

## MINUTES

Bro Roger more would ask me  
to send this to you and said he  
had the minutes back to 1882 if you  
could use them

Rev Lawrence Ferriell

## ROCKY BAYOU

Melbourne Ark Box 92.

# Baptist Association

1895

1882

Next session will be held with Zion Hill Church, eight  
miles east of Melbourne, Izard County, Arkansas  
commencing Friday evening, seven o'clock  
before the second Sunday in  
October, 1896

Mission work among the people, from house to house, and man to man, is the great need of these times and in all places. This is the work of

## The American Baptist Publication Society.

It sends out visitors, Bibles, Testaments, tracts, books, Sunday-school workers, and many kinds of papers and other periodicals.

### IT NEEDS HELP

always and liberally from every church, Sunday-school, young people's society, and from all persons. **This work is wholly dependent on the contributions received.** The calls are more than can now be answered. Let every one help this great and needy and blessed work.

C. C. BITTING,

*Bible and Missionary Secretary,*

1420 Chestnut St., Philadelphia, Pa.

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## Things Worth Knowing.

1. The American Baptist Publication Society, either at its home office, 1420 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, or at its Branches in New York or Boston, Chicago or St. Louis, Atlanta or Dallas, will gladly furnish any proper book at the lowest possible price. We are booksellers as well as publishers.

2. If you do not happen to know just the book you want, give us an idea of the subject, and we will try to send you the information you need.

3. If you are seeking Reward Books we shall be glad to counsel you in their choice. Tell us for what sort of people they are intended, and the amount you care to expend, and we can point out just the books you want.

4. A careful and competent committee examines every Sunday-school book as soon as it is published. We cast aside those which are not just right, and keep a list of those which are approved as unquestionably fit for a Baptist Sunday-school Library. Nobody can have a copy of that list, but we will fill orders for Baptist Sunday-schools from it, with our guarantee. If there is any reasonable objection to any book, we will exchange it or return the money.

5. We would rather sell a Bible than any other book. So we keep a very large assortment of Bibles, in all types and styles of binding, and at the lowest prices. We have more reason for wanting to sell Bibles than any other book-seller can possibly have.

6. We shall be glad to have some person in every church to act as our agent in selling our books. We are ready to pay a very liberal discount for vigorous service.

*A J Rowland*  
*Sec'y*

MINUTES

—OF THE—

*FIFTY-FOURTH ANNUAL SESSION*

—OF—

Rocky Bayou Baptist Association,

—HELD WITH—

Saints' Rest Baptist Church,

IZARD COUNTY, ARK.,

—ON—

OCTOBER 12 AND 14, 1895.

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Next session to be held with Zion Hill Baptist Church, 8 miles east of Melbourne, Izard County, Ark., commencing on Friday before the second Sunday in October, 1896, at 7 P. M.

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## OFFICERS.

Eld. W. M. DUREN, MODERATOR.....	Violet Hill.
B. A. SPRADLIN, FOREIGN MISSION AGENT.....	Gulley.

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## MISSIONARY BOARD.

G. S. RECTOR.....	Melbourne.
Eld. H. F. VERMILLION.....	Melbourne.
J. W. C. GARDNER.....	Gulley.
A. T. FELTS.....	Sage.
T. K. GOODMAN.....	Calico Rock.

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## BOARD OF MINISTERIAL EDUCATION.

R. L. LANDERS.....	Melbourne.
S. R. HINKLE.....	Melbourne.
J. W. C. GARDNER.....	Gulley.

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## MINISTERS.

John W. Miller.....	Zion.
G. L. Foard.....	Zion.
M. W. Frizzell.....	Zion.
A. E. Nixon.....	Victor.
D. M. Tucker.....	Victor.
Wm. Hutcheson.....	Jumbo.
J. J. Vest.....	Jumbo.
J. H. Vest.....	Jumbo.
H. F. Vermillion.....	Melbourne.
H. L. Thomas.....	Barren Fork.
S. A. Marchant.....	Calico Rock.
J. W. Twilley.....	Lunenburg.
H. J. Whaley.....	McPherson.
W. M. Duren.....	Violet Hill.
W. H. Wren.....	Cushman.
J. M. Harvey.....	Jamestown.
W. C. Brown.....	Jamestown.
W. H. Vest.....	Culp.

## Proceedings.

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The Rocky Bayou Missionary Baptist Association convened in its Fifty-Fourth Annual Session with Saint's Rest Church, Izard County, Ark., Saturday morning, October 12, 1895.

At 11 o'clock a. m. the introductory sermon was preached by Eld. W. M. Duren, from the 5th verse of the 1st chapter of Acts. The speaker proved that regeneration by the Holy Spirit and Holy Ghost baptism are not identical.

After recess and refreshments the Association was called to order by Eld. W. M. Duren, the Moderator of last session. Prayer by Eld. J. J. Vest. The names of the Churches were called and letters read by Bros. R. L. Landers and D. J. Smith.

Pleasant Valley, Zion Hill, Fairview and Concord asked for the next session of the Association.

Also, the letter from Pleasant Valley Church contained the following query:

"Would it be Scriptural baptism should a minister baptize a candidate on hearing his statement and being satisfied he was converted and, also, that he was a Baptist—in principle—and would speedily unite with a Baptist Church? If not Scriptural, why not?"

Call for petitionary letters from Churches desiring admission into this Association, whereupon Big Spring and Wise's Chapel Churches, situated in Izard County, presented letters by their respective Messengers; and it appearing that said Churches are Scriptural, they were received and the hand of fellowship extended to their Messengers by the Moderator.

On motion, the Association proceeded to elect a Moderator and Clerk, which resulted in the election of Eld. W. M. Duren as Moderator and W. K. Estes as Clerk.

Called for Corresponding Messengers from sister Associations; whereupon Bros. A. D. Taylor and J. B. Haley, from Spring River Association, accepted the invitation and were

given the hand of fellowship by the Moderator and welcomed among us.

Called for visiting ministers. None present.

The Moderator announced the following committees:

1st. On Arrangement of Business—Eld. H. F. Vermillion, Eld. J. J. Vest, S. P. Hite.

2d. On Preaching—Pastor and Messengers of Saints' Rest Church.

3d. On Baptist Literature—G. S. Rector, A. T. Felts, W. R. Miller.

4. On Associational Missions—R. J. Richardson, T. N. Estes, Eld. S. A. Marchant.

5th. On Foreign Missions—T. N. Estes, W. H. Hankins, A. A. Spradlin.

6th. On Sabbath Schools—Eld. H. F. Vermillion, S. P. Hite, N. C. Danner.

7th. On Finance—B. S. Stroud, R. F. Wilson.

8th. On Temperance—M. Hiveley, Eld. M. W. Frizzell, R. L. Waller.

9th. On Destitution—J. H. Sanders, J. N. Haley, Eld. S. A. Marchant.

10th. On Prayer Meetings—D. J. Smith, A. D. Taylor, J. B. Bland.

11th. On State Missions—Eld. H. F. Vermillion, G. S. Rector, John Arnold.

12th. On Ministerial Education—R. L. Landers, W. F. Campbell, A. T. Felts.

13th. On Schools and Colleges—R. L. Landers, J. H. Defries, T. E. Brown.

14th. On Obituaries—R. L. Landers, Eld. M. W. Frizzell, Henry Taylor.

After prayer, led by Eld. Vermillion, the Association adjourned till Monday morning 8:30 o'clock.

Preaching—Saturday night by Eld. J. W. Hiatt, of Mountain Home (not being present, I did not get the text); Sunday, at 11 a. m., by Eld. Henry F. Vermillion; Sunday evening, by Eld. J. W. Hiatt; text, Matthew 28:19-20.



MONDAY MORNING—OCTOBER 14.

The Association convened pursuant to adjournment. Prayer, by Eld. J. W. Hiatt. Minutes of Saturday read and approved.

1. Report of Committee on Arrangement of Business read and adopted.

2. Renewed invitation to Churches desiring admission.

3. Renewed invitation to Corresponding Messengers from sister Associations. None.

4. Renewed invitation to visiting ministers. Accepted by Eld. J.W. Hiatt of White River Association, who was welcomed.

5. The Moderator appointed Elds. J. W. Hiatt, S. A. Marchant and H. F. Vermillion as a committee to answer query from Pleasant Valley Church.

6. Report on Schools and Colleges was read and adopted, to-wit:

We, your Committee on Schools and Colleges, respectfully submit the following report: As missionary Baptists, we should live up to what we profess, and we would recommend that each and every member of this Association make every sacrifice possible to educate his children, and by education we would mean to place them in our Baptist institutions in the State, where they will receive moral and Christian training. We would emphasize the importance of a Christian education, for too many make the mistake of educating the brain without any moral training.

This growing age demands an active and energetic people. Along with the advance of the times we find that the growth of sin is prevalent, and we believe one of the easiest ways in which to overcome this is by a Christian education, we would recommend our Baptist colleges of this State to the patronage of this Association, and would especially call your attention to the work of Mountain Home Baptist College. We would heartily endorse its work and we would ask that the members of this body patronize and in every way give their support to this institution. It is one born of necessity, and the Lord has pros-

pered it since its foundation. We would not forget to call the attention to the financial needs of this college. It is the property of the Baptists of North Arkansas, and we must not and cannot afford to see it suffer.

R. L. LANDERS,

J. H. DEFRIES,

T. E. BROWN,

Committee.

7. Report on Baptist Literature was read and adopted, to-wit:

We, as a people, take the Bible as our chief guide in all matters pertaining to the doctrine of Christ and the government of His Churches—it being the inspired word of God and measurement of all things pertaining to Christianity. We therefore, first of all, commend the Bible to each of our members, and urge each to read it carefully and prayerfully. We would also recommend the Arkansas Baptist, American Baptist Flag and Ford's Christian Repository.

A. T. FELTS,

G. S. RECTOR,

W. R. MILLER,

Committee.

8. Report on Ministerial Education read and adopted, to-wit:

Knowing that the education of men for the ministry is one of vital importance and one which is calculated to promote the best interests of our denomination, we therefore recommend that the young men within our bounds who show the moral training and spiritual qualification, which is so essential in this glorious work, be urged to procure a good education and that they be liberally aided by our people in the way of money when necessary in procuring that education.

W. F. CAMPBELL,

R. L. LANDERS,

A. T. FELTS,

Committee.

9. Called for report of Committee on Obituaries. The



obituary of Bro. James Wren, deceased, was read, and, on motion, ordered to be inserted in the minutes.

10. The Committee on Query from Pleasant Valley Church presented the following as its answer:

It is not the province of the Association to settle matters of doctrine for the Churches. Each Church must be its own judge of the teachings of the Scriptures.

HENRY F. VERMILLION,  
S. A. MARCHANT,  
J. W. HIETT,

Committee.

On motion, the discussion of this question was referred to the fifth Sunday meeting, which was voted to be held with Pleasant Valley Church, embracing the fifth Sunday in December, next.

At 12 m. the Association took a recess till 1 p. m. for refreshments. After recess, convened. Prayer, led by Eld. Vermillion.

11. Report on Associational Missions was read and adopted, to-wit:

Whereas, there are destitute points within our bounds, we would recommend that they be supplied, and that our Board be continued and that each Church help furnish the Board with means to employ a missionary to work in the destitute points and with weak Churches, and that the pastors appoint an agent in each Church, whose duty it shall be to collect funds for this purpose, and that the Churches pay at least 25 cents per member

S. A. MARCHANT, Chairman.

(Before the adoption of this report more than one hundred dollars were pledged for Associational missions.)

12. Report on Foreign Missions was read and adopted, to-wit:

In looking over the foreign fields, we find the great Asiatic belt reaching from Japan on the north to India on the south, which includes three empires and aggregates seven hundred millions of heathens who are in darkness and death, with no name to save but that of Christ, of whom they have not heard. Our

Financial Board needs funds. We suggest that the Moderator of this Association appoint one Messenger from each Church to collect, and that each member of our Churches pay at least 25 cents.

T. N. ESTES,  
A. A. SPRADLIN,  
W. H. HANKINS,

Committee.

The Moderator appointed the following Foreign Mission agents, to-wit: W. J. Marlin, D. J. Smith, S. P. Hite, B. S. Stroud, R. F. Wilson, T. N. Estes, R. L. Waller, G. W. Walker, A. T. Felts, T. H. Pate, B. A. Spradlin, J. H. Sanders, T. K. Goodman, W. M. Stroud, J. J. Vest, W. J. Carder, M. Hiveley and W. R. Miller.

13. Report of Committee on Sabbath Schools was read and adopted, to-wit:

The Saviour commanded us to teach, and, as the Sunday school is one of the best ways in which to teach the Scriptures, we recommend that each Church in the Association organize and support a Baptist Sunday school.

H. F. VERMILLION,  
S. P. HITE,  
N. C. DANNER,

Committee.

14. Committee on Finance reported \$18.90 for printing minutes and \$5.05 for inserting the obituary of James Wren, deceased.

15. Report on Temperance was read and adopted as follows:

We regard intemperance in any form one of the greatest evils of this day. It is destructive to health and society and is injurious to the Churches and is a grievous hinderance to the spread of the Gospel. It destroys morals, dethrones reason and impairs the finer principles in man which should be used for the glorification of God. We insist that Churches throughout our Association discipline any member who aids in making or selling liquor, or signing any petition asking for a grant



of license, of territory and land upon which to establish a distillery or wholesale house or saloon or any establishment by which spirituous liquors might be distributed.

M. W. FRIZZELL,

M. HIVELEY,

R. L. WALLER,

Committee.

16. Report on Destitution read and adopted as follows:

The destitution in our bounds is from Cushman to White River, from Jamestown to Calico Rock; also, east of Franklin, and the following points: Mt. Olive, Twin Creek, Smith School House, Shady Grove, Mt. Carmel, Sidney, Sylamore, Flint Ridge; also, west of Pleasant Valley to Big North Fork.

S. A. MARCHANT,

J. N. HALEY,

Committee.

17. Report on Prayer Meetings read and adopted as follows:

Inasmuch as God has promised us great blessings in answer to prayer, and as prayer meetings are the best index to the prosperity of our Churches, we advise the Churches of this Association to appoint and attend weekly prayer meetings. We further recommend that the young be encouraged to officiate in prayer meetings.

D. J. SMITH,

J. B. BLAND,

A. D. TAYLOR,

Committee.

18. Report on State Missions read and adopted as follows:

Whereas, our State Board is doing a much needed work and one that promises permanent good to our cause, both at home and abroad, we recommend that the Churches of this Association co-operate with the State Board in this work, and that we sustain it with our prayers and contributions.

H. F. VERMILLION,

G. S. RECTOR,



At this point the Association took a recess till 7 p. m.

At 7 p. m. the Association convened. Prayer by Eld. Frizzell.

19. Zion Hill Church, eight miles east of Melbourne, Izard County, Ark., was selected as the Church with which the next session is to be held.

20. Eld. S. A. Marchant was elected to preach the introductory sermon at the next session, with Eld. M. W. Frizzell as his alternate.

21. Report of Missionary Board was read and adopted as follows:

We have held four meetings this year. We organized by electing G. S. Rector President, H. F. Vermillion Secretary and R. L. Landers Treasurer. We employed Brethren G. L. Foard and S. A. Marchant for one-fourth of their time, agreeing to pay Bro. Marchant \$12 for his services at Wise's Chapel and Bro. Foard \$13 for his services at Big Springs. We refer you to the Treasurer's report for our financial statement, and to the reports of these Churches for the results of the labors of these brethren.

G. S. RECTOR, Pres.

H. F. VERMILLION, Sec'y.

Report of R. L. Landers as Treasurer of said Board is as follows:

Receipts:		
Amount from last Treasurer.....		\$8 05
" " Melbourne church.....		13 15
" " Concord.....		1 00
" " Zion Hill.....		85
" " Wise's Chapel.....		25
" " Saints' Rest.....		1 30
" " Pleasant Valley.....		1 45
" " public collection.....		2 00
Total receipts.....		\$33 05
Disbursements:		
Amount paid Bro. Vest on last year.....		\$8 05
" " " Marchant.....		12 00
" " " Foard.....		13 00
		\$33 05

22. The Moderator appointed Missionary Board, Board of Ministerial Education and Agent for Foreign Missions.

23. Eld. Wm. M. Duren was elected Messenger to the Arkansas Baptist Convention and recommended as a member of the State Board.

24. Eld. H. F. Vermillion was appointed Messenger to the Southern Baptist Convention.

25. Arranged Correspondence as follows:

To Little Red River Association, J.H. Defries and J.B. Bland; to Blue Mountain, W.F. Campbell, J. N. Haley, C. C. Hagar and Eld. J. J. Vest; to Independence, Eld. H. F. Vermillion and N. C. Danner; to White River Valley, R. L. Waller, S. P. Hite, Eld. M. W. Frizzell, C. F. Moore and W. J. Marlin; to Spring River, Eld. G. L. Foard, A. T. Felts and Wilson Price; to Big Creek, T. N. Estes, D. J. Smith, Eld. W. M. Duren, Eld. S. A. Marchant, Eld. J. J. Vest and W. N. Haley; to White River, R. L. Landers, T. K. Goodman, Eld. H. F. Vermillion and N. C. Danner.

26. Called for report of Board of Ministerial Education. An oral report was made by Bro. R. L. Landers, who stated that nothing had been done by the Board.

27. Called for report of Agent for Foreign Missions. Agent not present.

The following amendment to the constitution, presented at the last session, was read and rejected by an almost unanimous vote:

"The members composing the annual meetings of the Association shall consist of Messengers sent by the Churches and the members of the different Boards appointed by the Association and the ministers in good standing in their Churches in said Association."

28. Jamestown Church having petitioned for a letter of dismission to join Independence Association, on motion a letter of dismission was granted said Church.

29. The following resolution, presented by Bro. R. L. Landers, was adopted:

"Resolved, That we, as an Association, tender our hearty thanks to the members of Saints' Rest Church and citizens of the vicinity for the hospitality extended to us during our stay with them."

30. Also, the following resolution, presented by Bro. Landers, was adopted:

"Resolved, That the Clerk superintend the printing and dis-



tribution of the minutes of this session and that he be allowed \$5 for his services."

31. The following resolution, presented by Eld. Vermillion, was adopted:

"Resolved, That we recommend to the Churches composing this Association that hereafter they call their pastors to begin their pastoral services at the first of the year."

32. The following resolution, presented by Eld. Vermillion, was adopted:

"Resolved, That the next session of this body meet on Friday night before the second Sunday in October, 1896; and that the introductory sermon be preached at that time."

33. The Moderator appointed Eld. S. A. Marchant, T. K. Goodman and Eld. A. J. Whaley as a committee to arrange a program for next fifth Sunday meeting.

34. The Clerk called the roll and enrolled the following Messengers:

Antioch—M. T. Patterson, W. J. Marlin, C. F. Moore.

Bellevue—J. L. Rector, D. J. Smith, G. S. Rector.

Big Spring—S. P. Hite, S. E. Martin.

Concord—H. C. Finley, B. S. Stroud, G. W. King.

Fairview—Eld. W. M. Duren, R. F. Wilson.

Melbourne—T. N. Estes, R. L. Landers, R. J. Richardson, W. K. Estes.

Mt. Nebo, No. 1—R. L. Waller, W. N. Haley.

Mt. Nebo, No. 2—G. W. Walker.

Mt. Pleasant—Alex Shell, A. T. Felts, W. O. Taylor.

New Hope—W. H. Hankins, T. H. Pate, J. D. Dozier.

Philadelphia—A. A. Spradlin.

Pilgrim's Rest—J. B. Bland, N. C. Danner, J. H. Defries, John H. Sanders.

Pleasant Valley—Eld. S. A. Marchant, T. K. Goodman, R. E. Marchant, Jesse Barlow.

Rocky Bayou—W. M. Stroud, J. N. Haley.

Saint's Rest—Eld. J. J. Vest, C. C. Hagar, D. R. Freeman, J. H. Vest.

Unity—W. J. Carder.



Wise's Chapel—T. E. Brown, M. Hiveley, John Arnold, W. M. Brown.

\* \* Zion Hill—Eld. M. W. Frizzell, W. R. Miller, W. F. Campbell.

After prayer, the Messengers, while singing, took the parting hand and the Association adjourned at 10 o'clock p. m. to meet with Zion Hill Church, Izard County, Ark., at 7 o'clock p. m. on Friday before the second Sunday in October, 1896.

W. M. DUREN, Moderator.

W. K. ESTES, Clerk.

*An Account of organization of old Rocky Bayou*

## IN MEMORY OF THE LATE JAMES WREN.

## A Short Historic Sketch of One Who Spent Many Years in This County.

A history of whose life would present a panoramic view of his adopted county through all its varied scenes, both Church and civic, almost from its incipency; his noble example of morality, sobriety and industry; his honest, godly walk through a long and blameless life, is worthy to be commended to our young men, and his death deserves more than a passing notice. True, years have passed since he breathed his last. Tears have ceased to flow and those most deeply pained have ceased to mourn. Yet his devotion to the Church he joined in early life, and his every effort to forward its cause, should be recorded in the undying pages of history, trusting prayerfully that those who follow may emulate his example.

James Wren was born in Lincoln County, North Carolina, April 4, 1792, and died in Izard County, Arkansas, April 28, 1890. He was buried at Bethlehem M. E. Cemetery, near Mt. Pleasant, by his wife. Coming into being under the first Presidential term of George Washington, and departing this life during the administration of Benjamin Harrison, his life covered the administration of every President the United States had, and one of the most remarkable periods in the world's history. The constitution of the United States had just been ratified when the dawn of being opened upon him. The great experiment of self-government, whose principles were drawn from our revolutionary sires, had not emerged from the misty domain of speculation and asserted a philosophic truth. As maturity advanced, instinct with the patriotic spirit of the times and a desire at all times to be right, he allied himself with the principles of Jefferson and Madison, the true exponents of Democracy, and was ever after true to the cause. About the age of maturity

he left his native soil and boyhood scenes for Alabama; from there to Tennessee; thence to Warren County, Ky. Here he volunteered under General Pinkney in the war of 1812. When peace was declared he was honorably discharged and returned to his Kentucky home. Soon after his return he married in Warren County Miss Elizabeth Hightower. She was born July 27, 1794. They commenced married life near Bowling Green, in Warren County, Ky., tilling the soil. Soon they were blessed with children, and their family of seven children—two sons and five daughters, all yet living but the oldest boy—were born here.

With no aspiration but to be a farmer, and possessed with but few of the good things of this world, believing he could better his condition and be of more benefit to his family, caused him to break his endearments with many friends and his Kentucky home and cast his destinies in the almost untrodden wilds of the territory of Arkansas. In November, 1830, Joshua and William Hightower, with their families, and Mrs. Elizabeth Wren (their sister), with her seven children, left Warren County, Ky., in wagons for Izard County, Ark. Mr. Wren remained until he could dispose of his tobacco crop. The progress of this little emigrant train was necessarily slow. There were few settlements, and public roads were unknown west of the Mississippi. By perseverance and energy they reached Rocky Bayou on the 24th of December and camped that Christmas eve night on the farm now owned by R. L. Landers. On this place Mrs. Wren waited for Mr. Wren, who came by water to Chickasaw Bluff, now Memphis, and walked through the lonely swamps and cane brakes alone, camping out nights, with no protection save his pocket-knife. He reached his family early in 1831 and made a crop on that place. The next two seasons he spent on White River. Chills and fever, the acclimating pest of newcomers, so affected his family that he returned to Rocky Bayou in the fall of 1833 and bought an improved farm from the late Andrew Walker, where Lunenburg now is. Here his family soon regained health, and by industry and economy the necessities and comforts of life were soon abundant on this place. His worth as a citizen and Christian gentleman became widely known. Settlements were few and far between, and



his house was a noted stand for the weary traveler or foot-sore hunter. His hospitable bearing and well filled board was long remembered by the early home-seekers. He never sought wealth or office, but served many terms as justice of the peace and as county and probate judge from 1844 to 1846; also, internal improvement commissioner. In all his intercourse with his fellowmen, either private or official, he was truthful, punctual and strictly honest. He was loved and esteemed as well for the amenity of his manners as the kindness of his heart; but above all, and better than all, he was a true, devout Christian, proving his faith by his daily walk and works through his long life. He and his wife were members of the Baptist Church in Kentucky, and brought their Church letters to Izard County with them. On his arrival he found there was no Baptist Church near. In their new home and surroundings they felt the want of Church association and communion. In that year (1831) Rev. Andrew Buchanan, a noted itinerant minister, had organized a Cumberland Presbyterian Church at the residence of Judge Johoiada Jefferys, east side of White River above Mt. Olive. The old house is yet standing where they organized this Church. With that Cumberland Presbyterian Church the Kentucky Church members placed their letters until such time as they could form a Baptist organization.

After his return to Rocky Bayou and his family regained health, he felt that he was permanently settled. His first work was to gather the few scattered settlers and build a house for the Lord. The patriarchs of old were commanded to build their altars in the wilderness with unhewn stone. This they built with the next most durable material—unhewn cedar logs; not the cedar of Lebanon described minutely by the prophets of old, but the cedar of Rocky Bayou. While building, he was inquiring for Baptist elders to organize them into a Church. Mail facilities had not reached here, and he went in person to seek them. After much travel, he secured four elders, widely separated, who met at the appointed time—David Orr, Benjamin Hawkins, George Gill and Elder Mercer. These four met with the few scattered settlers in the autumn of (1834) in the old house on the west bank of Rocky Bayou, just below Lunenburg.

After preaching and explaining the object of the meeting, they organized the Rocky Bayou Baptist Church with eight members, James Wren and Elizabeth Wren, his wife, being two. They dedicated this humble house, without paint or belfry, to the Lord. (This was the first Baptist Church ever organized in Izard County, and perhaps in this part of the State.) From this the grand old Rocky Bayou Association, with its many prosperous Churches, had its origin and name. Before this meeting closed arrangements were made to form an Association, which was to meet later in that year with the newly organized Rocky Bayou Church, and James Wren was appointed delegate to represent his new Church, and doubtless gave it the name it has so long and prosperously held. He was strictly a Baptist and pillar of the Church, and, unless providentially hindered, attended all his Church meetings, ready with his counsel to aid the cause, but liberal on his religious views and faulted no man for his religious opinions, and felt that all true Christians, of whatever denomination, were his brothers. Church houses were few, and any minister who desired could preach in this new house. He aided any and all who were laborers in the vineyard with his presence. While strength lasted his pleasant face was annually seen at the Association. Many insincere Sunday Christians proclaim publicly and loudly righteousness, but, alas, too few like him meekly practice it.

In 1850 he sold his farm on Rocky Bayou to the late Colonel Jesse Hinkle and settled on one of the branches of Caney, on the place now owned and occupied by his daughter, Mrs. William Byler. The neighborhood was fast settling and the Church accommodation insufficient and the distance too far for the aged. A suitable sight was selected midway between Rocky Bayou and Antioch, on the land of Andrew Walker, who donated it, and a large hewed loghouse was built. On Saturday, 19th of April, 1851, Eld. Henry McMurry, J. Hollinsworth, William Raney and James E. Duren met by agreement. Henry McMurry was made Moderator and Alfred C. Billingsley Clerk, and organized the Mount Pleasant Baptist Church on Caney with fourteen members (most of them aged) from Rocky Bayou



and Antioch. Mr. Wren and wife regretted to move their membership from their first love that they had nurtured so long, but age and convenience made it necessary. Their membership remained with the Mount Pleasant Church until transferred to the Church Triumphant. At this first meeting Rev. Henry McMurry was elected preacher for the ensuing year, and James Wren Clerk. James Wren was appointed on the committee to formulate rules of government for the Church and also delegate to the next Rocky Bayou Association to have the new Church admitted into the Association.

He lived on and cultivated his farm, doing most of the work with his own hands, until the war. The disturbed condition of this peaceful country during the unpleasantness rendered it unsafe for the old people to live alone, and from this time they lived with their children. After quiet was restored to the country they made their home with their widowed daughter, Mrs. William Gray, on Rocky Bayou, near where he made his first crop in 1831. In 1882 his wife, "Aunt Betsy," as she was familiarly known, passed quietly and peacefully away at her daughter's. Mrs. Gray, in her 89th year. She was buried in the cemetery of Bethlehem M. E. Church, near the Mount Pleasant Baptist Church, where her membership had been so many years. They had been married over sixty-five years. She was truly a faithful helpmeet. Their young hearts were cemented in the enchanted season of early life, and their long wedded life was one unbroken link of love. It blazed upon the marriage altar and shed its radiance upon the silent tomb. Could the cynic have seen these two old Christians enjoying themselves together up to their final parting, the delusion of failure of marriage would be dispelled. True, faithful and loving to each other, it seemed one continual honeymoon to the end. He now was alone, but did not grieve, knowing "we all must needs die." Tottering under four score and ten, he realized the time would be short when he would be called to meet his loved one, and he thanked heaven for the long, blissful, happy wedded life he had spent with her.

He spent the remaining few years of life with his daughter, Mrs. Gray, in meditation. He has seen the State of his adoption



emerge from territorial form into one of the stars of the Federal Union of States. By his efforts and example he had seen the wilderness and waste places give way to the industry of the hardy pioneer, and comfortable and happy home formed. He had seen the little spark he ignited in the cedar cabin in the wilderness spread and gather strength, and, like the famous cedars of Lebanon, its branches cover much territory, and many churches annually congregate in association to forward the cause for which he had fought and loved so well. His silent prayers were that those coming on to control the destinies of the Rocky Bayou Association, both ministers and lay members, would grow in grace and favor, and by example and precept so live that its influence would spread and gather strength as time rolls on, until many unbelievers would flock to its folds for safety from the wrath to come, and its saving influence would be felt in many distant Associations and Church assemblies.

For weeks his imbecility was such that constant attention was necessary. His dutiful daughter rendered every kindness that her age and filial affection could bestow. His mind, once so active, was all gone; his limbs refused to move, yet his spirit still hovered in its tenement of clay. On the 28th of April, 1890, his breathing ceased, his spirit departed. The old Ship of Zion that he had sung of to many penitents at the altar, was in readiness to waft it o'er the dark Jordan into a land brighter than day, there to meet his loved one, where they could kneel and worship in a house not made with hands, eternal in heaven.

Oh, what untold blessings would flow to the Church if more men like him would manifest their faith by their works, and keep their eyes steadily fixed upon the Cross, and live their religion in this life and boldly proclaim by precept and example their undying faith in the only name ever given whereby men can be saved.

STATISTICAL TABLE.

CHURCHES.	PASTORS.	CLERKS.	POSTOFFICES.	MEMBERSHIP.							FINANCIAL.				No. of Minutes.	
				Increase.			Decr's.			Present Membership.	Minutes Fund.	Pastor's Salary.	Value of Church Prop'ty.	Sunday Schools.		Sunday of Meeting.
				By Baptism.	By Letter.	Recomd'd in.	Restored.	Dismissed by Letter.	Excluded.							
Antioch.....	W. M. Duren.....	Green Hill.....	Zion.....	6	1	1	3	2	1	120	\$1 50	.....	\$400	1st.	60	
Bellevue.....	H. F. Vermillion..	D. J. Smith.....	Melbourne.....	14	4	.....	2	1	.....	84	1 50	\$65	500	1 3d.	42	
Big Spring.....	G. L. Foard.....	S. E. Martin.....	Franklin.....	.....	10	.....	.....	.....	.....	10	50	.....	.....	.....	10	
Concord.....	W. M. Duren.....	Jas. H. Bone.....	Stella.....	3	4	2	4	3	1	94	1 25	.....	300	1 4th.	47	
Fairview.....	J. H. Soden.....	R. P. Blevins.....	Violet Hill.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	1	2	57	1 00	30	500	3d.	28	
Jamestown.....	J. W. Goodwin.....	J. M. Barnes.....	Jamestown.....	3	2	.....	5	5	3	123	40	.....	.....	1 4th.	60	
Melbourne.....	H. F. Vermillion..	W. K. Estes.....	Melbourne.....	4	3	1	3	.....	.....	50	1 50	120	500	1 1st.	25	
Mt. Nebo No. 1..	J. H. Soden.....	W. N. Haley.....	Violet Hill.....	2	.....	.....	1	.....	.....	29	50	.....	250	2d.	15	
Mt. Nebo No. 2..	W. M. Duren.....	W. J. Blue.....	Barren Fork.....	11	1	.....	3	18	.....	32	75	.....	.....	3d.	16	
Mt. Pleasant.....	J. P. Lovelace.....	A. T. Felts.....	Sage.....	.....	1	.....	7	3	.....	43	75	.....	.....	2d.	22	
New Hope.....	N. N. Satterfield..	T. H. Pate.....	Calico Rock.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	11	50	15	.....	4th.	6	
Philadelphia.....	W. M. Duren.....	B. A. Spradlin..	Gulley.....	.....	4	2	3	.....	1	24	1 00	50	.....	4th.	12	
Pilgrims' Rest..	Jas. Purcelley.....	Jno. H. Sanders..	Victor.....	29	4	2	2	2	2	130	2 00	52	400	1 1st.	65	
Pleasant Valley..	S. A. Marchant.....	J. H. Whiteaker..	Pineville.....	7	1	.....	10	2	1	58	1 00	25	.....	4th.	20	
Rocky Bayou.....	H. F. Vermillion..	J. N. Haley.....	Lunenburg.....	.....	.....	.....	8	.....	.....	32	1 25	.....	.....	2d.	16	
Sain's Rest.....	S. A. Marchant.....	E. Vines.....	Jumbo.....	4	2	2	4	2	.....	83	1 00	40	250	1st.	41	
Unity.....	S. A. Marchant.....	W. Jasper Carder	Byler.....	.....	.....	.....	1	.....	1	36	50	.....	200	.....	18	
Wise's Chapel.....	S. A. Marchant.....	M. Hivcley.....	Pineville.....	7	4	4	.....	.....	.....	23	50	.....	.....	2d.	11	
Zion Hill.....	M. M. Frizzell.....	J. G. Jennings..	Zion.....	10	2	2	4	3	.....	119	1 50	40	300	1 3d.	59	
Totals.....				100	39	7	9	60	42	12	1158	\$18 90	\$437	\$3600	6	582

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