

# 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*



**Reuben Young Blalock**  
**1867 - 1962**  
***His Missionary Life;***  
***An Autobiography***

## Chapter VIII

We traded our farm near Middleton for an apartment house in Caldwell, Idaho, and moved there. There was a big debt against

it, but we lived there a few years and paid the monthly building and loan payments. I preached in the city hall, and we organized the Antioch Missionary Baptist Church of Caldwell there in the city hall. I served then as missionary pastor for several years. We bought a house and lot on Denver Street for a church building. We lived a while in the house, and held Sunday school and church in it.

I had lost the apartment house. Times were hard. The W.P.A. was put on to give people work. I worked some on it. My son, Harold, joined up and went into a C.C.C. camp to help us to live. The government gave us \$25 a month for his services, and gave him \$5 for his use. He often gave us that.

In 1928 Elder J.T. Moore was Secretary Treasurer of the American Baptist Association. He got the A.B.A. to pay me \$25 per month for my missionary work in Idaho. I worked as part time interstate missionary for the A.B.A. for about a year. I did not believe in the system, but under the insistence of J.T. Moore I agreed to receive this help from them. Bro. Moore and I were old friends, and I had confided in him my circumstances. He had recommended me to the Arkansas Baptist Association for a missionary. The board or committee elected me at a salary of \$1800 a year, one hundred and fifty a month. This was January, 1928. I wrote the secretary I would consider their invitation and let them know in March, as I was planning on visiting the meeting of the A.B.A. in Oklahoma City in March and then go on to visit my old mother in North Carolina.

So in March I went back through Colorado and preached to a little church in that state, then went on to

Oklahoma City and attended the A.B.A. meeting. After the meeting I preached in a few churches in the state, then went down to Texarkana and spent a few days with Bro. and Sister Moore. I told him of the little church in Colorado that wanted me for pastor.

I went from there up to Little Rock where I met with the Missionary Committee of the State Association. I told them I appreciated their confidence in me to elect me as a missionary of their state, but realizing they had so many capable preachers of their own state, I could not get the consent of my mind to leave the state of Idaho without a true active Baptist minister and come down there. They seemed to appreciate my position.

I went on through Tennessee and over into North Carolina and visited my old home. After my visit with my mother and some brothers and sisters, I came on back through Kentucky, Illinois, and Colorado, preaching some in each of these states on my way back to Caldwell, Idaho. I was satisfied the Lord wanted me to stay a while longer in Idaho.

I had been away about three months. I took up the work with renewed faith in God that He would provide. I had a debate with a Church of God preacher in Notus, in the High School building. He had the greatest mixture of false doctrine of anyone I ever saw, but God gave us a great victory. He was a different kind of "Church of God" from those I have known. He had a mixture of Adventism and Campbellism and other erroneous doctrines.

About July, 1928, I received a letter from Dr. J.T. Moore, then Secretary-Treasurer of the A.B.A., telling me they were to have a meeting of the Missionary Committee in Texarkana, and he wanted me to send a night letter to him stating whether I was going to accept that work in Colorado. He said he could not recommend me for the work in Idaho to the Committee. He urged me to go to Colorado and they would support me there but not in Idaho.

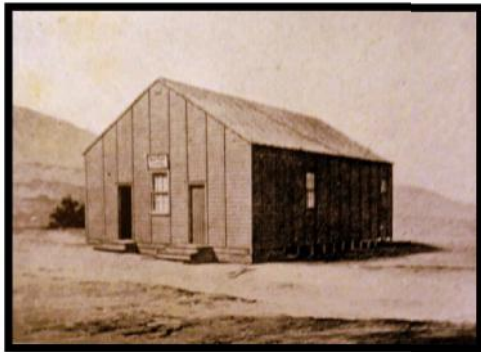
I sent him a night letter stating, "I do not choose to work for the A.B.A. any longer. A letter explaining will follow."

I wrote him I was a Baptist. If I was going to work under a pope, I did not know of a living man I had rather work under than he, but I didn't believe God went

to him to tell him where I should go, and that I believed God dealt directly with me.

Well, this letter raised a little rumpus, but he soon got over it, and we were good friends till his death. But I felt like a system that would make a good man feel like that was not a system of God's, and as the Book says, "Shun every appearance of evil." I have tried to do it in thi (sic)

Originally published by R. Y. Blalock in *The Western Baptist*, Page 3 of April, 1951 Issue



First Building of First Baptist Church

### Recent Road Trip to First Baptist Church San Francisco



On July 19, Jim Brower and I journeyed to San Francisco and met with Miriam Peterson, Historian of First Baptist Church. This delightful and knowledgeable lady has been a member of the church since 1946, just 3 years shy of their 100th year Anniversary.

Miriam gave us the grand tour of the area in the church set aside for Records and Artifacts of the church. She is holding the original Volume One of the records of the church.

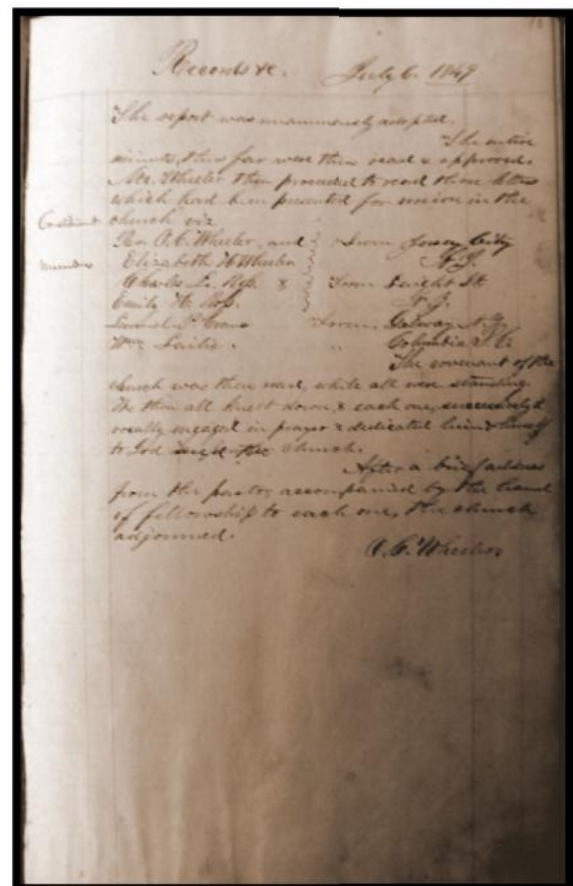
No Road Trip is complete without a digital camera.



Volume One of Minutes from 1849 to 1864.



A page from the book in the original hand of the Clerk, transcription to follow.



Transcription of Minutes was done by Michael Johnson

<sup>10</sup>The report was unanimously adopted. The entire minutes, thus far were then read & approved.

Mr. Wheeler then proceeded to read those letters which had been presented for union in the church viz.

**Constituent members**

Rev. O. C. Wheeler and Elizabeth H. Wheeler, from Jersey City, N. J.

Charles L. Ross & Emily H. Ross from Laight St. N. Y.

Lemuel P. Crane from Galway N. Y.

Wm Lailie from Columbia S.C.

The covenant of the church was then read, while all were standing. He then all knelt down & each one successively & vocally engaged in prayer & dedicated him & herself to God and the Church

After a brief address from the pastor, accompanied by the hand of fellowship to each one, the church adjourned.

O.C. Wheeler



Photo showing 5 bound Volumes of Church Minutes on bottom lower left.



And we made two new friends....

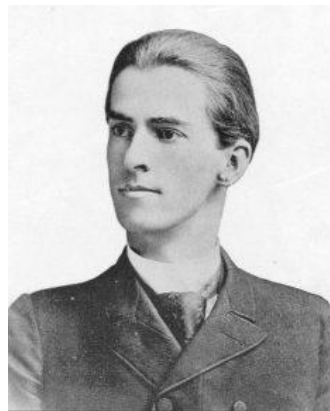


Photo: Rev. Frank Dixon, Pastor of the Tenth-Avenue Baptist Church, Oakland

**Baptists in California**  
By Frank Dixon

*California Magazine*  
1892

Part 2 of 2, Continued from  
Volume 2 - Number 3

**Work Among Chinese**

In 1854 Rev. J. Lewis Shuck came to San Francisco under appointment of the Southern Baptist Convention, and inaugurated mission work among the Chinese. Some progress was made, but the civil war came on, and, in 1861, Mr. Shuck withdrew to the South. This work was renewed under Dr. Graves in 1871, and continued until 1876, when again it came to an abrupt close. It was reopened In 1879 by Rev. J. B. Hartwell, D.D., who, as superintendent of Chinese missions on this coast, has charge at the present time of thirteen missions in a territory extending from Port Townsend, Washington, to Los Angeles. There are fifty-four members of the church in San Francisco immediately under Dr. Hartwell's care, thirty-three of whom are resident. Sixty-five Chinese on an average assemble in the schoolroom of the Baptist Mission on the corner of Sacramento street and Waverly place, to receive instruction in the Scriptures, in the Chinese classics and in English.

Few, who are unacquainted with the Chinese in California and the American antipathy for them, can appreciate the warfare which Dr. Hartwell has waged against pagan iniquities and Christian indifference or hostility. He is made of martyr-stuff and is absolutely without fear, save of Almighty God's disapproval. The circumstances have needed just such a man for his peculiar mission in San Francisco, a man not likely to be driven from his work of preaching the gospel to the Chinese upon the streets of the city by howling hoodlums. Opposition upon the part of American Christians grows weaker daily, which fact is not the least gratifying result of his devotion. Two years before his arrival in San Francisco, Mrs. J. R. Bradway, of Oakland, began work among the Chinese of that city. A woman of singularly sweet character, beautiful in her consecration, she has taught a score and a half Chinese to love and

serve the God in whom she trusts. In Fresno and Chico the Chinese have not been forgotten.

Seven converted Chinese have returned to China as Christian Missionaries from the territory under Dr. Hartwell's supervision.

### **Educational**

The public school system of California had its beginnings in the First Baptist Church of San Francisco. The first free public school in the State was opened there on December 26th, 1849, with three pupils in attendance, by Mr. John Pelton and his wife. On March 25th, 1850, the Council of San Francisco passed the following resolution:

"Resolved, That from the first day of April, 1850, John C. Pelton and Mrs. Pelton, his wife, be employed as teachers for the public school at the Baptist Church which has been offered to the Council free of charge, and that the average number of scholars shall not exceed one hundred; and that they shall be entitled to a monthly salary, during the pleasure of the Council, of five hundred dollars per month, payable each and every month."

None have greater cause for feeling proud of their historical connection with the system of public instruction of the State than Baptists.

Within the past two years a summer resort has been acquired by the Baptists at Twin Lakes, near Santa Cruz. Thirty-five thousand dollars have been spent in improvement upon the grounds. A tabernacle has been built in which the State Convention meets annually and in which summer schools are held. Twin Lakes is destined to become speedily a center of educational life in the summer.

The Baptists of Southern California have a university at Los Angeles. The institution, however, which probably represents the best endeavors of the Baptists of the State in the educational field is California College, situated at Highland Park, Oakland. It was formerly located at Vacaville, at which place it languished hopelessly. In early days the staunchest friend this institution had was Deacon Isaac Lankershim, whose widow now lives in Los Angeles. He laid the foundation of a permanent endowment in a gift of two hundred acres of land near Vacaville, for which he had paid ten thousand dollars. The college received this property while Rev. A. S. Worrall was president. Another true friend of the cause has been Hon. H. E. McCune, of Dixon. When it was located in Oakland six years ago, Mrs. E. H. Gray, of Oakland, a noble Christian woman who has contributed thousands, indeed, tens of thousand, to missionary and educational enterprises, gave the site, valued at ten thousand dollars upon which

three good buildings now stand. A farm of one hundred and sixty acres at Milton, the Stuart fund of ten thousand dollars, and a partial endowment of the President's chair, twenty-eight thousand, complete the assets of the institution. Rev. S. B. Morse, D. D., has been president for the past five years. Possibly no other man in the Baptist ranks in the State could have maintained the work with equal success. For what he has done in the way of raising funds toward an endowment he merits the gratitude of the Baptists of California.

To the further liberality of Mrs. E. H. Gray, Baptists are indebted for about thirty-five thousand dollars, the nucleus of an endowment for a Theological Seminary.

The friends of Christian education are surveying the field in California at the present time with much anxiety, lest steps be taken in the wrong direction, and the situation, educationally, become hopelessly involved. The crisis in religious education—that such is at hand is patent—opens no difficulties to such minds as have a serene faith in the adaptation of methods which have been partially successful in Eastern States to the conditions which prevail in California. But one need not be a prophet, or the son of a prophet, to see quite clearly that there is no room in California for colleges. The University at Berkeley and the Leland Stanford Jr. University at Palo Alto more than occupy the ground. Both have splendid financial support, and, in order to justify the heavy expenditures of their establishment and maintenance they will be driven to search for students through every village and county on this coast. They have able faculties; they charge no tuition; they have reduced expenses to a nominal figure. Henceforth ignorance on this Western coast will have no shadow of justification. To compete in collegiate work with these institutions would require a permanent endowment of three million dollars. Such an endowment cannot be raised by any religious body on this coast. If it could, to establish another high-grade institution would be a reckless waste of money. What is to be done by those who desire to place their sons and daughters under religious influence at school? No rational thing can be done, save this: Establish and endow liberally first-class academies. These are in demand. The religious influence of an academy is worth as much as that of a college. To build any other educational institution than, an academy on this coast for the next fifty years would be madness. The truest friends of education among Baptists will not fail to see the wisdom of this policy. The responsibility of a father to his son forbids that he should sacrifice his education by placing him in a third-rate religious school out of a mistaken loyalty to sect. His first

duty in this matter is to his son. The advantages of the State University and the Stanford University are overwhelmingly superior to any that can be offered by any denominational college in California. Yet the academic field, equally important, and in the judgment of many wise men, more important, religiously, is comparatively undeveloped. A magnificent opportunity presents itself to Baptists, and they will surely seize it.

In the sphere of theological instruction the actual condition of things dictates a policy different from that pursued by some denominations in the State, and in danger of being pursued by Baptists. They have a fund of thirty-five thousand dollars, generously donated by Mrs. Gray, with which to begin, but it would require at least one million dollars to found a seminary whose advantages would be great enough to justify a young man desiring to enter the ministry in not going East. Education is too serious a thing to be trifled with. In spite of the excellent work done by the seminaries of the East, there are enough incompetent men in the ministry. Christians cannot afford to impose upon the patience of their God. The best course to be pursued by Baptists, under the circumstances possibly it would be best, even if their capital were unlimited is to endow a theological chair in the State University, and send their young men there. The trustees of the University would probably consent to such an arrangement. A stronger element of Christian influence would thus be introduced into the life of the University, and theological students would be brought into contact with men whom they are to meet, and with whom they are to deal in practical life. Such an acquaintanceship would be incalculably beneficial to the clergy of any denomination. The Christian denominations of the State, by such a policy, would free themselves from the reproach strangely and unjustly flung by them at the University, however - of having tried to make the instruction "godless" by their ungenerous opposition to the institution.

If it be deemed wise by Baptists to carry their educational work beyond the academic stage, permission could easily be obtained, no doubt, from the authorities of the State University, to build a Baptist dormitory in Berkeley to be placed under the religious supervision of an endowed Baptist professorship. It would be possible for Baptists thus to avail themselves of the advantages of a great institution with a comparatively small outlay of money. If every Christian denomination of the State should thus identify its interests with those of the State, who can doubt but that the result would be to give preeminence to our State University, in which every true Californian feels a patriotic pride, and to develop a university life which

would have all the intellectual freedom of secular surroundings, with the wholesome restraint of Christian conviction? It is quite probable that Stanford University, notwithstanding the fact that its royal endowment insures it a position of unlimited influence from the very first, would welcome a similar affiliation with the religious organizations of the State.

### **The Baptist State Paper**

From the time when Rev. O. C. Wheeler edited *The Baptist Banner*, the first paper published by the denomination west of the Rockies, it has been found exceedingly difficult to maintain a paper. That early effort cost Mr. Wheeler three thousand dollars over and above all receipts. Probably the best paper yet published is that now in the field- *The Leader*, of San Francisco. This paper, known at the time as the *Herald of Truth*, passed into the hands of Mr. Garnett in the year 1889, and its continued existence is largely due to the readiness of himself and Rev. C. H. Hobart to invest thought and money in an enterprise from which there have been no returns, save an increased interest in the life of the denomination throughout the State.

The problem of religious journalism in California is yet much involved in the minds of Christian people. Nothing need prevent Baptists from solving it. With the present mail facilities, there is little demand for more than one or two strong Baptist denominational papers in the United States. Local church news, State news, could easily be disseminated through the daily and weekly press. No worthy effort has as yet been made by the Christian Church to avail itself of the secular press for developing its interests. In this day there is scarcely a family that does not take a daily paper - none that would confess itself too ignorant to take at least a weekly. How small is the space devoted in these papers to religious news, in which at least one-fifth the population is presumably interested! Scandalous phases of religious life are noticed faithfully enough, but religion itself is practically ignored. The time is ripe for such method as is being now studied by a few Baptists of this State. An effort is soon to be made to induce the denomination to arrange with one of the leading dailies of the State for the editing, religiously, of half a column or a column, in each issue by an editor selected for that purpose. At least the weekly issue of such a paper would go into every Baptist home in the State, and the influence of Christian thought upon the minds of thousands who never glance at an exclusively religious paper would be vastly augmented.

### **The Future**

The experience of Baptists in the past has been much like that of other Christian denominations in

California, possibly a little more restless. This is easily understood, when it is remembered that their polity is Democratic. Wherever Democracy fails, their polity is affected unfavorably. In the early days, government in California was chaotic, hence Baptist life was more or less turbulent. Since, however, the political institutions of the State have began to crystallize into the forms of a purer Democracy, Baptist life has grown more placid, and, the progress of the denomination has been correspondingly rapid. The lessons of the past have been learned with much pain and discouragement, but they will never be forgotten. The March winds of trial have shaken the denominational tree with great violence, and tugged at its roots with gigantic force, but it stands. Spring has fully come; the sap rises freely, and luxuriant branches stretch their shady welcome to the soul exhausted by the heat of early struggle. And now, many wonder how the turmoil of the past was possible. It would not have been, had the Baptist polity been faithfully enforced; had the Democratic right of each church to govern itself been respected at all times; had councils upon matters of discipline, which have often and sadly distracted the churches, been avoided, and had ministerial unions, which are in no sense a part of the organic life of the denomination, scrupulously refused to concern themselves with any matter beyond their jurisdiction. But these are unhappy features of a past from which there has been a triumphant escape. The future is secure, and Baptists look towards it eagerly. Their simple ecclesiastical machinery makes it possible for them to adjust themselves to the new civilization so rapidly developing on this coast, and control, in some measure, its inner life. The energy of progressive men is breaking traditional fetters, and gaining fullest freedom for Christian activity. Young men of broad culture, among whom Rev. H. B. Hutchins, pastor of the Immanuel Church, of Sacramento, is worthy of mention, are concerning themselves with the educational life of Baptists, and their influence will be felt in future policies. Some have laid firm hold upon social and industrial problems, and are determined to bring the church into contact with the masses. Preachers of persuasive power strive to convince the people of California that that nation is blessed whose God is the Lord. The hour is full of hope for Baptists, and they hasten towards the future with eager hearts, to possess it-not in the name of sectarianism, but in the name of Him who respecteth no person, but accepteth every man that feareth God and worketh righteousness.

**Ordination Service of Loren W. Browning**  
**at Trinity Landmark Missionary Baptist Church**  
**Red Bluff, California**  
**Saturday, July 28, 2012**

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**Ruth & Loren Browning**



**Ordination Council**



**The Browning Family**



**Bro. Dennis Wharton of Beacon MBC, Redding served as Moderator of Counsel**



**Bro. Clifford Scheer of Landmark MBC, Chico served as Clerk of the Counsel**



**Bro. Albert Runyan of First MBC Yuba City Laying on Hands after the church voted to ordain Bro. Browning**



**Bro. James Taylor of New Hope MBC, Oroville Questioned the Candidate**

# ATTENTION!

Your input is requested.

Suggestions for upcoming Issues are certainly welcome.

Article submissions of an historical nature will be used shortly after they are received.

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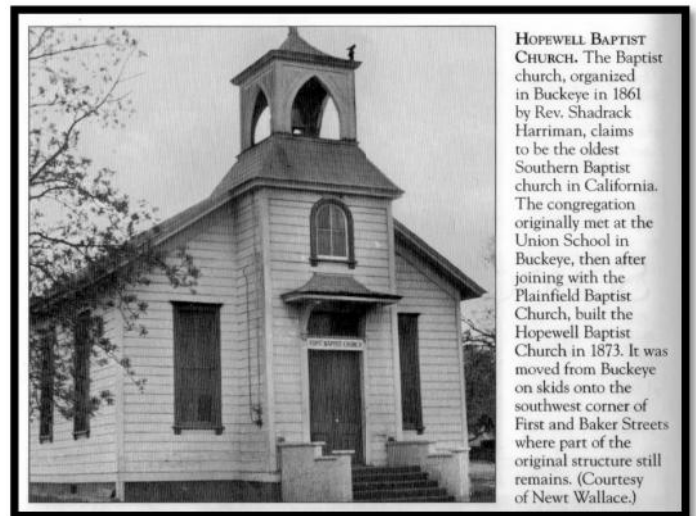
## From the Pages of Images of America: Winters



Bro. Ed Robinson of MBC in Anderson present the Bible



Bro. Albert Runyan of First MBC Yuba City preached the Ordination Sermon



**HOPWELL BAPTIST CHURCH.** The Baptist church, organized in Buckeye in 1861 by Rev. Shadrack Harriman, claims to be the oldest Southern Baptist church in California. The congregation originally met at the Union School in Buckeye, then after joining with the Plainfield Baptist Church, built the Hopewell Baptist Church in 1873. It was moved from Buckeye on skids onto the southwest corner of First and Baker Streets where part of the original structure still remains. (Courtesy of Newt Wallace.)

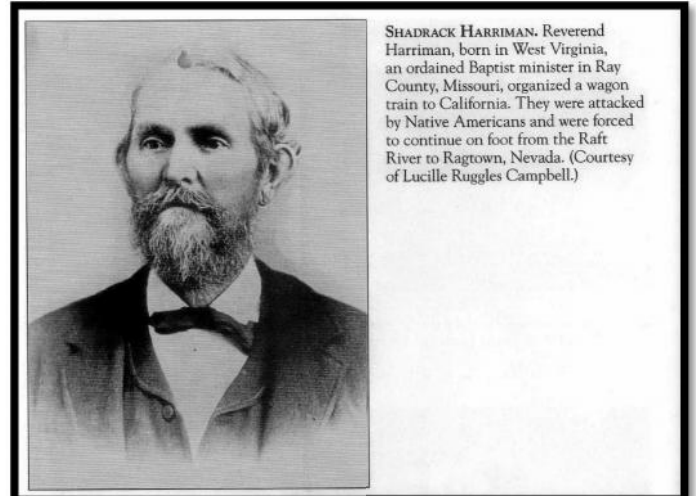
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The ladies of the Red Bluff church set out a fine spread of food for fellowship following the Service



Left to Right: Robert Cullifer of Folsom with Melissa & Ron Cook, Pastor of the Hughson MBC



**SHADRACK HARRIMAN.** Reverend Harriman, born in West Virginia, an ordained Baptist minister in Ray County, Missouri, organized a wagon train to California. They were attacked by Native Americans and were forced to continue on foot from the Raft River to Ragtown, Nevada. (Courtesy of Lucille Ruggles Campbell.)

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