

A Baptist Looks Back

James Oliver Young

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*A Baptist
Looks Back*



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A Baptist Looks Back

*The Origin and Early History
of Roan Mountain Baptist
Association, Now Mitchell
Baptist Association*

By
James Oliver Young

1968
117 Morningside Drive
BOONE, NORTH CAROLINA

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Faith

*I stood alone in the dark night,
And watched the clouds in their flight across the sky.
I saw a light in the mist afar;
Somehow I knew it was a star,
But it shone so dimly through
It seemed it were untrue.
But the wind rustled in the tree tops,
And the clouds soon passed on by;
Then I saw that star, a star, in the clear blue sky.*

*I stand alone in the drift of life,
And listen to the strains of joy and strife
In the souls of humankind.
I see through it all a gleam of truth,
Doubted by age and scorned by youth;
Lost in illusion, yet often it seems
To weave itself into all my dreams.
Though time rushes on in its ancient flight,
And the rivulet of life is lost in the sea,
I think I know what will live in eternity.*

James Oliver Young

Foreword

Every church, every association has its story, if only we can discover it. The background of the lives of the old ministers, their spiritual experiences, their conflicts, their sufferings, their victories, — sometimes a soul crisis in the life of a church — these things are woven into the pattern that makes what we are today.

For a period of several years James Oliver Young collected and studied minutes of the old Roan Mountain Baptist Association. He was especially interested because he was a member of the church that fostered the beginning of Baptist work in Mitchell County. There seemed to be a fairly good record beginning with the Reverend Julius Henline, Charles Ellis and others, but no record of early leaders.

After his health forced him to surrender his active ministry Mr. Young decided to complete the project — tracing the history of Mitchell County Baptists. Through conversation with many people, especially elderly people, and research in Mars Hill, Wake Forest and Appalachian State Teachers College libraries, the reading of associational minutes and visiting in various churches and cemeteries he gathered his information. Some he recorded, but he kept a wealth of information in his mind, planning to set it down for posterity.

His love for Christ was so great that he counted it a privilege to be of service, no matter how small the request. Thus he was so busy serving the Church and its people with his limited strength that he was not able to complete writing the history of Mitchell County Baptists before his death. Beginning with Chapter 13 his sister, Ethel, gleaned information from his material and completed that chapter and the biographies of Stephen M. Collis, James Collis and Stephen M. Greene.

We have omitted some portions which he planned to include because of the scarcity of information, namely, Bowman Academy and Bakersville Baptist Church, and the biography of Robert Patterson.

This is a non-profit project and is done as a memorial by his family and friends. It is sent forth with a prayer that it will be a blessing to the Association; and with the thought that the Association may want to continue this history.

E.E.Y. and V.M.Y.

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Grateful acknowledgment is made to the present clerk of the Mitchell Baptist Association, Mr. M. L. Blanton for help in collecting minutes. We wish particularly to thank the many Baptists in Mitchell, Avery, and Yancey counties who helped Mr. Young by responding willingly, lending minutes, and giving information.

We are indebted to Mrs. Nell B. Young and Mrs. Marshall Hargrove for typing portions of the manuscript.

Chapter I

In The Beginning

BEGINNINGS are elusive. In history always there was something that went before the time and place you choose to drive down your stake and label "beginning." If we choose to begin our story of Mitchell County Baptists with the organization of the Roan Mountain Baptist Association on October 5, 1849 at Double Island Baptist Church in Yancey County, we will leave unanswered too many questions concerning the origin of the eighteen churches which formed that association. How do we account for so many Baptist people and Baptist churches? Who were their preachers? What was the manner and content of their preaching? To answer some of these questions we must look far enough afield to get a general view of the people and movements on the early American frontier, out of which our story evolved.

First we are concerned with the men and movements which account for the churches in the valleys, coves, and hills of the great region between the Blue Ridge on the east, which forms the continental divide, and the range of high mountains to the west, beginning with the Yellow Mountain on the North Carolina-Tennessee state line and running southwest, including the Roan, Iron, Unaka, Bald, and Great Smoky Mountains, and extending to the Georgia state line. For many years all this vast territory was included in the French Broad Association, to which the first Baptist churches in the present Mitchell County area belonged.

Although access into and through this region was difficult, people found their way into it by way of mountain passes on the east and up through the river valleys and gorges on the west. While this latter movement was not so extensive as the movement westward, it was significant for our story as will become apparent. The mountain passes to the west were also used, and there was extensive movement of people from southwest to northeast and conversely across the transverse mountains and valleys connecting these two ranges.

People approached this region from different directions, being impelled by different motives. Many thousands who had recently arrived in America from England, Ireland, and Germany moved southwestward, following the foothills of the mountains, in search of lands that were not already taken. Many others along the Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia frontiers traveled southwestward fleeing the intense Indian raids incidental to the French and Indian War and a little later the ravages of Pontiac's War. Many of these people had entered the Great Valley of Virginia by way of the Potomac, Shenandoah, and James Rivers. Moving southwestward these entered the high plateau between the Blue Ridge and Alleghany Mountains, and eventually arrived at Big Lick (Roanoke), Virginia, which was a sort of pivotal

point. By bearing more to the westward the pioneers could reach the headwaters of the Holston, Clinch, and Powell Rivers. Over this route many thousands were to move into Tennessee and many on through the Cumberland Gap into Kentucky and beyond. By bearing slightly southwestward these pioneers could follow the foothills of the Blue Ridge and enter the valleys formed by the headwaters of the Yadkin and Catawba Rivers and their tributaries.¹ This is the route followed by the family of Daniel Boone. Then came the people of central North Carolina fleeing the political injustice and religious persecution imposed by Governor Tryon from 1765 to 1771, of which more will be said later. Then too, we should not overlook the fact that a little later, the bitterness and civil disorder engendered by the American Revolution in the older parts of North and South Carolina caused many people, both Whigs and Tories, to move westward.

The largest single ethnic group among these pioneers was the Scotch-Irish. Forman estimates that by 1770 a half million of these people had entered America. As early as 1729 the governor of Pennsylvania, noting the arrival of six ships within one week bringing in Scotch-Irish, became alarmed lest they should take over the whole province.² But these were men matched for the mountains, and they shaped the culture of the Southern Appalachian region as no other group. Normally, we could have expected these people to be Presbyterian, but it is apparent that only in rare instances did their ministers travel with them. Therefore, they became subject to the religious influence which they found or which was introduced in the areas of their settlement.

TIDENCE LANE

How these population movements affected the development of Baptist churches in the area with which we are concerned can best be illustrated by a brief account of the lives of two men, Elders Tidence Lane and Perminter Morgan. From the standpoint of chronology, the first of these is the Elder Tidence Lane. He was born near Baltimore, Maryland on August 31, 1734, the son of Richard and Sarah Tidings Lane. He was named for his paternal grandmother, but popular usage rendered the name "Tidence." Following the trend of the times, his family moved southwestward, stopping first in Virginia, and then moving on into the Yadkin Valley. They settled not far from the old home of Daniel Boone. Here young Tidence Lane grew to manhood and married Esther Bibbin. We note in passing that four of the seven sons of this couple were with John Sevier at the battle of King's Mountain in 1780. In his mature years Tidence Lane came under the influence of the preaching of the venerable Shubal Stearns. Since the significance of this influence will not be appreciated without some knowledge of Shubal Stearns, we digress for a moment to bring him into our picture.

1. Dale Van Every, *Forth to the Wilderness*, (William Morrow & Co., Inc., New York, 1961), p. 314.
2. S. E. Foreman, *Advanced American History*, Revised (The Century Co., New York, 1927), p. 86.

Shubal Stearns headed a group of New Light or Separate Baptists, who had their origin in the evangelistic crusades of George Whitefield in the 1740's. Stearns led his group down from New England, and was joined by his brother-in-law, Daniel Marshall, in Virginia in 1754. After preaching in Berkley County, Virginia for about a year with disappointing results, they decided to move into the fast growing piedmont section of North Carolina. The eight families of this group arrived at Sandy Creek, now in Randolph County, in November, 1755. Here they built a meeting house and organized a Separate Baptist church. Within a few years the membership of this church had increased from 16 to 606, and three strong churches were organized in the region. In 1758 the Sandy Creek Baptist Association, the third oldest Baptist association in America, was organized. Morgan Edwards, the Baptist historian who made a trip through the Carolinas in 1772 collecting materials for a Baptist history, said of this work of Stearns: ³

All the separate baptists (sic) sprang hence: not only eastward towards the sea, but westward towards the great river Mississippi, and northward to Virginia and southward to South Carolina and Georgia. The word went forth from this sion, and great was the company of them who published it, in so much that her converts were as the drops of the morning dew.

Edwards also records the following estimate of Stearns as a man and as a preacher: ⁴

Mr. Stearns was but a little man but a man of good natural parts and sound judgement. Of learning he had but a small share, yet was pretty well acquainted with books. His voice was musical and strong, which he managed to use in such a manner as, one while, to make soft impressions on the heart, and fetch tears from the eyes in a mechanical way; and anon, to shake the very nerves and throw the animal system into tumults and perturbations. All the Separate ministers copy after him in tones of voices and actions of body; and some few exceed him. His character was indisputable good, both as a man, a Christian and a preacher.

News of the stirring preaching of Stearns spread throughout the piedmont and frontier settlements. Tidence Lane out of curiosity rode over forty miles on horseback to hear this famous preacher. This proved to be a life-changing experience for him, as he later related it to Morgan Edwards: ⁵

When the fame of Mr. Stearns' preaching reached the Yadkin, where I lived, I felt a curiosity to go and hear him. Upon my arrival I saw him sitting under a peach tree with a book in his hand and the people gathered about him. He fixed his eyes upon me immediately, which made me feel in such a manner as I had never felt before. I turned to quit the place,

3. Morgan Edwards, *Materials Towards a History of the Baptists in the Province of North Carolina*, Vol. IV. p. 19.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 21.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 21.

and could not proceed far. I walked about, sometimes catching his eyes as I walked. My uneasiness increased and became intolerable. I went up to him thinking that a salutation and shaking of hands would relieve me; but it happened otherwise. I began to think he had an evil eye, and ought to be shunned. Shunning him I could no more effect than a bird can shun a rattlesnake when it fixes its eyes upon it. When he began to preach my perturbations increased, so that nature could no longer support me and I sunk to the ground.

Soon after this experience in 1772, Tidence Lane, one of two exhorters at Sandy Creek Church, was ordained to the ministry. How long he preached in North Carolina after his ordination is not ascertained. But that he was there during most of the violence of the War of the Regulators is evidenced by the fact that he joined Shubal Stearns in signing a petition to the Colonial Council for the pardon of John Pugh and Thomas Welborn who had been outlawed for their participation in the Regulator movement.⁶ Whether their petition was favorably received is not known, but it appears that these two men escaped to the western settlement, where they became well known in Watauga and Holston affairs, John Pugh having been elected sheriff of Washington County in 1787.⁷

It will not serve our purpose here to attempt a detailed account of the Regulator movement. It has been adequately covered in many writings. Perhaps it will be sufficient to say that the inequalities of taxation and the extortions of corrupt government officials, who were appointed by the Colonial Governor without regard to the wishes and welfare of the people, led to an organized movement on the part of the people to seek justice in the administration of their civil affairs. The vigor and ruthlessness with which Governor Tryon attempted to crush this movement led to the exodus of many hundreds from the province, including many Baptist people. Morgan Edwards is again our principal authority for this exodus of Baptist people. He says of the Sandy Creek Church:⁸

It began with 16 souls; and in a short time increased to 606, spreading its branches to Deep River and Abbot's Creek, which branches are gone to other provinces; and most of the members of this church have followed them in so much that in seventeen years it is reduced from 606 to 14 souls, and is in danger of becoming extinct. The cause of the dispersion was the abuse of power which too much prevailed in the Province and caused the inhabitants to rise in arms, and fight for their privileges; but being routed, (May 16, 1771), they despaired of seeing better times, and therefore quitted the province. It is said that 1,500 families departed since the battle of Alamance; and, to my knowledge a great many more are only

6. North Carolina Colonial Records, IX, pp. 26-30.

7. J. G. M. Ramsey, *Annals of Tennessee*, (Walker & James, Charleston, S. C., 1853; reprinted by Kingsport Press, Kingsport, Tennessee, 1926-, p. 388.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 18.

waiting to dispose of their plantations in order to follow them. This is to me an argument that their grievances were real, and their oppression great notwithstanding all that has been said to the contrary.

Edwards also recounts the exodus of Baptists from other churches and committees in North Carolina. Among those departing was the Elder Tidence Lane. Just when Lane arrived in Watauga settlement is not certain, but he was there in 1779. Ramsey, says: "Tidence Lane, a Baptist preacher, organized a church in this year (1779). A house of public worship was erected on Buffalo Ridge."⁹ David Benedict, who visited this church in 1818, says in his *History of the Baptists*:

Among those emigrants there was a small body which went out in something like a church capacity. They removed from the old Church Sandy Creek in North Carolina which was planted by Shubal Stearns; as a branch of that mother church they emigrated to the wilderness, and settled on Boone's Creek.

The church is now called Buffalo Ridge.

The Watauga and Holston settlements attracted hundreds of people, mostly from North Carolina and Virginia, and soon became a fertile field for the preaching of the gospel. Laboring with Tidence Lane were William Murphy and Jonathan Mulkey, and many others who joined forces with them as time went on. By 1781, only three years after the organization of Buffalo Ridge Church, five or six other churches at widely scattered points had been organized. These formed themselves into a temporary association maintaining affiliation with the Sandy Creek Association. But the distance was too great and communication too difficult to maintain a meaningful relationship. For this reason the Holston Association was organized in 1786, consisting of seven churches—Kendrick's Creek, Bent Creek, Beaver Creek, Greasy Cove, Cherokee, North Fork of Holston, and Lower French Broad. Both the rapid growth in population in this new settlement and the zeal of the Baptist ministers is indicated by the fact that in 1802 membership in the Holston Association had grown to thirty-six churches, with a membership of between two and three thousand Baptists.

These early preachers of the Holston Association went everywhere they could find a group of people willing to listen to the preaching of the gospel. They went up the streams which formed passes through the mountains. Quite early they found congregations among the settlers along the French Broad, Pigeon, and Tuckasegee Rivers and their tributaries, and wherever possible they organized a church. Three of these churches organized by workers out of the Holston Association were Little Ivy, formed most probably in 1796, near the present town of Marshall in Madison County; New Found Church, reported to have been formed in 1802, and now in the Buncombe Association; and Locust Old Fields, probably constituted in 1803 on the Pigeon River, near the present town of Canton in Haywood County. These three churches, at their request, were dismissed from the Holston Association in 1807 to join with three other churches of Broad River

9. *Ibid.*, p. 182.

Association of North Carolina to form the French Broad Baptist Association.

Before we turn our attention to the people and events which account for the three North Carolina churches in the French Broad Association, let us note that Tidence Lane, the pioneer Baptist preacher in our story of the Holston work, served a number of churches in East Tennessee before his death on January 30, 1806 at the age of seventy-two in what is now Hamblin County, Tennessee. He left a heritage and a family that has contributed much to the Christian mission and to the civic life of Tennessee.

Chapter II

Movement From The East Into The French Broad Region

AT the same time that many of those leaving central North Carolina were crossing over the mountains into what is now Tennessee, many others were crossing the Yadkin and Catawba Rivers and their tributaries, and settling along the foothills of the Blue Ridge in North Carolina and in northwestern South Carolina. Even before Tryon's ruthless suppression of the Regulators, many people were pressing westward. Missionaries from the Sandy Creek Association came into these areas quite early. In 1759 Elder Philip Mulky led a group of thirteen people from the Deep River Church, which belonged to the Sandy Creek Association, and organized a church in the Broad River section of South Carolina. In two years this church grew to a membership of 104. Then the group that organized this church moved on 100 miles southward and established a work at Fair Forest, near the present town of Union, South Carolina. This church grew in membership to 167 in ten years. The growth in membership of these churches indicates the strength of this early westward migration.

About one year after the arrival of Philip Mulky in South Carolina, Daniel Marshall led a group from Abbot's Creek, also a member of the Sandy Creek Association, and settled on Beaver Creek, a tributary of Broad River, where they established a church. Daniel Marshall then moved on into Georgia. From these early churches along the foothills of the mountains missionaries went out in all directions, preaching and organizing churches wherever they found settlements. Perhaps some idea of the strength of this early Baptist movement can be gained from an account of one who was not their friend. In writings edited by Richard Hooker, Charles Woodmason, an Anglican itinerant, writing under the date of 1765, made a report to the Bishop of London on the state of religion in the southern colonies. Woodmason said of North Carolina: ¹

The Baptists are now the most numerous and formidable Body of People which the Church has to encounter with in the Interior and Back Parts of the Province These Baptists have great Prevalance and footing in North Carolina, and have taken such deep roots there it will require long Time and Pains to grub up their layers.

1. Richard Hooker, *The Carolina Back Country on the Eve of the Revolution*, The Journal and Other Writings of Charles Woodmason, Anglican Itinerant. (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press 1953), p. 80. Published for the Institute of Early American History and Culture.

PERMINTER MORGAN

But the continued "great Prevalence and footing" of these Baptists was assured by men like Perminter Morgan, a young man who joined the movement to the west. He is important to our story not only because of his work in the Bethel, Broad River, and French Broad Associations, but also because he was the father of Elder Stephen Morgan, who was the organizer of the first Baptist work in what is now Mitchell County. We are indebted to Clarence W. Griffin for a sketch of his life: ²

Perminter Morgan was born in Virginia August 29, 1755, from whence he emigrated to North Carolina. He was on Deep River in Guilford County in the fall of 1773, where he signed a petition to the Colonial Council. He then removed to Rutherford County about 1775, where he married Grace Jones. He settled within one mile of Piney Knob Baptist Church, near Union Mills. Later he moved to Sugar Hill in what is McDowell County, where he spent the remainder of his life. He reared ten children, who with his wife, were living when he died April 28, 1824. He was the son of Stephen Morgan and a grandson of Perminter Morgan. He had a brother, James Morgan, who resided in Rutherford County. Perminter Morgan was the first pastor of Mountain Creek Church, and was also pastor of Bill's Creek, Bethel, and other churches. He was a man of great piety and of unusual force as a speaker. He was a frequent messenger to the Charleston and Bethel Associations prior to 1800. He helped to organize the Broad River Association in 1800. He preached the introductory sermon in 1802, 1804, 1806, and 1809. He was in the French Broad Association in 1812 as pastor of Bethel Church. Gracie Jones, his wife, was born March 27, 1755 and died December 4, 1834. Both are buried at Bethel Church in McDowell County.

Perminter Morgan would have been a young man of about twenty years when he settled in Rutherford County and married Gracie Jones. The 1790 census lists his family as living in the Third Company of Rutherford County. At this time there were seven sons and two daughters in the family. Only one of the sons, most probably Stephen, was then sixteen years or older. The Mountain Creek Church of which Perminter Morgan was pastor was a member of the Bethel Association, which was organized in 1789. By 1800 this association had grown very large, including churches in Georgia, all of northwestern South Carolina, and at least six churches in North Carolina. One of these was the French Broad Church in Buncombe County, and was apparently the first Baptist church west of the Blue Ridge. The date of its organization is somewhat in doubt. However, it was admitted to the Bethel Association in 1792, and Richard Newport, a resident of Rutherford County, was listed as pastor through 1794.

2. Clarence W. Griffin, *History of Old Tryon and Rutherford Counties, 1730-1930*. (Shelby, N. C.), p. 594. (by special permission of the Copyright owner).

As pastor of the Mountain Creek Baptist Church, Permitter Morgan led in a movement to organize an association composed of churches of North Carolina and the adjoining counties of South Carolina. This division was discussed over a period of three years, until August, 1800, when the Bethel Association dismissed a group of 16 churches to form the Broad River Association. One of these sixteen was the French Broad Church, presently located about five miles west of Hendersonville in Henderson County. John R. Logan, who had access to the minutes of the Broad River Association, makes this interesting comment concerning Permitter Morgan in his account of the session for 1807:³

The formation of the French Broad Association took from the Broad River the venerable Permitter Morgan, who became a member of the new body, and probably never crossed the mountains again to attend another session of his mother association.

It may be inferred from the above statement that Permitter Morgan had become pastor of the French Broad Church and that he had moved west of the mountains. The first inference is most probably correct. It appears, however, that he never took up permanent residence west of the Blue Ridge, but rather moved to Sugar Hill in what is now McDowell County. From this point travel across the mountains into the regions of the French Broad and its tributaries was relatively easy. By following the headwaters of the Catawba River and crossing the Blue Ridge through the Swannanoa Gap one could arrive on the headwaters of the Swannanoa River. This was a journey of no more than twenty miles from Permitter Morgan's home at Sugar Hill. It was a well known and well traveled route in that day. It was the route followed by General Griffith Rutherford's expedition against the Cherokee Indians in the fall of 1776. The Bethel Church which Permitter Morgan represented in the French Broad Association at its meeting in 1812 was the Bethel Church near his home at Sugar Hill and the place where he was buried in 1824.

It will not serve our purpose here to attempt to record every known detail of this good man's life. However, there is one episode which should be noted because of the light which it throws on a theological controversy which later arose in the French Broad Association, and which affected the churches in the area with which we are concerned. In his *Annals of Lincoln County* William L. Sherrill reports an incident in which a group of men led by Permitter Morgan seized Bishop Asbury and took him before Jonathan Hampton, a Magistrate in Rutherford County. Asbury was charged with going about preaching doctrines he had no authority to preach. The worthy peace officer listened to the complaint and dismissed the charges.

Morgan's action was indeed a strange course for one who belonged to a group that had historically emphasized complete religious freedom. But this was an age of theological controversy, and Morgan's conduct may be explained as a strong reaction to the Arminianism of

3. John R. Logan, *Sketches, Historical and Biographical, of the Broad River and King's Mountain Baptist Associations, from 1800 to 1882*, (Shelby, N. C.), p. 23.

Methodist doctrine. This doctrine emphasized the freedom and responsibility of man, held that God had not predestined some for salvation and others for perdition, that the grace of God is not irresistible, and that man always has a choice. To a mind like Perminter Morgan's, indoctrinated with the hyper-Calvinism of the Philadelphia Confession, this doctrine was anathema.

We should hasten to point out that while most of the ministers and churches of the Broad River Association were Separate Baptists of the Sandy Creek origin, and did not, at least in the beginning, approve of creeds and articles of faith, some of the ministers and churches were Particular Baptists, so called because they accepted the Calvinistic doctrine of "eternal particular election," or predestination. These were also called Regular Baptists, the name by which they were most commonly known in America. Perminter Morgan was one of this latter group. Yet even in the face of his influence to the contrary, the Broad River Association did not accept the doctrine of "eternal particular election" in the abstract of principles which it adopted in 1800.

At that time there was in popular usage in Virginia and the upper central region of North Carolina an "Abstract of Baptist Principles," based on the Philadelphia Confession. It had been worked out by leaders of the Regular Baptists in an effort to unite the Regular and Separate Baptist churches in their associations. The Philadelphia Confession, adopted by the Philadelphia Association in 1742, was based on the Westminster Confession of 1643, which was the product of the learned Presbyterians of England. The Philadelphia Confession was far too long and involved to claim the attention and interest of most Baptists, especially those of the frontier. The "Abstract" contained twelve principles, briefly stated. The Broad River Association adopted this abstract, but with some important modifications. They pointedly omitted the article which said "We believe in the doctrine of eternal particular election." They also altered the seventh article which said "We believe that God's elect shall be called, converted, regenerated and sanctified by the Holy Spirit," because it seemed to deny the freedom of the human will.

However, Morgan did not give up easily. He wrote the Circular Letter for the Broad River Association in 1803. This letter is best described as an effort to strengthen support for the doctrine of election. This doctrine, as held by Perminter Morgan and his son, Stephen Morgan, was carried over into the French Broad Association, and later became the subject of controversy, some of the results of which will need to be dealt with later in this story.

As noted above, Bishop Francis Asbury was present in the same area at the same time as Perminter Morgan. Indeed, this good Methodist brother made many journeys through the mountains of central western North Carolina between the early 1790's and 1814. He wrote in his journal for 1809: "Eight times within nine years I have crossed these Alps." His journals provide one of the best sources of information concerning the early history of the region. Contrary to often expressed opinion, both the Methodists and Presbyterians came into the region

under discussion at the same time as the Baptists, and into some sections earlier. The simultaneous presence of these groups in a frontier situation with their different theological emphasis, and in the absence of a broader intellectual and cultural climate, was bound to breed religious controversy. But let it be said that these early leaders did have convictions on which to differ and which they sincerely believed made a difference.

There is a tradition, which some historians have recorded as fact, that Stephen Morgan organized the Cane (Caney) River Baptist Church in 1800, which is the year it became a member of the Broad River Association. But there is information which casts doubt on this tradition. It is contained in Stephen Morgan's obituary recorded in the minutes of the Flat Creek Church, of which he was pastor for over forty years, near the present town of Weaverville. We quote from this obituary:

"He obtained a hope in Christ the 8th of June 1800 and was baptized the following July and began to preach in October, 1803 and obtained license April, 1805, and was ordained to the ministry in 1807."

Since Stephen Morgan is himself the source of this information it is most likely correct, and means that he could hardly have organized Cane River Church in 1800. However, it is a matter of record that he was pastor of Cane River when it became a part of the French Broad Association in 1807, and it is most probable that the Cane River Church asked for his ordination. It may well be that Perminter Morgan was responsible for starting the work at Cane River. He was, we know, instrumental in the organization of the French Broad Association, and the Bethel Church, of which he was pastor at the meeting of this association in 1812, was not organized until 1811.

Stephen Morgan did establish residence west of the Blue Ridge soon after 1800. He did own property in Buncombe County and had cattle grazing on the open range in 1810. As was the law and custom of the day, he registered his brand or mark with the county court at its January term in 1810. His mark was "a swallow fork in the left ear and an upper bit in the right ear."⁴ The history of the Baptists in a large area of Western North Carolina for the next fifty years is pretty much the story of Stephen Morgan.

It is interesting here to note that the Cane River Church was in that portion of Buncombe County that was cut off to form Yancey County in 1833, and that the first session of the Yancey County court was held in this meeting house.⁵ This church is at present (1966) a member of the Yancey County Association and has a total membership of 106.

The third church in the group of three which were dismissed from the Broad River Association to help form the French Broad Association in 1807 was the Cane Creek Church, organized on a stream by that name in the southern part of Buncombe County by Humphrey Posey

4. F. A. Sondley, *A History of Buncombe County*, (Asheville, N. C., 1930), p. 478.

5. Jason B. Deyton, *History of the Toe River Valley*, (Unpublished Thesis), p. 30.

in 1805. Mrs. Sadie Smathers Patton in her book, *The Story of Henderson County*, reports Posey's own account of this organization.⁶

In 1805, I commenced preaching of evenings in a destitute settlement near where I was teaching a school on Cane Creek. Brother James Whittaker and myself drew up Articles of Faith as we could not find any in the country, and we collected all the members intending to be in the constitution and examined them on the Articles. All being agreed a presbytery was invited to attend. The presbytery was pleased with our Articles of Faith and so the church was organized. Two of the members were at the same time ordained to the deacon's office and I was ordained to the work of the ministry. At the next meeting I baptized four professed believers and the work of the Lord continued for a length of time. Some were received for baptism at almost every meeting.

Because of his outstanding work among the Cherokee Indians and his work in Georgia, to which state he moved in 1824, Humphrey Posey is today considered by Baptist historians as one of the most able men produced by the Baptists.

The French Broad Association, formed in 1807 by the six churches, whose origin and background we have tried to outline, became the missionary and organizing force promoting the Baptist work in all western North Carolina, including what is now Yancey, Mitchell, and Avery counties.

Detailed information concerning the development of this work for the next few years is lacking. However, John Ammons in his *Outlines of History of French Broad Association and Mars Hill College*, makes this comment:

These six churches were the leaven in the meal, diffusing itself in the whole mass of the social order, so that wherever a settlement was planted a church was planted. In a few years the number of churches was greatly increased. Among the first new churches were Bull Creek, River Hill, Flat Creek, Grassy Creek, Middle Fork, Big Ivy, Roan Mountain, Hominy, Old Salem, Beula.

Five years after its organization the French Broad Association met again with the French Broad Church, September 19, 1812. As reported by Benedict, the minutes for that year gave the following information about the ten churches then in the Association:⁷

<i>Church</i>	<i>Pastor</i>	<i>Membership</i>
Little Ivy (1796)	Moses Freeman	44
Locust Old Fields	-----	73
New Found	Thomas Snelson	89
Caney River	Stephen Morgan	23
French Broad (1791)	Benjamin King	41

6. Mrs. Sadie Smathers Patton, *The Story of Henderson County*, (Asheville, N. C. Printed by Miller Printing Co. 1947).

7. David Benedict, *History of the Baptists*, (1813), Vol. I, p. 528.

<i>Church</i>	<i>Pastor</i>	<i>Membership</i>
Cane Creek	Humphrey Posey	40
Mud Creek	Joseph Byers	31
Bethel	Perminter Morgan	42
Flat Creek (1811)	-----	40
Mountain Page	William Kimsey	22
		<hr/> 455

At this time Stephen Morgan was moderator of the association and James Whitaker was clerk.

Chapter III

Beginnings of Roan Mountain and Grassy Creek

LET us return to the story of Stephen Morgan, and through his dynamic personality and wide-ranging activities trace the growth, the conflict, and the ultimate fruitful expansion of the Baptist work from Buncombe County northeastward into the region of the Toe River Valley.

First we put together such information as we have been able to collect concerning his personal life. For much of this information we are indebted to the Rev. J. H. Lackey, pastor of Flat Creek Baptist Church and to some of the membership of that church, especially to Mrs. C. D. Williams, who prepared a brief history of the Flat Creek Church for its Sesquicentennial Celebration in 1961. The church has on file minutes dating from 1833 to the present time. Stephen Morgan's grave is in the cemetery of this church.

Stephen Morgan was born March 4, 1776, the oldest of ten children born to Elder Perminter Morgan and his wife, Gracie Jones. He was born near the present village of Union Mills in Rutherford County. About his early youth we know only that he grew up in a frontier situation, the oldest son in a large family, whose father was one of the most respected and influential ministers of the area. It is reasonable to assume that he had above average educational advantages for young people on the North Carolina frontier. As noted in a previous chapter, his obituary recorded in the Flat Creek Church minutes at the time of his death in 1859, informs us that he was converted June 8, 1800 and was baptized the following July, that he began preaching in October, 1803, was licensed in 1805 and was ordained in 1807. This was the usual pattern for a Baptist minister of the day. First he was "liberated," that is, his church gave its approval and expressed confidence in him to begin preaching. If his talent and progress so indicated, he was then licensed. This was usually done without examination by the church, and was a formal, usually written endorsement of the church for him to exercise his talents wherever and whenever he had opportunity to do so. He might do missionary work or supply pulpits of established churches. Then if a church saw fit to call him to be its pastor, it might ask for his ordination, which was done by the laying on of hands after a careful examination by a presbytery called for that purpose.

As to Stephen Morgan's marital status, his obituary contains this quaint statement: "S. Morgan married Polly Stanley (or Stanety) and lived with her 20 years and she died, then married Dorcas Elkins and lived with her 27 years and she died and then married Elizabeth Byrd and lived with her 13 years and (he) died." His marriage to Polly

Stanley could hardly have occurred later than 1798, and may have taken place earlier. To this marriage were born three children, all boys—named Stephen Morgan, Jr., G. J. Morgan, and J. R. Morgan. There appears to have been no children by the other two marriages. His second wife, Dorcas, is highly praised in her obituary for being a good stepmother. In 1888 his legal heirs signed a deed conveying property to the Flat Creek Church, and the three sons named above were the only signers.

Just when Stephen Morgan took up residence west of the Blue Ridge is not known. It appears, however, from the evidence at hand that he accompanied his father, Perminter Morgan, on some of his itineraries over the mountains. We have already noted the tradition that Stephen Morgan founded the Cane River Baptist Church, but for reasons noted above, this can hardly have been true. In view of the fact that the Cane River Church was brought into the Broad River Association in 1800, it seems logical that Perminter Morgan may have been instrumental in its organization. In 1807 when the French Broad Association was formed, Stephen Morgan was pastor of the Cane River Church, and since this was also the year of his ordination, it seems likely, according to the custom of the day, that Cane River requested his ordination.

After 1807 the next check that we have on the French Broad Association is in the minutes for 1812 as recorded by Benedict. At that time Perminter Morgan was present as pastor of Bethel Church, and Stephen Morgan was present and still pastor of Cane River. At this time also, Stephen Morgan was serving as moderator of the Association. In that year a new church by the name of Flat Creek was admitted to the Association. It had been organized the year before, in 1811, by Stephen Morgan.

The Flat Creek Church, located about one mile north of the present town of Weaverville just off Highway 19, became Morgan's home base, from which he carried on a most active and far-ranging ministry for the next forty-five or more years. He was pastor of this church apparently without interruption, yet with the frequent assistance of some other pastor, from the time of its beginning in 1811 until his death in 1859. Failing health in his latter years restricted his activities.

Stephen Morgan owned property in the Flat Creek community and had cattle on the open range in 1810.¹ Also it appears that he was a slave holder, for the minutes of Flat Creek Church for 1837 contain this entry: "Daniel, a black, belonging to Stephen Morgan offered by experience and we received him." Although he was concerned about the earning of a living, as most Baptist preachers of the day had to be, it was not this that consumed Elder Stephen Morgan's time and energy. Rather it was the vigorous pursuit of his calling, as he rode horseback over the mountains and up and down the valleys preaching the gospel wherever a new settlement appeared.

1. F. A. Sondley, *A History of Buncombe County*, (Asheville 1930), p. 478.

The early date at which the rather populous area in the extreme western part of Burke County, now Mitchell, came under the influence of Stephen Morgan cannot be stated exactly, but from available information we must conclude that it was not later than 1813 or 1814. From the 1815 minutes of the French Broad Baptist Association, preserved on microfilm in the Baptist Collection at Wake Forest, we learn that Roan Mountain Church was then a member of that association, and since it was not admitted that year, and was not a member of the Association in 1812 as shown by the minutes of that year reported by Benedict,² we must conclude that Roan Mountain was admitted to the French Broad Association either in 1813 or 1814. It could not have been organized later than 1814. Stephen Morgan, now in his late thirties and in the prime of his ministerial vigor, must have begun his labors in this area soon after 1810.

A simple fact which has some bearing on this question was the naming of Stephen Morgan Collis, who was born April 30, 1818. At this time his parents had already come to know and love Stephen Morgan so well that they wanted their son to bear his name. The son, as we shall see, became a worthy successor to the man for whom he was named.

We reproduce below the statistical table of the "Minutes of the French Broad Baptist Association holden at Bethel Meeting House, Burke County, N. Carolina, August 26, 1815 and days following."³

STATE OF THE CHURCHES

Sunday	Ministers names in small capitals, licensed preacher in italics. Pastor's to whose names * is affixed were absent. ‡ denotes the want of a minister in that church.	Baptized	Received	Dismissed	Excluded	Restored	Deaths	Number	Contributions
2	Little Ivy, MOSES FREEMAN, M. Holcombe, D. Edwards	8	2	1	3	1	0	75	\$ 1.12½
2	Locust Old Fields, F. H. POSEY, Geo. Hall, Jon. Osburn	0	2	6	2	0	1	40	1.00
3	Newfound, <i>Issac Miles*</i> , S. Burnet, P. Plemon, Thomas Ingram.	0	3	13	2	1	2	74	1.00
4	Cane River, STEPHEN MORGAN, David Cox.	4	2	0	2	0	0	40	1.50
2	French Broad, BENJ. KING, Jordan, Wm. Morgan	1	2	14	1	1	0	46	1.00
1	Cane Creek, ‡, James Whitaker, R. Pinkerton, J. Meril.	1	2	2	1	0	0	41	1.00
4	Mud Creek, JOS. BYERS, Jn'o								

2. David Benedict, *History of the Baptists*, (1813), Vol. I, p. 528.

3. *Minutes of French Broad Baptist Association, 1815*, on Microfilm, Baptist Collection, Wake Forest College, Winston-Salem, N. C.

STATE OF THE CHURCHES

Sunday	Ministers names in small capitals, licensed preacher in italics. Pastor's to whose names is * afixed were absent. ‡ denotes the want of a minister in that church.	Baptized	Recorded	Dismissed	Excluded	Restored	Deaths	Number	Contributions
2	Heather, Jn'o Jones, A. CORN-* Bethel, P. MORGAN, W'm.	0	2	0	0	0	0	26	1.00
	Green, Jn'o Bright, Cor. Clements	0	2	1	3	2	0	40	1.00
1	Flat Creek, ‡, G. Deweese, A. Garrison	1	2	5	2	0	0	50	1.00
2	Mountain Page, W'M. KIMZEY, B'y Pace, W'm Christopher, Ja's Kincade	9	2	1	0	1	0	63	1.06¼
3	Bethany, ‡, E. Z. Gofourth, Joseph Jackson	1	1	0	0	0	0	19	1.00
4	Homony C., ‡, John Roberts, Porter Owenby	1	0	1	1	0	0	16	1.00
1	Crab Tree, ‡, Tho's M'Clure, Jn'o. Patterson, J. Bradshaw	0	2	0	1	0	0	19	1.00
2	Roan M'tn., ‡, W'm. Buckhanon, J. Green, Sh. Green, Wilson McKinney	1	1	0	0	0	0	22	1.00
3	Beulah, Daniel Lake, ZION BLYTHE, * J. TAYLOR *	0	0	0	0	0	0	15	1.00
Totals		27	23	46	15	4	3	586	16.68¾

An action taken in this 1815 meeting indicates that the brethren were well aware of and interested in what was going on in the state: ⁴

"Voted that the Association join the general meeting of correspondence in North Carolina, and for that purpose have appointed Elders Humphrey Posey and Stephen Morgan delegates and sent \$2.00 for printing of minutes."

The "General Meeting of Correspondence" was organized in 1811, and was the early beginning of the North Carolina Baptist State Convention. Soon after the Triennial Convention in Philadelphia in 1814, the name of this early organization was changed to the "North Carolina Baptist Missionary Society." The North Carolina Baptist State Convention was organized in 1830.

Concerning the relative date of origin of Roan Mountain and Grassy Creek churches, there has long existed a tradition that Roan Mountain was the first established and that Grassy Creek was organized soon thereafter. But heretofore the evidence to support this tradition has been lacking. There is also a tradition that in the early days people on both sides of the Blue Ridge would leave their homes on Saturday

4. *Ibid.*, (1823).

and travel by horseback and wagon to the Roan Mountain community to attend services conducted on Sunday by Elder Stephen Morgan. The 1815 minutes quoted above and the 1823 minutes reproduced below will serve to confirm both these traditions.

It will be seen that Grassy Creek was twenty-two in a list of twenty-four churches admitted to the French Broad Association, and since it was not admitted in 1823, it must be assumed that it was organized and admitted to the association between 1815 and 1821.

The 1823 meeting of the French Broad Baptist Association was held at the Cane Creek Meeting House in Buncombe County, August 22-23.⁵

STATE OF THE CHURCHES

Sunday	NAMES of DELEGATES, Etc. Names of ministers in small capitals; Licentiates in italics. * is mark of absence.	Baptized	Recorded	Dismissed	Excluded	Restored	Deaths	Number	Contributions
1	Little Ivy, Willian Williams	0	0	0	3	0	1	48	\$ 0.75
2	Locust Old Fields, John Slate, Geo. Clark	0	1	4	1	0	1	43	1.00
3	New Found, <i>Isaac Miles</i> * ⁵ Swan P. Burnet	2	0	3	0	0	0	53	2.00
3	Cane River, Jas. Randolph, Jacob Honeycutt	3	0	0	5	0	0	45	0.75
2	French Broad, WILLIAM KIMSEY, Jesse Rickman, J. Morgan	0	7	8	0	2	0	21	1.00
1	Cane Creek, James Whitaker, Robert Pinkerton, Josh Whitaker	0	0	2	0	0	0	33	1.25
4	Mud Creek, Thomas Jones, John Heatherly, Abram Kirkingdall	0	1	3	0	0	0	21	0.75
2	Bethel, PERMINTER MORGAN	0	0	1	1	0	1	15	0.62½
1	Flat Creek, STEPHEN MORGAN, Wm. Roberts, Lewis Palmer	1	0	4	0	0	0	41	1.50
2	Mountain Page, Daniel Pace	0	0	3	0	0	0	16	0.25
3	Bethany, no return							16	
2	Homony, Adam Cowen	2	0	0	0	0	0	12	0.50
1	Crab Tree, Thomas M'Clure, John Patterson, Joseph Patterson	0	1	6	0	0	0	16	1.00
3	Roan Mountain, William Buckhannon, Joseph Buckhannon	4	0	1	2	0	0	62	1.00

5. *Ibid.*, (1823).

STATE OF THE CHURCHES (Continued)

Sunday	NAMES of DELEGATES, Etc. Names of ministers in small capitols; Licentiates in italics. * is mark of absence.	Baptized	Received	Dismissed	Excluded	Restored	Deaths	Number	Contributions
3	Beula, ROBERT JORDAN, Jesse Blythe	0	1	4	3	0	0	15	1.00
3	Ebenezer, James Kincaid, John Jones	0	0	4	0	0	0	16	0.50
2	Bull Creek, MOSES FREE- MAN, David Edwards, Lewis Bryan	2	1	2	0	0	0	37	0.87½
4	Bill's Creek, John Whitesides	0	0	0	0	0	0	33	0.50
4	Middle Fork, GARRETT DE- WEESE, John McElroy, Dan- iel Carter, Samuel Hunter	8	2	11	0	0	0	50	1.62½
3	Unity, ADAM CORN*, Benja- min E. Hatfield	1	2	6	0	0	0	23	1.00
3	Cathey's Creek, BENJAMIN KING, Robert H. Galaspey	1	0	1	1	0	0	27	1.00
4	Grassy Creek, Robert Burch- field Franklin, HUMPHREY POSEY, Joseph Welch, Jas. Poteet	3	4	0	1	0	0	34	1.50
1	Waynesville, JOSEPH BYERS, John Howell	0	18	0	0	0	0	42	1.00
	Totals	27	42	67	17	2	4	744	22.37½

It will be seen from the above record that in 1823 Roan Mountain had 62 members and was the largest church in the French Broad Association. Grassy Creek, it will be noted had 34 members, had baptized three and received four by letter. It was now a growing church. Unfortunately we do not have the minutes for the years between 1815 and 1823 which would enable us to pinpoint exactly the date of Grassy Creek's organization. However, from his study of the information at hand, the writer concludes that Grassy Creek was organized in 1818, although it may have been a year earlier or later.

One is tempted here to take an excursion and explore the reasons for such a large concentration of population in this area of the Toe River Valley at this early date. Perhaps a study of the natural topography of the region—the mountain passes, the river and creek valleys, and the formidable barrier on the west created by the Yellow, Roan Iron, and Unaka mountains—had much to do with attracting and holding the population. Whatever the reasons, it is evident that there was in this area a relatively dense population in the early years of nineteenth century.

Our next check on the churches of the area is contained in the minutes of the French Broad Baptist Association for 1827. The annual meeting this year was held at Waynesville in Haywood County. The record shows that Roan Mountain had received seven by baptism, four by letter, and had grown to a membership of 84. While Grassy Creek had received four by letter and had grown to a membership of 46. The Association in 1827 reported twenty-three churches with 997 members. This was indeed an encouraging report, and as it relates to the Roan Mountain and Grassy Creek churches indicates fruitful activity on the part of the brethren who labored in this area. However, such growth was not to continue without interruption due to a development to which we must turn our attention in the next chapter.

Chapter IV

Division and Decline

FROM the trend of the reports in the previous chapter, one is prepared to witness a continuous and uninterrupted growth in the Baptist churches of the Toe River Valley. But when we look at the minutes of the French Broad Association for the next few years we are amazed at what we see. In the 1830 minutes we note that the Association has dropped from twenty-three to seventeen churches, and the total membership has dropped from 997 to 568. Roan Mountain which reported 84 members in 1827 reported only 21 in 1830, while Grassy Creek's membership had dropped from 46 to 28. In 1831 Roan Mountain did not even report, and Grassy Creek reported 27 members. Not only was there decline registered in 1830 and 1831, but there was a continued drop in both the number of churches and in the total membership of the French Broad Baptist Association over the next ten years; until in 1841 the Association reported only twelve churches and 507 members, and two years later, in 1843, while it reported thirteen churches the total membership had dropped to 455.¹

We ask what withering blight has hit our growing plant, what worm has entered the stem of our Jonah's gourd vine?

In chapter two we noted a difference in the theological emphasis between the Particular and Separate Baptist ministers in the Broad River Association, the majority of whom were Separate Baptists, holding a warm, wooing, evangelistic faith as proclaimed by Shubal Stearns and his followers. For many years these brethren did not see the need for creeds and articles of faith, holding that the New Testament was a sufficient guide to faith and practice. But there was a capable minority of Particular Baptists, who embraced the sterner aspects of higher Calvinism, including the doctrine of "eternal particular election," as expressed in an abstract based on the Philadelphia Confession. We noted that Perminter Morgan was the chief exponent of this latter group in the Broad River Association. His son, Stephen Morgan, apparently accepted the theological position of his father and became its chief contender in the French Broad Association. There was, therefore, from the beginning of this association a division along these lines.

One of the chief sources of our information concerning this division and of Stephen Morgan's part in it is John Ammons' *Outlines of History of the French Broad Association and Mars Hill College*. We will quote freely from his writings. Ammons undoubtedly knew Stephen Morgan, since he was born around 1830, while Morgan died in 1859,

1. *Minutes of French Broad Baptist Association 1843*, on Microfilm, Baptist Collection, Wake Forest University, Winston-Salem, N. C.

and they lived in the same general area. Although his memories of Morgan are not too vivid, it is evident that Morgan was to Ammons a sort of ideal; for he attributes to Morgan some of the same virtues that he claims for himself in his autobiographical sketch written in the third person in the above named work. Ammons says of Morgan's part in the theological controversy:²

These elements of controversy had gone into every community where the Baptists had gone, and so at an early day they developed in the French Broad Association. Stephen Morgan was a leader among his people; he was a man of rugged mold, physically, intellectually and morally. He was a man of strong convictions and decisive character — a radical rather than a conservative. He embraced the Calvinistic views with all the ardor of his soul. This gave offense to those who entertained different views; and as these questions were agitated they gave rise to contentions which resulted in divisions.

Just what Morgan's views were is at this day unknown, but he held and taught the doctrine of Election, i. e. that God, from all eternity, chose some men to Eternal Life, without any regard to faith or good works; that these would be Called, Sanctified and Saved; that the rest were Reprobates, and were doomed to Eternal Damnation; that the number of the saved was fixed and determined and could neither be added to nor diminished.

These differences drove the brethren asunder, and the bitterness was such that persons living in the same community would have little intercourse with each other.

A few pages earlier in his account Ammons tells us that the leading spirits in these disturbances were Stephen Morgan and Garrett Deweese. We continue to quote from Ammons:³

Deweese was charged with heresy, or false doctrine, and with the assistance of Morgan and a few others from other churches, was by a minority of his church, excluded; but the great majority of his church stood by him and followed his lead.

To be a Freewiller was enough to make one odious with all who followed Morgan, so that churches meeting in the same community had no fellowship with each other and but little intercourse among their members. Criminations and recriminations were the order of the day, and often became a source of scandal. On the other hand, Morgan and his followers were called Antinomians, and their doctrines were believed to be of devils.

The high-handed and arbitrary action of Morgan against Deweese in dealing with what he then considered heresy, which was apparently no more than the rejection of his extreme interpretation of the doctrine

2. John Ammons' *Outlines of History of the French Broad Association and Mars Hill College*. (Edwards and Broughton Printing Co., Raleigh, N. C.)

3. *Ibid.*

of election, precipitated a movement which had been for some time in the making. One might gather from reading Ammons' account that the majority of the leaders were with Morgan, but subsequent events show that this was not true. It appears rather that the majority of the ministers were not rigid Calvinists, having drawn their theology from all inclusive, appealing, and evangelistic preaching of the Separate Baptists, who, as we have seen, came into the area both from the east and the west. A group of churches led by these ministers took the first step toward forming a new association in 1827 by holding what appears to have been a preliminary meeting. Another such meeting was held in 1828, and on October 6, 1829, at Union Meeting House near the present town of Leicester, the representatives of a group of churches organized the Big Ivy Association. Ammons reports that two years later, in 1831 the association had seven churches and 233 members.

In the Preamble of the Constitution as printed in the minutes for 1841 a brief statement for the reason for separation was made:⁴

As a series of events hath taken place, which have made it necessary for us to separate ourselves from that denomination of Christians called United Baptists; and it being necessary for every religious community to have some form of government: we, therefore, the separate Baptist Association, assembled at Union meeting house, the 6th of October, 1829, adopt the following as our constitution.

Attention is directed to the use of the name "United Baptists." This name had originated earlier in central and eastern North Carolina and Virginia, where the Regular and Separate Baptist churches had by mutual agreement united in common associations. Although these associations generally adopted the "Abstract," a brief statement of faith based on the Philadelphia Confession, including the article on the doctrine of election, it was generally agreed that the acceptance or rejection of this doctrine would not constitute a test for church or associational membership. In the French Broad Association, however, under the leadership of Stephen Morgan, acceptance of a hyper-calvinistic interpretation of the doctrine of election became the distinguishing characteristic of the "United Baptists."

The constitution adopted by the Big Ivy Association contained sixteen articles, most of which were very similar to those in general use by the Baptist associations of the day. There were some differences however. Article number sixteen made a point of limiting the authority of the association. It reads: "That the Association shall assume no higher authority than an advisory council." The association adopted thirteen rules of decorum, which served as a guide for conducting their public meetings. Such rules of decorum were used by nearly all associations and public gatherings until published works on parliamentary procedure came into common use.

Article twelve of the constitution provided: "That any church may become a member of the association by making application by

4. *Ibid.* (Preamble of constitution as printed in minutes of Big Ivy Association for 1841).

letter and delegates, and adopting the Articles of Faith." We are indebted to Ammons for a copy of these Articles of Faith, which appeared in the minutes of the association of 1838. Because herein lies the heart of the story of the Big Ivy Association, we will list below these articles and then comment on the significance of some of them: ⁵

1. We believe in the only one true and living God; and notwithstanding there are three that bear record in heaven—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost—yet there is but one in substance, equal in power and glory, and can not be divided, either in principle or practice, and not liable to change.

2. We believe the Old and New Testaments is the word of God, and a sufficiency is therein contained for our instruction, and they are the only rule of faith and practice.

3. We believe in the doctrine of Original sin, and that all mankind, since the fall, are by nature the children of Wrath, one as much as another.

4. We believe in man's impotency, or inability to recover himself out of the fallen state he is in, therefore a Saviour is absolutely needed.

5. We believe that sinners are justified in the sight of God by only the imputed Righteousness of Jesus Christ.

6. We believe in the perseverance of the Saints in grace—that they are born again, or adopted into the family of Heaven—that they become equal heirs with Jesus Christ, and that He will raise them up at the last day.

7. We believe that Baptism and the Lord's supper are gospel Ordinances and true believers the proper subjects, and we admit of no other knowingly.

8. We believe that the true mode of Baptism is to baptize or immerse a person, by their own consent, once in water, back foremost, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

9. We believe in the resurrection of the dead and of the General judgment, where all will be judged according to the deeds done in the body.

10. We believe the punishment of the wicked will be Everlasting and the joys of the righteous will be Eternal after death.

11. We believe washing one another's feet is a command of Christ left with His disciples, and ought to be practiced by His followers.

12. We believe that no one has the right to administer the Ordinances but such as are legally called and qualified thereunto.

13. We believe it is the duty of all church members to attend their church meetings, and it is the duty of the church to deal with them for neglecting the same.

5. *Ibid.* (Articles of Faith. Appeared in minutes of 1838 of Big Ivy Association)

14. We believe it is the duty of all church members to contribute to the support of the gospel and defray all reasonable expenses of the church, never neglecting the poor, according to their several abilities.

15. We believe that any doctrine that goes to encourage or indulge people in their sins, or cause them to settle down to anything short of saving faith in Christ, for salvation, is erroneous, and all such doctrine will be rejected by us.

16. None of the above-named articles shall be so construed as to hold with Particular and Eternal Election and Reprobation, or so as to make God partial, either directly or indirectly, so as to injure any of the children of men.

The Big Ivy Association made a point of being a Separate Baptist association, and their articles constitute a Separate Baptist confession of faith. These articles differed little, except in wording and special emphasis from the articles of faith adopted by the Broad River Association in 1800, in which, it will be recalled, the doctrine of "eternal particular election" was repudiated. The Big Ivy articles do this pointedly in Articles fifteen and sixteen. Article fifteen is a safeguard against the antinomianism with which the strict Calvinists had been charged.

Let us digress for a moment to look at the historical and theological background of this development. What is said here by way of explanation is admittedly a limited definition of the use of the term "antinomianism" in Christian history. The charge against the strict Calvinists came about in this way; Because these people held that only certain people were elected to be saved and the number of these was predetermined and fixed and could not be changed, and that everyone else was lost and a child of perdition, it followed that if one was elected he would be saved regardless of what he did or did not do, and that the grace of God was irresistible. This, it was claimed, was something that belonged to the sovereignty of God and could not be altered by man. On the other hand, if one was not elected, he had no free will to repent and believe and be saved, but was eternally rejected regardless of what he did or did not do. It was argued, and perhaps in some cases did so develop, that if one believed himself to be elected, he could feel free to live as he pleased and to sin at will. If it was true (a misinterpretation of Paul's discussion of law and grace in Romans 5 and 6) that "where sin did abound, grace did much more abound," then let men sin that grace may the more abound.

One of the end results of the position of the extreme Calvinists was that it was held to be presumptuous to try to win people to Christ and that a public invitation to repentance and faith in Christ was useless. The great Baptist exponent of this hyper-calvinistic position was the Reverend Dr. John Gill of England (b. 1697, d. 1771), whose three volume *Body of Doctrinal Divinity* was published in 1769, and doubtless did the Baptists and the Christian cause more harm than good. Gill's work was characterized by the popular and eloquent Robert Hall (b. 1764 d. 1831), as "a continent of mud, Sir." Gill did not believe in

giving an invitation for people to make a public profession of faith in Christ, and was very much opposed to the foreign missionary movement. It was the prevalence of this doctrine among English Baptists which made it so difficult for William Carey to gain acceptance for his plan to establish a Baptist Foreign Missionary Society in 1792. This was also the theological background for the anti-missionary movement and the origin of the Primitive Baptists in America.

Article eight, which describes the "mode of baptism" was doubtless included because there were, both east and west of the mountains, communities of German Baptists or Dunkers, who practiced baptizing three times, face foremost, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Article eleven recommends "washing one another's feet," but does not consider it an ordinance. Articles 13 and 14 are somewhat unique in that commonly accepted duty of church members to support the church by attendance and material gifts and to practice the social grace of helping the poor was included in an associational constitution.

For a period of about fifteen years, from 1829 through 1843, the Big Ivy Association grew while the French Broad declined. During the earlier years of the division some of the decline was due to disturbances within some of the churches which remained in the French Broad Association, as is evidenced by the radical loss of membership in the Roan Mountain and Grassy Creek Churches. However, as time went on further decline of the French Broad was due to the organization of other associations, especially the Salem Association, which also grew out of the "election controversy" and in 1838 took nine churches from the French Broad Association. (The Salem Association was disbanded in 1882 when the Buncombe County Association was formed). For a period of time the progress of the work in all the area was hindered by the division.

We have two checks by which to gauge the growth of the Big Ivy Association. The first is the Big Ivy minutes for 1841, contained in the Baptist Collection at Wake Forest College, and the other is the minutes for 1847 as reported by John Ammons, who had all the Big Ivy minutes when he wrote his *Outlines of History of the French Broad Association and Mars Hill College*.

The minutes for 1841 show that the Big Ivy Association had grown to include 14 churches with 403 members, and that during that year 33 members were received by baptism and 18 by letter. As listed in the Big Ivy minutes for 1841 the churches with their pastors were:

<i>Church</i>	<i>Pastor</i>
Caney River	None reported
Middle Fork	Jacob Midcalf
Liberty	John Harwood
Whiteoak Creek	Moses Peterson, minister Leonard Buchanan, licentiate
Tow River	James Arrowood, licentiate
Smyrna	None reported
Avery's Creek	William C. Berry
Beaver Creek	None reported

<i>Church</i>	<i>Pastor</i>
Cranberry	None reported
Boiling Spring	S. S. Burdett
Bolen's Creek	James Rhea
Burning Town	William Deweese
Green Mountain	Jacob Silver
Gabriel's Creek	C. M. Phillips

According to Ammons, the 1848 minutes of the Big Ivy Association show that it had grown to include 25 churches with 372 members. Ammons accounts for this growth by citing the zeal and activity of the Big Ivy ministers. He says of them:

All the preachers belonging to this body were intensely evangelical, they went everywhere preaching the word, and success attended their efforts; churches increased in membership, new churches were planted, and the doctrines which they preached were generally held to be the doctrines of God's word. . . .

The ministers belonging to this body, (in 1848) were S. Byrd, J. M. Bryant, J. Midcalf, L. Buchanan, J. Buchanan, J. Arrowood, J. Silver, C. M. Phillips, W. C. Berry, T. J. Rollins, R. Deaver, Wm. Deweese, James Rhea, Jesse Rhea, J. Wheeler, M. Peterson, J. W. Ayer, E. Chasteen, J. Gunn, L. M. Berry, and Wm. Sprinkle, Berry and Sprinkle were not ordained.

. . . J. M. Bryant, W. C. Berry, and J. M. Runnion were men of some literary attainments, while L. M. Berry was, for that day, a scholarly man, and rose to eminence and distinction in the ministry.

Most of them were noted for piety and for zeal and devotion to the Lord's work; and dying in good old age left their work to follow them for the glory of God. The Big Ivy brethren were not heterodox as they have been represented, they were sounder than their creed, and the record shows that they were truly evangelical.

Now we must go on to say that the brethren of the French Broad Association were also "sounder than their creed," for their theology, however Calvinistic, did not inhibit their efforts to give the gospel to other people, as did the theology of some of the older English Baptists, and the later Primitive Baptists in America. Stephen Morgan and Robert Patterson, and perhaps others, continued to hold the loyalty of Grassy Creek and Roan Mountain, although, at first, with greatly reduced numbers, and eventually went on to establish other churches.

As time passed there came a much better feeling between the brethren of the two groups, which was due to several factors. First, and perhaps most important, there were good men on both sides who had felt from the beginning that the division was tragically wrong and should never have occurred. These never ceased to work to heal the breach. Second, in the Christian fellowship, time has a way of bringing theological differences into clearer perspective. Men of goodwill come to see that the fellowship and its mission are more important than the

triumph of one's own opinion. Third, younger men, to whom the old differences did not seem so important, were coming on the scene.

The growing desire for better understanding and better relationship between the two groups is indicated by actions taken in their associational meetings. In its meeting in 1841 the Big Ivy Association appointed four union meetings. These union meetings were extended preaching and fellowship sessions (but not involving the observance of the ordinances), to which all the people in the general area of the church where the meeting was held were invited, including members of other churches. According to the 1841 minutes these union meetings were to be held:

The 1st, at Burning Town, Macon County, N. C., to commence Friday before the 3rd Sabbath in October next: Reuben Deaver and W. C. Berry to attend. 2nd. at Boiling Spring, Spartanburg District, S. C., to commence Friday before the 2nd Sabbath in November; Jas. Rhea, Moses Peterson and Wm. C. Berry to attend. 3rd. at Caney River, Yancey County, N. C., to commence on Friday before the 3rd Sabbath in November; Jacob Silver, C. M. Phillips and Wm. Deweese to attend. 4th. at Beaver Creek, Yancey County, N. C., to commence on Friday before the 4th Sabbath in May; Jesse Rhea, S. S. Burdett, Jacob Midcalf and Charles M. Phillips to attend.

At the same meeting in 1841 the Big Ivy passed two resolutions which indicate a desire to cooperate with other Baptists:

Resolved, That we will unite with our beloved brethren holding the same Gospel doctrines, and entertaining the same views in regard to church discipline, in a general meeting to be holden at some time and place most suitable for all the denominations to be represented.

Resolved, That we will invite those associations with whom we correspond to unite with us holding such a meeting.

The term "denominations" as used in the first resolution above is used in a restrictive sense, meaning other Baptist churches and was undoubtedly directed to churches of the French Broad Association. There is not available any record of such a meeting being held.

In 1842 the French Broad Association met with the Roan Mountain Church, and a query presented by Roan Mountain must have occasioned some soul searching. That query was:

What shall our preachers do when they are with the Freewill Baptists — shall they exercise their gifts together, where they feel to, in any case or not?"

Concerning the answer to the query the minutes simply say:

Taken up, and after lengthy and faithful discussions for a considerable time, agreed to postpone or lay it over till another year, or a future period.

The fact that the French Broad brethren discussed this question freely and at length, and then decided to postpone any action, indicates a more relaxed and conciliatory attitude. The question was indeed taken

up the following year, in the 1843 meeting. In that meeting the above query and one presented by the Little Ivy Church were given a common answer. Little Ivy's query was: "Is it not expedient for this Association to reconsider the 21st Article of our minutes for 1837?" We do not have available a copy of the 1837 minutes, but it is obvious that the article referred to dealt with the matter of the relationship of the two bodies. The two queries were answered in the following manner:

"In answer to each, we advise the churches to adopt a rule as suggested by El. S. Morgan as follows:

Whereas, the French Broad Baptist Association did, in her minutes for 1829, say it would be disorder for us to invite the Free-will Liberty Baptists to preach with us (or to that amount) as those people then called themselves, and as some of our brethren since that time seem inclined to preach with said Freewill brethren—we now as a body say, if any desire to preach with them as they do with other religious denominations, it shall not be a breach of our Christian Fellowship. And if any of our Brethren, ministers or lay members, think it improper, or not good order to preach with them, or to allow them to use their privilege, and it shall not be a bar to fellowship on either side: Provided, that on either side do not commune with Free-will Baptists, or sit in fellowship with them in one church; but still continue to remain a distinct body of Baptists similar to that they have been since 1752.

Perhaps of even greater significance was the decision of this 1843 meeting of the French Broad Association that their churches might receive into their fellowship members from the "Free Will" churches upon statement of experience and satisfaction with baptism.

The date 1752 referred to in the above answer can only be considered a misprint for 1742, the date of the adoption of the Philadelphia Confession by the Philadelphia Association. The term "Free Will Baptist," which occurs in both the query and answer above, appears to have been used loosely by the French Broad brethren to refer to the Big Ivy people. The churches of the Big Ivy group were not what generally became known as Free Will Baptists. Their churches, as indicated in their articles of faith, did not practice open communion, did not consider washing of feet an ordinance, and *did* believe in the perseverance of the saints. They were not in the strictest sense Arminian. Except for their rejection of the extreme interpretation of the doctrine of election they were basically Calvinistic.

It is clear that with the end of 1843 many of the brethren in both the French Broad Association and the Big Ivy were unhappy with the divided situation and were seeking a way to end it. It is quite significant that Stephen Morgan, who perhaps bore more personal responsibility for the division than anyone else, was becoming reconciled to the point of view of the Big Ivy brethren, or at least was coming to see that the doctrine that had divided them need not continue to be a bar to fellowship. This was indeed to his credit, for it reflects his willingness

to accept the discipline of the Christian fellowship, and his acceptance also of the possibility of unity without uniformity.

In 1832 the annual meeting of the French Broad Association was held with the Roan Mountain Church, and it is more than likely that it was held here and at Grassy Creek at dates earlier than this. It met again with the Roan Mountain Church in 1842 in a log building situated near the confluence of the Young Cove with Cane Creek. We reproduce below the record of the churches for that year:

STATE OF CHURCHES (1842)

CHURCHES	Delegate's Names	Baptized	Rec'd By Letter	Restored	Dismissed	Expelled	Dead	No. of Members	Contributions
1. Little Ivy	Robert Ponder, John George, John Ramsey, Absalom Hooker	1	0	0	1	1	0	50	0.71½
2. New Found	PETER MILLER, HUMPHREY P. PARHAM -----	0	4	2	5	19	0	59	1.45
3. Flat Creek	Stephen Morgan, Sr., Stephen Morgan, Jr., Frederick Wild, Oliver McDavis -----	0	1	0	5	2	0	49	2.00
4. Hommony	Hodge Raburn -----	1	1	0	0	0	0	39	1.00
5. Roan Mountain	Jas. Buchanan, J'no. Buchanan, Henry Woody, Jas. Buchanan, Jr., W. Davis	2	0	0	20	1	0	58	1.58
6. Bull Creek	Luke L. Branson, Daniel W. Murry, William Peck, William Rees -----	0	0	0	0	1	1	30	1.00
7. Grassy Creek	Jacob Hollifield, Jas. Washburn, Stephen Collis, Isaac Washburn -----	0	1	0	1	1	0	38	2.55
8. Big Ivy	Robert Patterson, John Greenwood, Jas. Hooker, William Davis -----	4	2	0	2	1	0	39	1.32
9. Bethlehem	James Wilson, Edward Baley, John Edwards, Jesse Radford -----	0	0	0	1	0	1	33	2.02½

STATE OF THE CHURCHES (Continued)

CHURCHES	Delegate's Names	Baptized					No. of Members	Contributions	
		Rec'd	By Letter	Restored	Dismissed	Expelled			
10. Walnut Creek	George Peck -----	0	0	0	1	0	1	16	0.50
11. Pine Creek	Jeremiah Davis, George Roberts --	0	1	0	2	0	1	23	1.00
12. Macedonia	William Randolph, Jas. Rentfro, George Peek, Thomas								
	Deaton -----	1	0	0	3	1	1	17	1.01½
13. Tow River	Edward Woody, Josiah Woody, George Woody -----	0	0	0	0	0	0	21	1.14

According to the above table, it will be noted that the French Broad Association in 1842 had thirteen churches with 472 members, while the Big Ivy Association, composed of churches in the same relative territory had, in 1841, fourteen churches with 403 members.

Chapter V

Revival and Reunion 1844 - 1849

THE YEAR 1844 was a significant year in the history of the Baptists in that area of the French Broad Association which is now Mitchell County. During this year both Roan Mountain and Grassy Creek experienced most unusual revivals, and two new churches, Bear Creek and Rock Creek, were organized. As a result of these revivals Roan Mountain baptized 79 people and Grassy Creek baptized 40. The organization of the two new churches apparently grew directly out of this revival movement. It appears that Grassy Creek was largely responsible for the organization of the Bear Creek Church, while Roan Mountain was responsible for the constitution of the Rock Creek Church, although Bear Creek appears to have received members from both Grassy Creek and Roan Mountain. In 1844 Grassy Creek dismissed by letter 35 members, including Stephen Morgan Collis and his brother, James (Jimmy) Collis. Most of these became members of the Bear Creek Church, for at the annual associational meeting which was held at Walnut Creek Meeting House in Buncombe County in August, 1844, Bear Creek was admitted to the Association with 46 members, and the messengers were Stephen Collis, James Collis, Azer Bradshaw, and Henry Norman. The year before, in 1843, Stephen M. Collis and James Collis had been delegates from Grassy Creek.

In the same year Roan Mountain dismissed 50 members and Rock Creek was admitted to the association with a membership of 39. The delegates of this new church were George C. Hopson, Shadrack Greene, and Joseph Greene. George C. Hopson had been a delegate from the Roan Mountain Church in the associational meeting for 1843. Even after dismissing 50 members by letter Roan Mountain reported a membership of 93 as compared with 58 for the previous year; while Grassy Creek, after dismissing 35 by letter, reported a membership of 53 as compared with 39 in 1843. This was significant growth even for any age. Big Laurel, which is still a member of the French Broad Association, was also admitted to the association in 1844.

Bear Creek Church became the base of Stephen M. Collis' very fruitful ministry for many years to come. In 1846 he was reported as pastor of Bear Creek, Rock Creek, and Macedonia, near Burnsville. He probably became pastor of both Bear Creek and Rock Creek in 1844 or 1845.

Rock Creek is called Little Rock Creek in the Roan Mountain Associational Minutes for 1849 to distinguish it from the Big Rock Creek Church, which appears for the first time in the minutes for that year. The exact date of the organization of this church cannot be definitely fixed, although there is some indicative information. The

minutes of the French Broad Association for 1845 show that Roan Mountain baptized ten converts and dismissed thirty-two by letter during that year. Two new churches were admitted to the association that year. These were Flag Pond and Low Gap. Flag Pond was in Tennessee, and Low Gap gave Grassy Creek as its post office. Since both these churches were located a considerable distance from Roan Mountain, and since there was not sufficient increase in the membership of either Bear Creek or Rock Creek to account for the thirty-two members dismissed by Roan Mountain, the organization of the Big Rock Creek Church is the only logical explanation for the dismissal of these thirty-two members by letter. Big Rock Creek appears to have remained unassociated until the organization of the Roan Mountain Association in 1849.

Low Gap occurs only twice in the French Broad Association, once when it was admitted in 1845 and again in 1846, when it reported the dismissal of twenty-three members by letter. At the same time a new church by the name of Lynville with twenty-five members was admitted to the association. It appears that the Low Gap Church disappeared and the Lynville Church came into being, since the postoffice of both was given as Grassy Creek. Lynville appears in the minutes of the Roan Mountain Association for 1850 and for many years thereafter.

In the French Broad minutes for 1845 we find the following entry:

Noticed a request from Grassy Creek, Bar (Bear) Creek, and Bethlehem to rescind the 10th article of our minutes for 1843, and voted not to rescind.

The article referred to was the action of the French Broad Association which approved a more liberal attitude and closer fellowship with the churches of the Big Ivy Association. It would appear that the minds of the brethren, at least of the majority of them, were already settled in the direction of reunion with the Big Ivy Association.

Since it was the ministers and leaders of the Big Ivy group who withdrew from the French Broad Association in protest against the extreme interpretation of the doctrine of election and the rather high-handed methods employed to enforce acceptance of these views, as seen in the action of Stephen Morgan against Garrette Deweese, it was fitting that the Big Ivy Association, after having won general acceptance for its views and after the controversy had all but ceased, should take the first action toward the reunion of the two groups. We have already noted the first overture made by the Big Ivy Association reported in her minutes for 1841, and the conciliatory response of the French Broad Association in her minutes for 1843, and her rejection of a request to rescind that action in 1845. The final decision of the Big Ivy Association to write a letter and send up representatives to the French Broad Association to request correspondence was taken at their annual meeting in 1847, after a query from Gabriel's Creek Church had been considered and answered. According to Ammons, quoting from the minutes of the Big Ivy Association, that query was:

Inasmuch as the doctrine held by the United Baptist, which we protested against, has measurably subsided, would it be gospel order to invite those of that body which agree with us in sentiment to the Communion Table? Answer: We think it would be.¹

In the minutes of the French Broad Association, which met at Bull Creek Church on August 19-22, 1847, we find the following entry:

There was a letter from the Big Ivy Association by the hands of Elders Samuel Byrd and J. M. Bryan praying correspondence with us upon certain principles, and the letter was referred to the committee on arrangements, to be brought forward tomorrow.

The request indicates how completely the barriers between the two associations had fallen, since associations which exchanged correspondents were in general agreement with each other. The resolution in response to the Big Ivy request indicates that the French Broad Association was now ready to take the final step toward reunion. We continue to quote from the French Broad's 1847 minutes:

Took up the reference from Saturday and the following resolution was presented and adopted, vis. Whereas, the Big Ivy Association have made application by letter, or petition, to correspond with the French Broad Association, without any definite terms of union: Resolved therefore, that we are in favor of a union, and recommend Big Ivy Association, by their churches, to send up letters and delegates to our next association in the ordinary way: and a union can be effected honorable to both parties without further concession.

The French Broad Associational meeting for 1848 was held at the Grassy Creek Meeting House, located about one mile west of the present beautiful church plant. The minutes for this meeting are not available, but it is clear that the union was not completely effected at this meeting. Neither are the minutes of the 1848 meeting of the Big Ivy Association available, but it is evident that there were further discussion and agreement in response to the French Broad's offer to effect a union.

The French Broad Association met with the Flat Creek Church on August 24-27, 1849. There were present delegations from a number of the Big Ivy churches, some of which had already effected a consolidation with French Broad Churches where the two existed in the same community. Present also was a delegation from the Big Ivy Association with a letter requesting a joint committee meeting for the purpose of discussing terms for the consolidation. To tell this story we quote directly from the 1849 minutes of the French Broad Association:

From Big Ivy a letter by the hands of Elders J. M. Bryan, R. Deaver and Jacob Midcalf, and brethren John Fox, Solomon Carter, and J. W. Peak—and as they requested us to meet with them by committee to consult about the consolida-

1. John Ammons, *Outlines of History of French Broad Association and Mars Hill College*. p. 17.

tion of the two Associations, we referred the letter to the committee on arrangements.

Considered the request from the Big Ivy to meet them in Committee to strive for a consolidation of the two bodies, and appointed (by nomination) a committee consisting of Elders William Keith, Stephen M. Collis, Stephen Morgan, Henry W. Gilbert and Brother Jacob Hollifield to sit with them and report to this body. . . .

The committee appointed to form a plan for the amalgamation of the Big Ivy and the French Broad Associations, beg leave to report as follows:

1. That we recommend the adoption of a constitution that will shut out the aspersions that have been thrown at us, and we recommend the constitution as adopted by the Big Ivy Association.

2. That we in our amalgamation be known as the French Broad Baptist Association.

3. That we recommend a meeting of the two Associations this fall, for the purpose of appointing a time and place for holding the next association.

4. That we recommend that the Association meet with the Little Ivy Church on Saturday before the 4th Sunday in September next.

5. That we recommend that each church send not exceeding two delegates to said convention.

The above agreed to by the whole committee, ten in number.

Stephen Morgan, Char.
L. M. Bryan, Sec.

The above report was accepted by the association. The last three items dealt with the proposed September meeting. We do not have a record of that meeting, but its work was limited, according to item three, to the naming of a time and place for the 1850 consolidated meeting.

It is item one and two that are important. Item one recommends the adoption of the Big Ivy Constitution, the seventh article of which said: "This Association will discountenance and repudiate the doctrine of particular, personal, unconditional and Eternal Election and Re-probation." It will be noted that Elder Stephen Morgan, now in his seventy-third year and in the church that had been the base of his activities since 1811, presided over the meeting of the committee which presented this recommendation. We would note also that Stephen Morgan Collis, who became the outstanding leader in the Roan Mountain Association was also a member of this committee. This clearly illustrates how generally the views of the Big Ivy Association had come to be accepted. Dr. George Paschal in evaluating this development says: "The Big Ivy did a work and exerted an influence of epochal impor-

tance among the Baptists, not only of the French Broad region, but also of the entire state of North Carolina.”²

The consolidated association retained the old name “French Broad.” This name is still retained (1966) by the forty-nine churches in the area of Madison County, and Little Ivy, one of the original six in the organization of 1807, is still a member of it.

This epochal meeting of 1849 brought to an end twenty or more years of theological conflict and division; it cleared the way for the more orderly development of the Baptist work in the area, and it set the stage for the organization of the Roan Mountain Association. Now the consolidated association was almost twice as large as before and was spread over a wide territory, and regardless of where the new French Broad Association should meet, many of the delegates would have to travel long, laborious distances to attend and few church communities as then constituted would be able, without hardship, to entertain the large number of people who attend the three or four day sessions. It was standard practice then, and for many years to come, for the association to meet on Friday morning and continue through Monday noon of the following week. This meant that people from greater distances had to arrive in the community on Thursday and find food and shelter for themselves and their animals. It is true that some with wagons took part of their provisions with them, but most of them had to depend upon the local community for these necessities. The fact that the population was increasing rapidly made the establishment of more Baptist churches desirable, and was a fact favoring the formation of a new association. The social and geographical facts had taken on a new significance.

The decision to form this new association had already been made when the French Broad Association met at Flat Creek in August of 1849. In the minutes of that year we find this entry:

The following churches petitioning for dismissal, to wit: Roan Mountain, Rock Creek, Three Mile, Lynville, Double Island, Zion, Bear Creek, Grassy Creek, and Caney River, were regularly dismissed in order to form a new Association by the name of Roan(e) Mountain.

It is interesting to compare this list as it appears in the 1849 minutes with a statement made by John Ammons:

In October, 1849 Roan Mountain, Grassy Creek, Bear Creek, Rock Creek, Tow River, Beaver Creek, Cranbury, Laurel Branch, Ramsey Town, Jacks Creek, and Crab Tree were dismissed to enter into the organization of the Roan Mountain Association.³

There is obviously an error here. Ammons listed seven churches—Tow River, Beaver Creek, Cranbury, Laurel Branch, Ramsey Town, Jacks Creek, and Crab Tree—none of which appear in the petition quoted above, nor do they appear in the French Broad Minutes for

2. George Paschal, *History of North Carolina Baptists*, (Raleigh, N. C. 1955), Vol. II, p. 429.

3. Ammons, *Op. Cit.*, p. 21.

1849; while four churches—Three Mile, Lynville (presented letter in 1850), Double Island, and Zion—which are in the petition are not even mentioned by Ammons. However, all the churches in both lists, except Cane River, which apparently decided to remain in the French Broad Association, do appear in the list of churches in the Roan Mountain minutes for 1849 or 1850. Ammons also reported that the eleven churches which he named had a total of 666 members. However, it will be observed that all the eighteen churches, which includes three—New Liberty, Big Rock Creek, and Pine Grove—not mentioned in either list, that entered into the formation of the Roan Mountain Association had altogether 666 members. Ammons' error has been repeated in several publications.

Ammons' discussion of the work following the consolidation is very helpful:

The progress of the work, after the consolidation, was very satisfactory; there were brethren in both bodies who had labored very hard to effect a reconciliation. Now that it was consummated it gave great impetus to the work; revivals were held in many of the churches, and they grew and prospered as never before. The preachers helped each other in these meetings; sometimes a half dozen or more preachers co-operated in these meetings; there was no rivalry, but complete harmony and co-operation, their labors were greatly blessed, the old spirit of strife was dead, and hundreds were added to the churches. . . . Where there were two churches in the same community they united and formed one church, sometimes taking the name of the Big Ivy church, and at other that of the French Broad.⁴

Perhaps the writer will be forgiven for indulging the opinion that the example of these brethren of more than a hundred years ago might be followed with profit in many church communities of our own generation.

Some examples of the consolidation to which Ammons refers can be seen in the statistical report in the French Broad minutes for 1849. It will be noted that five of the eighteen churches listed are marked by a pointing index finger to indicate that they have been consolidated since the 1848 meeting. It is difficult to determine whether "consolidation" in each case means union with some other church or merely the ingathering of dissident members. For instance, the table indicates that Roan Mountain has been consolidated, but this writer has been unable to find any evidence of a Big Ivy church anywhere in the area with which Roan Mountain could have consolidated. However the radical decline in membership in the early 1830's would tend to indicate, in the absence of another church, that some who had dissented were still living in the community.

In the case of Caney River, we know that it consolidated with Bethlehem, a French Broad church organized after the division in 1829; while Zion consolidated with a Big Ivy Association church known as

4. *Ibid.*, p. 19.

Green Mountain, of which Jacob Silver was pastor in 1841. We can only speculate on what have occurred at the Double Island and Big Ivy churches.

FRENCH BROAD BAPTIST ASSOCIATION
HELD AT FLAT CREEK CHURCH IN BUNCOMBE COUNTY,
N. C., August 24-27, 1849

Churches marked  have been	Bap.	Rec.	Total
Consolidated since last meeting	by Ltr.		
Little Ivy—W. Keith, J. George, Ja. Ramsey, W. Briggs, J. Keith, A. Jarvis	3	3	152
Newfound—P. Miller, P. Parham, H. Brook- shire, J. Rich, H. Rogers	0	2	50
Flat Creek—S. Morgan, F. Wild, S. Mor- gan, Jr., J. H. Wild, C. Henderson	1	7	61
 Roan Mountain—L. Buchanan, J. Buchanan, G. C. Young, P. H. Wilson, W. T. & J. Buchanan	0	1	106
Bull Creek — W. Rees, L. L. Bronson, J. Gillespie, L. I. Roberts, R. Allen	0	1	55
 Big Ivy—Robert Patterson, J. Greenwood, I. Runion, S. Ingle, G. Woody	0	3	93
Grassy Creek—Jacob Holifield, James Wash- burn, Jesse J. Dixon, David Byrd	0	4	44
 Caney River—S. Byrd, H. Ray, J. Wilson, J. M'Elroy, E. Baly, M. Briggs, W. H. Thomas, J. Shepherd	13	5	135
Walnut Creek—W. H. Gilbert, M. Freeman, S. R. Miller, W. Peek, J. Rector, J. Ramsey	1	1	37
Pine Creek—George Roberts, Moses J. Free- man	0	1	20
 Zion—J. W. Ayers, Sanders Hughes, Swin- field Howell	0	5	66
 Double Island — T. Wilson, A. Silvers, T. Howell, M. Robinson, W. O. Wilson	1	2	58
Bear Creek — S. M. Collis, James Collis, Thomas Willis, Hardin Sparks	1	2	51
Big Laurel—Stephen Wallin, Joseph Rice, Sr. W. Runion, A. G. Tweed	0	0	53
Rock Creek — George C. Hopson, William Hughes	2	3	35
Flag Pond—D. W. Murry, J. Martin, J. C. Sams, T. Brown, I. Rice, L. W. Sams, Samuel Higgins	0	1	29
Three Mile—Levi Houston	0	0	20
Linville—No Return	—	—	—
Totals	24	45	1176

Chapter VI

The Organizational Meeting

THE MINUTES of the Roan Mountain Baptist Association for the years from 1849 through 1891 were recorded in the handwriting of the various associational clerks in a ledger which was passed on from year to year and was in the possession of the Rev. Stephen M. Greene at the time of his death in 1924. Fortunately for us this manuscript record is now in the Baptist Collection of the Library of Wake Forest College. The minutes for the years from 1892 through 1949, with very few exceptions, are either in the hands of the writer or are in the Library of Wake Forest College. Most of the information contained in the pages that follow was gleaned from these records. Other sources will be sufficiently identified. With this understanding we will not burden the reader with numerous footnote citations.

With the promise not to repeat the exercise on the records for each year for the next one hundred years, let us begin this story of the organization of the Roan Mountain Baptist Association with a reproduction of the minutes of that historic meeting with appropriate commentaries on churches and individuals. Although the table on "The State of the Churches" appears on the last page of the minutes for 1849, in the light of what has been reported in the previous chapter, we believe it appropriate to reproduce it at the beginning of this account. In the list of the delegates, we have taken the liberty to underline (italicize) the names of the ordained ministers.

THE STATE OF THE CHURCHES

<i>Churches</i>	<i>Delegates Names</i>	<i>Total number</i>	<i>Contributions</i>
Roan Mountain	<i>Leonard Buchanan, John Buchanan, Samuel McKinney, Wm. F. Buchanan, Clement Buchanan</i>	102	1.30
Grassy Creek	Jacob Hollifield, Isaac Washburn, James Washburn, David Byrd -----	44	.50
Zion	<i>J. W. Ayers, Wm. Randolph, Sanders Hughs, Noah Letterman</i>	65	1.11½
Double Island	<i>Jacob Silver, Thos. Wilson, Alford Silver, Wm. Deyton</i> ----	58	1.52½
Bear Creek	<i>S. M. Collis, James Collis, Thos. Willis, Harden Sparks, J. G. Thomas</i> -----	51	.11½
Little Rock Creek	John Hughes, Wm. Hughes ----	30	.50

THE STATE OF THE CHURCHES (Continued)

<i>Churches</i>	<i>Delegates Names</i>	<i>Total number</i>	<i>Contributions</i>
Three Mile	Flemon Vance ----- Thos. M. Sparks, A. J. Buchanan, Isaac Cox -----	29	.60
Beaver Creek	John Wheeler, Jesse Ray, William Bennett -----	25	1.92½
Laurel Branch	Uriah Honeycutt, W. Tipton ----	51	.50
Ramsey Town	Moses Peterson, Sampson Honeycutt, Ezekiel H. Honeycutt	32	.20
Jacks Creek	Thomas Silver, Thomas Robertson -----	27	.10
Crab Tree	Joseph Hopson, Cyrus Elliott, Haseal Wacaster -----	18	.77½
New Liberty	Samuel Baker -----	21	.25
Big Rock Creek	James Ray, Archibald McMahan	37	.10
Bolens Creek	James Arrowood, Moses Honeycutt -----	14	.50
Tow River	Samuel B. Adams -----	10	.20
Pine Grove	Wm. Houston -----	37	.25
Cranbury		15	.60
		666	11.61¼
		Individual Contributions	1.27½
		Total	12.88¾

Of the eighteen churches listed, four — Roan Mountain, Grassy Creek, Bear Creek, and Little Rock Creek—had from their beginning been members of the French Broad Association, while three of them—Zion, Three Mile, and Double Island—had entered the French Broad Association in the consolidation of 1849, and, as we have seen, were dismissed by letter. The other eleven churches in the list had either belonged to the Big Ivy Association and had not entered the consolidation, or had been unassociated prior to 1849. We have no record of the associational affiliation of the two oldest churches in the list. These are Zion and Laurel Branch. According to information collected by the North Carolina Historical Records Survey Project of the Works Progress Administration and published in 1942, Zion was organized around 1800 and Laurel Branch in 1807. We know nothing of their organization. However, Zion was on or near a much traveled trail or turnpike across the mountains into Tennessee. While Laurel Branch was on the Cane River about one mile north of Pensacola at the mouth of a branch from which it took its name. Both of these churches could have been sponsored by and associated with the Holston Association in Tennessee, as were three of the early churches which formed the French Broad Association.

Of the twelve ordained ministers of the Association all but three had belonged to the Big Ivy Association, and two of these three — Leonard Buchanan and John Buchanan, who were brothers and delegates from Roan Mountain—had come out of a Big Ivy church by the

name of Whiteoak Creek. Leonard is listed as a delegate and licentiate minister from Whiteoak Creek Church in the Big Ivy Associational minutes for 1841. John's obituary, which appears in the Roan Mountain minutes for 1880, informs us that he was ordained in 1845 at Whiteoak Creek Church by a presbytery consisting of Elders C. M. Phillips, Samuel Byrd, and J. S. Byrd.

The writer has been unable to find the location of this church or what became of it. However, there is in present Yancey County a Whiteoak Creek which flows into the Nolachucky River three or four miles below Hunteale. The church in question appears to have been located in this area, since the minutes of 1880 say that it was in Yancey County. There is, indeed, a White Oak Creek in Mitchell County which adjoins Cane Creek at Bakersville, on which the present White Oak Baptist Church was organized in 1884. We mention these facts only because it appears that one of two things happened. Either Whiteoak Creek Church was in some way consolidated with Roan Mountain, or these Buchanan brothers moved into the area and affiliated with the Roan Mountain Church after 1846.

It is an interesting fact that in the Roan Mountain delegation there were four brothers, the two preachers already named and Clement Buchanan, who incidentally was a grandfather of the writer on his mother's side, and William F. Buchanan, the oldest of the four.

We return now to the beginning of the 1849 minutes as recorded in the handwriting of the clerk, Elder, S. M. Collis:

Minutes of the first anniversary of the Roan Mountain Baptist Association held with the church at Double -Island Meeting house in Yancey County, N. C., October the 5th and the days following 1849.

October 5, 1849 was a little more than six weeks after the French Broad consolidation meeting of late August, an account of which was detailed in the previous chapter. If we had for reference the 1849, and last minutes, of the Big Ivy Association, we would almost certainly find that the time and place of this organizational meeting was set at that session.

Double Island Church was apparently organized in 1840 by ministers of the Big Ivy Association, and Garriet(t) Deweese was its first pastor. This is the man whom Stephen Morgan had attempted to discipline for "heresy" many years before, which action had precipitated the organization of the Big Ivy Association. It is assumed that he died or moved out of the area, since his name does not occur in any of the records after 1840. The name Double Island was evidently suggested by two islands in the Toe River near Kona just south of Lunday. At the time of this meeting (1849) Jacob Silver was pastor of Double Island Church and apparently continued as pastor through 1862.

A sermon introducing to business was delivered by Elder Moses Peterson from John the first chapter and 29th verse. (The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world) After a short recess the Delegates convened in the hour. Prayer by Elder Stephen Morgan.

Elder Moses Peterson was at this time pastor of Jacks Creek Church. He had been pastor of the Whiteoak Creek Church in the Big Ivy Association in 1841. As we shall see he was elected moderator of Roan Mountain Association, and was again in attendance at the meeting in 1850. After this date he does not appear in the associational records. In 1851, the Jacks Creek Church of which he was pastor, withdrew along with Ramsey Town, New Liberty, Pine Grove and Crooked Creek — which was admitted to the association in 1850 — to form a new group. The 1851 minutes of the Roan Mountain Association records an action taken with regard to this group:

In as much as Ramsey Town, Jacks Creek, New Liberty, Pine Grove, and Crooked Creek churches have written withdrawn from this association and have become a distant body calling themselves the Tow River Free Will Christian Communion Baptist, therefore the Association withdraws from said churches and is no more accountable for them.

Evidence of the tendency which led to this separation is indicated by an entry in the minutes of this very first meeting of the association.

In reference to a note found on the Pine Grove Church letter setting forth that that church moves for setting a free table in the Communion to all who have had their sins pardoned, this Association do in the spirit of meekness advise said church to divert from said practice.

The Roan Mountain Association resisted from the beginning what appeared to them to be an extreme Arminian trend. Perhaps it should be noted here that another Jacks Creek church was admitted to the Association in 1856, which was apparently organized by some of the members of the previous one, since a delegate named Sampson Honeycutt represented both the first and second churches. Jacks Creek church is listed in the 1966 minutes of the Yancey Baptist Association and has a present membership of seventy-one.

On motion Elder Stephen Morgan was called to the chair and Lewis Palmer clerk until the association was organized.

With Elder Stephen Morgan we are already acquainted. He was now a respected patriarch of seventy-three years, and had traveled horseback from Flat Creek to attend this meeting. Apparently he is still pastor of the Grassy Creek Church. Lewis Palmer was a layman, who had been elected clerk of the Big Ivy Association in 1841, and had apparently served in that capacity until now.

From this point on in the minutes separate actions of the association are numbered.

1. Read letters from 18 churches and enrolled their delegates.

2. Elected Elder Moses Peterson moderator and Elder S. M. Collis clerk.

3. Adopted the rules of decorum of the Big Ivy Association to govern us in all matters of order and discussion.

These rules of decorum were no different from those employed by nearly all Baptist associations of the day, and indeed, with special variations, by other deliberative bodies, before accepted works on par-

liamentary procedure came into common use. There were thirteen of the rules as follows:

1. That the Association shall be opened and closed by prayer.
2. That there be no conversing by members one with another so as to interrupt business.
3. That any member wishing to speak shall first rise to his feet and address to the Moderator.
4. That no member shall interrupt another when speaking.
5. That no member shall make remarks on another's manner of speaking or on their slips and blunders.
6. That we admit no other title to each other while in session but that of brother.
7. That any member speaking shall attend closely to the subject under consideration.
8. That no member shall speak more than three times on any one subject without leave of the Association.
9. That no member shall withdraw without leave of the Moderator.
10. That any motion made and seconded shall be attended to except withdrawn by the person who made it.
11. That all motions made where the vote of the Association is taken a majority shall be an act.
12. That the Moderator shall have the same privilege to speak as another member provided the chair is filled.
13. That any member violating the above rules shall be admonished by the Moderator.

A regular ritual of Baptist associations for many years before and after 1849 was the call for correspondence soon after the session opened. When the call was made, brethren representing other associations would present themselves with a letter from their respective associations and usually a package of the minutes of their last associational meeting. Roan Mountain usually maintained correspondence with three or four other associations. These associations were in doctrinal agreement. Their correspondents participated in each others deliberations. Usually visiting ministers were accorded the courtesy of doing most of the preaching, especially on Sunday, when it was customary to have two or three sermons in the morning and two or three in the afternoon. These Sunday services were usually attended by large crowds, many of whom came from distant places to be in attendance.

Items four and five record the call of correspondence and the recognition of visiting ministers:

4. Called for correspondence and received from the East Tennessee Association a letter by the hand of their messenger Elder Wm. Wall who took a seat with us.
5. On motion invited ministering brethren to seats with us. Whereupon Elders Stephen Morgan, Samuel Byrd, and Robert Patterson being present took seats.

Samuel Byrd was at this time pastor of the consolidated Cane River Church, and Robert Patterson was pastor of the Big Ivy Church. Patterson had been for some years pastor of Roan Mountain Church and for a brief period of Grassy Creek.

6. On motion agreed to adopt the French Broad Constitution.

It will be recalled that only six weeks before in its meeting of August, 1849, the French Broad Association had adopted the constitution of the Big Ivy Association. It follows then that the constitution here adopted was really the constitution of the former Big Ivy Association.

7. Appointed Elders Leonard Buchanan, Jacob Silver, J. Ray, James W. Ayers and Brother Samuel Baker, with the Moderator and a clerk a committee on arrangement with leave to invite correspondents to sit with them and ordered to report tomorrow morning. Also Wm. Deyton, David Byrd, Ezekiel Honeycutt a committee of finance to report before the Association rises. Adjourned till 10 o'clock tomorrow. prayer by elder Robert Patterson.

Saturday, October the 6th.

Met according to adjournment. Prayer by Elder Robert Patterson.

8. The report of committee or arrangements called for, read, received and committee discharged.

9. On motion adopted the French Broad articles of faith, and ordered that our Constitution and Articles of Faith and Rules of Decorum be printed in these minutes.

In keeping with this instruction, the Constitution, Articles of Faith, and Rules of Decorum were recorded in the minutes, and presumably published in the printed minutes. Because it is interesting to see how an association can forget in the course of time that it has these basic documents, we will devote a section to this phase of our history, and will postpone the recording of the Constitution and Articles of Faith until then.

10. Agreed to offer correspondence to the Holston, French Broad, and Union Associations, and that Elder S. M. Collis write to the French Broad Association, and that Elders Leonard Buchanan, Moses Peterson, S. M. Collis and Brethren Jacob Hollifield, Isaac Washburn, Harden Sparks and Sampson Honeycutt bear the letter. Elder Stephen Morgan to write to the Holston Association and Elders Leonard Buchanan, John Buchanan, S. M. Collis, Thomas Wilson, J. W. Ayers and Brother Wm. Deyton bear the letter. Ezekiel H. Honeycutt write to the Union Association, Elder J. W. Ayers and Brethren Thomas Robertson and Ezekiel Honeycutt to bear the letter. Brother James Collis to write to East Tennessee Association, Elders J. W. Ayers and James Arrowood to bear the letter.

The large delegations named to attend the French Broad and the Holston Associations reflects the closeness of fellowship between these groups through the years. The Union Association had been formed in 1848 by churches out of the Big Ivy, Salem, and Green River Associa-

tions. It lasted only nine years. The East Tennessee Association, organized in 1828, had previously been in correspondence with the Big Ivy Association. It is still a strong association.

11. Agreed that our next Association be held with the church at Beaver Creek, fifteen miles East of Burnsville, Yancey County, N. C., to commence Friday before the first Lord's Day in October, 1850, and that Elder Jacob Silver preach the introductory sermon and Elder James Ray be his alternate.

12. Appointed Elders Wheeler, Morgan, Patterson, and Wall to occupy the stand on Sabbath.

The last three items of business on Saturday concerned finances and the printing of the minutes. The finance committee reported the total amount given for the minute fund, and Elder James Ray was elected to serve as treasurer. It was agreed that Elder S. M. Collis should supervise the printing of the minutes, that he should have 500 copies printed, reserve 100 copies for the correspondents, and was to receive \$5.00 for his services.

On Sunday morning, October 7, 1849, the people assembled for the services planned for the day. Although four men had been named the day before to "occupy the stand," only three actually did. Elder John Wheeler did not preach. No reason is given for the omission. Perhaps the other three brethren filled the allotted time. Our patriarch, Elder Stephen Morgan, began the service with a message on Isaiah 40:9:

O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain; O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God.

Elder Morgan was followed by Elder Robert Patterson with a message on I Cor. 14:8 "For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself for battle." The Elder William Wall, from the East Tennessee Association, continued the service with a message from Isaiah 28:20. "For the bed is shorter than a man can stretch himself on it: and the covering is narrower than he can wrap himself in it." The Clerk makes this comment, "The whole performance was solemn and interesting, and we hope the fruits of this day's labour will be seen and enjoyed in eternity."

The Association met again on Monday morning, October 8, to transact one item of business. They called the roll, read and signed the corresponding letters. Elder S. M. Collis led the final prayer. So ended the first session of the Roan Mountain Baptist Association.

Chapter VII

Constitution and Articles of Faith, Lost or Forgotten

IN any cooperative organization, be it governmental, civic, or religious, nothing is more fundamental than its constitution, which sets forth its composition, purposes, and procedures. If it is a religious organization, such as a Baptist Association, which finds its homogeneity in the general acceptance of certain theological concepts or interpretations — referred to as articles of faith — becomes a matter of primary importance; or so it seemed to those who went before us in the faith.

We have already seen that the early Separate Baptists did not believe in creeds of any kind, holding that the Bible alone was a sufficient guide for all matters of faith and practice. Their early associations (1758-1790) refused even to have a moderator or to make statistical reports. But they learned from experience, and from other religious groups, especially the Particular Baptists, with which group they eventually united in North Carolina, South Carolina, and Virginia to form the Regular Baptists. George W. Purefoy, in his *History of Sandy Creek Baptist Association*, (1859), describes this development in the Piedmont region.

It became clear that to bring order and discipline to their meetings a constitution and rules of decorum were needed, and to have a basis of understanding between themselves and with other religious groups a statement of the things "most surely believed" among them was necessary.

We have seen something of the struggle, both in the Broad River and the French Broad Associations, which revolved around the doctrine of election, and have witnessed the formation of the Big Ivy Association, which grew out of resistance to the efforts on the part of some of the brethren to enforce the acceptance of the hyper-Calvinistic view of this doctrine. Now that the struggle was over, the Big Ivy Association having won general acceptance of its views, it was only natural that the newly organized Roan Mountain Baptist Association should adopt a constitution and articles of faith that reflected this predominate position. In the light of all that is in the background, we think this history would not be complete without recording this constitution and articles of faith, and pointing out some of the significant changes and developments through the years.

The Constitution of the Roan Mountain Baptist Association adopted in 1849 contained sixteen articles, as follows:

1. That the Association be composed of delegates chosen and sent from each individual church.

2. That the delegates chosen and sent shall be recommended in a letter by the church to which they belong and shall include the ministry and some of the most able members belonging to the church.

3. That the Association when met and formed shall at each meeting elect a moderator.

4. That the rules of decorum be read immediately after the Association is formed.

5. That this Association disclaims all human creeds or confessions of faith drawn up by uninspired men as bonds of union and communion and declare that the Bible alone is its platform and the only rule by which it will be governed, yet is willing to exhibit to the world an abstract as an exponent of its doctrinal views for the removing of false aspersions which are unjustly thrown at us, and for the information of others not acquainted with our tenets, but for no other reason.

6. That this Association will encourage a sound ministry, such as exhibits Christ a whole Saviour having made salvation possible to every human being on the terms of the gospel which is freely offered to all.

7. That this Association will discountenance and repudiate the doctrine of particular personal unconditional and eternal election and reprobation.

8. That any preacher in regular standing in any one of our churches, though not a delegate, may be invited to a seat and his name enrolled in our minutes.

9. That this Association may appoint a committee or committees which may be thought necessary for the expedition of business and every committee appointed to attend to any particular branch of business shall report their proceedings in writing to the Association while in session and all reports made by committees after due examination may be received or rejected by the Association.

10. That all queries regularly presented to the Association by any church in the Union shall be attended to and all queries shall be considered regularly presented that are applications to the Association for counsel or advice to the church presenting the same.

11. That the Association shall have a book in which shall be recorded an accurate account of all its proceedings.

12. That any church may become a member of the Association by making application by letter and delegates and adopting our Articles of Faith.

13. That the Association may withdraw from any church that becomes disorderly or refuses to be represented by letter and delegates.

14. That there shall be an association fund kept for defraying expenses and charges that may accrue and for keeping up said fund each church may contribute at pleasure.

15. That there be a Treasurer appointed by the Association, who shall hold his office during the pleasure of the Association, whose duty it shall be to take care of and account for all monies committed to his care.

16. That the Association shall assume no higher authority than an advisory council.

Articles Six and Seven above are really articles of faith, but so important had the issue of election become that these brethren left no doubt by spelling out their position in the constitution. However, Articles Five and Six in the Articles of Faith below also deal with this question. There were twelve articles in the statement adopted by the Roan Mountain Association in 1849, as listed below:

1. We believe in one only living and true God and that there are three persons in the godhead, the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, and that these three are one in substance and equal in power and glory.

2. We believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the word of God and the only rule of faith and practice.

3. We believe in the doctrine of original sin.

4. We believe in man's impotency to recover himself from the fallen state he is in by his own free will and ability.

5. We believe that sinners are justified in the sight of God only by the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ.

6. We believe that saints shall persevere on grace and that they never shall fall finally away.

7. We believe that Baptism and the Lord's Supper are ordinances instituted by Christ and that true believers are the only proper subjects thereof.

8. We believe the true mode of Baptism is by immersion.

9. We believe that no person has a right to administer the Ordinances but such as are regularly called and qualified thereunto.

10. We believe that no man should be ordained to the ministry without the unanimous voice of the church to which he belongs.

11. We believe in the resurrection of the dead and a general judgement, that punishment of the wicked shall be everlasting, and the joys of the righteous eternal.

12. We the members of the Roan Mountain Baptist Association agreeing to the above Articles of Faith for and in behalf of the churches whom we represent covenant, agree, and give ourselves up to each other in church and Christian fellowship in order to keep up the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace and to assist each other in all matters of distress and to pray for each's prosperity.

In 1851, when the Association was in session at Roan Mountain Church, it was agreed to change the wording of Articles Five and Six. Article Five was changed to read:

We believe that sinners are justified by the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ.

And Article Six was changed to read:

We believe such only are saints that do persevere or endure unto the end, that they being born of God and made heirs with Christ, are kept by the power of God through faith unto Salvation.

A careful search of the minutes reveals that no further change was ever made in these Articles of Faith.

In 1864, when the Association was in session at Pleasant Grove Church in Yancey County, a committee, consisting of Elders John Autry, J. W. Ayers, and S. M. Collis, was appointed to revise the constitution. In 1865 the committee reported that nothing had been done. The Committee was continued, and in 1866 presented a revision of the constitution which was adopted. The only significant changes were in the first and second articles, which set forth the name and purpose of the Association. The first and second articles of the old constitution were combined in the new Third Article. The Tenth Article was entirely new, but the remainder of the constitution was virtually unchanged except for wording. We reproduce this 1866 constitution below, because, so far as the minutes reveal, this constitution was never changed again and never repealed:

CONSTITUTION REVISED

Article 1. That this organization be known by the name of the Roan Mountain Baptist Association.

Article 2. That the Association shall have for its objects the spread of the Gospel, suppression of vice and immorality by employing missionaries to labor in her bounds, and establishing Sabbath schools in the churches.

Article 3. That the Association be composed of delegates chosen and sent and who shall be recommended in a letter which shall express their fellowship, and shall include the ministry and some of the most able members.

Article 4. That the Association when formed shall at each meeting elect a moderator and clerk by ballot.

Article 5. That the rules of decorum be read immediately after the Association is formed.

Article 6. That this Association disclaim all human creeds or confessions of faith drawn up by uninspired men as a bond of union and communion and declare that the Bible alone is its platform and the only rule by which it shall be governed; yet is willing to exhibit to the world an Abstract as an exponent of its doctrinal views for the removing of false aspersions unjustly thrown at us and for the information of those not acquainted with our tenets.

Article 7. That this Association will encourage a sound ministry, such as exhibits Christ a whole Saviour, having made

Salvation possible to every human being on the terms of the Gospel which is freely offered to all.

Article 8. That this Association will discountenance and repudiate the doctrine of fatality.

Article 9. That any minister of the Gospel in good standing, belonging to our denomination, though not a delegate, may be invited to a seat and his name enrolled in the minutes.

Article 10. That the Association may avail herself of any aid that she stands in need of by inviting any member of our denomination that is present to a seat.

Article 11. The Association may appoint a committee or committees which may be thought necessary for the expedition of business and every committee appointed to attend to any particular branch of business shall report their proceedings in writing to the Association while in session, which after examination may be received or rejected by the Association.

Article 12. That all queries regularly presented to the Association by any church in the union shall be attended to.

Article 13. That the Association shall have a book in which shall be recorded an accurate account of all its proceedings.

Article 14. That any church may become a member of this Association by making application by letter and delegates by adopting our Constitution and Articles of Faith.

Article 15. That the Association will withdraw from any church that becomes disorderly or refuses to be represented.

Article 16. That there shall be an Association fund kept for defraying the expenses of the Association and for keeping up said fund each church may contribute at pleasure.

Article 17. That there be a treasurer appointed yearly by the Association whose duty it shall be to take care of and account for all moneys committed to his care.

Article 18. That the Association assume no higher authority than the advisory council.

Ratified by the Association September 18, 1866.

The rules of decorum continued to be read at each session and to be printed in the published minutes, but the Constitution and Articles of Faith were not regularly read and were never printed in the published minutes. In the associational meeting of 1869 it was agreed that these should be printed in the printed minutes, but this was apparently never done, perhaps because of the expense involved, or more likely because the clerk simply neglected to include these in the material that he submitted to the printer. The writer has examined the printed minutes for 1868 and the years following and has not found the Constitution and Articles of Faith in any of them. In 1875, when the Association was in session at Yellow Mountain, the Rules of Decorum, the Consti-

tution, and the Articles of Faith were all read at the opening of the session. The minutes do not indicate that this was ever done again.

As time passed people tended to forget about these basic documents, and this tendency was accelerated by certain developments. Some of the older brethren who had been present for the organization in 1849 were passing off the scene. Elder John Buchanan died in 1880; his brother Leonard died soon afterward. In the spring of 1890 the Elder S. M. Collis died, and the next year the old ledger in which the hand-written minutes had been kept, and in which could be found the only copies of the Constitution and Articles of Faith, was filled to the last page and passed out of use. A new ledger was not purchased and the yearly minutes transcribed, as the constitution had provided. Since the Constitution and the Articles of Faith never appeared in the published minutes, and since these had not been read in an associational meeting in many years, it was simply forgotten that they existed.

In the minutes for 1906 we read "motion carried that Articles of Faith be printed in the minutes." But this was not done, perhaps for the simple reason that the clerk, who prepared the minutes for publication, did not have a copy and did not know where to look for it. By 1915 there was only one man living in the Association who may have had any recollection of the Constitution and Articles of Faith of the Roan Mountain Baptist Association. That man was the Elder S. M. Greene, who had become clerk of the Association for the first time in 1871, and it appears that he never had occasion to copy either of these documents. He was not clerk in 1875, when these were read publicly for the last time. Now (1915) he was seventy-seven years old, and, although still active was getting feeble.

Thus when a doctrinal question arose in one of the churches of the Association in 1915 and split it asunder, there was no obvious standard to which appeal could be made for guidance. In that year the Association was in session at Bakersville and a committee on the state of the churches made the following report and recommendation:

From reliable information we understand that in some of our churches there are seeds of discord being sown by a doctrine contrary to the tenets of the Baptist faith being preached, which we fear is calculated to do a great deal of injury to the Baptist cause. We . . . therefore recommend a committee be appointed to investigate and report at our next session.

In accordance with this recommendation a committee, consisting of S. M. Greene, chairman, R. T. Teague, J. A. Gouge, Isaac Grindstaff, and L. H. Greene, was appointed, and brought a report to the next associational meeting in 1916. This committee, apparently not being acquainted with the Constitution and Articles of Faith, which were still valid, turned to the popular New Hampshire Confession of Faith as a standard by which to judge the doctrinal question which had arisen. The New Hampshire Confession had been given wide circulation by its author, Dr. J. Newton Brown (b. 1803, d. 1868), while he was editorial secretary of the American Baptist Publication Society. This Confession, which is said to be "mildly Calvinistic," contained eighteen

articles. Our committee quoted seven of these eighteen articles, which we reproduce below, because they afford some insight into the nature of the problem concerned, and because the average reader might have difficulty finding a copy of this confession. The committee reported in 1916 as follows:

Your committee, appointed last session of the Association, on the sowing of seeds of discord in some of our churches by teaching a doctrine contrary to Baptist tenets and beliefs, make the following report:

The New Hampshire Confession of Faith is the formula of Christian truth most commonly used as a standard in Baptist churches throughout the country. It says:

IV. OF THE WAY OF SALVATION. — We believe that the salvation of sinners is wholly of grace; through the meditorial offices of the Son of God, who by the appointment of the Father, freely took upon him our nature, yet without sin; honored the divine law by his personal obedience, and by his death made a full atonement for our sins; that having risen from the dead, he is now enthroned in heaven and uniting in his wonderful person the tenderest sympathies with divine perfections, he is every way qualified to be a suitable, a compassionate, and all sufficient Saviour.

V. OF JUSTIFICATION. — We believe that the great gospel blessing which Christ secures to such as believe in him, is justification; that justification includes the pardon of sin, and the promise of eternal life on principles of righteousness; that it is bestowed not in consideration of any works of righteousness which we have done, but solely through faith in the Redeemer's blood; by virtue of which faith his perfect righteousness is freely imputed to us of God, that it brings us into a state of most blessed peace and favor with God, and secures every other blessing needful for time and eternity.

VII. OF GRACE IN REGENERATION. — We believe that in order to be saved sinners must be regenerated, or born again; that regeneration consists in giving a holy disposition to the mind; that it is effected in a manner above our comprehension by the power of the Holy Spirit, in connection with the divine truth, so as to secure our voluntary obedience to the gospel; and that its proper evidence appears in the holy fruits of repentance, and faith, and newness of life.

VIII. OF REPENTANCE AND FAITH. — We believe that repentance and faith are sacred duties, and also inseparable graces, wrought in our souls by the regenerating Spirit of God; whereby, being deeply convinced of our guilt, danger, and helplessness, and of the way of salvation by Christ, we turn to God with unfeigned contrition, confession, and supplication for mercy; at the same time heartily receiving the Lord

Jesus Christ as our Prophet, Priest and King, relying on him alone as the only and all sufficient Saviour.

X. OF SANCTIFICATION. — We believe that sanctification is the process by which, according to the will of God, we are made partakers of his holiness, that it is a progressive work; that it is begun in regeneration; and that it is carried on in the hearts of believers by the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, the sealer and comforter in the continual use of the appointed means — especially the word of God, self-examination, self-denial, watchfulness and prayer.

XI. OF THE PERSEVERANCE OF SAINTS. — We believe that such only are real believers as endure unto the end; that their persevering attachment to Christ is the grand mark which distinguishes them from superficial professors; that a special providence watches over their welfare; and they are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

XIV. OF BAPTISM AND THE LORD'S SUPPER. — We believe that Christian baptism is the immersion in water of a believer; into the name of the Father, and Son, and Holy Ghost; to show forth, in a solemn and beautiful emblem, our faith in the crucified, buried, and risen Saviour, with its effect, in our death to sin and resurrection to a new life; that it is prerequisite to the privileges of a church relation; and to the Lord's Supper, in which the members of the church by the sacred use of bread and wine, are to commemorate together the dying love of Christ; preceded always by solemn self-examination.

We find conclusive evidence that Brother W. B. Mull has sown seeds of discord in some of our churches, that he not only believes in the doctrine of baptismal regeneration and so teaches, but also that a person is not saved until he shall have taken the Lord's Supper. These fatal errors being wholly opposed to the teaching of the New Testament and Baptist beliefs. We must say that he is heterodox and heretical in his teachings and belief. We recommend therefore that our churches be warned against him and that they be asked to keep him out of their pulpits.

We find by conclusive testimony that Mine Creek Church, at the investigation of Brother Mull, who is pastor, dismissed from her membership parties who are orthodox and orderly, without so much as giving them a trial. This procedure is contrary to God's word, to the Christian Spirit, and to Baptist policy. We therefore recommend that Mine Creek be no longer recognized as a Missionary Baptist church and that her delegates be refused seats in our Association.

We find by examination that there are now members of Mine Creek Church who are sound in doctrine and faith who love the "old church" and are bound to the hallowed spot by

tender ties and sacred memories. We examined the deed to the property and find it to be given to the trustees of Mine Creek Missionary Baptist Church and to their successors. Since no other denomination can rightly claim the property, we recommend that the faithful few there now reorganize the church, select new trustees in the place of those heterodox, call a pastor and thereby hold the property.

The above report was accepted without a dissenting vote, and the record of further action in this situation continues:

Motion carried that the letters and delegates of the reorganized Mine Creek be received.

Motion carried that the moderator appoint a committee to assist the newly organized Missionary Baptist Church at Mine Creek.

The moderator appointed L. M. Buchanan, R. T. Teague, and L. H. Greene to serve on this committee. The minority group did claim the property and were recognized in the Association as the Missionary Baptist Church of Mine Creek. But the division involved a great many people, and this was not the end of the matter. Whereas the church had reported a membership of 155 in 1915, in 1916, after the division, it reported 38, and a year later in 1917, it reported only 30 members. In 1918 efforts at reconciliation were made. The Association that year was meeting with Liberty Hill Church, and what was known as the "Mullite Faction" of the Mine Creek Church presented a letter petitioning the Association to be received as a valid part of Mine Creek Baptist Church. Their petition was read by the Rev. L. M. Buchanan:

Mullite Petition

To the Mitchell County Baptist Association: We the Mine Creek Baptist Church, more generally known as the Mullite Faction, not withstanding the fact that we feel and believe that we have been misrepresented to your Association, but knowing that it is our duty to forgive, and our love for the church and the cause of Christ leads us to believe that it is our duty to lay down all our past differences with the faction of said church known as the Missionary Baptist Church.

And whereas we no longer retain Brother Mull as our pastor, and further, we do now, and always have, believed in the Baptist Standard Declaration of Faith and we believe that Salvation is wholly of grace. We believe that Christian baptism is the immersion in water of a regenerated or saved person, in the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

We now, therefore, in church conference regardless of the past differences, desire to resume fellowship with our brethren in said church of all factions, and we further desire to be reorganized in your body, the Mitchell County Baptist Association, as a Missionary Baptist Church.

This Sept. 10, 1918.

Isaac McKinney, Moderator

E. A. Greene, Clerk.

A committee, composed of G. A. Martin and Lee J. Jones — two visiting brethren from the McDowell County Association — and J. C. Thomas, was appointed to consider the petition and report back to the Association. This committee brought the following recommendations:

1. That, in keeping with Christian charity, you could do no less than grant their request, and grant them all former privileges of the Mine Creek Church.

2. That if those who now constitute the Mine Creek Church refuse them this privilege, they be allowed to organize themselves into a Missionary Baptist Church, with the right to worship in their old building.

3. That this petition be spread on the minutes of the Association and become a part of the records of this session.

It appears that the recommendations of this committee were accepted by the Association. However, the healing of the breach was a slower process, as is indicated by the fact that Mine Creek Church reported only 95 members in 1920, as compared with 155 reported five years before. In the meantime the work of W. B. Mull had caused disturbances in other places. In the diary of the Rev. S. M. Greene we read the following interesting entry:

On Friday before the second Sunday in September, 1917, I went to my meeting at Grassy Creek. On Monday I boarded the train at Spruce Pine and came to Roses' Branch. I got off the train and went to Flem. Thomas's. I saw A. E. Brown, L. H. Greene, J. C. Thomas, Sam Tipton, and Ike. Grindstaff on their way to Pleasant Grove Church to try W. B. Mull on his rotten doctrine and tearing up of churches. The committee found him guilty.

The Pleasant Grove Church had been refused a seat in the Yancey County Baptist Association that year on the account of doctrinal differences occasioned by the presence and teachings of W. B. Mull.

These incidents have been recorded in connection with the history of the Constitution and Articles of Faith, because it is altogether possible that if these documents had been kept before the people, these difficulties never would have arisen. Nothing further is said in the minutes about a constitution until 1930, when a proposed constitution was presented by the Rev. Charles G. Ellis. It is obvious from his introduction that he was unaware of the existence of any governing document other than the Rules of Decorum. There was no way that he could have known; the Constitution and Articles of Faith never had been printed in the published minutes, and the old minute book in which they were recorded had been retired from use since 1891. The constitution as proposed by Ellis and adopted by the Association is shown below as it appears in the minutes for 1930:

CONSTITUTION

WHEREAS: The rules of decorum for this body were adopted many years ago and served well and good, and with honor to its authors, but due to the many changes that have

taken place since that time the following (proposed constitution is offered)

Name

Article 1. — The name of this body shall be "The Mitchell County Baptist Association.

Object

Article 2. — It shall be the object of this Association to furnish the gospel (as we hold it) to the people within the bounds of the Association, and to cooperate with the Baptist State Convention to send the gospel to all the world.

Membership

Article 3. — The Membership shall consist of the officers of the Association, pastors of the churches in the Association, messengers from the churches. Each church shall be entitled to three messengers and one additional messenger for every twenty-five members or fraction thereof over and above one hundred members.

Officers

Article 4. — The officers of the Association shall be a Moderator, a Treasurer, and a Clerk, all of whom shall be elected each year by the Association at its annual meeting, and shall hold office until their successors are elected.

Board of Committees

Article 5. — The Association shall elect an Executive Committee each year, consisting of five members, whose duties shall be to look after having the gospel preached in all parts of the Association and to attend to all business of the Association between sessions, and to make such reports as they deem advisable at the annual meeting of the Association. The Association may appoint or elect such other boards or committees from time to time as circumstances may require.

Time of Meeting

Article 6. — The Association shall meet annually, on Thursday before the third Sunday in September. The moderator may at the request of the Executive Committee change the time or place of meeting of this Association when it for any good reason may be deemed advisable.

Vacancies

Article 7. — The Moderator in concurrence with the Executive Committee may fill any vacancy occurring between meetings of the Association.

Amendments

Article 8. — This Constitution may be amended at any regular session of the Association by a two-thirds vote of the number present.

The above constitution was amended in 1931 by the addition of Article 9.

Article 9. — If any church fails to send messengers or letters for two consecutive years and cannot give a reason-

able excuse for the same that church or such churches shall be placed on the delinquent or inactive list, and not be considered a part of the Association until such church or churches are reinstated by the body.

The following year, in 1932, the constitution was again amended by the addition of a tenth article.

Article 10. — Any church desiring admittance into this body must make application at least thirty days before the annual session of the Association, through the Executive Committee by letter and messengers, and furnish satisfactory evidence of faith and order; whereupon the Moderator shall in behalf of the Association give the messengers of the church the right-hand of fellowship.

The constitution was not altered again until 1937, when Dr. J. C. Owen, who was then serving as pastor of the First Baptist Church of Spruce Pine, presented an almost complete revision of the above constitution as amended. It appears that his revision was accepted by the Association without any serious objection. This revision as it appears in the 1937 minutes is given below.

CONSTITUTION MITCHELL COUNTY BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

Name

Article I. The name of this body shall be "The Mitchell County Baptist Association.

Object

Article II. It shall be the object of this Association to furnish the gospel to all the people of this Association, and to co-operate with the Baptist State Convention in giving the Gospel to all the world.

Membership

Article III. Membership of this Association shall consist of three classes: 1st. The officers of the Association. 2nd. Pastors of Baptist churches affiliated with the Association. 3rd. Messengers elected by the churches affiliated with the Association. Every church shall be entitled to three messengers, and one additional messenger for every twenty-five members beyond the first one hundred members.

Officers

Article IV. The officers of this Association shall be a Moderator, a Vice-Moderator, a Clerk, a Treasurer, and a Historian. All these shall be elected by the Association in its annual meeting and shall hold offices for one year, or until their successors are elected.

Boards and Committees

Article V. The Association shall elect each year the following committees: The Executive Committee, consisting of five members from the Association at large. The Moderator, Vice-Moderator and Clerk of the Association shall also be

members of this Committee. The committee shall have charge of the work of the Association between meetings of the Association. It shall make a written report to the Association at each meeting of the Association.

2nd. A Promotion Committee: This committee shall consist of the Moderator, Vice-Moderator and clerk of the Association; also the Superintendent of the County Sunday School Convention, the general director of the B. T. U. of the Association, the president of the W. M. U., and one additional member from each church affiliated with the Association, and all pastors of the Association. Nine members of this committee shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. This committee shall bear the responsibility of bringing the churches of the Association into co-operation with the program of the Baptist State Convention.

Meetings

Article VI. The Association shall meet annually on Thursday after the fourth Sunday in August. The fiscal year of the churches affiliated with the Association shall end July 31st. Each church shall then prepare its letter to the Association and forward the same to the Clerk at least two weeks before the date of the meeting of the Association. At the request of the Executive Committee, the Moderator may change the time for the meeting of the Association if good and sufficient reason therefor shall occur.

Vacancies

Article VII. The Executive Committee may fill any vacancies occurring in this organization between meetings of the Association. Those so elected will hold office till the next meeting of the Association.

Amendments

Article VIII. This constitution may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the members present at any session of the Association. Provided, that notice of such amendment be given of the first day and the vote taken at the morning of the second day.

By-Laws

1. Any church desiring admission into the fellowship of this body shall make application to the Executive Committee not less than two weeks before the meeting of the Association, and shall submit evidence of orthodoxy in faith and practice, and be ready to give any further information required by the committee. The Executive Committee shall submit its recommendations at the first session of the Association to make further investigation as to the desirability of admitting church making application. On the recommendation of the committee the Association may vote on the admission of this applicant. When this vote is favorable, the messengers shall receive the hand of fellowship by the Moderator.

2nd. Any church being shown to have departed from the doctrines and practices recognized by this Association may be suspended or excluded from the Association at any regular meeting by a majority vote of the messengers present.

To this revised constitution a copy of the covenant generally accepted among Baptist churches was appended. This constitution was not changed again, except to change the time of the annual meeting, until 1955, when Article Five was changed to enlarge the executive committee to include the pastor and one lay member from each church affiliated with the Association, and to specify more fully the duties of the executive committee. This change also provided for the appointment by the executive committee, or election by the Association, of the Association's representative on the General Board of the North Carolina Baptist State Convention. But next year, when it was learned that this last provision was contrary to the State Convention's Constitution, which provides for the election of the General Board members by the Convention, this part of the amendment to the Associational constitution was altered to be in keeping with the State Convention's provision.

The writer is aware that this has been a rather long and somewhat tedious discussion of the Association's Constitution and Articles of Faith, but he has tried to be thorough, and the information is here for anyone who cares to know.

Chapter VIII

Beaver Creek In Exile, Persons and Meetings

THE second meeting of the Roan Mountain Baptist Association was held October 4-6, 1850 at "Beaver Creek fifteen miles east of Burnsville, Yancey County." Beaver Creek church was one of the Big Ivy Association churches. It was listed in the minutes of that Association in 1841. We know nothing of the date and circumstances of its organization. In 1859, when the first attempt was made to list the postoffice addresses of the churches, "Sprucepine" was given as the address of Beaver Creek.

This church was located about one hundred yards east of the point where the road to Harris High School (1966) leaves Highway 19. The old cemetery, now known as the Tolley Cemetery, was then nearby the church, and contains graves, marked by rough stones, dating back to the early days of the church. One of the older citizens of the community told the writer in 1948, that he could remember well seeing the old log building in a dilapidated condition. Beaver Creek Church was represented in the 1849 meeting by Thomas M. Sparks, A. J. Buchanan, and Isaac Cox, and had a membership of twenty-five. Ten years later, when the Association met at Roan Mountain, Beaver Creek sent as delegates Tilman Blalock, J. Bartlett, and Lewis Buchanan. The Elder John Buchanan was then Pastor of this church. It had added twenty-eight members by baptism during the year, and had a total membership of 65. Six years later, in 1865, when the Association was meeting with Beaver Creek for the second and last time, the church reported the addition of forty-three by baptism and nine by letter, and had a total membership of 89. It was then the fourth largest church in the Association.

By 1870 the membership of Beaver Creek had increased to 90, but in this year the Association was divided. By mutual consent it was agreed that all the churches south of the Turnpike from Marion in McDowell County to the Tennessee line at the top of the Iron Mountain should join in the formation of a new association. These churches met at Zion Church in Yancey County on the third Sunday in October, 1870 and formed the Black Mountain Baptist Association. Beaver Creek, along with Mine Creek, Lily Branch, and Liberty Hill, although in Mitchell County, were south of the specified line and joined in the new organization. When the Roan Mountain Association changed its name in 1883 to the Mitchell County Baptist Association, Mine Creek, Lily Branch, and Liberty Hill returned to the old association. But Beaver Creek is never again mentioned in the Mitchell County or Roan Mountain Associational minutes. It is as if Beaver Creek Church went into exile and never returned. The details of its deterioration are lost.

The present (1966) Beaver Creek Church in the Mitchell County Baptist Association was organized and admitted to the Association in 1904, and has no historical connection with the earlier church, except that it is possible that some of the older members of first church may have become members of the second Beaver Creek. It is also quite possible that some of the members of the old Beaver Creek Church became members of the Baptist Church in Spruce Pine which was organized in 1908. We will discuss the formation of both these later churches a little further on in this history.

When the delegates assembled at Beaver Creek for the second meeting of the Roan Mountain Baptist Association on October 4, 1850, neither Elder Jacob Silver nor Elder James Ray, his alternate, were present to preach the introductory sermon. In their absence a prominent and respected visitor, the Elder Rees Bayless, was called upon to preach. He was no stranger to those present, being a correspondent from the Holston Association of Tennessee. He had for some years been serving as the third pastor in the history of Buffalo Ridge Church, the first church in Tennessee, founded by Elder Tidence Lane. Bayless was a frequent correspondent from the Holston Association. He had been present for the meeting of the French Broad Association at Roan Mountain in 1842, and had at that time "occupied the stand." At the 1850 meeting, he not only preached the introductory sermon, but again "occupied the stand" on Sunday.

Attending this meeting with Elder Rees Bayless were three other correspondents from the Holston Association—Elders S. C. Stone, I. H. Hider, and Brother Samuel Tipton. The delegation from the French Broad Association included Elders Robert Patterson, William Weith, Jacob Middalf, and Brother William H. Thomas. One of the more interesting visitors attending this meeting was Elder Luke S. Bronson. He had served as pastor of Bull Creek Church in Yancey County, and had preached the introductory sermon at the French Broad meeting at Roan Mountain in 1842. John Ammons who knew Bronson personally, gives in his *Outlines of History of French Broad Association and Mars Hill College*, the following interesting account of him:

Bronson was never a popular preacher, but esteemed as a good man and a wise counselor. He was the first in the French Broad Association to preach in a conversational tone; this in part accounts for his want of popularity, for it was generally held that the man called of God to preach the gospel must come with the gospel tone, which was a sort of solemn, sing-song tone, ending in a prolonged a-h, a-h. Bronson was the most cultured man in the Association in his day; a man of strong convictions, and always had the courage of his convictions. He was Calvinistic in doctrine, and rather inclined to hyper-calvinism; but with all his might he preached that Christ Jesus is the way of life, and that sinners must enter this way freely, and by loving consent, that life is offered to sinners in the gospel, and if we reject it, which we have the power to do, we shall perish world without end. His worth was never known till after his death.

At this second meeting of the Roan Mountain Association, the Elder Leonard Buchanan, now 41 years old and in the prime of his ministry, was elected Moderator. He was re-elected to this office nine out of the next twelve years. Elder S. M. Collis was again elected clerk, an office to which he was elected for seven years in succession. More space is given to this good man's life in our biographical section.

At this session a committee, consisting of William Deyton, John Ollis, John Autry, James W. Ayers, and James Riddle, was appointed to divide the Association into districts for the purpose of holding union meetings. This committee reported to the Association in 1851 at its meeting at Roan Mountain the following districts:

Lynville, Three Mile, Grassy Creek, Beaver Creek, and Bear Creek — 1st District; Roan Mountain, Double Island, Crab Tree, Bolens Creek, and Laurel Branch — 2nd District; Little Rock Creek, Big Rock Creek, Zion, Tow River, and Ball Creek — 3rd District.

From geography as we know it today, it is a little difficult to see the logic in some of these assignments, but the committee very probably had good reasons for their decision. The districts were for the purpose of holding union meetings, which were mostly one or two day preaching sessions, to which the churches and people in the districts were invited. From time to time, as the number of churches grew and other changes took place, the Association was re-districted.

The union meetings gave way to ministers' and deacons' meetings in 1859, when specific subjects were assigned to different ministers. In that year Elder J. W. Hooker was to preach on "Church Government," Elder S. M. Collis on the "Duty of the Churches to their Ministers," Elder Leonard Buchanan on "Hope," and James Collis on the "Duty of Deacons." There were now four districts and each man was to deliver his sermon in each of the districts.

Either union meetings or ministers' and deacons' meetings were held nearly every year until around the turn of the century. Sometimes, as in 1866, certain ministers were asked to prepare essays on given subjects to be read in all of the district meetings. In 1889 a Ministers' and Deacons' Institute was held in Bakersville. These meetings fulfilled the important function of providing instruction in doctrine, church government, and other matters, besides affording opportunities for fellowship and evangelism. They were usually held on Sunday, and as the number and importance of the Sunday Schools increased, the need for the district meetings declined and were finally discontinued.

On Sunday morning, October 6, 1850, the woodlands around Beaver Creek church were filled with neighing horses, and wagons were scattered about with horses tethered to their sides. Children raked in the leaves for chestnuts and hickory nuts, and enjoyed the rich profusion of nature's beauty and bounty. Men in their homespun and store-bought best melled about from group to group exchanging greetings, news and information about many things. The women and girls, decked out in their bonnets, buttons, and bows, formed their own interest groups. The region was not as isolated as it came to be in latter years.

This annual meeting of the association was in itself an institution. The people had come together from the surrounding communities to be present for this big day of preaching and fellowship.

The preaching began at ten o'clock in the morning. On this day three of the four men who had been asked to "occupy the stand" were from the Holston Association. These were Elders I. H. Hiden, Rees Bayless, and S. C. Stone. The fourth man was the Elder Robert Patterson from the French Broad Association. Elder I. H. Hiden began the service with a message from Haggai 2:9, which concerned Haggai's work in re-building the Temple. Hiden was followed by Elder Rees Bayless, speaking from 2 Timothy 2:16, which was a warning against "profane and vain babblings." Bayless was followed by Elder Robert Patterson, whose text was 2 Samuel 18:33, from which he belabored David's pathetic cry for his son Absalom. The final message was brought by Elder S. C. Stone from Isaiah 35:1-2, from which he dwelt on the promise of God to make the desert "blossom as a rose."

From some of the texts chosen, one is a little hard put to surmise the primary emphasis of the message. But then we must remember that these brethren were students of one Book, and could take almost any text in it and hold forth for an hour or longer. Between these messages there were exhortations, recesses, and dinner on the ground. It was altogether quite a satisfying day. The Clerk sums it up in the Associational minutes in these words: "The congregation was large and attentive, and we hope the fruits of this day's labor will be enjoyed in eternity."

Chapter IX

Twenty-One Years of Growth, Trouble, and Change

OF the original eighteen churches that formed the Roan Mountain Baptist Association in 1849, only ten were still members of the Association ten years later. In 1850 two churches — Crooked Creek and Lynville — were admitted to the association. But, as we have seen, sometime in 1851 five of these churches — Ramsey Town, Jacks Creek, New Liberty, Pine Grove, and Crooked Creek — withdrew to form the "Tow River Free Will Christian Communion." Cranbury (sic) was reported dissolved in 1850 and Tow River in 1853. Bolens Creek is reported for the last time in 1856, and there is no record of what happened to this church. The present Bolens Creek in the Yancey County Association was organized in 1896. Three Mile Church was reported for the last time in the minutes for 1857, and again there is no record of what happened.

Lynville Baptist Church was listed, but without a report, in the minutes for 1859, and then for the next few years the area of this church is reported to be "destitute of Baptist preaching." Then in 1868 a church called Linville River appears in the minutes, but in 1869 its letter was rejected, and the following resolution was adopted:

Resolved that it is the unanimous sense of this body that Lynville Baptist Church shall exclude certain members that are living in violation of law and good morals, and in case of failure to do so we withdraw fellowship with said church.

Linville River Church apparently submitted to this disciplinary action, for, whereas it reported twenty-two members in 1869, in 1870 it reported only fourteen. This church appears in the minutes erratically through 1903, when it appears for the last time. But in 1908 a new church called Linville Falls was admitted to the association, but was not again reported in the minutes. However, Aaron church was admitted in 1889 and Pineola in 1910. It can only be assumed that these two churches occupied the territory in which the Linville Church had tried for so many years to survive.

A church called Providence was admitted to the association in 1852 with delegates Sanders Hughes, Aaron Odom, S. M. Honeycutt. It was reported in most of the minutes through 1858, but was never a very strong church, and in 1862 a committee was appointed to visit the church with authority to dissolve it. It is questionable whether the association could really delegate that authority. This committee reported to the association in 1863 that the situation at Providence was "satisfactory." But in 1868 it was reported dissolved, and the next year, 1869,

was reported "revived." Providence was apparently with the churches that joined in forming the Black Mountain Association in 1870. Since it does not again appear in the minutes of either association, it is assumed that it disappeared.

Mine Creek, a relatively strong church with a continuous, if sometimes stormy history, was admitted to the association in 1852, with delegates Elder James Collis, Wilson McKinney, Isaac Howard, and Rayburn Beaver. In 1856 three churches — Bethlehem, Jacks Creek, and Pleasant Grove, all in the present Yancey County area — were admitted to the Association. Also in 1856 Fork Mountain was admitted with delegates George C. Hopson and William McKinney. It will be noted that George C. Hopson had previously represented Roan Mountain and Little Rock Creek. Lily Branch Church was brought into the association in 1857. Like Mine Creek, it was south of the line agreed upon for the division in 1870, and became a part of the Black Mountain Association. It returned to the Mitchell Association after the Black Mountain changed its name to the Yancey County Baptist Association in 1887.

Big Meadows Church, now in the Avery Association, appears in the minutes for 1858 but there is no record of its admission to the association which was perhaps a clerical error. A church by the name of Turkey Cove, which is now a strong church in the Blue Ridge Association, was admitted in 1860. In 1861 a new church called Blue Ridge, which gave Grassy Creek as its address, was admitted with twenty-two members. This was the last church organized within the bounds of the association for the next four years. In the twelve year period from 1849 through 1861, the Roan Mountain Association had grown and changed from eighteen churches with 666 members to twenty-one churches with 1153 members.

We present below a table on the state of the churches as it appears in the 1861 minutes. Names of ordained and licentiate ministers have been italicized:

STATE OF THE CHURCHES 1861

CHURCHES	Delegates Names	Baptized	Rec. by Ltr.	Disc. by Ltr.	Excluded	Restored	Deaths	Total Mbrs.
Roan Mountain	<i>J. Buchanan</i> , A. K. Buchanan, M. Young	4	0	3	1	0	1	97
Grassy Creek	<i>E. K. Blanton</i> , <i>J. P. Dickson</i> , J. Washburn, P. Washburn, N. Mace	4	6	11	5	0	2	81
Zion	William C. Randolph, C. Slagle, A. Griggs	0	0	5	1	5	1	74
Double Island	<i>J. Silver</i> , D. Robertson, W. J. Silver, J. Cox	0	3	3	0	0	0	51

STATE OF THE CHURCHES 1861 (Continued)

CHURCHES	Delegates Names	Baptized	Rec. by Ltr.	Disc. by Ltr.	Excluded	Restored	Deaths	Total Mbrs.
Bear Creek	<i>S. M. Collis, S. Buchanan,</i> T. Willis, W. Norman, J. Sparks	0	0	1	0	0	2	99
Rock Creek	<i>J. Buchanan, W. F. Buchanan,</i> J. Burleson, A. Buchanan	7	5	0	4	3	1	70
Beaver Creek	T. Blalock, J. A. Buchanan, J. Blalock, John Freeman	0	1	0	0	3	3	45
Big Meadows	Leander Pyatt, Samuel Car- penter	0	0	4	0	2	0	27
Laurel Branch	<i>T. Silver, S. Nanary, R. Rid-</i> dle, S. B. Ray	0	0	4	0	0	0	108
Crabtree	J. J. Thomas, Samuel Rob- ertson, Z. Simth	0	0	3	2	0	0	24
Big Rock Creek	<i>Leonard Buchanan, Thomas</i> Street	3	3	1	3	8	0	41
Ball Creek	<i>Samuel Wilson, H. Lewis, G.</i> W. Phillips	10	0	0	4	1	0	88
Mine Creek	<i>J. J. Jones, J. W. Wilson, S.</i> S. Young, Wm. O. Wilson	0	4	6	6	0	2	70
Providence	No report							24
Bethlehem	J. Allen, W. G. Peak	0	5	0	3	0	0	25
Jacks Creek	<i>S. Byrd, S. Honeycutt, T.</i> Dayton, G. Bagley	1	4	0	1	0	0	47
Pleasant Grove	<i>J. Collis, T. Robertson, Wm.</i> Collis, Josiah Woody	0	0	1	0	1	1	39
Lily Branch	B. R. Wilson, A. Grindstaff, A. Brinkley, H. Willis	0	0	1	0	1	1	39
Fork Mountain	No Report							41
Turkey Cove	No Report							43
Blue Ridge	A. Lowery, J. McKinney, J. M. Lowery							22
		29	37	43	30	24	14	1153

The next ten years, 1861-1869, were difficult but significant years in the history of the Roan Mountain Association. This was the period of the Civil War and the early days of reconstruction. Mitchell County was created by the North Carolina Legislature in 1861, but did not really begin to function as a county until after the Civil War. It is significant that the association did not fail to meet during any of these trying years, and surprisingly few of the churches failed to send up delegates from year to year. In 1863 six churches were not represented by delegates, but two of these did send a letter.

The effects of these troubled years on the churches is reflected in the fact that no new churches were added between 1861 and 1865, and by the very radical drop in the number of baptisms. For the two years of 1859 and 1860 the churches reported a total of 171 baptisms. But for the next four years, 1861 through 1864, only 55 baptisms were reported, and during one of these years, 1863, only one baptism was reported, and this one was by Bear Creek. There was also a decline in the total church membership from 1066 to 844 in 1864.

The Baptist people were deeply concerned about the war. They did what Christian people always do in troubled times. They prayed. Beginning in 1861, when the association was again meeting at Double Island Church, they "resolved to set apart one hour each day for solemn prayer." And in the same minutes we read this entry: "Agreed to set apart the first Thursday in November as a day of solemn prayer to Almighty God, that He would remove all causes and restore peace to our beloved country." A similar action of giving one hour each day the association was in session to prayer was followed in 1862, and the following resolution was adopted:

Resolved that we set apart the 25th of December next as a day of fasting and prayer for the upbuilding of zion, for the prosperity of our country, for our friends in the Army, and that God will speedily deliver us from our present confused and war-like condition.

In the minutes for 1864 we find the following entry: "On motion set apart Friday before the 4th Sabbath in October (1864) as a day of fasting, humiliation and prayer in behalf of our bleeding country," and on Sunday, September 11, 1864: "Met and spent one hour in prayer in behalf of our soldiers and our bleeding country."

The association was also concerned about furnishing the scriptures to the soldiers. In 1862, when the association was meeting at Zion in Yancey County, the Elder John Ammons attended the association as an army colporteur. He was accepted by the association and preached on the subject of army colportage. An offering was taken for this purpose and \$61.40 was received. At the same time a committee on army colportage recommended to the association the full support of this work, and Elder N. B. Cobb was endorsed as superintendent of army colportage for North Carolina. But this was a matter fraught with difficulties because of divided loyalties, which is reflected in a resolution passed at the 1863 session at Big Meadows in the northeastern part of Mitchell County: "Whereas we are now surrounded by many difficulties we advise the association to dispense with that matter (army colportage) this year." But in 1864, when the association was meeting at Pleasant Grove in Yancey County, Elder F. P. McGee, an army colporteur, preached and an offering amounting to \$38.00 was received for army colportage. Once again a committee appointed by the association commended this cause to the attention of the churches.

Men who were members of churches affiliated with the association were losing their lives in the war. In 1863 Elder S. M. Collis was asked to furnish a list of the names of these soldiers and that this

list be published in the minutes. Collis produced the following list of names and comments:

A. Hollifield, Wm. Collis, J. McKinney, Wm. Woody, Wm. Byrd, G. W. Byrd, Daniel Quinn, Ansel Randolph, Bartlett Wilson, E. J. Buchanan, Wm. Grindstaff, J. M. Robertson, John Robertson, J. D. Howell, Thow McKinney, James Willis, James Harris, H. Willis, John Beaver, Milas Hollifield.

The above Brethren were members of the Baptist church and had been ornaments to the denomination to which they belonged and when they came up under a sense of duty to their country they turned their backs upon their families and their breast to the cannon, bidding adieu to wives and children, fathers and mothers, the most of them having little families to mourn their loss. Some of their bodies lie in around Richmond, Va., some around Gettysburg, Pa., while others of them fell in Mississippi. Peace to their silent dust and honors to their memories. The Association tenders her heartfelt sympathies to the bereaved fathers and mothers, wives and children, yet would not sorrow as those without hope, believing that they are resting in heaven where war will disturb them no more.

*How many thousand widows
Bereft of husband brave
How many thousand orphans
With fathers in the grave.
The Father's seat is empty
'Twas never so before
The brother's voice is silent
And shall be heard no more.*

Five months after Appomattox, the Roan Mountain Association met again at Beaver Creek on September 8-9, 1865. A high note of optimism was reflected in the reports. The churches and the Sunday Schools were said to be in a "flourishing condition." The churches reported having received 243 by baptism as compared with 55 for all the four previous years. One newly constituted church, South Toe River, was admitted to the association. The churches had been the strongest cohesive force in the midst of the bitterness engendered by the war, and now that the war was over, the churches were the strongest rallying point to bring the people together. Gradually, but surely, people who had been on opposing sides met together in the fellowship of the churches. Of course, there were many who did not belong to these Baptist churches, or to any other church, and many of those who did, then as now, were not submissive to the Christian discipline. Yet the influence of the church in this trying period was indeed significant.

The next five years, 1866-1870, witnessed the most rapid growth in the association's history. In this period sixteen new churches were organized, and the total membership of the churches more than doubled. In 1866 a Negro church by the name of Roses Branch, in the extreme

eastern part of the county, presented a letter to the association. The letter was referred to the committee on arrangements, which recommended that the letter be held over to a future date and that the missionaries of the association visit the church. But the next day the following resolution was offered by Elder J. P. Dickson and adopted: "Resolved that the Roses Creek Church letter be refused for further consideration, and that we ask the Western Baptist Convention to invite a general convention on the subject of the welfare of our colored brethren."

Liberty Hill Church was organized sometime in 1867 and was received into the association at its meeting at Mine Creek in September 6-10, 1867. It was represented by delegates A. Buchanan, E. D. Cox, A. H. McNeil and P. Patton. At the same time a new church by the name of Buck Mountain came into the association, and one called Brush Creek was received by letter from the Three Forks Association. Two new churches joined the association in 1868. These were Rain Hill in Carter County, Tennessee, and Upper Egypt, the location of which has not been ascertained by this writer. However, it made only one report to the association, and apparently passed out of existence.

When the association was meeting again with Roan Mountain Church in 1869, the letters of eight new churches and one reconstituted church—Providence—were presented. Two of the new churches were Bakersville and Cane Creek. Bakersville with twenty-seven members was represented by John Buchanan, Wm. A. Wilson, D. W. Pannell, and James McKinney. Cane Creek Church with 93 members was represented by S. M. Greene, T. Buchanan, A. Bloodworth, and G. T. Greene. The organization of these two churches accounts for the 95 members dismissed by Roan Mountain that year. Most of these went to the Cane Creek Church, but some of them went to Bakersville.

The other new churches received in 1869 were Yellow Mountain, Mount Pleasant, Beach Mountain, Happy Valley, Bethel, and Paddys Creek. Of these, the first three are now members of the Avery Association. Happy Valley was granted a letter in 1885 to join the Watauga Association in Tennessee. Bethel apparently went with the churches that formed Black Mountain Association in 1870. Paddys Creek was in McDowell County. In the 1870 meeting a new church called Elk River, with delegates J. Edgars and Noah Edgars was received. This brought the total number of churches before the division to thirty-six.

The first suggestion for dividing the association was made in a resolution presented in 1863, but no action was taken. The times were then too unsettled. In 1870, when the association was meeting at Laurel Branch in Yancey County, a committee "was appointed to consider the propriety of dividing the association: Elders S. M. Collis, W. S. Buchanan, M. H. Winters, J. W. Ayers, Samuel Honeycutt and Brother J. W. Peak." This committee brought the following report:

We your committee on the Division of the Association, report the Turnpike-road from Marion, McDowell County, by way of Bakersville, Mitchell County, N. C., to the top of the Iron Mountain to be the line, and the churches on the

south side of said line meet on Friday before the 3rd Sabbath in October, 1870, to organize at Zion Church, Yancey County.

In accordance with this agreement, eleven churches in Yancey County — Zion, Double Island, Laurel Branch, Crab Tree, Bald Creek, Jacks Creek, Providence, Upper Egypt, Bethel, South Toe River, and Pleasant Grove — with four churches in Mitchell County — Beaver Creek, Mine Creek, Lily Branch, and Liberty Hill — and Turkey Cove in McDowell County and Rain Hill in Tennessee (since Rain Hill was received back from the Black Mountain Association in 1876), met at Zion Church on October 14, 1870 and organized the Black Mountain Association. This name was changed in 1887 to Yancey County Baptist Association, and in 1915 to Yancey Baptist Association.

STATE OF THE CHURCHES IN 1869

CHURCHES	Contributions	Total Membership	Dead	Restored	Excluded	Dismissed Ltr.	Rec. by Ltr.	Baptized	pay to Pastor
Roan Mountain	2.19	127	2	6	0	95	0	54	\$25.00
Grassy Creek	2.00	132	2	0	0	5	7	19	25.00
Zion	1.00	114	1	14	3	0	5	29	12.00
Double Island	.70	65	1	0	0	14	3	6	12.50
Bear Creek	1.00	111	2	4	12	22	2	7	12.50
Fork Mountain	.75	91	0	4	2	40	7	2	—
Beaver Creek	.85	77	0	0	3	0	2	4	2.50
Big Meadows	.45	51	1	1	1	29	4	27	—
Laurel Branch	1.40	120	1	1	3	3	10	54	42.50
Crabtree	.75	61	0	0	3	1	1	20	7.25
Big Rock Creek	.30	13	0	2	0	0	0	2	—
Ball Creek	.45	130	1	3	1	7	14	31	—
Mine Creek	1.10	133	0	0	5	19	3	7	36.40
Jacks Creek	.90	46	2	5	1	0	1	34	36.40
Pleasant Grove	.80	58	0	0	1	0	2	0	—
Lilly Branch	.45	94	0	2	1	4	8	19	—
Turkey Cove	1.30	71	0	3	1	1	2	16	31.00
Blue Ridge	.50	59	0	0	0	0	2	9	10.00
Little Rock Creek	1.20	78	0	8	0	0	15	29	—
South Toe River	.30	32	0	1	0	3	10	14	—
Buck Mountain	.50	42	1	9	4	20	18	20	—
Brushey Creek	.40	28	0	0	0	0	0	1	5.50
Liberty Hill	.30	38	1	2	0	7	9	18	—
Rain Hill	.60	20	0	0	0	0	2	1	—
Linville River	.50	22	0	0	0	2	0	2	—
Upper Egypt	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	—
Providence	.30	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	—
Yellow Mountain	.50	49	0	0	0	0	0	0	—

STATE OF THE CHURCHES IN 1869 (Continued)

CHURCHES	Contributions	Total Membership	Dead	Restored	Excluded	Dismissed	Ltr. Rec. by Ltr.	Baptized	pay to Pastor
Mount Pleasant	.60	28	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Happy Valley	.85	30	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Beach Mountain	.50	12	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Cane Creek	1.60	93	0	0	0	0	6	5	
Bakersville	.75	27	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Bethel	.65	22	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Paddys Creek	.25	19	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Totals	*26.69	2102	15	65	41	272	133	425	

* Minute fund.

Chapter X

During The '70's and '80's

FOLLOWING the Division in 1870, the Roan Mountain Association was left with nineteen churches, and the next annual meeting was held with Grassy Creek Church on September 7-10, 1871. At this meeting one new church, Cub Creek, came into the association. It was represented in the associational meeting of 1872 by J. C. Sparks, Joel Gouge, Thomas Gouge, S. Slagle, and James Greene.

During the next twenty years, 1871-1890, the churches of the association showed steady growth and six new churches were added to the fellowship. In 1872, New Hopewell, a church in the Blowing Rock area of Watauga County, was admitted to the association. This church continued to be represented in the association through 1886, when it was granted a letter to unite with the Stoney Fork Association, of which it is still a member (1966). Roaring Creek Church, still a strong member of the Avery Association, was received with 31 members in 1874. In 1875 Big Rock Creek requested and was granted a letter to join the Black Mountain Association. It was a member of Black Mountain until 1884, when it returned to the Mitchell County Association.

In 1878 the association was again meeting with Grassy Creek, in which meeting the Bakersville Church with thirty-three members was represented by A. Bloodworth, J. M. Stafford, M. Buchanan, and Wm. Wilson. Concern was expressed in the association over the fact that the church at Bakersville, the county seat, did not yet have a building, or at least had not completed it. There were two entries in the minutes relative to this matter: "On motion S. M. Collis was to take up a subscription to build a church in Bakersville." And a resolution: "Resolved that this association take up a subscription on Saturday and Sunday for the purpose of aiding the Baptists in Bakersville in the completion of their church house." There is no record of how much, if any, was received.

Two new churches were admitted in 1876. These were Toe River, giving Spear, N. C. as its address, with its 40 members being represented by J. Davis, D. Hughes, J. Hartley, and J. Buchanan, and Roan Valley with thirty-five members, represented by J. W. Ayers, P. Young, W. Hughes, W. L. Young, and H. R. Peak. Toe River was erratically reported in the minutes over a period of years, and the associational meeting was held here in 1886. In 1889 a committee appointed by the association to check on whether the churches were complying with the associations ban against churches holding in their membership those who made, or drank intoxicating liquors, made the following report to the association:

We have gospel evidence that Toe River Church retains members who continue to indulge excessively in the use of intoxicating liquors. We also have information that there are other churches whose members indulge in this pernicious habit. We would therefore recommend that the Association withdraw fellowship from Toe River Church, and that the pastors of all churches see that the advice of this Association on this subject carried out. And we will likewise withdraw fellowship from any church that fails to do so.

Toe River Church was restored to fellowship in 1890, and in 1892 reported a membership of 79. After this date the writer has been unable to find any mention of this church.

The Roan Valley Church did not have a continuous history. It was reported in the minutes through 1886 and is then dropped from the records. But ten years later, in 1896, Roan Valley was again received as a new church, but again drops from the reports. The present Roan Valley was organized in 1945.

During these years, the following churches appear and disappear in the minutes of the association: Mount Zion, Lacey's Chapel, Mt. Vernon, Sugar Mountain, Horse Creek, River Creek, and Baptist Chapel. The minutes of the association give very little information about these churches, where they were located and what became of them. With regard to the location of Baptist Chapel, we note that while the association was meeting with the Little Rock Creek Church in 1885, it expressed thanks to Little Rock Creek, Roan Valley, and Baptist Chapel for their hospitality. This would locate Baptist Chapel in the Rock Creek area.

In 1883, when the association was in session at Bear Creek, the name of the Roan Mountain Association was changed to the Mitchell County Baptist Association. As a result of this change, the next year, Mine Creek and Big Rock Creek were received by letter from the Black Mountain Association, and Liberty Hill, which, as we have seen, was organized in 1867 and went with the Black Mountain Association in 1870, was received as a new church, represented by J. Cox. This may have been due to the failure of Liberty Hill to request a letter from Black Mountain Association, or, which seems more likely, the church may indeed have declined and have been reorganized. At this same 1884 meeting, Whiteoak Church, represented by P. W. Wilson, M. Ledford, S. L. Wilson, and I. Grindstaff, was received into the association.

Green Valley, which is now a member of the Avery Association, was received in 1885, with delegates J. R. Greene, and D. Weatherman. At the same session Happy Valley was granted a letter to join the Watauga Association in Tennessee. Elk Park appears for the first time in the minutes of 1886, and the next year the association was held with this church.

The Black Mountain Association changed its name to the Yancey County Baptist Association in 1887, and as a result of this change, the following churches came into the Mitchell County Association: Black Mountain, Big Crabtree, Chestnut Grove, Silver Chapel, and Lily

Branch. All of these are still members of the Mitchell Association. The minutes, however, did not give us the date of the organization of Black Mountain, Chestnut Grove, and Silver Chapel. They obviously had been organized between 1870 and 1887. In 1888, the McKinney Cove Church was received into the association. Something of the activity of the times is indicated by a report on church buildings made in 1890: "We have twelve or fifteen new houses built or being built in the bounds of our association."

Between 1871 and 1891 the Mitchell County Association grew from nineteen churches with 1175 members to twenty-six churches with 2132 members. We present below the statistical table for 1891 as it appears in the published minutes for that year.

STATISTICAL TABLE FOR 1891

Names of Churches	Baptized	Rec. by Ltr.	Restored	Dis. by Ltr.	Excluded	Deaths	Total Members	Pastor	Paid Pastor
Bakersville	1	2	0	6	0	1	105	L. H. Greene	\$ 100
Green Valley	1	0	0	0	5	0	34	S. M. Greene	24
Little Rock Creek	2	2	3	1	4		173	S. M. Greene	12
Big Meadows	0	0	0	5	4	1	67	S. Buchanan	9
Big Rock Creek	7	0	2	0	3	2	83	J. W. Putnam	25
Fork Mountain	6	4	3	0	1	1	135	L. H. Greene	15
Black Mountain	13	1	0	2	3	5	82	S. M. Greene	—
Bear Creek	3	4	0	2	3	2	150	J. W. Duncan	—
McKinney Cove	4	0	0	0	1	0	54	J. C. Sparks	12
Mine Creek	1	2	5	3	0	0	103	I. Grindstaff	13
Grassy Creek	5	2	0	0	2	0	101	E. Buchanan	30
Lilly Branch	0	1	0	4	3	0	118	J. W. Duncan	—
Toe River	11	3	0	3	1	0	67	W. H. Ollis	18
Cane Creek	15	0	0	3	3	0	109	S. M. Greene	40
Elk Park	0	0	0	4	0	3	63	W. G. Buchanan	—
Yellow Mountain	19	0	0	3	4	1	101	L. H. Greene	25
Horse Creek	0	0	0	0	0	0	24	S. Buchanan	—
Roan Mountain	16	4	0	7	1	1	158	J. C. Sparks	24
Roaring Creek	7	0	7	1	1	0	78	G. A. Hughes	7
White Oak	2	3	0	5	2	1	42	J. C. Sparks	—
Liberty Hill	0	0	0	1	0	0	15	J. C. Blalock	—
Jonas Ridge	7	1	4	0	1	0	32	P. J. Shell	—
Silver Chapel	3	4	1	0	0	0	54	W. C. Parsons	—
Chestnut Grove	5	8	3	3	1	0	39	B. M. Hoyle	—
Montesuma (Aaron)	24	22	0	1	0	0	62	P. J. Shell	48
Mount Pleasant	6	2	3	2	4	1	124	E. Isaacs	—
Totals	158	65	31	57	46	19	2132		\$ 402.00

Chapter XI

Sharing The Gospel - - The Story of Missions

THE early leaders of the Roan Mountain Baptist Association were so conditioned by their understanding of the gospel mission and by their own experiences that they were from the very beginning concerned about supplying the Christian message to every community within the bounds of the association and in surrounding areas. The association regularly appointed a missions committee, which was sometimes called the Board of Managers, the Board of Domestic Missions, etc. It was the duty of this committee to promote Christian missions in the association, to receive and pay out money for missionary work, and to report to the association on areas of "destitution."

Beginning in 1853, the association appointed a Board of Managers consisting of William Silver, J. W. Peak, Isaac Washburn, Leonard Buchanan, and Samuel Baker. At this same meeting individuals and churches pledged \$61.00 for mission purposes, and four men were appointed to labor one month each in the association. These were H. W. Gilbert, James Collis, John Buchanan, and F. B. Justice. Gilbert was from the French Broad Association and Justice from the Union, but the custom in that day was for the associations to share in each other's work. At the next associational meeting, in 1854, at Big Rock Creek, these brethren reported on their work. Elder John Buchanan reported thirty-one days labor, and fifty-eight sermons. Elder James Collis reported twenty-four days spent in the field and twenty-one sermons preached, while Elder H. W. Gilbert reported fifteen days work and visits to seven churches. Elder Justice did not report. The Board of Managers reported that it had paid John Buchanan \$15.50, Elder James Collis \$12.00, and H. W. Gilbert \$7.00.

At this 1854 meeting it was decided to ask the ministers to volunteer their services for missionary work, instead of appointing them. The following men volunteered to give one month each: Elders James Collis, Thomas Silver, Thomas Wilson, Jacob Silver, John Buchanan, S. M. Collis. Leonard Buchanan, and Sampson Honeycutt, while J. W. Ayers agreed to give two months. Then at the Sunday services Elder James Blythe, a very able minister from the Union Association, preached on domestic missions, after which an offering of \$19.25 was received and turned over to the Board. The clerk comments on the results of this meeting: "Saints rejoiced, mourners crowded to the anxious seat, while sinners were made to tremble and shed the secret tear."

In 1856 the Board of Domestic Missions reported that it had on hand \$26.70. No report is made on the outcome of the volunteer work. During the next three years the committee reported Linville, Hollow

Poplar, the upper part of North Toe River, North Cove, Turkey Cove, and Burnsville to be "destitute of Baptist preaching." In 1858 Elder Leonard Buchanan reported fourteen days of missionary work, and S. M. Collis reported ten days, and each received \$4.80. At this 1858 meeting there was more than the unusual emphasis on missions. Elder J. R. Blanton made a strong appeal for the support of missions, especially Indian missions, and Elder L. M. Berry, a missionary agent for the Southern Baptist convention, spoke on both Saturday and Sunday on the subject of missions. After the second sermon an offering amounting to \$7.50 was received for convention missions, and Samuel Byrd made an individual contribution of \$10.00 to this cause.

The association had previously appointed a Bible Board, the purpose of which was to supply Bibles to the destitute. At this 1858 meeting it reported that it had done little during the past year, but that it had a small fund on hand, which it was advised to lay-out in buying Bibles for distribution.

The report of J. W. Peak, chairman of the committee on destitution in 1859, reflects some of the needs and difficulties in the mission work of the day:

Your committee on destitution begs leave to submit the following: We are called upon from year to year to report on this subject and to what purpose? We leave the community to judge. If reports would supply the destitute with the gospel the outskirts of our territory and the weakly churches would be highly favored indeed. But action is required, and until these sentiments adopted by us are carried out as well as endorsed, the destitute of our land still remains unbenefitted. The head of Lynville River, North and South Toe Rivers, North Cove, the town of Burnsville and Hollow Poplar Creek are, so far as we can learn, destitute of stated Baptist preaching, except for the labor of the Missionary Board of the Southern Baptist Convention. This appointment made for the town of Burnsville and vicinity, has given us some preaching at Burnsville and some visitations among our churches to secure cooperation. It is the opinion of your committee that a united effort on the part of our churches to aid the Board in this great work is needful now, that these points which have not yet received any of the labor might for the months to come share in the labor of the missionary of the Board, in connection with that of those brethren whose labors may be secured by us. The true spirit of supplying the destitute is just in the bud in this country, hence the backwardness on this point. But if the proper means be employed and carried on with the fruits of our labor. The wilderness shall blossom as the rose and the desert and solitary places shall rejoice.

In this connection the report of Elder E. K. Blanton to the association is of interest. His full report read:

Report of Eld. E. K. Blanton, Missionary of the Board of Domestic Missions to the Roan Mountain Baptist Associa-

tion: Dear Brethren: Your missionary begs leave to submit the following, my labor as Missionary for Burnsville and surrounding community under appointment from the Board of Domestic Missions for the Southern Baptist Convention, commenced April 1st. and has been as follows—Traveled in performance of my work 556 miles—attended 96 religious meetings, Delivered 77 sermons, delivered 39 other religious discourses, made 185 religious visits, organized 3 Sabbath Schools, organized at one church the monthly concert for prayer for missions, Baptized 2 persons, received of the Board at Marion, Ala. \$ 50.00, received on this field contribution \$ 350.00.

This arrangement must not have lasted more than one year, due perhaps to the work of the Western Baptist Convention. In 1859 the Association had agreed to be represented in the Western Baptist Convention, and appointed Elders Samuel Byrd and James Collis as delegates. The Western Baptist Convention had been formed in 1845 with the consent and aid of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina. It was formed as an auxiliary to the Convention, because of the extreme difficulty of travel between the east and west. But the the Western Baptist Convention resolved itself into an independent body in 1857, and set up three boards — a Sunday School Board based in Asheville, a Missions Board located in Waynesville, and an Education Board located in Hendersonville. This convention was composed of Baptists in the area west of the Blue Ridge, and never had more than thirteen associations.

In 1860 Elder H. W. Gilbert came into the association as an appointee of the Western Baptist Convention, and the association agreed to receive him and sustain him if the funds could be raised. Elder S. M. Collis offered the following resolution which was adopted by the body:

Resolved that in as much as the Western Baptist Convention has taken our condition into consideration and has sent us a missionary and agreed to defray a part of his expense, our churches have a duty to aid in carrying out this great enterprise.

But this effort was evidently not very successful, for Elder H. W. Gilbert appeared in the associational meeting of 1861 as a corresponding delegate from the French Broad Association and the association appointed Elder J. J. Jones as missionary to supply the destitute areas. A missions offering amounting to \$12.10 was received and turned over to Jones, who in 1862 reported twelve days labor and thirteen sermons.

A year later, in 1863, James Collis was again appointed missionary, and after a Sunday sermon by J. R. Wilds, from the Flat Creek Church in Buncombe County, a missions offering amounting to \$57.00 was received and turned over to Collis, who in 1864 reported that he had labored 45 days, preached 64 sermons, and received a total of \$82.00. Elder S. M. Collis was then appointed as missionary for the associational year of 1864-1865, and pledges amounting to \$85.00 for

the support of the work were received. The amounts now pledged and received represented highly inflated Confederate money. At the 1865 meeting S. M. Collis gave a glowing report of his year's work. He reported having preached 144 sermons, given 115 exhortations, baptized 177, and received 284 into churches. During this period the happy news of the end of the Civil War had come, and with it new hope and renewed vigor.

In the above report we note that S. M. Collis reported giving 115 exhortations. This was an item contained in most of the missionary reports of the day and had a very special meaning. It was the custom in the religious services of the day for the minister or pastor who preached the sermon to call upon some other minister present, or perhaps a beginning minister, or even a layman, to extend the invitation and exhort the people to respond to the message. In that day nearly always there were unconverted people in the congregation, and this part of the service was considered very important. It was in such a situation that George W. Truett gave his first public testimony for Christ. As a lad of only nineteen and a recent convert in the Baptist Country Church in Clay County, North Carolina, he was called upon by his pastor to give the exhortation following one of the visiting minister's messages. This experience marked him for the ministry.

At this 1865 meeting Elders J. P. Dickson of the Grassy Creek Church and John Autry of the Beaver Creek Church were appointed to serve as missionaries with S. M. Collis, and each of them gave a detailed report of his work at the 1866 meeting. To serve as missionaries for the 1866-67 associational year, the association again elected S. M. Collis and J. P. Dickson. In its report the missions committee said: "We advise them to give up the case of any particular church and consider that they have the case of all the churches collectively, and we advise the churches to remunerate them for their services."

But it appears that S. M. Collis continued to serve as pastor of Bear Creek church, and yet did a remarkable work as a missionary, as indicated by his report to the association in 1867. He reported 103 sermons, 138 exhortations, 129 baptisms, and having received about \$30.00. At the same time J. P. Dickson reported having preached 170 sermons, given 45 exhortations, baptized 60, aided in the constitution of two new churches and the ordination of three deacons.

The association continued for many years to appoint one or more of its ministers to serve as missionaries. Their reports appear in the minutes year after year up until around 1905, when gradually more emphasis was placed on home and foreign missions. As younger men came on the scene, many of them gave time and received training and experience as associational missionaries. Elder S. M. Greene was appointed as an associational missionary for the first time in 1868, when he appeared as a delegate and licentiate minister from Bear Creek. The old veteran, S. M. Collis was his sponsor, and this was the beginning of a long and fruitful ministry for S. M. Greene in the association. His reports as missionary, which appear from year to year, reveal the ardor of his labor. Other young men who came on the scene about this

time were Ephraim Buchanan, Stephen Buchanan, and others. In the late 1870's Landon H. Greene appeared as a licentiate from Cane Creek Church. He wanted to go to school, and the association, following a motion made by J. M. Stafford, took an offering and pledges to assist him in 1882. He attended Judson College at Hendersonville for a period of time, and became a most influential and effective minister in the association.

In 1881 Elder S. M. Collis reported to the association that he had spent the entire year in missionary labor in Alleghany, Ashe, Watauga, Mitchell, Yancey, Buncombe, McDowell, and Cleveland counties. He had preached 163 sermons, given 40 exhortations, witnessed 150 professions, baptized 17, and received \$215.38. He frequently kept a diary of his missionary itineraries and we will reproduce the details of one of these in a longer account of his life.

In 1882 a missionary board was again appointed, composed of J. M. Stafford, J. C. Blalock, T. C. Greene, J. J. Julian, and P. J. Shell, this board was continued in 1883. In 1882 Elder J. W. Putnam of the Fork Mountain Church was elected missionary and agreed to give his full time to the work. The churches and individuals pledged \$ 112.50 to support him. In 1885 Elder S. M. Collis was again elected associational missionary, and in 1888 and again in 1889 Elder S. M. Greene served in this capacity. In 1888 S. M. Greene reported 118 days labor, 181 sermons, 91 exhortations, "witnessed about 100 who professed conversion." baptized 34, aided in the constitution of one church, and received \$ 99.15 from the churches.

In 1889 S. M. Collis was chairman of the committee on destitution, and his report, which was the last one he ever made to the association, reflects something of his grasp of the situation and of his forward looking spirit:

All this county and the churches in it are destitute to a considerable extent, from the fact that the churches only have preaching once a month, when they should have it every Sabbath. There are but a few sections in this county but what have casual preaching but none of the churches have preaching every week. Therefore the churches should increase the salaries of their pastors so that they could devote all their time to the work of the ministry. This done and all the destitution would be supplied.

Elder Ephraim Buchanan served as missionary in 1891, and reported to the association that he had spent 110 days in the field, traveled 250 miles, preached 112 sermons and given 25 exhortations, made 28 religious visits, witnessed 51 professions, baptized 36 people, and received \$ 50.75 for his services.

The associational missions board consisting of J. R. Prichard, D. W. Greene, and N. Buchanan made the following report to the association in 1893:

After meeting and organizing and appointing our missionary, it was the decision of the board that it would be best not to have mission work done on the credit system, as such

a system had already been injurious to the mission cause in our association. We suppose that the amount pledged by the different churches at our last association for mission work would be published in our minutes, and we were assured that the pastors of the different churches would make the collections and turn them over to the treasurer, but we have received scarcely no funds for the purpose and therefore we have had no work done.

It appears that there was a period of relative inactivity in the area of associational missions. But Elder L. H. Greene was elected to serve as missionary for the associational year of 1899-1900. To the annual meeting in 1900 he made the following report:

Apart from church work I have labored 112 days, preached 160 sermons, received for work \$ 62.40, baptized during the year 78 persons, witnessed 146 conversions, witnessed 202 additions, collected for educational purposes \$ 221.72, collected \$ 1.68 for state missions. Mission station filled at Spruce Pine. We now have an arm at this point. We have about \$ 400.00 subscribed to build a church at this point. Your missionary would recommend that the association look after this point and assist them in building a house.

It should be noted that the money collected for "educational purposes" was for the Bowman Academy. It will be noted also that in this report we find the beginning of the First Baptist Church of Spruce Pine.

In 1901 instead of electing one man to serve as missionary, the association formed what it called "a volunteer missionary corps," and five ministers—J. C. Blalock, A. E. Brown, S. M. Greene, J. W. Duncan, and S. D. Tipton — agreed to give two weeks each to the work in the destitute areas of Mitchell County. At the same time the moderator appointed a committee consisting of James B. Reid, Dr. P. C. Duncan, D. W. Greene, James A. Weatherman, and John Willis, Jr. to point out the destitute fields and to direct the missionary work.

But this arrangement was short lived, for in 1902, L. H. Greene was again unanimously elected as associational missionary, and agreed to give his full time to the work. A committee consisting of J. D. English, Wm. Greene, and J. C. Bowman, was appointed to map out the fields in which the missionary should labor. This committee made the following recommendation:

We would recommend that he devote most of his time at Spruce Pine, Pineola, Cranberry, and Elk Park. We think these places are important points and they are destitute of Baptist preaching. We would recommend that our missionary try to secure a hold at these points, and build churches, and to do any other work which in his wisdom he thinks should be done.

L. H. Greene's report in 1903 would indicate that, while he was a very busy man, he did not give his "full time" to associational missions work. He reported:

Dear Brethren: — Separate and apart from my church work, I have labored thirty-nine days at Red Hill and Spruce Pine. Received on pledges made for the missionary: Cane Creek, \$ 12.00; Bear Creek, \$ 12.00; Bakersville, \$1.03; Lily Branch, \$ 1.00; total \$ 26.03.

I have received for all work done for the year \$ 265.00; baptized 30 persons; collected for Foreign Missions \$ 5.00, State Missions \$ 4.00. As your missionary, I recommend that this association look after the Baptist interests at Spruce Pine and other places of importance in our county.

Landon H. Greene continued to serve as missionary in 1904, and at the annual meeting that year reported:

I have labored 191 days and preached 210 times, witnessed 68 conversions, baptized 16, received \$274.93 for labor done. I have collected for Foreign Missions \$ 8.75, State Missions \$ 9.45, Associational missions \$ 4.00; education \$ 75.00.

As your missionary I recommend that this association keep a man or men in the field who will look after Baptist interests in Mitchell County. In my judgment Spruce Pine is one among the most important places in our bounds to look after. We have already located a site upon which to build. We have been hindered in the work at this place on account of smallpox.

The next reference to Spruce Pine is in the minutes for 1908, when the association was meeting at Silver Chapel Church on September 17. In the afternoon session a motion was made and carried that Spruce Pine Church with delegates be admitted to the association. The church was represented by L. A. Berry, and S. M. Greene is listed as the first pastor. The church had twenty-one members, and had expended \$ 600.06 during the year, which very probably represents expenditure for construction of their building. It was L. H. Greene who had laid the ground work for this church.

After 1904, the next reference we have to associational missions is contained in the minutes for 1907, at which meeting the following resolution was adopted:

Whereas there is great destitution among the churches in Mitchell County Association, therefore be it resolved: that this association appoint a committee consisting of five cooperate with the State Board to collect funds and appoint a missionary to supply destitute places, the committee to consist of the following brethren, vis. — S. J. Black, D. J. English, Wm. Greene, W. F. Dodson, and C. E. Greene.

There is no record of any action taken by this committee in the next three or four years. In 1911 a committee on destitution made the following report:

After taking the matter under consideration and looking over the territory covered by the bounds of this association, we find that there is a large part of our territory that is entirely destitute of Baptist preaching; to wit: Red Hill,

Bradshaw, Poplar, and parts of Herrels township. Therefore, we recommend that this association appoint and maintain a missionary to travel and preach in the destitute places named. We further recommend that he make special efforts to organize churches at Newland, Linville City, Linville Falls, and Altapass.

A committee of seven was then named to recommend a missionary and to "devise means for his support." The next day this committee reported:

We recommend Rev. L. H. Greene as our Missionary; that the Association raise \$ 300.00 toward his support; that pledges be taken for this work; that collections be taken at these destitute places for associational missions; and that we ask the Board of State Missions for \$ 300.00 on this work.

This report was read by R. T. Teague, spoken on by R. T. Teague, W. D. Blalock, E. H. Farthing, S. M. Greene, L. Johnson, and G. E. Lineberry, and then adopted. Since some of the delegates had already gone home the clerk was instructed to call the attention of the churches to this action.

But all this seems to have been only an exercise in forensics, for at the next associational meeting in 1912 letters were granted to fifteen churches to enter into the formation of the Avery County Baptist Association, and much of the destitution mentioned in the above report became the responsibility of the new association. This is the last reference contained in the associational minutes on the subject of associational missions for many years to come.

Chapter XII

The Story of Missions Continued

BUT the story of missions is not yet complete. While emphasis on associational missions was declining, emphasis on state, home, and foreign missions was increasing. This was due to changing times, to the enlargement of the denominational program, to the promotion of denominational literature, and most of all to the work of some very able men, among them A. E. Brown, who served the denomination in several different capacities, and W. R. Bradshaw, who came to the association as state evangelist for the west, having been appointed in 1905, and had considerable influence in the association over a period of years.

Even in the early days, when the association had prolonged preaching sessions on Sunday, one or more of the sermons always dealt with the subject of home and foreign missions, and offerings were taken and designated for these causes. The Roan Mountain Association was at this time (1859-1896) affiliated with the Western Baptist Convention, the primary object of which was set forth in the Second Article of its Constitution, which said:

The primary object of the convention shall be the distribution of the Bible among the destitute, the employment of Home missionaries within her bounds, the sustaining of foreign, domestic, and Indian missions; also to educated poor young men called of God to the ministry, who may be approved by their churches.

Even so, representatives of the North Carolina Baptist State Convention were occasional welcome visitors in the association. In 1875, J. H. Huffham, corresponding secretary for the Missions Board of the State Convention, was present in the associational meeting and preached on missions. An offering amounting to \$4.00 was received for foreign missions.

In 1867 the association passed the following resolution:

Resolved that we suggest to the Western Baptist Convention the propriety of becoming auxiliary to the American Missionary Union and the American Home Mission Society.

These were the mission organizations of the Northern Baptist Convention. Nothing apparently came of this resolution, but it reflects something of the sentiment of the times.

In the minutes for 1877, we find this entry:

On motion agreed that the association request the Western Baptist Convention to come into our midst, and that Roan Mountain Church send a letter and delegates requesting them to come.

The Western Baptist Convention did meet with the Roan Mountain Church in 1878.

In the minds of some of the associational leaders there was some question as to the effectiveness of the Western Baptist Convention. It was relatively weak, being composed entirely of rural mountain churches. It had, however, some strong leaders, among them John Ammons and A. I. Justice, who worked to keep it alive. But the bonds were definitely weakening. In 1880 and again in 1883 the Roan Mountain Association appointed delegates to both the Western Baptist Convention and to the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina. A few years later, in 1888, a full scale debate was conducted in the association on the question of the Western Baptist Convention uniting with the State Convention. Rev. S. M. Collis was especially in favor of this action, and, although the association voted against the union at this meeting, the idea had taken root and began to grow. The isolation of the area was beginning to recede somewhat. A railroad had come to Asheville and had touched other near-by points, roads were being built, and travel was no longer the extreme hardship that it once was.

In 1894, the Mitchell, Yancey, and French Broad associations did vote to unite with the North Carolina Baptist State Convention, and this left the Western Baptist Convention with only nine weak associations. Four years later, in 1898, the Western Baptist Convention voted to unite with the State Convention. A. E. Brown, who had served the Western Baptist Convention, was now working with the State Missions Board, and made the state missions report to the association in 1899, which in part read as follows:

An additional reason for gratitude lies in the fact that the white Baptists of North Carolina are again one in organization. They have always been one in love, aim, and effect, but the dissolution of the Western Baptist Convention after an existence of about fifty years and the union of the churches which composed it with the State Convention again make the Baptist hosts of North Carolina one in organization.

After this union, representatives of the various State Convention agencies were regular visitors at the associational meetings, and efforts were made to secure more definite and regular support from the churches for the convention causes. It had long been recognized that the churches had no plan for giving, even to the support of the local church, much less for outside causes. Efforts were made from time to time to correct this, but the association, then as now, had no power but to "resolve" and to suggest. In 1890 it was resolved that "each church and Sunday School in the association be requested to take stated collections for Home and Foreign missions," but the passage of the resolution did not appreciably change things. It was not so much that the power of coercion was desired, but that the power of conviction and persuasion in matters so distant and impersonal was lacking. Then, of course, there was the simple economic fact that the mountain farm population handled very little cash in the course of a year. In the

light of this fact, it must be concluded that many of the churches did very well indeed.

The churches had almost from the beginning been accustomed to being called upon in the associational meetings to make pledges, especially for the support of associational missions. This same plan was now urged on the churches for the support of other denominational causes. The great weakness of the plan was that the churches seldom felt obligated by what their delegates did in the associational meetings, even when their pastors and other church leaders were involved. This is still one of the characteristics of Southern Baptist associational and conventional affairs — no local church can be bound by what the association or the convention does. Yet the high degree of voluntary co-operation has been amazing.

About this time, in the middle 1890's, a controversy developed over the question of supporting the independent foreign mission movement or supporting the program of the Foreign Missionary Board of the Southern Baptist Convention. So far as our association was concerned, the controversy arose in the following manner: Thomas Lee Blalock, one of thirteen children, three of whom became preachers, of Elder and Mrs. J. C. Blalock, had been ordained to the gospel ministry by Elder R. L. Patton at Moravian Falls Baptist Church in 1891, while he was a student in the Moravian Falls Academy.¹ In 1893 he went out to China as a missionary with Elder D. W. Herring, who, beginning in 1890, led a movement, along with Dr. T. P. Crawford and Elder G. P. Bostic, to secure direct support from local churches for missionaries, as opposed to the channeling of mission funds through the Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention.

This movement was referred to as "gospel missionism," and had in its background and drew its ecclesiological support from the older "Landmark Movement," which had been led by J. R. Graves, J. M. Pendleton, and A. C. Dayton. Among other things it was held by Graves and his followers that the local church alone had the authority to appoint and to send out missionaries, and that denominational boards and committees, set up to co-ordinate the efforts of many local churches, were in violation of New Testament doctrine. The Landmarkers developed a body of church doctrine, which, in effect, held that only "properly ordained Baptist ministers" had any right to preach the gospel and administer the ordinances. This was Baptist high-churchism which took on a pharisaical tone. These two movements—

1. R. L. Patton served first as principal of Moravian Falls Academy, but he did his best work as principal of Amherst Academy near North Catawba Church in Burke County. Some of the men who attended this academy and who came to have considerable influence in Mitchell County and in the southland generally were, to name only a few, Dr. Hight C. Moore, editor, author, and for many years secretary of the Southern Baptist Convention; Dr. W. R. Bradshaw, North Carolina Baptist State Evangelist, who preached in many Mitchell County churches; D. D. and B. B. Dougherty, founders of the Appalachian State Teachers College; J. Clayton Bowman, founder of Bowman Academy and later business administrator of Berea College; Dr. Arch T. Allen, State Superintendent of Public Instruction; Dr. R. L. Moore, for thirty-one years president of Mars Hill College, and many others.

Landmarkism and Gospel Missionism led eventually to a minor split in the Southern Baptist Convention in 1905, and the formation of what has been known since 1924 as the American Baptist Association, which drew its strength almost exclusively from the area of the southwest.² Only the gospel mission aspect of this controversy affected seriously the Baptists in the eastern seaboard states, although some of the Mitchell Association brethren read and were influenced by Landmark writings.

Since T. L. Blalock was a native of Mitchell County, he naturally looked to the churches of this area for his support. Many of the brethren did want to support him. Accordingly agents were appointed in 1895 to collect offerings from the churches for his support. In 1896 the foreign missions report said:

As one of the agents appointed by the association to collect and pay over money to our missionary, T. L. Blalock, now in China, I beg leave to submit the following report: The total amount I have collected from the churches during the past year was \$ 28.17. I have paid out \$15.27 leaving a balance on hand of \$ 12.90."

Elder W. H. Ollis, another such agent, reported that he had collected \$ 27.00. In 1898, and in most of the associational meetings for the next ten years, offerings were received for Blalock. The concluding paragraph of the foreign missions report for 1901 made the following recommendation:

We would further recommend the adoption by our churches of some systematic plan for raising money for this glorious work. We have some twenty or more in the foreign field who are laboring under the "independent" plan, one of which is from our own association (T. L. Blalock). We further recommend that the churches take pledges for their support. In 1902 the foreign missions report again recommended:

That each church in the association mature some plan by which they can raise more money for foreign missions, and that each church dispose of the money as they choose. We realize that this association has Elder T. L. Blalock as an "independent" missionary in China, and it is our duty to help him preach the gospel in China.

The confusion in the churches on this question of foreign missions support was noted in the report presented by Elder S. J. Sparks in 1906; (then principal of Bowman Academy).

. . . We are sorry to note some confusion in many of the churches on this question. We find that our dearly beloved brother Rev. T. L. Blalock has been left under the impression in the past that the churches of this association will support him as a foreign missionary in China, while most of the churches seem to desire to work in harmony with the Board. We therefore recommend that each church take a decided

2. William Wright Barnes, *The Southern Baptist Convention 1845-1953*, (Broadman Press, Nashville, Tenn., 1954), pp. 113-117.

stand where God directs and notify Bro. Blalock if they mean to support him or if they don't, that he may know just what to expect.

And in the minutes for 1907 we find the following entries:

Motion that the churches settle the question whether they will support the Board or the Gospel Mission.

The following churches support the Board (not named) 16 in all. The remaining 11 did not report.

During this same year T. L. Blalock was home on leave, and spoke in many of the churches and in the associational meeting.

It appears that support for Blalock was never very strong in the association. There were reasons for this. The church doctrine which gave rise to the "independent" or "faith" mission movement ran counter to the concept of church co-operation through mission boards, and there were frequently present some able and influential men to support the Southern Baptist Convention program. Among these, as noted before, were A. E. Brown, W. R. Bradshaw, and representatives of the various denominational agencies, and most of the associational leaders at this time favored following their leadership. In 1908 W. R. Bradshaw, state evangelist, read and spoke to the state missions report, and the Clerk, W. F. Dodson, made this comment: "One of the best speeches ever delivered in Mitchell County was given by this gifted speaker." On this occasion Bradshaw also preached at the eleven o'clock service."

Associational goals for the various causes were set, and the churches were urged to make definite pledges to the support of these causes—state, home, and foreign missions and the orphanage—and from one-third to one-half of the churches regularly responded to this urging. In an effort to secure more support and to involve more of the churches the association in 1910 made pledges to these causes, and a board of apportionment, consisting of N. A. Buchanan, L. A. Berry, M. L. Wilson, Millard Frances, Titus Cox, W. C. Greene, Milton Buchanan, and C. P. Braswell, was appointed to apportion the pledges among the churches. This committee made the following report, read by S. M. Greene:

. . . Whereas the Association has pledges of \$ 200.00 for State Missions; \$ 200.00 for Home Missions; \$ 200.00 for Foreign Missions, and \$ 100.00 to the orphanage, your committee apportion this amount as indicated in the table below, and recommend that collections begin with the Associational year, and earnestly request that the pastors of the different churches look after these collections.

But this plan did not prove very satisfactory. Next year, in 1911, it was agreed on motion to return to the pledge system, and pledges were received for the various causes. Of twenty-nine churches listed that year, all pledged to support the orphanage; twenty-five pledged to home missions; nineteen to state missions, fourteen to foreign missions; and fourteen to associational missions. All together they pledged \$ 598.00 for all causes. We do not have an accurate check on how well these pledges were paid.

During this same period — 1900-1920's — the churches were being urged to pledge and contribute to the support of the Bowman Academy, or, after 1905, the Mitchell Collegiate Institute, at Bakersville.

Apportionment (1910)

CHURCHES						CHURCHES					
	State Missions	Home Missions	Foreign Missions	Orphanage	Total		State Missions	Home Missions	Foreign Missions	Orphanage	Total
Roan Mountain	\$ 10	10	10	5	35	White Oak	\$ 4	4	4	2	14
Little Rock Creek	10	10	10	5	35	Cub Creek	4	4	4	2	14
Bear Creek	10	10	10	5	35	Roaring Creek	6	6	6	3	21
Lily Branch	8	8	8	4	28	Spruce Pine	10	10	10	5	35
Big Rock Creek	4	4	4	2	14	Hensons Creek	4	4	4	2	14
Mine Creek	10	10	10	5	35	Cranberry	6	6	6	3	21
Fork Mountain	10	10	10	5	35	Aaron	4	4	4	2	14
Mount Pleasant	6	6	6	3	21	Elk Park	6	6	6	3	21
Bakersville	10	10	10	5	35	Oak Grove	2	2	2	1	7
Silver Chapel	10	10	10	5	35	Spring Creek	2	2	2	1	7
Grassy Creek	8	8	8	4	28	Gouges Chapel	4	4	4	2	14
Green Valley	6	6	6	3	21	Yellow Mount.	8	8	8	4	28
Pleasant Hill	10	10	10	5	35	Pineola	2	2	2	1	7
McKinney Cove	6	6	6	3	21	Liberty Hill	7	7	7	3	24
Cane Creek	10	10	10	5	35	Peppers Creek	2	2	2	1	7
Beaver Creek	2	2	2	1	7						

STATISTICAL REPORT — ASSOCIATIONAL
YEAR ENDING SEPT. 15, 1910

CHURCHES	PASTORS	BAPTISMS	CHURCH MEMBERSHIP	MINUTE FUND	STATE MISSIONS	HOME MISSIONS	FOREIGN MISSIONS	ORPHANAGE	PASTOR'S SALARY	OTHER OBJECTS
Crossnore	E. M. Johnson	20	67 .40							101.25
Liberty Hill	John A. Gouge	--	121 .80			3.00			25.00	181.00
Roan Mountain	S. M. Greene	--	167 1.40		5.00	10.00			27.62	181.00
L. Rock Creek	L. H. Greene	--	222 1.05			1.86	1.15		51.00	15.00
Bear Creek	L. H. Greene	16	274 1.85		5.00	10.00	24.40	5.00	68.00	60.29
Lily Branch	John A. Gouge	2	132 1.31			5.00	5.00		50.00	33.00
Big Rock Creek	Anderson Sparks	--	94 .80						19.00	6.00
Mine Creek	Isaac Grindstaff	22	152 .55			5.00			30.00	50.00
Big Meadows	E. A. Stamy	13	66 .60							
Bakersville	L. H. Greene	3	129 2.00		76.16	51.27	5.00	1.92	250.00	133.00
Silver Chapel	J. C. Thomas	5	101 .80			3.00	2.50	6.00	40.00	
Grassy Creek	S. M. Greene	21	171 1.45						77.50	16.00
Green Valley	E. M. Johnson	--	53 .90						36.00	15.00
Pleasant Hill	E. M. Johnson	9	157 1.50					10.00	81.80	749.00
McKinney Cove	C. H. McKinney	--	63 .70			3.00			25.00	792.00
Cane Creek	S. M. Greene	--	207 1.55		5.00				54.00	21.00
Beaver Creek	Yates Sparks	5	58 .50			2.50	2.50		10.75	14.00
Whiteoak	Anderson Sparks	--	90 .60			5.00			24.27	
Cub Creek	Anderson Sparks	6	99 .50						33.00	8.00
Roaring Creek	S. A. Hughes	1	126 1.30						14.90	12.30
Spruce Pine	S. M. Greene	8	102 1.50		60.00	18.00	5.00		60.00	256.21
Hensons Creek	J. Y. Sparks	--	28 .50		2.50	2.50			15.76	7.40
Cranberry	D. A. Greene	19	72 2.00		2.00	5.00	10.00	5.00	72.00	104.00
Aaron	L. C. Wilson	--	29 .60			2.00	2.00		62.00	104.50
Elk Park	J. M. Stout	5	37 .50						100.00	3.00
Pepper's Creek	R. Pitman	22	65 1.20						30.85	
Spring Creek	J. W. Putnam	--	31 .70		2.00				36.00	13.00
Gouge's Chapel	J. W. Putnam	5	45 .50						40.00	
Yellow Mountain	S. M. Greene	--	77 --		5.00	10.00	5.00		60.00	87.30
Pineola	L. C. Wilson	5	41 1.00							6.00
Fork Mountain	Anderson Sparks	--	143 1.10		2.50	2.00			42.19	19.00
31 Totals										

Chapter XIII

Woman's Work

THE beginning of the W.M.U. belongs to the mission's story of the Association. Nationally, there had been missionary activities on the part of Baptist women dating back to 1812. Through the years the growth of these activities had resulted in the organization of many missionary societies in churches and communities throughout the southland. As this union grew in strength, many leading men among Southern Baptists recognized the very great potential of this work among the women. This movement resulted, eventually, in the organization of the Woman's Missionary Union Auxiliary to the Southern Baptist Convention in 1888.

The first mention of this work in the minutes of the Mitchell County Baptist Association occurred in 1890, when J. M. Stafford, who, with his wife was operating a school, first at Roan Mountain and then at Bakersville, presented the following resolution.

Resolved: "That the pastor and Sunday School Superintendent, of each church be requested to organize a woman's and children's missionary society in each church and Sunday School for the purpose of raising money for home and foreign missions."

Although this resolution was apparently accepted by the association, its passage did not result in any immediate action. This was true because, the women by tradition and as a matter of church doctrine, had been denied participation in the leadership of the churches. The pastors and Sunday School Superintendents to whom the resolution delegated the authority to organize the women were men, who were in no way predisposed, either by sentiment, conviction, or ability to initiate this work. Many years were to elapse before the woman's part in women's work would be recognized, and before a woman would be permitted to present a report and speak on the woman's work in the association. For several years a committee on woman's work, usually consisting of two men, was regularly appointed by the moderator. In 1901 this committee consisted of T. C. King, and L. H. Greene. But they made no report. In 1902 Elders J. C. Blalock and S. A. Hughes served on this committee and presented the following report:

"We, your committee on woman's work, in the Baptist Churches of Mitchell County Association, would recommend that each church in the association appoint some sister of their body to organize a Woman's Missionary Society, and that they meet at least once a month and contribute of their means for the cause of missions." The fact that it was recognized that "some sister" would have to lead in this work was a forward step.

In 1903 the report on woman's work was read by E. Lee Fox, Principal of Bowman Academy.

In this same 1903 meeting a committee consisted of A. E. Brown and J. C. Blalock, appointed for that purpose, nominated a central committee of woman's work. Those nominated and elected were Mrs. Lucretia Young, Miss Larcenia Buchanan, Mrs. J. R. Prichard, Mrs. J. S. Poteat and Miss Lottie Ollis. After this second step forward things began to move a little better as is indicated by two developments reported in the 1906 minutes. At this association the women called a meeting of their own for 9:30 a.m., September 12, 1906. This was wholly new and no doubt disturbed some of the brethren as such women's meetings had done earlier in the Southern Baptist Convention. Then, too, for the first time in the history of the association, a woman, Mrs. Lucretia Young, Vice President of the Central Committee was permitted to read the report on woman's work. Hers is definitely a woman's report and reflects some of the difficulties faced.

"We the Woman's Missionary Societies, beg to submit the following report:

We have ten organized societies, five of which are actively engaged in mission work. These societies have contributed \$2.30 for mission work. Many are struggling and making sacrifices for this work, that God alone can know. They are struggling not only against adverse circumstances in the community but against an anti-mission spirit in some of the churches and an occasional anti-mission sermon. But through all, God is upholding His cause, and we sincerely beg the churches, and especially the pastors, to stand by this work, which means so much to the life of every church and the progress of God's cause."

Mrs. Lucretia Young, Vice President

In 1907 we find the brethren passing another resolution urging the pastors to see that Woman's Missionary societies were organized in their churches. At this meeting D. W. Greene and C. G. Bryant said in a report: "The contributions during the past year through these societies have been very gratifying.

In 1908 W. A. Robinson and J. C. Thomas reported three societies with about \$75.00 and \$50.00 paid for Home and Foreign missions.

In 1911 we find this disturbing information. "In this association we find only one mission society. Let us this year organize a society in every church. To this end we recommend that a special committee be appointed to look after this work." Read and spoken to by Lucretia Young and G. E. Lineberry, Educational secretary of Home Mission Board.

The following committee was appointed; Mrs. S. J. Black, Mrs. Lucretia Young, L. A. Berry, David Cook, J. Z. Singleton, David Dellinger and E. H. Farthing.

In 1913 in a report read by R. T. Teague that, "there is in the bounds of the association a great lack of organized work." But many christian mothers and daughters were doing a great work teaching

and training. Again we note that pastors are urged to take up and attend to the much-needed work.

Three years later in 1916, we find two men giving a short report on woman's work and stating there are no societies in this association and asking "Why is this true?" "Who is at fault?" Again they urge the pastors to encourage the women of their respective churches.

Ten years later Mrs. S. J. Black, Chairman, made this plea—"We feel that women owe a great debt to their Master as it was through his shed blood that we have come out of bondage and enjoy the freedom that the Christian religion gives to us which is denied to our sisters in heathen lands. Again, we beg for the sympathy and co-operation of our pastors in this".

Under the leadership of Mrs. D. A. Greene, Chairman: progress is noted in 1932. There were five missionary societies in five of the churches. The societies were organized into an associational organization with Mrs. S. J. Black, Superintendent.

During the 1940's under the leadership of Mrs. N. G. Pitman gains were made in the young people's organizations. Gifts to cooperative program increased ten per cent. In 1949 during the centennial anniversary association Mrs. Pitman's report stated that the W. M. S. membership was 219, young peoples organizations 137, and stewardship report gave 102 tithers. There was a total of eight adult organizations. Contributions through the cooperative program amounted to \$ 870.33 and \$ 783.30 through special offerings. Contrast this with \$2.30 given at first.

It will take too much space to continue this beyond the 100th year. Through it all though, even down to the present day, pastors are being urged to encourage the women. While there are no anti-mission sermons now and no longer do the men give the reports and do women's work, occasionally a deacon and sometimes a minister will get up and leave when a woman starts a report.

Chapter XIV

Delegates From Ripshin

THE associational meeting for 1919 was held at Roan Mountain Church, beginning on the 18th of September. The writer was then a nine year old lad, and although he does not remember attending a single session of that association, his family experience in connection with it made a lasting impression on his childish memory.

The date itself is significant, for the story related here could not have happened a few years later. It was just before the mule-drawn drag pans and two-wheeled dump carts, with the switch-hammer steel drivers and an occasional steam drill began to lift the main country roads out of the creek beds and red-clay gullies to higher ground, where adequate drainage and hard gravel surfaces could be provided. This marked the beginning of the invasion of the horseless carriage into our mountain area. It also marked the beginning of the public school consolidation movement.

But in September, 1919 travel was still by foot, horseback, buggy, or wagon. On rare occasions a surry with a fringe on top could be seen. By all these ways of travel, but chiefly by foot, the delegates began arriving early on Thursday morning. Those who came from farthest away were entertained in the community in the homes of church members. Our home had the fortune, or misfortune, of being picked as a lodging place by some delegates who came from quite far away. Perhaps we were chosen only because our home was closest to the church.

I stood on the front porch and watched our guests arrive. They came down the Young Cove road in single file, turned off the road onto a foot path that passed by our house on a shortcut to the church. They turned in through the gate in the picket fence that surrounded our house. I ran to tell mother that we had company, but I think that she had already detected their approach, for she was already coming out to greet them. They stood on the steps and boldly announced that they had come as delegates to the Association, and would like to stay at our house for the duration. Mother hesitated and showed some embarrassment. She had received no forewarning of their coming. This was most unexpected. But mother was a preacher's daughter, and the tradition and custom of the community was to turn no one away. "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers; for thereby some have entertained angels unawares." (Heb. 13:2)

I can see them standing there now as mother talked with them. They were one man and two women. He wore a stiff dome-shaped derby and a short-waisted scissortail coat, and carried a small duffel bag. He was only medium in height and girth and had a round, ruddy

face. His wife was a short, stout woman, and her sister was the tall, slender imperious one. I was so completely absorbed in the apparel of the preacher that I can recall few details of the ladies' dress, except that they wore hats.

They had come to us from Ripshin. Perhaps you never heard of Ripshin. Ripshin is a community on Roaring Creek, which drains the east side of Ripshin Ridge and empties into the Doe River about four miles below Roan Mountain, Tennessee. One can get some idea of the difficult and toilsome journey our guests had made when one views the rough and precipitous, yet majestic landscape along Tennessee Route 143 from Carver's Gap to Roan Mountain, Tennessee. Actually this was not a great distance as measured on the map as the crow flies, but this was not the way our guests traveled. They had come one step at a time along the winding, climbing, and descending trails of the Roan Mountain and other intervening mountains. They had left Ripshin the day before and had spent the night along the way on Little Rock Creek. Now they stood at our door representing a church that we had never heard of, and mother could not say "no." The preacher left his duffel bag on the porch and they went off to attend the morning session of the association.

My father was not at all happy about the prospect of taking care of these unexpected guests. Our house at that time had five rooms, the largest of which was a recent addition consisting of a combination kitchen and dining room. There were six of us children ranging in age from five to fourteen. In our living or sitting room there was a double bed with a trundle bed which could be rolled under the larger bed during the day and rolled out at night. This was where the four boys of the family slept. Our parents occupied one room and the two girls another. This left one spare room and bed for the preacher and two sisters. How this situation was managed, I do not now recall, but in those days such situations were not considered problems. Another complicating fact, at least as viewed by the modern mind, was that our house had no interior plumbing. As a matter of fact, we had no plumbing of any kind. But for the community and the times we were about standard.

The person who suffered most in this situation was mother, who had to prepare three square meals a day for her family and three guests, whom father considered somewhat uncouth both in manners and language. They were big eaters. I well remember one little table scene. The tall, imperious one sitting on one side of the table took her fork in her fist and, with the prongs pointing upward, tapped a little impatiently on the table as she called across to her robust sister to pass her the chicken.

But then all trials come to an end. Saturday morning came and our guests prepared to march back across the mountains to Ripshin. There were farewells and invitations. They insisted that we come across the mountains sometime and visit with them. None of our family ever did, but I still plan to.

Stephen M. Collis

1818 - 1890

The leading light in the Roan Mountain Association from the start in 1849 was the Elder Stephen Morgan Collis. He was born in Burke County, N. C. January 30, 1818. He died April 10, 1890. He was married to Polly Sparks. They had one daughter Basha Collis, who was married to Starling Buchanan.

When Roan Mtn. Baptist association (now Mitchell Association) was formed at Double Island Church in Yancey County on October 5, 1849, Collis was elected the first clerk. He served as clerk of the association for ten years and as moderator for nineteen years, serving for the last time in 1887.

In the associational minutes for 1855 it is noted that there was only one Sunday School in the sixteen affiliated churches. The following resolution was approved: "Resolved that we appoint Elder S. M. Collis to deliver lectures on the subject of Sabbath Schools in each church of the association and organize such schools where practicable." The record shows that the spirit of this resolution was vigorously carried out, for in 1869 the following report was made: "Your committee on Sunday Schools is happy to state that most of the churches have flourishing Sunday Schools, numbering from thirty-three to one hundred students."

As early as 1857 Collis was designated missionary of the association. In 1865 he reported to the association to have preached 114 sermons, given 115 exhortations, baptized 177, and received into the churches 284 people. Similar reports are recorded in subsequent years.

To show what his itineraries were like I quote from a small, badly worn diary kept by Collis through the years 1879 to 1884. "I left home on Wednesday 12th day of November 1884; attended prayer meeting at Banner Elk on Wed. night. Then came to Bro. Tatums. Stayed all night and attended night meeting. I preached on Friday at South Fork Church; left mourners crying for mercy. I came to Bro. Duncans, stayed all night. Then, came to Jefferson; preached Sat. and Sun. Then I went to Ore Knob and stayed all night at Harrison. I preached on Monday, then went to Laurel Springs. I stayed all night at Levi Comer (Cones) and preached at Laurel Springs and went to Daughtons. I then went to Bro. Woodruff's. I stayed two nights, then went to Sparta. I stayed from Friday 'til Monday evening and held meetings every day. I went to Jackson Woodruffs then back to Sparta. I then went to New Hope Church and stayed from Thursday 'til next Wed. morning. Went to Bro. T. M. Duncans, and on to Clingman Chapels and stayed all night. Then came home. Gone 31 days. In July 1884 I was out 29 days. Preached 20 sermons and visited with 11 families."

On August, 29th day 1884 T. M. Duncan, Wm. Hall and S. M. Collis constituted the first Missionary Baptist Church in Sparta, Alleghany County.

He served in positions, other than the pulpit. In 1866 he was elected clerk of superior court of Mitchell County. He tendered his bond of fifteen thousand dollars with A. A. Wiseman and E. D. Hall's securities. The court accepted and oath of office was administered to him in July.

He was known throughout the mountain area as the champion of prohibition. In 1884 he represented Mitchell county in the State Legislature and secured the enactment of a law prohibiting the manufacture, sale and use of intoxicating liquors in the county. While in Raleigh he occupied the pulpit of First Baptist Church on several occasions. Mitchell county has been dry ever since Collis' day. He earned distinction down-state as the "Joshua of the Mountains."

The late Hight C. Moore cherished these vivid recollections of him — "As a powerful preacher who riveted attention: now in easy conversational tones, now in upsurging modulation and manner, now in melodious "sing-song" style which bore his tense and often tearful hearers heavenward, now in tender warnings like church bells chiming at sabbath even tide;

As an Itinerant Evangelist with Bible and hymn-book in his saddle bags, riding his good horse "John the Baptist" up many a hollow and over many a hill: searching and finding the lost, hundreds and hundreds of them. Then baptizing them in the crystal creeks and rivers in Appalachia".

On the morning of his death the Mitchell County court adjourned as a mark of respect to his memory.

J. C. Pritchard read the resolution. Resolve: "That in the death of S. M. Collis the county has lost a good noble and good man, an honest, faithful citizen, an exemplary christian with a character above suspicion and without blemish. That in the loss of S. M. Collis christianity has lost a bright cause of temperance and able defender, in the cause of morality a faithful worker. The Baptist Church has lost one of its brightest ornaments as a minister and teacher". Judge John Gray Bynum was presiding.

The Morganton Star April 24, 1890 spoke of him as being "the most useful man in the Western Baptist Convention".

On the day before his death he had preached at Grassy Creek and seemed in his usual vigorous frame of mind and body.

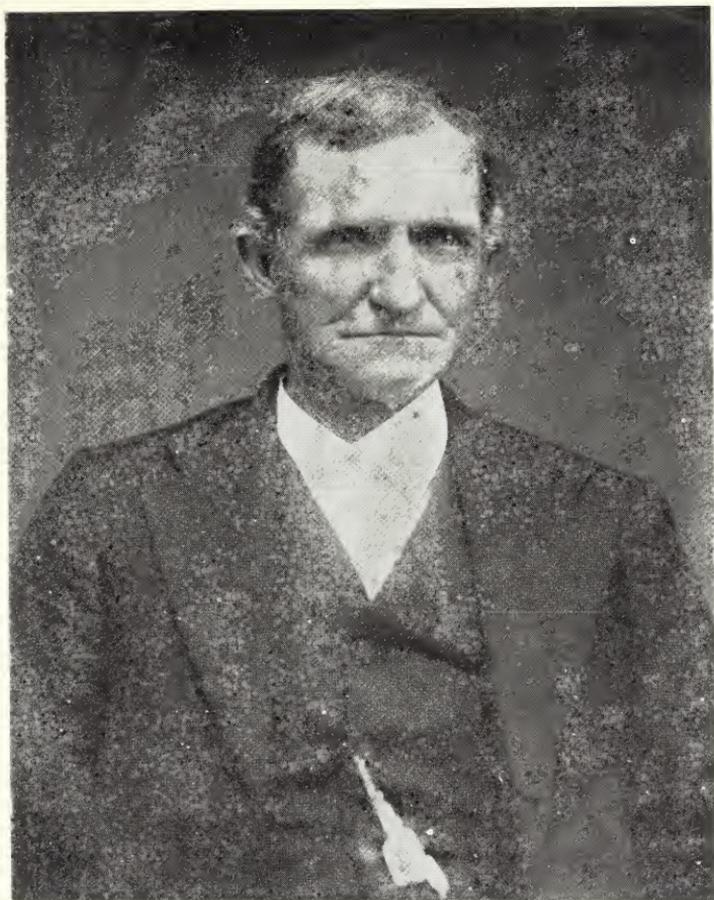
He is buried on a hill in a Bakersville cemetery. A monument that was paid for by individual church members of the association serves as marker.

It is noted that the churches under his leadership still have an enduring strength.

In the words of Hight C. Moore, "Thank God for the great and Good Joshua of the Mountains".

James Collis

James Collis was ordained at Bear Creek either in the fall of 1851 or the early part of 1852. Prior to this time, he was a delegate



Elder Stephen M. Collis

1818 - 1890



The Reverend Stephen M. Greene

1838 - 1924

from Grassy Creek church to the French Broad association in 1843 and a year later was listed with S. M. Collis as a delegate from the newly organized Bear Creek Church. We assume that he was a brother to Stephen Collis. We do not know whether he was younger or older than Stephen.

In a poem that has been preserved and passed on to us "Jimmy" Collis tells of his experience in trying to escape the call to the ministry by volunteering for army service in the war against Mexico (1846-1848). It is not known whether he was one of Captain Tilman Blalock's Yancey Rangers. It appears however, that since he went by ship, that he was not with Blalock.

POEM

*When I was called the news to tell,
How Jesus saves poor souls from hell
The, undertaking seemed so great
I thought I'd leave my native state.*

*The war was on in Mexico,
I volunteered, and I did go,
I blessed my wife and children dear,
I told them they must persevere,
I prayed with them at break of day,
And started on my lonely way.*

*I traveled on to Smithville Sound,
And there I left my native land
To sail on "thee, O' mighty deep"
And Jonah like I'd go to sleep.*

*The wind did blow; sailing was rough,
But he who rules the wind and sea
I must confess was kind to me.
He landed me safely on shore.*

*And now, I'm here in Mexico
Deprived of home and all that's dear.
The cries of souls I seem to hear.
Which makes me think of that great day
When heaven and earth shall pass away.*

*While I was here in this lone land
My duty I would try to do.
While I was praying in my tent,
Cold water upon me was sent.*

*When eighteen months had passed in pain
I found myself at home again,
And now I'm here to preach and tell
How Jesus saves poor souls from hell.*

Jimmy got back home in time to attend the organizational meeting of the Roan Mountain Association in 1849 as a delegate from Bear Creek.

In the year 1852 he is listed for the first time as an ordained minister; and as pastor of the newly organized Mine Creek church. In 1856 he was pastor of the newly organized Pleasant Grove church. ("11 miles north of Burnsville") He preached the introductory sermon at the associational meeting in 1858 and that same year was elected moderator.

In 1863 he was appointed as a missionary to ride the bounds of the association and the churches were advised to sustain him.

In 1865 he became pastor of Turkey Cove Church. He was appointed one of three missionaries to work in the association in 1867. He reported "54 days labor, 70 sermons, 15 exhortations, baptised 10 and received \$ 2.25". J. P. Dickson who presented the missions report made a simple statement without explanation. "James Collis quit the field."

In 1883 he preached on Sunday at Bear Creek. This is the last reference to James Collis in the minutes. We do not know when he died, nor where he is buried.

Autobiography and Diary Notes of Stephen M. Greene 1838 - 1924

In 1914 when in his seventy-sixth year the Rev. Stephen M. Greene recorded in his own handwriting on the last pages of the Old Minute Book of the Roan Mtn. Association, a brief account of his life. He observed no plan of organization in his account but wrote down from memory information as it came to him. We shall quote his account (leaving out most notes on health and weather) just as he wrote it with only such corrections as are necessary for clarity of meaning. In his unconscious style of writing and form of expression, we can see something of the nature of the man:

"Stephen M. Greene was born on the 22nd day of March 1838. He was married the first time in 1865 to Susie Sparks (daughter of Wilson and Callie Sparks). She died on March 26, 1883. Eight children were born to us, three boys and five girls. I was left with six small children. I was mighty poor in regard to this world's goods. Though I preached regularly every Saturday and Sunday; my churches did not pay me enough to keep "pete" from the door. They did not know a thing about paying preachers for their labor then.

Finally, through the solicitations of some of my best friends, I was married the second time to Betty Ann (Nee) Pitman, daughter of Aaron and Frankie Pitman, who had been married twice. Her first husband was Phillip Duncan, who was killed in the Civil War. Just at

the close of the war I, a justice of the peace, married her to David M. Buchanan, who was the first person to profess religion under my preaching. My uncle, Stephen M. Collis married us on the 18th of March 1884. We lived together for nearly 30 years. On the 31st day of January 1913, she passed away and left me all alone at the age of seventy-five.

Well, now I will note mainly from memory a history of my ministerial life. But, first I will notice something prior to my entering the ministry.

I was born and reared on a farm by, I believe as good, honest parents as anyone. Both were members of Old Roan Mtn. Church, the oldest church in the county. Their names were, Joseph and Polly Greene. They had twelve children, seven boys and five girls.

I was very sickly in my boyhood days and was petted a little more than the others.

My oldest brother, James, got to be deputy sheriff and took a Baptist newspaper published in Hendersonville, N. C. At night he would sit by the firelight and read to the family.

I was old enough to begin to go to school. Schools of three months were taught then in little old round log houses with saplings split open and auger holes bored in them for seats.

It seemed the committee would try to select the ugliest old man they could get for a teacher; who would sit with a big ugly frown on his face and a hickory by his side. Occasionally, he would fetch a slam on the floor and call out at the top of his voice, "Spell out, spell out".

My brother, Jimmy, would execute his papers and lay them aside. I would get him to set me copies on his old warrants. Then I would stand up by the bureau and try to write my very best. I undertook Folder's Arithmetic and enjoyed it fine.

Finally, I concluded school teaching would be a nice thing for me to do. So, I made me up a school and taught two or three months in the McKinney Cove. I taught in a good many different settlements.

The last school I taught previous to the war was a free school. I had gotten a second grade certificate. But the war put an end to my strong aspirations for getting an education.

About the year 1856 my uncle, and old spiritual father, S. M. Collis held a meeting at Bear Creek. I was converted and joined the church; but failed to be baptized. I felt impressions to preach. I kept striving to wear off the impressions. Finally, I decided that the trouble with me was, that I had not been baptized. So, in about three years I joined again and was baptized. But instead of getting rid of the impressions they got stronger. Sometimes I thought I would have to tell a friend about my feelings. Then I would think that would never do.

I had a tremendous temper to contend with. Just at the beginning of the war a big man clerk and I got into trouble. He picked up a couple of weights in each hand and ordered me with an oath to leave the store. Instead of going out I slipped my hand in my pocket, drew a little knife, opened it and went for him with a vim. There was no blood shed, but it wasn't my fault. My brother, Joe and another man

pulled me out of the house. I slept scarcely a wink that night. Old Satan pointed his finger at me, sniggered and grinned, "weren't you a pretty thing to think the Lord would call such a low down hypocrite as you to preach the gospel". He told me to get out of the church. I obeyed him. The good brethren did all they could to keep me in, but to no avail. So I was excluded. I then learned what the chastening rod was made for.

I married and settled down to work. I took deputy sheriff's place. That didn't satisfy me. I got to reading scripture to my wife and telling her what I thought it meant. She would cry and I would cry. Old Satan followed me around and said, "Wouldn't you look nice stuck up in a pulpit". I believed all he said and promised him I would have my wife to promise never to hint such a thing. But she wouldn't promise as firmly as I liked. So she let it slip. When Bro. Stephen Buchanan and Bro. Collis heard it the "fat was in the fire".

My first effort was on Cane Creek on Saturday evening before the second Sunday in April 1868. My text was, "This do and thou shalt live". I expected to see the young folks laughing. But instead, everybody looked serious. I talked about ten minutes. From this it was a call here and a call there.

The first meeting I held was in a school house at the head of Cane Creek in 1869. It lasted thirteen days. My uncle, S. M. Collis came to me the second week. There were 62 additions. My uncle and I baptized 25 a piece.

Satan immediately stepped up and said, "You are a powerful preacher. You can beat any old preachers now".

The first church I was elected to supply was Little Rock Creek. I went over there to hold a meeting. "Now", I thought, "I will slay the sinners tonight". So, I arose as full of conceit as any man ever felt. I began talking as sympathetic as I could. But it did not seem to have the desired effect. So, I put on more steam. I raved and charged 'til the steam gave out and me too. I dismissed as soon as I could. I prayed earnestly for the Lord to forgive me for trying to preach.

The next morning I was up before day and took to the woods. I thought, how could I ever get up the courage to preach that Sunday. When I arose my text was, "He that despised moral law died without mercy". In seven days and nights 47 were added to the church.

I never thought of them taking a collection for me — nor did they. One good brother did slip me a 50 cts. and it in silver too. How glad and thankful I did feel. I knew my wife and two kids had about consumed what meat they had.

At the close of a meeting in the upper end of the county an old brother deacon gave me 40 to 50 pounds of thick bacon. How rich I felt. But corn got scarce and high. I cut rye on a steep, rough hill with a scythe and cradle all day for one half bushel of corn. It would take volumes to tell all I underwent.

I remember a meeting in Yancey County. At the close of the meeting a brother's two sons professed. He had me go home with him that night. The next morning he said, "Your coat is split on your

shoulder blade". His wife had woven and made him a nice blue jeans coat. He told me to try it on. I did so, a fit to a tee. Said he would make me a present of it if I would accept.

I returned home. The next morning two men rode up from Bakersville with a letter from my uncle S. M. Collis asking me to come at once. I gave the best excuse I could to keep from going. I thought of my new coat and that encouraged me to go. But then, I thought of a merchant over there that I owed a debt of fourteen dollars. How that did bother me. However, I went. That night I had to occupy the pulpit. I didn't think that merchant would be there that night. So, I in my blue jeans coat, sat up in the pulpit pretty dignified. The people kept coming in. All at once in came that merchant. He walked down the aisle, took a seat facing me. If ever I prayed for help it was then. Next morning my nephew brought my account from him stating the debt was cancelled. Don't you think the Lord had something to do with it? I do.

Now, a little more about the blue coat. Some of the old brethren and sisters bragged on it. But the younger didn't brag so much. Said it looked odd, as such coats had gone out of style, "besides", said they, "this meeting is not like a meeting out in the country". This is the big city of Bakersville that numbers about two hundred inhabitants". Well, one good sister said to her son, a young man, "Bring your coat and let Bro. Greene try it on". He did so. She spoke out saying, "That's a fit. That makes him look like a preacher. Now, I won't be ashamed of him before those methodists. You can keep it". So I did.

We had a good meeting. It was said there were a hundred and twenty-five professions. They paid me pretty liberal that time. The next year they elected me pastor.

I haven't had to go in debt for several years; and thats a great thing for a preacher to keep out of debt if possible.

This is Sept. 25th, 1914. I think its been fifty-eight years ago when I professed religion. I fully believe I was truly converted. I never doubted but what I was made a new creature in Christ Jesus. Yet, I have had many apprehensions since then in regard to getting to heaven. I have done nothing to recommend me unto His favor. But it is His abundant mercy and grace that I rely on to give me entrance into that heavenly country.

When I think back and call to remembrance the many christians and the many kind folks that I believe have already gone to that good world; it doesn't seem like I want to stay here in this troublesome world. My first companion, Susie is there, I know. My Saviour let me see and talk with her the third day after she was buried. Yes, my second wife, Betty Ann is there. I have heard her tell often, when and where the Lord first blest her. Yes, my uncle, Stephen Collis is there. He prayed so often for me, baptized me and ordained me to preach.

I cannot afford to write down anything good that the Lord has used me in doing for fear I might take some of the honor upon myself. "Bless the Lord, O my soul and all that is within me bless His Holy name."

September 30, 1914

Twenty months ago Betty Ann died. I have seen many lonesome hours since then. I did think awhile of trying to look me up another wife, I prayed over it often and earnestly. I have concluded it would be better for me to plod out what few days are allotted to me alone. My body can be laid away at Roan Mtn. Church or at Bear Creek beside Susie's grave. It matters not which, I will leave it with my friends to do as they please.

October 1, 1914

I am expecting to start to Grassy Creek in the morning. I have been pastor of that church seven years in succession. A new building has been completed and around 130 members added during the last three years. The church number at Bear Creek is now 333.

They elected Bro. Anderson Sparks at the last meeting. I love that church and want it to prosper. I was liberated and ordained to preach there. I have been pastor of that church between 30 and 40 in all. I remember six or seven men who are now preachers who professed religion in my meetings.

November 11, 1914

I went to Bear Creek last Friday; stayed all night at Bro. Dave Englishs; went to church Saturday. Had Susie's tombstones put up. Mighty nice set. Got a set just like them for Betty Ann's grave. I feel good over what I did for my deceased wives.

26th Nov. 1914, Thanksgiving Day

I preached at Roan Mtn. Dinner was brought out in abundance. Got between seven and eight dollars for the orphanage. I have been their pastor except one year in succession between 30 and 40 years. I am thinking of going in the Young Cove and preaching some. I might be the means of saving some soul there.

Last Day of the old year, 1914

I have been sent for to go to Cane Creek to a meeting conducted by L. H. Greene. After prayer and much consideration I feel I am under no obligation to go. I resigned in February. If not greatly deceived I fully believe I have the approbation of the Holy Spirit.

Sat. April 17, 1915.

Bro. W. S. Buchanan and I proceeded to ordain Brother M. L. Buchanan to the full work of the gospel ministry. I am very favorably impressed with Bro. Fate. If he will be on his watch tower and not assume himself too high.

On Wed. evening Sept. 15, 1915, I went to Bakersville to be at the association next day. Stayed all night at S. J. Blacks'. I had been appointed to preach the introductory sermon. I preached from the book of 1st Peter 1:23. I had as good liberty in trying to preach, I think, as I ever did in my life. I felt mighty humble and grateful to my Saviour. We had several correspondents and some able ministers, such as Brown, Black, Hensley, Hanes from Erwin, Tenn., and Kessler from the orphanage.

Friday, July 21st, 1916

It is still raining. I have never heard of such destruction as a result of the rain on the 15th, mountains slid terribly, and Toe River has been fuller than it was ever known to be. The railroad is torn up; so we haven't had any mail for a week. It is reported there have been 14 corpses found on the McDowell side of the Blue Ridge, and a number more missing. At Asheville lots of houses washed away and at Marshall there were 8 people drowned and 58 houses washed away. I reckon people have forsaken their maker. Covetousness, selfishness and pride is a prelude to destruction.

On Friday before the 2nd Sunday, September 1917, I went to my meeting at Grassy Creek. On Mon. I boarded the train at Spruce Pine and came to Rosie's Branch. I went to Flem Thomas's. I saw A. E. Brown, L. H. Greene, J. C. Thomas, Sam Tipton and Ike Grindstaff on their way to Pleasant Grove Church to try W. B. Mull and his rotten doctrine and tearing up of churches. The committee found him guilty.

Monday, 22nd of September I moved to Spruce Pine to Elbert Greene's. Got there safe and think I will be well and satisfied.

2nd Sun. Dec. 1919 Bro. Black and myself began a meeting at Roan Mtn. It continued eight days, and 22 confessions were approved for baptism. They paid Bro. Black \$115.45 and they paid me \$27.50. (I remember this one).

Well, this Mon. 15th day of Mar. 1920 a message came from Charlie and Doc. Greene that their father, Landon Greene had dropped dead. They requested me to come and conduct the funeral. But I didn't get the message in time to catch the train. I thought of what David said in regard to Abner's death; that a great man and a prince had fallen. He had been a great preacher in bygone days.

At Roan Mtn. my meeting time, Sat. May 15th 1920 I baptized 13 persons. Never made a blunder and I am 82 years old. (The writer, Rev. J. O. Young was one of these).

Rev. Stephen M. Greene died February 9, 1924. His friends buried him in the cemetery at Roan Mountain Baptist Church. In the association of 1925, it was recommended that the churches place a monument at Uncle Stephen's and Rev. L. H. Greene's graves. "These men of God bore the burden in the heat of the day".

On Uncle Stephen's stone is this scripture. "They that turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars for ever and ever". Daniel 12:3.

Biography

James Oliver Young

1910 - 1967

James Oliver Young, son of Mr. and Mrs. W. H. Young of Clarissa was born August 31, 1910 and was reared in Mitchell County. After graduating from Bowman High School he worked in Akron, Ohio in a Goodyear tire and rubber factory before entering a teacher training class in Bakersville. He attended Appalachian State Teachers College from which he received his B.S. degree. His teaching career began with a one room school in Roan Valley and continued with his teaching at Altapass and in Dobson, Maxton, Bowman and Tipton Hill Schools. His career as a public school teacher ceased when he volunteered for service in the United States Army during World War II. During his four years in the army he spent 26 months overseas in North Africa and Italy with the 52nd Chemical Processing Company as company clerk. He was discharged from service at Kennedy General Hospital in Memphis, Tennessee, on December 29, 1945.

Before entering the service he realized the Lord was calling him for special service. On February 3, 1946 Roan Mountain Baptist Church ordained him as a minister with the Reverend Julius Henline preaching the ordination sermon. Immediately afterwards he entered the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky from which he received his Bachelor of Divinity degree after one summer's study in the Divinity School of Duke University.

He spent one year as associational missionary in the Mitchell (at that time the name of the association had been changed to Mitchell) and Avery Associations, before being called to the Bakersville Baptist Church, his first pastorate, in September of 1949. Here he served four and one-half years. He participated in community activities as well as church activities, becoming a member of the Lions Club and of Bakersville Lodge No. 357.

He was called to Woodlawn Baptist Church in Charlotte and began his ministry there March 1, 1954, remaining for eight years. While at Woodlawn he served as president of the Baptist Pastor's Conference of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County, Secretary to the Mecklenburg Associational Board, Program chairman of the Mecklenburg Ministerial Association and on numerous committees in associational work in addition to pastoring the local church.

Throughout his ministry he gratefully participated in varied forms of service — conducting devotional services on television and radio, preaching in mission centers, teaching at youth camps or retreats, visiting in hospitals or prison camps, counseling with individuals, and teaching Seminary Extension classes.

In the fall of 1962 he enrolled at Appalachian State Teachers College to earn his Master's degree in English in order to teach in a church related college. His health forced him to leave the active ministry but

he continued serving as interim and supply pastor the next four years. He was moderator of Three Forks Baptist Association in 1964, and a director of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes on the Appalachian State University campus for one year. As a member of First Baptist Church of Boone he participated actively in its program, curtailing activities only as his physical condition dictated the terms.

On December 22, 1942 he was married to Viola Elizabeth Mann of Pittsboro, North Carolina. They have three children — one son, Sidney Presswood and two daughters, Susan Dora and Emma Jane.

About two weeks before his death, December 19, 1967, he added the last stanza to this poem which was read by his pastor at his funeral.

IN PROSPECT OF DEATH

*Lord, let me pause a moment here
Before I turn from the
Yet friendly world I've known
And go with Thee into the vast beyond
For I have loved life
It has been good to me.*

*Yes, I've had my struggles here
With myself and others.
I've had my aspirations and little worldly dreams
I've known fear and anger and disappointment
And I've had to guard my heart
Against the sharp barb of hate.*

*But I've known the love of a companion
The sweet warm caresses of children
I've had the love and confidence of friends,
And a sense of mission under God.
In fact, I've had life's best
And I have lived . . .*

*And springing up within my heart
I find a well of gratitude
For in every joy and triumph that I've known
I've felt the presence of an unseen friend,
Who has known me at my very worst
Yet willed for me the very best.*

*And even now I do not walk alone
Though the house of clay dissolves
Though human strength runs out
"I know whom I have believed"
I can do all things—even this—
Through Him who is my strength.*

While stationed at Camp Bowie near Brownwood, Texas and while resting after an overnight march he composed "Iris by the Roadside" which was published by the Moody Monthly in July 1942.

IRIS BY THE ROADSIDE

*In the cool quiet shade
By the road, where we marched
In grime and sweat and dust,
A clean and peaceful iris bloomed alone,
And shed its beauty on a world enslaved by hate.
Six purple petals—three toward heaven curled
And three in weeping mood it held,
As if to pray for the folly of man.*

*O solitary flower—touched with sorrow
And poised in gesture of unbounded faith,
Unheeded, you plead with a hating, striving world
To make way for the way of God.*

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Appendix

A Story of The Roan Mountain Church Buildings From 1820

This story is told because the present Mitchell Baptist Association was first named after the Roan Mountain Church, the oldest church, which was customary in that day.

The first meeting house of the Roan Mountain Church was built in the 1820's, and stood on the present site of the home of the late W. H. Young, near the mouth of the Young Cove Creek (Prior's Creek) about two and one half miles above Bakersville. It was a rectangular building constructed of logs. It had a dirt floor and no chimney. There was a sand pile in the center of the building on which a fire could be built. There was an opening in the roof above where at least a part of the smoke and doubtless much of the heat could escape. It was in this building that the twenty-one members met in 1830. It was in this building that the annual meeting of the French Broad Baptist Association met in 1832 and 1842. To this building came representatives from churches west of the Blue Ridge extending from Buncombe County northeastward to what is now Watauga County.

The first building was used until 1872, when a new frame building was constructed on a new site. The old building was then moved a short distance from its original site by Capt. Mose Young and used for a horse and cattle barn until it was washed away in the May flood of 1901.

The building constructed in 1872 was a rectangular building with a chimney and fire place in one end. The deed for the site of this building was made by Mose Young and his wife, Elizabeth, to the trustees of the church in 1874.

Around 1890 the chimney was removed and a porch entrance and belfry was built in its place. It was in this building that the Rev. S. M. Collis preached one of his famous Saturday afternoon sermons against the manufacture and sale of intoxicating liquors. Some of the members of the church who were engaged in the manufacture of apple brandy, took issue with some of their neighbors on the subject as they walked home from the service. The discussion became so warm the parties finally engaged in a free for all fist fight.

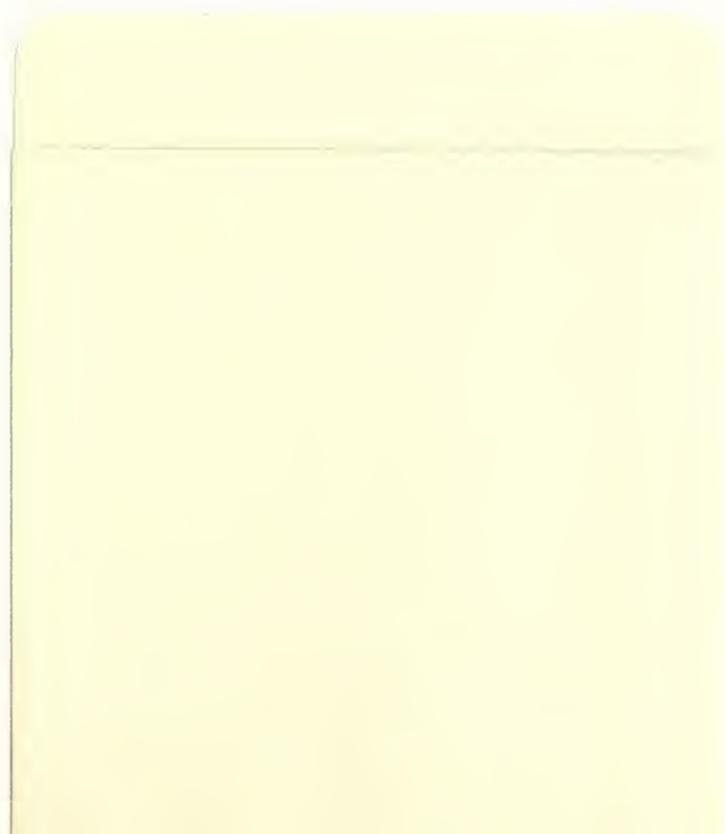
One of the famous Peabody schools was taught in this building in the 1870's.

This building served the congregation until 1910, when a new building was constructed. Two members, Wesley Buchanan and Zeb

Singleton, did the work. It, too was a frame building, but in the shape of a cross. During the fabulous 20's the wood stoves were replaced by coal stoves and the beautiful oil lamps were replaced by electric lights.

Finally in 1951 it was decided to build a new and adequate building. The present beautiful brick structure is the result. It was designed by an architect of the J. E. Greene Construction Company of Johnson City, Tennessee. The work was supervised by J. E. Greene.

This little story has had largely to do with facts concerning buildings. The real story, that is the story of the spiritual and moral influence in human lives, cannot be fully told. That is a continuing story.





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