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# A brief history of the Baptists of Louisa County, Virginia to 1865

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A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE BAPTISTS OF  
LOUISA COUNTY, VIRGINIA  
TO 1865

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A Thesis  
Presented to  
The Faculty of the Department of History  
University of Richmond

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

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by  
Roscoe Ashburn Musselwhite  
June 1958

-AUG 16

TO

MY WIFE

Margaret Olah Musselwhite

Whose Clear Conception of Spiritual Values

and

Devotion to Christ and Her Family

Have Been

A Constant Inspiration to Me

THIS THESIS

IS

AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The writer wishes to express his appreciation to Dr. A. L. Blakeney of the University of Alabama and Dr. Howard F. Vos of the Moody Bible Institute for their interest and inspiration which caused the writer to become a History Major during his undergraduate days at Tennessee Temple College.

Dr. Ralph C. McDanel and Dr. Wesley N. Laing of the Department of History of the University of Richmond have been an inspiration with their thorough knowledge of History and sincere interest and cooperation.

Mrs. L. L. Howitt and Mrs. T. R. Deal worked diligently as typists and have shown much interest in this paper. Without their efforts this thesis would never have been completed in its present form.

The writer's sister, Mrs. John G. Boogades, whose interest in her brother's welfare went a long way in making it possible for him to study in the Graduate School of the University of Richmond.

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## CHAPTER I

### THE ORIGIN AND CHARACTERISTICS OF "SEPARATE" BAPTISTS

All records, past and present, indicate that the Baptist movement in Louisa County, Virginia has remained strong and growing since its inception about the middle of the 18th century.

The first Baptists coming into Louisa County were the sturdy "Separate" Baptists. This movement came out of the "Great Awakening" revival under the preaching of George Whitefield. The revival spread over most of the eastern part of the United States. The converts to this "Awakening" were known as "New Lights". As they separated from the established church and tried to follow the plain and simple teachings of the Bible, they became known as "Separates".<sup>1</sup>

The Great Awakening caused a division among the Baptists as well as other churches. One Baptist division was called "Regulars" or "Conservatives". The other division became known as the "Separates" or "Revivalists". The "Regulars" settlement in northern Virginia dates back to 1743. Their influence dominated the northern part of the state and made good progress. The "Separates" movement into the central section of Virginia came up from the

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1. Robert B. Semple, A History of the Rise and Progress of the Baptists in Virginia (Richmond: Pitt & Dickinson, 1894), pp. 11-12.

southern part of the state and Northern North Carolina.<sup>2</sup>

These Baptists, with a sincere determination to accept only the simple and plain teachings of the Bible, quickly became a dynamic force in Virginia.<sup>3</sup>

Shubal Stearns and his brother-in-law, Daniel Marshall, who were converted under George Whitefield, were the early Separate Baptist leaders. Stearns united with the Baptists in 1751 and three years later came to Virginia. In Virginia he met Daniel Marshall who had just returned from preaching to the Mohawk Indians on the Susquehanna.

Stearns and Marshall preached as evangelists in the counties of Berkeley and Hampshire. Here they met with considerable opposition and criticism because of their "animated" preaching and consequently were not pleased with the results of their labors in Virginia. This opposition caused them in 1755 to move to Sandy Creek in Guilford, North Carolina.<sup>4</sup>

The Sandy Creek settlement became permanent. Their first church consisting of sixteen members did not remain small, however; in a short time the membership grew to over

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2. Wesley M. Gewehr, The Great Awakening in Virginia, 1740-1790 (Durham: Duke University Press, 1930), p. 107.

3. Ibid., p. 108.

4. William Warren Sweet, Religion on the American Frontier, The Baptists 1783-1830 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1931), p.8.

six hundred.

From this Sandy Creek church a great revival movement spread both north and south. The evangelical Separate Baptists proved to be one of the strongest and greatest factors in destroying the established church and securing religious liberty.<sup>5</sup>

This movement, because of the Great Awakening influence, had in it the fervour and fire of the Whitefield revival, thus distinguishing the Separates from the Regular Baptists. Also, the Separates "did not adhere to the London Confession of Faith (1689) which had been adopted in 1742 by the Philadelphia Association, but adopted the Bible as the broad platform of their beliefs".<sup>6</sup>

Because the Separates never formed or adopted any system of doctrine, or confession of faith, the Regulars became very jealous and suggested that since the Separates differed from other denominations, they should in an open manner make known their principles to the world. On the other hand the Separate Baptists believed that the adoption of a confession of faith would only lead to a formality that would divert them from the simplicity of the Bible.<sup>7</sup>

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5. Gewehr, op. cit., pp. 107-108.

6. Ibid., p. 109.

7. Ibid.



The Regular Baptists were orthodox Calvinists, while the Separates tended strongly towards Arminianism, or the doctrine of free grace. We are told also that the latter "thought the Regulars were not sufficiently particular in small matters such as dress, etc." 8

The growth of Separate Baptists in Virginia after 1770 was phenomenal. Their first association was formed in 1771 with fourteen churches reporting 1,335 members. Within two years the association had a total membership of over four thousand and was divided into Northern and Southern districts. Twenty years passed and they had become a "numerous and respectable body while their zeal 'was less mixed with enthusiasm' and their piety more rational".<sup>9</sup>

Strange were the mannerisms of these revivalistic Baptist preachers. The emotional extravagances which took place in their meetings, their whining tones and odd whoops aroused contempt and disgust. They, for a generation or more, were a despised people. One stated that, "he had rather go to hell than be obliged to hear a Baptist in order to go to heaven".<sup>10</sup>

One of the more peculiar mannerisms developed by the Baptist preachers was one called the "holy whine". A sing-song type of speaking which came about because of outdoor

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8. Ibid.

9. William Warren Sweet, Religion in Colonial America (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1942), p. 304.

10. Ibid.

preaching. For many years after, this practice was continued  
on the frontier by the less educated Baptist preachers.<sup>11</sup>

The Separate Baptists acquired a reputation for being illiterate and ignorant. As a rule, the type of individuals attracted to the meetings of the Baptist evangelists were of the lower classes educationally and economically. As has already been mentioned, many were alarmed or angered by the Baptist movement. Many people, those who held to infant baptism, considered the Baptists cruel in neglecting or refusing to baptise their infants, and then there were those to whom the very name Baptist was terrifying.<sup>12</sup>

Other denominations<sup>3</sup> such as the Presbyterians, had elaborate creedal demands and an educated ministry. But, in spite of this, the Presbyterians had not been able to reach the majority of the plain people. The Separate Baptists however, with their novel type of preaching, their unsalaried and uneducated ministry, were better able to supply the needs of the lower economic and social classes.<sup>13</sup>

Extreme emotional revivalism always has succeeded best among people of little education. But the presence of even a few people of higher educational attainments will tend to restrain the emotionalism of a large concourse of

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11. Sweet, Religion on the American Frontier, p. 10.

12. Ibid.

13. Sweet, Religion in Colonial America, p. 302.

the less educated. The Presbyterian congregations usually contained a few people of this type, while the minister himself was always a man of some attainment educationally. Such restraining influences were far more likely to be absent from among the Baptists. 14

The Separate Baptists, under the leadership of Stearns and Marshall, and many other preachers, attracted many people to their meetings in spite of the contempt in which they were held by many, and their lack of education was no handicap. Churches began to spring up all around with amazing rapidity. The work spread into Virginia from North Carolina. The first Separate Baptist church established in Virginia, was in the year, 1760.<sup>15</sup>

The Sandy Creek church in North Carolina became "the mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother to forty-two churches, from which sprang one hundred twenty-five ministers".<sup>16</sup>

One of these was Samuel Harriss, who became the apostle to Virginia. The progress of these Baptists for the next ten years, after 1760, is almost unparalleled in the history of Baptists. Entire communities were moved and stirred by the Baptist evangelists. Many strong Baptist churches were established.<sup>17</sup>

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14. Ibid.

15. Sweet, Religion on the American Frontier, p. 11.

16. Ibid.

17. Ibid.

There was more than a religious significance to the rapid increase of the Separate Baptists in Virginia. Their growing numbers soon made them a political factor of great importance. The lower classes were rough on the Baptists during the early years of the Virginia movement. Almost all of the early trouble experienced by the Baptist<sup>s</sup> preachers came from the rabble of the lower classes. The lower classes were aroused by some of the upper class citizens. Also, the natural human reaction of not desiring to change the way of life to which they had grown accustomed, caused them to resist the Baptist preaching. Gradually, the people began to realize that the Baptists were "fighting their battles" for them and a popular reaction began to shape up in favor of the Baptists. By 1770 these early Baptist preachers had overcome this opposition. However, trouble for the Baptists was brewing in another direction. The opposition came now from the civil authorities and the period from about 1768 to 1774 became known as the "Period of the Great Persecution".<sup>18</sup>

The Separate Baptists, as a rule, did not recognize the right of civil authorities to regulate preaching or places to preach. The Baptists claimed that in religious matters the authority came from God alone. The Baptists refused to license their places of worship or take any oaths. They were not inclined to go along with the Act of Toleration

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<sup>18</sup>. Ibid., p. 12.

in any way. Their conception of their job as ministers was to go into all the world and preach wherever and whenever they could. This idea made them unwilling to confine themselves to a particular place. The law that demanded that they subscribe to the articles of the Church of England was also inconsistent with the Baptist views of truth. "In short, the Toleration Act conflicted with the Separatist idea of religious liberty. They were unwilling to accept anything less than complete freedom of conscience and worship."<sup>19</sup>

There were at least six ways in which there was opposition to the Baptists. This will, in a small way, summarize the characteristics and faith of these God fearing, God inspired, Bible preaching men.

First, many regarded the Baptists as lawbreakers who should be punished. They were considered lawbreakers because of their uncooperative attitude towards the Act of Toleration as passed by Parliament in 1689. "This act exempted Dissenters from attendance at the parish church if they were loyal to the Crown, paid regular tithes to the parish, and attended their own worship services in a registered meeting place which was presided over by an ordained minister."<sup>20</sup> It was

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19. Gewehr, op. cit., p. 126.

20. From an article, Toleration and the Act of Toleration in Virginia, by Wesley N. Laing of the History Department of the University of Richmond.

easy to see that the Baptists did not intend to avail themselves of the terms of the Toleration Act, therefore, they were going contrary to the law. The fact that the Baptists claimed they were called of God carried little weight. In fact, this claim was often ridiculed and preachers were challenged to produce credentials other than their words. The authorities would use the scriptures to back up their argument against the Baptists. One of their favorites was:

"Beloved, believe not every Spirit but try them whether they be of God, since many false Prophets are gone out into the World." The Baptists were also reminded that the Scriptures enjoined obedience to the magistrates who do not bear the sword of justice in vain. 21

Secondly, there was a fear that the success enjoyed by the Baptists would ruin the Established Church. The lower class of people in Virginia were heavily burdened with mandatory rules and regulations executed by the Established Church. People do not enjoy being told what to do and when to do it. This is especially true as it pertains to church going. Therefore, the freedom to think and act as individuals, as offered by the Baptists, caused many folks to ignore the Established Church and caused the Established Church leaders to become very concerned.<sup>22</sup>

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Gewehr, *op. cit.*  
21. Ibid., pp. 128-129.

22. Ibid., p. 129.

A third cause came from the idea that the Baptists were a menace to society. The people claimed the Baptist doctrines were subversive of religion and morality. One in particular was:

That after conversion a man cannot sin unto death; by which you take off all religious Restraints from men of abandoned Principles, who, having been once dipped in your happy waters, are let loose to commit upon us murders, and every Species of Injury, when they can do it secretly so as to avoid temporal Punishment. 23

The Baptists also had thrown at them the accusation that the effects of their preaching was to destroy the home.

Wives are drawn from their Husbands, children from their Parents, and slaves from the obedience of their Masters. Thus the very heartstrings of these little Societies which form the greater are torn in sunder, and all their Peace destroyed. 24

Some individuals claimed that the Baptists were planning to destroy the state. When several Baptist preachers were arrested in Middlesex in 1771, they were searched one at a time to see if they were carrying firearms. 25

The fourth reason for opposition was that the Baptist preachers were thought of as false prophets. It was said of the preachers that they had:

By art and stratagem intoxicated the brains of poor

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23. Ibid., pp. 129-130. He is quoting from "An Address to the Anabaptists Imprisoned in Caroline County, August 8, 1771, in Purdie and Dixon's Virginia Gazette, February 20, 1772.

24. Ibid., p. 130.

25. Ibid.

people until they were horribly deluded. Their piety was considered a sham and hypocrisy and their loud praying as ostentatious. Their gospel was looked upon as a "religious madness", a "terrible Distemper" which raged "with greatest fury", an "Enthusiastic and Superstitious Delusion". 26

A fifth cause of discontent is seen in the violent attacks, by the Baptists, upon the Established Church. The Baptists believed, whether true or not, that the clergy of the Church of England were responsible for the persecution and opposition. Because of this belief, it is not hard to see how the Baptist ministers were able to be rash and abusive in their condemnation of the Established church. At times some Baptists were even indecent in their speaking against the Established Church. 27

The sixth cause is seen in the economic picture of that day. The Baptists were accused of drawing many from their labors to their meetings.

At times the number of males at meetings was actually counted by enemies and their lost wages totalled and this loss would be blamed on the "Wretched new-lights". The latter were accused of bringing people into habits of idleness and reducing them to want and distress. The poverty of most Baptist preachers, along with the lowly status of the members, no doubt added weight to this argument. 28

Any ordinary group of people would have been dis-

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26. Ibid.

27. Ibid., p. 132.

28. Ibid., p. 133.



couraged, but, in spite of the opposition, the Baptists flourished. Many of the accusations were turned to good effect and only served to strengthen their convictions. <sup>29</sup>

The persecution which the Baptists had to endure made many friends for them, with some coming from the Established Church. One friend who came to the rescue of the Baptists was James Madison. Mr. Madison was a member of the state church though his brother, the governor of Virginia, was a Baptist. Mr. Madison, who was later to become President of the United States, wrote in 1774 to a friend in Philadelphia as follows:

That diabolical hell-conceived principle of persecution rages among us, and to their eternal infamy the clergy can furnish their quota of imps for such persecution. There are, at the present time in the adjacent county, not less than five or six well meaning men in jail for preaching their religious beliefs, which are in the main quite orthodox. <sup>30</sup>

Another friend of the Baptists was Patrick Henry. He, a great orator and lawyer, rode horseback about fifty miles from Hanover County to Fredericksburg to defend a group of Baptist preachers in jail there. Mr. Henry's defense of these men is a classic and needs to be included here. <sup>31</sup>

"The king's attorney was reading the indictment

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29. Ibid.

30. L. L. Gwaltney, Heralds of Freedom (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1939), p. 89.

31. Ibid., pp. 89-90.

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against the preachers when Henry walked into the court."

L. L. Gwaltney in his "Heralds of Freedom" presents the happenings of that day as described and commented on by Rev. William Henry Foote in his "Sketches of Virginia". The account follows:

Patrick Henry, who had a few years before brought himself into notice by his famous plea against the parsons (Episcopal priests) in Hanover, hearing of the situation of these Baptist ministers confined in Spotsylvania jail, rode some fifty miles to volunteer his services on the day of their second trial. He entered the courthouse almost unknown, while the indictment was being read by the clerk. The king's attorney, having made some remarks in defense of the prosecution, Mr. Henry taking the paper containing the indictment, said: 'May it please your worships, I think I heard read by the prosecutor, as I entered the house, the paper I now hold in my hand. If I rightly understood, the king's attorney has framed an indictment for the purpose of arraigning, and punishing by imprisonment, these three inoffensive persons before the bar of this court for a crime of great magnitude,--as disturbers of the peace. May it please the court, what did I hear read? Did I hear it distinctly, or was it a mistake of my own? Did I hear an expression, as of a crime, that these men, whom your worships are about to try for a misdemeanor are charged with,--with,--what?' Then in a low solemn, heavy tone he continued--'preaching the gospel of the Son of God?' Pausing amid profound silence, he waved the paper, three times round his head, then raising his eyes and hands to Heaven, with peculiar and impressive energy, he exclaimed--'Great God!'

A burst of feeling from the audience followed this exclamation. Mr. Henry resumed--'May it please your worships, in a day like this,--when truth is about to burst her fetters,--when mankind are about to be aroused to claim their natural and inalienable rights--when the yoke of oppression that has reached the wilderness of America, and the unnatural alliance of ecclesiastical and civil power, are about to be dissevered,--at such a period, when liberty,--liberty of conscience,--is about to wake

from her slumberings, and inquire into the reasons of such charges as I find exhibited here today in this indictment,'—here he paused, and alternately cast his piercing eyes upon the court and upon the prisoners, and resumed, 'If I am not deceived, according to the contents of the paper I now hold in my hand, these men are accused of preaching the gospel of the Son!—Great God!'

A deeper impression was visible as he paused, and slowly waved the paper round his head, 'May it please your worships, there are periods in the history of man, when corruption and depravity have so long debased the human character, that man sinks under the weight of the oppressor's hand,—and becomes his servile, his abject slave; he licks the hand that smites him; and in this state of servility he receives his fetters of perpetual bondage. But may it please your worships, such a day has passed away. From that period when our fathers left the land of their nativity for these American wilds,—from the moment they placed their feet upon the American continent, from that moment despotism was crushed, the fetters of darkness were broken, and Heaven decreed that men should be free,—free to worship God according to the Bible. Were it not for this, in vain were all their sufferings and bloodshed to subjugate this new world, if we their offspring must still be oppressed and persecuted. But, may it please your worships, permit me to inquire once more, for what are these men about to be tried? This paper says, for preaching the gospel of the Saviour to Adam's fallen race.'

For the third time he slowly waved the indictment around his head, and lifting his eyes to heaven in a solemn, dignified manner, and again looking at the court, he exclaimed with the full power of his strong voice—'What law have they violated?' The scene now became painful,—the audience were excited,—the attorney was agitated,—the bench and bar were moved; and the presiding magistrate exclaimed, 'Sheriff, discharge these men'. 33

All during the years of the Revolution, the Baptists were constantly carrying on their agitation for religious liberty. The years of suffering and persecution had taught them the value of publicity, agitation, petitions and lob-

bying. Not all at one time did they gain their concessions, but little by little their faithfulness was rewarded. They wanted a law legalizing marriages performed by the Baptist ministers; they asked that overseers of the poor be chosen by the community; they constantly assaulted the vestries. None of these partial measures completely satisfied the Baptists. They wanted and demanded complete religious freedom and did not let up in their efforts until this goal had been won.<sup>34</sup>

The religious freedom enjoyed in the United States today is a living testimony to the Baptists of early Virginia. The type of Baptist described in this chapter was typical of those who came to Louisa County, Virginia, in the latter half of the 18th century.

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<sup>34</sup>. Sweet, Religion on the American Frontier, p. 15.

## CHAPTER II

### THE BAPTIST MOVEMENT INTO LOUISA COUNTY, VIRGINIA

Malcolm H. Harris in his "A History of Louisa County, Virginia," says that the Baptist movement in Louisa dates back to 1754 with Shubael Stearns and Daniel Marshall.<sup>35</sup>

#### I. THE EARLY LEADERS

As has already been mentioned in the previous chapter, Stearns and Marshall were products of the "Great Awakening". They came down from New England, through Virginia to settle on Sandy Creek in North Carolina.

Stearns and Marshall were ably assisted in their work by Colonel Samuel Harriss. Mr. Harriss, well known as a Virginian of distinction, had been converted under the preaching of Daniel Marshall. These three men were the leaders of the Separate Baptists.<sup>36</sup>

Even though all three of these men, Stearns, Marshall, and Harriss, preached in many areas of Virginia, it was Samuel Harriss who was to play the lead role in Louisa County. His influence was felt far and wide and God greatly used him to

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<sup>35</sup>. Malcolm H. Harris, A History of Louisa County, Virginia (Richmond: The Dietz Press, 1936), p. 189.

<sup>36</sup>. Robert G. Torbet, A History of the Baptists (Philadelphia: The Judson Press, 1950), p. 246.

preach the gospel.

Mr. Harriss was a resident of Pittsylvania County. He held many different offices in that county, among them were the office of sheriff, church warden, burgess for the county, captain of Mayo Fort, commissary for the fort and army, justice of the peace and colonel of the militia.<sup>37</sup>

Colonel Harriss, as he was often called, could boast of an education which was very good for his day and also of the fact that he came from respectable parentage.<sup>38</sup>

"He appears to have first received serious religious convictions under the preaching of Joseph and William Murphy at a meeting-house near Allen's Creek, on the road leading from Booker's Ferry, Staunton River, to Pittsylvania Courthouse."<sup>39</sup>

Harriss became identified with the Separate Baptists early in the movement; he was ordained ruling elder in 1759. He was particularly active in the revival in the counties, which would include Louisa, north of the James River. People came from forty and fifty miles, and often came a distance of a hundred miles to attend his meetings. Hundreds of individuals would come and set up camp on the grounds in order to

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37. Semple, op. cit., p. 18.

38. Gewehr, op. cit., p. 118.

39. Semple, op. cit., p. 18.

be able to stay through the meetings. It was not uncommon for the ground to be covered with those who had been, while Mr. Harriss preached, "struck down under the conviction of sin."<sup>40</sup>

Another early leader in the Baptist movement who played a very vital role in the establishment of the first Louisa County Baptist churches was John Waller. Born December 23, 1741, in Spot/sylvania County, he gained a notorious reputation for recklessness and profanity. This kind of life caused the people in the area to give him several nicknames, two of the more popular were, "The Devil's Adjutant",<sup>41</sup> and "Swearing Jack Waller".

His family was highly respectable and Waller himself was one of the leaders in his community. He became an orphan early in life and received little education. His uncle, who served as his guardian, wanted him to study law. Waller was a member of the grand jury who tried Lewis Craig, (a Baptist preacher and leader in Spot/sylvania County), for preaching. It was from this court trial that Waller got his first impression of the Baptists.<sup>42</sup>

James Read baptised John Waller in 1767, during one of his visits to Orange County. Waller took over the care of

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<sup>40</sup>. Gewehr, op. cit., p. 118.

<sup>41</sup>. Semple, op. cit., p. 24.

<sup>42</sup>. Harris, op. cit., pp. 205-206.

Waller's Church in 1769.<sup>43</sup> This church, known as Lower Spottsylvania, was constituted with one hundred fifty-four members on December 2, 1769, with John Waller as the first pastor. Even though John Waller was the chosen pastor, he was not duly consecrated to the office of pastor of the church until June 2, 1770. Like many of the early churches, this one soon adopted the name of its pastor.<sup>44</sup>

John Waller baptised more than two thousand individuals and helped in the formation of eighteen churches. He had for many years the pastoral care of five different churches.<sup>45</sup>

Even though there are no recorded incidents that show Baptists ever having been persecuted in Louisa County, many of the preachers who labored there were severely persecuted in other counties. In order to fully understand and appreciate the faith of these early Baptists, it is necessary to mention something of their sufferings which came about because of their stand for God and the Bible.

Samuel Harriss is a good example of the way the early Baptists were treated. Harriss, a constant traveler, would not confine himself to one place for long, but was always looking for openings to preach. There were few places in

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43. Semple, op. cit., p. 24.

44. Minutes of the 1928 Goshen Baptist Association.

45. Gewehr, op. cit., p. 119.



Virginia that did not have a meeting with Samuel Harriss preaching the Gospel.

On one occasion in Culpeper, he was arrested and taken to court on the charge that he was disturbing the peace. The court ordered him not to preach in that county for the next twelve months or they would send him to jail. He left Culpeper and crossed the Blue Ridge preaching along the way and in Shenandoah. On his way back he stopped again in Culpeper where a group of young preachers were holding a meeting. The urge to preach was too much for Mr. Harriss, so, when the young preachers had finished he rose and spoke to the congregation:

I partly promised the devil, a few days past, at the courthouse, that I would not preach in this county again in the term of a year. But the devil is a perfidious wretch, and covenants with him are not to be kept; and, therefore, I will preach. 46

Samuel Harriss was of course just one of many Baptist preachers who suffered violence. James Read, a companion of Samuel Harriss, who, as has already been mentioned, led John Waller to Christ, and whose life will be discussed in a subsequent chapter, was another. 47

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46. William Taylor Thom, The Struggle for Religious Freedom in Virginia: The Baptists. John Hopkins University Studies in Historical and Political Science. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1900), pp. 15-16.

47. James B. Taylor, Virginia Baptist Ministers (First Series. New York: Sheldon and Company, 1860) pp. 26-27.

Many times John Waller was beaten severely. In Caroline County in 1771, the sheriff, the local parson and his clerk led an attack on Waller. The parson, trying to silence Waller, ran his whip down Waller's throat. They then pulled Waller down and beat him severely. Waller, sore as he was, kept right on preaching after his persecutors departed.<sup>48</sup>

On June 4, 1768, the first actual imprisonment of Baptists was carried out in Spot/sylvania. Lewis Craig, John Waller, James Childs (a member of the Thompsons Meeting-house in Louisa County), and William Marsh were arrested and charged with disturbing the peace. One particular charge was that "they cannot meet a man on the road but they must ram a text of Scripture down his throat". If they would promise not to preach for a year and a day and put up a certain amount of money as security, the court offered to release them. Refusing to do this they were imprisoned. All except Lewis Craig, who was released after four weeks, were kept in jail for forty three days. "While in prison they constantly preached through the grates. The mobs without used every exertion to prevent the people from hearing, but to little purpose."<sup>49</sup>

The persecution and violence handed the Baptist

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<sup>48</sup>. Gewehr, op. cit., p. 120.

<sup>49</sup>. Ibid. p. 122.

preachers tended, as it did among the first Christians, to spread the Gospel and to make it more secure.

## II. MEETING-HOUSES ESTABLISHED BEFORE 1800

At least five Baptist Meeting-houses were established in Louisa County before 1800. Thompson's (later known as Goldmine), was planted by Samuel Harriss and James Read; Scarrot's by John Waller, who established Roundabout and Little River, and with John Leland planted William's<sup>50</sup> Meeting-house.

Thompson's Meeting-house, the oldest Baptist church in Louisa County, was organized in 1770. Baptist preachers in Orange County had made an impression on a number of folks in Louisa County who had gone to Orange to hear them. They were so impressed that they began to watch out for preachers that they could induce to come to Louisa to preach. Samuel Harriss and James Read stopped in Louisa on one of their preaching journeys through Virginia, and were greatly blessed of the Lord with a number in the area around the Thompson's Meeting-house being baptised. This caused other preachers to visit this area and the church became an organized unit in 1770. David Thompson was called as the first pastor.

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<sup>50</sup>. Semple, op. cit., p. 186.

Perhaps the people made a mistake in their choice of Thompson, because the church declined under his care. Finally, however, Thompson moved on and the church called John Leland as pastor. The church increased to a great extent as God poured out his blessings on the ministry of John Leland. Few preachers enjoyed the privilege of being as popular among their people as John Leland. However, much to the regret of the community, Mr. Leland in 1791, returned to his native New England.<sup>51</sup>

The next meeting-house organized into a church was Scarrot's.<sup>52</sup> This was one of the many planted by John Waller. Little is recorded concerning this church but, Robert B. Semple in his writings concerning the Baptists in Virginia said, "This church, though not large, is of good standing. Nothing uncommon has occurred among them. They have moved on smoothly for many years under the stated ministry of Elder Henry Goodloe. Early after their constitution Mr. William Dawson was their pastor, but he did not continue long among them."<sup>53</sup> Scarrot's was organized in 1777.<sup>54</sup>

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51. Ibid., pp. 215-216.

52. This church, according to tradition, was located on the present state road #522 and about one half mile from the present Trinity Baptist church.

53. Semple, op. cit., pp. 218-219.

54. Ibid., p. 186.

According to Malcolm Harris in his History of Louisa County, the next church organized was William's in 1785.<sup>55</sup>

It actually had two meeting-houses. One in Goochland County and one in Louisa County. The building on the Louisa side of the South Anna<sup>56</sup> was located about one hundred yards from the present South Anna Baptist church.

On March 7, 1778,<sup>57</sup> a general committee met at the William's Meeting-house to consider the recently proposed provision, that was later to become a part of the Federal Constitution, having to do with the question of religious freedom. At this meeting a committee was created composed of elders John Waller, John Williams, Eli Clay, and Reuben Ford.<sup>58</sup>

There were two other matters of business that lend real significance to this meeting. One was a discussion of the "Rise and Progress of the Baptists", the other had to do with making slavery more bearable.<sup>59</sup>

John Waller was one of the first pastors of William's Meeting-house. Mr. Goodloe followed John Waller and served

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55. Harris, op. cit., p. 201.

56. The name of the river which divided the two meeting-houses.

57. 1778, is confusing since the church was organized in 1785, but services were held there prior to its organization.

58. Minutes of the 1951 Goshen Baptist Association.

59. Ibid.

there until about 1796, when John Poindexter became the pastor. The people enjoyed an excellent revival under Mr. Poindexter's ministry, during which time between ninety and one hundred persons were baptised.

The next pastor was Elisha Purrington. Mr. Purrington was a man of mild and pleasant manners, very lively and affectionate in his preaching and sound in doctrine. Under him the church enjoyed peace and happiness. Mr. Purrington came from New England to Virginia as a teacher of church music, in which, according to Semple, he was "Excelled by none and equaled by few in the state".<sup>60</sup>

In the William's church was an unusual man named Thomas Waford, "an old and faithful disciple of Christ, who was among the first to profess religion at the rise of the Baptists".<sup>61</sup>

Thomas Waford was not a preacher, but did far more good than many preachers. When John Waller and others would make their journeys over the state, Mr. Waford would go beforehand to advertise and make arrangements for their meetings. He would back up with private arguments what the preachers had proclaimed from the pulpit. He also shared with the preachers their persecutions. In Essex County, at one time,

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60. Semple, op. cit., pp. 211-212.

61. Ibid., p. 212.

he was brought before the magistrate along with the preachers. They searched his saddle-bags and then discharged him because he had not disturbed the peace by preaching. "At another meeting, when persecution ran high, he went to the spring to drink, and there meeting with one of the sons of Belial was severely whipped, the scars of which he will doubtless carry to his grave."<sup>62</sup>

The fourth church established in Louisa County before 1800, was constituted in 1791, and named Roundabout.<sup>63</sup>

"The meeting-house of Roundabout church stood on the north side of the old Richmond and Gordonsville road, about three miles east of Ball's Cross Roads and about seven miles due south of Louisa Courthouse."<sup>64</sup>

In 1792, John Poindexter was called as pastor of the Roundabout church. It seemed as if God had really sent the right man to them, because, under Mr. Poindexter's ministry the church experienced a powerful revival. In a few months after he came to the church more than one hundred were baptised.<sup>65</sup>

So many of the new converts were from the neighborhood of Foster's Creek, that it was decided it would be best to

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62. Ibid., pp. 212-213.

63. Ibid., p. 186.

64. Ibid., p. 217.

65. Ibid.,

have a meeting-house nearer to them. An arbor in the woods near Munford's Bridge served as the first place of worship. They used this arbor in the woods until they were able to build a meeting-house on Foster's Creek, called Siloam, though it usually went by the name of the creek on which it was built. The house was to be free to be used by all denominations in the area, except when the Baptists had need of it they had the preference.<sup>66</sup>

The church was organized with thirty female and nineteen male white members along with a number of colored ones. The Goshen Association held its annual meeting in 1798, with the Foster's Creek church. Much is said here about the Foster's Creek church because it was always considered a part of the Roundabout church. In later years when a split came most of the people went back to the Roundabout church.<sup>67</sup>

The fifth and last church established in Louisa County prior to 1800, was Little River, which was constituted in the year 1791, the same year in which the Roundabout church was organized.<sup>68</sup>

The meeting-house at Little River is located today at the same spot where the first house was built. "Its history

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66. Harris, op. cit., p. 197.

67. Ibid.

68. Ibid., p. 199.



seemed to have been uncolored by the vicissitudes that beset  
many churches of the day.<sup>69</sup>

The activities of these and other Louisa County  
Baptist churches will be dealt with more fully in subsequent  
chapters.

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69. Ibid.

## CHAPTER III

### A TYPICAL LOUISA COUNTY BAPTIST CHURCH CONSTITUTION, AN EARLY MISSIONARY SOCIETY CONSTITUTION AND EX- CERPTS FROM SOME EARLY MEETING-HOUSE DEEDS

#### CONSTITUTION OF TRINITY BAPTIST CHURCH

Organized December 25, 1863

- 1st. This Church shall be known as the Baptist Church worshipping at Trinity, Louisa County, Virginia.
- 2nd. We believe that the Scriptures teach that a visible Church of Christ is a congregation of immersed believers, associated by Covenant in the faith and fellowship of the Gospel, observing the Ordinances of Christ, governed by His laws and exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His word; that its only Scriptural officers are Bishops or Pastors and Deacons whose qualifications, claims, and duties are defined in the Epistles to Timothy and Titus.
- 3rd. The Church to assemble once a month to transact business, or oftener if thought necessary.

#### C O V E N A N T

Having as we trust been brought by Divine grace to embrace the Lord Jesus Christ and to give ourselves wholly to Him we do now solemnly covenant with each other to walk together in Him with brotherly love to His glory as our common Lord. We do, therefore, in His strength engage that we

will exercise a Christian care and watchfulness over each other and faithfully warn, exhort, and admonish each other as occasion may require; that we will not forsake the assembling of ourselves together but will uphold the public worship of God and the ordinances of His house; that we will seek Divine aid to enable us to deny ungodliness and every wordly lust and to walk circumspectly in the world; that we will cheerfully contribute of our property according as God has blessed us for the maintenance of a faithful and evangelical ministry among us for the support of the poor and the spread of the Gospel over the world.

#### R U L E S O F D E C O R U M

- 1st. The Pastor to act as Moderator; in case of absence, the Church to choose one.
- 2nd. All questions to be decided by a majority except the receiving of members -- then the Church to be unanimous.
- 3rd. The members to speak one at a time, to rise and address the Moderator, and cast no reflections.
- 4th. No person to interrupt another while speaking or making a motion; every motion must be seconded or fall.
- 5th. The Constitution, Covenant, and by-laws to be read at every meeting if thought necessary.
- 6th. No person to absent himself in time of doing business without leave of the Moderator. 70

The early Louisa County Baptist Missionary Societies were formed with much zeal and interest. Following are two Missionary Society Constitutions. The first one is brief, the other one in more detail. The first one was for ladies

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70. This constitution was given to the author by a member of the present Trinity Baptist Church.

only, the other included both men and women.

### CONSTITUTION

Article 1 -- This Society shall be called the Baptist Female Missionary Society of Louisa for foreign missions.

Article 2 -- The design of this society is to aid the Baptist Mission Society of Virginia in their endeavors to promote the Redeemer's Kingdom among the heathen.

Article 3 -- There shall be a meeting of this society every year, at such time & place as the society may appoint. At every annual meeting there shall be elected a board of managers, consisting of a principal agent and six other managers.

Article 4 -- It shall be the duty of the managers to use all proper means to promote the objects of the society -- to collect & dispose of funds agreeably to the Constitution, and to present a report of their proceedings at every annual meeting.

Article 5 -- It shall be the duty of the agent to preside at all meetings of the board, to state questions, keep order, and record the proceedings of the society.

Article 6 -- Alterations of this constitution may be made at

a meeting of the society by the concurrence of  
 two-thirds of its members present. <sup>71</sup>

At the Elk Creek Meeting House in Louisa County, on  
 March 15, 1832, a number of persons, having agreed to unite  
 as a Missionary Society, adopted the following Constitution.  
 After which they elected the following officers:

Robert Goodwin, President  
 Pollison Boxley, Secretary  
 Henry Harris, Treasurer

After the meeting they adjourned to meet on the second  
 Saturday in the following April at the same place. <sup>72</sup>

#### CONSTITUTION OF A MISSIONARY SOCIETY

We hereby agree to unite as a Missionary Society  
 Auxiliary to the General Association of the Baptist  
 Church of Virginia, for the purpose of supplying  
 every destitute part of this state with preaching;  
 to be denominated the Elk Creek Missionary Society.

Any person contributing \$1, or upwards annually  
 shall be a member of this Society.

The officers of this Society shall be a President,  
 Secretary and Treasurer. The President shall preside  
 at all meetings of the Society, and call extra meetings  
 when necessary. The Secretary shall keep a record  
 of the proceedings of the Society, as also a record  
 of the names of the members. The Treasurer shall  
 collect all monies due the Society, receive con-  
 tributions, keeping a correct account; and as soon  
 as he can pay the same over to the General Agent  
 or order whose certificate for such payment shall  
 be deposited with the Secretary.

This Society shall meet annually before the 15th  
 of May, for the purpose of appointing one or more  
 delegates to represent it in the General Association,

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<sup>71</sup>. Copied from a paper, without a date, found in the  
 Bible belonging to Henry Harris, an early leader in the Elk  
 Creek Baptist Church. This paper is now in the possession of  
 Dr. Malcolm Harris of West Point, Virginia.

<sup>72</sup>. Ibid.

the names of such delegate or delegates shall be entered on the certificate of the agent which shall be the credential, entitling such delegation to a seat in the General Association. 73

Very interesting conclusions may be drawn concerning the early Baptists of Louisa County from their deeds for church property.

The following is a portion of the deed for the South Anna Baptist Church property as recorded in the Clerk's office of Louisa County.

This deed made this 1st day of May 1875 between Bettie A. Clough of the County of Louisa and State of Virginia of the 1st part and A. T. Goodwin & Wm James Walton & R.C. Carpenter lawful Trustees of Southanna Baptist Church in the same county and State of the other part witnessed that the said Bettie A. Clough for and in consideration of the sum of thirty dollars cash in hand paid, doth hereby grant bargain and sell unto the said parties of the second part and their successors forever a certain tract or parcel of land adjoining the present lot of said Southanna Baptist Church. 74

The following deed is unusual in that the property was used by three denominations with instructions laid down in the deed as to the time the denominations were to use the church for services.

This deed made the 2nd day of July in the year 1886 between Thos. G. Bowles and Lucy E. his wife of the first part and Ira F. Jordon, Frank V. Winston parties of the second part

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73. Ibid.

74. This is a portion of a deed as recorded in the County Clerk's office at Louisa County, Virginia, and dated 1875.

witnesseth that the said Thos. G. Bowles and Lucy E. his wife do grant in fee simple, with general warranty, unto the parties of the second part a lot of land, containing three tenths of an acre, lying on the Victoria Furnace Road in Louisa County and adjoining the lands of Thos. G. Bowles, Thomas Thompson and others with metes and bounds as follows: Beginning in the middle of said road, thence N.  $35\frac{1}{2}$  Degrees E. 17 poles to a stone, thence S.  $35\frac{1}{2}$  Degrees E. 6 poles to a stone, thence along said Road 16 poles to the beginning. In trust nevertheless for the following uses and purposes and for none other - that is to say - the said lot of land and building thereon, known as the "Miners Chapel" shall be used for the public worship of God and other religious uses by the three Christian Denominations, known as the Presbyterian, Baptist, and Methodist, in the order and time specified below that is to say the first and third Sundays and the following weeks shall belong to the Presbyterian, and the second Sunday and the following week to the Baptists, and the fourth Sunday and week following to the Methodists. 75

The author of this brief history has had the privilege of serving as pastor to many of the heirs of those described in the following deed.

This Deed made this 13th day of March 1893 between George E. Ware and Jennie C. his wife of the first part and T. T. Johnson, John S. Quisinberry, B. W. Vass, W. J. Coleman, and W. H. Groome Trustees of the church known and dedicated as Trinity Baptist Church for the religious benefit of the congregation known as the Trinity Baptist Church of the second part all the parties as a Church being of Louisa Co., Va. and so recognized in this deed. Witnesseth: that for and in consideration of the amount of one \$1.00 dollar then in hand paid the receipt of which we do hereby acknow-

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75. This is a portion of the Miner's Chapel Deed as recorded in the Clerk's office at Louisa County, Virginia, and dated 1886.

ledge we Geo. E. Ware and Jennie C. his wife parties of the first part, have this day donated and by these presents doth donate with general warranty unto the said T. T. Johnson, John S. Quisinberry, B. W. Vass, W. J. Coleman and W. H. Groome, Trustees of the said Trinity Baptist Church and to their successor trustees of said church forever a certain piece or parcel of land on which the building known as Trinity Church now stands and containing  $2\frac{1}{2}$  acres be the same more or less described by recent survey made by John W. Nunn Sept. 29th 1891 hereto annexed and to be recorded with this deed as follows beginning at a rock corner to McGehee thence N.  $28\frac{1}{2}$  Degrees E. 5.50 chains to a rock corner with McGehee about 40 feet from the main road thence S.  $73\frac{3}{4}$  Degrees 4.95 chains corner in main road with McGehee thence S.  $28\frac{1}{2}$  Degrees W. 5.60 chains to a rock in Ware's and Sulpher Mines Co. line thence N.  $72\frac{3}{4}$  W. 4.95 chains to the point of beginning and bounded by the lands of the said Ware McGehee and the Sulpher Mine Co. to have and to hold in fee simple unto the said trustees and unto their successors in office for the said Trinity Baptist Church. 76

The author, ~~was~~ was at one time, the pastor of the Elk Creek Baptist Church of Louisa County. There are two deeds recorded concerning the Elk Creek Church <sup>which</sup> ~~and~~ are quite interesting because the first deed was quite liberal in that any and all orderly ministers could use the facilities while the second and later deed specified that the property was for the Baptists only.

Whereas a meeting house has been erected on the land of Henry Harris on Elk Creek in the County of Louisa for all orderly ministers of the gospel of every denomination to preach in and which is known by the name of the Elk Creek

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76. This is a portion of the Trinity Deed as recorded in the Clerk's office at Louisa County, Virginia, and dated 1893.



meeting house and whereas William Kimbrough, Samuel Ragland, William Tyler, Joseph Sandridge and Thomas Micholls are appointed trustees of the same. Now this Indenture witnesseth that the said Henry Harris and wife for and in consideration of the sum of five dollars to them in hand paid the receipt whereof is hereby acknowledged have granted bargained and sold unto the said William Kimbrough, Samuel Ragland, Wm. Tyler, Joseph Sandridge and Thomas Micholls aforesaid and their heirs forever a certain piece or parcel of land on which the said meeting house now stands containing by actual survey one hundred and fourteen square poles and bounded as follows, beginning at a corner hickory on Smith and Harris thence South ten degrees east fourteen poles and twenty-two links to a corner on the old mine road on Smith and Harris thence South sixty-eight and a half degrees east sixteen poles to a corner hickory on Smith and Harris thence north thirty-one and a half degrees east twenty four poles to the beginning, to have and to hold the above described piece or parcel of land to them the above mentioned trustees and their heirs forever and the said Henry Harris and wife as further covenant and agree with the aforesaid trustees that they will warrant and forever defend the right and title to the aforesaid land and premises with the appurtenances to them the said William Kimbrough, Samuel Ragland, Wm. Tyler, Joseph Sandridge and Thomas Micholls trustees as aforesaid and their heirs forever free and clear from the claim or claims of them the said Henry Harris and wife their heirs and against the claim or claims of all and every other person or persons. In testimony whereof the said Henry Harris and wife have herewith set their hands and seals this 9th day of April 1814. 77

Whereas a meeting house is about to be erected on the land of Thos. Harris near Elk Creek in the County of Louisa for the exclusive benefit of the Baptist denomination and which is known by the name of the Elk Creek meeting house and whereas Garland T. Waddy, John Hart,

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77. This is the first Elk Creek Deed as recorded in the Clerk's office at Louisa County, Virginia, and dated 1814.

Joseph C. Boxley, Caias M. Carpenter & Thos.  
T. Goodwin are appointed trustees of the same. 78

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78. This is the second Elk Creek Deed as recorded in  
the Clerk's office at Louisa County, Virginia, and dated 1848.

## CHAPTER IV

### SOME OF THE MORE FAMOUS EARLY LOUISA COUNTY BAPTIST LEADERS

#### JOHN POINDEXTER

Not until Poindexter became a married man did he manifest an interest in the subject of religion; on the contrary, he was understood to be an opposer. At that period when the gospel was first proclaimed by the Baptists in the County of Louisa, where he resided, he employed all his influence to resist the truth. But the Lord was mightier than he, and the truth became effectual in his own family. His wife was turned to the Lord, and rejoiced in him as her Saviour. This circumstance created in the bosom of Mr. Poindexter mingled emotions of surprise and rage. His opposition was exhibited in more marked and decided manner. When his companion desired to be immersed, and to unite herself with the Baptists, he entered his express prohibition against it. In secret places she often wept, and sought God on behalf of his cause and her unbelieving husband; nor were her entreaties in vain. The Lord heard her prayer, and brought her companion to feel his own guilt and ruin, and to beg for mercy.

In February, 1792, he was publicly ordained to the work of the ministry. Within twelve months after his ordination he baptised upwards of one hundred. and the church contin-

used to increase until more than three hundred were added. His labors were extended into the neighboring counties and with great power did he exhibit the truth as it is in Jesus Christ.

Elder Poindexter was a man of no ordinary talents. His discourses were highly doctrinal, and usually displayed much thought and discrimination. He seldom preached without preparation, giving evidence that in no common degree he was a scribe well instructed in the things of the kingdom.

The influence of Elder Poindexter was extensive and merited. For many years he was the clerk of Louisa County; and, as a member of the community, was highly useful. The Goshen Association, of which he was a member, enjoyed the advantage of his counsel and influence. For a series of years he was elected to preside over their deliberations. Although inquiries have been made, no definite information has been received concerning the precise time and circumstances of his departure from this world. His death took place the latter part of the year 1819.<sup>79</sup>

#### ABSALOM WALLER

This servant of Christ was born in Spotsylvania, Virginia, in the year 1772. His parents, several years prior to their marriage, were brought under religious influence by

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<sup>79</sup>. James B. Taylor, Virginia Baptist Ministers, Volume I (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Company, 1859), pp. 371-378.

the instrumentality of Elder Samuel Harriss. Having heard from his lips, the preaching of the Gospel, and embraced it in 1768, they became members of the Baptist church. They had six children, of whom Absalom was the oldest.

In 1768, as already referred to, he became a joyful believer in Christ, and some time during the next year was baptised by his uncle, John Waller, and united with the church at Waller's, Spot/sylvania. When he and his brother John were converted, a deep impression was made on the mind of their uncle and pastor. He felt that John was designed of God to become a minister of the gospel. Connected with this impression, a remarkable incident is related. Elder John Leland, who then resided in Virginia, attended a meeting at which he met the youthful brothers, and had an opportunity to hear them both lead in prayer. After rising from his knees he appeared thoughtful, and calling the attention of the pastor, said, "Brother Waller, you are deceived in your impressions: John will never preach; but that little white-headed boy",<sup>80</sup> pointing to Absalom, "will be the preacher in your flock".

#### ELISHA PURRINGTON

Many of those who have labored in Virginia as the heralds of the Cross were natives of other states. The subject

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<sup>80</sup>. Ibid., pp. 281-283.

of this sketch, it is believed, was born in New England, and came to this state about 1772. His principal object in moving here was to teach the science of sacred music. He succeeded in obtaining patronage in Louisa, Goochland, and Fluvanna Counties, and having formed a matrimonial engagement with a Miss Todd, finally settled in the first-named county. Although he was a member of the Baptist church when he moved to Virginia, he was far from being zealous in spiritual things. But a happy change took place in his religious feelings, which resulted in the conviction that God required him to work in his vineyard. He began to exhort, and ultimately to preach. At first his efforts were very unpromising; many believed that he would never overcome the obstacles which impeded his progress, and he was often, on this account, the subject of despondency. But, with the most indefatigable industry, he applied himself to study, and by degrees acquired an extensive fund of knowledge. He became one of the most intelligent preachers of his day. His acquaintance with the Scriptures was deep and thorough.

As he advanced in life his influence increased, not only among the private members of the church, but his brethren in the ministry. At Associational meetings he was often consulted by the most intelligent regarding difficult passages in the Word of God, while his opinions received most respectful attention.

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81. Ibid., p. 379.

## JOHN LELAND

John Leland was born in Grafton, Massachusetts, May 14, 1754.

He states that his father presented his first child for baptism, and in doing it, the passage, "who hath required this at your hands?" was strongly impressed upon his mind. Six other children were born before he ventured to have them receive the rite. John was among the number. Being about three years old, when he ascertained the object of the meeting, he ran away, and, falling received an injury, which caused the blood to flow freely from his face. He was afterwards forced to the baptismal water. He says: "All the merit of this transaction I must give to the maid who caught me, my father, and the minister, for I was not a voluntary candidate, but a reluctant subject, forced against my will".

He was in early life fond of study. He could read the Bible at five years of age. His education did not exceed the ordinary branches taught in the common schools of that day. Having access to few books, the Bible was his constant companion. He seems, however, to have been a headstrong, unmanageable boy, being, as he says, "in all evil, full of vanity, exceedingly attached to frolicking and foolish wickedness".

In his eighteenth year he became the subject of

religious impressions. He was baptised June, 1774. He began to speak, with spirit, with other young men, and even to preach before his baptism.<sup>82</sup>

Little is known or recorded concerning many of the early faithful men who labored so diligently for the Baptist cause in Louisa County. The only record of many is that tribute given them in the Goshen Association Minutes after they have passed on to their rewards.

#### DEACON WM. P. NUCKOLS

Wm. P. Nuckols, the son of Lewis and Henrietta Nuckols, was born in Louisa County, Va., in the year 1816. He passed to his rest in the eighty-sixth year of his age on the 10th of November, 1901. At the time of his death he was a resident of Spotsylvania County, Va., In 1863, when the Trinity Baptist church was formed, Wm. P. Nuckols was one of its constituent members. He came to Trinity from the Mt. Hermon Church. For the forty years during which he was a member of Trinity he was a very prominent in all the affairs of his church and a most valuable and useful Christian man and citizen in all his community. For many years he was a deacon of his church, superintendent of its Sunday-school, and a leader of his brethren in every good word and work. He was a man of earnest piety, of fine practical judgement, of great courage and firmness where principle was involved, full to overflowing of the spirit of charity, affable and courteous in his manners, having the confidence and respect of all who enjoyed his good neighborhood, and consequently it was not so strange that he should have occupied so prominent and useful a position

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82. James B. Taylor, Virginia Baptist Ministers, Volume II (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Company, 1859), pp. 30-31.



in his church and in his community. 83

DEACON B. F. VAUGHAN

Benjamin Franklin Vaughan was the eldest child of Joseph and Catherine Vaughan, of Hanover County, Va. He died at his home in Louisa County, on January 13, 1904, being 73 years old. His wife was Miss Lucy Dora Carpenter, daughter of Mr. Caius M. Carpenter, of Louisa County, Va.

Some twenty-five years ago Brother Vaughan became a member of the Elk Creek church, and from the time of his joining the church to the day of his death he was a most liberal, faithful, and useful member of his church. I am sure in all my experience in church affairs I never knew a more attentive and liberal church member than B. F. Vaughan. He was always at his post, wise and judicious in counsel, and courteous and respectful of the opinions of others, and in the matter of burden-bearing always ready to do his part. For many years he was a deacon and the clerk of his church, teacher of the young men's Bible class in the Sunday School, and in general one on whom his pastor and brethren could rely in every phase of church work. 84

DEACON RICHARD W. LUMSDEN

Died of pneumonia, at his residence, near Brian, Louisa County, Va., February 22, 1905, in the seventy-first year of his age, Richard W. Lumsden.

He was a warmly esteemed and faithful member of Trinity Baptist Church, and for many years one of her beloved deacons; and by his modesty, strict integrity, and uniform Christian life, he won for himself "a good name which is rather to be chosen than great riches." He was an affectionate husband and father, a firm friend, and a kind neighbor. His devoted wife, eight sons, and two daughters survive him. His pastor, church, and community feel deeply

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83. Minutes of the 1902 Goshen Baptist Association.

84. Minutes of the 1904 Goshen Baptist Association.

the loss they sustained in the death of this excellent Christian gentleman and deacon. His example and influence still live, and his works do follow him. 85

The following obituary of Henry Pendleton is so beautifully written that it must be included in its entirety. The individual who wrote the obituary must have been his pastor, even though there is no record of who composed it.

#### OBITUARY OF HENRY PENDLETON

Departed this life at his house in Louisa County, Va. on the 1st day of November, 1822, Henry Pendleton, Esq. in the 60th year of his age. Mr. Pendleton was for many years an upright member of the Baptist church, holding the office of Deacon, in the house of God. By his death his family has sustained an irreparable [sic] loss. The useful member of society, the tender husband, and the affectionate father is taken away, and a numerous family left to mourn his loss. The deceased stands recorded among the millions, who in death have found support from the gospel of peace and have borne this faithful testimony to its power to save and support in the trying hour. During a languishing illness, he uniformly appeared calm and resigned, often speaking of the mercy and goodness of God to him. He was favored with bright prospect of eternal joys, and often expressed his victory over the fear of death, and exhorted his family not to mourn on his account. He took great pleasure in engaging in prayer with a friend who visited him even when his speech had failed him. He made signs of his desire to join in the worship of God, his Saviour. On seeing one sabbath evening, the pastor of his church, enter his room, he immediately said; I have great peace, and mentioned the words of the Lord Jesus.

"My peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you," His friend said. That is the churches legacy. Yes! Said he! and it is mine, and what a blessing.

On the same day in the presence of several, he repeated at difference times, "the mediator is the way to God", and none can approach in any other way. "Jesus died to save sinners." The last time he was able to converse with the pastor of the church of which he was a member, he spoke much of the Lords tender dealings towards him, and enumerated many mercies he still enjoyed. On parting this friend observed, If we never meet again in time, I hope to meet you in heaven. After a little pause his trembling lips replied, "Yes! We have an eternity of joy and praise before us, the smile of God will make us smile on death." Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his. 86

#### JAMES READ

All that is known of the early history of James Read, before his conversion to God, is from his own account. He revealed that, in his early years, he felt the great weight of guilt as a transgressor of the Divine Law. He had many mistaken ideas on the subject of religion, however. When he was about thirty years old, in the year 1756, he surrendered to the Lord Jesus. It was in North Carolina, under the ministry of Elder Daniel Marshall that he was converted. Until this time, he had few educational opportunities, and could neither read nor write when he entered the ministry. It was through the tutelage of his wife he became able to read the Bible.

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86. From the family papers of Mrs. W. M. Forrest, formerly Anne Pendleton, of Cuckoo, Virginia, a great, great granddaughter of Henry Pendleton.

He found his greatest work in winning souls to Christ as an evangelist, although he was not qualified to instruct in spiritual things in some respects. He felt the burden for the thousands lost in sin, and he preached the Gospel of Christ in simplicity and Godly sincerity.

With a talent suited to itinerant evangelism, he traveled widely in North Carolina and Virginia. In one journey, with Samuel Harriss, he baptised seventy-five persons; and in another, two hundred received Christ and were baptized.

At one time in his life, because of some improper conduct, he was excluded from the fellowship of Christian brethren, and deprived of his ministry for two or three years. He was restored to full exercise of his ministerial functions upon presentation of satisfactory evidence of his repentance. From that time to the end of his life, he showed himself blameless and was greatly used in God's cause.

Although he was respected as a pious and successful man of God, his early years of comparative ignorance influenced his attitudes. He was too much inclined to consider his impressions to be immediately from heaven. This inclination to over-enthusiasm was apparent from his childhood.

His death took place in 1798, and in 72nd year of his age, after more than forty years in the ministry.

The end of his life was described as triumphant, as he was willing to leave the world to be with Christ. In his last hour, he said to a friend, "Do you not see the angels, waiting to convey my soul to glory?"<sup>87</sup>

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87. Taylor. First series, op. cit., pp. 26-27.

## CHAPTER V

### THE FORMATION OF THE GOSHEN ASSOCIATION AND THE PART PLAYED BY THE LOUISA CHURCHES UNTIL THE CIVIL WAR

The original Separate Baptist Association met with<sup>88</sup> the Sandy Creek church in North Carolina in 1758. There was no regularly constituted church in Virginia at this time. The Association increased in size as attendance increased in the churches. "In 1767, some of the Spotsylvania preachers attended the Association, and obtained the attendance of a presbytery, to constitute their first<sup>89</sup> church."

There were several disagreements between the Separate Baptists and Regular Baptists in Spotsylvania. In 1769, the Separates held an Association meeting to which the Regulars sent messengers. Reconciliation was attempted but<sup>90</sup> failed.

In 1770, the Separate Baptist Association met again at the Sandy Creek Meeting Place in North Carolina. They decided at this meeting to divide the Association into three districts. The first meeting for the Association in Virginia

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88. Semple, op. cit., p. 64.

89. Ibid., p. 67.

90. Ibid., pp. 67-68.

was to be held at the Thompson's Meeting House, in Louisa  
 County, in September, 1771.<sup>91</sup>

Thus, Louisa County has the distinction of having the first Virginia Separate Baptist Association meeting in the state. However, there was a regulation forming meeting held at the Craig's meeting house in May of 1771. This meeting was necessary in order to have some rules and regulations by which the Association could operate at its first official meeting. At this meeting at Craig's Samuel Harriss was chosen moderator and John Waller, Jr., clerk. The Louisa church was represented by James Childs, David Thompson, and Andrew Tribble. The following report was given by the Louisa church.

Added by baptism since October (1770) - - - -	17
By experience or commendatory letters - - - -	0
Removed by death - - - - - - - - - - - - - -	1
By excommunication - - - - - - - - - - - - - -	9
Under censure - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - -	1
Dismissed - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - -	2
Restored - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - -	1
Now under care (total members) - - - - - - - -	100. 92

The Association met as scheduled at Thompson's meeting house in September of 1771. In 1773 the Association divided into a northern and a southern district. The Association had its ups and downs but somehow stayed together until the division of the General Association which began in 1783.

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91. Ibid., pp. 68-69.

92. Ibid., pp. 69-70.

For several years after this, sub-divisions were made and the Goshen Association became a reality in 1791. The Goshen Association has occupied its original territory up to the present time with little, if any, change. This Association included all of the Louisa churches.<sup>93</sup>

The first Goshen Association meeting was held at the Roundabout Meeting House in Louisa, thus giving Louisa another first in Associational meetings. The Roundabout church in Louisa was the only church reporting a revival.<sup>94</sup>

The early records concerning the activities of the Goshen Association and the Louisa churches are scarce. The earliest copy of association minutes is 1795, and is preserved in the Virginia Baptist Historical Society at the University of Richmond.

There were four Louisa churches represented at the 1795 Goshen Association meeting: Roundabout Meeting House with representatives John Poindexter, Thomas Johnson, John Lea, and John Gilbert; Williams Meeting House with representatives William Walker, John Nichols, Henry Pendleton, and Nathan Sims; Scarrots Meeting House with representatives Benjamin Hellens, Thomas Gardner, Joseph Sandridge, and William Mansfield; and Thompsons Meeting House with repre-

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93. Ibid., p. 185,

94. Ibid., p. 187,



sentatives Thomas Gooch, John Bigger, Charles Slaughter, and George Morris.

The Association chose John Poindexter of Roundabout Meeting House moderator, and George Morris of Thompsons as assistant clerk. These two men were also selected to preach during the meeting of the Association. These same two Louisa Baptist leaders were also chose, along with twenty others, to represent the Goshen Association at the next General Committee meeting. The Circular Letter was written that year by John Poindexter.<sup>95</sup>

The next record of any minutes of the Goshen Baptist Association in the Virginia Baptist Historical Society begins at 1800. The same four Louisa County churches represented at the 1795 Association meeting were represented at the 1800 meeting.<sup>96</sup>

George Morris was the moderator and was from Thompsons Meeting House in Louisa. The Circular Letter was on religious education and family worship.<sup>97</sup>

In 1801 the same four Louisa County churches were represented at the Goshen Association meeting. John Poindexter from the Roundabout Meeting House was chosen clerk. The Circular Letter was on the office and duty of a deacon.<sup>98</sup>

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95. Minutes of the 1795 Goshen Baptist Association.

96. Minutes of the 1800 Goshen Baptist Association.

97. Ibid.

98. Minutes of the 1801 Goshen Baptist Association.

There are no available records of the minutes for 1802 and 1803 in the Virginia Baptist Historical Society.

In 1804 the Little River Church was added to the original four Louisa County churches represented at Goshen Association meetings, and Thompsons Meeting House became known as the Goldmine Meeting House. John Poindexter from the Roundabout Meeting House was chosen moderator. The Circular Letter was on the Life and Conversation of a Christian. <sup>99</sup>

In 1805 the same five Louisa County churches were represented. John Poindexter was again chosen moderator. The Circular Letter was on the Lord's Supper. <sup>100</sup>

In 1806 the Goshen Association met at the Goldmine Meeting House, Louisa. The same five Louisa County churches were represented. John Poindexter was again chosen moderator and the Circular Letter was on the Nature of Christian Charity. <sup>101</sup>

In 1807 the same five Louisa churches were represented with John Poindexter chosen again as moderator. The Circular Letter was on the Advantage of Church History. <sup>102</sup>

In 1808 the same five Louisa churches were represented

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99. Minutes of the 1804 Goshen Baptist Association.

100. Minutes of the 1805 Goshen Baptist Association.

101. Minutes of the 1806 Goshen Baptist Association.

102. Minutes of the 1807 Goshen Baptist Association.

at the Goshen Association which met at Williams Meeting House. John Poindexter was again chosen moderator. The Circular Letter was on the Exercising of Public Gifts. <sup>103</sup>

The 1809 Minutes of the Goshen Association are missing at the Virginia Baptist Historical Society.

In 1810 the same five Louisa County churches were represented at the Goshen Association meeting which met at the Little River Meeting House. John Poindexter was again chosen moderator. The Circular Letter was on Reading the Scriptures. <sup>104</sup>

In 1811 the same five Louisa churches were represented with John Poindexter as moderator. The Circular Letter was on Revivals and Declensions in Religion. <sup>105</sup>

In 1812 the same five Louisa churches were represented and John Poindexter was chosen moderator. The committee failed to complete the Circular Letter so Andrew Broaddus, the clerk, was instructed to bring an address on Revivals in the Association. <sup>106</sup>

In 1813 the same five Louisa County churches were represented, and in addition, the Elk Creek Church which was

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103. Minutes of the 1808 Goshen Baptist Association.

104. Minutes of the 1810 Goshen Baptist Association.

105. Minutes of the 1811 Goshen Baptist Association.

106. Minutes of the 1812 Goshen Baptist Association.

admitted to the Goshen Association at this session. John Poindexter was chosen moderator. The Circular Letter was on Practical Religion, by A. Waller. <sup>107</sup>

In 1814 the same six Louisa County churches were represented with John Poindexter as moderator. The Circular Letter was on Godly Zeal. <sup>108</sup>

In 1815 the Goshen Association met at Goldmine Meeting House in Louisa County with the same seven Louisa churches represented. The Circular Letter was on the Door of Admission into the Visible Gospel Church. Elder John Poindexter, who had been moderator many years, was absent on account of illness, and for the first time in years the moderator was not from one of the Louisa churches, as the Association selected Elder A Broadus, from Burrus's Meeting House, to serve as moderator. <sup>109</sup>

In 1816 the same seven Louisa churches were represented with John Poindexter back as moderator. The Circular Letter was on giving religious instruction to children.

"Whereas it appears by information, that many Coloured persons who are Members of our Churches, hold the abominable opinion that it is no crime, in the sight of God, to steal

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107. Minutes of the 1813 Goshen Baptist Association.

108. Minutes of the 1814 Goshen Baptist Association.

109. Minutes of the 1815 Goshen Baptist Association.

their master's property, arguing that it is taking their own labour; and whereas many of them, acting upon this principle, have thereby brought great reproach upon the cause of Religion: this Association therefore strongly recommends to the Churches, to call upon their Coloured Members one by one, to avow their opinions upon this point, and where this opinion is avowed, and the party cannot be convinced of his or her error, after full and fair investigation, that they exclude them from their fellowship."<sup>110</sup>

In 1817 the same seven Louisa churches were represented with John Poindexter again chosen as moderator. The Circular Letter was on the Reciprocal Duties of Pastors and Churches.<sup>111</sup>

In 1818 the Goshen Association met at the Foster's Creek Meeting House, which was an arm of the Roundabout Church until it was constituted. John Poindexter served as moderator, and the same seven churches were represented.<sup>112</sup>  
The Circular Letter was on Gospel Missions.

"Foster's Creek Meeting House was situated one mile southeast of Munford's Bridge. It was turned over to the colored members in 1866, and a new house erected one-half mile northeast of Munford's Bridge, and the name of the

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110. Minutes of the 1816 Goshen Baptist Association.

111. Minutes of the 1817 Goshen Baptist Association.

112. Minutes of the 1818 Goshen Baptist Association.

church changed to Berea."<sup>113</sup>

In 1819 the same seven Louisa churches were represented at the Goshen Association with John Poindexter as moderator. The Circular Letter was on Christian Conversation.<sup>114</sup>

In 1820 the same seven Louisa churches were represented. The Circular Letter was on Not Conforming to this World.<sup>115</sup>

In 1821 the same seven Louisa County churches were represented, with the Circular Letter on the Observance of the Lord's Day.<sup>116</sup>

In 1822 the same seven Louisa churches were represented, with the Circular Letter on "An inquiry into the probable causes of the languid state of many of our churches, and most likely means of their recovery from such languor."<sup>117</sup>

In 1823 the same seven churches were represented with the Circular Letter on Covetousness.<sup>118</sup>

In 1824 the same seven Louisa churches were represented, with the Fork Church coming in. The Circular Letter was on The Increase of the Redeemer's Kingdom.<sup>119</sup>

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113. Semple, op. cit., p. 217.

114. Minutes of the 1819 Goshen Baptist Association.

115. Minutes of the 1820 Goshen Baptist Association.

116. Minutes of the 1821 Goshen Baptist Association.

117. Minutes of the 1822 Goshen Baptist Association.

118. Minutes of the 1823 Goshen Baptist Association.

✓ 119. Minutes of the 1824 Goshen Baptist Association.

Actually, in this year Scarrott's dissolved its constitution, so only seven Louisa churches made a report.

In 1825 the seven Louisa churches represented were the same as in 1824. The Circular Letter was on Revelation  
120  
3:2.

In 1826 the same seven Louisa churches were represented. William Hiter, the clerk, wrote the Circular Letter on  
121  
Fervent in Spirit.

In 1827 the Goshen Association met at Elk Creek with the seven Louisa churches represented. William Y. Hiter, from the Goldmine church was chosen moderator. He had served as clerk before. The Circular Letter was on the  
122  
Support of the Gospel Ministry.

In 1828, the same seven Louisa churches were represented, with W. Y. Hiter chosen moderator. The Circular Letter was on Brotherly Love. The Temperance Church from Louisa came into the Association, thus changing the total  
123  
of Louisa churches in the Association to eight.

In 1829 the same eight Louisa churches were represented, with Upper Goldmine, later to become Louisa, and Free Union

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120. Minutes of the 1825 Goshen Baptist Association.

121. Minutes of the 1826 Goshen Baptist Association.

122. Minutes of the 1827 Goshen Baptist Association.

123. Minutes of the 1828 Goshen Baptist Association.

churches coming into the Association, thus bringing the total of Louisa Baptist churches in the Goshen Association to ten.  
124

In 1830 the Association met at South Anna in Louisa with ten churches from Louisa County represented. William Hiter was chosen moderator. The Circular Letter was on the Lord's Supper.  
125

In 1831 there were ten Louisa churches listed in the Association. William Hiter was chosen moderator. No Circular Letter was published, rather a list or an abstract of information of the Benevolent Operations of the churches.

Fork - - - - - Within the bounds of this church, there are two Sabbath schools, embracing about fifty scholars. These schools have been conducted with prudence, - and the teachers deserve much credit. Four of the teachers have been awakened, and have obtained a good hope through grace.

There is one Temperance Society of sixty-eight members, a Female Foreign Mission Society in a prosperous condition, and a Bible Society in good order, by which all the destitute families in the bounds of the church are at present supplied. This church is now enjoying a precious season of refreshing; and such a religious concern, as never was witnessed before in that part of the country.

Elk Creek - - - - - In the bounds of this church, there is a Bible Society in an operative and flourishing condition. The members of this church generally, are members of the South Anna Temperance Society at Mount Hermon. There is a weekly prayer meeting.

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124. Minutes of the 1829 Goshen Baptist Association.

125. Minutes of the 1830 Goshen Baptist Association.



Lower Goldmine- -There is a Missionary Society, Bible Society, and Temperance Society within the bounds of this church, and a regular weekly prayer meeting kept up.

Free Union - - - A Missionary Society has been formed in the bounds of this church, in aid of the General Association. There is also a weekly prayer meeting well attended.

Upper Goldmine - Many of the members of this church have united with the Bible Society, Missionary Society, and Temperance Society at Lower Goldmine. A Sunday School has been instituted, and for a length of time carried on with order and vigour. There is also a weekly prayer meeting held by the church.

Temperance - - - During a part of the year a Sunday school has been in operation at Temperance Meeting House, and well attended.

There is a large and respectable Temperance Society here, and the Temperance Reform is gaining ground.

Little River - - The letter from this church contains no notice of the benevolent operations of the present day.

Roundabout - - - A Missionary Society has been formed in the bounds of this church, in aid of the General Association. There are regular weekly prayer meetings held by this church.

William's - - - In the bounds of this church, there are two Sabbath Schools, one Temperance Society, and a regular prayer meeting.

The Almighty has poured out his spirit in a wonderful manner upon this church, especially upon that arm or portion of it, worshipping at South Anna Meeting House. It would seem that every soul at South Anna would be saved.

Laurel Spring - -Within the bounds of this church there is a Sunday School, a Temperance Society and a Missionary Society. Several

members of this church are members of the Bible Society at Lower Goldmine. 126

For some reason not given in the minutes, Little River does not appear in the Associational list of churches in 1832, 1833, or 1834, but in 1835 the minutes report a newly constituted church at Little River, which was accepted into the Association.

In 1832 nine Louisa churches were represented, with William Hiter chosen as moderator. A brief Circular Letter was compiled on Gospel Discipline. The Fork Church in Louisa presented the following query:

Does this Association think it orderly to keep in her fellowship, and support as a Pastor, a preacher of the Reforming, or Campbellite order? - From the Committee - In relation to the above Query, we recommend the adoption of the following resolution: Resolved, That this Association will not keep in her fellowship, any Church which countenances the preaching of any Ministers, or the course of any individuals, who hold fellowship with Mr. Alexander Campbell. <sup>127</sup>  
Adopted without debate, and with great unanimity."

In 1833 nine Louisa churches were represented with

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126. Minutes of the 1831 Goshen Baptist Association.

127. Minutes of the 1832 Goshen Baptist Association.

William Hiter as moderator. The Association met at Laurel Spring in Louisa. The Circular Letter was on Unity.<sup>128</sup>

In 1834 the same nine Louisa churches were represented. The Circular Letter was on the exercise of a public gift by the ministry and the conduct of the church toward the minister. This letter was a reprint of one by John Poindexter in the 1808 minutes. Roundabout is recorded, beginning with this year, as Foster's Creek.<sup>129</sup>

In 1835 a new church at Little River came into the Association and ten Louisa churches were represented. William Hiter was chosen moderator. There was a brief Circular Letter on Time. The Association met at Free Union, which is at present known as Mechanicsville.<sup>130</sup>

In 1836 the same ten Louisa churches were represented with William Hiter acting as moderator. The Circular Letter was on "Lord what wilt thou have me to do."<sup>131</sup>

In 1837 the same ten Louisa churches were represented with William Hiter as moderator. The Circular Letter was a continuation of the previous year's letter.<sup>132</sup>

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128. Minutes of the 1833 Goshen Baptist Association.

129. Minutes of the 1834 Goshen Baptist Association.

130. Minutes of the 1835 Goshen Baptist Association.

131. Minutes of the 1836 Goshen Baptist Association.

132. Minutes of the 1837 Goshen Baptist Association.

In 1838 only nine churches were represented, as Little River failed to report. William Hiter was moderator, and the Circular Letter was on Carrying Your Religion into Practice.  
133

In 1839 the Association met at Lower Goldmine with ten Louisa churches reporting. The Circular Letter was on the subject, "Ye must be born again."  
134

In 1840 the same ten Louisa churches were represented. The Circular Letter was on Repentance.  
135

In 1841, the same ten Louisa churches reported to the Goshen Association. The following year, Temperance dropped out of the list of Louisa churches in the minutes of the Association.  
136

With Temperance not reporting to the Association, there were only nine Louisa churches represented at the 1843 Association meeting. At this Goshen Association meeting, Lower Goldmine suggested that the Association form a Missionary Society. It was agreed that this should be done and the churches were asked to contribute to its support.  
137

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133. Minutes of the 1838 Goshen Baptist Association.

134. Minutes of the 1839 Goshen Baptist Association.

135. Minutes of the 1840 Goshen Baptist Association.

136. Minutes of the Goshen Baptist Association, 1841-1842.

137. Minutes of the Goshen Baptist Association, 1843.

From 1844 through 1848, the same nine Louisa churches reported to the Association. In 1848 a new Louisa church, Forest Hill, came into the Association. This brought the total number of Louisa County Baptist churches in the Goshen Association to ten.<sup>138</sup>

During the years 1849 through 1853, the same ten Louisa County churches were represented in the Goshen Association. In 1854 another Louisa church, Oakland, reported, bringing the total number from Louisa to eleven. Laurel Spring dropped out in 1855. In 1856, the remaining ten Louisa County churches met with the Goshen Association at Little River. At this time Foster's Creek became known as Berea Baptist Church.<sup>139</sup>

The same ten churches reported to the Association during the years 1857 through 1861.<sup>140</sup>

There were only five Louisa churches at the Association meeting in 1862. The churches were still in operation, but the presence of Federal troops in the area hindered the activities of the churches.<sup>141</sup>

The Goshen Association met at Elk Creek in 1863.

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138. Minutes of the Goshen Baptist Association, 1844-1848.

139. Minutes of the Goshen Baptist Association, 1849-1856.

140. Minutes of the Goshen Baptist Association, 1857-1861.

141. Minutes of the 1862 Goshen Baptist Association.

Nine Louisa churches reported. In September of that year the Association passed the following resolutions:

1. That the success which has attended the Confederate arms from the beginning of the war in which we are engaged, calls for renewed expressions on the part of this body, of gratitude to that God who has thus far sustained us in our great struggle for liberty.

2. That nothing in our recent experience ought to discourage us, or diminish our confidence in the cause in which we have so freely made so many sacrifices.

3. That the late appeal of our noble President, calling on all who belong to the army, to return to their places in the strife, deserves a cordial response from all the people, and should engage our most earnest efforts to secure the return, of every one absent, promptly to his brethren in arms.

4. That it is our duty as patriots and Christians, to do all in our power to sustain the credit of the currency of the Confederate States, and in every probable way to aid the Government in the further prosecution of the war until our national independence is secured. 142

In 1864 ten Louisa churches were represented at the Goshen Association. Trinity Church, of Louisa County, entered the Association. At the meeting, the churches were concerned mainly over raids by the Federal Troops. 143

The people of the Baptist churches of Louisa County, like all Virginians, felt the results of the Civil War. The Baptist convictions, the Baptist spirit and determination, could not be snuffed out. The simple, plain, sensible.

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142. Minutes of the 1863 Goshen Baptist Association.

143. Minutes of the 1864 Goshen Baptist Association.

Bible-centered Baptist doctrines became a part of Louisa County life as never before. The Baptist folks of Louisa County have grown and developed with the great Commonwealth of Virginia. The men of God who have directed the Baptists of Louisa County have been men of courage, stamina, willingness, devotion, determination, and most of all, men of great faith in a "Living Word", the Bible, a "Living God", the Provider, and a "Living Christ", the Saviour.

"History is so genuine and familiar to men of all estates, ages, qualities, sects and conditions, that among the many eulogies it hath received from the learned pieces of ancient and modern writers, it may be justly accounted rather the recreation than the application of a studious man.

"It is, indeed, that telescope by which we see into distant ages, and take up the actions of our forefathers, with as much evidence as the news of the latest Gazette; it is the mirror that represents the various transactions of times past, and shows us the dress of antiquity, according to which we may rectify or adjust our present fashions. In a word, it is the last will and testament of our deceased progenitors; which, though it does not expressly leave every one of us a particular legacy, yet it shows us how

we may be possessed of their inheritance; and accordingly as we follow their example, live in reputation or ignominy." <sup>114</sup>

This is a brief history of the Baptists of Louisa County, Virginia, to 1865. It would be impossible to gather all the impressions made on Virginia society and the American way of life by Louisa Baptists. The author of this paper has not always been a Baptist, but is a Baptist by conviction. Much of the tradition and color of the old days is still noticeable in the Louisa County Baptist Churches. Louisa County has been and ever shall be a better county in which to live because of Louisa Baptists.

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114. Elders Lemuel Burkitt and Jesse Read, A Concise History of the Kehukee Baptist Association from its Original Rise Down to 1803. (Philadelphia: Lippincott, Grambo and Company, 1850). Page IX of the Preface.



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## VITA

Roscoe Ashburn Musselwhite, son of the late Mr. & Mrs. Ashburn M. Musselwhite, was born in Bainbridge, Georgia, February 16, 1922.

After graduation from Great Bridge High School of Norfolk County, Virginia, he entered the Navy in 1943 and served until 1946.

In 1951, after having spent five years in the grocery business in Norfolk, Virginia, he enrolled at Tennessee Temple College in Chattanooga, Tennessee to prepare for the Baptist Ministry. He completed his studies and received the B.A. degree in June, 1954.

He was ordained to the Gospel Ministry in November, 1952 at the Kings Point Baptist Church in Chattanooga, Tennessee.

As pastor, he has served five Southern Baptist Churches. The Kings Point Baptist Church in Chattanooga, Tennessee, the Trinity and Elk Creek Baptist Churches in Louisa County, Virginia, the Mt. Hermon Baptist Church in Spotsylvania County, Virginia and is now the pastor of the Deep Creek Baptist Church of Portsmouth, Virginia.

The writer entered the Graduate School of the University of Richmond in June, 1955, to work on his M.A. in History.

He was married July 28, 1940, to Margaret Elizabeth Olah of Norfolk County, Virginia. They have two sons, Roscoe, Jr. and Daniel Lee.