

Life Story of Rev. John H. Ballard, 1924

LIFE HISTORY OF REV. JOHN H. BALLARD WALNUT, N. C., JANUARY, 1924

JOHN H. BALLARD, in the eightieth year of my age, will endeavor to write a short autobiography of my life, with a brief, traditional history of my ancestors. Ballard is said to be a Welch name, from which other names have been derived, as Bollard, Bullard, etc. Some spell it with one l, while it is usually spelled with two l's. Some accent the last syllable, while others pronounce it as though it was spelled Ballord, accenting the last syllable.

At some unknown date, but soon after the Revolutionary war, there was one, John Ballard, a soldier who fought for our independence, who migrated from Virginia and settled in Powell's Valley (which is now in the state of Tennessee). The said John Ballard had married one Miss James, by whom he raised twelve children, ten boys and two girls. One of the girls married a man by the name of Aldrage, of Macon County, North Carolina. The other girl married a man by the name of Byrd, of Yancey county, North Carolina. Of the boys I know nothing except for one, Joseph, my grandfather who was born November 9, 1794, and died November, 1884, being 90 years old. The said Joseph Ballard married Sallie Arwood, a daughter of one James Arwood, a Pennsylvanian who served in the Continental army during the Revolutionary struggle for independence. He first served under Washington in the North, being in the battle of Monmouth and others. He, with others, was afterwards transferred to the South, where they fought under Generals Green and Marion and was in the battle at King's Mountain, and many skirmishes with the Indians and Tories. The said James Arwood afterwards [sic] married one Miss Bryan, and entered on and bought a large boundary of land on the Paint Fork of Little Ivy, which is now in Madison county, N.C., where he settled and raised a large family of boys and three girls. The boys with one exception were frequently drunk and fighting, and thus reduced their father to poverty paying them out of difficulties, and yet when said boys were sober they were tender hearted and inclined to be religious. 'Ere long the old soldier, my great grandfather Arwood died at the advanced age of 100 years in poverty, while his wife lived to be 102 years old.

Joseph Ballard and wife, my grandparents, raised seven children: first, Susanah; second, John; third, David; fourth, James; fifth, Elizabeth; sixth, George; seventh, Ruth. David Ballard, my father; was born April 25, 1823 A. D. and lived to be almost 83 years old.

Said David Ballard married Vian Harwood, daughter of Squire Harwood, who had married Miss Sallie Dewese, daughter of Rev. Garret Dewese, who was one of the pioneer preachers of East Tennessee and Western North Carolina. David Ballard and wife raised eight children: first, John Henry; second, James Robert; third, Sarah Louisa; fourth, Squire Washington; fifth, Joseph Newton; sixth, Emer Lucinda; seventh, David Alexander; eighth, William Woodard. John H. Ballard, the writer, was born October 23, 1844, A. D., on the waters of Jacks Creek, in Yancey county, N. C., and was removed from place to place until his father was able to purchase land of his own, his first purchase being on Gabriel's Creek, a tributary of Big Ivy in Madison county, N. C. He soon sold said land and bought a mountain farm, on the north prong of Reems Creek, in Buncombe county, N. C. where I have my first recollection. We remained there until I was six years old, and attended one short session of school taught by one Mrs. Hughey. At that age I was so timid that I could scarcely talk enough to recite my lessons. About the year 1850 my father sold his land on Reems Creek and bought land and moved to Mountain Creek in Cherokee county, now Graham County, about one mile from Robensville, the county seat, where we remained about two years and had no opportunity for schools or churches, it being a backwoods settlement and our neighbors being mostly Cherokee Indians. And yet with these disadvantages before I was eight years old, and scarcely able to read the New Testament, I had some religious impressions, and perhaps would have accepted Christ as my personal Savior at that early age, if I could have had the proper encouragement, but while my parents were strictly moral, they were neither of them religious at the time.

After two years my father sold his property there and moved back to Buncombe county, and bought land on the South fork of Reem's Creek, where I had the advantage of Sunday schools, and short terms of public schools, about two months each autumn. The balance of the year I had to look after the stock, and the labor on the farm, but while I had some advantages, I was often surrounded with wicked associates and my head grew hard, notwithstanding I had frequent awakenings, and felt very serious, under the preaching of the gospel, or when attending funerals, and yet with an open Bible before me, and with the moving of God's spirit pressing for my heart's affection, I stubbornly resisted His overtures until I was almost eighteen years old, while I was always under the conviction that I was resisting the power that sought my well-being, while by force of will I had overcome my natural timidity. I was full of levity and being a pretty good mimic, I spent much time in rude company, mimicking preachers and politicians who frequently stumped the county, either Whig or Democratic. Often while mocking the preacher I would choke with emotion, my own words bringing conviction to my heart. This pastime was not because of any disrespect I had towards the preachers, as I always did respect the man who condemned sin, and espoused the cause of Jesus Christ. Perhaps my negligence about being religious was the reasoning of Satan, who prompted me to think that religion was morbid, and full of gloom and doubt. Something seemed to say to me, "You are destined for a long life, get pleasure out of the world. You see your parents, while very moral, are still worldly-minded, striving by all honest means to make money, giving themselves no rest day or night, and while they often counsel you to be moral and law abiding, they seldom if ever say anything to you about being religious. You are likely to live to be old; religion is more suitable for the old people. See you parents are not uneasy, your grandfather is not religious yet, and you need not wonder at your grandmother's piety, as she is sorely afflicted, being paralyzed as she is, it behooves her to be religious and if your great grand parents, who have reached the century mark, are religious, you have never heard them say anything about it, so be contented until you grow old and decrepit. Religion is only meant to keep people from going to hell anyway."

On the 15th day of July, 1862, A. D., it was my privilege to hear a sermon by one James Jones of the Methodist church, who seemed to preach directly to me, which produced great seriousness on my mind, and while striving to get rid of my convictions that afternoon, I had a narrow escape from death. A tree fell on my brother and myself, crippling my brother and killing the horse which he was riding, while I and my horse escaped with minor injuries. I believe that said accident, as it is called, was Providential to make my conviction permanent for from that day on my struggle was intense, until I found peace.

I made the mistake that thousands of others make, by trying to bring myself into favor with God, by much prayer and good works, and thus I continued for about three months. About this time Rev. W. W. Ramsey and others held a protracted meeting, when with experienced Christians as instructors. I was enabled by faith to accept Christ as my personal Savior, realizing that He had paid the penalty for all who would come to God with repentance and faith in the atonement. I was converted on the 15th day of October, 1862. The next thing to do then was to decide on what church to unite with, my people being mostly of Missionary Baptist sentiment, and that church was very prosperous in the community, as also were the Methodist and Presbyterian, the Free Will Baptist on the other hand, was very weak. While I agree with the larger Baptist church on the mode of baptism, yet the communion question settled my convictions, and on the 14th day of December in the year 1862, I was baptized and united with the Free Will Baptist church at Union Valley, Buncombe county, N. C. Believing that the Lord required the labors of even the weakest talents in his vineyard, I began at once to assist in prayer meetings, to visit the sick, and converse with the unsaved of the neighborhood, with some success among the young people, to whom I confined my labors almost exclusively. Here a sudden trouble comes into my life. The Civil War is on. The young men are volunteering, and going into the Confederate army. What shall I do? I am of Revolutionary descent. My father is an uncompromising union man. I hold a conference with my father, the decision is for me to stay at home as long as possible, rather than raise arms against the flag and union for which our fathers fought, but, on the conscript law comes to take all from 18 to 45 years of age. I was small and beardless so I kept my age a secret for a time. The war went on and I was taken to camp, but I refused to take the prescribed oath, so after much wrangling with threats to send me to Castle Thunder, a prison at Richmond, Virginia. Eventually Captain Wm. Fortune decided to arm me and place me in his company as a private, where I remained for a short time then took another soldier, younger than myself, Henry Bias, by name, and we made our way through the mountains into East Tennessee, and joined the Federal army, where I served under the Star Spangled Banner, as a corporal in Company C Third Regiment North Carolina Infantry volunteers, having bid my parents good-bye, determined to take the course I did, with the decision that if the South should succeed in establishing a Confederacy, I would never return to the old home again. With this decision of course it was a sad parting. Of the part I took in the war I shall say but little, suffice it to say I tried to make a good soldier, participated in several minor engagements and was exposed to the cold on a battlefield, contracting a cold which resulted in bronchitis and caused me to spend some time in a hospital. Said trouble left me an invalid from which I have never fully recovered, (and for which I received a pension after the war.) However I recovered sufficiently to return to my command and serve my company as secretary, making out all the payrolls, etc., until discharged by general order at Knoxville, Tennessee, on the 8th day of August, 1865. So much for my war record. I have said but little about it because I detest war and think all controversies should be settled by arbitration instead of war, however, the Civil war settled two questions, viz: Slavery and State Supremacy. Soon after my return to my home I met a young school Miss, by the name of Mattie J. Honeycutt, daughter of Rev. Stephen Honeycutt. My acquaintance with the school Miss soon ripened into love and courtship, and notwithstanding my physical disability, we decided to enter into matrimony, and on the 23rd day of September, 1866 A. D., we were married by Rev. Jno. Arwood at the residence of the bride's father in Yancey county. This union proved to be a happy one and to it was born nine children as follows: first, Hester Ann; second, Loretta Leticia; third, Theodore Vasco; fourth, Virgil Adkins; fifth, Cheney Marks; sixth, John Bunyan; seventh, Benjamin Randall; eighth, Curtis Nichols; ninth, Effie Haselton.

I will now turn to the religious question again. While in the army I still tried to be religious while a majority of my comrades (and a large majority) was wicked, yet I think they had confidence in my piety, as they would always encourage me to have prayers in their tents, and often checked themselves from profanity in my presence, and would even rebuke each other for swearing when they discovered my presence. As our regiment had no chaplain our colonel would often call on me to attend the funeral rites of our dead comrades, which consisted of a short eulogy on the patriotism and character of the deceased, with a prayer and religious exhortation to the comrades, and the firing of the salute over the grave of the dead.

After my return from the army I still engaged in prayer meetings and the Sunday school work and tried to satisfy myself that this was all that was required of me though at the same time there was strong impressions that I should go out and publicly declare the great love of God as manifested in the atonement, and thus persuade people to accept Christ as a personal Savior. My reasoning against taking this advanced step was first, my own unworthiness, second, my limited education, third, not being an orator and slow of speech, fourth, my physical condition (weak lungs), fifth, my poverty, being poor with a family to care for. While the brethren and especially the clergymen would frequently question me in regard to my calling to the work of the ministry, I didn't acknowledge a divine call to any except my wife, for some years. Still trying to get rid of my convictions, while my wife all this time was encouraging me to heed my convictions, giving me regular lessons in grammar in which I was very deficient, and at length I yielded to the request of the church and appeared before conference and was licensed to preach September, 1871, and on the 10th day of May, in the year 1872, was publicly ordained in the Union Valley church by Revs. W. W. Ramsey, S. M. Honeycutt and Wm. B. Wolsey. The ordaining prayer was made by Wolsey. While I was not publicly set apart as a preacher until 1871, yet I had been exhorting and praying both publicly and privately from the day of my conversion. My first pastoral charge was with the Pensacola church in Yancey county among a mountain people, and yet a well informed people at large. I am now on the retired list by reason of age and bodily infirmities, but during my fifty years of regular work as a pastor and evangelist I have held pastorates as follows: Union Valley, my old home church, 40 years, Pensacola church 4 years, Big Ivy church 6 years,

Inahanium church 5 years, Piney Grove church 5 years, Red Hill church 8 years, Jewell Hill church 10 years, Laurel Fork church 1 year, Chapel Hill church 3 years, Valley Union church 4 years, Homer's Chapel church 5 years, Anderson Branch church 1 year, Paint Rock church 7 years, Dry Branch church 5 years, Shady Grove church 4 years.

I have organized and helped to organize churches as follows: Homer's Chapel, Valley Union, Paint Rock, Indian Creek, Price's Creek, Gum Rock, Hagan's Chapel and Little Pine. I have traveled over most of the territory and preached in the churches of the French Broad, Jack's Creek, Toe River and Union Associations, besides to hold revivals in various Methodist, Baptist and Presbyterian churches. I have generally traveled alone. For a time I traveled with A. S. Justice, who was ordained at the same time I was. He soon left our church and joined the Missionary Baptist. For a time I was associated with Revs. James A. Ray and D. W. Adkins, who were very genial companions and able divines. I was associated and traveled with one A. M. Penland, an able Presbyterian minister to whom I went to school one year after I was licensed to preach. I traveled with him, and preached in his churches, often exchanging pulpits with him. He has gone to his reward, but his memory is very dear to me because of the pains he took in my preparation for the ministry. Some years after I entered the ministry I got in touch with one Thomas Cole, a licensed preacher in the Methodist church and finding him to be a congenial yoke fellow, whose characteristics seemed to be akin to my own, we soon became closely associated in our christian work, me going around with him on his circuit and he always a ready helper in my work. I had so much confidence in his ability in conducting revival work, that I never attempted to hold a protracted service without his help if it could be secured. After some years the said Thomas Cole decided to change churches and join our church, so I had the privilege of baptising him and making the ordaining prayer at his ordination, hence we have grown old together, being near the same age, having fought many hard battles together, and by God's grace had many glorious victories, having witnessed hundreds of happy conversions in our meetings. My association has honored me with official positions that I never sought I having served them as moderator at our annual conferences several times and as clerk several times. I also represented the French Broad Association, in a conference at Nashville, Tennessee, when we were making an effort to unite all our Southern churches into one body. I am now serving the association as Historian.

Just In the midst of my ministry when all seemed to be prosperous a sudden and sad calamity comes on me, the wife of my youth is taken away by death, after toiling with and encouraging me in every good word and work for 24 years and 12 days.

On the 5th day of October, 1890, the death angel came and Mattie was gone after a short illness with measles. She gave minute directions about her burial and some domestic concerns, and said she was going home to be forever with the Lord. Oh, how my plans were all confused, what to do in regard to church work or anything else I knew not. So I at once wrote all my churches (except one, my home church) tendering my resignation as pastor, thinking it best for me to stay at home and care for my children, there being 8 at home, one was married and gone, the youngest being only one year old at that time. But time in a measure heals broken hearts, and as my children learned a little more about house keeping I began to travel again, and making the acquaintance of another school Miss, I entered the second time into matrimony. On December the 12th, 1898 I was married by the Rev. A. F. Cresswell to Mary J. Reeves, daughter of Henry Jackson Reeves. My second wife had many of the traits of my first wife being social, lovable, industrious and economizing, always encouraging me in all my religious work. By her I have six children: first, Henry Dawese; second, Roscoe Blaine; third, Paul Hargus; fourth, Rex Ottis; fifth, Angelia Queen; sixth, Rhea Wolsey. It has been my privilege to labor and pray with both my parents and all my brothers and sisters when they were seeking salvation and I rejoice in that I have lived to see my parents, and all my brothers and sisters, and also all of my own children make a public profession of religion.

I have always felt that my work should be especially among the young people: first, because their hearts are tender and easily touched; second, because of my inability to instruct the better informed, yet there has been some old people converted in my meetings. Among them my wife's grandfather, Welse Reeves, who was ninety-one years old. Said Reeves lived to be 95 years old. And one woman, Dorcas Griffin, was one hundred years old and lived to be 117 years old. She and her son, an old gray-haired man, were both converted the same day. I have had many handicaps in my religious work: first, I was possessed with a bad temper, which not being controlled as it should have been, may have made me liable to just criticism at times; second, the brethren complained that I lacked confidence in myself, to accomplish what I might have done with more confidence in my work, especially among the older people; third, I think my war record caused some prejudice against me and made me unpopular in some places, as my labors have been entirely in the South and as I served in the Federal army during the Civil war; fourth, I was uneducated and had not the eloquence or flow of language demanded of the pulpit at the present day; fifth, my boyish nature, or lively make up might have been a handicap in my work, especially among the older people, but feeling that my especial work was among the young people, I tried to be one of them, and I think by thus mingling amongst them I gained some converts that otherwise I might not have reached. To illustrate I was in charge of one church to which I preached once each month on Friday. A school was going on most of the year in the church house and the teacher would give a short recess before preaching began and I frequently took part with the boys in their plays. One old sister complained saying the church had made a mistake in calling a boy to the pastorate of the church. After some time I held a protracted service and her boys were both converted. One of them in relating his experience in the church referred to my playing with them and gaining his affections, so he decided to heed my admonition about being religious. At that moment his mother came to her feet and shouted aloud, Thank God for baseball preachers. Another young man who I was interested in, a very sweet singer, proposed that I go with him on his fox-hunting trips which I did on several occasions, he furnishing the mules to ride and the dogs for the chase. This gave me an opportunity for private conversation and at my suggestion he finally agreed to sing a certain song. "Oh Where Shall Rest Be Found?" with serious consideration once each day for the *next* month. When I returned the following month he was under conviction and I had the pleasure of seeing him converted and the sad duty of preaching his funeral not many months afterwards as consumption had done its deadly work. And last but not least I was handicapped with poverty. My churches paid no salary and I generally had three or four scattered from ten to forty miles apart. My family worked hard and their labor and my small pension kept me going for fifty years, when by reason of age and bodily

infirmities I quit pastoral work, after burning midnight oil in my studies for all these years. It must be said of some of our pioneer preachers in this country that they opposed paying the preacher a salary, hence an anti-missionary spirit was implanted in the minds of the clergy and laity. Natural timidity kept me from preaching that duty to my churches for many years. Finally we got a resolution passed in our association advising the churches to take a collection once each month for their pastor, and that we favor home and foreign missions. I had preached more than twenty years before there was a public collection taken for my benefit, sometimes traveling as much as fifteen hundred miles in a year and not receiving as much as \$1.00 for my services, hence many churches lost their visibility for lack of pastors. With one exception I never received as much as \$100.00 for my services per year. I am glad to say that of late years our people are doing much better, yet our preachers are poorly paid and have doubtless made more sacrifices for the cause of Christ than any other preachers in this or any other state.

Enemies, if I have ever made any, either in or out of the church, it has been on account of the stand I have always taken on the liquor question, yet I am proud of my record, as I have always publicly and privately fought alcohol, in all its various forms, in county, state and general government. In my religious work my efforts have always been to get people converted and let them make their own selection for a church home believing that all converted people should unite with some branch of the Christian church.

After my second wife had several children I decided to sell my farm in Buncombe county and divide the proceeds between the two families, which I did in a way that was satisfactory to all, my wife taking the share for her and her children, and buying a small farm near Walnut in Madison county, N. C. I have labored with most of our preachers in Western North Carolina and East Tennessee and was personally acquainted with the fathers of our church in this country, viz: [John F.] Wheeler, [Moses] Peterson and [William B.] Wolsey.

My best knowledge of our church history follows: More than 100 years ago, one Garret Dewese, was called to account in the Baptist association charged with heresy for preaching Free Salvation, while at that day they preached a limited atonement, believing in fore-ordination and predestination, they failing to convince Dewese of his error in doctrine, he with a few others withdrew from the larger body of Baptists, and organized a body of Free Salvationists and called themselves Free Will Baptists, but still held close communion. The new church prospered and grew so fast that the old church became alarmed and called for a conference between the two bodies which resulted in a union on the following basis, viz: That each preacher should preach his own doctrine in regard to the atonement, and they would be known as the United Baptists. The union so elated them that one old man by the name of Carter, shouted out in the language of Simeon, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace," and soon expired. After they wore the name of United Baptist for some years one Rev. Chesterfield possessed them to call their name Missionary Baptist. At this time I think they usually write it Baptist. About the time the Baptist united there were three preachers taking another advanced step. [John F.] Wheeler, [Moses] Peterson and [William B.] Wolsey were practicing free communion at the Lord's Supper as they read from Paul let a man examine himself and so let him eat, and took the example of Robert Hall and John Bunyan who said no bar to the communion, also the noted C. H. Spurgeon, of England, another example of free communion. This caused another rent and produced another denomination called Free Will Baptist. Said church grew very slow for some years being greatly persecuted, and after some forty years or more the Civil war came and while other preachers were excused from military service, ours was conscripted, the enrolling officers claiming that ours was not a legitimate denomination, hence our churches without shepherds were scattered so the first association after the war mustered less than a thousand members. Now there are five or six associations with an average of one thousand each. However, at this time, there seems to be a great dearth among our people. The cause as I think is by the teaching of the majority of our preachers that we must seek what they call the second blessing, or the gift of the Holy Ghost. They would also discard the medical profession and depend on divine healing for all the ills of life. Some claim that they have been instantly healed of dangerous maladies while some of our members claim the ability to talk with tongues. I am told that in a state of excitement they will dance over the floor and croak like frogs in a pond. A better description of their actions would be that given by Rev. I. D. Stewart of the Shakers, their origin was in England, a fanatical offshoot of the Quakers. Because of their trembling and shaking of their bodies, in times of excited worship, they were called Shakers. One preacher in our association in his annual report says he had held several revivals so many converted and so many had received the Holy Ghost, (as though the Holy Ghost had nothing to do in conversion). One preacher said in a sermon that if the old preachers had preached a pure and full gospel our country would have been in much better shape spiritually. He says again of our fathers who died without this second experience they are lost unless God made some provision for them as He did for the infants. The fathers in our church in this mountain country taught in common with all others that conversion was the work of the Holy Spirit and that in conversion the soul was cleansed from all sin. The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanses from all sin. Then advised to add to their faith all the Christian graces, and thus grow in grace, and knowledge of truth, and thus obtain Bible satisfaction. The Free Will Baptist seemed to spring up like mushrooms, spontaneously, in the last half of the 18th and the first of the 19th centuries in different states and in different parts of the same states under various names. Free Baptist. Free Will Baptist. Free Communion Baptist and Free Salvation Baptist. When I joined the church, I had no idea that there was another body of the same name or doctrine in the world.

Perhaps the largest body of Free Will Baptist that ever existed in the United States was in the north, and north-east, first organized by Benjamin Randall, on the thirtieth day of June, in the year 1780, at New Durham, Massachusetts. And perhaps the fiercest persecution has been among them, as prior to the struggle for independence, the law of church and state was blended in one. The established church was Congregationalist, the doctrine Calvinistic and all the churches (Free Will Baptist excepted) taught that God from all eternity fore-ordained and predestinated unchangeable the lot of every being, some being predestinated to eternal life, the balance reprobated for all eternity. The name of Free Will Baptist was first given by their enemies as a reproach. They finally accepted the name taking it to mean: first, free salvation on God's part as by the grace of God He (Christ) tasted death for every man; second, freedom on man's part to accept or reject the proffered salvation, as whosoever will let him come; third, free communion as let a man examine himself and so let him eat, this they practiced without regard to denominational differences. The

custom in the New England states was for the parish to elect a preacher of the established order (Congregationalist), vote his salary and tax the parish for his support. Hence Free Will Baptist had to build church houses they never entered and pay preachers they never heard. Upon refusing to pay the church tax one man's cow was taken and sold for his church tax and at least one preacher's horse was taken. Infant baptism was so universally taught it was considered heresy to speak against it. Dunster, the first president of Harvard college, was banished for opposing it and thus the persecution continued until some Free Will Baptist preachers were elected to the legislature of Massachusetts and got a toleration act passed as follows: Resolved that the people of this state commonly known by the name of Free Will (Antipedo) Baptist church and society shall be considered as a distinct religious sect or denomination with all the privileges as such agreeable to the constitution. Here ended all legal opposition to the Free Will Baptist who notified the Selectmen of their unwillingness to be taxed for the support of another church.

Others soon obtained the same recognition for themselves. Notwithstanding all the persecution and mistakes (as doubtless there were many) the Free Will Baptist spread westward to the Pacific and northward into Canada and in less than a century had established a publishing house and a mission at Calcutta and Balasore India, where they sent and sustained a score or more missionaries. They also built schools and colleges as follows: Parker college, California, Hillsdale college in Michigan, Rio Grande college in Ohio, Bates college in Maine, also one in New York. After the war of the rebellion they established the Cairo Mission among the freed men, where Dr. Manning spent several of the last years of his life. They also built Storer college at Harper's ferry, where the religious fanatic and misguided John Brown had been executed for insurrection among the negroes. Said college was built to educate the colored race just out of bondage. Soon after the erection of this college there was a colored man of royal blood from Liberia, Africa, who paid the United States a visit by the name of Louis P. Clinton. Said Clinton entered school at Harper's ferry and stayed until graduated and entered the ministry. He then returned to his native country and established a Free Will Baptist mission, which was so prosperous that he sent for and received aid from the whites, one man and wife going to his assistance.

To me it seems sad to relate that after a century of hard trials and much labor, we must lose our name in part, but perhaps our doctrine as presented had the influence to soften the doctrine of the Northern Baptist, so they no longer preached unconditional election, and reprobation, nor held close communion, that they could court our people for cooperation in our work both in church and missions which finally resulted in the merging of the Morning Star into the Watchman, a Baptist publication. Or perhaps our people did the wooing, be that as it may, there seems to be a union with us losing the name. However; if God can be honored more by the union, I will say Amen, and trust that all these colleges will still be useful to men and glorify God.

Now we will turn our attention to the South. The oldest Free Will Baptist church in North America was organized in North Carolina, by Revs. Paul Palmer and Joseph Parker in 1764. The Calvinist Baptist came from Philadelphia and succeeded in drawing some away and the others were known as Free Will Baptist. Rev. Elias Hutchins visited them in 1829 and preached among them. He also visited some of the churches of South Carolina and found them all of the same faith as those of the North except some of the Southerners were slaveholders. So we see that North Carolina was not only the first to make a declaration of independence as they did at Mecklinburg, but the first Baptist to declare free salvation.

We now have state conventions in the southern states or at least some of them and a general conference of all that are disposed to unite with us regardless of latitude. It was my privilege to represent the French Broad association in said general conference two years ago.

We as a denomination have a high school at Ayden, N. C., where our people are building a college. We also have a publishing house at the same place where our denominational paper the Free Will Paper is published. Our people also have an orphanage at Middlesex, N. C., where a number of orphan children are well trained and well cared for. I think there are other papers published in some of the states in the interest of the churches and possibly there are orphanages in other states of which I have no knowledge. The Free Will Baptist had made wonderful advancement for the last several years, until recently it seems that they have left or added to the doctrine of the early fathers or founders of the Free Will Baptist church until it seems that it in these mountain associations will be merged into Shakerism or Holy Rollerism, but if this thing be of man it will come to naught of itself, and if it be of God we can not fight against it. I can only say may God be honored let the outcome be what it may.

In writing this little pamphlet I have tried to be correct, yet there may be some slight errors. I have gotten it largely from Stewart's History of the Free Will Baptist and he seems to prove all his assertions. I now close this brief sketch dedicating it to my children for future reference.

JOHN H. BALLARD. 1924