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ELDER J. R. RAKES



I was born to Amos and Lillie Rakes on January 28, 1939 in Patrick County, VA. After high school I married Estelle Marie Hylton, and to this union came a son, Allan Donathan Rakes, and a daughter, Angela Dee Rakes. Angela married Gregory C. Evans and they have one son, Joshua Weldon Evans, our only grandchild.

I joined the Missionary Baptist church in 1967, and was ordained by them October 24, 1971. I served a Missionary Baptist church in Sandy Ridge, NC for four years.

I was enlightened to see the doctrines of Grace and believe the Primitive Baptist doctrine, and came to the Primitive Baptists in May of 1975. There were 19 that came out of the Missionary Baptist and joined the Primitive Baptists that day. We were all baptized in June 1975 by Elder Donnie Conner and Elder Rupert Turner. Those 19 were organized into Grace Primitive Baptist Church, near Sandy Ridge, NC. I was ordained by the Primitive Baptists on November 29, 1975, to serve Grace Church. Out of this church came Elders E. Guy Parks and Elder Sammy Coleman.

I served Grace Church for 17 years. I also served churches in Norfolk, VA, Martinsville, VA, and am now serving Sugartree Primitive Baptist Church in Danville, VA, and have been there for several years.

ELDER ELTON DEE RAMEY

WRITTEN BY MEMBERS OF THE GULF COAST PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH: Elder Ramey was born April 28, 1921 in Gladewater, Texas, the first child of David and Myra Ramey. On February 17, 1940, he married Mildred C. Lee, the daughter of Morty and Zelma Lee of Pritchett, Texas. They have two sons, Doyce and Donald; and one daughter Linda Rogers. Bro. Ramey served in the Army Air Corp in World War II and was discharged in 1946. The Rameys moved to the Houston area in the early sixties where Bro. Ramey worked for Cameron Iron Works, retiring after 23 years.



Bro. and Sis. Ramey joined the First Primitive Baptist Church of Dallas in 1954 when they were baptized by Eld Paul Harris. Bro. Ramey began exercising in 1956 with a regular appointment at the Primitive Baptist Church in Paris, Texas, under Eld. Farmer. Bro. Ramey was ordained into the work of the ministry at Friendship PBC in Baytown, Texas, on May 1, 1960. At his ordination, Bro. Ramey was questioned by Eld. L. R. Ethridge, and the charge was delivered by the pastor, Eld. Charles R. Rose. During his ministry, he pastored churches in Cameron, Beaumont, Point Enterprise, Pasadena, Houston, and Alvin. At the time of his death, he was the pastor of the Gulf Coast Church in Alvin, Texas.

Elder Ramey passed from this life on July 21, 1999 at a local hospital following a long illness.

ELDER W. D. RAMSEY

Elder William Dewey Ramsey was born on July 7, 1898 in Grayson County, TX and moved to the vicinity of Merkel, TX in 1915, where he spent the rest of his life. He attended Simmons College, later renamed Hardin-Simmons University, and taught school at Compere for four years. He married Miss Fannie Childers on July 3, 1921 and the couple had one son, Lee Roy Ramsey.

HAYDEN HARRELL WRITES: Elder Ramsey was pastor of the church at Anson, TX for many years.



During this time he was also pastor of the church at Wingate, TX, and at Breckenridge, TX. He was called to pastor the (First Primitive Baptist) Church at Abilene, TX in 1975 and served there until he was no longer able to preach or walk. He was a wonderful man and preacher. He was a minister for over 48 years and never thought of retiring. He was also a

fine, self-employed farmer.

ELDER LEONARD RAPER

FROM 1947 PRIMITIVE BAPTIST YEARBOOK: This highly esteemed minister was born in Wilson County, North Carolina on March 23, 1877.

He first united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Scotts, near Wilson, North Carolina about the year 1907 and later moved his membership to Singleton Church where he was ordained to the ministry on June 9, 1929. The ministers who made up his ordination presbytery were Elders W. M. Stubbs, R. H. Boswell, and Gillman Sawyer. During his ministerial life, Elder Raper pastored the following churches: Singleton Church in Washington County, North Carolina; Sparta Church, North Creek Church, and Atlantic Church. Sometime after his ordination, Brother Raper moved his church membership to Upper Black Creek Church where he remained until his death from a paralyzing stroke which beset him in 1939. His eventual death came on December 15, 1945.

ELDER CORNISH RATCLIFF

SUBMITTED BY KENNETH RATCLIFF: Elder Cornish L. Ratcliff was born in Scott County, Ky., on March 1, 1899. He and his wife, Mattie, joined Ray's Fork Church on Sept. 16, 1933, while attending a service conducted by Eld. S. E. Angle at a church of another faith. They were baptized the next morning with his brother, Otto, he having joined at the water. Having a feeling that he had a call to the ministry, he began to

exercise publicly in November 1936, and after a year or more the church called for his ordination to the full work of the ministry, which was done August 10, 1938.



Elder Ratcliff pastored Liberty Church in Estill County and Winchester Church in Winchester, Ky., Clark County, before feeling impressed to move to near Monroe, N. C. in May 1954. About six months later he was called to pastor Cool Springs Church near Travelers Rest, S.C. He lived in North Carolina over nine years before moving to South Carolina in January 1964, and continued serving Cool Springs through 1967.

Before becoming disabled by old age, he moved back to Kentucky to be near their two sons and their families in November 1969, and joined Sugar Grove Church near Liberty, Indiana.

In January 1972, he had a heart attack followed by three more attacks during the next few years, and had been unable to serve as a pastor since the first attack. Sister Ratcliff died on Feb. 10, 1986.

In October 1995, Elder Ratcliff, his son Kenneth and his wife, received letters of dimission and joined Middle Run Church near Waynesville, Ohio. The last sermon he preached was at Middle Run in October 1995. From about the middle of January 1996, he was in St. Luke Hospital until he died on Feb. 7.

ELDER JAMES RATLIFF

Was born in the state of Kentucky, near the city of Louisville, January 19, 1798. He was united in marriage to Miss Martha Hines of the same state. They started to Missouri at once, hoping to find a suitable place for a home. The young couple had only one horse, so the journey was a tedious one. A part of the way they traveled with an acquaintance who complimented the young wife on her inventiveness and courage.

Their first home, which was typical of all pioneer homes of that day, was in Randolph County, Mo., in the midst of Indian settlements. They made friends with the Indians and when their first little child was old enough, the Indian women often took him to their homes and kept him for hours at a time. By the hardest of labor and perseverance, husband and wife had the satisfaction of seeing their land produce food and were proud of their home. During these times, the spiritual side of their lives was not neglected, and Elder Ratliff often expounded the gospel of salvation by Grace in a firm and fearless manner.

Near the year 1830, the family moved to Macon County. They were always ready to take part in anything worthwhile. In 1837, Elder Ratliff was selected as the Commissioner of Justice for Macon County, and he being surveyor laid out the town of Bloomington, which was the first county seat of Macon County. Mr. Ratliff and his associate in church work, Elder William H. Sears, set out the first orchard in Macon County.

During these years, Elder Ratliff held religious services at various homes and schoolhouses, and, when a suitable building could not be had, services were held in groves, which were God's first temples. He was one of the first acknowledged leaders of the Primitive Baptist Faith, and he aided in the establishment of several churches in this then, new county. One of these churches was the Goose Pond Church, seven miles from Huntsville, Mo. In 1838, he organized a church in Jackson Township, Macon County. In 1840, he preached at Little Zion Church in Independence Township, Macon County. In 1855, the family moved to Drake Township, where he established a grist mill. The home was on the farm now owned by Charley Gall—near the site of New Boston, which was originally east of Mussel Fork. Elder Ratliff died there, and was buried in what is now the Helton Cemetery, north of Goldsberry.

ELDER R. O. RAULSTON

Elder Raulston was born December 22, 1856. He passed away July 7, 1938. Elder Raulston was a charter member of the Chattanooga Church, which was constituted in 1910, and pastor from 1910 to 1938.

He was highly respected among the churches and brethren and was an able minister of the gospel. He traveled extensively among the Primitive Baptists.

ELDER BENJAMIN FRANKLIN REDFORD



B. F. Redford was born at Dothan, Alabama, April 22, 1842, the youngest of nine children born to James and Sallie Shelburne Redford. The family moved to Texas in 1847, settling near Brenham in Washington County, where he grew to manhood. He married Sarah Jane Reddin, December 29, 1868, who died when their two children, Sammie and Annie, were very young. On the fourth Sunday in May 1871, he joined Mill Creek Church, Austin County, where his parents were charter members. Licensed to preach in 1873, he was ordained to the full work of the ministry October 1881 by Elder J. W. Shook and Deacons S. G. Bailey and S. S. Redford, (his brother).

He moved to Llano County with his two children in 1883, along with his brother Sam and family, to settle on land he had bought near Valley Spring. He was received into Valley Springs Church on recommendation, September 1887. (Speculation is that he lost his church letter in the fire, which destroyed his home soon after he moved to Llano County.) At the time he joined, he was called to assist Elder J. L. Jones, who was then pastor, and continued as pastor for thirty-six years.

After his children were grown and married, he married Mrs. Fannie Harris, who died within a few months. Several years later, he married Mrs. Mary (Aunt Mollie) Weston, who outlived him. He died at his home near Valley Spring in May 1926, and was buried in Salem Cemetery. His request had been that the song, "When I Am Gone," be sung at his funeral.

Elder Redford was a sound, doctrinal preacher, a good disciplinarian, a steadfast and faithful overseer, loved and respected. Beginning in 1895, he served as Moderator of Friendship Association most of the years until 1923.

ELDER SAMUEL N. REDFORD

FROM "THE BAPTIST TRUMPET" 1914: I was born the 20th day of November 1872 in Washington County, Texas. There were only three of us children, two boys and one girl; the little boy older than me died in infancy. In my early childhood, I remember having very serious thoughts and somehow I felt that God was to be greatly feared. My father (Elder B. F. Redford) was a Primitive Baptist preacher, my mother was a member, too, and I often heard them speak of God as one to be greatly honored and praised. My dear mother often talked to me of Jesus.



My mother has long since been called from this world of sorrow, but she preached to me the truth and I hope I will be enabled to contend for it while I live.

I remember again she called me to her bedside one day and said to me, "Sammie, if you ever get in trouble, pray to the Lord and He will deliver you out of your trouble." O, my soul, how true this has been with me! He has delivered me out of every trouble I have ever had, but space forbids my telling more of her godly admonitions. At the age of seven, I came home from school one day and ran into the house to tell her how I had succeeded at school that day, and found my dear and precious mother lying dead on the floor, she having died of heart trouble. Although only a child, it seemed my poor heart would burst at the thought that I would speak to her and she did not answer me with her kind and gentle voice. In a few moments, I went out to the field where my father was plowing and told him, my little sister having gone to my uncle's a short distance away.

When I was eleven years of age, my father moved to Llano County, Texas, and as I grew older, I began to drift with the world, taking delight in vain and foolish things. The dancing hall was a place of great delight to me until the summer of 1893. I was out one morning alone in the woods when all at once, Jesus hanging on the cross flashed into my mind. I had

often seen Him pictured on the cross, and it hadn't affected me, but this sight seemed to make me tremble. I did not know what was the matter; I felt like someone was watching me, and just the breaking of a twig alarmed me. I tried to shake off the feeling. I tried the dancing hall; and I am ashamed to say, I tried more wickedness. I tried swearing, but my burden went with me wherever I went.

Sometimes I could not sleep; sometimes I could not keep from shedding tears. Oh, it seemed at times my sins, when they would loom up before me, were enough to damn a whole world. Time rolled on; I grew more and more distressed. Oh, my soul, if there was a time that I felt to be without hope and God in the world, it was while I was under conviction.

But in the month of July 1894, I was cutting fodder, and it seemed all day that I could not live. Oh, what gloom settled all around me. In spite of all I could do, I would beg for mercy. I could have asked anyone on earth to pray for me. Somehow, I felt that it was my last day on earth. About sundown that evening, I cut fodder out to the end of the row and stood looking at the setting sun. I felt perhaps it was for the last time in life. In my deep trouble, I thought I would try one more time to pray. I fell to the ground saying, "God have mercy on my poor soul." At that moment, children of God, the sweetest peace I have ever felt filled my poor soul, instead of a burden. Oh, how happy I felt: It seemed that all the fountains of the deep of God's everlasting love broke loose in my soul. I can never describe what my poor soul felt, how glorious everything appeared, but indeed it was a heavenly place.

FROM HIS OBITUARY: Elder S. N. Redford was born November 20, 1872, in Washington County, Texas, the son of Elder B. F. Redford and Sarah Jane Redford. He moved, with his father and sister (his mother having passed away a few years before) to Valley Spring, Llano County, Texas in 1883, where he grew to manhood. On November 12, 1895, he was married to Henrietta Elizabeth Milton. He joined the church at Valley Springs February 1896; made his first attempt to preach in March 1899; and was ordained to the full work of the ministry, July 1900, at the Friendship Association convening at Valley Springs. Elders S. R. Woods, P. T. Watson, B. F. Redford, and Deacons J. R. Clark, N. R. Jeffrey and S. S. Redford sat as a presbytery for the ordination.

During his fifty years in the ministry, Elder Redford traveled widely over the country, as well as pastored churches locally. Following his father

in 1923, he served Valley Springs Church as pastor for twenty-four years. A gifted writer, he wrote extensively for Baptist papers. Although a very able preacher, he was an humble man with an open mind, qualities which endeared him the more to the Baptists.

Elder Redford passed away on January 19, 1950.

FROM "A GREAT MAN" BY ELDER A. E. RICHARDS: One of the great men of a generation or two ago, that I had the privilege of knowing was Elder S. N. Redford.

My first memories of the church include Elder Redford, and my hearing him preach at the associations, and special meetings. The Lord gave him a special gift, and these who tried to copy him did not get along very well. As the old expression goes, a borrowed ax will fly off the handle.

In the days of his prime as a gospel minister, it was nothing unusual at all, as he warmed up into his subject for people to break out in shouting praises to the Lord, and they would literally shout him down. When they would start shouting, he would usually quit, and privately he would say, "I can't compete with the sisters."

He was sound in the doctrine, and preached it in an experimental way, very seldom getting controversial with his approach. He traveled extensively, and was known all over the nation during those days.

I recall very vividly the last meeting I had with him. It was the day he, along with Elder Norman and Elder Crain, conducted the funeral for my grandfather. We were on the way to the church house in my car. I was driving, and he was sitting in the back seat. He made a remark about an article I had written and said to me, "I want to reach all the way from my country to yours and give you my hand on that" and reached across the seat behind me, and gave me a warm handshake.

He was a great Old Testament preacher. One of his favorite texts was "My love, my dove, my undefiled, she is but one." Another embraced the scripture about getting honey from the rock and oil from the flinty rock. I recall at one time he quoted this scripture, and I thought, well, I can see the honey, but I can't see much in the idea of getting oil out of the flinty rock—but he hadn't been talking long before I could. I had not associated

this oil with its healing qualities—but he did, and had so many beautiful things to say about it.

Perhaps we do have men today of his caliber, but not any with just the special gift he had.

The memories I have of this great man, Elder S. N. Redford or Sammie as my grandfather called him will long be precious to me.

ELDER HOLLIE REDMON



IN 1972, ELDER REDMON WROTE: I was born in Warren County, Virginia, March 8, 1909. I was brought up in the fear of God and to respect the Bible. I tried the works system and when I failed in that I gave up. I would walk about a half mile from my home and pray under a tree. I went to church, but could not get out of it what others said they did. I married Daisy Moore, who was a member of the Primitive Baptist church. I could not see it her way, but went with her.

In 1936, I went on a trip for the Army. It was union meeting time at her church--a three day meeting. I was not expected to be back until it was over, but a change in orders got me back as the meeting was starting. I felt the urge to go before the church at that meeting and was accepted and baptized the 4th weekend in June 1936, by Elder A. L. Harrison.

I was in two wars, World War II and the Korean conflict. We were transferred to Missouri and took our membership to New Garden Church in Ray County. I was given liberty by the church in 1952 to speak wherever the Spirit directed. We came back to Virginia in 1953, and I was called to serve Hopewell and Richmond Churches in 1954. I had a job with the State of Virginia as Food Inspector, and thought I could do both. Soon Greenwood and Mill Creek Churches called me to serve them, and, a little later, Timber Ridge called me. I had to give up the job, which I hated to do; but can truly say I haven't lost a thing by so doing.

I was ordained in January 1955, and still serve these churches here in Virginia. We have gone through some rough times, but the Lord never promised a smooth road. These churches are in sweet peace, and it's God's love and the love for the churches that keeps me wanting to serve them better. God, the churches, and my wife have been with me all the way.

NOTE:: Elder Redmon passed from this life May 12, 1989.

ELDER AARON REEDER

I was born a cripple on Sept. 2, 1892, and my mother died shortly after my birth. I do not remember attending any church until I was almost in my teens, but when I was quite young I suddenly felt a great fear of death and damnation. I wanted to be saved, and asked everyone I thought could help me, what they thought I could do. Nobody could help me. They just told me over and over, to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. That didn't help me, for I was already a believer in his existence and mission to save sinners. I went to mourner benches; preachers prayed for me; and others tried to help me. As I understand it, my new birth took place when I was a little boy, but my conversion took place when I understood what Jesus said and believed it. He said whoever believed in him was saved. I was unbelievably happy.

I never knew an Old Baptist until many years later, but when I did hear them they were preaching exactly in harmony with my experience. I joined Cottage Grove Church in Saline County, Illinois, in 1923, was licensed to preach in 1924, and was ordained in 1925. I was about sixteen or seventeen years old when I obtained a hope of salvation.

My first wife died in 1953. I married my present wife in 1960.

ELDER F. M. REEDS

Francis Marion Reeds was born near Old Elbridge, Edgar County, Illinois, August 13, 1845. He was one of three children born to John W. and Elizabeth Lamb Reeds, and was married to Angeline Lumbrick on May 7, 1868. Two years after he was married he moved to a farm near

Hindsboro. He moved to Paris, Illinois, in March 1919, where he resided until his death August 11, 1924.

He joined the Primitive Baptist Church in June 1869, and began preaching almost immediately, continuing his work until the fourth Sunday in October 1914, when a stroke of paralysis made it necessary for him to give up his ministerial work. Being an able preacher, he gave much of his time to the cause he loved so well. He was always ready to do his part, and was never happier than when he was entertaining his brethren. His home and his heart were open to the poor and needy. He was never known to turn a beggar from his door without food or shelter and wished his family to do the same, saying we may be denying one of God's precious children.

Though he was afflicted for ten years, we never heard him complain of God's dealings with him. He was blessed in many ways, one of the greatest being that he had to suffer but little pain.

ELDER ORREN LEE REGISTER

EXTRACTED FROM AUGUST 1961 ISSUE OF GOODWILL: Elder Register was born in Dupont, Georgia on 1 January 1882. He joined Arnie Church of the Union Association in August 1907. He was ordained to the ministry on 28 Oct 1933.

After his ordination, Elder Register moved to Macclenny where he united with Oak Grove Church. He served them as their pastor faithfully until his health forced him to enter the hospital. After his stay in the hospital he returned to his home where he was confined to the bed until his death on 26 Dec 1959.

ELDER S. H. REID

WRITTEN BY ELDER J. A. FAGG: Elder S. H. Reid was born August 20, 1866. He died May 2, 1951.

He was united in marriage to Miss Nannie Jane Marshall on December 20, 1893. To this union five daughters and four sons were born.

He joined Clear Springs Church on June 8, 1912 and was baptized by Elder J. A. Fagg. He was granted liberty to speak in public on October 12, 1912. He was a charter member of Walnut Cove Church. He organized Boyles Chapel Church and served as its pastor twenty-four years. He served No Creek Church for thirty years. He served Brush Creek, Sandy Creek, Stuart Creek, Flat Shoals and Holly Springs for several years. He was a good pastor and loved the doctrine of Salvation by grace.

ELDER AFTON E. RICHARDS



AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH
WRITTEN BY ELDER RICHARDS IN
1972. I made my first appearance on this
earth in the West Texas prairie country,
near Rule, in Haskell County, about 57
years ago. All of my life I have lived in
this general area of West Texas.

At the age of nine days, my mother
carried me to Ephesus Church in Rule,
Texas, where my grandfather Elder W.H.
Richards was the pastor. I have been
attending services at this church from
time to time all of my life.

In my memory I can recall being interested in the Lord and the Church as far back as the age of five. I united with the Primitive Baptists at the West Texas Association at Tahoka, Texas, in August of 1932. I was ordained as a deacon by the Rule Church in 1947. I served to the best of my ability in that capacity until December of 1962 when I was ordained to the full work of the ministry by Little Flock Church at Munday, Texas.

At the time I was ordained, I was trying to speak in the name of our Lord every Sunday. Shortly thereafter, held services on an average of four times each month for several years, in addition to two 30 minute radio programs each Sunday. This has kept me pretty busy. Many, many times I have gone home Sunday night, completely empty and tired, with a sincere prayer in my heart, "Lord, you will have to give me something to tell our people next week, I am empty, and void."

I feel that I have a great heritage in the church. One of my grandfathers was a deacon and great scholar. My father, Elder H.G. Richards was a great presenter and defender of the doctrine of the Bible and the church.

I married into a Primitive Baptist family of 13 children. Grandfather Bass was a deacon, and extremely well posted the scriptures. All the children were members of the church. Many of the sons and grandsons are now ordained ministers and deacons in the church. My wife, Mary, was the youngest of the 13 children. She was a good wife and mother, and a great help to me.

Perhaps the greatest burden of my life, about four years ago, she was in very poor health, and was in great pain. Several doctors examined her with no good diagnosis. I recall one Sunday morning at the Muleshoe Church I used for a sermon topic the question, "If God be for us, who can be against us?"

Two days later I took my wife to another doctor. After a short examination he called me aside, and with a solemn expression he said to me: "I am very sorry, your wife is almost dead with inoperable cancer." Four days later she suffered a stroke, with a block in the artery to the lungs. You can imagine my grief and the feeling I had, and the grief or problem of discussing this with her. But she had a strong faith and trust in the Lord. I had to remember my text, and what it meant. In less than a month she was gone from us.

By Providence, we feel the Lord worked in our behalf. And how peculiar it came about. Brother Ed Crawford of the Cisco Church, where I tried to serve as pastor, had surgery, diagnosed as terminal cancer. His daughter, Sister Opal Sanders of Corpus Christi, was attending his bedside, when I was visiting him. Although her grandfather was a deacon in the church where, my grandfather was pastor about 50 years ago, and I had been her father's pastor for several years, we had not known each other until this time. We felt the Lord had thrown our lives together in this strange manner. We were married December 12, 1969.

Our family started the *Banner of Love*, a Primitive Baptist publication in December of 1932. At that time most of the church papers, used much of their space in discussing personal differences, and church troubles. My father felt the great need of the Baptists having a paper of scriptural

discussions, and of good news, without the trouble. This was the reason for the birth of the *Banner of Love*.

Two years later, at the age of 20, I became editor and publisher of the *Banner of Love*, which capacity I have tried to occupy since that time.

I have tried to preach the gospel in the states of New Mexico, Colorado, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Tennessee, Virginia, Maryland, Delaware, Pennsylvania, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, and my native state of Texas.

FROM DAVID MONTGOMERY: Elder Richards passed from this life on June 21, 1984. He was editor of *The Banner of Love* for over 50 years. He authored several other publications including *Why I Am A Primitive Baptist* and *Bible Stories*. His positive influence on God's people in the State of Texas as well as across the country is felt to this day. He had a wonderful memory and his mind was quick to recall so many wonderful and unusual incidents from past days. I remember one afternoon at Corpus Christi, Texas, when between services, he kept several of us entertained for hours by telling stories from the "good old days."

ELDER CHARLES HENRY RICHARDS



WRITTEN BY HIS SISTER: ILA MARIE (RICHARDS) DAVIS Elder Richards was the oldest son of Elder Phillip Wade Hampton Richards. He was born May 6, 1882 in Hood County Texas. He went to be with Jesus Aug. 29, 1958.

Brother Charlie joined the Church at Providence Church.. He was ordained at Rule Church on Sat before the first Sunday in Aug. 1920. The Presbytery consisted of Elders W.H. Richards, A. C. McMillon, T. A. Dunn, J.W. Poe, J. B. Denton, J.C. Turnbow, and Deacons W. T. Hudson, S. B. Kurykendal, G. H. Contrell, W. A. Short, H. A. Patterson, E.A. Ritchie, W. T. Hudson. The Clerk was N.O. Phillips.

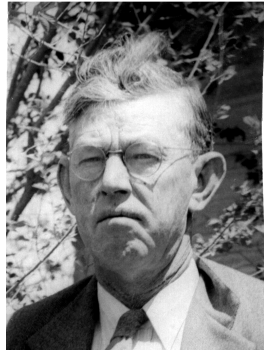
Brother Charlie pastored many Churches during his lifetime. Some of them being: Vera, Eldorado, Santa Anna, Fort Worth, Blanchard, Oklahoma. He helped with the organizing the Church at Union Grove (near Knox City, Texas).

Brother Charlie was married to Miss Mattie Hamrick on Aug. 24, 1902. Elder J.W. Poe preformed the ceremony.

Brother Charlie spent his life preaching and caring for the Old Baptists. He was well loved by all. He worked in law enforcement for many years. A monument was erected in his Honor at the Cowboy History Park. It is located outside of Santa Anna, Texas.

ELDER H. G. RICHARDS

THIS SKETCH WAS SUBMITTED BY HIS SISTER: ILA MARIE (RICHARDS) DAVIS, WITH HELP FROM HIS DAUGHTER, IMA DORA HAILE.



Elder Hardon Gideon Richards was born March 5, 1890 in Erath County, Texas, and died at Anton, Texas on August 23, 1951. He was ordained 1915 at Rule, Texas. He pastored churches in Vera, Knox Co Texas; Joy, Clay Co. Texas; Pilgrim's Rest, Lamesa Texas; Anton Church, Anton, Texas; Brownfield Church, Brownfield, Texas. He was the son of Elder (Phillip) Wade Hampton Richards & Mattie Richards. He married the former Eora Elizabeth Short on Sept. 27, 1911 at Rule, Tex. To this union were born 5 children (Elder) Afton E. Richards, Alton M. Richards, Ima Dora Richards Haile, Edwin Richards, and William Hampton (died at birth).

He was the first Mayor of Anton, Hockley County, Tex. He was Justice of the Peace for Hockley County, President of the Lions club International. He was President of the West Texas Press. Assn. He was the first Publisher of the *Banner of Love* from 1932 till 1934. He had a wonderful gift as a preacher and loved the Lord with his whole self and was faithful until death.

ELDER J. W. RICHARDS



Elder John Willie Richards, a well-known Primitive Baptist minister of Indiana, was born December 1, 1860, and departed this life December 10, 1954. He and his wife Emma were united in wedlock on March 1, 1883, and lived together to celebrate their 71st wedding anniversary. They lived on the same farm near Gaston, Ind., all of their married life. He owned one of the first automobiles in the county, having purchased it in 1912.

He joined Harmony Church near Matthews, Ind., on December 1, 1888, and was licensed to preach June 3, 1893, and ordained to the ministry on December 6, 1902. He married 450 couples. He was called to pastor his home church in 1904 and served them until his health failed him.

Elder Richards did not travel extensively but spent most of his labors in the community where he lived. He had a very humble disposition and had the respect of his neighbors and friends as well as the great number of Baptist brethren and sisters.

ELDER MARK RICHARDS

Elder Richards was born on October 22, 1970 in Hereford, Deaf Smith County, Texas. He was baptized on May 17, 1980 at Bethel Church, McMahan, Caldwell County, Texas by Elder W.R. "Dickie" Daniels, Jr. He was ordained September 17, 1994 at the Bethel Primitive Baptist Church, McMahan, Caldwell County, Texas. Elder Billy Moseley led the ordination prayer. Elder Hulan Bass did the interrogation and Elders Bill Walden and Anthony Blevins did the charge. Elder Clifford Gowens was the clerk.

He was married to Paula Lynette Blevins (of Huntsville, TX), August 20, 1994 at the Fellowship Church, Madisonville, Texas; Elder Billy

Moseley officiated. To this union two sons were born: Zachary Isom and Ryan Christopher.

ELDER RICHARDS WRITES: I cannot recall a time when I did not feel to be enfolded in the loving arms of God, nor can I recollect the instant that the conviction of sin first brought me to my knees. I do recall,



however, a special meeting at Bethel when Elder Mike Montgomery preached on the subject of repentance. I remember after services standing outside the church, looking upon the beautiful view through tear-stained eyes, and promising that from that point on my life would be.

The first time I felt the glorious revealing of God's word was while working as a drafting intern in 1988. After being outnumbered in an office discussion about a blasphemous movie being released that summer, I felt the need to read the Bible. The pastor of my youth, Elder W.R. "Dickie" Daniels called on me to introduce the services that Sunday night at the Luling Church. I spoke from the forth chapter of Second Corinthians. As things progressed, the Lord blessed me with my pastor, Elder Hulan Bass, as a father in the ministry. In 1992 the Lord doubly blessed me by bringing into my life a sweet young lady, and her father. In the time that Paula and I dated, her father, Elder Anthony Blevins, became another father in the ministry to me, and cultivated in me a great respect for the church and the Spiritual Kingdom of God. I also count among my blessings the ministries of Elders Billy Moseley, Mike Montgomery, and Clifford Gowens. Each has strengthened in me an appreciation for the care of the sheep and lambs of God.

ELDER STRATFORD HAMPTON RICHARDS



The second son of Elder W. H. Richards. He was born August 28, 1887 in Erath County, Texas; and died February 20 in the late 1950's at Rochester, Haskell County Texas. He was ordained in the

Primitive Baptist Church at Rule, Haskell County, Texas in the late 1950s. He later pastored that church.

ELDER W. H. RICHARDS



SUBMITTED BY HIS DAUGHTER, ILA MARIE (RICHARDS) DAVIS: Phillip Wade Hampton Richards was born June 4, 1861 in Johnson Co. Texas to Stratford Wade Hampton Richards and Elender Caroline Cooper. He died Feb. 1948 and was buried at Rule, Texas. Elder Richards joined the Church the 4th Sunday in July 1897 and was baptized by Elder R.A. Biggs. He was ordained first Sun in Sep. 1900 by the authority of Providence Church in Erath Co. Tex. Elders J. S. Newman, J. H. Fisher, J. M. Creel, J. R. McCarthy, B. J. Driver, E. R. Robinson, J. W. Poe, S. A. Paine and F. D. L Koehn comprised the Presbytery. He pastored many churches.

He married his first wife on May 26, 1880 to the former Mattie Lee Hewett. She died Nov. 20, 1923 after a long illness. They had had nine children by his first wife: five boys and four girls. The first girl died at birth.

Married second wife on Oct 8 1924, her name was Rosa Cleveland Barnard. She died in Nov. 1946.

Number of children by second wife: three girls. One girl died at birth. The other two girls are still living. They are Ila Marie (Richards) Davis and Sally Lea (Richards) Burress.

He published a church paper entitled *Glad Tidings* in the twenties but had to give it up because of the depression. At the insistence of Eld. J. G. Webb, my father wrote a little booklet entitled "My Experience and Call to the Ministry." It is recorded that "He baptized more than one thousand of the Lord's little children."

ELDER ROBERT H. RIGGAN

WRITTEN BY ELDER C.W. MILLER: Elder Riggan was born October 14, 1862, in Surry County, North Carolina, and died February 13, 1953.

Elder Riggan's wife was Victoria Farmer of Carroll County, Virginia. He was a preacher nearly 60 years; a member and sometimes pastor of Little Vine Church in Fishers River Association in North Carolina.

ELDER WILLIAM RILEY RIGGS

Elder Riggs was born April 2, 1885 in Ray County, MO and passed from this life on March 4, 1924. He united with the New Garden Church in Excelsior Springs, MO in July 1874. He was ordained a deacon in November 1876 and was licensed to preach in March 1886. He was ordained a deacon in November 1876 and was licensed to preach in March 1886. He was ordained to the ministry in October 1886.

He served Crooked River Church at Rayville, MO; New Garden at Excelsior Springs, MO; Sugar Creek at Gilman City, MO; and Fishing River at Orrick, MO.

ELDER DAVID L. RILEY

Elder Riley was an ordained minister for more than fifty years.

He was a native of Clay County. He was married and had eight sons and two daughters. He departed this life on September 27, 1954 (?) at the age of 84 years. Elders Frank M. Guy and H. R. White preached his funeral, which was held at Ephesus Primitive Baptist Church near Alexander City.

ELDER JOHN E. RILEY

Elder Riley was born in Sangamon County, near Springfield, and came to Adams County with his parents in his early youth. He was married in 1849 to Miss Lucinda Harris, who was his faithful and capable

helpmeet through sixty-three years of wedded life. To this union there were born seven children, two daughters and five sons. Elder Riley united with Bear Creek Church, Adams County, Illinois, where he was ordained to the ministry in 1866. A pioneer resident of Chatten, and later of Bowen, he was an honest, conscientious and upright citizen, held in high esteem by all who knew him. He passed away May 13, 1912.

ELDER CURTIS RIPLEY



I was born June 26, 1923 to Mr. and Mrs. L. S. Ripley at Comanche County, Texas. I am the first of eight children. I am the only one of my family that is a Primitive Baptist, with the exception of an aunt on my mother's side. I do not remember an experience of grace like some of my brethren, but I know when I was very small boy I would try to pray and not knowing the truth I could not find the relief that I now enjoy in trusting in the precious Lord Jesus Christ.

It seems that the Lord has been so very good to me; in 1942 I married Virgie Lee Koen, a daughter of J. D. and Edith Koen. I have always felt that the Lord was in the matter in sending me my precious wife, for had it not been for her I doubt if I would have ever heard the truth. We have been blessed with three children, Delton, Allen and Susan.

The first time I ever heard a Primitive Baptist preach was at Mt. Olive Church near Goldthwaite, Texas in 1942. I joined the church at Mt. Olive April 18, 1948 and was baptized by Elder W. J. Chambers May 15, 1948. I was ordained to the full work of the ministry in February 1957 at Mt. Olive Church.

I wonder some times how they could put up with such a one as I feel to be. I know in my poor heart that I do not want to cause God's people any trouble, but live with them and serve them in any way that I can. And be enabled by the grace and mercy of a loving God to preach Christ and him crucified to His humble poor.

ELDER ARMOND RITCH



I was born on December 12, 1929, in Cook Springs, Alabama. My parents were William Thomas Ritch and Ossie Kelly Ritch, who were good, honest and hard working. I was the youngest of five boys, and joined the Missionary Baptist Church at a very young age.

On June 29, 1947, I married Bettye Baker.

Until adulthood, I knew nothing of the Primitive Baptist beliefs, but was taught the doctrines of grace by the Lord. I joined Ebenezer Church on September 1, 1963, being baptized by Elder Lloyd Hand, and was ordained to preach on June 11, 1966. Since ordination, I have continually been trying to pastor between one and three churches. Currently, I am serving my home church, Liberty, in Dora, Alabama, and have served in that capacity for thirty-three years. I also serve James Creek Church, in Tremont, Mississippi, as well as Bethlehem Church, Tuscaloosa, Alabama.

In my ordination, were Elders Lloyd Hand, J.C. Justice, Holand Popwell, Lamon Farris and Gordon Justice. The clerk, Deacon Eldridge Samples, is the only person still living, who sat in that ordination.

I am opposed to all attempts to introduce new inventions and/or forms of modernism into the church. I hope to die in the faith and in the fellowship of the Lord's people.

ELDER THURMAN RITCHIE

Of Rensselaer, Indiana. He was born April 21, 1930 and was one of eight children born to Edward Ritchie and Myrtle Dobson Ritchie of Knott County, Kentucky. He moved to Indiana 1948 and served in the U.S. Air Force during the Korean War from 1951 to 1955. Married Joy Lee Sallee of Jackson, Kentucky in 1955. Four children were born into

our family. In 1959, he joined the Oak Grove Church at Rensselaer, Indiana. He was ordained to the ministry in 1974.

PASTORED THE FOLLOWING CHURCHES: Shiloh Church – Elkhart, Indiana; Pilgrim's Rest - Etna Green, Indiana; Mount Zion – Waukegan, Illinois; Oak Grove – Rensselaer, Indiana. Pastor at this time with Elder Mitchell Dobson, Jr.

Elder Ritchie is well known for his true pastor's heart and the Cause of Christ is uppermost in his mind. He has a kind and gentle spirit.

ELDER WILLIAM THOMAS RITTER

Wm. T. Ritter was born January 23, 1841. He was married to Nancy Howerton in 1862. Brother Ritter was ordained to the full work of the ministry about 1883 by Elders J. M. Demane, P. G. Lester and others. He died May 2, 1920.

ELDER JACOB RIVERS

WRITTEN BY HIS WIDOW: Elder Rivers of Hampton, South Carolina was born October 9, 1863, and died on January 29, 1928. We were married in 1881. My dear companion was ordained in 1908 in the St. Paul Church in the Prince William Association, where we both are members. He attended our Union Meeting at the Prince William Church on Saturday, January, 28th, 1929 and preached a good sermon and offered prayer and seemed to be feeling well, but was taken sick that night and died the next morning.

ELDER S. L. RIVES

Samuel Lee Rives was born February 9, 1871 in Lincoln Parish, Louisiana and came to Texas in 1892. He was married the former Texie Brumley in 1892. He joined the Primitive Baptist Church in 1896 and was ordained to the full work of the ministry by the Concord Church in Jones County, Texas, in July 1902. Ministers in the presbytery were Elders J. R.



Bolinger, J. B. Downing, H. C. Curington, and W. H. Richards. He taught school thirty-one years, and also served as pastor of numerous Primitive Baptist Churches throughout Central and West Texas. He died May 31, 1956, while living in Odessa, Texas.

ELDER JOHN A. ROBBINS

Elder John A. Robbins of Middlesboro, Kentucky died at the age of 69 years. He joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Brownies Creek, Oaks, Kentucky in 1910. He moved his letter to Cannon Creek Church in 1914. This church ordained him to preach in 1928. In 1937 he moved his letter to Pinnacle View Church where he was a member at his death. He served this church as pastor for 15 years. He was a great defender of the doctrine of salvation by grace.

ELDER COY L. ROBERTS



WRITTEN BY ELDER REUBEN HAWKS, JR: Elder Roberts was born April 11, 1879 to McKinley and Margaret Stroupe Roberts. He passed from this life on September 25, 1972.

Elder Roberts united with the Primitive Baptist Church at the age of 29, and was ordained to preach in Nov. 1926, at the age of 47. He pastored a number of churches, and died a member of Rock Creek Church.

ELDER GEORGE ROBERTS

FROM "A HISTORY OF THE PRIMITIVE BAPTISTS OF ALABAMA, MT. ZION ASSOCIATION" BY ELDER E. B. WATTS: Elder Roberts was ordained at Mount Moriah in February 1825, by Elders Phillip Archer and Thomas Jones. He was also pastor at Mount Pisgah from 1829 to 1832.

ELDER MIKE ROBERTS



Elder Roberts was born on July 6, 1954. He was baptized on February 1, 1995 at the Old Bethel Primitive Baptist Church in Fulton, Kentucky by Elder Ray Ward. He was ordained on July 18, 1998 at the Old Bethel Church. He and his wife Debbie were married on July 18, 1973. They have two sons (Billy and Brad) and one daughter (Bobbie Jo).

ELDER ROBERTS WRITES: I was born and raised in this area. My family was from various different religious orders. I married into the Primitive Baptist family and was blessed to see the truth of salvation. Shortly after I united with the church I began to feel the impression to preach. I accepted to pastoral care of Old Bethel Church in January 1999 and am currently serving there.

ELDER SAMUEL FERGUSON ROBERTS, MD

WRITTEN BY SISTER MARYNELL HARRIS: Dr. Sam Roberts was born 16 August 1847 in Carbon Hill, Walker Co, AL. He was the son of John Green and Elizabeth Martha "Mariah" (Ferguson) Roberts. On 26 November 1871, he and Sarah Elizabeth Keeton were married at Carbon Hill. Dr. Roberts joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Flat Woods, near Carbon Hill, and was baptized by Thomas McCough (a blind man). He later became an ordained minister of the Primitive Baptist Church. He was a charter member of Mt. Olive Church located in Mills Co, TX, when

it was organized July 28, 1899. He was also a farmer and a self-educated medical doctor.

In December 1896, Sam and Sarah, along with their children went by train to Hico, Hamilton Co, TX. They rented a farm that was located 9 miles north and west of Hico and stayed there two years. They then bought a farm and lived on it for two years before moving to the Mt. Olive Community near Caradan in Mills Co, TX in December 1900.

Dr. Roberts departed this life on 13 March 1932 at Caradan, Mills Co, TX.

NOTE: In Elder J.S. Newman's *History of the Primitive Baptists in Texas Oklahoma and Indian Territory*, edited by B. S. Young, page 340, information is given about the constitution of Mount Union Church, located six miles east of Goldthwaite in Mills Co, TX. It gives the date of constitution, the elders and deacons who were present, and names Elds. Barnhart and S. R. Woods as having preached for this church. It then states, "Elder Sam Roberts is the present pastor." Not having access to the records of that church, I don't know if the above-mentioned Eld. Sam Roberts and Dr. Sam Roberts are one and the same people. Even though Dr. Sam would have been well up in years by this time, I suspect there is a good possibility that they are. In that event, this comment by Eld. J.S. Newman would have been penned not too long before the death of Dr. Roberts.

ELDER STEVE PRESTON ROBERTS

FROM AN OBITUARY IN THE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST, WRITTEN BY ELDER C. F. MARTIN: Elder Roberts, the son of Elder P. K. and Margret (Strupe) Roberts, was born Jan. 27, 1889 and died in a Winston-Salem, N. C., hospital on March 20, 1957. On October 5, 1914, he united in marriage to Miss Amanda Rebecca Fields. To this union three children were born.

Brother Roberts professed a hope in Christ Jesus in early life and united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Pilgrims Rest in 1913. He was granted liberty to speak in public in May 1917, ordained to the full functions of the gospel ministry in March 1921; elected joint-pastor, with his father, of Pilgrims Rest Church in 1921; and served until his passing. He also served the following churches as pastor: Cross Roads, Rock

Creek, Peach Bottom, Saddle Creek, Fox Creek, Barton's Cross Roads and Little River. He served as moderator of the Mountain District Association for ten years.

Brother Roberts was sound in the faith, doctrine and practice of the Primitive Baptist cause, ever contending for the principles and practice our forefathers have set forth, which are established by the teachings of the Holy Bible. He had no place in his life for any other doctrine or practice. Two or three days before his passing he said he would love to be blessed to live to preach the grand old doctrine that he had preached and loved for all these years one more time.

The writer had the privilege of laboring in this field with Brother Roberts and can say it was a sweet privilege to labor with him. He was so humble.

Brother Roberts was an upright, hard-working man, having earned his living by the sweat of his brow, ever ready to render help to the poor and needy with his services.

ELDER JAMES E. (ARCHIE) ROBERTSON, JR.



AS TOLD TO ELDER HUGH MONTGOMERY BY ELDER ROBERTSON IN AUGUST 2000: Elder Robertson was born on February 13, 1925. He married Faye Oleta Pettijohn on August 21, 1944 in Brownwood, Texas. He joined the church the 3rd Sunday of August 1947. His wife joined the Fort Worth Church in June 1955 and was baptized by Elder Sam Holt.

In 1950, he felt the call to the ministry and tried to run from the call by moving to Wyoming, and later to New Mexico and Oklahoma. He submitted to the call and moved back to Texas where he held several appointments. He was ordained to the ministry at the Abilene Church where Elder Floyd Griffin was pastor. There were 19 ministers in the presbytery.

Elder Robertson has served the following churches, all in Texas: Kokomo, Odessa, Hamilton, Mt. Olive near Goldthwaithe, Cisco and the Mohawk Drive Church in Dallas.

ELDER JAMES E. ROBERTSON, SR.

Elder Robertson was born on November 19, 1898. He married Addie Mae Wright on March 29, 1922. He joined the church at Colorado City, Texas in 1935 and was baptized by Elder R. B. Hester. In 1934, he began introducing services at the Colorado City Church, but trouble in the church discouraged him to the point where he seldom attended services for the next fourteen years.

In 1947, he joined the Mt. Olive Church near Goldthwaithe, Texas and began speaking again. In 1953, he moved to Oklahoma and attended the Salem Church in Wichita Falls, Texas where Elder R. H. Williams was pastor. He was ordained to the ministry in June 1953 at the Salem Church by Elders O. C. Floyd, G. L. Lester and R. H. Williams.

Elder Robertson died in a car accident in January 1967.

ELDER J. M. C. ROBERTSON



I was born February 21st, 1812, in White County, Tennessee. My parents were Charles and Elizabeth Robertson; my mother's maiden name was Thomas. Early in life I had serious thoughts about death, but like the most of Adam's fallen race, I thought that the place called heaven was for good people, and was sure that any and every one could be good if they would. With these views I lived a Pharisee, having set times for prayer, thinking the more I prayed the better I was. My mother was an Old Baptist, but my father was no professor. My mother always attended her meeting when she could do so; and on returning from one of her meetings one Saturday evening, she told the family that a beloved uncle,

living near the meeting house, was very sick, and not expected to recover; and that he had desired the preacher and the members of the church to pray for him, as he was not prepared to die. On hearing this I thought I would pray for him, and when I commenced, the thought struck me with force that I was a poor, dead sinner myself.

This was the first time that I ever saw the horrors or depths of the pit that I was in, and no way of escape. My pharisaical religion could not stand the light that had opened my blinded eyes; for now I thought I was the worse sinner on earth. I was but a boy, not quite 14 years of age. I never have been able to describe the anguish of my mind in this awful state of despair, when all of a sudden, and entirely unexpected, the burden was gone, and a sweet calm came over me, and before I was aware I was singing praises to God. I could say, "A sinner saved by grace." This was in the year 1825, in September, and in October I went to the church and told them that I wanted to follow Jesus, and was received into old Hephzibah Church, in Franklin County, Alabama, and was baptized the next day--being the third Sunday in October 1825--by old Brother Thomas Moss. The Baptists at that time were all one people, but what a vast difference 59 years has made! Impressions to preach soon bothered me, and I tried to avoid all such notions, and when my parents moved from Alabama to Tennessee. I was determined on living as a mute amongst the Baptists; as I did not think I would find anyone, or not many, who would know that I was or ever had been a Baptist. And when I could hide no longer, in the year 1829 I commenced trying to preach, and the church at Enon, where my membership was, gave me a written license in April of that year to exercise my gift wherever God, in his providence, might cast my lot. I went to work in good earnest, and in the year 1831, in November, I was ordained to the full work of the gospel by D. Sweeton, James Bruton and A. Samans, acting as a presbytery, and was called to serve Moss Creek Church, in McNary County, and served a little over one year. In August 1832, I was married to Mrs. Elizabeth Watson, whose maiden name was Carter, and in that year removed to Tipton County, Tenn., where I took charge of three churches until the split of 1836. After the division I attended four churches till the fall of 1841, when left Tennessee and came to the State of Arkansas and settled in Union County, but afterward Washata, and there lived till 1864, attending from one to four churches all the time. When I came to Texas, in 1864, I stopped in Titus County, and had the care of no church during that year, but tried to preach from two to five sermons almost every week when I was well. In 1865 and 1866 I lived in Fannin County, where I attended two churches and two congregations the most of the time. In 1867 I came to Hunt County,

where I attended two churches and two congregations till 1869, when I took charge of another church, and continued to attend them till 1880, when I stopped attending one of the three churches, my wife's health becoming so feeble that I took a congregation nearer home. In 1882 my wife died, and my health being bad I traveled the most of 1883, preaching whenever I felt able. In September 1883, I was married the second time to a Mrs. H. E. Tatum, whose maiden name was McCullar, and am still attending two churches and two congregations.

NOTE: Elder Robertson passed from this life in 1887.

ELDER THOMAS D. ROBERTSON

EXCERPT FROM A EULOGY BY ELDER PAUL R. MANN IN THE "PRIMITIVE MONITOR:" Elder Robertson fell asleep in the arms of the precious Saviour in the early hours of May 18, 1960. In August of 1958, upon my return to my former home in Atlanta, Georgia, from Orlando, Florida, where I had gone to look for a home, I told my people that I had met a man at the Orange Church in Orlando who bore the kindest expression and from whom seemed to flow all the Christian graces that ever I had known in a person of so short acquaintance. This was Brother Robertson (affectionately known as Brother "Tommy"). From that day on whenever I met him he was the same, high in the Spirit of our blessed Lord, walking in a Christ-like manner. Brother Tommy was not ashamed to own his Lord nor to defend His cause, being ready at all times to give a reason for his hope. He was a "burning and shining light." He was always anxious and ready to go to Church, a place he considered most sacred and dear to his heart. Surely, he had found a friend in Jesus as he so often spoke of the greatness of His love and friendship. His favorite song was "What a Friend We Have in Jesus," and he sang it with the innermost expressions of his soul. In his sweet preaching, he hardly ever failed to speak of the precious promises of Jesus and of the riches of Heaven into which his spirit and soul have now entered.

ELDER OWEN BUFORD ROBINSON

Elder Robinson was born in the rural community of Whites Creek, Tennessee just a few miles north of Nashville, in 1918. At the age of eight

he lost his father to typhoid fever. According to family history, Samuel Robinson sang several verses of "Amazing Grace" with his last few breaths of life as his family stood gathered around his bed.

Young Owen, his two brothers and one sister, moved with their mother, Annie Mae, to her father's farm a short distance away where he



spent the rest of his childhood at farm labor under the stern guidance and strict discipline of his grandfather Owens. During the years of the Great Depression in the 1930's, he took a WPA job with a highway crew to help support his mother and siblings. He loved baseball and basketball, which he played informally whenever he could take a brief break from the seemingly endless farm work his grandfather and his uncles supplied for him in abundance.

He eventually took a job at a farm equipment dealership in Nashville that later led to a job with the International Harvester Company with whom he remained affiliated in management and sales throughout his professional career.

He joined the Army and rendered four years of service and duty to his country in World War II. His cooperative attitude, his sense of discipline, hard work, duty and obedience soon earned him a stint at officer training school. He rose to the rank of First Lieutenant. In his capacity he served as platoon leader in the Ordinance Corps supplying front line artillery and infantry units with ammunition in Belgium, France and Germany, repeatedly falling under Nazi air and ground attack.

At the end of the war he returned to Nashville and in 1947 married Jane Miller with whom he would celebrate their Golden Anniversary in 1997. They raised three sons: Owen Buford Jr., James Miller, and Murray Samuel. The family moved to Huntsville, Alabama in 1962.

It was at Bethel Church in Nashville in the 1950's that Owen joined the church and was baptized. At Bush Hills Church in Birmingham, he was first, called to lead prayer and introduce services. He also enjoyed a life-long association throughout, his ministry with East Lake Church in Birmingham as frequent guest, preacher. In 1968 Brother Owen was ordained at Flint River Church near Huntsville where he served as co-pastor for the rest of his life taking an active role in the leadership of the

Flint River Association and its sister churches in Madison County: Briar Fork Church and Hurricane Valley Church as well as Flint Church, reportedly the oldest non-Catholic Church in the state of Alabama.

Elder Robinson was fascinated by the broad panorama of the scriptures and often focused in his sermons on piecing together passages from the Hebrew Law and the prophets with those referring to the life and words of Christ as well as the lessons of the Apostle Paul. He took pride in clear annunciation, good grammar, and usage of the English language.

Elder Robinson spent the last ten years of his life crippled and silenced by a devastating stroke, but thanks to the love and support he continued to receive from his church and the faithful assistance of his wife, he held steadfast to his faith and devotion to our Lord and God. Elder Owen Buford Robinson died on July 3, 1999.

ELDER BAZEL RODEN

FROM "A HISTORY OF THE PRIMITIVE BAPTISTS OF ALABAMA, MT. ZION ASSOCIATION" BY ELDER E. B. WATTS: Elder Bazel Roden was born in South Carolina in 1779. The only mention made of him by Holcombe is that he was pastor of Salem Church in 1839. Elder Roden and Elder Madison Hendricks were called to pastor Siloam Church in 1840. Both continued there for several years. In 1837, Elder Roden and Elder Andrew Alldredge ordained Elder Martin Putman at Salem Church.

According to Marshall County records, Elder Roden, together with Elder Martin Putman, ordained John Oden at Bethel Church, July 15, 1862.

ELDER MICHAEL H. RODGERS

Elder Rodgers was born December 6, 1964, in Lexington, Mississippi. He is the second of three sons born to Wayne and Nell Rodgers, who lived in Tchula, Mississippi, at the time of his birth. At the age of seven his family moved to Carthage, Mississippi, where they remained until Mike graduated from high school. After his graduation in

1982, Mike's family moved to Ruidoso, New Mexico, and Mike enrolled at New Mexico State University (NMSU). During his two years there, Mike served in the student senate and as campaign manager for his future wife, Lori Hand.



Mike had been reared in the Southern Baptist church and was baptized sometime during his pre-teen years. When he went to NMSU, he continued to attend worship services at a Southern Baptist church, but he also attended worship services with other denominations. Except for a brief encounter with a Pentecostal group through a friend in Mississippi, this was really his first exposure to services and beliefs that differed (however slightly) from his own. At this point, however, he did not give much attention to such details. It was during this time that he met Lori Hand, the daughter of Elder Gerald Hand of Artesia, New Mexico. They first met in the fall of 1982, and by the grace of God made it through a dating relationship that ended in their marriage on August 4, 1984.

Mike and Lori moved to Lubbock, Texas, where Mike obtained his Bachelor of Business Administration degree from Texas Tech University in 1986. During the first couple of years of marriage, Mike vainly led he and Lori to various churches in an attempt to find a "compromise" between the Primitive Baptist and the Southern Baptist faiths. Throughout this endeavor, Elder Hand encouraged his daughter to "let patience have her perfect work." This patience prevailed as the gracious God of Heaven led Mike to an understanding of His ways, showing Mike the Truth of the Scriptures in his meager attempts to study the word of God. This Heavenly guidance culminated upon the Spirit's exposition of 1 Kings 10:9, whereupon Mike learned that God loved Israel "forever," which, of course, means even before the world began. Upon this revelation, Mike sought to join the Primitive Baptist Church at Lubbock, Texas, being baptized there on the second Sunday of January 1987 by Elder Hand and recommended for membership by his new pastor, Elder George Johnson.

God had richly blessed Mike through the study of the Scriptures, and these blessings were compounded through the mutual study and fellowship that Mike enjoyed with Steve Bloyd. It was Steve who had first invited Mike to lead singing at the Lubbock Church and by God's leadership the two grew together in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ. Both Mike and Steve became increasingly involved in the Lubbock Church, and they were ordained together as deacons in this Church, along with Brother Jack Denton, in December 1989. Under the tutelage of Elder Johnson, both Mike and Steve began to speak from the pulpit of the things which God revealed to them in the Scriptures. After several years of "exercising," Mike and Steve were ordained together to the full work of the gospel ministry in July 1991. (Mike and Steve have often wondered if they were the only two men to ever be ordained together as both deacons and elders.) They received questioning from their pastor, Elder George Johnson, and received their charge from Elder Gus Harter of Atlanta, Georgia. While Steve took upon himself the pastorate of the Crosbyton Church, Mike soon accepted the call from the Brownfield Church. After Steve followed the Spirit's guidance to Maryland in 1992, Mike became pastor of the Church at Crosbyton, where he remained until his move to San Antonio in 1999. Since this move, Mike has taken a regular once monthly appointment at the Church in Fredericksburg, and has his membership, along with that of Lori and their son Corbin, at Bethany Church in San Antonio.

Mike and Lori have three children - Corbin, who joined the church in 1998, Micah, and Ashton. All three children are adopted, which has led the parents to have wonderful thoughts of the adoption that God has done with His children.

ELDER JIMMY ROGERS

FROM "A HISTORY OF THE PRIMITIVE BAPTISTS OF ALABAMA, MT. ZION ASSOCIATION" BY ELDER E. B. WATTS: Elder Jimmy Rogers was born July 6, 1932. He was reared a Missionary Baptist and was ordained minister by them in 1956. Shortly after this, he was married to Miss Ruth Porter and to their union two sons and one daughter were born.

During his ministry with the Missionary Baptists, he became disturbed concerning the doctrine of sovereign grace. When he began to

preach his convictions, he lost his position with the people with whom he was connected. Perplexed, he began to search for those who taught the truths he believed. He found it at Oakdale Primitive Baptist Church in Tuscaloosa, Alabama.

Elder Rogers joined Oakdale Church, April 17, 1969, and was ordained August 8, 1969. He pastored Oakdale Church for about two years. Awhile later, he and twenty-three others were dismissed for the purpose of constituting a new church in the city of Tuscaloosa. Here, Elder Roger's labors were greatly blessed and the church prospered.

In the summer of 1975, Elder Rogers suffered a severe heart attack from which he did not quite recover. He died September 24, 1975.

ELDER J. W. ROGERS

EXTRACTED FROM JANUARY 1962 ISSUE OF GOODWILL: Elder Rogers was born in Brooks County, Georgia on 1 February 1886. He was raised in that same vicinity. In early manhood he took a wife by the name of Mamie.

On 2 May 1925 he united with Bethel Church of the Oclocknee Association of Georgia. After he joined the church, he was appointed to fill the office of clerk on 1 August 1925. On 31 October 1925 he began his first public effort at preaching. He was licensed to the ministry on 13 April 1926. His ordination to the ministry occurred on 2 September 1929. In October of 1929, Elder Rogers was elected to moderate the Oclocknee Association. He served as the pastor of Bethel Church and Sardis Church for 36 years and also served the congregations at Indian Creek, Harmony, and Mt. Pisgah for a lengthy period.

Elder Rogers passed away on 29 May 1961.

ELDER GLENN ROOKER



Elder Rooker was ordained the third Sunday in June 1965 at Tuttle Primitive Baptist Church, Tuttle, Oklahoma. He has served Tuttle, Mt. View, Elk Creek, Clegern and Tecumseh Churches during his ministry.

On May 14, 1950, he was married to Cleta Aynes, and they have two children, Katherine Kay Rooker Wynn and Stanley V. Rooker.

Elder Rooker is a faithful and able minister, and his labors are appreciated by the brethren whom he has served and where he has traveled.

ELDER THOMAS W. ROSCOE



FROM "THE GOSPEL MESSENGER:"

I was born in Berrie County, N. C., 26 October 1827. My father's name was John Roscoe, and my mother's maiden name Jennet Skiles. At the age of 18 years, by my father's permission, I went to Plymouth, N. C. to a shop joiner, then called. He was an infidel, and my boss was a fiddler, and I soon began to play the fiddle, and my fellow apprentices and I enjoyed ourselves much. But there came over me a sad feeling, so that the fiddle and the boys

became rather disgusting to me, and I could no longer enjoy myself in my old pleasures. I continued in this condition for some time, and tried to get dear of my trouble by associating in lively company, but it only served to make me more miserable. Whilst in this distressed condition, I went to hear a Methodist preach who said "that if any one in the congregation wanted religion, and would pray three times a day for three weeks, my soul for your soul if you do not get it."

It pleased me to be told how to get religion, for I thought I needed it, and so I began the next day, having gone to a thicket some distance from town as a suitable place, to which I resorted regularly, and never missed a time for three weeks. We had to work of nights, and one evening a buggy

was brought to the shop to have a shaft put in. The boss told me to put the shaft in, as it was wanted next morning, and I worked until 9 o'clock, when I started to bed. Soon after leaving the shop I turned into a lot adjoining our shop to pray, and whilst there on my knees, I felt that God would be just, let him do what he pleased to do with me; but I did not feel that I wanted to go to eternal ruin. At that I felt as I had never felt before; and then I saw that it was for what Jesus had done for me; and if I had have had a million of tongues, I think that they would all have praised God. After I was free I left Plymouth and went about 50 miles, into Martin County, where I found a good location for my trade. In a short time after I was settled down, I heard there was to be preaching at a church in two-miles, and having heard he was an Old Baptist, it made me all the more anxious as I had never heard one preach. I took a seat off in a corner of the house, as I was a stranger. There were two preachers --one named Wilson and the other Daniel. Brother Wilson preached first, but I did not feel to be benefited by his preaching, being unable to understand him. Brother Daniel arose and sung a hymn, which affected me, and took for his text this Scripture: "There came a leper and worshipped Him saying, Lord, if thou wilt thou canst make me clean." He told my feelings better than I could have told them, and I wondered how he could tell my feelings so well, for I knew I had never told any person my feelings. From that time I continued going to hear them preach, and I fell in love with their doctrine, especially the experimental part; and equally I concluded if they would receive me, I would go with them, and in May, 1824, in company with six others, I was received into the fellowship of the church at Spring Green, Martin County, N. C., and was baptized by Elder Wm. Hyman, who was afterward my father, in-law. I married Miss Penninah Hyman, 17th November 1831 and to us ten children were born.

In 1843 I made up my mind to leave North Carolina and move to Tennessee. I arrived at my destination in Maury County, Tennessee, January 1844, and making inquiry about Baptists, found one, a cousin of my wife's. We agreed on all points of doctrine, and I felt much gratified; but he suggested that perhaps we would not agree on the resurrection; that he did not believe like the Baptists did back in the Kehukee Association; "for one," said he, "I do not believe the body will ever rise from the grave." This astonished me very much to hear such ideas from a Primitive Baptist, and I told him I should never put my letter in a church of that sort. He said his preacher, Elder Brownlow, could convince me of my error; and finally he brought Elder Brownlow to see me. He said: "Here is the grave, this body, and when it dies the soul slips out, and God has a body prepared in Heaven for the soul, and this body will never rise."

I told him I did not belong to his sort of Baptists; that I did not find such doctrine in the Bible; that I had been reared up under Elders Joseph Biggs, Joshua Lawrence and William Hymen, and they had never preached such doctrine, and that I would not join a church that believed it. But it was not long until I heard Elder Jesse Cox, at Knob Creek, and it was the same old bell I heard from these old Elders in North Carolina. When the church went into conference that day, Saturday before the second Sunday in June 1844, I handed in my letter and was received into the fellowship of the church. In 1845, I was ordained by a presbytery composed of Elders James King, Henry Walker and Jeremiah Stephens. The day I was ordained the church called me as their pastor, and soon two others called me; and the most of my time has been filled in serving churches. I am now in my 79th year, am trying to preach to three churches, and do all my traveling on horseback, except two visits in a buggy. My lungs are good, my voice strong and clear, so I can be heard over a large congregation.

ELDER CHARLES ROSE



Elder Rose was born on December 23, 1923 in Bell County, Texas to Charles Eugene and Maggy Naomi (nee Harris) Rose. He is the seventh of nine children. His mother died on April 2, 1929 giving birth to the ninth child. His father died ten years later. They were farmers and were members of the Primitive Baptist church.

At the age of twelve, he walked two miles to Belton, Texas to attend an association. There, he had an experience of grace but dues to church trouble in the area he did not join. Seven years later, he joined the church in Donaldson, Arkansas and was baptized by E. W. Hargett.

At the age of fourteen, he went to live with his older brother Clifford in Temple, Texas. He began exercising at the age of nineteen under the pastorate of Elder V. F. Lowrance. In the summer of 1945, while attending Ouachita Baptist University, he met Ruth Hall. They were married on June 6, 1948. Their son Chuck was born in December 1952.

In 1955, they moved to Houston, Texas and joined the Houston Church, served by Elder Woodrow Wilson. He was ordained there on October 27, 1957.

Elder Rose has served the following churches: Houston, Baytown, Bethel (Houston), San Antonio and Fredericksburg. He now fulfills his role in the Kingdom as an evangelist, preaching where the Lord leads him to go. He currently resides in New Braunfels, Texas with his wife, Ruth. He was an instructor in the public school system for 37 years and used his faith and his love of God's truth for the benefit of many.

ELDER CLIFFORD E. ROSE

Elder Clifford Rose was born on June 8, 1911 in Rogers, Texas and passed from this life on December 21, 1987. Elder J.M. Hardwich baptized him when he was 16, during an association in Duffour, Texas. Elder Rose was ordained to the full work of the ministry on April 11, 1954. He was pastor and filled regular appointments at Pilgrim's Rest Church in Arkoma, Oklahoma for many years. He also was pastor of the church at Kinta, Oklahoma and at Bethlehem Church near Siloam Springs, Arkansas.



Elder Rose and his loving wife, Iris, always loved to have visitors in their home. Brother Rose was good to frequently sit with the sick and offer up fervent prayers when called upon. Yet, he never wanted any praise for himself and was known to quote John the Baptist, "He must increase, but I must decrease."

ELDER WILLIAM RAY ROTENIZER



Elder Rotenizer was born Aug., 8, 1909 in Southwest Virginia to Royal and Dora Rotenizer; members of the Pine Grove Church, Hillsville, VA. This son of a second generation German immigrant was to become a true believer in Jesus Christ, who preached for over 53 years to the poor and wealthy alike.

Elder Ray Rotenizer, second in a family of 12 children, was born and raised in very meager circumstances and suffered disabling polio at age one. Unable to attend school until age 9; his polio disability which left his foot turned in the normal opposite direction and his leg not much larger than the size of the bone all the way to his spine, made walking up hill to the school ¼ mile a real struggle and only possible in the early years by assistance of a sibling. At age 19, a neighbor town-businessman, the Rotary Club and generous commitments made it possible for him to undergo lengthy surgery at Roanoke, VA Crippled Children's Hospital and have his foot turned around, which gave some relief and a new outlook and attitude on life though the surgery was long, painful, and unusual for those days. The recovery was very lengthy.

He married Ava Marie Robinson in. In 1938, he became a member of Pine Grove Primitive Baptist Church, Hillsville, VA and by 1940 Ava had received a desire to join him as a member of the same Pine Grove Church. Then only a few months later in 1941, Elder Rotenizer commenced speaking in church after a Call he would not turn from--the mighty voice of God.

Ordained in 1943, Elder Rotenizer, preached in seventeen states over the years, pastored four different churches over a fifty-year span and conducted over 2,500 funerals and weddings. During this time, they used the radio as another media communication to reach, bless and preach God's true Word.

His working life to earn his way, in addition to the retail business; he successfully traded in real estate, owned and operated two restaurants, opened and operated an insurance agency, did real estate appraisal for a bank, was a gentleman farmer most of his life, ran for public office, operated a retail monument sales agency for 35 years, and they owned and operated a draper-remnant store for a number of years.

Since his passing in 1992, family and other events have not been the same without his presence.

ELDER WILLIAM DAVID ROUSSEAU

FROM "HISTORY OF MUD CREEK ASSOCIATION" BY JOANN THOMAS ELKIN: William David Rousseau, usually known as Will Dave, was born September 12, 1870; died August 2, 1948. He was the son of Rubin C. Rousseau and Lydia Ann Houk; a grandson of Elder Simeon Houk and Tobitha Murray. He married Ellen C. Tipton, born July 14, 1875; died November 10, 1947. They are buried in Peters Cove Cemetery near Woodville, Alabama.

Elder Rousseau is shown as a licentiate in 1908 with membership at Bethlehem Church. The 1914 minutes show his name in the list of home ministers; he may have been ordained 1910-1913; there are no minutes for these years. The minutes for 1915 through 1918 do not show his name in the list of home ministers. In 1919, he is shown as a messenger from Bethlehem Church, but is not listed as an Elder; same in 1920 and then in 1922 through 1948, he is shown in the list of home ministers.

Elder Rousseau and his wife had six children; known children are Dora Katherine (1892-1961); John William (1902-1981) and Andrew Calvin (1910-1968).

ELDER JOHN R ROWE

SUBMITTED BY GAYLON POWELL: Elder Rowe was born in 1830 and lived much of his life in Taylor County, Georgia. He married Jane Phillips, and to this union two sons and two daughters were born. He joined Bethel Church of Taylor County by letter July 24, 1880, and served as Pastor to that church from October 1867 until October 1870 and then again from January 1898 until his death. He died August 25, 1898, at his home near Butler, Taylor County.

He authored several books that related to the doctrines of the Church, and he was considered one of the strongest and ablest exponents

of the Primitive Baptist faith in that part of the State for that day and time.

ELDER JOSHUA T. ROWE

Elder Rowe departed this life February 19, 1936, at his home in Baltimore, Maryland. He was born April 12, 1858 in Beaufort County, N.C. His parents were John Tillman Rowe and Penelope Ross, both members of the Primitive Baptist Church.

He united with the church at Sandy Grove, in Beaufort County, and was baptized on the first Sunday in June 1876 by Elder Bryan Whitford. In September 1876 he began speaking in public, and the following December was licensed by the church to exercise in the public ministry. On Feb. 16, 1881, he married Miss Ella B. Harrison, of near Plymouth, N.C., where they made their first home, and he joined by letter the Morrattock Church in Washington County. In January 1882 the church at Jamesville, in Martin County, asked Morrattock Church for his ordination, that he might serve them as pastor. They agreed, and in February of the same year he was ordained by Elders N. H. Harrison and Joseph E. Adams. He served Jamesville Church four years. From 1882 to 1890 he assisted the pastor at Morrattock Church. In January 1890 he moved to his old home in Beaufort County and was called to the care of Blount's Creek Church, served them six years. He also served Bethlehem Church, in Tyrrell County, as assistant pastor a few years, and in 1891 was chosen pastor, where he remained until 1898.

In December 1898, Elder Rowe moved to Baltimore, MD, and in January 1899, took the care of Ebenezer Church there, also Black Rock Church in Baltimore County, and Shiloh Church in Washington, D. C., and remained their pastor until his death. He served as pastor for the Alexandria, Va., church for a time.

The principle part of Elder Rowe's ministry was spent in North Carolina, Maryland and Virginia. For a number of years prior to his death he was associate editor of *Zion's Landmark*.

Elder Rowe's first wife died June 17, 1914, and in October 1915 he was married to Mrs. Addie Farmer Massey, of Wilson, N. C., who died in

1919. He married Miss Mamie E. Wiles of Ringgold, Va., in 1920, who survives him.

In July 1935 he was stricken with total blindness caused by a heart ailment, and his physical health gradually failed from that time to the end, but his mind remained clear and active. During the last two weeks he seemed to realize his departure was close at hand and made certain requests concerning same. During his last illness he quoted much Scripture, but in his weakened condition it was not always possible to understand him. At one time shortly before his death he recited Jer. 3: 23, and a few hours before he passed away he prayed aloud for several minutes, thanking the Lord for all his wonderful mercies and blessings, both temporal and spiritual, and asking for a continuance of them for family, friends and churches.

ELDER J. A. ROWELL, JR.



WRITTEN BY HIS SON,
ELDER MARK ROWELL: Jacob Abraham Rowell, Jr. was born to Jacob Abraham and Eunice Ward Rowell August 10, 1930 in Houston, Texas. After completing high school and three years in the US Air Force during the Korean War, he obtained a BBA degree in Accounting from the University of Houston.

He united with Ephesus Church (now known as the Grace PBC) of Houston, Texas and was baptized by Elder J. A. Rowell Sr. on July 4, 1948.

Margret Singletery and J.A. were united in marriage July 3, 1957 and to this union were born Terry (now married to Ed James), Ward (now married to Catherine Sauls Rowell), and Mark (now married to Melissa Brown Rowell) who all have survived his death.

J.A. was ordained as a deacon the 3rd Sunday in February of 1958 and served in this capacity until April 1972 at which time the Church ordained him to the full work of the gospel ministry.

He served as pastor of the Sardis Church from 1974 to 1976; Grace Church from 1972 to 1991; Houston Church from 1985 to 1987; and Fellowship Church from 1984 to 1991.

He served several churches through visitation and appointments. He was instrumental in the formative stages of what is now known as the Tyler Fellowship Meeting held the 3rd weekend of June each year. The original purpose of this meeting was a drawing together of several Primitive Baptist "factions" from Texas to Arkansas to Louisiana. The meeting today stands as a tribute to the work of the Holy Ghost.

Elder Rowell died on July 18, 1991 at the age of 60 years and 11 months.

ELDER J. A. ROWELL, SR.



WRITTEN BY HIS GRANDSON, ELDER MARK ROWELL: Jacob Abraham Rowell, Sr. was born to Martha Staten Rowell and Jacob Rowell on a farm out of Ozark, Arkansas on March 21, 1892.

He was the eldest son of thirteen children and was left with the heavy responsibility of providing for his family at the young age of 18 at which time his father died at the early age of 40.

The family migrated to Houston, Texas about 1917 where he met and married Eunice Ward Rowell in August of 1925. To this union were born Elmira Rowell Calhoun and J. A. Rowell, Jr. He began attending the Ephesus Primitive Baptist Church in Houston where his wife had been a member since she was 11 years old. After much soul searching and finally conversion, he was moved to unite with the Primitive Baptist church

during the Neches River Association being held at Goose Creek, Texas in 1932. His membership was soon placed in Ephesus Church in Houston, Texas.

After being liberated for a short time, he was ordained to the ministry March 15, 1942 by the Ephesus Church (which later became the Grace PBC). After serving this church and several local churches by appointment, he was called as the pastor of the Grace PBC in 1949 and served in this capacity until his death on January 25, 1971. Other south Texas churches he served as pastor were Texas City, Gonzales, Combs, and Madisonville. He also served as the moderator of the Primitive Baptist Association of Texas for 22 years. Elder Rowell was a prolific writer for periodicals among Primitive Baptists. He was a kind and loving man and the Lord greatly blessed him in his ministry particularly as pastor and teacher. He was a father in the ministry to several young ministers, including his son, the Late Elder J. A. Rowell Jr.

ELDER MARK ROWELL

Mark Daniel Rowell was born in Houston, Texas on March 25th, 1968 to Elder J. A. Rowell, Jr and Margret Singletary Rowell. Being the son of an Elder, Brother Mark spent most of his time going to meetings with his family.



Brother Mark Rowell was baptized into the Grace Church in September of 1976 at the age of 8 years. He was very active in the church, even at a young age, always anxious and willing to lead singing and help out doing the physical upkeep of the church grounds.

At the age of 16, Brother Mark began to really dig and study the Bible, mainly in response to several questions of his future bride, Melissa Brown. However, during this time of intense study, Brother Mark began to realize a love for the scriptures and a desire for knowledge. He was asked to open services by his father many times. Each time he spent only a few minutes reading a verse or two and then quickly sitting down. But one time, when he was 18 and asked to introduce, he relates this experience:

"I remember praying during the song service that Dad wouldn't call on me to introduce. I felt lower than low that morning and seemed to realize that the Lord was burdening me. The last thing I wanted to be was a preacher so I thought that if Dad asked I would simply refuse and never get up again. However, this Sunday, Dad didn't ask. After the last song, I remember my Dad getting up front and simply saying, 'This morning we're going to have Mark open services...' I wanted to find the deepest hole to crawl into! Nevertheless, I got up. I began to be overwhelmed at the thought of the Lord pouring out His blessings on me. I felt so weighted down. I stood and sobbed for what seemed to be an eternity but really only a few minutes. I was then drawn to Luke 2:10, 'And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy...' I was overwhelmed by the scripture and began to expound on it in such a way that I had never done before. It was from that point on that I realized the Lord had a work for me to do and that HIS grace was, and is still, sufficient for me."

Soon after this experience, Mark and Melissa were married in November of 1987. There were many highs and lows during the next few years while he exercised among local churches. He enjoyed many preaching trips with his father during this time and relied on him greatly for counsel. Then, the lowest of lows hit when his father died on July 18th, 1991. He felt lost but soon realized that the Elders that he loved and respected began to be fathers in the ministry to him, much like his own father. He will never stop missing his father but he also realizes the eternal bliss that his father and all the other saints of God are experiencing. Since his father's death, Mark and Melissa have been blessed with two beautiful daughters: Kathryn Malie and Sarah Danielle.

In April of 1992, Elder Rowell was ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry. Since that time he has served many churches by appointment. He has also served as pastor of the Corpus Christi Church from 1993 to 1997 and the Houston and Grace Church from 1999 until this day.

ELDER MICUAH B. ROWLAND

Elder Rowland was born in North Carolina in about 1783; he united with the Primitive Baptist Church at age 18 and entered the ministry at age 20. He married Miss Lucy Bradley, a native of Virginia, in 1806 in

Kentucky. Elder Rowland was active in the Little River Association of Kentucky before coming to Illinois. He united with Providence Church in 1836, and was dismissed to Cedar Creek Church of Iowa in 1837. At the time of his death, which occurred May 24, 1861, he was a member of Round Prairie Church in the Des Moines River Association. The cause of Christ seemed ever uppermost in his mind, especially the last few years of his life as was shown by his daily walk.

ELDER JOSEPH RUCKMAN

FROM "ZION'S ADVOCATE:" Elder Joseph Ruckman of Hampshire county, Virginia, died at his residence on Sunday evening, the 22nd of July 1855. Elder John Clark, editor of *Zion's Advocate*, said of him: "From the time of our first acquaintance with Brother Ruckman, we have esteemed him as one of the excellent of the earth; and none, we are persuaded, that know the truth, that were acquainted with him, but what love him. He both preached and lived the Gospel, and was a living epistle known and read of all men."

ELDER J. MARION RUFFNER

Second son of Jacob and Eliza Ruffner, he was born in Morrow County, Ohio, May 24, 1853. Part of his early life was spent in teaching school in Fairfield and Delaware Counties. At the age of sixteen he professed a hope in his Savior and united with the Pleasant Run Church, was baptized by Elder Benjamin J. Lampton, of Kentucky. Later he moved to Delaware County, Ohio, and joined the Refuge Church by letter. He here engaged in farming. He was united in marriage to Miss Stanza A. Montgomery, and they lived happily together for over a half-century.

The church saw in him the special gift of God, called a presbytery to set apart this gift to the full work of a minister. He served in this work for a number of years until health failed him. He was sick a number of years, was removed to a hospital in Bucyrus, Ohio, where he died Nov. 5, 1933.

ELDER ALBERT RUNYON

Elder Albert Runyon was born May 31, 1885, the son of Calahan and Jennie (Varney) Runyon.

Elder Runyon was married to Mary Curry, July 9, 1884. To this union 18 children were born.

The dearly beloved Elder was converted and baptized along with his dear wife in December, 1895, by Elder William Spence and was ordained to preach the gospel in 1907. He was a faithful servant, never shirking the duty and responsibility that God had placed upon him. He traveled through the heat and cold over mountains and through valleys to tell the people of the unsearchable riches of God.

He lived a faithful laborious life in the vineyard; not complaining of blindness or tribulations, which worked for him patience and hope. He passed this life April 6, 1948.

ELDER HENRY ODELL RUSHING

From an obituary in *Gospel Appeal*: On Jan 21, 1972, our heavenly Father saw fit to call our beloved brother, pastor and friend from the labors of this life while he was in the hospital in Greenville, Texas. He was born April 13, 1904, the son of Brother and Sister Samuel Rushing. He was married March 24, 1924, to Miss Mary Frances Huffman.

Elder Rushing had been a member of the Primitive Baptist Church 45 years, and had been in the ministry for 37 years. He had been the pastor of the Providence Church, southwest of Blue Ridge, and the Little Flock Church, at Farmersville, Tex., for many years. He was a faithful pastor and a man that was respected and liked by all that knew him.

ELDER JAMES RUSHING

Elder James Allen Rushing was born November 1, 1933 in Memphis, Tennessee to George Emmett and Louise Rushing. He was married to

Janet McNeil Rushing on March 25, 1967. To this union seven children, four boys and three girls, were born.



Elder Rushing began exercising in the ministry around 1965. He was ordained on April 9, 1967, along with Elder Bobby Poe and Zack Guess at the Whitehaven Church, pastored by Elder Hassell Wallis. Elder Rushing lived near his wife's family in Mississippi for two years and pastored the Lebanon Primitive Baptist Church, near Hickory, MS. At the same time, he was assisting pastor to Elder J. D. Holder at Bethany P. B. Church near Ecu,

MS. After moving back to Tennessee in 1969, he pastored Greenfield Church for 17 years. He was a charter member at Grace Chapel Church in Memphis, TN, and often preached there. In 1989, he began going to the Radnor Church in Nashville, TN as an interim pastor, then full time from 1990 - 1995.

During the Summer of 1996, he was diagnosed with a rare form of squamous cell carcinoma. After several surgeries and treatments, he was able to continue preaching occasionally and remained able to attend church up to two weeks before his death.

In front of every Bible he wrote this line, "I am a servant of God and not of man." He truly lived up to this.

ELDER OWEN RUSHING

I joined the church on the first Sunday in July 1951 at the age of 13.

I was ordained to the Office of Deacon the first Sunday of January in 1959, along with my father, Brother Charlie Rushing, and Brother Charles White.

I served in the U.S. Army from June of 1959 until May of 1961. The Lord led me to marry the woman of my life on February 14, 1961.

My ordination to the Gospel Ministry was May 21, 1972.

I served as pastor of Harmony Church near Bonham, TX for 17 years and Lone Star Church at Tioga, TX for eight years.

My membership is with Farmersville Church near Farmersville, TX.

ELDER ALVIN C. RUSSELL

Alvin Curtis Russell, Sr. was born on November 28, 1940 (Thanksgiving Day) on a farm near Manila, Arkansas, to James Leland Russell and Ader Flora (Ferguson) Russell, the seventh child among eight sisters and one brother.

My early life was filled with chopping and picking cotton, going to school and to church on Sunday. I graduated from high school at Dyess, AR in 1958. I then became a supervisor in a shoe factory at the Soles Department Store at Osceola, AR for two years. I then attended one year at State College at Jonesboro, AR. Some years later, I attended UCCS and PPCC in Colorado Springs, CO and GCC in Glendale, ARIZ. I have worked mostly in the grocery business.

Even as a child, I loved singing and being among the Primitive Baptists where God's love was manifest in the singing, preaching and praying in their simple order of worship. I joined the church at age nine on August 13, 1950 at Old Bethel Church at Dexter, MO at the Harmony Association and was baptized along with my three sisters in a gravel pit near Jonesboro, AR by Elder V. M. Davis. I started leading the singing at age 12 and was elected clerk and treasurer of Hay Memorial at age 15. I was ordained a deacon at age 18 in May 1959.

I met Alene Pauline (Polly) Downen from West Plains, MO at the Harmony Association. She is the daughter of Elder Ray and Oda (Drumwright) Downen. We were married by her father on October 1, 1961. We are blessed with 3 sons, Curtis, Kevin and Stephen.

I felt a call to the ministry in a dream when I was 30. I was ordained an Elder on August 19, 1973 by Elders Ray Downen, Travis Eye and Calvin Washburn. I served as co-pastor and moderator of First Pilgrim's Rest Church near West Plains, MO, and at Pike's Peak Church in

Colorado Springs, CO. My family became members of Phoenix Church for about six months in 1978-79. I served Bethel Church for almost eight years, January 1982--September 1989. Polly and I are presently members of Lone Pilgrim Church where I serve as co-pastor and moderator with Elder Alphonso Hurst. I baptized my youngest son, Stephen, when he was six and my oldest son, Curtis, when he was 13. My middle son, Kevin, was baptized by his grandfather. I have baptized three of my grandchildren. The Lord has been good to us!

ELDER HAROLD D. RUSSELL



SUBMITTED BY HIS
WIFE, DARLENE
RUSSELL: Harold D
Russell was born in
Lamesa Texas, Dawson
County on January 20,
1923. He passed away
December 2, 1994 after a
lengthy illness with
cancer.

He married Darlene Moore in Lamesa, Texas on November 22, 1943. To this union was born one daughter, Teresa Ann.

Elder Russell joined the Primitive Baptist church in Lamesa, Texas on the fourth Sunday in July of 1957 and was baptized by Elder Willie Fox. His first experience of feeling that someday it might be his duty to preach God's word or gospel was when he was serving in World War II under General George S. Patton. His group was undertaking the task of finding buried mines planted by the enemy. On one occasion a soldier saw that one of the other soldiers was about to step on a mine. He threw himself on it to save the one that was about to step on it. The one who was saved was having a time trying to adjust to the fact that someone would give up his own life for him so Elder Russell began to try to talk to him and he offered prayer. Afterward the soldier looked up and said, "Elder Russell, I didn't know you were a preacher."

In 1952, just before the Southwest Texas Association was to be hosted by Bethel Church, he put his membership in Bethel Church.

Before the move was made, he gave up his job with Southern Pacific Railroad that he had worked on for nine years. Eventually he began to exercise some and later was licensed by Bethel Church.

While living in McMahan he began to do carpenter work and built several houses. He did other jobs also. In 1956, he had a desire to move to LaPryor Texas as the church there had called him to pastor their church.

On September 9, 1956, he was ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry by order of LaPryor Baptist. Elder Willie Fox of Amarillo Texas delivered the charge.

Elder Russell was pastor of the following churches for several years: Lamesa, Texas; Eldorado, Texas; Combs, Texas; and he was pastor of LaPryor Church for 38 years. During those years, he had a desire to learn how to fly an airplane. He received his pilot's license in 1969. He flew mostly in Texas and Louisiana to several churches for meetings, and associations. He was moderator of the Southwest Texas association for nine years.

ELDER LYNN RUSSELL



Born August 18, 1936 at Abilene, Texas, the only living child of Claude and Oma Russell. I was raised in a loving, Godly home and carried to church all my childhood. I have loved the Lord as long as I can remember and would pray over my sins as a child. I remember an old elder, laying his hand on my head and saying that I would be a preacher. He knew it before I did!

At seventeen, I joined the church on Sunday at the West Texas Association at Anton as a member for the Muleshoe Church. I was baptized by Elder E. J. Norman in the baptistry at Anton. I still remember that happy day!

In 1964, I married Faye Foutch, a P. B. from Smithville, TN. Faye is a wonderful blessing and drives us many miles since I became legally blind in 1988. It was my happy privilege to baptize our sons Tim and Dan and see them active in church. My ordination was at Mt. View P. B. Church, Smithville, TN on October 30, 1971. I have pastored Goshen Church at Linden, TN and currently pastor West Fifth St. P. B. Church in Dickson, TN. I have found a rich blessing in the love that is manifested among all true Primitive Baptists.

ELDER M. J. RYAN

Elder Martin J. Ryan was a charter member of Little Vine Church, Blue Mountain, Ark., in 1881. He was ordained in 1883 and in 1887 was called as pastor of that church. In addition he served Harmony, Reveille, Mt. Pleasant, and Chickalah Churches. He died in 1931.

ELDER RONALD E RYAN



Ronald E. Ryan (Ronnie) was born on November 12, 1935 and was a native of Alabama. He lived in Birmingham for 26 years. His father Stacy Ryan was a deacon in the church. His mother is Unie Ryan. Ronnie and his family lived in Cleveland, Ohio from September of 1953 until July of 1962. While in Cleveland, in 1955 Ronnie married Libby Ondrick, a native of Ohio.

In 1956 they had a son, Richard A (Ricky). In 1962 they moved back to Birmingham, AL.

Together Ronnie and his wife, Libby joined Antioch Church in Birmingham on August 15, 1965. They were baptized at Bush Hill Church.

March 14, 1970 Ronnie was ordained as an Elder to the ministry. Those participating in his ordination were Elders Armond Ritch, Allen

Bailey, Laymon Farris, I.G. Heaven, C.O. Woodley, Edwin Farris, A.T.
Davis, S.H. LeCroy and W.G. Hall.

In April of 1972 Elder Ryan was called as co-pastor of Westwood
Church.

Elder Ryan died on February 22, 1973 at the young age of 37.
