

Primitive Baptist
MINUTES

OF THE

FISHER'S RIVER

Primitive Baptist Association,

CONVENED AT

Volunteer Meeting House,

Stokes County, N. C.,

April 21st, 1876.

“Watchman” Print.

1876.

The introductory sermon was delivered by Elder James M. Blansett, and after prayer by elder R. W. Hill, letters from the following churches were handed forward, read and minuted as follows:

Rock Spring—Elder Robert Willbarn,* C. W. York,* Enoc York.*

Cody's Creek—Elder H. Alberty,* H. J. Wood,* Isaiah Whitaker,* Moses Pilson.

Stewart's Creek—Elder Wm. B. Gates,* L. J. Jones, T. J. Booker.

Fisher's Gap—Jacob Lowe,* H. B. Creed,* Wm. Golden, George Brannock.*

Fisher's River—Wm. T. Lewis, Henry Cave,* B. F. Wood.

Deep Creek—D. M. Fletcher,* T. R. Hall,* E. Carter, Jesse Williams.*

Ararat—Elder M. G. Harbour, A. M. Denny, Gabriel Denny, and brethren James H. Dicks and C. B. Denny.

Tom's Creek—Elders A. Moran, H. Cain, J. E. Atkinson, John Moran; brethren L. G. Adams,* Peterson Slate.

Elk Spur—Levi Edwards,* John J. Ayers, Andrew Hawks.

Franklin—Elders T. J. Lawson,* A. C. Woodruff,* and brethren H. Maze* and Calvin Gentry.

Volunteer—P. W. Lawrance, James George, F. M. Venable.

White Oak Spring—P. Detherage, N. Howe, H. Shelton, I. Sutphin.*

Flower Gap—Elder H. Jones; brethren F. M. McCraw, James Hawks, Calvin Blackburn and Henry Hawks.*

Round Peak—Daniel Barker.*

State Road not represented.

Then chose elder Hugh Jones moderator, Moses Pilson clerk and elder A. M. Denny assistant clerk.

Then called for correspondents, when, from Mayo, elders R. W. Hill, Samuel Arrington, T. S. Ring, M. D. Hill, and brethren David Hall, A. T. Stewart Yancy B. Davis, Franklin Redmon, L. H. Southern, John Lawrance, Benjamin Sprinkle, James Hicks, Fewel Fulton, J. A. Leak; Smith's River, elders Samuel J. Lackey, James M. Blansett; New River, brother James Boyd. Brethren A. Reed and A. M. Moss, from Mayo, being present were invited to seats. Then appointed R. W. Hill S. J. Lackey, Samuel Arrington, with the moderator and clerk, a committee to arrange the business of this Association. Then made choice of elders S. Arrington, A. Moran and J. M. Blansett to preach on Saturday, worship to commence at 9 o'clock, and elders R. W. Hill, S. J. Lackey, M. D. Hill to preach on Sunday, worship to commence at 10 o'clock, then adjourned.

Met on Saturday, according to adjournment, and after prayer by the moderator, the messenger's names were called, read the rules of decorum, marked the absentees. The committee then made their report, the same being received, they were discharged. The business of the Association was then disposed of as follows:

1st. Called on the Presbytery appointed to attend at Franklin

church to report, which reported that they attended and ordained brother A. C. Woodruff to the ordinance of the gospel, and were then discharged.

2d. Agreed that Wm. B. Gates preach the introductory sermon at our Fall Association, and in case of failure elder M. G. Harbour.

3d. Attended to the case referred, in regard to the propriety of opening a correspondence with the Mountain Association. We say that owing to the confliction in the minds of the brethren, we think it not expedient to open a correspondence at this time.

4th. Appointed a Presbytery of elders T. J. Lawson, A. C. Woodruff, M. G. Harbour and H. Jones to attend the request of Fisher's Gap church for the purpose of ordaining deacons.

5th. Appointed elder A. M. Denny to prepare an obituary of elder John Jones, dec'd, to be annexed to our minutes at our Fall Association.

6th. Query: Has a member a right to withdraw from the church without a trial?

Answer: No.

Saturday the stand was occupied as follows: Samuel Arrington opened the services of the day from Isaiah 35th chap. 10th verse: "And the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads, &c"—elder J. M. Blansett followed by exhortation. Elder R. W. Hill closed from Nehemiah 13th chap. 1st, 2d and 3d verses: "On that day they read in the book of Moses in the audience of the people, and therein was found written that the Ammonite and the Moabite should not come into the congregation of God forever," &c.

Sunday—The brethren appointed to preach to-day met a large congregation. Elder M. D. Hill opened the services of the day from Luke 1st chap. 52d and 53d verses: "He hath put down the mighty from their seats and exalted them of low degree," &c. Elder Samuel J. Lackey followed from Ezekiel 37th chap. 3d, 4th and 5th verses: "And he said unto me, son of man can these bones live? and I answered, O Lord God, thou knowest," &c., and elder R. W. Hill closed from Matthew 25th chap. 31st, 32d and 33d verses: "When the son of man shall come in his glory and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory," &c.

HUGH JONES, Moderator.

MOSES PILSON, Clerk.

Minutes of the same Association convened at Cody's Creek Meeting House, Surry County, N. C., October, 20th, 1876.

The introductory sermon was preached by elder Wm. B. Gates

from Zephaniah 3d chap. 12th verse: "I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people," &c., and after prayer by elder M. G. Harbour, letters from the different churches were handed forward and minuted as follows:

CHURCHES.	NAMES OF DELEGATES.	Received by Experience	Received by Letter.	Dismissed by Letter.	Restored.	Excluded.	Deceased.	Total Number.	Contributions.
Elk Spur	Abner Gardner, Levi Edwards, John J. Ayers, G. H. Hawks,* W. M. Stricklin,* A. Hawks.	2						19	\$ 50
Volunteer	P. W. Lawrance, J. George,* F. M. Venable.*	2	1					130	1 00
Rock Spring	Elder R. Wilbourn, Hardin Cockerham,* C. W. York, Henry Shore, E. H. York.*	1						225	1 00
Deep Creek	T. R. Hall, E. Carter, D. M. Fletcher, J. M. Jones.	2						33	3 30
Flower Gap	Elder H. Jones, Calvin Blackburn, F. M. McCraw, Henry Hawks,* James Hawks.		1					51	85
Tom's Creek	Elder A. Moran,* H. Cain, J. E. Atkinson,* John Moran,* and brethren S. G. Adams,* P. Slats.*	5	2					82	1 48
Cody's Creek	Elder N. Alberty, H. J. Wood, Moses Pilson.							29	1 10
State Road	H. Hanes,* S. Young,* A. J. Williams, Thomas Nixon.*							31	95
Fisher's Gap	Samuel Low,* Jacob Low,* R. W. Flippen, George Brannock, William Golding.							23	70
Stewart's Creek	Elders William B. Gates, James D. Draughn, and brethren S. J. Jones, S. J. Booker.	3	1	1				223	1 10
Franklin	Elders Thomas J. Lawson, A. C. Woodruff, and brethren H. Maze,* Calvin Gentry.	1						124	85
Ararat	Elders M. G. Harbour, A. M. Denny, G. Denny, and brethren F. R. Stone,* E. Denny, C. B. Denny.					1		163	3 35
Fisher's River	William T. Lewis, Henry Cave and B. F. Wood.		1					26	1 90
White Oak Spring	P. Detherage,* H. Shelton and William Jones.*	2	1					112	1 05
Round Peak	Not represented.								

Absentees marked thus *

Then chose elder Hugh Jones Moderator, Moses Pilson Clerk and elder A. M. Denny assistant clerk. Then called for correspondents when, from New River, brethren Edmund Branscomb, Thomas J. Jennings, Larkin Nawton and Jonas Boyd were invited to seats with us, and also received a file of Minutes each from Kehukee, Abbot's Creek and Little River associations. A letter from the Mountain Association was received, read and referred to the committee. Then chose elders T. J. Lawson, M. G. Harbour and brother F. M. McCraw with the Moderator and Clerk a committee to arrange the business of this Association. Then made choice of elders Hugh Jones, H. Cain, Wm. B. Gates to preach on Saturday, worship to commence at 9 o'clock, and elders T. J. Lawson, A. M.

Denny and M. G. Harbour to preach on Sunday, worship to commence at 10 o'clock. Then appointed brethren Henry Shelton and P. W. Lawrance a committee of finance. Then called for the circular letter, which was received and referred to the committee, and also the obituary of Elder Jones called for, received and referred to the committee. Then adjourned.

Met on Saturday according to adjournment, and after prayer by elder A. M. Denny, the messenger's names were called, marked the absentees and read the constitution and rules of decorum. The committee then made their report, the same being received they were then discharged and the business was then disposed of as follows: 1st. Called on correspondents appointed to attend sister associations to report, some attended, and those that did not were excused; 2d. Called on the Presbytery appointed to attend the request of Fisher's Gap church to report, which reported that they attended and ordained brethren William Golding and Jacob Low to the office of deacon; 3d. Considered the act of Elk Spur church legal in receiving members from the Mountain Association by experience and baptism; 4th. Called for the circular letter, which was prepared by elder Wm. B. Gates, which was read and ordered to be annexed to our minutes, and elder A. M. Denny to prepare the next circular letter by our Fall Association; 5th. Called for the obituary of elder John Jones, which was produced by elder A. M. Denny, received and ordered to be annexed to our minutes; 6th. Appointed correspondents to sister associations: to Mayo, elders H. Jones, A. Moran, H. Cain, J. E. Atkinson, and brethren Calvin Blackburn, A. Gardner; to Smith's River, elders M. G. Harbour, H. Cain, H. Jones, A. Moran, John Moran, J. E. Atkinson; to Abbott's Creek, elders A. M. Denny, Eugene Carter; to New River, elders Hugh Jones, T. J. Lawson, M. G. Harbour; Kehukee and Little River associations we correspond by minutes; 7th. Called on the committee of finance to report, which reported that they received from the churches at this time \$19 13, and in the hands of the clerk \$5 88, making in all \$25 01, the committee discharged; 8th. Agreed that our next association be held at Fisher's River meeting house, 4 miles northeast of Dobson, to commence the Friday before the 4th Sunday in April, 1877, and elder M. G. Harbour preach the introductory sermon, and in case of failure elder A. M. Denny, and the Fall Association to be held with Deep Church, at Coe's meeting house, in Yadkin county, N. C., two miles north of East Bend, to commence on Friday before the 4th Sunday in October, 1877; 9th. Agreed that the clerk have 550 copies of these Minutes printed and distribute them as usual.

Saturday the stand was occupied as follows: elder Gabriel Denny opened the services of the day from Romans 9th chap. 27th verse: "Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved," elder Wm. B. Gates followed and preached from John 3d chap. 14th verse: "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the son of man be lifted up."

Sunday—The brethren appointed to preach to-day met a large

congregation. Elder A. M. Denny opened the services of the day from Romans 11th chap. 26th and 27th verses: "And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written," &c., and elder M. G. Harbour followed from 1st Peter, 4th chap. 18th verse: "And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" Elder T. J. Lawson closed from Jeremiah 31st chap. and part of the 3d verse: "I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee."

HUGH JONES, Moderator.

MOSES PILSON, Clerk.

Price for printing these minutes \$16 00; clerk's fees \$5 00.

Names of ordained ministers belonging to our association with postoffice address—Hugh Jones, Isaac Edwards, St. Paul's, Va.; Nathan Alberty, M. G. Harbour, Dobson, N. C.; T. J. Lawson, Taylorsville, N. C.; H. Cain, A. Moran, John Moran, J. E. Atkinson, Tom's Creek, N. C.; William B. Gates, J. D. Draughn, Mt. Airy, N. C.; Robert Wilbourn, Rusk, N. C.; A. M. Denny, Gabriel Denny, Pilot Mountain, N. C.; A. C. Woodruff, Boonville, N. C.

CIRCULAR LETTER.

To the brethren composing the Fisher's River District:

Dear brethren—As I was appointed to write a circular letter to be attached to our minutes, if approved, you will doubtless expect an address. To proceed, I will call your attention to Isaiah 54th chapter and 13th verse: "And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children." Here we discover a difference between the offering of Cain and that of Abel: Cain brought of the fruit of earth after the Lord had said to Adam cursed is the ground for thy sake; while Abel brought the firstlings of the flock and offered an offering more acceptable than that of Cain. Here seems to be two spirits, and they pursued quite a different course; one teaches self-exaltation and justification by their own works, saying God doth know ye shall not die; therefore they bring death eternal upon themselves by taking the advice of the old serpent to wit, Satan, but quite different with our Father's children, they are taught that vain is the help of man. Thus saith the Lord, "Inquire for the old land marks and walk therein, and ye shall find rest unto your souls." We believe that Jeremiah was taught of the Lord, and therefore spoke as he was moved by the Holy Ghost. David being taught of the Lord says—"and he led them forth by the right way, that they might go to a city of habitation; oh that man would praise the Lord for his goodness and wonderful works towards the children of men. Isaiah being taught of the Lord that he was mighty and able to save to the uttermost all that come unto him by and through the atoning blood of Christ. The ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads. They shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighings shall flee away. Thanks be unto God who hath redeemed and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works but according to his own purpose given us in Christ Jesus before the world was. Not with the perishable things of this world, such as gold and silver, but with the blood of Christ which purify and cleanseth from all sin, verily Christ came to do his father's will. He lived up to law that man had violated and restored it honorable to the Father. He saith, take my yoke upon you and learn of me for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest to your souls, for my yoke is easy and my burden is light. Dear brethren, Jesus said unto Nicodemus "Marvel not that I said unto thee ye must be born again." This was strange doctrine to him, so in conclusion of these remarks, I conceive this doctrine strange to me in nature's night. So farewell brethren.

WM. B. GATES.

OBITUARY.

Elder John Jones was born in Patrick county, Virginia, on the 23d day of March, 1790, (son of Wm. and Elizabeth Jones.) He seemed to be a youth of rather uncommon intelligence, possessing extraordinary muscular strength, as well as a strong sensation of natural sense and judgment.

On the 15th day of December, 1812, he was married to Rozanah Boaz, the wife of his youth, with whom he spent about 21 years of social comfort, she being a lady of much tenderness and virtue, and, as far as her strength and ability would admit, performed the duty of a wife with much zeal and integrity.

In process of time he joined the Primitive Baptist church of Christ at Spoon Creek meeting house, in Patrick county, and was baptized by Elder M. Hill, the pastor of that church. He was soon made choice of by the church to serve them by filling the office of deacon, which office he filled with much prudence and faithfulness for a number of years. But soon began to manifest an impression of mind indicating that God claimed a further duty at his hand, and that he must now serve Him by sounding the gospel trumpet in Zion, and warn the sons of men to flee the wrath to come. The church being satisfied that his gift and calling was of God, and that it was essential that he should be set at liberty, granted him license to exercise the gift according to the impression of his mind, and finding he was so much blessed with the knowledge and power of the gospel, called for a Presbytery and ordained or set him apart to the work of the ministry, authorizing him to officiate in all the ordinances of the gospel.

In November, 1830, he moved to Surry county, N. C., and also moved his membership to Ararat church in said county, and there remained until it pleased God to call his soul home to Himself.

For many years he served the Fisher's River Association as Moderator, and also kept the monthly pastoral care of four churches until his death.

All through life he seemed to be possessed with more than a common mind, both in civil and religious matters. He, by honest labor and economy, procured an ample support for himself and family, and also give large assistance to poor around him by administering from his own honest earnings to their necessities. His generous heart was always open to the cries of the widows and orphan children, and was pleased to comfort them in any way he could.

On the 4th of June, 1833, it pleased God to call from him his dear Rozanah, leaving him with a large family of children to grieve and mourn the loss of a kind and affectionate wife and mother whose space was now left vacant among them, which vacation was soon in a measure supplied by a second marriage to Miss Jane McCarter, which marriage was celebrated on the 10th of November, 1833. But notwithstanding all this adversity, he kept an eye single to the cause of God, and manifested much zeal and integrity in promulgating the gospel.

He spent a large portion of his time for fifty-four or five years of his life in traveling and preaching, during which time he visited many of the surrounding associations, and was cordially received by the Baptist wherever he went. Thus he formed almost an unbounded acquaintance, and was noted by all for his soundness of mind and integrity of heart. He was blessed with very good health, with little exception, and retained his bodily strength to a great age, so that even when he was 84 years old he could get upon a horse with perfect ease and agility and ride 15 or 20 miles in time for preaching. His judgment in discipline, both as Moderator of the Association and also of the separate churches, was equal to that of any in his day, and as for his skill in preaching the gospel it seemed that first and last almost the whole gospel field came under his notice, and his gift in cultivating it was such that any pen or tongue will fail to do the subject full justice. The gift and power of God was continually being made manifest through him in feeding the fold of God in comforting mourning souls, in reclaiming the wicked and calling after the lost, and to the general edification and building up of the church. But, alas! alas! notwithstanding he

was a faithful servant of God, and loved dearly by thousands of his fellow-men. Heaven in the fullness of time must have its own.

About the first of October, 1875, his health began to fail very fast, so that his seat was now seen vacant at his churches; his voice ceased to be heard: at Coe's Creek church in Yadkin county (October meeting being his last visit there) and at Ararat, Stewart's Creek and Fisher's River, all seemed to be clothed with sadness owing to the absence of their pastor who had attended them with so much faithfulness for so many years.

On the 31st day of October, he attended a funeral near his home (being the last appointment he had under promise more than his monthly meetings at the four named churches) where he preached his last sermon on this occasion he seemed to be strangely under the influence of the Spirit of God, and preached with great boldness the same doctrine that he had contended for for more than fifty years. From this time he was confined to home, but not to bed until the 13th of December, when his strength suddenly failed and symptoms of death began to be manifest. While on his death-bed he maintained his integrity of heart, he seemed to be entirely submissive to the will of God, but yet was moved with compassion towards the churches and begged God that he might not cease to pray for his preaching brethren as long as he lived, but on Sunday the 19th of December death prevailed upon his mortal body and he fell asleep in the arms of a faithful Savior, after numbering 85 years, 8 months and 16 days.

This faithful herald of God left a wife about 75 years old, 6 children living, and a number of grand children, and numerous other friends to mourn his loss, besides not only the four churches he was pastor of, but nearly all the Baptist churches in western North Carolina and also many churches in Virginia meet in their associations and mourn over the now vacant seat of one whose voice had become so natural among them, but now he is gone to eternity, his flesh is mingling back to dust from whence it was filling the decree of destiny, but his happy soul is not there, it has taken its flight to that blissful region of eternal rest, there to join in the general association above, around the throne of God, where congregations never break up and Sabbaths never end, there to receive a just reward for all his toils, travels, cares and woes that he has ever passed through while serving God below. 'Tis true, our loss seems great indeed, but our loss is his eternal gain, and while we are yet mourning his absence and toiling and suffering here, his raptured soul is there swallowed up in immortal glory, wearing the blood bought robe of righteousness prepared and applied by grace divine, walking the golden streets of the Jerusalem, eternally praising God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, in a world without end.

So let us submit to God and own
That he has done His will,
And though our loving pastor's gone
His soul is living still.
'Twas not the will of God that he
Should always suffer here,
But that his soul should be set free
From every cumbering care.
Then let us strive the prize to gain
And love and serve the Lord,
That we may meet our pastor again
Around the throne of God.