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Life of John Taylor, a frontiersman, missionary, Baptist minister, and historian

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LIFE OF JOHN TAYLOR
A FRONTIERSMAN, MISSIONARY, BAPTIST MINISTER,
AND HISTORIAN

A Thesis

Presented to
the Faculty of the Department of History
University of Richmond

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

by

Carlisle C. Crank

August 1956

Dedicated
to my
parents
who have
encouraged me
in greater
achievements

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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LIFE OF JOHN TAYLOR
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AND HISTORIAN

CHAPTER I

ANCESTORS AND EARLY LIFE OF JOHN TAYLOR

Taylor is a very popular name in American history. The original immigrant of the family followed in this story was John Taylor who came to the Virginia shore from England in 1650 with his two brothers, Arggle and William.¹ He was about twenty three when he embarked from the Amsterdam and docked in Fleet's Bay. Soon this immigrant settled in Wicomico Parish in Northumberland County. His wife, the former Alice Gaskins, and he brought up a family of three sons and several daughters. Early in 1702,² John died at the age of seventy-five.

Lazarus Taylor, a son of the immigrant, married Mary Vezey and they had seven children. One of them, Aaron, married Batty Wilde and into their family was born a son, Lazarus. Lazarus was about thirty when he married Hannah

1. William B. Sprague, Annals of the American Pulpit or Commemorative Notices of Distinguished American Clergymen of Various Denominations (New York: Robert Carter and Brothers, 1877), VI, p. 152.

2. Dorothy Brown Thompson, "Ancestors and Descendants of the Reverend John Taylor," (ed.). Bayless E. Hardin, The Register of the Kentucky Historical Society (Frankfort, 1949) XLVII, pp. 24, 26.

³
Bradford.

On October 27, 1752 a son, named John, was born to Hannah and Lazarus Taylor. This small baby's place of nativity was the western part of Prince William County, Virginia in the section which became Fauquier County in 1759.⁵ Lazarus was a poor man and apparently he drank heavily which forced his family to labor in order for them to secure a livelihood.⁶ He was trustworthy for in several cases he was chosen to be a witness to wills probated in this rural community.⁷ Help came to this needy family in a sad event when Lazarus's father-in-law died early in 1760,⁸ leaving to his beloved daughter a negro woman named Nan.

Still they struggled together but the spurs of the Blue Ridge seen on the western skyline lured them westward to higher heights in hope for prosperity.⁹ By 1767¹⁰ they had settled in a new area called Frederick County.

3. Ibid., pp. 26-29.

4. Ibid., p. 48.

5. Henry Howe, Historical Collections of Virginia (Charleston: William R. Babcock, 1852), p. 261.

6. John Taylor, A History of Ten Baptist Churches (Frankfort: J. H. Holeman, 1823), p. 288.

7. J. Estelle Stewart King (comp.), Wills Administrations and Marriages Fauquier County, Virginia 1759-1800 (Beverly Hills, 1939), pp. 2, 4.

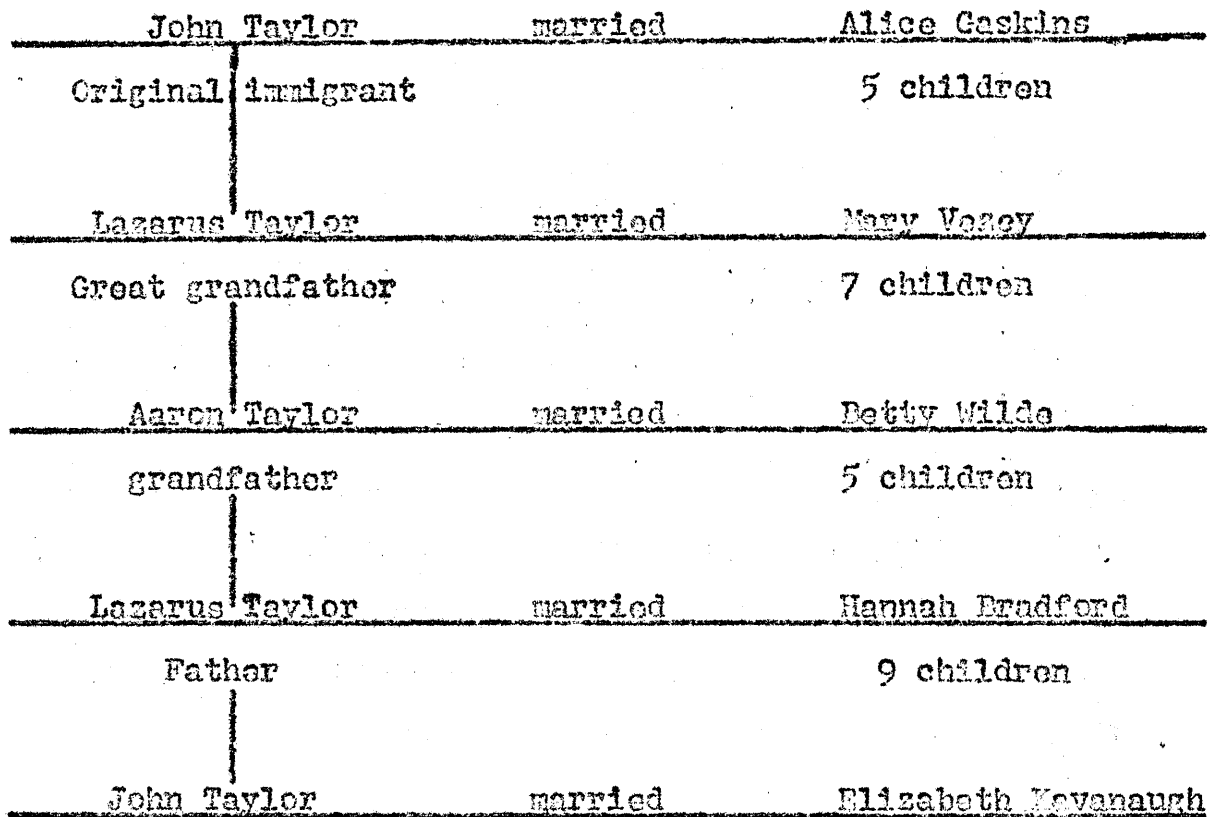
8. Will Book Number 1 1759-1783 Fauquier County, Virginia (Warrenton: Filmed by the Genealogical Society of Utah, 1951), p. 17.

9. Howe, Historical Collections of Virginia, p. 261.

10. Thompson, Ancestors and Descendants, p. 30.

CHART 1

ANCESTORS OF JOHN TAYLOR*



* William Warren Sweet, "John Taylor," Dictionary of American Biography, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1936) XVIII, p. 330; William B. Sprague, Annals of the American Pulpit (New York: Robert Carter and Brothers, 1877), p. 152; Dorothy Brown Thompson, "Ancestors and descendants of the Reverend John Taylor," The Register of the Kentucky Historical Society (Frankfort, 1949) XLVII, pp. 24-26, 48.

A beautiful landscape greeted them here in hills ideal for plowing or grazing.¹¹

Lazarus was concerned chiefly with the present, giving little foresight to the future and his changeable habits made it a necessity for his son to support the family. There was little time for John's education and because of his duties, formal schooling was chiefly neglected. Education for him came mainly through experiences and association with others. John was practical and not afraid of hard work. Growing up close to nature, the rural life and open air was a congenial environment in making him strong and healthy.¹²

Soon this young and growing family crossed the Blue Ridge and settled close to the Shenandoah River in Dunmore County. John was now gathering experiences and being subjected to uncounted influences which shaped his early training and character. He accepted greater responsibilities and continued his concern for the welfare of the family.¹³

Indians often attacked along the frontier close to

11. Samuel Thornely (ed.), The Journal of Nicholas Cresswell 1774-1777 (New York: The Dial Press, 1924), p. 49.

12. Taylor, Ten Churches, (1823), pp. 208, 228 and Sprague, American Pulpit, p. 152.

13. Ibid., pp. 152-153; James B. Taylor, Virginia Baptist Ministers (New York: Sheldon and Company, 1860), p. 226 and J. R. V. Daniel (ed.), A Hornbook of Virginia History (Richmond: Va. Dept. of Conservation and Development, 1949), p. 18.

where the Taylors lived and dangers were constant in these backwoods of Virginia.¹⁴ This area was influenced by the movement known as the "Great Awakening."

The "Great Awakening" caused a realization among the people of the Christian world of the importance of Christian experience. Beginning in Europe and spreading to America, this movement gained momentum as it spread westward and produced reactions to the formalism of the Church of England by its revivalistic service. One direct result of this was the stimulation of evangelism among the Baptists.¹⁵ The earliest beginnings of the "Great Awakening" in this country was in New England around 1720. This religious tidal wave covered the colonies from New England to Georgia so by 1740 the evangelical spirit was present in all colonies. It still lacked unity until George Whitefield zealously carried the aspects of it through New England, the middle colonies and even to Georgia. By 1740 the "Great Awakening" had reached its high water mark in the North but the real spur of the movement in Virginia

14. John Taylor, History of Clear Creek Church and Campbellism Exposed (Frankfort: A. G. Hodges, 1830), p. 44.

15. William Cathcart, Baptists and the American Revolution (Philadelphia, 1876), p. 11; George MacLaren Brydon, Virginia's Mother Church and the Political Conditions Under Which It Grew 1727-1814 (Philadelphia, 1952), p. 139; Robert G. Torbet, A History of the Baptists (Philadelphia: The Judson Press, 1950), p. 239; Francis Butler Simpkins, The South Old and New 1820-1947 (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1947), p. 79.

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came from 1740 to 1790.

Bringing revival of personal religion and the gathering of new churches, a fresh spiritual zeal was an outgrowth of this movement. Controversies arose as a result which led to the divisions within church bodies. Baptists split into the Regular and Separate bodies or into conservative and revivalistic groups. Fire and fervor were characteristics of Separate Baptists who did not adhere to confessions of faith whereas the Regular Baptists were strong supporters of the London Confession of Faith and had little desire for revivalism.

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The Taylors received news of this movement and of the religious activities from the east. In 1764, William Marshall, a Baptist clergyman and uncle of the later chief justice, John Marshall, came to their locality preaching the Gospel. William Marshall was connected with the Philadelphia Association which was the earliest Baptist Association in America, having been organized since 1707.

18

16. Wesley M. Gewehr, The Great Awakening in Virginia 1740-1790 (Durham: Duke University Press, 1930), pp. 3-8.

17. Ibid., pp. 9, 107, 109.

18. Taylor, Campbellism Exposed, p. 44; Taylor, Ten Churches, (1823), p. 228; James B. Taylor, Virginia Baptist Ministers, p. 226; James Grant Wilson and John Fiske (Editors), Appleton's Cyclopaedia of American Biography (New York, 1888) VI, p. 226; A. D. Gillette (comp.) Minutes of the Philadelphia Baptist Association from 1707 to 1807 (Philadelphia, 1851), p. 84; W. J. McGlothlin, Baptists Confessions of Faith (Philadelphia, 1911), p. 293.

John wanted to hear this man who exerted such a big influence over the masses. He was now seventeen and had never heard anyone preach. His parents were members of the Church of England, and John had been christened when a small boy and taught the rules of the Prayer Book, yet during his youth due to their constant moving and conditions on the frontier, they had little contact with the church.¹⁹

This short, broad-shouldered, muscular boy had a broad face with heavy eye-brows and expressive eyes. He was plain in dress, not particular with his clothing, and was reserved in conversation.²⁰ He came from an obscure family. He had little formal education but was experienced in the rough life of the frontier. John grew up among the struggling lower and middle economic classes. This fact together with other experiences to which he was subjected along the frontier exerted a marked influence on his later life. John Taylor developed into a man of strong and healthy physique humble in heart, and practical in all his ways.

19. Ibid.

20. Sprague, American Pulpit, p. 159.

CHAPTER 2

CONVERSION AND CALL INTO MINISTRY

Soon John had the opportunity to attend one of Marshall's meetings. He went curiously, thinking of it as a scene of merry making where they indulged in tricks and wild pranks. As he listened, he became more and more interested in Marshall's words and about mid way of the service John felt his mind had been opened to the truth. He later wrote that the truth of this man speaking from a white oak stump, seemed to have pierced his soul as though it were an electric shock. Instantly he loved God's work and sought to learn more.²¹

John's conversion and call is a story told by him, for no one could have known how he felt and what really went on in his mind. He said he became conscious of guilt and sin in his life after Marshall's sermon, but went home to live with his old companions who were not religiously inclined. John continued to do as the crowd did because he was afraid not to conform to their standards. If he did otherwise, they might tease. After all wasn't he as good as those who attended church? Yet, sin grew more hateful

²¹. Taylor, Ten Churches, (1823), pp. 13, 288-289; Sprague, American Pulpit, p. 153; James B. Taylor, Virginia Baptist Ministers, p. 226.

to John for a great impression had formed in his mind. Afterwards he withdrew from his comrades to be alone and meditate because he didn't approve of their actions. Finally after reading the scripture, the sincere desire to pray came upon him. He discovered that he couldn't solve his own problems but needed an unseen partner.²²

In the neighborhood of the Taylors, lived Joseph and Isaac Redding who gave John that necessary element which makes religion become Christian. These men, speaking in their community, told of Jesus and the message that "Ye must be born again" to enter the kingdom of Heaven. Had John Taylor's day of grace passed? This thought was entertained in his mind for many months. He could not sleep or eat properly. His father's family became alarmed at his actions.²³

One day while John was doing his daily chores, he began to feel that he would be better off in hell than to live like he was. A vision of majesty and justice of God came upon him as he chopped firewood on this cold winter day. The sun was dying in the west and shadows fell across the deep snow. His eyes fell upon a lonely mountain and he began to walk the two miles to its summit. Taylor said he expected to roam and spend the rest of his life there

22. Taylor, Ten Churches, (1823), pp. 7, 289-290.

23. Ibid., pp. 290-291.

away from man and close to nature. The sun was like a beacon guiding him to a crowning glory. Night fell fast before he reached the peak. Suddenly, he stopped and fell on his knees by an overhanging rock. He spoke his thoughts and a sweet calm and peace of mind came over him. Returning as a new man he felt there was something in life worth living for. The road to salvation through the saving grace of Christ had been made clear to him by that hanging rock²⁴ at a high point on the mountain.

Again John turned to the scripture and read, for he wanted to be sure his conversion was sound and real. In early May, 1772 he went to a Baptist Church meeting for the first time in his life. The seventeen year old youth went near the front watching the examination of the candidates for baptism. A lasting impression was created in his mind the next day as he witnessed the same individuals come one by one to the banks of the South River for a huge Baptismal Ceremony. Are these men convicted and true believers, he thought? The work Jesus caught his attention as he glanced through a hymn book. Could this be the answer?²⁵

Two weeks later, John was baptised by James Ireland, the local pastor of the South River Church. He was now twenty and having found Christ, felt the desire to go to

24. Ibid., pp. 291-293.

25. Ibid., pp. 6, 7, 293-297.

work for him. John was unprepared for this great work of telling others about Jesus but Isaac Redding, a local minister helped him by giving him his first experience at public speaking.²⁶

There were three influences of encouragement: William Marshall first opened his eyes, James Ireland gave him pastoral care and Joseph and Isaac Redding presented the teachings of Jesus. The greatest instrument of personal encouragement was the Bible itself.²⁷

It was three years from Marshall's sermon until Taylor's baptism. John's decision to join the church was not one which came suddenly for months passed into years before his unsettled mind could find a firm conviction. His conversion and call into the ministry seemed to have come only after earnest prayer, a religious experience, and more thoughtful consideration. As a result of this, there was a change in this individual as he started his new life of service for his Lord and fellowman.

26. Ibid., p. 297; Sprague, American Pulpit, p. 153.
27. Taylor, Ten Churches, (1823), pp. 289-290.

CHAPTER III

EARLY MINISTERIAL LIFE AND JOURNEYS

The church at South River consisted of about two hundred members when John Taylor joined. It was located on the southern branch of the Shenandoah in a region famous for its fertility of the soil. This church was established chiefly under the ministry of William Marshall and John Picket.²⁸

How the exact origin of the South River Church came about is uncertain. Baptists first came to the Shenandoah Valley region around 1742 from Maryland. Religious groups came from the north into Virginia and settled where the Church of England wasn't as strong. The Anglican Church was the established church of the entire colony of Virginia but it was only dominant in the oldest regions east of the mountains. Prior to 1738, the established church did not have a single church west of the Blue Ridge mountains. The Anglican Church serving in this region was the Frederick parish which would not effectively provide worship for the widespread settlements in Clarke, Shenandoah, Warren, Page, Berkeley, Jefferson, and Morgan counties. The main strength of the Baptists east of the Blue Ridge was in Fairfax and Fauquier counties and in Frederick

²⁸. Taylor, Ten Churches, (1823), pp. preface, 4, 8.

County west of the mountains. The Baptist preachers stopped everywhere they could get people to listen. They used to the fullest extent a strong emotional preaching with psychological excitement. Their appeal was to the uneducated, who were more numerous on the frontier. The Anglican and Presbyterian appeal was more to an educated class and they lost some of their zeal because of this.²⁹

Joseph Redding, the elder of the two Reddings, had been preaching for about twelve months and in 1772 decided to move his small family to South Carolina. John Taylor felt he should be with Joseph Redding, so he went to live with them. Here he felt a greater desire to preach and the association and work with his close personal ministerial friend convinced him the Christian Gospel furnishes the hope for salvation. They returned in the Spring of 1773 with fresh and renewed efforts for work in Virginia.³⁰

South River Church called Taylor to preach before their congregation. A joyous occasion came for him when the presbytery composed of Lewis Craig, John Picket, John Koonitz, Joseph Redding, and Theoderick Noel ordained Taylor as a traveling minister. He could preach but not administer the ordinances or have a regular congregation.

29. Brydon, Virginia's Mother Church, pp. 104, 105, 117, 118, 122, 178, 180, 190.

30. James Taylor, Virginia Baptist Ministers, p. 231; Taylor, Ten Churches, (1823), pp. 8, 298.

The early Baptist ministers seldom had any training or received pay for they were usually farmers with a call who wanted the people to know how they felt. In a sense, they were "Lay" preachers.

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To encourage the efforts of all religious groups, Jefferson in 1776 introduced a bill of religious freedom which didn't immediately become law but paved the way for its future adoption. Baptists naturally supported any move for the cause of religious liberty because they had not always been permitted to worship as they pleased. Their preachers had difficulty in getting licenses since the county claimed not to have the power to do this. Before the Revolution, the preacher had to have the certification of two magistrates that people requesting him to be licensed were inhabitants of the community and legal signers of a petition to that effect. Official prejudice was shown in some cases.

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Rev. James Ireland, pastor of the South River Church, had to fight for every religious gain he made. The established church had a special concern for this minister. The persecutions in the west never were as wicked as some in

31. Taylor, Ten Churches, (1823), p. 298; James Taylor, Va's Baptist Ministers, p. 231; Carlyle Baley, The Old Northwest-Pioneer Period 1815-1840 (Indianapolis, 1950), II, p. 436.

32. Robert G. Torbet, A History of the Baptists (Philadelphia: The Judson Press, 1950), pp. 256, 258, 259.

eastern Virginia but attempts were made to drive Ireland and his followers out of the country.³³

As a traveling minister, John Taylor often faced the uncontrollable anger of the disorderly crowds. Twenty young men on one occasion in the early 1770's broke up his service by threatening him with their weapons.³⁴

There was a great need for preaching nearly a hundred miles from the South River Church in Hampshire County, Virginia which later became Hardy County, West Virginia. Taylor and Redding visited this region and soon a church was raised on Lunies Creek. There were some conversions so Taylor asked Marshall to come there. Marshall came and baptised two men. A second visit by him followed in which the church was officially constituted and Redding ordained as its pastor. Taylor spent most of his time here so it was natural that his membership was moved to Lunies Creek Church. This church grew to about a hundred members within a short while.³⁵

Near the opening of the Revolutionary War in Virginia,

33. T. K. Cartmell, Shenandoah Valley Pioneers and Their Descendants (Winchester: Eddy Press, 1909), p. 209.

34. Ibid., p. 120.

35. James Taylor, Va. Baptist Ministers, p. 119; Robert B. Semple, A History of the Rise and Progress of Baptists in Virginia (Richmond: John Lynch, 1810), p. 191; Rev. C. W. Beale, (ed.), Rise and Progress of Baptists in Virginia (Richmond: Pitt and Dickinson, 1894), p. 250; Taylor, Ten Churches, (1823), pp. 16-17; Garnett Ryland, The Baptists of Virginia 1699-1926 (Richmond: Virginia Baptists Board of Missions and Education, 1955), p. 119.

Taylor and Redding often visited a place called "George's Hills" on the Maryland side of the Potomac River. They continued to range through the mountains in almost every section around Lunies Creek in their sincere and unwearying devotion to people. They were dealing with plain ordinary folk who found a warm place in their hearts for their religious needs.³⁶

Explorers and hunters moved across the Allegheny Mountains prior to the Revolution; most noted of these was Daniel Boone who with his brother, Squire Boone, a Baptist minister, led this expansion. The settlement of Boonesboro was established by 1775 through the effort of the Boone family. Several other Baptist ministers came about this same time. John Taylor spent the winter of 1779 in Kentucky.³⁷

These Baptists were first to promote public worship in Kentucky. The hard, back-woodsmen pioneers and hunters faced the unknown with a will to work which was expressed in their heart warming message told in the language of the frontier. Lord Dunmore's victory over the Indians in 1774 at Point Pleasant encouraged settlement in Kentucky but

36. Torbet, A History of Baptists, p. 140; Taylor, Ten Churches, (1823), pp. 16-17.

37. Torbet, A History of Baptists, p. 247, 372; William Warren Sweet, Religion on the American Frontier (Chicago: University Press, 1931), pp. 18-19.

still the Chickasaws and the Shawnees were powerful in the west.³⁸

The Revolutionary War began and excitement filled the west. Men were needed in the Virginia militia. John and his father were listed in a census taken in 1775 of the men living in lower Dunmore County. They were placed under the call of Joseph Bowman. News reached South River and Lunies Creek telling how settlers in the back settlements on the Monongohela River were exposed to savage fury. Taylor contemplated passing over the Alleghany mountains and visiting this region.³⁹

The war was in its full blast as Taylor and Whitman, his traveling companion, left for Tigers (Tygart) Valley on the main branch of the Mononogohela. It was a two day journey of over fifty miles in mid winter, with snow knee deep in the mountains. People in Tigers Valley lived in a fort and only one Baptist woman was found among them. In another days journey they reached the Greenbrier settlement but were discouraged here too. The people did not welcome religion so they returned a different route with little desire to revisit the region.⁴⁰

38. Bendict, General History of the Baptists, p. 389; Torbet, History of Baptists, p. 372; N. S. Shaler, Kentucky A Pioneer Commonwealth (Boston, 1844), pp. 47, 67.

39. Taylor, Ten Churches, (1823), p. 18; Caius Marcus Brumbaugh, Revolutionary War Records (Washington, 1936), I, p. 605.

40. Sprague, American Pulpit, pp. 153-154; Taylor, Ten Churches, (1823), pp. 21-22, 24.

A deep concern was still felt for these forsaken and seemingly doomed people. In June of 1776, Taylor decided to take a more extensive tour and visit the settlements on the five main branches of the Monogohela River. These were the Yohogamy (Youghicheny), the Cheat River, Valley Fork, Buckhannon, and West Fork. Taylor and Wood, a newly baptised friend, departed for this journey. They reached the Cheat River where a little settlement of Baptists, who had moved from Shenandoah, were now living. According to Taylor, they worshipped awhile here before moving on thirty more miles to a large settlement where the Cheat and Monogohela rivers meet. There was a Baptist church here under the leadership of John Corbly. It was here that Wood was mistaken for a preacher and the Congregation surprised when Taylor, who looked much younger than twenty three, arose to preach. His sermon was well received and when they left the people cried and gave them several dollars as a token of their friendship.⁴¹

From there they went to the West Fork River, where some people had built homes outside the fort. The many pioneers living in these separate cabins near the main stockade would load their pack horses with their belongings and head for the fort if Indians threatened. Soon they went further to

⁴¹ Taylor, Ten Churches, (1823), pp. 18-22; Clark, A History of Kentucky, p. 97.

the Buckhannon River, where a settlement of thirty families were gathered. These people lived either in houses grouped together or in forts for safety. They were anxious to hear preaching and risked their lives in order to hear it.⁴² More meetings followed on their return journey.

Encouraged by this, Taylor undertook several more tours with his beloved friend, Joseph Redding. They ranged through the Appalachian Mountains into the fertile and pleasant valleys interspread beside the Shenandoah, Potomac, Monongohela and Greenbrier rivers and into regions ministers had never previously penetrated.⁴³

In the winter of 1776 a number of regular troops were stationed in Tigers Valley as a guarding agency to the frontier and as a protection to those traveling. Some of the soldiers came to the services Taylor conducted and seemed affected by what he preached. This valley became a temporary home where Taylor traveled to and from the Greenbrier section.⁴⁴ Taylor may be classified as a chaplain because he took interest in military personnel particularly during the American Revolution in the winter of 1775-76.

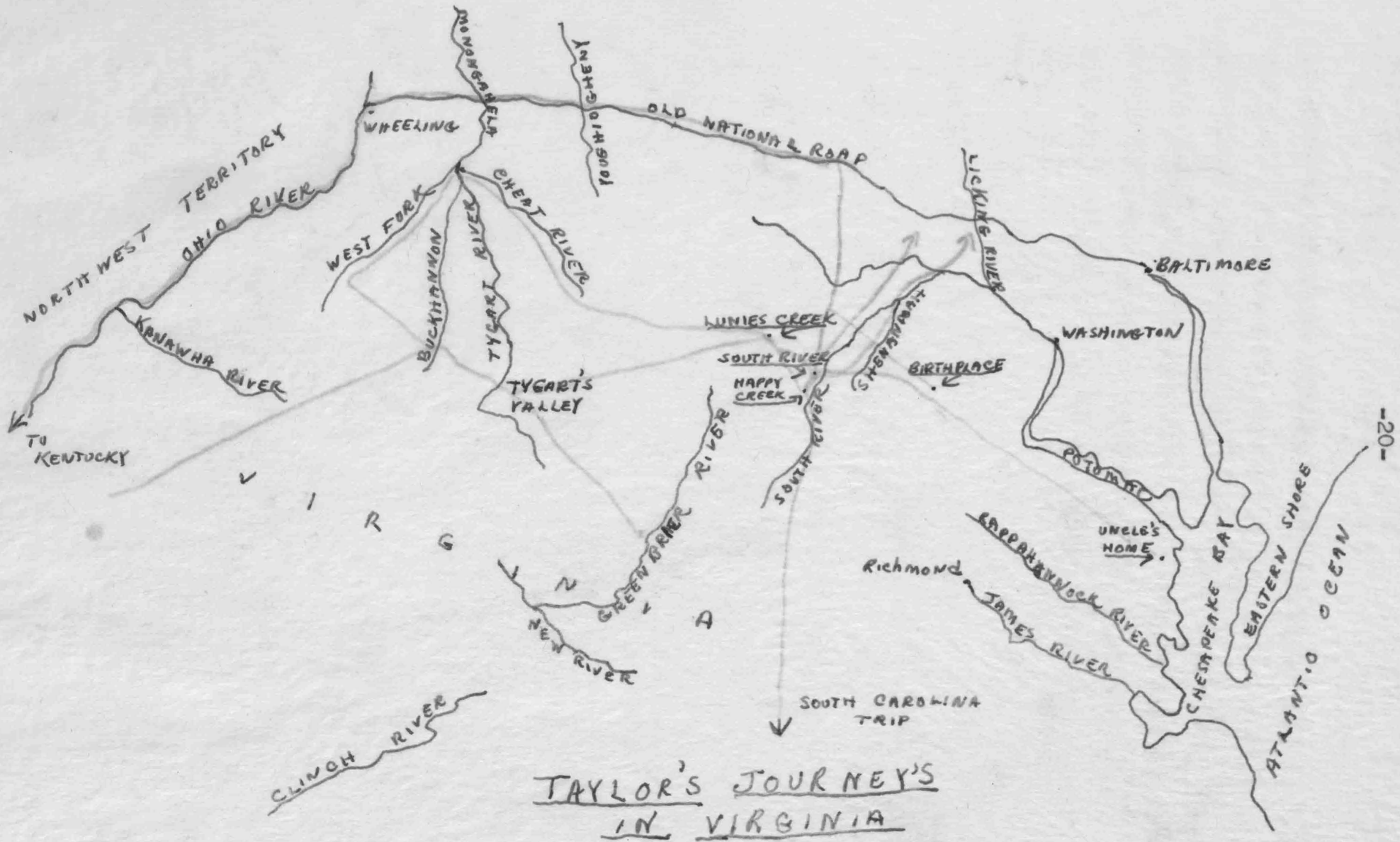
John Taylor's early ministerial life was one full of travel and experiences. He had to struggle to have freedom

⁴². Taylor, Ten Churches, (1823), pp. 21, 22, and 24.

⁴³. Sprague, American Pulpit, pp. 153-154; Thornely, Journal of Nicholas Cresswell, p. 267.

⁴⁴. Ibid., pp. 9, 26-27.

CHART - II



to speak on religious matters. Some people refused to listen and others threatened his preaching, yet during this period many heard this traveling minister for he carried his messages to Maryland, western Virginia and beyond the Alleghenies. During this same period he helped establish Lunies Creek Church and preached to American soldiers stationed in the west.

CHAPTER IV

ORDINATION, MARRIAGE, AND VISITS TO EASTERN VIRGINIA

Redding felt Taylor should be ordained and made capable of administering ordinances. At a meeting of ministers at Shenandoah, he was considered. Ireland and Marshall had moved away, leaving the South River Church without a pastor. Taylor was ordained and given credentials to fill this vacant post in the spring of 1777.⁴⁵

Soon after his ordination, Taylor took a trip east to the Northern Neck, near the Chesapeake Bay, for a two week stay with his uncle, Joseph Taylor, who was a tutor in the home of Robert Carter. Carter enjoyed talking with John Taylor and it was this grandson of "King Carter" who became a Baptist and opened Nomini Hall, his home, for a discussion on the new religious doctrines. Taylor was astonished when the people in this area came long distances to hear a sermon. This was an encouraging stay and when he left, his uncle presented him with his watch, the first he had ever owned.⁴⁶

Returning to South River Church Taylor ministered to English prisoners of war stationed in that region. Two of

⁴⁵. Taylor, Ten Churches, (1823), pp. 9, 26-27; Semple, A History of the Rise and Progress of Baptists in Virginia, pp. 298, 320.

⁴⁶. Eudora Ramsay Richardson (comp.), Virginia A Guide to the Old Dominion (New York: Oxford University Press, 1947), p. 555; Taylor, Ten Churches, (1823), pp. 26, 37, 38.

these men applied to the church for admission. They had been baptised at Albemarle barracks and although they had no letter, the congregation accepted them.⁴⁷

In the autumn of 1782 Elizabeth Kavanaugh became the bride of John Taylor. Elizabeth's great grandfather and great great grandfather were ministers. This daughter of Philemon and Nancy Cave Kavanaugh was a member of the South River Baptist Church and highly respected in their neighborhood. She was born in 1761 and married John when she was twenty one years old.⁴⁸

The little community at South River showed their love for this couple when they voted to give Taylor a salary plus a hundred dollars to purchase things for their home. John had been preaching for ten years but this was the first time he had ever received a salary. He probably made his living prior to this from farming, hunting, and fishing.

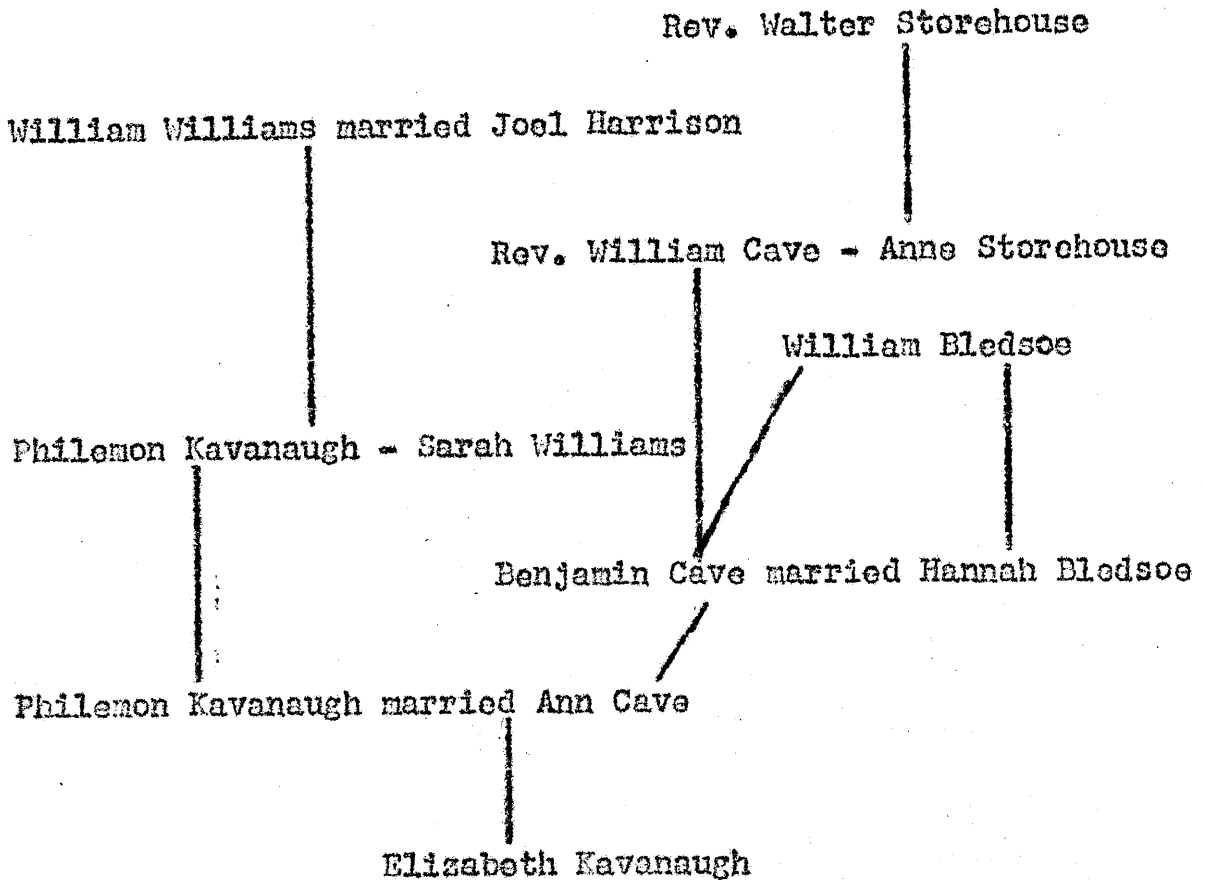
John decided to take another trip to the Northern Neck where he could preach and revisit his uncle Joseph. The people in the east, especially the Carters, were anxious to hear the news from the west and about the journeys of Taylor. The shocking news of his uncle's death came to his

⁴⁷. Taylor, Ten Churches, (1823), p. 9.

⁴⁸. James Taylor, Virginia Baptist Ministers, p. 234; Sprague, American Pulpit, p. 154; Hardin, The Register, XLVII, p. 29 and Vol. 48, p. 314; Taylor, Ten Churches, (1823), pp. 9-10, 39.

CHART 3

ANCESTORS OF ELIZABETH KAVANAUGH*



* This chart based on information from Dorothy Brown Thompson, "Ancestors and Descendants of the Reverend John Taylor," The Register of the Kentucky Historical Society (Frankfort: 1949) XLVII, pp. 31-32.

ears upon arriving in the Northern Neck. Joseph's will was opened and John learned that he was the sole heir to his possessions. This included land, negroes, stock, furniture, and several hundred dollars in cash. The total value of this estate, being about three thousand dollars, came at a time when John needed it most for now he was establishing his home. In spite of his uncle's death, a revival was held over the larger part of the Northern Neck with Taylor baptising many.⁴⁹

Upon his return, John resumed his work with the South River and Lunies Creek Churches. South River Baptist Church was considerably weakened by 1785 when many of its members moved to Kentucky. The worship house was sold to the Presbyterians and the Baptists in 1780 built a new church only two miles from the old. It was located at the cross roads beside a stream and called Happy Creek Church. James Ireland, its first pastor, guided this group until his death. William Marshall became the second pastor but when he moved to Kentucky in 1782 John Taylor became the leader of the congregation. The young minister was with the church less than a year.⁵⁰

It was at South River, the church Taylor first joined,

⁴⁹. Sprague, American Pulpit, p. 154; Taylor, Ten Churches, (1823), pp. 9-10.

⁵⁰. Semple, Rise and Progress of Baptists in Virginia, pp. 298, 320; Taylor, Ten Churches, (1823), p. 12.

COUNTIES (100 Counties)			
Name of County	Population 1950	Location on Map	
ALBEMARLE	52,631	F-11	
ALLEGHANY	28,934	G-8	
AMELIA	7,908	H-12	
AMHERST	20,332	G-10	
APPOMATTOX	8,764	H-11	
ARLINGTON	197,236	D-14	
AUGUSTA	66,438	F-10	
BATH	6,296	F-9	
BEDFORD	29,627	H-9	
BLAND	6,436	I-6	
BOTE TOWN	19,766	G-9	
BRUNSWICK	20,136	J-13	
BUCHANAN	35,748	H-4	
BUCKINGHAM	12,288	H-11	
CAMPBELL	76,604	H-10	
CAROLINE	12,471	F-14	
CARROLL	26,695	J-7	
CHARLES CITY	4,676	H-14	
CHARLOTTE	14,057	J-11	
CHESTERFIELD	46,477	H-13	
CLARKE	7,074	C-12	
CRAIG	3,452	H-8	
CULPEPER	13,242	E-12	
CUMBERLAND	7,252	H-12	
DICKENSON	23,393	I-4	
DINWIDDIE	53,893	I-13	
ELIZABETH CITY	60,994	I-16	
ESSEX	6,530	F-14	
FAIRFAX	106,092	D-14	
FAUQUIER	21,248	D-13	
FLOYD	11,351	I-8	
FLUVANNA	7,121	G-12	
FRANKLIN	24,560	I-8	
FREDERICK	31,378	C-12	
GILES	18,956	H-7	
GLOUCESTER	10,343	H-15	
GOOCHLAND	8,934	G-12	
GRAYSON	21,379	J-6	
GREENE	4,745	F-11	
GREENSVILLE	16,319	J-13	
HALIFAX	41,442	F-10	
HANOVER	21,985	G-13	
HENRICO	287,650	G-13	
HENRY	48,470	J-9	
HIGHLAND	4,069	E-9	
ISLE OF WIGHT	14,905	I-15	
JAMES CITY	13,052	H-15	
KING AND QUEEN	6,299	G-15	
KING WILLIAM	6,710	F-14	
LANCASTER	7,589	G-14	
LANCASTER	8,640	G-16	
LEE	36,106	J-2	
LOU DOUN	21,147	C-13	
LOUISA	12,826	F-12	
LUNENBURG	14,116	J-12	
MADISON	8,273	E-12	
MATHEWS	7,148	H-16	
MECKLENBURG	33,497	J-12	
MIDDLESEX	6,715	G-15	
MONTGOMERY	38,806	I-8	
NANSEMOND	37,577	J-15	
NELSON	14,042	G-10	
NEW KENT	3,995	H-14	
NORFOLK	309,986	J-16	
NORTHAMPTON	17,300	H-17	
NORTHUMBERLAND	10,012	G-16	
NOTTOWAY	15,479	I-12	
ORANGE	12,755	F-13	
PAGE	15,152	E-11	
PATRICK	15,642	J-8	
PITTSYLVANIA	101,162	I-10	
POWhatan	5,556	H-13	
PRINCE EDWARD	15,398	H-11	
PRINCE GEORGE	29,898	I-14	
PRINCESS ANNE	42,277	D-13	
PRINCE WILLIAM	22,612	J-16	
PULASKI	27,758	I-7	
RAPPAHANNOCK	6,112	D-12	
RICHMOND	6,189	G-15	
ROANOKE	133,407	H-8	
ROCKBRIDGE	28,513	G-10	
ROCKINGHAM	49,889	E-11	
RUSSELL	26,818	I-4	
SCOTT	27,540	J-3	
SHENANDOAH	21,169	D-11	
SMYTH	30,187	J-5	
SOUTHAMPTON	6,522	J-14	
SPOTSYLVANIA	24,078	F-13	
STAFFORD	11,902	E-14	
SURRY	6,220	I-15	
SUSSEX	12,785	I-14	
TAZEWELL	47,512	I-5	
WARREN	14,801	D-12	
WARWICK	82,233	J-16	
WASHINGTON	53,490	J-4	
WESTMORELAND	10,148	F-15	
WISE	56,336	I-3	
WYTHE	23,327	I-6	
YORK	11,750	H-15	
TOTAL	3,318,680		

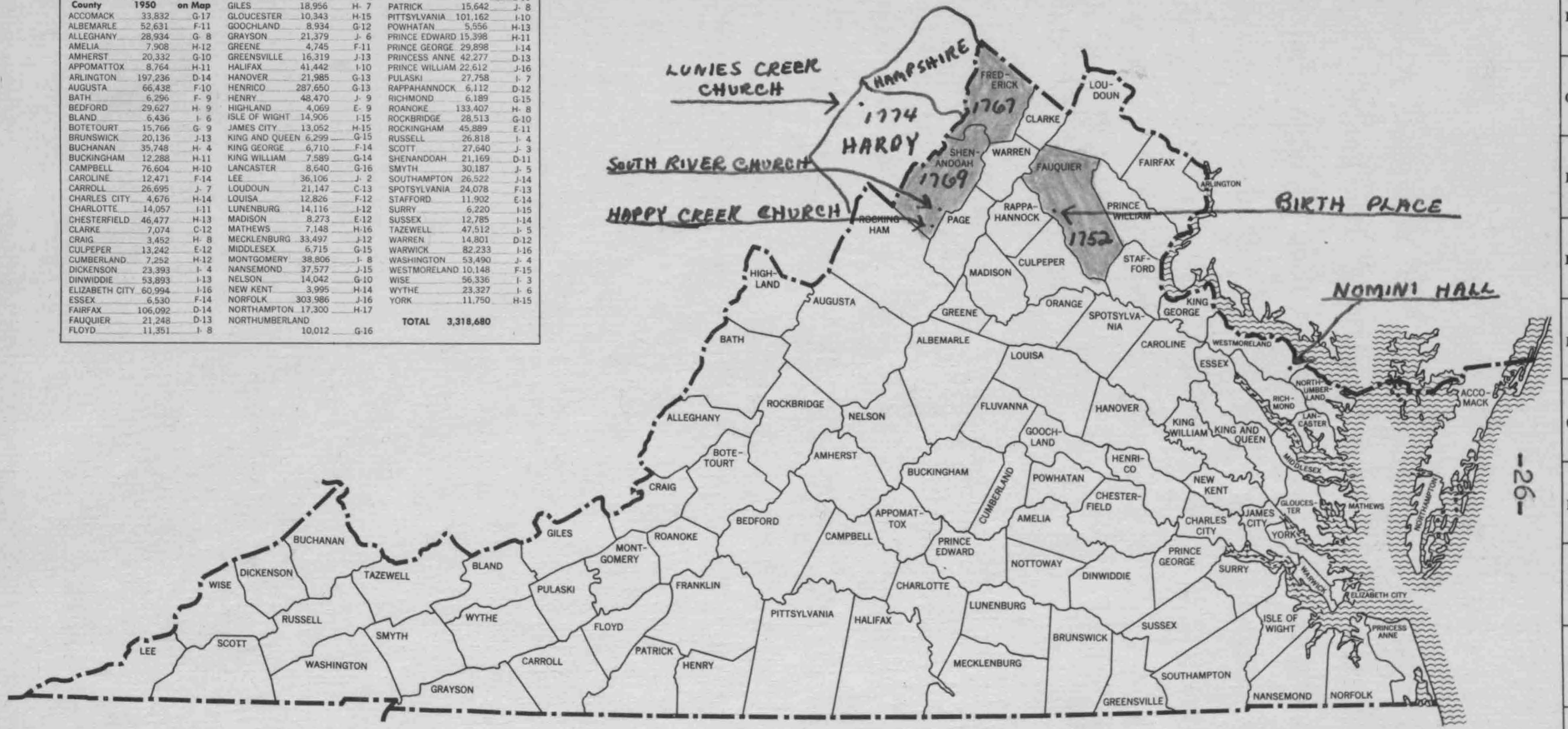
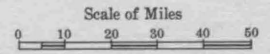


CHART IV
VIRGINIA COUNTIES TAYLOR
LIVED IN

NOTE:

SHENANDOAH COUNTY FIRST NAMED DUNMORE COUNTY UNTIL 1778
 HAMPSHIRE AND HARDY COUNTIES NOW IN WEST VIRGINIA
 HAMPSHIRE COUNTY ORIGINALLY INCLUDED HARDY COUNTY

CLEARTYPE
 TRADE MARK REGISTERED
 COUNTY OUTLINE
 VIRGINIA



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that he took over his first pastorate as an ordained minister. He not only ministered to that congregation but also to prisoners of war stationed near by. Elizabeth Kavanaugh became his wife and help mate, as this young couple worked together in the South River and Happy Creek churches.

CHAPTER V
ON TO KENTUCKY

The Taylors, who were completely satisfied with their association and life at South River, felt it their duty to move to Kentucky in order to provide better for themselves and the expected increase in their family. Friends regretted seeing them leave for it was dangerous to move to Kentucky, a land of wilderness. In the fall of 1783, they headed for Redstone, the usual boating place for people going from the Shenandoah Valley to points west. The Redstone settlements were in Pennsylvania between the Monogahela and the Ohio rivers at what is now called Brownsville. 51

Pittsburgh became a boat building center following the Revolutionary War. Most of the immigrants going west either arrived here or at Redstone, which is south of Pittsburgh beside the eastern bank of the Monogahela River on the old national road leading to Wheeling. Redstone received its name from the creek which is one of the main 52 branches composing the head waters of the Ohio.

51. Thomas D. Clark, A History of Kentucky (New York: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1937), p. 69; Taylor, Ten Churches, (1823), p. 154.

52. Charles Henry Ambler, A History of Transportation in the Ohio Valley (Glendale, Arthur Clarke and Company, 1932), p. 34; O. Ellyson, A Map of the Baptist Churches in Virginia (Petersburg, 1851), from map; John Filson (ed.) The Discovery, Settlement and Purchase of Present State of Kentuckee (Wilmington, 1784), p. 40.

Mileage by water from Pittsburgh to the rapids of the Ohio just west of Louisville was 592 miles. The entire country between Wheeling and Louisville (then Beargrass) where the Taylors were going, was entirely unsettled and subjected to hostile raids. It is interesting to note the average trip in 1791 from the falls of the Ohio to New Orleans without the use of oars and traveling at night, took from twenty five to forty days.⁵³

The flatboat was the most popular craft for moving families because of its usefulness. Having paid passage, John and his wife boarded the favorite flat bottom boat with a group of strangers and started the long water trip. The river being low retarded the speed of the boat. In seven weeks they docked at Beargrass and went to the fort by the river. Here John made up his mind to go eighty miles further to Craig's station on Gilbert Creek in what became Lincoln County near the present day city of Danville, Kentucky.⁵⁴

In a few days they were on their way again. This was

⁵³. Filson, Discovery, Settlement, and Purchase of Kentucky, pp. 116-117; Sprague, American Pulpit, p. 154; James Taylor, Va. Baptist Ministers, p. 234; Taylor, Ten Churches, (1823), p. 10; Toulmin, The Western Country in 1793, pp. 117, 136.

⁵⁴. Ambler, A History of Transportation, p. 34; Taylor, Ten Churches, (1823), p. 10; Leo T. Crisman, "John Taylor Pioneer Kentucky Baptist Preacher and Historian" (typed address to chapel service at Southern Seminary), p. 2.

a big journey for nearly all they owned could be lost. The path was narrow as the small party of the Taylors, four slaves and three pack horses waded through mud, rivers, and streams in cold weather. On the sixth day the party arrived at Craig's station south of the Kentucky River. Ben, the first child of John and Elizabeth, was born February 22, 1784 after they had taken shelter at Craig's station. This son, the oldest of nine children grew up and attended Transylvania University in 1807.⁵⁵

A Baptist Church already existed here for its members had immigrated from Spotsylvania County, Virginia to Kentucky with their pastor, Lewis Craig. Craig's church left Virginia in September of 1781 and between five and six hundred people followed him in forming the largest known body of Virginians ever setting out to Kentucky. Entering Kentucky over Cumberland pass, they first settled in central Kentucky and established Craig's station in December of 1781.⁵⁶

One of the Craig stations was established in 1783 by John Craig, the son of the famous Reverend Lewis Craig of Virginia. They moved from this station to Gilbert Creek and probably helped to form the Gilbert Creek Church.

⁵⁵. Hardin, The Register, XLVII, p. 32; Taylor, Ten Churches, (1823), pp. 10, 11, 14.

⁵⁶. George W. Ranck, The Travelling Church (Cincinnati: Smith Book Company, 1891), pp. 5, 13, 27, 31, 32.

Uniting with this church as soon after their arrival as possible, the Taylors spent from seven to ten months here but John never became its pastor.⁵⁷

Craig's fort was also established in 1783 in the heart of the bluegrass country by John Craig. He brought several families from Bryant's station and built a fort⁵⁸ beside the small Clear Creek about three miles south of the present day town of Versailles. Each individual of his party was given a reward of land for assisting in building the block-house which covered the access to the hill from the creek.⁵⁹

The Taylors moved to Clear Creek in Woodford County in the summer of 1784 where their little sixteen feet square cabin began to take form. It had no floor or furniture but was a welcome shelter. The members of the neighborhood began to contemplate having a church locally. Several councils were held for this purpose and a church constitution written. Soon Taylor led this group into becoming the Church of Christ at Clear Creek and a little wooden church forty by twenty feet was erected. This was the second church John

57. Mable Clare Weaks (comp.), Calendar of the Kentucky Papers of the Draper Collection of Manuscripts (Madison, 1925), pp. 471, 482; Taylor, Ten Churches, (1823), p. 43; Crisman, Address, p. 4.

58. Historical road marker beside site, erected by National Society of the Colonial Dames of America in the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

59. Ibid.

Taylor was connected with while in Kentucky.

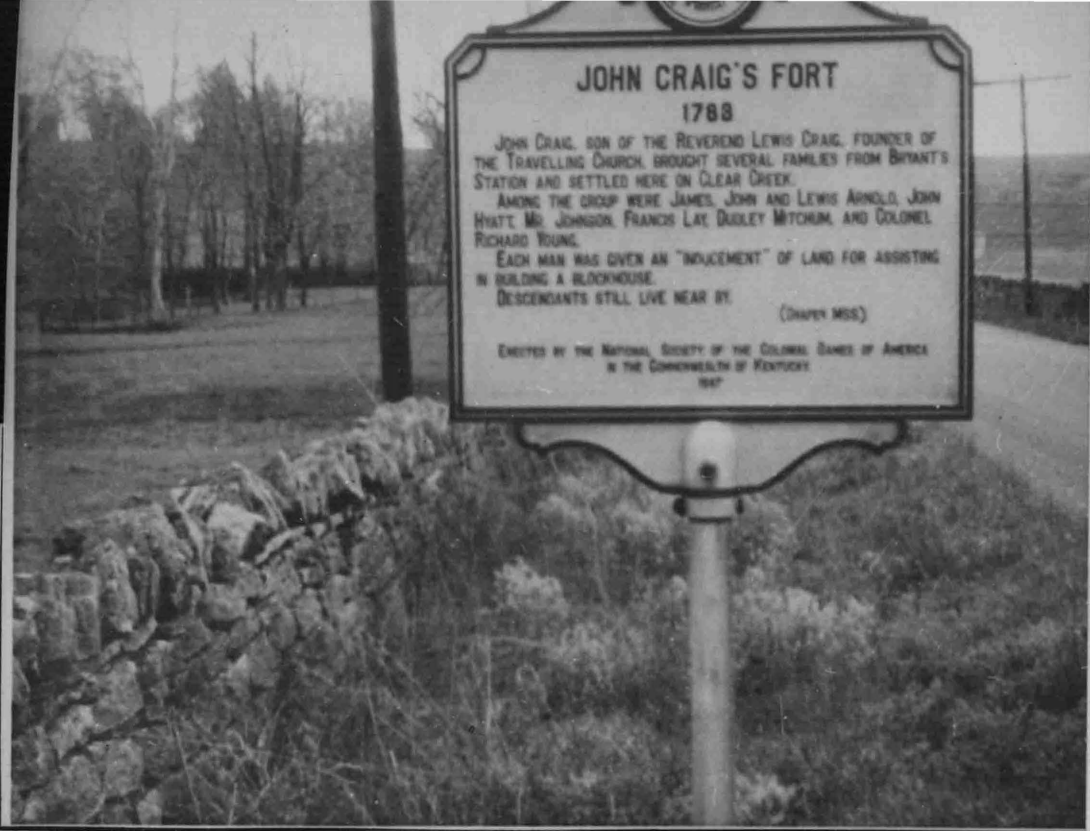
About six miles from their home was the South Elkhorn Church where Lewis Craig was pastor. He had suffered imprisonment in eastern Virginia for preaching but was still in the prime of his life. Joseph and Lewis Craig had brought their traveling church from Virginia and were the first Baptist preachers in Kentucky. Reverend Lewis Craig's congregation arrived in Kentucky in 1871 and settled at the so called "Craig's station" in 1783.⁶¹

The Great Crossing Church was founded in 1785 with John Taylor as its first pastor. Located in what became Scott County, it is about two and a half miles from present day Georgetown, Kentucky. The sixteen members of this church adopted the Philadelphia Confession of Faith which had been previously taken from the London Confession dealing with the imposition of hands and singing of psalms in public worship. The "laying on of hands" was believed to be an ordinance of Christ and was given to all people who were permitted to partake of the Lord's Supper. There had been a controversy over singing in public worship but the

60. Taylor, Ten Churches, (1823), pp. 43, 49, 50, 53; Sprague, American Pulpit, p. 155; William Cathcart, The Baptist Encyclopaedia (Philadelphia: Louis Everts, 1881), p. 1136; Semple, Rise and Progress of Baptists in Va., p. 45.

61. Weeks, Calendar of Ky. Papers from Deacon Manuscripts, pp. 471, 535.

John Craig's Fort and Clear Creek Church



Philadelphia Confession permitted this.

The first pastor of Great Crossing Church, John Taylor, only visited the church once a month due to the tiresome foot journey of about twenty miles. Traveling to and from this church also involved the danger of Indians. This church increased in number and within a short time there were thirty two members.

Taylor's cabin was located near the Elkhorn River, a small body of water flowing in a northwest by west direction into the larger Kentucky River. Surrounding this river was mostly first rate land covered with cane, clover, and wild rye. This section was much in demand and it was here that the Forks of the Elkhorn Baptist Church arose. On June 7, 1785 John Taylor gathered with others to draw up this church's constitution.

Brother Taylor was active in the churches of his neighborhood and continued to improve his cabin. Another child was born in the Taylor family on August 17, 1786 at

62. I. M. Allen, The United States Baptist Annual Register for 1832 (Philadelphia: T. W. Ustick, 1833), p. 186; W. J. McGlothlin, Baptist Confessions of Faith (Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, 1911), pp. 295-297; Isaac Buckus, An Abridgement of the Church History of New England from 1602-1804 (Boston: E. Lincoln, 1804), p. 253.

63. Allen, The U. S. Annual Register for 1832, p. 186.

64. Filson, Discovery, Purchase and Settlement of Ky., pp. 13, 18; Minutes of Forks of Elkhorn Baptist Church, Kentucky, p. 3.

Clear Creek. This boy, Joseph Taylor, followed in his father's chosen profession and became a minister. He attended Transylvania University but was not baptised until he was forty years old. Joseph preached in Franklin and surrounding counties.

The Taylors were now settled in this new environment. They, like other Baptists, had expanded with the frontier as it moved westward. Just as Taylor had experienced the winning of independence, he was now in the midst of the westward expansion which led to the winning of the west. John Taylor frankly tells us he went west in search of prosperity. Perhaps his youthful days of constantly moving west with the frontier reminded him to push on in love of that way of life. Another factor which could have influenced his move was that the opportunities looked bright in Kentucky for Baptists and the need of religion greater. Other churches were well organized in the east and the appeal of Baptists was to the frontier folk who were not subjected to well established churches.

In Kentucky the Taylors found others who had moved west to Craig's station, Gilbert's Creek, and Clear Creek. John Taylor aided in establishing the Forks of Elkhorn Church and became the first pastor of the Great Crossing Church.

65. Hardin, The Register, vol. XLVII, p. 36; Sprague, American Pulpit, p. 155.

CHAPTER VI

THE ELKHORN ASSOCIATION

Soon the people began to see the advantages of an association to gain unity and help for each church. On June, 22, 1785 at South Elkhorn a conference for this purpose was held in which six churches proposed an association. On Friday, September 30th and October 1st of the same year the same six churches reconvened at Clear Creek Church. They formed with Taylor's aid the Elkhorn Association which is the oldest known church association west of the Allegheny mountains. The largest churches in this organization in the beginning were Tate's Creek, Clear Creek, and South Elkhorn but within seven years it was composed of twenty three churches with about seventeen hundred members. It later increased to thirty four churches and was the best organized group of religious faith in the entire area west of the Appalachians. The bounds of the Elkhorn Association were very extensive, taking in all the churches north of the Kentucky River, some south of it, the church at Columbia in the northwest territory, (which is now in Ohio) and a church in the Cumberland settlements in what later became Tennessee.

66. Taylor, Ten Churches, (1823), p. 50; Spencer, A History of Kentucky Baptists 1769-1885 (Cincinnati, 1886), p. 7; Benedict, History of Baptists, p. 391; James Taylor, Va. Baptist Ministers, p. 235; Minutes of the Elkhorn Baptist Association, pp. 1, 3.

This association, interested in any question affecting their churches was a loosely organized theological and ecclesiastical body. The churches in their associational organization meetings made it plain they came together because they saw the advantages of accomplishing more in their Christian work by fellowship and mutual aid. An example of this aid can be seen in the money, ministers, and material aid they provided for destitute churches.⁶⁷

The Elkhorn Association adopted a confession of faith which gave to the churches a statement of a systematic theology. There were to be quarterly meetings which rotated from one worship house to another and also an annual meeting of all churches. It was difficult to have more than one entire associational meeting a year due to the great distance some members had to travel. The annual association meetings were held on the second Saturday in August for a period of three days. News was sent from the association by means of a circular letter.⁶⁸

Rules for the functioning of the association were officially adopted in October of 1789, although they appear to have been used from the beginning. A moderator was elected by show of hands from all those present. All

67. Minutes of the Elkhorn Baptist Association, pp. 2, 3, 7.

68. Ibid., pp. 2-4; Asplund, Annual Register of Baptist Denomination in North America (Southampton County, Virginia, 1791), p. 48.

propositions and motions were debated before the entire group and a conclusion had to be reached on all motions. A motion, however, could be withdrawn at anytime. All outstanding motions had to be made in writing.

The Elkhorn Association corresponded by letter and by delegate when convenient with other associations in other states. They made reports of the number of members in their own association and had figures on those admitted by letter, plus statistical information on marriages and deaths. Each church in the association would send a letter and in most cases a messenger to the annual meeting, reporting the condition of their respective churches and including statistical notations.

Due to the flood of Baptist immigrants chiefly from Virginia, a large number of churches were being established in Kentucky following the Revolutionary War. Two more associations, the Salem and the South River, were in existence by 1785 following a similar pattern as the Elkhorn Association. These people often gathered in large companies for safety when traveling. The various stations already established served as a meeting place. In a few instances the Baptists moved as an entire church. Kentucky seemed

69. Minutes of the Elkhorn Baptist Association, pp. 22-23.

70. Ibid., pp. 10-11; Buckus, An Abridgement of Church History, p. 259.

to be the mecca for this rapidly growing communion.

In August of 1791, the Elkhorn Association named a group to study the question of slavery in the light of the Gospel. The committee discussed religious liberty as provided in the constitution of their district. Much agitation arose among members of various churches on this issue with some withdrawing. The association urged in 1805-06 to refrain from meddling with slavery or political questions of

72

any nature.

The proposal for the printing of John Asplund's book "A Register of the Baptists in North America" came before the Elkhorn Association. John Asplund, a Swede, traveling over the United States in 1790-1791 visited about two hundred and fifteen churches and fifteen associations. His recorded findings show there were three hundred and eight members on February 8, 1790 at John Taylor's Clear Creek Church and fourteen churches in the Elkhorn Association. His book reveals there were forty two churches with three thousand, one hundred and five Baptists in all Kentucky. In comparison, the Elkhorn Association composed one half of the total churches of the state and over one third of

71. Benedict, History of the Baptist Denomination, p. 390; Richard B. Cook, The Story of the Baptists in All Ages and Countries (Baltimore: R. H. Woodward and Company, 1889), p. 263.

72. Minutes of the Elkhorn Baptist Association, pp. 6, 33, 104; Torbet, A History of the Baptists, p. 300.

the complete total of denominational membership.⁷³ There were more Baptists in Virginia than in any other state in the Union in this same year of 1790.⁷⁴

Brother Taylor's activities within the Elkhorn Association were numerous. He represented Clear Creek Church in the organizational meetings and served as moderator of the associational meeting in August of 1786. On numerous occasions he worked on committees to study certain projects. Some of these include: the committee to establish a form for marriages, the committee to investigate into the disagreements among members of South Elkhorn Church, the committee to write circular letters for the association, and the committee of reconciliation between the churches and within the churches. Brother Taylor also preached at least three annual associational sermons, in 1803, 1809, and 1811. As a delegate on several occasions from the Elkhorn Association to other associational meetings, he was able to learn of Baptist work in other areas.⁷⁵

The Elkhorn Association was composed of small struggling congregations which were separated by great distances in some cases. The association seems to have provided a

73. Minutes of the Elkhorn Baptist Association, p. 47; Asplund, Annual Register of the Baptist, pp. 33, 44, 48.

74. Benedict, An Abridgement of the General History, p. 311.

75. Minutes of the Elkhorn Association, pp. 2, 4, 5, 14, 17, 24, 45, 94, 121, 130.

source of guiding unity during the critical period of early Baptist denominational organization in the West. John Taylor was a leader in the Elkhorn Association from the beginning and was a representative to it from several churches in the years to come.

CHAPTER VII

TAYLOR'S JOURNEY TO TENNESSEE AND STATEHOOD FOR KENTUCKY

Baptists had entered and settled in the eastern portion of Tennessee but the middle and western section were practically unsettled. Taylor and a traveling companion, Ambrose Dudley, took an Indian trail over the plains and through unbroken forest in 1791 as they journeyed by horseback into middle Tennessee. These missionaries, wearing only scanty clothing and carrying the Bible and hymn books in their saddle bags, sung hymns of praise as they rode to aid in the establishment of Red River and Sulphur Fork churches. 76

On July 5, 1791 the Red River Church was organized at the mouth of the Red and Sulphur Fork rivers. This was the first Baptist church in middle Tennessee and with the Sulphur Fork church it became an outpost of religion to the expanding frontier. The nearest church was approximately a hundred miles away. 77

76. B. F. Riley, A History of the Baptists in the Southern States East of the Mississippi (Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, 1898), pp. 40, 120; James Sprunt, (ed.), Minutes of the Kehukoy Association (Greenville, no date), p. 6; Torbet, A History of the Baptists, p. 372; Sweet, Dictionary of American Biography, vol. 18, p. 331.

77. Minute Book of the Red River Church, p. 1; Lawrence Edwards, The Baptists of Tennessee with Particular Attention to the Primitive Baptists of East Tennessee (Unpublished thesis, University of Tennessee, May, 1940), p. 33; Riley, A History of Baptists in Southern States, p. 120.

After visitations among the Cumberland settlements, John and Ambrose returned expecting these churches to be part of the Elkhorn Association. These churches became members of the Elkhorn Association but later became part of the Kentucky Association.⁷⁸

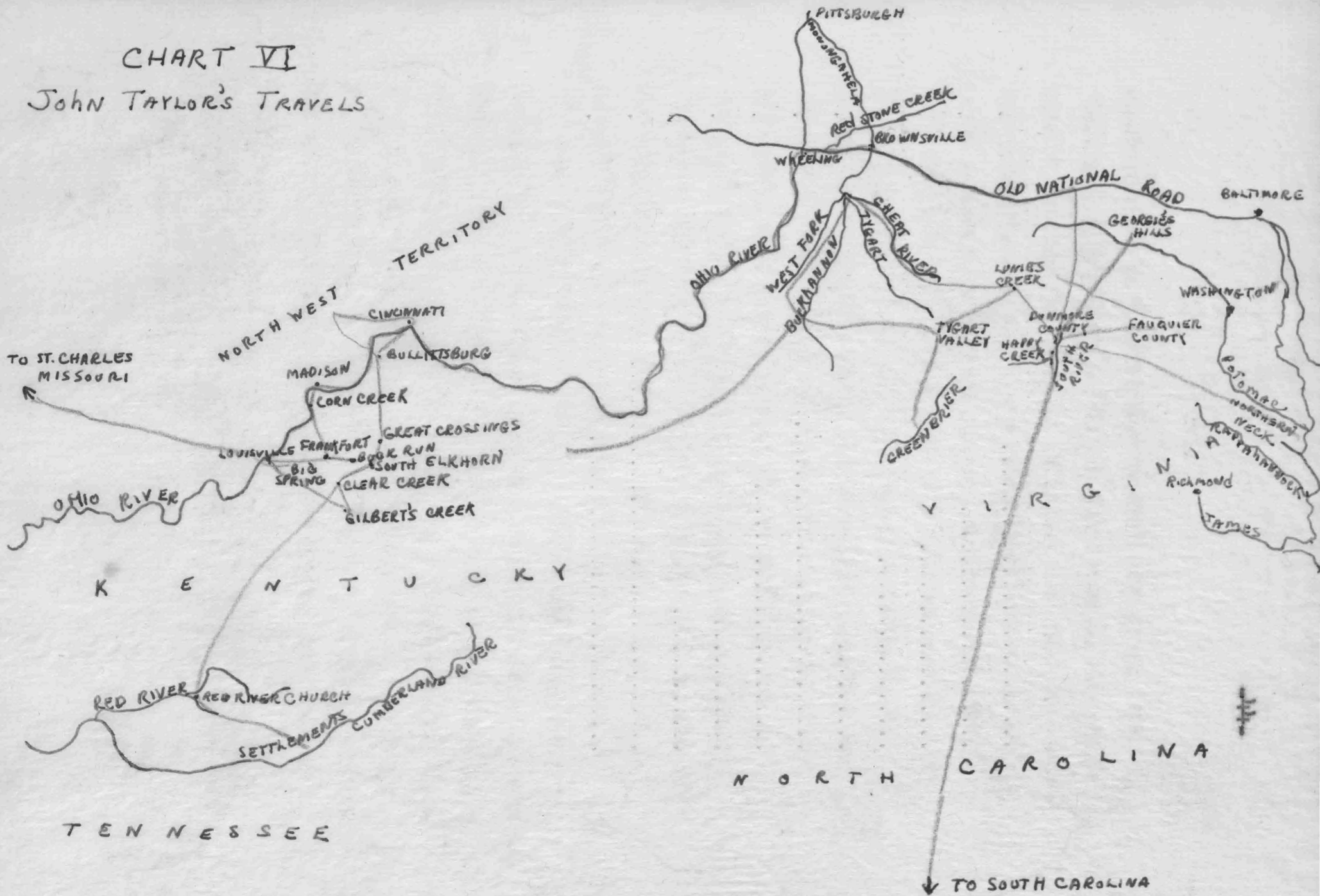
The question of statehood for Kentucky was strong upon John Taylor's return from Tennessee to Clear Creek. Recorded in the "Petitions of the Early Inhabitants of Kentucky to the General Assembly of Virginia", we find five petitions signed by a John Taylor. It seems likely that this John Taylor's signature was that of the Reverend Taylor since in each case he was living in the same locality where these petitions were written and being a man of great influence and high respect his signature would be desired.

These petitions to the general assembly of Virginia bearing Taylor's name among others, date 1785, 1787, 1788, and 1789. The petition of 1785 asked for the laying off of two distinct counties to be made from the existing Lincoln County. In 1787 the people from Taylor's neighborhood complained to the general assembly about the dangers and cruel attacks of the Indians and pleaded for a nearer county seat than that of Bourbon. They also requested a

⁷⁸. Benedict, An Abridgement of the General History, p. 391; Sprunt, Minutes of the Kentucky Association, p. 6.

CHART VI

John Taylor's Travels



strengthening of the frontier against attack and that the "Erection of the district of Kentucky into an Independent State" may soon take place. This petition strongly urged for a legislative body to be formed in Kentucky so they would not have to work under their present conditions.⁷⁹

The two petitions of 1788 both ask for divisions in land. Fayette County was three times as large as any county in Kentucky District and they felt that unless it was divided it would destroy every idea of equality in representation. South Elkhorn is mentioned as the possible boundary. In October of the same year a petition came from Kentucky to the Virginia Assembly requesting for a division of Bourbon County. Both of these requests for land division were granted by the State of Virginia.⁸⁰

The last petition bearing Taylor's name requested a town be officially established by law and a trustee appointed. The need for the laying off of lots seems to have been great. This petition was granted and the town of Milford took form.⁸¹

A census taken in 1791 when Kentucky was a territory of the United States shows 73,677 people in Kentucky including males, females, and slaves. The central portion had

^{79.} James Rod Robertson (com.), Petitions of the Early Inhabitants of Kentucky to the General Assembly of Virginia 1769-1792 (Louisville, 1914), pp. 84, 85, 108-110.

^{80.} Ibid., pp. 114-119.

^{81.} Ibid., pp. 127-128.

the best soil and for that reason more settlers were there. The first Federal census for tax purposes was made in 1790 and shows John Taylor paying taxes on land in Bourbon, Madison, and Fayette counties. As early as 1784 he owned land in Jefferson County.⁸²

Statehood was the goal of many for as early as 1784 Kentucky settlers called a convention at Danville to petition congress for that purpose. The long effort to win statehood was achieved when on June 4, 1792 Kentucky became a state. There were 3,331 Baptists in fifty five churches within Kentucky in the year of its statehood. Fayette, Woodford, Bourbon, Nelson, and Jefferson counties were the most thickly settled regions of the state in 1793.⁸³

Taylor had taken interest in local governmental affairs as well as religious matters. He sought statehood and more efficient division of land. The Red River and Sulphur Fork churches owe much to Taylor for their formation. It was not his nature to settle down to a pastorate

⁸². Toulmin, The Western Country, pp. 89-90; Charles Brunk Heinemann, First Census of Kentucky (Washington, 1940), p. 93; Filson, Discovery, Settlement and Purchase of Kentucky, pp. 151, 295.

⁸³. F. D. Compton, Compton's Encyclopedia (Chicago, 1935), vol. 8, p. 13; Toulmin, The Western Country, pp. 89-90; Torbet, A History of the Baptists, p. 247; Clark, History of Kentucky, p. 136.

INDEX

COUNTIES	POPULA TION 1940
Adair.....	1-10...18,666
Allen.....	1-8...15,486
Anderson.....	7-11...8,936
Ballard.....	0-2...9,480
Barren.....	9...27,959
Bath.....	7-16...14,461
Bell.....	7-14...45,613
Bocane.....	0-11...10,880
Bourbon.....	7-18...17,938
Boyd.....	6-18...42,836
Boyle.....	1-11...17,076
Bracken.....	0-18...9,589
Breathitt.....	0-18...25,946
Breckinridge.....	0-6...17,744
Bullitt.....	0-9...9,511
Buller.....	7...14,571
Caldwell.....	1-9...14,499
Calloway.....	4...19,041
Campbell.....	0-18...71,918
Carlisle.....	0-2...7,950
Carroll.....	0-11...6,657
Carter.....	0-18...25,845
Cass... ..	0-11...19,962
Christian.....	0-6...36,189
Clark.....	7-18...17,968
Clay.....	1-16...83,801
Clinton.....	7-11...10,279
Crittenden.....	0-4...12,115
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Edmonson.....	1-6...11,544
Elliott.....	7-15...9,712
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Fulton.....	0-8...15,418
Gallatin.....	0-11...4,307
Garrard.....	0-18...11,910
Grant.....	0-8...9,476
Graves.....	0-2...21,782
Grayson.....	0-8...17,468
Green.....	1-10...12,321
Greene.....	0-15...24,617
Hancock.....	0-7...37,030
Harlan.....	0-9...29,108
Harless.....	0-15...75,478
Harrison.....	0-18...15,124
Hart.....	0-9...17,838
Henderson.....	0-9...37,030
Henry.....	0-10...18,220
Hickman.....	0-2...9,148
Hopkins.....	1-5...27,798
Jackson.....	0-18...16,338
Jaffarson.....	7-8...368,828
Jessamine.....	0-12...12,174
Johnson.....	0-18...25,772
Kenton.....	0-18...59,380
TOTAL.....	2,845,687

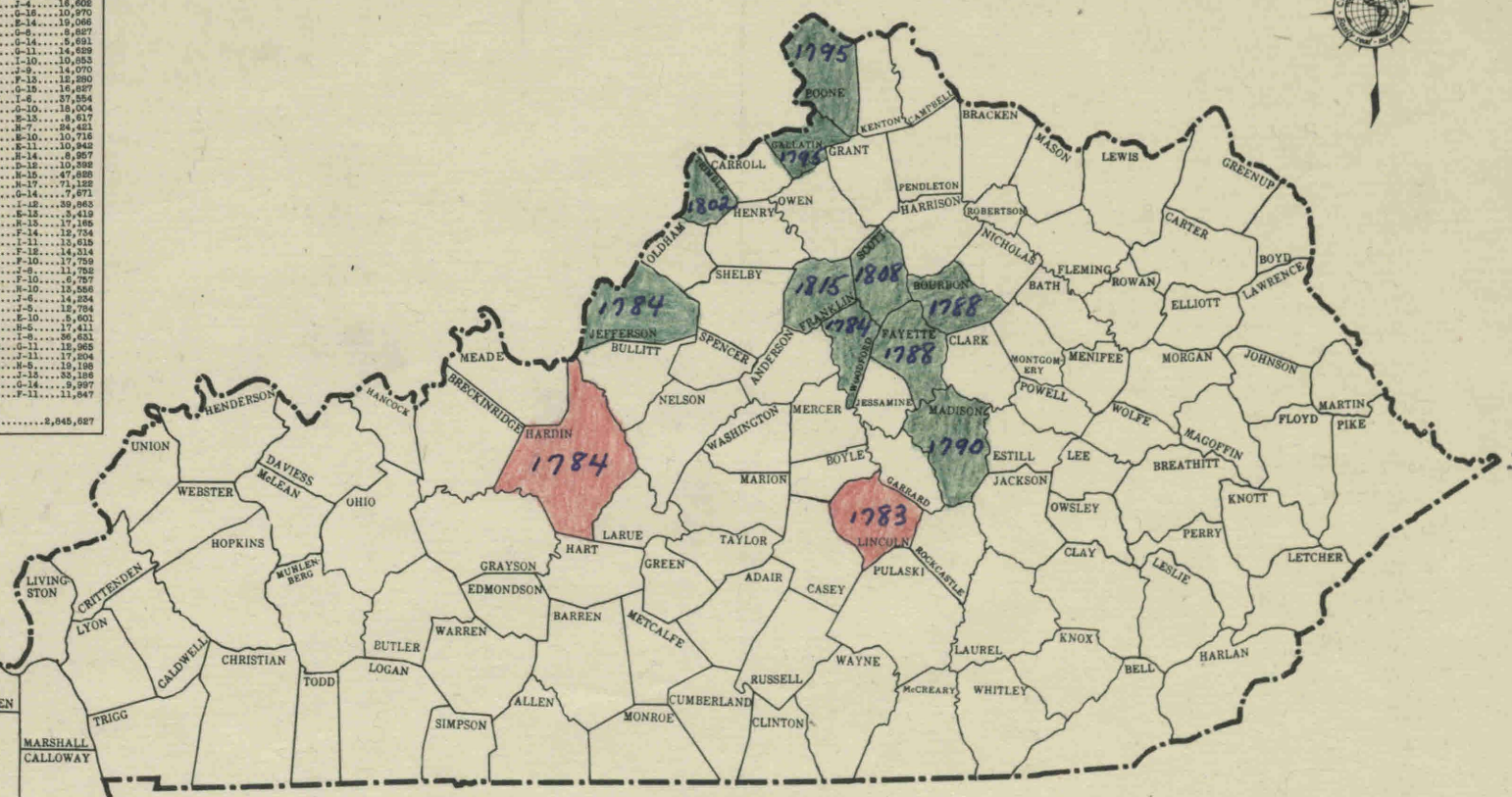


CHART VII

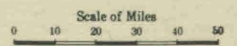
JOHN TAYLOR'S LAND HOLDINGS

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for his most profitable work was that of an itinerant evangelist.

CHAPTER VIII
THE GREAT REVIVAL

The "Great Awakening" spread from Virginia to Kentucky with the impact starting in the Elkhorn Association and later affecting churches in North Carolina. It improved speech, promoted education, increased respect for law, and encouraged sobriety throughout the South by its emphasis on the individual thinking for himself and living a clean life.⁸⁴

Taylor preached in his own cabin and those of his neighbors to begin the first recorded revival in the northern half of Kentucky. This revival increased the membership of his own church, Clear Creek, and led to the spread of the first real religious revival in the Kentucky region.⁸⁵

John Taylor's visitation evangelism was based on Acts 20:20 "I taught you publicly and from house to house." This inspired program was successful. This movement had far reaching effects for it encouraged the union of the Separates and Regular Baptists. The Union of these two sects took place in 1801 in the midst of the "Great Revival" of

84. Torbet, History of the Baptists, pp. 247-249; Francis Bulter Simkins, The South Old and New (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1947), p. 77.

85. Spencer, History of Kentucky Baptists, p. 58; Cathcart, The Baptist Encyclopaedia, p. 1136; Taylor, Ten Churches, (1823), pp. 66, 68-69; Crisman, Address, p. 5.

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1800-1803.

The Regular Baptists had adopted as their creed the Philadelphia Confession of Faith which was Calvinistic in theology whereas the Separates had no public confession of faith, insisting the Bible alone was their authority. A centralization of authority and organization can be seen in the Regular Baptists but the Separate Baptists were autonomous. In the presentation of the Gospel these two bodies differed. The Separates evangelistic zeal was characterized by mannerism of voice and gestures whereas the Regulars used exposition rather than exhortation. The popular idea had even a further difference between these bodies in that the Separates appeared ignorant and poor but the Regulars were made up of town people with a higher educational standard.⁸⁷

In the union the two church groups took on a new name: "The United Baptists". The Separates accepted the Regular Baptist Confession of Faith, but they were not strictly bound by the document for church government was to be in the hands of individual churches. The compromise absorbed the Arminian views among the Separates and the Calvinistic creed

86. Spencer, A History of Kentucky Baptists, p. 58; Cathcart, Encyclopaedia, p. 1136; Torbet, History of Baptists, p. 247; Taylor, Ten Churches, (1823), pp. 68, 69.

87. Buckus, An Abridgement of Church History, p. 253; Torbet, The History of the Baptists, pp. 273, 241, 242.

of the Regulars.

John Taylor was a Separate Baptist while in Virginia but this seems to be more by chance rather than conviction for the Separate Baptists were more numerous in that region. He found his inspiration in the Bible and never was, however, a strong creed advocator. Becoming a Regular while in Kentucky, Taylor's support was behind the movement for he wrote a circular letter to the North Bend Association in which he asked for the long enjoyment of happiness and general union of the Baptists. A feeling of pride and solidarity was soon with the Baptists by this union for they knew of their common struggle for religious freedom and the necessity for revival.

The "Great Revival" also brought prosperous days to the Elkhorn Association, for in 1801 an addition of twelve more churches took place when 3,011 members were added to Baptist ranks. Many ministers baptised from two to four hundred each as about ten thousand became Baptists within a three year period. By 1802 there were 14,076 communicants in Baptist churches within the boundaries of Kentucky.

88. Torbet, History of the Baptists, p. 249; Sprague, American Pulpit, p. 158.

89. Taylor, Ten Churches, (1823), p. 20; Taylor, Campbellism Exposed, p. 36; Torbet, History of the Baptists, p. 247; Bailey, The Old Northwest, pp. 291, 400.

90. Benedict, History of the Baptist Denomination, pp. 391, 400; Buckus, An Abridgement of Church History, p. 258.

CHAPTER IX

THE BULLITTSBURG AND CORN CREEK CHURCHES

Over ten years were spent in the church of Clear Creek with the Taylor family increasing in size. John and Elizabeth now had four children, two boys and two girls. The increasing size of his family was one factor which led John to sell his present land and purchase around three thousand acres of land on the Ohio River near the mouth of the Miami River in what later became Boone County, Kentucky. The area around Clear Creek was thickly settled and three additional churches had been formed by the Clear Creek Church. Other ministers were living in the neighborhood and Taylor felt they could take his place.⁹¹ Perhaps his love for unsettled country was another reason for moving.

In the Spring of 1795 the family made the move to Boone County a practically unsettled area. John joined the small church at Bullittsburg in April 1795 which had only thirteen members. A young unordained minister, named Duease, served as pastor of this church and under the guidance of Taylor he was ordained and became one of the most acceptable preachers in that locality.⁹²

91. Taylor, Ten Churches, (1823), pp. 76-80; Semple, Rise and Progress of Baptists, p. 415.

92. Taylor, Ten Churches, (1823), pp. 81-82, 85, 89; Benedict, History of the Baptists, p. 391.

Taylor preached in the Bullittsburg Church and conducted revivals in that general area for about a year. He crossed the river to the Ohio site and carried out missionary duties in the northwest territory along the river. Cincinnati was arising as a new town at this time.⁹³

Continuing to grow, the Bullittsburg Church within a six year's period had about two hundred members. The members who were scattered from this central worship house began to contemplate a new church. Twenty people, under the leadership of Benjamin Garnet, a young preacher, petitioned the Bullittsburg Church for this purpose. The request was granted and the new church named Middle Creek was started. At first the meetings were held in homes but later a frame meeting house was built and this congregation reached the strength of the older church.⁹⁴

John Taylor later writing of the Bullittsburg Church said it produced more preachers than any other church he had ever known. There were seven unordained ministers in the church but only Duease and Taylor were ordained. Harmony among the group made this growing church not only the nursery of ministers but the mother of many other churches. Later these churches organized in the community

93. Taylor, Ten Churches, (1823), pp. 82, 88, 90, 95, 98.

94. Ibid., pp. 95-97.

the North Bend Baptist Association.

The Church of Bullittsburg was well supplied with ministers and John felt his call to service at a church he had previously visited called "Corn Creek." He joined the Corn Creek Church in 1802 after seven years with the churches around Bullittsburg. Located about sixty miles down the Ohio River was the Corn Creek Church which had been founded October 18, 1800.

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The land the Taylors moved on near the Corn Creek Church was once part of a military tract surveyed forty years previously for Colonel Byrd of Virginia. It was fine land, located on one of the highest bluffs along the Ohio River and called "Mount Byrd". He was now more wealthy than ever before for he owned his land, home, twenty-seven slaves much stock, and was free of debt.

97

Perhaps this wealth had been acquired from sale of his land holdings and gifts but no mention is made of this in Taylor's own writings. According to the Corn Creek Church minutes, Taylor gave the largest amount of money given in several instances to that church.

98

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95. Taylor, Ten Churches, (1823), pp. 95, 97-98, 112-113.
96. Ibid., pp. 89, 113; Corn Creek Baptist Church Minutes, pp. 1, 9.
97. Semple, Rise and Progress of Baptists in Virginia, p. 415; Cathcart, Encyclopaedia, p. 1136; Taylor, Ten Churches, (1823), pp. 86, 88-89; Taylor, A History of Ten Baptist Churches (Bloomfield: Will A. Holmes, 1827), p. 181.
98. Corn Creek Baptist Church Minutes Book I, p. 15 and Book #2, p. 51.



Figure VIII: Upper scene view of the site of Mount Byrd;
Lower scene view of present day Madison, Indiana

Drakeford Gray, a local resident and church member, gave the church on April 6, 1804 about an acre of land around the existing meeting house. This church grew from its original eight members to fifteen members when John and his wife joined becoming its sixteenth and seventeenth members. It was here in Trimble County that John was to minister about thirteen years, the longest of his stay at any one of the ten churches he was directly connected with.⁹⁹

Taylor's leadership can be clearly seen for his name is constantly reappearing in the Corn Creek Church minutes. He served as moderator of the monthly business meetings on five occasions during the years of 1813, 1814, and 1815. He was appointed as a messenger to the Long Run Association in addition to his preaching and helpful financial support to the church. The Taylor's second son, The Rev. Joseph Taylor, preached in this church in 1832 and 1833 and John also returned to preach in January of 1833.¹⁰⁰

At Mount Byrd the Taylor's youngest two children, Eliza and Sally were born. Eliza died in infancy and Cove Taylor, their youngest son, drowned on August 10, 1810 when he was ten years old. This left a total of seven living

99. Will Deed Book X Gallatin County, Kentucky, 1804, p. 180; Corn Creek Baptist Church Minutes, p. unnumbered; Taylor, Ten Churches, 1827 edition, p. 181.

100. Corn Creek Minutes Book #1, pp. 12-14, 17-18; Book #2, pp. 51, 57-58.

101

children in John and Elizabeth's family.

Present day Corn Creek Church is situated on the original site of the old church and the foundations are said to be of the old church, although the frame structure has been destroyed several times by fire. The graveyard beside the church reveals the graves of several of the first members, including Presley Gray and Gape Coleman. ¹⁰² Corn Creek still flows at the foot of the knoll on which the church is situated.

101. Thompson, The Register, XLVII, p. 42 and Vol. 48,
p. 314¹/₂.
102. Corn Creek Baptist Church Minutes, Book #2, pp.
1, 12.



Figure X
Corn Creek Church

CHAPTER X

RETURN TO CENTRAL KENTUCKY

About seven miles northeast of the Corn Creek Church the town of Madison came into being. Soon a large number of negroes came into this town which had sprung up on the opposite side of the Ohio River in present day Indiana. Taylor states that this growing town across the river within view of his home, Mount Byrd, was one factor which caused him to move. John also felt he had lost the confidence and respect of the people for many seemed to have strong malice towards him because he had preached in the school house. He pushed on again in March of 1815, going to the Forks of the Elkhorn seeking to put his membership in another church. He joined a young church called "Big Spring" located in Woodford County. There was a warm atmosphere here but he could not forget Mount Byrd for his children still lived there.

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Living about six miles from Big Spring Church, the Taylors at first enjoyed the fellowship of this congregation under the leadership of Silas Noel. They soon discovered the church was really somewhat divided due to a pamphlet published by one of its members, Judge Davidge. The Judge was a licensed preacher of this church and his

103. Taylor, Ten Churches, (1823), pp. 119, 128; Corn Creek Church Minutes, p. 19.

pamphlet showed strong elements of the Arminian doctrine. This departure from the theological norm to hyper-calvinistic doctrines bothered John Taylor and others.¹⁰⁴

John thought it was his duty to bring the question of the doctrinal beliefs expressed in this pamphlet to the attention of the congregation. Taylor in January of 1816 had his question of the judge's pamphlet turned down for the congregation felt it was contrary to good order. The Elkhorn and two other associations took up this matter, however, and overwhelmingly condemned the doctrine found in the pamphlet.¹⁰⁵

In nearby Frankfort in Franklin County a number of Baptists were contemplating establishing a new church. They sought Taylor and he preached in the little church which at first met anywhere they could get out of the weather. Sometimes this was in the courthouse, senate chamber, or assembly hall. Later Methodists, Presbyterians, and Baptists all shared alternating a house which they used for a church.¹⁰⁶

John Taylor decided to unite with the Frankfort Church for it was more convenient to his home and he saw it as a

^{104.} Taylor, Ten Churches, (1823), pp. 129, 130, 131, 133.

^{105.} Ibid.

^{106.} Ibid., pp. 130, 134-135; Semple, History of the Rise and Progress of Baptists in Virginia, p. 417.

good opportunity to establish a permanent Baptist church in that town. He had been with Big Spring Church in Woodford County for ten months and on January 7, 1816 his letter was accepted in the Frankfort Church.¹⁰⁷

Taylor never became pastor of the Frankfort Church although he preached there on many occasions. The life of the urban preacher did not appeal to him so he took his letter from this church in January 1818 after having been a member about two years.¹⁰⁸

It was the Taylors usual custom to join another church when they took a letter of dismissal. John seems to have been the organizer of the Buck Run Church located about five miles southeast of Frankfort. He was present at its first meeting on Saturday, January 31, 1818 only a week after he had left the Frankfort Church. When the church was officially constituted John and Elizabeth Taylor were the first among twenty one to give their letters for admission. Benjamin Taylor, his oldest son, requested to join by letter from the Great Crossing Church.¹⁰⁹

Perhaps it was Taylor's dominant personality that led him to have a proprietary interest in all matters at Buck Run. He seems to have written its covenant, showing the

107. Taylor, Ten Churches, (1823), pp. 130, 133.

108. Ibid., p. 135; Buck Run Baptist Church Minutes, p. 1.

109. Taylor, Ten Churches, (1823), pp. 136-138; Buck Run Minutes, p. 1.



Figure XI
Buck Run Baptist Church

compact agreement between the members of the church and their responsibility in witnessing was printed in John Taylor's later writings. He had regarded it as one of his best efforts. It had been unanimously agreed to by the members. ¹¹⁰

When John was called as pastor of the Buck Run Church in early 1818, every member gave his approval. He preached once a month and administered the ordinances. In a short time due to a revival, the church had approximately sixty members. A snug little brick church forty by thirty feet was built to house the rapid growing congregation. The fact that there were only a few rich men in this congregation and only a very few colored folk was seen by Taylor as a healthy condition. By 1827, however, there were forty nine negroes in this church which made up one third of its congregation. ¹¹¹

Only a mile from the church was an old stone house which served as a private school. This school, near Woodlake, Kentucky was built on land said to have been given by John Taylor and has been in continuous use since 1808. This is one of the oldest buildings for school purposes west of the Alleghanies. still in use.

110. Buck Run Minutes, p.1; Thompson, The Register, vol. 48, p. 292; Taylor, Ten Churches, p. 137; Crisman, Address, p. 9.

111. Taylor, Ten Churches, pp. 143, 144; Taylor, Ten Churches (second edition), p. 207.

It was in the area around the Buck Run Church which the
Taylors were to spend the remainder of their lives.¹¹²

¹¹². Thompson, The Register, vol. 48, p. 293.

CHAPTER XI

MISSIONS AND SLAVERY BECOME VITAL ISSUES

The development of the missionary movement was a major concern of John Taylor in his early days as pastor of Buck Run Church. On October of 1813 in Richmond, Virginia, a missionary society was formed and it was only a year later that one modeled like this one was created at South Elkhorn in Kentucky. Luther Rice, one of the first missionaries to the east, who had visited Boston, New York, Baltimore, Washington, and Richmond, now came to Kentucky to give his life to the missionary cause of that state. ¹¹³

The Baptist general missionary convention met for its second meeting on 1817 and plans were drawn up for home missions in the west. At first, the western churches seemed favorable to this plan but suddenly it was opposed causing divisions of opinion. John Taylor from the beginning opposed this mission plan with William Thompson of Kentucky, David Parker of Tennessee and Alexander Campbell in the Ohio Valley. Campbell expressed the fear of the missionary societies dominating the churches and praised his friend, Daniel Parker, who also attacked the societies. His comments were not only orally given but also expressed

113. Semple, History of the Rise and Progress of Baptists, p. 415; Cathcart, Encyclopaedia, p. 1136; Taylor, Ten Churches (1827), p. 181.

in The Christian Baptist a newspaper of which he was the
114
editor.

John Taylor observed the work of the missionaries on two visits to Missouri in which he traveled over six hundred miles. In 1818 he visited in the St. Charles area which is about twenty miles northwest of St. Louis. The need of the missionaries seemed, to him, to be greater in other sections than it was in Missouri. He later wrote about the begging and peddling of books and images. The board of foreign missions was no more than an aristocracy, to him, for the creation of it was not by the church but by a
115
few.

John had nothing personally against the missionaries but he feared their activities. Missionaries contacted him and asked for his support in stirring up their cause among the fifteen associations in Kentucky. The cause of winning souls to Christ appealed to him but their true motive seemed more to get money. Where was this money to
116
be sent?

The western people were against missions because of the

114. Torbet, A History of the Baptists, pp. 286-287; Baley, The Old Northwest, p. 456; The Christian Baptist, August 3, 1828, pp. 14, 15, 568.

115. Taylor, Thought on Missions and Biographies of Baptist Preachers (Kentucky, 1819), pp. 10, 14-16, 18.

116. Ibid., pp. 3, 5, 6, 8; Torbet, History of the Baptists, p. 286.

likelihood of the great East gaining financial control of the church by administering missionary funds. This could lead to political control since the East could gain control of the purse strings. The West feared the Indians and didn't like the idea of being friendly to them by preaching the Gospel.¹¹⁷

Taylor probably knew the existing views of westerners and how they wanted their funds to be retained in the West. His outspoken beliefs given in his book, in sermons, and in association with others had an important influence in turning the West against missions. He was not alone on this attack against missions for many believed money taken for missions would be consumed in overhead expenses. Were missionary societies scriptural? What were these better trained clergy of the east up to?¹¹⁸

Another issue facing the church was the slavery one. The Baptists in the South, on a whole, were irritated by what they believed to be northern abolitionists. A center of the anti-slavery agitation was Kentucky where slavery had been an issue since the early days of statehood. The leaders of the Baptists during 1820-1830 sought to maintain peace by a policy embracing moderation.¹¹⁹ Taylor did not

117. Torbet, History of the Baptists, p. 286.

118. Ibid.

119. Baley, The Old Northwest, p. 467; Torbet, A History of the Baptists, pp. 302-303.

state his personal views on slavery in his writings but seemed to avoid the issue.

CHAPTER XII

LIFE AS AN AUTHOR

John, growing old, found much of his zeal lost but his best work was now being done in counseling, visiting in homes, and recording his knowledge in books. He attended meetings, made short preaching tours, and kept up on the events of the various churches. After returning from Missouri, most of his remaining days were spent near Franklin County, Kentucky. ¹²⁰

Fresh from his Missouri journey, John Taylor began to write his Thoughts On Missions which was published in 1819 giving us a picture of this vital issue of that day. The first attack against the missionaries in this book is that they were motivated by the love of money from sale of books and images. His second argument against missions was much stronger in that he felt it was contrary to Baptist principles of local independent government for it resembled a hierarchy with possibilities of domination. ¹²¹

This book, coming from a man who had been mobbed, persecuted, and driven from preaching places in the east was a major cause of the hostility of westerners against the

120. Taylor, Thoughts on Missions, p. 3; James Taylor, Va. Baptists Ministers, p. 236; Taylor, Ten Churches, (1823), pp. 160, 176, 179.

121. Taylor, Thoughts on Missions, pp. 3, 6, 10, 16, 32; B. H. Carroll, The Genesis of American Anti-Missionism (Louisville, 1902), pp. 97, 101, 104.

missionary program. Campbell and Parker joined Taylor in spreading the anti-mission program which led to its success from about 1820 to 1840.¹²²

It is surprising that John Taylor opposed missions since actually the greater portion of his life had been devoted to home missionary labors. Friends tried to persuade Taylor not to publish his prepared pamphlet on missions but he was concerned at that time in driving the missionary society men out of the Baptist association. John's views regarding missions were to change, for in 1830, Taylor told his friend, James Welch, at the Long Run Association meeting that he regretted he had written Thoughts on Missions.¹²³

Taylor's second publication after his Thoughts on Missions was A History of Ten Baptist Churches which came out in 1823. Elder Jacob Creath, a former minister of Clear Creek Church was co-editor of the newspaper, The Christian Examiner, wrote a letter to Taylor telling him he was glad his history was being written. Creath urged Taylor to give impartial consideration of the facts in regard to the Clear Creek Church split and not blame him for any part

122. Carroll, The Genesis of Anti-Missionism, pp. 4, 107.
123. Ibid., p. 104; James T. White, The National Cyclopaedia of American Biography (New York, 1897), vol. IX, p. 283; Taylor; Thoughts on Missions, p. 33; Sprague, American Pulpit, pp. 154, 158-159.

in it. Creath saw Taylor as a qualified writer because of his long and useful life in service to his fellowman.¹²⁴

The History of Ten Baptist Churches gives us a detailed analysis of the churches he was connected with. In telling this story, he gives biographies of ministers of his acquaintance as he had previously done in his book of 1819. Taylor seemed to have concern for recording the facts and a consciousness of history in the making. Ten Churches is a book frequently referred to by historians in making the early histories of West Virginia and Kentucky complete as well as the religious history of the Baptists.

The Christian Examiner, newspaper of Lexington, Kentucky, included several sections taken from Taylor's Ten Churches. One of these by Taylor was "Essay on Paul's First Works." It was printed in answer to public debate on the remission of sin in baptism. Taylor's theological force and influence is shown as he gives the traditional Baptist viewpoint in answer to protests within their ranks. In this essay Taylor points out how God commanded Paul to be baptised and he connects salvation with baptism. His scriptural authority rests on Acts 22:16.¹²⁵

On June 28, 1830 the Christian Examiner included another

¹²⁴. The Christian Examiner, June 28, 1830, vol. 1, no. 8, pp. 94-96.

¹²⁵. Ibid., pp. 174, 175-176.

article from the History of Ten Churches entitled "Elder Taylor's Apostacy." This included some philosophical, metaphysical, and speculative questions. John states in this article that he has asked many questions in his life such as whether Adam was a spiritual or natural man and whether the new birth and regeneration are the same things. He calls these trifles and asked ministers not to spend their time on these questions but only on the fundamental truths. Also in the same issue of the Christian Examiner there is a letter to Taylor from five members of Clear Creek Church in protest to his charges made in his book against brother Creath as having divided the Church. The five signed members of Clear Creek Church said the charges were totally untrue.

Creath, who became a disciple of Alexander Campbell, used his newspaper to oppose Baptist doctrines. John Taylor probably received copies of The Christian Examiner since his oldest son, Benjamin, was a subscriber to the newspaper which sold at a subscription price of one dollar per year.

Ten Churches must have been well received, for in 1827 the second edition was published. Taylor wanted to bring

126. Ibid., pp. 188-191.

127. Ibid., p. 72.

each of the churches up to date in this book and make minor clarifications, plus adding additional biographies and notices of recent deaths. All of the first edition books were sold and the people were now asking for more, so John gladly consented to serve by writing books. It is interesting to note the subscription price of this book was 37¹/₂ cents.¹²⁸

The last of Taylor's published writings came out when he was seventy eight years old. Published in 1830, The History of Clear Creek Church and Campbellism Exposed is important not so much for its continuation of the Clear Creek history as it is for his views on Alexander Campbell. Taylor is bold, forthright and not afraid of hurting people's feelings. He is like a prophet of old, boiling over with something to say for he has held his tongue until he felt he couldn't any longer. John was heart broken to see conditions taking place which were splitting the churches he had tried so hard to build up.¹²⁹

It is easy to understand his feeling for he had established the little church at Clear Creek and watched it grow and it now seemed to be breaking up over the teaching of Campbell. Taylor has agreed with Campbell on missions

¹²⁸. Taylor, Ten Churches (second edition), pp. v, 210, 278, 300, 304.

¹²⁹. Taylor, Campbellism Exposed, pp. preface, 4-5.

but he now bitterly opposed him.

John Taylor was shocked when he read in the Kentucky Gazette of the followers of Alexander Campbell calling themselves "Baptist Reformers." Campbell had been exhibiting himself among the people of Kentucky preaching, debating, and talking for seven or eight years but he had no saving religion, according to Taylor. ¹³⁰

Followers of Campbell came to Clear Creek preaching with much zeal against all creeds and confessions of faith except what is found in the scripture. Clear Creek had adopted the Philadelphia Confession of Faith but some didn't approve of this. Taylor attending the monthly meeting in June, 1823 could see where the church's governmental reins were broken because two parties, those for and against Campbell, had arisen in the church. In the mind of John Taylor, Campbell was better fitted for a political rather than a religious vocation. "Let him leave that sacred trust, to those who know more of it than he does, and let the Church of Christ go on in peace without him" were his words. ¹³¹

Buck Run Church did not escape from the influence of Alexander Campbell nor did the North District Association.

130. Ibid., p. 6.

131. Taylor, Campbellism Exposed, p. 10.

One of the main objections of the Campbellites was to creeds. In Taylor's mind, all religious faiths have been creed holders for even the Lord's prayer, in a sense, is a creed. "I never was a violent creed man" he wrote, "but have always thought, that some given principles in a summary way should be well understood in every church in its constitution."¹³²

Here was a man who had first hand knowledge of Campbell, for he had read his book, had met him, and had heard him preach. Another attack on Campbell came against his great use of the New Testament with little regard for the Old Testament. The point is clearly given in Taylor's book, that Christ himself recommended the Christian scripture of the Old Testament and Campbell was overlooking the moral law written by God on the table of stone.¹³³

Taylor's attack on Campbell did not go unanswered for on Monday, June 7, 1830 front page headlines of Alexander Campbell's newspaper, The Millennial Harbinger, gave a review of John's book. In a seven page review he claims Taylor's object is threefold: to blame all the troubles of the church at Clear Creek to the reformers; to prejudice the public against him; and to produce a permanent division within the Elkhorn Association by attempting to throw out

132. Ibid., pp. 23, 36.

133. Ibid., pp. 44-46, 57-58.

all advocates for reform. Recognizing the power of Taylor's influence, Campbell accuses him of ruling the churches with a hand of iron and trying to exclude the reformers by making a new sect of them.¹³⁴

Alexander Campbell went on in his newspaper article pleading for liberty to worship according to his own conscience and not having to accept a covenant. Taylor, to him, was old with a fading memory and shouldn't try to force his self-willed, dogmatical opinions on others. Campbell claimed he did not recall an interview Taylor claimed he had with him.¹³⁵

He saw Taylor as refusing to change himself and unwilling for others to do so. Taylor's short work, entitled "Paul's First Work," he claimed actually expressed his own views which had been expressed in the debate with W. L. Maccalla, a Kentucky Presbyterian minister. Even John Taylor was deviating from the old accepted doctrines.¹³⁶

An article written by a Mr. Clopton appeared in the Columbian Star newspaper, attacking Campbellism. Clopton quotes Taylor to support his point of view and blames the Christian Baptist, the reformers newspaper, for much dis-

134. The Millennial Harbinger, Monday, June 7, 1830, vol. 1, no. 6, pp. 241, 244-246.

135. Ibid., pp. 246-247.

136. Ibid., p. 263; Torbet, History of the Baptists, p. 289.

137
content.

Some members of Clear Creek Church wrote a letter to the Millennial Harbinger expressing the reasons they left the Clear Creek Church. Their reasons were threefold: first, the unchristian attitude manifested toward them and the open practices against the laws of Christ; secondly, Clear Creek's neglect of the Lord's Supper which had not been administered for at least eighteen months; lastly,¹³⁸ their protest against constant quarrel and dispute.

After reading a pamphlet by John Taylor and finding a charge against Jacob Creath as being a bishop in the new church at South Benson, a "certificate from South Benson Church" appeared in Campbell's newspaper. The statement voluntarily offered by eleven members on June 12, 1830 claimed Taylor's charge was false. Creath, they said, had refused to take charge of the church when John Brown resigned. The split in the Clear Creek Church was not brought about by Creath but because of their insistence¹³⁹ on improper practices.

The newspapers of 1830 were filled with attacks and defense of the reformers within the Baptists ranks. Taylor

137. The Millennial Harbinger, Monday, August 2, 1830, vol. 1, no. 8, pp. 378, 379.

138. Ibid., p. 379.

139. Ibid., p. 380.

apparently was one of the leaders of the old traditional Baptist stand, whereas Campbell was clearly a leader of the so called "reformers." The heated arguments of this year were growing in momentum.

The Elkhorn Association in 1830 refused to recognize a messenger from the North District because of this pro-Campbell views and two churches were dropped from further correspondence. Baptist began to exclude the reformers from their body and the reformers gained control of some associations. Campbell tried to avoid denominationalism in his movement, but in 1830 the separate existence of his followers can be traced.¹⁴⁰

Controversy continued and a large number of Baptists in Kentucky went over to the reformers. It was not until 1844, however, that the Disciples of Christ or so called "Christian Church" was officially established under the leadership of Barton W. Stone and Alexander Campbell.¹⁴¹

¹⁴⁰. Errett Gates, The Early Relation and Separation of Baptists and Disciples. (Chicago: Christian Century Co., 1904), p. 72; Torbet, A History of the Baptists, p. 290.
¹⁴¹. Torbet, A History of the Baptists, pp. 291-292.

CHAPTER XIII

TAYLOR'S FINAL EFFORTS

During the heat of the controversy of the Baptists with Campbellism, John Taylor was busy in other activities as well as following its results. In the community where the north and south branches of the Elkhorn form, the Baptist Church of Christ at Buckhorn met on February 26, 1831. When the regular business meeting of the church ended, a motion was made requesting the use of the church for the purpose of forming a temperance society. This request was granted by the church at that meeting. ¹⁴²

A constitution was drawn up and the Temperance League of Buck Run was formed to prohibit liquor in any form. Rev. Joseph Taylor, John Taylor's second son, was elected as vice president. John Taylor became a member of this society in April of 1831. He took an active part in its affairs, addressing the society on April 24, May 28, and in June of 1831. ¹⁴³

Taylor's last efforts were probably spent with the temperance Society and in the controversy against Campbellism. His wife died in 1832 and John's long expected

142. "Buck Run Temperance Society Minutes" (found in the old State House in Frankfort), p. 1.

143. Ibid., pp. 1-5; Dorothy Brown Thompson, "Buck Run Temperance Society," (ed.); Bayless E. Hardin, The Register of the Kentucky Historical Society (Louisville, Dunne Press, 1950) vol. 48, pp. 303, 305-309.

death was close at hand. There are contradictions in history as to the exact time of John Taylor's death. James Welch, a home missionary to Missouri, states in his writings that he saw the aged Taylor at the Elkhorn Association meeting in the Big Spring Church in 1832. According to Appleton's Cyclopaedia of American Biography and The National Cyclopaedia of American Biography, Taylor died at the Forks of the Elkhorn in 1833. Robert Semple and James B. Taylor, both Baptist historians, fail to give the date of his death. However, Cathcart states John Taylor died in the winter of 1836 at his residence near Frankfort. The article written by William Warren Sweet in The Dictionary of American Biography says he died on April 12, 1835. Sweet's information is taken from the Frankfort Argus, a local Kentucky newspaper, which was dated April 22, 1835. This writer accepts the date of April 12, 1835 based on the Saturday, April 18, 1835 issue of The Commonwealth, a newspaper published in Frankfort, Kentucky.

John Taylor was probably buried, following his death

¹⁴⁴. Semple, Rise and Progress of Baptists in Virginia; James Wilson (ed.) Appleton's Cyclopaedia of American Biography, vol. VI, p. 45; "John Taylor," The National Cyclopaedia of American Biography, (New York: James T. White and Company, 1899), vol. IX, p. 283; Malone, Dumas (ed.), Dictionary of American Biography, XLVIII, p. 331; Cathcart, The Baptist Encyclopedia, p. 1136; News item in The Commonwealth, April 18, 1835 (Frankfort: O. Brown and A. G. Hodges), vol. 3, number 114.

on Sunday, April 12th at his home, in the old Taylor burying ground located at the Forks of the Elkhorn on the Macklin Farm.¹⁴⁵

John Taylor had traveled many thousand miles, labored much in all kinds of weather, and had mingled with the sick and diseased, yet he had had little sickness himself. His writings show that he faced death unafraid of the unknown but trusting in that glorious promise awaiting all who believe and work for the Lord.¹⁴⁶ "Well done, Thou good and faithful servant," was the voice he was waiting to hear.

145. G. Glenn Clift, "Notes on Kentucky Veterans of the War of 1812," (ed.); Bayless E. Hardin, The Register of the Kentucky Historical Society (Louisville, April, 1953) vol. 51, number 175, p. 143.

146. Taylor, Ten Churches, (1823), pp. 1, 160.

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