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Proceedings of the
Eastern District Association

Thursday Morning, October 5, 1978

It has been customary for a number of years to begin our minutes with a brief history of the host church. The association last met with Blackwater Lick Church in 1971, and a very thorough history of the church and community is contained in the minutes for that year. There is little to be added to the record since then as history is normally recorded over a longer period of time.

We would instead like to examine the influence this church has had in the association by way of the individual contributions several of its members and pastors have made.

If the Willis Chapel Church is our mother church — and surely it is — then it could be said it was at Blackwater Lick where she travailed and the Eastern District Association was brought forth.

On Friday before the first Saturday in October, 1848, twenty-one delegates from six churches met in a log building near here to organize the association. They elected Elder Isaac Chrisman as moderator. Elder Chrisman and Elder Green B. Wallen wrote the church covenant when the Blackwater Lick Church was organized September 27, 1847.

One of the delegates from Blackwater Lick to that first annual session was a man named Solomon Robinette. In 1839 a man by that name had fathered a son who was named Isaac S. Robinette. Isaac was converted in 1866 and shortly felt the call to the ministry. At that time the association was trying to recover from the effects of the Civil War and consisted of only 2 to 4 churches with a total of less than 100 members. He had a deep love for the churches and

an intense desire to see the association prosper. He seemed

to love the association and its brotherhood better than anything on earth. He was a soul-stirring minister, tender in assail of error, though a firm defender of the truth. After being elected moderator, he served until his death in 1886 at the still young age of 48 years. Much of the early growth of the association is attributed to his reaching and organizational abilities. In the 20 years of his ministry, the association grew to 22 churches and approximately 1000 members.

One of the men who preached here regularly and gave much of his life to the ministry was Elder J. P. Peters. He

served as moderator of the association on 3 different occasions, although for only one year at a time. He may well have been the outstanding preacher of his time as evidenced by his selection to preach the introductory sermon 14 times. This is twice the number any other minister has been chosen. He preached and labored in the ministry 42 years beginning at the age of 17. He traveled extensively and conducted many revivals. It was not unusual for 30, 40 or even more to be saved during these meetings.

Elder E. S. McPherson was pastor of the church for 32 years, association clerk for 2 years and for 20 years was moderator of the association. During this time he was an accepted leader in the council of the churches, presiding over the deliberations with a wisdom and judgment which bespoke the high character and personage that he was. He believed strongly in the independence of the churches feeling the association was only the servant of the churches and that if the churches were in order, their representatives that compose the association would be in order, the association itself would then be in order, and all things would work together for good and confusion and dissensions would be unknown. For his time, Elder McPherson was a well-educated man, teaching school for a number of years, and from about 1904 to 1908 publishing a monthly newspaper, "The Primitive Baptist Advocate."

Elder E. A. Robinette served the church as pastor for many years. His record of service in the association far surpasses that of any other individual of whom we have record. He not only served for 24 years as moderator but served as clerk for 11 making a total of 35 years as an elected official. He filled the office of moderator ably and well; always striving for peace and unity in the brotherhood. He had a great knowledge of the Bible. As a church pastor, he was a watchful and loving shepherd of the sheep. He was ordained to the ministry at the age of 29 and spent the remainder of his life - 51 years - in this great calling.

Elder Amos Osborne was association clerk for 15 years at various times and served his home church in that capacity for 59 years. For 36 of those years he was also a Primitive Baptist minister.

Elder Hampton Osborne has been a member of this church all his Christian life. He is our oldest minister both in age and in the ministry, having been ordained for 64 of his 84 years. He served as association clerk for 2 years and as assistant clerk for 2 others.

The church has also had stalwart men in the faith, such as John McPherson; W. S. Osborne, Cal. Asbury, Jimmy Eldridge, Harrison Russell and others too numerous to name who have served both church and association and passed on to their reward. The wives of these men as well as other faithful women such as Sister Bonnie Manis have been known by untold numbers of people for their kind and gentle lives and their belief in the truth of the doctrine preached in the pulpit of this church.

These people entrusted the pastoral care of the church to a group of young ministers whom they nourished and supported until they too came to be considered leaders in the association. Among these were Elders H. V. Hall, J. H. Sybert, Alex Willis; Logan Willis and the present pastor, Carl Lawson.

The session began with congregational singing and songs by the Bowlin Family and Clea Springs Quartets. It was evident from the very beginning that the same spirit we had felt at Chestnut Flats the last two days of the previous year was present with us.

The association was warmly welcomed by Elder Carl Lawson, pastor of the host church. The committee on church letters, appointed at the last association, was reorganized. This committee is composed of Eugene Warden (chairman) Morris Giles; Ellis I. Wallen and W. S. Mellons (alternate).

The moderator appointed the committee on religious exercises. This committee is composed of Jim Parker (chairman), Raymond Ward and Jess Akens, Jr.

Elder Basil Freeman made an inspiring plea for the association to be conducted in a spiritual mind; He reminded us that to be carnal minded would bring only hurt and disorder.

The body was called to prayer led by Elder A. D. Howington who had been unable to attend last year due to being hospitalized with a heart attack.

Elder J. I. Sybert led the congregation in singing, "Brethren, We Have Met Again."

Elder Walter Willis, the one chosen to preach the introductory sermon, came forward at this time. He read the 2nd chapter of Ephesians and used as a text Romans 8:6, "For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. He was followed by Elder Bobby Williams, the alternate. Brothers of these brethren were blessed with liberty to preach a message of awesomeness. As children