1833. Beulah—formed within the bounds of the old Country Line—consisted of churches who were decidedly supportive of missions and other “benevolent objects.” Likewise, correspondence between Flat River and Roanoke associations was interrupted in 1839—the year in which twelve churches in the Roanoke Association asked for letters of dismission to form Dan River Association. While correspondence was maintained from the beginning between Flat River and Dan River associations, the Roanoke Association had “rejected” overtures of correspondence with Dan River in 1840. Again, the churches of the Dan River Association were decidedly more pro-missionary during these early years than were many of their sister churches within the parent Roanoke District Association.

⁵⁰Appointing Corresponding Messengers to sister associations was maintained by Flat River Association until 1864.

⁵¹The Constitution of the Association made no specific provision for a Circular Letter. The custom of appending such a message to the annual *Minutes* probably arose with the practice of printing and distributing such *Minutes* in quantity. Moreover, the very earliest of these documents may have been prepared by the associational Clerk to serve as an “Introduction” or “Cover Letter” to accompany the attached Proceedings.

⁵²A roster of the subjects of those Circular Letters to be found in the extant Minutes of the Association—together with the name of the person responsible for submitting each—is as follows: 1811—Final Perseverance of the Saints (Roland Cooke); 1812—Government of Your Families (William W. Farthing); 1819—Resolutions on Proposed Theological Institution (Abner W. Clopton); 1830—Cases of Conscience (William Hill Jordan); 1836—The Duty of Ministerial Support (Thomas B. Barnett); 1840—On the Spirit

of Unity (Allen S. Wynne); 1841—Progress in the Divine Life (Robert McNabb); 1842—Family Religion (William Hill Jordan); and 1843—A Call to the Ministry (William Jones).

⁵³Thus, the Circular Letter for 1812 was taken from the 1809 *Minutes* of the Bethel (South Carolina) Association; that for 1819, from the pages of *The Latter Day Luminary*, published under the auspices of the Baptist Board of Foreign Missions; and that of 1830 was an abridgement of a transcript which had come into the hands of William Hill Jordan.

⁵⁴In 1843, Flat River Association had taken the following action: “*Resolved*, That instead of a Circular Letter, Thomas B. Barnett be requested to prepare a history of the churches connected with this Association, to be appended to the Minutes of the next Association.”

Since Barnett had not received sufficient materials to compile such a history by the date projected, the associational delegates took the following action in 1844: On motion, *Resolved*, that he [Barnett] report the history of the churches to the next Association, and all persons in possession of any information which will aid him in the history, are respectfully requested to forward it to T. B. Barnett, Abrams Plains, P[ost] O[ffice].” See *FR Minutes* 1843, p. 3; 1844, p. 5.

Brief historical sketches of the churches then in union with the Association appeared in the *Minutes* of 1845, in lieu of the traditional Circular Letter.

⁵⁵Queries could be submitted by a local congregation; by an individual; or by the “Select Committee” (Committee on Arrangements) which prepared an agenda for the annual meeting. The Constitution specified: “Every query presented by any member, shall be once read; and before it is debated, the moderator shall put it to vote, and if there be a majority for its being debated, it shall be taken into consideration and shall be deliberated; but if there be a majority against it; it shall be withdrawn.” See *FR Minutes*, 1828, p. 2.

Guidelines for the conduct of such deliberation or debate were delineated in the Rules for the Government of the Association, and were applicable to any other business to be discussed. See Appendix A of this volume, “Rules . . . ,” especially sections 3-5, 7, and 12.

⁵⁶*FR Minutes*, 1811, p. 4.

⁵⁷*Ibid.*, 1830, p. 4.

⁵⁸*Ibid.*, 1842, p. 7.

⁵⁹*Ibid.*, 1841, p. 6.

⁶⁰The introduction of Queries was not as popular a feature of the annual meetings of the Flat River Association as it was, for example, in the neighboring Roanoke District Association. Available records up to 1858 (the date of the last mention of a Query) recorded only 15 such questions introduced in the annual sessions of the Flat River Association. By contrast, in 1803 alone the delegates to the Roanoke District Association debated 8 Queries, referred others to further discussion at the next session of that body, and responded to still others by noting: “We believe it not in our province as an advisory council to determine on such queries.” See *Minutes of the Roanoke District Association, Held at Ebenezer Meeting House, Campbell County, Virginia. April 30th, and May 1st and 2nd, 1803* (Lynchburg: Carter & Weaver, 1803).

⁶¹Ministers’ and Deacons’ Meetings were introduced in 1852, with such gatherings to be held “on each 5th Sunday in the year . . . one to be held in each section.” See *FR Minutes*, 1852, p. 6.

⁶²The earliest reference in associational records to establishing a Union Meeting is found in 1856. However, the *Biblical Recorder* for October 25, 1860, carried an account of a Union Meeting which had been held at Concord Church, September 28-30, 1860. Furthermore, this account makes it evident that this was not the first such meeting of its kind to be conducted among the churches of the Association. The terms “Ministers’ and Deacons’ Meeting” and “Union Meeting” were apparently used interchangeably. Union Meetings continued to be held within the bounds of the Association until replaced by the Sunday School Institute in the 1870s.

⁶³*FR Minutes*, 1828, p. 7.

⁶⁴*Ibid.*, 1829, p. 10.

⁶⁵*Ibid.*, 1830, pp. 1, 2. While the churches were divided into four geographical “sections,” no more than three of these early Sectional Meetings were scheduled in a given year.

⁶⁶Accounts of later Union Meetings and Ministers’ and Deacons’ Meetings would tend to confirm this assumption. That meeting which was held with Concord Church, September 28-30, 1860, bore all the features of earlier associational meetings, including the submission of eight Queries for consideration by the body. An indication of the spirited debate which could be engendered by such Queries was noted in the report of the Clerk for the meeting, E. C. Montague:

The first query in order for debate was laid over so as to reach the following, viz: 'Were those certain disciples mentioned in the 19th chapter of Acts re-baptized?' which was discussed with freedom and ability by Elders Devin and Hester, and as there appeared some division of sentiment, the query was laid over.

The discussion on the above question continued until time for adjournment, and it was considered advisable not to take up any of the others; therefore all were laid over for the next Meeting's consideration.

See *Biblical Recorder*, October 25, 1860, for a full account of the Proceedings of this particular Union Meeting.

⁶⁷*FR Minutes*, 1839, p. 5. Associational reports indicated that ministers appointed to attend Sectional Meetings were frequently prevented from doing so. In 1838, only one of the appointed ministers—James King—reported on "having attended at Buffaloe Church, and had a very interesting meeting [italics in the original]." On the other hand, "Bro' Z. Allen reported that he attended at Tanner's, but found no one there." See *FR Minutes*, 1838, p. 3.

⁶⁸The designation "Section Meeting" was applied occasionally to the later Union Meetings held within the bounds of the Association. Thus, the issue of the *Biblical Recorder* for June 11, 1890, takes note of a "Southern Section Union Meeting" to commence on June 28, 1890.

⁶⁹*FR Minutes*, 1828, p. 3.

⁷⁰The original purpose for the insertion in the *Minutes* of a roster of both ordained and licensed ministers belonging to churches within the Association was to assist all churches in detecting fraudulent claims on the part of traveling or itinerant preachers.

⁷¹*FR Minutes*, 1828, p. 7.

⁷²*Ibid.*, 1829, p. 10.

⁷³*Ibid.*, 1830, p. 3.

⁷⁴*Ibid.*, 1838, p. 7.

⁷⁵*Ibid.*, 1842, p. 6. Thereafter, the Association was requested frequently to name presbyteries to examine and ordain candidates for the ministry. Moreover, both the examination of a candidate and his service of ordination took place, on occasion, during the session of the annual associational meeting. Thus, James P. Montague, a licentiate of Corinth Church, was ordained at the associational meeting in 1851; George Thomas Watkins, Mountain Creek Church, in 1889; and James L. Barrett, Bethel Church, in 1906. The account of the ordination of Watkins reads:

The hour for the ordination of Brother G. T. Watkins having arrived, the Association adjourned to the arbor, where the services were conducted by Dr. R. H. Marsh in his usual graceful and impressive manner. Rev[erend] R. I. Devin led in prayer; Rev[erend] A. G. Mc Manaway delivered the charge to Brother Watkins, which was full of valuable and useful information and advice. Rev[erend] C. A. Jenkins, in very appropriate terms presented him a Bible.

See *FR Minutes*, 1889, p. 8.

⁷⁶See *FR Minutes* for 1843, 1844, 1846, 1851, and 1871, for additional references to reports from associational presbyteries.

⁷⁷*Biblical Recorder*, April 1, 1835.

⁷⁸Annual sessions of the General Meeting of Correspondence were held as follows: 1811—Falls of Tar River Meeting House, Nash County, June 7-9, 1812—Raleigh, July 24-26; 1813—Falls of Tar River, July 24-26; 1814—Union Meeting House, Wake County, July 21-23; 1815—Campbell's Meeting House, Orange County, July 21-23; 1816—Tanner's Meeting House, Warren County, August 3-5; 1817—Grassy Creek Meeting House, Granville County, August 2-4; 1818—Haywood's Meeting House, Franklin County, August 1-3; 1819—Fayetteville, August 7-9; 1820—Tabb's Creek Meeting House, Granville County, August 5-7; and 1821—Crossroad's Meeting House, Wake County,

⁷⁹*FR Minutes*, 1811, p. 4.

⁸⁰*Ibid.*, 1812, P. 5. These suggested amendments proposed that (1) contributions to the General Meeting be voluntary; (2) objectives be limited to adopting measures to extend religious acquaintance, encourage preaching of the Gospel, and diffusion of religious knowledge; (3) the Meeting be understood as strictly an advisory council; and (4) the constitution could be amended or the Meeting dissolved at the wishes of a majority of the affiliated associations. Each of these amendments was incorporated into a later version of the constitution of the General Meeting.

⁸¹Delegates named to this session of the General Meeting were Thomas Gardner, Balaam Ezell, Thomas Vass, and Benjamin Hester.

⁸²"Minutes of the North Carolina General Meeting of Correspondence, Held at Union Meeting House, Wake County, the 21st, 22nd and 23rd Days of July, 1814," in *Wake Forest Student*, XXV (October, 1905), 27-28.

⁸³"Minutes of the North Carolina General Meeting of Correspondence, Held at Tanner's Meeting House, Warren County, the 3rd, 4th, and 5th Days of August, 1816," in *ibid.*, pp. 32-33.

⁸⁴*Ibid.*, 1816, p. 31. The recommendation of these three brethren as "helps" meant that they were not official spokesmen for the Association. Despite their "unofficial" capacity, however, each of the three played a significant role in the business of this particular session of the General Meeting. Battle was named to the Committee on Finance; Gardner was in charge of taking a collection for foreign missions, reporting receipt of \$126.56 1/2 for that purpose. Vass brought an invitation on behalf of the Grassy Creek Church to hold the 1817 session of the General Meeting at that place.

Luther Rice was present at this [1816] session of the General Meeting, participating in the deliberations and delivering a message "appropriate to foreign missions" during the season of worship on Sunday, August 4.

⁸⁵Associational records for 1819—the only records now extant between 1812-1828—noted a "satisfactory report" from Corresponding Messengers to the General Meeting of 1819. Roland Cooke, James Weathers, Abner W. Clopton, and William W. Farthing were then appointed Messengers to the General Meeting of 1820. Nonetheless, "at the urgent request of a part of the Association, the business of the General Meeting was postponed till the next Association." See *FR Minutes*, 1819, p. 4.

⁸⁶Extant records indicate that the Society held annual meetings, 1814-1825, as follows: 1814—Shell-Banks Meeting House, Edgecombe County, March 19-21; 1816—Tabb's Creek Meeting House, Granville County, March 16-18; 1817—Campbell's Meeting House, Orange County, March 15-17; 1818—Cross Roads Meeting House, Wake County, March 14-16; 1819—Shell-Banks Meeting House, Edgecombe County, March 20-22; 1820—Patterson's Meeting House, Orange County, March 18-20; 1822—Raleigh, August 3-5; 1823—Southerland's [Union] Meeting House, Wake County, May 24-26; 1824—Haywood's Meeting House, Franklin County, May 22-24; and 1825—Mt. Moriah Meeting House, Orange County, July.

⁸⁷Battle served as an Agent of the Society, and was also a trustee of the organization. He entertained Luther Rice on at least two occasions at his home, "Battle Hall," near Oxford.

⁸⁸Clopton, a charter member of the Society, was Corresponding Secretary, 1814-19, and was Recording Secretary, 1819-20, prior to his removal to Virginia. He and the Reverend George Roberts, pastor of churches formerly affiliated with Flat River Association, were chosen to represent the Society at the 1817 session of the Baptist General Convention (Triennial Convention). Clopton, however, was prevented from attending this gathering of Baptists.

⁸⁹Farthing served at least one term as a trustee of the Society, 1823-24, and labored as a Domestic Missionary under the auspices of the Society, 1823-24. In this latter capacity it was expected that he would "solicit contributions from such persons as may not choose to become members of the society, organize auxiliary societies, receive subscriptions and donations for the benefit of the society, and, in all respects, to advance as far as possible the interests of the institution." See Article 12 of the Constitution in *Minutes of the North-Carolina Baptist Society for Foreign and Domestic Missions, Convened at Haywood's Meeting House, Franklin County, May 22, 1824* (Raleigh: Bell & Lawrence, 1824), p. 12.

⁹⁰Also having served as a trustee and a missionary of the Society, Crocker was re-appointed to missionary service on behalf of the Society in 1824.

⁹¹Worrell was among three missionaries of the Society for whom the Board of Directors published a resolution of thanks in 1824 in view of "the zeal and diligence with which they have prosecuted the labors assigned them." He was re-appointed to another term of service as a missionary, and was appointed to

preach the Introductory Sermon before the annual meeting of the Society in 1825. See *Minutes of the North-Carolina Baptist Society for Foreign and Domestic Missions, Convened at Haywood's Meeting House, Franklin County, May 22, 1824*, pp. 4, 5.

⁹²Among those members of the Society who were in attendance upon the meeting in 1824, the following are recognizable as members of churches affiliated with the Flat River Association: Moses Neale, Cedar Creek; William B. Worrell, Island Creek; Benjamin Hester, Tabb's Creek; and William W. Farthing, Eno.

⁹³Letter from Luther Rice to William Staughton, Corresponding Secretary, Baptist Board of Foreign Missions, dated May 25, 1815, and found in *The First Annual Report of the Baptist Board of Foreign Missions for the United States* (Philadelphia: William Fry, 1815), p. 24. The text reads: "By the attention and zeal of Rev[erend] Mr. Read, the missionary business was placed before the *Flat River Association*, at their last session, and seems likely to receive countenance from that quarter, as a person was appointed by the Association to receive communications from the Board. Mr. Read has also forwarded a copy of their Minutes, and two very kind letters [italics in the original]." This Mr. Read who "introduced the missionary business" was probably the Reverend Jesse Read, Corresponding Messenger from the Kehukee Association, who had been appointed to attend the Spring meeting of the Flat River Association in 1815.

⁹⁴From available records, it would appear that those who were appointed associational correspondents with the Baptist Board were: Elisha Battle, 1815-19; Thomas Gardner, 1819-23; and William B. Worrell, 1823-25.

⁹⁵Letter from Luther Rice to William Staughton, dated June 19, 1816, in *The Second Annual Report of the Baptist Board of Foreign Missions of the United States* (Philadelphia: Anderson & Meehan, 1816), p. 74. The collection amounted to \$20.25.

⁹⁶In addition to the Annual Reports of the Baptist Board which were received by the associational correspondent, individuals within the churches were subscribers to *The Latter Day Luminary*, published under the auspices of a committee of the Board, 1818-25; and of the religious weekly *The Columbian Star*, which commenced publication in Washington, D. C., February 2, 1822. Luther Rice was also instrumental in the founding of this latter weekly journal, which was later to become *The Christian Index*, newsjournal of the Georgia Baptist Convention.

⁹⁷*Proceedings of the Third Annual Meeting of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, Held at Dockery's Meeting House, Richmond County, November 1-6, 1833* (Fayetteville: Edward J. Hale, Printer, 1834), p. 14.

⁹⁸These were: Mt. Moriah, represented by William Duskin and John Burroughs; Island Creek, represented by Thomas King; Grassy Creek, represented by William Royster; and Olive Branch, represented by letter, but with no delegate present.

⁹⁹John Purefoy (1778-1855) spent the greater portion of his ministerial labors among churches of the Raleigh Association. He did, however, serve as pastor of Mt. Moriah in the late 1830s. Purefoy (often spelled "Purify" in the early records) was elected to the Board of Managers of the Convention and as an Agent of the Convention at its initial session in 1830. He served as "voluntary Agent," 1830-32, and was a member of the Board of Managers, 1830-40. He was also one of the charter members of the Board of Trustees of Wake Forest Institute.

¹⁰⁰Thomas Crocker (1786-1848) served briefly as pastor of Concord and New Light [Neuse] churches. A charter member of the Board of Trustees of Wake Forest Institute, he also served on the Convention's Board of Managers, 1841-46.

¹⁰¹Allen S. Wynne (d. 1865), another of the charter members of the Board of Trustees of Wake Forest Institute, served as pastor of Friendship and Mt. Moriah churches prior to his removal to Tennessee in 1841. Wynne also served on the Convention's Board of Managers, 1834-36.

¹⁰²James King (1780?-1870), beloved pastor of Bethel, Grassy Creek, Olive Branch, and Hester's churches during portions of the period under consideration, was a charter member of the Board of Trustees, Wake Forest Institute. He also served on the Convention's Board of Managers, 1833-35.

¹⁰³William Jones (d. 1852), a licentiate of Neuse [New Light] Church, was the first young man to be aided by the Ministerial Education Board of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina. Following his ordination in 1839, Jones served as pastor of Hester's, Mt. Moriah, and Shady Hill churches; was a General Agent for the Baptist State Convention, 1848-52.

¹⁰⁴Thomas B. Barnett (1805-1859) was a prominent layman in Grassy Creek Church. A frequent contributor to the *Biblical Recorder*, Barnett served on the Convention's Board of Managers, 1836-46. He moved to Hinds County, Mississippi, in 1848.

¹⁰⁵Robert D. Bumpass (1797-1879), a member of Olive Branch Church, Person County, served on the Convention's Board of Managers, 1836-44. He, too, was a rather frequent contributor to the *Biblical Recorder*, championing the missionary cause. Thus, he wrote on one occasion: "It seems to me that every disciple of Christ, who makes produce for sale to the amount of some three or four hundred dollars, can easily afford to give from five to ten dollars to the objects of our Convention—others in like proportion. . . . Let each one come to some conclusion [as to] what they can give each year, and let not the purchase of property, nor any trifling matter prevent." See *The Biblical Recorder and Southern Watchman*, July 11, 1840.

¹⁰⁶The following notice regarding advanced preparations was submitted by Thomas B. Barnett for inclusion in the issue of *The Biblical Recorder and Southern Watchman*, dated September 14, 1839:

The Baptist State Convention of N[orth] C[arolina] will hold its next annual session at Grassy Creek M[eeting] H[ouse], Granville county(sic), commencing on Friday the 1st of November. Grassey(sic) Creek M[eeting] H[ouse] is near Brownsville, on the road from Clarksville, Va., to Oxford, N[orth] C[arolina], ten miles south of the former place, and fifteen miles north of the latter. The brethren and friends at Grassey(sic) Creek will make preparations for a full Convention, and hope not to be disappointed. The church has appointed a committee to attend to the delegates and visiting brethren and friends, and provide them homes. The committee consists of A. W. Venable, J. J. Speed, Rob[er]t K. Clack, S. S. Downey, T. B. Barnett, J. S. Overby, John Stovall, and F. Hester. If any one should be overlooked they will please report themselves to some of the committee who will provide them homes with great pleasure.

The editor, Thomas Meredith, prefaced Barnett's notice with the following comment: "We are pleased with the arrangement which has been made for the easy and prompt reception of strangers. And we are not the less pleased by learning that the committee of arrangements consists of Presbyterian and Methodist brethren, as well as Baptists. The harmony and kind feeling which seems to prevail in that vicinity, afford pleasing indications of a happy meeting."

Venable, Downey, and Clack were from the Presbyterian Church; Speed, from the Methodist Church, according to an editorial note in *The Biblical Recorder and Southern Watchman*, November 9, 1839.

¹⁰⁷Of the sixty-two persons listed in the roster of delegates to the Eight Annual Meeting of the Baptist State Convention, held at Grassy Creek, November 1-4, 1839, sixteen represented churches of the Flat River Association. In addition to the two delegates appointed to represent the Association (William Hill Jordan and Thomas B. Barnett), the following churches were represented: Brassfield's, by S. H. Cannady and J.B. Allen; Concord, by Elijah Hester; Corinth, by L. Montague; Bethel, by E.L. Pugh, J. Lewis, and Thomas Halliburton; Friendship, by Allen S. Wynne; Hester's, by James Hobgood and G. Boswell; Grassy Creek, by J. Stovall; Island Creek, by J.M. Norwood; Mt. Moriah, by Louis DuPre; and Olive Branch, by R. D. Bumpass.

¹⁰⁸*Biblical Recorder*, August 19, 1843.

III. TOWARDS FULL PARTICIPATION IN A DENOMINATIONAL MISSION, 1845-1884

Prior to 1845, the deliberations of the Flat River Association were confined, largely, to matters related to the perpetuation of union and communion among her several affiliated churches. There had been infrequent attempts to address and promote benevolent interests beyond the bounds of the district association— attempts often occasioned by the presence of visiting brethren who represented such interests.¹ Nonetheless, little concerted effort had been made to direct the attention or to enlist the energies of the associated churches towards a vital concern with those benevolent objects which were claiming increasing attention from the larger Baptist denomination.²

The following action, taken at the annual session of the Association in 1845, was to alter the course of associational deliberations thereafter: "On motion, resolved that the Moderator appoint Committees in[on] the various Benevolent institutions to report to the next Association."³ Whereupon, committees were then appointed to report upon Periodicals, Foreign Missions, Home Missions, Education, Temperance, Bible Society, Tracts, Sabbath Schools, and Changes (Obituaries). The reports of such Standing Committees in succeeding years—together with the deliberations and resolutions attendant upon such reports—served both to acquaint the churches with the expanding mission of the denomination, and to bestir them to greater missionary effort within their own bounds.

Attention to those benevolent interests and enterprises which were fostered by the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina afforded guidance and stimulus for much local interest, concern, and support. Accordingly, associational activity often represented local response to the vision and the appeal of those several benevolent objects which were claiming the attention of the larger denomination. The pages which follow relate something of the progress of the Flat River Association towards full participation in a denominational mission throughout the four decades, 1845-1884.

A. Missions Abroad and at Home

Concerns with what would currently be designated Foreign Missions, Home Missions, State Missions, and Associational Missions, consumed a significant portion of associational deliberations throughout the period now under review. Pleas for the financial support of those engaged in the evangelization of the heathen, abroad and at home, were increasingly heard and heeded by the churches. By the end of the period, considerable attention was also being directed towards that measure of destitution within the bounds of the Association, itself—attention which had failed to elicit appropriate concern during earlier years.

Foreign Missions

The report of the associational Committee on Foreign Missions in 1846 established the priority of this particular object of benevolence in terms of an appeal to that familiar Biblical injunction with which Baptists have continued to justify their concern for a worldwide missionary enterprise. At the same time, this initial report on Foreign Missions

also took note of the gap which prevailed between missionary theory and missionary practice:

The command, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature," plainly makes it the duty of Christians to aim at the universal spread of the truth, and clearly intimates that their work will not be accomplished, nor their obligation cease till the nations now sunk in darkness shall see the light of life. . . . And yet it is a solemn truth that there are hundreds and thousands of Baptists in North Carolina, and we fear many within the bounds of this Association, who have never contributed the first cent to this glorious cause.⁴

Of course, many of the associated churches and/or their related auxiliaries had long been exerting themselves in some measure towards the support of missionary personnel stationed in foreign lands.⁵ Moreover, it can be safely surmised that the prospects for and the progress of Baptist missions abroad were familiar to the readers of the *Biblical Recorder*, to the auditory of those several Convention Agents who itinerated among the churches, and to those congregations who came under the influence of local personnel who had been enlisted for service on the Mission Board of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina.⁶ Yet, that attention which was directed towards Foreign Missions after 1846 was designed to urge and encourage the churches to *greater* exertions on behalf of this primary object of Baptist benevolence. Annual reports on the subject frequently provided a rather cursory summary of the current status of mission work under the auspices of the Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, together with recommendations for the formation of local "societies of inquiry," and for extended patronage of such periodicals as the *Home and Foreign Journal*.⁷ Visiting brethren who were requested to speak to the subject of missions might admonish their listeners for failing to match their moral support of the enterprise with comparable financial support. Thus, the Reverend Elias Dodson, presenting the report on Foreign Missions in 1856, noted: "Those who pray for the world's conversion and give nothing for it are like those persons mentioned by the Apostles—who love in word and tongue, but not in deed and in truth."⁸

Nevertheless, financial support for Foreign Missions received increasing attention throughout the period. The Financial Committee of the Baptist State Convention had reported receipts in 1845-46 from only two churches in the Association, and that in the amount of \$16.58. The Convention's General Agent, the Reverend William Lineberry, had reported receipt of an additional \$16.37 which had been collected during the course of his travels within the bounds of the Association during the same year.⁹

However, comparable associational statistics for 1883-84 noted total receipts for Foreign Missions in the amount of \$594.44, with twenty-two (22) of the twenty-eight (28) churches reporting some contribution to this facet of denominational missions.¹⁰ Moreover, the following resolution which was adopted at the 1884 session of the Association appeared to be a good omen for increased interest and support in the immediate future: "*Resolved*, That we, as an Association, will undertake to bear one-half or more of the expenses of a Foreign Missionary."¹¹

Home Missions

Home Missions—with reference, specifically, to those missionary labors under the immediate auspices of the Home (Domestic) Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention—did not claim the direct attention of the Flat River Association prior to 1876. On the other hand, when earlier associational reports were made and discussion ensued on the subject of “Home Missions,” or “Domestic Missions,” reference was usually had towards missionary operations under the auspices of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina and/or to what would now be termed “Associational Missions.”¹²

One of the primary objectives of the Baptist State Convention was that of the employment of missionaries throughout the geographical bounds of the State. Support for such missionary operations was dependent upon the support of the churches, societies, associations, or individuals who were sympathetic with such ministries. Churches within the bounds of the Flat River Association were visited frequently by missionaries, agents, or other itinerants under the auspices of the Convention, especially during the early years of the Convention’s history.¹³

The overall design of the Convention with regard to “State Missions” was expressed in the report of its Committee on “Home Missions” in 1846:

A Domestic Missionary should be forthwith appointed to travel and preach for the ensuing year within the bounds of each Association connected with the Convention, or within the range of its operations, and the Missionaries so appointed should act as Colporteurs in the sale of Baptist publications and also be instructed to raise what funds they could towards their support, the deficiency to be made up from the funds of the Convention.¹⁴

A similar call for such laborers was repeated five years later, but with the added appeal that the associations take the initiative in regard to their employment.¹⁵

Associational approval had been voiced for the following resolution which was presented in 1847 in lieu of a full report on Home Missions: “*Resolved*, That this Association approve of Home Missions [i. e., State Missions] and that every effort shall be made to sustain them.”¹⁶ Similar associational reports thereafter included repeated references to those mission stations at which appointees of the Baptist State Convention were engaged in ministry. Collections for the prosecution of this aspect of missionary activity were often received during the course of the annual meetings, supplementing those contributions which had been forthcoming from the churches throughout the previous year.¹⁷ But it was with the question of providing for a missionary who would devote his labors to places of destitution within the bounds of the Association itself that delegates from the churches struggled frequently, and with varying degrees of success. The earliest call for the employment of an associational missionary—in keeping with the recommendation of the Baptist State Convention—was sounded by the Reverend John E. Montague, reporting for the Committee on Home Missions in 1851. Montague observed:

There is great destitution in our favored country, and even in the bounds of this Association. We think, therefore, that a missionary could be pro-

fitably employed in aiding the pastors of churches in protracted meetings, and in preaching to destitute neighborhoods.¹⁸

A less tentative note was sounded four years later in the form of a resolution, and in the wake of earlier abortive efforts at the engagement of a domestic missionary and colporteur. This resolution read: “*Resolved*, That this Association make vigorous efforts to employ a missionary to go from house to house and commune with those who cannot, or do not attend upon the preached word publicly.”¹⁹ Appointment of such a missionary colporteur—together with the public pledge of subscriptions towards his support—was forthcoming in 1857.²⁰

Concern for the spiritual nurture and well-being of soldiers engaged in the Civil War issued in a very decided increase in the support of chaplaincy and colportage work during the early 1860s. Moreover, the financial plight of the State Mission Board in the aftermath of that conflict had the salutary effect of rallying the Association to both renewed effort on behalf of State Missions, and to a greater recognition of local responsibility for local destitution. Thus, the Committee on State Missions made the following observation in 1873, after reviewing the current scope of statewide missionary operations:

In our Association there are large and inviting fields of labor. We would mention particularly Kittrells, the section in an around Townsville and along the Virginia line to Warren [County], and a large territory in the south-western part of the Association lying between Knap of Reeds, Hillsboro and Antioch.²¹

In lieu of obtaining the services of an appointee of the State Mission Board, delegates to the Flat River Association eventually resorted to the appointment of an Associational Missionary Committee to “look at the destitute points within the bounds of the Association, and to adopt any plan that to them may seem best to raise funds, and forthwith supply the destitution as far as practicable, . . .”²² The plan adopted, initially, was that of naming one brother from each of the associated churches to assist this committee in raising funds. When the associational committee reported “little work accomplished due to the failure of the churches to give aid,” a different strategy was employed. The men were replaced by women from the churches—an omen of an approaching new day in missions promotion, missions education, and missions support.²³

B. Education

The fortunes of Wake Forest College—founded under the auspices of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, and located in such near geographical proximity to the churches of the region—commanded considerable attention of the Association during the period under review. Moreover, a growing concern for the provision of higher educational opportunities for women issued in the founding of Oxford College. The necessity for “lower schools,” designed to prepare young men for matriculation in collegiate studies at Wake Forest, resulted in the founding of a male academy at Bethel Hill, Person County, under the joint auspices of the Beulah and Flat River associations.

Accordingly, indications are given in the paragraphs which follow of associational participation in the efforts to secure adequate funding for Wake Forest College, and to defend her against her detractors. Provisions for and benefits of an educated ministry—prime reasons for initial Baptist interest in establishing an institute at Wake Forest—are then noted in terms of their particular bearing upon the associated churches. Finally, the section is concluded with brief glimpses at the early contributions of Oxford College and of Bethel Academy towards the educational vision and mission among Flat River Baptists.

Wake Forest College

Records related to the founding, governance, and early patronage of Wake Forest Institute [Wake Forest College after 1838] abound with the names and contributions of Baptists affiliated with the churches of the Flat River Association.²⁴ The monthly business of church conference and the conduct of periodic services of public worship for many congregations were often presided over by men whose weekday responsibilities were exercised in administration, instruction, agency, or classroom studies at Wake Forest.²⁵ Thus, it is readily understandable that Baptists of the region maintained a love for the institution and her purposes, exemplified by concerted efforts towards her interests and well-being.

Earliest reference to Wake Forest College in the extant *Minutes* of the Flat River Association is found in 1842, at which session the delegates present authorized the insertion of extracts from the college catalog as an appendage to the official records of that body.²⁶ Two years later, associational delegates adopted a series of resolutions designed to encourage pastors, churches, and individuals to come to the financial relief of Wake Forest. The resolutions read:

Whereas it is necessary that the sum of \$9,000 shall be raised with as little delay as possible for the relief of Wake Forest College; whereas there are a few brethren which are bound for this amount, and which they shall be obliged to raise from their own private resources, if it shall not be obtained by public contribution; and whereas we are not willing either that the existence or the prosperity of the College shall be endangered, or that a few brethren shall bear the whole burden of its support, therefore, *Resolved*, That for the purpose of relieving the College of the aforementioned debt of \$9,000, this Association recommend to the several churches composing it, that each church raise an amount equal to fifty cents for every white member belonging to the church, as soon as possible to be applied to the payment of said debt.

Resolved, further, That we recommend to our brethren and friends, that they subscribe liberally to the Agent appointed by the Board of Trustees, for raising by subscription the said sum of \$9,000 for the object aforesaid.

Resolved, further, That each minister having the pastoral charge of churches belonging to this Association is hereby respectfully requested to bring the foregoing resolution to the attention of their churches and congregations, and urge the claims of Wake Forest to their support.²⁷

The author of the Association's initial Report on Education in 1846 acknowledged the existence of indifference, apathy, and even opposition to the subject itself. The eloquent manner in which he interpreted the role of education, however, bears repeating, for his was to become the prevailing opinion among Baptists of the region. He noted:

As it is necessary that the pioneer of the forest with axe in hand, shall go before colonization to prepare the road, and the country for civilization, so it is necessary that the light of knowledge should either precede, or at least, be a hand-maid of that divine wisdom which is our consolation for the present, and our brightest hope for the future.²⁸

Thereafter, associational records are replete with references commending Wake Forest to the patronage of the churches; indicating various attempts to assist with the provisions of general endowment and scholarship aid for the institution; and exhibiting efforts to memorialize two of the institution's early presidents with the endowment of the Wait Professorship and the erection of Wingate Memorial Hall, respectively.²⁹

Oxford Female College

Sentiment for an educational institution for young women to serve as a counterpart to Wake Forest College prompted the calling of a public meeting, October 23, 1849, relative to the "establishment of a Female College to be under the patronage of the Baptist Convention of North Carolina, and to be located in the Town of Oxford."³⁰ Thus, was the groundwork laid for the founding of Oxford Female College—an institution which continued to serve the educational needs of young women for over three quarters of a century, although it never fully attained that degree of "patronage of the Baptist Convention of North Carolina" which had been envisioned by its promoters in 1849-50.³¹

Having engaged the venerable Samuel Wait as president, Oxford Female College opened her first academic session on July 21, 1851, with seventeen young ladies eventually matriculating during this initial session.³² Enrollment had increased to 80 students within the span of four years; the number of faculty members, nine.³³ The catalog for 1856 outlined courses of study in both "Preparatory" and "Collegiate" departments, with Samuel Wait, John Haymes Mills, and Jehu Lewis Shuck listed as instructors in collegiate studies.³⁴

The female college, or seminary, at Oxford was not the immediate offspring of the Flat River Association. The Association exerted no direct influence in the shaping of institutional policies, such as might have been exercised through the election of trustees. Yet, Oxford Female College represented a response, under Baptist auspices and direction, to the educational needs of young women in which the Association took considerable pride.

The Reverend Joshua John James—who had been employed as Agent for the college in December 1850—first presented the claims of the institution before the annual session of the Flat River Association, meeting with Flat River Union Church, August 9-12, 1851. His appeal—together with supporting remarks by Robert I. Devin, Elijah Hester, William Jones, and Nathaniel E. Cannady—prompted unanimous adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas, This Association has learned with great pleasure that since its last annual session, a Baptist Female College has been located within its own bounds and,

Whereas, This measure is deemed of great importance to our denomination generally. Therefore, *Resolved*, That we take a deep interest in the success of this Institution; and that we recommend it to the Patronage and support of the churches composing this body.³⁵

Subsequent resolutions commending the patronage of the school in Oxford were adopted by the Association in 1852, 1853, and 1854. Associational *Minutes* for 1855 included the earliest notice of an academic calendar for the college. After 1861, the institution was permitted to insert advertisements in the annual records of associational proceedings—a practice which contributed to the general sanctioning of her educational programs throughout the region.³⁶

Nonetheless, Oxford Female College did not enjoy universal appeal, nor was her early financial support as forthcoming as the founders had anticipated. An otherwise gratifying report on the examination of the institution's pupils, May 27, 1853, included the observation:

We regret to say that this college has had to encounter no small share of *religious* prejudice and opposition. Not only from those whose views, doctrines, and church polity are antagonistic to our own, but even from those who ought to be warm friends and patrons [*italics not in the original*].³⁷

President Wait had to dispel rumors which were in circulation with regard to both civil and religious restrictions which were supposedly being imposed on the school's matriculants, and with regard to a complaint that too many teachers were being sought from the North.³⁸

An indebtedness of \$9,001.42 was reported at the conclusion of the college's first year of operation. Employment of a succession of agents to secure funds for the liquidation of debt proved far less than satisfactory. The building and premises were sold in 1857 to John Haymes Mills, who continued to operate the school until 1866. Mills, in turn, sold the property in the latter year, repairing to nearby St. Johns College, an institution which had opened some years earlier under the auspices of the Masonic Order.³⁹

Oxford Female College was to experience her finest years as an educational institution after 1880, when the premises were at first leased, and subsequently purchased, by a native son, Franklin P. Hobgood. It was also under Hobgood's extended tenure as president that the college would come to more nearly enjoy that measure of favor and patronage among Flat River Baptists which had been anticipated during the period of her conception and infancy as an educational enterprise.⁴⁰

An Associational School: Bethel Academy

The wide disparity in educational backgrounds among the early students who matriculated at Wake Forest College—and, later, at Oxford Female College—had necessitated the expenditure of considerable attention to “preparatory studies” on the part

of the institution's instructional staff. One method proposed for correcting such deficiencies on the part of those who wished to pursue studies at Wake Forest, especially, was that of establishing associational high schools, or academies, designed to prepare students for enrollment in collegiate studies. Interest in such preparatory schools had prompted the Baptist State Convention to adopt the following resolution at its annual session in 1845:

Whereas it is deemed by this Convention to be of the utmost importance to the Baptist denomination, and to the interest of truth in general, that Academies and Schools should be established under the care and patronage of Baptists, and that their children and wards should not be sent to schools where sectarian principles opposed to the doctrines and ordinances of our church are taught and form a part of instruction, Therefore:

Resolved, That this Convention recommend to their brethren throughout the State to encourage the establishment of Schools, both male and female, under the patronage of the Baptist denomination, and by all proper means to sustain and support those which have been established, as a means, under God's blessing, of advancing the interest of true religion [italics not in the original].⁴¹

Similar resolutions or recommendations were also forthcoming from the Convention, or its Board of Managers, in 1849, 1852, and 1854, as a few of the associations throughout the State began to make at least tentative response to this earlier appeal.

Neighboring Beulah Association was among the leaders in establishing and/or commending academies within her bounds to the patronage of Baptists throughout the region. Milton Male Classical Institute, which opened in 1852 under the superintendency of the Reverend Poindexter Smith Henson, was advertised as an institution "under the patronage of the Roanoke, Dan River, and Beulah Associations."⁴² Baptists affiliated with the churches of the Flat River Association added their endorsement in the year the school opened, noting: ". . . until we shall be enabled to establish a similar school within our bounds as recommended by the Board of the Convention, that this Institution be considered under our patronage."⁴³

It was in 1856 that Flat River Baptists initiated the process which would eventuate in the establishing of an associational academy, with the appointment of a committee of five persons to "enquire into the expedience of establishing a High School, preparatory to W[ake] F[orest] College, and if deemed expedient, to report a plan for its location and establishment."⁴⁴ Three years later, a subsequent committee brought the following report with recommendations, to which the Association responded with resolutions of support:

The Committee on the High School would state, that we have erected for the accommodation of a High School, preparatory to W[ake] F[orest] College, a house 40 by 20 feet, all complete and in good style. It is built on shares of \$20 each. After having considered carefully all the plans upon which Schools are established, we came to the conclusion that the stock plan was preferable. But we think the stockholders too few in number to

make the School as profitable to the denomination as it should be. We therefore recommend that the churches in this Association take one or more shares each. We also recommend the appointment of five Trustees, who are stockholders, or who represent stock, to act with the five to be appointed by the stockholders.⁴⁵

The site selected for the location of this school being adjacent to Bethel Church, Person County, the institution assumed the designation "Bethel Academy." Its first session commenced in January 1860, under the care of the Reverend Thomas Jefferson Horner who, though personally deprived of a college education, had taught successfully for some fifteen years at private schools in Granville, Person, and Wake counties. Like its counterpart, Oxford Female College, Bethel Academy was also to enjoy her greatest measure of success and patronage in succeeding decades—particularly after the abandoned premises came under the management of the Reverend and Mrs. John Alexander Beam in 1887.⁴⁶

C. Colportage and Christian Nurture

None of the seventeen churches affiliated with the Flat River Association in 1845 maintained regular services of worship more frequently than once each month. Such public worship, once-a-month, continued to be the prevailing practice among the churches throughout the period now under consideration.⁴⁷ Religious instruction for members of widely scattered congregations—apart from the early efforts of the Sunday School, to which specific attention is directed below—was largely dependent upon the exertions of the individual households. Moreover, such instruction as any household might be able to provide was further limited by the lack of adequate and appropriate literature.

It was to address such destitution that the Association, or associational leadership, encouraged and promoted the purchase and distribution of Bibles and other religious literature; exerted commendable efforts at colportage, especially in connection with concern for the spiritual nurture of Confederate soldiers engaged in the Civil War; and attempted to foster and enhance Christian nurture, in general, through attention to family worship and weekly prayer meetings.

Flat River Association Bible Society

A North Carolina Bible Society, auxiliary to the American and Foreign Bible Society, had been formed at Graves' Meeting House, Caswell County, November 15, 1836, by delegates—and others—in attendance upon the annual session of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina. Its primary objective was to cooperate with the parent society "in promoting a wider circulation of the Scriptures, in the most faithful versions that can be procured."⁴⁸ Among the North Carolina Society's charter members were William Hill Jordan, pastor of Island Creek Church in earlier years, and his wife, Elizabeth.

The formation of county and other primary societies, auxiliary to the North Carolina Bible Society, had been anticipated and recommended as early as 1837. Accordingly, the Flat River Baptist Bible Society, Auxiliary to the North Carolina Baptist Bible Society,

was organized at Tabb's Creek Meeting House, August 9, 1845, during an adjournment of the annual associational meeting at that place.

That its primary focus of attention was to be local is evidenced from the organization's statement of purpose, found in Article 2 of the Constitution: "The object of this Society shall be to supply our own destitute first, and with our surplus funds to aid the parent Society, to be sent up by Delegates appointed by this Society."⁴⁹ Membership in the Flat River Bible Society was based upon the payment of an annual fee of \$1.00, with a contribution of \$10.00 entitling one to life membership. Each church in the Association was urged to "form a Bible Society Auxiliary to the Flat River Association Bible Society, and to send funds so collected by their delegates to the Association, to the parent Society."⁵⁰

However, response from the churches to this particular form of benevolence proved to be less than gratifying. By 1847, auxiliaries had been established in only four churches.⁵¹ Continued neglect prompted passage of the following resolution in 1851:

Whereas, This Association has heretofore formed a Bible Society, auxiliary to the N[orth] C[arolina] B[aptist] B[ible] S[ociety], and whereas, our churches, with but few exceptions, have neglected to send up their contributions to said Society, Therefore,

Resolved, That this Association request the Ministers having the care of churches in its bounds, to bring the object before the churches, and if possible, urge them to do their duty in this important work.⁵²

Similar appeals were also echoed in 1855, 1856, and 1858.

Yet, while most of the individual churches affiliated with the Association appeared reluctant to commit themselves to financial contributions towards Bible distribution, individual members within the churches made significant contributions to both the associational and State societies. William Hill Jordan, a charter member of the North Carolina Bible Society, served as a Vice-President of this parent organization, 1836-41 and 1848-57. Hamilton Hester, a layman from Hester's Church who had been elected Treasurer of the Flat River Bible Society at the time of its formation in 1845, also served the parent organization as a Vice-President, 1848-57.⁵³

The Town of Oxford was the site of the North Carolina Bible Society's Book Depository, 1848-51, with William Hester and Joseph Hobgood serving, successively, as the depository's Agents.⁵⁴ James P. Montague—a licentiate of Corinth Church who was to be ordained to the work of the Gospel ministry during the 1851 session of the Association—served as Colporteur and Agent, under joint appointment of the North Carolina Baptist Bible Society and the North Carolina Baptist Sunday School and Publication Society, 1849-51.⁵⁵

Army Colportage

Attempts at engaging the services of 'an itinerant minister—under associational auspices and support—who could supply the destitute with religious books, periodicals, and other services had met with but limited success throughout the decade of the 1850s. The report of Albert W. Barksdale, associational colporteur in 1857-58,

makes it apparent that his labors were frustrated by lack of sufficient direction and guidance on the part of the committee responsible for superintending his work. After giving an account of the number of books he had sold, families visited, services conducted, etc., he added:

I have done the work according to the best judgment I had, considering what a variety of minds those had for whom I labored as a Colporteur. *All think the Colporteur ought to work differently: hardly any two think alike as to the duties of a Colporteur* [italics not in the original].⁵⁶

Further attempts at sustaining associational colportage in 1859, 1860, and 1861 proved abortive.⁵⁷

Concerns for the spiritual nurture of the troops prosecuting the cause of the Confederacy, however, elicited the financial support of Flat River Baptists—and of Baptists throughout North Carolina—to a degree previously unknown for any other cause. That “variety of minds” regarding the proper pursuit of domestic colportage was replaced with general consensus with regard to the needs of the military. Each session of the Association which was conducted during the course of the North/South conflict issued pleas for the support of destitution among the soldiers in the field of battle—and each plea met with liberal response.

Thus, in 1861 it was: “*Resolved*, That after the Conventional Sermon tomorrow a collection be taken up for the purpose of supplying the volunteers from the bounds of this Association with Testaments and other religious reading matter.”⁵⁸ One year later, a collection amounting to \$300.00 was forwarded to the Domestic Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention “to be applied to furnishing missionaries for the Southern armies,” while an additional \$261.00 was collected for colportage among the soldiers of the Confederacy.⁵⁹ Further contributions of \$331.00 and \$938.49 were reported in 1863 and 1864, respectively.⁶⁰

Assessing the “State of Religion”

Associational endeavors related to both colportage, in the limited sense of the distribution of religious literature, and the engagement of an itinerant associational missionary actually reflected attempts to address a much broader issue or concern. That concern was to assess—with a view towards improving—what the records describe as the “State of Religion” within the bounds of the Flat River Association. An associational Committee on the State of Religion had reported as early as 1854:

Lukewarmness in religion, and indifference to its claims are but too apparent as a general fact, and it is an enquiry of the most serious character as to whether christians(sic) are not insensible to their duty, and obligations, while blessed with the bounties of Providence.⁶¹

Ten years later, with the Confederacy facing imminent defeat in the Civil War, attention to the State of Religion among the churches issued in the following report which was “respectfully but sorrowfully” submitted by the associational committee to whom the subject had been entrusted:

There is not, perhaps within the bounds of this Association, a single church that "He who holdeth the seven stars in his right hand hath not somewhat against." While our churches are as strong in numbers, as they have been at any time, they are weak in faith, slothful and negligent in business, "having a form of godliness but denying the power thereof." Covetousness, which is so prevalent in the world at this time, has penetrated the churches; and the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches is choking the word and causing it to be unfruitful. When we compare the zeal and earnestness of primitive times, with the carlessness(sic) and lukewarmness of the present we are almost forced to the conclusion, that genuine piety has failed among the children of Men. . . . God grant that some means may be delivered by which it may be improved.⁶²

An immediate means designed to assist with that improvement was recommended through attention to Family Worship and Prayer Meetings. Beginning in 1864, a Committee on Family Worship and Prayer Meetings was added to the roster of "standing committees" which were expected to bring a report to each succeeding annual session of the Association. The report of the initial committee, chaired by the Reverend Elijah Forbes Beachum, defined the nature of these spiritual exercises in which each family unit was encouraged to engage itself. That same report also projected the benefits to be derived from appropriate devotion to such exercises on a regular, sustained basis:

Family worship, or family prayer, signifies the religious offering or sacrifice presented to God by a collection of persons occupying the same abode, when one of the group presents the cause of the whole before the mercy seat and there earnestly importunes with the Giver of all good in their behalf. . . . If parents and heads of families would spend more time at a family altar, in behalf of those they love, and less in in(sic) the popular current of worldly amusements they might anticipate greater proficiency in the divine life, and earlier reception of the truth and a large amount of holy happiness in the family circle.⁶³

Subsequent reports, from as early as 1866, encouraged the churches to supplement family devotions with the conduct of weekly prayer meetings. There are, however, no statistics available for determining how many of the churches either attempted and/or managed to sustain such weekly prayer meetings—especially in the absence of resident pastors who could assume the administrative responsibility for maintaining such religious exercises.⁶⁴

Sunday Schools

Only one of the churches affiliated with the Flat River Association in 1845 is reported to have been conducting a Sunday Scho'ol. Forty years later, however, 19 of the 27 churches then in connection with the Association reported Sunday Schools—or Sabbath Schools—in operation, with three of these churches conducting multiple schools.⁶⁵ The intervening years had witnessed both encouraging and discouraging prospects towards a goal which had been set forth by the Committee on Sabbath Schools in 1845:

“*Resolved*, That we recommend [to] the churches composing this Association to form a Sabbath School at each church.”⁶⁶

Since the churches of the Association neglected to report Sunday School statistics prior to 1872, it is difficult to determine the actual extent of Sunday School operations apart from the reports of associational committees. The general tenor of such reports prior to the 1870s is well reflected in the words of Samuel H. Cannady, member of Brassfield’s Church, who submitted the following on behalf of the Committee on Sabbath Schools in 1848:

It is to be regretted that Sunday Schools are so generally neglected in this part of the State; it must be that we are deficient in some respect; it appears that we are found wanting in point of courage to practice, rather than theorize the subject.⁶⁷

This same gulf between theory and practice was noted two years later by Nathaniel E. Cannady, also of Brassfield’s Church, when he wrote on behalf of the Committee on Sabbath Schools:

The importance of Sabbath Schools is now with but few exceptions, admitted by all. Yet, it is a lamentable fact that there is little or nothing doing within the bounds of the Flat River Association, especially by baptists(sic) for their promotion.⁶⁸

Eventually the Association endorsed and adopted two strategies which were designed to encourage and assist the prosecution of Sunday School work among the churches. The first was the appointment in 1866 of a Sunday School Committee “to keep on hand a supply of books, and attend to the general interest of Sabbath Schools, and make an annual report to this Association.”⁶⁹ The second was the utilization of the quarterly 5th Sundays for the conduct of associational Sunday School Institutes, beginning in October 1875.⁷⁰

Successful prosecution of the task entrusted to the Sunday School Committee was dependent upon the receipt of adequate funds from the churches requesting materials and/or other helps. Such funds were not forthcoming. Accordingly, the Sunday School Committee was discontinued, at its own request, in 1868, after submitting the following report:

Your committee is sorry to have to report again that not one dollar has been furnished them with which to procure such a supply as would meet the wants of our Sabbath Schools. . . . We beg the Association to take some steps to furnish the committee with means to keep on hand needed Sunday School books, *or else rescind the action of the Association creating a standing Sunday School committee* [italics not in the original].⁷¹

The quarterly Sunday School Institutes, however, proved to be far more effective in generating substantial interest in the primary objective for which they were created and conducted, as well as in generating interest in related benevolent causes. The initial Committee on Sunday School Institutes reported in 1876:

The committee have found it desirable to include Saturday also, and have a two days' meeting. We are gratified to be able to report that considerable interest has been taken in these meetings, and that they have awakened a deeper and more general interest in the Sunday School work at large. We may add that the last meeting was regarded as the most interesting and successful of all.⁷²

Institutes appear to have been conducted as scheduled throughout the decade, 1875-1884, except when prevented by inclement weather, or by conflict in schedule with the annual associational meeting. In 1881, the Committee on Sunday School Institutes was instructed "to select for discussion at each session of the Institute, at least one subject bearing upon the objects of the Baptist State Convention."⁷³ In terms of the primary object for which Sunday School Institutes had been inaugurated, it was largely due to their continuing influence and attraction that the associational report on Sunday Schools could note triumphantly in 1881 that only one church remained without a Sunday School.⁷⁴

Temperance

None of the reports on the various "benevolent objects of the day" to which the Flat River Association turned her attention after 1845 engendered as much of what the Clerk termed "animated discussion" as those related to the question of Temperance. The point at issue was not the propriety of temperance—to which there was general consensus among the churches—but rather the propriety of insisting on *total abstinence* as a test of Christian fellowship.

Unanimous adoption of the earliest report by an associational Committee on Temperance was probably due to the adroit language in which the committee couched its only recommendation:

Resolved, That in the estimation of this Association, the making, vending, and drinking of intoxicating spirits *as a common drink or beverage*, is derogatory to the christian(sic) character; and [we] recommend to the churches composing this Association *to use all proper vigilance and zeal to induce* their respective members to abandon all such [italics not in the original].⁷⁵

Seven years later, a resolution that the "cause of temperance should be encouraged by our churches" was adopted, following "animated discussion" thereon by R. I. Devin, W. A. Atkinson, Patrick H. Smith, and James S. Purefoy.⁷⁶

That a "variety of opinions" existed with regard to the subject of Temperance was granted in the associational report of 1855, with the Association then called upon to express its opinion on one question: "Is it consistent with the character of a member of the Baptist church to sell ardent spirits, or give countenance to those who do sell destroying drink?" The Association responded to this query as follows: "In the opinion of this body, it is not consistent with the character of a christian(sic) to sell ardent spirits, or give countenance to those who sell intoxicating drinks as a beverage."⁷⁷

By the late 1860s and early 1870s, reports on Temperance began to focus more directly upon the question of discipline to be imposed upon those who engage in the

“manufacture and use of spiritous liquors, except for medicinal and mechanical purposes”—a practice which, in the opinion of the Association of 1868, was again deemed “inconsistent with the character of an exemplary christian(sic).”⁷⁸ Initial drafts of committee reports were rejected or recommitted in 1868 and, again, in 1871, due to “indefiniteness in point of construction”; or, for their “general indictment against Baptists for drunkenness.”⁷⁹

The following mediating position was advanced and advocated in 1873 in the wake of more stringent resolutions which had been adopted the previous year:

Resolved, That while we would not make the moderate use of intoxicating liquors a test of fellowship, we do earnestly recommend to every Baptist a total abstinence from everything that can intoxicate, except for mechanical or medicinal purposes, on the principle of the Apostle: “If meat makes my brother to offend, I will eat no meat while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend.”⁸⁰

Even the moderate use of intoxicating drink was to be avoided on the principle of honor, or service, to the conscience of a weaker brother.

However, neither those advocating mediation nor moderation were to prevail in associational councils. The reports of Committees on Temperance in 1882 and 1884 gave clear indication of the stance at which delegates to the annual associational meetings were prepared to position themselves. The former report declared:

The position of this Association on the Temperance Question has often been repeated: That no Church of this body shall retain in fellowship any member engaged in the sale or manufacture of intoxicating beverages; that every Christian should personally abstain from the use of all intoxicating liquors, and that they should discountenance their use on all public and private occasions.⁸¹

The latter report observed: “We believe the only prudent and safe course for church members is *total abstinence* [italics in the original].”⁸²

That decision made in 1845 to “appoint Committees on the various Benevolent institutions to report to the next Association” had altered the agenda of associational meetings thereafter. Proclamation, prayer, and praise continued to play a significant role in the annual three-day gatherings. However, the attention formerly given to discussion of Queries from the churches, production and approval of Circular Letters, and hearing the reports of Corresponding Messengers to sister associations, were increasingly directed to report and deliberation upon the progress of Missions, Education, and a variety of related auxiliary enterprises.⁸³ In the process, the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina had enlisted a strong ally and partner in Flat River Baptist Association and her churches.⁸⁴

ENDNOTES

¹Reference has been made earlier to the first public collection for foreign missions at a "Sectional Meeting" of the Association in April 1816—a collection occasioned by the presence and preaching of Luther Rice. Visiting representatives of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina had also been requested to address the Association at her sessions in 1832, 1839, 1840, 1842, 1843, and 1844. Otherwise, there appear to have been no representatives of benevolent interests present at associational gatherings prior to 1845.

²The Association had passed a resolution in 1839 recommending that the churches "contribute more liberally than they have hitherto done" towards the objects of the Baptist State Convention, and authorizing a public collection on the Sabbath "for the purpose of sending a delegation from this Association to the next Convention." Even so, it was also deemed necessary to ask the churches to indicate, by means of their next letters, whether they were willing for such collections to be taken and delegates sent to the annual session of the Convention. See *FR Minutes*, 1839, p. 4, 6.

³*FR Minutes*, 1845, p. 5.

⁴*Ibid.*, 1839, p. 7.

⁵The Treasurer of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina reported receiving receipts amounting to \$20.57 1/2 from the Grassy Creek Missionary Society in 1831. Other receipts for foreign missions which were received from Flat River churches/societies prior to 1845 were reported from the following: 1832—Mt. Moriah; 1833—Mt. Moriah, Olive Branch, Island Creek, Grassy Creek; 1835—Chestnut Grove, Olive Branch, Grassy Creek, Hester's, Mt. Moriah; 1836—Olive Branch, Brassfield's, Tabb's Creek, Grassy Creek, Island Creek; 1837—Olive Branch; 1838—Grassy Creek, Island Creek, Olive Branch; 1839—Island Creek, Grassy Creek, Hester's, Concord, Corinth, Brassfield's, Bethel, Olive Branch; 1840—Concord; 1841—Hester's, Olive Branch; 1843—Brassfield's, Mt. Zion, Concord, Island Creek, Corinth; and 1844—Olive Branch.

Contributions received by the various Agents of the Convention during the course of their itinerancies among the churches are not included in the enumeration above. Neither are those "public collections" reported which were taken at associational meetings after 1839.

⁶That the *Biblical Recorder* had been fairly widely known and read within the bounds of the Association since the inception of the former in January 1835 is evident from the occasional publicizing of the names of subscribers for whom receipts had been forwarded to the editor/publisher. Moreover, an early list of "Agents" for the *Biblical Recorder* includes the names of two members of churches which were affiliated with the Association: Thomas B. Barnett (Grassy Creek) and John M. Norwood (Island Creek). See *Biblical Recorder*, February 11, 1835.

Publication in the early issues of the *Biblical Recorder* of the proposed itineraries of the Convention's Agent and of others who were employed to promote the interests of various benevolent objects indicated frequent appointments among churches within the associational bounds. Reports of these same individuals to the annual sessions of the Baptist State Convention often included accounts of contributions from individuals, churches, or missionary societies in addition to those reported by the Treasurer of the Convention or by its Finance Committee in any given year.

⁷*The Home and Foreign Journal* succeeded the earlier *Southern Baptist Missionary Journal* (1846ff.) as the literary organ of both the Foreign Mission Board and the Domestic Mission Board after 1853. Following a suspension of operations during the Civil War and its immediate aftermath, the *Journal* resumed publication, with space devoted to the interests of the Foreign Mission Board, Domestic Mission Board, Sunday School Board, and the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. It became a publication of the Foreign Mission Board, alone, by action of the Southern Baptist Convention in 1874.

⁸*FR Minutes*, 1856, p. 14. Elias Dodson (1807-1882), a native of Halifax County, Virginia, and a graduate of the College of William and Mary, spent the greater portion of his ministry in North Carolina, including several years as Missionary in the Beulah Association.

⁹*Proceedings of the Sixteenth Anniversary of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, Held with the Church at Raleigh, October 15-20, 1846* (Raleigh: Recorder Office, 1847), pp. 26-27, 29. Churches reporting contributions were: Brassfield's, Concord, Fellowship, Hester's, Mt. Zion, and Tabb's Creek.

¹⁰*FR Minutes*, 1884, p. 13. Of this total, Mt. Zion Church had contributed \$200.00, making her the largest single contributor among the churches.

¹¹*Ibid.*, p. 6. The earlier presence of David Wells Herring, who was later to serve as a missionary in China (1885-1927), at the 1882 session of the Association appears to have marked a high point in missionary interest among the delegates and visitors gathered for the annual meetings among Flat River Baptists. Herring's effect among his hearers was reported by the Clerk of the Association on that occasion in the following terms:

Bro[ther] D. W. Herring, from Eastern Association, who proposes to go as a Missionary to China and assist Dr. Yates, was introduced to the Association by Rev[erend] R. H. Marsh. Bro[ther] Herring made a telling speech for Foreign Missions, and moved the hearts of all present by relating his call of God to the work of preaching the gospel in China. Bro[ther] Herring will never be forgotten by this body in the ages to come. He was followed by the Rev[erend] C. T. Bailey, who regards the special call of Bro[ther] Herring as the answer of God to the prayers of North Carolina that a young man from their own borders, known to all the brethren, might go to receive the lessons of Missionary life from the lips of our distinguished and beloved brother Yates. Rev[erend] T. J. Horner also spoke touchingly and earnestly of the call of brother Herring. Brother Horner regrets that he is an old man, and would rejoice in accompanying our young brother to China if he were himself a young man.

See *ibid.*, p. 8.

¹²The Report of the Committee on Home Missions in 1857 was the earliest to delineate missionary labors "in the Southern States as well as the Indian Territories" as one of the three "divisions" of Home Missions. The earliest summary of the Board of Domestic Missions (now, Home Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention) was included in a general Report on Home Missions in 1864. See *FR Minutes*, 1857, p. 12; 1864, p. 8.

¹³Samuel Wait, first General Agent of the Baptist State Convention, had visited within the bounds of the Association in 1832-33. John Culpeper, Sr., had visited in the Summer of 1834, and again during the Winter of 1835-36. The Report of the Board of Managers of the Convention included the following notation with reference to the report of the labors of Agent Robert McNabb in 1838: "The month of September was occupied in traveling through the Flat River Association.—Bro[ther] McNabb represents the field in this region as white for harvest." See *Proceedings of the Seventh Annual Meeting of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, Held at Brown's M[eeeting] H[ouse], Sampson County, N[orth] C[arolina], November 3-7, 1838* (Raleigh: Printed at the Recorder Office, 1839), p. 17.

¹⁴*Proceedings of the Sixteenth Anniversary of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, Held with the Church at Raleigh, October 15-20, 1846* (Raleigh: Printed at the Recorder Office, 1847), p. 10.

¹⁵*Proceedings of the Twenty-Second Annual Session of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, Held with the First Baptist Church in Wilmington, N[orth] C[arolina]. From October 16th to 20th Inclusive [1851]* (Raleigh: Printed by M. A. Meredith, 1851), p. 32. This appeal actually came in the form of a notation which was appended to the Minutes of the meeting of the Convention's Board of Managers, October 29, 1851. The appeal read:

The Board are anxious that a missionary should be appointed to travel within the bounds of each Association within the State, during the ensuing year: nothing but their limited means prevents the consummation of this object. They believe that their brethren and friends could easily sustain one or more to labor amongst them. If, therefore, the moderator and other active brethren in each Association would write and recommend someone as their missionary, and resolve that they will sustain him, it will afford the Board great pleasure to make the appointment, and they doubt not from the experience of the past, that the most happy results will follow. A missionary visiting statedly all the churches within the bounds of the Association, serves as a connecting link to bind them together, and renders most efficient aid to the pastors, and serves as a supply to otherwise destitute churches.

¹⁶*FR Minutes*, 1847, p. 12.

¹⁷The earliest collection for the support of benevolences under the auspices of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina was taken in 1839. At that time, the churches were asked to signify (by means of their next annual letters) whether they were willing for such collections to be taken at future meetings, and delegates sent to represent the Association at the annual meetings of the Convention. One year later, three churches were reported to be opposed to this proposal.

¹⁸*FR Minutes*, 1851, p. 6. A proposal to employ an itinerant missionary had been submitted to the churches as early as 1841, in the following terms:

Resolved, That the churches belonging to this Association be requested to state in their letters to the next session of this body whether or not it will meet their approbation to employ an Itinerant(sic) to travel one year in the bounds of this Association, and if he does, if they will pay their proportionable part of his salary, provided it should not exceed seventy-five cents per day for a single man, and one dollar for a man with a family.

See *FR Minutes*, 1841, pp. 6, 7.

¹⁹*FR Minutes*, 1855, p. 9. Proposals favorable to the appointment of a Domestic Missionary and/or Colporteur had been approved in 1852, 1853, and 1854. Plans for procuring the services of "an efficient Missionary and Colporteur" were devised in 1854, with an Executive Committee charged with superintending his work. One year later, however, this Committee had to report being unable to procure the services of the man who had been recommended for the task. See *FR Minutes*, 1852, p. 4; 1853, p. 6; 1854, p. 4.

²⁰*Ibid.*, 1857, p. 5. "On motion, brother Albert W. Barksdale, a Licentiate of the Dan River Association, was appointed a Colporteur of this Association, at a rate of \$200.00 per annum, and he receive the profit on the books which he may sell."

The following year, Barksdale reported having sold 574 books, preached 54 sermons, made 404 family visits, engaged in prayer with 192 families, and addressed 14 other public meetings. Nonetheless, a deficit in funds sent up to the Association for colportage had to be made up by a collection taken at the associational meeting in 1858. A deficit of \$21.25 owed Hartswell Freeman—Barksdale's successor, who labored for a short while in 1859—was erased by a similar collection taken in 1862.

²¹*Ibid.*, 1873, p. 10.

²²*Ibid.*, 1881, p. 9.

²³*Ibid.*, 1882, p. 11. The women appointed to this task from the several churches were listed in the associational records as follows: Antioch—Sister Ruffin Rue; Amis' Chapel—Sister R. A. Stovall; Bethel—Sister S. C. Humphries; Concord—Sister Samuel Clark; Corinth—Sister Lou Y. Pittard; Enon—Sister Belle Hester; Fellowship—Sister Dave Hunt; Grassy Creek—Sister Geo[rge] Royster; Henderson—Sister Hattie Lassiter; Hester's—Sister Julia Knott; Island Creek—Sister Anna Gill; Mary's Chapel—Sister Mary Allen; Mill Creek—Sister T. H. Street; Mountain Creek—Sister John A. Watkins; Mt. Zion—Sister Mary A. Gooch; Mt. Harmony—Sister James Knott; North Fork—Sister Mary E. Tines; Oxford—Sister Nora Crawford; Olive Branch—Sister Mollie Humphries; Poplar Creek—Sister Sue Barnes; Providence—Sister S. White; Tally Ho—Sister Bettie Hunt; Roxboro—Sister Ida Lansdell; and Flat River Union—Sister Rachel Roycroft. The Clerk apparently failed to get the names of the appointees from the New Light, Olive Grove, and Pleasant Grove churches.

²⁴John Purefoy and Allen S. Wynne—appointed by the Baptist State Convention in 1832 to solicit funds for the purchase of a site on which to locate the proposed Institute—served as pastors of churches within the Association. The same is true of Samuel Wait, General Agent of the Convention and first president of Wake Forest. Purefoy is generally credited with recommending purchase of the Calvin Jones farm as the site for the proposed Institute.

The original Board of Trustees included at least three persons related to churches within the Association: James King, John Purefoy, and Allen S. Wynne. Other associational leaders and spokesmen who served on the board prior to the conclusion of the period now under review included at least the following: James Weathers (1835-43), William Hill Jordan (1835-48), Thomas B. Barnett (1838-59), Samuel Wait (1838-67), Elijah Hester (1841), George W. Jones (1841-60), Joshua John James (1844-70), William Jones (1844-52), Nathaniel E. Cannady (1844), James S. Purefoy (1844-89), Robert D. Bumpass (1844), Hamilton Hester (1847-62), Rhodes N. Herndon (1849-60), John C. Averitt (1854-59), Samuel H. Cannady (1855-67), John Haymes Mills (1860-72), William T. Brooks (1860-83), J. B. Solomon (1860-67), Robert Bruce Jones (1866-67), John Lemuel Carroll (1868-71), Robert Henry Marsh (1870-1924), and Franklin P. Hobgood (1879-1924).

²⁵Available records indicate that at least the following churches benefitted from the pastoral labors of members of the faculty, staff, or student body of Wake Forest College prior to 1885: Brassfield's (James S. Purefoy, William Jones, W. M. Wingate, Thomas W. Walters, William T. Brooks), Concord (Robert McNabb, Samuel Wait), Corinth (James S. Purefoy), Fellowship (Joseph A. White), Hester's (William Jones, Samuel Wait), Mt. Moriah (William Jones), Mt. Zion (Robert McNabb, James S. Purefoy), Oxford (W. M. Wingate), Shady Hill (William Jones), and Tabb's Creek (James S. Purefoy). At least thirteen additional Wake Forest alumni served the churches at various times during the period under review.

²⁶*FR Minutes*, 1842, p. 7. Samuel Wait and Thomas Crocker were also requested to address the Association in behalf of Wake Forest.

²⁷*Ibid.*, pp. 6, 7.

²⁸*Ibid.*, p. 5.

²⁹Resolutions encouraging support for the endowment of Wake Forest and the subscription of scholarship aid to assist ministerial beneficiaries were passed by the Association as early as 1853 and 1854, respectively. The churches pledged \$1,400.00 towards the endowment of the college in 1857. A total of \$500.00 towards ministerial aid was pledged by the following individuals at the session of 1854: George W. Thompson, \$50.00; B. J. Rogers, \$50.00, Hillary Thompson, \$50.00; Edward McCullers, \$25.00; J. M. Howell, \$25.00; A. M. Veasey, \$25.00; Elijah Meadows, \$25.00; S. Y. Ragsdale, \$25.00; Thomas Hester, \$25.00; B. D. Rogers, \$25.00; Edward Dalby, \$25.00; Z. M. P. Downey, \$25.00; William A. Currin, \$25.00; Richard Peed, \$25.00; W. W. Dement, \$25.00; John T. C. Norwood, \$25.00; Jesse Jones, \$15.00; and Sophronia McCullers, \$10.00.

In 1877, a Committee on the Wait Endowment noted that subscriptions of \$7,400.00 had been made within the bounds of the Association towards the endowment of the Wait Professorship. This sum represented an excess of \$400.00 beyond the goal which had been projected by the Association in the preceding year.

Two years later, it was recommended to the churches that they assume a "full share" in the construction of Wingate Memorial Hall on the Wake Forest campus.

³⁰*Biblical Recorder*, October 27, 1849. Associational interest in and support for a female academy had been sounded four years earlier with the passage of the following: "Resolved, That Wake Forest College and the Milton Female Institute to be under the patronage of the Beulah, Roanoke, Dan River, and Flat River Associations, are institutions eminently worthy of their patronage and support, and as such we hope they will be sustained." See *FR Minutes*, 1845, p. 7.

The initial Board of Trustees of Milton Female Institute included the following persons who were members of churches affiliated with the Flat River Association: Willie P. Mangum, William Hill Jordan, William Jones, Thomas B. Barnett, George W. Jones, and Harrison Parham. See *Biblical Recorder*, October 5, 1844.

³¹The Convention had concurred in the "propriety of establishing such an Institute" at her annual session in 1850, agreeing to "give way at a suitable hour, for a public meeting to be held for the promotion of that enterprise." See *Proceedings of the Twenty-First Annual Session of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, Held with the Church at Louisburg, Franklin Co[unty], From October 17th to 21st Inclusive [1850]; Also the Proceedings of the Societies Meeting with the Convention* (Richmond: H. K. Ellyson, Printer, 1850), p. 10.

A committee had been appointed by the Convention's Board of Managers in July 1838 to "report on the expediency of establishing a female seminary, of high order, in the central part of the state." This committee then reported that such a school—when established—should be located "in Raleigh or in the vicinity of that city." See *Proceedings of the Seventh(sic) Annual Meeting of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, Held at Brown's M[eeeting] H[ouse], Sampson County, N[orth] C[arolina], November 3-7, 1838* (Raleigh: Printed at the Recorder Office, 1839), pp. 13, 14.

³²*Biblical Recorder*, July 19, 1851; November 29, 1851.

³³Letter from Titus T. Grandy in *Biblical Recorder*, May 17, 1855; notice related to Oxford College in *Biblical Recorder*, June 21, 1855.

³⁴*Biblical Recorder*, August 7, 1856.

³⁵*FR Minutes*, 1851, p. 52.

³⁶The same privilege of inserting advertisements, at institutional expense, was also accorded Wake Forest College and Bethel Academy at the 1861 session of the Association.

³⁷Report from "A Friend," in *Biblical Recorder*, January 10, 1853.

³⁸*Ibid.* Wait, himself a transplanted Yankee, responded to the latter criticism by noting: "No circumstance in regard to the nativity of an individual, can be taken as a substitute for *ability in teaching* [italics in the original]."

³⁹J. H. Mills, "Oxford Female College," *Biblical Recorder*, April 7, 1859; John R. Woodard, "John Haymes Mills," *Dictionary of North Carolina Biography* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1991), IV, 278.

⁴⁰See R. Hargus Taylor, "Franklin P. Hobgood," *Dictionary of North Carolina Biography*, III, 154.

⁴¹*FR Minutes*, 1845, p. 7.

⁴²*Biblical Recorder*, June 11, 1852. This same advertisement indicated that the Institute was to commence its first session on July 15, 1852. The decision to establish the school had been made on May 15, 1852, according to a news story which appeared in the *Biblical Recorder*, May 28, 1852.

⁴³See *FR Minutes*, 1852, pp. 5, 6, for the text of the full preamble and resolutions.

⁴⁴*Ibid.*, 1856, p. 6. The committee consisted of George W. Thompson, N. E. Cannady, Edward Dalby, R. I. Devin, and J. C. Bumpass.

⁴⁵*Ibid.*, 1859, p. 5. Trustees selected by the committee were: John E. Montague, T. H. Street, J. F. Neal, Drury A. Harris, and William H. Lawson. Montague, Street, Harris, and Lawson were members of Bethel Church; Neal, of Olive Branch Church.

⁴⁶The Reverend Thomas Jefferson Horner appears to have continued as principal of the academy until 1864, when it suspended operations due to the Civil War. It was reopened in 1866, with the Reverend Joseph E. Jordan serving as principal. See George Washington Paschal, *History of Wake Forest College* (Raleigh: Edwards & Broughton, 1935), I, 318.

Flat River Association severed formal ties with the academy in 1867, as per the following from the report of the associational Committee on Education. After commending J. E. Jordan for the quality of work which he was doing as principal, the report continued: "But owing to the fact that the Association cannot successfully manage the financial affairs of the Academy, we recommend that it be turned over to the trustees to be disposed of by them as they may deem most judicious in order that they may release themselves from all liabilities incurred by them in the building up of the institution." See *FR Minutes*, 1867, pp. 5, 6.

⁴⁷Only three of the twenty-seven churches which were affiliated with the Association in 1883-84 reported conducting services of worship more frequently than one Sunday in each month. These three were the churches in Oxford, Henderson, and Roxboro. Only Oxford Baptist Church was conducting services of worship every Sunday in the month.

⁴⁸*Proceedings of the Sixth Annual Meeting of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, Held at Country Line M[eeeting] H[ouse], Caswell County, November 11-15, 1836* (Newbern: Printed at the Recorder Office, 1837), p. 30. The North Carolina Baptist Bible Society maintained an independent existence until 1851, when its operations were combined with those of the North Carolina Baptist Sunday School and Publication Society, which had been formed in 1845. These united societies ceased to exist after 1857 as a consequence of the Convention's acceptance of the proposal of the Bible and Publication Society to tender all its books and funds to the Convention "on condition that the Convention so amend its Constitution as to make the objects of the Society, a part of the primary objects of the Convention, to be managed by its Board, which shall make a full report thereon annually to the Convention, . . ." See *Proceedings of the Twenty-Eighth Annual Session of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, Held with the Church in Hertford, From Nov[ember] 4th to 9th [1857] Inclusive* (Raleigh: Biblical Recorder Office, 1857), p. 18.

⁴⁹*FR Minutes*, 1845, p. 8. Records of the Society indicate that it had 29 charter members, with the Reverend James King serving as first president.

⁵⁰*Ibid.*

⁵¹Churches reporting auxiliary societies in 1847 were: Brassfield's, Buffaloe, Fellowship, and Olive Branch. Grassy Creek had reported an auxiliary society in 1846; Concord and Mt. Zion, in 1848.

⁵²*FR Minutes*, 1851, p. 3.

⁵³Thomas B. Barnett, a member of Grassy Creek Church, served on the Board of Managers of the North Carolina Baptist Bible Society, 1839-45.

⁵⁴William Hester was a member of Tabb's Creek Church. Joseph Hobgood's church affiliation could not be determined by the author, although he probably belonged to Hester's Church.

⁵⁵The Flat River Association Bible Society appears to have continued its operations until 1857.

⁵⁶*FR Minutes*, 1858, p. 14.

⁵⁷In 1859, a committee of five persons was appointed to "take into consideration the subject of Colportage within the bounds of this Association, and to employ a colporter or missionary, provided they think it expedient to do so." This committee succeeded in engaging the services of Hartswell Freeman, "who traveled a short time and resigned." Freeman was not fully reimbursed for his labors until 1862. See *FR Minutes*, 1859, p. 6; 1860, p. 5; 1862, p. 5.

In 1860, the Association again resolved to "sustain a colporter within its bounds, and [he] to be under the direction of a committee on Colportage." In 1861, however, this committee reported "nothing done for lack of funds." See *FR Minutes* 1860, p. 6; 1861, p. 5.

⁵⁸*FR Minutes*, 1861, p. 5.

⁵⁹*Ibid.*, 1862, pp. 5-6.

⁶⁰*Ibid.*, 1863, p. 6; 1864, p. 7. \$124.00 was collected to furnish the *Biblical Recorder* to soldiers; \$207.00, for general army colportage. In 1864, \$571.83 was contributed to supply soldiers with the *Recorder*; \$366.66, for general army colportage.

⁶¹*Ibid.*, 1854, p. 6.

⁶²*Ibid.*, 1864, p. 5. This committee consisted of three of the most venerable and respected ministers of the Association: Elijah Hester, Thomas Jefferson Horner, and William Hill Jordan. Horner was probably the author of the report.

⁶³*Ibid.*, p. 9.

⁶⁴*Ibid.*, 1866, p. 6. Committees on Prayer Meetings, or on Prayer Meetings and Family Worship continued to be appointed annually and to make reports to the Association, 1864-84.

⁶⁵Churches reporting no Sunday School statistics in 1883-84 were: Antioch, Corinth, Fellowship, New Light, Olive Branch, Pleasant Grove, Providence, and Tabb's Creek.

⁶⁶*FR Minutes*, 1846, p. 9.

⁶⁷*Ibid.*, 1848, p. 4.

⁶⁸*Ibid.*, 1850, p. 9.

⁶⁹*Ibid.*, 1866, p. 7.

⁷⁰The Sunday School Institutes succeeded the earlier Ministers' and Deacons' Meetings which had been authorized by action of the Association in 1852: "Resolved, That we have our Association divided into four sections, and that we appoint Ministers' and Deacons' Meetings one each 5th Sunday in the year, one to be held in each section." The first such meeting was scheduled at Mt. Zion Church on the 5th Sabbath in August, 1852. See *FR Minutes*, 1852, p. 6.

⁷¹*Ibid.*, 1868, p. 7.

⁷²*Ibid.*, 1876, pp. 8-9. Institutes had been conducted at Enon (October 1875), Corinth (January 1876), Mountain Creek (April 1876), and Poplar Creek (July 1876).

⁷³*Ibid.*, 1881, p. 6.

⁷⁴*Ibid.* The report on Sunday School Institutes in the previous year had noted: "We have no church now without a school. . . ." See *Ibid.*, p. 6.

⁷⁵*Ibid.*, 1846, p. 8.

⁷⁶*Ibid.*, 1853, p. 5.

⁷⁷*Ibid.*, 1855, p. 6. The person who had induced the Association to take this more positive stance on the matter of Temperance by couching his report in the language of a Query was the Reverend William E. Oakley.

⁷⁸*Ibid.*, 1868, p. 8.

⁷⁹*Ibid.*, 1871, p. 6.

⁸⁰*Ibid.*, 1873, p. 12. The author of this resolution was probably the Reverend John Elizabeth Montague, pastor of Bethel, Mill Creek, and Olive Branch churches. The Association had adopted the resolution which follows in the previous year:

Resolved, That the churches be counselled to deal promptly with those who manufacture, or sell intoxicating liquors, and to withdraw fellowship from them if they persist in this wicked business after faithful admonition.

[*Resolved*, That our church members be encouraged to set their faces against what is called the moderate use of intoxicating beverages, inasmuch as it tends surely to drunkenness, poverty and ruin.]

⁸¹*Ibid.*, 1882, pp. 11-12.

⁸²*Ibid.*, 1884, p. 8.

⁸³Among the other related "benevolent objects" to which the Association directed the attention of the churches were: Religious Periodicals (with repeated commendations for the *Biblical Recorder* and for the various publications of the mission boards), Tracts, Religious Instruction of Slaves, Status of Colored Members (after the Civil War), and Systematic Beneficence (to which more specific attention is directed in succeeding sections of this narrative).

Moreover, the occasional presence at associational gatherings of Agents representing institutions or boards of the Southern Baptist Convention often issued in official commendations of their ministries and/or the collection of special offerings to support those ministries. Thus, for example, in 1859 "the members of the Association then repaired to the [preaching] stand to listen to an address by Elder J. F. B. Mays, in behalf of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary." Mays' address prompted a resolution requesting each of the churches to pledge \$100.00 towards the endowment of the Seminary. See *FR Minutes*, 1859, pp. 5, 7.

⁸⁴The first delegate to represent a church from within the bounds of the Flat River Association at an annual session of the Baptist State Convention was William Blackwood, who represented Mt. Moriah Church at the session of 1831. Thereafter, the number of delegates—1831-1884—present from Flat River churches ranged from a low of one (1837, 1843, and 1853) to a high of fifty-five (1879), with the average annual delegation from Flat River churches numbering seven (7). During this same period, there were five sessions of the Convention at which no one was recorded as present from Flat River Association churches.

Numerous individuals served on the various administrative boards of the Convention during the period under consideration, including: *Board of Managers*—Allen S. Wynne (1834-37), John Purefoy (1834-40), James King (1834-35), William Hill Jordan (1834-38, 1847-49, 1852-53), Thomas B. Barnett (1836-40, 1842-46), Robert D. Bumpass (1836-45), Elijah Hester (1839-40), W. A. Atkinson (1841-45), William Jones (1841-46), George W. Jones (1841-46), Robert McNabb (1842-44), Williamson Parham (1842-45), Samuel Wait (1847-51, 1858-60), Hamilton Hester (1848-49), R. I. Devin (1852-58), S. H. Cannady (1854-55), John H. Mills (1858-62). *Board of Missions*—James B. Hobgood (1868-69), Joshua A. Stradley (1868-74, 1882ff.), James S. Purefoy (1868-69), Benjamin F. Hester (1874-77), Frank R. Underwood (1877-78), F. M. Meadows (1877-78), William Biggs (1877-78), Robert H. Marsh (1878ff.), Franklin P. Hobgood (1880ff.), C. A. Jenkins (1881-83). *Education Board*—William Hill Jordan (1846-47), William Jones (1846-47), Thomas B. Barnett (1846-47), James S. Purefoy (1846-47), Samuel Wait (1846-47). *Home Missions Board*—James S. Purefoy (1846-47). *Foreign Missions Board*—Samuel Wait (1846-47). *Sunday School Board*—Benjamin F. Hester (1877-81), Joshua A. Stradley (1877-82), and B. D. Howard (1881-82).

Several ministers who served churches in the Association—together with one layman from the Oxford Church—were elected to positions of leadership within the Convention, apart from their election to service on administrative boards. These included: the Reverend William T. Brooks, Convention President, 1869-73, and Recording Secretary, 1844; the Reverend J. L. Carroll, Recording Secretary, 1867-70; the Reverend William Hill Jordan, Corresponding Secretary, 1837-43; the Reverend W.M. Wingate, Corresponding Secretary, 1855-56; William Biggs, Assistant Recording Secretary, 1877, and Recording Secretary, 1878-81; the

Reverend Frank R. Underwood, Assistant Recording Secretary, 1874-76; and the Reverend James S. Purefoy, Treasurer, 1842-59, 1861-70.

Eight ministers who served churches in the Flat River Association were chosen to preach the annual Introductory Sermon, or Convention Sermon, as follows: Samuel Wait, 1830; William Hill Jordan, 1841; James S. Purefoy, 1847; Robert I. Devin, 1853; W. M. Wingate, 1864 and 1871; J. L. Carroll, 1867 and 1869; Robert H. Marsh, 1873; and C. A. Jenkins, 1884.

Beginning in 1849, the Baptist State Convention had made provision for "Life Membership," on the one-time payment of \$30.00 towards benevolences supported by the Convention. At least nineteen persons related to churches affiliated with the Flat River Association took advantage of this special category of "Life Membership" prior to the discontinuance of this practice after 1884. The following laymen from Flat River churches were numbered among the Convention's "Life Members:" Rufus Amis (Amis Chapel), Edward Dalby (Concord), Hamilton Hester (Hester's), Joseph Howard (Hester's), Samuel L. Howard (Mt. Zion), Rufus P. Jones (Brassfield's), and J. F. Neal (Olive Branch).

Also, the following ministers who either served various churches in the Association, or had been reared in one of the churches: Moses Baldwin, Elijah F. Beachum, J. L. Carroll, Robert I. Devin, James King Howell, Joshua J. James, William Hill Jordan, Jr., Jephtha H. Layton, James P. Montague, John E. Montague, James S. Purefoy, and Joshua A. Stradley.

IV. CONSOLIDATING GAINS AND EXPANDING HORIZONS, 1884-1919

The 35-year span, 1884-1919, represented an era when that segment of the Baptist denomination whose churches had aligned themselves with the benevolent interests supported by the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina attempted to consolidate the gains achieved during the previous half-century, while expanding their horizons in missions and ministry. "System" and "efficiency" served as the key watchwords for eliciting adequate financial support for both local and denominational enterprises, on the one hand, and for the proper administration of those enterprises, on the other hand. Ministries directed by or for women, children, and youth succeeded in enlarging the scope of churchly auxiliaries related to the life and witness of most local congregations.

Flat River Baptists participated willingly and significantly in those efforts at consolidation and expansion which characterized the larger denomination. Attempts at fostering an increased support of and commitment to Missions, Colportage, and Education were enhanced through greater utilization of the gifts and influences of the women of the churches. The Sunday School as the Bible teaching auxiliary of the churches began to be augmented by that of Baptist Young People's Union as an organization designed to "secure the increased activity of our Baptist Young People in Christian service and their instruction in the Scriptures, Baptist doctrine and history, and their enlistment in all forms of missionary work; . . ." The earlier focus on Temperance was maintained and heightened, while the churches were also directed to a consideration of those obligations which a later generation would term Christian Social Services.²

A. Fostering Increased Support for Missions and Other Christian Benevolences

In the early nineteenth century, two obstacles had served as primary hindrances towards "eliciting, combining, and directing" the full energies of Baptist churches in support of a denominational mission. One was the anti-mission sentiment which was displayed by a significant segment of the Baptist constituency. The other was the lack of adequate financial commitment to sustain and maintain an expanding denominational mission on the part of those Baptists who were sympathetic with the objectives of that mission.

The first of these obstacles was largely overcome with the division of churches and associations on the basis of either affirmation or renunciation of the so-called benevolent objects of the day (i.e., division among Primitive—or Old School—Baptists and Missionary Baptists).³ The second continued to hamper the measure of progress which could be realized in missions and education, while also serving as a stimulus to calls for greater Christian stewardship.

Early Pleas Regarding Stewardship

Resolutions pertaining to Christian stewardship had been adopted by the Flat River Association in 1842 and in 1850, respectively. The first was at the instigation of a prominent layman, Thomas B. Barnett, a native of Granville County and a member of Grassy

Creek Church; the second, by the Reverend Robert Irah Devin, a relative newcomer to the area whose subsequent pastoral tenure would eventually rank him among the patriarchs of the Association.⁴

That resolution which was adopted in 1842 urged each church member to engage in regular, systematic financial support of the “cause of Christ” through weekly contributions into the church’s treasury. It read:

Whereas, it is the duty of all Christians to contribute accordingly(sic) to their ability of their worldly substance to promote the cause of Christ, and whereas, the united efforts of the church are necessary to meet the increasing demand for the supply of the gospel, both at home and abroad, and whereas, we have reason to fear that the churches in our Association are not exerting in this respect the full amount of their ability, *and indeed that there is no plan for general effort among them*; and whereas, it is necessary in attaining any object that there should be some organized plan; and whereas, furthermore, we believe that our churches might accomplish a great amount of good by a very simple means and such as would not be felt to be either burthensome or inconvenient. Now, therefore to the end that these important objects may at least to some extent be secured among us,

Resolved, That we recommend to the churches of our Association that each church form a Treasury which shall be entrusted to one appointed for that purpose, and into which Treasury *each member of the church who chooses may every week pay one cent or more according to his ability and discretion* as a fund for the service of the Lord, and from time to time as shall be judged most expedient. They shall appropriate this fund to such objects as they shall deem most suitable to the design for which it was collected [italics not in the original].⁵

The resolution which was adopted in 1850 called upon pastors and churches to assume a greater responsibility for promoting the cause of missions and other benevolences, and to utilize the Association as an appropriate channel for directing contributions to the Baptist State Convention. It read:

Whereas we feel that more systematic efforts should be made in the cause of benevolence, and that the subject should be placed more clearly before the churches:—Resolved, Therefore, that the Pastors of the churches of this Association be requested to preach a sermon on the subject of *benevolence* once a year, and take up a collection for the same, say, at the monthly meeting of May, June, or July. 2. Resolved, That the churches be requested to make this Association a channel through which they will send their contributions to the Convention.⁶

While these and similar pleas had salutary effects among the churches, they did not suffice to sustain associational commitments to various benevolences—commitments apart from which the Convention and the Association were hampered in the pursuit of their objectives.⁷ Accordingly, on the eve of the period now under review, the as-

sociational Committee on Systematic Beneficence still echoed the sentiments which had been expressed in earlier years:

One great defect in our benevolent operations is *the want of system*. Too much is left to be done at the close of the Associational year, which produces too great a strain at one time. . . . Each pastor should instruct the church which he serves as to the various objects claiming our regular contributions, and urge their importance, and *see that contributions are raised* [italics not in the original].⁸

The report of the committee was concluded with the further observation: "Those churches do most according to their means that have regular systems; those do least which have the least system, and those having no system do nothing."⁹

"General" vs. "Specific" Beneficence

As early as 1884, the Baptist State Convention's Committee on Systematic Beneficence had gained the approval of a series of recommendations—in the form of resolutions—pertaining to Christian stewardship, and had instructed its Board of Missions to "use its utmost endeavors to bring this plan to the attention of every church and to secure its adoption; . . ." ¹⁰ Among these were recommendations related to: (1) encouraging each church, through church action, to determine the number of offerings, or collections, to be taken annually for the objects of Christian Benevolence; (2) urging each church member to "lay aside" his/her contributions weekly, as per the Scriptural method delineated in 1 Corinthians 16:2ff.; and (3) requesting churches to adopt effective measures for securing from every member both financial pledges and the prompt payment on the same.

Most significant among this series of resolutions, however, was the following: "That the churches be requested to take these collections, *not for specific objects*, but for the *general work* of Christian Beneficence, to be divided among its various departments according to the wishes of the donors or special church action [italics in the original]."¹¹

While the associational representatives on the Board of Missions undoubtedly endeavored to bring such a plan to the attention of the churches, their utmost endeavors proved insufficient to secure its adoption. Thus, the associational Report on Systematic Beneficence for 1885 recommended that the churches take four collections each year, one for the benefit of each of the "boards" (Home Missions, Foreign Missions, State Missions, and Education).¹² With the expansion of the objects of benevolence there was a corresponding expansion in the suggested schedule for collections in the churches. Thus, in 1897 the churches were encouraged to adopt a schedule of six special collections, as follows: August—Baptist Orphanage; October—State Missions; December—Foreign Missions; February—Home Missions; April—Ministers' Relief; and June—Ministerial Education.¹³

Towards the "Scriptural Method" of Stewardship

Although the Association had frequently appealed to her churches to adopt more systematic approaches towards financing both local and denominational ministries, *associational* practice continued to reflect the same methods which were prevalent among the churches. Delegates, or messengers, to the annual meetings were called upon to contribute to one or more special offerings;¹⁴ to subscribe—individually, or on behalf of the congregations they represented—to the support of some particularly urgent cause;¹⁵ or to pledge what they *would try to raise* during the ensuing year for various objects of benevolence.¹⁶

The Report on Systematic Benevolence in 1914 assessed the degree to which earlier pleas for individual accountability in Christian stewardship appeared to have been heeded. It also contained a significant challenge towards methodology and procedure in church finances. The author of the report declared:

Whereas, there is a wide-spread, and well-nigh general neglect of the Scriptural Method of "Collection for the Saints," as laid down in 1 Cor[inthians] 16:2, "Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by in store as God hath prospered him," etc.

Therefore, Resolved, that we accept the obligation and urgently recommend to all the churches this Apostolic "order" of the "Every-Member Plan" of church collections—applying the principle to church expenses and works of benevolence.

For the purpose of securing unity of effort we suggest:

1. That the aim be to obtain a liberal contribution from every member.
2. That the minimum amount of all expenditures, current, mission and benevolent be indicated by the church and be raised on the "budget plan"—each object being provided for on a pro rata basis.
3. That collections be made monthly by a Finance Committee and paid to a Treasurer, who shall forward the same at least quarterly.¹⁷

Three years later, the utilization of the Every Member Canvass and the adoption of a budget plan of finance were again recommended to the churches.¹⁸ Neither, however, was to be effected as speedily as the proponents of such measures might have wished. Each, however, would later become standard practice as the churches attempted to promote and to practice the principles and obligations of Christian stewardship.

The Stewardship Record: 1884-1919

All those churches which were affiliated with the Flat River Baptist Association in 1883-84—save three—had made, in the previous year, a contribution to *some* aspect of the program of missions and benevolences then sponsored by the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina: i. e., Foreign Missions, Home Missions, State Missions, Associational Missions, and Ministerial Education.¹⁹ Most, however, continued to be

rather selective in distributing the bounty of their beneficence. Thus, the associational report on Church Letters for 1884-85 noted twelve churches contributing nothing to Home Missions; twelve, nothing to Ministerial Education; nine, nothing to Associational Missions; eight, nothing to State Missions; and two, nothing to Foreign Missions.²⁰ Moreover, average contributions to benevolent objects ranged from a low of \$.02 per member in New Light Baptist Church to \$2.67 per member in Oxford Baptist Church.²¹ Total associational gifts to all benevolent objects amounted to \$2,770.28; or, \$.84 per member.²²

Both total contributions from the associated churches and per capita giving fluctuated considerably during the thirty-five years now under consideration. Total gifts from the churches first exceeded \$3,000.00 in 1887-88; \$4,000.00, in 1904-05; \$5,000.00, in 1909-10; \$7,000.00, in 1913-14; \$8,000.00, in 1917-18; and \$9,000.00, in 1918-19.²³

Per capita contributions to benevolent objects did not exceed \$1.00 until 1913-14, when statistical records of the Baptist State Convention indicated per capita contributions from the churches affiliated with the Association at \$1.37. Perennially, the leading churches in *total* contributions to all benevolences were: Oxford, Mill Creek, Bethel, Mount Zion, Enon, and Mountain Creek.

B. Missions, Colportage, and Education

Those primary expressions of Christian benevolence—missions, colportage, and education—which had made increasing claims upon the interests of the Association since 1845 continued to represent a major focus of associational concern after 1884. Support for missions abroad was complemented by a renewed vigor in the prosecution of missionary and/or colportage activity within the bounds of the Association. These issued—directly or indirectly—in the constitution of several new churches. Ministerial Education, which had represented both the Baptist State Convention's initial rationale for founding Wake Forest College and the basis of her appeal to the churches for their direct support of the institution, began to be supplemented with a concern for the quality of general education—especially within those schools laying claim to denominational sponsorship. Associational dependence upon and commitment to the educational mission of the Convention were reflected through pastoral leadership for the churches, financial support of denominational schools, and a valiant attempt to secure and perpetuate Oxford College for the denomination.

Missions Abroad

The presence and testimony of David Wells Herring at the annual meeting of the Association, Wednesday, August 16, 1882, had produced an electrifying effect upon the audience present on that occasion.²⁴ His subsequent appointment in 1885 to serve alongside the aging Matthew Tyson Yates in the Central China Mission made him the first North Carolinian to be appointed to mission service in foreign lands since 1854. However, he was to be but the first among forty-eight (48) natives of the Old North State who were to be appointed to missionary service abroad, 1885-1919, with thirty-three (33) of these appointed for service in China.²⁵

Renewed enthusiasm for the support of Foreign Missions on the part of Flat River Baptists was evidenced following the departures of David Wells Herring and Robert Thomas Bryan to missionary service in 1885.²⁶ That enthusiasm was further enhanced with the declaration of George Thomas Watkins, a licentiate of Mountain Creek Church, of his intention to prepare himself for missionary service abroad. Accordingly, the Association in 1888: “*Resolved*, That with the concurrency of the Foreign Mission Board, the Flat River Association adopt Bro[ther] G[eorge] T[homas] Watkins as her missionary and pledge herself to support him at the Seminary and on the foreign field [italics not in the original].”²⁷ Watkins was solemnly set apart to the work of the Gospel ministry during the annual session of the Association in 1889, and subsequently appointed to service in the Central China Mission on August 4, 1890.²⁸

Contributions to Foreign Missions had amounted to \$2,676.20 in the six years preceding the departures of Herring and Bryan. The six years immediately following their arrival in China, however, witnessed contributions totaling \$4,824.41.²⁹ Moreover, each of the years between 1906 and 1919 found the churches of the Association contributing in excess of \$1,000.00, with a record contribution of \$3,222.15 reported in 1913-14.³⁰ These statistics are significantly more impressive when account is taken of the separate collections taken by the women of the churches after 1886.

Associational Missions

The number of churches in affiliation with Flat River Baptist Association had grown from ten in 1794 to twenty-eight by 1884. An additional twenty-three churches had maintained affiliation for varying periods of years before being dismissed to unite with other Baptist bodies, or—in some cases—becoming extinct.³¹ By 1911-12, the Association reached the peak of her numerical strength—in terms of the number of affiliated churches—when messengers representing thirty-nine (39) local congregations responded to the Clerk’s roll call of the churches.

Such a significant increase was due in large measure to a renewed commitment to missionary and colportage work within the geographical bounds of Granville, eastern Person, and northern Vance counties. Specific communities which were judged to be “ripe” for missionary labors had been identified as early as 1882, when a Committee on Associational Missions which had been appointed the previous year had to report general failure in adopting “any plan that to them may seem best to raise funds and forthwith supply the destitution [among us] so far as practicable, . . .”³² Among the mission points to be supplied were sites “at or near Dean’s Chapel, Beaver Pond, Bumpass’ X Roads, and some point near the State line, east of Beaver Pond, to be selected by the Committee.”³³

The Reverend Thomas Jefferson Horner, whose ministerial labors had contributed to the constitution of Bethany Church, Person County, in 1883, was engaged for services as Associational Missionary during 1884-85, to preach at Bethany and “the new church near Townsville.”³⁴ Horner’s initial report to the Association in 1885 noted travel amounting to 900 miles, 17 persons baptized, and several others awaiting baptism.³⁵

During the ensuing year, the missionary force was doubled with the engagement of the Reverend Joshua Addison Stradley to preach at Sassafras Fork [Stovall], while Horner divided his labors between the congregations at Rock Spring and State Line.³⁶ Satisfactory arrangements were made in the following year (1886-87) to relinquish direct associational sponsorship of missionary activity in favor of the expanding program of the State Board of Missions. Thereafter, missionaries identified with the State Board of Missions, and under the auspices of the same, were employed at various points within the bounds of the Association until 1893.³⁷

Attention to these and other "places of destitution" prompted members of older congregations living at some distance from their accustomed meeting houses to encourage the formation of additional churches. From the date of the constitution of Roxboro Baptist Church (1882) to that of South Oxford [West Oxford] in 1909, a total of seventeen newly constituted churches were added to the ranks of Flat River Baptist Association. These were: Roxboro, 1882; Olive Grove, 1882; Bethany, 1883; Rock Spring, 1886; Sassafras Fork [Stovall], 1886; State Line, 1886; Snow Hill, 1889; Peace's Chapel, 1890; Florence Avenue, 1891; Creedmoor, 1896; Sharon, 1897; Knott's Grove, 1902; Bullock, 1905; Dexter, 1906; Beulah [Providence], 1907; Rock Grove, 1907 and South Oxford [West Oxford], 1909.

Celebrating Two Missionary Centennials

Those features of an associational meeting which had become traditional for those in charge of arranging an Order of Business for such annual gatherings were augmented with celebrations marking two particularly significant anniversaries in 1892 and 1893, respectively. The first was the Centennial of the Modern Missionary Movement, identified with William Carey and the founding of the Baptist Missionary Society in England; the second, the Centennial Year of Flat River Baptist Association as a distinct union of churches engaged in missions at home and abroad. Both reflected an appropriate concern for the history and heritage of the churches.

Preparations for the first of these celebrations were initiated in 1891 with the adoption of the following resolutions, which had been submitted by Dr. Robert Henry Marsh:

Whereas, The Centennial of Missions is to be emphasized by Baptists of the world, and especially by the Southern Baptist Convention during the year 1892. Therefore

Resolved, That a Committee of three be appointed to arrange for special and appropriate Centennial Services on Wednesday of [our] next session.³⁸

The Moderator then proceeded to name three of the body's ablest spokespersons for this task: the Reverend Robert Irah Devin, recently retired from active pastoral labors; the Reverend John Steger Hardaway, current pastor of Oxford Baptist Church; and the Reverend Joshua Addison Stradley, pastor of Amis Chapel, Island Creek, Rock Spring, and Stovall churches.

Although the *Minutes* of 1892 make only a passing allusion to the Association's "move to the stand for Centennial service," an independent source indicated that the committee in charge of arrangements had made very careful preparations for properly com-

memorating a century of missions, with the primary services apparently set one week in advance of the associational meeting, and as fitting prelude to that gathering. The Editor of the *Biblical Recorder* observed in anticipation of the Centennial Celebration: "If we can only have thirty-nine other such Associational Centennial Mission meetings as the program of the Flat River indicates, this year's work will lay the foundation for enlarged Mission work in all the year to come."³⁹

Preparations for and anticipation of the Centennial Year in the history of the Association had been initiated in 1889, when Dr. Robert Henry Marsh introduced the following:

Whereas, We as an Association are nearing the close of our first century and that through all this time we have been making important history, and *whereas*,—it is desirable that the personal history of the good men and women in our Church who have gone before us, and the facts in the work and struggle of the Church be collected and printed in some suitable form.

Therefore, be it resolved: That Rev[erend] R[obert] I[ra]h Devin be requested and urged to undertake this important work, and that he be requested to report the progress made to each annual meeting of this body.

Resolved further, That the brethren of the Association be requested to cooperate with Brother Devin in collecting the necessary material for said history.⁴⁰

Such a projected Centennial history did not materialize. In its stead, Devin was eventually requested in 1892 to "preach or deliver an address on the History of the Flat River Association at its next session."⁴¹ He complied with this request. In the process of doing so, he not only regaled his audience with recollection and reminiscence of their common heritage, but he also preserved for posterity certain segments of that heritage which would otherwise have been lost. Credit for the latter again belongs to Robert Henry Marsh, upon whose motion Devin's address was ordered to be printed in the *Minutes* of the Association.⁴²

Baptist Education: Cultivating Heart and Mind

Those three educational institutions which had endeared themselves most to Flat River Baptists—i.e., Wake Forest College, Oxford Female Seminary, and Bethel Hill Institute—continued to enjoy the patronage, endorsement, and support of the churches. Several Wake Forest men served the churches as pastors while in the process of attaining their educational goals and ambitions, fully justifying that measure of financial support which was directed by the churches for Ministerial Education.⁴³ Franklin P. Hobgood, a native son of Granville County and a Wake Forest alumnus, began a tenure as president of Oxford Female Seminary in 1880 which was not to be terminated until his death forty-four years later. The Reverend John Alexander Beam, another son of Wake Forest, purchased the properties of the dormant Bethel Hill Academy, Person County, in 1888, inaugurating a new era of prosperity in the history of that former associational preparatory school.⁴⁴

Commendations of these schools were frequently incorporated into associational reports on education. For example, it was noted of Oxford Female Seminary in 1892:

The corps of teachers and officers consisting of ten, have been selected with great care; and your committee think they are hozarding(sic) nothing in saying that in their opinion they are the equal of any other corps in the State.

The religious influences are all that can be desired. Besides the advantages of the Sunday School and worship at the Baptist Church every Sunday, the effort is made in the Seminary itself in every way possible to prepare the student for faithfully performing all the duties of life.⁴⁵

Similarly, the same report added with reference to the school at Bethel Hill:

We have in our borders Bethel Institute, Bethel Hill, Person Co[unty], N[orth] C[arolina]. This is a male and female school under the management of Rev[erend] J[ohn] A[lexander] Beam

The Principal labors to cultivate the heart as well as the mind. The school is owned and run entirely by Baptists, all the teachers employed being Baptist.⁴⁶

The report then concluded: "We, your committee, earnestly advise parants(sic) to educate their children, and commend to them these schools."⁴⁷

In spite of her record during the tenure of the Reverend Mr. Beam—including the preparation of more than one hundred (100) young men for the Gospel ministry—Bethel Hill Institute ceased to exist following the destruction of its main building by fire in 1905. The fortunes of Oxford Seminary, on the other hand, suffered from the increasing attention which the denomination paid to the development of Baptist Female University [Meredith College] after 1891, and for the growing concern for institutional accountability to the denomination through elected boards of trustees.⁴⁹

A valiant effort was made in 1919 to "save" the Seminary for the denomination, on the one hand, and to place it in position for broader financial support, on the other. Responding to an initiative which had been proffered two years earlier, the Association adopted the following Preamble and Resolutions:

Whereas, the Flat River Association, at its session at Olive Branch in July, 1917, endorsed the Million Dollar Movement for Christian Education; and

Whereas, it is greatly to be desired that our contribution for this cause be applied to the purchase and adoption of Oxford College by the State Board of Education; Now, therefore, be it resolved:

1. That we heartily endorse the plan to perpetuate Oxford College by the application of the contributions to this fund secured in the Flat River Association to the purchase and adoption of Oxford College as a denominational institution by the State Board of Education.

2. That we pledge our co-operation in an enthusiastic canvass for the necessary funds.
3. That a committee of five be appointed to co-operate with the State Board of Education in carrying out the purpose of this resolution.⁵⁰

When the Reverend Carey Almon Upchurch, speaking on behalf of the Association, presented these resolutions before the Baptist State Convention the following November, they were quickly referred to the Board of Education for report back to the Convention. Subsequently, the Convention merely passed a resolution of commendation for President Hobgood and wished him Godspeed in his continuing ministry in education—just as it had done frequently during past sessions of that body.⁵¹

C. Sunday Schools and Woman's Work

One major auxiliary related to local Baptist churches continued to develop and mature during the decades now under review. Another was brought to birth, and began quickly to make significant contributions in those areas of Christian endeavor to which its constituencies committed themselves. The former auxiliary was the Sunday School; the latter, Woman's Missionary Union.

Sunday School Growth and Development

Reflecting upon the condition of the churches at the time of his arrival in the Association, the Reverend Robert Irah Devin had made the following observation in his Centennial Address of 1893:

In 1846 there was not a well organized Sabbath School within the bounds of the Flat River Association. Some sporadic efforts had been made to establish schools by several churches at various points, but they were either very short lived, or turned out to be sad failures. There was no opposition to the Sunday School enterprise, but the brethren did not realize that there was any obligation resting on them to engage personally in the work.⁵²

This situation had improved considerably, of course, during the forty-seven years which had elapsed between the date of Devin's first acquaintance with the Association and the date of his reflections. Yet, annual reports by the associational committees on Sabbath Schools often referred to the "neglect" of schools, or to a "lack of enthusiasm for [Sunday Schools] in our country churches." While each of the Association's twenty-five churches reporting conducting schools in 1892, enrollments in them ranged from a low of thirty (30) at Mt. Harmony to two hundred four (204) at Oxford. Only two churches—Island Creek and Oxford—reported Sunday School enrollments in excess of one hundred.

Both the aspirations of and the obstacles facing the rural Sunday School had been expressed by Thomas Henderson Street, Superintendent of Mill Creek Sunday School, Person County, in a communication published in the *Biblical Recorder* in the Winter of 1879. Street, who later served the Association admirably as a member of the Baptist State Convention's Board of Missions and Sunday Schools, wrote:

Our School has concluded not to go into “winter quarters,” but to continue; something never before known in the history of the church, so far as I know. It has been a very difficult matter to carry on the School through the summer months in the past; but we have had a School going on seven months of this year. We now number nearly 60, with an average attendance of 30 or 35. Our great need now is funds and teachers. We have a small [Sunday School] Missionary Society, but it is with difficulty that we get boys to persevere in their Commissions. It is about impossible to get brethren and sisters that are competent to teach to take hold of the work. But we have members hardly able to read that are regular attendants, and seem to take great interest in the School, which is very encouraging to me. We hope by perseverance and prayer to be able yet to have the banner School of the county.⁵³

Each of the three obstacles identified by Street (i.e., maintaining year-round schools, perseverance in contributing to missions through the Sunday School, and the enlistment and/or training of competent, dedicated teachers) received continuing attention during the latter years of the nineteenth century. Sunday School Institutes were revived, with a committee of three appointed in 1891—for example—to take charge of Sunday School Institutes and Colportage, in cooperation with the Baptist State Convention’s Sunday School and Colportage Board.⁵⁴ Enrollments and contributions to missions or other benevolent causes doubled.⁵⁵

Nonetheless, the report of the Committee on Sunday Schools at the turn of the century was less than encouraging. Although membership in the Association’s twenty-three churches had reached a total of 4,141, Sunday School enrollments totaled only 2,079. Only twelve of the churches reported contributions to mission causes through the Sunday School. Seven churches reported no Sunday School work at all. The Reverend John Steger Hardaway, author of the committee’s report, concluded:

A study of the Sunday School statistics of the Flat River Association will show that our Association is far behind in Sunday School work.

Our needs.

1. There is an imperative need of an awakening in the churches to a sense of the importance of this great work. A church with three fourths of its members indifferent to the Sunday School is a very lukewarm church.
2. We MUST strongly organize and regularly conduct Sunday School Institutes It would be well for our Association to employ a man for twelve months to do this work and to circulate Baptist books and tracts.
3. We MUST raise the standard of TEACHING in our Sunday Schools.
4. The churches should defray all the expenses of the Sunday School, and the Sunday School should contribute to our benevolent and missionary work.⁵⁶

Hardaway, of course, was only echoing the sentiments and issuing the challenge of other Sunday School advocates within the Baptist State Convention—sentiments and challenge which found appropriate focus and effective leadership after 1896 through the services of Bernard Washington Spilman, first Field Secretary for Sunday School work throughout the State, and his successors. By 1910, thirty-six (36) schools were being conducted by the thirty-seven (37) churches then affiliated with the Association, with twenty-five (25) of these being conducted on a perennial basis. Nine years later, there were thirty-two (32) schools being conducted by the Association's thirty-one (31) churches, with the enrollment of scholars and teachers numbering 3,457. Eleven of these schools, however, did not qualify as "evergreen."⁵⁷

Woman's Work

The roster of eighty-one (81) delegates, or messengers, chosen by the respective churches to represent them in Association in 1884 included the names of no women whom the churches had selected from among their membership as "best qualified for that purpose." In fact, it was to be another thirty-nine years before the names of any women were to be enrolled among the delegates, or messengers, to the annual associational gatherings.⁵⁸ Despite their early initiatives in support of missions and other benevolent causes, their leadership in maintaining Sunday Schools, and their numerical preponderance among the memberships of the several churches, women had remained excluded from the councils of the churches in association.⁵⁹

However, concern for a more faithful and more fruitful prosecution of missions support and missions education was to effect a virtual revolution in the recognition of the role to be played by women in the ministries of the churches.

Appointment in 1882 and 1883 of "Sisters" from the churches to assist with the raising of funds for Associational Missions represented at least a tacit recognition that women might well be more adept at this particular enterprise than were their male counterparts.⁶⁰ Meanwhile, under the rubric of "Woman's Work," the Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention had begun to pay increasing attention to the work of Woman's Missionary Societies scattered throughout the South, and to commend their efforts to the Boards of Missions of the several State conventions of Baptists. Impetus towards the organization and growth of such societies in North Carolina was effected in 1886 with the formation of a Central Committee for Woman's Work.⁶¹

Societies related to the churches at Oxford, Henderson, Bethel Hill, and Poplar Creek had been organized prior to 1890.⁶²

However, no mention of such organizations is found in associational records until 1896, when: "J[oshua] A[ddison] Stradley announced that Sister F. M. Meadows would meet on Thursday morning in Heggie's Hall all Ladies interested in Ladies' Missionary Societies to discuss that work."⁶³ Two years later, the associational Treasurer reported contributions from "Ladies' Aid Societies" at Hester's, Island Creek, Mill Creek, Mt. Zion, and Oxford churches.⁶⁴

Reports on Woman's Work became a standard feature of associational proceedings after 1902, when the first such report urged the formation of missionary societies in each church where none exists.⁶⁵ Closer alignment and cooperation with the State or-

ganization was effected with the naming of Mrs. C. D. Ray as Associational Vice-President for Woman's Work in 1905.⁶⁶ The number of societies within the churches of the Association had grown to thirty-one (31) by 1907, with contributions to missions totaling \$696.01. In that same year, Mrs. Ray of the Oxford Church was succeeded by Miss Evye Street, Mill Creek Church, as the Associational Vice-President.⁶⁷

On July 13, 1910, twenty-two (22) delegates, representing eleven missionary societies, met at Mill Creek Church, Person County, to conduct what the Proceedings describe as the "first real [woman's] meeting of [the] Association."⁶⁸ This official organization of Woman's Missionary Union, Auxiliary to the Flat River Association, had undoubtedly received impetus from the fact that the women of Oxford Baptist Church had hosted the annual meeting of North Carolina Woman's Missionary Union, March 22-25, 1910. It was to experience significant growth—both numerically and in terms of its financial contributions to missions—over the next decade, under the able and inspirational leadership of Sue Kelly of the Island Creek Church, and Mrs. John Webb, of the Oxford Church.⁶⁹

D. The Temperance Question and Social Services

Ratification of the Eighteenth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, January 16, 1919, marked the attainment of a goal to which the Association had voiced her support for nearly three-quarters of a century—prohibition of the manufacture, sale, and use of intoxicating liquors as a beverage. As the arena for promoting the cause of Temperance moved beyond the local church/community to the halls of local, State, and national governments, she had lent her support towards legislative enactments to curb and/or prohibit the liquor traffic. Meanwhile, recognition that the churches must take greater responsibility for addressing the needs of orphans and widows was exhibited through support of the initiatives of the North Carolina Baptist Orphanage Association and of the Ministerial Relief Board of the Baptist State Convention, respectively.

Temperance

Each church within the Association had been requested in 1888 to prepare a Total Abstinence Pledge, and "invite each of her members to sign it, thereby binding themselves not to drink intoxicating liquors, except strictly as a medicine, or at the communion table."⁷⁰ Endorsements of the Temperance League and the Anti-Saloon League were included in the reports on Temperance for 1902 and 1903, respectively, with the churches urged to hold Temperance meetings at once, and—in the case of the latter report—calling upon members to "vote only for Temperance men."⁷¹ A rallying cry for total abstinence was sounded in a testimonial of the venerable Joshua Addison Stradley at the associational meeting of 1909, when he declared:

I have lived to be an old man, and have never used one drop of intoxicating liquors, either in sickness or health. I know they can be done without. In view of the above fact, and in view of the additional fact that the liquor traffic is the most fruitful source of poverty, ignorance, crime, disgrace, and suffering, therefore all people should abstain from the use of intoxicants and unite to banish the liquor traffic from the face of the earth.⁷²

The first direct appeal to legal and judicial authority for curbing the liquor traffic was issued in 1913 in a resolution which was presented by the Reverend Jesse Burton Weatherspoon, pastor of the Oxford and Tabb's Creek churches, in which the delegates to the Association then meeting with Poplar Creek Church did "most earnestly and humbly request Judge Barksdale, of Houston, Va., to do all in his power to close the liquor interests in his county contiguous to our borders."⁷³ The following year, a resolution in support of the lobbying efforts of the North Carolina Anti-Saloon League was sent to the North Carolina General Assembly. Similarly, resolutions in support of the proposed amendment to the Constitution of the United States for nationwide prohibition of the liquor traffic were forwarded to the United States House of Representatives and the United States Senate, respectively.⁷⁴

A note of victory, coupled with a word of caution, was sounded by the Reverend Jacob David Harte, spokesperson for the Association's Committee on Temperance, in 1919. Harte, pastor of Oxford Baptist Church, observed:

The first Independence Day was July 4, 1776, when our country became free of a power without. The second independence was July 1, 1919, when our beloved country threw off her great enemy from within. Yet we should not misunderstand the present legal status of the liquor business.⁷⁵

Thomasville Baptist Orphanage

North Carolina Baptists embarked upon a ministry designed to provide nurture and education for orphaned children with the formation of the North Carolina Baptist Orphanage Association, November 14, 1884, during an adjournment of the annual session of the Baptist State Convention in Raleigh. Legislative charter for the association was quickly secured, a tract of land purchased near the Town of Thomasville, and plans laid for the early reception of children under the care of a Baptist orphanage. Before the institution had been sufficiently readied for the reception of its first charges, Flat River Association had resolved to build one house on the grounds of the orphanage in the name of Flat River Baptists.⁷⁶

A combination of factors prevented the realization of this dream of erecting a Flat River Building for the Baptist orphanage at Thomasville. Churches were somewhat negligent in raising the monies required for the construction of such a cottage.⁷⁷ Failure to clearly designate funds remitted to the Treasurer of the Orphanage "for the Flat River Building" resulted in their expenditure to meet current operating expenses.⁷⁸ Finally, in 1896 the Association accepted a proposal from the Trustees of the Orphanage to place a monumental tablet in the Central Building on the campus, in lieu of erecting the Flat River Building for which funds had been raised and remitted. The inscription on the monumental plaque was to read: "This tablet is placed here to perpetuate the history of the liberality of the Flat River Association towards the Orphanage in contributing funds for a Flat River building."⁷⁹

Support of the Orphanage in monies, material goods, and foodstuffs increased significantly in the wake of the resolution of any misunderstanding related to the earlier remittance and appropriation of funds intended for a building bearing the name of Flat River Baptists. By 1907, financial contributions to the Orphanage ranked second only

to Foreign Missions as the most appealing of the several objects of missions and benevolence receiving annual support from the churches. Indeed, if account were taken of gifts in kind and of contributions through the Sunday School, the Baptist Orphanage at Thomasville had probably surpassed the foreign mission enterprise on several occasions in the annual contributions which had been garnered for the support of orphaned and homeless children.⁸⁰

Ministerial Relief

Care for aged and/or indigent Baptist ministers and their families had been assumed by the Baptist State Convention in 1889 with the appointment of a Board of Trustees "whose duty it shall be to collect, appropriate and invest funds for the relief of aged or indigent Baptist ministers."⁸¹ By 1891, this North Carolina Baptist Ministers' Relief Board reported eleven beneficiaries, including the widows of three deceased ministers. Among these was Mrs. Cornelius F. Humphries, whose husband had died on January 30, 1890, while serving as pastor of Corinth, Mt. Harmony, and Olive Branch churches in the Flat River Association.⁸²

However, it was the Association which had taken the initiative in coming to the relief of Mrs. Humphries through the provision of a home for her and her family in the Town of Oxford. Pledges towards that end had been first received at the associational meeting in 1890. One year later, it was reported that a lot and house had been purchased for Sister Humphries at a cost of \$650.00—monies which had been contributed through the generosity of churches and individuals within the bounds of the Association. It was at this same session of the Association that an endorsement was forthcoming commending the work of the Ministers' Relief Board.⁸³

Financial support for ministerial relief, however, continued to be quite minimal. Average annual contributions between the date of the endorsement of the work of the Relief Board (1891) and the end of the period now under review (1919) amounted to only \$122.46.⁸⁴ Moreover, a similar appeal to come to the aid of Mrs. James King Humphries—a second widow whose pastor husband had died while serving churches in the Association—appears to have met with far less success than the appeal heard in 1890.⁸⁵

Churches in affiliation with Flat River Baptist Association had, indeed, consolidated the gains of earlier years and expanded their horizons in ministry during the three and one-half decades, 1884-1919. The succeeding three decades would find them introduced to the concept of a unified mission, nurtured through the support of all church organizations and auxiliaries.

ENDNOTES

¹This early description of the purposes of Baptist Young People's Union (B.Y.P.U.) is taken from "Report on Baptist Young People's Societies," in *Minutes of the Sixty-Third Annual Meeting of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina. Held in Elizabeth City, N[orth] C[arolina], December 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11, 1893* (Raleigh: Edwards & Broughton, 1893), pp. 67-68. This initial report to the Convention issued in the appointment of a committee of five persons which was instructed "to aid by letter, circular, and newspaper articles, and in other ways, the organization of local societies of Young People."

²The period under consideration witnessed the entrance of Baptists and the Baptist State Convention into the area of child care with the establishment and incorporation of the North Carolina Baptist Orphanage Association in 1885; and of provision for the needs of aged and/or indigent ministers and their families, with the formation of a Ministers' Relief Board in 1889.

Promotion of the cause of Temperance retained a central focus—particularly as the nation moved towards the eventual ratification of the Eighteenth Amendment (Prohibition) to the Constitution.

³Flat River Association experienced very little internal dissension related to the question of the support of missions and other benevolences after 1840, when Eno and Tar River churches were expelled for disorderly conduct, "by absenting themselves from this body without a letter of dismission." Both churches eventually found a home within the Country Line Association. See *FR Minutes*, 1840, p. 4.

⁴In October 1846, Devin, a native of Henry County, Virginia, had been appointed by the Baptist State Convention's Board of Home Missions to labor 12 months within the bounds of Flat River Association. The remainder of his ministerial career was to be spent among the churches affiliated with this body.

⁵*FR Minutes*, 1842, pp. 7-8.

⁶*Ibid.*, 1850, p. 4.

⁷In 1877, the Committee on Systematic Beneficence had encouraged adoption of the plan of giving which is outlined in 1 Corinthians 16:2. The report of the Committee sought to underscore the importance of support by every member of the churches by adding: "And any other member, male or female, whom the Lord prospers in any way, who will not give of his means to support the Gospel in his own church, or abroad, is not only failing in his christian duty, *but shall forfeit his or her membership* [italics not in the original]." See *FR Minutes*, 1877, p. 9.

⁸*Ibid.*, 1884, pp. 7-8.

⁹*Ibid.*

¹⁰*Minutes of the Fifty-Fourth Annual Meeting of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, Held in the City of Raleigh, N[orth] C[arolina], November 12th, 13th, 14th, 15th, 16th, 1884* (Raleigh: Edwards, Broughton & Co., 1884), p. 44. The Flat River Association's representatives to the Board of Missions included two pastors (Robert Henry Marsh and Joshua Addison Stradley) and two laymen (Franklin P. Hobbard and B. Dyer Howard).

¹¹*Ibid.*

¹²*FR Minutes*, 1885, p. 11.

¹³*Ibid.*, 1897, pp. 14-15.

¹⁴From 1888-1906 the associational report on the Baptist Orphanage was almost invariably accompanied by a "cash" collection in behalf of the institution. Other more occasional beneficiaries of cash collections included State Missions, Associational Missions, Foreign Missions, and Ministerial Education.

¹⁵Thus, in 1886 subscriptions were raised to "lift the debt" on State Line Church, and for the support of both State Missions and Ministerial Education.

¹⁶Encouraging the churches to "endeavor to raise" or "to try to raise" specific pledged amounts for Foreign Missions, State Missions, and Ministerial Education was a strategy which was utilized especially by the advocates for these particular benevolences, 1894-1900. Pledges, however, often proved to be more optimistic than the amounts of funds which were actually forthcoming.

¹⁷*FR Minutes*, 1914, p. 12.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, 1917, p. 8.

¹⁹The three churches from whom no contributions had been reported for benevolent objects were: New Light, Olive Grove, and Pleasant Grove.

²⁰*FR Minutes*, 1885, p. 11. There is some discrepancy between the report on stewardship summarized in the digest of Church Letters and the Table of Contributions to benevolent objects found in the *Minutes* of 1885. The Table indicates there were *twelve* churches who had contributed nothing to *Home Missions* (Amis' Chapel, Antioch, Fellowship, Grassy Creek, Henderson, Mary's Chapel, Mill Creek, Mountain Creek, Mount Harmony, Olive Grove, Pleasant Grove, and Providence); *thirteen* who had contributed nothing to *Ministerial Education* (Antioch, Bethany, Bethel, Fellowship, Grassy Creek, Mill Creek, Mount Harmony, New Light, North Fork, Olive Branch, Olive Grove, Pleasant Grove, and Providence); *eleven* who had contributed nothing to *Associational Missions* (Antioch, Bethel, Fellowship, Mill Creek, Mountain Creek, Mount Harmony, North Fork, Olive Branch, Olive Grove, Pleasant Grove, and Providence); *seven* who had contributed nothing to *State Missions* (Fellowship, Mary's Chapel, Mount Harmony, Olive Branch, Olive Grove, Pleasant Grove, and Providence); and *three* who had contributed nothing to *Foreign Missions* (Fellowship, Olive Grove, and Pleasant Grove).

²¹*Ibid.* These per capita statistics do not include contributions for local church expenses.

²²Again, these per capita statistics apply only to contributions beyond the local church.

²³Statistics after 1904-05 are taken from the Annuals of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina. There will be some discrepancy between the annual statistics found in associational *Minutes* and those in Convention Annuals due to different procedures for reporting and calculating that which qualifies as "benevolences."

²⁴See Chapter III, Note 11, for the Clerk's account of the impression made by Herring on this occasion.

²⁵North Carolina had sent only three of her native sons and daughters to mission service in foreign lands under the auspices of the Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention following the appointment of Matthew Tyson Yates and his wife, Eliza, in 1846. These were: Frederick S. James—Africa, 1847; Olivia Barkley (Mrs. John Henry) Lacy—Africa, 1853; and A. D. Phillips—Africa, 1854.

²⁶David Wells and Maggie Nutt Herring sailed for China on December 10, 1885, in the company of fellow North Carolinians, Robert Thomas and Lula Freeland Bryan. Wells and his wife settled in Shanghai; the Bryans, in Chin-kiang—both within the confines of the Central China Mission. See "Report of the Foreign Mission Board," *Proceedings of the Southern Baptist Convention, Held in the Meeting-House of the First Baptist Church, Montgomery, Ala[bama], May 7-11, 1886* (Atlanta: Jas. P. Harris & Co., 1886), pp. xxv, xl.

²⁷*FR Minutes*, 1888, p. 10.

²⁸*Ibid.*, 1889, p. 8. It had been anticipated that Watkins would sail for China in the Fall of 1890. A brief notation in the Annual of the Southern Baptist Convention for 1891, p. 10, observed: "The Board regrets to report that Bro[ther] Watkins' health has so failed that, by his own request, he was released from his engagement as our missionary-elect."

Watkins continued to champion the cause of missions in the course of his subsequent pastoral labors. After varying periods of service with Antioch, Mill Creek, and Roxboro churches in the Flat River Association, he concluded his ministerial career as pastor of First Baptist Church, Goldsboro, 1908-22; and Grace Baptist Church, Durham, 1922-32.

²⁹These statistics do not take account of monies contributed for Herring's personal expenses, for the support of Watkins while a student at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, and for the special project of constructing a dwelling house for the Bryans after their arrival in China.

³⁰Loyalty to and sympathies with Herring, George Pleasant Bostick, and other North Carolinians who resigned from service with the Foreign Mission Board to align themselves with the Gospel Mission Movement after 1893 are evidenced by contributions in the amount of \$2,397.03 to "Gospel Missions," 1894-96. Both Herring and Bostick were subsequently re-appointed by the Board, completing their missionary careers under its auspices. For a brief account of the emergence and principles of this movement, see W. B. Glass, "Gospel Mission Movement," *Encyclopedia of Southern Baptists* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1958), I, 572; John F. Gibson, "Gospel Missionism," in *ibid.*, I, 571-572.

Moreover, support of Gospel Missions was encouraged by the fact that Emma Humphries (1866-1918), a member of Bethel Hill Church, had aligned herself with the work of Tarleton Perry Crawford—the founder of the Gospel Missions Movement—upon her arrival in China as a missionary in 1894. Miss Humphries was wed to Thomas Lee Blalock (1865-1960), another of Crawford's co-laborers, in 1896.

Olive Branch Baptist Church “adopted Brother and Sister Blalock” as their missionaries in November 1898. The Blalocks also depended for support upon Bethel Hill Baptist Church, which is said to have taken frequent collections for their support. See Mary Elizabeth Woody McGill, “The Smith Cooper Humphries Family,” *The Heritage of Person County* (Winston-Salem: Hunter Publishing Company, 1981), I, 276-77; Stuart V. Poole, “Olive Branch Baptist Church,” *The Heritage of Person County* (Winston-Salem: Hunter Publishing Company, 1983), II, 32.

³¹Churches which had been admitted into the fellowship of the Association after 1844 included: Flat River Union, 1846; Oxford, 1849; Mt. Pleasant [Tally Ho], 1850; Sandy Level, 1854; Five Forks [Mount Harmony], 1855; Amis' Chapel, 1855; Antioch, 1858; Pleasant Grove, 1859; Mountain Creek, 1860; Mount Calvary, 1869; Mill Creek, 1870; Enon, 1875; North Fork, 1876; Providence (in Person County), 1877; Henderson, 1878; Mary's Chapel, 1880; Roxboro, 1882; Olive Grove, 1882; and Bethany, 1883.

³²*FR Minutes*, 1881, p. 9.

³³*Ibid.*, 1882, p. 11.

³⁴Rock Spring, which would be constituted in 1886.

³⁵*FR Minutes*, 1885, p. 5.

³⁶*Ibid.*, p. 9.

³⁷In addition to Horner and Stradley, others who were employed under the auspices of the State Board included Thomas W. Greer, George N. Pittard, and Joseph Henry Lamberth. The work of Lamberth, however, was largely confined to the territory encompassed by Beulah Association.

³⁸*FR Minutes*, 1891, pp. 5-6.

³⁹*Biblical Recorder*, April 6, 1892. The program planned for the Missions Centennial included eleven addresses, each of which was not to exceed thirty minutes in length. Five of these were scheduled for the “morning session”; the remaining six, for an evening session. See *ibid.*, for projected topics and speakers.

⁴⁰*FR Minutes*, 1889, p. 8.

⁴¹*Ibid.*, 1892, p. 5.

⁴²*Ibid.*, 1893, p. 6. Devin's address is of particular value for the traditions it relates relative to the origins of the Association, his descriptions of some of her earlier ministers, and his depiction of some of the rustic conditions which formerly characterized many of the meeting houses in which the congregations gathered for worship.

⁴³Among the young ministerial students at Wake Forest who served the churches while enrolled in academic studies there were at least the following: Matthias Darling Austin, John Alfred Brendle, Hampton Gerome Bryant Monrovia Pierce Davis, Barbour Vaughan Ferguson, William F. Fry, Asa Parker Gray, William Lemuel Griggs, Charles Robert Hairfield, Edwin Rowland Harris, Sr., Thomas Benton Hill, Sidney Cecil Hilliard, Kenneth Cassidy Horner, Lucius Lanell Hudson, Augustus Vallie Joyner, William Lee Kyles, Elvis M. Lassiter, Henry Hamilton Mashburn, Jesse Coleman Owen, Edward Sylvester Pierce, Elbert Young Pool, Frank Kenneth Pool, Miles Lee Rickman, Theophilus Yates Seymour, Thomas Christopher Singleton, George Edward Spruill, Herman Thomas Stevens, Charles Ross Taylor, Charles Herman Trueblood, Sr., Robert Percy Walker, Jesse Burton Weatherspoon, and Otis Webster Yates.

⁴⁴Both Beam (1857-1928) and Hobgood (1847-1924) were deemed educators of sufficient renown to be included in the biographical section of a six-volume *History of North Carolina*, published in 1919. The biographer said of Beam, who became Superintendent of Person County Schools in 1913: “He has been continually elevating the standard of the schools until Person County has every reason to be proud of its educational system, which is most thorough, practical and beneficial.”

Of Hobgood it was recorded: “Mr. Hobgood's educational ideals have been high, demanding superior intellectual culture, developing the finer social sensibilities, converging on a life at once practical and refined, and above all centering in Christ, the Great Teacher, Savior, and Sovereign of the race.”

For complete sketches, see R. D. W. Connor, J. G. deRoulhac Hamilton, William K. Boyd, *et. alii*. (Compilers), *History of North Carolina* (Chicago: Lewis Publishing Company, 1919), IV, 261; V, 147-48.

⁴⁵*FR Minutes*, 1892, p. 8.

⁴⁶*Ibid.*, p. 10.

⁴⁷*Ibid.*

⁴⁸*Biblical Recorder*, January 25, 1905.

⁴⁹In 1904, the Baptist State Convention's Committee on Schools had placed the denominational colleges, secondary schools, and other academies in two classifications: (1) Those owned by individuals or stock companies, but which wished to be classified as Baptist schools; and (2) Schools owned or controlled through Trustees by Baptist bodies and chartered as Baptist schools.

Oxford Female Seminary was classified in Category 1 above, whereas Baptist Female University [Meredith College], Chowan Female Institute, and Wake Forest College were all classified in Category 2.

⁵⁰*FR Minutes*, 1919, p. 8. The Million Dollar Movement—initiated by action of the Baptist State Convention in 1916 and officially launched by the [Baptist] Board of Education in February 1917—contemplated raising \$1,000,000.00 for the “endowment and equipment of our schools.” The monies raised were to be apportioned as follows: \$300,000.00 each to Wake Forest and Meredith colleges; \$150,000.00 to Chowan; and \$250,000.00 to be invested for the benefit of the denominational high schools in the State.

Three years later, this ambitious undertaking had been incorporated into the North Carolina “apportionment” for the Seventy-Five Million Campaign, inaugurated by the Southern Baptist Convention in May 1919. See *Annual of the North Carolina Baptist State Convention*, 1917 (Raleigh: Mutual Publishing Company, 1917), pp. 77-78; *Annual of the North Carolina Baptist State Convention*, 1919 (Raleigh: Edwards & Broughton, 1919), p. 73.

⁵¹There is no indication that the Board of Education took any specific action regarding the Flat River Resolutions, apart from a general statement that it was deemed inexpedient to multiply the number of Baptist institutions at the present time. It may very well be true that Hobgood and his associates preferred to retain the kind of ownership and control of the Oxford school which had prevailed since 1880.

⁵²*FR Minutes*, 1893, p. 18. The only church which appeared to be conducting a Sunday School in 1845 was Mt. Moriah, Orange County.

⁵³*Biblical Recorder*, January 8, 1879.

⁵⁴*FR Minutes*, 1891, p. 9.

⁵⁵The number of officers, teachers, and scholars enrolled in the Sunday Schools in 1884-85 was 994. The comparable statistic in 1899-1900 was 2,079. Contributions to Missions through the Sunday Schools was reported to be \$280.37 in 1884-85; \$559.80, in 1899-1900.

⁵⁶*FR Minutes*, 1900, p. 14.

⁵⁷*Annual of the North Carolina Baptist State Convention, 1910* (Raleigh: Edwards & Broughton, 1910), p. 106; *FR Minutes*, 1919, p. 21. “Evergreen” was an early designation for those schools which did not suspend operations during any portion of the year. Churches which were still conducting Sunday Schools during only a portion of the year in 1919 included: Bethany, 6 months; Concord, 9 months; Fellowship, 9 months; Grassy Creek, 9 months; Island Creek, 9 months; Mt. Harmony, 6 months; Olive Grove, 9 months; Pleasant Grove, 9 months; Sharon, 9 months; and State Line, 9 months. Island Creek was conducting two schools in 1918-19.

⁵⁸The church at Creedmoor holds the distinction of breaking the gender barrier by first naming women as messengers to the Association in 1923. They were Mrs. Edwin Rowland Harris, wife of the pastor of Creedmoor Church, and one whose name the Clerk recorded only as “Mrs. Mole” (possibly, Mrs. Mollie Lyon, who was a frequent messenger to the Association in later years).

⁵⁹Associational statistics for 1878 reported a total membership in the churches of 2,678. Of that number, 928 were males; 1,750, females. It is probable that a similar ratio had prevailed throughout the earlier years of the history of the Association.

⁶⁰See *FR Minutes*, 1882, p. 11; 1883, p. 7.

⁶¹*Minutes of the Fifty-Sixth Annual Meeting of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, Held in the Town of Wilmington, N[orth] C[arolina], November 17th, 18th, 19th, 20th and 21st, 1886* (Raleigh: Edwards, Broughton & Co., 1886), p. 16. The Central Committee had conducted its first meeting on January 20, 1886.

⁶²Reports from the Central Committee noted gifts from Societies related to Henderson Baptist Church (1886, 1887, 1890); Oxford Baptist Church Sunbeams (1887, 1890); Maggie Nutt Society, Oxford Female Seminary (1890); and Bethel Hill Baptist Church.

Maggie Nutt was the wife of David Wells Herring, missionary to China.

⁶³*FR Minutes*, 1896, p. 11.

⁶⁴*Ibid.*, 1898, p. 19.

⁶⁵*Ibid.*, 1902, pp. 14-15.

⁶⁶*Ibid.*, p. 9.

⁶⁷*Annual, North Carolina Baptist State Convention, 1907* (Raleigh: Edwards & Broughton, 1907), p. 120. The Society related to Mill Creek Church was "the largest Woman's Missionary Society in the State," according to a brief notice of the death of the Society's president, Bettie Geoghagen (Mrs. Thomas Hender-son) Street, in *FR Minutes*, 1907, p. 15.

⁶⁸"Minutes of the First Annual Meeting of the Woman's Missionary Union of the Flat River Association, Held with the Mill Creek Baptist Church, Mill Creek, N[orth] C[arolina], July 13, 1910," appended to *FR Minutes*, 1910.

The official delegates were as follows: *Amis Chapel WMS*—Mrs. C. W. Sneed, Myrtle Norwood; *Bethel Hill WMS*—Mrs. W. A. Woody, Maude Woody, Mrs. Walter Day; *Florence Avenue WMS*—Mrs. S. M. Torian, Mrs. W. D. Amis; *Island Creek WMS*—Mrs. J. E. Jones, Hattie Woody; *Island Creek Sunbeams*—Sue Kelly; *Knott's Grove WMS*—Annie Lou Phipps; *Roxboro WMS*—Mrs. J. A. Noell, Mrs. L. D. Veazey; *Roxboro YWA*—Myrtle Barrett; *Roxboro Sunbeams*—Mary Cheek; *Mt. Zion Sunbeams*—Miss Daniel; *Oxford WMS*—Mrs. John Webb, Mrs. J. D. Brooks; *Oxford YWA*—Mrs. C. D. Ray; *Mill Creek WMS*—Sallie Montague, Evye Street; and *Rock Grove WMS*—Mrs. S. R. Parham.

⁶⁹Miss Kelly served as Associational Vice-President of Woman's Missionary Union, 1909-10, before becoming the first young woman from the Association to enroll in Woman's Missionary Union Training School, Louisville, Kentucky. Mrs. Webb served as Associational Vice-President, 1912-20.

The Report on Woman's Work for 1912-13 noted the following with regard to Miss Kelly's promotion of the cause of WMU within the Association: "Since June 1st, she has visited more than thirty churches, organized twenty-three societies, distributed over three hundred pieces of mission literature, and traveled over 450 miles." See *FR Minutes*, 1913, p. 10.

In 1916, Sue Kelly was asked to comment upon the work of Woman's Missionary Union, following the acceptance of the Report on Woman's Work which, of course, had been read by a male member of the associational Committee on Woman's Work. This is the earliest occasion of a woman being asked to address the Association!

Contributions to Missions through the WMU organizations in Flat River Association totaled \$1,694.27 in 1918-19.

⁷⁰*FR Minutes*, 1888, p. 12.

⁷¹*Ibid.*, 1902, p. 8; 1903, p. 13. The North Carolina Anti-Saloon League had been organized in February 1902, largely through the initiative and leadership of John Alexander Oates, Jr., a leading Baptist advocate of prohibition. See Daniel Jay Whitener, *Prohibition in North Carolina, 1715-1945* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1945), pp. 133ff., for an account of the League's success in North Carolina.

⁷²*FR Minutes*, 1909, p. 7.

⁷³*Ibid.*, 1913, p. 12.

⁷⁴*Ibid.*, 1914, pp. 10-11. The Resolution addressed to the House of Representatives and communicated through Representative Charles Manly Stedman read: "We, the Flat River Association, assembled at Enon near Oxford, N[orth] C[arolina], July 14, 1914, earnestly petition for the speedy passage of House Joint Resolution No. 168, by Mr. Hobson, of Alabama, proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States for nation-wide prohibition of the beverage traffic in intoxicating liquors."

The petition addressed to the United States Senate was similarly worded, with the substitution of the name of the Senator and the identification number applied to the Prohibition resolution which had been introduced in that body.

⁷⁵*Ibid.*, 1919, p. 7.

⁷⁶*Ibid.*, 1885, p. 7.

⁷⁷The Orphanage report in 1886 called upon the churches to raise the balance needed to complete the projected Flat River Building, and to cooperate with the Orphanage Association by taking an annual collection, reporting the same to the Association. See *FR Minutes*, 1886, p. 7.

One year later, however, Deacon James H. Lassiter (1816-1904) of Henderson Baptist Church advanced \$500.00 in the name of the Association to enable payment on the last tract of land belonging to the Orphanage. It was understood that this amount—which was to be repaid to Lassiter through collections from the churches—was to be “placed to the credit of the Association on the Flat River building, promised by us to be built.” See *FR Minutes*, 1887, p. 11.

⁷⁸The report on the Orphanage building in 1889 indicated that a total of \$1,250.00 had been forwarded between 1885-87, but not always designated “for the Flat River Building.” The management of the Orphanage promised to erect such a building “whenever monies shall become available from the General Operating Fund.” See *FR Minutes*, 1889, pp. 4-5.

⁷⁹*Ibid.*, 1896, pp. 7, 9.

⁸⁰Sunday Schools throughout the State had been requested to make the Orphanage an object of their particular “missionary” concern, with at least monthly offerings taken for the benefit of that institution. A review of the early issues of *Charity and Children*, a publication of the Baptist Orphanage which was inaugurated July 14, 1887, would provide a more complete account of Sunday School contributions—and other gifts in kind—than do the annual *Minutes* of associational proceedings.

⁸¹*Minutes of the Fifty-Ninth Annual Meeting of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, Held in the Town of Henderson, N[orth] C[arolina], November 13th, 14th, 15th, 16th, and 17th, 1889* (Raleigh: Edwards & Broughton, 1889), p. 29.

A “Committee on the Care of Aged Ministers” had been appointed by the Convention in 1886. Its report to the Convention called for the appointment of a committee of five persons “to mature and report, as early as practicable, a safe and judicious plan of assisting and relieving disabled, infirm ministers.” This committee was further requested to “preface their plan with a succinct statement of the duties of the churches to their worn-out pastors and their families.” See *Minutes of the Fifty-Sixth Annual Meeting of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, Held in the City of Wilmington, N[orth] C[arolina], November 17th, 18th, 19th, 20th and 21st, 1886* (Raleigh: Edwards, Broughton & Co., 1886), pp. 27, 34-35.

⁸²Mrs. Humphries continued to be a beneficiary of the Board for at least 20 years, receiving annual benefits ranging from \$40.00 to \$110.00.

⁸³*FR Minutes*, 1890, p. 5; 1891, p. 11.

⁸⁴Contributions to Ministers’ Relief reached their highest level by far in 1918-19, with totals amounting to \$429.01.

⁸⁵James King Humphries (1870-1915), of the Woodsdale community in Person County, had been ordained to the work of the Gospel ministry on April 17, 1898, at Bethel Hill Church. He subsequently served the following churches in Flat River Association: Mt. Harmony, 1914-15, and Olive Branch, 1914-15.

V. PROMOTING UNIFIED MISSIONS AND SUPPORTIVE CHURCH AUXILIARIES, 1919-1949

Your *big* committee has had four meetings during the year. At these meetings we revised the work in the Association and made suggestions and plans for carrying on in the best way. *We have been working on the plan set up in Sec[retary] Huggins list of objectives for the churches. We are making some headway on these [italics not in the original].*¹

Thus reads the brief Report of the Executive Committee of the Flat River Association for 1933-34. The allusion to your “big committee” reflects the emergence of an administrative structure designed to assist the churches in visualizing and then realizing their potential strength.² The reference to “working on . . . a list of objectives” delineated by Maloy Alton Huggins, General Secretary-Treasurer of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, denotes a major focus of associational concern during three difficult decades, 1919-1949, during which the churches proved to be preparing themselves for a future era of significant advance.³

Under the leadership and guidance of an associational Executive Committee, Flat River Baptists were encouraged to respond liberally to the challenge of the Seventy-Five Million Campaign, and—subsequently—to that of a “New Program” of unified support for denominational causes—the Cooperative Program. Similarly, they were urged to adopt such measures as would further facilitate and enhance the growth and nurture of the churches and of their primary auxiliaries devoted to Bible teaching, instruction in discipleship, and missions education/support.⁴

The immediate response to such challenges was not always as encouraging or gratifying as the proponents of these measures could have wished. Yet, the Association arrived on the threshold of the 1950s with an administrative structure and a community of churches well poised for an era of growth and advance which that post-war decade would inaugurate.

A. The Seventy-Five Million Campaign and the Cooperative Program

North Carolina Baptists—including those affiliated with Flat River Association—had grown accustomed to participating in financial campaigns designed to support and sustain *particular* objects of missions and benevolence. The Centennial Fund (1892) had anticipated receipts of \$15,000.00 within the State for the permanent work of the Home and Foreign Mission boards of the Southern Baptist Convention. The Century Fund (1900) had projected revenues of \$100,000.00 to relieve the indebtedness of denominational schools. The Million Dollar Movement, inaugurated in 1917 and intended to endow and equip the Convention’s system of denominational schools, represented the most ambitious effort to date which North Carolina Baptists had attempted. Wake Forest, Meredith, and Chowan colleges had been designated as the prime beneficiaries of its fruitful harvest.⁵

However, each of these earlier financial campaigns paled into virtual insignificance when compared to the nature and scope of the Seventy-Five Million Campaign,

1919-24, and to that stewardship vehicle which was designed to conserve and preserve its approach and appeal: i.e., the Cooperative Program among Southern Baptists.

Launching the Campaign

Officially launched in June 1919, the initial—or pledge—phase of this unified effort to raise \$75,000,000.00 was to extend for six months, culminating with Eight Great Days: Victory Week, November 30—December 7, 1919. The adopted quota for all North Carolina Baptists was \$6,140,000.00; that for Flat River Baptists, \$175,000.00.⁶ Campaign directors were enlisted to promote and coordinate fund raising efforts at the State, associational, and local church levels. By the time all commitments had been reported and tabulated, North Carolina Baptists had pledged in excess of \$7,000,000.00 to be remitted over the five-year period, 1919-24.⁷ In turn, the churches of Flat River Association had remitted pledges to the Campaign in excess of \$153,000.00.⁸ Careful planning, detailed preparation, and continuing promotion/publicity through the denominational press contributed to making this initial phase of the Seventy-Five Million Campaign a remarkable success.

Reinforcing Campaign Commitments

That measure of zeal and enthusiasm with which the churches of the Association responded initially to the Seventy-Five Million Campaign was not to be sustained throughout the projected life span of this five-year venture in Christian stewardship. The report of the associational Executive Committee for 1921-22 was reminiscent of numerous earlier reports which had sought to account for the disparity between financial pledges, or subscriptions, and financial performance. The author of the report observed:

Our section has had two bad years, financially. We had large crops and low prices in 1920, while the drought left us with poor crops and only average prices for 1921. The leftover debts for 1920, together with the crop failure of 1921, left us in the slough of despond even until now. And so the Seventy-Five Million Campaign has suffered with everything else, *and in some cases more than everything else* [italics not in the original].⁹

That disparity was further exhibited in a “Financial Statement of the Flat River Association, 75 Million Campaign Pledges” forwarded from the office of the Reverend Charles Edward Maddry, Corresponding Secretary, Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, and included in the associational *Minutes* for 1923. It was intended as a means of reminding the churches of their commitments and reinforcing their efforts towards realizing those commitments. It is given below as an indication of the manner in which most of the churches responded liberally to the concept behind the Seventy-Five Million Campaign, on the one hand, and to the record they actually managed to attain in payment on earlier pledges, on the other hand.

Financial Statement of the Flat River Association

75 Million Campaign Pledges

Four-fifths Total Pledge Due December 1, 1923

<u>Church</u>	<u>Pledge</u>	<u>Paid, 8/29/23</u>	<u>Due, 10/1/23</u>
Amis Chapel	\$ 6,217.00	\$ 3,018.17	\$ 1,955.43
Bethany	665.00	417.41	114.59
Beulah	4,750.00	1,622.30	2,177.70
Bullock	3,250.40	670.93	1,929.39
Concord	1,600.00	571.84	708.16
Corinth	3,075.00	839.12	1,620.88
Creedmoor	3,598.00	1,848.88	1,029.56
Dexter	2,974.00	1,306.12	1,073.08
Enon	10,500.00	2,730.59	5,669.41
Fellowship	825.00	429.49	230.51
Florence Avenue	7,275.00	3,933.39	1,886.61
Grassy Creek	5,721.00	2,828.59	1,748.21
Hesters	9,000.00	4,300.66	2,899.34
Island Creek	10,300.00	3,935.37	4,304.63
Knap of Reeds	4,627.00	2,972.14	729.46
Knott's Grove	4,325.00	1,608.87	1,851.13
Mountain Creek	12,000.00	3,001.25	6,598.75
Mt. Harmony	1,059.00	638.45	208.76
Mt. Zion	1,032.76	804.97	21.23
Olive Branch	904.00	564.89	158.31
Olive Grove	957.00	286.94	479.06
Oxford	25,000.00	17,826.57	2,173.43
Peace Chapel	1,232.00	502.81	482.79
Pleasant Grove	---	300.00	---
Poplar Creek	2,100.25	1,096.92	583.28
Rock Springs	6,350.00	2,045.55	3,034.45
Sharon	1,565.50	659.70	592.70
State Line	2,300.00	767.07	1,072.93
Stovall	6,299.00	2,625.65	2,413.55
Tabbs Creek	4,500.00	1,336.57	2,263.43
Tally Ho	5,775.00	1,944.81	2,675.19
West Oxford	3,700.00	2,037.49	922.51
TOTALS	\$153,477.41	\$69,473.42	\$53,607.67

Beyond a Temporary Expedient

The Seventy-Five Million Campaign had been conceived as the Southern Baptist response to the desire to seize upon the opportunities for expansion in missions, edu-

cation, and evangelism—at home and abroad—which the successful conclusion of World War I appeared to vouchsafe to North American Protestantism.¹¹ Initial response to the Campaign resulted in premature commitments in programs and personnel based upon anticipated revenues—revenues which were not forthcoming to the degree anticipated when the initial phase of the Campaign was completed. Baptists had entered the decade of the 1920s in full confidence that the measure of indebtedness—both perennial and long-term—which had hampered the operations of numerous denominational boards, institutions, and agencies could be quickly erased. Instead, they witnessed an increase in indebtedness, due to a combination of unwise procedures, fiscal mismanagement, and—especially—the economic recession of the early 1920s and the Great Depression of the 1930s.¹²

At mid-point in the Campaign effort, Charles Edward Maddy, then Corresponding Secretary of the Baptist State Convention's Board of Missions and Director of the Seventy-Five Million Reinforcement Campaign in the State, analyzed the situation with which Baptists were confronted. His words represent a succinct summary of the circumstances which had prompted Baptists to undertake such an ambitious campaign, his view of the folly of depending upon such efforts for sustaining the daily operations of denominational agencies, and his appeal to move beyond what he termed a "Temporary Expedient."

The Great World War and the unprecedented opportunity for Christian work by Baptists in practically all the nations battling for democracy and the right of self-expression, called for such an increase in money and men, and for so immediate action that sufficient time was not available in which to plan a fixed and sure policy of finance, hence the 75 Million Campaign and the strenuous months of preparation and anxious years in securing the money pledged. A strong stimulus may be applied to a tree and induce great and rapid growth. But repeated a few times and the tree becomes top-heavy, refuses to bear fruit without the stimulus is repeated in constantly repeated applications, and finally refuses to bear fruit at all. The efforts to collect the pledges this year have been heart-breaking and nerve-racking. *Another and better method of financing our Lord's work must be found, accepted and put into operation at the end of this Campaign period or we shall have to resort to the use of an increased stimulus in order to keep going the work already begun* [italics not in the original].¹³

"Another and Better Method:" The Cooperative Program

That method for which Maddy, and others, appealed was unveiled for Flat River Baptists at the associational meeting of 1924. Referred to initially as the "Program for 1925," it was structured around a system of financial quotas suggested for each of the associated churches—quotas based upon 1/4 of the receipts which each church had actually remitted for the Seventy-Five Million Campaign during the first four years of its operation. The quota suggested for the entire Association was \$20,071.00.¹⁴ After 1925, this "fixed and sure policy of finance" was to be known as the Cooperative Pro-

gram of Southern Baptists. It was a unified approach to the financing of all denominational enterprises, based upon cooperative agreements between each State convention of Baptists and the Southern Baptist Convention, and dependent upon the soliciting, securing, and distribution of funds remitted from cooperating churches.¹⁵

Flat River Baptists fell considerably short of their quota for gifts for denominational causes which had been suggested in 1924 by the Association's Executive Committee. Only five congregations—Fellowship, Grassy Creek, Knott's Grove, Mountain Creek, and Rock Spring—reached or exceeded the quotas for local churches. Seven churches—Bullock, Concord, Corinth, Fellowship, Olive Grove, Peace's Chapel, and Pleasant Grove—remitted no *undesignated* gifts to the Treasurer of the Baptist State Convention to be distributed according to the initial formula adopted for division of funds between State and south wide causes. Of the total denominational contributions of \$15,654.39, undesignated Cooperative Program receipts amounted to \$10,137.67.¹⁶

Nevertheless, the methods employed by and the lessons learned from the prosecution of the five-year Seventy-Five Million Campaign were to have an exceptionally salutary effect upon the manner in which the churches would approach their obligations as Christian stewards thereafter. Following, a marked decline in financial support of denominational causes extending throughout the 1930s, the economic recovery which accompanied the prosecution of World War II and its aftermath was reflected in renewed local support of a unified denominational mission.¹⁷

By 1949, Flat River Baptists had established an unprecedented record of financial support for denominational missions, having contributed \$45,332.00 in fiscal 1948-49.¹⁸ Per capita giving to denominational causes approached \$5.00 in that same year.¹⁹ Unrestricted gifts through the Cooperative Program had accounted for more than 50% of the *total* gifts remitted by the churches for denominational causes in 1945 and, again, in 1949—a percentage which had not been matched since 1927.²⁰ Moreover, each of the Association's twenty-eight churches was now committed to undesignated contributions through the Cooperative Program arrangement for financing the operation of denominational missions and benevolences.²¹

An exuberant note had been sounded in 1925 on behalf of North Carolina Baptists by Walter Murchison Gilmore, Recording Secretary of the Baptist State Convention and tireless advocate of "systematic beneficence," in the wake of the Seventy-Five Million Campaign. His words could have been echoed with an even more positive sound on the eve of mid-century, thanks to the energies, sacrifices, and efforts of numerous churches like those in affiliation with Flat River Association. Gilmore had declared in 1925:

The day of haphazard methods of financing the Kingdom is passing and ought to pass speedily. Our New Program contemplates the New Testament method of regular, systematic, proportionate giving to every cause fostered by our denomination. This will make the old high pressure method unnecessary. It will guarantee all of our enterprises a regular dependable income. This is good religion as well as good business.²²

B. Developing Churches for Effective Ministries

Publicity accompanying the inauguration and prosecution of the Seventy-Five Million Campaign among North Carolina Baptists had made it clear from the outset that this unified effort represented much more than a mere fund raising drive. To be sure, the immediate primary objective was to secure the commitment of an unprecedented sum of monies for the pursuit of an expanding program of denominational ministries. But the measure of success attained by both the Campaign and the "New Program" which it spawned was dependent upon effective, consecrated leadership in the local church and her auxiliaries. Thus, an emphasis upon standards, goals, objectives for local churches as a means of attaining the broader denominational objectives with which the churches were aligned in mission. An effective denominational program presupposed effective ministries through the local congregations.²³

General Secretary-Treasurer Huggins' "Objectives for the Next Seven Years" incorporated no new directions, or programs, in missions and ministry. All were recognizable as perennial concerns of every local church. But they did serve as a stimulant towards and a canon of effectiveness in, or for, ministry among the churches. It is in these regards that some of these are utilized in the paragraphs which follow as aids to a description of progress and development within the Flat River Association of churches.²⁴

The Sunday School: Enrollments

"Every church with a Sunday School enrollment at least as large as the church membership." At the time Secretary Huggins set forth this objective, only two churches within the Association—Tabb's Creek and West Oxford—met the criterion. At mid-century there were none. Yet, the inability to attain this particular objective hardly does justice to the progress the associated churches had made with regard to Sunday School enrollments, facilities, and programs of instruction.

In spite of previous efforts—and considerable success—in establishing and maintaining vital teaching ministries through the Sunday Schools of the Association, much was left to be desired at the beginning of the 1920s. The Committee on Sunday Schools pointed to various deficiencies in its reports for both 1920-21 and 1921-22. The former declared:

We have only a few church houses properly equipped for efficient [Sunday School] work. There is an awful chilling indifference toward the Sunday-school in many quarters. Many of our so-called best members in our churches pay no attention to the Sunday-school in their own churches. There is in many communities a dearth of enthusiasm or zeal for the Sunday-school which has ever been an indispensable essential to success in the work. Many of the leading workers do their tasks as if it(sic) were a bore and a burden.²⁵

The latter report observed, in a manner intended to prod the constituency into exercising greater zeal and enthusiasm: "It is, with regret and humiliation on the part of your committee that it is compelled to report that of the sixty-six associations of the Baptist State Convention the Flat River stands seventh from the bottom in enlisting its constituency [in Sunday School]."²⁶

Simultaneous Enlargement Campaigns, employment of an associational Sunday School and/or Young People's "Field Worker," and the development of an associational Sunday School organization were all utilized after 1926 in an attempt to improve the ratio between church membership and Sunday School enrollments. An initial Enlargement Campaign, conducted with the assistance of the Sunday School Department of the Baptist State Convention, June—September, 1926, netted approximately 500 new members for the Sunday Schools.²⁷

A second Simultaneous Enlargement Campaign was conducted throughout the week of April 17-24, 1927, involving 38 trained Sunday School workers engaged for assistance in procedures and methods in 31 of the Association's 33 churches. Every church reportedly adopted the "Standard of Excellence" as a goal for its school, with many also adopting the "Six-Point Record System" as a guide towards gauging individual progress and performance.²⁸ Providence Baptist Church hosted the first Associational Sunday School Rally, September 25, 1927, with attendance estimated at more than 1,000 persons.²⁹

Maintenance of the momentum gained for Sunday School ministries was enhanced with the employment of the Reverend Hampton Gerome Bryant as the first Associational Sunday School and B. Y. P. U. Worker, 1927-28, through a cooperative financial arrangement with the Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention.³⁰ Meanwhile, a general associational Sunday School organization had been effected in 1926, with the election of Willard Howard Upchurch, of the Oxford Church, and Edward Knott, Knott's Grove Church, as Director and Secretary-Treasurer, respectively.³¹

By the mid-1930s, however, earlier enthusiasm had waned considerably. After having established a record enrollment of 5,712 in 1926-27, the Sunday Schools of the Association reported enrollments totaling only 4,491 in 1934-35. Church membership in the meantime had increased slightly from 7,525 in 1926-27 to 7,830 in 1934-35. The author of the Report on Sunday Schools in 1936 expressed his judgment and dismay at the current situation in the following doleful words: "From the best information that I can gather, the Sunday Schools in Flat River Association are nothing to be proud of or brag about. In fact, they seem to be sick, they look pale and undernourished, they are rundown at the heel."³² Beginnings of recovery were to be another twelve years in the future.³³

The Sunday Schools: Facilities and Instruction

Attainment of excellence—by denominational standards—in the Sunday Schools was hampered, to be sure, by a dearth of trained officers and teachers.³⁴ It was also hindered to no inconsiderable degree by the inadequate accommodations which the churches had heretofore seen fit to provide for their educational ministries. As late as 1934, sixteen (16) of the thirty-two (32) church buildings in the Association were one-room, framed houses of worship.³⁵ Only twelve years earlier, however, the number of one-room structures had been twenty-four.³⁶

One outgrowth of the Sunday School Enlargement Campaigns in many churches was a recognition of the need for improved and enlarged facilities. At least eight churches

entered upon building programs, 1924-1930, with the most impressive being that of Oxford Church, whose new sanctuary and enlarged Sunday School facilities were ready for initial use on February 26, 1928.³⁷ In lieu of the provision of additional meeting rooms for classes or departments, Sunday School leaders in many of the churches resorted to the expedient of makeshift partitions in such facilities as were available. Thus, the Report on Sunday Schools for 1927 had observed: "More than eleven hundred yards of curtain goods were bought and put up in our one room churches making separate rooms; . . ." ³⁸

Yet the goal of attaining and maintaining "standard" work continued to be an elusive one. The Sunday Schools of eleven churches were reported to be doing "Standard Work" in 1927-28. Three years later, however, that number has been reduced to four.³⁹ Whereas all Sunday Schools except one had been reported to be "fully graded" in the wake of the Simultaneous Enlargement Campaign of 1927, eight additional ones had fallen from the ranks of the fully graded by 1930-31. "Standard of Excellence" was attained by only two schools—Fellowship and Knap of Reeds—in 1931-32.⁴⁰

Baptist Young People's Union

"A B. Y. P. U. in every church" was the goal enunciated by the Reverend George Taylor Tunstall, pastor of Enon and Hester's churches, in the first annual associational report on Baptist Young People's Union in 1922.⁴¹ Such an enterprise was further underscored one year later when the Executive Committee of the Association advised: ". . . along with the Sunday School work, the Baptist Young People's Union is knocking at the door of all the churches asking for a chance to help us enlist and train the new generation for the work they must do."⁴² Such training contemplated the development of youth spiritually, mentally, morally, and socially, while focusing programmatically upon Bible doctrine, Baptist distinctives, mission study, and practical endeavor.⁴³

But associational goals related to Baptist Young People's Union and its successor, Baptist Training Union, proved even more elusive than those pertaining to the Sunday School ministry of the churches. A report on the progress of Young People's Work in 1934 noted: "Very few of our churches finance their own [Baptist Young People's] unions; and there are still some instances where adequate equipment, such as lights, is not provided. A respectable number of the unions are either forced into winter quarters, or go there voluntarily."⁴⁴ Local churches were also slow to effect the kind of administrative structure which could provide appropriate guidance and direction to their individual unions in the pursuit of their objectives.

Nonetheless, an associational Baptist Young People's Union was organized on June 1, 1930, at a Young People's Convention hosted by Dexter Church.⁴⁵ Sufficient interest in and support of B. Y. P. U. was sustained thereafter to enable the scheduling of annual conventions through 1935, under the capable leadership of Lillian Cannady Bullock.⁴⁶ Transition of Baptist Young People's Union into the more-encompassing Baptist Training Union was effected slowly after 1936. The associational report for 1939 noted only eight churches having elected Baptist Training Union Directors. The number of unions in that same year totaled eighteen (18); the number of persons enrolled, three hundred sixty (360),⁴⁷

The goal of a B. Y. P. U. in every church—first envisioned for Flat River Baptists by the Reverend George Taylor Tunstall in 1922 and echoed in General Secretary Huggins' "Objectives" in 1933—was not to be realized. Yet, upon many of those who had been schooled in Baptist Young People's Union in the 1920s and 1930s would fall the mantle of leadership for directing their churches in discipleship training in later decades. A foretaste of what was to come had been experienced in 1948-49, when enrollments in Baptist Training Union showed an annual increase from four hundred one (401) in seven churches to seven hundred sixty-two (762) in twelve churches.⁴⁸

Women in the Churches

"Every church with a W. M. S." had been another of the objectives set forth by Secretary Huggins, with an added notation that less than 1/2 the churches in the State could make that claim on October 1, 1933. Women among Flat River Baptists could boast only a slightly better record than that noted for the State in 1933.⁴⁹ By the end of the seven-year evaluation period which had been projected by Huggins, however, they were able to report W. M. U. organizations in every church but one.⁵⁰ Moreover, total enrollment in organizations under the auspices of women had increased from less than three hundred (300) in 1919 to two thousand two hundred fifty-one (2,251) in 1949—the most dramatic numeral advance recorded by any of the auxiliaries related to the ministries of the churches.

Women were also beginning to assume a significant role in the deliberations of the Association. The two lone women who had represented Creedmoor Baptist Church at the associational meeting of 1923 were joined by increasing numbers of female faces—and voices—in succeeding years.⁵¹ Associational committees, including the expanded Executive Committee after 1933, benefitted from the knowledge and perspective of their female members. While Woman's Missionary Union had retained its status as an auxiliary to the Association, "woman's work" was no longer confined to the limited objectives of this particular auxiliary.

Sustained, effective leadership was recognized as a major contributing factor enabling Woman's Missionary Union to record notable achievements at both the local church and the associational levels. Sentiments penned in appreciation of the work of Julia Currin (Mrs. Sterling) Carrington in 1942 could have been repeated on various occasions, substituting the names of other "fellow workers" who were equally deserving of praise and recognition. Of Mrs. Carrington, the Association had affirmed:

We the members of the Flat River Association desire to express our profound appreciation of Mrs. Sterling Carrington, our beloved W. M. U. Superintendent from the year 1933 to 1942.

Those years speak for themselves as to her faithfulness to W. M. U. work. She has been a true, consecrated, loyal follower of Christ, being constant these many years through the trials and difficulties which faces(sic) one in this office.

We wish especially to express our appreciation to Mrs. Carrington for the helpfulness and many kindnesses she has shown her fellow workers. We never found her too busy with her own affairs to help someone in trouble who called upon her.

We are grateful to Mrs. Carrington for the tremendous progress our W. M. U. has made under her leadership.

Through such faithful and courageous followers of Christ as Mrs. Carrington we would love for the world to form their impression of Christians.⁵²

Unified Missions Support

The Cooperative Program among Southern Baptists represented an approach to missions support as a *unified* endeavor, rather than a mere collection of separate and distinct missionary enterprises. It also anticipated involvement of every member of the congregation in missions support through the church and each of her auxiliaries. Hence, a renewed emphasis upon the Every Member Canvass,⁵³ Stewardship Revivals,⁵⁴ and the obligations incumbent upon all church auxiliaries for the teaching and practice of good stewardship among their constituents.

“Every member making a Thanksgiving offering for the [Baptist] Orphanage” and “Every church and Sunday School making an offering on Mother’s Day for the [North Carolina Baptist] Hospital” reflected objectives which were intended to support the regular operating budget of the former, on the one hand, and to enable the latter to maintain its policy of providing quality health care for indigent patients, on the other hand. Both the reports of associational Standing Committees and the financial tables representing remittance of mission funds were designed to encourage the churches towards fulfilling their obligations in these regards.⁵⁵

Regular, systematic *contributions* in support of denominational causes were of little value, however, apart from the practice of regular, systematic *remittance* of such contributions to the Treasurer of the Baptist State Convention. Sound fiscal operation of boards, agencies, and institutions—especially through seasons of economic recession or depression—was dependent upon current receipts to meet current expenses. The “special” appeal as a *general* method for funding denominational causes was to be supplanted by a broad application of the New Testament principles of stewardship.

“Every church making a remittance to the Convention Treasurer at least once each month” was the ideal which General Secretary Huggins reiterated in his initial report to the Baptist State Convention in 1933. His predecessor, Charles Edward Maddry, had inaugurated a practice some five years earlier which was designed both to encourage and to praise the churches with regard to regular, systematic remittances of mission funds. Accompanying the annual publication of receipts from the churches which had appeared in the *Biblical Recorder* after 1926 was a roster of the “Honor Roll Churches,” 1928ff.⁵⁶

While no Flat River church was included in the roster of Honor Roll churches in 1928, three—Knap of Reeds, Mountain Creek, and West Oxford—were found in the roster for 1929. That number of Honor Roll churches increased to a high of eleven during

some of the succeeding years, however, with Knap of Reeds Church holding the distinction of being an "honor" church during ten of the thirteen years, 1928-1940. The annual average of churches making the "Honor Roll" of contributing churches, 1928-1940, was six.⁵⁷

A Promotion-Executive Committee

At the time Maloy Alton Huggins outlined his "Objectives for the Next Seven Years," it was believed that perhaps as many as twelve of the State's sixty-eight district associations were currently functioning through a representative Promotion-Executive Committee, or its equivalent. The primary expectation of such committees was that they would "visit and encourage the churches" in pursuit of their ministries.⁵⁸ Flat River Association was among those dozen or so similar Baptist bodies in North Carolina who were attempting to review, evaluate, and promote missions and ministries through the agency of a representative associational Executive Committee.

Operation between sessions of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina had been constitutionally vested in a single, representative General Board after 1926. Similarly, the Executive Committee of the Flat River Association assumed increasing responsibilities for "carrying on the work of the Association between sessions."⁵⁹ Quarterly meetings of the Committee—together with the elected leadership of Woman's Missionary Union, Sunday School, and Baptist Young People's Union—were conducted after 1930. The Committee was authorized by the Association to conduct special campaigns in the interests of B. Y. P. U. and Sunday School,⁶⁰ Stewardship,⁶¹ and Emergency Debt Services.⁶²

The most ambitious series of recommendations to emanate from the expanded Executive Committee came in 1939. These were dutifully adopted by the Association, but produced little significant effect among the churches.⁶³ At the end of World War II, the Sunday Schools of the Association reported their lowest enrollment since 1922.⁶⁴ Baptist Training Union—with functioning organizations reported by only the Oxford and Stovall churches—recorded an all-time low enrollment of one hundred twenty-four (124).⁶⁵

Neglect in attending to the teaching/training ministries of the churches prompted some to project the employment of an Associational Field Worker in conjunction with the Sunday School Division of the Baptist State Convention's Department of Missions—an arrangement which had proven effective in the late 1920s. Accordingly, in 1946 the Association concurred in a recommendation brought by Dr. Bonnie David Bunn, Superintendent of Granville County Schools and representative on the Executive Committee from Oxford Church, "that a central place be designated for a meeting on the second Sunday in November, when the churches might decide whether to employ an Associational Sunday School Worker."⁶⁶

Negotiations related to the possible employment of a Sunday School Worker issued instead in the engagement of an Associational Missionary. His general duties, as outlined by the Reverend George Woodrow Bullard, Superintendent of Associational Missions for the Baptist State Convention, included: (1) general promotion of denominational ministries at the associational level, (2) enlisting the local churches in support

of those ministries and assisting them with resources for ministry, and (3) “reaching out to people in unreached areas.”⁶⁷

An Associational Missionary

The Reverend Roger Edson Williams, Jr., assumed his duties as Associational Missionary among Flat River Baptists in June 1947. His initial report to the Association the following October indicated that he had been quite busily engaged in acquainting the churches with himself and his duties during the intervening months. Each of the twenty-eight churches had been visited. Moreover, he had taught 8 mission study courses, assisted in 6 Vacation Bible Schools, conducted 3 revival meetings, begun publication of a monthly associational newsletter, and arranged for a series of radio broadcasts—“The Prove Me Hour”—over station WHNC-Henderson, North Carolina.⁶⁸ The report also contained recommendations pertaining to the development of an associational Sunday School organization, a Baptist Training Union enlargement campaign, local church surveys to assess *actual* and *potential* strength, and the drafting of an Associational Calendar of Activities.⁶⁹

One year later, Williams delineated seven “Associational Needs” which—in his judgment—had to be faced, and met, if the churches were to realize their potential. These needs included: (1) a well-organized Executive Committee, (2) clearer understanding of the financial program [of the denomination], (3) better distribution of the services of the Associational Missionary, (4) an association-wide Rural Church Enlargement Campaign, (5) greater utilization of audio-visual resources available to the churches, (6) beautification of church properties, and (7) more resident, full-time pastors in service to the churches.⁷⁰

Rural Church Enlargement—in the broadest sense of the term—had, in fact, represented the primary vision and objective which lay behind the development of the Baptist State Convention’s renewed emphasis upon associational missions in the 1940s.⁷¹ With predominantly rural constituencies, Flat River Association appeared to constitute a combination of churches for whom such a program of associational missions had been intended and designed. More full-time churches with full-time pastors was both an objective of Rural Church Enlargement and a key to its attainment.

Two events occurred in the Spring of 1949 which would serve as harbingers of an altered future among these predominantly rural churches. The first took place at the April meeting of the Associational Executive Committee when the Associational Missionary tendered his resignation in order to accept the pastoral care of Hester Baptist Church on a full-time basis. Hester thus became the first rural church in Flat River Baptist Association to inaugurate full-time services, after having shared the ministrations of her pastors on either a quarterly or half-time basis for one hundred twenty-six years.⁷²

The second event occurred on May 19 during the course of the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. The report of a special Committee to Study Theological Education included the following recommendation which was approved by the Convention: “That two new seminaries, one in the West and one in the East, be established as soon as suitable sites can be had and adequate plans be made for financing the same without injury or impairment to our existing seminaries.”⁷³

That “suitable site” in the East proved to be the campus of Wake Forest College, then in the process of relocation to the City of Winston-Salem. With the opening of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in the Fall of 1951, rural churches throughout eastern North Carolina—including those in Flat River Association—were soon afforded the resources of student pastors, enabling many of them to follow Hester’s lead in the decades of the 1950s and 1960s.

ENDNOTES

¹*FR Minutes*, 1934, p. 16.

²An associational Executive Committee had been named as early as 1854, and charged with superintending missionary and colportage work. Other such committees had also been appointed, sporadically, to oversee the work of associational missions, verify the eligibility of applicants for ministerial grants at Wake Forest, or some other specific function. The Executive Committee had become a Standing Committee of the Association after 1901, but with rather ill-defined responsibilities and duties. It was not until 1922 that the Committee began to make annual reports to the Association, involving some review of work accomplished and suggestions for improved or expanded ministries. In 1933, the Committee had been increased in size to include six members at large, the Moderator and Clerk as members *ex-officio*, and one additional member to be elected by each of the Association's affiliated churches. See *FR Minutes*, 1854, p. 4; 1922, p. 16; 1933, p. 21.

³Huggins, who had been elected General Secretary-Treasurer of the Convention on November 16, 1932, outlined in his inaugural "Report of the General Board" a series of twenty-two "Objectives for the Next Seven Years," which he hoped the Convention would "adopt with enthusiasm." Briefly described, they were: (1) Every church with a pastor; (2) Every church with a Sunday School enrollment at least as large as the church membership; (3) Every church conducting at least one revival meeting each year; (4) Every church with a B. Y. P. U.; (5) Every church with a W. M. S.; (6) At least 500,000 church members in North Carolina Baptist churches by 1940, with all church rolls corrected; (7) Every association with a representative, functioning Promotion-Executive Committee, or its equivalent; (8) A ten-day School, or schools, for Christian Workers conducted each year; (9) At least 2,500 students enrolled in Baptist colleges by 1940; (10) Two general missionaries devoting their full-time to the development of the churches; (11) A *Charity and Children Club* in every Sunday School; (12) 25,000 subscribers to the *Biblical Recorder* by 1940; (13) Every institution and agency living within its income; (14) No borrowing by agencies of any funds, except in anticipation of current income; (15) A 50-50 distribution of Cooperative Program monies between State and SBC causes; (16) An income in Convention receipts to total \$800,000.00 by 1940; (17) Every church contributing to the Cooperative Program; (18) Every church and Sunday School contributing to the Orphanage; (19) Every Sunday School contributing and remitting monies to the Orphanage each month; (20) Every church making a Thanksgiving offering [for the Orphanage]; (21) Each church and Sunday School making an offering for Baptist Hospital on Mother's Day; and (22) Every church making monthly remittance of funds to the Convention Treasurer. See *Annual of the North Carolina Baptist State Convention, One-Hundred-Third Annual Session, First Baptist Church, Greensboro, November 14-17, 1933* ([n.p.]: [n.d.]), pp. 109-111.

⁴It was in these regards that the Executive Committee, or Promotion-Executive Committee, of the Association paid particular heed to many of the objectives which had been delineated by the Convention's General Secretary-Treasurer.

⁵Associational records make no mention of the Centennial Fund for Missions, although the Financial Report of the Treasurer for 1892-93 lists individual contributions to that effort in the amount of \$35.37. See *FR Minutes*, 1893, p. 21.

The Association's Executive Committee endorsed the Century Fund for Education in 1901, adopted an associational goal of \$2,000.00, and suggested "apportionments" to the churches, based upon approximately \$.50 per member. No record was available, however, regarding the response of the churches to these suggested apportionments. The movement itself managed to garner only 1/3 of the initial Statewide goal. See *FR Minutes*, 1901, pp. 11-12.

Progress towards successful completion of the Million Dollar Campaign was hampered by the resignation of its initial Financial Secretary, the Reverend Charles Judson Thompson, in May 1918; an influenza epidemic which extended throughout the Fall and Winter of 1918-19; and the Convention's decision to abandon this effort for a season, while concentrating on a special Campaign for Missions in the Spring of 1919.

The Reverend Carey Almon Upchurch, pastor of Island Creek, Knott's Grove, and Mt. Zion churches, served as associational Manager for the Million Dollar Campaign among the churches of the Flat River Association. The Association's apportionment was \$37;500.00; its anticipated revenue, only \$10,000.00. See *Annual of the Baptist State Convention, 1918* (Raleigh: Edwards & Broughton, 1919), pp. 23, 78-82, for an account of the early fortunes of this financial endeavor prior to its absorption into the larger Seventy-Five Million Campaign.

⁶North Carolina's initial quota of \$5,500,000.00 was increased to \$6,140,000.00 by adding the pledges previously made and/or monies actually remitted towards the State's Million Dollar Campaign. Woman's Missionary Union was to be responsible for 1/5 of the Association's quota, or \$35,000.00.

⁷*Annual of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, Ninety-Second Session, Winston-Salem, December 12-15, 1922* (Raleigh: Edwards & Broughton, 1922), p. 37. The amount of monies actually received at the close of the Campaign period was \$5,165,684.55. See *Annual of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, 1924* (Raleigh: Edwards & Broughton, [n.d.]), p. 94.

North Carolina's performance in the Seventy-Five Million Campaign was considerably better than that reported for the entire Southern Baptist Convention. Southwide, subscriptions to the Campaign amounted to \$92,630,923.00. Actual monies by the end of the Campaign period amounted to \$58,591,713.69. See Frank E. Burkhalter, "Seventy-Five Million Campaign," *Encyclopedia of Southern Baptists* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1958), I, 1196-1198, for a description of the Campaign and its significance for Southern Baptists.

⁸*FR Minutes*, 1923, p. 21. There is an apparent discrepancy between the pledge totals reported in 1922 and those reported in the "Financial Statement of the Flat River Association, 75 Million Campaign Pledges," which are incorporated in the *Minutes* of 1923, and noted above. The Association's Executive Committee had reported total pledges in 1922 of \$148,756.00.

It is also apparent that confusion abounded regarding the method of accounting for that portion of a church's total pledge which had been assumed by Woman's Missionary Union. Thus, the complaint in the Report on Woman's Work for 1919-20:

When the reports came in their (i.e., the women's) subscriptions amounted to \$37,292.77 and only 20 churches sent in Woman's Missionary Union reports. The plan of the 75 Million Commission is that all gifts of the women and children be credited to the W. M. U. *as well as to the church*. If we follow the plan, it is necessary that when the Campaign money is collected, the amounts given by our women and children be reported each quarter to the State W. M. U. Secretary, because if we do not, it will appear that the women of Flat River have failed to meet their obligations [italics not in the original].

See *FR Minutes*, 1920, p. 14. It is probable that the total in pledges from Flat River churches and their auxiliaries exceeded \$185,000.00.

⁹*FR Minutes*, 1922, p. 15.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, 1923, p. 21. The author has found no record of the actual total of monies attributed to Flat River Association at the "closing of the books" of the Seventy-Five Million Campaign in 1924. The procedure followed by the Associational Executive Committee in suggesting apportionments for the "New Program" of 1925—i.e., one-fourth of what had actually been contributed during the first four years of the Campaign—indicates that total contributions had amounted to \$80,000.00—\$90,000.00. However, the question of whether the contributions of Woman's Missionary Union were taken into account when apportionments were made remains problematic.

¹¹Southern Baptists had declined an invitation to prosecute their Seventy-Five Million Campaign as an integral segment of the Interchurch World Movement (1918-20)—a cooperative effort involving some 30 Protestant denominations in North America, whose most visionary goal was to raise one billion dollars for the evangelization of the world. The movement succeeded in actually raising approximately 1/3 of its visionary goal before succumbing to the effects of economic recession and theological controversy. See Winthrop Still Hudson, *Religion in America: An Historical Account of the Development of American Religious Life*. Fifth Edition (Macmillan: New York, 1992), 345-346, for a brief account of this interdenominational venture.

¹²"Fiscal Mismanagement" refers, primarily, to the defalcation of Clinton S. Carnes, Treasurer of the Home Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention (1919-28), who embezzled over \$900,000.00 in funds during his tenure as an officer of the Board. For a brief description of the Carnes affair, see [William] W[right] Barnes, "Carnes's Defalcation," *Encyclopedia of Southern Baptists* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1958), I, 232.

Substantial percentages of Cooperative Program receipts which were retained in North Carolina had to be earmarked for the Convention's debt retirement program throughout the late 1920s and the decade of the 1930s.

¹³*Annual of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, Ninety-Second Session, Winston-Salem, December 12-15, 1922* (Raleigh: Edwards & Broughton, 1922), pp. 37-38.

¹⁴*FR Minutes*, 1924, p. 21.

¹⁵See Austin Crouch, "Cooperative Program," *Encyclopedia of Southern Baptists* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1958), I, 323-324, for a description of the genesis of this unified approach to the financing of denominational missions. Actually, the ideal of "unrestricted giving" had been compromised from the beginning, perhaps as a means of making the concept more palatable to those who had grown accustomed to financial support of "special causes," while also preserving the principle of individual/church autonomy in matters of stewardship.

The author of the Report of the Board of Missions to the 1919 session of the Baptist State Convention had declared:

In the Baptist 75-Million Campaign pledges and contributions may be designated to each regular object of the Southern Baptist Convention and of our Baptist State Convention, even up to the amount of its quota, or they may be given undesignated.

Each Baptist has a right to designate his gift and the honor of the denomination is sacredly pledged to see that each designated contribution reaches its destination.

But for the sake of concentration, simplicity, unity and flexibility in our Baptist work each giver in the 75 Million Campaign is urged to allow at least a part of his contribution to go into the Treasury undesignated. [italics not in the original].

See *Annual of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, 1919* (Raleigh: Edwards & Broughton, 1919), p. 62.

¹⁶*Annual of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, Ninety-Fifth Session, Charlotte, November 17-19, 1925* (Raleigh: Edwards & Broughton, [n.d.]), pp. 157-158.

¹⁷Associational records indicate that average annual contributions through the Cooperative Program from Flat River churches totaled \$6,849.75, 1925-1930; \$2,681.87, 1930-1939; and \$10,022.46, 1940-1949.

¹⁸*Annual of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, One Hundred Nineteenth Annual Session, Tabernacle Baptist Church, Raleigh, November [15-17], 1949* ([n.p]: [n.d.]), p. 274.

¹⁹*Ibid.*, p. 276.

²⁰The highest percentage had been attained in 1925—the first year of the Cooperative Program—when unrestricted gifts equalled nearly 65% of the total gifts reported for denominational causes.

²¹It was not until 1947, however, that every church was recorded as making unrestricted contributions to missions support through the Cooperative Program.

²²*Annual of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, 1924* (Raleigh: Edwards & Broughton, [n.d.]), p. 37.

²³The general publicity phase of the Seventy-Five Million Campaign had been inaugurated in July 1919 with a news release prepared for circulation through the pages of the several Baptist State papers by Dr. Lee Rutland Scarborough, General Director of the Campaign. In it he observed:

Every Baptist must get in. Don't leave out one! The poorest, the richest, the wisest, the "other-wisest," the country Baptist, the city Baptist, the men, the women, the young people, the children—all Southland Baptists must be brought in. . . . This duty is not alone on the headquarters in Nashville. It is on every State Secretary, pastor, school, paper, orphanage, hospital, church, W. M. U., B. Y. P. U., Sunday School,—and it rests with ponderous weight on every Baptist in the Sunny Southland.

See "Big Things for God," *Biblical Recorder*, July 2, 1919, for a full account of Scarborough's initial plea on behalf of the Campaign.

²⁴At least thirteen of Huggins' "Objectives" pertained directly to the ministries of the local congregation.

²⁵*FR Minutes*, 1921, p. 16.

²⁶*Ibid.*, 1922, p. 7.

²⁷*Ibid.*, 1926, pp. 7-8. The same report noted, however, that only 67 of these new members who had been enlisted for Sunday School came from the ranks of previously unenlisted church members.

²⁸A detailed account of this Campaign is found in *FR Minutes*, 1927, pp. 7-10. Much of the credit for its success was accorded Jasper Newton Barnette, Associate for Sunday School Administration, Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, and Edwin Lee Middleton, Secretary, Sunday School Department, Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, for bringing the resources of their respective offices to bear upon this associational endeavor.

²⁹*Ibid.*, p. 9.

³⁰*Ibid.* Bryant was no stranger to the Association having served as pastor of Beulah (1916-18), Creedmoor (1915-18), Fellowship (1915-18), Mary's Chapel (1913), Poplar Creek (1913), and Tally Ho (1915-18) churches.

³¹*Ibid.*, 1926, p. 24.

³²*Ibid.*, 1936, p. 14.

³³Enrollment in the Sunday Schools decreased by more than one thousand persons, 1939-1945, before beginning to show a marked increase after 1948.

³⁴The associational Sunday School report for 1924-25 noted only twenty instructors having earned teacher-training diplomas. One segment of the Sunday School Board's "Standard of Excellence" required a sizeable percentage of officers and teachers holding the "Normal Course Diploma."

³⁵*FR Minutes*, 1934, p. 23.

³⁶Those churches whose physical facilities consisted of multiple rooms in 1922 were: Enon, 9 rooms; Florence Avenue, 3 rooms; Fellowship, 8 rooms; Hester's, 8 rooms; Mountain Creek, 8 rooms; Oxford, 12 rooms; and West Oxford, 9 rooms. See *FR Minutes*, 1922, p. 25, for earliest recorded data pertaining to date of construction, seating capacity, number of rooms, and estimated valuation of church properties.

³⁷*Biblical Recorder*, March 27, 1928. The church reported 54 rooms useable for Sunday School or other educational ministries.

³⁸*FR Minutes*, 1927, P. 8.

³⁹"Standard Work" was noted for the schools at Bullock, Enon, Hester's, Island Creek, Knap of Reeds, Olive Branch, Peace's Chapel, Providence, Sharon, Stovall, and Tabb's Creek in 1928. The only "Standard" schools in 1930-31 were those operated by Creedmoor, Dexter, Knap of Reeds, and Stovall churches. See *FR Minutes*, 1928, p. 11; 1931, p. 26.

⁴⁰*Ibid.*, 1932, p. 16. In addition to Florence Avenue—the only school reported as not fully graded in 1927—the following schools had been added to the ranks of the "ungraded" by 1931: Amis Chapel, Concord, Grassy Creek, Knott's Grove, Olivé Grove, Pleasant Grove, Poplar Creek, and Tabb's Creek.

Weekly instruction through the Sunday School began to be supplemented among the churches as early as 1927 with the introduction of Daily Vacation Bible School at Mt. Harmony Church, Person County. By 1948, there were only five churches within the Association who had not conducted a Vacation Bible School during the previous Summer.

⁴¹*Ibid.*, 1922, p. 9. Baptist Young People's Unions were reported to be functioning in 1922 at Amis Chapel, Bullock, Creedmoor, Enon, Florence Avenue, Grassy Creek, Island Creek, Knott's Grove, Mt. Harmony, Olive Branch, Oxford, Pleasant Grove, Providence, and Rock Spring.

The first B. Y. P. U. organization among the churches of the Association appears to have been organized at Rock Spring, October 18, 1914. See *Biblical Recorder*, December 9, 1914, for an account of this organization.

⁴²*FR Minutes*, 1923, p. 17.

⁴³*Ibid.*, 1925, pp. 13-14.

⁴⁴*Ibid.*, 1934, p. 14.

⁴⁵See *ibid.*, 1930, pp. 13-14, for an account of this first Young People's Convention, and of the officers elected to serve the interests of an associational organization.

⁴⁶Lillian Cannady (Mrs. Ed) Bullock served as president of the associational Young People's organization, 1930-35.

⁴⁷*FR Minutes*, 1939, p. 22.

⁴⁸The first associational Training Union Enlargement Campaign had been conducted during the week of April 10-16, 1949, with eleven churches participating. See *ibid.*, 1949, p. 19.

⁴⁹Eleven of the thirty-two churches in the association lacked a Woman's Missionary Union organization in 1930. These were: Bethany, Concord, Fellowship, Grassy Creek, Knott's Grove, Mt. Harmony, Olive Grove, Pleasant Grove, Poplar Creek, Sharon, and Tally Ho.

⁵⁰Olive Grove, the lone hold out with regard to Woman's Missionary Union in 1940, had organized a W. M. S. by 1941, making it possible to report W. M. U. organizations in all the churches of the Association.

⁵¹Women constituted a majority of the messengers representing the churches in an associational meeting for the first time in 1948.

Representation of women on the expanded Executive Committee, 1933-48, was minimal. Three women were appointed to serve as members at large: Edith Fagan Cannady, Oxford Church, 1933-47; Mrs. Ben Averette, Oxford Church, 1947-48; and Mrs. W. K. Wood, Creedmoor Church, 1939-48. Three additional women were elected to represent their churches on the Board: Ethel (Mrs. Sylvanus Toppin) Slaughter, Rock Grove Church, 1933-45; Mrs. Calvin Frazier, Stovall Church, 1933-34; and Ellen Wilkins, Florence Avenue Church, 1944-45.

⁵²*FR Minutes*, 1942, p. 15.

⁵³While the Every Member Canvass had been employed in earlier years, an annual canvass became increasingly popular in the wake of the Seventy-Five Million Campaign and the concept of subscribing to an annual unified church budget. Reports on the Cooperative Program after 1931 generally recommended the use of the Every Member Canvass by the churches. The report of the Association's Executive Committee for 1932 noted thirteen churches had indicated conducting an Every Member Canvass during the previous year. See *FR Minutes*, 1932, p. 19.

⁵⁴Revivals were first recommended as a means of fostering better stewardship of resources at the associational meeting of 1938. See *ibid.*, 1938, p. 16.

⁵⁵North Carolina Baptist Orphanage as a particular object of benevolence for the children in the Sunday Schools had been advocated since the latter years of the nineteenth century. Sunday Schools were urged to take at least once-a-month offerings for the Orphanage, with a special church wide offering at Thanksgiving each year.

North Carolina Baptist Hospital, Winston-Salem, began operations on May 28, 1923, with the Reverend George Thomas Lumpkin, a former pastor of Oxford Church, 1914-17, serving as the institution's first Superintendent. Mother's Day offerings were instituted in 1924.

⁵⁶The earliest roster of "Honor Roll Churches" was published in the issue of the *Biblical Recorder* dated March 6, 1929.

⁵⁷Fifteen churches were recognized for "punctuality" in remittance of funds to the Convention Treasurer during 1946—the last year in which the "Honor Roll" was published. These fifteen churches were: Amis Chapel, Brassfield, Bullock, Creedmoor, Dexter, Enon, Fellowship, Hester, Mountain Creek, Mt. Zion, Oxford, Peace's Chapel, Providence, Stovall, and West Oxford. See *Biblical Recorder*, April 16, 1947.

⁵⁸*Annual of the North Carolina Baptist State Convention, One-Hundred-Third Annual Session, First Baptist Church, Greensboro, November 14-17, 1933* ([n.p.]; [n.d.]), p. 110.

⁵⁹Duties of the associational Executive Committee were not clearly defined until 1948, when the Constitution of Flat River Baptist Association underwent a thorough revision. Nonetheless, the Committee had been functioning on behalf of the Association, during the interim between annual meetings, since the mid-1920s. See *FR Minutes*, 1948, pp. 3-5, for the revised Constitution of the Association.

The Constitution of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina had undergone a thorough revision in 1926, resulting in the coordination of her entire program of missions, education, and social services through one, representative General Board. Article V, Section 2, of this revised Constitution noted: "The General Board shall have charge and control, except when otherwise directed by the Convention, of all the work of the Convention, including Missions, Education, Benevolences, and all other general activities, in the interim between the sessions of the Convention." See *Annual of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, Ninety-Sixth Annual Session, Wilmington, [November 16-18, 1926]* (Raleigh: Bynum Printing Company, 1927), p. 13.

⁶⁰*FR Minutes*, 1922, p. 16.

⁶¹*Ibid.*, 1936, p. 16.

⁶²*Ibid.*, 1931, p. 18; 1932, p. 18.

⁶³*Ibid.*, 1938, pp. 15-16. Presented on behalf of the Committee by the Reverend Madison Lamar Banister, pastor, Oxford Baptist Church, the recommendations were as follows:

1. That every Sunday School conduct a Training school.
2. That every church have a study course on Stewardship and Missions between the closing of the Associational meeting and the last of December.
3. That every pastor will seek to organize a B.T.U. in his church or churches.
4. That the Sunday School be re-organized, and an annual meeting be held in one of the churches.
5. That specific emphasis be placed on evangelism either at every service of worship, or during a revival meeting, and that every member of each of the churches seek to win at least one soul to Christ.
6. That an Every Member Canvass be taken in every church before the last of December.
7. That every church use envelopes, and that an offering be taken in every service of worship.
8. That every church revise the membership roll, that every non-resident member be located and solicited for an offering, or persuaded to transfer his or her membership to the nearest church of his faith.
9. That every church have a *Biblical Recorder* representative, and that special emphasis be placed on new subscriptions until the first of January.
10. That only three copies of the Association *Minutes* be given to each church, and one sent to the Secretary of the North Carolina Baptist Convention, one to the Moderator, Clerk, and Treasurer.
11. That the Association continue to have two days for the annual meeting, but that the session of the second day be held at a different church.
12. That parents earnestly seek to maintain daily family devotions.

⁶⁴Reported enrollment in the Sunday Schools was 4,035 in 1944-45. It had been only 3,656 in 1921-22.

⁶⁵*FR Minutes*, 1945, p. 6.

⁶⁶*Ibid.*, 1941, p. 10.

⁶⁷*Annual of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, One Hundred Seventeenth Annual Session, First Baptist Church, Winston-Salem, November [11-13], 1947* ([n.p.]: [n.d.]), p. 109.

⁶⁸*FR Minutes*, 1947, p. 10.

⁶⁹*Ibid.*, p. 11.

⁷⁰*Ibid.*, 1948, p. 12.

⁷¹Recommendation of the employment of A Superintendent of Associational Missions had issued from the work of a special Committee for Study of Rural Churches, chaired by Dr. Garland Alford Hendricks, then pastor of Olive Chapel Baptist Church, Apex. His report to the General Board of the Baptist State Convention in 1944 had noted:

By the nature of our region, by the location of our churches and church members, and by the condition of our churches one can readily see that the greatest field for denominational development is the rural church. But at the present time the personnel of our Convention boards and agencies is made of the pastors and lay members of a few large urban churches. These are good men and women, and many of them are from the country. But they are engaged in urban work and think along urban lines.

See *Annual of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, One Hundred Fourteenth Annual Session, First Baptist Church, Charlotte, November 14-16, 1944* ([n.p.]: [n.d.]), pp. 97-99, for Hendricks' analysis of the rural church.

⁷²*FR Minutes*, 1949, p. 15.

⁷³*Annual of the Southern Baptist Convention, Nineteen Hundred and Forty-Nine, Ninety-Second Session, One Hundred Fourth Year, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, May 18-22, 1949* (Nashville: Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention, [n.d.]), p. 44.



VI. REFINING STRUCTURES AND EXTENDING MINISTRIES, 1949-1993

Rural Church Enlargement—as envisioned in the 1940s—focused upon one goal, which was to be attained through concerted attention to certain obvious components. The goal was development of a comprehensive church program which is “readily accessible to the people in all areas of the State.” The components of such a “comprehensive program” included resident pastors for the churches; church parsonages; adequate facilities; improved local financial support of the church and her ministries; appropriate organizations devoted to the ministries of Bible teaching, church training, and missions education/support; and a concern for the aesthetic character of the church’s buildings and grounds.¹ Each member of that succession of individuals who have served since 1947 in the role of Associational Missionary, Promotional Secretary, or Director of Missions, has demonstrated a strong commitment to lending *direct, personal* assistance to the churches in the interest of attaining such a comprehensive program.²

Moreover, considerable success has been recorded in terms of these particular criteria. Yet, a review of the official records and proceedings of the Association—especially during the past quarter-century—reveal two additional characteristics which have served to distinguished this era in her history from earlier ones.

The first of these is a concern with refining structures in the interest of enabling pursuit of more inclusive and effective ministries. It has been evidenced at the associational level in perennial alterations to the Constitution of that body, issuing in a much more comprehensive administrative structure; at the local church level, through expanded staff and/or committee assignments and responsibilities.³ The second is an extension of the vision for and involvement in ministries and mission beyond that encompassed in the earlier, traditional “comprehensive church program.” It has been evidenced at the associational level through enlarged annual budgets directed towards extended *associational missions*; at the local church level, through personal participation in ministry and missions beyond the confines of the church and community.

A. Towards Comprehensive Church Programs

Each of the components of a Comprehensive Church Program—as noted above—received considerable attention among the churches of the Flat River Association during the forty-six years which have elapsed since the calling of the Reverend Roger Edson Williams, Jr., as the first Associational Missionary in 1947. The church with a resident pastor devoting his ministrations to a single congregation has since become the norm, rather than the exception to a prevailing pattern. Local church ministries have been enhanced through further provision of commodious and aesthetically attractive physical facilities and properties. Increased devotion to “systematic beneficence” has made the projection of ministries more feasible and less problematic than at any period in the past. Those organizations, or auxiliaries, which are designed to foster the church’s ministries through Bible teaching, discipleship training, and missions education/missions support attained record levels of participation and support in the

1950s and 1960s, before arriving at a plateau beyond which they have not as yet begun to ascend.⁴ Moreover, each of these achievements on the local scene has been encouraged, supported, and supplemented designed to assist and enable the churches in visualizing and fulfilling their common mission task.

Full-Time Pastors

Hester Baptist Church had taken a significant initiative towards the implementation of a comprehensive church program with the extension of a pastoral call to the Reverend Roger Edson Williams, Jr., effective May 1, 1949. Williams thus became the first full-time, resident pastor of a rural congregation within the bounds of the Association. Within the span of three short decades, however, all the other churches in affiliation with the Association had followed Hester's lead in this regard, fulfilling the terms of a recommendation which had gained associational approval as early as 1912.⁵

First Baptist Church, Creedmoor, engaged the services of her pastor, the Reverend John Rountree Blanchard, Sr., on a full-time basis, beginning October 29, 1950.⁶ Thereafter, the remaining churches followed the pattern which had been established by Oxford, Hester, and First Baptist, Creedmoor, in the following sequence: Stovall (1951), Florence Avenue (1952), West Oxford (1952), Island Creek (1954), Corinth (1956), Fellowship (1956), Olive Grove (1957), Providence (1957), Knott's Grove (1959), Pleasant Grove (1959), Concord (1960), Grassy Creek (1960), Mountain Creek (1960), Rock Spring (1960), Dexter (1961), Peace's Chapel (1961), First Baptist, Tally Ho (1961), Poplar Creek (1962), Sharon (1965), Tabb's Creek (1965), Enon (1966), Mt. Zion (1966), Brassfield (1971), First Baptist of Tungsten (1971), and Amis Chapel (1977).⁷

Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, which enrolled its first student class in the Fall of 1951, quickly emerged as a bountiful source of ministerial candidates, eager to serve a pastoral charge while engaged in pursuing academic and professional programs of study. Student pastors, of course, had not been unknown among the churches in earlier years. Wake Forest College, which had been initially planted in northern Wake County with a primary purpose of providing some means for "the education of young men called of God to the ministry," had furnished occasional student ministers for the churches since the days of William Jones (1839) and Robert McNabb (1840-41).⁸

By 1952, the following churches in the Association had called young men to their pastoral care who were also students at Southeastern Baptist Seminary: Mt. Olivet, Olive Grove, Pleasant Grove, Rock Spring, and Sharon.⁹ Eventually, these five would be joined by every other church in the Association—with the exceptions of Butner, Hester, and Oxford—in engaging the services of student pastors to assist in the transition to full-time ministries. The process proved to be mutually beneficial to the churches and to the numerous young seminarians who, for the most part, had gained their initial pastoral experience among the rural churches of the region served by the Flat River Baptist Association.¹⁰

Pastors in Residence

Additional provision of church-owned parsonages accompanied the transition to full-time pastoral ministries. Only eleven of the twenty-nine churches in affiliation with the Association in 1949 reported church-owned parsonages among their physical assets.¹¹ Accordingly, many of the earlier student ministers maintained a residence on or near the Southeastern campus, commuting the distance between seminary and local community to attend to their pastoral obligations. Such an arrangement placed a burden upon both pastor and church, while also limiting the extent to which a minister and his family could become fully identified with the community being served.

Within the next decade, however, seven additional churches either constructed or purchased a residence in which to house the pastor and his family, as follows: West Oxford (1952), First Baptist, Creedmoor (1954), Knott's Grove (1955), Olive Grove (1957), Fellowship (1958), Providence (1959), and Stovall (1959). By 1983, each of the thirty-three had provided comfortable living quarters for the pastor and his family within the local community, with Amis Chapel (1979), Brassfield (1980), and Concord (1983) being the last of the congregations to construct a local residence for the accommodation and convenience of those by whom they were being served in the pastoral office.

New Sanctuaries and Educational Facilities

That flurry of building activity which had characterized the 1920s and 1930s had represented a fairly adequate response on the part of many of the churches for providing more commodious facilities in which to gather for worship and to maintain the educational ministries appropriate to the needs of the various congregations. But all such facilities proved inadequate and/or outmoded in the face of the growth experienced by most of the churches, particularly in the decades of the 1950s and 1960s—growth in terms of both numerical strength and stewardship commitment.¹²

Allocation of significantly increased financial resources towards the provision of additional, or improved, church facilities began to be evidenced shortly after the culmination of World War II. Nearly \$700,000.00 was expended towards remodeling existing facilities, construction/purchase of additional facilities, or debt retirement during the decade between 1947-48 and 1957-58. By 1973, the monies so expended by the churches of the Association during the past quarter-century had exceeded \$2,300,000.00, with virtually every church having been engaged in one or more major construction projects. The priority given to construction or renovation of church-owned facilities during the course of this period becomes most apparent when it is realized that the valuation placed on *all* existing church properties in 1947-48 barely exceeded \$400,000.00.¹³

Financing Church Programs

Commitments to enlarged and improved local church facilities was accompanied by equally impressive financial support of church ministries, at home and abroad, particularly when compared with earlier decades. Support of the denomination's unified mis-

sions enterprise through the Cooperative Program—which had previously exceeded \$10,000.00 by the churches of the Association on only two occasions during the years 1925-1945—rose dramatically during the succeeding decades. Such support averaged \$28,663.00 during the 1950s; \$42,220.00 during the 1960s; \$65,624.00 during the 1970s; and \$161,988.00 during the 1980s. Designated gifts for mission purposes were approximately equal to those contributed through the Cooperative Program during the decades of the 1950s and 1960s, before exhibiting a marked increase in the 1970s and 1980s—an increase due in large measure to the emergence and growth of the Associational Missions budget in support of associational mission projects.¹⁴

Local church commitments to full-time pastorates and full-time ministries—together with the traditional support accorded those objects of missions and benevolence under the sponsorship of the larger denomination—was evidenced in increased revenues to undergird annual operating budgets. Only four churches—Island Creek, Mt. Zion, Oxford, and Providence—had reported “local expenditures” in excess of \$10,000.00 in 1948-49, with the average such expenditure totaling \$5,482.00.¹⁵ At successive ten-year intervals thereafter, comparable statistics were as follows: 1959—\$9,963.00; 1969—\$15,376.00; 1979—\$33,093.00; and 1989—\$62,820.00.¹⁶ In terms of the objective of self-supporting rural churches, only one within the Association had been the recipient of significant external financial assistance.¹⁷

Teaching/Training Ministries

The earlier ideal of Sunday School enrollments equal to, if not in excess of, local church memberships was to be attained by only a few of the churches.¹⁸ It would be maintained by none. Nonetheless, total enrollment in the Sunday Schools reached a record level of 7,629 in 1957-58. With notable exceptions, however, the years thereafter have witnessed a gradual decline in ongoing enrollment in the Sunday Schools. The number of persons enrolled in the schools conducted by the Association’s thirty-three churches had decreased to 5,409 by 1991-92.¹⁹

Meanwhile, the churches had posted a net gain in membership of almost 2,000 between 1948-49 and 1957-58, with total membership exceeding 11,000 for the first time in the latter year. A record membership of 11,683 was attained in 1977-78. By that date, however, total enrollment in the Sunday Schools had declined to 6,173, or 53% of the total church membership. Currently (1991-92), Sunday School enrollments among the churches of the Association stand at approximately 48% of total church membership.²⁰

High aspirations for an ongoing program of Church Training, on the one hand, and the frustrations related to the attempt to maintain such ministries, on the other hand, are reflected in the report of the associational Training Union Director for 1956-57 and that of the Church Training Director for 1988-89, respectively. The former—the Reverend James Clarence Jones, Jr., pastor of First Baptist Church, Creedmoor—noted at a time of increased enrollment/participation in Baptist Training Union:

Ten years ago we had only six training unions with a total enrolment of three hundred and eighty-four. Today we have eighteen training unions

with a total enrolment of over 1200. . . . Our people have produced regional and state winners in the spring tournaments. Could not our goal be a training union for every church in Flat River Association.²¹

The latter—the Reverend Tim Parker, assistant pastor of Oxford Baptist Church—having noted a decline in Church Training enrollment during the previous year, opined:

We need a change. We need to open our hearts and eyes to see the devastation that comes with untrained disciples. The plauteaued state of the S[outhern] B[aptist] C[onvention] can trace its beginnings to untrained disciples, stumbling through a political lion's den without the Word and way of God.²²

Baptist Training union had succeeded in establishing a foothold in no more than eighteen of the Association's churches in any given year. A peak enrollment of 1,362 in eighteen churches was reported in 1956-57, with an average total annual enrollment of 1,152 in participating churches, 1952-53—1964-65. Restructuring of the denomination's program in Church Training in the late 1960s and, again, in the late 1970s, issued in an emphasis upon commitment to and completion of short-term units, or projects, rather than ongoing enrollment in the traditionally structured, dated Sunday evening study sessions. Consequently, the churches were enabled to report increased participation in Church Training ministries during the decade of the 1980s when compared to the experience of the 1970s.²³

Nonetheless, only fifteen churches reported enrollment or participation in the several age/interest categories, or study modules, included under the rubric "Discipleship Training" in 1991-92, with an overall enrollment of seven hundred three (703). Moreover, duplication of enrollment/participation in multiple units of study made it highly probable that the *total* number of different persons engaged in Church Training ministries was considerably less than such a statistic might otherwise suggest.²⁴

Missionary Auxiliaries

Enrollment in the various education/study units under the auspices of Woman's Missionary Union, Auxiliary to the Flat River Association, reached its peak at 2,490 during the associational year, 1953-54. This represented a net gain of some 800 participants within the short span of five years (1949-50—1953-54). Such numerical increases, however, were not to be sustained beyond the decade of the 1950s. While Woman's Missionary Union continued to play a vital role in the life and witness of virtually all the churches, total enrollment therein had fallen below 2,000 by 1964-65. Thirty-two churches reported enrollments totaling 1,590 in 1991-92—a total which had previously been exceeded as early as 1939-40.²⁵

Mobilization of men in support of missions can be traced to the Laymen's Missionary Movement of the early twentieth century among Southern Baptists. Efforts at such mobilization among Flat River Baptists had been singled out for special commendation, with Dr. Franklin P. Hobgood, President of Oxford College and an outstanding layman in Oxford Baptist Church, contributing exemplary leadership to the entire Movement in North Carolina.²⁶ The report on the Laymen's Missionary Movement before

the Baptist State Convention in 1911 had noted, after having discussed various hindrances to the cause:

But the main work [of marshaling the interests and resources of men in the churches] so far as we are able to report has been done in the Flat River Association. This can be regarded as an object lesson, for what has been done here can be done elsewhere. . . . What these brethren of the Flat River Association were induced to do after listening to a presentation of the plans and purposes of the Movement, can be expected of the members of the churches of the other associations of the State.²⁷

However, this earlier enthusiasm among men for increased support of the missionary enterprise did not issue quickly in organizations similar to those which had been effected by the women of the churches. Associational interest in further mobilization of the energies and resources of men was not in evidence until 1947, when a portion of the evening session of the annual meeting was devoted to a promotional presentation related to Baptist Brotherhood.²⁸ The only church reporting a Brotherhood organization at that time was the Oxford Church.

Provision for men's organizations in the churches accelerated following the decision of Woman's Missionary Union to transfer sponsorship of Royal Ambassadors—the missionary organization for boys, ages 9-17—to Baptist Brotherhood in 1953. An associational Brotherhood Department was established in 1956, with R. E. Jernigan of West Oxford Baptist Church serving as its first president. His initial report to the Association indicated the presence of Baptist Men's groups in nine churches, with chapters of Royal Ambassadors functioning in an additional eight churches.²⁹

The fortunes and progress of the Baptist Brotherhood organization thereafter are to be closely identified with the name and leadership of George Gresham, Peace's Chapel Church, whose lengthy tenure as associational Brotherhood Director began with his initial election to that post in 1967. In addition to the degree of encouragement and support which he and his co-workers have contributed to the maintenance of ongoing Baptist Brotherhood organizations in the local churches, it has also been during Gresham's tenure that a viable associational program has been effected. An annual Royal Ambassador Conclave, the annual Baptist Men/Baptist Women Banquet, recreational programs for Royal Ambassadors, and increased participation in mission projects have become standard features of the Association's commitment in enlisting men and boys in missions education, mission support, and mission action.³⁰

B. From Promotional Agency to Mission Agency

The Reverend Daniel Franklin Page, Superintendent of Missions, 1969-1972, noted the following in his report to the Association in 1970: "We have begun an emphasis to shift our association from a promotional agency to a mission agency. This is causing us this past year to re-examine our approaches."³¹

While concerted attention to each of the emphases contained in a projected ten-year agenda was necessarily interrupted with Page's departure from the Association in 1972, the shift in emphasis about which he had spoken has been quite discernible.

Without abandoning those elements of promotion and publicity which are essential to an informed local constituency in cooperation with a larger denomination, the Association has focused increasingly upon *involvement in missions beyond the mere financial support of missions*.³²

Associational structures have been refined and modified to underscore the organization's function and self-understanding as a mission agency. Institutional ministries, resort ministries, and ministry among Hispanics residing in the region served by the Association have become standard, local expressions of Christian witness and mission, eliciting strong cooperation and support from the churches. Mission partnerships—at home and abroad—have been forged between the Association and fellow Christians elsewhere through cooperative agreements with the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina and/or the Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention. Such opportunities for direct, “hands-on” ministry—whether on the local scene or in distant lands—have tended to confirm an observation which was made by the Association's beloved William Johnson Edwards, Superintendent of Missions, 1953-56, 1962-67. Reporting on a conference under the sponsorship of the Home Mission Board, Southern Baptist Convention, which he had attended in February 1963, Edwards had declared: “The lesson I learned at this meeting was that there is a major change taking place in the philosophy of associational missions, our most effective work is going to be done on the local church level.”³³

Effecting Mission Structures

Revisions to the Constitution of the Association in 1958 initiated a process of continuing modifications of that document in the interest of forming an administrative structure which would be both more representative of the churches and more effective in the performance of year-round tasks or ministries. A Missions Advisory Committee, which had been added during the previous year to the Standing Committees of the organization, was assigned the specific tasks of studying the needs within the Association, providing counsel to the Associational Missionary in the promotion of the work of the Association, and recommending further projects in which the churches of the Association might cooperate.³⁴ Church representation on the Executive Committee was increased substantially by restoring lay representation to that body in addition to pastoral representation.³⁵ Duties of officers and committees—both of which tended to proliferate with the assumption of expanded ministries under the aegis of the Association—were delineated to a much greater degree than in earlier years.³⁶

Indication of the Association's growing self-understanding as a mission agency was further evidenced in 1990 with the Constitutional provision for *Mission Performance Directors* who

. . . shall seek to plan, promote, and execute programs adapted from the Southern Baptist Convention's suggestions for the respective offices of Sunday School, Discipleship Training, Brotherhood, Woman's Missionary Union, Music, Youth, Senior Adults, Evangelism, Stewardship, Missions Development, Media-Library, Pastoral Ministries or others so named.³⁷

Further revisions to the Constitution in that same year found those tasks formerly assigned to the Missions Advisory Committee now assumed by an Associational Council, with the Director of Missions serving as chairman of this representative, advisory body.³⁸

Institutional Ministries: the Butner Complex

Construction and activation of Camp Butner during the early months of 1942 had occasioned the disbanding of seven churches located in southwestern Granville and northeastern Durham counties, including three which had maintained an earlier affiliation with Flat River Association.³⁹ Deactivation of the camp in 1946—with the subsequent development of the facilities which had been occupied formerly by the post proper as a State-operated complex of institutions devoted, primarily, to various aspects of physical/mental health and rehabilitation—presented new opportunities for ministry and mission on the part of the Association and her churches.

Associational attention to the vast opportunities for ministry which were afforded by the growing population of this State-operated complex of health care and rehabilitative institutions at Butner appears to have emerged in 1968. It was in that year that the Reverend Earl William Howard and members of Mt. Zion Church began to conduct a Sunday School mission for the students at the C. A. Dillon School for youth rehabilitation.⁴⁰ By 1970, fifteen additional churches or church groups were reported to be conducting limited ministries among the residents of the Murdoch Center.⁴¹ The Missions-Advisory Committee of the Association—having discovered that administrative personnel in the several other institutions comprising the Butner Complex would welcome further appropriate ministries—expressed the hope that “. . . through aid from the Home Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention and from the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina. . . a highly trained minister can be stationed in Butner to coordinate needed ministries in the various institutions.”⁴²

Butner Christian Social Ministries—under the joint sponsorship of the Association, Home Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, and the Department of City and Metropolitan Missions, Baptist State Convention of North Carolina—was launched on October 1, 1972, with the Reverend Mr. Howard serving as part-time director of the project. Volunteer services during the first year of operation included fifth Sunday visitations; financial assistance to enable residents to attend Summer youth camps; and the distribution of New Testaments, other reading materials, and needed items of clothing or personal hygiene. Conversely, weekly in-service training sessions at the complex's Alcoholic Rehabilitation Center afforded local pastors an opportunity to learn more about alcoholics, the problems related to alcoholism, and resources available for assisting persons in the local churches and communities who might be victims of this disease and its effects.⁴³

By 1978, Howard reported four hundred volunteers engaged in various expressions of ministry among the 3,000 residents of the Butner Complex of institutions.⁴⁴ His success in directing the attention of the churches, Woman's Missionary Union, and Baptist Brotherhood to the needs of the institutionalized in their midst contributed to the “adoption” of many of those expressions of ministry which had been inaugurated under his auspices as a continuing facet of associational missions. His successors as part-

time directors of what is currently termed Church and Community Missions within the Association have continued to report favorable response to the challenge presented by such ministries related to the Butner Complex—and beyond.⁴⁵

Resort Ministries

That initiative taken by the pastor and members of Mt. Zion Church in extending a ministry to the students enrolled in C. A. Dillon School had focused the attention of the Association upon institutional missions. A comparable initiative—taken ten years earlier by the Reverend Jack Franklin Coffey, Mr. C. H. Guerrant, and other members of Island Creek Church—directed attention to the opportunities for resort ministry in conjunction with the growing utilization of the waters of Kerr Lake Reservoir in northern Vance County as a recreational facility. The area served by Nutbush Campground was the site selected for the establishment of Kerr Harbor Chapel in the Summer of 1958. This ministry has been maintained to the present, with primary emphasis upon Bible teaching through a mission Sunday School which is conducted under the auspices of Island Creek Church.⁴⁶

What has now developed into a much more extensive and intensive weekend ministry among the campers, fisherman, boaters, and other vacationers who flock to the facilities afforded by Kerr Lake was inaugurated in 1970 under the joint sponsorship of the Association and the Department of Town and Country Missions, Baptist State Convention of North Carolina. After some initial years of uncertainty and frustration, this ministry—focused in the area of Hibernia Campground and Hibernia State Park—began to assume different dimensions in 1976 under the direction of Larry Thomas Elliott, a young seminarian who had been reared in the Grassy Creek community and church. Typical programs or activities related to this ministry have included Friday/Saturday visitation among the campers, recreational opportunities, Saturday evening entertainment, and an informal worship service on Sunday morning.⁴⁷

Ministry with Hispanics (Migrant Ministries)

A line item for ministries among persons of Hispanic origin and culture who were employed as seasonal farm laborers in the area served by the Association was first projected in the Ministry-Action Budget for 1979-80.⁴⁸ The scope of this ministry was enhanced considerably in 1981-82 with the engagement of the first in a series of Spanish-speaking students to assist those who were not proficient in the language or familiar with the culture in visitation; distribution of Bibles, other literature, and health kits; and conducting services of worship.⁴⁹

Periodic "Migrant Days"—hosted by various churches throughout the Summer season—afforded further opportunities for communication across linguistic/cultural barriers through activities devoted primarily to recreation, leisure, and fellowship. By the Summer of 1988, the Director of Migrant Ministries could report contact with 350 different individuals; encouraging response to classes in conversational English, Bible study sessions, services of worship, recreational activities; and—especially—a total of 64 professions of faith in Christ which had been made during the course of these ministries.⁵⁰

Formation of a mission station to serve the spiritual needs of increasing numbers of Hispanics—many of whom were now beginning to establish year-round residence in the area—was effected in 1991, with the facilities of Fellowship Baptist Church utilized as a mission center. In addition to Migrant Days and other special occasions which continued to be hosted by the several churches of the Association, Mision Bautista Hermandad represented a central gathering place for weekly services of worship, Bible study, English classes, and Christian fellowship throughout the Summer months.⁵¹

“This is not to say that the work is over,” noted the Reverend Paul Flores, Hispanic pastor, in submitting his annual report to the Association in 1991. “We will continue to minister to the Hispanic community at the afore mentioned times throughout the year. . . . We hope to reach out to those workers who will remain in the area, and if the Lord so wills it, to establish a permanent Hispanic mission.”⁵² The permanency of that mission had been further secured by the Spring and Summer of 1993 with the gift of a tract of land, beginnings of construction of a house of worship, and continuing generous contribution of both fiscal resources and physical labor on the part of numerous volunteers among the churches.⁵³

C. Partners in Bold Missions

Church and Community Ministries, intensified Resort Ministries, and the developing Hispanic Ministry represented aspects of the local phase of a much larger mission enterprise to which the churches had been challenged by the Reverend Robert Henry Wainwright, Director of Missions, in his annual address to the Association in 1976. After noting a diversity of ways in which involvement in ministry, mission action, was currently being expressed—and reminding his audience of the basic objective behind the hosting of the latest in a series of World Mission Conferences among the churches of the Association during the week immediately preceding the annual meeting—he added:

From 1976 through 1980 we will be participating in the Bold Mission Thrust which has three goals:

1. To explore the possibility of churches in the Flat River Association assisting one or more churches in the Maryland Baptist Convention during the Bold Mission Thrust emphasis such as Weekend Bible Schools, conduct musicals, help with Community Survey, send pastors to preach in revival, etc.
2. To determine where there is a need for new work in the Flat River Baptist Association such as Backyard Bible Clubs, Mission Vacation Bible Schools, Fellowship Bible Classes, Mission Sunday Schools, etc.
3. To discover cultural life-style groups that need the ministry of the church such as singles, the elderly, deaf, etc.

In this year ahead, let’s dedicate ourselves to the task of helping every Christian to seek God’s leadership in this matter, and to exercise the gift that God has given him.⁵⁴

In the past, seeking and finding “God’s leadership in this matter” had generally been understood in terms of a choice few who had heard and responded to the call of missions as a primary vocation. Churches of the Association had participated in commissioning, blessing, and engaging in prayer on behalf of thousands of these who labored under the auspices of the mission boards of the denomination. The roll call of these faithful ones who had responded to the challenge of missions included the names of at least a half-dozen missionaries in foreign lands who had been nurtured in the homes and churches of the region. Among these were: Emma Humphries (Mrs. Thomas Lee) Blalock, missionary to China, 1894-1918; Pauline Pittard (Mrs. Arthur Samuel) Gillespie, missionary to China, 1931-48; Ruby Inez Daniel (Mrs. Bela) Udvarnoki, missionary to Hungary, 1935-45, and to Nigeria, 1945-46; Audrey Gertrude Jolly (Mrs. Richard Edward) Gordon, missionary to the Philippines since 1952; Rosalind Knott (Mrs. Ralph Webster) Harrell, missionary to Tanganyika, 1958-1962, and to Kenya since 1962; and Rebecca Knott (Mrs. Hugh Thomas) McKinley, missionary to Rhodesia since 1958.⁵⁵ Other familiar names were soon to be added to this roster of career missionaries.⁵⁶

But the objectives envisioned by and the strategies employed in that venture in mission advance which Southern Baptists termed Bold Missions necessitated a rethinking of who constitutes a missionary. Persons engaged in volunteer services, short-term commitments, and partnership projects complemented the ongoing tasks of the traditional career missionary, at home and abroad. In this respect, the Association became a mission-sending agency in conjunction with the Baptist State Convention’s dedication to fostering missions and evangelism in this country and throughout the world.⁵⁷

Partnership Missions at Home

The Baptist Convention of Maryland—with whom the Reverend Mr. Wainwright had hoped the Association might cooperate by lending assistance to one or more of her churches—proved to be but the first in a series of State conventions for whom such assistance would be forthcoming. Churches or mission stations related to the younger conventions of Southern Baptists in New England,⁵⁸ New York,⁵⁹ Pennsylvania-New Jersey,⁶⁰ and in West Virginia⁶¹ became focal points for ministry by teams of volunteers from the churches of the Association. It was with the Delaware Association of Maryland Baptists, however, that a continuing partnership has been forged.

Christian witness with and among Maryland Baptists was inaugurated in the Summer of 1978 in response to an appeal which had been issued by the Reverend Joe Paul Turner, Director of Missions, Delaware Baptist Association, at the previous session of the Flat River Association. The community served by London Village Chapel—a mission station sponsored and maintained by Harrington Baptist Church, Harrington, Delaware, with the assistance of the Home Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention—soon thereafter became the locale to which teams of youth would make annual trek in the interests of bearing witness and sharing faith.⁶²

An initial team of eleven youth, accompanied by the Reverend and Mrs. Robert Henry Wainwright in the Summer of 1978, has been succeeded by fifteen similar teams, 1979-1993. Community Surveys, Backyard Bible Clubs, Vacation Bible Schools, ser-

vices of worship, manual labor, and numerous hours of Christian fellowship, have been the major components of each of these weeks on mission. The number of persons who had participated in such mission ventures through 1993 was one hundred eighty-six (186), with twenty-five of the Association's thirty-three churches having been represented by one or more of these Youth on Mission.⁶³

The Reverend Dallas Glass, Pastor of London Village Chapel, is reported to have generated an initial aura of dis-ease among the members of the youth team of 1980, when he greeted them in this fashion:

The kids that "yous" will be working with are rough. They have grown up in broken homes where no one cares about them. Yet, they need to be loved. They need to know about Jesus. I think that if "yous" are ready, "yous" can do it.⁶⁴

Despite the occasional moments of physical, emotional, and spiritual frustration which have accompanied the efforts to minister among the "rough and unloved," each of the Delaware Youth Teams has demonstrated itself ready and willing to share love, and thereby to share the knowledge of Jesus.

Partnership Missions Abroad

If the partnership which has been established and maintained between Flat River Baptists and Delaware Baptist Association has come to represent an ongoing opportunity for youth in missions, similar partnerships between the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina and sister bodies of believers in distant lands have challenged the men and women of the churches to exercise their gifts for ministry abroad. Volunteer ministries in mission projects outside the United States were initiated by Charles Gup-ton and Danny Evans—laymen from Mt. Olivet and West Oxford churches, respectively—who applied their skills in carpentry and back hoe operation to assist with the Partners in Wholeness Project in Togo, West Africa, April 28—May 25, 1985.⁶⁵ Thereafter, men and women from the churches of the Association have served on teams of volunteers assisting with projects in ministry and mission in England, Honduras, and Brazil.

Two laymen, the Director of Missions, and the pastor of Tally Ho First Baptist Church responded to invitations to ministry associated with Temple Baptist Church, Huntingdon, England, in the Spring and Summer of 1986.⁶⁶ Their initiatives in the construction of a building and the extension of pastoral ministries—particularly to the families of military personnel stationed at the Alconbury Royal Air Force Base—have been supported and supplemented in succeeding years through church contributions to an Overseas Mission Fund which has since assumed proportions well beyond this initial project.

A five-year partnership which was established in 1987 between the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina and the Baptist Convention of the State of Sao Paulo, Brazil, carried the unique feature of pairing associations or groups of associations in addressing mission needs, as determined by the host Convention. Cullom, Tar River, and Flat River associations in North Carolina were thus paired with Centro d'Estada Association in Sao Paulo, with an initial group of volunteers engaged in visitation, evangelistic

services, and other human needs projects, August 2-15, 1989. Mrs. Gladys Satterwhite, Oxford Baptist Church, and Mrs. Margie Newcomb, Union Baptist Church, who represented Flat River Baptists in this endeavor, brought report of their experience in ministry before the messengers assembled for the annual session of the Association in 1989.⁶⁷

It was a special project initiated by Grassy Creek Church in the Autumn of 1986, however, which has since developed into an ongoing mission commitment between Flat River Baptists and the ministry of the Reverend Larry Thomas Elliott, a missionary to the Central American Republic of Honduras.⁶⁸ Ten men, representing eight different churches, spent July 18-31, 1987, on mission in Honduras, accomplishing varied tasks in conjunction with the Vocational Center operated by the Baptist Theological Seminary in Tegucigalpa. Circumstance beyond their control prevented the completion of the primary task for which they had been commissioned—i.e., the erection of a windmill which could guarantee a sufficient supply of water to serve the continuing needs of Iglesia Bautista Rostro de Cristo (Face of Christ Baptist Church) in San Pedro de Catacamas, Olancho, Honduras.⁶⁹

This interrupted task was resumed and completed in October 1988, when four of the men who had comprised the earlier team returned to Honduras, reporting of their venture:

God provided for all our needs and sent just the resources that we needed at just the right time; from the fair weather, to the abundant help, to the safe travel, to the winds needed to test and operate the windmill. It was a thrill to work with the Honduran believers, who would come to the site every day prepared to stay as long and work as hard as necessary to finish their windmill.⁷⁰

Successive teams of five persons in March 1989, eight persons in August 1989, four persons in August 1990, two persons in January 1991, and eleven persons in March 1992, have since added their labors—material and spiritual—to those initiated in the Summer of 1987.⁷¹ Each person who has been thus engaged in this ministry of digging wells, constructing chapels, and sharing witness would assuredly concur with the sentiments expressed by one of the members of the team of 1988: "Though we went to serve, we were served ourselves."⁷²

D. Looking to the Future

As the Association approached her bicentennial year—a time to celebrate the heritage of the past two centuries of partnership in missions and ministry—she also began to look toward and plan for the future. The annual report of the Director of Missions included the following significant item which was approved at the annual session, October 23, 1990: "I recommend that we do an [Associational] Strategy Planning and report back at the annual session next year."⁷³

Subsequent to this action, seven Study/Task Groups, comprised of volunteers from the several churches, initiated a process designed to assist the Association as she moved into her third century of service. Long hours of study, research, and dialogue—under

the general leadership and guidance of the Reverend Larry Ray Zaky (General Chairman), the Reverend Willie Lee “Bill” Pearson, Jr., (Consultant), and the Reverend Robert Henry Wainwright (Director of Missions)—issued in the formulation of “Associational Strategy Planning Report—Looking to the Future, 1991-1996.” It was adopted by the Association in annual session, October 22, 1991.⁷⁴

The agenda of the 199th annual session of the Flat River Association, October 19-20, 1992, included the 19th annual report of her current Director of Missions. Reflections therein upon both present ministries and prospective ones were tempered with reminders of present, or potential, hindrances to their fullest realization.⁷⁵ The substance of the entire report, however, was prefaced with words of appreciation, encouragement, and hope:

We all have a deep appreciation for our heritage and what has taken place in the past. I thank God for those people of vision and forethought who went before us and prepared a way.

But God is a God of the future Who is always calling His people to move forward. All the way through the Bible God is leading His people to a new Place: physically, spiritually, or both.⁷⁶

That little band of delegates which is reported to have assembled at Elder Thomas Gardner’s Meeting House, Warren County, in the Autumn of 1794 had initiated the formation of an association to “perpetuate union and communion” among the churches scattered across the northern tier of North Carolina counties from Warren to Rockingham. All who had assembled there would have marveled—some, no doubt, been scandalized—had they been able to envision the course such a perpetuation of union and communion would take among their spiritual descendants. Yet, since they, too, served the God Who is God of the future, they would surely have been obliged to declare to those who would follow them: “Amen!” and “Godspeed!”

ENDNOTES

¹This basic goal with these specific components had been enunciated in that segment of the Report of the General Board of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina related to the "Department of Rural Church Work" in 1948. The report continued by recommending the employment of a "Rural Church Director" for the State of North Carolina. See *Annual of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, One Hundred Eighteenth Annual Session, First Baptist Church, Charlotte, November [16-18], 1948* (n.p.: n. d.), pp. 114-116, for the full text of the report.

²The varied nomenclature which has been utilized to identify those employed to coordinate an associational missions program reflects both the ambiguities inherent in the expectations of the person occupying such a position, and the maturing of the role itself over the past half-century. While promotion and publicity remain essential to the function of the current Director of Missions, a comparison of the annual reports submitted by his predecessors up to 1969 with those which have been submitted thereafter revealed a decided shift in emphasis from promotional director to missions coordinator.

Those who have been employed by Flat River Baptists in the position now known as Director of Missions have included: Roger Edson Williams, Jr., 1947-49; John T. Biddle, 1949-50; Ronald E. Rice, 1950-53; William Johnson Edwards, 1953-56, on a part-time basis; Mertie Booker (Mrs. Henry Oliver) Davis, 1957-59; Archie Gilliam Cree, 1960-62; William Johnson Edwards, 1962-67; Daniel Franklin Page, 1969-72; and Robert Henry Wainwright, 1973 to the present.

³The Constitution of the Association had been subject to only minor revisions, 1794-1862, when a new Constitution and Decorum were adopted by the body in the latter year. Likewise, the Constitution of 1862 underwent only minor revisions until 1948, when it was updated and replaced with a new document.

Refinements to the Association's administrative structure since 1958—together with changes in terminology related to the administration of denominational programs and agencies—has necessitated numerous constitutional alterations since 1958. A Constitution Committee was added to the growing roster of associational Standing Committees in 1969.

⁴In this regard, Flat River Baptists reflected and shared in the general surge in interest in institutional forms of religious practice which characterized the 1950s and 1960s.

⁵The Association had adopted the following resolution in 1912:

Whereas only six of the seventeen pastors of the Flat River Association reside within its bounds, thus rendering it necessary for many of our churches to call pastors whose homes are too far from their work for them to render the most effectual work for the Master. The Flat River Association—

Resolves 1. That we recommend to our churches the importance of calling pastors who can reside as near them as practicable. 2. That a committee be appointed to take this matter under consideration and report at our next meeting, making such recommendations for providing homes for several preachers at such places within the bounds of the Association as they may deem expedient.

The committee subsequently reported having "accomplished no visible results," with the added observation that the "matter will have to be discussed more and the people educated up to the point that they will adopt the plan." See *FR Minutes*, 1912, p. 9; 1913, p. 6.

⁶*Biblical Recorder*, December 9, 1950.

⁷"Full-time" is here used in the sense of a pastor who has obligations to only one congregation. First Baptist Church, Butner, and Mount Olivet Church had already engaged full-time pastors at the time each was admitted into the fellowship of the Association. The same was true of Franklinton Baptist Church which was affiliated with the Association, 1950-60.

⁸Jones served the churches at Mount Moriah (Orange County) and Shady Hill (Orange County) while a student at Wake Forest. McNabb served Concord and Mount Zion churches during the one year he was enrolled as a student at Wake Forest.

⁹These earliest student pastors were: Earl Louis Hardin (Mount Olivet), C. H. Beard (Olive Grove), Warren Turner (Pleasant Grove-Sharon), and Elijah Daniel Flowers, Jr. (Rock Spring).

¹⁰The total number of young seminarians who have served churches in the Flat River Association since 1951 exceeds two hundred. The Association and her student pastors was the focus of a dissertation submitted by John Calvin Durrence in 1968 in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Th.M. degree from Southeastern Baptist Seminary entitled: *A Study of the Effectiveness of the Student Minister as Pastor in the Flat River Baptist Association, North Carolina.*

The data utilized in Durrence's study was gathered from 297 respondents to a lengthy questionnaire submitted to fifteen individuals from the following churches who were then being served by student pastors: Brassfield, Bullock, Concord, Corinth, Creedmoor First Baptist, Hester, Island Creek, Knott's Grove, Mount Olivet, Mountain Creek, Olive Grove, Peace's Chapel, Pleasant Grove, Poplar Creek, Providence, Rock Spring, Sharon, Tabb's Creek, Tally Ho, and West Oxford.

¹¹These were: Enon, Florence Avenue, Grassy Creek, Hester, Island Creek, Knott's Grove, Mountain Creek, Mount Zion, Oxford, Providence, and Stovall. Of these, the following comprised a "field" which was being served by the same pastor: Enon-Mount Zion, Grassy Creek-Mountain Creek-Providence, and Island Creek-Stovall.

¹²Total membership in the churches increased from 9,053 in 1948-49 to 11,125 in 1968-69. Total church expenditures amounted to \$153,483.00 in 1948-49; \$492,034.00, in 1968-69. See *FR Minutes*, 1949, p. 32; 1969, p. 74.

¹³Actual valuation in 1947-48 was \$386,765.00, with the properties of the Oxford Church accounting for 36% of the total. See *FR Minutes*, 1948, p. 26.

¹⁴The budget item for Associational Missions exceeded \$10,000.00 for the first time in 1966-67, including a monthly supplement which was then received from the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina. The budget surpassed \$15,000.00 in 1971-72; \$25,000.00, in 1977-78; \$50,000.00, in 1984-85; and \$75,000.00, in 1990-91.

¹⁵*FR Minutes*, 1949, p. 32. Of the four churches reporting local expenditures in excess of \$10,000.00, Island Creek, Mount Zion, and Providence were engaged in building projects.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, 1959, p. 64; 1969, p. 75; 1979, p. 78; 1989, p. 99. Total local expenditures were reported to be \$2,073,073.00 in 1989.

¹⁷First Baptist Church of Tungsten had been the recipient of supplemental pastoral aid from the Baptist State Convention's Division of Missions.

¹⁸The following churches reported Sunday School enrollments which were greater than church memberships during the period under review: 1951: West Oxford; 1952: First Baptist of Tungsten and West Oxford; 1953: First Baptist of Butner, and West Oxford; 1954: First Baptist of Butner, Franklinton, and West Oxford; 1955: First Baptist of Butner, First Baptist of Creedmoor, and West Oxford; 1956: Brassfield, First Baptist of Butner, Hester, and West Oxford; 1957: First Baptist of Butner and West Oxford; and 1958: First Baptist of Butner. No church has reported a Sunday School in excess of church membership since 1965.

¹⁹The church which came closest to approximating this statistic was Knott's Grove. She reported a total membership of 42, resident membership of 37, and a Sunday School enrollment of 40. See *Directory of the 162nd Annual Session of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, Lawrence Joel Veterans Memorial Coliseum, Winston-Salem, North Carolina, November 9-12, 1992* ([n.p.: n.d.]), p. 71, for the current comparison of Sunday School enrollment to church membership among the churches.

²⁰See Appendix for statistical records related to the churches of the Association.

²¹*FR Minutes*, 1957, p. 37.

²²*Ibid.*, 1989, p. 29.

²³Enrollment in ongoing programs of Church Training had reached an all-time low of 95 in 1976-77, with only four churches reporting Church Training Directors among their rosters of elected officers and teachers.

²⁴"Discipleship Training" included participation in such study sessions or modules as those related to New Church Member Orientation, Baptist Doctrine, DiscipleYouth and DiscipleLife, Equipping Centers, LIFE, and General Leadership Training. Fifteen churches reported participation in one or more of these training sessions or modules. See *FR Minutes*, 1991, P. 103.

²⁵WMU enrollment had decreased to 1,580 in 1990-91. In that same year, only five churches—Corinth, Enon, Mountain Creek, Oxford, and Tabb's Creek—reported functioning units for all age categories: i.e., Mission Friends (5 years and under), Girls in Action (grades 1-6), Acteens (grades 7-12), Baptist Young Women (18-34 years of age), and Baptist Women (35 years and above). Two churches—Brassfield and Rock Spring—reported units for Baptist Women only. See *ibid.*, pp. 106-107.

²⁶Hobgood, who was also serving as one of the Vice-Presidents of the Convention at the time, had been named Chairman of a Central Committee on the Laymen's Movement in 1910.

²⁷*Annual of the North Carolina Baptist State Convention, 1911* (Raleigh: Edwards & Broughton, 1911), pp. 66-67. The report, which was prepared by Hobgood, noted several hindrances to the general advancement of this early laymen's movement in the State.

²⁸*FR Minutes*, 1947, p. 19.

²⁹*Ibid.*, 1957, pp. 35, 60.

³⁰Gresham served as Director of Baptist Brotherhood, 1967-1984. He served as Vice-Moderator, 1984-86, and Moderator, 1986-88. He then resumed his earlier responsibilities as Brotherhood Director in 1990.

³¹*FR Minutes*, 1970, p. 33.

³²Those reports on the "various Benevolent institutions" which became standard features of an associational meeting after 1846 have been maintained to the present, with the number and scope of such reports expanded with an expanding denominational mission. Whereas there were seven (7) such reports in 1846, that number had increased to fifty-three (53) in 1992, including the reports of primarily local concern.

Ongoing communication, publicity, and promotion within the Association were greatly enhanced with the inauguration of a periodic, associational newsletter in 1949-50. "The Flat River News,"—currently published on a monthly basis—typically carries announcements of local or regional meetings, challenges or invitations to address specific needs in ministry, a reprint of the monthly associational "Calendar of Activities," news from the churches, congratulatory messages related to birthdays or anniversaries, and "A Word from Bob"—the Director of Missions.

³³*FR Minutes*, 1963, P. 26. Indications of the esteem in which Edwards and his wife, Sarah, were held by the Association have been given public expression in at least two specific acts. First, the Association voted unanimously to extend to Edwards the continued use of the parsonage section of the office building for six months following his retirement on December 31, 1967; and to extend a "gift" of \$360.00 per month for his use during that same period of time.

Second, following the death of the Reverend Mr. Edwards, November 10, 1977, the Association established an "Edwards Fund Account," with proceeds therefrom to be used to supplement the income of Mrs. Edwards throughout her life—an act reminiscent of earlier efforts which had been extended on behalf of the widows of Cornelius F. Humphries (d. 1890) and James King Humphries (d. 1915).

The Edwards Fund Account—which is supplemented annually by an offering received in the churches on a date near the birthday of the late Mr. Edwards—contained a balance of \$1,584.72 as of October 1, 1992. Average monthly checks amounting to \$132.83 had been forwarded to Mrs. Edwards throughout the associational year, 1991-92. See *FR Minutes*, 1967, pp. 21,33; 1978, p. 28; 1992, p. 49.

³⁴*Ibid.*, 1958, p. 12. While the composition of this committee was modified throughout the intervening years, it remained in effect with substantially unaltered duties and responsibilities until replaced by an Associational Council in 1990.

³⁵The Constitution of 1948 had reduced the composition of the Executive Committee by eliminating the provision for one lay representative from each of the affiliated churches. Such representation was restored in 1958, and increased to two representatives from each church in 1978.

The earlier Executive Committee became the "General Board" in 1990—in keeping with the nomenclature employed by the Baptist State Convention—with a subsidiary Executive Committee of the Board consisting of the Director of Missions (Chairman), the four primary elected officers of the Association (Moderator, Vice-Moderator, Clerk, Treasurer), chairman of the Finance Committee, and two at-large members from the General Board.

³⁶The number of officers elected by the Association in 1949 had been nine. By 1992, that number had grown to sixteen. The Constitution made specific provision for only two Standing Committees in 1949; eleven, in 1992. The number of such committees had reached nineteen, however, prior to some consolidation of duties and responsibilities in 1990.

That process of elaboration of the Constitution and Bylaws which govern the Association can be noted easily from a comparison of the contents of the document in effect in 1949 with those which govern the "Corporation" in 1992. Printing of the document required 2 1/2 pages of the associational annual in 1949. The similar document in effect in 1992 required 9 pages in the printed annual.

³⁷*FR Minutes*, 1990, pp. 82-83.

³⁸*Ibid.*, p. 84. The Council is advisory in nature, with no authority over program organizations. Its functions are to recommend plans for ministry, coordinate and evaluate the work of the Association, and formulate and present a tentative "Calendar of Activities."

³⁹Camp Creek and Tar River Primitive Baptist churches, both of which are reported to have been constituent members of the Flat River Association, formally disbanded on June 20, 1942, and May 20, 1942, respectively, in the wake of the "purchase" of their properties by the federal government. Also, Knap of Reeds Baptist Church, which had been admitted into the Association in 1846 as Flat River Union, conducted its last service of worship in February 1942.

Other churches which were forced to disband due to required evacuation of all civilian populations from the area which would comprise Camp Butner were: Calvary Methodist, Moore's Grove Primitive Baptist (Black), Mount Level Missionary Baptist (Black), Mount Vernon Missionary Baptist (Black), and Roberts Chapel Methodist. See *Minutes of the Lower Country Line Primitive Baptist Association Held with the Church at J. H. Gooch Memorial, Granville Co[unty], N[orth] C[arolina], July 3rd, 4th and 5th, 1943* ([n.p.: n.d.]), P. 9, for official actions taken by the Camp Creek and Tar River churches.

⁴⁰*FR Minutes*, 1968, p. 54.

⁴¹*Ibid.*, 1970, p. 27. Ministry among the students at Murdoch Center, a school for persons with varied dimensions of mental retardation, was initiated with 5th Sunday visitation on the part of participating churches. It was later expanded to include other services, activities, and ministries among those whom Howard styled God's "special people."

⁴²*Ibid.*, p. 26.

⁴³See "Report of the Butner Christian Social Ministries," in *ibid.*, 1973, pp. 39-40, for Howard's account of this project in ministry during its initial year.

⁴⁴*Ibid.*, 1978, p. 44. In addition to the forms of ministry noted earlier, Howard called attention to "Operation Santa Claus" and the "Youth at Risk" (Big Brother) programs in 1978. At that time, the Butner Complex of institutions included C. A. Dillon School (youth rehabilitation), Murdoch School (mentally handicapped), North Carolina Center for the Blind, John Umstead Hospital (mentally/emotionally ill), and the Umstead Youth Center (first-time male youth offenders against the law). It has since been expanded into a much larger complex.

⁴⁵Upon Howard's departure from the Association to assume the pastoral care of Swift Creek Baptist Church, Raleigh Association, in 1979, he was succeeded as part-time Director of Butner Christian Ministries by the Reverend Howard Austin Stokes, 1980-82. Stokes, in turn, was succeeded by Linda (Mrs. Horace Watson) Lariscy, 1982-88; and Virginia (Mrs. N. Malvin) Tuck, who has served since November 1, 1988. The title of the position has also been changed to Director of Church and Community Ministries, reflecting an expansion of the focus of the program.

The ministry was featured in a segment of a video tape prepared by the Division of Missions in conjunction with the promotion of the North Carolina State Missions Offering in 1990.

⁴⁶*FR Minutes*, 1958, p. 45. Mr. Guerrant's services were later recognized with the naming of the chapel at Nutbush Campground, "Guerrant Chapel."

⁴⁷The ministry at Hibernia Campground was extended for fifteen weekends (Memorial Day through Labor Day), beginning in 1982. In addition to Elliott, others who have served as coordinators of this ministry to vacationers have included: Tony Walter Cartledge, 1982-84; Charles B. Sloan, 1985-87; Greg and Tyana Day, 1988; Vance and Doris Russ, 1989-91.

⁴⁸*FR Minutes*, 1979, p. 41. The earliest mention of a ministry with migrant farm workers is found in the report of Mertie Booker (Mrs. Henry Oliver) Davis, Director of Woman's Missionary Union for 1976-77, where it is noted: "In response to an appeal for 'health kits' for the migrant who were working in our area this summer, fifty bags were bought with a \$6-10 value per kit, plus extra articles, and distributed to them." See *FR Minutes*, 1977, p. 36.

Woman's Missionary Union has continued to be extremely supportive of the ministry since that date.

⁴⁹*Ibid.*, 1982, p. 33. The first Hispanic student to assist with the ministry among migrant workers was Napoleon Rodriguez, Campbell University, in the Summers of 1982 and 1983. Clifton Turner Forrester, son of Richard and Betty Joan Forrester, Southern Baptist missionaries to Venezuela, coordinated the ministry with Hispanics during the Summers while he was enrolled at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1984-86. Pedro Cruz assisted with the ministry during the Summer of 1987.

⁵⁰*Ibid.*, 1988, p. 64. Alfredo Granillo had served as minister with Hispanics during the Summer of 1988.

⁵¹*Ibid.*, 1991, p. 70. A cooperative agreement with the Yates and Tar River Baptist associations in the Summer of 1990 had issued in the engagement of the Reverend Carlos Oliveros as Hispanic Church Planter for the area served by the three associations. Such a ministry task involved "seeking to draw together Hispanic people living in each area for Bible study and to organize a mission when it is possible." See *ibid.*, 1990, p. 47; "The Flat River Baptist News," August 1990.

⁵²*Ibid.* Flores, a student at Southeastern Baptist Seminary, had begun his ministry with the Hispanic mission in May 1991.

⁵³Year-round ministry with Hispanics began in September 1991, with Fellowship Baptist Church continuing to serve as host and sponsor. Attendance at Sunday services averaged 61 during the first full year of operation. Attendance at the "Migrant Day" events had averaged 100 in the Summer of 1992, as compared to an average of 70 in 1991.

A ten-acre tract of land on Enon Road, in the Culbreth community of Granville County, had been deeded to the Association in the Autumn of 1992—a gift from J. B. Haney, a layman in Oxford Baptist Church. Following a series of volunteer "work days," a ground breaking ceremony was conducted at the site, July 25, 1993. See *FR Minutes*, 1992, pp. 40, 66; "The Flat River Baptist News," June 1993 and August 1993.

⁵⁴*FR Minutes*, 1976, p. 54. Bold Mission Thrust issued from the report of a special committee appointed by the Southern Baptist Convention in 1974 to "measure Southern Baptists' human and financial resources and potential for mission advance." This committee subsequently brought a report with 15 recommendations which was adopted by the Convention in 1976.

The first of these recommendations called upon the Convention to set as "its primary missions challenge that every person in the world shall have the opportunity to hear the gospel of Christ in the next 25 years, and that in the presentation of this message the biblical faith be magnified so that all men, women, and children can understand the claims that Jesus Christ has on their lives."

One further recommendation had requested the mission boards of the Convention to "develop as many ways as possible for long and short term involvement for persons in direct mission work in the modern setting. . . ." A second "called upon our churches, state conventions, institutions, and Southern Baptist Convention agencies to unite in a viable and dynamic program for calling out the called." See *Annual of the Southern Baptist Convention, Nineteen Hundred and Seventy-Six, One Hundred Nineteenth Session, One Hundred Thirty-First Year, Norfolk, Virginia, June 15-17, 1976* (Nashville: Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention, n.d.), pp. 54-55. Also, Albert McClellan, "Bold Mission Thrust," *Encyclopedia of Southern Baptists* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1982), IV, 2125-26, for an early description of the plans and emphases designed to realize the objectives of Bold Missions among Southern Baptists.

⁵⁵Mrs. Gillespie had returned to the United States in 1948 in the wake of the political turmoil in China. She did not actually terminate her services with the Foreign Mission Board until 1958.

⁵⁶Tilden William and Linda (McKinnish) Bridges, appointed missionaries to Taiwan in 1977 (staff members from Hester Church); Larry Thomas and Donna Jean (Dover) Elliott, appointed missionaries to Honduras in 1978 (Larry from Grassy Creek Church); Mark Thompson, appointed Missionary Journeyman to Norway, 1981 (Corinth Church).

⁵⁷In addition to those who were to volunteer for short-term ministries at home and abroad, several who had earlier served the churches of the Association were later to serve in mission stations around the world. Among these were: Percy Augustus and Georgia Smith Cline (Knott's Grove-Providence), missionaries to Thailand, 1955-61; Charles Ray and Sara Katherine Bradley Frye (First Church, Creedmoor), appointed missionaries to Malaysia, 1966; James Leonard and Mary Anne Coffey Burnham (Dexter), appointed missionaries to Spain, 1969; Kenneth Gene and Sarah Lawrence Childers (Mountain Creek), appointed missionaries to Senegal, 1981; Courtney Merrill "Buddy" and Lois Johnson Woodson (Corinth), appointed missionaries to Chile 1981; Robert and Mickie Wilkinson Norman (Sharon), appointed missionaries to Uganda, 1984; Lonnie Austin and Connie Smoot Reynolds (Concord), appointed missionaries to Spain, 1985; James Earle and Sandra Phillips Pollard (Amis Chapel), appointed missionaries to Chile, 1985; Ronald and Margie Williams Carothers (Oxford), appointed missionaries to Guatemala, 1985; and Ronald Wayne and Angela Beane McCracken (Peace's Chapel), appointed missionaries to the Dominican Republic, 1986.

⁵⁸Glenn Cameron Currin, a licentiate of Delrayno Church, and Howard and Ethel Stokes, retirees who were members of Delrayno Church, had served with the Christian Service Corps—a short-term support ministry of the Home Mission Board—in the Summer of 1980.

Richard Wayne Porter, resigned as pastor of Amis Chapel Church, to assume the pastoral care of Island Pond Baptist Chapel, West Hampstead, New Hampshire, in October 1980. See *Biblical Recorder*, June 7, 1980; *FR Minutes*, 1981, p. 64.

⁵⁹A cooperative partnership, 1990-1995, between the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina and the Baptist Convention of New York was approved by the former in November 1990. Flat River Association was subsequently paired with Adirondack Baptist Association in upstate New York, with the first call for volunteers for this partnership effort issued in 1993. See *Annual of the 160th Annual Session of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, Lawrence Joel Veterans Memorial Coliseum, Winston-Salem, North Carolina, November 12-14, 1990* (n.p.; n.d.), pp. 93-94, 112; "The Flat River Baptist News," January 1993.

⁶⁰Although no formal partnership had been established between North Carolina Baptists and those of the Baptist Convention of Pennsylvania-South Jersey, volunteers from Hester and Pleasant Grove churches had assisted local congregations in Erie, Pennsylvania, and Ruffs Dale, Pennsylvania.

⁶¹"Mountain State 200"—a partnership between North Carolina Baptists and the West Virginia Convention of Southern Baptists was approved by the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina in 1980. Originally designed to extend for five years, 1980-85, its objective was to increase the number of churches in West Virginia from 100 to 200. Pastors Thomas Horne (Corinth) and Jack Self (Bullock) had left their pastorates in Flat River Association to assume the care of small congregations in the Mountain State in 1979 and 1982, respectively. Moreover, teams of Baptist Men from several of the churches had assisted with construction projects in Brandywine and Rowlesburg, West Virginia, respectively, in 1982. A team of four men from the Association joined others from North Carolina in assisting with flood relief ministries in West Virginia in 1985. See *Annual of the 150th Annual Session of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, Greensboro Coliseum, Greensboro, North Carolina, November 10-12, 1980* (n.p.; n.d.), pp. 104, 135; *FR Minutes*, 1982, p. 25; 1985, p. 29.

⁶²*FR Minutes*, 1977, p. 21. The little community of Marydel was the locale for the initial visit by a team of youth from Flat River Association. Pleasant Grove Church, especially, later took a special interest in continuing to nurture and support the Marydel Church and community.

⁶³The names of all these individuals and their churches have been dutifully recorded in the appropriate issues of both "The Flat River Baptist News" and the annual proceedings of the Association.

⁶⁴*FR Minutes*, 1980, p. 35.

⁶⁵*Ibid.*, 1985, pp. 23, 29; "The Flat River Baptist News," March 1985. Partners in Wholeness was a 3 1/2 year partnership between the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, and the Togolese Baptist Association, which had been approved by the Convention in annual session in 1983. For a description of the objectives of this partnership project, see *Annual of the 154th Annual Session of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, Asheville Civic Center, Asheville, North Carolina, November 12-14, 1984* (n.p.; n.d.), pp. 121-123.

⁶⁶*FR Minutes*, 1986, pp. 29, 50; "The Flat River Baptist News," May 1986.

⁶⁷*FR Minutes*, 1989, p. 42.

⁶⁸"The Flat River Baptist News," December 1986, had carried the initial announcement of this project in a news item from Grassy Creek Church. The objective was to raise funds for purchasing and, then, enlisting men to erect a windmill as part of a well-drilling project under the auspices of missionary Elliott. The project was conceived and designed as a memorial to Elliott's late father, Mr. Conway Elliott, former member of Grassy Creek Church.

⁶⁹*FR Minutes*, 1987, p. 44. In appreciation of their efforts at modeling the Christian concept of servant-hood, these men were made honorary members of Iglesia Bautista Rostro de Cristo.

⁷⁰*Ibid.*, 1988, p. 45.

⁷¹See *ibid.*, 1989, pp. 42-43; 1990, p. 46; 1991, p. 64; 1992, pp. 62-63, for reports of the work of each of these groups. After 1990, the volunteers from Flat River Association were joined in their labors by other volunteers from sister associations and state conventions.

⁷²*Ibid.*, 1988, p. 45.

⁷³*Ibid.*, 1990, p. 51.

⁷⁴*Ibid.*, 1991, p. 29. "The Flat River Baptist News," March 1991, had carried the announcement of a training session for the Associational Strategy Planning Study Groups to be conducted at Pleasant Grove Church, March 12, 1991. An earlier communication in the issue of the newsletter for November 1990 had outlined the basic tasks for seven groups of volunteers who would be engaged in strategy planning as one "way our association can study its purpose and set the course of action in fulfilling Christ's Great Commission for our association."

The Task Groups were as follows: (1) Publication—purpose to compile and publish all the information gathered by the data gathering groups; (2) Church Study—purpose to gather, analyze, summarize, and present data from all the congregations within the association; (3) Associational Organization Study—purpose to determine if every facet of the associational organization supports the purpose, objectives, and action plans determined by the association; (4) Population Study—purpose to gather and present census materials which suggest demographic profile of the community; (5) Social Systems—purpose to gather, analyze, summarize, and present data regarding the nine (9) basic social systems which influence community and associational life; (6) Other Religious Study—purpose to gather, analyze, summarize, and present data regarding all other religious groups within the community; and (8) Resources Study—purpose to gather, analyze, summarize, and present data regarding the resources of the association as well as resources needed for the future. Such resources include the associational center, land, rent property, camps, schools, etc.

⁷⁵*FR Minutes*, 1992, pp. 67-69. Wainwright had earlier identified eight "hindrances" which he hoped the process of Strategy Planning would succeed in identifying, correcting, or removing. These were: (1) Lack of Purpose, or an Unclear Purpose; (2) Non-Involvement and Apathy; (3) Unused Resources; (4) Misused Resources; (5) Lack of Resources; (6) Lack of Teamwork; (7) Confusion of "Means" and "Ends"; and (8) Cultural Insensitivity. See "The Flat River Baptist News," March 1991.

⁷⁶*FR Minutes*, 1992, pp. 67-68.

VII. THE CHURCHES COMPRISING FLAT RIVER BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

As Flat River Baptist Association enters her Bicentennial Year, her immediate fellowship encompasses thirty-three churches and one church-type mission. At least two of these churches—Grassy Creek and Tabb's Creek—antedate the Association. The youngest—Union Baptist Church—is but twenty-one years of age. Apart from her present constituency, however, the Association has included an additional forty-four churches within her fellowship for various periods during the long course of her two hundred years. Some of these are no longer extant. The remainder maintain current affiliation with some other Baptist association; or, are no longer affiliated with any external organization of churches.

The earliest associational attempt at gathering and preserving data relative to the histories of the churches was undertaken during the course of the annual meeting in 1843, with the passage of the following resolutions:

Resolved, That instead of a Circular Letter, Tho[mas] B[ooker] Barnett be requested to prepare a history of the churches connected with this Association, to be appended to the minutes of the next Association.

Resolved, That the clerks of each church be requested to forward to T[homas] B[ooker] Barnett the time at which their church was constituted, the number of members, white and black, constituting each, the number of revivals, their present pastors, the names of their deacons and clerks, the days of their monthly meetings, and the post offices of their clerks respectively, and other such requisite information with regard to said churches, as soon as practicable.

Sufficient information had been forwarded to enable Barnett, the Clerk of the Association, to append very brief sketches of the seventeen churches then in affiliation with the Association to the *Minutes* of 1845.

A second attempt at gathering and preserving such data was initiated in 1969, with the inclusion of brief historical sketches of Island Creek Baptist Church and Providence Baptist Church in the *Minutes* of the annual meeting of the Association. It was anticipated that the histories of two additional churches would be included in the annual records of associational proceedings through 1984, by which time the "cycle" of published historical sketches would have included one for each of the thirty-two churches then affiliated with the Association. A new "cycle" would then begin in 1985, with each church updating her history from the date of its last inclusion in the *Minutes* of the Association.

The material which follows takes brief note of those forty-four churches which were formerly affiliated with Flat River Association. Then, a brief historical sketch is included for each of the churches currently affiliated with the Association. The data for such sketches has been derived from: (1) Those sketches included in the *Minutes* of 1845 and 1969ff.; (2) *Inventory of the Church Archives of North Carolina, Southern Baptist Convention, Flat River Association*, prepared by The North Carolina Historical Records

Survey Project, Division of Community Service Programs, Work Projects Administration, in February 1941; (3) News items from the pages of the *Biblical Recorder*; and (4) Other data gleaned from the *Minutes* of the annual meetings of Flat River Association.

Among those churches which formerly maintained an affiliation with Flat River Baptist Association are the following:

Antioch (Person County)—affiliated with Flat River, 1858-1912; dismissed in latter year to reunite with Beulah Association; currently affiliated with Beulah Association.

Bethany (Person County)—affiliated with Flat River, 1883-1944; dismissed in latter year to unite with Beulah Association; currently affiliated with Beulah Association.

Bethel, or *Bethel Hill* (Person County)—affiliated with Flat River, 1825-1912; dismissed in latter year to unite with Beulah Association; currently affiliated with Beulah Association.

Bridge (Guilford County)—affiliated with Flat River prior to 1806, when dismissed to become constituent member of Country Line Association; reported “disbanded” in 1841.

Buffaloe Creek (Mecklenburg County, Virginia)—affiliated with Flat River in 1811 “for convenience sake”; dismissed to unite with Concord (VA) Association in 1852; currently a member of Concord Association as Buffalo Church.

Camp Creek (Durham County)—said to have been a constituent member of Flat River Association in 1794; dismissed to become constituent member of Country Line Association in 1806; disbanded in 1942 with the construction of Camp Butner.

Cedar Creek (Granville County)—constituent member of Flat River Association in 1794; reported “dissolved” in 1840, in the wake of the burning of the church’s meeting house; few remaining members reported to have joined Brassfield’s and other nearby churches.

Chestnut Grove, or *Friendship*, or *New Bethel* (Wake County)—affiliated with Flat River prior to 1829; dismissed to unite with Central Association in 1866; maintains some semblance of continued existence as Olde Mount Vernon (Raleigh Association).

Country Line (Caswell County)—dismissed from Roanoke (VA) Association in 1795 to unite with Flat River; dismissed to become constituent member of Country Line Association in 1806; currently unaffiliated with any association; virtually extinct.

Deep Creek (Alamance County)—affiliated with Flat River, 1803-1805; dismissed to become constituent member of Country Line Association in 1806; now survives as McCray Primitive Baptist Church, Upper Country Line Primitive Baptist Association.

Eno (Durham County)—constituent member of Flat River Association in 1794; expelled in 1840 for “disorderly conduct, by absenting themselves from this body, without a letter of dismission”; united with Country Line Primitive Baptist Association in 1843; currently affiliated with Lower Country Line Primitive Baptist Association.

Flat River (Person County)—constituent member of Flat River Association in 1794; dismissed to become constituent member of Country Line Association in 1806; currently a member of Lower Country Line Primitive Baptist Association.

Flat River Union, or *Knap of Reeds* (Durham and Granville counties)—affiliated with Flat River, 1846-1942; disbanded in the wake of the construction of Camp Butner in 1942.

Franklinton (Franklin County)—affiliated with Flat River, 1950-1958; dismissed in latter year to reunite with Tar River Association; currently a member of Tar River Association.

Gardner's (Warren County)—constituent member of Flat River Association in 1794; subsumed into Tanner's Church prior to 1811; not to be confused with present Gardner's Church in Cullom Association, which was admitted into Tar River Association in 1845.

Haw River (Rockingham County)—dismissed from Roanoke (VA) Association in 1795 to become a member of Flat River Association; extinct prior to 1806.

Henderson (Vance County)—affiliated with Flat River, 1878-1891, when dismissed to reunite with Tar River Association; currently a member of Cullom Association.

Hogan's (Caswell and Rockingham counties)—dismissed from Roanoke (VA) Association in 1795 to unite with Flat River Association; dismissed to become constituent member of Country Line Association in 1806; not listed among Country Line churches after 1810.

Island Ford (Caswell County)—dismissed from Roanoke (VA) Association in 1795 to unite with Flat River Association; dismissed to become constituent member of Country Line Association in 1806; not listed among Country Line churches after 1806.

Lick Fork (Rockingham County)—dismissed from Roanoke (VA) Association in 1795 to unite with Flat River Association; dismissed to become constituent member of Country Line Association in 1806; currently listed among member churches in Upper Country Line Primitive Baptist Association, though church has no current membership.

Lower South Hyco, or Ebenezer (Person County)—dismissed from Roanoke (VA) Association in 1795 to unite with Flat River Association; dismissed to become constituent member of Country Line Association in 1806; church is either unaffiliated with any association, or extinct.

Lynches Creek (Caswell County)—affiliated with Flat River, 1799-1806, when dismissed to become constituent member of Country Line Association; extinct after 1949.

Mary's Chapel (Granville County)—affiliated with Flat River, 1880-1899, 1912-1921; dismissed to reunite with Central Association in 1921; currently a member of Raleigh Association.

Mill Creek (Person County)—affiliated with Flat River, 1875-1912, when dismissed to reunite with Beulah Association; currently affiliated with Beulah Association.

Mount Calvary (Durham County)—affiliated with Flat River, 1869-1874; extinct after 1874.

Mount Carmel (Orange County)—admitted into Flat River Association as Pritchard's Church prior to 1811; dismissed to unite with Sandy Creek Association in 1827; currently affiliated with Yates Association.

Mount Harmony (Person County)—admitted into Flat River Association as Five Forks Church in 1858; united with Beulah Association in 1945; currently a member of Beulah Association.

Mount Moriah (Orange County)—united with Flat River Association shortly after her constitution in 1823; dismissed to become constituent member of Mt. Zion Association in 1869; currently affiliated with Yates Association.

Neuse, or New Light (Wake County)—constituent member of Flat River Association in 1794; dismissed to unite with Central Association in 1921; currently affiliated with Raleigh Association.

North Fork (Halifax County, Virginia)—affiliated with Flat River, 1876-1885; united with Dan River (VA) Association in 1886; currently a member of Dan River Association.

Olive Branch (Person)—affiliated with Flat River Association as early as 1832; united with Beulah Association in 1945; currently a member of Beulah Association.

Providence (Person County)—received into Flat River from Beulah Association in 1877; dismissed to reunite with Beulah Association in 1916; currently affiliated with Beulah Association.

Rock Grove (Person County)—affiliated with Flat River, 1907-1913, 1923-1944; reunited with Beulah Association in 1945; currently affiliated with Beulah Association.

Roxboro (Person County)—affiliated with Flat River, 1882-1912, when dismissed to unite with Beulah Association; currently a member of Beulah Association.

Sandy Level (Durham County)—affiliated with Flat River, 1854-1876, when dismissed to unite with Mt. Zion Association; subsumed into constitution of Durham Memorial Baptist Church (Yates Association) in 1939; currently a member of Yates Association.

Shady Hill (Orange County)—affiliated with Flat River, 1841-1861; extinct after 1861.

Snow Hill (Person County)—affiliated with Flat River, 1889-1903; extinct after formation of Rock Grove Church in 1906.

South Country Line (Caswell and Orange counties)—dismissed from Roanoke (VA) Association in 1795 to unite with Flat River Association; no further record of this church has come to hand; those who were listed among her clergy in 1794 had all moved to Middle Tennessee after 1796.

State Line (Vance County and Mecklenburg County, Virginia)—affiliated with Flat River, 1886-1929; member of Concord (VA) Association, 1933-1954; now extinct.

Tanner's (Warren County)—constituent member of Flat River Association in 1794; dismissed to Tar River Association in 1840; survives to the present as Warren Plains Baptist Church (Cullom Association).

Tar River, or Sherman's (Granville County)—constituent member of Flat River Association in 1794; expelled in 1840 for "disorderly conduct, by absenting themselves from this body, without a letter of dismission"; united with Country Line Primitive Baptist Association in 1841; dismissed to become a constituent member of Lower Country Line Primitive Baptist Association in 1906; disbanded in 1942 in the wake of the construction of Camp Butner.

Unity, or Wynn's Creek (Alamance County?)—affiliated with Flat River as early as 1804, when she entertained the annual meeting of the Association; dismissed in 1806 to become constituent member of Country Line Association; now extinct.

Whealers, or Upper South Hyco (Person County)—dismissed from Roanoke (VA) Association in 1795 to unite with Flat River Association; dismissed to become constituent member of Country Line Association in 1806; currently affiliated with Lower Country Line Primitive Baptist Association.

Wolf Island (Rockingham County)—dismissed from Roanoke (VA) Association in 1795 to unite with Flat River Association; dismissed to become constituent member of Country Line Association in 1806; currently maintains affiliation with Upper Country Line Primitive Baptist Association, but is virtually extinct.



Amis Chapel Baptist Church

9189 Amis Chapel Road
Oxford, North Carolina

Named to honor the family of John Amis—a charter member who had donated a tract of approximately 4 acres on which the first meeting house would be built—Amis Chapel was constituted on April 29, 1855. The organizing presbytery consisted of Robert Irah Devin and James King. Charter membership consisted of twenty-two persons, most of whom presented letters of dismission from Grassy Creek Baptist Church. The Reverend Robert Irah Devin was called as first pastor; Rufus Amis appears to have been chosen as first clerk.

Church membership—which had increased to forty-four in consequence of a revival meeting in late September and early October 1855—reached 135, in 1873-74; 205, in 1906-07; 317, in 1952; and 325 in 1953-54, the largest membership to date. Reported membership in 1991-92 was 224.

A Sunday School was being conducted as early as 1868, with Rufus Amis the first Superintendent of record. Woman's Missionary Union was organized in 1906, with Mrs. C. W. Sneed representing the local Woman's Missionary Society at the organizational meeting of Flat River Woman's Missionary Union in 1910. Baptist Young People's Union (predecessor to Baptist Training Union) dates from 1923, with Mrs. J. L. Garner as first president of that organization. The church reported a Baptist Brotherhood organization as early as 1939, although the name of Horace P. Elliott (1956) is the first of record among the presidents of this men's missionary auxiliary.

The congregation has worshiped in three meeting houses. The first, a wood frame structure with seating capacity of 150, served the needs of the church and her auxiliary organizations for thirty years, 1855-1885. The second, a wood frame structure with seating to accommodate 300 persons, was constructed in 1885 and remained in service until 1949. The present structure was completed in June 1949. The educational wing was added in 1963; a parsonage, in 1979.

Admitted into Flat River Association in August 1855, with Rufus Amis and R. D. Puryear named as first delegates to that body, Amis Chapel has since entertained the annual associational meeting on seven occasions: 1859, 1876, 1907, 1928, 1951, 1966, and 1981. At least two of her members have been entrusted with major leadership positions in the Association: i.e., Rufus Amis, Clerk, 1877-80; and Mrs. James E. Frazier, Clerk, 1966 to the present date. Mrs. Frazier has also served ably as Secretary in the associational office building since 1965.

Pastors of record who have served Amis Chapel during her one hundred nine years of ministry in northwestern Granville County have included the following: Robert Irah Devin, 1855-58; Robert Henry Marsh, 1862-64; Joshua Addison Stradley, 1864-94; Patrick Henry Fontaine, 1894-1915; Jerre Reaves, 1916-21; Jackson Uriah Teague, 1922-40; W. Barry Garrett, 1942; Edward Wyche Greene, 1943-77; Richard Wayne Porter, 1977-80; James Earle Pollard, 1981-83; Ronald Dean Craddock, 1983-87; and N. Malvin Tuck, since 1987. Local tradition claims the services of two other ministers, the Reverend John Kerr Faulkner and a Reverend Mr. Morgan, during the interim between the pastorates of Devin and Marsh.

In addition to those who have ministered to the congregation and community served by this church, she has ordained at least three of her sons to minister among others. These were: John William Downey, 1894; Adolphus Drewery Frazier, 1941; and Ryland Michael Harris, 1976. She also dismissed seven of her members to join in the constitution of Florence Avenue Baptist Church in 1891.

Amis Chapel engaged the services of her pastors on a quarter-time basis until October 1, 1952, when she began half-time services. The church has maintained full-time services since April 1977.



Brassfield Baptist Church

2072 NC Highway 96
Creedmoor, North Carolina

Granville County land records indicate that the roots of Brassfield Baptist Church—whose official constitution dates from August 30, 1823—lie in a Union Meeting House which had been erected in early 1805 on a plot of land lying between Neuse and Tarborough roads; and for which James Weathers, John Matthews, William Moore, and Robert Jeter had been appointed commissioners on July 17, 1805. That original plot of land now constitutes a portion of the cemetery which is adjacent to the present Baptist church structure. While no records of this union meeting house are any longer extant, it is known that James Weathers was a prominent Baptist minister, and that John Matthews served as pastor of Nut Bush and Grassy Creek Presbyterian churches.

Zachariah Allen, James Weathers, and William Worrell comprised the presbytery of ministers which presided over the constitution of the church as a distinct Baptist body in 1823, with nineteen persons presenting themselves for charter membership in the fledgling organization. Zachariah Allen was chosen as the first pastor; Anthony Clement, first Clerk. The church's name honors the memory of Caleb Brassfield, who donated an acre of land on which the first meeting house was erected.

Church membership was eighteen in 1829—the earliest year for which there is extant record of Brassfield's affiliation with Flat River Association. Membership had reached 103 in 1842-43, and 201 in 1857-58, with that total representing the largest membership the church has attained to date. Associational records reported a membership of 139 in 1991-92.

Sunday School has been conducted since at least 1863, at which time Nathaniel Ellis Cannady was Superintendent of that auxiliary organization of the church. Though the church reported contributions from a "Ladies Missionary Society" as early as 1887, the first Woman's Missionary Society of record was organized in 1899, with Mrs. Ellen Lawrence, president. Baptist Young People's Union existed prior to 1922, when Mary Ava Whitfield was serving as president of this organization. No Baptist Men's group has ever been reported at Brassfield, although provision has been made for a chapter,

or chapters, of Royal Ambassadors, the missionary organization for young boys.

The original Brassfield's Meeting House was a log structure which had been replaced prior to 1842 by the current wood frame building described by a visitor to the 1870 meeting of the Central Baptist Association (of which Brassfield had become a constituent member in 1865) as "a neatly painted, well proportioned house of worship, with a gallery across one end and both sides. The benches are comfortable and the house is in good condition." A parsonage was added to the church's physical facilities in 1980-81, with a Fellowship Building completed in 1984-85.

Although probably admitted to Flat River Association shortly after her constitution, the first delegates of record named to attend an annual session of that body were Zachariah Allen and Matthew Joiner, who were listed as delegates from Brassfield's in 1829. Brassfield has entertained the Association on five different occasions since that date: 1835, 1853, 1958, 1974, and 1990. Claude W. Allen, Jr., was elected to serve as Moderator of the Flat River Association, 1969-70.

The course of her history of one hundred seventy years has seen Brassfield Church served by fifty-eight pastors. They were: Zachariah Allen, 1823-42; Malthus David Freeman, 1842-45; Henry Spivey, 1845-46; James Simpson Purefoy, 1846-49; Malthus David Freeman, 1849-50; William Jones, 1850-51; Alexander Doughan Blackwood, 1851-52; John White, 1852-53; James Simpson Purefoy, 1853-56; James Simpson Purefoy and Washington Manly Wingate, 1856-59; Elijah Forbes Beachum, 1859-60; Robert Bruce Jones, 1860-61; William Thomas Walters, 1861-66; William Terrell Brooks, 1866-67; Washington Manly Wingate, 1867-69; William Ashley Barrett, 1869-71; James Simpson Purefoy, 1871-76; D. A. Glenn, 1876-81; Charles Wesley Scarborough, 1881-83.

Also, William J. Fulford, 1883-86; Miles Lee Rickman, 1886-88; Jesse Richard Pace, 1888-91; George Thomas Watkins, 1891-1900; Willis Richard Cullom, 1900-03; Thomas Butler Justice, 1903-05; Arthur Columbus Sherwood, 1905-08; Theophilus Yates Seymour, 1908-10; Barbour Vaughan Ferguson, 1910-12; John Festus Mitchiner, 1912-16; Theodore Bunyan Davis, 1916-18; Frank Kenneth Pool, 1918-19; Willis Richard Cullom, 1919-23; Edwin Rowland Harris, Sr., 1923-24; Edward Lowell Spivey, 1924; R. W. Reed, 1924-25; Charles Lee Gillespie, 1925-35; William Clive Francis, 1936-41; Linwood Ray Jordan, 1942-47; Elmer Lamar Kincaid, 1947-49; Robert Gardner, 1949-51; Randolph Denard Spear, 1952-54; Leland Bailey, 1954-55.

Also, Allen Holt Higginbotham, 1956-57; Daylon Thomas Greene, 1958-60; Robert H. Bruhn, 1960-62; Dean Carlyle Bridges, 1962-63; Roger Leonard Patterson, 1963-65; Mitchell Lynn Reddick, 1965-68; Ronald Frank King, 1968-71; James Carter, 1971-73; Allen Cagle Allen, 1973-75; Russell Parrish Carlton, 1975-78; M. Thomas Langston, 1978-81; James Arthur Carlson, 1981-82; Michael Lynn Townsend, 1983-85; Audrey L. Diggs, 1986-88; David B. Wiedenman, 1988-91. The current pastor is Travis Jourden Moger, who assumed the care of the church in 1991.

Members of Brassfield have been granted letters of dismissal to join in the constitution of at least three other churches: Rock Spring (Black), Pleasant Grove, and Greenwood (no longer extant).

Brassfield Meeting House was added to the National Register of Historical Places in 1990, with a brass plaque placed at the front entrance to the building denoting this recognition of a facility which has served a congregation well for over 150 years.



Bullock Baptist Church

Bullock, North Carolina

After having assembled for some time to conduct Sunday School and engage in prayer meetings in a local school building, twenty-one persons presented themselves for charter membership in a new church which was to be constituted in the community, July 16, 1904. Thus did Bullock Baptist Church come into existence, with B. T. Hicks and W. B. Royster—both of whom had been members of Grassy Creek Church—serving as Moderator and Secretary, respectively, at the organizational meeting of this body. Robert Henry Marsh was engaged as first pastor. J. G. Pittard, another of the charter members, was elected by his brethren as the church's first Clerk.

Church membership was twenty-five when the church applied for and was granted admission to Flat River Association in July 1905. Thereafter, membership reached 102 in 1914-15; 206, in 1960-61, and a high of 213 in 1963-64. Current membership (1991-92) is 169.

The earliest Superintendent of the Sunday School—which was in existence prior to the constitution of the church—was B. T. Hicks. A Woman's Missionary Society appears to have been formed in late 1920 or early 1921, with Miss Annie Davis serving as the first president thereof. Baptist Young People's Union was added to the roster of church auxiliaries in 1925, James Bullock Pittard, Jr., president. Presence of a Baptist Brotherhood organization was first recorded in the associational *Minutes* of 1960, with Tom Morgan serving as president of this men's auxiliary.

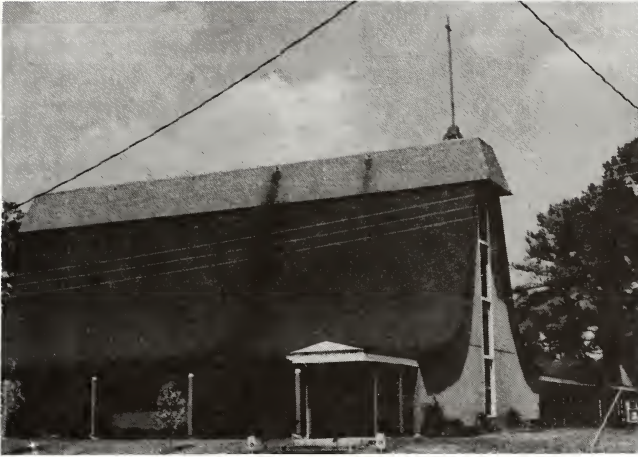
Bullock Baptists have gathered for worship, Bible study, and other activities in two structures which have served the needs of the congregation since the days of the community school building in which the church was constituted. The first, a wood frame structure, was completed in 1906, with Sunday School rooms added to the original

building in 1918. It served the congregation until 1928, when the building was destroyed by fire. The present T-shaped, red brick structure was completed in 1929. Dedication services for the facility were delayed until 1939, however, when it had been rendered "debt free." A parsonage was added to the church's facilities in 1951, and an Educational Annex in 1957. The church has maintained full-time services since 1954.

Since her admission into Flat River Association, the church and community have entertained the annual meetings of this body on the following occasions: 1944, 1957, 1972, and 1988. Mertie Booker (Mrs. Henry Oliver) Davis has served the Association as Director of Missions, 1957-59, and as Director of Woman's Missionary Union, Auxiliary to Flat River Association.

The roster of pastors who have ministered to the church and congregation includes: Robert Henry Marsh, 1905-17; George Taylor Tunstall, 1917-18; Eugene Grissom Usry, 1918-19; George Taylor Tunstall, 1919-21; Hughey Osborne Miller, 1921; Carey Almon Upchurch, Jr., 1922-23; Paul Gamaliel Hartsell, 1923-30; Gordon Van Stephens, 1930-40; Jesse Marshall Walker, 1941-46; William Shelley Caudle, 1947-50; John Cooper Gill, Jr., 1951-53; Milton Floyd Hellams, 1954-59; Robert Dale Shepherd, 1953-63; Gleaton F. Rickenbaker, 1963-66; William Boyd Rogers, 1967-69; Marvin Wayne Oakes, 1970-72; Isaac B. Laughrun, Jr., 1973-75; James Willard Benefield, 1975-78; Jack L. Self, 1978-82; Donald Lee Padgett, 1982-85; Richard Lyle Clore, 1985-89; Terry C. Howard, 1989-93. The Reverends Michael and Cheryl Brooks were called as co-pastors in 1993.

At least one son of the church, James Pittard Davis, has been ordained to the Gospel ministry.



The First Baptist Church of Butner

Butner, North Carolina

Residents of the area formerly occupied by Camp Butner began to assemble for religious services in early 1948, following the successful efforts of John Umstead to encourage the State of North Carolina to purchase the properties then owned by the War Assets Administration. Their concerns issued in the eventual formation of Community Methodist Church, which had served—at first—as an inter-denominational fellowship.

However, Baptists in the group expressed an interest in organizing a Baptist church, though receiving little encouragement from either the Flat River or the Yates Association in this regard. Through the inspired and inspiring leadership of W. Edwin and Lillian (Cannady) Bullock—who had recently returned to Granville County and the Butner area from Laurinburg, North Carolina—a canvass of the community was undertaken, with the resulting list of “prospective” members for such a church submitted to the Baptist Council of Durham and Vicinity. Fruitful revival services were conducted in early September 1948, after which members of the Baptist Council of Durham and Vicinity presided over the constitution of Butner Baptist Church, September 19, 1948. The present name of the church was adopted in 1973.

Forty-two persons were numbered among the charter members of the newly constituted church. That number had grown to 44 when Butner Baptist Church was admitted into the fellowship of Yates Baptist Association in 1949. Membership increased to 123 in 1951-52; 202, in 1956-57; 326, in 1960-61; 407, in 1967-68; 509, in 1974-75; and 561, by 1979-80. Current membership (1991-92) was noted as 510 in the church’s letter to Flat River Association. First pastor of the church was Edwin Rudy Andrews, who served for a few months in 1949; the first Clerk of record, Mrs. Robert R. Thomas.

Sunday School, Woman’s Missionary Union, and Baptist Training Union were integral church auxiliaries from the time of the church’s constitution in 1948. J. H.

Eason was the first Sunday School Superintendent of record; Mrs. Fred Coley, first Director of Baptist Training Union. A Baptist Brotherhood was first reported in the associational *Minutes* for 1974, with James R. Pittman, president.

Butner Baptists first house of worship was the old Post Chapel #1, which was purchased by the Baptist Council of Durham and Vicinity and donated to the young church. One of the former post dining halls was later purchased and moved to the church site to serve as an educational facility. A building adjacent to the church site was also procured for use as a parsonage. The present facility was constructed in stages, with Educational Unit I (Children's Building) completed in 1960. Educational Unit II (Youth Department, Fellowship Hall, and Kitchen) was erected in 1967-68; the Sanctuary, in 1973. Meanwhile, the church had also built a new parsonage in 1965.

The church has entertained Flat River Association on three occasions since uniting with this fellowship in 1953. Annual sessions were hosted, or co-hosted, by the Butner congregation in 1956, 1970, and 1986. The Reverend Warren Thomas Bush was elected Moderator of the Association for 1963 and 1964 while serving as pastor of the Butner congregation.

A complete roster of pastors who have ministered to this relatively young congregation includes the names of the following: Edwin Rudy Andrews, 1949; Clyde Franklin Melton, 1950; Hal M. Helms, 1951-54; Harold Lester, 1955-56; Warren Thomas Bush, 1956-70; David George Peach, 1971-77; R. Scott Good, 1978-84; and Emmanuel Poole Pegram, 1985 to the present.



Concord Baptist Church

2509 Lyons Station Road
Creedmoor, North Carolina

Baptists worshipping at Lock's Meeting House—another of those houses of worship in southern Granville County which had been frequented by ministers of differing Christian denominations since 1782—were constituted into a distinct, separate church in 1805. The presbytery of ministers who presided over the organization of this church consisted of Elders George Roberts, James Weathers, and Josiah Rucks. Names of those who entered into the constitution are no longer known, although membership had grown to thirty-three by 1811—the earliest year for which any record remains extant. The Reverend Rowland Cooke was serving as pastor in 1810-11. The earliest Clerk of record was Elijah Hester (1836), who later became a prominent minister in the Association.

From the thirty-three members reported in 1810-11, church membership increased to 115 in 1840-41; 202, in 1965-66; 307, in 1983-84, and 318, in 1984-85. Membership in 1991-92 was 299.

Concord Baptists were conducting a Sunday School at least as early as 1872, when A. M. Veazey was serving as Superintendent of this Bible teaching auxiliary. A Woman's Missionary Society had been formed in 1907, although the first president of record for this missionary organization was Mrs. D. P. Coley (1917-18). Baptist Young People's Union was organized in 1925; Baptist Brotherhood, not until 1960. Ralph Daniel was the first president of B.Y.P.U. James R. Goss was the first president of the organization of Baptist Men.

That log structure known as Lock's Meeting House served the Baptist congregation until some time prior to 1857, when it was replaced by a wood frame building. This second facility, in turn, served the needs of the congregation until 1959, when it was replaced by the present structure. A Fellowship Hall was constructed in 1975, and rebuilt in 1988 to support a baptistry and additional Sunday School rooms. The church purchased a parsonage in 1983.

The first delegates of record to the Flat River Association in 1811 were the Reverend Rowland Cooke, Blount Cooper, and Knight Dalby. Concord—or Lock's, as she continued to be designated until 1838—has since entertained nine annual meetings of Flat River Association, as follows: 1826, 1838, 1856, 1872, 1895, 1931, 1960, 1976, and 1992. A. M. Veazey was elected Moderator of the Association in 1881.

Among those who are known to have served the congregation in the ministerial office prior to 1855 are the names of Rowland Cooke, Thomas Crocker, William E. Oakley, Robert McNabb, Samuel Wait, and Elijah Hester. The complete roster of pastors since 1955 includes: Malthus David Freeman, 1855-58; Robert Irah Devin, 1858-59; Elijah Hester, 1859-60; Robert Irah Devin, 1860-63; Robert Henry Marsh, 1863-66; John Joyner Lansdell, 1866-71; Joshua Addison Stradley, 1873-87; Nathaniel Sidney Jones, 1887-91; Willis Richard Cullom, 1891-93; Monrovia Pierce Davis, 1893-96; and Henry Hamilton Mashburn, 1897-98.

Also, Malicus Addison Adams, 1898-1900; Edwin Rowland Harris, Sr., 1900-05; Lucius Lanell Hudson, 1905-08; James Lee Martin, 1908-13; Eugene Grissom Usry, 1913-19; Lalister Matthews Hobbs, 1919-21; John Alfred Brendle, 1921-23; Eugene Grissom Usry, 1922-24; Edwin Rowland Harris, Sr., 1924-25; A. Lamonds, 1925-26; Eugene Grissom Usry, 1928-48; Leo Bridges, 1948-49; Boyce H. Creamer, 1949-51; Luby Guilford Daugherty, 1951-52; James Gordon Dissel, 1952-56; William Henry Pope, 1956-57; Daylon Thomas Greene, 1957-61; J. Spurgeon Hayes, 1961-62; Nesbert Earl Wellborn, 1962-66; Preminto Edward Chisenhall, 1966-72; Ray Von Faile, 1972-73; Lewis Everette McMannen, 1973-75; Charles Ohio Clay, 1975-79; Jerome Cash, 1979-80; Clarence Hal Freeman, 1981-82; Lonnie Reynolds, 1983-85; William Terry Hall, 1986-88; Ron Edmondson, 1988-89; and Howard E. Suttles, 1989-92. Roger Dale Wallace was called as pastor of the congregation, effective June 13, 1993.

Concord has sent forth at least two of her sons to minister among others within the Flat River Association and beyond; namely, Elijah Hester and Lucius Lanell Hudson. The church has maintained the full-times services of a pastor since 1960.



Corinth Baptist Church

3658 North Carolina Highway 96, South
Oxford, North Carolina

Preaching services had been conducted monthly for some three years prior to the constitution of Corinth Baptist Church, August 1, 1835. A meeting house had been constructed in 1832, on a tract of land donated to the little band of worshipers by Archie Cawthon, a resident of the community. Elders James Weathers and Zachariah Allen presided over the constitution, with seventeen persons enrolled as charter members of the newly formed church. The Reverend Zachariah Allen was chosen as first pastor; John Montague, the first Clerk.

Membership in the body remained at seventeen at the time of Corinth's admission into the fellowship of Flat River Association, October 15, 1836—the church reporting the reception of 1 new member and the exclusion of another during the previous year. The roster of members increased to 102 by 1844-45; 203, by 1929-30; and 241, by 1955-56, the year in which the church reported her largest membership. Current membership (1991-92) stands at 238.

A Sunday School was organized as early as 1857, with J. W. Gordon being the first Superintendent of record. Woman's Missionary Society was organized in 1910, with Dora Overton the first president of this ladies missionary auxiliary. Ruth Eakes was president of the earliest Baptist Young People's Union of record in 1923. Church letters to the Association have never included any indication of the presence of Baptist Brotherhood, although provision has been made from time to time for the missions education of boys through Royal Ambassadors.

The congregation has occupied three houses of worship during the course of the past one hundred sixty-one. That white frame structure which had been built by J. E. Allen in 1832 continued to serve the congregation until 1857. A second structure of similar design and architecture was utilized for some seventy years, 1857-1927. The

present T-shaped, red brick facility, with seating capacity of 300, was first utilized for worship services in February 1927, with the dedication of the building to the service of God occurring in October of the same year. Sunday School rooms were added to the facility in 1958, and a Fellowship Building in 1981. The church's parsonage dates from 1964.

Corinth has entertained, or hosted, the annual meeting of the Association on seven occasions since being represented in that body for the first time in 1836 by delegates Thomas Dement and John Montague. Annual meetings were hosted, or co-hosted, in 1850, 1858, 1879, 1903, 1948, 1963, and 1981. One of her members—H. M. Shaw—served as Treasurer of the Flat River Association, 1893-96.

Zachariah Allen ministered to the church and congregation for seven years, 1835-42. He was succeeded by Samuel Wait and Wiley A. Atkinson prior to the lengthy pastorate of James Simpson Purefoy, 1849-76. Those who have served since that date in what early Baptists termed "holy things" have included: Franklin Royal Underwood, 1877-80; Elijah Forbes Beachum, 1881-82; Robert Irah Devin, 1883-86; Cornelius F. Humphries, 1887-90; Malicus Addison Adams, 1890-91; James W. Atkinson, 1892-99; Elbert Young Pool, 1899; George Edward Spruill, 1900; James Howard Gordon, 1901-05; Herman Thomas Stevens, 1905-09; Elvis Martin Lassiter, 1909-10; Charles Herman Trueblood, 1911-12; Wallace Howell Hartsell, 1913; and George Taylor Tunstall, 1914.

Also, T. A. Tatum, 1915; Carey Almon Upchurch, 1916-18; Dossie Elbert Deaton, 1919; George Taylor Tunstall, 1920; Charley Hayes Cashwell, 1921; Jackson Uriah Teague, 1922; Lucius Lanell Hudson, 1923; Eugene Grissom Usry, 1924-28; Charles Lee Gillespie, 1929; Eugene Grissom Usry, 1930-36; Jesse Wade Baker, 1936-37; William Clive Francis, 1938-41; Carey Almon Upchurch, 1941-42; Linwood Ray Jordan, 1943; J. W. Cummings, 1944; E. M. Powell, 1945-48; Norman Arrington Hicks, 1949-57; John Richard Ball, 1957; Frank Ross Campbell, 1958-60; Bobby Tyson Holland, 1961-62; James Norman Perry, 1963-66; James Franklin Adams, 1967; Joseph Martin Glisson, 1968; William A. Robertson, 1969-71; Gary Ronald Harrelson, 1971-74; Kenneth Brown, 1975-78; Thomas Horne, 1978-79; Courtney Merrell Woodson, 1980-82; Stephen McFaddin Lewis, 1982-87; James Christopher Schofield, 1987-91; and Eric Grant Pfeifer, 1991 to the present.

Among those who have gone out from this church to devote their lives to full-time Christian vocations are: Jeff Burwell, a Black member, who was ordained to the ministry in 1868; Nathaniel Thomas Brummitt; and Hannah LeMay (Brummitt) Hills.



Creedmoor First Baptist Church

Creedmoor, North Carolina

Creedmoor First Baptist Church was formally constituted on December 14, 1895, after having operated for some years previous to that date as an “arm” or “branch” of nearby Concord Baptist Church. The organizing presbytery was comprised of deacons from Concord, Flat River Union, Pleasant Grove, and First Baptist of Durham, together with the Reverend Herbert Taylor Williams, Pastor of Roxboro Baptist Church. Seven persons entered into the constitution, as follows: Monrovia Pierce Davis, Arizona Davis, Edith Davis, Lucy Freeman, Thomas B. Lyon, Sion Rogers, and J. F. Sanderford. Monrovia Pierce Davis was elected pastor; J.F. Sanderford, deacon and Clerk.

Membership remained at seven when the church applied for and was admitted to affiliation with Flat River Association in August 1896. Nine members had been received since the date of constitution; two, dismissed to other churches. A total of 106 members was reported in 1915-16; 214, in 1923-24; 369, in 1952-53; 425, in 1955-56; 504, in 1979-80; and 554, in 1989-90. Total membership in 1991-92 was 552.

Sunday School had been conducted in the community prior to the date of the church's constitution, with R. H. Rogers—a member of the organizing council from Pleasant Grove Church—the first Superintendent of record. Mrs. Joe Weathersby was the initial president of Woman's Missionary Society, which was formed in 1898. Mandy Chappell was president of Baptist Young People's Union in 1921-22, although it is apparent that a young people's union was functioning prior to that date. The earliest record of a Baptist Brotherhood is found in the associational *Minutes* of 1980, with James Lee noted as the first president of this missions organization for men.

A T-shaped, frame structure, with sanctuary to seat 300 and 6 Sunday School rooms, served the needs of the congregation from 1895 until 1950, with additional Sunday School rooms having been constructed in 1924. The present house of worship was

completed and ready for use in connection with a Homecoming celebration in October 1950. Further educational facilities were constructed in 1960 and 1965. The church engaged the services of her pastors on a full-time basis beginning in 1950.

J. E. Freeman and J. F. Sanderford were listed as the church's delegates to the Association in 1896, although neither appears to have been present on the occasion of the church's admission into the associational fellowship. The annual meetings of the Association have been hosted, or co-hosted, by Creedmoor Baptists on four occasions: 1919, 1953, 1967, and 1979. R. H. Rogers, whose name first appears among the delegates to Flat River Association from Creedmoor Church in 1905, served that body as Treasurer in 1919.

Monrovia Pierce Davis, a recent graduate of Wake Forest College, served as pastor of the congregation, 1895-98. He has been succeeded in the pastoral office by the following ministers of the Gospel: James Lee Martin, 1898-1900; Willis Richard Culom, 1901-02; John Festus Mitchiner, 1903-04; Oliver Nicholas Marshall, 1905; Arthur Columbus Sherwood, 1906-08; James Lee Martin, 1909-11; O. B. Allen, 1912; George Pinckney Harrill, 1913-15; Hampton Gerome Bryant, 1915-18; Lalister Matthews Hobbs, 1918-20; Paul Gamaliel Hartsell, 1920-22; John Alfred Brendle, 1922-23; Edwin Rowland Harris, Sr., 1923-24; A. Lamonds, 1924-27; and Charles Lee Gillespie, 1927-31.

Also, Clarence Eugene Baker, 1931-33; Samuel Lewis Morgan, Sr., 1933-39; William Clive Francis, 1939-41; Linwood Ray Jordan, 1941-47; Elmer Lamar Kincaid, 1947-49; John Rountree Blanchard, Sr., 1949-52; Robert Thayer Liner, 1953-55; James Clarence Jones, Jr., 1956-59; Charles Ray Frye, 1959-66; David Dewey Blakely, 1967-74; Thomas R. Wright, 1974-76; James Smith McBride, 1977-79; Richard G. Shaw, 1980; and Donald Allison Williams, 1981-91. The Reverend Donald Baxter Brown assumed the pastoral care of the church, effective January 1, 1992.



Delrayno Baptist Church

208 Rayland Street
Oxford, North Carolina

Churches of Flat River Association established various preaching stations, or “mission” Sunday Schools, in response to the 30,000 Movement with which Southern Baptists had been challenged in the mid-1950s. One of these issued in the formation of a new church. Delrayno Baptist Church, a mission which had been sponsored by Oxford Baptist Church since May 3, 1959, was formally constituted on October 2, 1960. The names of eighty-eight persons were enrolled as charter members, with the Reverend Tom Martin Jones called as first pastor; Mrs. Jerry Johnson, elected first Clerk.

During the first year following her admission into Flat River Association in 1960, church membership increased to 120. It reached 207 by 1967-68; 313, by 1974-75; 417, by 1980-81; and 446—the largest membership to date—in 1986-87. Membership statistics for 1991-92 reported 440 persons in full fellowship with the church.

Each of the traditional church auxiliaries among Baptists has been a functioning organization among Delrayno Baptists from the beginning of her existence as a fully constituted church. Those persons who hold the distinction of having been the initial leaders or sponsors for these missionary and educational auxiliaries are: James B. Dean, Sunday School Superintendent; Alton E. Wood, Baptist Training Union Director; Henry Currin, Baptist Brotherhood President; and Mrs. N. Warren Weldon, Woman’s Missionary Union President.

The congregation of Delrayno Baptist Chapel—later to become Delrayno Baptist Church—gathered for worship for some three years in the facilities of Masonic Lodge #122. Meanwhile, the sponsoring church had purchased the Lake Ray property, which was then presented to the Chapel as the site on which to build permanent facilities to accommodate the growing congregation in the exercise of her ministries. Construction on the present building, of contemporary design, began in the Spring of 1962,

with the first service of worship conducted in the facility on October 14, 1962.

Flat River Baptists were hosted in annual session by the congregation of Delrayno Baptist Church in 1972 and, again, in 1978. One of her pastors, the Reverend Charles E. Mieir, was elected to preside as Moderator over that body in 1980 and 1981.

Eight pastors have succeeded the Reverend Tom Martin Jones, who began his services as mission pastor in 1959 and remained with the young church until 1963. These were: Walter Clifford Mitchell, 1963-66; Lamar B. Pridgen, 1966-67; John Stephen Perrou, Jr., 1967-69; Steven E. Williams, 1969-71; Jerry Oakley Hicks, 1971-74; Carlton Smith, 1974-78; and Charles E. Mieir, 1978-88. The current pastor, Robert Howard Rhoden, assumed his pastoral duties with the congregation on November 1, 1988.

Born of the missionary spirit of Oxford Baptist Church and the Missions/Advisory Committee of the Flat River Association, Delrayno has continued to exhibit a similar spirit through missions outreach on behalf of the residents of various health care institutions located in Oxford. She, like many of her sister churches, has also extended that missionary spirit to regions beyond the local community.



Dexter Baptist Church

3179 Sam Usry Road
Oxford, North Carolina

Persons having taken letters of dismissal from Island Creek and Stovall churches, together with "a few Methodists who found it inconvenient to reach a Methodist church," entered into the constitution of Dexter Baptist Church, April 29, 1906. The beloved Robert Henry Marsh was called as first pastor. E. J. Green was the first Church Clerk. From a charter membership of twelve, the church had grown to sixteen members by the time she was admitted into the fellowship of Flat River Association, July 10, 1906.

Membership surpassed one hundred for the first time in 1919-20, when the church reported 141 persons on her roster of communicants. The number of communicants reached 209 in 1926-27, and 285 in 1990-91. The statistical report to the Association for 1991-92 noted a membership of 278.

Sunday School has been conducted from the beginning, with S. A. Green—a constituent whose former membership was with Island Creek Baptist Church—serving as the initial Superintendent thereof. While a Woman's Missionary Society had been organized as early as 1913, the first president of record for this auxiliary was Mrs. E. J. Green (1918). The church appears to have never organized a Baptist Young People's Union, or a Baptist Training Union during the course of her history. Baptist Brotherhood was established in 1967, with Russell Nutt serving as the first president of the initial group of men who comprised this auxiliary missions organization.

The house of worship which has served the congregation since 1906 is a rectangular, frame structure which was designed to accommodate 250 persons. Additional educational facilities were provided in 1965, 1967, and 1984, respectively. The original facility has also been subjected to minor remodeling and renovations at other periods in the history of the congregation. The church has engaged a pastor for his full-time services since 1961.

First represented in the counsels of the Flat River Association by delegates W. L. Faucette, S. A. Green, and W. H. Green in 1906, Dexter Baptists have since entertained the annual session of that body on three occasions: 1954, 1969, and 1985. Two young men who were nurtured in her fellowship have been subsequently ordained to the work of the Gospel ministry: namely, John Bunyan "Jack" Usry (1926) and Augustus Byron Greene, Jr. (1963).

Robert Henry Marsh, who served the congregation as pastor, 1906-12, has had thirteen successors in that office. Eugene Grissom Usry holds the distinction of serving the lengthiest tenure, 1913-36. He has been followed, in turn, by: Lowell Frazier Sode-man, 1937-38; Samuel Lewis Morgan, Sr., 1938-40; Marshall Lee Pridgen, 1941-42; Edward Wyche Greene, 1942-48; Thaburn Lawson McSwain, 1948-49; Ray Keith Hodge, 1949-51; William Johnson Edwards, 1952-56; Eldridge Thomas Vinson, 1956-59; James Leonard Burnham, 1960-62; Clyde Hampton, 1962-66; Woodrow Edward Yancey, 1966-73; Robert Alex Price, 1974-76; and the current pastor, Clarence Neil Woodlief, who assumed the pastoral care of the church and congregation in 1977.



Enon Baptist Church

2298 Enon Road
Oxford, North Carolina

Forty-three persons, holding memberships in at least three neighboring churches, entered into the constitution of Enon Baptist Church on Saturday, May 29, 1875. The organizing council, or presbytery, included the Reverend Robert Irah Devin, Mountain Creek Church, the Reverend Frank Royal Underwood, Oxford Church, and George W. Watkins, of Mountain Creek Church. At the first monthly meeting of the congregation in June 1875, Robert Henry Marsh was called to serve the congregation as pastor at an annual salary of \$400.00. Benjamin Franklin Hester, a constituent member who had formerly belonged to Hester Church, was elected as the first Church Clerk.

Membership had increased to fifty-four by 1875-76, the first year for which there is an extant associational record. Thereafter, the church roster included the names of 105 persons by 1893-94; 203, by 1912-13; 315, by 1922-23; 400, by 1935-36; and 411 in 1951-52—with this figure representing the largest membership the church has attained to date. The statistical report to the Flat River Association for 1991-92 noted a total membership of 294.

A Sunday School has been reported from the beginning of the history of the church, with F. Knott listed as Superintendent in 1875-76. A Woman's Missionary Society was organized in 1897, with Mrs. W. C. Currin serving as the initial president of this church auxiliary. The earliest Baptist Young People's Union of record was noted in the associational annals for 1921-22, Miss Cary Curin, president. An organization of Baptist Men was reported in 1965-66, with Willie Perkins elected president by the initial group of men who comprised this missions auxiliary.

The church's initial meeting house, constructed in 1875, was a wood frame structure which accommodated the needs of the congregation until 1919, when it was replaced by the present building, which initially included an octagon-shaped sanctuary, pastor's study, and 6 Sunday School rooms. Provisions were made for additional

educational/fellowship facilities in 1950 and 1961-62. The initial church parsonage, built on Broad Street, Oxford, in 1925, was sold in 1956, a new parsonage being constructed in the same year in cooperation with the congregation of Mount Zion Church. The latter church's share in this parsonage was purchased by Enon when the church elected to engage a pastor for his full-time services in 1966.

Enon Baptists first entertained an annual session of Flat River Association five years after her reception into that fellowship, August 10-11, 1880. Since that date she has hosted, or co-hosted, the annual meeting of the Association in 1889, 1914, 1934, 1950, 1976, and 1992. Captain Benjamin Franklin Hester, one of her best known and beloved laymen, was elected Clerk of the Association in 1876, 1885, and 1886. His picture and a suitable memorial tribute were included in the pages of the associational annual in 1926.

The sequence of those who have ministered to the congregation worshipping at Enon is as follows: Robert Henry Marsh, 1875-86; Charles Augustus Jenkins, 1887-94; Patrick Henry Fontaine, 1894-96; Robert Henry Marsh, 1897-1917; George Taylor Tunstall, 1917-26; William Dowd Poe, 1926-48; Ronald Dewitt Hicks, 1949-57; William Iver Johnson, 1957-65; Alden Lee Hicks, 1965-70; James Owen Shurling, 1970-77; Preston A. Creech, Jr., 1977-85; James Weaver Holmes, 1985-88; and Robert Wilburn Cornwell, 1990-91. Kenneth Lee Cavey, the current pastor, assumed his pastoral duties on August 2, 1992.

At least six sons and two daughters of the Enon congregation have prepared themselves for service in church-related vocations. These include Carl Howell Ragland, Joseph Badgett Currin, Leland Ray O'Briant, John William Woody, Wayland Thomas Johnson, Edward Hudson Daniel, Rebecca (Knott) Harrell, and Rosalind (Knott) McKinley.



Fellowship Baptist Church

1512 Beaver Dam Road
Creedmoor, North Carolina

Eighteen persons are reported to have entered into the constitution of Fellowship Baptist Church, April 26, 1840, with Elders Zachariah Allen and Allen S. Wynne presiding over the ceremonies which accompany such a solemn occasion. Zachariah Allen was called to serve as first pastor of the church, continuing in that capacity until enfeebled health necessitated his declension of further pastoral responsibilities in 1842. The earliest Clerk of record was Calvin J. Rogers.

Two members had been added to the initial roster of eighteen when Fellowship petitioned for admission to the Flat River Association, meeting at the New Meeting House [Island Creek], August 8-10, 1840. The church roster included the names of 104 members by 1882-83; 202, by 1925-26; 315, by 1957-58; and 399, in 1969-70. Associational statistics for 1991-92 noted a church membership of 375.

Associational records first note the conduct of a Sunday School in 1877-78, with J. P. Beck, Superintendent. A missionary society is reported to have been organized as early as 1879. However, there is no associational record of Woman's Missionary Union until 1947, when Mrs. W. J. O'Briant was serving as president of this auxiliary. Baptist Young People's Union appears to have been organized in 1923-24, with Onice Perry as first president of this young people's study group. Baptist Brotherhood dates from 1958-59, with Ralph W. Green elected to preside over the meetings of this initial group of Baptist Men.

The first meeting house was a log structure, erected at a site approximately one mile from the present church property. It is reported to have accommodated the congregation for some forty years, 1840-1880. The second facility—a frame structure, which is believed to have been erected some 100 yards south of the original meeting house—was in use until 1922, when it was torn down and the lumber sold to Mr. L. V. Keith. A cross-shaped structure, with seating capacity for 500 and 7 rooms to be used for

purposes of the Sunday School, was completed and ready for use by 1922. Erected on lands donated to the church by J. H. Perry, this building has accommodated the church and congregation until the present. Additional educational facilities were provided in 1955 and 1966. A parsonage was purchased in 1958, the church having begun full-time services two years earlier.

Fellowship has entertained the delegates assembled for annual sessions of Flat River Baptist Association on six occasions: 1883, 1902, 1929, 1954, 1968, and 1984. At least two of her sons have been ordained to the work of the Gospel ministry: namely, David Franklin Lawrence (1892) and Michael S. Vaughan (1989). Her most unique ministry was initiated in 1991 with the sponsorship of Mision Bautista Hermandad (Hispanic Baptist Mission), the church's facilities being utilized to accommodate the year-round ministries of this fellowship of believers.

Those who have succeeded the venerable Zachariah Allen in the pastoral office include the following: Elijah Hester, 1843-47; Wiley A. Atkinson, 1848-72; Elijah Forbes Beachum, 1873; Joseph Abram White, 1874; William Ashley Barrett, 1875-80; Charles Wesley Scarborough, 1881; John Caswell Hocutt, 1882-85; James W. Atkinson, 1886-97; Malicus Addison Adams, 1898-99; John Alfred Brendle, 1900-02; Joshua Addison Stradley, 1903-06; Lucius Lanell Hudson, 1907-10; Elvis Martin Lassiter, 1911-12; Otis Webster Yates, 1913-14; Hampton Gerome Bryant, 1915-18; James Blaine Davis, 1919-21; John Alfred Brendle, 1922-23; Edwin Rowland Harris, Sr., 1924; Henry Grady Dorsett, Sr., 1925; A. Lamonds, 1926-27; Lawyer James Rainey, 1928-33; Jackson Uriah Teague, 1934-36; William Clive Francis, 1937-41; Linwood Ray Jordan, 1941-46; Aaron Columbus Phipps, 1947-48; Cadwin Hugh Norris, 1949-52; Rudolph Raymond Pulley, 1953-71; Rutherford Richard Moran, 1971-75; Tony Derrell Wilson, 1975-79; Donald Dewyatt Cashwell, 1979-82; and Daniel Conley Hill, 1983 to the present.



Florence Avenue Baptist Church

9629 North Carolina Highway 96
Oxford, North Carolina

The setting for the meeting which issued in the constitution of Florence Avenue Baptist Church, July 23, 1891, was an old tobacco factory building owned by C. A. Tuck of the Blue Wing community in northwestern Granville County. Following the preaching of a “most interesting sermon” by the Reverend S. H. Thompson and the service of a “bountiful feast,” the congregation then returned to their factory/sanctuary to attend to the major business of the day—the formal organization of a new Baptist church in their community.

Twenty-one persons entered into the constitution which was presided over by a presbytery of four ministers: Thompson, John Joyner Lansdell, Joseph Henry Lamberth, and John Alexander Beam. The twelve women and nine men who became charter members of the church had presented letters of dismission for that purpose from Amis Chapel, Bethel Hill, and Olive Branch churches. Thomas W. Greer consented to serve them as pastor; William D. Amis, as Church Clerk.

Rufus Amis, G. W. P. Pool, and T. B. Hill were appointed delegates to the 1891 session of Flat River Association, August 11-13, 1891, at which time the church petitioned for and was granted admission to this fellowship of associated churches. From an initial membership of twenty-one, the church increased to 117 members in 1910-11, and 195 in 1981-82—the year in when she attained her greatest numerical strength to date. Membership in 1991-92 was 180.

W. W. Hill, one of the constituent members from Olive Branch Church, was Superintendent of the Sunday School in 1890-91, when the school reported an enrollment of 60, with average weekly attendance of 40. A Woman’s Missionary Society was organized on June 18, 1899, with Mrs. Adelia Overby, president. Baptist Young People’s Union was noted in 1925, with Styron Harris elected to preside over the activities of

this initial young people's organization. A Baptist Men's organization was not reported until 1974, with the Reverend Clarence H. Bishop serving as the first president of this missionary auxiliary.

The facilities of the tobacco factory continued to serve as sanctuary and classroom for the congregation until 1892, when a rectangular, frame structure containing a sanctuary with seating capacity of 250 and two adjacent Sunday School rooms was erected for the accommodation of worshipers and pupils. It continued to serve the needs of the congregation until replaced by the current facility in 1980. Meanwhile, additional educational facilities had been provided in 1957 and 1975. A parsonage was added to the church's physical properties in 1964. She had engaged the services of a pastor on a full-time basis, beginning on January 1, 1952.

A succession of twenty pastors has ministered to the spiritual needs of the congregation and community over the past one hundred two years. These were: Thomas W. Greer, 1891-93; Herbert Taylor Williams, 1894-96; William Thomas Creath, 1897-1901; James Monroe Coleman, 1902-05; Thomas William Hart, 1906-07; Joseph Gooch Blalock, 1908-09; Charles Pennington Ryland, 1910-11; Doctor Franklin Putnam, 1912-14; Miles Costin Walton, 1915-18; Willis Washington Reynolds, 1919-21; Thomas Walter Fogleman, 1922-24; Edwin Rowland Harris, Sr., 1925-27; Ronald Earl Rice, Sr., 1948-49; E. U. Hoover, 1950-52; Thomas Owen Moak, Jr., 1953-55; Robert F. Lambert, 1956-57; Clarence H. Bishop, 1958-81; Ernest Marshall Center, 1982-86; and Michael Blake Trollo, 1987-89. The current pastor, Robert Eugene Garrett, assumed his pastoral labors in 1990.

Flat River Baptists have been hosted, or co-hosted, by the congregation of Florence Avenue Church on three occasions: 1912, 1955, and 1977.



Grassy Creek Baptist Church

9142 Grassy Creek Road
Bullock, North Carolina

Grassy Creek holds undisputed title to being the oldest church among those affiliated with Flat River Association. A precise date for her constitution, however, is no longer ascertainable. The Reverend Robert Irah Devin, who published *A History of Grassy Creek Baptist Church, From Its Foundation to 1880, with Biographical Sketches of Its Pastors and Ministers*, settled upon 1754 as the latest possible date for the church's initial constitution, based upon the fact that the community served by the church is known to have had a Baptist meeting house by 1755. Although the number and names of the constituent members of the church are no longer known, the first pastor of record was James Reed, 1754-70; the first Clerk, Charles Harris, 1770-73.

While the early church records to which Devin had access at the time of his research are no longer extant, other sources indicate that the church had in excess of 100 members prior to 1890. She reported a membership of 150 in her letter to the Roanoke District Association, October 11-13, 1794. The number in fellowship with the church had increased to 272 by 1831-32; 324, by 1850-51; 424, by 1942-43; and 469 in 1948-49, the year in which the church attained her greatest numerical strength to date.

The earliest Sunday School of record was being conducted in 1871-72, with R. E. Yancey and F. B. Hester serving as the co-superintendents of this enterprise. A missionary society existed as early as 1829—probably earlier. With the later emerging role of women as recognized leaders in missions education and missions support, a Woman's Missionary Society was organized in June 1897, Mrs. J. L. Pittard, president. Baptist Young People's Union was first noted in associational records for 1922-23, with Helen Elliott as initial president of this early church training auxiliary. An organization of Baptist Men was formed at least as early as 1978-79, with Travis G. Sizemore presiding over the programs and projects of this group of mission-minded members of the congregation.

That meeting house which had been visited by the Reverend Hugh McAden on his journey through the vicinity in 1855 continued to serve the needs of the congregation until 1833, when it was replaced by a frame structure, located some 200 yards from the site of the original. This second facility continued to accommodate the congrega-

tion for one hundred three years, 1833-1936. The present house of worship—a rectangular red brick structure—was dedicated to the service of God in October 1936. At the time of its construction, the interior arrangements included sanctuary, two large assembly rooms, and eight classrooms for use by the Sunday School and/or other auxiliary organizations. An educational annex, including pastor's study and rest room facilities, was constructed in 1964-65, with five additional Sunday School classrooms completed in 1978. The present church parsonage was added to the church's physical properties in 1960-61, in consequence of the church's engagement of her first full-time pastor, January 7, 1960.

A constituent member of Flat River Association at the time it was "cut off" from Roanoke District Association in 1794, Grassy Creek Church had formerly maintained affiliation with Sandy Creek Association, 1762-71; General Association (VA) of Separate Baptists, 1771-83; Middle District (VA) Association, 1783-88; and Roanoke District Association, 1784-88. In addition to entertaining the delegates to annual gatherings of at least two of these bodies, she has hosted, or co-hosted, the annual meetings of Flat River Baptists on eleven occasions: 1799, 1803, 1832, 1849, 1865, 1884, 1899, 1924, 1947, 1961, and 1978. Thomas Booker Barnett, a leading layman in the congregation until his removal to Mississippi, served as associational Clerk, 1836-48.

The roster of pastors who have ministered to the congregation and community over the span of the past two hundred thirty-nine years is both lengthy and illustrious. It includes the following: James Reed, 1754-70; Samuel Harris, 1770-72; James Reed, 1772-89; Henry Lester, 1789-93; Thomas Vass, Sr., 1793-1805; Reuben Pickett, 1805-08; Thomas Vass, Sr., 1808-14; Elisha Battle, 1814-19; Robert Thomas Daniel, 1819-21; William B. Worrell, 1821-24; Thomas D. Mason, 1824-27; Samuel Duty, 1827-29; James King, 1829-46; Robert Irah Devin, 1846-58; Moses Baldwin, 1858-59; Robert Irah Devin, 1859-62; Robert Henry Marsh, 1863-65; and Robert Irah Devin, 1865-86.

Also, Robert Henry Marsh, 1886-96; Patrick Henry Fontaine, 1897-1915; Jerre Reaves, 1915-22; Jackson Uriah Teague, 1922-41; W. Barry Garrett, 1941-42; James W. Cummings, 1943-45; William Isaac Terrell, 1945-50; Dennis Moore Larkins, 1951-59; Edward Glen Holt, 1960-62; W. Truman Moore, 1962-63; Robert Ricks Boone, 1963-69; Maylon Ellis Kearney, 1969-72; Jerry Dawson Jarrell, 1973-77; Harold Ball, 1977-80; Robert Andrew Dickard, 1981-84; Kenneth Taylor Kelley, 1984-87; Steven Waters, 1988-91; and Scott Thompson, who assumed the pastoral care of the church on June 27, 1993.

By virtue of her antiquity, Grassy Creek has been mother or grandmother to many of the other churches located in Granville, Person, and Vance counties in North Carolina, and of churches in Mecklenburg and Halifax counties in Virginia. A partial listing of these would include Amis Chapel, Averette, Buffalo, Bullock, Dexter Enon, Florence Avenue, Hester, Island Creek, Jonathan Creek (Black), Mountain Creek, Rock Spring, Sharon, State Line, Stovall, and First Baptist of Tungsten.

Numerous sons of Grassy Creek church and community have also been nurtured, licensed, and/or ordained to the work of the Gospel ministry. Among these are Sanders Walker, William Creath, William Whitehead, Zachariah Allen, William Richards, Daniel Gould, William B. Worrell, John Elizabeth Montague, George N. Pittard, Edward Yancey, and Larry Thomas Elliott.



Hester Baptist Church

NC Highway, North
Oxford, North Carolina

Eighteen persons, having taken letters of dismission from Grassy Creek, Tabb's Creek, and Tar River churches for that purpose, united in covenant to enter into the constitution of a new church, September 13, 1823. The opening words of the covenant to which each affixed his signature read: "Being fully convinced that there is a necessity for meeting together at least once a month for the purpose of keeping up Gospel order amongst us, we agree to meet on Saturday before the 2nd Sunday in each month for that purpose. . . ." Presiding over this solemn occasion were Elders Robert Thomas Daniel and Samuel Duty. The newly constituted church called itself Hester's—later, simply Hester—in honor of Captain Benjamin Franklin Hester, who donated the land on which the first meeting house was erected. The Reverend William B. Worrell was called to serve the congregation as first pastor. Joseph Howard was the first Clerk of record (1835-36).

The initial membership had increased to thirty-one by 1829—the earliest year for which statistics remain extant subsequent to the admission of Hester Church into Flat River Association. That number increased to 113 in 1831-32; 242, in 1841-42; 308, in 1844-45; 402, in 1920-21; 504, in 1945-46; 608, in 1964-65; and 613, in 1965-66—the greatest numerical strength the church has been able to report to date. The church's letter to the Association for 1991-92 reported a membership of 511.

A Sunday School was being conducted at least as early as 1872, with Benjamin Franklin Hester, serving as Superintendent. Woman's Missionary Society was organized on January 10, 1897, with Mrs. Lawson Knott, president. There is no record of Baptist Young People's Union or its church training successor, Baptist Training Union, until 1950, at which time Mrs. W. Frank Currin was B.T.U. Director. Baptist Brotherhood appears to have been organized in 1957-58, with Bill Ellington elected to preside over the meetings of this missionary auxiliary.

The initial house of worship—Hester's Meeting House—was a log structure, 20' x 20' in dimension, which continued to accommodate the congregation, 1823-41. It was replaced by a frame structure, which served the needs of the congregation, 1841-1918, a twelve-foot extension to the building having been added in 1885. A cross-shaped, brick structure, with seating capacity of 500 and seven initial Sunday School rooms, was dedicated to the service of God, July 14, 1918. With modifications, it serves as the present sanctuary. Educational wings were added to either side of the sanctuary in 1951 and 1968, respectively. A parsonage was erected on a lot on Cherry Street, Oxford, subsequent to the church's extension of a call to the Reverend Roger Edson Williams, Jr., as full-time pastor in February 1949.

Hester Baptist Church first entertained an annual session of Flat River Association, October 18-20, 1828. Subsequent to that date, she has hosted, or co-hosted, the Association on nine occasions, as follows: 1845, 1868, 1885, 1906, 1927, 1943, 1956, 1970, and 1986. Captain Benjamin Franklin Hester, served as Clerk of the Association, 1866-69. Samuel A. Howard, who holds the distinction of having a longer tenure in the office than any other individual to date, served as Clerk of Flat River Association from 1927 until his resignation due to ill health in 1956.

Those who have served the church and congregation in the pastoral office during her history of 170 years include the following: William B. Worrell, 1823-32; James King, 1832-37; Thomas King, 1837-40; William Jones, 1840-48; Samuel Wait, 1848-57; Robert Irah Devin, 1857-59; Moses Baldwin, 1859-63; Elijah Forbes Beachum, 1863-68; Robert Henry Marsh, 1868-1917; George Taylor Tunstall, 1917-26; William Dowd Poe, 1926-48; Roger Edson Williams, Jr., 1949-53; Paul C. Mattox, 1953-61; Leslie Haile Giles, 1961-70; Thomas Ervin Lolley, 1970-77; Roy Joseph Parker, 1978-84; and Randy Charles Bridges, 1985 to the present.

At least eight of Hester's sons have been licensed and subsequently ordained to the work of the Gospel ministry: James Bradley Jackson, 1850; James B. Knott, 1867; B. F. Knott, 1869; Clarence Eugene Hobgood, 1936; Irvin Warren Adcock, 1954; John Cramer Dean, 1956; Geoffrey Douglas Knott, 1957; and Tilden William Bridges, Jr., 1973.



Island Creek Baptist Church

Williamsboro
North Carolina

Twenty-four members of Grassy Creek Baptist Church—together with twenty-one Black slaves—entered into the constitution of Island Creek Baptist Church, November 27, 1840. The presbytery of elders, or ministers, who officiated on this occasion consisted of Zachariah Allen, James Weathers, and Pleasant Gold. The newly constituted fellowship called William B. Worrell, one of her charter members, as first pastor. Jesse Barnett and Thomas Williams were her first deacons; Joseph Barnett, the first Church Clerk.

Church membership had increased to ninety-three by 1829-30—the earliest year for which extant associational *Minutes* record membership statistics for Island Creek. The roster of members in fellowship with the church had increased to 115 by 1831-32; 216, by 1854-55; 300, by 1913-14, 423, by 1919-20; 504, by 1942-43; and 575, in 1955-56—the greatest numerical strength the church has evidenced to date. Associational statistics for 1991-92 reported a membership of 382.

Sunday School was being conducted as a church auxiliary at least as early as 1871-72, at which time P. B. Sneed and J. G. Morgan were listed as Superintendents of the school, or schools. The first Woman's Missionary Society of record was organized in May 1897, with Lillian Shanks, president. Baptist Young People's Union was a functioning organization by 1922, when Hammie Guerrant was serving as the leader of this early church training organization. While provision had been made much earlier for the missionary education of young boys, the earliest indication of a Baptist Brotherhood, or Baptist Men's, auxiliary is found in the associational records for 1955-56. Charlie C. O'Brian was serving as president of this initial men's group within the church.

The church's first house of worship—a frame structure located some three miles east of the village of Bullock—served the needs of the growing congregation for twenty years, 1820-40. What associational records refer to as “the New Meeting House, near Williamsborough,” was completed and ready for use in 1840, when Island Creek Church entertained the annual session of Flat River Association, August 8-10, 1840. This facility continued in use until replaced in 1911 by a one-room, frame structure, with sanctuary to seat 500, stained-glass windows, and five Sunday School rooms. The building, which had been formally dedicated in 1915, remained in use until 1950, when the present sanctuary—together with a parsonage—was completed and ready for use. A Fellowship Building was constructed on lands adjacent to the initial church property at her present site in 1984.

Island Creek Church must have been admitted into the fellowship of Flat River Association in 1821 or 1822, for she entertained the annual session of that body for the first time, October 15-17, 1823. Thereafter, the church and congregation have hosted the Association on ten additional occasions: 1839, 1840, 1860, 1878, 1892, 1916, 1935, 1952, 1967, and 1983. Among her members who have been elected to major leadership positions (i.e., Moderator, Clerk, or Treasurer) are J. A. T. Shotwell, Treasurer, 1906; R. W. Shanks, Treasurer, 1909; and Carl D. Blake, Moderator, 1965-66.

During the years of her existence as a “branch” of Grassy Creek Church, the Island Creek congregation is reported to have enjoyed the occasional ministrations of the following ministers: Thomas Vass, Robert Thomas Daniel, Elisha Battle, and Thomas Mason. Since her constitution in 1820, she has called the following to her assistance in the pastoral office: William B. Worrell, 1821-26; William Hill Jordan, 1826-33; William Burns, 1833-36; Thomas King, 1836-40; William Hill Jordan, 1840-45; James Delk, 1845-48; Robert Irah Devin, 1848-52; William E. Oakley, 1852-57; William Hill Jordan, 1857-60; Elijah Forbes Beachum, 1860-71; Joshua Addison Stradley, 1871-99; Gideon Needham Bray, 1899-1901; Robert Percy Walker, 1901-04; Isaac Newton Loftin, 1904-05; and Herman Thomas Stevens, 1905-08.

Also, Elias Dodson Poe, 1908-10; Edward Rosser Nelson, 1911-12; William Lemuel Griggs, 1913-16; Carey Almon Upchurch, Jr., 1916-21; Hughey Osborne Miller, 1921-23; Lucius Lanell Hudson, 1923-28; Paul Gamaliel Hartsell, 1928-30; Gordon Van Stephens, 1930-41; Jesse Marshall Walker, 1941-46; William Shelley Caudle, 1947-50; John Cooper Gill, Jr., 1951-53; Jack Franklin Coffey, 1954-58; Clyde Preston Pearson, 1959-71; William Ray McCollum, 1972-78; Kenneth Durrett Wilbanks, 1979-81; Lyman Wilson, 1981-87; and the current pastor, Stephen Brock-Loftis, who assumed the pastoral care of the congregation, January 1, 1988.

The church can claim at least one son in the ministry—the Reverend John Marshall Neathery, who was ordained in 1967.



Knott's Grove Baptist Church

3593 Knott's Grove Road
Oxford, North Carolina

After some considerable discussion thereon, the little band of twenty-five persons who entered into the constitution of a church some three miles south of the Town of Oxford, September 12, 1901, settled upon the name "Knott's Grove" for their newly formed fellowship. The designation was chosen to honor Fielding Knott, Sr., the father of S. W. Knott, whose tobacco pack barn served as the initial meeting place for the group. The presbytery consisted of four pastors of nearby churches, and seven laymen representing Enon, Hester, Mount Zion, Oxford, Poplar Creek, and Tally ho churches. The ministers in the group were John Steger Hardaway, Robert Henry Marsh, Joshua Addison Stradley, and—probably—Willis Richard Cullom. Jesse Richard Pace, who had been conducting services in the neighborhood for some time past, was chosen as pastor. W. R. Buchanan was elected Clerk. The constituent members had taken letters of dismission from Corinth, Enon, and Oxford churches.

Membership had increased to forty-two by the time of the church's application for and admission to the fellowship of Flat River Baptist Association, July 15, 1902. The roster of members numbered 101 in 1914-15; 202, in 1974-75; and 312, in 1988-89. It currently stands at forty-two, due to the withdrawal of a number of members during the course of that year to establish another church fellowship.

J. R. Buchanan was elected Superintendent of the Sunday School for 1901-02. While a Woman's Missionary Society had been organized as early as April 1902, the first president of record was Mrs. S. W. Knott (1918). Baptist Young People's Union was a functioning church training auxiliary at least as early as 1921-22, with Rosa J. Knott, president of the group. The presence of a Baptist Men's organization is first recorded in 1973-74, with Howard Riggan elected to preside over this missionary fellowship.

The tobacco barn of S. W. Knott continued to serve as a meeting house, 1901-03. A building which formerly housed Oxford Methodist Church was purchased in the latter year, removed to the Knott's Grove community piece-by-piece, and re-constructed to serve the Baptist congregation worshiping in that place on a tract of land donated by S. W. Knott for that purpose. Dedication of this frame structure, with seating capacity to accommodate 250 persons, was incorporated in services conducted on December 17, 1905. A Sunday School annex was completed in 1958, with the church parsonage constructed in 1973 on a tract of land which had been presented as a gift to the church by J. E. Knott and his sister, Mary Frances (Knott) Darden, in memory of their deceased parents. A second educational building was completed in 1985.

Those who have served Knott's Grove in a pastoral relation include: Jesse Richard Pace, 1901-05; John Dawson Morris, 1906-07; Fairly Daniel King, 1907-08; John Alston Ellis, 1908-10; George Taylor Tunstall, 1910-14; T. A. Tatum, 1914-15; Carey Almon Upchurch, Jr., 1916-23; George Taylor Tunstall, 1923-26; William Dowd Poe, 1926-43; James W. Cummings, 1943-45; William Isaac Terrell, 1945-50; Clyde Franklin Melton, 1951-53; Percy Augustus Cline, Jr., 1953-55; Lester Willard Smith, 1956; Herbert Zerof, 1957-59; N. Stephen Warden, 1959-61; Madison Lamar Banister, 1961-67; Ronald Carson Shelley, 1967-70; John D. Dill, 1970-72; James Hall, 1972-73; Larry Francis McCracken, 1973-76; Thomas Wright Harper, 1976-78; Robert Allen Wilson, 1979-80; Horace Watson Lariscy, III, 1981-88; Jeff Dawson, 1988-89; James Donald Carroll, 1990-91; and Curtis Richard Taylor, 1991 to the present.

Knott's Grove Baptists have entertained the annual meeting of Flat River Association on two occasions, 1971 and 1987. She ordained the beloved Eugene Grissom Ury to the work of the Gospel ministry, June 4, 1905.



Mount Olivet Baptist Church

State Road 1202

Franklin County, North Carolina

The origins of this church are recorded in a communication from the Reverend William Ashley Barrett which appeared in the *Biblical Recorder*, March 23, 1870, under the byline, "Mt. Olivet." Barrett wrote:

Brother M. R. Pennell(sic), having moved to this settlement from the neighborhood of Haywood's church, commenced a Sunday School on the 1st Sunday of April, 1866, and at the earnest request of brother Pennell(sic) *I preached my first sermon there in October, 1867. Having preached a series of sermons, at the close we received on profession of faith and baptism eighteen persons; with these we organized a church, or rather an arm of Haywood's church. . . .*

On the 30th of August, 1868, Dr. William Royall dedicated the house of worship, and gave it the name of Mt. Olivet [italics not in the original].

William Ashley Barrett was serving as pastor and Fenner Tharrington, Clerk, at the time of the church's admission into the fellowship of Tar River Association, October 1, 1868.

Church membership, which had increased to thirty-five at the time of the church's admission into Tar River Association, reached 100 in 1889-90; 209, in 1938-39; and 243, in 1950-51—the associational year in which the church reported her greatest numerical strength to date. Current membership (1991-92) stands at 170.

Sunday School was being conducted in the neighborhood prior to the formal constitution of the church. However, the earliest record of such a school comes from the Minutes of Tar River Association for 1871-72, when M. Y. Chappell was serving as

Superintendent. A Woman's Missionary Society was organized in 1914, with Mrs. Meredith Blackley, president. Baptist Young People's Union was a functioning auxiliary by 1926-27, although the record gives no indication of the earliest leadership of this church training organization. The earliest Baptist Brotherhood group appears to have been formed in 1966-67, with the Reverend Byard Houck as president of the same.

That initial house of worship which was dedicated to the service of God on August 30, 1868, was a school building, located on land which was given to the church by W. W. Green. It appears to have accommodated the congregation until 1886 or 1887, when the church erected a frame structure on a rock foundation. This facility remained in use until the men of the congregation constructed the present structure in 1949. An extension to the building in 1955 provided five additional classrooms.

Mount Olivet applied for and was granted admission into Flat River Association in 1952. Earlier affiliations had been maintained with Tar River Association, 1868-88; Central Association, 1888-1944; and Raleigh Association, 1944-52. The church and congregation entertained annual sessions of Flat River Association in 1961 and 1978.

Those who have served the church as pastor include the following: William Ashley Barrett, 1867-71; Elijah Forbes Beachum, 1871-74; William Ashley Barrett, 1875; Patrick Henry Fontaine, 1876-77; Elijah Forbes Beachum, 1878-83; James A. Pitchford, 1884-85; John Wesley Sledge, 1886-91; George Abram Sowell, 1892; William Carey Newton, 1893; Baylus Cade, 1894-95; James Vance DeVenny, 1896; Alexander Anderson Butler, 1897-98; John Wesley Sledge, 1899-1904; Pearl Damon Mangum, 1905; George Washington Coppedge, 1906-08; Mack Stamps, 1909-25; Charles Richard Hinton, 1926-29; Sankey Lee Blanton, 1929-31; Robert Lee Randolph, 1931-34; and Lucius Russell Evans, 1935-38.

Also, Arvil Woodrow Icard, 1939-50; Earl Louis Hardin, 1951-53; Dwight Wilbur Cooper, 1954-55; Robert Lawrence Clegg, 1955-57; Rufus Roy Cantrell, 1957-60; Charles Donald Thorne, 1960-63; Elmer Dean Coffey, 1963-65; Byard Houck, Jr., 1965-68; David Dana Scrivner, 1968-71; Erwin Wayne Robinson, 1971-74; Lewis Edwin Pettit, 1974-82; Roy Duncan Graves, 1982-84; Paul Edgar Boles, 1984-85; David Gardner, 1986-91; and Carl Edwin Hunter, 1991 to the present.



Mount Zion Baptist Church

1171 Highway 158
Oxford, North Carolina

The Reverend Robert McNabb, General Missionary of the Baptist State Convention assigned to labor in Flat River Association, related the origins of this church in a series of letters which appeared in the *Biblical Recorder and Southern Watchman*, July 4, September 12, and December 5, 1840. The last in the series—written from Dutchville, Granville County, November 30—noted:

On the 26th ult., Elder A[llen] S. Wynne and myself, constituted a church near Tar River M[ee]ting H[ouse], consisting of 16 members. The same day brother J[ohn] Blalock was ordained deacon. A new building is now being erected within two miles of the old meeting house, at which when completed, the congregation will assemble for worship. From present appearance we believe the church will prosper.

McNabb was chosen pastor of this fledgling congregation; W. P. B. Slaughter, Clerk. By the time Mount Zion was admitted into the fellowship of Flat River Association in 1841, church membership had increased to twenty-seven. That number grew to 117 by 1852-53; 200, by 1886-87; 309, by 1947-48; 408, by 1957-58; and 444, in 1982-83. Associational statistics for 1991-92 reported a membership of 431.

Sunday School was established on June 3, 1865, with James Benton Hobgood, Superintendent. A Woman's Missionary Society was organized in June 1897, with Rowena Minor Meadows elected first president of this auxiliary. The first Baptist Young People's Union of record was noted in 1922-23, with Clyde Adcock, president. Baptist Brotherhood was formed at least as early as 1969-70, J. S. Rudder being president of this men's missionary organization in that year.

The first house of worship, a frame building, served the congregation from the time of its completion in early 1841 until 1856. It was replaced by a structure of similar design which continued to be used for some thirty-seven years, 1856-93. The present house of worship—a one-room, brick structure, with seating capacity of 500—was dedicated to the service of God, June 4, 1893. A two-story educational annex was completed in 1949. The church added a parsonage to her physical assets at the time the decision was made to engage a pastor on a full-time basis in 1966. A Fellowship Building was constructed in 1988.

Mount Zion first hosted an annual meeting of Flat River Association seven years after her admission into that body, August 11-14, 1848. Since that date she has hosted, or co-hosted, the body on eight subsequent occasions: 1871, 1875, 1893, 1921, 1933, 1948, 1962, and 1980. One of her members, Joseph Gooch Blalock, served as Clerk of the Association, 1891-93.

A succession of twenty-five pastors have attended to the spiritual nurture of the church and congregation over the past one hundred fifty-three years. These include: Robert McNabb, 1840-42; James Simpson Purefoy, 1842-46; James King, 1846-59; Moses Baldwin, 1859-61; William Hill Jordan, 1863-64; Thomas Jefferson Horner, 1864-86; Charles Augustus Jenkins, 1886-93; John Alexander Beam, 1893-94; Joshua Addison Stradley, 1894-95; Robert Henry Marsh, 1895-1905; and Jesse Burton Weather-
spoon, 1906-07.

Also, Joseph Gooch Blalock, 1905-08; William Marshall Hudson, 1909-14; George Thomas Lumpkin, 1915; Carey Almon Upchurch, Jr., 1916-20; Edwin Rowland Harris, Sr., 1923-24; A. Lamonds, 1924-27; Charles Lee Gillespie, 1927-35; William Clive Francis, 1936-41; Lawyer James Rainey, 1941-43; Linwood Ray Jordan, 1943-47; Ronald Dewitt Hicks, 1949-57; William Iver Johnson, 1957-65; Earl William Howard, 1966-79; and Keith Franklin Williams, the current pastor, since 1980.

At least eleven of her members have been sent forth to minister among others following their ordination to the Gospel ministry. These include: William Sherwood Hobgood, Thomas Jefferson Horner, Fred N. Day, Joseph Gooch Blalock, Robert Alfred McFarland, Elmore D. Gooch, Leland Ray O'Brian, Wayne Curtis, Jerreal Boyd Buchanan, J. Paul Berry, and Glen Cameron Currin.



Mountain Creek Baptist Church

2136 Mountain Creek Road
Oxford, North Carolina

Thirty-eight persons who had taken letters of dismissal from Hester Baptist Church entered into the constitution of Mountain Creek Church, May 27, 1860. The Reverend Robert Irah Devin was chosen to serve them as their first pastor. The first Clerk of record was Abner Currin, who was serving in that capacity at least as early as 1863-64.

Within two years of her constitution, the church had increased in membership to 111. That roster grew to 215 by 1869-70; 307, by 1915-16; 447, by 1939-40; 508, by 1962-63; and 510 in 1963-64—the greatest numerical strength the church has reported to date. Membership in 1991-92 was 428.

A Sunday School was organized in 1872, with J. S. Hobgood serving as the first Superintendent of this Bible teaching auxiliary. Woman's Missionary Society was first organized in 1902, although the name of the president for this missionary group does not appear in associational annals until 1917-18, when Mrs. Clyde Hart held that position. L. D. Parham was leader of the first Baptist Young People's Union of record in 1924-25. A missionary organization for men does not appear to have been formed until 1973-74, with the Reverend Kenneth Gene Childers as the first president.

The congregation has occupied three houses of worship during her history of one hundred thirty-three years. The first, a wooden structure, appears to have accommodated the church for only a few years. The second—also a wooden structure of similar design to the first—was used until 1918, when it was replaced with the present cross-shaped, red brick facility, designed to seat 325, and to accommodate seven Sunday School classes in separate classrooms. Additional educational facilities, adjacent to the sanctuary, were provided in 1957. A parsonage was added to the church's physical assets with the calling of her first full-time pastor in 1960.

B. D. Frazier, H. J. Hester, and Z. M. P. Downey were “delegated” to represent the church at the annual meeting of Flat River Association, August 14-16, 1860, when the church was admitted into the counsels of that body. She has served as host or co-host to her fellow Baptists of the Association on eight occasions: 1863, 1873, 1894, 1920, 1945, 1953, 1968, and most recently in 1984. Among her members who have been elected to leadership positions with the Association are Benjamin Dyer Howard, Clerk, 1881-82, John S. Watkins, Moderator, 1920-21, and John M. Owen, Moderator, 1982-83.

Those who have served in the pastoral office among Mountain Creek Baptists include the following: Robert Irah Devin, 1860-63; Robert Henry Marsh, 1863-66; John Lemuel Carroll, 1866-67; Robert Irah Devin, 1867-87; Charles Augustus Jenkins, 1887-93; John Thomas Riddick, 1893-96; Elbert Young Pool, 1896-1901; Augustus Vallie Joyner, 1902-07; Joseph Gooch Blalock, 1907-09; Patrick Henry Fontaine, 1909-15; Jerre Reaves, 1915-21; Jackson Uriah Teague, 1922-41; W. Barry Garrett, 1942-43; James W. Cummings, 1943-45; William Isaac Terrell, 1945-50; Dennis Moore Larkins, 1951-59; Jones Lemar Wheeler, 1962-73; Kenneth Gene Childers, 1974-81; Terry Dee Cagle, 1982-85; John Weathersby Edge, 1986-89; and Lee V. Coyle, 1991 to the present.

One of Mountain Creek’s sons has been ordained to the work of the Gospel; namely, George Thomas Watkins, whose ordination actually took place at the associational meeting in 1889. Some twenty-five of her members took letters of dismissal in 1896 to enter into the constitution of Sharon Baptist Church.



Olive Grove Baptist Church

3024 Olive Grove Church Road
Creedmoor, North Carolina

One of the two churches which applied for and was granted admission to Flat River Association, August 16, 1882, bore the name "Olive Grove." Her origins stemmed from a series of revival meetings conducted in the neighborhood by the Reverend W. P. Stallings in 1880. Being separated from the nearest Baptist Church—Fellowship, in Granville County—by the sometimes treacherous and unpredictable waters of Falls Creek, these Baptists residing in northwestern Wake County decided to build themselves a place of worship. Their determination issued in the construction of Keith's Chapel, which may have served as a union, or interdenominational, place of worship for several months thereafter.

Just how early this fellowship—or a portion thereof—was constituted into a Baptist church is no longer ascertainable. At the time of her admission into Flat River Association, she reported 24 members. However, she also reported having received 24 members, while dismissing 3, during the course of the preceding year, 1881-82! Her pastor in 1881-82 was the Reverend James W. Atkinson; her first Clerk, J. A. Aiken.

The membership of the church had increased to 106 by 1905-06; 202, by 1920-21; 304, by 1957-58; and 409, by 1989-90. Membership in 1991-92 was 416—making Olive Grove one of the few churches in the Association whose current membership exceeds that which has been reported in any previous year.

A Sunday School was organized in 1886, with A. B. Smith as her first Superintendent. Woman's Missionary Society dates from at least as early as 1919, when Rosa Ragland was listed as president of this missionary auxiliary. An organized program of church training appears to date from 1954-55, when W. D. Emory was noted as Director of Baptist Training Union for the church. A missionary organization for Baptist Men was first noted in the associational records of 1969-70, with Fletcher Keith serving as president of this men's missions auxiliary.

The earliest place of worship for the fellowship which became Olive Grove Church was a brush arbor, erected on land donated for that purpose by Benneham Cameron. This temporary shelter was replaced after three months' use by a log structure, which continued to accommodate the congregation until 1887, when it—in turn—was replaced by a frame structure. It was dedicated to the service of God in 1889, in services conducted by the Reverend W. P. Stallings. The present facility—originally an 8-room, red brick structure, including sanctuary to seat 500—was constructed in 1929. A recreational/fellowship building was added to the church's physical properties in 1958, an educational annex in 1965, and an addition to the fellowship hall in 1986. The parsonage dates from 1957, when the church entered upon a program of full-time services.

Pastors of record who have ministered to the spiritual needs of the Olive Grove fellowship since the time of her admission into Flat River Association include the following: James W. Atkinson, 1883-84; Nicholas Pezonna Stallings, 1886-89; J. H. Hutchinson, 1889-91; John Alexander Beam, 1891-93; Zadock W. Wheelous, 1893; William Yancey Chappell, 1894-1900; James W. Atkinson, 1901-12; Rex Battle Duckett, 1913; C. V. Reid, 1914; John Herman Barnes, 1915-17; James Blaine Davis, 1918-20; Jackson Gray Murray, 1921-22; Henry Grady Dorsett, 1923-26; and Lucius Russell Evans, 1926-31.

Also, Cadwin Hugh Norris, 1932-34; Henry Grady Dorsett, 1934-36; J. B. Teal, 1936-38; William Clive Francis, 1939; Robert Eugene Adkins, 1940-41; Paul Hester, 1942-43; Paul Hester, 1942-43; I. T. Stroud, 1944-46; Walter Louis Jones, 1947; Edwin Rudy Andrews, 1948-50; Boyce H. Creamer, 1950-52; C. H. Beard, 1952-53; Robert Lawson, 1954-56; Allen Holt Higginbotham, 1957-58; Larry E. Roberts, 1959-61; Marshall K. Tribble, 1963-67; James Rhodes, 1968; Edward Eugene Hunsinger, 1969-74; Benny Joseph Leonard, 1975-79; Douglas Dewitt Agnew, 1980-81; Paul Zane Brown, 1981-83; Ernest Glen Holt, 1983-87; Jeffrey Lance Borden, 1987-90; and Charles Anderson Smith, Jr., 1991 to the present.

The Olive Grove Church and community have entertained the Association in annual session on the following occasions: 1937, 1942, 1959, 1975, and 1991.



Oxford Baptist Church

Main Street
Oxford, North Carolina

Constituted on September 2, 1848, Oxford Baptist Church represented the fruits of two years of labor on the part of the Reverend Robert Irah Devin, who had been engaged by the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina in 1846 to engage in missionary activity within Granville County, with particular emphasis upon the Town of Oxford. Fifteen persons—four men and eleven women—entered into the constitution of this body, with Devin and the Reverend Jeremiah Bell Jeter serving as the presbytery in effecting her organization according to traditional Baptist polity. Devin was called to the pastoral office. William Parham was the first church Clerk of record (1849).

While the initial prospects for establishing a vigorous Baptist presence in Oxford may have appeared less than auspicious—with Devin able to identify only five persons of Baptist persuasion residing in the town of 700 inhabitants in 1846—numerical growth was to characterize the future. The little band of believers had increased in number to twenty-two by the time the church was admitted into the fellowship of Flat River Association in 1849. That number reached 103 in 1860-61; 215, in 1888-89; 312, in 1903-04; 440, in 1906-07; 538, in 1913-14; 635, in 1915-16; 732, in 1921-22; 818, in 1924-25; 991, in 1937-38; 1,061, in 1938-39, 1,110, in 1940-41; 1,205, in 1945-46; 1,316, in 1948-49; 1,430, in 1955-56; and 1,499, in 1959-60—this being the largest membership reported to date. Membership in 1991-92 was 1,034.

While the church undoubtedly conducted a Sunday School in earlier years, the first school of record was noted in the associational annals for 1871-72, with Titus T. Grandy and E. C. Montague serving as Superintendents. A Woman's Missionary Society was organized on February 27, 1891, with Cynthia Herndon (Mrs. Robert Irah) Devin as first president of this missions auxiliary. Effie Lee was president of Baptist Young People's Union in 1921-22, the first year in which associational records began to include statis-

tics on this church training ministry. Dr. Franklin P. Hobgood—a leading layman in Oxford Baptist Church, and president of Oxford College— was a “pioneer” in the Laymen’s Missionary Movement after 1910. A Baptist Men’s group may have been present by the late 1930s. However, the first president of record for the Baptist Brotherhood auxiliary was J. E. Rawls, who was serving in that capacity in 1955-56.

The first house of worship for the congregation—a 40’ x 60’ frame building, constructed on Broad Street—was dedicated to the service of God on July 2, 1848, Dr. William Hooper, President, Wake Forest College, delivering the dedicatory sermon. It remained in use until 1896, when replaced by a red brick structure, which was formally dedicated upon payment of the debt which had been incurred in constructing the facility, December 30, 1900. The present cream-colored brick structure—with sanctuary to seat 800, 7 adjoining assembly rooms, and 57 Sunday School rooms—was completed in 1928. Additional properties were purchased in 1957, 1967, and 1968 to accommodate the expanding ministries of the church.

Oxford Baptist Church has entertained the annual sessions of Flat River Association on ten occasions: 1864, 1874, 1882, 1915, 1918, 1932, 1949, 1964, 1973, and 1989. Moreover, she has hosted the annual meetings of the Baptist State Convention on three occasions: 1849, 1879, and 1897. The members from the church who have been elected to major leadership positions by the local Baptist Association are legion. A partial roster of these includes the following: E. C. Montague, Treasurer, 1868-71; Titus T. Grandy, Treasurer, 1873-74; Walter P. Stradley, Clerk, 1887; Franklin P. Hobgood, Moderator, 1882-88; Frank Wills Hancock, Sr., Treasurer, 1897-99; W. A. Devin, Moderator, 1913-16; Frank Wills Hancock, Sr., Moderator, 1922-26; Willard Henry Upchurch, Moderator, 1927-36; Madison Lamar Banister, Moderator, 1949-50; Sam C. Hall, Moderator, 1953-54; William A. Mitchiner, Moderator, 1957-58; Clarence Edwin Godwin, Moderator, 1971-73; J. B. Clay, Moderator, 1978-79; and Norman S. Jones, Treasurer, 1989 to the present.

Those who have served the church in a pastoral connection include: Robert Irah Devin, 1848-57; William Hill Jordan, 1857-58; Moses Baldwin, 1859; Elijah Forbes Beachum, 1859-62; Washington Manly Wingate, 1862-67; John Lemuel Carroll, 1867-69; Robert Henry Marsh, 1869-73; Franklin Royal Underwood, 1873-80; Charles Augustus Jenkins, 1880-83; John Steger Hardaway, 1883-1904; Adoniram B. Dunaway, 1904-11; Jesse Burton Weatherspoon, 1912-13; George Thomas Lumpkin, 1913-16; Jacob David Harte, 1917-25; Oscar Ray Mangum, 1926-28; Roy Ray McCulloch, 1929-36; Madison Lamar Banister, 1936-54; Herbert Wayland Baucom, Jr., 1955-64; Clarence Edwin Godwin, 1965-83; E. Rudy Patton, 1984-88; and James Steven Bolton, 1989 to the present.

Among those whom Oxford Baptists have sent forth into the ministry are: Hunter Hardaway, R. E. Hardaway, William Bullock Pittard, Jr., Paul Gettys Gillespie, Bob Holland, James E. Baucom, James Blanchard, and Coy H. Jeans.



Peace's Chapel Baptist Church

4572 Antioch Road
Oxford, North Carolina

According to a notation found in the *Minutes* of Central Baptist Association for 1888—the year in which she applied for admission into that body—the church called Peace's Chapel was constituted on Saturday, July 30, 1887. She represented the fruits of the labors of the Reverend Marion R. Pernell who, together with the Reverend William Ashley Barrett, comprised the presbytery which presided over the organizational meeting. The charter members numbered thirty-five. Pernell was chosen pastor; W. B. Dickerson, Clerk.

Church membership had declined to twenty-two at the time of the admission of the church to Central Association. The membership roster included 100 names in 1898-99; 219, in 1922-23; 312, in 1936-37; 407, in 1985-86; and 426, in 1991-92. Thus, the church's current membership represents the greatest numerical strength she has reported to date during her history of one hundred six years.

The earliest Sunday School of record was being conducted in 1886-87, with J. J. Gordon, Superintendent. A Woman's Missionary Society was organized in 1909, with Irene Howell elected president of this missions auxiliary. Baptist Young People's Union seems not to have been a functioning organization at Peace' Chapel, but its successor—Baptist Training Union—was being conducted on a weekly basis at least as early as 1948-49, with George Gresham, Director. A Baptist Brotherhood was organized in 1963-64, with 23 charter members, and J. B. Harris serving as president of this men's auxiliary.

The initial meeting house was the loft of a tobacco barn owned by Alexander T. Peace. This makeshift facility continued to accommodate the congregation for some three years, when a T-shaped, framed structure—including sanctuary to seat 400 and seven Sunday School classrooms—was sufficiently complete to enable the Reverend Mr. Pernell to conduct the initial worship service therein on June 21, 1890. Fully com-

pleted and furnished in 1896, the building was moved 100 feet to the west of the original site in 1927. Additional educational facilities were provided in 1936. The present facility was built in 1958-59, with the first services therein conducted on June 28, 1959. A parsonage was added to the church's assets in 1962, following the call of the Reverend Phillip Ray Morrow as the first full-time pastor in July 1961. The most recent addition to the church's physical properties was a combined Fellowship Hall/Educational unit in 1976.

After maintaining affiliation with Central Association for two years, Peace's Chapel was admitted into the fellowship of Flat River Association in 1890. Since that date, she has been host, or co-host, to the annual meetings of the Association in 1938, 1957, 1964, and 1977. Mrs. Stanley Daniel, a member of this church, served as associational Treasurer in 1986.

Since the pastoral tenure of Marion R. Pernell, 1887-91, Peace's Chapel has enjoyed the ministrations of the following ministers of the Gospel: Kenneth Cassidy Horner, 1892-93; Thomas Benton Hill, 1893-96; Charles Ross Taylor, 1896-98; Edwin Rowland Harris, Sr., 1899-1902; Arthur Columbus Sherwood, 1903-04; Oliver Nicholas Marshall, 1905-06; Arthur Columbus Sherwood, 1906-07; Thomas Christopher Singleton, 1907-08; Asa Parker Gray, 1909-10; Rufus Edwin Powell, 1910-12; Victor V. McGuire, 1912-13; Eugene Grissom Usry, 1913-18; Dossie Elbert Deaton, 1918-20; Eugene Grissom Usry, 1920-50; Norman Arrington Hicks, 1951-56; John Richard Ball, 1957-58; Frank Ross Campbell, 1958-61; Phillip Ray Morrow, 1961-67; Eugene Talmadge Williams, 1967-71; James William Quarles, 1971-73; L. W. Burnette, 1973-78; Russell Wayne McCracken, 1978-82; Robert Paul McCrary, 1982-89; and Timothy Craig Worthington, 1990-93.



Pleasant Grove Baptist

Creedmoor-Wilton Road
Creedmoor, North Carolina

Small congregations of persons residing in the surrounding neighborhood began to assemble during the Summer of 1858 in what contemporaries described as “a very pleasant grove” to listen to the preaching of the Reverend Jephtha H. Layton. The inspiration of his messages led some of his congregants to determine to establish a church for the convenience of those who lived nearby. Accordingly, a presbytery consisting of the Reverends Layton, Elijah Hester, and James P. Montague, presided over the constitution of such a fellowship on October 30, 1858. Ten persons—six women and four men—entered into this constitution, electing to name their church after their meeting place—Pleasant Grove. The Reverend Jephtha H. Layton was chosen as pastor; Elijah Winston, elected Church Clerk.

Membership had increased to thirty-six by the time the church applied for and was granted admission in Flat River Association, August 16, 1859. The number of names on the church roster grew to 105 by 1893-94; 222, by 1910-11; 304, by 1915-16; 409, by 1980-81; 512, by 1986-87; and 590 at the time of the latest report in 1991-92.

Earliest reference to a Sunday School was found in the associational annals for 1877-78, with G. W. Rogers, Superintendent. The ladies of the congregation were participating in Woman’s Missionary Society as early as 1922-23, when Siddie Rogers was president of this missions auxiliary. Baptist Young People’s Union was organized in 1923-24, with Grace Rogers, president. Baptist Brotherhood was organized in 1964-65, with C. B. Newton, Jr., the first president of this men’s auxiliary.

The first house of worship was constructed in 1859 on a tract of land which had been purchased for that purpose from Thompson Blackley. This facility—a frame structure, designed to seat 500—continued to accommodate the needs of the congregation until it was replaced in 1961. Meanwhile, Sunday School wings had been added to

either side of this structure in 1909. An educational unit was constructed in 1959, a parsonage purchased in 1969, and a new sanctuary erected in 1987. Upon entering a new sanctuary, the church renovated the 1961 facility for use by the Sunday School.

Subsequent to her admission into Flat River Association, Pleasant Grove Church has entertained the annual meetings of the Association on four occasions: 1890, 1951, 1971, and 1987. Thomas E. Averette, a layman from the church, was elected Moderator of the Association for 1990 and 1991.

The roster of ministers who have been called to the pastoral office includes the following: Jephtha H. Layton, 1858-68; John Joyner Lansdell, 1868-69; Jephtha H. Layton, 1869-76; William Ashley Barrett, 1876-80; John Caswell Hocutt, 1880-82; James W. Atkinson, 1882-94; Joseph Edwin Smith, 1894-96; Henry Hamilton Mashburn, 1896-97; Jesse Coleman Owen, 1897-99; James W. Atkinson, 1899-1903; William Marion Whiteside, 1903-04; Matthias Darling Austin, 1904-05; Arthur Columbus Sherwood, 1905-08; Kelly Wade Hogan, 1908-09; James Lee Martin, 1909-20; Lalister Matthews Hobbs, 1920-22; and John Alfred Brendle, 1922-24.

Also, Edward Lowell Spivey, 1924-25; Sankey Lee Blanton, 1925-27; John Clyde Yates, Sr., 1927-30; Sankey Lee Blanton, 1930; Charles Lee Gillespie, 1930-35; Clarence Eugene Baker, 1936-39; Needham Arthur Catlette, 1939-40; Gordon Van Stephens, 1940-41; Cadwin Hugh Norris, 1941-43; Linwood Ray Jordan, 1944-47; Elmer Lamar Kincaid, 1948-50; Lewis Warren Turner, 1950-54; Rudolph Raymond Pulley, 1954-56; Herbert G. Zerof, 1956-59; James Aaron Lewis, 1959-62; James Landrum Johnson, 1962-64; Gilmer Johnson Beck, 1964-68; Roy Vincent Young, Jr., 1968-73; John M. Corey, 1973-77; and the current pastor, Melvin Thomas Robertson, who assumed the pastoral office in 1978.

In recent years, Pleasant Grove has ordained three of her men to the work of the Gospel ministry: Gary Montague Brummitt, 1989; Robert Lavan Oliver, 1990; and Roger Lee Overton, Jr., 1991.



Poplar Creek Baptist Church

Poplar Creek Road
Henderson, North Carolina

The church now known as Poplar Creek was first constituted on September 24, 1836, at Floyd's Meeting House in what is now western Vance County. Hence, its earliest designation was "Floyd's,"—a name which was retained in associational records until 1844, after which "Poplar Creek" appears. Neither the number of constituent members who entered into the constitution, nor the churches from which they may have come, is any longer ascertainable. The presbytery of ministers who presided over the organization of this new fellowship consisted of the Reverends Samuel Duty and Josiah Crudup. Duty was called as first pastor to the congregation. Randolph Hester was elected Church Clerk.

By the time Floyd's applied for and was admitted to membership in Flat River Association, August 8, 1840, the little church reported a membership of sixteen. That number grew to 57 by 1846-47, but had declined again to 34 in 1852-53—the last year in which this earliest church made report to the annual meeting of Flat River Association. The name of Poplar Creek was dropped from the roster of churches affiliated with the Association in 1857. Those who were desirous of maintaining a vital church connection apparently joined themselves to the church worshipping at Tabb's Creek.

In consequence of a series of revival meetings which were conducted by the Reverend Moses Baldwin at Tabb's Creek Meeting House in 1858, the decision was made to revive the fellowship which had formerly worshiped on Poplar Creek. Thus, Poplar Creek remained an "arm," or "branch," of Tabb's Creek Church until re-constituted as an independent body in 1863. In that same year, she applied for and was granted re-admission to Flat River Association. Church membership, which was reported to be 43 in 1862-63, grew to 108 in 1869-70 and 175 in 1932-33. The church's letter

to the Association noted a membership of 180 in 1991-92, that total representing the height of numerical strength to this date.

Sunday School was being conducted at least as early as 1871-72, when E. C. Montague—a member of Oxford Church—was listed in the associational *Minutes* as Superintendent. A Woman's Missionary Society was organized in 1907, Viola Fleming, president. The Presence of a Baptist Young People's Union was not reported until 1923, when Mrs. Dorsey Hart was listed as president of this church training auxiliary. An organization of Baptist Men was not effected until 1991-92, with Donnie Dunkley serving as the initial president of this missions auxiliary.

Floyd's Meeting House—a log structure located some 20 yards south of the present church site—was probably used by the congregation until 1859-60, when the present church building was constructed. This one-room, frame structure, which was designed to accommodate a congregation of up to 400 persons, was dedicated to the service of God in 1860, with the Reverend Josiah Bridges Solomon delivering the dedicatory message. An educational annex was completed in 1976. The church's first parsonage was built in 1987.

Poplar Creek first entertained an annual meeting of Flat River Association in 1866. Since that date, she has been host, or co-host, to the annual meeting of her Association on five other occasions: 1888, 1913, 1940, 1962, and 1979. Arthur C. Parham, whose spiritual roots lay with Tabb's Creek Church, was a member of Poplar Creek at the time he served as Moderator of the Association, 1892-95.

The names of those who served in the pastoral office among Poplar Creek Baptists prior to 1863 have not been fully preserved. Samuel Duty may have been the first pastor to serve the church which was constituted as Floyd's in 1836. Patrick Henry Smith, who is listed as pastor in the associational *Minutes* of 1845, probably served until at least 1851, when his name appears again as pastor in another source.

The roster is complete, however, after the re-constitution in 1863. It includes the following: Elijah Forbes Beachum, 1863-66; John Lemuel Carroll, 1866-68; Joshua Addison Stradley, 1868-75; Franklin Royal Underwood, 1875-80; Robert Henry Marsh, 1880-94; Thomas Benton Hill, 1894-96; Willis Richard Cullom, 1896-1902; Alsey Dalton Hunter, 1902-05; Herman Thomas Stevens, 1906-08; Joshua Addison Stradley, 1909-10; Edward Rosser Nelson, 1911-13; Hampton Gerome Bryant, 1913; Edward Rosser Nelson, 1914-16; Jackson Uriah Teague, 1917; Samuel Lewis Morgan, 1919; E. R. Morgan, 1920; Willis Richard Cullom, 1921-30; J. W. Davis, 1931-33; William Dowd Poe, 1933-43; and John Holmes McCrimmon, 1944. Also, Reuben Talmadge Smith, 1945-47; Billy Marlin Gordon, 1949; Ray Keith Hodge, 1949; William Johnson Edwards, 1952-55; Eldridge Thomas Vinson, 1955-59; James Leonard Burnham, 1960-61; Millard Bennett, 1961; Charles Brand Parker, Jr., 1962-65; Albert Eugene Hawkins, 1965; Norris Wilborn Wilson, 1966-69; Richard James Englert, Jr., 1969-71; John William Phillips, 1971-88; and David Cameron Ford, the current pastor, since 1988.



Providence Baptist Church

4603 Old Route 75
Oxford, North Carolina

The immediate origins of what was to be constituted as Beulah Baptist Church stem from the request of five active laymen in Tally Ho Church who, in 1906, sought permission to form a new church which would be more convenient to some of her members. These five—Sim Brinkley, Lockett Parham, Carl Piper, George Royster, and Thomas J. Smith—then became an organizing committee to effect such a constitution. The date of the formal organization of the body was March 19, 1907, when thirty members of Tally Ho Church entered into the constitution of Beulah Baptist Church. The presbytery consisted of the Reverend Jesse Richard Pace, the Reverend Joshua Addison Stradley, Deacon Franklin P. Hobgood, and other deacons representing Tally Ho, Enon, Oxford, and Mount Zion churches. Stradley was chosen as first pastor; Thomas J. Smith, Church Clerk. The name “Beulah” was retained until 1922, when it was changed to “Providence.”

Upon admittance into the fellowship of churches comprising Flat River Association in July 1907, Beulah (i.e., Providence) reported a membership of thirty-four. That number had increased to 111 by 1909-10; 216, by 1919-20; 301, by 1948-49; 405, by 1955-56; and 473, by 1968-68—the year in which the church recorded her greatest numerical strength to date. Associational statistics for 1991-92 reported a membership in Providence Church of 445.

Sunday School was conducted from the beginning, with George Royster serving as the first Superintendent. While the date of the organization of the earliest Woman’s Missionary Society is unknown, Mrs. J. T. Averette represented Beulah W.M.U. at the formation of an associational Woman’s Missionary Union auxiliary in 1910. Baptist Young People’s Union was a functioning organization at least as early as 1921-22, when Annie Bell Averette was listed as president of this church training group. A Bap-

tist Men's group was formed in 1955-56, with Brodie Jones elected to serve as first president of this missions auxiliary.

Initial services of worship were conducted in a school building which served the community. The first meeting house was erected in the Fall of 1907 on a lot which had been donated for that purpose by Mr. & Mrs. P. L. Parham. With additions to this original structure in 1912 and in 1936, it continued to accommodate the congregation until 1950, when replaced by the present facility. A parsonage was added to the church's physical assets in 1964, and a Fellowship Building in 1973. The original meeting house—still owned by the church—serves as a community building.

Providence first entertained the Association in annual meeting in 1925. She has hosted, or co-hosted, her fellow churches in associational meeting on four other occasions since that date: 1941, 1959, 1974, and 1990. Numbered among her members who have served the Association in elective office are: John N. Watkins, Treasurer, 1920-23; and Lila Piper, Clerk, 1959-65, and Treasurer, 1972-79.

Those who have served in the pastoral office include: Joshua Addison Stradley, 1907-12; George Taylor Tunstall, 1912-14; T. A. Tatum, 1915; Hampton Gerome Bryant, 1916-18; Eugene Grissom Usry, 1919-22; Jackson Uriah Teague, 1923; Paul Gamaliel Hartsell, 1924-30; Gordon Van Stephens, 1930-40; Jesse Marshall Walker, 1941-43; James W. Cummings, 1943-45; William Isaac Terrell, 1945-50; Clyde Franklin Melton, 1951-53; Percy Augustus Cline, Jr., 1953-55; Lester Willard Smith, 1956-67; Herman Lewis Smith, 1968-74; William Alexander Farrar, Jr., 1974-80; Clarence Woodrow Butler, Jr., 1980-83; Robert Howard Rhoden, 1983-86; and Irvin Warren Adcock, 1986 to the present.

Providence has ordained at least three of her sons to the work of the Gospel ministry during the course of her history. These were: Bernice William "Bill" Jackson, 1943; Lonnie Johnson Newton, Jr., 1943; and Billy Lynch, 1966.



Rock Spring Baptist Church

Townsville, North Carolina

The *Minutes* of Flat River Association for 1885 indicate that the Reverend Thomas Jefferson Horner had been employed to “preach at Bethany & at [a] new church near Townsville.” That new church had come into being both as a result of the Reverend Mr. Horner’s earlier ministrations in the community, and through the desire of some members of Island Creek Church living in the community to have a place of worship nearer their places of residence. Rock Spring Baptist Church was formally constituted in January 1886, with thirteen charter members. Horner was chosen first pastor; Francis Duiguird Harris, Church Clerk.

Membership had increased to fifteen by the time the church was admitted into the fellowship of Flat River Association, August 11, 1886. Thereafter, it increased to 106 by 1898-99; 220, by 1919-20; 307, by 1937-38; and 318, by 1945-46—the year in which the church reported its greatest numerical strength to date. Associational statistics for 1991-92 noted a membership of 160.

Sunday School was conducted from the time of the church’s beginnings, with Chalmers Gordon, Superintendent in 1885-85. A Woman’s Missionary Society was organized in 1904, with Mrs. Ed Royster the first president of this missions auxiliary. A Baptist Young People’s Union—perhaps the earliest to be formed in the Association—was organized on October 18, 1914. The news account of its organization which appeared in the *Biblical Recorder*, December 9, 1914, indicated that the union had enrolled twenty-five members. James Moody was elected president for 1914-15. Baptist Brotherhood was not an organized missions education unit until 1976-77, with Roy Garrison the first president of this auxiliary.

The church continues to worship in the structure which was built for that purpose in 1885. It originally consisted of a sanctuary to seat 425, and 4 Sunday School rooms. Repairs to the structure were made in 1929, with 5 additional Sunday School rooms annexed to either side of the building at the same time. Extensive remodeling was com-

pleted in 1947-48, and a Fellowship Hall constructed in 1975. A parsonage was constructed in 1961, following the church's decision to engage a pastor for full-time services in the previous year.

Rock Spring has entertained the Association in annual meeting on only three occasions during the past one hundred seven years. The first such meeting was hosted by the church and community in 1911; the second, in 1949; and the most recent, in 1982.

The Reverend Thomas Jefferson Horner served in the pastoral office among Rock Spring Baptists for only one year, 1886; He was succeeded by the following ministering brethren: Thomas W. Greer, 1887-88; Joshua Addison Stradley, 1889-1902; Jesse Richard Pace, 1902-03; Isaac Newton Loftin, 1903-04; Herman Thomas Stevens, 1905-08; Elias Dodson Poe, 1908-09; Sidney Cecil Hilliard, 1909; J. H. Spaulding, 1910-13; John Madison Arnette, 1914-17; Samuel Lewis Morgan, 1918; Carey Almon Upchurch, Jr., 1919-20; Hughey Osborne Miller, 1921-23; Carey Almon Upchurch, Jr., 1923; Jackson Uriah Teague, 1923-30; Samuel Lewis Morgan, 1934-40; Marshall Lee Pridgen, 1940-42; Burnice Girtha Bass, 1942-43; and Albert S. Lamm, 1943-45.

Also, James Lois Walter Moose, 1945-51; Elijah Daniel Flowers, Jr., 1951-54; Milton Floyd Hellams, 1954-59; Robert Dale Shepherd, 1959-61; Cecil Ballard, 1961; Harold Kahler, 1962-63; Eugene Stevens Warrick, 1964-66; Howard Allan Wimmer, 1966-70; William Benny Powers, 1970-72; Daniel W. Collins, 1973-75; Joseph P. McCullough, 1975-77; Edward Lee Milliner, Jr., 1977-81; Norman Arrington Hicks, 1982-90; and James Preston Tyndall, the current pastor, 1990 to the present.



Sharon Baptist Church

6746 Goshen Road
Oxford, North Carolina

The Reverend John Thomas Riddick, Pastor of Mountain Creek Church, began to conduct occasional preaching services for residents in the vicinity of Wolf Rock school-house in the Summer of 1895. With the aid of R. T. Blackwell, a layman in the church, a Sunday School was soon organized. Out of these beginnings emerged the vision of establishing a new Baptist church to serve the neighborhood. Accordingly, Sharon Baptist Church was formally constituted on November 28, 1896, with twenty-nine charter members who had taken letters of dismission from Mountain Creek, Hester, Enon, and Mount Zion churches. The Reverend John Alexander Beam, President of Bethel Hill Institute, was called to serve as first pastor. W. A. McFarland was elected Clerk.

A membership of twenty-six was reported at the time of Sharon's admission into Flat River Association, July 14, 1897. That number had increased to 110 by 1914-15; 205, by 1940-41; and 254, by 1950-51—the year in which the church attained her greatest numerical strength to date. Statistics for 1991-92 noted a membership of 177.

The earliest Sunday School Superintendent of record was J. C. Currin, who was serving in that capacity in 1896-97. Woman's Missionary Union was not noted in associational records until 1937-38, with Mrs. J. R. Williams presiding over the programs and activities of this missions auxiliary in that year. Baptist Training Union was organized in 1952-53, Clyde Powell, Director. There is no evidence of the existence of a Baptist Brotherhood prior to 1973-74, when Ray Huff was listed as president of this men's missions auxiliary.

Land on which to construct the first meeting house was donated by J. C. Currin, with the building completed in late 1896. It continued to served the needs of the congregation until 1938, when it was replaced with a frame, cross-shaped structure, with sanctuary to seat 250, and adjacent Sunday School rooms. Extensive renovation/repair

to the structure was required in 1968 in the wake of a fire which destroyed the interior of the sanctuary. Additional classroom facilities were provided in 1957 and 1982, respectively. A parsonage was completed in 1967.

Subsequent to her admission into Flat River Association in 1897—when represented at that gathering by J. C. Currin, R. A. McFarland, and C. L. Knott—Sharon Baptists have entertained annual meetings of their Association on five occasions: 1923, 1946, 1960, 1975, and 1991.

Those whom the church has called to serve her in a pastoral connection include: John Alexander Beam, 1896-98; George Crudup Duncan, 1898-99; Elbert Young Pool, 1899-1901; Jesse Richard Pace, 1902-04; Eugene Grissom Usry, 1905-06; Jesse Richard Pace, 1907; Joshua Addison Stradley, 1908-12; Eugene Grissom Usry, 1912; John Alexander Beam, 1912-16; Charles Houston Utley, 1917; Carey Almon Upchurch, Jr., 1917; Eugene Grissom Usry, 1918-23; Edwin Rowland Harris, Sr., 1923-24; Lucius Lanell Hudson, 1924-27; Eugene Grissom Usry, 1928-29; and Joseph Badgett Currin, 1929-34.

Also, Lawyer James Rainey, 1935-36; Eugene Grissom Usry, 1936-48; Norman Arrington Hicks, 1949-51; Lewis Warren Turner, 1952-54; William Johnson Edwards, 1955-58; Oren Jewell Elms, 1959-65; James Cleveland Shelley, 1965-73; Robert Bryant Livingston, 1973-79; Robert Norman, III, 1979-81; Wayne D. Dickard, 1982-83; Bernard Allen Danner, 1984; Elmer Dean Coffey, 1985-89; James Evan Horton, 1989-91; and the current pastor, Robert Baynard, who assumed the pastoral care of the congregation on March 1, 1992.



Stovall Baptist Church

Stovall, North Carolina

On August 12, 1886, the Board of Associational Missions for Flat River Association reported that it had engaged the services of the Reverend Joshua Addison Stradley for fourteen months to preach at Sassafras Fork. It noted further that his labors had issued in the formation of a church in that community. The church, which had been formally constituted on August 7, 1886, had been admitted into the fellowship of the Association on August 11, 1886, at which time she reported a membership of thirty-two. Stradley was called to minister among the members of the congregation as first pastor. J. T. C. Norwood was elected to serve as Clerk. The name of the church—and the community which she served—was changed to Stovall in 1890.

Membership in Stovall Baptist Church had increased to 106 by 1890-91; 207, by 1902-03; 321, by 1922-23; 463, by 1928-29; 511, by 1939-40; 624, by 1943-44; 705, by 1946-47; and 720, by 1951-52, the year in which the church reported her largest membership to date. Current membership (1991-92) is 518.

A Sunday School was organized in March 1887, with M. G. Taylor elected to administer the operation of the school as Superintendent. Woman's Missionary Society was formed in 1899, with Mrs. S. M. Stovall elected to serve as first president of this missions auxiliary. Thomas Allgood was the earliest Director of record for Baptist Training Union, 1941-42. An organization of Baptist Men was formed in 1957-58, with T. G. Stovall presiding over the programs and activities of this group in the initial year of its operation.

The church's house of worship—as initially designed—was a T-shaped frame structure, erected in 1886. Extensive renovations to the original building were made in 1928 and, again, in 1950, to accommodate her expanding educational ministries. A two-story brick annex was constructed in 1963. The church's present parsonage was purchased in 1957.

Flat River Baptist Association has been hosted, or co-hosted, in annual meeting by Stovall Baptists on five occasions. The first occurred ten years after the church's admission into the associational fellowship of churches, August 11-13, 1896. Annuals meetings thereafter have been held at Stovall in 1930, 1950, 1965, and—most recently—in 1982.

Subsequent to the eleven-year tenure of Joshua Addison Stradley as her initial pastor, 1886-87, the church has called the following ministers to serve her in a pastoral relationship: William Francis Fry, 1897-1900; Malicus Addison Adams, 1901-03; Carey Almon Upchurch, Jr., 1903-04; Henry Bradley Jordan, 1905-06; Joshua Addison Stradley, 1907-08; George Taylor Tunstall, 1909-14; T. A. Tatum, 1914-15; Carey Almon Upchurch, Jr., 1916-23; Paul Gamaliel Hartsell, 1923-30; Gordon Van Stephens, 1930-40; Jesse Marshall Walker, 1941-46; William Shelley Caudle, 1947-50; Robert Oren Bradley, 1951-56; Nathan Curtis Knowles, 1957-62; Charles Franklin Lloyd, 1962-67; Howard Austin Stokes, 1967-71; Charles Fred Middleton, 1971-73; Lyn Anderson, 1974-76; Forest McClure Gale, Jr., 1977-79; James Willard Benefield, 1980-82; Donald Vernon Dowless, 1983-85; Eddie Allen Cooper, 1985-87; Terry Gladden, 1988-90; and Daniel Garrison Tilley, 1991 to the present.



Tabb's Creek Baptist Church

Tabb's Creek Road
Oxford, North Carolina

Probably the second oldest church in Flat River Association, and probably a daughter of Grassy Creek, a precise date for the constitution of this church cannot be ascertained. One early Baptist historian, John Asplund, uses the date 1775. The historical sketches in the 1845 *Minutes* of Flat River Association suggest "c[irca] 1792." She is first listed among the churches of Roanoke (VA) Association in May 1793, but the following item in the *Minutes* of that meeting suggest her affiliation with that Association had dated from some years earlier:

Brethren Pickett, Roberts, Dorriss , & Vass were appointed a committee to attend Tabb's Creek and Eno churches, *who have absented themselves from us*, enquire into circumstances, and reasons of this neglect, and make report to the next Assn [italics not in the original].

Elder George Roberts is credited with establishing the first church meeting on Tabb's Creek. The first pastor of record was Josiah Rucks; the first Clerk, Williamson Parham, who may have been serving in that office as early as 1830.

Membership, which was reported to be twenty in 1793, had grown to 60 by 1810-11; 136, by 1843-44; 205, by 1948-49; and 245, by 1969-70—the year in which the church has reported her greatest numerical strength to date. Associational statistics for 1991-92 recorded a membership for Tabb's Creek of 211.

Sunday School was being conducted as early as 1876-77, although statistics submitted to the Association do not indicated the name of the Superintendent at this date. A Woman's Missionary Society was functioning at least as early as 1913, when Mrs. Albert C. Parham represented the organization at the annual meeting of the associational Woman's Missionary Union. Baptist Training Union was organized in 1946-47, with Mrs. Roy Belcher, Director. A Baptist Men's auxiliary was not affected until

1980-81, with Raymond Oakes elected to preside over the activities of this missions organization.

Tradition has it that worship services were conducted in the homes of members of the Tabb's Creek congregation until 1794, when a one-room frame structure was erected on land donated for that purpose by James Parham, Sr. This structure continued to accommodate the congregation until the church became inactive in 1883, with most of her members transferring their affiliation to Poplar Creek Church. Revived and re-constituted in 1906—largely through the instrumentality of Albert C. Parham—the church then met for worship and Bible study in a schoolhouse at Dickerson's Station, 1906-07, after which she constructed a frame building, 40' x 50', on land given for that purpose by James Parham, Jr. The present brick structure, including sanctuary and 4 Sunday School classrooms, was completed in 1950. An educational annex was added in 1955, a parsonage in 1962, and another educational building in 1970.

Tabb's Creek first entertained the Flat River Association, May 21-23, 1796, at a Spring meeting of that body. Since that date, she has also served as host, or co-host, for annual meetings of the Association in 1812, 1827, 1842, 1857, 1958, 1973, and 1989. Albert C. Parham, who was so instrumental in the revival and re-constitution of Tabb's Creek in 1906 that the meeting place was locally known as "Parham's Chapel," served as Treasurer of the Association, 1876-90, and as Moderator, 1892-95. His church membership was actually at Poplar Creek during most of the years of the church's period of inactivity.

The Reverend Josiah Rucks probably served as pastor of the Tabb's Creek Church from at least as early as 1792 until his removal to Smith County, Tennessee, in 1809. Others who are known to have ministered to the congregation for varying periods before 1872 include Thomas Thomasson, Elisha Battle, James Simpson Purefoy, Thomas Jefferson Horner, John Lemuel Carroll, and William J. Fulford. The roster of pastors, which is virtually complete after 1872, includes the following: Thomas Jefferson Horner, 1872-75; William Ashley Barrett, 1876; Robert Irah Devin, 1877; William Hill Jordan, 1878; Adoniram B. Dunnaway, 1907-10; Jesse Burton Weatherspoon, 1911-13; Robert Henry Marsh, 1914-16; and George Taylor Tunstall, 1917-20.

Also, Jackson Uriah Teague, 1921-22; Lucius Lanell Hudson, 1923-25; Jackson Uriah Teague, 1928-38; Carey Almon Upchurch, Jr., 1939-51; William Johnson Edwards, 1952-57; Oren Jewell Elms, 1958-68; Douglas Roebuck, 1968-71; Frank R. Ellis, Jr., 1971-75; Denzil Adams, 1975-79; Tony Walter Cartledge, 1980-85; Lanny Ray Atkins, 1986-89; and James Eldon West, the current pastor, 1990 to the present.



Tally Ho First Baptist Church

Tally Ho and Belltown Roads
Stem, North Carolina

The origins of this church are related in the two following communications addressed to Thomas Meredith, Editor of the *Biblical Recorder*, and penned by the Reverend Alexander Doughan Blackwood, Missionary of the Baptist State Convention to Flat River Association. The first—dated September 12, 1849—appeared in the issue of the *Recorder* for September 22, 1849. The second—dated April 9, 1850—appeared in the *Recorder* of April 20, 1850.

Permit me again through the columns of your paper to communicate to its readers an account of a meeting held by brother Devin and myself, about 9 miles west of Oxford, under a brush arbour, which continued 17 days, during which time the Lord was with us in his power. Many came forward inquiring what they should do to be saved,—about 33 or 4 were enabled to trust in the Saviour and realize that peace of mind that the world can neither give nor take away

I gave you an account last fall of a meeting held by brother Devin and myself, at the close of which I baptized 15 converts, and the citizens immediately raised a subscription to build a meeting house, which is now completed, and upon the whole, a very neat, comfortable church. *On the fifth Sabbath in last month [i.e., March 31, 1850] we assembled there through the inclemency of the weather, and in the presence of a respectable congregation. A church was constituted by brother Devin and myself which will perhaps bear the name of Mt. Pleasant. May the Lord bless this little band of brethren and raise up a flourishing church for himself in that community [italics not in the original].*

This little church was called Mt. Pleasant, 1850-55; Tally Ho, 1856-57; Tally Ho Union, 1858-61; Tally Ho, 1862-1970. The name was changed to Tally Ho First Baptist Church upon the adoption of a church constitution in 1971.

Mount Pleasant Church reported ten members at the time of her admission into the fellowship of Flat River Association, August 9, 1850. The first pastor called to minister to the congregation was Robert Irah Devin; the first Clerk, Thomas Hester. Membership had increased to 102 by 1867-68; 225, by 1899-1900; 304, by 1970-71; and 375, by 1984-85—the largest membership the church has attained to date. Associational statistics for 1991-92 reported membership in Tally Ho First Baptist Church as 307.

Though it did not maintain a continuous existence, a Sunday School was reported as early as 1872, with Samuel Washington serving as Superintendent thereof. A Woman's Missionary Society had been formed prior to 1913, when Mrs. J. P. Bradsher represented the women of Tally Ho at the annual meeting of Woman's Missionary Union, Auxiliary to Flat River Association. Ruby Inez Daniel—later to be appointed to missionary service in Hungary and Nigeria—was president of Baptist Young People's Union in 1923, the earliest year in which associational records listed B.Y.P.U. organizations in the churches. A Baptist Men's auxiliary was formed in 1955-56, with Victor B. Montague as president.

The present church structure, which was completed in 1910, was preceded as a meeting place by the early brush arbor, and the building referred to in the second communication noted above. It was designed as a one-room, rectangular frame structure with seating to accommodate up to 300. Educational facilities were added to the church's physical properties in 1958, a parsonage in 1964, and—most recently—a Fellowship Hall in 1990.

Tally Ho Baptists have entertained annual sessions of the Flat River Association on seven different occasions: 1862, 1881, 1909, 1922, 1952, 1966, and 1983. Among the laymen from the church who have been elected to leadership positions are Legan Hobgood, Treasurer, 1864-66; and W. R. Mangum, Clerk, 1923-26.

Robert Irah Devin and Patrick Henry Smith served as the first two pastors of the church, with the latter holding the pastoral office at the time of his death in 1857. A complete roster of pastors is available after 1863, including the following who have ministered to this congregation: Robert Henry Marsh, 1863-64; John Lemuel Carroll, 1866; Thomas Jefferson Horner, 1868-69; Robert Henry Marsh, 1870; Thomas Jefferson Horner, 1871-74; Robert Henry Marsh, 1874-78; Elijah Forbes Beachum, 1878-83; Robert Henry Marsh, 1883-93; Joseph Edwin Smith, 1894-96; James Lee Martin, 1897-1900; Joshua Addison Stradley, 1901-06; and Arthur Columbus Sherwood, 1907.

Also, Joseph Gooch Blalock, 1980; James Lee Martin, 1908-15; Hampton Gerome Bryant, 1915-18; Lalister Matthews Hobbs, 1918-21; Paul Gamaliel Hartsell, 1921-22; Henry Grady Dorsett, Sr., 1923; Paul Gamaliel Hartsell, 1923-27; Shelby Thomas Morris, 1928-29; Charles Lee Gillespie, 1930-35; Clarence E. Hobgood, 1936-37; High Franklin Harrill, 1937-40; Marvin M. Turner, 1940-42; Cadwin Hugh Norris, 1942-55; Eldridge Thomas Vinson, 1956-59; Glenn Patton, 1959-62; Richard L. Hawks, 1963-65; Delano Rudolph Suggs, 1965-68; Lewis Everette McMannen, 1968-72; Bobby Wayne McNew, 1974-77; Harold Armstrong, 1977-79; Carey J. Cobb, 1979-81; William Clifford Houston, 1981-86; and Robert Randy Hall, 1986-93. The church is currently without a pastor.



First Baptist Church of Tungsten

Tungsten, North Carolina

Constituted on November 5, 1950, with all who would unite with the fellowship within the first six weeks thereafter to be numbered among the charter members, this church grew out of a Sunday School mission which had been established in the community around Tungsten Mine in the Summer of 1949. Bullock Baptist Church had taken the initiative in forming the mission, with Miss Zella Dew Woody—a graduate of Woman's Union Training School and a member of Bullock Church—employed to direct this missionary endeavor. Upon formal organization of the church, John William was called to service as first pastor. Mrs. Bruce Blevins was elected Church Clerk.

The early fortunes of the church fluctuated with those of the mining operation. Ninety members were reported in 1952 when the church was admitted into Flat River Association. That number had increased to 100 in 1953-54. Many of the members moved elsewhere with the cessation of mining operations in 1958. Following a decade and a half of considerable struggle to maintain her ministries, the church began to evidence increased vitality after 1974. Membership had grown to 202 by 1979-80. Associational records for 1991-92 reported a membership of 260.

Floyd Thomas was serving as Superintendent of the Sunday School in 1949-50. Woman's Missionary Union was first organized in 1974-75, with Mrs. Harold Champion elected first president of this missions auxiliary. A Baptist Training Union was formed in 1960-61, Fred Willis, Sr., Director. The men of the church established a Brotherhood in 1972-73, with Lee Roy Beam presiding over the programs and activities of this missions organization.

The church continues to worship in the original structure which was completed in 1950. Educational wings were annexed thereto in 1975 and 1981, respectively.

First Baptist Church of Tungsten has been served by the following pastors during her history of forty-three years: John William Phillips, 1950-51; Ned Hughes, 1951-54; Fred Verlie Ellis, 1954-55; Ernest Canipe, 1955-57; Joseph Foster Bennett, 1957-58; Lee J. Pittman, 1958-70; James S. Talley, 1971-73; Samuel Zaye Brewer, 1974-83; Durwood Perry, 1984-87; Robin Rowe, 1983-84; and Samuel Zaye Brewer, 1987 to the present.



Union Baptist Church

Fish Dam Road
Creedmoor, North Carolina

Preliminary discussion related to the formation of this church took place in the home of Mr. & Mrs. Cecil Keith, Route 1, Creedmoor, on February 12, 1972. Official organization took place one month later, March 5, 1972, when thirty-six persons assembled at Barbara's Florist, Highway 50 south of Creedmoor. By March 12, it was reported that the Reverend Rudolph Raymond Pulley had consented to serve the church as pastor. Officers and deacons were then elected, with Joan Reece named to serve as first Church Clerk.

Membership had increased to seventy-three by the time the church was admitted into the full fellowship of Flat River Association, October 23, 1973. It increased further to 124 by 1975-76; and 152, by 1988-89—the year in which the church has reported her greatest numerical strength to date. Associational records for 1991-92 noted a total membership of 143.

Sunday School has been conducted since the time of the church's constitution, with Bob Woodlief serving as first Sunday School Superintendent. A Woman's Missionary Society was organized in 1976-77 under the leadership of Mrs. C. G. Brodgen, who served as first Director of Woman's Missionary Union for the church. Baptist Brotherhood was added to the roster of mission auxiliaries in 1980-81, with Bobby Harmon serving as the first Director of this ministry.

After conducting services of worship and Sunday School in rented quarters for two years, the congregation moved into its present sanctuary on June 30, 1974. A sixteen-foot extension to the building was completed in 1975.

Union Baptists have been served by three pastors during the course of the past twenty-one years. Rudolph Raymond Pulley, the first pastor, continued in his pastoral relationship with the church until 1989. He was succeeded by John Howard Fishbaugh, 1989-90. The current pastor, Robert Lavan Oliver, assumed his ministerial duties in 1991.



West Oxford Baptist Church

101 Pine Tree Road
Oxford, North Carolina

We have just closed a series of meetings at the Oxford Cotton Mills, which resulted in the conversion of about eighteen souls and the organization of the South Oxford Baptist Church. . . . Immediately after the close of the meeting a council composed of Rev[erend] J[oshua] A[ddison] Stradley, Dr. A[doniram] B. Dunnaway, Rev[erend] J[esse] R[ichard] Pace, and E[ugene] G[rissom] Usry met in the hall near the cotton mills with fourteen happy Christians, who had procured their church letters and asked to be organized into a missionary Baptist Church.

Thus reads a portion of a lengthier communication from the Reverend Mr. Usry which appeared in the *Biblical Recorder*, November 17, 1909. An earlier communication, printed in the *Recorder* of November 3, 1909, indicates that the date of the constitution of the church to which he referred was October 22, 1909. The name "South Oxford" was changed to "West Oxford" in 1911. Usry was called to serve as first pastor; D. F. Lanier, elected first Church Clerk.

The initial band of fourteen had grown to fifty-five in number by the time South Oxford applied for and was granted admission to the fellowship of Flat River Association, July 12, 1910. The roster of church members included 109 names by 1914-15; 200, by 1931-32; 318, by 1949-50; 425, by 1957-58; 511, by 1967-68; and 588, by 1969-70—the year in which the church reported her greatest numerical strength. Current membership (1991-92) is 366.

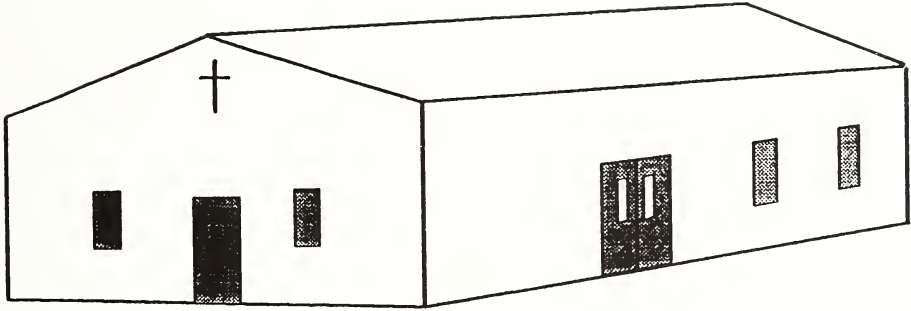
Sunday School—which had actually been conducted in the neighborhood since as early as 1903—was reckoned as an auxiliary of the church from the beginning of her constitution, with D. F. Lanier serving as Superintendent, 1909-10. A Woman's Missionary Society was organized in 1910, with Mrs. D. F. Lanier tapped as first president of this missions auxiliary. Owen Gupton was president of Baptist Young People's

Union in 1922-23—the earliest year for which there are associational records. Baptist Brotherhood was formed by the men of the church in 1954-55, with W. O. Wilson serving as president of this organization during its initial year of operation.

The first house of worship was a frame structure, with sanctuary to seat 300, and six Sunday School classrooms. It was probably completed in 1910 and constructed on a lot which had been donated to the church by R. W. Lassiter. The facility was moved to an adjoining lot in 1922, at which time eight additional Sunday School rooms were annexed to the building. The initial unit of the present structure was completed in 1959. Major renovations to the facility were undertaken in the Summer of 1979, with a fellowship hall constructed in 1990. A parsonage—purchased in 1952 when the church first engaged a pastor for his full-time services—continued to house the church's ministers and their families until 1985.

West Oxford has entertained annual sessions of the Flat River Association on three occasions: 1955, 1969, and 1985. D. F. Lanier was elected Treasurer of the Association, 1950-51.

The roster of those who have served the church and congregation in the pastoral office includes the following: Eugene Grissom Usry, 1910-19; Carey Almon Upchurch, 1920-22; Eugene Grissom Usry, 1922-24; Lucius Lanell Hudson, 1925-28; Eugene Grissom Usry, 1929-50; William Cullom Barham, Jr., 1951-52; Homer Ira Nichols, 1952-53; Albert S. Lamm, 1953-62; Evan Andrew Abbott, 1963-66; Donald Marshall Price, 1967-72; Harvey Louis Beeler, 1973-75; Allen Raines, 1975-81; Toy Steven Bolton, 1982-84; Robby Phillips, 1985-89; Larry Ray Zaky, 1989-93; and Cky John Carrigan, who assumed the pastoral office, May 23, 1993.



Mision Bautista Hermandad

Enon Road
Oxford, North Carolina

When completed, the structure which is pictured above will have been transformed into a 50' x 90' building, complete with sanctuary/fellowship hall, classrooms, kitchen, rest room facilities, and other physical amenities appropriate to a place of worship and fellowship. It is located on a 10-acre site in the Culbreth Community of Granville County—the gift of J. B. Haney, layman of the Oxford Church. Official ground-breaking ceremonies were conducted at the site, July 25, 1993, with the construction project to be largely completed through the labor of volunteers from the churches, together with their Hispanic brothers and sisters who are related to the ministries of this mission, and of the Association with which they have aligned themselves.

The Association's ministry among Hispanics was initiated in the Summer of 1978, when seasonal farm workers first began to come to the area in significant numbers. Worship services, Bible studies, English classes, and leisure activities were soon being scheduled on Sundays, June—August. Response to such Christian witness was increasingly gratifying, especially with the engagement of Spanish-speaking personnel to conduct and/or to coordinate these ministries.

By 1990, it had become apparent that many of those who had come initially to harvest farm produce in the Summer months were becoming year-round residents of the region. Accordingly, associational officials recognized the need to provide for an on-going ministry, rather than a merely seasonal one.

Continuing, weekly ministries among members of the Hispanic community began in February 1991, with Fellowship Baptist Church serving as both host and sponsor. The Reverend Paul Flores, a student at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, was engaged as minister among Hispanics, beginning May 5, 1991. The facilities of Fellowship Church are utilized on Sundays, from 3:30 P.M.—6:30 P.M. for services of worship; on Wednesdays, from 7:30 P.M.—9:00 P.M. for Bible study.

Associational statistics for 1991-92 noted eleven resident members affiliated with Mision Bautista Hermandad. Thirty-eight persons were enrolled in ongoing Bible study. Average attendance for services of worship throughout the associational year was seventy-nine, with that number increasing significantly during the Summer months. Moreover, members of the congregation of this mission station were also engaged in missions through their financial support of the various aspects of the worldwide mission enterprise with which Flat River Baptists had earlier identified themselves.

It has been twenty-one years since Flat River Baptist Association added a new church to the roster of those affiliated with this body as partners in missions and ministry, with the admission of Union Baptist Church into her fellowship in 1972. Mision Bautista Hermandad bids fair to become the next Christian congregation to seek constitution as an independent church body, and—then—to unite her talents, energies, and services in full partnership with those of her fellow Baptists in Flat River Association.

Appendix A

Associational Constitutions and ByLaws

During the past two hundred years, Flat River Baptist Association has evolved from a relatively simple organism to a rather complex organization, now legally incorporated and promoting its purpose(s) and objectives through a salaried staff, a Board of Directors, and a series of Standing Committees. The course of that evolutionary process is reflected in periodic alterations, or amendments, to those documents through which the Association has attempted to define her mission, and to structure her common life towards the realization of that mission.

For purposes of comparison between the Association's early understanding of her mission and structure and that which prevails at present, recorded below are: (1) "The Constitution of the United Baptist Association, Called Flat River," together with the "Rules for the Government of the Association," as found in the manuscript *Minutes* of 1828; and (2) "Articles of Incorporation of Flat River Baptist Association, Inc.," together with the "Bylaws [of] Flat River Baptist Association, Inc.," which were adopted initially on October 20, 1987. The form of these Articles and Bylaws given below are those recorded in the 1991 *Minutes* of the Association.

The manuscript *Minutes* of 1828 are the earliest extant official associational documents which include a record of her Constitution and Rules of Government. However, their substantial verbal agreement with similar documents included in the early records of the parent Roanoke District Association make it probable that these represent the original constitutional provisions of the Flat River Baptist Association, with some allowance for slight verbal alterations or variations.

1. THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED BAPTIST ASSOCIATION, CALLED FLAT RIVER

Preamble

From a long series of experience, we the churches of Jesus Christ, being regularly baptized upon the profession of our faith in Christ, are convinced of the necessity of a combination of churches, in order to perpetuate a union and communion among us; and preserve and maintain a correspondance(sic) with each other in our union: We therefore, propose to maintain and keep the orders and Rules of an Association according to the following form of government.

Art[icle] 1. The association shall be composed of members chosen by the different churches in our union, and duly sent to represent them, and they shall be those whom they shall judge best qualified for that purpose; producing letters from their respective churches certifying their appointment, when they shall be entitled to seat.

Art[icle] 2. In the letters from the different Church's(sic), the number in full fellowship shall be expressed, those Baptized, Received by letter, dismissed, excommunicated, or dead since the last session.

Art[icle] 3. The members thus chosen and convened shall be denominated the United Baptist Association; called Flat River; Being composed of churches in North Carolina, and Virginia; Who shall have no power to Lord it over God's heritage, nor shall they infringe any of the internal rights of any church in the union.

Art[icle] 4. When convened they shall be ruled by a proper decorum.

Art[icle] 5. They shall have a Moderator and Clerk.

Art[icle] 6. New churches may be admitted into this union, Who shall petition by letter and delegates; and upon examination if found orthodox, and orderly, shall be received into the body by the moderator's giving the delegates the right hand of fellowship.

Art[icle] 7. Every church in the union, shall be entitled to representation, but shall have ondley(sic) three members from each.

Art[icle] 8. Every query presented by any member, shall be once read; and before it is debated, the moderator shall put it to vote, and if there be a majority for its being debated, it shall be taken into consideration, and shall be deliberated; but if there be a majority against it; it shall be withdrawn.

Art[icle] 9. Every motion made and seconded, shall be taken under consideration, except it shall be withdrawn by the member who made it.

Art[icle] 10. They shall endeavor to furnish the churches with the minuits(sic); the best method of affecting(sic) it shall be at their discretion.

Art[icle] 11. We think it absolutely necessary to have an association fund, for defraying the expenses of the same, for the raising and supporting of which we think it the duty of each church, in this union, to contribute voluntarily such sums as they shall think proper, and send by the hands of their delegates; and those monies thus contributed shall be deposited in the hands of a treasurer, whom they shall appoint, who shall be accountable to them for all monies received; and be paid out by him according to their direction.

Art[icle] 12. There shall be a Book kep(sic) where in the procedeing(sic) of every session, shall be regularly recorded by a Secretary, who shall receive a compensation yearely(sic) for his services.

Art[icle] 13. The minuits(sic) shall be read, and corrected if need be, and signed by the moderator and clerk before the association rises.

Art[icle] 14. Amendments to this form of government may be made at any time by a majority of the union, that they may think proper.

Art[icle] 15. They shall have power, 1, To provide for the general union of the churches. 2, To preserver(sic) inviolably a chain of communion among the churches. 3, To give the churches all necessary advices in cases of difficulty. 4, To inquire into the cause, why the Churches fail to represent

themselves at any time. 5, To appropriate(sic) those monies, by the Churches contributed to a fund to any purpose they may think proper. 6, To appoint any member or members, by his or their consent, to transact any business which they may see necessary. 7, To appoint a presbytery who shall be authorized to attend to the calls of the churches at all times untill(sic) the next association; to ordain preachers or constitute Churches, without putting the said presbytery to any inconvenience. 8, They shall have power to withdraw from any church in the union which shall violate [or] deviate from the orthodox principles of religion. 9, To admit any of the distant brethren in the ministry as assistants who may be present(sic) at the time of their setting(sic) whom they shall judge necessary. 10, They shall have power to adjourn themselves, to any future time or place they may think most convenient to the churches, provided it be holden once in the year, and the members to fix the time and place for holding the next [association], with in the bounds, etc.

Rules for the Government of the Association

As we believe it to be our indispensable(sic) duty to bind ourselves under certain obligations, in conducting the affairs of the Association, We make the following resolutions:

1. The Association shall be opened and closed by prayer.
2. A moderator and clerk shall be chosen by the suffrage of the members.
3. Only(sic) one person shall speak at once, Who shall rise from his seat, and address the moderator when he speaks.
4. The person thus speaking shall not be interrupted untill(sic) he be done.
5. He shall strictly adhere to the subject, and in no wise reflect on the person who spoke before, so as to make remarks on his failings or imperfections, but shall fairly state the case as he can, so as to convey his ideas.
6. No person shall abruptly(sic) break off, or absent himself, without obtaining liberty.
7. No person shall rise and speak more than one time unless by way of explanation, without liberty being granted.
8. No member shall be at liberty to be whispering or laughing in time of speaking.
9. No member of the body shall address another by any other appellation than brother.
10. The moderator shall not interrupt any member or prohibit his speaking, till he give his light on the subject, unless he break the rules of decorum.
11. The names of the several members shall be inrolled(sic) by the Clerk, and called over as often as the body requires.
12. The moderator shall be the last person who may speak to the subject, and may give his light on it if he pleases, before he puts it to vote.
13. Any member who shall willingly and knowingly break any of these rules, shall be reproved by the body as they may think proper.

2. ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION OF
FLAT RIVER BAPTIST ASSOCIATION, INC.

The undersigned, being of the age of eighteen years or more, does hereby make and acknowledge these Articles of Incorporation for the purpose of forming a non-profit corporation under and by virtue of the laws of the State of North Carolina:

1. The name of the Corporation is Flat River Baptist Association, Inc., and is hereinafter referred to in these Articles as "the Corporation".

2. The period of duration of the Corporation shall be perpetual.

3. The purpose or purposes for which the Corporation is organized are to foster evangelism, missions and benevolences, Christian education and such other objects as may be promoted by the North Carolina Baptist Convention, and the Baptist World Alliance; to preserve correct statistics of the churches affiliated with the Corporation, to promote harmony and give Christian counsel in case of difficulty in and among the churches upon their invitation; and to devise and recommend measures for programs of common interest to all the said churches.

4. In furtherance of its purposes, and to the extent necessary to carry out such purposes, the Corporation

A. Shall have the powers given to and possessed by a North Carolina Corporation organized under the North Carolina Corporation Act.

B. May engage in any lawful activity within the purposes for which the corporation may be organized which are incidental to and in furtherance of the exempt purposes of the Corporation.

5. The address of the initial registered office of the Corporation is 117 West McClanahan Street, Oxford, Granville County, North Carolina, and the name of the initial registered agent at such address is Robert H. Wainwright.

6. The number of initial directors shall be four (4); and the initial directors and their terms shall be the same as the current officers of the Flat River Baptist Association, whose names and addresses are as follows:

Mr. George Gresham
Route 3, Box 304
Oxford, N.C. 27565
693-7844

Mrs. James E. Frazier
Route 7, Box 280
Oxford, N.C. 27565
693-6372

Rev. Robert H. Wainwright
216 W. Thorndale Drive
Oxford, N.C. 27565
693-5004

Mr. Crawford A. Knott
P. O. Box 817
Oxford, N.C. 27565
693-8558

7. The name and address of the incorporator is:

Thomas L. Currin
Attorney at Law

118 Main Street
Oxford, N. C. 27565

8. The Corporation shall have as members such persons as shall be admitted to membership under the bylaws of the Corporation.

9. No members of this Corporation, nor any officer or director shall, merely by virtue of such membership, office or position, incur or be subject to personal liability to any extent for any indebtedness or obligations from acts or omissions of this Corporation.

10. No part of the net earnings of the Corporation shall insure to the benefit of, or be distributable to its members, trustees, officers or other private persons, except to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purposes as set forth in the Articles.

11. Upon the dissolution of the Corporation, the board of directors shall, after paying or making provision for the payment of all the liabilities of the Corporation, dispose of all of the assets of the Corporation exclusively for the purposes of the Corporation in such a manner, or to such organization or organizations organized and operated exclusively for religious purposes as shall at the time qualify as an exempt organization or organizations under section 501(c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (or the corresponding provision of any future U. S. Internal Revenue Law), as the board of directors shall determine. Any such assets not so disposed of shall be dispersed by the Superior Court of the county in which the principal office of the Corporation is then located, exclusively for such purposes or to such organization or organizations, as said court shall determine, which are organized or operated exclusively for such purposes.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 4th day of November, 1987.

Thomas L. Currin

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA, COUNTY OF GRANVILLE:

This is to certify that on the 4th day of November, 1987, before me, a Notary Public, personally appeared Thomas L. Currin, whom I am satisfied is the person named in and who executed the foregoing Articles of Incorporation, and I having first made known to him the contents thereof, he did acknowledge that he signed and delivered the same as his voluntary act and deed for the uses and purposes therein expressed.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed my official seal, this 4th day of November, 1987.

Joan G. Blackwell
Notary Public

My commission expires: 2-14-88

Bylaws

Flat River Baptist Association, Inc.

PREAMBLE

For the declaration of its fundamental purposes and the permanent guidance and control of its activities, this body does adopt the following as its Bylaws, to wit:

ARTICLE I—NAME

The name of this body is the Flat River Baptist Association, Inc.

ARTICLE II—OBJECTIVES

SECTION 1. The objective or objectives for which the Corporation is organized is to serve as a group of Baptist churches in a voluntary relationship for the purpose of strengthening and extending the ministry of Christ through the churches. It shall foster worship, evangelism, missions, ministries, education and discipleship. It shall also serve to promote fellowship, to encourage cooperation, to discover areas of spiritual need, to serve as a channel through which the churches can share their resources, and to preserve correct statistics. The association (corporation) shall cooperate voluntarily with the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, the Southern Baptist Convention and other organizations which are in accord with the purposes of this association.

ARTICLE III—MEMBERSHIP

SECTION 1. There shall be two (2) classes of membership in the Corporation: voting and non-voting. The non-voting membership shall be composed of all the members of the churches affiliated with the Corporation. Voting members of the Corporation shall be known as messengers and shall be elected annually by each of the churches affiliated with the Corporation in accordance with the following schedule. Each church is entitled to three (3) messengers for the [first] one hundred (100) members or fraction thereof; and one (1) additional messenger for each additional 50 members or fraction thereof; provided no church shall have more than ten (10) messengers.

SECTION 2. Any Missionary Baptist Church, which has been an affiliate in good standing for a period of twelve (12) months or more with another Missionary Baptist Corporation, or any new Missionary Baptist Church seeking affiliation with this body must present its application to the Executive Committee not less than six (6) months prior to the annual meeting, and shall be received into the Corporation upon a majority vote of the messengers present, provided, however, that all churches previously a member in good standing with the Flat River Baptist Association of North Carolina shall automatically be affiliated with the Corporation without the requirement of any further approval by the Corporation.

SECTION 3. The membership of the Corporation shall meet annually on Monday and Tuesday evenings after the third Sunday in October.

ARTICLE IV—ORGANIZATION

SECTION 1. The officers of the Corporation shall be a President to be known also as a Moderator, a Vice-President to be known also as a Vice-Moderator, a Secretary to be known as a Clerk, Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, Auditor, Discipleship Training Director, Sunday School Director, Woman's Missionary Union Director, Brotherhood Director, Director of Church Music, Historian (or Historians), and Director of Missions, Parliamentarian and Senior Adult Director. These officers shall be elected at each annual session by the voting membership of the Corporation and shall hold office for one (1) year, or until their successors in office shall be filed to respective offices, except the Director of Missions, whose term of office shall be indefinite. The Moderator and Vice-Moderator cannot succeed themselves more than one (1) term. All terms of office shall begin immediately before adjournment of the annual meeting of the Corporation.

SECTION 2. The Moderator and Vice-Moderator shall be elected from the floor at the beginning of the second session of the first day. The office of Moderator shall rotate between a pastor and layman. The other officers (except the Director of Missions) as named in Article IV, Section 1, shall be elected by the Corporation after receiving nominations from the floor of the Corporation.

In the event of the resignation or death of the Moderator, the Vice-Moderator shall complete the unexpired term of the Moderator. In such an event or in the event of the resignation or death of the Vice-Moderator, the Moderator or Clerk shall call the Executive Committee into session to elect someone to fill the vacancy for the unexpired term of the Vice-Moderator.

At no time shall the offices of Moderator and Vice-Moderator both be filled by Pastors or both by laymen.

ARTICLE V—DUTIES OF OFFICERS

SECTION 1. The Moderator shall preside over the annual meetings, serve as chairman of the General Board and shall such committees as may be called for during the annual meeting, and serve as chairman of [the] Order of Business Committee for the program of the next session of the Corporation. The incoming Moderator shall have authority to fill vacancies on committees during the Corporational year.

SECTION 2. The Vice-Moderator shall perform all the duties of the Moderator during his absence and assist the Moderator when called upon.

SECTION 3. The Clerk shall enroll the messengers, keep a true record of the proceedings, conduct the correspondence, make effort to get the Corporational annual to the printer within thirty (30) days, and superintend its printing and distribution in the Corporation and to denominational agencies.

SECTION 4. The Treasurer shall receive deposit slips and pay bills promptly, keep an accurate record of the same, and submit his record to the auditor for inspection at the close of the Corporational year, and make a report to the Corporation through the Director of Missions. All checks and drafts drawn on the Flat River Baptist Association, Inc. will be signed by the Treasurer. The Treasurer will be [an] ex officio member of the Budget Committee.

SECTION 5. The Assistant Treasurer will function as directed by the Treasurer in case of illness or prolonged absence of the Treasurer.

SECTION 6. The Auditor shall inspect the books of the Treasurer annually, and make a report to the Corporation.

SECTION 7. The Historian (or Historians) shall collect, preserve, and make available to the Corporation such facts about activities of the churches and the Corporation that are of historical interest according in their requests and future needs.

SECTION 8. The Director of Missions shall promote the program of the Corporation in cooperation with the pastors, Executive Committee and General Board. He shall be responsible to the General Board to be representative of all phases of the Corporational program.

SECTION 9. The Parliamentarian shall advise and assist the presiding officer of the Corporation with respect of all matters involving proper parliamentary procedure. The rule of order for the Corporation will be those laid down in Robert's Rules of Order, but in cases where the meaning may not be clear, the presiding officer shall exercise his discretion.

ARTICLE VI—MISSION PERFORMANCE DIRECTORS

All Mission Performance Directors shall seek to plan, promote and execute programs adapted from the Southern Baptist Convention's denominational suggestions for the respective offices of Sunday School, Discipleship Training, Brotherhood, Woman's Missionary Union, Music, Youth, Senior Adults, Evangelism, Stewardship, Missions Development, Media-Library, Pastoral Ministries or others so named. Each shall present a written report for the annual meeting and report to the General Board at its meetings.

SECTION 1. The Pastoral Ministries and evaluating associational pastoral ministries work in cooperation with the director of missions. He shall seek to provide assistance upon the request of the church for such counsel. The director will serve on the Associational Council.

SECTION 2. The Stewardship Director shall lead in planning, promotion, conducting and evaluating stewardship work in the association in cooperation with the director of missions. This includes leading churches in setting stewardship goals, participating in stewardship programs promoted by the Stewardship Commission and the Baptist State Convention. The director will serve on the Associational Council.

SECTION 3. The Missions Development Director leads in planning, promotion, conducting and evaluating mission development in the association in cooperation with the director of missions. This includes leading churches to establish church mission committees, conduct surveys to discover mission needs in regard to new church starts, language ministry, Christian Social Ministries, prison ministries, interfaith witness, black church relations, and resort ministries. The Missions Development Director will serve on the Associational Council.

SECTION 4. The Media Library Director leads in planning, promotion, conducting and evaluating the media library program. This includes leading churches to establish and/or maintain a media library by providing training and information about resources. Also to maintain an associational media library. The Director will serve on the Associational Council.

SECTION 5. The Sunday School Director shall study and seek to promote the work of the Sunday School in each church of the Corporation through the Corporational organization with a director of each age group.

SECTION 6. The Discipleship Training Director shall study and seek to promote the work of the Discipleship Training in each church of the Corporation through the Corporational organization with a leader for each department.

SECTION 7. The Woman's Missionary Union Director, working with the director of each of its auxiliaries (as elected by the Association Woman's Missionary Union), shall seek to promote the work of Woman's Missionary Union in each of the churches of the Corporation through Corporational organization.

SECTION 8. The Brotherhood Director shall study and seek to promote the work of the Brotherhood in each church of the Corporation through the Corporational organization with a director for each age group.

SECTION 9. The Director of Church Music shall plan and direct the music for all the meetings of the Corporation and shall seek to stimulate interest in good church music in the churches of the Corporation. The music director shall be an ex officio member of the Order of Business Committee and shall provide for appropriate music at the annual session in cooperation with the host churches.

SECTION 10. The Youth Director leads in planning, conducting, promotion and evaluation special youth activities in the association to undergird and supplement the ongoing youth ministries in the churches in cooperation with the director of missions and youth leaders from the churches.

SECTION 11. The Senior Adult Director shall seek to challenge the churches to meet the needs of aging persons, encourage them to develop and use their skills and gifts; promote opportunities for fellowship and training for senior adults and their leaders; and to provide the means for coordination and planning of work with senior adults.

ARTICLE VII —DUTIES OF GENERAL BOARD

SECTION 1. The General Board shall serve as the Board of Directors of the Corporation and shall be composed of active pastors of the Corporation, all officers of the Corporation, all chairmen of all standing committees of the Corporation, and two elected representatives of each of the churches affiliated with the Corporation. Each member of the General Board shall be considered a Director of the Corporation.

SECTION 2. The General Board shall meet at least once in the second, third and fourth quarters of each Corporational year. Such meetings shall be held in the months of January, April and July, respectively. The Moderator shall serve as chairman; the Vice-Moderator shall serve as vice-chairman and the Clerk shall serve as Secretary of the General Board.

SECTION 3. It shall be the duty of the General Board to carry on the work of the Corporation between sessions, adopt the budget, and present recommendations and reports to the Corporation.

SECTION 4. Meetings of the General Board shall be called by the Moderator. All members shall be notified in writing 2 weeks prior to the meetings. It shall be necessary to have a quorum of twenty (20) to transact business.

ARTICLE VIII—THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Executive Committee shall be composed of the following: director of missions, moderator, vice-moderator, clerk, treasurer, finance committee chairperson, and two at large members from the General Board and elected by that Board.

The Moderator shall serve as chairperson of the Executive Committee. The primary task of the Executive Committee shall be to advise the director of missions with regard to his administrative task and drafting of recommendations to the General Board and/or the Association which are not delegated to other committees or officers. The Executive Committee shall exercise no authority except that delegated by the General Board or the Association. This Executive Committee shall meet in January, April and July prior to the General Board or the Association. Special meetings may be called by the director of missions or moderator.

ARTICLE IX—THE ASSOCIATIONAL COUNCIL

The Associational Council shall be composed of the director of missions who shall serve as chairman, the Mission Performance directors, the Church and Community Missions (CCM) director, and others that may be added by the General Board. Ex-officio members shall be the moderator, vice-moderator, and associational secretary.

The council shall be advisory in nature and shall have no authority over program organizations. It shall recommend to the General Board and/or Association plans for ministry, coordinate and evaluate the work of the association. The Council shall present the tentative calendar of events for the succeeding year for adoption at the annual session. The Council shall meet at least semi-annually.

ARTICLE X—DUTIES OF COMMITTEES

SECTION 1. A Committee on Committees, composed of five (5) from different churches appointed by the incoming Moderator before the close of the annual session, shall nominate persons to all vacancies on the following committees: Nominating; Resolutions; Property; Finance; Bylaws/Constitution; Christian Life; Recreation; Personnel. The tenure of elected committee members shall be arranged such that in so far as possible, an equal portion of the elected committee membership shall be replaced each year. No committee members shall serve longer than three (3) years, and cannot be re-elected to the same committee for one (1) year after having completed an elected tenure of membership; provided however, this shall not apply if one is a committee member by virtue of holding some other position in the Corporation. The members of the Order of Business Committee are selected by virtue of the office they hold. A chairperson shall be designated annually for each committee.

SECTION 2. The Nominating Committee shall be composed of five (5) members. This committee shall nominate all officers during the year, including the nominees to be elected at the following annual meeting, except the Moderator and Vice-Moderator whose election is described in Article IV, Section 2. The Sunday School Director, Discipleship Training Director, Woman's Missionary Union Director and Brotherhood Director shall be nominated for election by the General Board at the July meeting. Other officers to be elected at the annual meeting of the Corporation are Clerk, Treasurer,

Assistant Treasurer, Auditor, Director of Church Music, Historians, Missions Development director, Senior Adult Director, Pastoral Ministries director, Stewardship director, Media Library director, Youth director, Evangelism director, Parliamentarian, any other officer the Corporation may decide it needs, and the following representatives who will report to the annual Corporation: State Missions, Home Missions, Foreign Missions, Baptist Colleges, Relief and Annuity, N[orth] C[arolina] Baptist Hospital, N[orth] C[arolina] Baptist Homes and other objects or agencies of denominational interest.

SECTION 3. The Resolutions Committee shall be composed of three (3) members. Duties of this committee shall be to study all resolutions presented to the Corporation on the first day and report to the Corporation on the second day, and form all expressions of courtesy.

SECTION 4. The Ordination Committee, composed of five (5) pastors and five (5) laymen, shall, when requested by any church in the Corporation, examine a candidate for ordination to the Christian ministry and assist with the service of ordination if such assistance is desired. Any church requesting the services of this committee will place the name of the candidate before the committee at least thirty (30) days prior to the date set for ordination for examination on the following principles:

- A. Christian experience and conversion
- B. Call to the ministry
- C. Moral and spiritual fitness
- D. Doctrinal beliefs
- E. Knowledge of the Bible
- F. Attitude towards denominational work and objects
- G. Support of denominational causes

Every candidate for the Christian ministry is to be urged to prepare for such ministry in Baptist institutions of higher learning. This committee shall be responsible for recommending or not recommending that the candidate be ordained by the church making the request.

Before candidates can be recommended for ordination by this committee, they must be engaged in some aspect of the Christian ministry.

SECTION 5. The Christian Life Committee shall be composed of four (4) members. This committee shall assist churches in the Flat River Baptist Association, Inc. to become more aware of the ethical implications of the Christian Gospel with regards to such aspects of daily living as family life, human life, moral issues, economic life and daily work, citizenship, public affairs and related fields to assist in creating with God's leadership and by His grace the kind of moral and social climate in which the Baptist witness for Christ will be most effective.

SECTION 6. The Bylaws Committee shall be composed of three (3) members. The Bylaws Committee shall be available to study any changes or revisions in the Bylaws as needed.

SECTION 7. The Recreation Committee shall be composed of at least nine (9) members. The purpose of this committee is to plan and carry out church-centered sports programs that will develop Christlike character and establish the ideals of good sportsmanship.

SECTION 8. The Finance Committee shall be composed of six (6) members. They shall be responsible for studying the financial status of the Corporation and provide adequate funding for all mission performance ministries, and all other operating and personnel expenses. In their planning and presenting of the annual budget, they shall consider the recommendations of the Mission Performance Directors and all other committees. They shall cooperate with the Stewardship Director in promoting cooperative support of the churches to meet the budget. The budget will be presented for approval of the General Board at the July meeting of the General Board. The Finance Committee shall also be responsible for overseeing the Flat River Edwards Fund Account. The Treasurer will be an ex-officio member of this committee.

SECTION 9. For purpose of identification—The Order of Business Committee will replace the following committees (Time, Place, Preacher Committee, Obituary Committee, Calendar Committee, Program Committee) in addition to the previous responsibilities these committees have had, the new committee will also have the responsibility of Credentials.

The Order of Business Committee shall be made up of [the] Moderator, Vice-Moderator, WMU Director, Host Pastors, Music Director, and two (2) at large members. Their duties shall be to plan the order of business for the Annual Meeting of the Corporation, to present that order of business to the body on the first day of the Annual Meeting for the body's approval; they shall also be responsible to recommend any changes that may need to be offered to the body during the meeting to allocate time as deemed necessary. In the Order of Business, they shall allocate time for obituaries to be read of any members that have deceased during the past year, and a time of Memorial in honor of the same. They shall announce the time and place and preacher of the next annual meeting of the Corporation, and recommend the places of the meeting of the Corporation five (5) years in advance, and announce any other meetings other than the Annual Meeting.

The Order of Business Committee will be responsible to assure that all voting members of the Corporation are properly elected by their local congregation and that they have proper credentials at the time of registration.

SECTION 10. The Property Committee shall oversee the maintenance and repair of all property of the Corporation, recommend an adequate and protective insurance plan and policies for use of facilities, equipment and the van. The committee shall make recommendations to the General Board and/or the Annual Session in regard to transfer, purchase, or sale of all real and personal property. The committee shall consist of nine members.

SECTION 11. The Personnel Committee shall consist of six members who shall have the responsibility to update and/or write job descriptions for all staff members; have an annual evaluation procedure, study staff salaries and benefits each year prior to preparation of the budget and make recommendations to the Finance Committee; and prepare a policy manual for all personnel. Such policies and procedures shall be approved by the General Board.

SECTION 12. The Association shall elect representatives for the purpose of liaison and information for each institution, agency or board requesting one. Such representatives shall be nominated by the Nominating Committee for one year and may succeed themselves.

ARTICLE XI—RULES OF PROCEDURE FOR ANNUAL MEETINGS

SECTION 1. Ministers and lay members of other Baptist Associations may be invited to participate in all proceedings, but shall NOT be entitled to vote.

SECTION 2. Every question shall be decided by majority vote of those attending [and] entitled to vote.

SECTION 3. The vote shall be taken by show of hands or standing, at the direction of the Moderator.

SECTION 4. All motions shall be seconded before opening for discussion.

SECTION 5. Any speaker may be allowed to state his or her views, pro or con, without reflecting on any other personal views or without dealing in personalities in a derogatory manner.

SECTION 6. No speaker may be allowed to speak more than once on a motion without permission of the Moderator and not more than twice without approval of the assembly.

SECTION 7. The Moderator shall have the authority to place a time limit on speakers where not otherwise designated.

SECTION 8. All meetings shall be opened and closed with prayer.

SECTION 9. Any member of any church in the Flat River [Baptist] Association, Inc. may be elected to any office in said Corporation.

SECTION 10. The Bylaws shall be printed in the annual of the Corporation.

SECTION 11. A two-thirds majority vote of the Corporation, while in session, may be allowed to overrule any of these Rules of Procedure, when questioned.

SECTION 12. These Bylaws may be amended on the second day of the annual meeting by two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members present, provided notice is given in writing, with a minimum of thirty-five (35) copies, the preceding day.

Adopted this 23 day of October 1990, by the Directors of the Corporation.

Thomas E. Averett
Chairman of the Board of Directors

Appendix B

Roster of Ministers Serving Churches in Flat River Association

Approximately 600 ministers of the Gospel have served as pastors of the churches which have comprised Flat River Baptist Association since 1794 (including some who served Grassy Creek prior to the formation of the Association). The roster below attempts to record the names of those who have served, together with the churches and congregations with whom they bore a pastoral relationship.

Abbott, Evan Andrew: West Oxford

Adams, Denzil: Tabb's Creek

Adams, James Franklin: Corinth

Adams, Malicus Addison: Concord, Corinth, Fellowship, Flat River Union, Stovall

Adcock, Irvin Warren: Providence

Adkins, Robert Eugene: Olive Grove

Agnew, Douglas Dewitt: Olive Grove

Allen, Allen Cagle: Brassfield

Allen, O. B.: Creedmoor

Allen, Zachariah: Brassfield, Corinth, Fellowship, New Light

Anderson, Lyn: Stovall

Andrews, Edwin Rudy: First Baptist, Butner; Olive Grove

Armstrong, Harold: Tally Ho

Armstrong, Thomas D.: Mount Moriah

Arnette, John Madison: Rock Spring

Atkins, Lanny Ray: Tabb's Creek

Atkinson, James W.: Corinth, Fellowship, Mary's Chapel, New Light, Olive Grove, Pleasant Grove

Atkinson, Wiley A.: Corinth, Fellowship, Flat River Union, Friendship, New Bethel, New Light

Austin, Matthias Darling: Pleasant Grove

Bailey, Leland: Brassfield

Baker, Clarence Eugene: Creedmoor, Knap of Reeds, Pleasant Grove

Baker, J. S.: Bethel

Baker, Jesse Wade: Corinth

Baldwin, Moses: Grassy Creek, Hester, Mount Zion, Oxford

Ball, John Richard: Corinth, Peace's Chapel

Ball, Harold: Grassy Creek

Ballard, Cecil Lea: Rock Spring

Banister, Madison Lamar: Knott's Grove, Oxford

Barham, William Cullom, Jr.: West Oxford

Barnes, Jehu Herman: Olive Grove

Barrett, William Ashley: Brassfield, Fellowship, Mary's Chapel, Mount Olivet, Pleasant Grove, Tabb's Creek

Bass, Burnice Girtha: Rock Spring
Bass, Samuel A.: Concord, Olive Branch
Bass, John Henry: Knap of Reeds, Mill Creek
Battle, Elisha: Grassy Creek, Tabb's Creek
Baucom, Herbert Wayland, Jr.: Oxford
Baynard, Robert: Sharon
Beachum, Elijah Forbes: Brassfield, Corinth, Fellowship, Hester's, Island Creek, Mary's Chapel, Mount Olivet, New Light, Olive Branch, Oxford, Pleasant Grove, Poplar Creek, Tabb's Creek, Tally Ho
Beam, John Alexander: Antioch, Bethel, Mount Harmony, Mount Zion, Olive Branch, Olive Grove, Sharon
Beard, C. H.: Olive Grove
Beck, Gilmer Johnson: Pleasant Grove
Beeler, Harvey Louis: West Oxford
Benefield, James Willard: Bullock, Stovall
Bennett, Charles Norman, Jr.: Mountain Creek
Bennett, Joseph Foster: First Baptist, Tungsten
Bennett, Millard: Poplar Creek
Bishop, Clarence H.: Florence Avenue
Blackwood, Alexander Doughan: Brassfield
Blakeley, David Dewey: Creedmoor
Blalock, Joseph Gooch: Florence Avenue, Knap of Reeds, Mountain Creek, Mount Zion, Tally Ho
Blanchard, John Rountree, Sr.: Creedmoor
Blanton, Sankey Lee: Mount Olivet, Pleasant Grove
Boles, Paul Edgar: Mount Olivet
Bolton, James Steven: Oxford
Bolton, Toy Steven: West Oxford
Boone, Robert Ricks: Grassy Creek
Borden, Jeffrey Lance: Olive Grove
Bradley, Robert Oren: Stovall
Bray, Gideon Needham: Island Creek
Brendle, John Alfred: Concord, Creedmoor, Fellowship, Pleasant Grove
Brewer, Sam Zaye: First Baptist, Tungsten
Bridges, Dean Carlyle: Brassfield
Bridges, Leo: Concord
Bridges, Randy Charles: Hester
Brock-Loftis, Stephen Earl: Island Creek
Brooks, Cheryl: Bullock
Brooks, John: Bethel
Brooks, Michael: Bullock
Brooks, William Terrell: Brassfield
Brown, Don Baxter: Creedmoor
Brown, Kenneth Neil: Corinth
Brown, Paul Zane: Olive Grove

Brown, William: Lower South Hycy
Bruhn, Robert H.: Brassfield
Bryant, Hampton Jerome: Beulah, Creedmoor, Fellowship, Mary's Chapel, Poplar
 Creek, Providence, Tally Ho
Burnette, L. W.: Peace's Chapel
Burnham, James Leonard: Dexter, Poplar Creek
Burns, William: Island Creek
Bush, Joseph: Hogan's Creek
Bush, Warren Thomas: First Baptist, Butner
Butler, Alexander Anderson: Flat River Union, Mount Olivet
Butler, Clarence Woodrow: Providence
Cade, Baylus: Mount Olivet
Cagle, Terry Dee: Mountain Creek
Campbell, Frank Ross: Corinth, Peace's Chapel
Canipe, Ernest: First Baptist, Tungsten
Cantrill, Rufus Roy: Mount Olivet
Cantrill, Isaac: Wolf Island
Carlson, James Arthur: Brassfield
Carlton, Russell Parrish: Brassfield
Carrigan, Cky John: West Oxford
Carroll, James Donald: Knott's Grove
Carroll, James P.: Mount Olivet
Carroll, John Lemuel: Mountain Creek, Oxford, Poplar Creek, Tabb's Creek, Tally Ho
Carter, James: Brassfield
Cartledge, Tony Walter: Tabb's Creek
Cash, Jerome: Concord
Cashwell, Donald DeWyatt: Fellowship
Cashwell, Charley Hayes: Corinth
Catlette, Needham Arthur: Pleasant Grove
Caudle, William Shelley: Bullock, Island Creek, Stovall
Cavey, Kenneth Lee: Enon
Center, Ernest Marshall: Florence Avenue
Chappell, William Yancey: Mary's Chapel, Olive Grove
Childers, Kenneth Lee: Mountain Creek
Childress, Paul: Knap of Reeds
Chisenhall, Preminto Edward: Concord
Clay, Charles Ohio: Concord
Clegg, Robert Lawrence: Mount Olivet
Cline, Percy Augustus, Jr.: Knott's Grove, Providence
Clore, Richard Lyle: Bullock
Cobb, Carey J.: Tally Ho
Coffey, Elmer Dean: Mount Olivet, Sharon
Coffey, Jack Franklin: Island Creek
Coleman, James Monroe: Florence Avenue
Collins, Danny W.: Rock Spring

Cooke, Roland: New Light
Cooper, Dwight Wilbur: Franklinton, Mount Olivet
Cooper, Eddie Allen: Stovall
Coppedge, George Washington: Mount Olivet
Corey, John M.: Pleasant Grove
Cornwell, Robert Wilburn: Enon
Coyle, Lee V.: Mountain Creek
Craddock, Ronald Dean: Amis Chapel
Creamer, Boyce H.: Concord, Olive Grove
Creath, William Thomas: Florence Avenue
Creech, Preston A.: Enon
Crocker, Thomas: Concord, New Light
Cullom, Willis Richard: Brassfield, Concord, Creedmoor, Flat River Union, Poplar
Creek
Cummings, James W.: Corinth, Grassy Creek, Knott's Grove, Mountain Creek,
Providence
Currin, Joseph Badgett: Bethany, Mount Harmony, Olive Branch, Rock Grove, Sharon
Daniel, Robert Thomas: Grassy Creek
Danner, Bernard Allen: Sharon
Daugherty, Luby Guilford: Concord
Davis, James Blaine: Fellowship, Olive Grove
Davis, J. G.: New Light
Davis, John Wesley: Poplar Creek
Davis, Monrovia Pierce: Concord, Creedmoor, New Light
Davis, Theo Bunyan: Brassfield
Dawson, Jeff: Knott's Grove
Deaton, Dossie Elbert: Corinth, Peace's Chapel
Delk, James: Island Creek
Dennis, James: Friendship
Dent, William: New Light
DeVenny, James Vance: Mount Olivet
Devin, Robert Irah: Amis Chapel, Concord, Corinth, Grassy Creek, Hester, Island
Creek, Mountain Creek, Oxford, Tabb's Creek, Mount Pleasant [Tally Ho]
Dickard, Robert Andy: Grassy Creek
Dickard, Wayne D.: Sharon
Diggs, Audrey L.: Brassfield
Dill, John D.: Knott's Grove
Dissel, James Gordon: Concord
Dorris, Joseph: South Country Line
Dorsett, Henry Grady, Sr.: Fellowship, Olive Grove, Tally Ho
Dowd, Patrick Winston: Mount Moriah
Dowless, Donald Vernon: Stovall
Downey, John William: State Line
Duckett, Rex Battle: Olive Grove
Duncan, George Crudup: Sharon

Dunnaway, Adoniram B.: Oxford, Tabb's Creek
 Duty, Samuel: Grassy Creek, Tabb's Creek
 Edge, John Weathersby: Mountain Creek
 Edmondson, Ron: Concord
 Edwards, William Johnson: Dexter, Poplar Creek, Sharon, Tabb's Creek
 Ellen, M. H.: Mount Harmony
 Ellis, Frank, Jr.: Tabb's Creek
 Ellis, Fred Verlie: First Baptist, Tungsten
 Ellis, John Alston: Knott's Grove
 Elms, Oren Jewell: Sharon, Tabb's Creek
 Englert, Richard James: Poplar Creek
 Evans, Lucius Lanell: Mount Olivet, Olive Grove
 Ezell, Balaam: Buffaloe
 Faile, Ray Von: Concord
 Farrar, William Alexander: Providence
 Farthing, William Watkins: Mount Moriah
 Faulkner, John Kerr: Amis Chapel, Antioch
 Ferguson, Barbour Vaughan: Brassfield
 Ferrell, James: Eno, Mount Moriah
 Fishbaugh, John Howard: Union
 Flores, Paul: Mision Bautista Hermandad
 Flowers, Elijah Daniel, Jr.: Rock Spring
 Fogleman, Thomas Walter: Florence Avenue
 Fontaine, Patrick Henry: Amis Chapel, Bethel, Enon, Grassy Creek, Mountain Creek,
 Olive Branch
 Ford, David Cameron: Poplar Creek
 Francis, William Clive: Brassfield, Corinth, Creedmoor, Fellowship, Mount Zion, Olive
 Grove, Tally Ho
 Freeman, Clarence Hal: Concord
 Freeman, Malthus David: Brassfield, Concord
 Freeman, Thomas: Mount Moriah
 Fry, William Francis: Stovall
 Frye, Charles Ray: Creedmoor
 Fulford, William J.: Brassfield, Tabb's Creek
 Gale, Forest McClure, Jr.: Stovall
 Gardner, David: Mount Olivet
 Gardner, Robert: Brassfield
 Gardner, Thomas: Gardner's, Tanner's
 Garrett, Robert Eugene: Florence Avenue
 Garrett, W. Barry: Amis Chapel, Grassy Creek, Mountain Creek
 Giles, Leslie Haile: Hester
 Gill, John Cooper, Jr.: Bullock, Island Creek
 Gillespie, Charles Lee: Brassfield, Corinth, Creedmoor, Mount Zion, Pleasant Grove,
 Tally Ho
 Gladden, Terry: Stovall

Glisson, Joseph Martin: Corinth
Godwin, Clarence Edwin: Oxford
Gold, Pleasant: Buffaloe
Gooch, Elmore D.: Mount Zion
Good, R. Scott: First Baptist, Butner
Gordon, Bill Marlin: Poplar Creek
Gordon, James Howard: Corinth, Mount Harmony, Providence, Rock Grove, Snow Hill
Graves, Barzallai: Country Line
Graves, Roy Duncan: Mount Olivet
Gray, Asa Parker: Peace's Chapel
Greene, Daylon Thomas: Brassfield, Concord
Greene, Edward Wyche: Amis Chapel, Dexter
Greer, Thomas W.: Florence Avenue, Rock Spring, State Line
Griggs, William Lemuel: Island Creek
Gulley, John: New Bethel
Hairfield, Charles Robert: Bethany
Hall, James: Knott's Grove
Hall, Robert Randy: Tally Ho
Hall, William Terry: Concord
Hampton, Clyde: Dexter
Hardaway, John Steger: Oxford
Hardin, Earl Louis: Mount Olivet
Harper, Thomas Wright: Knott's Grove
Harrelson, Gary Ronald: Corinth
Harrill, George Pinckney: Creedmoor
Harrill, Hugh Franklin: Knap of Reeds, Tally Ho
Harris, Edwin Rowland, Sr.: Brassfield, Concord, Creedmoor, Fellowship, Flat River Union, Florence Avenue, Mount Zion, Peace's Chapel, Sharon
Harris, George Andrew: Antioch, Bethany
Harris, Samuel: Grassy Creek
Harrison, John Hartwell: State Line
Hart, Thomas William: Florence Avenue, Olive Branch
Harte, Jacob David: Oxford
Hartsell, Paul Gamaliel: Bullock, Creedmoor, Island Creek, Mary's Chapel, Providence, Stovall, Tally Ho
Hartsell, Wallace Howell: Corinth
Hawkins, Albert Gene: Poplar Creek
Hawks, Richard L.: Tally Ho
Hayes, J. Spurgeon: Concord
Heflin, James: Eno, New Light
Hellams, Milton Floyd: Bullock, Rock Spring
Helms, Hal M.: First Baptist, Butner
Hester, Elijah: Concord, Fellowship, Flat River Union, New Light
Hester, Paul: Olive Grove

Hicks, Alden Lee: Enon
Hicks, Jerry Oakley: Delrayno
Hicks, Norman Arrington: Corinth, Peace's Chapel, Rock Spring, Sharon
Hicks, Ronald Dewitt: Enon, Mount Zion
Higginbotham, Allen Holt: Brassfield, Olive Grove
Hill, Daniel Conle: Fellowship
Hill, Thomas Benton: Peace's Chapel, Poplar Creek
Hilliard, Sidney Cecil: Rock Spring
Hinton, Charles Richard: Mount Olivet
Hobbs, Lalister Matthews: Concord, Creedmoor, Mary's Chapel, Pleasant Grove, Tally Ho
Hobgood, Clarence Eugene: Tally Ho
Hobgood, William Sherwood: Flat River Union
Hocutt, John Caswell: Fellowship, New Light, Olive Branch, Pleasant Grove
Hodge, Ray Keith: Dexter, Poplar Creek
Hogan, Kelly Wade: Pleasant Grove
Holland, Bobby Tyson: Corinth
Holmes, James Weaver: Enon
Holmes, Thomas J.: Franklinton
Holt, Edward Glen: Grassy Creek
Holt, Ernest Glenn: Olive Grove
Honeycutt, John: Friendship
Hoover, E. U.: Florence Avenue
Horne, Thomas: Corinth
Horner, Kenneth Cassidy: Peace's Chapel
Horner, Thomas Jefferson: Bethany, Mount Harmony, Mount Zion, Olive Branch, Rock Spring, State Line, Tabb's Creek, Tally Ho
Horton, James Evan: Sharon
Houck, Byard, Jr.: Mount Olivet
Houston, William Clifford: Tally Ho
Hovis, R. W.: Mount Harmony
Howard, Earl William: Mount Zion
Howard, Terry C.: Bullock
Howell, Jesse: Mount Moriah
Hudgins, Willoughby: Tanner's
Hudson, Charles Franklin: Bethany
Hudson, Lucius Lanell: Concord, Corinth, Fellowship, Island Creek, Sharon, Tabb's Creek
Hudson, William Marshall: Bethany, Knap of Reeds, Mount Zion
Hughes, Ned: First Baptist, Tungsten
Humphries, Cornelius F.: Corinth, Mount Harmony, Olive Branch, Providence
Humphries, James King: Mount Harmony, Olive Branch
Hunsinger, Edward Eugene: Olive Grove
Hunter, Alosey David: Poplar Creek
Hunter, Carl Edwin: Mount Olivet

Hutchinson, J. H.: New Light, Olive Branch, Olive Grove
Icard, Arvil Woodrow: Mount Olivet
Jarrell, Jerry Dawson: Grassy Creek
Jenkins, Charles Augustus: Bethany, Enon, Mountain Creek, Mount Zion, Oxford
Johnson, James Landrum: Pleasant Grove
Johnson, William Iver: Enon, Mount Zion
Jones, James Clarence, Jr.: Creedmoor
Jones, Nathaniel Sidney: Concord, Flat River Union
Jones, Robert Bruce: Brassfield
Jones, R. H.: Providence, Rock Grove
Jones, Tom Martin: Delrayno
Jones, Walter Louis: Olive Grove
Jones, William: Brassfield, Hester, Mount Moriah, Shady Hill
Jordan, Francis Marion: Bethel
Jordan, Henry Bradley: Stovall, State Line
Jordan, Linwood Ray: Brassfield, Corinth, Creedmoor, Fellowship, Mount Zion, Pleasant Grove
Jordan, William Hill: Island Creek, Mount Zion, Oxford, Tabb's Creek
Joyner, Augustus Vallie: Mountain Creek
Justice, Thomas Butler: Brassfield
Kahler, Harold: Rock Spring
Kearney, Maylon Ellis: Grassy Creek
Kelley, Kenneth Taylor: Grassy Creek
Kincaid, Elmer Lamar: Brassfield, Creedmoor, Pleasant Grove
King, Fairly Daniel: Knott's Grove
King, James: Bethel, Buffaloe, Grassy Creek, Hester, Mount Zion, Olive Branch
King, Ronald Frank: Brassfield
King, Thomas: Hester, Island Creek
Knowles, Nathan Curtis: Stovall
Kyles, William Lee: State Line
Lambert, Robert F.: Florence Avenue
Lamberth, Joseph Henry: Mill Creek, Roxboro
Lamm, Albert S.: Rock Spring, West Oxford
Lamonds, A.: Concord, Creedmoor, Fellowship, Mount Zion
Landers, John: Lynches Creek
Langston, M. Thomas: Brassfield
Lansdell, John Joyner: Concord, Mount Harmony, Pleasant Grove, Providence (in PersonCounty), Roxboro
Lariscy, Horace Watson, III: Knott's Grove
Larkins, Dennis Moore: Grassy Creek, Mountain Creek
Lassiter, Elvis Martin: Corinth, Fellowship
Laughrun, Isaac B.: Bullock
Lawson, David: Bethel
Lawson, Robert: Olive Grove
Layton, Jephtha H.: Mount Calvary, Pleasant Grove, Sandy Level

Lee, Russell Cole: Rock Spring
Leonard, Benny Joseph: Olive Grove
Lester, Henry: Grassy Creek
Lester, W. Harold: First Baptist, Butner
Lewis, Stephen McFaddin: Corinth
Lewis, James Aaron: Pleasant Grove
Liner, Robert Thayer: Creedmoor
Livingston, Robert Bryant: Sharon
Lloyd, Charles Franklin: Stovall
Loflin, Isaac Newton: Island Creek, Rock Spring
Lolley, Thomas Ervin: Hester
Luehrs, H. Herbert: Franklinton
Lumpkin, George Thomas: Mount Harmony, Mount Zion, Oxford
Mangum, Oscar Ray: Oxford
Mangum, Pearl Damon: Mount Olivet
Marcom, James Coleman: New Bethel
Marsh, Robert Henry: Amis Chapel, Antioch, Bullock, Concord, Dexter, Enon, Flat River Union, Grassy Creek, Hester, Mountain Creek, Mount Zion, Oxford, Poplar Creek, State Line, Tabb's Creek, Tally Ho
Marshall, John: Tar River
Marshall, Oliver Nicholas: Creedmoor, Peace's Chapel
Martin, James Lee: Concord, Creedmoor, Mary's Chapel, Pleasant Grove, Tally Ho
Martin, Richard: Country Line
Mashburn, Henry Hamilton: Concord, Creedmoor, Flat River Union, Pleasant Grove, Rock Spring
Mason, P. G.: Mount Moriah
Mason, Thomas D.: Grassy Creek
Mattox, Paul C.: Hester
McBride, James Smith: Creedmoor
McCullum, William Ray: Island Creek
McCracken, Larry Francis: Knott's Grove
McCracken, Ronald Wayne: Peace's Chapel
McCrary, Robert Paul: Peace's Chapel
McCrimmon, John Holmes: Poplar Creek
McCulloch, Roy Ray: Oxford
McCullough, Joseph P.: Rock Spring
McDuffie, Marshall V.: Henderson
McGuire, Victor V.: Peace's Chapel, State Line
McMannen, Lewis Everette: Concord, Tally Ho
McNabb, Robert: Concord, Mount Zion
McNew, Bobby Wayne: Tally Ho
McSwain, Thaburn Lawson: Dexter
Melton, Clyde Franklin: First Baptist, Butner; Knott's Grove; Providence
Middleton, Charles Fred: Stovall

Mieir, Charles E.: Delrayno
Miller, Hughey Osborne: Bullock, Island Creek, Rock Spring
Milliner, Edward Lee: Rock Spring
Mitchell, Walter Clifford: Delrayno
Mitchiner, John Festus: Brassfield, Creedmoor
Moak, Thomas Owen, Jr.: Florence Avenue
Moger, Jourden Travis: Brassfield
Montague, Edwin Jordan: Antioch, Mount Harmony, North Fork, Providence (in Person County), Snow Hill, Tally Ho
Montague, James P.: Concord, Flat River Union, Pleasant Grove, Sandy Level, Shady Hill
Montague, John Elizabeth: Antioch, Bethel, Mill Creek, Olive Branch
Moore, W. Truman: Grassy Creek
Moore, William: Wynn's Creek
Moose, James Lois Walter: Rock Spring
Morgan, E. R.: Poplar Creek
Moran, Richard Rutherford: Fellowship
Morgan, Samuel Lewis, Sr.: Creedmoor, Dexter, Poplar Creek, Rock Spring
Morris, John Dawson: Knott's Grove
Morris, Shelby Thomas: Mount Zion, Tally Ho
Morrow, Phillip Ray: Peace's Chapel
Morton, Wilson Bunyan: Antioch, Roxboro
Mullen, Thomas: Country Line
Murray, Jackson Gray: Olive Grove
Nelson, Edwin Rosser: Island Creek, Poplar Creek
Newton, William Carey: Mount Olivet
Nichols, Homer Ira: West Oxford
Norman, Robert, III: Sharon
Norris, Cadwin Hugh: Fellowship, Olive Grove, Pleasant Grove, Tally Ho
Oakes, Marvin Wayne: Bullock
Oakley, William E.: Chestnut Grove, Concord, Flat River Union, Island Creek, Mount Harmony, Providence (in Person County), Shady Hill
Olive, Johnson: Mount Moriah
Oliver, Robert Lavan: Union
Owen, Jesse Coleman: Pleasant Grove
Pace, Jesse Richard: Brassfield, Knott's Grove, Mount Harmony, Olive Branch, Rock Spring, Sharon
Padgett, Donald Lee: Bullock
Parker, Charles Brand, Jr.: Poplar Creek
Parker, Roy Joseph: Hester
Patterson, Roger Leonard: Brassfield
Patton, Glenn: Tally Ho
Patton, E. Rudy: Oxford
Peach, David George: First Baptist, Butner
Pearson, Clyde Preston: Island Creek

Peele, Robert Evans: State Line
Pegram, Emmanuel Poole: First Baptist, Butner
Pernell, Marion R.: Peace's Chapel
Pernell, Patrick Henry: Mount Olivet
Perrou, John Stephen, Jr.: Delrayno
Perry, Durwood: First Baptist, Tungsten
Perry, James Norman: Corinth
Pettit, Lewis Edwin: Mount Olivet
Pfeifer, Eric Grant: Corinth
Phillips, John William: First Baptist, Tungsten; Poplar Creek
Phillips, Robby: West Oxford
Phipps, Aaron Columbus: Fellowship
Pickett, Reuben: Bethel, Grassy Creek
Pierce, Edward Sylvester: Providence
Pitchford, James A.: Mount Olivet
Pittard, William Bullock, Jr.: Franklinton
Pittman, Lee J.: First Baptist, Tungsten
Pleasant, Stephen: Bethel
Poe, Elias Dodson: Island Creek, Rock Spring
Poe, William Dowd: Enon, Hester, Knott's Grove, Poplar Creek
Pollard, James Earle: Amis Chapel
Pool, Elbert Young: Corinth, Mill Creek, Mount Harmony, Mountain Creek, Olive Branch, Sharon
Pool, Frank Kenneth: Brassfield
Pope, William Henry: Concord
Porter, Richard Wayne: Amis Chapel
Poston, Hill Furman: Mary's Chapel
Powell, E. M.: Corinth
Powell, Rufus Edwin: Peace's Chapel, State Line
Powers, William Benny: Rock Spring
Price, Donald Marshall: West Oxford
Price, Robert Alex: Dexter
Pridgen, Lamar B.: Delrayno
Pridgen, Marshall Lee: Rock Spring
Pulley, Rudolph Raymond: Fellowship, Pleasant Grove, Union
Purefoy, Addison Foster: Mary's Chapel
Purefoy, George Washington: Mount Moriah
Purefoy, James Simpson: Brassfield, Corinth, Mount Zion, Tabb's Creek
Purefoy, John: Mount Moriah
Putnam, Doctor Franklin: Antioch, Florence Avenue, Mill Creek, Rock Grove, Roxboro
Quarles, James William: Peace's Chapel
Raines, Allen: West Oxford
Rainey, Lawyer James: Fellowship, Mount Harmony, Mount Zion, Sharon
Randolph, Robert Lee: Mount Olivet
Reed, James: Grassy Creek

Reddick, Mitchell Lynn: Brassfield
Reed, R. W.: Brassfield
Reeves, Jerre: Amis Chapel, Grassy Creek, Mountain Creek
Reid, C. V.: Mary's Chapel, Olive Grove
Reynolds, Lonnie Austin: Concord
Reynolds, Willis Washington: Florence Avenue
Rhoden, Robert Howard: Delrayno
Rhodes, James: Olive Grove
Rice, Ronald Earl, Sr.: Florence Avenue
Rickenbaker, Gleaton F.: Bullock
Rickman, Miles Lee: Brassfield
Riddick, John Thomas: Mount Harmony, Mountain Creek, Olive Branch
Riggs, Ollie Leonidas: Knap of Reeds
Roberts, George: Flat River
Roberts, Larry E.: Olive Grove
Robertson, Melvin Thomas: Pleasant Grove
Robertson, William: Corinth
Robinson, Erwin Wayne: Mount Olivet
Roebuck, Henry Douglas: Tabb's Creek
Rogers, William Boyd: Bullock
Rowe, Robin: First Baptist, Tungsten
Rucks, Josiah: Tabb's Creek
Ryland, Charles Pennington: Florence Avenue, Mill Creek, Roxboro
Scarborough, Charles Wesley: Brassfield, Fellowship
Schofield, James Christopher: Corinth
Scrivner, David Dana: Mount Olivet
Self, Jack L.: Bullock
Seymour, Theophilus Yates: Brassfield
Shacklette, Benjamin Marion: Bethany
Shaw, Richard G.: Creedmoor
Shelley, James Cleveland, Jr.: Sharon
Shelley, Ronald Carson: Knott's Grove
Shepherd, Robert Dale: Bullock, Rock Spring
Sherwood, Arthur Columbus: Brassfield, Creedmoor, Peace's Chapel, Pleasant Grove,
 Tally Ho
Shurling, James Owen: Enon
Singleton, Thomas Christopher: Peace's Chapel
Sledge, John Wesley: Mount Olivet
Smith, Charles Anderson, Jr.: Olive Grove
Smith, Herman Lewis: Providence
Smith, John B.: Buffalo
Smith, Joseph Edwin: Bethany, Pleasant Grove, Tally Ho
Smith, Lewis Willard: Knott's Grove, Providence
Smith, Patrick Henry: Poplar Creek, Tally Ho
Smith, Reuben Talmadge: Poplar Creek

Smith, William Carlton: Delrayno
 Sodeman, Lowell Frazier: Dexter
 Sowell, George Abram: Mount Olivet
 Spaulding, J. H.: Rock Spring
 Spear, Randolph Denard, Jr.: Brassfield
 Spivey, Edwin Lowell: Brassfield, Pleasant Grove
 Spivey, Henry S.: Brassfield, Mount Zion
 Spruill, George Edward: Corinth
 Stallings, Nicholas Pezini: Mary's Chapel, Olive Grove
 Stamps, Mack: Mount Olivet
 Stephens, Gordon Van: Bullock, Island Creek, Pleasant Grove, Providence, Stovall
 Stevens, Herman Thomas: Corinth, Island Creek, Poplar Creek, Rock Spring
 Stokes, Howard Austin: Stovall
 Stradley, Joshua Addison: Amis Chapel, Antioch, Bethany, Bethel Beulah, Concord,
 Fellowship, Flatip, Flat River Union, Island Creek, Mount Zion, Poplar Creek, Rock
 Spring, Sharon, Stovall, Tally Ho
 Stroud, I. T.: Olive Grove
 Suggs, Delano Rudolph: Tally Ho
 Suttles, Howard E.: Concord
 Talley, James S.: First Baptist, Tungsten
 Tatum, T. A.: Beulah, Corinth, Knott's Grove, Stovall
 Taylor, Charles Ross: Knott's Grove, Peace's Chapel
 Taylor, Curtis Richard: Knott's Grove
 Teague, Jackson Uriah: Amis Chapel, Corinth, Fellowship, Grassy Creek, Mountain
 Creek, Poplar Creek, Providence, Rock Spring, State Line, Tabb's Creek
 Teal, J. B.: Olive Grove
 Terrell, William Isacc: Grassy Creek, Knott's Grove, Mountain Creek, Providence
 Thames, R. G.: Antioch
 Thomas, Scott Alan: Grassy Creek
 Thomason, Thomas: Tabb's Creek
 Thorne, Charles Donald: Mount Olivet
 Tilley, Daniel Garrison: Stovall
 Townsend, Michael Lynn: Brassfield
 Tribble, Marshall K.: Olive Grove
 Trollo, Michael Blake: Florence Avenue
 Trueblood, Charles Herman: Corinth
 Tuck, N. Malvin: Amis Chapel
 Tunstall, George Taylor: Beulah, Bullock, Corinth, Enon, Hester, Knott's Grove,
 Stovall, Tabb's Creek
 Turner, Lewis Warren: Pleasant Grove, Sharon
 Turner, Marvin M.: Tally Ho
 Tyndall, James Preston: Rock Spring
 Underwood, Franklin Royal: Corinth, New Light, Oxford, Poplar Creek
 Upchurch, Carey Almon, Jr.: Bullock, Corinth, Island Creek, Knott's Grove, Mount
 Zion, Pleasant Grove, Rock Spring, Sharon, Stovall, Tabb's Creek

Usry, Eugene Grissom: Antioch, Beulah, Bethany, Bullock, Concord, Corinth, Dexter, Mount Harmony, Olive Branch, Peace's Chapel, Sharon, West Oxford
Utley, Charles Houston: Sharon
Van Deventer, Robert: Henderson
Vass, Thomas, Sr.: Grassy Creek
Vernon, John Henry: Antioch
Vinson, Eldridge Thomas: Dexter, Poplar Creek, Tally Ho
Wait, Samuel: Concord, Corinth, Hester
Walker, Jesse Marshall: Bullock, Island Creek, Providence, Stovall
Walker, Robert Percy: Island Creek, State Line
Wallace Roger Dale: Concord
Walters, Thomas W.: Brassfield
Walton, Miles Costin: Florence Avenue, Olive Branch
Warden, N. Stephen: Knott's Grove
Warren, William Edward: Antioch, Mount Harmony, Providence (in Person County)
Warrick, Eugene Stevens: Rock Spring
Waters, Steven: Grassy Creek
Watkins, George Thomas: Antioch, Brassfield, Mill Creek, Roxboro
Watson, William Franklin: Roxboro
Weathers, James: New Light
Weatherspoon, Jesse Burton: Flat River Union, Mount Zion, Oxford, Tabb's Creek
Wellborn, Nesbert Earl: Concord
West, James Earl, Jr.: Tabb's Creek
Wheeler, Jones Lemar: Mountain Creek
Wheelous, Zadock W.: Mary's Chapel, New Light, Olive Grove
White, John Brown: Brassfield
White, Joseph Abram: Fellowship
Whiteside, William Marion: Pleasant Grove
Wiedenman, David: Brassfield
Wilbanks, Kenneth Durrett: Island Creek
Williams, Donald Allison: First Baptist, Creedmoor
Williams, Eugene Talmadge: Peace's Chapel
Williams, Herbert Taylor: Florence Avenue, Roxboro
Williams, Keith Franklin: Mount Zion
Williams, Roger Edson, Jr.: Hester
Williams, Steve E.: Delrayno
Wilson, Lyman: Island Creek
Wilson, Norris Wilborn: Poplar Creek
Wilson, Robert Allen: Knott's Grove
Wilson, Tony Derrell: Fellowship
Wimmer, Howard Allan, Jr.: Rock Spring
Wingate, Washington Manly: Brassfield, Oxford
Woodlief, Clarence Neil: Dexter
Woodson, Courtney Merrill: Corinth
Worrell, William B.: Grassy Creek, Hester, Island Creek

Worthington, Timothy Craig: Peace's Chapel
Wright, Thomas R.: Creedmoor
Wynne, Allen S.: Chestnut Grove, Mount Moriah
Yancey, Woodrow Edward: Dexter
Yates, John Clyde, Sr.: Pleasant Grove
Yates, Otis Webster: Fellowship
Young, Roy Vincent, Jr.: Pleasant Grove
Young, Thomas W.: New Bethel, New Light
Zaky, Larry Ray: West Oxford
Zerof, Herbert: Knott's Grove, Pleasant Grove

Appendix C

Woman's Missionary Union, Auxiliary to Flat River Association

An associational auxiliary of Woman's Missionary Union among Flat River Baptists was not formed until 1910, even though attempts had been made to formally organize such a missions support body among the women of the churches at an earlier date. Women's Missionary Union has maintained an auxiliary relationship to the Association since 1910, conducting annual meetings and leadership conferences devoted to fostering their particular interests, while assuming increasingly significant leadership roles within the churches and the Association.

The Table below indicates the names of those women who have served as Associational Superintendents, Presidents, or Directors of W.M.U., Auxiliary, since 1905—the first year in which the Association requested the Central Committee of Woman's Missionary Union of North Carolina to name an associational executive; locations of the annual meetings; annual membership in the various units of Woman's Missionary Union among the churches of the Association, where such data is available; and the financial commitments of Woman's Missionary Union to missions support for those years in which the organization assumed a major responsibility for direct, financial support of the missionary enterprise prior to the emergence of the Unified Church Budget. Financial Contributions have been rounded off to the nearest whole dollar.

DATE/PLACE	DIRECTOR/PRESIDENT	MEMBERS	SUPPORT
1905	Mrs. C. D. Ray	280	\$ 474.00
1906	Mrs. R. E. Street	275	707.00
1907	Miss Evye Street	---	696.00
1908	-----	---	774.00
1909	Miss Sue Kelly	---	619.00
1910—Mill Creek	Miss Sue Kelly	---	909.00
1911—Oxford	Maggie Short	---	980.00
1912—Amis Chapel	Mrs. John Webb	---	739.00
1913—Poplar Creek	Mrs. John Webb	---	830.00
1914—Creedmoor	Mrs. John Webb	---	1,244.00
1915—Florence Ave.	Mrs. John Webb	---	1,375.00
1916—Stovall	Mrs. John Webb	---	1,401.00
1917—Knott's Grove	Mrs. John Webb	---	1,446.00
1918—Enon	Mrs. John Webb	733	1,68.00
1919—Tally Ho	Mrs. John Webb	---	1,694.00
1920—Oxford	Mrs. John Webb	625	3,765.00
1921—Amis Chapel	Mrs. A. H. Powell	632	6,296.00
1922—Mount Zion	Miss Bettie Frances Knott	907	5,165.00
1923—Island Creek	Mrs. B. E. Parham	898	4,182.00
1924—Bullock	Mrs. S. H. Usry	1,082	4,930.00

DATE/PLACE	DIRECTOR/PRESIDENT	MEMBERS	SUPPORT
1925—Rock Spring	Mrs. Charles G. Royster	985	4,337.00
1926—Mtn. Creek	Mrs. Charles G. Royster	2,85?	2,127.00
1927—Florence Ave.	Mrs. Charles G. Royster	900	4,296.00
1928—Olive Branch	Mrs. Charles G. Royster	1,204	3,340.00
1929—Stovall	Mrs. N. Warren Weldon	1,192	3,462.00
1930—Enon	Mrs. N. Warren Weldon	1,225	3,605.00
1931—Oxford	Mrs. N. Warren Weldon	528	3,346.00
1932—Creedmoor	Mrs. N. Warren Weldon	---	2,915.00
1933—Amis Chapel	Mrs. N. Warren Weldon	1,307	2,449.00
1934—Dexter	Mrs. Sterling Carrington	1,307	1,340.00
1935—Hester	Mrs. Sterling Carrington	1,139	1,822.00
1936—Peace's Ch.	Mrs. Sterling Carrington	1,200	1,869.00
1937—West Oxford	Mrs. Sterling Carrington	1,249	2,404.00
1938—Tally Ho	Mrs. Sterling Carrington	1,315	2,512.00
1939—Mtn. Creek	Mrs. Sterling Carrington	1,500	2,905.00
1940—Grassy Creek	Mrs. Sterling Carrington	1,600	3,089.00
1941—Mount Zion	Mrs. Sterling Carrington	1,610	2,788.00
1942—Oxford	Mrs. Fred Phipps	1,610	3,540.00
1943—Enon	Mrs. Fred Phipps	1,610	4,754.00
1944—Stovall	Mrs. W. D. Poe	1,653	5,188.00
1945—Hester	Mrs. W. D. Poe	1,753	6,827.00
1946—Sharon	Mrs. W. D. Poe	1,653	8,772.00
1947—Corinth	Mrs. W. D. Poe	1,770	11,770.00
1948—Creedmoor	Mrs. W. D. Poe	1,882	-----
1949—Enon	Mrs. Fred Phipps	1,671	-----
1950—Amis Chapel	Mrs. Fred Phipps	2,251	-----
1951—Providence	Mrs. Lonnie Nelms	2,348	-----
1952—Tabb's Creem	Mrs. Lonnie Nelms	2,320	-----
1953—Dexter	Mrs. Lonnie Nelms	2,442	-----
1954—Peace's Ch.	Mrs. Lonnie Nelms	2,490	-----
1955—Island Creek	Mrs. Lonnie Nelms	2,399	-----
1956—Mount Zion	Mrs. Lonnie Nelms	2,238	-----
1957	Mrs. Lonnie Nelms	2,149	-----
1958—Stovall	Mrs. Brodie M. O'Brian	2,352	-----
1959—Corinth	Mrs. Brodie M. O'Brian	2,092	-----
1960—Rock Spring	Mrs. Brodie M. O'Brian	2,110	-----
1961—Creedmoor	Mrs. Brodie M. O'Brian	2,199	-----
1962—Hester	Mrs. Brodie M. O'Brian	2,173	-----
1963—Enon	Mrs. Emmett Perry	2,176	-----
1964—Pleasant Gr.	Mrs. Emmett Perry	2,069	-----

DATE/PLACE	DIRECTOR/PRESIDENT	MEMBERS	SUPPORT
1965—Mtn. Creek	Mrs. Emmett Perry	1,999	-----
1966—Delrayno	Mrs. James R. Frazier	1996	-----
1967—Bullock	Mrs. James R. Frazier	2,115	-----
1968—Mount Zion	Mrs. James R. Frazier	2,081	-----
1969—Oxford	Mrs. James R. Frazier	1,897	-----
1970—Dexter	Mrs. James R. Frazier	1,795	-----
1971—Hester	Mrs. Lawrence Davis	1,661	-----
1972—Providence	Mrs. Lawrence Davis	1,649	-----
1973—Amis Chapel	Mrs. Lawrence Davis	1,724	-----
1974—Sharon	Mrs. Lawrence Davis	1,723	-----
1975—Island Creek	Mrs. Lawrence Davis	1,738	-----
1976—Fellowship	Mrs. H. Oliver Davis	1,740	-----
1977—Knott's Grove	Mrs. H. Oliver Davis	1,599	-----
1978—Delrayno	Mrs. H. Oliver Davis	1,603	-----
1979—Peace's Ch.	Mrs. Warren T. Bush	1,731	-----
1980—Stovall	Mrs. Warren T. Bush	1,749	-----
1981—Bullock	Mrs. Warren T. Bush	1,720	-----
1982—Tungsten	Mrs. Reynolds Frazier	1,702	-----
1983—Tabb's Creek	Mrs. Reynolds Frazier	1,657	-----
1984—Mount Zion	Mrs. Reynolds Frazier	1,754	-----
1985—West Oxford	Mrs. Reynolds Frazier	1,717	-----
1986—Creedmoor	Mrs. Reynolds Frazier	1,693	-----
1987—Rock Spring	Mrs. Tommy Robertson	1,705	-----
1988—Olive Grove	Mrs. Tommy Robertson	1,585	-----
1989—Butner, First	Mrs. Edith Frazier Tuck	1,573	-----
1990—Mount Zion	Mrs. Edith Frazier Tuck	1,623	-----
1991—Pleasant Gr.	Mrs. Edith Frazier Tuck	1,580	-----
1992—Brassfield	Mrs. Bobby Temple	1,590	-----
1993—Dexter	Mrs. Bobby Temple		

Appendix D

Statistical Data Related to Flat River Association

The following tables provide an overview of the growth of Flat River Baptist Association in terms of affiliated churches, membership, and enrollment in the various auxiliaries. 1830 has been selected as the initial year for providing such statistics, since there exists a virtually complete file of associational records from that date. Sunday School data began to be included in associational *Minutes* after 1872, Church Training records after 1922, Brotherhood data after 1955, and enrollment in Music Ministries after 1967. Missions support—which reflects *total* gifts for Denominational Causes as reported to the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina—is noted after 1905, the earliest year in which the compilers of the Convention Annual began to include associational statistics as a basic segment of their reports related to the life of the denomination. Churches had been making such contributions, of course, since the earliest years of the Baptist State Convention. Financial contributions have been rounded off to the nearest whole dollar.

Abbreviations are utilized in the records found below in the interest of conserving space. Under the major heading “Auxiliary Enrollments,” SS = Sunday School, BTU = Church Training organizations, Bro = Brotherhood, and Mus = Music Ministries.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Churches/Church</u>		<u>Auxiliary Enrollments</u>				<u>Missions</u>
	<u>Members</u>		<u>SS</u>	<u>BTU</u>	<u>BRO</u>	<u>MUS</u>	<u>Support</u>
1830	16	1,532					
1831	16	1,622					
1832	17	1,837					
1833	--	----					
1834	--	----					
1835	--	----					
1836	18	1,586					
1837	--	----					
1838	17	1,301					
1839	17	1,576					
1840	15	1,380					
1841	17	1,709					
1842	17	1,997					
1843	17	2,118					
1844	17	2,305					
1845	17	2,296					
1846	18	2,203					
1847	18	2,350					
1848	18	2,341					
1849	19	2,558					

<u>Year</u>	<u>Churches/Church</u>		<u>Auxiliary Enrollments</u>				<u>Missions</u>
	<u>Members</u>		<u>SS</u>	<u>BTU</u>	<u>BRO</u>	<u>MUS</u>	<u>Support</u>
1850	20	2,404					
1851	20	2,517					
1852	20	2,618					
1853	19	2,395					
1854	20	2,380					
1855	22	2,652					
1856	22	2,656					
1857	21	2,759					
1858	22	2,625					
1859	23	2,957					
1860	24	2,847					
1861	22	2,943					
1862	22	2,821					
1863	23	2,750					
1864	23	3,068					
1865							
1866	23	2,866					
1867							
1868	22	2,784					
1869							
1870	23	2,714					
1871	23	2,828					
1872	23	2,650	<u>SS</u>				
1873	23	2,521	459				
1874	23	2,491	216				
1875			414				
1876	24	2,373	859				
1877	24	2,496	970				
1878	25	2,678	1,442				
1879	25	2,741	1,570				
1880	26	2,563	1,173				
1881	26	2,861	1,025				
1882	27	3,291	1,197				
1883	28	3,248	1,197				
1884	28	3,389	1,373				
1885	28	3,373	994				
1886	30	3,288	1,023				
1887	30	3,097	1,606				
1888	30	3,730	1,605				
1889	30	3,831	1,740				

<u>Year</u>	<u>Churches/Church</u>		<u>Auxiliary Enrollments</u>				<u>Missions</u>
	<u>Members</u>		<u>SS</u>	<u>BTU</u>	<u>BRO</u>	<u>MUS</u>	<u>Support</u>
1890	32	3,850	2,070				
1891	33	3,843	1,930				
1892	32	3,581	1,748				
1893	32	3,983	1,621				
1894	30	3,918	1,826				
1895	32	3,948	1,703				
1896	33	3,634	1,601				
1897	34	4,123	1,972				
1898	34	4,066	1,987				
1899	34	4,273	1,935				
1900	33	4,141	2,079				
1901	33	4,327	2,097				
1902	34	4,281	1,900				
1903	34	4,256	2,027				
1904	32	4,390	2,416				
1905	33	4,678	2,269				\$ <u>Mission</u>
1906	35	4,782	2,722				<u>Support</u>
1907	37	4,968	2,789				3,814.00
1908	37	5,129	2,883				4,071.00
1909	37	5,170	2,999				4,192.00
1910	38	5,285	2,878				4,005.00
1911	38	5,295	3,174				5,138.00
1912	39	5,660	3,349				5,112.00
1913	36	5,454	3,204				5,430.00
1914	36	5,680	3,271				5,393.00
1915	37	6,148	3,575				7,794.00
1916	37	6,412	4,030				6,580.00
1917	33	5,726	3,609				6,551.00
1918	34	5,987	3,525				6,282.00
1919	33	5,834	3,457				8,233.00
1920	34	6,514	3,831				9,461.00
1921	34	6,917	4,097				25,463.00
1922	32	6,682	3,656				17,290.00
1923	32	7,060	4,568				13,433.00
1924	33	7,348	4,553				13,612.00
1925	33	7,480	4,858	<u>BTU</u>			18,485.00
1926	33	7,387	5,593	1,076			15,654.00
1927	33	7,216	5,712	951			13,308.00
1928	33	7,465	5,658	390			14,141.00
1929	33	7,555	5,468	299			12,307.00
				345			11,052.00

<u>Year</u>	<u>Churches/Church</u>		<u>Auxiliary Enrollments</u>				<u>Missions</u>
	<u>Members</u>		<u>SS</u>	<u>BTU</u>	<u>BRO</u>	<u>MUS</u>	<u>Support</u>
1930	32	7,537	5,295	346			10,651.00
1931	32	7,702	5,034	529			7,029.00
1932	32	7,697	5,140	552			4,976.00
1933	32	7,922	4,785	575			3,469.00
1934	32	7,968	4,746	713			6,012.00
1935	32	7,830	4,491	621			6,545.00
1936	32	8,099	4,702	483			6,574.00
1937	32	8,091	4,821	332			7,198.00
1938	32	8,384	4,973	522			7,711.00
1939	32	8,567	5,087	540			7,498.00
1940	32	8,609	5,037	396			8,003.00
1941	32	8,704	4,918	205			8,604.00
1942	32	8,723	4,585	315			11,162.00
1943	31	8,809	4,492	300			14,582.00
1944	32	9,142	4,304	136			17,572.00
1945	28	8,518	4,035	159			21,551.00
1946	28	8,792	4,409	295			28,957.00
1947	28	8,965	4,063	378			35,358.00
1948	28	8,876	4,621	401			35,481.00
1949	28	9,053	4,886	762			45,332.00
1950	29	9,530	5,564	807			39,480.00
1951	29	9,450	5,903	762			40,666.00
1952	31	9,956	6,297	861			52,024.00
1953	32	10,247	6,812	1,056			52,632.00
1954	32	10,374	7,199	1,172	<u>BRO</u>		48,951.00
1955	32	10,400	7,471	1,231	248		73,666.00
1956	32	10,592	7,542	1,161	409		64,130.00
1957	32	10,686	7,438	1,362	457		65,966.00
1958	32	11,024	7,629	1,175	524		70,750.00
1959	31	10,481	7,291	1,041	443		67,593.00
1960	32	10,494	7,338	1,048	458		63,253.00
1961	32	10,546	7,582	1,288	546		69,900.00
1962	32	10,684	7,423	1,185	1,519		74,889.00
1963	32	10,841	7,363	1,181	554		96,378.00
1964	32	10,753	7,316	1,141	496		86,086.00
1965	32	10,847	7,256	941	477		91,480.00
1966	32	10,963	7,099	738	504	<u>MUS</u>	89,156.00
1967	32	10,934	6,913	755	517	1049	88,739.00
1968	32	10,976	6,941	667	525	1,000	93,832.00
1969	32	11,125	6,916	617	486	1,039	94,242.00

<u>Year</u>	<u>Churches/Church</u>		<u>Auxiliary Enrollments</u>				<u>Missions</u>
	<u>Members</u>		<u>SS</u>	<u>BTU</u>	<u>BRO</u>	<u>MUS</u>	<u>Support</u>
1970	32	11,204	6,739	406	574	1,031	96,480.00
1971	32	11,238	6,545	107	579	972	98,702.00
1972	33	11,293	6,648	108	581	1,243	113,445.00
1973	33	11,279	6,582	140	559	1,271	130,051.00
1974	33	11,393	6,240	89	660	1,317	134,724.00
1975	33	11,354	6,472	105	671	1,397	147,677.00
1976	33	11,562	6,392	128	622	1,468	152,318.00
1977	33	11,501	6,262	95	531	1,286	163,167.00
1978	33	11,683	6,173	225	630	1,223	187,811.00
1979	33	11,091	6,065	165	619	1210	214,745.00
1980	33	11,193	6,054	314	628	1,271	234,591.00
1981	33	11,226	5,933	215	681	1,225	254,375.00
1982	33	11,172	6,036	436	687	1,226	281,244.00
1983	33	11,372	5,977	451	761	1,315	318,401.00
1984	33	11,375	6,146	634	727	1,472	341,422.00
1985	33	11,427	6,231	592	791	1,368	357,900.00
1986	33	11,448	6,177	559	681	1,300	382,738.00
1987	33	11,480	6,040	795	633	1,479	421,654.00
1988	33	11,517	5,896	870	594	1,447	452,330.00
1989	33	11,473	5,677	725	647	1,454	468,531.00
1990	33	11,527	5,365	1,070	656	1,706	478,927.00
1991	33	11,427	5,293	613	680	1,843	517,929.00
1992	33	11,293	5,409	703	657	1,740	535,668.00

Appendix E

Historical Table of Meetings/Officers of Flat River Association

The locations of the annual meetings of Flat River Association, 1794-1804, are indicated in the Minutes of Church Conference of both Upper South Hyco, or Wheeler's, Primitive Baptist Church, and Flat River Primitive Baptist Church. Each of these churches was a constituent member of Flat River Association, and retained affiliation with her until the formation of Country Line Association in 1806. Other locations for meetings of the Association prior to 1828—apart from the records of 1805, 1811, 1812, and 1819, which are still extant—are found in the early Minutes of Church Conference for Bethel Hill Baptist Church, Neuse Baptist Church, or Island Creek Baptist Church.

<u>Date/Place</u>	<u>Moderator</u>	<u>Clerk</u>
1794—Gardner's		
1795—Flat River		
1796—Upper South Hyco		
1797—Lower South Hyco		
1798—Upper South Hyco		
1799—Grassy Creek		
1800—Country Line		
1801—Milton		
1802—Lower South Hyco		
1803—Grassy Creek		
1804—Wynn's Creek		
1805—Eno		
1806—Tanner's		
1807—		
1808—		
1809—		
1810—		
1811—Eno	Thomas Gardner	George Brassfield
1812—Tabb's Creek	Thomas Gardner	Thomas Vass
1813—Buffaloe		
1814—		
1815—Tanner's		
1816—Neuse		
1817—Mount Carmel		
1818—Cedar Creek		
1819—Camp Creek	George Roberts	
1820—Tar River		
1821—		

1822—		
1823—Island Creek		
1824—Buffaloe		
1825—		
1826—Lock's [Concord]		
1827—Tabb's Creek		
1828—Hester	Zachariah Allen	Willoughby Hudgins
1829—New Bethel	Zachariah Allen	Willoughby Hudgins
1830—Tar River	Zachariah Allen	Willoughby Hudgins
1831—Tanner's	Zachariah Allen	Willoughby Hudgins
1832—Grassy Creek	Zachariah Allen	Willoughby Hudgins
1833—Camp Creek	Zachariah Allen	Willoughby Hudgins
1834—Neuse	James King	Willoughby Hudgins
1835—Brassfield	Zachariah Allen	Willoughby Hudgins
1836—Bethel	Zachariah Allen	Thomas B. Barnett
1837—Enoe	Zachariah Allen	Thomas B. Barnett
1838—Concord	Zachariah Allen	Thomas B. Barnett
1839—Island Creek	Zachariah Allen	Thomas B. Barnett
1840—Island Creek	William Hill Jordan	Thomas B. Barnett
1841—Mount Moriah	William Hill Jordan	Thomas B. Barnett
1842—Tabb's Creek	William Hill Jordan	Thomas B. Barnett
1843—Shady Hill	William Hill Jordan	Thomas B. Barnett
1844—Buffaloe	William Hill Jordan	Thomas B. Barnett
1845—Hester's	William Jones	Thomas B. Barnett
1846—New Light	Elijah Hester	Thomas B. Barnett
1847—Olive Branch	Elijah Hester	Thomas B. Barnett
1848—Mount Zion	Elijah Hester	Robert Irah Devin
1849—Grassy Creek	Drury A. Harris	Robert Irah Devin
1850—Corinth	Elijah Hester	Robert Irah Devin
1851—Flat River U.	Elijah Hester	Robert Irah Devin
1852—Bethel	Elijah Hester	Robert Irah Devin
1853—Brassfield	Elijah Hester	Robert Irah Devin
1854—New Bethel	Elijah Hester	Robert Irah Devin
1855—Mount Moriah	George W. Thompson	Robert Irah Devin
1856—Concord	George W. Thompson	Robert Irah Devin
1857—Tabb's Creek	William Hill Jordan	Robert Irah Devin
1858—Corinth	John Haymes Mills	Robert Irah Devin
1859—Amis Chapel	John Haymes Mills	Edward Dalby
1860—Island Creek	John Haymes Mills	Edward Dalby
1861—Antioch	Wiley A. Atkinson	Edward Dalby
1862—Tally Ho	Wiley A. Atkinson	Edward Dalby
1863—Mtn. Creek	Wiley A. Atkinson	Edward Dalby

1864—Oxford	Wiley A. Atkinson	Edward Dalby
1865—Grassy Creek	Wiley A. Atkinson	Edward Dalby
1866—Poplar Creek	Wiley A. Atkinson	B. F. Hester
1867—Olive Branch	Wiley A. Atkinson	B. F. Hester
1868—Hester's	Wiley A. Atkinson	B. F. Hester
1869—Flat River U.	Robert Henry Marsh	B. F. Hester
1870—Bethel	Robert Henry Marsh	John Joyner Lansdell
1871—Mount Zion	Robert Irah Devin	John Joyner Lansdell
1872—Concord	Robert Irah Devin	John Joyner Lansdell
1873—Mtn. Creek	Joshua Addison Stradley	John Joyner Lansdell
1874—Oxford	Joshua Addison Stradley	John Joyner Lansdell
1875—Mount Zion	Joshua Addison Stradley	John Joyner Lansdell
1876—Island Creek	Franklin Royal Underwood	Rufus Amis
1877—Mill Creek	Franklin Royal Underwood	Rufus Amis
1878—Island Creek	W. D. Horner	Rufus Amis
1879—Corinth	W. D. Horner	Rufus Amis
1880—Enon	Franklin Royal Underwood	Rufus Amis
1881—Tally Ho	A. M. Veazey	Benjamin Dyer Howard
1882—Oxford	Franklin P. Hobgood	Benjamin Dyer Howard
1883—Fellowship	Franklin P. Hobgood	John Joyner Lansdell
1884—Grassy Creek	Franklin P. Hobgood	John Joyner Lansdell
1885—Hester's	Franklin P. Hobgood	B. F. Hester
1886—Bethel	Franklin P. Hobgood	B. F. Hester
1887—Antioch	Franklin P. Hobgood	Walter P. Stradley
1888—Poplar Creek	Franklin P. Hobgood	C. T. Wilson
1889—Enon	Thomas Henderson Street	B. S. Royster
1890—Pleasant Gr.	Thomas Henderson Street	B. S. Royster
1891—Mill Creek	Thomas Henderson Street	Joseph Gooch Blalock
1892—Island Creek	Albert C. Parham	Joseph Gooch Blalock
1893—Mount Zion	Albert C. Parham	Joseph Gooch Blalock
1894—Mtn. Creek	Albert C. Parham	W. L. Foushee
1895—Concord	Albert C. Parham	W. L. Foushee
1896—Stovall	B. S. Royster	W. L. Foushee
1897—Bethel	B. S. Royster	W. L. Foushee
1898—Flat River U.	B. S. Royster	J. C. Howard
1899—Grassy Creek	Joshua Addison Stradley	J. C. Howard
1900—Roxboro	Joshua Addison Stradley	J. C. Howard
1901—Bethany	Joshua Addison Stradley	J. C. Howard
1902—Fellowship	Joshua Addison Stradley	J. C. Howard
1903—Corinth	Joshua Addison Stradley	J. C. Howard
1904—Providence(P)	Joshua Addison Stradley	J. A. Noell

1905—Knap of Reeds	Joshua Addison Stradley	J. C. Howard
1906—Hester's	Joshua Addison Stradley	J. C. Howard
1907—Amis Chapel	Patrick Henry Fontaine	J. C. Howard
1908—Mt. Harmony	Patrick Henry Fontaine	J. C. Howard
1909—Tally Ho	Patrick Henry Fontaine	J. C. Howard
1910—Mill Creek	Adoniram B. Dunnaway	J. C. Howard
1911—Rock Spring	Patrick Henry Fontaine	J. C. Howard
1912—Florence Ave.	Patrick Henry Fontaine	J. C. Howard
1913—Poplar Creek	W. A. Devin	J. C. Howard
1914—Enon	W. A. Devin	J. C. Howard
1915—Oxford	W. A. Devin	J. C. Howard
1916—Island Creek	W. A. Devin	J. C. Howard
1917—Olive Branch	C. D. Ray	Eugene Grissom Usry
1918—Oxford	E. B. Meadows	Eugene Grissom Usry
1919—Creedmoor	E. B. Meadows	Eugene Grissom Usry
1920—Mtn. Creek	John S. Watkins	Eugene Grissom Usry
1921—Mount Zion	John S. Watkins	Eugene Grissom Usry
1922—Tally Ho	Frank Wills Hancock	Eugene Grissom Usry
1923—Sharon	Frank Wills Hancock	W. R. Mangum
1924—Grassy Creek	Frank Wills Hancock	W. R. Mangum
1925—Providence	Frank Wills Hancock	W. R. Mangum
1926—Knap of Reeds	Frank Wills Hancock	W. R. Mangum
1927—Hester's	Frank Wills Hancock	W. R. Mangum
1928—Amis Chapel	Willard Henry Upchurch	Sam A. Howard
1929—Fellowship	Willard Henry Upchurch	Sam A. Howard
1930—Stovall	Willard Henry Upchurch	Sam A. Howard
1931—Concord	Willard Henry Upchurch	Sam A. Howard
1932—Oxford	Willard Henry Upchurch	Sam A. Howard
1933—Mount Zion	Willard Henry Upchurch	Sam A. Howard
1934—Enon	Willard Henry Upchurch	Sam A. Howard
1935—Island Creek	Willard Henry Upchurch	Sam A. Howard
1936—Olive Branch	Willard Henry Upchurch	Sam A. Howard
1937—Olive Grove	William Dowd Poe	Sam A. Howard
1938—Peace's Ch.	William Dowd Poe	Sam A. Howard
1939—Mt. Harmony	William Dowd Poe	Sam A. Howard
1940—Poplar Creek	William Dowd Poe	Sam A. Howard
1941—Providence	William Dowd Poe	Sam A. Howard
1942—Olive Grove	William Dowd Poe	Sam A. Howard
1943—Hester	William Dowd Poe	Sam A. Howard
1944—Bullock	William Dowd Poe	Sam A. Howard
1945—Mtn. Creek	William Dowd Poe	Sam A. Howard

1946—Sharon	William Dowd Poe	Sam A. Howard
1947—Grassy Creek	William Dowd Poe	Sam A. Howard
1948—Corinth Mt. Zion	William Dowd Poe	Sam A. Howard
1949—Oxford Rock Spring	Madison Lamar Banister	Sam A. Howard
1950—Enon Stovall	Madison Lamar Banister	Sam A. Howard
1951—Pleasant Gr. Amis Chapel	Roger Edson Williams	Sam A. Howard
1952—Island Creek Tally Ho	Roger Edson Williams	Sam A. Howard
1953—Creedmoor, 1st. Mtn. Creek	Sam C. Hall	Sam A. Howard
1954—Dexter Fellowship	Sam C. Hall	Sam A. Howard
1955—West Oxford Florence Ave.	Dennis Moore Larkins	Sam A. Howard
1956—Hester Butner	Dennis Moore Larkins	Sam A. Howard
1957—Peace's Ch. Bullock	William A. Mitchiner	William J. Edwards
1958—Brassfield Tabb's Creek	William A. Mitchiner	William J. Edwards
1959—Providence Olive Grove	Herbert Wayland Baucom	Lila Piper
1960—Sharon Concord	Herbert Wayland Baucom	Lila Piper
1961—Grassy Creek Mount Olivet	Leon B. Perkinson	Lila Piper
1962—Mount Zion Poplar Creek	Leon B. Perkinson	Lila Piper
1963—Corinth	Warren Thomas Bush	Lila Piper
1964—Oxford Peace's Ch.	Warren Thomas Bush	Lila Piper
1965—Stovall	Carl D. Blake	Lila Piper
1966—Amis Chapel Tally Ho	Carl D. Blake	Mrs. James E. Frazier
1967—Island Creek Creedmoor, 1st.	Leslie Haile Giles	Mrs. James E. Frazier
1968—Mtn. Creek Fellowship	Leslie Haile Giles	Mrs. James E. Frazier

1969—West Oxford Dexter	Claude W. Allen, Jr.	Mrs. James E. Frazier
1970—Butner Hester	Claude W. Allen, Jr.	Mrs. James E. Frazier
1971—Pleasant Gr. Knott's Grove	Clarence Edwin Godwin	Mrs. James E. Frazier
1972—Delrayno Bullock	Clarence Edwin Godwin	Mrs. James E. Frazier
1973—Oxford Tabb's Creek	Clarence Edwin Godwin	Mrs. James E. Frazier
1974—Providence Brassfield	L. C. Adcock	Mrs. James E. Frazier
1975—Olive Grove Sharon	L. C. Adcock	Mrs. James E. Frazier
1976—Enon Concord	Thomas Ervin Lolley	Mrs. James E. Frazier
1977—Peace's Ch. Florence Ave.	Thomas Ervin Lolley	Mrs. James E. Frazier
1978—Grassy Creek Mount Olivet	J. B. Clay	Mrs. James E. Frazier
1979—Creedmoor, 1st Tungsten, 1st. Poplar Creek	J. B. Clay	Mrs. James E. Frazier
1980—Mount Zion Union	Charles E. Mier	Mrs. James E. Frazier
1981—Amis Chapel Corinth	Charles E. Mier	Mrs. James E. Frazier
1982—Stovall Rock Spring	John M. Owens	Mrs. James E. Frazier
1983—Island Creek Tally Ho, First	John M. Owens	Mrs. James E. Frazier
1984—Mtn. Creek Fellowship	M. Thomas Robertson	Mrs. James E. Frazier
1985—West Oxford Dexter	M. Thomas Robertson	Mrs. James E. Frazier
1986—Butner, First Hester	George Gresham	Mrs. James E. Frazier
1987—Pleasant Gr. Knott's Grove	George Gresham	Mrs. James E. Frazier
1988—Delrayno Bullock	E. Rudy Patton	Mrs. James E. Frazier
1989—Oxford Tabb's Creek	Donald A. Williams	Mrs. James E. Frazier

1990—Providence
Brassfield
1991—Olive Grove
Sharon
1992—Enon
Concord

Thomas E. Averette
Thomas E. Averette
Sam Zaye Brewer

Mrs. James E. Frazier
Mrs. James E. Frazier
Mrs. James E. Frazier





