

The Christian Ideal

The Life of T.B. Larimore



*Collected Thoughts By:
Bob Wheatley*

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Preface

The name of Theophilus Brown Larimore is an association with the strong influence of holy scripture and the growth of knowledge of Jesus Christ. Biographical sketches of his life indicate he was a quiet, well mannered, educated, and focused individual.

The keenest insight into Larimore's life can be seen through the eyes of F. D. Srygley and Emma Page Larimore. During his life, five major books were written that documented his life, sermons, and people who influenced his work.

The purpose of this book is not to tell his story again. Others have documented the various phases of his life extremely well. The Christian Ideal better explains the major influences of his life, his decision-making process he used, and answers to the question why he did what he did.

T. B. Larimore was a man. He was a human subject to the world he was born into. He had the same pressures in life that you and I have. What were the conditions that influenced his life? The people that made his decision-making process so effective? And, how can we learn from his life, almost 180 years after he began his life?

The Christian Ideal

Galations 5:1 "Stand fast therefore in the liberty where with Christ hath made us free, and be no entangled again with the yoke of bondage." *King James Version*

Galations 5:1 "For freedom Christ has set us free, stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery." *Gospel Transformation Bible*

On his 21st birthday, T.B. Larimore was baptized into Christ. He had studied the scriptures, and he knew what and when he wanted to do when his Christian life began. If he were alive today, I believe he would probably tell us that there was never a time when he did not know the presence of God from that day forward.

Why did T.B. Larimore exhibit such freedom after his 21st birthday?

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CHAPTER I

Larimore Succeeds Because He Will Not Fail

In *Smiles and Tears – Larimore and His Boys*, F.D. Srygley begins Chapter 13 with this simple statement, “He succeeds in what he undertakes because he will not fail.” He had a great faith in God and in man. He believed anything can be done that ought to be done. He made no allowances for failure. If a thing ought to succeed, he believed God would do everything man could not do for its successes. His perseverance was absolutely indomitable. He never gave up.

In an announcement concerning Mars Hill Academy in 1875, he said, “Trusting in Jehovah’s strength we know no such word as fail. With us (the faculty at Mars Hill Academy), Webster’s Unabridged is next to the Bible, and the word ‘fail’ has been erased from our copy of that.”

The first paragraph of Chapter 14 illustrates how Larimore got things done. This logic served him well. “He always taught in school that there was a difference between perseverance and industry.” This is F.D. Syrgley remembering when he was at Mars Hill as a student. “Perseverance is industry steadily directed toward the accomplishment of a well-defined result.” Many industrious people fail to accomplish anything in life for want of perseverance. Larimore had both industry and perseverance. His plans were carefully formed and unwaveringly pursued. People followed his direction because he knew what it took to be successful. When he and Esther planned Mars Hill Academy, they were the planners and conveyed those plans to the workers. The people responded during construction, the development of the faculty, the day-to-day operations, and the student body that responded in the lives for Christ. This was their success.

There are two stories that T.B. Larimore would appreciate if he could have lived a little later in time. These events took place in the 1950s and 1960s. The logic the stories contain is essentially the same as T.B. and Esther used.

In the 1950s and for many years later, Earl Nightingale filled the airwaves with his logic for success. He defined success as “the progressive realization of a worthy ideal.” He used

example after example of successful people who accomplished their goals, set new goals, all the days of their lives. As a young person in high school during the mid-50's that logic made sense to me.

Set a goal. Strive to meet that goal. If you meet it, set another goal. And then do this all the days of your life. This will define success for you. Nightingale always added that the people who did these steps were some of the happiest people on earth. They knew what they were trying to accomplish; they did it and enjoyed their success. The key to this success is the accomplishment of a "worthy" goal. Apply this to your Christian walk.

The second story took place in 1968. In November, Dean Seay Brown of the School of Engineering at Tennessee Tech University went to Atlanta, Georgia for a conference of engineers. One speaker at the conference was a Mr. Barnum. He was the relative of P.T. Barnum of circus fame. His claim to fame was he was a part of a team of individuals responsible to help rebuild Europe after World War II.

When Dean Brown heard his speech, he asked him to stop in Cookeville, Tennessee on his way back to New York and talk to the freshman engineering class. The occasion was set, and Mr. Barnum talked to the class of freshmen on campus in Derryberry Hall. This is what he needed and what he said.

Dean Brown called the university and asked for a 40-foot blackboard to be built on the stage at Derryberry Hall. The best the maintenance people could do was put five pieces of 4' x 8' plywood end to end on the stage with craft paper for the surface.

This is a condensed version of what Mr. Barnum said.

*"Freshman, potential engineers, you are no different than any other people on the face of the earth. What are you going to do with your four M's of life? You have your **manpower, mental capacity, material wealth, and money.** Use these potentials all the days of your life to accomplish your goals." Then he went to the 40-foot board and he drew a target at the right end. He said, 'Set a goal.' Then, he went to the left end and drew a 40-foot arrow. He said, 'You have to know how to meet that goal. Make adjustments over time so you will be successful. Freshman engineers you know what it takes to accomplish a degree from Tennessee Tech University. As you accomplish each semester you are getting closer to your goal. Don't let anyone or anything keep you from being successful. Use your four M's wisely!' Mr. Barnum went on to give good advice. "At any one point in time you may have to adjust your objectives. That is OK. Remember, this is a process of thinking. You may be asked to build another Empire State Building or you may have to rebuild Europe again after another war. Use the four M's to solve the problem of life."*

Now apply this logic to the life of T.B. Larimore. As a Christian, there is an additional logic to use. If a person looks at his life, T.B. Larimore was a successful teacher, preacher, and evangelist. F.D. Srygley depicts T.B. Larimore as the person who would not fail. He literally always found a way not to fail. When T.B. Larimore reached 22-24 years of age, he began to develop a Christian maturity that allowed him to read scriptures and apply the scriptures to his life. He learned how to let God work in his daily existence to be successful. Some people call this living by faith, but it is more than that.

Consider these points: the person hears the word of God; as he brings that into his consciousness and believes what he reads or hears from the Word of God; as he reflects this consciousness by changing his behavior in his life; as he understands his changed life to recognize he is a

sinner before God; as he recognizes God as being the only entity who can forgive his sins; when he obeys the scriptures and is baptized and commits his being to God... then God gives that person two gifts: forgiveness of sin and the gift of his Holy Spirit.

This next logic is the analysis of one word in the scriptures: spiritual. Vine's analysis of Greek words defines the English word spiritual as pneumatikos. His analysis describes one way the Holy Spirit works within a person's life. This is a practical way he works in a human's life but not the only way. Galatians 5 says, "The spiritual man is one who walks by the spirit in the sense of Galatians 5:16 and 5:25, and who himself manifests the fruit in his own ways."

Vine also makes this key statement, "The spiritual state is reached by: (1) diligence in the Word of God; (2) in prayer; (3) it is maintained by obedience; and (4) in self-judgement. Vine goes on to say, "Such are led by the Spirit are 'spiritual', but of course spirituality is not a fixed or absolute condition; it admits to growth." Consider what Peter says in II Peter 3:18, "But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."

To better understand T.B. Larimore's life, we will now look at the people who influenced his life during his most formative years. These formative years include his life through his formal education at Franklin College. The challenge is to look at how and why T.B. Larimore did what he did.

CHAPTER II

The Larimores in East Tennessee

1830-1858

George and Mary Larimore, Nancy Larimore's mother and daddy, lived in Jefferson County, Tennessee in the 1830s. This county was a relatively new county, in a new state, in the United States. In 1800, the United States was 24 years old. The state of Tennessee was four years old, and this did not include West Tennessee. The area of West Tennessee, west of the Tennessee river to the Mississippi River, was bought from the Chickasaw Indians by President Andrew Jackson in the 1830s.

Before the birth of T.B. Larimore in 1843, these are some of the conditions that existed in Tennessee and the surrounding states. These conditions reflect a young country and the people that occupied the area. Daniel Boone came to the Cumberland Gap; Davy Crockett (1786-1836) marries Polly Finley of Jefferson County. They move to Texas and Davy dies at the Alamo on March 6, 1836; Sam Houston moved through the area (1793-1863); President Andrew Jackson was a frequent visitor (1767-1845); President James K. Polk was from the same area (1795-1849); President Andrew Johnson was born and raised in this area (1808-1875). For a relatively small county in a young state, Jefferson County was a lively place.

In 1840, Census data shows Jefferson County with 12,076 people. Settlers were moving out of the mountains of North Carolina, Virginia, and Kentucky. This area was some of the first farmland with rolling hills and fertile soil that settlers saw. Therefore, the settlers were farmers and businesspeople. Remember that 90% of all productivity was due to farming in the early history of the young United States. The occupation of these lands were outright gifts by the government or by the homestead laws which really hadn't been written at this time. Take the land, occupy the land, hold the land... if you can! They were pioneers.

It is in these circumstances that the Larimore family existed. When Theophilus was born in 1843, the economic conditions were unsettling. George and Mary Larimore were a part of the 1830 Census for Jefferson County. In 1830, George was 34, Mary was 35, Nancy was 17, and Jackson would be born in 1838.

When Nancy marries, she is about 17 or maybe a little older. The data shows Helen, Nancy's first child, was born in 1838. No data exists that tell the name of Nancy Larimore's husband. There are some thoughts that he was from a fairly wealthy family (remember the economic conditions). Wealth was always a changing condition. The money supply caused wealth to change, especially in the 1830s and 1840s. Wealth today did not mean a person had wealth tomorrow. Other indications point to Nancy's husband as being a consumer of alcohol. In one phrase, F.D. Srygley quotes T.B. Larimore as saying there were two negatives in his childhood: debt and drunkenness.

In all literature, Nancy Larimore is portrayed as a very strong individual. Her marriage resulted in four children: Helen, Theophilus, Prends, and Mary F. (Mollie). In the 1860 Census, the children are Helen, 21, Theophilus, 17, Prends, 13, and Mollie, 8.

1852: A Pivotal Year

In 1852, George, Mary, Jackson, and Nancy and the kids leave Jefferson County and move to the area which would be set aside as Sequatchie County. In the late 1850s, Sequatchie County would be made up of parts of Marion and Bledsoe Counties.

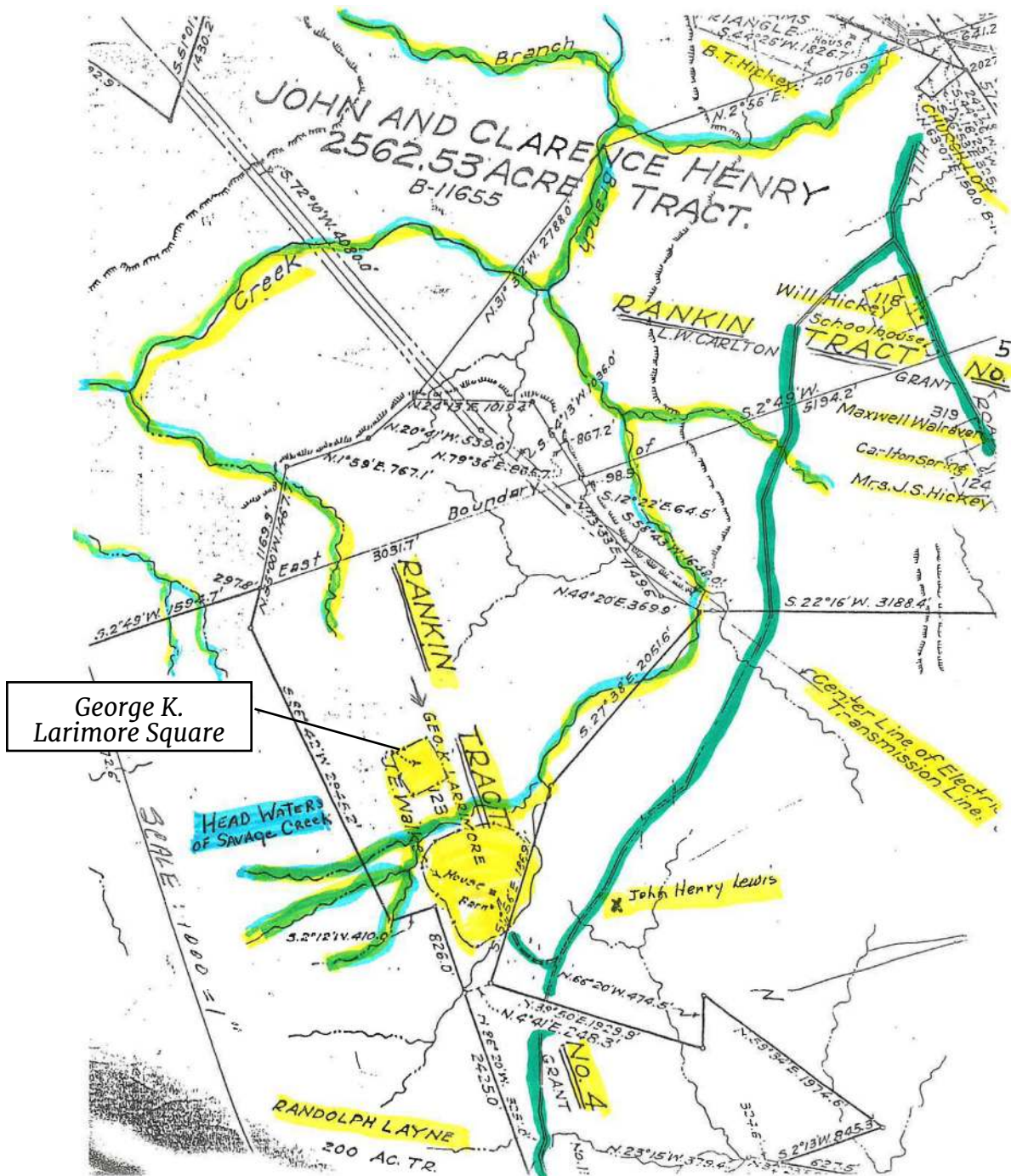
All indications are that George Larimore was the key decision-maker in this move. George was a pioneer and for whatever reason he decided to homestead property in the Sequatchie Valley. We do not know the reason for the move, but we can assume the following events took place.

- The wealth of the two families was placed in one or no more than two wagons.
- The timing of the move was complicated by two events: the birth of Molly on April 25th, 1852 and the growing season of the Sequatchie Valley in 1852.
- The virgin land had to be cleared and housing had to be built before Thanksgiving.
- In 1852, George is 56, Mary 57, Jackson 14, Nancy 39, Helen 14, Theophilus 9, Prends 5, and Molly is less than one year, probably only days old if she was born on April 25th, 1852 in Jefferson County or on the road or after they arrived in Sequatchie County.
- George chose the land on the west side of the valley, on top of Slagle Mountain, at the headwaters of Savage Creek.
- George recognized that he and two boys, Jackson 14 and Theophilus 9, were going to homestead the property. He had done that in Jefferson County years before, but he was a young man then.

The move to the Sequatchie valley took place and events did happen. The timing of these events is not known. The closest community to the Larimores is Coop's Cove, located on the river down in the valley. After Sequatchie County is formed in the late 1850s, Coop's Cove is renamed Dunlap.

At the time of the move, Coop's Cove was a small community. There was a mill on the river, a general store owned by Mr. Rankin, and the community.

The map below shows the location of the Larimore property. This map was in a time of the 1860s showing the additional landowners. The Larimore property is determined by metes and bounds when the property was sold to Mr. Rankin on September 7th, 1859. The deed was recorded April 9, 1860. The sale price was \$52. The tax map number 039-039-016.04 shows the tract. With this record, the Larimores sell the property after living on it for seven years.



1852-1858

In the first six years of the Larimores in Sequatchie Valley, there were several changes. Nancy and her children moved from the mountain to Coop's Cove. The Census data from 1860 shows Nancy, Theophilus, Prends, and Molly living in a cabin between Dr. Bell and Dr. Smith in Coop's Cove, now renamed Dunlap. We know that George, Mary, and Jackson were now living in Dunlap also. They lived two lots down from William and Minerva Rankin and two children, Jean Vaught (13) and Delia J. Vaught (4). Were they renting the property from Mr. Rankin?

The 1860 Census shows one other major change. Nancy's oldest child, Helen, was living next to Dr. Smith. She married Joseph Tate, and they had one child, Copetola .

All of these family units are found in the Census data as follows: Unit #133, Dr. Bell's family; #134 Nancy Larimore's family; #135 Dr. Smith's family; #136 Joseph Tate and Helen Tate family; #144 William Rankin family; #146 George Larimore family; #175 Franklin Deakins family. For the analysis of 1860 Census data see Appendix A.

When T.B. Larimore mentions the story of Daniel Deakins, a schoolmate, (*Smiles and Tears – Larimore and His Boys*, by F. D. Srygley, p. 62), it is possible that the schoolhouse on the tax map was the location of the school that these children attended. However, it is more likely that the school they attended was in Coop's Cove. The Nancy Larimore family probably did not stay on the mountain as long as George and Mary. Note the following logic.

Prior to the Census of 1860, we can glean some things about the neighborhood T.B. Larimore and the family were growing up in. In the community of Coop's Cove there were about 50-60 families. In December 1857, the community of Coop's Cove got a good Christmas present. They were told that the legislature for the State of Tennessee, under some political powers and persuasion of William Dunlap of Knoxville, was going to make a new county of two districts of Marion County and one district of Bledsoe County. These three districts were brought together to form Sequatchie County. The law was passed December 9, 1857.

In January 1858, Mr. G. W. Cain was elected as chairman of the Sequatchie County court in a meeting in the home of Joel Wheeler in the Filmore community. A decision was made to locate the county seat in Coop's Cove on the Rankin property. In the next few months, 40 acres of property were purchased from Mr. William Rankin, the owner of a mercantile store in the community, and the County was off and running.

By the time of the 1860 Census the community had really changed. On June 12, 1858, Coop's Cove was renamed Dunlap in recognition of Mr. William Dunlap, the County's friend from Knoxville. The community was divided into districts, with Dunlap being located in the fourth civil district. Two post offices were in the County, one in Dunlap and the other in Walnut Valley. The county had a total of 334 household units with 1,918 individuals. The fourth district (Dunlap and surrounding area) had 66 family units with 353 individuals that made up the community.

The following story is told in a way to establish further the community of Dunlap. There was probably only one merchant in town, Mr. William Rankin and his wife Minerva. In 1860, they were 55 and 47 years old, respectively. They had been in the community longer than most of the other families. At least they owned more land and were more established. Mr. Tharton, who lived with the Bells and may have been related to Mrs. Bell, is listed as a merchant. Did he have his own business? Did he work for Mr. Rankin? This remains

unknown. Mr. Joseph Lawyers, who lived with Dr. Smith, was a clerk. Did he clerk for Mr. Rankin, Mr. Tharton, or was he a clerk at the county courthouse? This is unknown from the Census data. It is known that Mr. Lawyers witnessed the deed from George Larimore to William Rankin on September 7, 1859, along with Joseph R. Brown, who lived in the same area as George and Mary Larimore. He lived in dwelling #151 and the Larimores lived in dwelling #147. The Mansfields, Hatfields, Chambers, and Sheltons lived between. The Mansfields were the millers and blacksmiths. The Hatfields were also blacksmiths. All were probably farmers.

It is in this setting that we place the following story as it was told by T.B. Larimore. The story of the “ten-acre field”.

~~~~~  
*“I am in the ‘ten-acre field’ today, and my mind is scanning pages and pictures of the past.*

*The ‘ten-acre field’ is on ‘the ridge’, about one mile nearly due south from Dunlap, the capital of Sequatchie County, Tennessee. The beautiful Sequatchie flows along the eastern foot of ‘the ridge’.*

*‘The ridge’ would be a mountain in Kansas or Texas but in East Tennessee, shadowed by rock-ribbed chains of towering mountains that bound Sequatchie Valley on the east and on the west, it is only a baby asleep on the bosom of the beautiful valley, and we simply call it ‘the ridge’.*

*The mountains, the valley, the river and the ridge are parallel – approximately so, at least. The river, about seventy to one hundred miles long, runs from north to south.*

*The field and I are about the same age, and both of us are older than we were when we were chums three and thirty years ago. like a boy today, however, and the field is not worn out. The soil on the surface of the field is thinner than it was long ago, and I am somewhat thinner on top, too.*

*When I was in the middle of my teens, and the field was comparatively ‘new’, two negroes and I cultivated the ‘ten-acre field’ and other fields. The doctor inherited “Samps” and Tamar, and brought them from Currituck County, NC, when he came to Tennessee. He hired me for six months, including crop time, for thirty-six dollars, which was more than the market price of boys of my age and size and strength in ‘the valley’ then. The reason the doctor rendered for voluntarily paying me such an exorbitant price was that he expected me to somewhat oversee and manage matters in my sphere, while he practiced medicine.*

*The natural tendency of the doctor’s kindness and confidence and of my financial boom, all coming upon me suddenly and at the same time, was to make me very vain and very grateful, of course, and I resolved then and there that the doctor should never be disappointed in me.*

*That spring was very favorable for ‘pitching crops’, and we succeeded splendidly.*

*When the time for ‘laying off’ the ‘ten-acre field’ came, the doctor sent me alone to do that. I was to go alone and ‘lay it off’ one way. Then, as I ‘laid it off’ the other way, Tamar was to ‘drop’ the corn and “Samps” was to ‘cover’ it. The field was a lonely spot in the woods.*

*There was not a house in it or in sight of it then, nor was there another field near. I was afraid of wild cats, witches, and things; but a boy who was valued at six dollar a month could not afford to be otherwise than brave, so I went without a murmur. I waited at 'the gap' till day dawned and brightened sufficiently for me to see to 'run a row.' Then, that day's work began. A big battle was to be. My heart was set on getting ready to begin planting that field at the dawning of the next day. My honor and reputation were at stake. I resolved to do my very best, and I did.*

*The moon, almost full, was hanging low over the brow of the mountain to the east, and I could see my shadow distinctly, when I finished my task. I never entertained the thought of quitting till my task was done. Nothing short of the scream of a panther or the cry of a wild cat could have driven me from that field till the victory was complete. Years have come and gone since then, and many battles I have fought; but I am not sure I have ever been more elated over any victory I have won than over that. My task was done, the victory won, and I was happy.*

*The doctor was delighted. He said, 'Make a hurry, 'Samps'---make a hurry! Theophilus has laid off the ten-acre field today. I thought it would take him two days, but he has done it in one. Make a hurry, now-- make a hurry! Get the seed corn ready. That field must be planted tomorrow. Make a hurry--make a hurry!'*

*How real sometimes seem things trivial and tame that transpired almost a lifetime ago! I can almost see 'Samps' now, and hear the doctor's voice as he says, "Make a hurry, 'Samps'---make a hurry!" That was the way he talked to 'Samps', but he never did tell me to make a hurry. He encouraged me, praised me, and paid me---paid me all he promised---and gave me twenty-five cents.*

*I worked for the doctor for six months, lost only one-half day—one afternoon—and worked till midnight of that day. I thought if George Washington was the first man, Dr. Bell was the second.*

*The day his firstborn was born and buried, and his right arm was broken, was a dark and dreadful day to me.*

*The doctor died long ago, leaving a worthy wife and intelligent children to fight the battle of life without him. I pray that they may all prosper and always be happy—in time and in eternity. I believe 'Samps' and Tamar' went away wid de Yankees endu'in' de wah.'"*

In the last part of the recollection, Larimore says, "I thought if George Washington was the first man, Dr. Bell was the second." He is just saying that this man had encouraged when few had done so, not only financially but as a 'pat on the back'.

The time of these comments was probably in the spring of 1858 or near that time. He was about 15-16 years old, Dr. Bell was 20-21. Dr. Bell's wife was 16-17. In 1860, the Bells had a daughter in May named Lella. The family lived on one side of Nancy Larimore and her family. Nancy was about 44. On the other side was Dr. Smith and his family, being 20-21 and 16-17 years of age, respectively. The Tates had not moved next door to the Smiths at this point. The Bells must have had a child that died; then other children were born before Dr. Bell died.

The 1870 Census shows no mention of the Bell family. So, the conclusion can be made that Mrs. Bell probably left the valley after the death of her husband or remarried. T.B. Larimore was remembering these comments in the 1890s, a full 20 years after these events.

He also mentioned that 'Samps' and Tamar had left the valley during the war. They probably went north to escape the war and to enjoy their freedom.

The young Sarah Bell most likely went back to her people in Currituck County, North Carolina, the most north-east county in North Carolina, located on the Atlantic Ocean.

One story that research reveals, which was not a part of Larimore's knowledge, is the story of the Hatfield baby. In looking at the Census data in the third district, outside Dunlap, Jonathan and Jane Hatfield are listed the proud parents of a baby they named 'Dr. Bell Hatfield'. Was another miracle like Abraham and Sarah wrought? Jonathan was 70 and Jane 67. They had a house full of children with three other children with names other than Hatfield. So, Jonathan and Jane must have been helping other members of the clan or someone in the community. Little 'Dr. Bell Hatfield' must have been a real joy to everyone he met. If he was truly their son, Johnathan and Jane must have considered it a miracle of Dr. Bell's abilities that the young man was born.

All that has been accomplished with this dialog is the fact that there needs to be a change in the way to study T.B. Larimore's background. He grew up in difficult circumstances, and he did have to work hard during his formative years. However, he grew up in a community of people that worked hard each day to make life. When the cost of Larimore's education is put together in the next chapter, a valid question is 'who paid the bill?' Was it Dr. Bell? Was it his father's family in Jefferson County?

It is logical (to me) that Larimore would not have written the statement about George Washington and Dr. Bell unless there was more than an employer/employee relationship or even a next-door-neighbor relationship. Nancy had a pauper's income. Indications are that George and Mary did not have wealth either. There were no banks. Mr. Rankin was probably the closest thing to a banker that the community had. Therefore, who paid for the two years at Mossy Creek? When Larimore said he believed in the "providence of God", this is what he was saying...that when things needed to happen in his life, they happened.

One person needs to be revisited, Nancy Larimore. All literature indicates that Nancy was a very strong person. Her educational background is unknown but research indicates the following:

- Nancy was a relatively small individual.
- She had a very good education for a person living in her time.
- After she was married, she would have been considered in our times a "battered wife."
- She protected her children.
- Larimore protected his mother all of her life.
- She lived with Mollie during the last 20 years of her life.
- She was buried in the Clear Creek Cemetary in McNairy County, Tennessee.



*The Last Home of T.B. Larimore in  
East Tennessee Before His Move to Kentucky*



*Nancy Larimore*  
1813-1902

## CHAPTER III

# Two School Years Mossy Creek Baptist Seminary

1858-1860

**I**n the fall of 1858, T.B. Larimore left the Sequatchie Valley and returned to Jefferson County. He had had some schoolwork because we know that he and Daniel Deakens did a great deal of 'ciphering.' He certainly knew how to read and do basic mathematics. He had some formal schoolwork on Cagle Mountain or in Coop's Cove, or both. In addition, he had studied at home under Nancy. The amount of education he had in 1858 is unknown. But more importantly, he exhibited to himself and others that he had the discipline to go to school and be a success. It was in August 1858, when he had just turned 16 in July, that he began his walk to Jefferson County. He later recalled the walk and the first day when he walked 40 miles. For the next 21 months, he would have a concentrated daily schedule of positive influence for the first time in his life. When we see the history of Mossy Creek, and the influence of Dr. Goforth, it is extremely important to recognize his well-being over these 21 months, not only for the formal education, but for the discipline of the school life.

## The History of Mossy Creek

The Carson-Newman Baptist is a publication from the archives of the school. They along with other publications which show the history of Baptist churches, preachers, and schools have given a good history of the Mossy Creek Baptist Seminary. The following is a brief history of the people and the institution where Larimore was a part of for his first formal education.



Mossy Creek College had its beginnings in the teachings of Robert Reedy Bryan (1822–1878). He taught in public schools, private schools, and anywhere he could find students in Jefferson County, Tennessee and especially at the Mossy Creek meetinghouse. For five years he taught in the old ‘Zinc Works’ building and any other vacant building that was available. He had a real passion for teaching children all the days of his life.

Finally, Mossy Creek Seminary was chartered in 1851 with William Rogers as its first president and Robert Reedy Bryan as professor. The elders of the Mossy Creek congregation, along with the financial stability of Isaac, J.N., William C. Rogers, and a second cousin, Samuel Newman, made up the basis for the growth of the school. Because of the untimely death of William Rogers, the first two years were difficult. There was a good foundation to forge ahead, with R.R. Bryan as president and professor. In 1853, Dr. Samuel Anderson became the third president. He brought a much more formal and deeper background. He had graduated from Tusculum College in Greenville, Tennessee with a B.A. and M.A. in mathematics, had taught at Tusculum for four years, and then came to Mossy Creek.

Prior to the presidency of Dr. Anderson, students at Mossy Creek were housed in their own homes or in the homes of the community. In the fall of 1855, two new dormitories were ready to be occupied by 84 young men. Dr. Rogers was a good planner and generator of funds. W.C. Newman was responsible for the construction, and the dorms cost \$10,840 dollars. Also in the year of 1855, the name of Mossy Creek was changed from Mossy Creek Baptist Seminary to Mossy Creek Baptist College.

The college continued to grow, and a fourth president was Rev. Matthew Hillsman. During his tenure, the school developed into a college with 19 members on the board of trustees and four members on the faculty. The handbook for the 1858–59 school year shows the following:

#### **Board of Trustees**

- |                                |                     |
|--------------------------------|---------------------|
| • Rev. E. Moore, President     | • Dr. W.M.P. Helm   |
| • Rev. M. Hillsman             | • W. Phillips, Esq. |
| • Dr. J. Carson                | • Rev. W. Billieu   |
| • C.M. Witt, Esq.              | • Rev. J.S. Coram   |
| • J.H. Carson, Treasurer       | • E. Allen, Esq.    |
| • Rev. J. Manning              | • J.M. Dyer, Esq.   |
| • J. Mullendore, Esq.          | • Rev. T.J. Lane    |
| • W.C. Newman, Esq.            | • Dr. R. Birdwell   |
| • Rev. N.B. Goforth, Secretary | • W.C. Carson, Esq. |
| • Rev. G.G. Taylor             |                     |

#### **Faculty**

Rev. Mat. Hillsman, President and Professor of Intellectual and Moral Philosophy

R.H. Keeling, A.M., Professor of Mathematics and Modern Languages

N.B. Goforth, A.M., Professor of Ancient Languages

R.R. Bryan, Professor of Natural Philosophy, Chemistry, etc.

The student body of the school year 1858–59 showed a total of 149 students: 5 seniors, 56 in collegiate work, 13 irregular students, and 75 in preparatory work. The courses of study were listed as follows:

### **Preparatory Department**

Modern Geography, Elements of History, Natural Philosophy, Chemistry and Astronomy, Watts on the Mind, English Grammar, Arithmetic, Elementary Algebra, Caesar's Commentaries, Greek Reader.

### **Freshman Year**

Algebra, Plane Geometry, English Analysis, Ovid, Virgil, Isocrates, Xenophon's Cyropedia and Anabasis, Composition and Declamation.

### **Sophomore Year**

Higher Algebra, Spherical Geometry, Trigonometry and Surveying, Cicero's Orations, Horace – Odes and Satires, Demosthenes de Corona, Thucydides, Longinus, Outlines of Universal History, Composition, Declamation

### **Junior Year**

Practical Mathematics, Engineering (optional), Horace – Aers, Poetica, Tacitus, Homer's Iliad, Plato, Aristotle, Natural Philosophy, Chemistry and Astronomy (college edition), Composition and Declamation.

### **Senior Year**

English Grammar, Geology, Mineralogy, Mental and Moral Philosophy, Logic, Upham on the Will, Butler's Analogy, Rhetoric, Evidences of Christianity, Natural Theology

The school year was divided into Fall and Spring terms, each lasting 20 weeks and occurring back-to-back. The school year began in the first week of September and ended in the first week of June with 12 weeks of vacation during the summer.

The costs for boarding and tuition were as follows. For a bare room, fitted with bed, table, and fire irons and including food was \$1.35 per week. Tuition was based on the class: Preparatory – \$10, Freshman class – \$12, Sophomore class – \$14, Junior class – \$16, and Senior class – \$18. Hebrew, French, Spanish, and Engineering classes were an extra \$5 per class. Contingent fee – \$1. All tuition fees were for one 20-week session.



# The Carson Newman Baptist



VOL. III • NO. 2

Carson-Newman College Baptist Archives

Spring, 2002

**From Rogers to Netherton:  
A Heritage of Baptist Presidents  
The Fifth and Eighth:  
Dr. N.B. Goforth**

*"Dr. Goforth was characterized by mental energy and rugged strength rather than polish; he was a diamond in the rough. He believed in education, in the truest sense of the word – training, discipline – rather than polish or cramming; and, teaching by example, his life bore fruit in that direction."*



**Dr. N.B. Goforth (bottom left)  
President, 1859-62, 1870-82**

J.J. Burnett's quote from *Sketches of Tennessee's Pioneer Baptist Preachers* wonderfully describes the life and work of Napoleon Bonaparte Goforth. One of only two presidents to serve two terms, he provided leadership during some of the college's most exciting, expansive and trying days.

Goforth was born May 20, 1828 to Hugh and Mary Goforth in Sevier County, Tennessee. At the age of nineteen while attending services conducted by William Billue and Joseph Manning at Central Campground he became a

Christian. He was baptized by Manning in the Pigeon River.

Three years later Goforth attended Sevierville Academy and then went on to Maryville College where he received his B.A. in 1854. Afterward he received his M.A. and later an honorary doctorate from Mossy Creek Baptist College.

1855 proved to be an eventful year for both the college and Goforth. He became the chair of Mossy Creek Baptist Missionary Seminary's languages department and the school changed its name to Mossy Creek Baptist College. This was done to more accurately reflect the school's original purpose of providing a Baptist liberal arts education.

Physical growth also took place. Up until this point students had been housed in local residences. In 1855 William C. Newman was asked to direct the construction of two buildings - Newman Dormitory number one and two.

On December 24, 1856 Goforth married Rebecca Adaline Pattison of Jefferson City. She was the niece of Isaac, J.N., and William C. Newman and second cousin of Samuel Newman. These four were among the Oak Tree Five whose vision and efforts led to the founding of Mossy Creek Baptist Missionary Seminary in 1851.

In 1859 Goforth succeeded Matthew Hillsman as president and according to Dr. I. N. Carr in his *History of Carson-Newman College* "gave himself diligently to the task of maintaining and developing the college." That same year he was also ordained in Boyd's Creek Church. In 1861 he began pastoring the Mossy Creek Church. Among the other East Tennessee churches he pastored were Riceville, Mouse Creek, Eastanallee, Hiwassee, Mount Harmony, Double Springs, and New Hopewell.

1861 brought the start of the War Between the States and the secession of Tennessee. After commencement in the spring of 1862 Mossy Creek



# The Carson Newman Baptist

VOL. II • NO. 2

Carson-Newman College Baptist Archives

Spring, 2001

## From Rogers to Netherton: A Heritage of Baptist Presidents The Third: Dr. Samuel Anderson

In the summer of 1853, Dr. Samuel Anderson succeeded R.R. Bryan to become the third president of Mossy Creek Missionary Baptist Seminary. Though his presidential tenure only lasted until 1857, Anderson served during a pivotal time in the college's history.

Anderson was born October 15, 1824 and like Bryan, was also a native of Jefferson County. He attended Tusculum College where he received his B.A. and M.A. After graduating in 1847 he taught mathematics for four years at Tusculum. During this time he must have completed his medical training, having become a qualified physician.

Also in 1847 Anderson married Julia M. Doak. She was the daughter of Samuel W. Doak, then president of Tusculum College. They would go on to have nine children: Mary Jane, William Coleman, Samuel Doak Newman, Sarah Lourinda, Smith Pleasant, Joseph James, Julia Emma, Alexander Eckel, and Josephine Houston.

In 1853 Anderson and his family left Tusculum to take over the presidential duties as well as continue teaching at the fledgling Mossy Creek Missionary Baptist Seminary. Up until this time, the school had relied on local residents to house its students. This policy was changed and

plans were made to construct two dormitories and implement a boarding program.

In August of 1855 the new dormitories were ready to house 84 young men. W.C. Newman had been responsible for their construction. Through the donations of money (much of which came from Mr. Newman) and labor from local citizens committed to the education movement, the buildings were constructed at a cost of \$10,840.00. One of these buildings had a kitchen and dining room attached.

In the spring of 1855, one of the most significant events in the college's history took place. The first degrees were given to W.T. Russell and Richard Scruggs. Russell went on to the ministry while Scruggs became a physician.

Later that year in December, a development took place that reflected the school's academic progression. The name of the institution was changed to Mossy Creek Baptist College. This was done to more accurately reflect the expanding curriculum and breadth of liberal arts courses being offered.



Newman Dormitory, No. 1

In 1859, Dr. N.B. Goforth succeeded Mr. Hillsman as president of the college. Larimore enrolled for the 1859–60 school year and completed the second year in the 1860–61 school year.

It is unknown which program he studied. The student body included 149 students and the administration had to have some way of classifying the students as they entered. Larimore had studied in school in Sequatchie County and had studied with his mother's help at home.

This brings in the relationship with Dr. Bell. It makes common sense that Dr. Bell and Dr. Smith had books, all kinds of books. Did they loan books to and help their neighbor? Probably so.

Of the 149 students in the school, five were seniors, 56 were classified to do the college work, 13 were irregular and 75 were in preparatory classes. It is not known for sure, but Larimore probably would not have been doing senior work; therefore, he may have been an irregular student.

Whatever the classification, whatever the work involved, he learned student discipline and gained knowledge. At the end of the second school year, he received a diploma.

Take note of the major factors in the second-year program. He was very fortunate to have Dr. Goforth. The following is a part of the two paragraphs in a sketch written by J.J. Burnett in 1919 in *“Sketches of Tennessee's Pioneer Baptist Preachers”*, Nashville, Tennessee, Press or Marshall and Bruce Company.

*“Dr. Goforth at Mossy Creek was not only a successful teacher but a great moral force in the school. As a disciplinarian he had few equals. The observance of a few reasonable rules and a moral purpose to study and to get an education was emphasized as the law of the school and the ‘whole duty’ of the student. If the moral purpose was found wanting, the student was not wanted in the school and was sent home or elsewhere till he came to a better mind.*

*Dr. Goforth was characterized by mental energy and rugged strength, rather than polish, he was a diamond in the rough. He believed in education, in the truest sense of the word – training, discipline rather than a policy of cramming, and teaching by example, his life bore fruit in that direction. He was naturally a good metaphysician and logician, and taught metaphysics and logic, as well as theology, but he was most at home in the dead languages.”*

After T.B. Larimore finished two years ending in the middle of the year 1861, Dr. Goforth completed one more year at Mossy Creek before he entered the war. The school was closed until the end of the war. On May 14, 1862, Dr. Goforth was appointed as Chaplain of his regiment.

On April 28, 1865, Goforth was surrendered at Asheville, North Carolina. After the war he went to support Riceville Academy and in 1870 he returned to Mossy Creek and served 12 more years before he retired. Dr. Goforth was born in 1828 and died in 1907. T.B. Larimore was fortunate to have him as a teacher.

## CHAPTER IV

# Two Years of Civil War

*August 28, 1860 – August 17, 1862*

After the quiet of campus life at Mossy Creek, the daily discipline developed for the mental challenges by Dr. Goforth, and the excitement in the air of the coming war, T.B. Larimore's life was ready for a lot of change. In the summer of 1860, Larimore turned 17 years of age. His experiences in life had shifted from a life of undisciplined poverty to a planned life with discipline. Now, the war years would magnify this discipline into a daily routine that developed an extremely disciplined life.

For 24 months, the one person that would guide his life was Captain C.C. Spiller. The next few pages show how Captain C.C. Spiller made a different person out of Larimore. He will become a self-reliant individual. He will take orders, and he will be relied on to do his best. These two things can be seen in the development of C.C. Spiller and T.B. Larimore. Larimore would experience the blood, sweat, and tears for fast-moving events.

## Captain C.C. Spiller

C.C. Spiller had little formal education. His career as a riverboat captain before the war developed a background of giving orders to his crew and making decisions based on experience and changing conditions. He was educated by the life he had lived.

His home was located south of Bridgeport, Alabama. He and his wife were 40 years old when they moved from Bridgeport to Chattanooga, Tennessee to enter the war effort. He went into the surrounding area of Chattanooga recruiting for a company of men. When C.C. Spiller went into the Sequatchie Valley, he found T.B. Larimore. He had joined another



group but had not been mustered into service. He had not been recruited into any unit. C.C. Spiller must have seen a background in T.B. Larimore that he thought he could use.

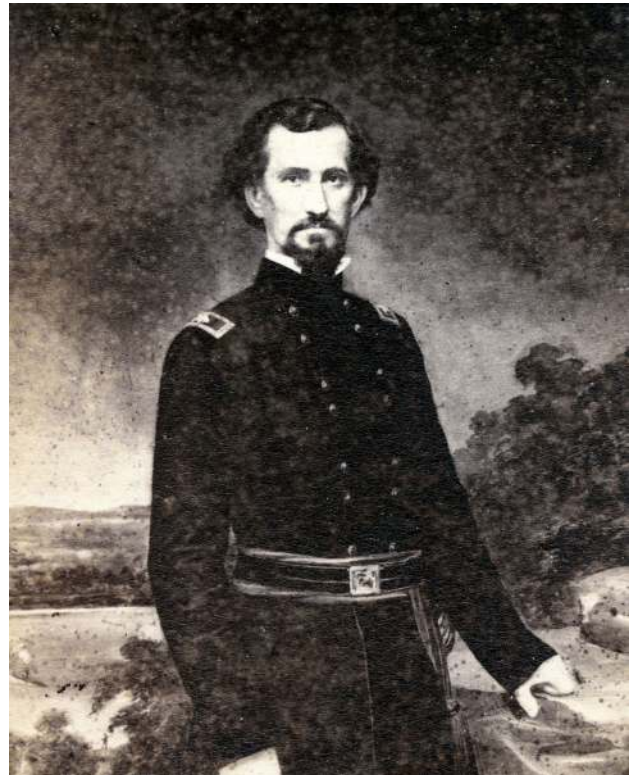
On August 29, 1860, T.B. Larimore was mustered into Company B, 5th Battalion Tennessee Calvary under Lieutenant Colonel George R. McClellan. The company of 100 men had diverse backgrounds, but C.C. Spiller knew T.B. Larimore's background could be very useful. From the beginning, C.C. Spiller used the character of Larimore as well as his education. On September 15, 1861, Brigade General Felix K. Zollicoffer listed: McClellan's 5th Calvary with 540 effectives, 570 present, and 600 present + absent.

Of McClellan's "6" companies (600 men), C.C. Spiller's Company B and David McClellan's Company F (organized in Knoxville) tended to be grouped together, especially when the troops were divided after the Battle of Fishing Creek (Mill Springs).

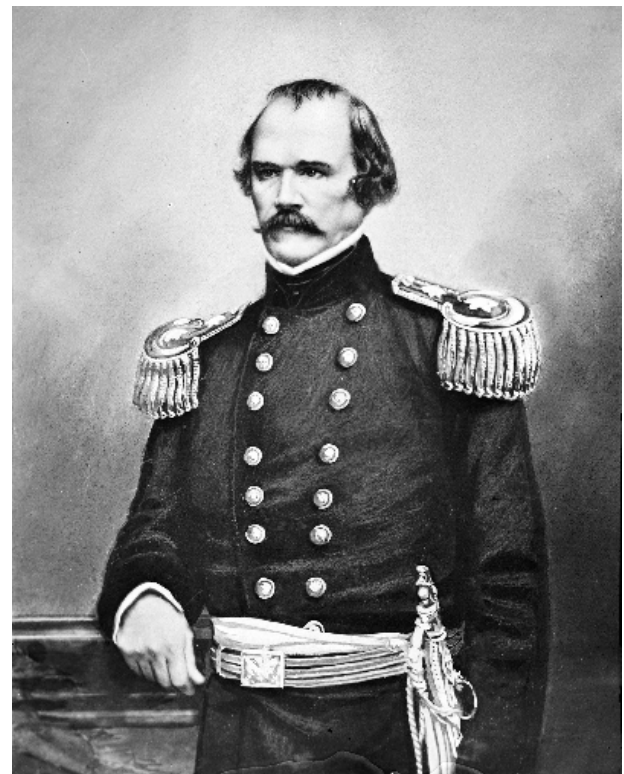
T.B. Larimore's chain of command was as follows: Private Larimore, under C.C. Spiller's Company, a part of McClellan's 5th Calvary, a part of Brigade General Felix Zollicoffer forces developing the Southern line of defense across the Tennessee-Kentucky border from the Mississippi River to the Smokey Mountains. This line established from Somerset, Kentucky to Columbus, Kentucky was under the command of General Albert Sydney Johnson with headquarters in Nashville, Tennessee.

Because of rail and water transportation, this allowed good movement of supplies and manpower. Events changed with the loss of the Southern forces at Mill Springs on the Cumberland River and the two losses at Fort Donelson and Fort Henry. The Southern forces left Nashville at the command center and moved to Murfreesboro and on to Corinth. This took place in February 1861.

After training in late 1860, C.C. Spiller's unit left Knoxville and was deployed to the Northern bank of the Cumberland River at Mill Springs. General Zollicoffer gave C.C. Spiller orders to go to Nashville, pick up



*Felix Kirk Zollicoffer, General at Mill Springs*



*Albert Sidney Johnson, General at Shiloh*

a boat, bring supplies to Kentucky, and all before December 31, 1860. C.C. Spiller's crew plus T.B. Larimore and probably others left the camp at Mill Springs, went downriver to Nashville, secured the Noble Ellis, a packet steamer, loaded these supplies, and returned to Mill Springs. Larimore was a part of the crew, and this was his first time to be part of a river crew. They returned to Mill Springs in early January 1861. General George B. Crittenden had received intelligence that the Northern forces under Brigadier General George Thomas were headed to Logan's Crossroads, five miles north of Mill Springs.

## Battle of Fishing Creek

On January 19th, the Southern forces attacked at dawn. They left the camp at Mill Springs and attacked. McClellan's 5th cavalry was left in camp as backup to the infantry. Initially, the Southern forces attack pushed the Northern troops back. General Zollicoffer was killed, and the second attack was rebuffed by the Union troops.

After the battle was lost and General Zollicoffer was killed, the command directed C.C. Spiller's company to take the Noble Ellis and transport the men, weapons, and supplies to the southern bank of the Cumberland. This involved the use of two barges and took hours of time. After midnight the transfer was completed. The last portion of time was under fire by the Northern cannons.

In the afternoon of the 19th, C.C. Spiller asked Larimore to be a part of the detail to bring Zollicoffer's body off the field. Because of his background at Mossy Creek, T.B. Larimore was chosen because of the sobriety of the occasion. Did they get the body? No one actually knows.

The removal of General Zollicoffer's body is described briefly by F.D. Srygley. "He went with General Buckner under a flag of truce for the body of General Zollicoffer after the Battle of Fishing Creek (Mill Springs). While on this duty, the command retreated to Murfreesboro, Tennessee, where he again joined it." This comment by F.D. Srygley does not explain the time and succession of events.

The following article written by Dan Master's *Civil War Chronicles* is probably closer to the truth. It is titled "The Odyssey of Zollicoffer's Body." The article indicates that the Northern forces took the body of Zollicoffer and the body of Lieutenant B. Peyton to Louisville, Kentucky. There the bodies were embalmed and later returned to the Southern forces on January 31st.

The article indicated that General Richard W. Johnson received the bodies at Horse Cave, Kentucky. The following group was the escort of the body of General Zollicoffer to Nashville: Colonel C.H. Williams of the 20th Tennessee, Lieutenant Colonel J.F. Neill commanding the 23rd Tennessee, and Major D.G. White of General Hardee's staff. All had charge of the escort which was one company of the 20th Tennessee. General Zollicoffer was buried February 3, 1862 in the Nashville City Cemetery.

This article may be closer to what really happened. Larimore's comment did not say they got the body. They went after the body. That is all that is actually known.

The statistics of the Battle at Mill Springs are: Northern forces reported 246 casualties including 39 killed in action; Southern forces suffered 533 casualties with 120 killed in action.



Upon the death of General Zollicoffer, Major General George Crittenden divided the troops at Mill Springs. The units were: 15th Mississippi, 19th Tennessee, 20th Tennessee, 17th Tennessee, 28th Tennessee, 25th Tennessee, and 16th Alabama, with the reserves at camp with Colonel Bawner and Colonel McClellan's cavalry units with Rutledge's Battery of Artillery.

All forces were sent east except McClellan's 5th Cavalry (C.C. Spiller's Company B and McClellan's Company F) and Rutledge's artillery. These men were sent to Brigade General Albert Sydney Johnson for reassignment. This occurred before General Johnson had moved from Nashville.

The battles of Fort Donelson and Fort Henry in West Tennessee were two more losses for the Southern forces. General Johnson consolidated all of the remaining forces and moved his command center to Murfreesboro on February 28th. In the consolidation of troops that gathered from the western theater and southern theater and from the three battles on the Tennessee-Kentucky line, a total force in Corinth, Mississippi on March 27, 1862 was 49,000 troops.

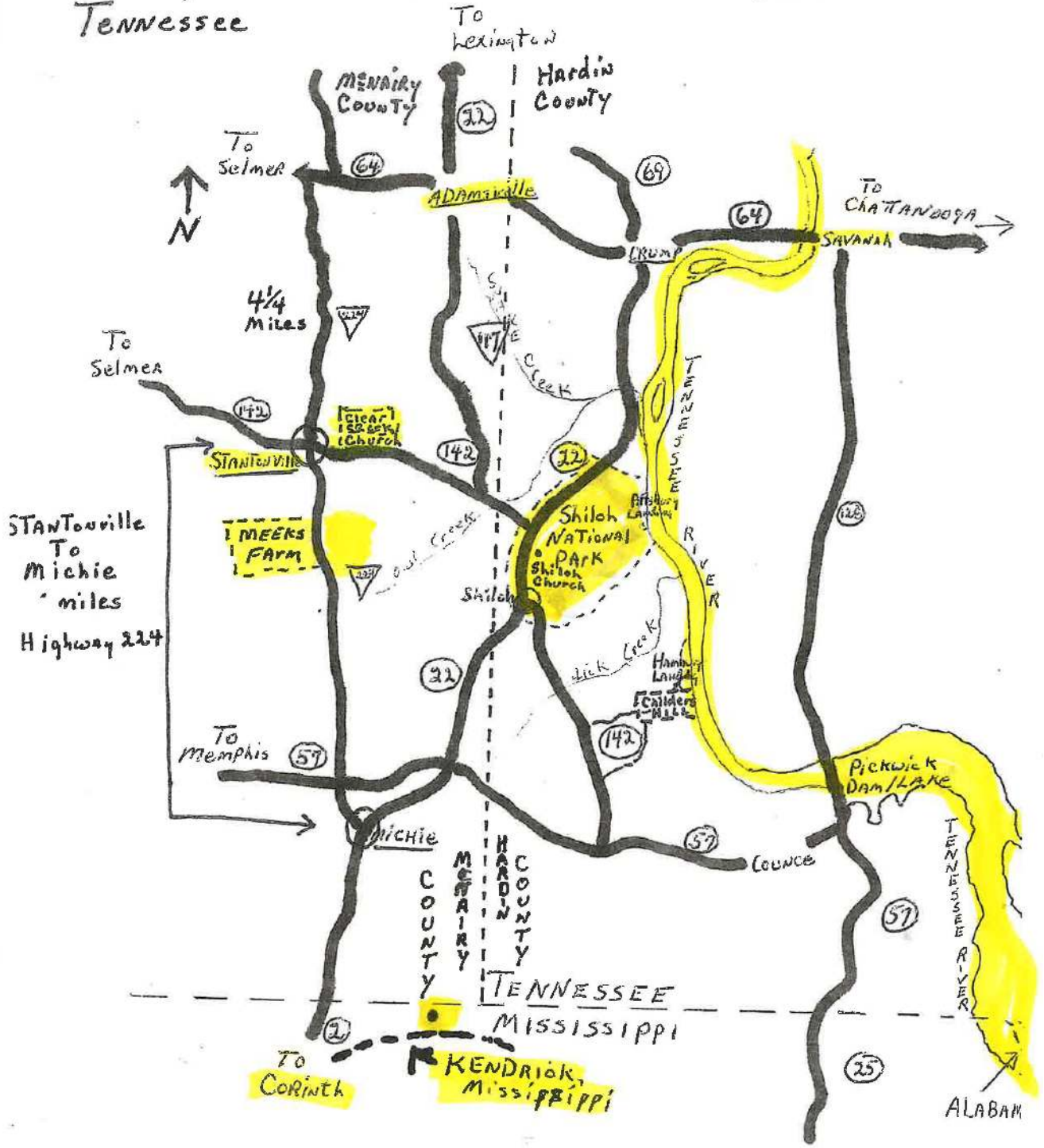
## Battle of Shiloh



*Shiloh Church  
Hardin County, Tennessee*

# MENAIKY-HARDIN COUNTY LINE Tennessee

SCALE: 1" = 2 miles





The best logic indicates C.C. Spiller's Company B and McClellan's Company F were reorganized and were in the calvary units of General Breckenridge's 3rd Brigade. Nathan Bedford Forrest's calvary unit joined the other cavalry units coming from the battles in West Tennessee. Maps of the Southern forces' location of calvary showed C.C. Spiller's unit and N.B. Forrest's unit on the Tennessee River where Lick Creek goes into the Tennessee. In the two days of battle these units were scouting the river for reinforcements. Larimore was the person responsible for writing the scouting report on the first day when gunboats were coming down the river. The report went to General Johnson saying that gunboats were coming down river headed to Pittsburg Landing. General Johnson stated that the report was very professional.

The Southern forces won the first day of battle. During the night, additional manpower came to the field. General Buell's reinforcements were in place at the beginning of the second day. The Southern forces lost the second day and retreated from the field.

At two o'clock in the afternoon on the first day, General Johnson was shot in his leg and bled to death. This was a major turning point in the Battle of Shiloh .

The statistics of the 2-day Battle of Shiloh show that at the end of conflict, these numbers were real:

|                   | <b>Killed</b> | <b>Wounded</b> | <b>Missing</b> | <b>Total</b> |
|-------------------|---------------|----------------|----------------|--------------|
| Army of Tennessee | 1,513         | 6,601          | 2,830          | 10,944       |
| Army of the Ohio  | 241           | 807            | 55             | 2,103        |
| Southern Troops   | 1,728         | 8,012          | 959            | 10,699       |
| Northern Troops   | 1,754         | 8,408          | 2,885          | 13,047       |

Totals for the Battle: 3,428 killed; 16, 420 wounded; 3,844 missing; total casualties for the Battle of Shiloh: 23,746. The battle was also costly in terms of officers killed: Northern Forces lost 55 killed and Southern Forces lost 48 killed, including General Johnson.

## Battle at Fallen Timbers

T.B. Larimore's unit was not involved in the 2-day battles. However, as the manpower left the field, another battle at Fallen Timbers took place. On April 8, 1861, as the Southern troops left the field with the wounded, the Northern troops attacked the 'slow moving' army as they traveled toward Corinth, Mississippi. The calvary units were the last to leave the field, and they were the ones who fought the Northern forces under General William T. Sherman. The Southern forces were led by Nathan Bedford Forrest who was wounded and sent to Memphis for recovery. This was a brief skirmish and was of no great importance.

In preparation for the Battle at Shiloh, General Johnson had made arrangements for 140 boxcars to handle men, supplies, and wounded after the battle. Corinth became the hub for all activities after the battle. The Tennessee River to the east of Corinth became the dividing line for the next series of battles .

After Shiloh and the death of General Johnson, another reorganization took place. Records indicate that on June 30th troops under Major General E. Kirby Smith included a Tennessee Calvary Battalion under Lieutenant Colonel C.C. Spiller. They were listed as 'unattached.' From April after the Battle of Shiloh, C.C. Spiller's unit was scouting the movements of Northern troops on the north side of the Tennessee River; this was along the Mississippi and Alabama borders.

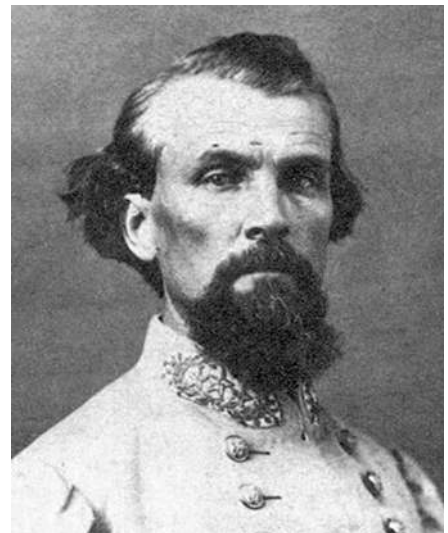
On July 6, 1862, General Smith ordered Colonel J.J. Morrison (at Kingston) to go to McMinnville and wait for Colonel N.B. Forrest's unit coming from Chattanooga headed to Murfreesboro. In the diary of Colonel Forrest, he indicated that a portion of First Georgia Calvary, two companies of C.C. Spiller's Tennessee Battalion and the companies of Kentuckians were added giving Colonel Forrest a total of 1,400 men. On the 12th, he headed for Murfreesboro. Colonel Forrest had 50 miles to go.

## First Battle of Murfreesboro

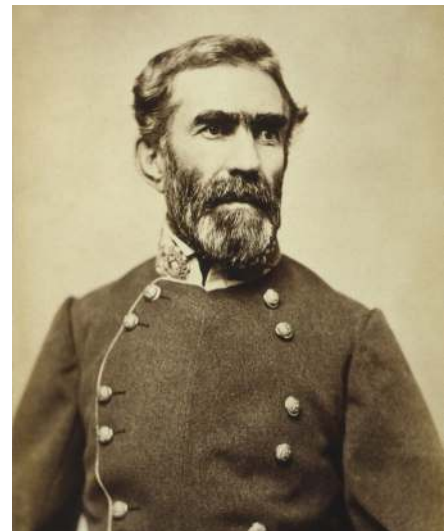
On July 13, 1862, Colonel Forrest began the Battle of Murfreesboro at 4:30 in the morning. C.C. Spiller's unit was on the Nashville Pike on the north side of Murfreesboro. Colonel Forrest won the 1-day battle. C.C. Spiller's unit had one major casualty. Captain Allen Baird Green, Company B, 5th Tennessee Calvary was killed. Captain Green had been made captain when Captain C.C. Spiller was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel after Shiloh. Green was reported to have died at home on August 5, 1862; however, other reports indicated he died on the field on July 13, 1862.

The cost of the Battle at Murfreesboro was significant. In the one-day battle, the Northern forces lost 890 men out of 900 soldiers. The Southern forces lost 150 men out of their 1,400 soldiers.

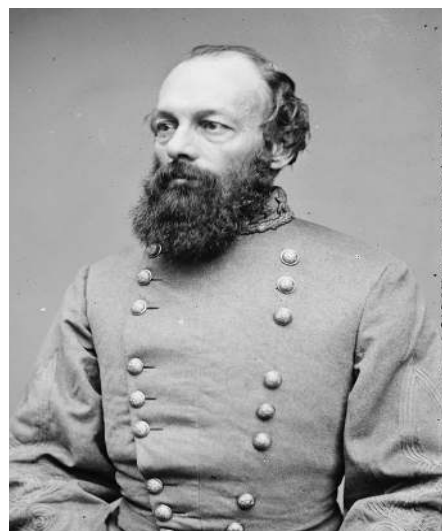
Special Note: C.C. Spiller and T.B. Larimore learned a great deal in the first year of war. C.C. Spiller became a major leader of men rather than a riverboat captain. He and Larimore had learned to be expert riders. Since the Battle of Fishing Creek (Mill Springs), the calvary had ridden hundreds of miles. Larimore, now 19 years old, had seen a tremendous amount of death and destruction. He had learned much about decision-making from his experiences. Scouting the Tennessee River gave him experience and self-reliance.



*General Nathan Bedford Forrest*



*General Braxton Bragg*



*General Edmund Kirby Smith*

On August 30th, the 18th Ohio infantry reported it was attacked at Short Mountain Crossroads by General Forrest's calvary, consisting of one regiment of Texas Rangers, one battalion Alabama calvary under Captain Bacon, one battalion Tennessee Calvary under Major Smith, and one Kentucky calvary battalion.

This report was the last record found of C.C. Spiller's Battalion. His company was next reported in Murray's 4th Tennessee Calvary Regiment, which was formed in August 1862 with C.C. Spiller as Lieutenant Colonel and Baxter Smith as Major.

Another Special Note: In the history of the Civil War, one of the most successful leaders of the Southern forces was General Braxton Bragg. His education included graduating from West Point before the war. This is a brief history including the time after the Battle of Shiloh:

1. Bragg led 10,000 at Shiloh, second in command to General A.S. Johnson. After Johnson was killed, Bragg was made second in command to General Beauregard.
2. After Shiloh, Bragg commanded troops in special missions into Kentucky and Tennessee.
3. After the major battles at Perryville and Stones River (second Battle of Murfreesboro) in 1862, General Bragg was made head of all forces in the western theater.
4. He established his command in Chattanooga and began to consolidate troops to do battle with General Rosecravens. They had been the leaders fighting at Stones River and fought to a virtual tie.
5. Bragg began 1863 gathering troops for the Battle at Chickamauga, Georgia on the Tennessee line.

\*Remember that T.B. Larimore was captured in September 1863.

## Battle of Stone's River

Returning to the history of C.C. Spiller and T.B. Larimore, in late 1862, the 3-day battle took place at Stones River or the second Battle of Murfreesboro (December 31, 1862 – January 2, 1863). After these three days of battle, the generals withdrew from the field. Critics of the battle say that General Rosecravens probably won the battle because he was fighting from the strongest position when the battle ended. The number of casualties were comparable to Shiloh. Northern forces lost 12,906 men and Southern forces lost 11,739 men with a total of 24, 645 casualties. General Rosecravens lost 31.17% of his forces. General Bragg lost 33.54% of his forces.

On January 23, 1863, General Bragg underwent another reorganization. The best records indicate that C.C. Spiller's unit that was part of Murray's 4th Tennessee calvary regiment was absorbed into the 8th Tennessee on March 1, 1863 led by General 'Fighting Joe' Wheeler's Calvary Corp Army of Tennessee. The history of Fighting Joe's unit included participating in more than 90 skirmishes and battles during its history.

From the data, the following took place. C.C. Spiller and T.B. Larimore were at the Battle of Stones River. They may have been at: Woodbury on March 1st and March 6th, Vought's Hill near Milton on March 21st, Woodbury on March 27th, Liberty on May 12-16th, and Smithville on June 4th and 5th. Later when Larimore was captured, his unit was in Graysville,

Georgia, one mile south of Chattanooga. He was stationed there from August 16, 1863 until September 22, 1863 prior to the Battle of Chickamauga.

Larimore ended his military career on August 22, 1863 when he was captured while on a scouting assignment in the Sequatchie Valley.

When a person reads the two articles written on the following pages, they do not tell the story of T.B. Larimore, Private, Confederate Army.

What did Larimore learn in these two fast-moving years? He learned the discipline of military life; he certainly learned how to ride a horse; he learned a good lesson of taking care of each day of life and the dangers within each day; and the list goes on. So, it is with all humans but not in the degree of sobriety that T.B. Larimore had.



These articles from the "Confederate Veteran" give a small summary of T.B. Larimore's thoughts about C.C. Spiller and his part in the war.

CAPTAIN SPILLER. → LT. Col. C.C. Spiller.

BY T. B. LARIMORE, NASHVILLE, TENN.

Capt. C. C. Spiller was my captain when I wore the Confederate gray in the sanguinary sixties. He was a man of deeds, not of words; but I remember some of the things I heard him say sixty years ago. He took me to Confederate headquarters at Chattanooga, in 1863 I think it was, and said: "This boy has been, to my certain knowledge, where a crow could not have escaped."

At the beginning of the war he was captain of a steamboat, his home being six miles below Bridgeport, Ala., near the right bank of the Tennessee River.

Commissioned by the Confederacy to raise a company of cavalry, he sent officers and a competent horse trader into Sequatchie Valley to enlist men to recruit his company and to buy horses to mount his men, the nucleus of his company consisting of officers and men subject to his command as river or steamboat captain.

That was early in sixty-one, but even then the spirit of war filled the valley as waters fill the sea. An infantry company had been formed in Dunlap, the county seat of Sequatchie County, and I was its hopeful, happy color bearer. That company had not been mustered into service, however; and, fearing the war would be over before I got there, I hastened away to Chattanooga and joined Captain Spiller's company.

As one of Spiller's scouts I made my military record—a record of which I have never been disposed to boast or be ashamed. This gave me a rare opportunity to know the man of whom I write. It is not meet that I should laud him overmuch; but, suffice it to say, he was no ordinary man.

He was brave, but cautious and prudent, and always took the best possible care of his men. It was not possible, however, for him to keep them constantly out of danger, as every sensible soldier knows; but when it was necessary for him to send one or more of his men into a perilous place from which escape seemed almost impossible, he did it with fatherly reluctance and regret.

I remember well a time when the salvation and safety of his command depended on his knowing whether the enemy occupied a certain place which, though little more than a mile distant, could not be seen from where we were. The desired, the essential information could not be obtained except by his drawing the enemy's fire or at least endeavoring to do so. That made it necessary for him to send one or more of his soldiers into such peril that to select one for that service seemed like sentencing him to be shot. He was unwilling to do that; hence he called for volunteers to thus run the risk of giving their lives to save the rest. Two boys volunteered to go. They went. They drew the fire of the enemy. Minie balls filled the air around them with music such as only soldiers can understand.

Having fulfilled their mission, they beat a hasty retreat, rejoined their command, all were saved and were safe for the time; and our brave captain was perfectly satisfied. Bill Whittle was one of those two boys, and the other would be glad to hear from him and delighted to meet him again. He would likewise be delighted to meet or hear from any other member or members of Captain Spiller's Confederate company.

I visited Captain Spiller's old home and his grave near by a few weeks ago. He and his wife lived and died childless, and their graves, side by side, are still unmarked—not even a stone, a slab, or a board to tell whose dust is sleeping there. So shall it be, it may be, with the dust of you and of me. "O, why should the spirit of mortal be proud?"

It is doubtful whether any man in the Confederate army did more for the Confederate cause during the first year of the war than Captain Spiller.

When Zollicoffer was killed and his army defeated at Fishing Creek, Logan's Crossroads, Ky., January 19, 1862, Captain Spiller had the steamer, the Noble Ellis, at the proper place to save the wreck by transporting men and munitions across the Cumberland from Beech Grove, Zollicoffer's last camp, to Mill Springs, on the left bank of the river, where our retreat ended and our march to Shiloh began. Thus he saved all that was saved of Zollicoffer's army. Let us never forget that.

Our Captain detailed Bill Whittle and me to go as members of General Carroll's escort, under a flag of truce, after the body of our fallen chieftain, and Bill carried the flag—a flag that was finally destroyed in a disastrous fire.

Captain Spiller's company picketed the right flank of Gen. Albert Sydney Johnston's army at and previous to the battle of Shiloh and furnished him with his first information of the approach of Federal gunboats at Pittsburg Landing preparatory to that terrible Sunday slaughter. I know that, for I wrote the dispatch and remember well how those two gunboats and three transports looked as they silently slipped up the river.

I went with Captain Spiller into the war, was with him in the war, and with him as friend with friend after his return from the war. I knew him as citizen, as soldier, as friend; and I know neither his name nor his record should be consigned to oblivion.



## Confederate Veteran.

Dec. 1921

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### SERMON FROM A VETERAN TO COMRADES.

In a sermon delivered by T. B. Larimore at the Tennessee Confederate Soldiers' Home, quoting his text from 2 Timothy ii. 3-5, he said:

"Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier. And if a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully." Whether right or wrong, it has been considered from time immemorial an honor to be a good soldier. The post of honor has been assigned to brave, true soldiers from the beginning of history to the present time. Orators, poets, and painters have essayed to give honor to brave, obedient, self-sacrificing soldiers. This may be one reason why Christians are called soldiers, and also why Christ is called the Captain of our salvation. In the language just read the apostle Paul exhorts Timothy to "endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ." In his first letter to Timothy, sixth chapter, he bids him "fight the good fight of faith" and "lay hold on eternal life."

It has been understood through the ages that, when firesides are to be defended, when wives and children and friends are to be protected, the bravest and best boys and men have ever been willing to defend and protect them, to shield and save home and loved ones. I heard United States Senator Daniel Voorhees, the "Tall Sycamore of the Wabash," in a great speech say, "The best blood of our country was in the army on both sides," alluding to the men in our great war. Nothing said indicated any bitterness in his heart toward soldiers on either side. . . . God wants people to be what is best for them—best for body, soul, and spirit, for time and for eternity—and he wants them to be honored as they are honorable in that relationship. . . . The Scriptures clearly indicate that God's Church is an army, and that every member of it is a soldier.

About forty years ago a call was made throughout our Southland for boys and men to enlist in the army. . . . We heeded the call for volunteers, to fight for what we regarded the sacred rights of self and loved ones. The call then was for a definite number to follow the stars and bars for a definite period of time.

When we were in the Confederate army it was natural for us to love our leaders and to follow them at every peril. If we were good soldiers, we were ready and willing to obey their orders until death.

### REMINISCENCES OF THE SPEAKER'S EXPERIENCES.

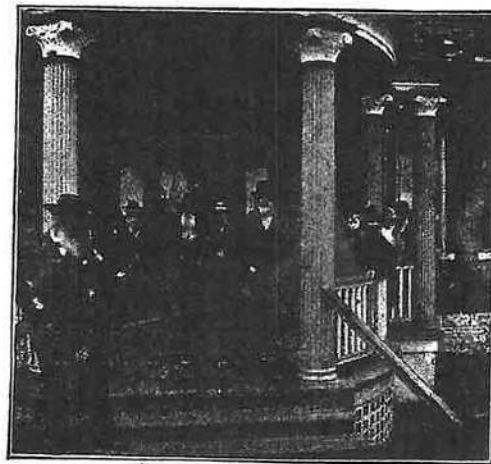
My first general officer was Zollicoffer. His soldiers loved him, and believed him to be a leader worthy of their love and confidence. When, on the dark and drizzly 19th of January, 1862, he fell at the head of his army, his faithful soldiers sorrowed not so much because the battle was lost as because their leader had fallen. Though we had heard terrible things of the army in blue, when the time came for soldiers to be detailed to go back under a flag of truce for his body it was not hard to get men to go. I think all of us wanted to go. I well remember that I considered myself exceedingly fortunate in being one of those who were designated. We had neither dread of danger nor fear of death. A little group of us, under a

white flag, went back for the body of our fallen leader, the leader we loved.

Albert Sidney Johnston was my next general officer. His soldiers loved him and had high confidence in him. Well do some of us remember when, on April 6, 1862, he fell, and under the weeping heavens, on April 7, his battle-scarred army fell back from Shiloh's bloody field. The battle was lost, and we sighed for the companionship of many missing comrades, but especially did we mourn for our leader.

We, as soldiers of the cross—if we are soldiers of the cross, and I hope we are—have a Leader infinitely greater and better than these. . . . This Leader has been tested and tried through the ages, and has never been found wanting. No mortal has ever trusted him in vain. I know not how many of you are in his army, but I do know that all of us ought to be. Those of us who are in it ought to fear no danger, dread no death, and be always true to the cause to establish which our Leader died.

In that other warfare we were always cautious. Though we believed we could whip anything we might meet, we were careful to prepare for emergencies, so that we could get something between us and the enemy, to save ourselves from extermination, should such a shield be necessary. When we were camped at Beech Grove, near Fishing Creek, and our leader knew a battle was inevitable, some of us were sent to Nashville to get a steamboat and bring it up the river to Beech Grove (Mill Springs) so that, if we got whipped, we should have some way to get to the south side of the river. We came down and took the Noble Ellis up to Beech Grove, and later, when our leader was killed and the battle was lost, we had the boat there to carry us over the river. We kept it plying to and fro all day and late into the night. About midnight it was abandoned, wrapped in withering flames, to drift down the stream, but the Cumberland River was between us and our foes. We could see the flash of their guns and hear the roar of their artillery, but the beautiful Cumberland flowed between us and them. The Noble Ellis saved us, and then ceased to be. This shows the wisdom of soldiers in worldly



ON THE PORCH OF THE CONFEDERATE HOME.



## Confederate Veteran.

warfare. But for such precautions on the part of the leaders in the army to which we then belonged, our bodies might to-day be in neglected ditches far away, and this Soldiers' Home never have been thought of.

We are engaged in a struggle for life here as long as we live. The human race is a warfare from the cradle to the grave, fighting for existence. Some have an easy time, some a hard time; but nevertheless it is a battle for life, and we are destined to lose the battle at last. It matters not how strong we are, how courageous we are, we are all absolutely certain to fall on this field of battle. We are growing older and weaker every day, and death will finally defeat and destroy us. We must then cross, not the winding Cumberland, not the broad, beautiful Tennessee, nor the mighty Mississippi; but the deep, dark, dreaded river of death, the river that silently and ceaselessly rolls between the shores of fleeting time and never-ending eternity.

Now, as we look back to our bloody war we commend the prudence of our leaders as manifested in the case of Zollicoffer's sending for the Noble Elms that saved the boys after he fell. It is infinitely more important that we prepare for crossing this deeper, darker river. We did not know then that we should ever have to cross the Cumberland River; our General did not know that we should ever need that boat, but he did know it would be well to be ready for an emergency. We absolutely know we must cross the river of death. The wealth and power of a thousand worlds could not keep us from crossing that dark river. We should be prepared for the crossing; and, as we know neither the day nor the hour when we must pass to the other shore, we should be prepared every day and every hour.

Now, the question for each to ask himself is: "Am I to be saved?" It is hard for me to realize that only small remnants of the armies that less than forty years ago followed the stars and bars and the stars and stripes are left now. It is hard for me to realize that those who were boys then are old men now, the snows that never melt gathering upon their locks; and it is just as hard for me to realize that a few more days or years at most, and not a Confederate soldier can be found on earth; but this is true. There will be Federal soldiers on earth, perhaps, while time lasts; but the day is near at hand for the burial of the last Confederate soldier. Realizing now that this little remnant is soon to cease to be; that most of the boys have joined the solemn bivouac of the dead, and those who are left must soon pass over to that silent camping ground, we ought to press this question home: Am I to be saved? When we ask this question each ought to say, "I can and I will be saved," and then carry out that resolve.

There never was a Confederate soldier who had not enlisted in the Confederate army. There were certain laws, rules, and regulations of enlistment in that army; and, in order to become a Confederate soldier, those conditions had to be observed. We who were in that army can tell our children just how we became soldiers. When we who were Confederate soldiers, however, have all passed away, when two or three generations more have come and gone, and no one on earth can remember having seen a Confederate soldier, or having seen any one who ever saw a Confederate soldier, how can the world then know about the

Confederate army? If books be left covering that period, especially books written by that generation, beginning with the breaking out of the war, or the first movement toward secession, picturing everything, giving names and dates and details, can then be found in the libraries of the land, men, women, and children, by reading and studying those books, can know all about the Confederate army as it was.

As we could not be Confederate soldiers without enlisting in the Confederate army, so we can never be soldiers of the cross without enlisting in the army of the cross. To become soldiers in the army of the Lord, we must observe the rules and conditions of enlistment in the army of the cross. The Bible reveals very clearly the conditions of enlistment in this army, and we should turn to God's book and read his instructions. We must hear the gospel, believe the gospel, obey the gospel. In the first four books of the New Testament (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John) we find the history of our Leader. In those eighty-nine chapters we learn of his birth, his life, his death, his burial, his resurrection, his ascension. We can study his life and character, imbibe his spirit, learn to love him and the cause for which he died.

In the book known as the Acts of the Apostles we are taught exactly how we can become soldiers of the cross. That book was written by a soldier of the cross, guided by the Holy Spirit, in the century in which our Saviour lived on the earth. In it we have an account of the ascension of the Saviour, the descent of the Holy Spirit to take up his abode in the material provided for the formation of his army, the charter members; the terms of enlistment proclaimed, and the organization and recruiting of the army for several years after its formation. If we would understand all the details of enlistment in the army of the Lord Jesus—what we must believe and what we must do to become soldiers in the army of the cross—we must study the Acts of the Apostles. It is the only book that gives this information. If we do this, if we read and understand this book, if we hear the gospel, believe the gospel, and obey the gospel according to its instructions, then we are enlisted in the army and are ready for the divine warfare.

After we enlisted in the Confederate army we were drilled according to the tactics thereof, that we might become skillful and successful soldiers; but very few of us ever had access to a book of military discipline. Having enlisted in the army of the Lord, we should drill and be drilled, according to the tactics of the army of righteousness, that we may be skillful and successful soldiers of the cross, and to this end we may have access to the discipline divine, to all the rules and regulations constituting the discipline of the Church of Christ. These are found in the Epistles. The one hundred and twenty-one chapters of these twenty-one letters to Christian soldiers we should read and study, to learn how soldiers of the cross are to live, how they are to fight the battles of the Lord. These twenty-one Epistles, beginning with Romans and ending with Jude, constitute the discipline of the Church of God. In the last book of the New Testament, Revelation, we have glimpses of the grandeurs and glories and beauties of the soldiers' home above, that "house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."



Soldiers learned to love one another in "our war." By the very hardships they endured they were drawn closer together. They would stand by each other through suffering and danger, even unto death. The true soldier would divide his last cracker with a comrade. The war is over, but this tie still binds them together, and as they grow old and gray their hearts are drawn closer together by memories of the hardships they endured so long ago. They loved each other like brothers indeed. This is also especially true of all good soldiers of the cross. They are loyal and faithful and true to each other. They will make sacrifices for each other, and their hearts are drawn closer and closer together as they grow old in the service of the Lord. This tie is not broken here; even death cannot break it. It is to be strengthened while eternity lasts.

Here we have reunions, of those who wore the gray and of those who wore the blue in that other war, that bloody war. Some of us are too busy to attend them. I have been busy all my life, for fifty years at least, too busy to attend any of the reunions of old soldiers. This is as near to a reunion as anything I have ever attended. These reunions are becoming very frequent, but there is always sadness connected with them. Some are absent because their life's battle has been fought, and they have passed over the river. Some of those who are present do not recognize each other, though they fought side by side, they have grown so old and gray. Others say or think: "We are together, but for only a few days. Then we separate, and may never meet again." Thus there is sadness mingled with the gladness of every reunion. But there is to be a grand and glorious reunion of the soldiers of the cross some day. That reunion will have no sadness connected with it, born of the thought that some may not be there. Every faithful soldier of the cross, all who have valiantly fought the battles of the Lord, and have been faithful unto death, shall enjoy that reunion, which will be in the soldiers' home above, and shall last forever.

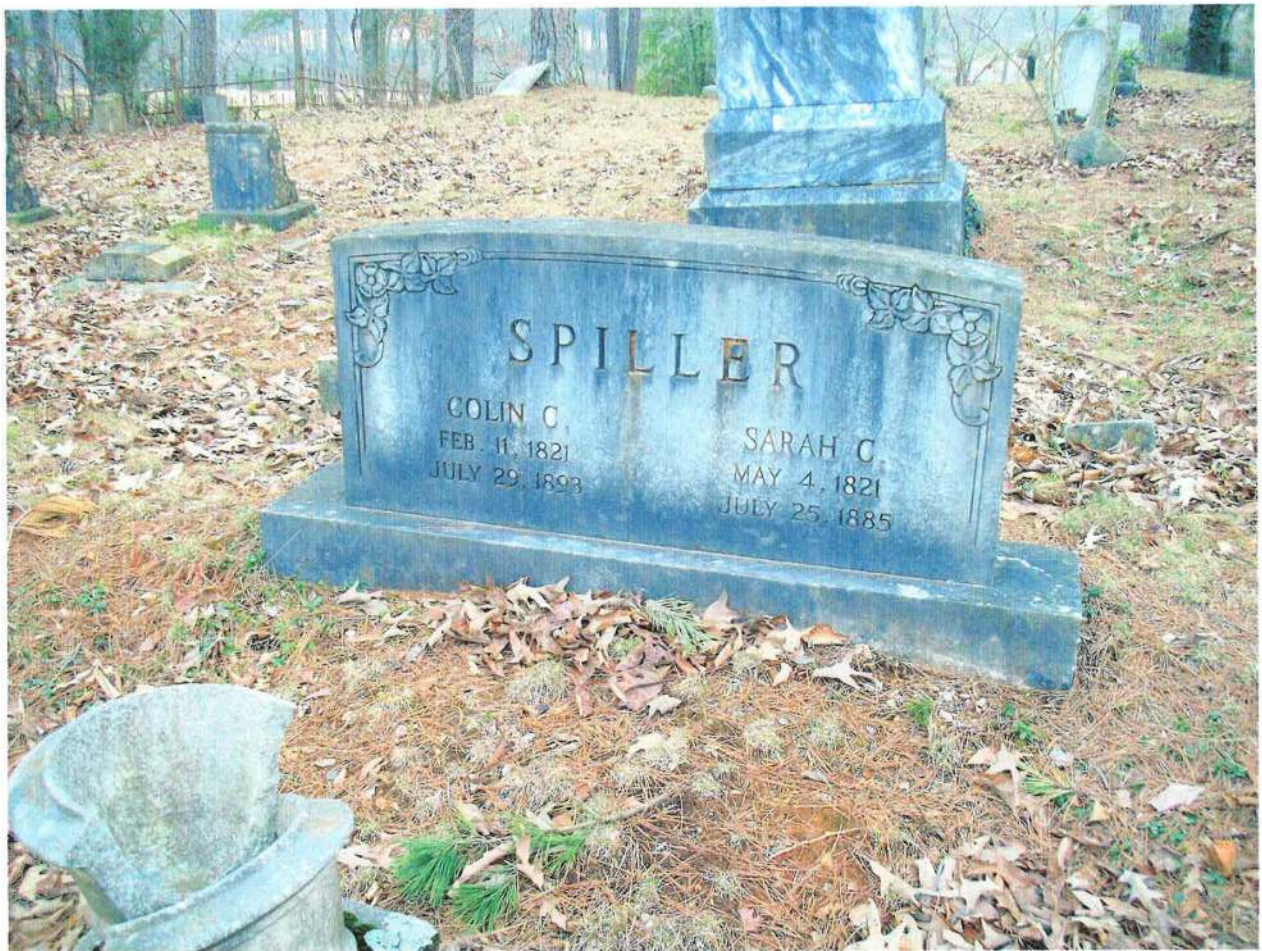
I rejoice that our State has made provision here for Confederate soldiers. Blessed be the State! Blessed be the Home! I rejoice that brave men, pure women, good boys, and sweet girls have contributed prayers and tears and labor and money to bring about this good result. But high heaven has prepared a soldiers' home that is grander, more glorious far, than

this; and when that final reunion comes, all faithful soldiers of the cross shall be there, and shall realize that they are there forever. When trillions of ages have come and gone, they shall have no less time to enjoy the comforts and bliss of that delightful home than when they first entered its portals. They shall never grow old in that home; youth, strength, vigor, and beauty shall be eternal there. There shall be no sorrow, no pain, no death, but perpetual peace and joy forever. Remember that, to reach that blessed place, we must hear the gospel, believe the gospel, obey the gospel, and be faithful soldiers of the cross till God shall call us home. I pray God that all who have enlisted in this army may be faithful until death; and if there are any of you who have not enlisted in the army of the Lord, I pray that you may enlist without delay.



THE TENNESSEE CONFEDERATE SOLDIERS' HOME, LOCATED AT THE HERMITAGE.





## CHAPTER V

# The Kentucky Years

1863-1866

**A**fter the war was over for T.B. Larimore, the Civil War wasn't over for two more years (1865). The Sequatchie Valley was still in the middle of military action so when T.B. Larimore returned to the Valley to the quiet of home, this is what he found.

Mr. Rankin's home (the best in town), built in 1852 and beautiful, was now a hospital for Northern forces. The fields and crops were being burned as a part of the Scorched Earth policy. Dr. Bell's family was gone. Dr. Bell had been or would be killed in the war. His wife had probably returned to North Carolina. Dr. Smith and his family are still in Dunlap. Joseph Tate, Helen's husband, is probably in the war. His history is unknown. The war had intensified during 1863 in the Valley. Both armies wanted control of the river and the railroads. The Valley was in constant war. The Battles of Chattanooga, Lookout Mountain, and Chickamauga all happened after Larimore was captured. F.D. Srygley described it this way, "The two armies never ceased to strive for the mastery of the Tennessee River til the soldiers on both sides were mustered out of service." The two armies would drive each other back and forth, destroying railroads, bridges, etc. over and over again. Dunlap was close enough to be a part of the troop movements and destruction. A map shows Dunlap being 15 miles from the Tennessee River, north of Chattanooga and about 20 miles from Jasper and the river at the mouth of the Sequatchie Valley. You and I can only imagine the roar of cannons during the battles and the day-to-day war activities that were taking place for months.

It was not a difficult decision for Larimore to decide to move to the north into the union-held territory of Kentucky. By 1863, the Southern forces had lost most parts of Kentucky. Why Kentucky was chosen is not known, but the trek out of Dunlap must have been from the war zone toward Crossville rather than going toward Murfreesboro and Nashville. Since Larimore was familiar with the terrain, he probably chose the means of staying out of the Nashville bowl. He also stayed away from the Cumberland River at its widest points and

crossed the upper regions above and east of Nashville. It was in the summer/fall season and the river would have been at its lowest.

Whatever logic Larimore used, all of the references indicate he came into Kentucky from the south into Christian County, through the area of the Liberty church about four miles from Hopkinsville. Then, for the next two years, the Larimore family, Nancy, Helen, Copatola, T.B., and Mollie lived outside Hopkinsville.

One note on the Providence of God. Remember, Larimore did not get religion at Mossy Creek school. He was taught; he developed good study habits; he prayed, but in his own words he did not understand how to match up what he was taught to what the scriptures were teaching him.

After Mossy Creek, questions began to rise as to how to make decisions during the war, on his way to Kentucky, where to settle in Kentucky, etc. These questions can only be answered if one looks at his total life and understand God's direction in his life. With this in mind, watch what happened in Kentucky. The first people the wagon load of Larimores ran into were the Campbells. And, the 2-year history began.

Nancy and Helen had been baptized into Christ in Dunlap by Christians from North Alabama. The Campbells had a history of helping people, and this Christian attitude helped them to assist the Larimores and the Tates.

Mr. Brooks Major, PhD from Vanderbilt in history, wrote the history of the Liberty Christian Church, the "9" Churches of Christian County, including the main congregation in Hopkinsville, which began in 1814. There are two episodes that reflect the attitude of these people in Christian County, Kentucky.

The Liberty church in 1850 had 67 members. In 1853, Alexander Cross, a slave who had been bought by the Liberty Church was freed, given an education by Elder Enos Campbell of Hopkinsville, and was sent to Liberia as the second missionary from the Hopkinsville area.

Another example of the churches in the Hopkinsville community that met the community's needs is the example of the disaster at Camp Alcorn. In the early part of the war, about 18 months before the Larimores moved into Kentucky, Camp Alcorn was a training camp for Southern troops. It was begun in September 1861. Research shows that over 300 soldiers (new recruits from all over the South) died in basic training from September to February 1862. They contracted 'Black Measles'. This disease is contracted when the skin of humans is subjected to sustained cold without proper clothing for sustained periods of time.

Many of the recruits were coming to Camp Alcorn without proper clothes from the 'Deep South' states, did not have clothes for the winter, had none issued to them, and they got sick. The lack of blankets, food, medicines, and better housing caused the epidemic. Even though Hopkinsville, Kentucky did not have a major battle, they had a potter's field of bodies.

In order to show the major effort by the community, note the way the people of Christian County reacted. Dr. R.W. Grimes oversaw this process to help the soldiers. Finally, the state of Kentucky worked with all of the volunteers. These institutions housed and took care of the sick. The local hospital became overrun with patients; North Street Presbyterian Church; Christian Church in Hopkinsville; Methodist Church; Black Baptist Churches; County Seminary; the Ritter Hotel; South Kentucky College; Baptist Bethel College; the B.E. Randolph home; and Nathan Bedford Forrest's headquarters; at any one point in time, a person could open the doors and find a building full of patients.



Needless to say, the community of Hopkinsville and Christian County, Kentucky were occupied by unusual people for their time. The Christian churches in Christian County had 494 members at this time and it was the Liberty Church that the Larimore and Tate families came to first. Enos Campbell, B.S. Campbell, and Mr. Hopper were some of the main leaders. They served in some way overseeing these nine churches as preachers, elders, and leaders.

It is into this environment that Larimore brought the family. They had run out of supplies and had to stop to live. The Campbells were instrumental in getting housing, food, jobs, and the Christian community they needed for peace and normal living conditions. B.S. Campbell was the first person they met. He helped with the housing and food and in short order, Larimore was selling wagon loads of wood to customers in Hopkinsville.

Enos Campbell was the person who educated Alexander Cross. He also helped create a successful high school in Hopkinsville, which became the South Kentucky Institute. He and T.N. Trice were the main principals. They secured the funds to start the school and operated it until it was turned over to the Christian Churches in 1859.

The Campbells, Mr. Hopper, and an unnamed Presbyterian preacher were the influential group that taught Larimore over a few months. So, the family began to thrive. T.B. was selling wood for \$1.25 per load. Nancy was probably sewing for income. Helen, Mollie, and Copatola were at home. The family had a roof over their heads and an income, with a positive Christian environment. This was a greater stability than they had in Tennessee.

As the number of major battles in Tennessee and Georgia take place in the latter part of 1863 and 1864, the smaller skirmishes in Tennessee and Kentucky diminished. The Northern forces were concentrated on taking Atlanta.

The members of Larimore's group were intent on making each day. In the words of Larimore to F.D. Srygley, "The people in general treated me justly, and Elders Campbell and Hopper were especially kind and generous to me." F.D. Srygley continued to say that Larimore's reputation in Kentucky was 'one of honesty, industrious, studious, courteous, and especially devoted to his mother'.

For a few months in the winter of 1863 and the spring of 1864, T.B. Larimore studied under the Presbyterian minister. With this experience, he began to be recognized for his knowledge and was given a 'country school' for his first opportunity to teach in the summer. Study and careful reading of the scriptures and encouragement by Christians made the time right. He ended his 20th year in this situation. On July 10, 1864, on his 21st birthday, he was baptized into Christ. When he was at Mossy Creek, he made a vow to God to obey the Scriptures and be baptized.

Records by F.D. Srygley indicate that he made his first talk in a prayer meeting on January 10, 1866. His second was at another prayer meeting on February 7, 1866. On April 1, 1866 he talked to a Sunday school class. Then he made his first talk before a congregation on May 6, 1866.

One last comment about the Kentucky years...in an analysis made by Emma Page Larimore, Larimore's second wife, in *Life, Letters, and Sermons*, she quotes Mollie Meeks (Mrs. R.P. Meeks) as giving credit to her brother and her mother, Nancy, for the education she received while they all lived in Kentucky. In a quote, Mollie says, "Next to her God and her mother, he stands most prominent among those to whom she is indebted for the advantages of her childhood and girlhood." She signed the letter as Mary Francis Larimore, Mrs. R. P. Meeks. Further, this relationship of brother and sister will be developed in other chapters.

During the last 20 years of her life, Nancy Larimore lived in the Meeks home in Henderson, Tennessee with R.P., Mollie, and family. This part of Nancy's and Mollie's lives will be developed in the explanation of R.P. Meeks' relationship to T.B. Larimore.

## CHAPTER VI

# The School Year – Franklin College

1866–1867

**I**n the summer of 1866, the Larimore family left Kentucky. Larimore went to Nashville to study under Tolbert and Jack Fanning at Franklin School. The family returned to Sequatchie Valley. At this point in time, no data is available concerning what has happened to Prends, the younger brother of T.B. Larimore. He was four years younger than Theophilus and was probably deceased at the time the family moved to Kentucky. He is mentioned in the 1860 Census as being 13 years old. There is no history after the war began in 1861.

When the family returned to Tennessee, Nancy and Helen, Mollie, and Copatola all returned to Dunlap. Helen probably returned to Mr. Tate or maybe to his family in Dunlap. Nancy probably returned to George and Mary Larimore. In the Census of 1870, Nancy and Mary are the only ones listed together. George had died at this time.

During the school year of 1866–1867, Larimore enjoys the school life at Franklin College. He was very much a part of his class activities. The students enjoyed him and his background. The main characteristics of this year involved two things: he learns from Tolbert Fanning and books, and he sees and learns about the people and ideas associated with the Restoration Movement. The spokespeople for the movement were in and out of Nashville and the periodicals of the day carried articles of current thoughts and controversies.

For a complete history of these times, Leroy Garrett's book *The Stone–Campbell Movement*, published in 1981, carried the thoughts and history of the individuals. The three groups were the Disciples of Christ, the independent Christian churches, and the developing Church of Christ. Other books of history with a more recent past would include *Introduction to the Restoration Ideal* by Marshall Leggett and *Free in Christ* by Cecil Hook.

In the summer of 1867, Larimore graduated from Franklin College. He was valedictorian of his class. At this point, Larimore's background was certainly different from any background of the other preachers or teachers within the Restoration churches.

It is outside the purview of this book to discuss his sermons and the response that he began to have by people that heard his sermons. What will be covered in the remainder of this book will be the individuals whose lives he touched and the impact on his ministry. His effectiveness with people of all ages was rare for a man only 24 years old.

Larimore visited the Fanning properties 33 years later. He was received by Mrs. Lipscomb and Mrs. Mary Fanning. Later, he wrote down some memories of his days at the college. The following is a quote:

*"It takes time and experience – much of both – to convince some of us that man knows but little here below, nor knows that little long; but the Fannings – Tolbert and Jack – made a believer of me in a very few days. It was a clear case and they argued it wisely and well. They taught me that I needed to be taught, convinced me, and I gladly became a schoolboy again. They taught me how to think, how to talk, and how to teach.*

*When I left them to stem tides of trouble I knew not of, one of them handed me a letter, approved by both. The letter said, 'I have never failed to read a man correctly when I had a good chance. [T.B. Larimore] You may never accumulate a fortune, but you will never depart from the faith or disgrace the cause of Christ.'"*

*Remembered by T.B. Larimore, 1900*

*Letters and Sermons by F.D. Srygley, pp. 321-322*

## Fear and Stress

The time spent at Franklin College must have been a soothing balm to the soul of Larimore. History tells us he enjoyed the students and they enjoyed him. There is no doubt that he had developed a different personality while he was in Kentucky and the campus life must have been just what the 'Private Larimore' needed to adjust to normal life.

Fear and stress can change a person, especially the conditions of war. During the war, Larimore's conditions changed every day. Records do not tell us all of the pressures he was under but we do know that the day-to-day living was constantly in change. All we can do in 2023 is ask the question, "What did he see?"

From the battlefield at Fishing Creek, to Shiloh, to Murfreesboro, to Stones River, and even in the day-to-day scouting for location of the enemy, every mile the horse made under him, what did he see? What pressure was there in every moment, behind every tree and bush?

There is no record of Larimore seeing the death of any one person before Fishing Creek. Then in major battles he saw multitudes of dead and dying. The carnage was tremendous. And, then at the First Battle of Murfreesboro, Captain Allen Baird Green, a good friend and leader of his company, is killed. The death and dying became personal. Shortly thereafter, the bloodiest battle of his military life at Stone's River showed how the lives of soldiers really didn't have much value. After three days of battling, the Generals decided to leave the field.



With this history, what did Larimore see? How did he sleep at night? His experiences from August 17, 1861 until August 22, 1863 were always different and always full of stress and fear. So, when we ask questions about his compassion for his fellow man in his older life; the direct messages to his listeners of his sermons; his answers to his critics over meaningless controversies; etc. Larimore had answers that must have been tempered by the stress and fear of two years of war.

## The Formative Years are Complete

Upon graduation in the summer of 1867, Larimore's formal education was almost complete. He did attend Purdy College with R.P. Meeks and his brother, Henry Meeks, for a brief period. He is now 24 years old and wise beyond his years. His character, life's discipline, study habits, methods of oration, knowledge of poverty, and always a high energy level are set for life. He has learned how to set priorities and objectives for his life. He now knows how to use the best of talents and time to reach the goals of the day. He has developed the innate ability to teach the gospel message and to challenge people. His quiet demeanor and forceful speech are ready for use. As F.D. Srygley states, "He succeeds in what he undertakes because he will not fail." As a Christian, he was special.

This is not an unusual statement. In the conclusion of J.M. Powell's book *The Man From Mars Hill*, a lecture by Paul Southern at Abilene Christian College in 1938 is referenced. Mr. Southern says this about Larimore:

*"May I suggest the world is still waiting for the sunrise of real Christian devotion. May I suggest that if mortal man ever yielded to God's plan for man, it was T.B. Larimore. When the sun rose on Larimore, it rose on a man who more nearly yielded to the will of God than perhaps any other man of our time. God had a plan for Larimore's life. It is the consensus of all who knew him that Larimore yielded to God's plan; as a result, life has been richer for countless people."*

Paul Southern,  
**Christian Discipleship**  
*Abilene Christian Lectures, 1938 p. 115*

## CHAPTER VII

# Preaching, Teaching, and the Beginning of His Professional Life

1867-1870

## Preaching Tour

The preaching of T.B. Larimore now becomes the main purpose of his life. In June of 1867, when he left Franklin College, Larimore had a classmate from Hart County, Kentucky. As he was teaching and preaching in Davidson County, C.G. Payton decided to be baptized. So, he and Larimore went to Hart County, Kentucky in order to have Payton's mother to witness the baptism. On June 16, 1867, he baptized his classmate. This was the first baptism after he started his career in preaching. His first funeral was on July 12, 1867 at Thompson's Station.

In the next few months, another student at Franklin College, Robert Baker Trimble, and T.B. Larimore decided to work together in preaching in Middle Tennessee. Trimble was 20 years older than T.B. Larimore and had a business background as well as his studies at Franklin College. He had worked as an apprentice to a tailor and owned his own business up until 1855. Then he decided to go into ministry.

F.D. Srygley tells an interesting story in *Smiles and Tears – Larimore and His Boys*, which summarizes their mission trips. During the summer of 1867, they toured Maury County (Columbia), Hickman County (Centerville), and the surrounding counties. They rode horseback in buggies but never on railroads. Later Larimore used the railroads as much as he could. Their meetings were in country churches and in some areas where there

were no churches. They preached in private homes, under the trees, in schoolhouses, and just about any place the people could gather. F.D. Srygley ended his story by saying, "It was easy to see the effects of the war on the spirits of people and the destruction."

Remember the Battle of Stone's Creek was a very bloody, three-day battle in this area of Tennessee. It was very close to Maury County over in Rutherford County. These people where Larimore and Trimble had preached had vivid memories of that battle four years earlier.

As 1867 ended, the preaching tour also ended. Larimore makes one more visit to Franklin College before he went out on his own. In late 1867 or early 1868 he travels to the Rock Creek area of Alabama. He meets the Srygley family for the first time. From this meeting, F.D. Srygley is so impressed with Larimore that his life will be devoted to documenting Larimore's life as his first biographer. For the events of his trip to Rock Creek, Srygley devoted Chapter 2 of *Smiles and Tears – Larimore and His Boys* to the details.

After several weeks in the Rock Creek area, Larimore travels to Florence, Alabama, Tennessee River area. This is in 1868. He was familiar with this area because of his scouting days in the calvary. It was at this time that he married Julia Esther Gresham. Larimore described his bride to Srygley this way. "Esther is bright and beautiful and as good as could be. She is an incessant worker, not a club woman, not a meddler in other people's matters, and as far from a gadabout as possible. She has neither time nor taste for such pestiferous things." Larimore also said, she was more than willing for him to preach and teach to the limit of his ability and to advance their work in God's kingdom. Larimore had a tremendous help-mate in God's work.

The chapter on Mars Hill will better develop the relationship of T.B. and Esther, the family, and their life's work. On August 30, 1868 Esther and T.B. were married. In a very short time they leave Mars Hill for Larimore to teach at Kendrick, Mississippi or Kendrick, Tennessee. The town is on the Mississippi-Tennessee line eight miles east of Corinth, Mississippi, 35 miles from Mars Hill, and most importantly, Kendrick is 12 miles from Stantonville, Tennessee. The importance of Stantonville, Tennessee will be seen in the next chapter.

One last note about the area T.B. and Esther began their married life and ministry. The time in 1868. Three years after the war ends. The communities of Florence, Corinth, Kendrick, and Stantonville had one thing in common, the Tennessee River. During the war, half of Florence was burned. The North and South forces changed ownership of Florence several times during the war. Florence is on the north side of the river. After Shiloh, it was in the Northern territory but they didn't hold it until later. Corinth was the hub of activity after Shiloh. These communities only had hundreds of people, not thousands. Kendrick was like Stantonville, a small group of families. Kendrick was smaller than Stantonville with only a few people. The 1860 census showed 50 people in Stantonville.

So, when Esther and T.B leave Florence to go to Kendrick they are leaving a river town with very little industry left, going to a farming community of maybe 4-5 families. The school had been developed to handle children in a wide area.

When Esther and T.B. move to Kendrick, they meet Rufus P. Meeks. R.P.'s dad was a farmer who had a cotton farm 2 miles south of Stantonville, about 6-7 miles from Kendrick. John Henderson Meeks and "Miss Ellie" had homesteaded the farm of 600 acres and later added another 800 acres. The Battle of Shiloh was fought in his front yard. The introduction of

R.P. Meeks to T.B. Larimore begins one of the most long-lasting relationships that Larimore had in his lifetime.

When the Larimores leave Florence and move to Kendrick, the next 10 months from the fall of 1868 to the spring/summer of 1869 they are in Stantonville. This move is providential because of the Larimore family and the Meeks family. This 10-month period is extremely important to both families. The school in Kendrick begins to fail because of the lack of students and conditions of poverty. Conditions in the years of Reconstruction in the south were hard. The conditions for the school were extremely difficult. This sets the stage for many good decisions for the Larimores and the Meeks.

Just as Franklin College was a time of rest and reflection for Larimore, the Meeks farm now becomes a good time for T.B. and Esther. T.B. has responsibilities but his time until he gets back to Florence is one of planning, getting to know in depth the Meeks family, and we can assume an in-depth group of discussions with John Henderson Meeks. In these 10 months, relationships will be developed that will help forge the rest of Larimore's life.

## CHAPTER VIII

# History of John Henderson Meeks Family

(1814-1898)

There is a description of the farm as it existed in the 1940s and 1950s. Some assumptions can be made. The farm was smaller in acreage than when T.B. and Esther first went to the farm in 1869.

These are the basic facts of John Henderson, his wife, Miss Ellie, their eight children, and their lives up until 1869.

John Henderson Meeks – Son of John and Martha Meeks. Martha Meeks died when John Henderson was 14 days old. From birth until manhood, he lived with his grandfather. John Henderson was born on September 27, 1814 in Lincoln County, Tennessee. As a baby, he moved into the home of his grandfather, Captain John Henderson of Revolutionary War fame. He lived in Lawrence County, Alabama from 1819 until 1830. Then he moved to McNairy County, Tennessee where he lived all the days of his life.

A story from his youth...As a young man, his grandfather's confidence in him led him to let John Henderson be the executor of his estate, which was a large estate. The grandfather had sons that were honorable and trustworthy and much older than John Henderson. The young executor "wound up" the estate and satisfied all parties. This bit of legal persuasion followed him all the days of his life. He never sued or was sued by any person during his life.

Another assumption: we assume because of no information to the contrary that in 1830 when he moves to McNairy County, he homesteads the acreage in his farm. At all points in his life, he owned as many as 600 acres, and at one point, more than an additional 800 acres in Hardin County.



On January 27, 1841, he married Miss Elenor Atkins of McNairy County. They lived happily for 55 years. They had eight children, five sons and three daughters. On June 20, 1896, Miss Ellie died and is buried at the Clear Creek Church, east of Stantonville, Tennessee.

John Henderson Meeks never had a preference for politics. He never sought office, but office sought him.

T.B. Larimore mentions John Henderson's character in the short essay in the front of *At the Feet of Jesus* by R.P. Meeks. As long as he lived, he was a consistent Christian; a great power for good; and, for 30 years, a respectful and revered elder of the Christian church at Clear Creek.

John Henderson Meeks had troubles all his life. As a child, he often wept because he had no mother. He would see a mother and child together and realize that there is no other love like it. His life on the farm was a hard life of homesteading. His home during the Battle of Shiloh was almost in the line of battle. Today, the farm exists 3.5 miles from Shiloh National Park off Highway 22 in Stantonville, Tennessee. His oldest son was in this battle, returned safely, but then died in another battle later. He had one other son killed in the war.

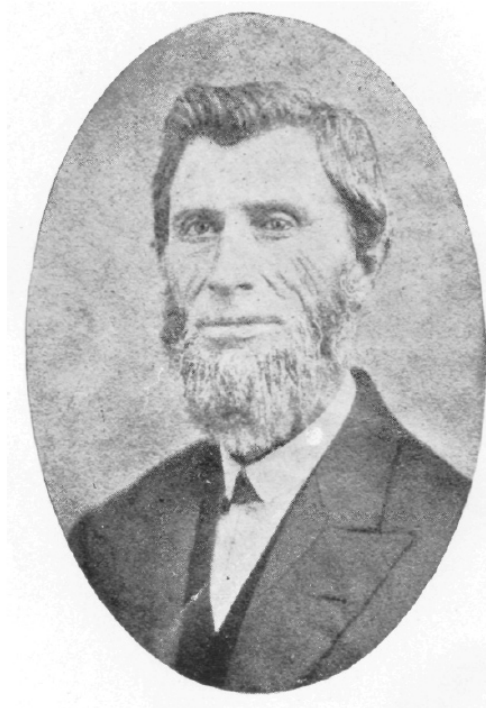
Of their eight children, Miss Ellie and John Henderson had four children to die during their lives. John, George, Orval, and Margret died before Miss Ellie and John Henderson Meeks died. Mattie, Rufus, Henry, and Zilpah lived past their parents' deaths.

T.B. and Esther move to the parents of R.P. Meeks' farm. The next 10 months, T.B. Larimore will teach and preach with a temporary home on the Meeks farm. They lived on the farm until April of 1870.

On the farm, adjustments were still being made. The farm operations were as follows. Sharecroppers lived on the farm and were assigned a given number of acres. There were as many as six houses in addition to the main house the Meeks family lived in.

The Meeks family home is shown in the picture. It had three bedrooms, a kitchen, dining room, and living room. The house was built in 1851.

During these 10 months, R.P. Meeks, Henry Meeks, and T.B. Larimore attended a school at Purdy, Tennessee. During the winter of 1870, John Henderson Meeks leaves the farm to go to Nashville for the Constitutional Convention. He returns on February 23/24, 1870. They await the special election on March 26, 1870. In April, the Larimores are on the road again. They return to oversee more construction at Mars Hill. They had to be ready for the school to start in 1871.



MRS. JOHN H. MEES.

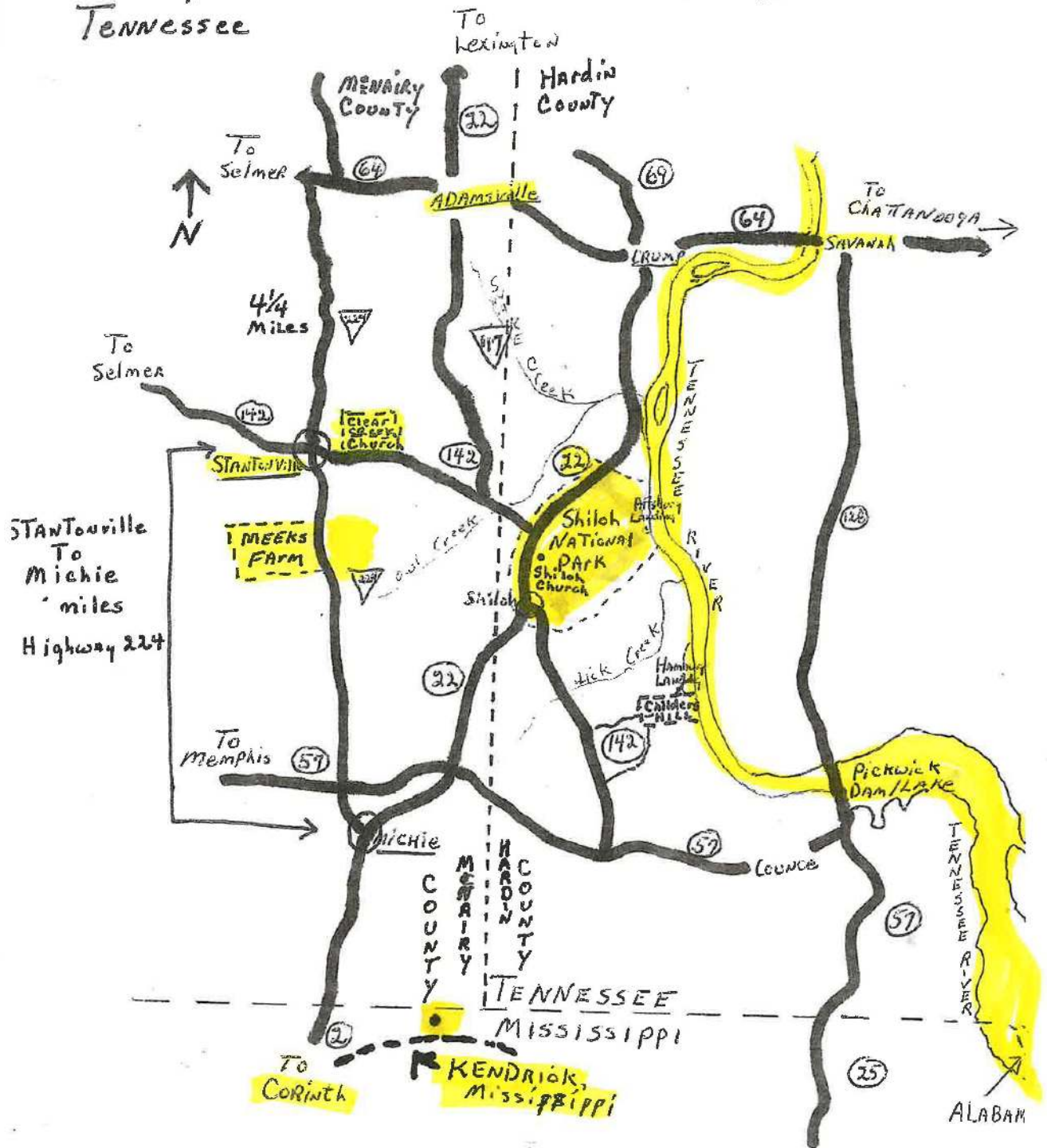
*John Henderson and "Miss Ellie" Meeks*

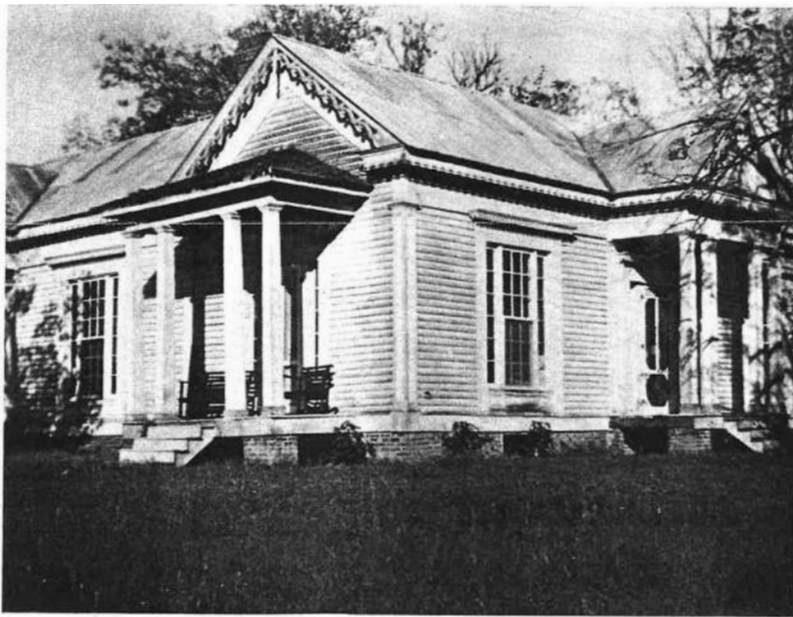


*Purdy University*

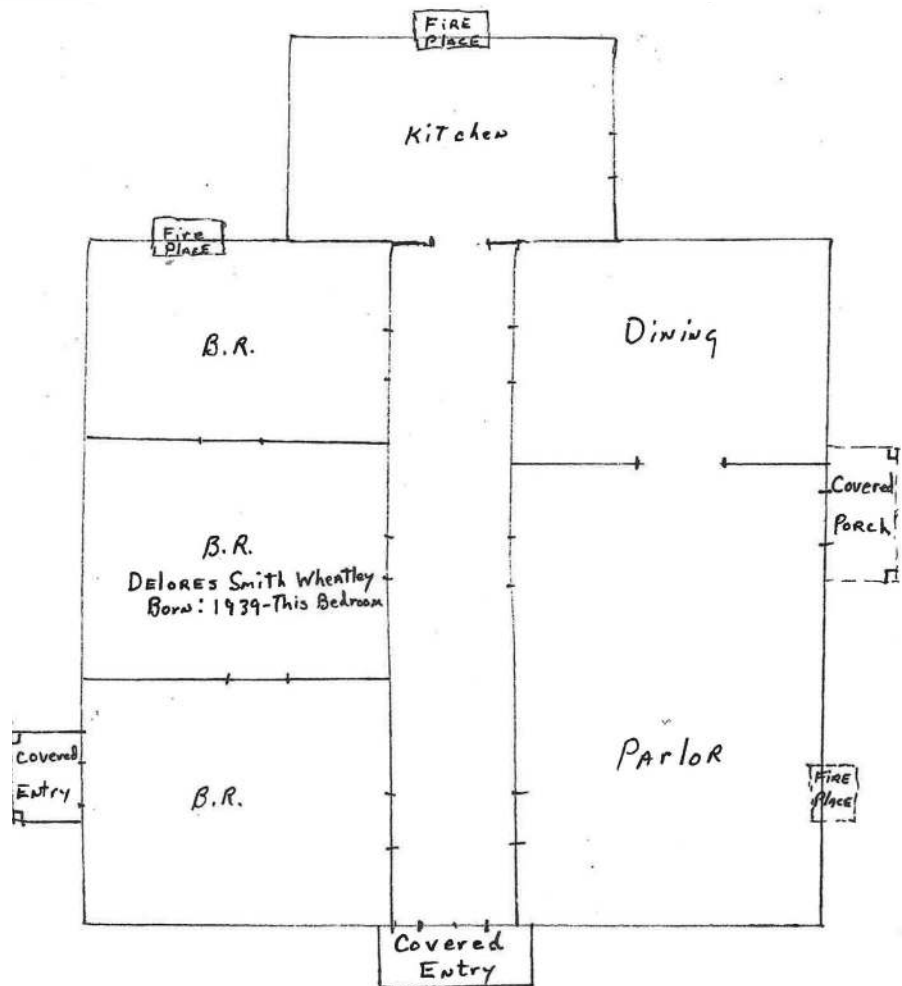
# MENAIKY-HARDIN County Line Tennessee

SCALE: 1"=2 miles





THE JOHN HENDERSON MEEKS HOME, one of the early homes in McNairy County, was built in 1851. It was located three miles south of Stantonville. It burned in 1946.



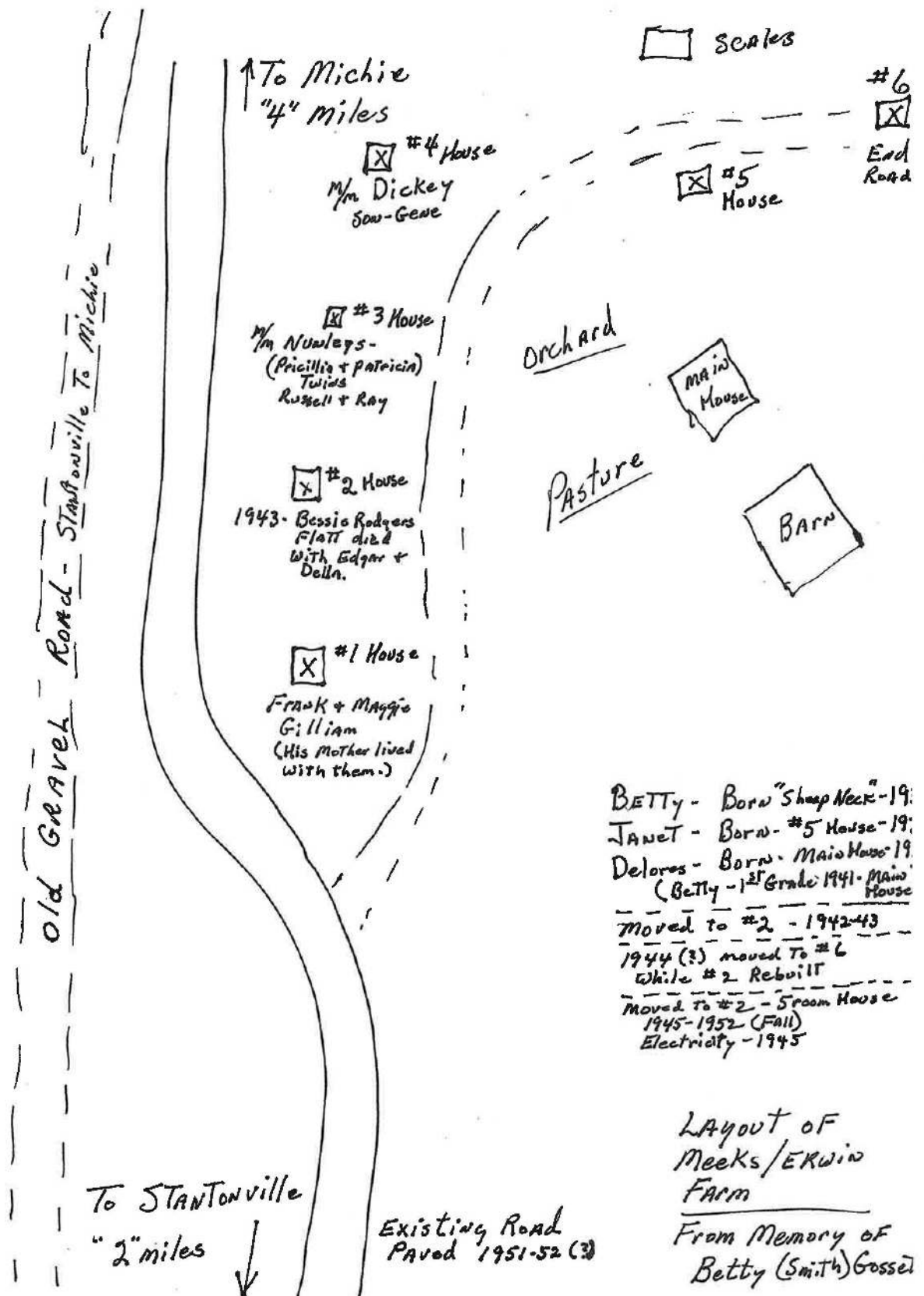
MEEK'S HOUSE

Burned: 1946

Floor Plan by: Betty Smith Gossett (Memory)

In 1946, Fire Caught in Kitchen. (Men in fields)





In these few months, prior to the spring of 1870, there is a melding of personalities. John Henderson and Miss Ellie open their farm up to the Larimores. After reading the histories of all parties, these are the ages of all the family members. In 1870, John Henderson is 55, Miss Ellie is 57, R.P. is 21, T.B. is 27, Esther is 25, Mollie is 18, Nancy is 53 (if she visited). The census of 1870 has Nancy living in Sequatchie County with her mother Mary. Nancy's dad is assumed to be dead at this point.

With John Henderson as the oldest man in the household, he is the busiest. He is adjusting the activities of the farm; he is preparing to go to Nashville as a part of the Constitutional Convention for the State of Tennessee in January 1870. He is still adjusting to the needs of his family, his county, and his specific community.

T.B. and Esther are probably occupying one of the six dwellings on the property. They are planning the events that will soon begin in Florence with the development of the Mars Hill school. They will soon leave to oversee the construction of the Academy. Their few weeks on the farm allows T.B. to preach some at Clear Creek Church. But, his day-to-day responsibilities are centered in educating R.P. and Henry. This is when they enter Purdy University. This could not have been for more than one term, the spring term of 1870.

The one relationship to watch is the development of Rufus P. Meeks. By January 1, 1870, R.P. had been in Larimore's tutelage for four and a half months; then one school year (1871-1872) at Bethany College, West Virginia; then returned to Mars Hill for five more sessions with Larimore. A part of these last five sessions were spent teaching at Mars Hill.

All of this occurred because of T.B. Larimore going to Kendrick, Mississippi to teach.

While R.P. Meeks was at Mars Hill for the five sessions, he and Mollie Larimore were married September 18, 1873. They returned to Stantonville where they made their home for the next five years. At some point in this time, R.P. and Mollie return to Mars Hill for two more sessions. They lived in the main house for a short time and it is documented that they lived within two or three hundred yards of the main house on the farm for the remainder.

1870 was the beginning of a special relationship between T.B. and Esther and R.P. and Mollie.

## Clear Creek Church

In 1860, the community of Stantonville had a total of 50 people. The Clear Creek church was a Restoration Christian church which was established in about 1842. The leaders of the church movement of the Campbells, Barton Stone, Racoon Smith, and others had its beginning in the Pennsylvania, West Virginia, and Ohio areas during the earliest 1800s. We do not know who began this congregation at Clear Creek but there is a record of activity going back to May 8, 1842.

This congregation is where the Meeks family worshipped, where T.B. Larimore and R.P. Meeks preached, and was a viable part of the community during the early history of Stantonville.

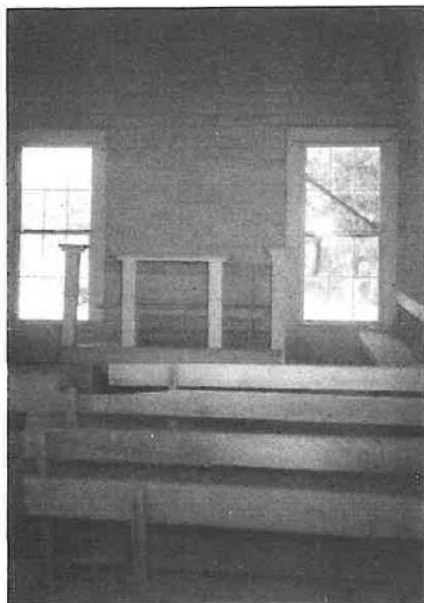
These pages of history show the accounts of discipline in the church. When T.B. Larimore and R.P. Meeks attended in 1869–1870, the congregation's minister was Mr. Michie. Mr. Robert Michie dies in 1902 and was buried in the Clear Creek cemetery. Specific graves of other people mentioned in this book that are buried at Clear Creek are: John Henderson Meeks, Nancy Larimore, and George L. Meeks, son of R.P. Meeks and Mollie Larimore Meeks.

The history of this congregation is unusual for the time that it started. Remember the history of the Restoration churches. In the earliest part of the 1800's, the preaching of Thomas Campbell, Alexander Campbell, and Barton Stone was mostly in the area of Pennsylvania, Ohio, West Virginia, and the mid-west. It was very unusual to find these churches in the deep south. However, it will be noted that a similar set of circumstances will exist in Jack's Creek, Tennessee, which had a congregation move to Henderson in 1875 where R.P. Meeks will be the preacher in the late 1800's and early 1900's. This history of Clear Creek is found in Appendix B.



Clear Creek Church building, Stantonville, McNairy County, Tenn. 1957. (Photo by Euthia Flatt Dancer)

Inside, Clear Creek Church building, Stantonville, McNairy County, Tenn. 1957. Individual facing the camera is assumed to be the evangelist conducting the meeting. The Clear Creek Record Book recorded J. Gavin Smith as the evangelist conducting the August 1957 "meeting". (Photo by Euthia Flatt Dancer)



Clear Creek church building, Stantonville, McNairy County, Tenn., 1957. Inside view of the empty building showing podium, "deacon's benches" and the hand made pews. (Photo by Euthia Flatt Dancer)

Color photo restoration by Mid-South Color Labs, Inc., Jackson, Tenn. (All photographs from the Paul Dancer collection.)



## CHAPTER IX

# The Effects of War on Two Farmers and a Preacher

The previous chapter introduces you to a person most people have never heard of, John Henderson Meeks. This chapter will introduce another farmer who was in the same experience in life as John Henderson Meeks and T.B. Larimore. They all were in or near the Battle of Shiloh.

Alfred T. Fielder was also a farmer from west Tennessee. Most people have never heard of him. He was in the middle of the battle for two days. Larimore, as a part of the calvary, was on the banks of the river scouting for Northern troops. John Henderson Meeks was in his home, listening and trying to survive. It was in his front yard.

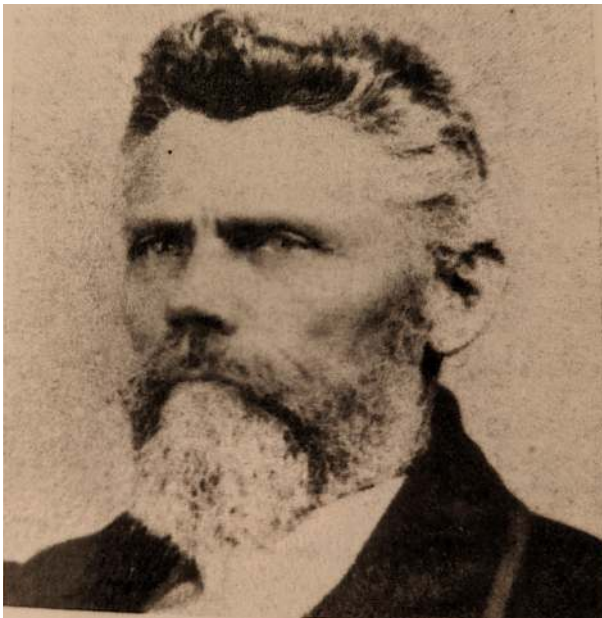
Fielder recorded the war in a series of diaries. He fought and endured the war and fought in several major battles including Shiloh and Atlanta.

It is the purpose of this section of T.B. Larimore's background to explain the impact of Shiloh on the human soul and spirit (psyche). Dr. Kent Dollar wrote *Soldiers of the Cross* in 2005 and documented Alfred T. Fielder's life from his diaries. Dollar made a comparison of soldiers from various backgrounds and religions.

Larimore is not mentioned in this book. The only reason for looking at one of the people mentioned in this book, Alfred T. Fielder, is because of the logic he expressed as he lived through the Civil War.

On March 3, 1865, Captain Alfred T. Fielder of the 12th Tennessee Infantry wrote, "I have come up through many difficulties and dangers, but God's unseen hand has protected and shielded me thus far for which I am thankful and feel in my heart willing to trust him in the future believing his grace will be sufficient for me." Alfred T. Fielder wrote this on his 51st birthday.

It is the maturing effect of his religious faith that is recognized.



*Alfred Tyler Fielder*

*Born: 1814*

*Died: 1893*

*Lived: Friendship, Tennessee*

*Farm: 60 acres*

*First Postmaster: 1853*

*Served in House of Representatives*

*31st General Assembly: 1855-1857*

*Served as Captain C.S.A 12th Tennessee Infantry*

*Through War: 1861-1865*

*Methodist Faith: Trustee*

*Married: Isabell Tate*

*Served in Constitutional Convention: 1870*

Before the analysis of the mature character of Alfred T. Fielder, it is important to look at the environment in which he lived after the war. This environment was the same for John Henderson Meeks and can be applied to many people that lived through Reconstruction.

- He was a farmer in Friendship, Tennessee, a small community in Dyer County in West Tennessee.
- He was a leader in his community.
- He was a member of the Constitutional Convention of 1870 in Nashville for the State of Tennessee.
- He was a Christian. He lived his Christianity during the war and after.
- He fought in many of the major and minor battles. With this battle experience, plus the fact of being wounded, and yet survived, did his faith sustain him and did he change?

In the beginning of the war in 1861, Alfred T. Fielder was 47 years old. His age and maturity made him a born leader for the younger troops under his command. The various conditions in training and in battles are shown in his diaries as moments of reflection, mainly the reflections of his own character.

For example, in the beginning he tried to have a religious time each week. Later, that evolved into a time of worship with other troops led by a chaplain. Later, he led worship services for others.

The previous comments, analyses of diaries, research and observations are contained in Dr. Kent Dollar's book *Soldiers of the Cross*. The following observations are made in the last chapter. All of the nine soldiers analyzed in the book have these characteristics:

- Steadfastness in their religious convictions increased;
- Their devotion to God also increased;
- Prayer took on a new meaning for the soldier-Christians;

- The war served to test and purify their faith or trust in God; all soldiers drew closer to God and earthly matters became less and less; and
- Their nearness to God changed these men.

As a result, look at acceptances:

- They accepted defeat as a part of God's plans.
- They realized that their faith had been strengthened.
- A summation by O.C.S. Wallace concluded that "When a Christian reaches one point spiritually, there are always new heights to attain."

Take note of Dr. Kent Dollar's last comment in the book. "Furthermore, this study demonstrates that war's impact spanned denominations, ages, military ranks, and social classes." Now apply the logic of Alfred T. Fielder and Kent Dollar to the lives of T.B. Larimore and John Henderson Meeks.

#### Timeline of Events for Alfred T. Fielder

1814 – Born

1861 – Joined Confederate States of America

1862 – In December, before the Battle of Stone's River or Murfreesboro, he learned Union forces had raided his farm and freed his slaves. He believed Northern religion was corrupted by politics and therefore displeased God.

First night of the Battle of Shiloh – led worship.

War-related adversity soon replaced habit as the primary motivation for his prayers. He sat out of the Battle of Perryville; he prayed four different times for his comrades, his country, his family, and himself.

At one point, he spoke to an old friend near Tupelo, Mississippi who was dying of pneumonia, stayed with him, and prayed for him. He died that morning.

"Following the engagement at Shiloh in April 1862 he wrote, "I...passed the two days of the ever memorable Battle of Shiloh – the thousands that had been killed and wounded, and that I had passed through it all and was not wounded and had passed through it and was not seriously hurt, my soul appeared to be almost melted within me in thankfulness to God for his preserving care."

Alfred T. Fielder lived through the Battle of Atlanta

Alfred T. Fielder lived through three major battles and a host of smaller battles. He was paroled out of service on May 1, 1865.

The written characteristics of Alfred T. Fielder can be applied to John Henderson Meeks and T.B. Larimore. We can assume these three men had somewhat similar thoughts after the war. Think of the effect of one battle (Shiloh) on each of these men.

- Each saw 23,746 men dead, dying, or wounded.

- John Henderson Meeks saw and heard the battle and for months had to live with the stench of war. The battle was in his front yard. Can you imagine the beauty of his farm before the battle and after? Can you see in your mind's eye the destruction, the bloody pond, and the dead being buried for days?
- On April 8th, troops are trying to leave, and another battle breaks out. John Henderson Meeks had a son in that smaller battle. They are fighting even when the wounded are trying to get off the field.
- Alfred T. Fielder and T.B. Larimore see more battles and even greater percentages of soldiers wounded and dying. The second Battle of Murfreesboro was carnage. The battle for Atlanta was even greater for Alfred T. Fielder because he was wounded, but he lived. He saw the hospital and yet, lived.

These three men must have grown older and wiser about the things of this earth.

In 1870, both Alfred T. Fielder and John Henderson Meeks were a part of the Constitutional Convention for the State of Tennessee. It was convened on January 10, 1870 and adjourned February 23, 1870. There were a total of 66 members with Fielder as #26 and John Henderson Meeks as #49. The convention made the following changes in the State's constitution which was without change until 1953.

The main part of the constitution made these changes:

- Abolished slavery;
- Eliminated restrictions of voting;
- Restricted the powers of the Governor:
  - Could not suspend habeas corpus,
  - Could not call out militia without consent of legislature,
  - Could not appoint judges and county officials, and
  - Had limited veto power and legislative restrictions.
- All appointed county officials and judges appointed by Governor Brownlow were dismissed.

A special election by the State of Tennessee on March 26, 1870 adopted the new Constitution.

So Fielder and Meeks helped eliminate the abuses of reconstruction and the constitution they helped to write became a model for other Southern states.



## CHAPTER X

# Mars Hill Academy

*1870–Present*

With all that has been written so far about the background of T.B. Larimore, one must realize that as he and Esther leave Tennessee and go back to Alabama, Larimore's jaw is set and he knows what he wants to do. When a person reads Srygley's chapters of Mars Hill during 1870–1887 remember the youthful energy that is displayed in Esther and T.B. Note the lives that are touched.

In F.D. Srygley's *Smiles and Tears – Larimore and His Boys* Chapters 12–30 are devoted to the means of construction for Mars Hill's Academy, the pupils that went through the school, and the method T.B. Larimore used in this facility to become the school, the base of all his teaching and preaching for 16 years.

The number of effective preachers for God's kingdom and the number of generations effected because of his teaching and preaching cannot be determined. The number would be great if it could be calculated. Only God knows the answer.

The following pages include the physical plan as it was designed and used. The only sad thing is the home that is pictured caught fire and was destroyed in 2018. The picture is found in Appendix D.

The joyous news is the school which was closed in 1887 was reopened in 1946 and is still operational today. In 2023, the enrollment in twelve grades is well over 400 students.

A recent publication, "The Mars Hill Story: 150 Years of Love, Mercy, Peace, and Truth" by Nathan Guy tells the story of the current operations. To get the feel for the impact the school has had, read the books by F.D. Srygley, Emma Page Larimore, and Nathan Guy.

F.D. Srygley says on page 97 of *Smiles and Tears – Larimore and His Boys*, "His (T.B. Larimore) effort to establish Mars Hill College may be regarded as the greatest enterprise of his

life.” Then F.D. Srygley gives a detailed account of how the college was built, the campus expanded, and all debts paid for...a big miracle.

We began the history of Reconstruction in Tennessee from May 1865 to April 1870 with the life of T.B. Larimore as he began preaching and teaching. On August 30, 1868, Esther Gresham and T.B. Larimore were married near Florence, Alabama. In later years, T.B. Larimore dictated to Emma Page Larimore the following characteristics of Esther.

*“She was bright and beautiful and as good as she could be. Withal she was an incessant worker – not a club woman, not a meddler in other people’s matters, and as far from a gadabout as possible.”*

She evidently had no personality to want these things in her life. She wanted her husband to be about his work of preaching and teaching and she would do all she could to advance his work. That became their work.

Chapter 23 of *Smiles and Tears – Larimore and His Boys* by F.D. Srygley describes Esther Larimore better than anyone can. Her qualities as a mother and housewife are recognized as the most important comments are directed throughout the book that added to the work of T.B. Larimore. She was a major worker for the day-to-day operations of Mars Hill Academy. She was a major personality for the school because of what she contributed to the students. One of the most important factors when T.B. Larimore was on the road doing evangelistic work and his daily preparations for his sermons, even at Mars Hill or at home after Mars Hill was closed, she was the go-to person in the family.

She taught her children that the family unit was the backdrop of the evangelistic work of T.B. Larimore. The picture the public saw had to reflect the preaching of their father.

One last comment about Esther and the family needs to include Nancy. During the formative years of Esther’s and T.B.’s marriage, Nancy Larimore was a positive influence. Because of her age and wisdom based on life experiences, she had to be an extremely positive influence on Esther and T.B.’s marriage.

So, with this support system, T.B. Larimore established the school, “not to make money but as a means of building up the church,” according to Chapter 15 of F.D. Srygley’s book. It operated for the school year beginning January 1, 1871 until the end of the school year in 1887. It was a success and reached the goal that had been set. It operated and ended without any debt on the books. At this point, T.B. Larimore returns to evangelism and teaching in other places.

The two biographies of T.B. Larimore’s life covered by F.D. Srygley and Emma Page Larimore explain the day-to-day operations of the school. The best way to explain the objectives that were set in the operations of the school is to analyze the parts established by Larimore.

If a student came to Mars Hill, he could define the subjects he wanted to study in six categories – primary education, preparatory education, scientific and literary education, business education, vocal music, and biblical education designed for preparation in the ministry. The student’s day was outlined for every hour – beginning at 4:00 AM and lasting until 9:00 PM, six and a half days a week with half a day off on Saturday.

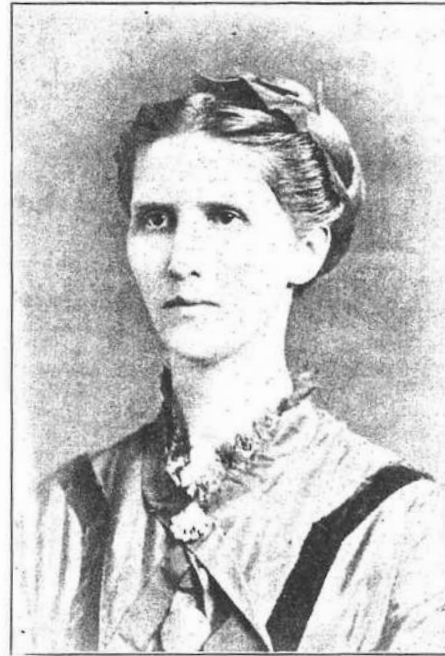
The students learned the importance of a disciplined life. There were times for study, for learning, for singing, for eating, and for sleeping. A student never had to wonder what he

was to be doing. T.B. Larimore led with this discipline and the students found his kind ways and soft discipline impressions they carried all of their lives.

Larimore and Esther sacrificed for Mars Hill. The students were very aware of this. They served the students in every way. Esther was tireless in seeing that the meals were prepared for students and her family.

This is the appropriate time to consider the four women that were most important in Larimore's life: Nancy Larimore, Mollie Larimore, Esther Larimore, and Emma Larimore.

Nancy Larimore was the major influence on the character of Larimore. When he grew up to manhood, she had the most important role. She had more influence on his character than any one person. Her strengths were an even, motherly personality that handled all circumstances. It is not stated in any literature, but she had the strength of her father, George Larimore, for all of the negative years with her husband. George was a decision maker that always included Nancy and the kids. This is best seen when he decided to make the move to the Sequatchie Valley. He and Mary gave independence to Nancy and the kids and ultimately gave them the ability to go back out on their own when they moved to the house next to the Bells and Dr. Smith. This gave Nancy the ability to exercise decision-making without mother and daddy.



MRS. T. B. LARIMORE.  
("The Mother of Mars' Hill.")

In all of the literature, Nancy is seen as a person who protected the kids and made good decisions for all of the family. This trait is passed on to T.B. Larimore and is one of the most important traits in his life. He knew how to make good decisions in adverse, oftentimes very adverse, conditions. T.B. Larimore was placed in circumstances which required more maturity than his physical age required.

The second lady in his life was Mollie Larimore. He knew her all of his life. From the day she was born in 1852 until the day he died. Mollie was always there. In her early life, T.B. Larimore was her protector, educator, big brother, ideal role model, confidant, etc. They had a most special relationship, especially for the last 20 years of Nancy Larimore's life, protected by Mollie and R. P. Meeks. T.B. Larimore was always coming in and out of the Meeks' household. After Esther Larimore died, there were about two years when Henderson, Tennessee was a little bit like home base for T.B. Larimore. Mollie accepted the role of a major female figure in her brother's life. She was very busy in her husband's life as minister and teacher in Henderson, her children's lives, and in the process of writing *Hearthstone Echoes*, which showed her creative skills.

Little is known about the latter part of R. P. Meeks and Mollie's lives. After conflict in Henderson, R.P. and Mollie moved to Humbolt, Tennessee for R.P. to minister in the church there. T.B. Larimore died in California in 1929. Mollie died in 1940. She and R.P. were buried in Humbolt.

The third and most important lady in T.B. Larimore's life was Julia Esther Gresham Larimore. She was born and lived her early life outside Florence, Alabama. She was born on July 11, 1845. She married T.B. Larimore on August 30, 1868. She died after an extended illness on March 4, 1907. So, T.B. Larimore and Esther had 39 years to work together. For the most descriptive ways of explaining her life, the books written by F.D. Srygley and Emma Page Larimore are the most important.

From day one of their married life, T.B. Larimore and Esther were a team working in God's kingdom. Her personality, education, physical traits, and character traits were very compatible with T.B. Larimore and the ministry they had together. A person cannot complement T.B. Larimore's record of success in God's kingdom without complementing Esther's role. When he needed to be gone, Esther filled his role as decision-maker. While Mars Hill was in operation, she was a major helper and decision-maker.

In *Life, Letters, and Sermons of T.B. Larimore* page 16, the family of T.B. Larimore and Esther is given.

*"During the existence of the school, seven children were born to them: Mary Delilah, or 'Dedie' as she is familiarly called; Granville Lipscomb; Theophilus Brown, called 'Toppie'; William Herschell, known as 'Herschell'; Julia Esther, called 'Ettie'; Andrew Virgil, or 'Virgil'; and a baby girl, Minnie Belle, 'whose span of life was so short that she can scarcely be said to have lived in this world at all'."*

During the years of operation (1870–1887) of the school at Mars Hill, T.B. Larimore, Esther, and family had a major impact on God's kingdom with the development of preachers for the kingdom by the continuous preaching of T.B. Larimore and the multiplied impact of workers in the kingdom. Probably not enough is said of the students that secured extremely good educations that never went into the ministry. F.D. Srygley mentions the preachers in Chapter 17 and 18 in *Smiles and Tears – Larimore and His Boys*. But it is the multitude of students that got their education at Mars Hill that had a major impact on the churches that they worked in as elders, deacons, member wives, Sunday school leaders, etc. Every one of the students not only remembers the roles of T.B. Larimore but also Esther.

A person has to read the books of F.D. Srygley and Emma Page Larimore to appreciate all of the details of Esther and T.B. Larimore's lives.

The fourth lady that was most important was Emma Page Larimore, second wife of T.B. Larimore. Emma Page was born in Donaldson, Tennessee on September 14, 1855. She married T.B. Larimore on January 1, 1911. She died in California on April 23, 1943.

In 1900, T.B. Larimore was in a long series of meetings in Nashville. F.D. Srygley decided to hire Emma Page to take the sermons down in short hand and use these to place in a book of sections dealing with T.B. Larimore's life and these sermons. Emma had heard T.B. Larimore preach on a couple of occasions but had never met him or had any occasion to be in his presence. At that time, Emma was a secretary in a law office during the day and she was transcribing at night.

The book by F.D. Srygley was published in 1900 and shortly thereafter he died. Emma continued to take shorthand notes during 1901–1903 and another book was published in 1910. In the process, Emma and T.B. Larimore had a relationship of editor to writer. Both T.B. Larimore and Emma had working relationships with the Gospel Advocate.





THE FAMILY UNBROKEN.



*T.B. and Nancy  
Mars Hill, 1885*

## CHAPTER XI

# R.P. and Mollie (Larimore) Meeks Family

(1873-1940)

**T**True to the objective of this book, the relationship between T.B. Larimore, R. P. Meeks, and Mollie Meeks was the longest lasting of all in T.B. Larimore's life. Because Mollie was the younger sister of Larimore and because of his guidance in the life of R.P., T.B. always saw his role in the Meeks household as being special.

In the beginning of R.P. Meeks' book *At the Feet of Jesus*, 1898, Mollie Meeks gives a 17-page history of R.P. Meeks' life up to 1900.

As a young child, R.P. was noted for five things: he was bashful, inquisitive, awkward, known for saying what he thought, and for believing all he heard. At 17, he was baptized by R.W. Michie at Clear Creek, two miles from home. In his 18th year, he went to school to Professor B.H. Malone at Pebble Hill Academy two miles south of the Meeks farm. Next, he went to school under T.B. Larimore at Kendrick, Mississippi for four and a half months, then one session to T.B. Larimore at Mars Hill Academy, then the school year of 1871-1872 at Bethany College in West Virginia, and then back to Mars Hill for instruction and to teach for the total of five sessions.

While at Mars Hill, R.P. met Mollie and they married on September 18, 1873. They moved to the Meeks farm for the next five years. Then they lived another eight years more in one of the other houses on the farm. During this time, he had major health problems with his voice.

F.D. Srygley wrote about the preachers that went through the years at Mars Hill and his words on R.P. Meeks are very revealing. This is a condensed version of what is told about Meeks in Chapter 17 of *Smiles and Tears – Larimore and His Boys*.

R.P. Meeks is described as a man of ‘splendid talents’ and ‘thorough education’. He would have been as successful as T.B. Larimore if he had not been afflicted with throat and voice problems. F.D. Srygley says that Meeks, by 1900, had baptized hundreds of people and helped to establish scores of good churches. Most of his efforts had been in West Tennessee, north Alabama, and north Mississippi. In 1887, the Meeks family moved from Stantonville to Jackson, Tennessee. He was the minister for a year at Jackson and then he was asked to teach at the Tennessee Christian College in Henderson. When F.D. Srygley wrote in 1900, R.P. was the head of the Bible Department. He also mentions in the article that it was “no unusual thing for Meeks to baptize 30–50 people during a meeting”.

Mollie Meeks characterized R.P. as the “Noble Son of Christian Parents”. These parents were John Henderson and Miss Ellie Meeks.

Everyone is always impressed by the strength and endurance of T.B. Larimore. The same can be seen in his younger sister Mollie. Her family included R.P. and three children: George Larimore Meeks, Ella Pearle Meeks, and John Henderson Meeks. Her children were disciplined and productive in their lives. George L. died an early death at 19 years of age from typhoid fever. He was educated in McNairy County, in Henderson, and at the University of Kentucky. He died at home in Henderson.

A daughter, Ella Pearle Meeks Baldy, was born in 1878 in McNairy County on the farm. She was educated in McNairy County and was married to W.H. Baldy. They lived in Henderson and Brownsville, Tennessee. She died in August 1958.

A second son, John Henderson Meeks, was born in 1883 and died in 1937. He also lived on the farm in McNairy County until the family moved to Jackson when he was three. He then moved to Henderson where he was educated in the Chester County system. His education led him to obey the gospel at age 10. He studied business in college. He died at the relatively young age of 54.

Mollie Larimore Meeks was a good wife, mother, and educated lady. During her life, she supported her husband’s ministry, her brother’s ministry, and her mother’s aging life, and showed her own abilities in writing the book *Hearthstone Echoes* in 1901. After leaving Henderson, the church in Humbolt, Tennessee employed R.P. as their minister and Mollie had the challenge of being the minister’s wife. R.P. died March 11, 1916 and Mollie died at age 88 in 1940. We are not privileged to know the family history after the move from Henderson to Gibson County.

Author’s Note: Included in the history of R.P. Meeks is a letter from E.M. Wheatley, the author’s uncle. He was influenced by R.P. Meeks and spent his entire life in ministry with 51 years of service.

Shortly after R.P. Meeks wrote his book in 1898, Mollie published a book *Hearthstone Echoes* in 1901. Remember that Mollie’s mother lived from January 3, 1814 to September 2, 1903 so Nancy Larimore was 90 years old when she died and had lived her last 20 years with Mollie and R.P. in Henderson.

In *Hearthstone Echoes* there are two sketches that are important: “Grandmamma” (pp. 384–389) is the tribute of Mollie to her mother and “Unequally Yoked” (pp. 37–80). The short story “Unequally Yoked” is an allegory based on a true story. The first sentence is, “Children, be quiet, please, and listen to a short story founded on truth.” If this story is based on a set of true events, Mollie is maybe telling a story that Nancy had told about her father. Remember that Mollie was born in April 1852 and the family was moving to Coop’s

Cove from Jefferson County. So, Mollie never knew her daddy. This may be Mollie's way of telling the general public who her dad was without saying his name.

Mollie Meeks, like her brother, was a person of strong character. During her life, she was also a major factor in R.P. ministry in Jackson, Henderson, and Humbolt. When they lived in Stantonville, R.P.'s would be gone on evangelistic trips, and she carried multiple roles on the farm for the John Henderson Meeks family, her mother Nancy, and the role of wife.



*Rufus Polk Meeks*



*Mollie Larimore Meeks*



*George L. Meeks*

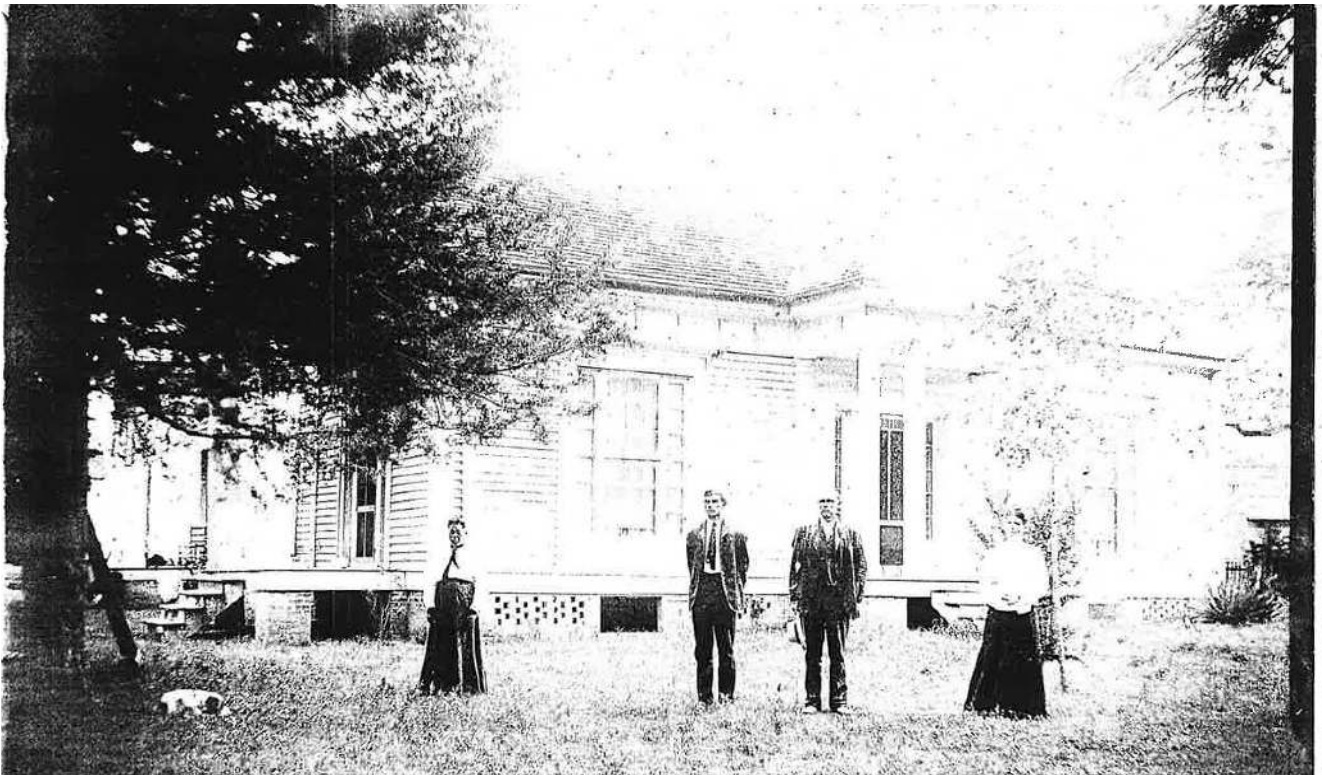


*Ella Pearle Meeks  
Mr. and Mrs. W.H. Baldy*



*John H. Meeks*





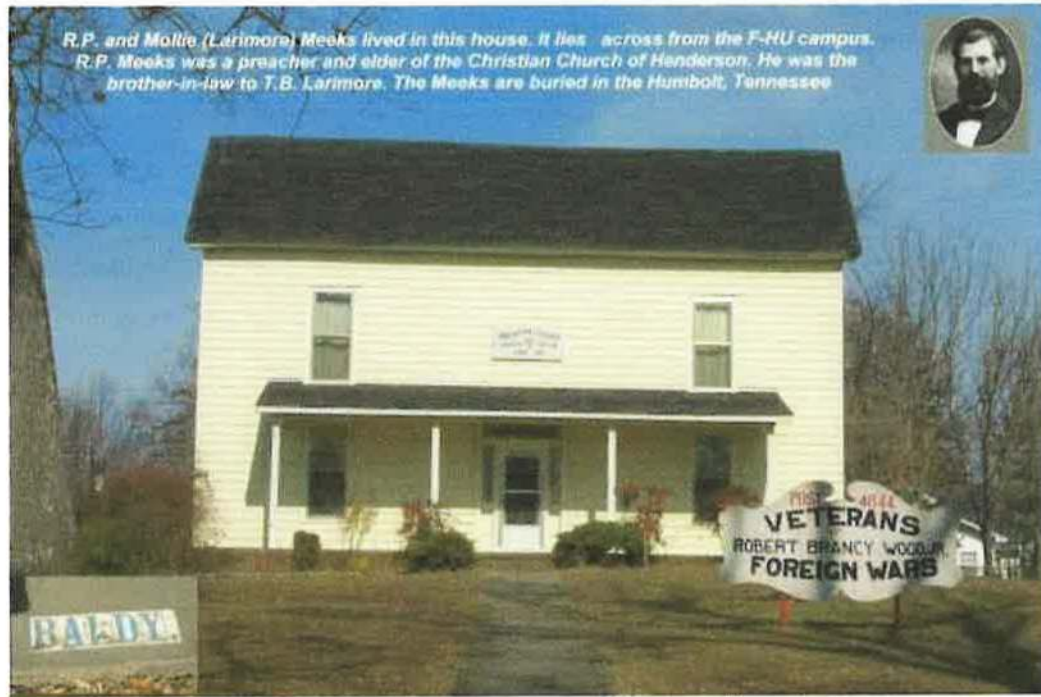
*John Henderson Meeks Farm Home  
"Miss Ellie", T.B. Larimore, R.P. Meeks, Mollie Meeks*



*Georgia Roberson College*



*1st Christian Church  
Henderson, Tennessee*



**Home Of R.P. & Mollie Meeks**



## CHAPTER XII

# T.B. Larimore and R.P. Meeks

## *Influences on Cookeville, Tennessee*

**T**he history of the Restoration Church in Cookeville can be dated back to 1871. The method and the time for the creation of the church is very similar to the Clear Creek Church in West Tennessee.

After the Civil War, many people were looking for spiritual answers to their lives. Cookeville is located approximately 80 miles east of Nashville. The politics of Tennessee have always been democratic in West Tennessee, a mixture in Middle Tennessee, and the further east a person travels, the more conservative Republican politics is dominant.

Religion tends to be somewhat the same. So, the Restoration Movement that can be dated to the early 1800s in West Virginia, Pennsylvania, Ohio, North Carolina, and Illinois spread to the south after the war.

So the history of the church in Cookeville began from individuals with different backgrounds from surrounding counties. After it was established, but before 1900, preachers such as R.P. Meeks, T.B. Larimore, McQuiddy, F.D. Srygley, and others worked to better make the church succeed. In the late 1800s, members began to discuss the need for a Christian school in Cookeville. A new church building on Broad Street was designed, land bought, and constructed by 1909. During the process, Larimore was discussed as a person to be the leader of the college. The name of a college was to be Larimore College, but Larimore suggested that would not be a good name. He suggested a generic name such as Dixie College.

## Dates to Remember for the Creation of School, Cookeville, Tennessee

- July 10, 1909 – T.B. Larimore accepts the presidency of a proposed school in Cookeville.
- July – December 1910 – Broken arm is healing in cast. July 10, 1910 T.B. Larimore is 67 years old. When he writes back from Louisville to the Gospel Advocate, he says in December that his arm is healed from a break five months before. Of all the biography of his life, this is the longest and probably most serious injury to this date.
- October 1910 – He is at a resort hotel in Bloomington Springs, Tennessee, close to Baxter and Cookeville, Tennessee. In his words he would be there “indefinitely”, in other words, at least until his arm is completely healed.
- January 1, 1911 – Marries Emma Page
- 1911 – Resigns from the presidency of the proposed school
- November 1911 – T.B. Larimore goes back to Cookeville

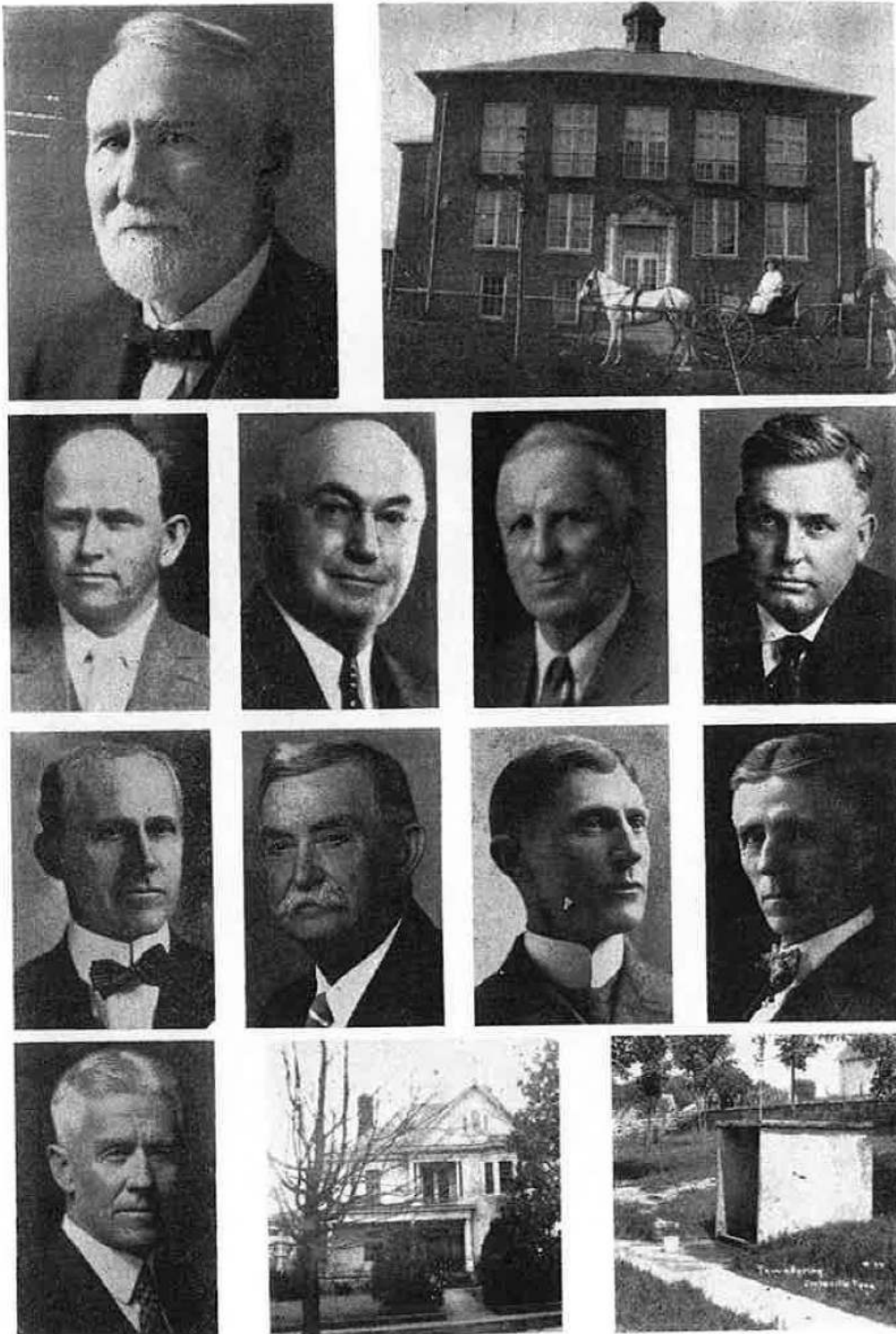
## Creation of the School

- Proposed Trustees – February 3, 1910
- The 10 Trustees are chosen. Mr. Dow is the only person added that was not on the list of 33.
- All of the information on the formation of Dixie University comes from Austin Wheeler Smith’s book and the archives of the school.
- The objective to be reached, the faculty, and the administrative staff are set.

Take note that the basis of the school in its infancy is much different from Mars Hill School, which was created and operated, in 1871.



*Austin Wheeler Smith's Book*



**DIXIE UNIVERSITY (COLLEGE) AND ITS BOARD**

First row (bottom), left to right: G. A. Maxwell; Jeremiah Whitson Home; Town Spring. Second row, left to right: Robert L. Farley; Thomas D. Ford; Gideon H. Lowe; A. G. Maxwell. Third row, left to right: W. D. Boyd; James N. Cox; J. B. Dow; J. C. Elrod. Fourth row, left to right: Jeremiah Whitson; Dixie University (College).

## Minutes of February 3, 1910 Meeting for Proposed Trustees of Larimore University

Proposed trustees mentioned in a Gospel Advocate article in Nashville, Tennessee on August 18, 1910. On this date, the name was changed to Dixie University

1. G.A. Maxwell, Cookeville, Tennessee
2. G.H. Lowe, Cookeville, Tennessee
3. R.L. Farley, Cookeville, Tennessee
4. J.B.S. Martin, Cookeville, Tennessee
5. J.N. Cox, Cookeville, Tennessee
6. J.C. Elrod, Cookeville, Tennessee
7. W.B. Boyd, Cookeville, Tennessee
8. T.D. Ford, Cookeville, Tennessee
9. J. Whitson, Cookeville, Tennessee
10. T.B. Larimore, Mars Hill, Alabama
11. J.C. McQuiddy, Nashville, Tennessee
12. F.B. Srygley, Nashville, Tennessee
13. Frank Dribell, Nashville, Tennessee
14. W.V. Davidson, Nashville, Tennessee
15. I.F. Bonner, Nashville, Tennessee
16. W.N. Billingsley, Spencer, Tennessee
17. J.R. Tubb, Sparta, Tennessee
18. J.T. Anderson, Sparta, Tennessee
19. J. Walling, McMinnville, Tennessee
20. J.A. Williams, Gainesboro, Tennessee
21. S.B. Fowler, Gainesboro, Tennessee
22. W.L. Brown, Celina, Tennessee
23. L.S. Gillentine, Lafayette, Tennessee
24. Alex Reed, Carthage, Tennessee
25. Joe S. Warlick, Dallas, Texas
26. Price Billingsley, Abeline, Texas
27. Landon J. Jackson, Riverside, California
28. Gee A. Clingman, Detroit, Michigan
29. S.D. McCravy, Atlanta, Georgia
30. M.C. Kurfrees, Louisville, Kentucky
31. T.M. Darnall, Corinth, Mississippi
32. C.M. Southall, Florence, Alabama
33. Jack Neece, Nashville, Arkansas

## Ten Directors for the Board of Trustees

1. Jeremiah Whitson
2. W.B. Boyd
3. James N. Cox
4. J.B. Dow *\*only person not on the list of 33*
5. J.C. Elrod
6. Robert L. Farley
7. Thomas D. Ford
8. Gideon H. Lowe
9. A.G. Maxwell
10. G.A. Maxwell

## The Decision for T.B. Larimore (1909–1910)

In July 1909, T.B. Larimore turned 66 years old. The decision to help create a school in Cookeville had to be a very difficult one. On July 10, 1909, he accepts the presidency if the directors will change the name to Dixie College.

Since Mars Hill was begun in 1871, approximately 37 years have passed. The decisions made in 1871 when Mars Hill began classes were made mostly by two people. T.B. Larimore and Esther were young and the youthful energy that is displayed in the Mars Hill chapter is not available in the Dixie College model. Consider these events:

- The basis for Mars Hill was the development of students after the Civil War, especially students that wanted to go into ministry. Would this happen in Cookeville?
- Putnam County students were offered a school in Baxter, which began in 1909, the Baxter Seminary. When T.B. Larimore spent a summer/fall at the Bloomington Springs Hotel nursing a broken arm, he was within a very few miles of the Baxter Seminary. Did he want to compete with this school? Was the concept of the school in Cookeville anything like the one at Mars Hill?
- In *The Story of Tennessee Tech*, Austin Wheeler Smith paints a picture of Cookeville as, “a mud bound, sleepy little village in 1890. With the advent of the railroad, Cookeville became an enterprising little town, and with the advent of good roads, became a rapidly expanding, thriving, and advancing young city.” This is the positive.
- Prior to 1909 with the start of the Baxter Seminary, schools were started and had closed for various reasons: Andrew College, Bloomington Seminary, Washington Academy, Yeargan Select School, ended in 1904. So, is the community ready for a second learning institution? If so, what kind? This was yet to be decided.

With this information in mind and knowing the experience, age, and wisdom of T.B. Larimore, he decided to resign the presidency of the proposed school. The overriding logic he used must have included the following:

- Who are the decision-makers?

- What is the background of each and how will these backgrounds add to the objectives to be reached?
- T.B. Larimore, do you remember all of the energy that it took at Mars Hill?
- Will the monies and debt be a constant factor? Can you work within the framework laid out for you? T.B. Larimore, remember your statement to F.D. Srygley, "Debt and drunkenness" two major problems by other people have plagued your early life.
- The energies of Esther and T.B. Larimore have to come from someone. Will they be bought? Will that make a success or failure for the project?

When these questions are answered in prayer to God then what is the answer. Theophilus what is the best use of your time and energy for the remainder of your life? Considering the proposal of a new life with Emma Page. What is the role of evangelism? Should you consider a preacher's school in Florida?

With all considerations, T.B. Larimore resigns from the Dixie College presidency. He decides to marry Emma Page and return to evangelism. The next major project is working with the church in Murfreesboro. Just maybe, God can use him to rebuild some of the war destruction in the two battles he saw.





## Dixie College Success

In 1912, W.D. Boyd became the first president of Dixie University, a position he held until the fall of 1914. The major force for the creation of the school came from Jere Whitson. He served as Chairman of the Board of Directors during his life until the establishment of a Tennessee Polytechnic Institute.

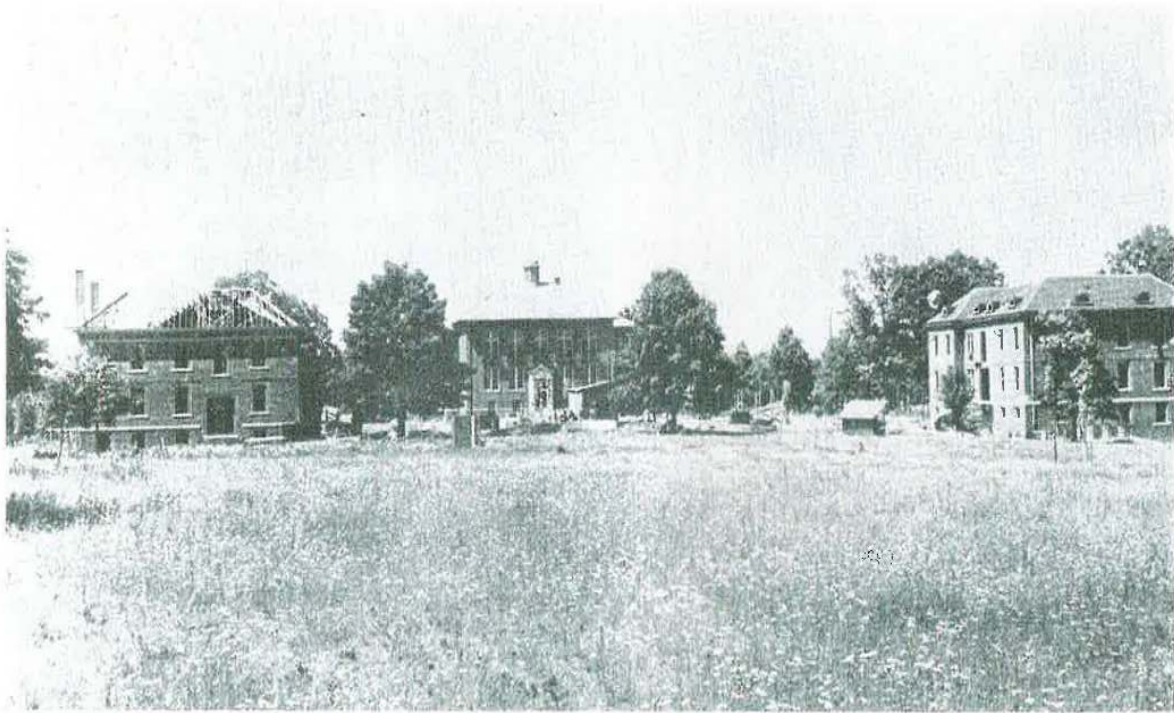
After years of political discussion, the Dixie University Board entered into a contract with the state of Tennessee Board of Education on August 5, 1915. The first school year began in 1916. The following were people in teaching and administration.

President – Thomas A. Early  
 English – C.D. Danile, Dean  
 Mathematics – F.C. Lowery  
 History and Civics – A.W. Smith  
 Manual Arts – Otis C. Kirkman  
 Science – L.J. Netto  
 Agriculture – Albert Barnett  
 Agriculturist – Blair Harrison  
 High School Department – T.K. Sick  
 Home Economics – Grace E. Frysinger  
 Principal of Practice School – M.T. Carlisle  
 Domestic Science – Vena May Martin  
 Bursar, Bookkeeping – W.M. Sherrill  
 Secretary, Institutional Music – Helen Hawkins  
 Matron, Director of Physical Education – Alice Hanger  
 Sara Donnelle Griffin

The University in 2023 has a student body of approximately 10,000 in all levels of education – undergraduate, graduate, and PhD programs. Main fields of study are engineering, business, education, science, and social science.

In 100 years, the University has been at the forefront of educating their students to be viable members of all levels of society. The U.S. Space Program, the businesses throughout the world, and the list goes on of the success of the university. Has God blessed this University? Yes. Do you believe in the providence of God?

For the complete story of Tennessee Technological University prior to 1957, the book written by Austin Wheeler Smith tells all. It was published by McQuiddy Printing Company, Nashville, Tennessee in October 1957.



Tennessee Tech 1916. Center: The Dixie College Building erected in 1912 which became the Administration Building of Tech in 1916. On left: West Hall, the first men's dormitory. On right: East Hall, the first women's dormitory. Both erected in 1916. The three buildings and a twenty-five acre campus was all of Tech's material possessions in 1916. Its greatest asset, THE DETERMINATION of those who were responsible for its establishment and of those who directed its academic expansion to develop it into an outstanding school of technology, is not shown in this picture but is clearly retrospectively portrayed in the bird's eye view of the campus made in 1956. In 1916 the campus was a wilderness of beautiful daisies which grew in abundance for many years where buildings now stand. On a normal school day in the fall of 1916, old pictures show that not more than three or four cars were parked on the campus. Forty years later, on October 3, 1956 at 10:00 AM, which was an average school day parking, 1,120 cars of most all makes valued at \$2,240,000 were parked on Tech's campus. The babe in the daisy field in 1916 had become a young giant among a sea of cars.

During Larimore's time in Cookeville, 1908-1910, there were strong relationships developed between Larimore and the church families. In 1908, Roselle Pendergrass's mother and father were both baptized by Larimore. The picture of Rozelle and T.B. is shown. Rozelle is quoted in some of her writings that on one occasion Brother Larimore had preached two identical sermons. His response back to her was "It was a good one, wasn't it?" This was during the opening meeting from December 31, 1908 to March 1910, a total of 13 weeks when Larimore preached 91 sermons.

Another strong relationship was shared with a Cookeville attorney and Judge, Thompson Luther Denny. He and his wife Fannie had six children. The last child was named Theophilus Larimore Denny, I. T.L. Denny, I. had a child T.L. Denny, II. Fannie died in 1908 and Thompson Luther died in 1911.

The Darwin family was a life long companion to Larimore in correspondence.

The pictures shown here depict a young Rozelle Pendergrass and the family of Thompson Luther Denny before Theophilus Larimore Denny was born.



BROTHER LARIMORE AND ROZELLE.



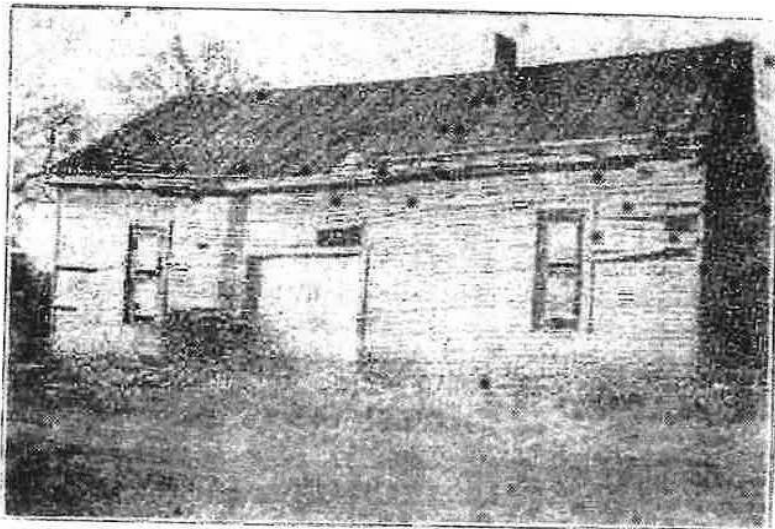
Family of Thompson Luther Denny  
Picture taken ca. 1890

Sitting: Thompson Luther Denny, s/o Jonathan Denny & Agnes T. Winfree holding his daughter Clara Lucy Denny who md Elisha A. Conger; Frances "Fannie" Jane Ford, d/o Charles Randolph Ford & Henrietta Pheobe Draper.

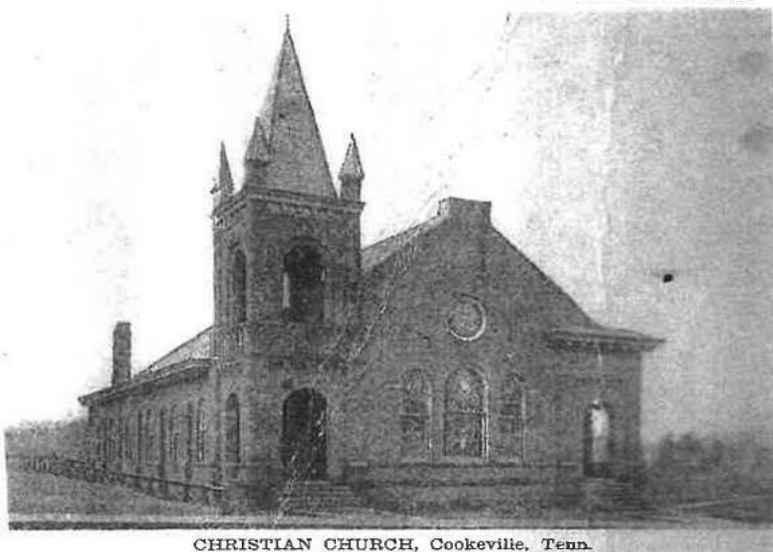
Standing: Leslie Luther Denny md Nallie Naoma Trousdale; Marguerite "Maggie" Black Denny, md Oscar King Holladay; Minnie Belle Denny, md 1<sup>st</sup> Hasker Michael Jared & md 2<sup>nd</sup> George E. Snyder; Cora Agnes Denny, md William D. McCluen.

Picture courtesy of Nancy Jane Clark Childress  
& Jean Hudson.





*N. Washington at Freeze Street  
1st Building, Late 1800's*



CHRISTIAN CHURCH, Cookeville, Tenn.

*1909 Broad Street  
2nd Building*



*Preparing for Conference - Whitson's Yard Early 1900's  
Cookeville, Tennessee*

*Two people identified: Jere Whitson on left; Harding second from left*



## CHAPTER XIII

# Marriage to Emma Page Larimore

On January 1, 1911 Emma Page married T.B. Larimore. For the remainder of his life, Larimore enjoyed the company and skills of Emma.

Their lives together are well documented. After the decision not to be the head-master for the school in Cookeville, they leave on additional evangelistic tours. The major effort of Emma are the books she edited about Larimore's life. He is 68 years old in July 1911.

When F.D. Srygley was compiling his books, Emma and Srygley were both working for the Gospel Advocate in Nashville. When Srygley died on August 1, 1900, Emma began to work in the documentation of Larimore's sermons. So by 1911, she was very familiar with Larimore and his preaching style.

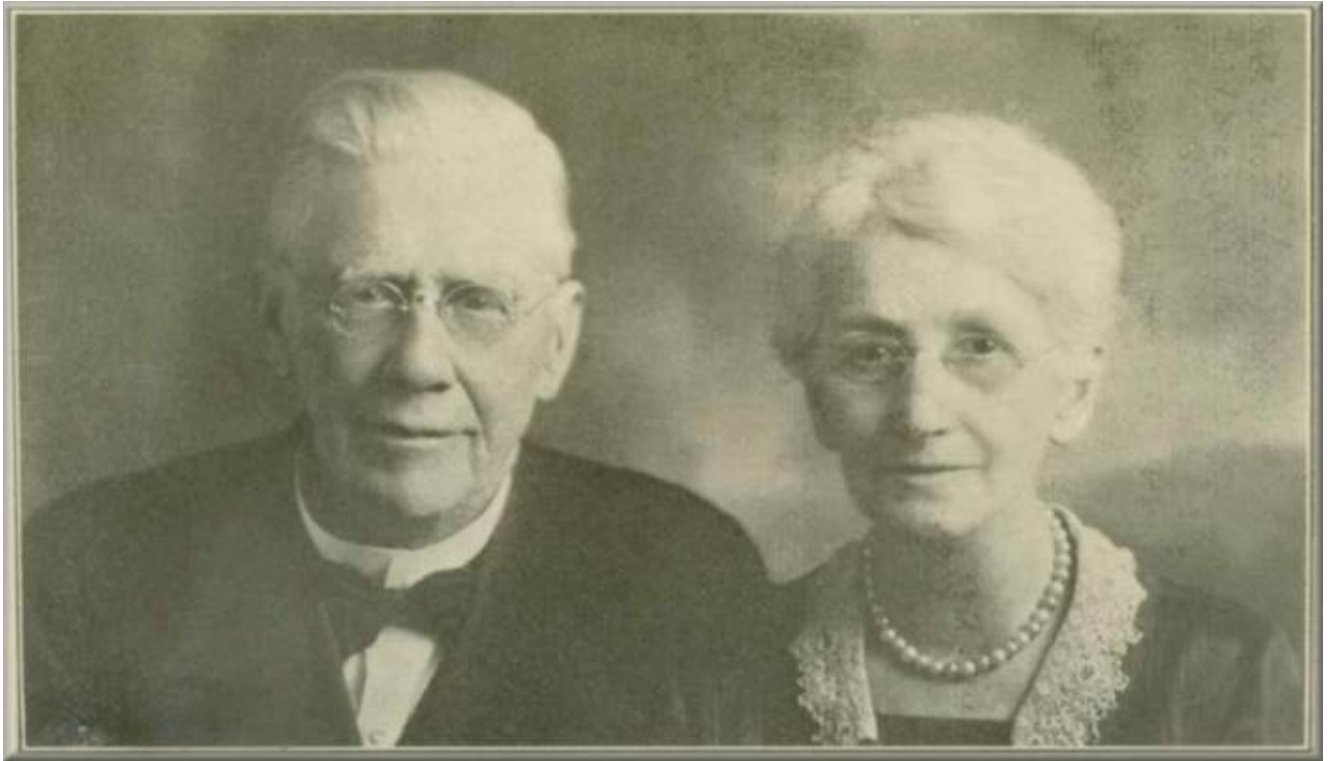
The effectiveness of Larimore's style of preaching is documented by Emma. Not only do the books she edited contain the analysis of scriptures, she was very adept at showing the interaction of Larimore with his audiences. His kindness, which was a direct result of the war stress, was very apparent. He spoke directly to his audience and was very successful. Remember that Larimore started his preaching in Kentucky, then trained under the Fanning brothers, so from 1867 to 1911 he had developed his own style.

We know the background of Larimore so much better because of Emma. Srygley wrote the main events prior to 1900. Emma wrote the next years from 1900-1929. So her books contain additional history and especially pictures of his friends and family.

In Volume 3 of *Letters and Sermons of T.B. Larimore* Emma ends the book with a sermon on eternity. Larimore uses the following scripture for his text:

*“For this saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name in Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.” Isaiah 57:15*

Only the individual who hears the Word of God and responds as the scriptures dictate will have the contrite heart. It is very appropriate for Emma to end the last book of *Letters and Sermons* with this sermon on eternity.



*Mr. and Mrs. T.B. Larimore  
The last picture, November 1928*

## CHAPTER XIV

# Conclusion

Can we answer the question of ‘what made T.B. Larimore do what he did’?

For a person born in 1843 and lived until 1929, covering the United States and part of the world with the Word of God; each phase of his life led him to personal habits that made him an unusual decision-maker.

The model of his life that anyone can apply to his own life is the discipline of applying scriptures in practical day-to-day living.

Note these lessons T.B. Larimore learns:

- From his grandfather, he learned the importance of a father figure to the family unit. George Larimore took care of his family. He was truly a pioneer in the young country. Without any acclaim he went about his disciplined life as a farmer to do good.
- From his mother, he learned wisdom. She struggled in life because of the lack of a soulmate. It is not known who her husband was, but it was known that he had a distorted sense of values. That ended in 1852 and she had to become a strong mother and father image to all of the children.
- When Dr. Bell became a neighbor to T.B. Larimore, a positive influence was seen on a day-to-day basis. No clues were given to the amount of time, advice, resources, etc. that Dr. Bell and T.B. Larimore shared, but it can be gleaned that the strong relationship he had with Dr. Bell had a lasting effect. This was in the teen years of a young boy who had a lot of questions.
- It has been overlooked in the books, but close reading will indicate the powerful influence of Dr. Goforth on T.B. Larimore. The two years at Mossy Creek were special. The environment for learning at Mossy Creek was just exactly what T.B. Larimore needed. He learned the importance of personal discipline. He was in a day-to-day environment where he knew exactly what he needed to do in order to meet his goals. When Dr. Goforth is characterized as a person of ‘high mental energy’ and ‘rugged strength’, these qualities had to be seen by the teenager. As a teacher, Dr. Goforth set the example: discipline in the daily routine; discipline in studies of the dead languages

and scriptures; looking at self-analysis of right and wrong; and looking for the application of scriptures for a person's life.

- Next, the powerful influence of C.C. Spiller during the two years of war greatly affected T.B. Larimore. He learned the importance of listening to orders, obeying those orders, the importance of self-reliance and decision-making. This was learned from a man of total independence. Yes, C.C. Spiller had bosses that told him the battle plans, but he executed those orders in his own style that showed years of decision-making.
- The years that followed the capture of T.B. Larimore began to show his decision-making. When he saw the conditions in the Sequatchie River Valley, he did not fight the change in his circumstances. His decision-making took over and he gathered his family together and left for peaceful conditions in Kentucky.
- Resources were running low, and the territory of peaceful travel carried the family into Kentucky out of Tennessee. Then, the influence of Christian people began to help the Larimores. He was no longer a teenager struggling with life. Now he was the decision-maker. The family unit knew what tomorrow would bring. They knew the importance of a Christian life as a family unit. Positive influencers from the Campbells, the Presbyterian minister, the church leaders, and the entire community, show T.B. Larimore in a very positive lifestyle.
- T.B. Larimore's response to these two years in Kentucky were a commitment to Christ, decisions for the immediate direction of his life, and decisions for the household as the decision-maker. This time in Kentucky must have been a time of reflection. The positive characteristics of his personality have developed and grew stronger. This is true for his life and the life of his younger sister, Mollie.
- After these experiences, T.B. Larimore went back to the school environment in Nashville. Tolbert and A.J. Fanning convinced T.B. Larimore he needed to be better educated. His background and his clarity of purpose showed through. He knew what to do and how to do it.

The remainder of T.B. Larimore's life was the use of his talents to develop the Christian backgrounds of other people. Now he develops his abilities to preach and teach God's word. No matter what the circumstances, he spent his life in the development of Christians out of the people he met.

In the summer of 1867, Robert Blake Trimble and T.B. Larimore went on the road in Middle Tennessee and tried to offset the negative effects of the war. Then, after another visit to Franklin College, he took a tour to Northern Alabama.

The first major friend and disciple that he made was in Rock Creek, Alabama. He was a young man, 12-13 years old, F.D. Srygley. He was born on December 22, 1856, and died on August 1, 1900. During his lifetime, he went to Mars Hill school to T.B. Larimore and wrote four books: *Larimore and His Boys*, *Seventy Years in Dixie*, *Biographies and Sermons*, and *Letters and Sermons of T.B. Larimore*. He was a preacher and evangelist and worked with the Gospel Advocate Company in Nashville. T.B. Larimore delivered a loving discourse at F.D. Srygley's funeral in Nashville. The correspondence between the two men was a lifetime of love.



The second major life impacted by T.B. Larimore was in the summer of 1868 when he married Esther Gresham. The lives of Larimore and Esther were documented as total energies in God's kingdom.

The third major life was that of John Henderson Meeks. We have studied the pioneer life of John Henderson Meeks and concluded that he was more than a farmer with a huge plantation. He was more than a politician, and more than just a Christian. He was a strong influence on all the people around him. He knew how to handle adversity and he knew how to use wealth.

The fourth and fifth major lives Larimore impacted were R.P. and Mollie Meeks. As a family unit, their greatest impact was their time at Mars Hill. The education of R.P. Meeks truly reflected T.B. Larimore. Meeks' ability to teach and preach was a direct result of what he learned from T.B. Larimore. Mollie Larimore Meeks was the same. She learned all of her life from her brother. She learned how to express herself as a result of her mother Nancy and her brother. This was in addition to the influence of R.P. Meeks, her husband.

The last of the group was the life of Emma Page. When Emma began working in 1900 until the time of Larimore's death, her life took new meaning because of the work at the Gospel Advocate and as Larimore's second wife. She brought her own skills to the marriage and learned the decision-making process from Larimore.

Other lives were just as reflective of T.B. Larimore's talents as these mentioned. However, the kingdom of God knows who and how much of an impact the total was during his life and since. The ripple effect is still happening in the beginning of the second century.

Now the basic question ends the book about Larimore. How does one apply what he learned and applied in his life? In God's kingdom, the Holy Spirit will interact with all members to channel their talents, skills, opportunities, and total lives to accomplish the God-given objectives for their lives. God wants to be a part of every Christian's life. Theophilus Brown Larimore and Rufus Polk Meeks are living examples.

In the books written about T.B. Larimore, there are 46 of his sermons to read. In the book by R.P. Meeks, there are 25 sermons to read. Larimore kept good records of his letters and speeches that he wrote. So there is ample basis for knowing the way he interpreted the scriptures. The best interaction with the public is found in his articles written for publication in answer to questions.

## Present Day Mars Hill Academy

### 1947 – Present

There is a living story of the ideals T.B. Larimore tried to live. Consider Larimore's logic.

Larimore wrote a letter from Columbia, Tennessee on December 31, 1895 to F.D. Srygly.

*“Instead of writing you a new-year letter, as I have often doen, I write you as follors, a few of my life rules, as they occur to me in the light of the last day of 1895 – rules which I hope to strictly observe, both in letter and spirit, til God shall call me home:*

*(1) be kind; (2) be meek; (3) be true; (4) be humble; (5) be gentle; (6) be polite; (7) be patient; (8) be earnest; (9) be careful; (10) be hopeful; (11) be faithful; (12) be cheerful; (13) be grateful; (14) be generous; (15) be prayerful; (16) be courteous; (17) be unselfish; (18) be thoughtful; (19) be industrious; (20) be concentrated; (21) be conscientious; (22) always ‘do the right;’ (23) do as much good as possible; (24) do as little evil as possible; (25) eat to live, not live to eat; (26) if possible, be perfectly pure; (27) if not, be pure as possible; (28) always make the best of the situation; (29) be clean – body, soul, and spirit – clean in thought, in word, in deed – always clean; (30) conscientiously consecrate all to Christ – head, hand, heart – body, soul, and spirit – time, tongue, talent – mind, muscle, money – consecrate all to Him who gave his very life to ransom a recreant, lost, and ruined race.”*

Being mindful of these thoughts of Larimore to Srygly in 1895, take note of how the present generation is using this mindset.

Mars Hill Academy reopened in 1947 and operates today as the Mars Hill Bible School. In Nathan Guy's book, *The Mars Hill Story: 150 Years of Love, Mercy, Peace, and Truth*, the ideals of Larimore continue. The following is a three chapter outline of their objectives.

#### Chapter One – The Mars Hill Story

- This is the history of Mars Hill Academy (1871–1877)
- This is the history of Mars Hill College (1877–1887)
- Then, the remainder of Chapter 1 covers the year of 1947 – present.

#### Chapter 2 – Excellence in All Things: The Four Pillars

- The “Mind” of Mars Hill: In Pursuit of Excellence
- The “Heart” of Mars Hill: Virtuous Character
- The “Body” of Mars Hill: Holistic Health
- The “Soul” of Mars Hill: A Chrstit-Centered Worldview

#### Chapter 3 – Love Rules the School: The Core Vision and Values of Mars Hill

- Our Christian Mission
- Our Core Beliefs
- Our Core Values
- Our Core Objectives
- Our Strategic Vision

- Strategic Priority #1 – Mars Hill will be a Christ-centered institution.
- Strategic Priority #2 – Mars Hill will be a school of academic excellence.
- Strategic Priority #3 – Mars Hill will seek to provide an affordable education.
- Strategic Priority #4 – Mars Hill will encourage character development with students growing hearts for service.
- Strategic Priority #5 – Mars Hill will embrace diversity.

T.B. Larimore would be proud of the development of this school.

So the best answer to the question of the example of T.B. Larimore's life gives anyone who is looking to improve their Christian life and be the best example for Christ is, "Be a person with a high degree of discipline." With clear thinking, set priorities to be reached. Include God in those priorities. Pray! Then look for the doors that are opened for you. Then 'do'. God will bless your efforts. His kingdom will grow.

## Annotated Bibliography

### 1. **As Good as the Best, by Douglas Foster, 1984.**

#### **T. B. Larimore Chronology**

##### **Section 1 – Early Life**

- 1843 – July 10 -- Born.
- 1852 – Mother and family move to Sequatchie County, TN
- 1859-61 – Studies at Mossy Creek Baptist College
- 1861-63 – In Confederate Army
- 1863-- Fall – Captured by Federal soldiers
- 1864 – Baptized at Hopkinsville, KY
- 1866 – January 10 – Makes first “talk” at Hopkinsville
- 1866 – Fall – Begins school at Franklin College
- 1867 – June – Graduates from Franklin College
- 1867 – June 2 – First baptism
- 1868 – Jun.-Aug. –Preaches at Rock Creek – meets Srygleys
- 1868 – Preaching in North Alabama and Mississippi
- 1868 – Aug. 30 – Marries Julia Esther Gresham, Florence, AL
- 1869 – Jan. – Moves to Kendrick, TN to teach at Mountain Home
- 1869-70 – Lives with Gen. John H. Meeks, Stantonville, TN
- 1870 – April – Moves near Florence, AL to begin school
- 1871 – Jan. -- Mars Hill Academy begins.
- 1871 – Sept. – Preaching in Chewalla, Pocohontas, Colliersville and Jackson
- 1873 – Sept. 18 – T. B. Larimore’s sister, Mollie, marries R. P. Meeks
- 1874 – July – Meetings at Stoney Point and Hopewell, AL
- 1874 – Summer – Speaker, Linden Street Church – Memphis
- 1875 – Begins paper “Little Angel”
- 1875 – Summer – Preaching in Miss. and TN
- 1876 – Effort at making “Little Angel” succeed
- 1878 – Jan. – First attempts at writing for Gospel Advocate
- 1880 – First meeting in Texas
- 1880 – Decides to see the school – then tries again to succeed
- 1885 – Nov. – First meeting in Nashville
- 1887 – Mars Hill College closed
- 1888 – Jan.-Feb. – South Nashville meeting
- 1888 – May-June – Meeting at Louisville, KY



- 1888 – Summer – Meeting at Sherman, TX
- 1889 – Jan. – Moves to Louisville, KY
- 1889 – Larimore and His Boys published
- 1890 – Nov.-Dec. – Meeting in Dallas, TX
- 1891 – Declines Superintendency of Nashville Bible School
- 1891 – April-June – Meeting in Louisville, KY
- 1892 – Three meetings – Bonham, TX; Mountain Mills, TN; Mars Hill, AL
- 1894 – Jan. 4-June 7 – Meeting in Sherman, TX
- 1894 – Aug.-Nov. – Instrumental music controversy in Sherman, TX
- 1894 – Fall – Meeting in Huntsville, AL
- 1895 – Jan. 3-Apr. 17 – Meeting in Los Angeles, CA
- 1897 – July – Open letter on Controversy and Reply by Larimore
- 1898 – Sick much of year – return to preaching in Sept. – Selmer, TN
- 1900 – Vol. 1 – Letters and Sermons
- 1900 – Jan. -- Meeting – South Street, Nashville
- 1902 – May – Meeting at Weatherford, TX
- 1902 – Sept. 2 – Death of Nancy Larimore
- 1903 – Aug. 4 – Death of Toppie Larimore
- 1904 – June – Preaches at Gunter Bible College, Gunter, TX
- 1905 – Delivers graduation sermon at Nashville Bible School
- 1905 – Oct. – Special service at Iron City, TN
- 1907 – Mar. 4 – Death of Julia Esther Gresham Larimore
- 1908 – May – Meeting at Valdosta, GA
- 1909 – July 10 – Accepts Presidency of College – Cookeville, TN
- 1909 – Hanford, CA for meeting in area
- 1910 – Oct. – Visiting “indefinitely” in Bloomington Springs, TN
- 1910 – Dec. – Writes “Arm in cast for five months is healed.”
- 1911 – Resignation from school in Cookeville, TN
- 1911 – Jan. 1 – Marries Emma Page – Nashville, TN
- 1911 – Dec. 31 – Begins work with church in Murfreesboro, TN
- 1911 – Travel: Hurricane Mills, TN; Pittsfield, ME; Birmingham, AL; Cookeville, TN; Lebanon, TN; Dec. – Florida –in train wreck – broken ribs.
- 1912-13 – Gainesville, FL – “Our Florida Friend” published; tries to establish a school and Christian community
- 1914-15 – Teaches at Freed-Hardeman College, Henderson, TN
- 1916 – Joins editorial staff at The Gospel Advocate

1916 – Meetings – Washington, D.C.; Nashville, TN; Lafayette, GA; Mt. Pleasant, TN; Hurricane Mills, TN; Lawrenceburg, TN; Manchester, TN; Pikeville, TN; Murray, KY; Detroit, MI; ailing much of year – knee problems.

1917 – Jan.-Apr. – In Florida

1918 – Texas and California – Moves to California on Nov. 21

1919 – Aug. – Meetings at East Chattanooga and Mars Hills, AL; Oct. – Cookeville, TN –  
Back to California – Preached at San Francisco

1921 – June-Oct. – Meetings: Nashville, TN; East Chattanooga; Henderson, TN (Sept. 16-20).  
Then to Berkeley, CA

1922 – July – Meeting in Washington, D.C. – stays three years. Meetings in Cookeville and  
Bell Buckle, TN

1923 – July 10 – 80 years old

1924 – Begins articles for The Gospel Advocate – “Word from Washington”

1924 – July: Meetings in Hurricane Mills, TN; Henderson, TN; Nashville, TN – almost develops  
pneumonia. Aug. – Back to Washington

1925 – Oct. – Resigns from Washington church and returns to Berkeley, CA

1926 – Begins “Greetings from the Golden Gate” for Gospel Advocate

1926 – July 10 – 83rd birthday

1927 – Jan. 14 – Speaks on radio for the first time

1928 – June – Moves to Santa Ana, CA – preaches at Fullerton

1928 – Sept. 9 – Preaches for meeting at Burbank, CA

1928 – Dec. 2 – Preaches last two sermons at Sichel Street church, Los Angeles, CA

1928 – Dec. 17 – Weakened with flu – falls and breaks hip

1929 – Feb. 3 – Returns home from hospital

1929 – Mar. 18 – Dies at home during therapy

1929 – May 16 – Memorial issue of Gospel Advocate

For anyone interested in studying T. B. Larimore’s life, this chronology is extremely helpful.

Doug Foster is now Dr. Foster and has been on the faculty at Abilene Christian University for many years. His booklet has been a good source to keep all of the dates in mind.

## 2. Larimore and His Boys by F.D. Srygley, 1889.

When F.D. Srygley was writing *Larimore and His Boys*, he was encouraged to use as many resources as he could from the information given to him and others by Larimore. The format of *Larimore and His Boys* becomes the prototype of other books by Srygley and Emma Page Larimore. Srygley was an accomplished writer and wrote three other books along with articles for the *Gospel Advocate*. Between Srygley and Emma Page Larimore, they compiled

five books on T. B. Larimore. All deal with history, letters and sermons by Larimore. Srygley died Aug. 2, 1900.

- (a) *Smiles and Tears, Larimore and His Boys*, Srygley
- (b) *Letters and Sermons of T.B. Larimore, Vol. 1*, Srygley
- (c) *Life, Letters and Sermons of T.B. Larimore*, by Mrs. T.B. Larimore
- (d) *Letters and Sermons – T.B. Larimore, Vol. 2*, Emma Page
- (e) *Letters and Sermons – T.B. Larimore, Vol. 3*, Emma Page

In these five books, the personal history of T.B. Larimore is given as he wanted to tell it.

### **3. At the Feet of Jesus by Rufus P. Meeks, 1898**

From the author, Bob D. Wheatley – My copy of this book was given to me by my mother. It was my father's book, given to him by his father, Ed Wheatley, who died in 1932, six years before I was born. The inscription in the book indicates that it was purchased in 1926 by my mother and daddy from their Sunday School teacher at First Christian Church, Henderson, TN. Mother and Daddy married in 1926.

Included in this book are: a comment by Meeks about preaching, a life sketch of R.P Meeks by Mollie Meeks, a life sketch of John Henderson Meeks (father of R.P. Meeks) by T.B. Larimore, and a sketch of John V. Wright about John Henderson Meeks.

This book is a collection of sermons by R.P. Meeks about Christ (a total of 25 sermons). One comment about R.P. Meeks: Remember that Srygley said that Meeks, like Larimore, was a very successful preacher, teacher and leader. If he had not had the constant disease of the throat, his career would have been a lot different. For years he was plagued with this malady.

### **4. Hearthstone Echoes by Mollie Larimore Meeks, 1902**

Mollie Meeks was the sister of T.B. Larimore. She was a person of unusual talents. Her story is told by her own words in this book. (It is the opinion of this author that Mollie tells the world about the early history of Nancy Larimore's husband.) It is written as an allegory based on truth. This had to be the story of Nancy Larimore to her daughter. We do not know this for sure.

This book has some simple passages, poetry, and some difficult passages. To better understand the Meeks household, this book is worthwhile.

### **5. Soldiers of the Cross by Kent Dollar, 2005.**

This book examines the religious faith of nine Confederate soldiers in the Civil War. Different denominations are analyzed, and these soldiers were from different backgrounds. The logic of this book looks at the way faith grows under the progression of the stress of war. Well written.

**6. Nathan Bedford Forrest by Jack Hurst, 1994.**

This is an excellent analysis of an unusual soldier. Not only did he develop into a good soldier, he understood what the details of war were about. Even though he was not trained in war, he innately understood how to lead men. Jack Hurst gives a very detailed history of war. T. B. Larimore and C. C. Spiller both served under Forrest.

**7. The Men from Mars Hill by J. M. Powell, 2002**

This book gives a brief history of Larimore's life and goes into the analysis of his sermons. One interesting feature is the analysis of Larimore's contemporaries.

**8. The Story of Tennessee Tech by Austin Wheeler Smith, 1957**

This book gives a detailed history of Tennessee Tech University up to the mid 1950's. This book does not give the history of Larimore in 1908-10. Larimore's history is found in the archives of the Tech Library.

**9. The Mars Hill Story: 150 Years of Love, Mercy, Peace and Truth by Nathan Guy, 2020.**

This is a three-chapter booklet of the history of Mars Hill, the current objectives of the school, and the vision and values of the school. In the 2022-23 school year, the enrollment is over 400 students.



## **Appendix A**

### **1860 Census Data**

Beginning with household #117 and ending with household #181, there were 28 heads of households that were farmers, nine were farm laborers, two day laborers, nine widows or single women, one carpenter, one brick mason, three clergy (all from the Methodist faith—there were Baptist preachers in the county), one grocery owner, one merchant, two physicians, two blacksmiths, one blacksmith apprentice, one tailoress (Nancy Larimore), three mechanics, and two ditchers.

The data does not tell us the size of each lot or acreage or the ownership of the property that made up the household units. However, we can gain some knowledge when we look at the relative location of each household unit in relation to the others.

- #117 – Farm family
- #118 – Farm family
- #119 – 2 women – Singles
- #120 – 1 woman
- #121 – Farm family
- #122 – Farm family
- #123 – Carpenter
- #124 – Clergy – M.Me. – N.B.S. Orvings – 26 yrs.
- #125 – Farm family
- #126 – Farm family
- #127 – Farm family
- #128 – Farm family
- #129 – Farm family
- #130 – 1 woman
- #131 – Grocery keeper – William Heard family – 54 yrs.
- #132 – Mechanic
- #133 – Physician -- Dr. F.J. Bell – 23 yrs.  
                                 Sarah – 17 yrs.  
                                 Lella – one month  
                                 (J.W. Tharton – Merchant – 23 yrs.)
- #134 – Tailoress -- Nancy Larimore – 47 yrs.  
                                 Theophilus – 17 yrs.  
                                 Pseudo – 13 yrs.  
                                 Mary F. – 8 yrs.
- #135 – Physician -- Dr. S.F. Smith – 23 yrs.  
                                 Amy B. – 19 yrs.  
                                 Theodgicia – 2 yrs.  
                                 J. L. B. – 1 yr.  
                                 (E. L. Lawyers – Clerk – 29 yrs.)
- #136 – Farm laborer – Joseph Tate – 22 yrs.  
                                 Helen – 22 yrs.  
                                 Copetola – 8 months
- #137 – Farm family

- #138 - Farm family
- #139 - Farm family
- #140 - Farm family
- #141 - Farm family & Census Taker - S. C. Stone - 32 yrs.
- #142 - Farm family
- #143 - Clergy - John Alley - 34 yrs.
- #144 - Merchant -- William Rankin - 55 yrs.  
                                   Minerva - 47 yrs.  
                                   Jean Vaught - 13 yrs.  
                                   Delila J. Vaught - 4 yrs.
- #145 - Ditcher
- #146 - Farmer -- George Larimore - 64 yrs.  
                                   Mary Larimore - 65 yrs.  
                                   Jackson V. - 22 yrs. (Farm laborer)
- #147 - Blacksmith - James Mansfield - 32 yrs.  
                                   Mily - 28 yrs.  
                                   Anderson - 8 yrs.  
                                   J. C. Wimberly - 26 yrs. - Apprentice blacksmith
- #148 - Blacksmith -- Robert Mansfield - 28 yrs.  
                                   John W. - 7 yrs.  
                                   Sarah F. - 4 yrs.  
                                   Elizabeth - 2 yrs.
- #149 - Blacksmith -- J. H. Hatfield - 41 yrs.  
                                   Mary - 41 yrs.  
                                   John - 18 yrs.  
                                   William - 16 yrs.  
                                   Mary - 15 yrs.  
                                   Lucinda - 13 yrs.  
                                   Sarah - 11 yrs.  
                                   Lousa - 4 yrs.
- #150 - Brick Mason -- Chambers family  
                                   Rebecca Mansfield - 78 yrs.
- #151 - Farm family - J. R. Brown - 33 yrs. - Witness on deed
- #152 - Farm family
- #153 - Clergy - George Walker - 60 yrs.  
                                   Anna - 61 yrs.
- #154 - Day laborer family
- #155 - Farm Laborer family
- #156 - Farm Laborer family
- #157 - Farm Laborer family

- #158 – Farm Laborer family
- #159 – Farm Laborer family
- #160 – Farmer
- #161 – Farmer
- #162 – Farm Laborer family
- #163 – Farm Laborer
- #164 – Farmer
- #165 – Day laborer
- #166 – Farm Laborer
- #167 – 1 Single woman – 93 yrs.
- #168 – Farm family
- #169 – Farm family
- #170 – Farmer
- #171 – Farmer
- #172 – 1 Single woman
- #173 – Farm laborer
- #174 – Farmer
- #175 – Farmer -- Franklin Deakins – 42 yrs.
  - Lydia – 43 yrs.
  - Moses – 19 yrs.
  - Daniel – 16 yrs. – mentioned by T.B. Larimore as classmate
  - Nancy – 14 yrs.
  - Mary – 11 yrs.
  - James – 8 yrs.
  - Harvey C. – 6 yrs.
  - John – 4 yrs.
  - Alex – 1 yr.
- #176 – Farmer
- #177 – Farmer
- #178 – Farmer
- #179 – 1 Single woman
- #180 – Farm family
- #181 – Farm family



### Explanation of Terms:

Farmer—Probably owned property, maybe was a sharecropper, or homesteader.

Farm Laborer – Probably was a sharecropper or hired out.

Mechanic – Probably was a farmer that was also good at fixing equipment. Could also be a maintenance person at a mill to maintain equipment.

Blacksmith – Since the Mansfield family is known to have owned a grist mill at the upper part of the river and also later on the lower part below town, a blacksmith would not only perform the normal duties of shoeing horses but also worked in the maintenance of the mills.

Even the quickest analysis of this data shows the sense of community. As a small agricultural-based community, everyone depended on the other families for survival. When there was a need in the community, all tried to help. This probably wasn't the same interdependence upon Cagle mountain because there were fewer people and the community was more spread out.

It should be noted that the four families in dwellings #133-136 are important. The Bell family, Nancy Larimore and kids, the Smith family and the Tates are all neighbors. The distance between these neighbors is unknown, but the Census Taker should have taken the data in some uniform manner.

Larimore mentioned that he had had the opportunity to go to school at an earlier time but did not do so because of the security of the family. What changed this? Probably the move down to Coop's Cove. There must have been a much closer relationship to the neighbors by 1858. Dr. Bell, his wife, two slaves and a second child, Lella, a first child had died, and another household member, J. W. Tharton, 23 years, all lived in the house next door. The two slaves are not mentioned in the census but are mentioned as he told his story about the "10-acre field."

After Nancy and the kids, the next family was another physician, Dr. Smith and his family. Did the two doctors come to Coop's Cove together? They were both the same age, 23. It is very possible that they did. If so, they probably all came from the North Carolina area or from the same school. They must have had some relationship to each other.

The next family was Joseph Tate and Helen. This must be Nancy's oldest daughter. They had one child, Copetola, less than 1 year in the 1860 census. Did the Tates and Larimore own their property? Probably not. Did the doctors own these houses? Unknown. We do know that the doctor's income was far greater than the Larimores' or the Tates'. It should be noted that Nancy was the oldest person in the group. She was 47, and the others were 23 and younger. She was a seamstress. Who did she sew for? Probably her neighbors. If her income flow in 1860 was \$125, for whom was she sewing? Not only the doctors but the community at large. Therefore, the sense of community must have given T. B. Larimore a greater feeling of ease to leave his mother, brother, and sister in this setting.

**Appendix B**  
**History of the Clear Creek Church**  
**Stantonville, Tennessee**

**by Billy Nicks**

## OLD CLEAR CREEK CHURCH OF CHRIST, McNAIRY CO. TENN.

Following are some interesting accounts taken from the Church record book of the Old Clear Creek Church of Christ at Stantonville in McNairy County, Tennessee. About six of the first pages are missing, but the first page of the book says: "May the 8th, 1842. Church Book, Clear Creek Church, McNairy County, Tennessee." Brother Ephraim Michie, elder for 50 years (1902-1951) kept the book in recent years, but the elders and record clerks in the 1800's and early 1900's were especially diligent in keeping account of the happenings of the church. Brother Michie has now passed on, but his life still speaks, though he is dead. Also the live of the faithful elders of former years speaks in volumes as we read the interesting accounts from this old record book. It strikes one as he reads that these men were full of faith and courage, the likes of which are seldom found in our day.

The old Clear Creek meeting house still stands, but a new house has been erected on the highway, (state 42) in Stantonville, where the present church meets. However, once a year the Stantonville church goes back to the old Clear Creek meeting house, which is still intact, though only used for a few funerals. The occasion for the going back once each year is the gospel meeting. Usually on the first Sunday of the meeting the members, new and old, love to go back reminiscingly, having an old time "all day preaching and dinner on the ground." The writer has conducted several meetings here and always enjoys these occasions.

The first page of the book proper that is extant reads:

*"Met on Saturday the 15th of Feb. 1841. Being called to order preceeded to business and after various exertions to settle the old difficulties existing in the church, believed to be over, it was ascertained that they could not be settled without a division in the church, it was resolved that the following propositions should be submitted, viz: All persons who are willing to live together and serve the Lord according to the Bible and the Bible alone and to acknowledge all their faults and to forgive each other all former trespasses will make it known by coming forward and giving Brother John H. Johns the right hand of fellowship."*

*"It was also furthermore resolved that, viz:*

*All those who wouldn't come forward on the above resolution on after a sufficient time had been given they should be considered as manifesting an unwillingness to conform to the rules and regulations of the Church of Christ and therefore should be withdrawn from.*

*By order of the church.*

*Signed : Thos. R. Beck, Clerk."*

## DISCIPLINE OF THE CHURCH

The most striking thing about this aged book is the firmness which characterized the discipline of the church. Sin was so abhorrent to these elders that the people were obviously made to fear. That this discipline was effective is manifested by the record of most of those who were subjects of exclusion making acknowledgment later of wrongs.

*"Met on Saturaday before the 2nd Lord's day in April, A.D. 1842. The brethren being called to order, the case of Bro. Mark H. Wilson was taken up. He being accused of*

*intoxication and fighting and not present, the brethren from the evidence, believed it their duty to withdraw from him—which they did.”*

*“The case of Bro. John Fowler was also taken up. He was charged with having been drunk and wanting to fight but for want of evidence the case was laid over until 2nd Lord’s day in May.”*

*“Met on 2nd Lord’s day in May. The case of John Fowler was taken up. From the evidence presented on the case it was not believed that he was guilty of intoxication, but that of wanting to fight. As he did not seem to manifest that penitent disposition required, it was thought advisable to lay his case over until the 2nd Lord’s day in June.”*

*“Met on the 2nd Lord’s day in June. The case of John Fowler was laid over until Saturday before the 2nd Lord’s day in July.”*

*“Met on Saturday before the 2nd Lord’s day in July. The case of John Fowler was taken up, and as he failed to give satisfaction the elders proclaimed it to be the duty of the church to withdraw from him which they accordingly did.”*

Even elders were not spared in this discipline of unfaithful members. In April of 1842 the following account is given:

*“The cases of certain delinquents: (William Erwin, Mary Erwin, John Kendrick, Matilda Kendrick, John P. Erwin, Minerva Erwin, Thomas Kendrick, William Kendrick) were taken up and according to a resolution passed by the church on Saturday 15th of February, 1841, they were withdrawn from. – As two of the brethren (William Erwin and John Kendrick) were elders who were withdrawn from, upon their exclusion it became necessary for the church to appoint others in their stead. Accordingly, William Shelby and James Kerr were chosen to be ordained the 2nd Lord’s day in May by John H. Jones and John Dunn. – In case of failure on the part of Brother John Dunn, Elder, William Ussary was to act in his stead.” Thos. R. Beck, Church Clerk.”*

## ORDINATION OF ELDERS

It is interesting to note how elders were selected and ordained in Clear Creek church in May of 1842.

*“The ordination of nominated elders (Wm. Shelby and James Kerr) was next attended to. As Bro. Dunn was not present, Elders William Ussary John H. Jones proceeded to and ordained them according to the New Testament form, viz, by fasting, prayer and imposition of hands.”*

## ELDERS KEPT UP WITH MEMBERS

The elders were very scrupulous in keeping records of their members and in overhauling the church book. They met periodically to “clean out the book” by taking off names of those who had been excluded and who has moved away or died. Most frequent are records of those who asked for and received letters of dismissal and recommendation when going away to other localities. An example follows:

*“On the 7th of August, Sister Mary A. Shelby applied to the elders for a letter of dismission and recommendation which they granted.”*

However, one case where a Brother applied for a letter of recommendation was refused because of a difficulty just before he left.

They could carefully oversee the flock because they kept diligent records of the members and knew them, laboring over them in behalf of their souls “as they that shall give account.”

## GODLY ELDERS

The elders must have been Godly men for they would not tolerate sin. Evidently the church respected them for their work's sake and stood with them generally when sin had to be rebuked. The following sins were causes of withdrawal:

1. Drinking. “4th Lord's day in December, 1878. The elders informed the church that they had often admonished Brother Ephraim Michie to quit drinking liquor and swearing, but he still goes on in sin, consequently the church withdrew their fellowship from him. T. B. Kendrick, Church Clerk.”

Brother Michie repented of his sins and made “all necessary acknowledgements at the protracted meeting in September 1882 and was restored to full fellowship.”

2. Dancing. “2nd Lord's day in January, 1844. The church being in possession of news by report that John Dapane had been dancing, requested that Elder Kerr go and see him before the next meeting.”

“Met on Saturday before the 2nd Lord's day in Feb. and proceeded to business the case of John Dspane. Elder Kerr stted he had seen Dspane and he acknowledged he had been dancing and fighting and said he had no desire to live a Christain life. The elders therefore proclaimed it to be the duty of the church to withdraw from him which they accordingly did.” T.R. Beck, Church Clerk.

3. Not paying honest debt. “Met on the 2nd Lord's day in June and proceeded to business the case of Bro. Samuel Perkins and Bro. Felise G. Braden. The former accused the latter of violating his promise in not paying him a debt when he had the means in his hands after having pledged his word and honour to do so which charge was not denied. Bro. Braden refusing to make any acknowledgment, the elders proclaimed it to be the duty of the church to withdraw their fellowship from him, which they did.---Thos. R. Beck, Church Clerk.”

4. Swearing. “Met on Saturday the 8th of March, 1845. The case of Brother David Smith was taken up, he having been accused of swearing, the elders admonished him to do better and come to the church and make acknowledgment.

He refused therefore the elders proclaimed it to be the duty of the church to withdraw their fellowship from him which they did.—Thos. R. Beck, Church Clerk.”

5. Heresy. “the case of Bro. E. G. Braden and children was taken up. He was charged with immoral conduct and propagating heretical doctrine.” He was withdrawn from. This was August, 1848.



6. Lying. "May, 1853. The case of Bro. William Erwin was taken up. He was charged with lying concerning the age and soundness of a mule, by which means he defrauded the purchaser. These were proved on him to the satisfaction of the church. He refused to make such acknowledgments as the church required therefore he was withdrawn from."

7. Gambling. "July 1853. The case of James W. Michie was taken up. He was charged of being drunk and having gambled. These charges were sustained and after repeated admonitions from the elders and he failing to forsake these errors the church withdrew from him."

8. Keeping a Tipling house. "Met on 8th day of May, 1875. When the case of Reese Bennet was taken up, he was accused of keeping a Tipling house at Hamburg and selling intoxicating liquors to the drinking class. After being admonished at various times, he utterly refused to quit said practice and even plead justification in his action the above day the elders reported it to be the duty of the church to withdraw their fellowship from him which they did. Done by the order of the church. T. R. Beck, Church Clerk."

9. General immorality. "On Sat. Feb. 25, 1879. The case of Seburn Winningham Jr. and John East was taken up. They were accused of drunkenness and general immorality, and failing to make satisfaction, the Church withdrew their fellowship from them..."

10. Liquor, Lying and other bad habits. "On the 4th Lord's day.

"On the 4th Lord's day in December, 1878, the elders informed the church that they had often talked to Bro. Charley Waltern about drinking liquor and lying and other bad habits but he still persisted consequently the church withdrew their fellowship from him. Done by order of the church. T. B. Kendrick, C. C."

11. Fighting. "March 25, 1902. The elders and old Brother Robert Michie of Clear Creek church met according to previous appointment to settle the fight between J.R. Hurley and Bro. Long for which he, Bro. Hurley acknowledged he had done wrong and was very sorry for it and Bro. Long forgave me and both made acknowledgments satisfactory to the church. T. B. Kendrick, C. C."

This is the last record of any activity of Bro. Robert Michie, who preached his first and last sermons at the Clear Creek Church. A monument in his memory is at the cemetery by the old church building. He died in October of 1902.

## EFFECTS OF DISCIPLINE

Many of the above cases ended happily by the one excluded coming back and making acknowledgment, repenting of his sins. Some of those doing so are recorded as follows:

*(1871) "2nd Lord's day in October. Bro. W. J. Pettigrew made satisfaction for the crime he was excluded for April, 1871 and was restored to fellowship. By order of the church. T. R. Besk, Clerk and Elder."*

*"March 27, 1881. Bro. J. M. Chapman made satisfaction for the crime he was excluded for and was restored to fellowship." T. B. Kendrick C. C.*

In 1895 Brother Chapman was appointed a deacon, but in 1899, he was withdrawn from again for drinking and dancing.

*“June 12, 1853. The Church was in possession of a letter from Lucinda Braden dated April 1, 1853, Quitman Texas in which she acknowledges her faults in committing the crime for which she was excluded and desires to be forgiven by the brethern of this church. On the reception of this, the church restored her to fellowship and authorized the clerk to inform her of her restoration.”*

The following base brought repentance and confession immediately :

*“Met Saturday before the 4th Lord’s day in August 1853. The case of charges against Brother G. B. Babb by B. T. Babb was taken up. 1st charge—For throwing forcibly the latter off of his horse and personal abuse. Acknowledged by G. B. Babb. 2nd charge—Accusing B. T. Babb of stealing by withholding a twenty dollar bill in change or money. 3rd charge—For abusing B. T. Babb’s wife by using disrespectful language towards her.*

*After examination and on the first two cases it was ascertained that Brother Breen B. Babb was guilty and the elders ordered that he should make satisfaction by acknowledging his faults and promising to do so no more, which things he did. The third charge was not sustained by any evidence. Done by order of the church. T. R. Beck, C. C.”*

In October, 1854, Brother B. T. Babb was refused a letter of recommendation “his conduct previous to this time being such as to justify the church in refusing his request which they did.”

## PREACHERS AT CLEAR CREEK

R. W. Michie and R. P. Meeks were authorized by the church at Clear Creek to perform the duties of preachers of the gospel. The records are as follows:

*“Met on Wednesday after the 2nd Lord’s day in September, 1856, and ordained G. G. Michie and David McKenzie elders of the Clear Creek church and at the same time ordained R. W. Michie and evangelist and authorized him to perform all the duties of a preacher of the gospel. Done by the order of the church, T. R. Beck, C. C.”*

*“Met on the 11th day of July, 1875. Brother Rufus P. Meeks was ordained a minister of the gospel and authorized to perform all the duties of a minister of the gospel.”*

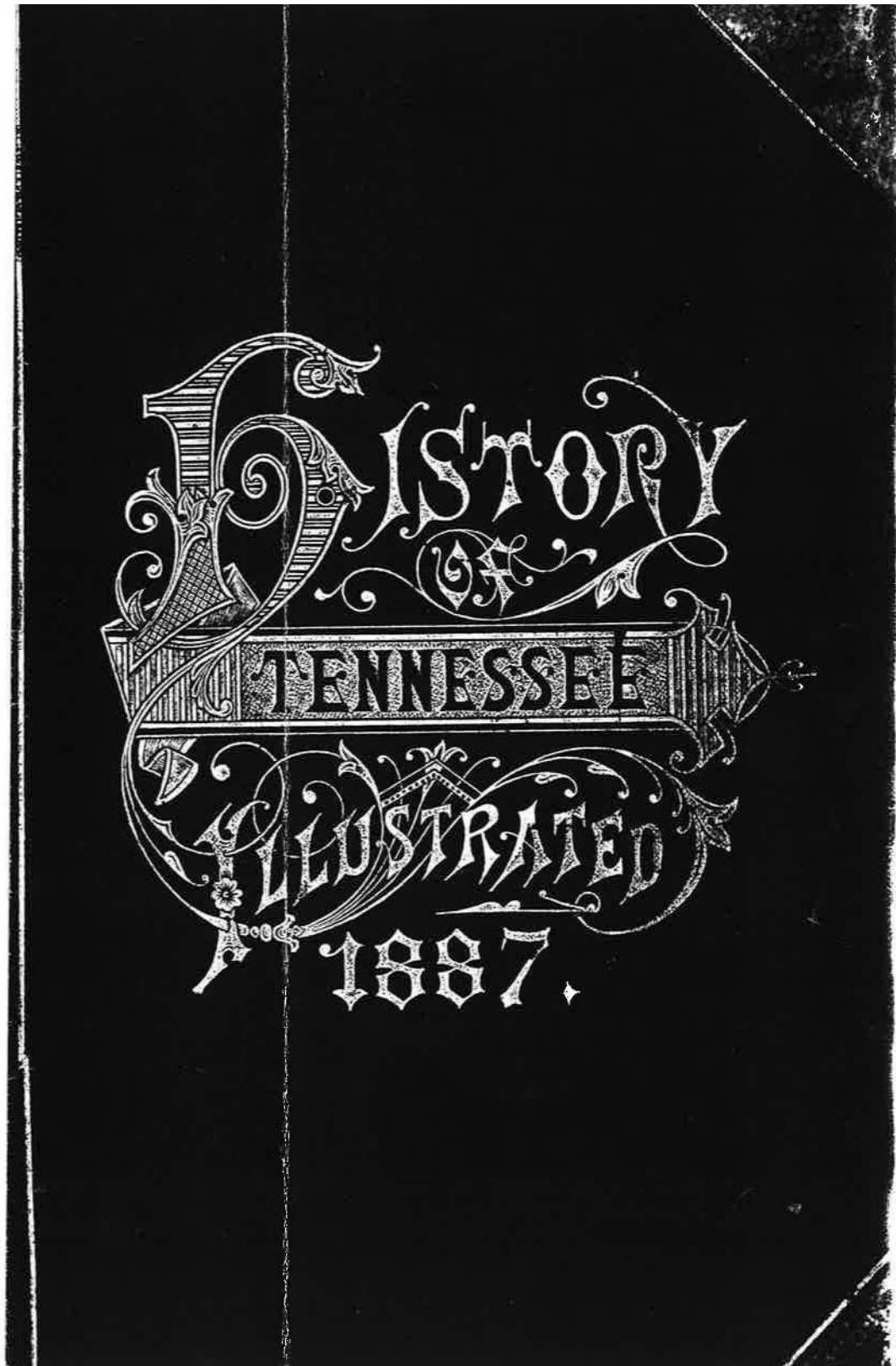
In August of 1888, Brother Meeks asked and received a letter of dismissal and recommendation for himself, his wife, Molly L. Meeks, and son, George L. Meeks. They moved to Henderson at that time.

## CHURCH AT HAMBURG

A record of several names is given of those who transferred their membership from the Clear Creek church to the congregation at Hanburg, evidently established more recently than that of Clear Creek.

## **Appendix C**

**The History of Tennessee – John Henderson Meeks  
Nashville, Tennessee – Goodspeed Publishing Co., 1887**





# JOHN HENDERSON MEERS

McNairy County  
Biographical Appendix  
Pp. 875-876

*The History of Tennessee - John Henderson Meeks*  
*Nashville, Tenn. - Goodspeed Publishing Co.*  
*1887*

Gen. John H. Meeks, one of the most influential citizens and leading farmers of McNairy County, was born in Lincoln County, Tenn., in 1814, was the youngest of three sons and the only one now living. His parents were John and Elizabeth (Henderson) Meeks, both natives of Pendleton District, S.C. The father was born in 1783, was well educated, married the first time in 1810 to the mother of John H., and after her death made a second marriage in 1819 with Elizabeth Lane, by whom he had six children. In 1811 he moved to Lincoln County, and engaged in farming until 1844 when he located in McNairy Co., and there resided up to the time of his death, which occurred in 1877. The mother was a daughter of Capt. John Henderson, a gallant and noted man of Revolutionary fame. Mrs. Meeks died in October 1814, when the subject of this sketch was but an infant; he was taken by his grandfather, Capt. Henderson with whom he remained until manhood. He received liberal literary and business education and spent the time from 1835 to 1838 as a teacher in which capacity he proved most efficient. Since the latter date he has been tilling the soil, either carrying it on himself or having it done by others. In 1830 he was sent by Capt. Henderson to McNairy County, to take charge of a number of men and raise a crop, after which he returned to Alabama, his grandparents having moved there in his childhood. In 1832 they settled in McNairy County. January, 1841, John H. was married to Ellen, daughter of George and Martha Atkins; she was born in Rockingham County, N. C., and came to McNairy county with her parents Martha E., wife of F.A. Johnson, ~~of McNairy County, Tenn.~~ in 1832. To them were born eight children, only two sons and two daughters are living: Martha E., wife of F.A. Johnson, of Dyer County; Elder Rufus P., an earnest and influential minister of the Christian Church, residing at Jackson, Tenn.; Marcus Henry, a leading attorney at law of Jackson, Tenn.; and, Silpah, wife of W. D. Erwin, a prominent merchant of Falcon. General Meeks has been living on his present farm since 1851; it is twelve miles east from Falcon, extends over 600 acres of the county's most productive soil, which is highly cultivated and improved; the dwelling house is not of the most elegant and well arranged in the country. He also owns about 800 acres of Tennessee River bottom land in Hardin County, which is very valuable. The General is a half-brother to Arvil L. Meeks of the same county. He is a man of unusual strength of mind, a keen financier, and of indisputable integrity; is an ardent advocate of universal education, and gives liberally to all charitable and religious institutions. He has always been a staunch Democrat-the recognized leader of that party in McNairy County, having held various responsible and prominent positions. His public career began in 1849, when he represented his county in the Lower House of the State Legislature, being the first Democrat representative from McNairy County; he was re-elected in 1851; was nominated several times afterward, but declined further election. In 1855 he was offered the nomination for congressman in his congressional district, but positively declined. He was a member of the constitutional convention of 1870. His first presidential vote was cast for Hugh L. White in 1836. He has been a Mason of good standing and prominence since 1848. The entire family are members of the Christian Church. He received the title of general from the militia votes of both Hardemond and McNairy counties; was not a soldier in the late war, but had two sons who fought bravely in defense of the lost cause. The elder of these, under the command of Gen. Forrest, fell mortally wounded, in 1864. Gen Meeks earnestly opposed the first action of the South in bringing about secession, but, finally, when the ware was forced on the Southern people, he was afterward an ardent supporter of the lost cause.



## **Appendix D**

### **Mars Hill Academy**

















## INTRODUCTION.

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In presenting to the public this, the third Circular of Mars Hill Academy, we deem it our imperative duty to devoutly thank our Heavenly Father for the success that has crowned our every effort in connection with the Institution.

We also tender to the many faithful friends of the school our sincere thanks for the interest they have manifested in this useful enterprise.

In our former Circulars various errors of a trivial nature occurred. That the present Circular shall be free from such inaccuracies, is all the promise we have to make while asking pardon for former mistakes. Our profits are so extremely small that every unnecessary expense must be avoided; those, therefore, who receive this Circular need not expect another until called for, as this will continue to be a fair representative of the school from year to year, *indefinitely*. Any one receiving a plurality of these pamphlets will please circulate them to the best advantage, reserving only *one* for himself.

No one who reads the Circular can, for one moment, justly think our object is a *fortune*. We have been assured that we could not *even live* at such rates. Our object is to perpetuate an Institution that shall be an honor to the worthy country and community in which it shall stand as a "bright and burning light." We seek not to hoard up shining millions, to "perish with their using," but "we seek a city out of sight, whose builder and maker is God,"—"a house not made with hands, *eternal in the heavens*."



# MARS HILL ACADEMY

## FOR MALES AND FEMALES.

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This Institution, situated four miles northeast of Florence, Alabama, on the highway leading from Florence to the justly celebrated "Bailey Springs,"—only six miles from the latter,—has passed triumphantly through its first and second sessions, and now invites the seekers of *health and knowledge* to its quiet shades, limpid springs and cozy rooms for an *indefinite number of sessions in the future*.

Each scholastic year or session will be divided into two *terms* of three months (twelve weeks) each, thus constituting a *session* of six months, (twenty-four weeks,) commencing on the first Monday in January every year.

The LOCATION is entirely free from every temptation to extravagance and vice, and for health and convenience *can not be excelled*.

### TERMS.

Terms per session of six months, (twenty-four weeks,): Boarding, Washing, Lights, Fuel, Tuition, Contingent Fee, all necessary books, including all the ordinary text-books necessary, together with Histories, Bibles, Hymn Books, Note Books, etc.; also everything in the line of Slates, Pencils, Pens, Ink, Chalk, Note Paper, Letter Paper, Writing Paper, Envelopes, etc.; also Blacking, Blacking Brushes, Soap, Matches, etc., *all this*, together with various rewards, and a beautiful certificate, elegantly framed, presented to every pupil at the expiration of the session, stating the conduct and the progress of the pupil, for only \$130.

Those not boarding at the Academy can have the benefit of all contained in the preceding list, boarding and things connected therewith excepted, for \$42.50.

The *unfortunate* among our neighbors who can not even pay for *books*, will be received into the Institution, will receive all the benefits thereof, and be treated with all possible kindness and attention, ENTIRELY FREE OF CHARGE, by furnishing a *written certificate*, stating inability to pay, and furnishing a *good reason* for such inability.

#### REGULAR ATTENDANCE

Is essential to success, and a failure to commence with the session subjects the pupil to many embarrassments, therefore *every pupil will be charged for the entire session, regardless of the time of admission.*

#### CONDITIONS.

All can see at a glance that we can take no *risk* at our rates of charge, therefore the entire expense must be paid *invariably in advance*. To insure impartiality, we pledge ourselves to receive no pupil under any circumstances, *until the entire charges are paid*, except the beneficiaries previously specified, who are charged *nothing*.

Under no circumstance will any deduction be made or money refunded, *except in cases of protracted illness*; then a deduction of two-thirds of the regular expenses will be made for *the time of actual illness* of the pupil—one-third being retained to defray expense of books, etc., which expense will be principally incurred near the beginning of the session.

#### BOOKS.

We have not decided what books we will adopt for permanent use, but are determined to use the best. To this end we will devote considerable time to the consideration of the merits of the various books in use. Publishers desiring to do so, can send us specimen copies of their various works, all of which shall be carefully examined, each book to be adopted or rejected in consideration of its merits or demerits. This course shall be pursued until we succeed in selecting a complete course of the *very best books in use*.

#### HISTORIES.

We are determined that our historical course shall be so varied and thorough that our pupils, when the course is completed, shall be well versed in the general outlines, as well as many of the details, of the world's history, in *all its departments*.

#### PUPILS' LIBRARIES.



## REWARDS.

Hon. R. M. Patton, a firm pillar of the Presbyterian Church, an untiring advocate of *Education*, and an excellent judge of the merits of a Literary Institution, who has honored our State (Alabama) by filling almost every office in the gift of the people, who endeared himself to the people of his beloved State by his judicious management of affairs in the stormy days when he was Governor,—*this man*, to whose aged brow no eulogy of ours can add a laurel, is a *firm friend of Mars Hill Academy*. In confirmation of this we might quote his own words, expressing his anxiety for the continued prosperity of the Institution in the *very highest terms* the English language affords. Instead of this, however, we are authorized to say that at the close of the next session of Mars Hill Academy ex-Governor Patton will present an ELEGANT GOLD MEDAL, worth from twenty-five to thirty dollars, to the pupil whose conduct has been *most exemplary* during the entire session.

John A. Thompson, Circuit Clerk of Lauderdale County, Alabama, to whom the Institution is greatly indebted for its success, will present at the same time a SILVER MEDAL, similar to the gold one by Governor Patton, to the one whose general deportment during the entire session has been *the next to the best*.

Miss Mollie Larimore, Assistant Teacher, will present to the pupils in her department TWO ELEGANT BIBLES, beautifully bound, full gilt, with rims and clasp, *general deportment and progress in studies* determining the question—what two pupils shall have the honor of receiving the Bibles.

The Matron will present to the members of the Bible Class TWO ELEGANT BIBLES, beautifully bound, full gilt, with rims and clasp, *superbly finished*, one to the young gentleman or boy, and the other to the young lady or girl, who, during the entire session, makes *the best progress in the study of the Bible*.

The Matron will present TWO BIBLES, similar to those presented to the Bible class, to the two, male and female, whose progress during the entire session is best in *Vocal Music*.

The Principal will present a BIBLE, similar to those presented by the Matron, to the *best speaker*, the same to be the best reader of composition.

2 To obviate the possibility of *partiality* in awarding these valuable



To every pupil, great and small, will be presented a VERY ELEGANT CERTIFICATE, containing a concise statement of the progress of the pupil, with the name, State, county and post office of the same. These certificates are very beautiful; they are beautifully printed in *four colors*. In the center is a representation of the Earth, showing the Equator, Tropics and Polar Circles. Around the horizon of the northern hemisphere is printed in green, "Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." The southern hemisphere is bounded by— "Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is the whole duty of man." Within this circle is beautifully arranged the following certificate:

"This is to certify that M..... .., of .....county, ....., a good, kind, obedient, moral, studious, courteous, worthy and honorable pupil of Mars Hill Academy, near Florence, Alabama, has attained a high degree of proficiency in ..... and is hereby recommended to the public as eminently worthy the confidence and esteem of every member of any community in which he... lot may e'er be cast, if future life does not corrupt h...."

This is surrounded by four hearts, two in red and two in green, and *eight beautiful appropriate illustrations*. The words *Faith, Hope, Charity* and *Heaven* are printed in green and red within the hearts in *Greek, Latin* and *English*. Surrounding the heart on the north is the motto, "Labor conquers all things," in three languages. The name of the Institution on the south in three languages. In large and beautiful variegated characters the name and location of the Institution appears on the top and bottom of the certificate. All the space not otherwise filled, is occupied by most beautiful and appropriate passages of Scripture. The whole is surrounded by a neat border, ends with the benediction of the Principal, and will be presented to each and every pupil, *elegantly framed*, so that it may be worthy of a conspicuous place in the most fashionable parlor. Size of frame, sixteen by eighteen inches.

The certificates and other rewards of merit will be presented to the pupils before a public audience by individuals selected for that purpose, as the closing act of every session.

No one whose general deportment and moral habits have not been good during the entire session, will be entitled to a certificate or



## DEPARTMENTS.

That the presence of one sex invariably wields a stimulating and salutary influence over the other in school is certain. This is the decision of many of the best educators in the world. The rise, progress and success of Eminence College, Northwestern University, and many other justly celebrated schools, confirms this just and true decision. Therefore, while there are separate departments for males and females, they will often be brought into the presence of each other in the school rooms, and hall for prayer and vocal music. Even then, however, the strictest care shall be taken to see that all observe a proper distance, and that the deportment of all be perfect. Rapid and practical advancement in the *manners* of the pupils—such as will fit them for the best society, and enable them to feel free from embarrassment in good company—is thus guaranteed beyond a doubt.

The cultivation of the *purest morals and manners* shall be the constant aim and untiring endeavor of Principal, Matron and Teachers.

## PARENTAL CARE.

It will be the desire and constant aim of the Principal and Matron to fill the place of *parents* to the pupils as nearly as possible. To this end, diligent watch will be kept and assiduous care taken to preserve their health and morals—their bodies from disease, and their souls from corruption.

## THE DISCIPLINE

Shall be mild and parental, but firm. Our school is a *select* one. We will not knowingly receive an unworthy pupil, nor will we retain one if, through mistake, received. "Evil communications corrupt good morals;" and we are determined that the moral atmosphere of Mars Hill Academy *shall be pure*. Therefore, any pupil persistently refusing to conform to any of the rules, regulations or requirements of the school, shall be peremptorily expelled, *no deduction* being made from the expenses, but the charges being the same as if the pupil had continued to the close of the session.

## THE COURSE OF STUDY

Shall be selected and arranged with great care to meet the demands of the age and country in which we live. Our steady aim shall be to make practical, accomplished men and women—to fit them for the stern realities and lofty associations of life.

or *female*, will do well to address the Principal on the desiring to qualify themselves for teaching will find it an advantage to attend this Institution, as every care will be taken to fit them for that business, as well as to *procure a good*.

#### CLOTHING.

Neat, substantial clothing is all that is necessary for students at Mars Hill. Anything fine or gaudy would be inappropriate. Parents are requested to supply their children with clothing that will last them through the session before their departure. All white clothing should be marked with indelible ink to prevent trouble and loss.

#### POCKET MONEY.

One of the most successful ways to retard the progress and injure them in various other respects is to furnish them with money to spend at school. Therefore parents are requested not to give their children with any money at all to squander here. They will never need it, not being allowed to visit parents. They will have a good reason for spending it.

#### THE ACADEMY BUILDING

Is new, large and commodious. All the improvements have been arranged especially for the *health, comfort and convenience*. Additional buildings will be erected as the patronage demands.



## MARS HILL ACADEMY.

ished to see what progress pupils thus make, without taking their time from their other studies. The Bible studies are of a non-denominational character, but are such as all believers should desire to have their children receive.

We intend to purchase a complete set of the LARGEST FINEST MAPS now in use, to be used in connection with the BIBLICAL AND HISTORICAL LESSONS AND LECTURES.

At our last examination we examined the Bible publicly for *one hour* without one unsatisfactory answer, and might have continued the examination with 100 members for *four hours*. They could tell with ease the number of *books* in the old Bible; the number of *books* in the New Testament; the number of *chapters* in each; the number of *chapters* in each book; the names of the various writers; the name and order of *every book* in the Bible; the number of *chapters* in every book in the entire Bible; the *meaning* of the names of the books; the *history* of the Bible in detail; the history of the *first family*; the history of the *first church*; the history of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, the twelve patriarchs; the history of the Egyptian bondage and deliverance; the order of the plagues of Egypt; the history of Sodom and Gomorrah; the beautiful, thrilling, story of the Cross; etc.

These are truths that *all* should know; truths that are not subject to doubts; truths belonging to no particular creed, church, or particular party, but held in common by them all—truths that will stand the test, the storms, the wreck, the ruin of Time, and

will be one of great interest. To the energy and well-directed John A. Thompson, Esq., are the people in that section indebted for this excellent school. The Principal \* \* and a man eminent alike for his piety and attention to duty.

The following is from the same worthy source :

“ MARS HILL ACADEMY.—The first session of this Institution on the 18th inst. \* \* \* The Academy building, though modious, was wholly inadequate to accommodate the large sexes who were present. \* \* \* Speeches by the young delivered, and compositions by the young ladies were read :

Master L. H. Abington, Collierville, Tenn.—Deluge of

Miss Mattie J. Young, Florence, Ala.—Time Brings all

Mr. J. C. Wade, Wayland Springs, Tenn.—The Day of

Miss Romie A. Thompson, Florence, Ala.—Man as he was he will be.

Master James P. Thompson, Florence, Ala.—The Inquiry.  
Miss Bell Gresham, Florence, Ala.—War.

Mr. P. P. Anderson, Florence, Ala.—The Poor Indian.

Miss Hettie Wade, Florence, Ala.—Government of the

Master A. B. Brandon, Florence, Ala.—Temptation of

Miss Annie A. Cunningham, Hamburg, Tenn.—They Shall Reap in Joy.

Master A. D. Carson, Florence, Ala.—Woman.

Miss Mattie Z. Blolock, Florence, Ala.—The Past.

Mr. C. C. Jordan, West Point, Tenn.—Public Station.

Miss Susie M. Cunningham, Hamburg, Tenn.—All Things Transient.

Master B. H. Thompson, Florence, Ala.—Assassination



## MARS HILL ACADEMY.

parents to patronize in the country. Its location is perfectly healthy. Its isolated position in the country is a barrier to away from temptation and vice. \* \* \*

Dr. D. R. L. request, delivered in his usual happy manner an address to

\* \* \* The Principal, \* \* \* having in a very feeble manner addressed a few parting words to his pupils, who to him as children to a father, declared the exercises of the first session of Mars Hill Academy closed."

We might here introduce an article similar to the one from the prolific pen of W. J. Wood, editor of the *Liberator*, relative to the exercises of the second session, but it is unnecessary to do so. We are proud, however, to enroll this able young editor upon the list of the *friends of Mars Hill Academy*.

Judge W. B. Wood, of Florence, Alabama, a true pillar of the M. E. Church, a gentleman whose address and judgment are too well known to need comment, delivered the following address at Mars Hill Academy:—

"To say that I have been pleased with the performance of the first session, is to say less than the truth. I like this system here *both sexes* can be educated. Wise educators are now convening to discuss the subject of *educating both sexes* and to *know the other's progress*. They are adopting this plan. It is *nature demands it*; and it is bound ere long to be the **SYSTEM OF EDUCATION.**

"I am a sincere friend of this Institution. But it speaks for itself. What it has done but tells what it can do."

ling gem, has thus been added to the glorious diadem sacred brow."

J. M. Cunningham, of Hamburg, Tennessee, boarded *two daughters* at the Institution during the first session; second session he boarded *one son and four daughters* to regret his inability to do more for the school, but *Emma, the baby*, rather too small to send to a boarding school, thinks, however that the school is a good one, and desires of those who are blessed with more children than he, a *more helping hand*. *He is a man whose judgment is both valuable.*

#### TESTIMONIALS CONCERNING THE PRINCIPAL

Colonel O. Meeks, Corinth, Miss., says:

"He is a *gentleman, a scholar, and a Christian.*"

The following is from the pen of *his old teacher*, Mr. J. T. Barclay, formerly Professor of Mathematics in Franklin University, now the proprietor of that Institution,—a well-trying judgment is second to none. He says:

"*I consider his scholarship superior to that of any (of whom I am acquainted.)*"

The following is from the pen of Dr. J. T. Barclay, *a missionary to Jerusalem*, author of one of the most valuable Palestine extant, viz., "The City of the Great King."

"He is a young preacher of great promise of fine



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MARS HILL ACADEMY.

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**TWENTY-FIVE REASONS  
FOR PATRONIZING MARS HILL**

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1. The location is healthful, convenient and beautiful.
2. The building is spacious, convenient and comfortable.
3. The pure spring water is abundant and good — second to none.
4. Pupils can eat, sleep, study and recite under the same roof.
5. This obviates all necessity of exposure in inclement weather.
6. Away from the city, 'mong the beauties of Nature, pure air.
7. The premiums as incentives to piety, patience and industry exceed in value \$100.
8. The location is free from temptation to extravagance.
9. Every pupil receives an elegantly-framed, beautiful diploma worth at least \$5.
10. The charges are extremely low for such an institution.
11. All our text-books shall be of the *very best quality*.
12. The historical course shall be varied, and the *very best* authors used.
13. At the close of the course each pupil has an *ele*

## SOLEMN OBLIGATION OR PROMISE

Voluntarily made by every Pupil of Mars Hill Academy.

Having carefully read the circular of Mars Hill Academy, I do hereby subscribe myself a student thereof; and I do solemnly promise and pledge my honor and veracity as a gentleman (or lady) that during my connection with this Institution, I will willingly, voluntarily, and faithfully observe and obey all its rules, requirements, and regulations; that I will be diligent in study, punctual, polite and orderly at recitations; strictly moral in language and conduct; kind, respectful, courteous, and implicitly obedient to my *matron* and *teachers*; polite and courteous to my associates, and all the pupils, in every sense of these terms; that I will never fight or quarrel with any one, and that I will use every exertion in my power, at all times and under all circumstances, to promote peace, harmony, quietude, love and prosperity among all connected with this school; that I will never be noisy or boisterous, or wrestle, or do anything of the kind about the house; that I will never seek or accept a private or secret conversation or correspondence with any pupil of the opposite sex from my own, and that I will never receive a proposition for such correspondence or conversation, or anything tending thereto, without immediately committing the same to the Principal; that I will abstain from all kinds of gaming, (except such as the Principal may recommend for recreation,) from the use of all intoxicating liquors; that I will neither keep nor use fire-arms, or any other kind of deadly weapons whatever, and that I will immediately inform the Principal or Matron of any violation of this pledge by any pupil, when the knowledge of such violation becomes known to me.

*I subscribe to this paper freely, willingly, voluntarily and understandingly without any constraint: if therefore I violate this pledge, I will be*



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### VOCAL MUSIC.

Teacher, C. L. FILLMORE, of Cincinnati, Ohio.

Believing the cultivation of the vocal powers to be of vast importance, especially to those who intend to serve the Lord either by *singing* or *speaking*, we have employed C. L. Fillmore, of Cincinnati, Ohio, to teach *Vocal Music* at Mars Hill Academy. C. L. Fillmore has been a teacher of music for more than *twenty-five years*. He is the author of various musical productions. He is a *senior* brother of the lamented and far-famed A. D. FILLMORE, author of quite a library of Music Books, known as "Fillmore's Music Books."

Such is C. L. Fillmore, of Cincinnati, Ohio, Teacher of Vocal Music in Mars Hill Academy, near Florence, Alabama.

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### TO OUR NEIGHBORS.

Wood, Produce, Stock, Lumber, Manual Labor, (such as we need,) etc., will be taken from our neighbors as pay for schooling, *when they can not conveniently pay money.*

A. J. GRESHAM,

To whom the Institute is greatly indebted for its success, but who has no personal interest involved, will give attention to this department. *Any trade or contract whatever, made with him or*

JOHN A. THOMPSON,

*In accordance with this Circular, will be entirely valid in every sense of the word.*

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### REQUESTS.

Those who intend patronizing this Institution will please inform us of their intention, stating number, sex and advancement of the pupils they intend to send, if convenient to do so,

*At Least One Month Previous to the Beginning of the Session.*

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PLEASE SHOW THIS CIRCULAR TO YOUR FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS.

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**REMEMBER,**

We keep no accounts whatever; therefore, no pupil will be received *under any circumstances* till the entire charges are paid. (This does not apply to beneficiaries who are charged nothing.) Our terms are unprecedentedly low, and we are bound to be impartial, therefore, *we will not in any case deviate from this indispensable rule.*

**CONCLUSION.**

For additional information call on

JOHN A. THOMPSON, :

At the Circuit Clerk's Office, Florence, Alabama.

A. J. GRESHAM, Mars Hill Academy,

Or address,


**T. B. LARIMORE, Principal,**

**MARS HILL ACADEMY,**

Florence, Alabama.

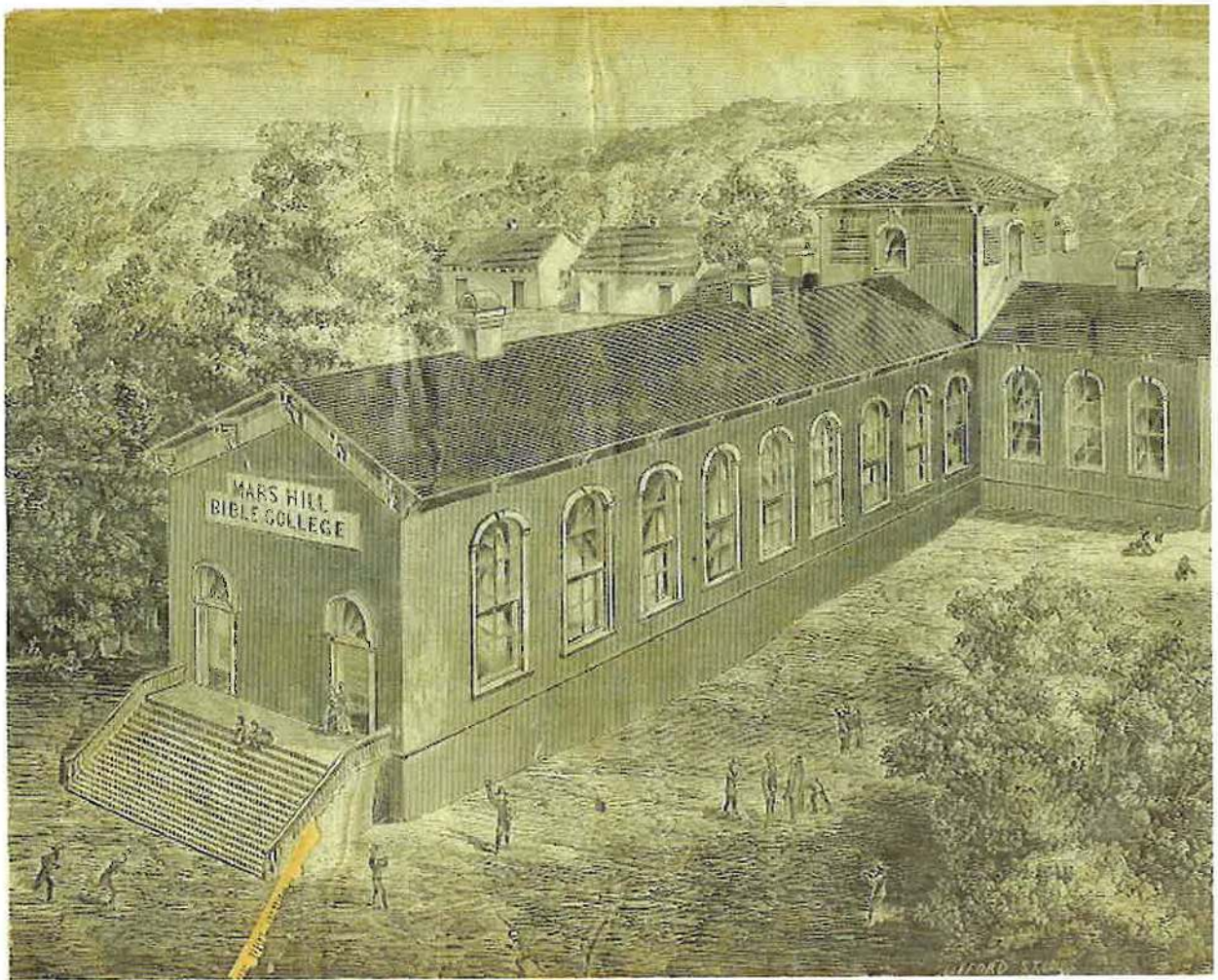
**A FREE SCHOOL.**

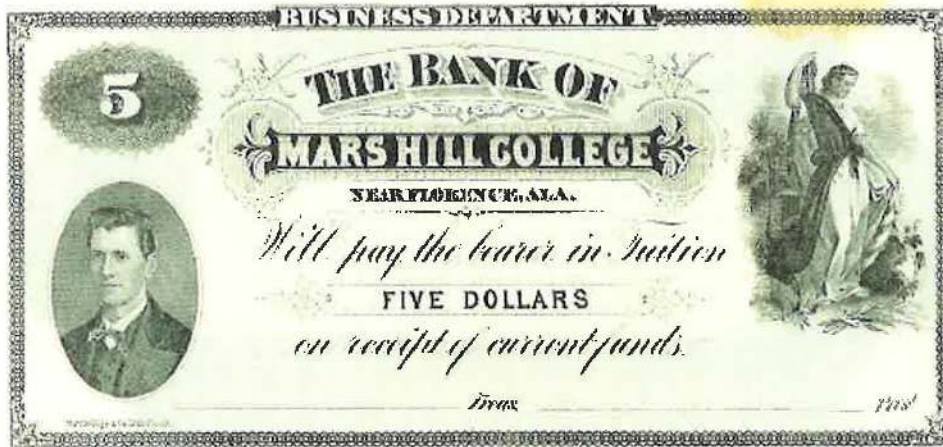
We expect to have a four months' free school at Mars Hill Academy every year, between June and January, free to every one in our neighborhood who attends the regular six months' session, *whether there is any public money or not.*

 *All books, stationery, etc., furnished free of charge.*

This gives to our neighbors a ten months' school, including every expense,—tuition, books, etc., for \$42.50, and to those not able to







## Author's Note

As I end this book, the reader should recognize the reason and why this book is written. My family in several ways was influenced by these events.

The lives of T.B. Larimore, his family, and his teaching and preaching in Henderson, Tennessee have effected my family. The life and family of R.P. Meeks is also true. The Meeks family was very effective to my dad's family. They were members of the church in Henderson from the late 1800's through 1950.

Our family has been effected by the Christians in Cookeville, Tennessee. Delores and I have a multitude of friends because of this Christian community. From 1968 til the present, our lives have had a positive, continual impact by Tennessee Tech University and the churchers in Cookeville.

I am sure there are errors in writing this book. But I know it may help the people who read it to better understand the body of logic that surrounded T.B. Larimore and his brother-in-law, R.P. Meeks. How did they make decisions? What made them so successful in their decision-making? Maybe these thoughts will help you in your decision-making before God.

Delores (Smith) Wheatley was born on the Meeks farm in 1939. When the note under the picture says "this house burned in 1946," Dee ran back into the house while it was burning to get a doll. The Smith family lived on this farm during the 1940's and early 1950's.



## The Author

Bob Wheatley was born in Henderson, Tennessee of Christian parents, Glen and Verna Wheatley. He married his high school sweetheart, Delores Smith Wheatley. As of this writing, they have been married 65 years. Their immediate family includes two children, five grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren.

He holds a B.S. degree in science, a MBA in business, heavy in economics, with additional graduate work in regional economics and sociology. His business career spanned ten years in the chemical industry, thirteen years in real estate and construction, and fifteen in consulting and management. Bob taught economics in three universities, three years as full time faculty and their years as adjunct faculty.

He has served in church leadership and as a Sunday school teacher since 1976.

Currently, the Wheatleys reside in Cookeville, Tennessee.

Bob is the author of an additional book, *The Jericho Road*. It is designed to explain in relationships the spiritual bonds between Christ and a Christian.

