

LANDMARK BAPTIST HISTORIAN

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*"Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations: ask thy father, and he will show thee; thy elders, and they will tell thee."
Deuteronomy 32: 7*

Early California Baptist Ministers and Churches.

**The Evangel—Thursday Morning,
July 5, 1860—Vol. III No. 7 pg 2**

Rev. S Cornelius, Jr., lately arrived in this city under appointment of the A.B.H. Mission Society sailed for **Portland, Oregon**, some ten days since. Mr. C, while in this State, made a trip into the interior where he was badly poisoned by the "Poison Oak" from which he suffered greatly. He hopes to relocate in Portland-an important field that has long been destitute. We commend him and his family (who have accompanied him) to the affectionate regards of our brethren in Oregon, and hope the Lord will set before him an open door.

Rev. J. B. Morse sailed from New York on the 7th of February last, on the **ship Polynesia**. The ship is now some time overdue, and may be daily expected at this port. Mr. M graduated some three years ago from the Theological Department of Madison University, and is an earnest Christian and preacher of the gospel. Since writing the above Mr. M has arrived, and is now in this city.

Rev. Geo. E. Davis has closed his labors with the **San Ramon Church**, and is expected to remove his family at an early day to **Brooklyn** or vicinity.

The Baptists of **Brooklyn** under the ministry of **Rev. J. B. Saxton** are building a good and commodious house of worship. It had so far progressed several weeks ago that a pleasant company gathered within its walls to spend a social evening. When completed, it will be all our people there will need for many years. Three or four hundred dollars in addition to what they can raise among themselves would enable them to complete the house at once and pay for it. We believe it would be money well expended and we commend the enterprise to the favorable consideration of our brethren in this city. A meeting house built and paid for is one thing done, and a very important one in such a community as **Brooklyn**.

The **Church in Stockton (Rev. C. King, pastor)** are moving in earnest towards their new house of worship. They made arrangements several weeks ago to vacate their old house, and worship in the future in the City Hall. They have a fine lot, somewhat removed from the business centre of town, but eligible to the best class of residences. It is a corner lot on two principal streets, one hundred by one hundred and fifty. One part of it stands their parsonage. (By the way is there another Baptist parsonage

in California? We have not heard of one) they had commenced their subscription, and had secured upon it, two or three weeks ago, some three thousand dollars. Our brethren there greatly need a house, and we hope they will now make a vigorous and united effort to build a house suitable for that important. It is no time for any to be lukewarm, for any to falter. Let all make the effort-honest earnest and persevering—and we believe they will ere long rejoice over the fruits of their labors. Success to the undertaking to build this house for the Lord in Stockton.

Rev. H. M. Henderson writes of interesting services with the **church in Half Moon Bay**. He reports a recent case of conversion there, some accession to the Church and that others are soon expected to join.

The **Church in Sonora-C. R. Hendrickson**, pastor- is enjoying enlarged prosperity. They have twice used the baptistry of their new house, dedicated only a little more than a month ago. Four candidates were baptized two weeks ago-three men and one woman-and others are expected to follow soon. Since February last the church has increased from twenty to forty-four members. That was a field 'white for the harvest,' and Bro. H is doing a good work in fathering the ripened sheaves.

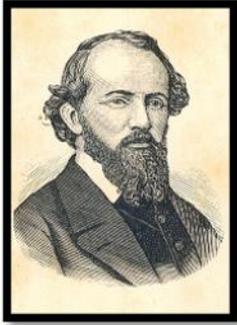
Rev. S. Riley, of **St. Helena** writes that he and his family have been afflicted for a long time. It is understood some months ago, that he designed to remove to Oregon; but our brethren here will be pleased to know that he has decided to remain in this State. Bro. R has been a pioneer laborer in the section of the State where he now resides, and God has honored his ministry there turning many to righteousness. We hope he will soon be able to enter some one of our many open fields.

Rev. C. N. West of **Santa Cruz** writes hopefully of his field of labor' He says "our infant cause is prospering in Santa Cruz." He orders a good Sunday school library, which shows life in an important direction. It has been well said "take care of the children and the men will take care of themselves" and we may add that the church that takes care of on generation will the men to take care of the church in the generation following. We are glad to note this movement for the Sunday School in **Santa Cruz**.

Rev. J. T. Huff, Late pastor of **Clear Lake**, was very seriously injured at **Sacramento** last week. His right hand was caught in some kind of machine, tearing off his thumb and forefinger, and otherwise injuring his hand seriously. Fears were entertained lest he would lose his hand entirely. That he will share in the sympathy of all who

know him, we hardly need to say. We hope the results will not be so serious as to entirely deprive him of his hand.

Rev. Wm. A-hmore, a missionary at **Hong Kong**, under the patronage of the missionary Union, recently spent a few weeks very pleasantly in this city where he now has many attached friends. He is a man of most excellent spirit of good abilities and fine culture. His health is poor and has gone home to recruit. He sailed on the steamer of June 5th, for New York. We expect him to write for or columns.



S. Cornelius



Jesse B. Saxton



Clark King



Stephen Riley



J. T. Huff

Gallery of Ministers mentioned in the Evangel Article.

Images collected from a variety of sources, over a period of several years. From Cullifer Photo Collection

Gallery of Churches mentioned in the Evangel Article.

Images collected from a variety of sources, over a period of several years. From Cullifer Photo Collection



Brooklyn - 1854

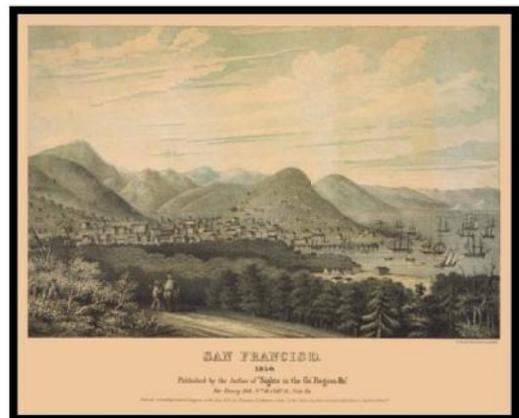


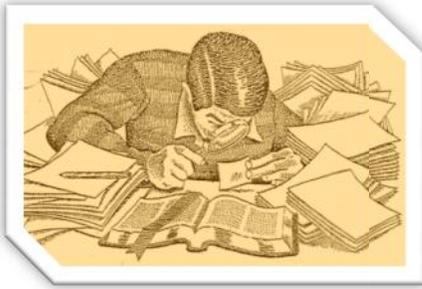
Stockton - 1860



St. Helena - Date unknown

An early Lithograph of San Francisco





Searching for Clues to our California Baptist History & Heritage

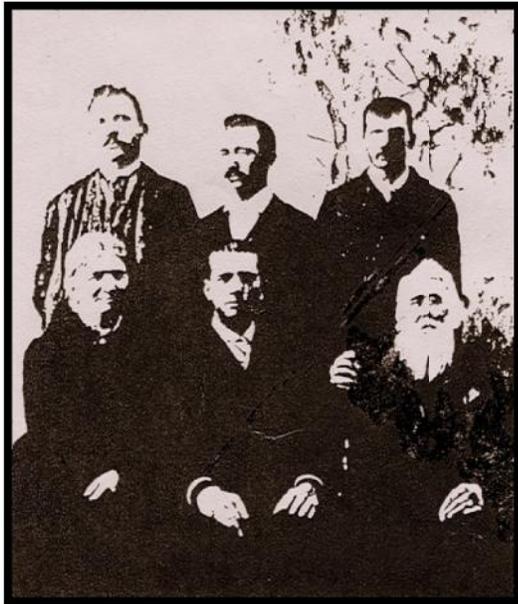
Henry E. Adams

From Lasher's Ministerial Directory

ADAMS, Henry E., 364 S. 9th St., San Jose, CAL. – Born, Highland, Mich.; Stud. Fenton Sem., 2 yrs.; Stud. Kal. C., Mich 4 yrs.; Stud. B. Un. T. S., Chicago, 2 yrs.; Lic. 1865, Fentonville, Mich.; Ord. '72, Tuscola, Mich; S. Tuscola, Mich., Charlotte, Mich., Carpentaria, Cal., Santa Barbara, Cal., San Luis Obispo, Cal., Cambria, Cal., Oak Grove, Cal., Estrella, Cal., Cholame, Cal., Selma, Cal., Santa Clara, Cal.; Mountain View, Cal.

Lasher's Ministerial Directory – 1899 - Page 17

John Dickerson Bonner



Front Row (Left to Right) Martha E. Barker Bonner, Lester Bonner, James Dickerson Bonner.

Back Row (Left to Right) Walter Bonner, J. Todd Bonner and Will Bonner.

From Files of G. A Williams.

OBITUARY NOTICE

JAMES DICKERSON BONNER

DIED.

At his home on Sugar Hill, Modoc Count, California, July 26, 1898. James Dickerson Bonner, aged 78 years, 7 months and 8 days. Brother Bonner was born in Allan County, Kentuck, December 1819. He was the fourth son of Moses J. and Nancy Snith Bonner. He moved to Arkansas in early life and was married to Elizabeth Gibson October 14, 1841. To her was born three daughters, who are now all dead. His companion died in 1859. He was baptizei into the fellowship of the Baptist church in 1837, and ordained to be full work of the gospel ministry in 1848. In 1850 he crossed the plans in company with deacon T.H. Garret of Lake City, California, settled in Lake County, California, where he taught school and preached for a number of years. October 3, 1861, he was again married to Martha Ella Farker. To her was born four sons, Walter Parker, James William, John Todd and Lester Vernon. In 1872 he moved with his wife and little sons from Lake to Modoc County, California, and in 1873 he organized the First Baptist church of Goose Lake, which was the first Baptist church organized in Modoc County. He was pastor of this church fourteen years, which prospered while he was pastor. At the close of fourteen years his declining health compelled him to retire from active pastoral work. The funeral occurred at the Baptist church in New Pine Creek, July 27. Elder H. Smith preached the sermon, which was requested by Elder Bonner before his death. Brother Smith took for his text, Rev. 13:14. The sermon was appropriate and ably delivered and listened to by a large and sorrowing congregation of brethren and friends who folowed him to his last resting place. May God bless the sorrowing family of Brother Bonner.

S.B. CHASTAIN

AS PUBLISHED IN: THE BAPTIST SENTINEL
SEPTEMBER 1, 1898

Stephen L. Riley

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CHURCH HISTORY

and having been Baptists in the old home land, were just the kind one might expect to be loyal to their convictions and, in the new land of new homes, early set to establish the means of grace or religious services.

The Rev. Stephen L. Riley, then antinerant Baptist preacher, formerly from Missouri, was already preaching occasionally to

The Preaching a settlement at Sonoma and another on the

Service Russian river, near the present site of Healdsburg. On his trips from one appointment to the other "He must needs go through Samaria" of his little settlement on the creek of Santa Rosa, and accordingly it became his custom to

stop for rest and refreshment in the hospitable homes of Martin Hudson or Stephen Piner. The matter of preaching in the settlement was often talked over and finally arranged. The date of this meeting, which was the beginning of Baptist work in the vicinity of Santa Rosa, is not known, but the place was a big house on Martin Hudson's place some six miles east of the present site of Santa Rosa. The meeting was so well attended that the appointment was made permanent. Several attempts to organize a church were no doubt made before anything tangible resulted. On one occasion after the preaching service, when a call was made to ascertain how many were ready for organization, only three, Stephen Piner, Sarah Piner, his wife, and Henry McPeak responded.

This not being sufficiently encouraging the matter was postponed until a few weeks later. Finally, according to V. C. The Catron, who was present and had ought to know, a meeting was held one Saturday night in the home of Martin Hudson and a church organized with all due formality and ceremoniously launched upon its, more or less, eventful career. The Lebanon Baptist Church was the name with which the new organization emerged from the christening



Grandma Elizabeth Hudson



W. C. Catron, Surviving Charter Member

discussion. Seven good names and true, Martin Hudson, Elizabeth Hudson, Stephen Piner, Sarah Piner, Jane Hann, William Manion and W. C. Catron graced the natal roll. The name of Henry McPeak was added so soon afterward that we are inclined to bestow upon him the distinction which a charter member is entitled. Joel Crane uniting a few weeks later is also practically an initial constituent.



Joel Crane

The Rev. Stephen L. Riley, who was present at the organization, was called as pastor, Martin Hudson was elected deacon, Stephen Piner, treasurer, W. C. Catron, clerk, and thus the church was officered and equipped for work.

Unfortunately, the records of the first meeting, and in fact all the records down to 1857 were either destroyed or lost, and consequently the exact date of organization cannot be known. Joel Crane, reinforced somewhat by tradition, is inclined to place **The Records Lost** it as early as February. W. C. Catron says March was the month, and basing his conclusion on the fact that the monthly business meeting was, from the first, held on the third Saturday in each month, thinks it was in the third week. Henry McPeak is an advocate of April, while a letter written by the Church to the Association, in Eighteen fifty-seven, five years later, states that it was organized in June. So, since the "Doctors disagree" the only positive statement we are able to make is that the organization took place some time in the spring of 1852.

At that time there were only three other Baptist Churches in the State, which according to date ranked as follows: First Church San Francisco first, First Church Sacramento second, Tabernacle Church San Jose third, making the Lebanon Church the fourth Baptist Church to be organized in the State.



Mr. and Mrs. Henry McPeak

at Carson, Virginia City, Silver City, Dayton, and Fort Churchill, and school superintendent for Lyon County. Until 1869 he labored in Nevada and Eastern California, and organized more new churches than any other pastor or missionary on the Pacific coast. He has labored at Sacramento and Red Bluff in California, built new meeting-houses, organized the Eastern Association in 1873; moved to Oregon in 1876; was pastor at Eugene City, the seat of the State University; is now pastor at the Dalles; has baptized 300 converts. He is author of a "Chronological Historical Chart" of the leading events of the world; also author of a similar "History of the American Civil War," a "Baptist Chronological History from the Days of Christ," and now has a work nearly ready for the press, containing nearly four hundred Pedobaptist concessions to Baptist principles, arranged denominationally. He is a good preacher and lecturer on reformatory subjects, and a number of his discourses on special subjects have been published.

The Baptist Encyclopaedia
By William Cathcart - Volumes 1 & 2
1881 & 1883 - [page 964]

Henry M. Henderson

In a letter to the American Baptist Home Mission Society [published in the Home Mission Record, Aug. 1850], O.C. Wheeler writes concerning the organization of the First Baptist Church of San Jose. [See Historical Compendium, Vol. 1, page 61]

In 1950, this church celebrated its 100th Anniversary, producing a well written church history. This work, in addition to providing valuable information about the organization of the church, lists the names of ministers associated with the church through the years. On page 12, we read:

"The church continued to grow, recording a membership of seventy-three in 1855, at which time Rev. Henry M. Henderson shepherded the flock, remaining until September 1856."

How he came to be in California is still a mystery. The usual questions about a minister's background remain unanswered. But that he was here, laboring among the early California Baptists in 1855, is a fact of history. During the time of his pastorate at San Jose, only one Baptist Association existed, the San Francisco Baptist Association, and the church he pastored was one of the three founding churches of that Association.

The California Baptist State Convention printed a REPORT on the Baptists of California; the state of the Churches, and the unoccupied Fields of Labor, in 1860. In this Report we find H.M. Henderson listed twice:

1) Mountain View, Bethel church, organized in 1855, H.M. Henderson, pastor.

Pages 8 & 9 Golden Jubilee History of the First Baptist Church 1852-1902

By W. L. Gaston, Pastor, First Baptist Church of Santa Rosa

Cyrus William Rees, A.M.

Rees, Rev. Cyrus William, A.M., was born in Guernsey Co., O., Jan. 2, 1828; son of Rev. Wm. Rees, who did so much for missions and education in Indiana: has two brothers in the Baptist ministry, Rev. Eli Rees, of California, and Rev. Jonathan H. Rees, of Texas. In early life he studied for the medical profession. At eighteen he was converted, and baptized by his father at Delphi, Ind. Studied at Franklin and Kalamazoo Colleges, graduating at Kalamazoo in 1855. Offered himself as a foreign missionary, and was accepted by the board at Boston. but the \$60,000 debt prevented the Union from sending him. In 1855 he settled as pastor of the Mount Clemens and Macomb churches, Mich., and was ordained November 15, precious revivals attending his work at both churches. In 1856 he settled at Fort Wayne, built a meeting-house, and baptized sixty. Losing his voice, he removed to Texas. In 1859 he removed to California, regained his voice, settled at Petaluma, and built a meeting-house costing \$1,500; removed to Nevada in 1861; was the first Baptist preacher

2) Half Moon Bay, organized in 1857, H.M. Henderson, pastor.

In 1870, he appears in the minutes of the Convention, on page 15, Names of Ordained Baptist Ministers in California, and Their Post Office Address. Below the above heading is printed:

[Probably not more than one-third of the following list are Acting Pastors.]

~ Henderson H. N. [M].....San Jose ~

In 1876, he was employed by the Missionary Board of the Eastern Baptist Association and in the 1877 Report of the Board it states:

"We employed Elder H.M. Henderson as missionary, who commenced his labors on the 15th day of October 1876, and has labored to the present time...." Historical Compendium Vol.2, page 24. Vol. 1 of the above mentioned Compendium provides four other instances of his name appearing in connection with the churches and work of the Eastern Baptist Association:

1) Historical Sketch of the Surprise Valley Church, 1881 E.B.A. Minutes. [Vol.1-p.64]

"At this date, February 18, 1877 Rev. H.M. Henderson, missionary, preached for us about once a month and acted as Chairman for the Church at their meetings..."

2) Historical Sketch of the Goose Lake Valley Church, 1882 E.B.A. Minutes. [Vol.1-p.65]

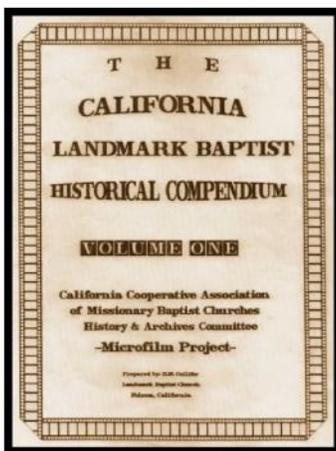
"Aug. 11th, 1877, Elder H.M. Henderson was received by relation, and Mrs. N. E. Duke by letter..."

3) Historical Sketch of the Dorrisville Church, 1883 E.B.A. Minutes. [Vol.1-p.66]

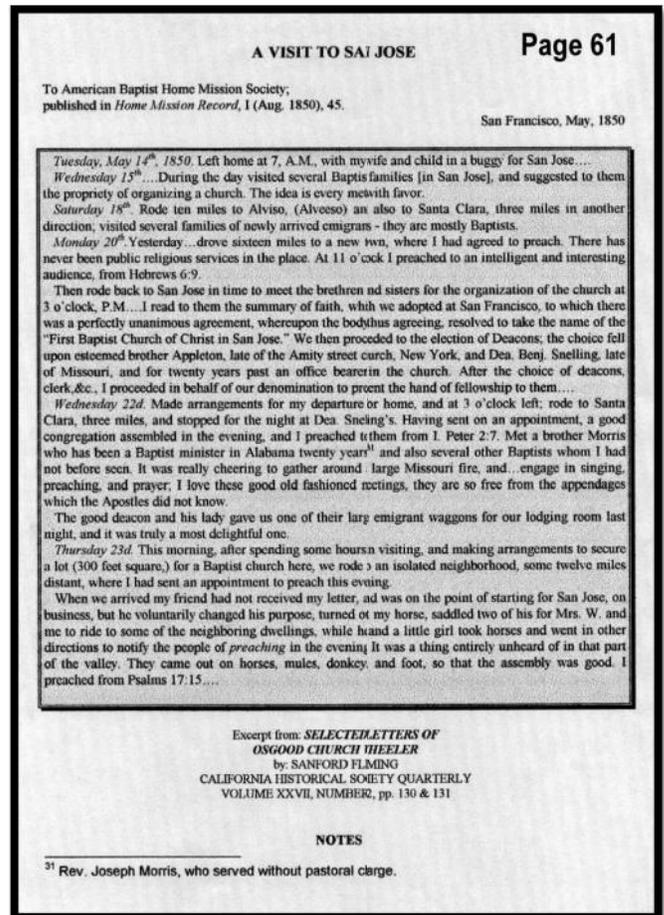
"...December 19, 1878 [H.M. Henderson] was called as Pastor..."

4) The Circular Letter, 1882 E.B.A. Minutes. [Vol.1-p.83]

This letter was written by Elder H.M. Henderson. His name appears consistently in Section Two, of Historical Compendium Vol. 2, beginning on page 24 and ending on page 58, Where he is listed under the heading List of Ordained Ministers.



This was self-published on a "print to order" basis and was one of the first major projects that I worked on. It contained 171 pages, of historical material gleaned from rolls of microfilm in the collection of the History & Archives Committee of the Cooperative Association.



**Four Connecting Links
to our present day churches:**

1. John Dickerson Bonner
2. Stephen L. Riley
3. Cyrus William Rees, A.M.
4. Henry M. Henderson

These brethren organized churches and fellowshipped in Associations within the State of California, beginning with the San Francisco Baptist Association. Lastly, all four pastored churches within the Eastern Baptist Association of California & Oregon, the forerunner of the Baptist Missionary Association of California, organized July 31, 1932. This last Association is today known as the California State Missionary Baptist Association.



Reuben Young Blalock
1867 - 1962
His Missionary Life;
an Autobiography

Chapter III

In 1897, while pastoring Stayton church for half time, I preached at Cox school house near Nehama, 12 miles east of Stayton.

I had Elder G.W. Purtherer, who was missionary of the Western Association, to help in a meeting at Cox school house. This was a wonderful meeting. It rained every day, but would let up about time to go to church. The people got so they would say, "Let us get ready to go to church: the rain will quit." And it did. There were 6 or 8 professions. Stayton church extended an arm up there to receive members. Two of these had been baptized by a Campbellite preacher who was there when they told their experiences. I commented on the danger of being baptized without a change of heart. The Campbellite preacher got up and said, "Did you say we don't believe in a change of heart?" I said, "I don't know what you believe." He said, "I want to say we do." I said, "I hope you do and will preach it, and the Bible from Genesis to Revelation." He said, "I will," and sat down. Brother Purtherer laughed about me getting that Campbellite to promise to preach the Bible from Genesis to Revelation.

At this time we had the Western Baptist Association of about 8 churches, and Bro. Purtherer was their missionary, a grand old man. Never had I a better friend or brother, and he was loved by all true Christians that knew him. He got so hard of hearing that he quit preaching before he went home to be with the Lord.

I was called as pastor at Dallas Baptist Church in Polk County for half time, and when my year was up at Stayton, I went to Dallas. I was preaching one Sunday a month for a little country church called "Riverside" near Albany. Old Brother Valentine Caldwell, his wife and 12 children about made up this church. I bought a bicycle and traveled on it to my appointments. The year at Dallas I baptized about fifteen into the church. I advocated direct, or "Gospel Missions" as it was called then, and took subscriptions for "The Missionary Helper" published by Sister Kerr of Decatur, Georgia, a Gospel Mission paper.

While here the Missionary Secretary of the North Pacific Coast Convention came to see me. He wanted to get me to quit my way of opposing the Convention. He offered to buy me, then threatened to starve me off the field, said he had rather pay my way back east than for me to go on in my independent way opposed to the Convention. I listened to his arguments and threats, then I said, "Brother, the Lord led me to this field, and when He wants me to leave, He will let me know and provide the

means for me to go." He said, "You can't expect my help, and you will just starve." Well, I have not starved yet, and where he is now, the Lord only knows.

While I was here in Dallas I held a meeting for a country church for 10 days and baptized four. I never took a collection. Some opposed it and said it was the deacon's business to raise the money to pay the preacher. One old deacon said to me, "I'm going to raise some money for you." But all I got for the meeting was \$0.50, and an old Methodist lady gave me that. In a few months that church house burned down, and the church never met again. It was thought that a man who held fire insurance of \$600 burned it to get his money.

After pastoring the Dallas church for one year I went over into Nestucca Valley in Tillamook County. Here were two little churches, Hebo Baptist Church meeting in Nyefong School House and Union Baptist Church meeting in Union School House. They were only about 3 or 4 miles apart, one on one side of Nestucca River, the other on the other side. In 1898 there were no bridges, and it was difficult to cross the river, especially in the winter time. The two churches called me as their pastor for one fourth time each. In the course of time I got them to unite, and they became the Cloverdale Missionary Baptist Church.

Here I preached in school houses about the county, and I held a week's meeting in Fairview School House 4 miles east of Tillamook. I stopped in the home of Mrs. Amanda Donaldson. They were Southern Methodists, old settlers from Georgia. Here I got acquainted with their daughter, Miss May Donaldson, who was a school teacher. We were married September 6th, 1899. She was a good Christian girl, had been converted in a Methodist camp meeting held near their home. In teaching school in Beaver, Oregon, she boarded with a strong Campbellite lady who got her to be immersed by a Campbellite preacher. She had never heard a Baptist preacher, but she believed the Bible taught immersion for baptism. When she heard me preach a sermon on baptism one night in their school house, as I walked home with her she said if she ever got a chance she would join a Baptist church. I said, "If you join a true Baptist church, you will have to be immersed again." She said, "I would want to be. If I was baptized for the wrong purpose, I would want to be baptized for the right purpose." So in a few months after we were married she joined the Cloverdale Baptist Church and was baptized in the beautiful Nestucca River to show forth the death, burial, and resurrection of her Savior, by the hands of her husband, the pastor of Cloverdale Missionary Baptist Church.

As Published In The Western Baptist
(pages 3-4 of November, 1950 issue)





The Ninth of a 12 part Series in
The Western Baptist

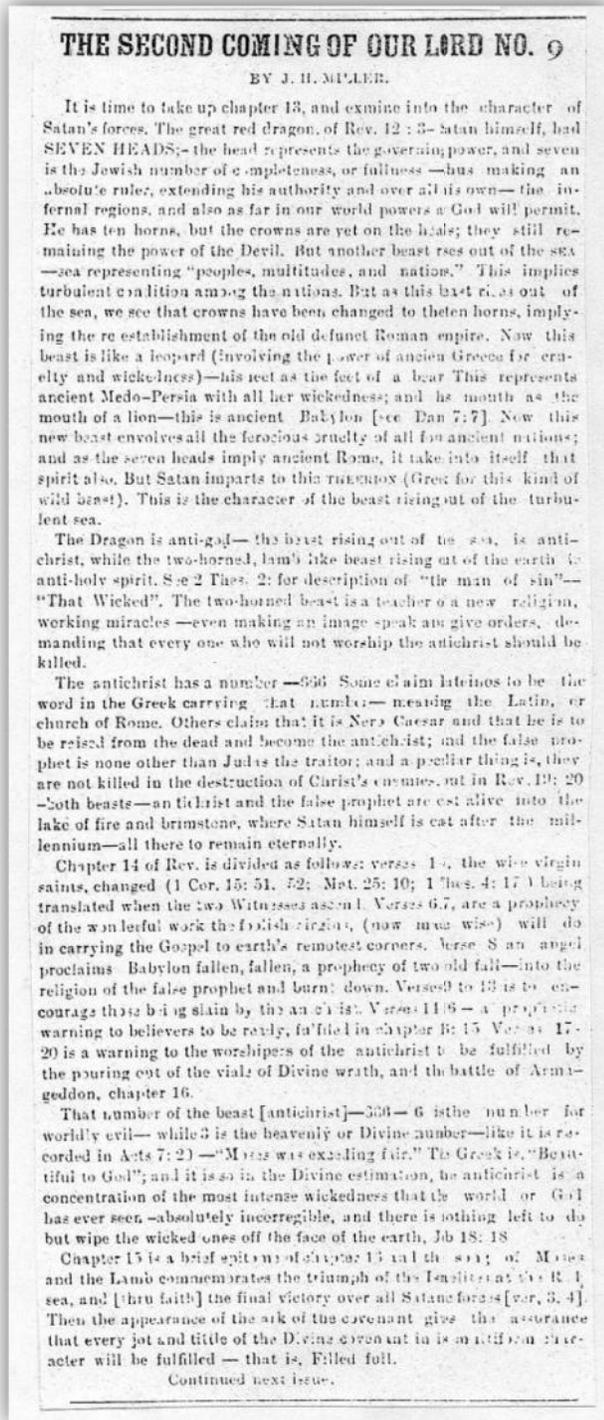
THE SECOND COMING OF OUR
LORD NO. 9
BY J. H. MILLER



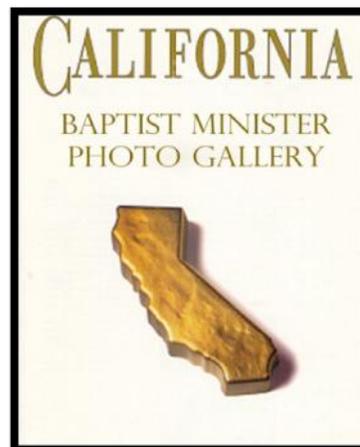
Minister Photos
Needed

If you have or know of someone that may have minister photos, please send a jpeg image of the following brethren to: e-mail: Lbfolsom@aol.com

- Andy Thommarson
- Tom Tickenoff
- Robert I. Timmons
- Ora Nelson True
- Meri Tucker
- Jose Vasquez
- Arthur Lawan Vaughn
- Steven Vaughan
- Mervin Vineyard
- Cornelius Vuurens
- William Cheek Wallace
- James E. Ward, Sr.
- Richard A. Weathers
- David Weiss
- Tim Westbrook
- Roy Westmoreland
- Don B. Wheeler
- Jimmie Williams
- James B. Wooding
- Walter Fred Woods
- B. B. Wright
- Lawrence W. Wright
- W. Z. W. Wright
- Kenneth W. Yoder
- Roy Young



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This is a major project and has been in the works for over 20 years.

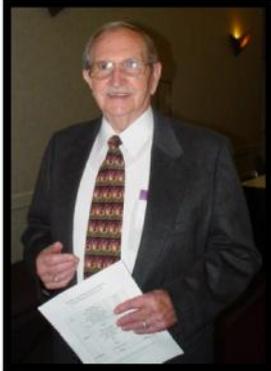
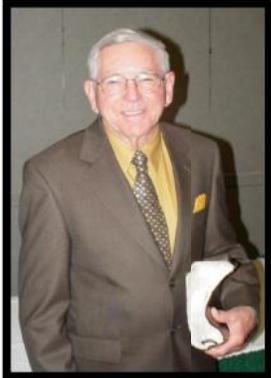


2006 Cooperative Association Meeting in Visalia



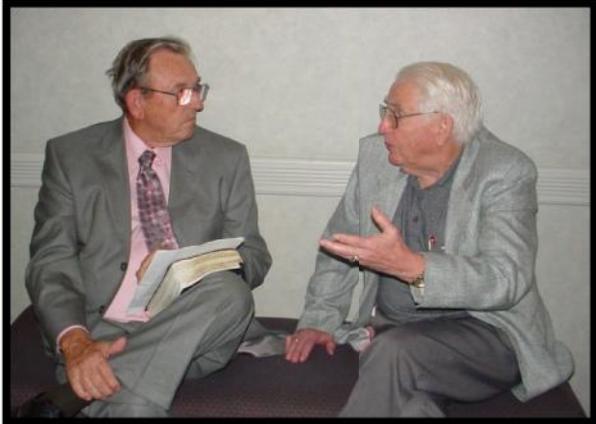
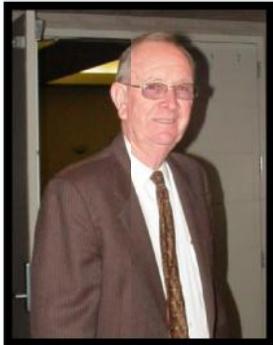
The Shawn Hendrix Family
Emily, Shawn & Joanna

Tonie Robertson



James C. Pack

Jack Dennis



Lindon Sparks & L. D. Perdue



Art & Billie Richardson with Sandy & Randy Cloud, ABA Secretary-Treasurer of Missions



2006 State Ladies Auxiliary Officers
Back Row (Left to Right)
Lavonna Woolley & Priscilla McCright
Front Row (Left to Right)
Deanna Bailey & Catherine Kelley