

**A HISTORY OF THE UNITED BAPTIST CHURCH
OF CHRIST AT COTTAGE GROVE, TENNESSEE
FROM 1850-1908**

PAUL BRUCE GRUBBS

**A HISTORY OF THE UNITED BAPTIST CHURCH OF CHRIST
AT COTTAGE GROVE, TENNESSEE
FROM 1850-1908**

**An Abstract
Presented to
the Graduate Council of
Austin Peay State University**

**In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts**

**by
Paul Bruce Grubbs**

May 1971

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ABSTRACT

The Cottage Grove Baptist Church, organized in 1850, is today a vital, functioning congregation of Baptist Christians. Located in the small community of Cottage Grove, Henry County, Tennessee, this church currently boasts a membership in excess of three-hundred persons, a full-time pastor, and an ever-expanding ministry.

The early history of this church, 1850-1908, can be divided into basically five periods. These periods generally coincide with the ministries of the various pastors of the church during these first fifty-eight years of its life.

Beginning with the founding of the church in 1850, the first period continues until 1858. This is the period of beginning of origination and is the time of the ministry of the first pastor, James L. Morton.

D. M. Fleming and F. M. Felts were the pastors of the church during the second period. This is the period of continuation and it runs from 1858 to 1866.

The third general period encompasses the ministry of but one man, J. W. Bell. Bell's ministry began in 1866 and continued until 1885. This was the period of stabilization.

The year 1885 marked the beginning of the fourth general period in the life of the Cottage Grove Church. The men who served the church as pastors during this period were: W.B. Jones, J.H. Petitt, A.J. Bussell, and Asa Cox. This was the period of stagnation and it continued until 1896.

The fifth and final period of the early history of the church was the period of revitalization. Beginning in 1896 and continuing until 1908, this period saw the church under the ministry of the following pastors: Fleetwood Ball, T.J. Perry, and C.H. Bell. Ball's ministry both began and ended the period as he served the church as pastor upon two separate occasions.

During these first fifty-eight years of the life of the Cottage Grove Baptist Church there can be seen the birth, growth, stagnation and renewal of a young Christian fellowship. This was indeed a significant era in the total life of this church.

**A HISTORY OF THE UNITED BAPTIST CHURCH OF CHRIST
AT COTTAGE GROVE, TENNESSEE**

FROM 1850-1908

A Thesis

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**In Partial Fulfillment
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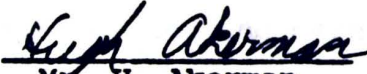
May 1971

To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a Thesis written by Paul Bruce Grubbs entitled "A History of the United Baptist Church at Cottage Grove, Tennessee from 1850-1908." I recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in History.


Dr. M. Henry
Major Professor


Dr. P. Hubbard
Second Committee Member


Mr. H. Akerman
Third Committee Member

Accepted for the Council:


Dean of the Graduate School

PREFACE

The author of this thesis would like to express his appreciation to the following for assistance and encouragement in the writing of this paper. The Cottage Grove Baptist Church is the object of the author's deepest gratitude for the use of the original documents from which the information for this paper was gathered. Also for the encouragement of many of the members of the church in the writing of the paper.

Appreciation is likewise due and tendered to Dr. Milton Henry, the author's thesis director, for his consistent and valuable advice in the choice of the subject and the mechanics of the paper.

The author's wife, Jewel, is also to be recognized for her patience and assistance while this paper was occupying much of her companion's time and energies. Her encouragement and understanding are also here recognized as she raised no questions as to the value of compiling, writing and typing this paper.

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CHAPTER I

ORIGINATION: 1850-1858

The special time period to be considered in this chapter is the period of beginning. It is the period of the ministry of Elder James L. Morton. It begins in 1850 with the founding of the church and continues through the first eight years of the life of the church. These were years of strategic importance in the history of this church and will therefore be given special attention.

On August 3, 1850, a group of thirteen Baptist Christians met in the small village of Cottage Grove, Henry County, Tennessee. The purpose of this meeting was the organization of a Baptist Church. This group was composed of ten lay persons and three ordained ministers. The ten lay persons, Moses Todd, Penelope Todd, Harvey Collier, John H. Olive, Oscar S. Stevenson, Sarah Stevenson, Candace Powel, Jonathan Stevenson, Nancy Stevenson, and Robert A. Wade, composed the original membership of the new congregation. The three ordained ministers were James L. Morton, William Alexander, and D.M. Fleming. They composed the organizing presbytery

These thirteen persons covenanted together to constitute the United Baptist Church of Christ at Cottage Grove.¹ They then formalized the birth of the new fellowship with the following statement:

We, a Presbytery, called and received by the Brethren near Cottage Grove, have this day met and examined the letters handed in by the Brethren, and also examined the said Brethren upon Doctrine, Covenant, and Rules of Decorum, and have proceeded to constitute them into a United Baptist Church of Jesus Christ; given under our hands this the third day of August, 1850.

This document was then signed by the moderator, James L. Morton, the clerk, William Alexander, and Davie M. Fleming.²

The new fellowship further proceeded to organize with the unanimous choice of a pastor, Elder James L. Morton, the selection of two deacons, Moses Todd and Harvey Collier, and the choice of a clerk, Robert A. Wade.³ In September, 1850, the church elected Harvey Collier as treasurer. It was also at this meeting that the church held an ordination

¹Business conference August 3, 1850. Minutes of the United Baptist Church. Record Book for 1850-1871. Records on deposit at the Cottage Grove Bank, Cottage Grove, Tennessee. Hereafter referred to as MUBC, 1850-1871.

²Business conference August 3, 1850. MUBC, 1850-1871. See Appendix I for Doctrine, Covenant, and Rules of Decorum.

³Business conference August 3, 1850. MUBC, 1850-1871.

service during which both Moses Todd and Harvey Collier were ordained as deacons. The presbytery which officiated at this service was composed of Elders J.T. Edwards, E.H. Hearn, and James L. Morton.⁴

Thus, after the first two months of its life, the church had completed its initial organization. Simplicity appears to be the watchword in the beginning. The organization was composed of a pastor, two deacons, a clerk, a treasurer, and the original membership.

The church chose as its time of meeting the first Saturday and Sunday in each month. On Saturday, a business conference and preaching service was held, and on Sunday there was the usual worship service in the morning. Other special services were the communion services that they agreed to hold in April, June and September of each year.⁵ Also, a major meeting for the church each year was the "protracted" or revival meeting. This was held in the late summer or early fall and generally featured a guest speaker or "evangelist." The protracted meetings had a specific starting date but did not include a definite date for closing. This meeting usually ended when the church

⁴Business conference of September, 1850. MUBC, 1850-1871.

⁵Business conferences of August and September, 1850. MUBC, 1850-1871.

felt that enough good had been accomplished or when it became obvious that nothing was being accomplished.⁶ Although people joined the church at the regular services, the protracted meetings provided the church with its most important period of evangelistic outreach. Evidence of this can be seen in the membership records from the period.⁷

Certainly one of the major concerns of the church in this beginning period was the question of a meeting place. Having at first no place to gather for worship, they were able to solve the problem by making arrangements with the local Masonic Lodge for the use of its building.⁸ This solution was an excellent one at first for neither the church nor the lodge was active enough to have use for the building each week. However, even if there was no initial conflict in the scheduling of meetings, the church soon discovered that it was outgrowing the borrowed building.

The answer to this problem was one of two things; they would have to either build a separate, larger building, or enlarge the borrowed one. The final decision reflects the financial condition of the church in its infant days.

⁶Business conference of July, 1852. MUBC, 1850-1871.

⁷Membership records, 1850-1871. MUBC, 1850-1871. Note Appendix II.

⁸Statement by Mrs. Reba Nichols, personal interview, July 29, 1970. Hereafter referred to as statement by Nichols.

In November, 1853, the church elected a committee of five men consisting of J.A. Highfill, H.W. Collier, David Lowery, Thomas Crutchfield, and William Johnson, "...to confer with the Lodge and know if they will grant permission to the church to enlarge the meeting place."⁹ In December of that year the committee had begun its relative work and submitted to the church a plan for enlargement, but the church delayed action upon the plan.¹⁰

It was one full year later before any further action was taken relative to the proposed enlargement. At this time another committee consisting of Dr. E.P. Bates, Levi Killebrew, and J.A. Highfill was asked again to confer with the lodge about the enlargement. Whether the further delay was on the part of the church or the lodge is not known. However, the enlargement was begun and the above named committee was asked to oversee the construction.¹¹ This new portion of the meeting house was to be an addition of some twenty-four feet to one room of the existing structure. It was to be started once the building committee had raised the necessary subscriptions.¹²

⁹Business conference of November, 1853. MUBC, 1850-1871.

¹⁰Business conference of December, 1853. MUBC, 1850-1871.

¹¹Business conference of November, 1854. MUBC, 1850-1871.

¹²Business conference of January, 1855. MUBC, 1850-1871.

In August, 1855, the subscription was called in. This suggests that the construction of the new addition to the meeting house was well on the way to completion. At this time too, J.L. Barton and Thomas Crutchfield were added to the building committee.¹³

In 1856, another problem or potential problem relative to the meeting house developed. This appears to have been a problem regarding a conflict of meeting times and other use of the lodge building. Either to settle the difficulty or to head off a problem, an agreement was drawn up between the church and the lodge. Moses Todd was placed in charge of obtaining the following agreement in behalf of the church:

Article of Agreement made and entered into between Marshall Lodge No. 109, of Free and Accepted Masons, of the one part and Moses Todd, of the other part. Witnesseth that Marshall Lodge has this day donated to said Todd, the lower part of the house, to be used as a meeting house, said Todd, on his part is to run a partition[sic] across the west end of the lower room, so as to cut off all communication between the Lodge room and the Church. Said Todd has permission to finish off lower part of the Lodge, as he may think proper. It is further agreed by said Todd, that the meetings of the Church are never to conflict with those of the Lodge, and if any difficulty hereafter should arise between the Lodge and the Church, the Lodge has the right to close the Church doors, provided the difficulty cannot be adjusted without such alternatives. The Lodge at all times shall hold the right of ownership, when its privileges and rights are intruded upon....¹⁴

¹³Business conferences August and September, 1855. MUBC, 1850-1871.

¹⁴Business conference of April, 1856. MUBC, 1850-1871.

This agreement was read and approved by the church and the church agreed to obligate itself "...to carry out its stipulations."¹⁵

After having provided for the construction of this enlargement, it was necessary for the church to then provide for other essential matters relative to the new portion of the building. The treasurer was appointed to get the lights for the building, and a committee was appointed to oversee the sinking of a baptismal pool.¹⁶ In November, 1856, the committee on the baptismal pool reported that Dr. E.T. Bates had been paid five dollars "...for sinking the pool..." and J.W. Todd received three dollars for the plank.¹⁷

Thus, the young church provided for its physical needs during the beginning period of 1850-1871. With these needed provisions too came the establishment of definite policies as to the use of the church building. In January, 1856, the church barred "...the holding of exhibitions, shows and political speakings..." in the church house. This did not, as one might think, indicate a feeling of selfishness on the

¹⁵Business conference of June, 1856. MUBC, 1850-1871.

¹⁶Business conference of August, 1856. MUBC, 1850-1871.

¹⁷Business conference of November, 1856. MUBC, 1850-1871.

part of the church. Rather, it indicates a deep conviction about the nature of the church itself and the sacredness of those things connected with the service of God. Actually, the church was willing to allow the use of the building for other types of activities. An example of this is seen in the fact that in August, 1857, the church "...agreed to allow Sister Perkins privilege [sic] of teaching school in the Church."¹⁸

Another major area of concern for the church during the period, 1850-1871, was the transaction of the business affairs of the church. The regular business conference was held every first Saturday afternoon in the month. In order to provide a taste of what the transaction of church business was like, a characteristic business session is recorded below:

On Saturday before the 1st Lord's day in September, after Sermon by Elder Morton, the Church sat in conference and did the following business (viz), 1st The Moderator inquired after the peace and fellowship of the Church, 2nd Invited visiting Brethren to seats, 3rd Opened a door for the reception of members, when Sisters Charity Powel and Elizabeth Collier presented letters of recommendation and were received into full fellowship, 4th References called for by motion the ordination of our deacons is postponed until the Saturday before the 5th Lord's day in September. The Church letter was handed in and read by Bro. Morton, and was received by the Church, 5th On Motion and second we proceed to appoint a Treasurer, when Bro. Harvey Collier was chosen to that office, 6th We agree to celebrate the

¹⁸Business conference of August, 1857. MUBC, 1850-1871.

Lord's Supper on the 5th Lord's day in September and we agree to invite all those who have joined us by Baptism since our constitution to receive the hand of fellowship. The Church was then dismissed in order.

R.A. Wade, Clerk 19

One of the primary matters of concern in the church regarding business was the question of finances. It is suggested from the conferences from 1850 to 1858 that it was not the custom of the church to take up an offering in the regular services. On several occasions, special note is made of the fact that an offering or collection was taken. In May, 1853, the clerk recorded that the church "...agreed to take up a collection for the support of the church...." This indicates that the taking of a collection was not in the usual order of the services.²⁰ In the matter of church finances one of the most frequent discussions surrounded the question of the pastor's salary. The salary for the pastor was generally raised by subscription. In March, 1853, for example, James Highfill was given the following instructions:

...to apply, immediately to every member of the Church, both male and female, and ascertain by their subscriptions and contributions, what they are willing to give for the support of our Pastor for the current year....²¹

¹⁹Business conference of September, 1850. MUBC, 1850-1871.

²⁰Business conference of May, 1853. MUBC, 1850-1871.

²¹Business conference of March, 1853, MUBC, 1850-1871.

Relative to the handling of the funds of the church, it was the established policy that "...all money for the church and pastor shall pass through the treasury and be reported to the church annually."²² The problem of raising funds for the support of the church and pastor was placed before the church in 1854. It was then agreed to place the treasurer in charge of obtaining a subscription annually from the membership.²³ The major portion of the subscription was for the support of the pastor; however, the amount that was pledged to the pastor was small. In March, 1854, the subscription for the pastor was sixty-one dollars. Of this amount, only forty-six dollars of this had been collected up to that date.²⁴ In 1855, the actual subscription is not known, but by August of that year only about thirty-eight dollars had been collected.²⁵

There is no evidence during this period to indicate that the pastor sometimes never received all of even the small amount subscribed to him, but it is not unlikely. If such were the case, however, Pastor Morton did not appear to have reacted to it for his services to the church do not seem impaired by discouragement or resentment.

²²Business conference of September, 1852. MUBC, 1850-1871.

²³Business conference of December, 1854. MUBC, 1850-1871.

²⁴Business conference of August, 1854. MUBC, 1850-1871.

²⁵Business conference of August, 1855. MUBC, 1850-1871.

Another highly significant portion of the history of the Cottage Grove Church during the period, 1850-1858, is the matter of church membership. The total membership of the young fellowship grew rather rapidly during Pastor Morton's ministry. Additions to the church were generally in one of the three following forms: profession of personal faith in Christ and baptism, presentation of a letter of recommendation from another Baptist Church, or a verbal statement as to the fact of previous Christian experience and baptism. In regard to the admission to church membership it was ruled in 1852 that:

No person shall be received into the fellowship of this church by any other than a unanimous vote of the members present but a majority of vote shall govern in the transaction of all other business. 26

This stipulation as to the necessity of a unanimous vote by the church before membership in the church was granted indicates the importance laid on membership in the body.

Church membership growth during this period was relatively fast. Beginning with the original ten members in 1850, the church saw the addition of eighteen others that same year. In the following years the church continued to receive new members as is seen in the following figures:

²⁶Business conference of September, 1852. MUBC, 1850-1871.

1851, 1; 1852, 10; 1853, 5; 1854, 7; 1855, 8; 1856, 1; and 1857, 0.²⁷ Among those who united with the church during this period was the pastor and his wife, Eliza Morton. They joined on the basis of a letter of recommendation from another church.²⁸

The question of the membership of the church has another side to it, however, for between 1850 and 1858 there were those who ceased to be members. Of particular interest are those with whom the church itself severed relations. In November, 1850, for example, a committee of Moses Todd, R.A. Wade, and Oscar Stevenson was requested to "...see Bro. Alexander Wade and inquire into certain reports in circulation derogatory to his Christian character...."²⁹ Wade had been a charter member of the church, but when the committee met with him "...he acknowledged that he had no religion and he wished the church to erase his name from the records." Upon receiving this report, the church withdrew fellowship from him.³⁰

²⁷Membership records, 1850-1871. MUBC, 1850-1871. Note Appendix II.

²⁸Business conference of July, 1855. MUBC, 1850-1871.

²⁹Business conference of November, 1850. MUBC, 1850-1871.

³⁰Business conference of December, 1850. MUBC, 1850-1871.

In September, 1853, the church sent a committee to see about the reports that Martha H. Cox had joined another denomination. The next month the church received the committee's report that she had indeed joined another denomination and upon the receipt of this report, fellowship was withdrawn from her.³¹

In July, 1854, a committee was sent to see F.G. Austin "...to ascertain the reason of his not attending church...." The committee reported to the church that Austin "...gave them no satisfaction whatever." Fellowship was then withdrawn from him for non-attendance.³²

Other cases in which church discipline seemed likely were also recorded during the period. Moses Austin was questioned by the church for certain activities to which "...he acknowledged that he had played cards twice for past time, being persuaded into it not thinking that any evil would grow out of it...." Upon receiving this report, the church took no action against him.³³ Thus, the membership of the church both grew and decreased. In either case, however, the primary question was the purity and integrity of the body as a whole.

³¹Business conferences of September and November, 1853. MUBC, 1850-1871.

³²Business conference of July and August, 1854, MUBC, 1850-1871.

³³Business conference of August, 1853. MUBC, 1850-1871.

Before concluding the consideration of this period of beginning, some attention must be devoted to the young church's interest in Christian work outside its own community. In the same month in which the church itself was organized, application was made by the church for admission into the Western District Association of Baptist Churches. With this application was sent two men, Moses Todd and Oscar S. Stevenson, to represent the church. They carried not only the letter of application but also a gift of one dollar and fifty cents to be placed in the mission fund of the association.³⁴ From this point on, the church was active in the affairs of this association, sending both messengers and money each year to the annual associational meeting.³⁵

In 1851 the church approved the plans of the association to employ an associational missionary "...to labor in the bounds of our Association the next year." They further agreed "...to aid in sustaining a mature preacher among the indians." ³⁶ [sic]

³⁴Business conference of August, 1850. MUBC, 1850-1871.

³⁵MUBC, 1850-1871. See Appendix III for listing of associational messengers and mission gifts.

³⁶Business conference of December, 1851. MUBC, 1850-1871.

Thus, the Cottage Grove Baptist Church completed the first few years of what was to be a long ministry. The close of this beginning period was marked by the resignation of James L. Morton as pastor of the church in January, 1858. Upon presenting this resignation, Morton stated that "...the church was at liberty to choose another pastor."³⁷

³⁷Business conference of January, 1858. MUBC, 1850-1871.

CHAPTER II

CONTINUATION: 1858-1866

The second major period to be considered in the life of the Cottage Grove Baptist Church can be termed the period of continuation. This period extends from 1858 to 1866 and encompasses the ministries of the second and third pastors of the church. D. M. Fleming's pastoral care of the church ran from February, 1858 to December, 1860. Felt's ministry reached from January, 1861 to January, 1866. In an effort to maintain the continuity of the period, no effort will be made to distinguish between the ministries of the two pastors during the period, except to comment upon the ministries of each man as it may seem appropriate. Despite the fact that this general period includes the Civil War era there is no record whatsoever to indicate that the struggle between the north and the south directly affected the activities of the church.

Upon the resignation of James Morton from his position as pastor of the church it was "...resolved to go into the election of a Pastor which resulted in the choice of D. M. Fleming." He was elected to the position in February, 1858,

and was notified of his election by Oscar S. Stevenson and Levi Killebrew.¹ The record indicates that Fleming assumed his position the following month.²

In January, 1859, Fleming was elected as pastor again and his election was both unanimous and "...without regard to time, indefinitely...."³ However, his ministry with the church was rather brief for in December, 1860 he "...called the church together and resigned his Pastoral care of the Cottage Grove Baptist Church and stated that the church was now at liberty to call another Pastor."⁴

F.M. Felts was elected pastor in January, 1861, and was informed of this by Moses Todd and James A. Highfill who composed "...a committee to inform him of his election by the church for a pastor, and that we pay him seventy-five dollars a year for his services."⁵ His ministry with

¹Business conference of February, 1858. MUBC, 1850-1871.

²Business conference of March, 1858. MUBC, 1850-1871.

³Business conference of January, 1859. MUBC, 1850-1871.

⁴Business conference of December, 1858. MUBC, 1850-1871.

⁵Business conference of January, 1861. MUBC, 1850-1871.

the church was to last for five years and upon his resignation the church quickly elected another pastor to replace him.⁶

The period, 1858-1866, may be termed the period of continuation on the basis that during this period additional leadership was chosen. In February, 1859, the church selected two additional deacons in the persons of J. Wade Barton and J.W. Todd. This was at the suggestion of Moses Todd, another deacon.⁷ It was also decided that the ordination service would be held in April of that year and that Brother Felts and Brother Alexander were to be asked to assist in the service.⁸ This ordination was held on Sunday morning of the first Sunday in April, 1859, and Brothers James L. Morton and Isaac Coker were also invited to assist.⁹

The importance of the deacons in the life of the church is rather difficult to discern. Their primary influence was perhaps felt more as a result of their individual participation in the church than as a result of any group action. However, this is not to say that

⁶Business conference of January, 1866. MUBC, 1850-1871.

⁷Business conference of February, 1859. MUBC, 1850-1871.

⁸Business conference of March, 1859. MUBC, 1850-1871.

⁹Business conference of April, 1859. MUBC, 1850-1871.

they were not recognized as being a rather special group within the church. In 1859, for example, it was "...resolved by motion and second that the Deacons be and are hereby appointed a committee on arrangement, during the Protracted meeting...."¹⁰ Another indication of their possible importance may be seen in the fact that they frequently held positions of significance in the church outside of the office of deacons. Most of the early clerks and treasurers of the church were also deacons in the church.¹¹

During the period in question, 1858-1866, the services of the church continued to be basically the same as in the previous period. The only really noticeable change is the fact that in 1861 the church agreed to begin its preaching service on both Saturday and Sunday mornings at eleven instead of twelve o'clock.¹² Despite the fact that no other significant changes took place in the services, there were some new or previously unmentioned matters regarding the services that came to light in this period. The first of these is that in March, 1859, the church resolved to continue "...prayer meeting once a week."¹³

¹⁰Business conference of November, 1859. MUBC, 1850-1871.

¹¹MUBC, 1850-1871.

¹²Business conference of March, 1861. MUBC, 1850-1871.

¹³Business conference of March, 1859. MUBC, 1850-1871.

Another was the fact that women apparently were allowed to participate in the public worship services. In 1864, for example, Sister Todd is recorded to have led in public prayer during a Saturday service.¹⁴

The church also seems to have continued its previous practice of having protracted meetings in the summer or fall. These meetings also continued to be the major event in the outreach of the church.

The business of the church during this period was not markedly different from the previous period. The basic order of the business conference indicated no real difference in either conduct or procedure. The conference still featured a sermon by the pastor, an invitation to visiting Christians to join the services, an opportunity to allow persons to join the church, and the reading of the minutes of the previous conference.¹⁵

Matters of finance were still a primary consideration, but there did not seem to be as much actual business concerning this matter as before. A prime matter of business which came before the church in 1869 was a motion to build a new church building. The proposed building was to measure thirty-four feet by fifty feet. To deal with the necessary matters

¹⁴Business conference of March, 1864. MUBC, 1850-1871.

¹⁵Business conference of April, 1861. MUBC, 1850-1871.

of arrangement, a committee of Moses Todd, J. Wade Barton, J.W. Todd, and James A. Highfill was appointed. This committee was to "...draw up subscriptions and present them to the church and the citizens of the community...."¹⁶ This plan, however, was aborted the next month when the church voted to "...dispense with building a new church house at this time."¹⁷

Another matter of rather significant church business related to a church member named S.D. Scott. In 1865 Scott was granted a license from the church "...to exercise in public the capacity of preaching when he saw fit."¹⁸ After Scott had been granted this license he preached in the services at Cottage Grove on several occasions.¹⁹

The membership of the church also continued to grow during the period, 1850-1866. The numerical growth of the church is indicated in the following figures: 1858, 11; 1859, 5; 1860, 2; 1861-1862, no figures, 1863, 2; 1864, 2; and 1865, 8. Of course this growth was not undeterred by

¹⁶Business conference of July, 1859. MUBC, 1850-1871.

¹⁷Business conference of August, 1859. MUBC, 1850-1871.

¹⁸Business conference of April, 1865. MUBC, 1850-1871.

¹⁹Business conference of May, 1865. MUBC, 1850-1871.

the fact that the membership of the church also suffered some losses during the period.²⁰

Those losses that involved the withdrawal of church fellowship should be particularly noted. In November, 1860, fellowship was withdrawn from Mrs. Arminta Caviness.²¹ No reason is indicated for her exclusion. Another case which resulted in the exclusion of a member was that of Josephine Riggs. She had been guilty of dancing. A committee of sisters Jones and Stevenson was sent to see her about the reports. Upon further consideration, the church added the ladies' husbands to the committee. In December, 1860, this committee reported to the church that the charges were true and that "...she wished her name erased from the church book...."²²

Another person of significance who left the fellowship of the church during this period was S. D. Scott. As noted previously, Scott had been licensed by the church to preach. During this period some question arose concerning his conduct but no church action was taken against him as he moved his membership to a Baptist Church in Mobile, Alabama.²³

²⁰Membership records, 1850-1871. MUBC, 1850-1871.
Note Appendix II.

²¹Business conference of November, 1860. MUBC, 1850-1871.

²²Business conference of December, 1860. MUBC, 1850-1871.

²³Business conference of July, 1864. MUBC, 1850-1871.

The final area of concern relative to the history of the Cottage Grove Church in this period is the matter of the church's ministry through the Baptist Association. During these years, as during the years of the beginning, the church continued to send messengers and money to the annual associational meetings.²⁴ The church also was asked to extend its council and influence "...to assist in settling a difficulty..." at the Bethel Baptist Church. This was one of the churches in the association. The Committee which was sent from Cottage Grove was composed of Oscar S. Stevenson and J. Wade Barton.²⁵

From 1858 to 1866 the Cottage Grove Church simply continued as it had previously. With the exception of the two different pastors who served during this period there was little real difference from the period 1850-1858

²⁴MUBC, 1850-1871. See Appendix III for listing of associational messengers and mission gifts.

²⁵Business conference of May, 1859. MUBC, 1850-1871.

CHAPTER III

STABILIZATION: 1866-1885

The third major period to be considered begins in January, 1866 and continues to March, 1885. This is the longest single period and it involves the years during which but one man was pastor. That man was J. W. Bell. Bell served the church for the entire length of the period and led in the stabilization of the church. This stabilization period insured that the church would maintain the progress which it had already achieved.

J. W. Bell became pastor of the Cottage Grove Church in January, 1866. His election to the position of pastor was unanimous,¹ He was present in the services of the church the next month after his election to begin what was perhaps one of the most important ministries the church was to know for many years. It appears that Bell was elected that first year on an annual call basis, but his services seemed to be so satisfactory that when time came to elect a pastor again, he was elected "...without regard to time."² This of course meant that he was to be pastor without having to face the question of election every year.

¹Business conference of January, 1866. MUBC, 1850-1871.

²Business conference of January, 1867. MUBC, 1850-1871.

Bell's personal leadership ability is attested to by his prominence in the Baptist Association. He was clerk for the association from 1859 to 1864, then again from 1867 to 1873, and finally again from 1876 to 1881.³ He was also pastor of two other churches in Henry County during part of the period in which he was pastor at Cottage Grove. In 1877, for example, he was pastor at the North Fork and the Palmersville Baptist Churches as well as at Cottage Grove Baptist Church.⁴

His ability is also indicated by the fact that during his ministry at Cottage Grove he wrote several essays that he read at the associational ministers' and deacons' meetings. The Cottage Grove Church requested that the association publish his essays. How many such essays there were is not known, but the following are the titles of two of them: "On the Importance of Man,"⁶ and "An Efficient Ministry."⁷ The church

³Historical Table. Minutes of the Western District Association of Churches. Micro-filmed copy of Records from 1877-1956. Held by the Baptist Association, Paris, Tennessee. The minutes hereafter referred to as MWDA, 1877-1956.

⁴Annual meeting, 1877. MWDA, 1877-1956.

⁵Business conference of August, 1868. MUBC, 1850-1871.

⁶Business conference of August, 1868. MUBC, 1850-1871.

⁷Business conference of August, 1875. Minutes of the United Baptist Church. Record Book for 1872-1879. Hereafter referred to as MUBC, 1872-1879.

also called upon the association to publish one of Bell's sermons entitled, "The Progress of the Baptists." This sermon had been preached by Bell at the request of the church, and he had done what must have been considered such an outstanding job of speaking to the subject that the church wished to have the message printed.⁸ With the church receiving leadership then, from such an outstanding pastor for an extended period of time there can be little doubt that the church was indeed strengthened and stabilized during the period.

Oddly enough, Bell and his wife, Elizabeth, did not themselves join the church until two years after he had become pastor. However, in December, 1870, they presented a letter from the Tumbling Creek Baptist Church and were received into the membership at Cottage Grove.⁹ Despite the quality of his leadership, the question of his salary was as much a problem as it had been for previous pastors. It appears that his salary was based upon such subscriptions as could be raised from among the membership.¹⁰ Though no exact figures are available, it is likely that the amount

⁸Business conference of June 1878. MUBC, 1872-1879.

⁹Business conference of December, 1870. MUBC, 1850-1871.

¹⁰Business conference of January, 1881. Minutes of the United Baptist Church. Record Book for 1879-1904. Hereafter referred to as MUBC, 1879-1904.

of his salary was not much different from that of previous pastors.

Another indication of Bell's leadership as pastor is the fact that under his ministry, the church elected an assistant pastor. This was in 1868. The man elected to fill this position was William Jones. The wording of the motion which was made to elect an assistant pastor indicates the subordinate position that Jones held. The motion stated that "...Elder William Jones, be, and is hereby chosen as assistant Pastor to Brother Bell...."¹¹ These arrangements appear to have been satisfactory to both Bell and Jones for there is no evidence of any difficulty between the two men. The reason for this may well have been that Jones' position was clearly subordinate to Bell's.

The only indication that Elder Bell may have been the object of doubt or suspicion while pastor at Cottage Grove was an incident which occurred in 1883. In that year a committee of J. Wade Barton, B.D. Bowden, and E.M. Jones was created "...to draft a resolution concerning the reports against J. W. Bell."¹² The following is the body of that resolution:

¹¹Business conference of April, 1868. MUBC, 1850-1871.

¹²Business conference of September, 1883. MUBC, 1879-1904.

Whereas, there is a report in circulation that Elder J. W. Bell has departed from the rule of propriety of dealing fairly and honestly with his fellow-men, in the case of building the Dresden [sic] Church house, as published by Elder R. Ross;

Therefore be it resolved by the Baptist Church at Cottage Grove, that we endorse his, J. W. Bell, word and action with us, as an honest and truthful man, and a man of fidelity, as he has been our Pastor for 18 years. ¹³

Whether there was any truth in the case against him or not is unknown. But one thing is sure; the people of Cottage Grove did not believe him guilty in the least.

Bell's ministry at Cottage Grove ended in 1885. He tendered his resignation and refused the offer of the church to re-elect him. ¹⁴ In May, 1885, the church voted Bell a recommendation for having served them so well and faithfully as pastor. ¹⁵

During the general period in question, 1866-1885, the Cottage Grove Church was further stabilized by the choice of additional deacons, and the establishment of a policy as to the choice of the men for this important position. In August, 1871, the church resolved to elect two deacons. ¹⁶ In the next conference, I. L. Wrinkle

¹³Business conference of September, 1883. MUBC, 1879-1904.

¹⁴Business conferences of January and February, 1885. MUBC, 1879-1904.

¹⁵Business conference of May, 1885. MUBC, 1879-1904.

¹⁶Business conference of August, 1871. MUBC, 1850-1871.

and J. M. Todd were chosen and the decision was made to ordain them at the next protracted meeting. This meeting was held during the same month and the ordaining presbytery was composed of J. W. Felts, J. W. Bell, Moses Todd, and J. Wade Barton.¹⁷

Up until this time, the church seemed to have had no definite policies relative to the particular qualifications for those men chosen to fill the office of deacon. However, in answer to a question which seemed to have arisen at this point, the church passed the following resolution:

Resolved by motion and second that we do not require nor think it scriptural that a brother's wife be a member with him in the Church as a qualification to elect him deacon. 18

It seems obvious from the wording of this resolution what the issue was, but what is even more obvious and perhaps more important is that the source of authority for church policy is indicated. That source of authority was the scriptures.

Some years later in the period other deacons were chosen. In January, 1880, the church agreed to the choice of D. J. Bowden and I. L. Alexander as deacons. Alexander

¹⁷Business conference of September 1871. MUBC, 1850-1871.

¹⁸Business conference of December, 1871. MUBC, 1850-1871.

¹⁹Business conference of January, 1880. MUBC, 1879-1904.

had apparently already been ordained as a deacon for the church agreed to simply recognize him as a deacon.¹⁹ Bowden, however, had to be ordained by the church. His ordination was conducted in April, 1880. The ordaining presbytery consisted of the pastor, J. W. Bell, the assistant pastor, William Jones, and deacons I. L. Alexander, I. M. Wrinkle, and J. Wade Barton.²⁰ The leadership of the church thus grew, and the church itself was becoming more stable and was attaining a more firm foundation in the community.

From 1866 to 1885, the services of the church continued basically the same as before. The Saturday meeting, however, was changed from eleven in the morning to two in the afternoon.²¹ This time change was continued until 1871 at which time the services were set back to the previous eleven o'clock hour.²² In 1869 it was decided that the church should hold its communion services every other month.²³ This would mean that instead of having communion three times a year, it would now be held six times a year.

On some occasions, the church did not have its regular services. In August, 1874, the church agreed "... to attend

²⁰Business conference of April, 1880. MUBC, 1879-1904.

²¹Business conference of September, 1867. MUBC, 1850-1871.

²²Business conference of November, 1871. MUBC, 1850-1871.

²³Business conference of June, 1869. MUBC, 1850-1871.

with the Methodist Brethren today and tomorrow."²⁴

On some occasions there were no services held at all. One record indicated that "...in consequence of the non-attendance of the members there was no meeting."²⁵ These kind of situations were not commonplace, however, and it was most unusual for the regular services not to be held.

Also continued during the period was the practice of having the annual protracted meeting. The preacher who was asked to help during these meetings was agreed upon by the church but the pastor and the other church officers were responsible for setting the time for the meeting.²⁶ These protracted meetings were generally held as before, in the summer or early fall. Sometimes they were postponed for some reason, but if the postponement was an extended period of time, the meeting for that year might simply be forgotten altogether.²⁷ These revival or protracted meetings were still the time of the primary evangelistic thrust for the year.²⁸

²⁴Business conference of August, 1874. MUBC, 1872-1879.

²⁵Business conference of November, 1884. MUBC, 1879-1904.

²⁶Business conference of July, 1871. MUBC, 1850-1871.

²⁷Business conference of August, 1884. MUBC, 1879-1904.

²⁸Membership records, 1850-1904. MUBC, 1850-1871. MUBC, 1872-1879. MUBC, 1879-1904. Note Appendix II.

In this period, 1866-1885, the Cottage Grove Church experienced further stabilization by the addition of a Sunday School to the organization of the church. Early in the period the church "...agreed to consider the propriety of a Sunday School...."²⁹ The initial study of the Sunday School idea, however, resulted in the decision to postpone a final decision about it until later.³⁰ In 1872, a year having past since the initial consideration of the Sunday School, the church appointed a committee of Barton, Jones, and Todd to present a plan for a Sunday School for the church.³¹ This committee made the following report:

We, the committee appointed on Sabbath School..., do make the following report:

1st We recommend a Sabbath School.

2nd Said Sabbath School to open and close with prayer.

3rd We recommend the following books to be used: The Bible and Testament, Dayton's Question Book, the Common School Dictionary as a reference book, the first and second Readers and the Spelling Book, [sic]

4th And that the students shall not be classed contrary to their or their parents wishes.

5th For the school to commence promptly at 8 o'clock.

6th We recommend that Elder J. W. Bell be elected Superintendant, and that the Superintendant

²⁹Business conference of May, 1871. MUBC, 1850-1871.

³⁰Business conference of June, 1871. MUBC, 1850-1871.

³¹Business conference of March, 1872. MUBC, 1872-1879.

nominate suitable teachers for the different classes, which nominations shall be ratified by the Church,

7th And that the teachers of the class in the Scriptures and Dayton's book shall be members of our order. [sic]

After these resolutions were presented to the church, it was agreed to meet the next morning to organize the school.³² Thus was begun an altogether new phase of the church's work. With the beginning of the Sunday School there was the conscious effort to educate the membership through teaching as well as through preaching. In the next several weeks, the teachers and other necessary leaders were chosen. J. L. Bell became the teacher of the Bible class and Sister Y. C. Todd became the teacher in the class in Dayton's Question Book.³³ In 1873 the position of assistant superintendant was created and the superintendant was given the authority to appoint whomever he saw fit.³⁴

It can be seen then, that the period, 1866-1885, was a time of continued stabilization of the total life of the church. From the increased regularity of the communion services to the creation of a totally new phase of the work,

³²Business conference of April, 1872, MUBC, 1872-1879.

³³Business conferences of May and June, 1872. MUBC, 1872-1879.

³⁴Business conference of April, 1873. MUBC, 1872-1879.

the ultimate result was to strengthen and stabilize the total church ministry.

The business side of the church's life during this period also strongly reflects the stabilization which was taking place in the church. June, 1871, saw the church appoint a committee to suggest specific policies governing the order of the business conferences. This committee responded the next month by suggesting the following "Rules for Conference":

- Conference shall be opened by Prayer,
- 1st Invite visiting Brethren and Sisters to seats with us,
- 2nd Give an opportunity for the reception of members.
- 3rd Read and adopt the minutes of the last meeting.
- 4th Call for Reference or References if any should exist.
- 5th Call for new business.³⁵

The adoption of this form for the conduction of the monthly business conference was a step toward a more complete organization of the church and indicates an awareness on the part of the leadership of the importance of correctness and propriety of procedures. This in turn indicates that they considered the conducting of church affairs important enough to have order and method.

As had previously been the case, one of the more significant matters of concern in church business was the matter of

³⁵Business conferences of June and July, 1871. MUBC, 1850-1871.

church finances. In most instances the question of money arose in regard to the payment of the salaries of the pastor, sexton, or some other person to whom the church might pay for services rendered. Many times the necessary funds were raised by canvassing the membership of the church and securing a promise or pledge from each member as to the amount they would give to meet a specific need. This, however, was not always successful for sometimes the members would not live up to the pledges which they had made.

In 1868, for example, the treasurer was still trying to raise funds that had been promised previously but had not been paid. He reported to the church that "...he had made diligent application to the subscribers, whose names are on the old subscriptions....," but that he could collect nothing pledged prior to 1867. As a result of the treasurer's report as to his lack of success in collecting these old subscriptions, it was resolved "that all subscriptions prior to the year 1867 be dispensed with or destroyed...."³⁶

Because of the unsatisfactory performance of the subscription system, a suggestion was made to attempt to finance the church program by a different method. A committee of J. W. Bell, J. Wade Barton, J. M. Todd, and D. J. Bowden was appointed to make a report to the church as to "...the

³⁶Business conference of February, 1868. MUBC, 1850-1871.

propriety or the impropriety of a per capita tax for the purpose of defraying the church expense...."³⁷ The committee returned its report which said that "...they considered such a tax inexpedient and unscriptural." The church then accepted their report unanimously.³⁸ Thus, there was no solution to the problem of financing the church's program. However, there is seen in this event further evidence of the trend toward stabilization. The church was searching for the best way to do its work and this search indicated interest and concern.

In June, 1868, a matter of business was brought to the floor of the church which is indicative of the spirit of permanency with which the church had become infected.⁴³ That issue was the matter of building a new church building. After the initial discussion, a committee of J. Wade Barton, Moses Todd, and Elder William Jones was selected to draft a plan for the new structure and to determine the probable cost.³⁹ This committee reported to the next conference and its report was approved. The church then resolved to build a frame building and to write subscriptions to raise the needed funds for construction.⁴⁰ It was further

³⁷Business conference of February, 1880. MUBC, 1879-1904.

³⁸Business conference of March, 1880. MUBC, 1879-1904.

³⁹Business conference of June, 1868. MUBC, 1850-1871.

⁴⁰Business conference of July, 1868. MUBC, 1850-1871.

decided that the building would be constructed on land obtained a Dr. Bates. However, after a search for the deed, it was discovered that the document and all other records of it were lost.⁴¹ As a consequence of this plans were delayed until arrangements for land could be made. In the meantime the church organized a building committee and authorized it to employ a workman when sufficient funds were raised.⁴²

In February, 1869, the building committee reported that seven-hundred dollars had been raised and upon receipt of this report the church dismissed the committee. Another committee composed of Moses Todd, I. L. Wrinkle, William Jones, J. M. Todd and J. Wade Barton was organized.⁴³

The problem of where to build the structure was finally solved by the donation of land to the church by the lodge. The church agreed to accept the land and laid its plans for immediate construction of its new church building.⁴⁴

In the following months the building committee was enlarged by the addition of W. L. Woolverton and J. W. Bell.⁴⁵

⁴¹Business conference of August, 1868. MUBC, 1850-1871.

⁴²Business conference of September, 1868. MUBC, 1850-1871.

⁴³Business conference of February, 1869. MUBC, 1850-1871.

⁴⁴Business conference of March, 1869. MUBC, 1850-1871.

⁴⁵Business conference of May, 1869. MUBC, 1850-1871.

March, 1871, found the new building completed and the church ready to occupy the structure. Upon entering the new house of worship, the church passed the following resolution of gratitude:

Whereas circumstances have found us without a house to worship in of our own during the last 16 months, our thanks are hereby due and tendered to the Methodist Brethren of this town for kindly tendering us the use of their house of worship during the pendency of building ours. 46

The total cost of the structure is unknown, but the debt remaining on the building in 1874 was about one-hundred dollars. This amount was owed to the building committee which had apparently personally backed the financial obligation involved in construction.⁴⁷ In 1876 the amount of this debt had not been decreased much and the debt was still some seventy-two dollars and sixty cents.⁴⁸

The new building, probably more than any other single thing, indicated the nature of this general period. This building served as a concrete symbol of the stability which the church was beginning to enjoy. With this building came a new community awareness of the church and a new realization of the vitality of the young Baptist fellowship.

⁴⁶Business conference of March, 1871. MUBC, 1850-1871.

⁴⁷Business conference of August, 1874. MUBC, 1872-1879.

⁴⁸Business conference of August, 1875. MUBC, 1872-1879.

After the new structure was completed it was the site of various community meetings including singing schools,⁴⁹ lodge activities,⁵⁰ and even preaching services conducted by men other than the pastor.⁵¹ This indicates that the church was well on its way to becoming a community institution.

Another item of business relative to the new building was the equipment or fixtures for the structure. A major piece of such equipment which was considered needful by some was a musical instrument. In 1879, in answer to this need, an unidentified person offered to donate an organ to the church.⁵² The church, however, was somewhat reluctant to accept the offer. There seemed to be some feeling against the use of the instrument in the church services. Consequently, the stipulation was made that the organ could be used only for the Sunday School meeting.⁵³

⁴⁹Business conference of August, 1876. MUBC, 1872-1879.

⁵⁰Business conference of July, 1878. MUBC, 1872-1879.

⁵¹Business conference of February, 1882. MUBC, 1879-1904.

⁵²Business conference of July, 1879. MUBC, 1872-1879.

⁵³Business conference of September, 1879. MUBC, 1879-1904.

During the general period, 1866-1885, church membership also went through a time of stabilization. For the first time in its history, the church formulated an official method of dealing with the dismissal of those of its membership who wished to unite with other churches. In 1871 a form letter was drawn up and approved for use in the granting of letters of recommendation. Below is the wording of this letter:

We, the United Baptist Church, worshipping at Cottage Grove, Henry County, Tennessee, under the watchcare of Elder J. W. Bell...certify that Brother (Sister) _____ is a member with us in good and regular standing and at his request is hereby dismissed from us.... 54

In some cases the stabilization of the membership took the form of purification.⁵⁵ There were some rather outstanding cases in which the church found it necessary to vote to withdraw fellowship. In some instances the reason for exclusion was not dramatic. In many instances a member may have simply joined a church of another denomination and exclusion was merely a matter of course.⁵⁶ Other cases involved more complicated matters. In 1868, for example Sister Sara Wilson was found guilty of dancing.

⁵⁴Business conference of July, 1871. MUBC, 1850-1871.

⁵⁵Note the membership records in Appendix II for the members dismissed during the period and the reasons for their dismissal.

⁵⁶Business conference of July, 1868. MUBC, 1850-1871.

The church voted unanimously to exclude her for conduct unbecoming a Christian.⁵⁷

Probably the most outstanding case involving the exclusion of a member during this period was the case of S. D. Scott. In January, 1870, the church organized a committee of Brethren Bell, Barton, and Jones to investigate reports adverse to Scott's Christian character.⁵⁸ The committee reported in November of that year that the reports concerning Scott were true and the church then proceeded to withdraw fellowship from him.⁵⁹ really made this case so dramatic was the fact that Scott had previously been licensed by the church to preach. This license amounted to a stamp of approval from the church. To exclude a person with such church approval was doubtless a matter of real concern to the fellowship.

In 1871 Scott was restored to the fellowship of the church, but he was asked to return his license. This readmission to the membership was probably to make it possible for the church to clear the roll of his name by granting a letter for him to another church.⁶⁰

⁵⁷Business conference of December, 1868. MUBC, 1850-1871.

⁵⁸Business conference of January, 1870. MUBC, 1850-1871.

⁵⁹Business conference of November, 1870. MUBC, 1850-1871.

⁶⁰Business conference of September, 1871. MUBC, 1850-1871.

Another case of exclusion which likely had some overtones of controversy was that of H. H. Barton. Barton was excluded on a variety of charges including drinking, swearing, and dancing. Any one of these offences would have been sufficient for his exclusion. It is therefore quite likely that the vote against him was unanimous.⁶¹ Perhaps in this case as in few others, can be seen the value of church discipline. Barton, after learning of his exclusion, acknowledged his wrong, expressed his sorrow, and was forgiven by the church.⁶²

The church not only exercised discipline after the fact in its attempt to maintain church purity, it also practiced preventive discipline, or deterrent discipline. In 1880 the church "...passed a resolution regarding it a disorder for any member...to play cards for amusement or otherwise."⁶³ Three years later "...the Church unanimously expressed an opinion that it was wrong to risk a wages at shooting."⁶⁴ By these means, the church was trying to insure the morality and decency of its membership.

⁶¹Business conference of January, 1879. MUBC, 1872-1879.

⁶²Business conference of April, 1879. MUBC, 1872-1879.

⁶³Business conference of December, 1880. MUBC, 1879-1804.

⁶⁴Business conference of February, 1883. MUBC, 1879-1904.

The period, 1866-1885, was also a time during which the Cottage Grove Church further extended and established its ministry outside of its own community. The church was annually represented at the Baptist Associational meetings and the delegates from the church took an active part in the gatherings.⁶⁵ The pastor was also highly active in the organization.⁶⁶ J. Wade Barton, a prominent member and deacon of Cottage Grove Church was a significant member of the Associational Education Committee. Barton was instrumental in the drafting of the following associational resolution:

The Committee on Education reported as follows: That we consider ignorance among the ministry a great embarrassment to the progress of the Baptist cause in the country, that we consider the want of an education the principal cause of all the jealousy and discord among the ministry. We also believe that the superstitious notions with regard to conversion which has caused so much prejudice against altar experiences are due, in a great measure, to the want of a well-informed ministry. We, therefore, suggest that this body make an effort to send, each year, one or more of our worthy young ministers to some one of our denominational schools.⁶⁷

It was during this period too that for the first time in the history of the church there was a representative sent to the Tennessee Baptist Convention. The person chosen

⁶⁵Note Appendix III for listing of associational delegates.

⁶⁶Annual meeting, 1877. MWDA, 1877-1956.

⁶⁷Annual meeting, 1877. MWDA, 1877-1956.

to represent the church was J. Wade Barton.⁶⁸

The outreach ministry of the church was even further extended while Bell was pastor of the Cottage Grove Church. In 1867 William Jones, Bell's assistant in the pastoral care of the church was granted the privilege of "...using the church house every third Sunday for the express purpose of preaching to the colored population of the vicinity."⁶⁹ This indicates the church had an honest and real desire to have a ministry among people who were likely receiving little if any spiritual care or religious training.

The next year, 1868, the Cottage Grove church extended its outreach still further when it extended an arm of the church to Palmersville, a small community located near Cottage Grove. The purpose of this was aid in the establishment of a new church in that community. Upon the organization of the new church, however, the Cottage Grove Church withdrew its influence. These events then are concrete physical manifestations of the increasing strength and stability of the Cottage Grove Church from 1866 to 1885.⁷⁰

⁶⁸Business conference of September, 1872. MUBC, 1872-1879.

⁶⁹Business conference of January, 1867. MUBC, 1850-1871.

⁷⁰Business conference of September, 1868. MUBC, 1850-1871.

CHAPTER IV

STAGNATION: 1885-1896

The period to be discussed in this section begins in 1885 and continues to 1896. This is a short interim period during which the church had a total of four pastors. In many ways it was a period of stagnation. It is not so much a time of decline and loss as one of listlessness and lack of direction and achievement.

In March, 1885, the church found itself pastorless and proceeded to choose a man to fill the vacancy. The vote for pastor was divided among four men: W. B. Jones, A. T. Bussell, J. H. Hardwick, and J. W. Bell. The resulting vote was in favor of W. B. Jones who received ten of the seventeen votes cast. The vote was then made unanimous and Jones was chosen pastor.¹ The next month, Jones notified the church that he would accept the position but stipulated that he would accept it only until the Baptist Association met in the fall.² No reason was indicated as to why he placed this condition upon his acceptance.

Jones was true to his word, and in September, 1885, the church was again pastorless for the coming year and

¹Business conference of March, 1885. MUBC, 1879-1904.

²Business conference of April, 1885. MUBC, 1879-1904.

another election for pastor was held. On Tuesday, September 15, 1885, "a meeting was held for the purpose of electing a Pastor for one year beginning January 1st, 1886." This meeting resulted in the unanimous election of J. H. Petitt as pastor. The church then voted him a salary of one-hundred and fifty dollars for the year.³ Petitt's tenure as pastor was just one year, however, and in September of 1886 the church agreed "...to go into the election of Pastor for 1887." Petitt's name was again placed in nomination and was unanimously chosen to serve for 1887.⁴ He refused to accept the position, however, and in December, 1877, still another election for pastor was held. This time Elder A. T. Bussell was elected.⁵

There is no information available to indicate the reason why the church went through such a succession of pastors during this time. It is likely that the short tenures of service by these men was by mutual agreement between themselves and the church. Possibly this shortness of tenure was indicative of the spirit of directionlessness which is seen in other areas of the church life at this time.

³Business conference of September, 1885. MUBC, 1879-1904.

⁴Business conference of September, 1886. MUBC, 1879-1904.

⁵Business conference of December, 1887. MUBC, 1879-1904.

Buswell's ministry was as short as had been the previous pastors' and in December, 1888, the church was once again involved in the election of a pastor. This time the church chose Elder W. J. Beale.⁶ However, the next month, the church received a letter from Beale which indicated that he would not accept its offer. Upon the reading of this letter, the church set about to elect another person to the position. The man chosen was Elder Asa Cox.⁷ Cox's services as pastor were to be continued somewhat longer than the other pastors of this period. In November, 1889, Cox was elected as pastor for the next year. In October of the next year he was chosen again, and finally in September, 1891, he was elected pastor "...without regard to time."⁸ It was further agreed that "...when either party become dissatisfied it shall give the other party 60 days notice so as to give ample time for further arrangements...."⁹

Despite the agreement that this election was to be without regard to time, or indefinitely, Cox was voted on

⁶Business conference of December, 1888. MUBC, 1879-1904.

⁷Business conference of January, 1889. MUBC, 1879-1904.

⁸Business conference of November, 1889. MUBC, 1879-1904.

⁹Business conference of September, 1891. MUBC, 1879-1904.

as pastor in 1894 and again in 1895.¹⁰ In 1896 another election was held to determine the pastor for the next year. This time Cox was defeated and elected to replace him was Elder Fleetwood Ball. Upon learning the results of the vote, Cox tried to present his resignation but the church rejected it for the moment.¹¹ It appears that the church wished him to complete that year's service as pastor. It seems likely that there may have been some strong feelings surrounding this entire matter; however, nothing in the records, except Cox's attempt to resign, directly indicates this.¹⁶

Of all the men who served the church as pastor during this period, Cox seems to have been the most outstanding.¹⁷ During his ministry at Cottage Grove he remained a member of the Bird's Creek Baptist Church but was active in the Baptist Association in behalf of the Cottage Grove Church.¹² He repeatedly served the association as its highest elective officer, the moderator of the association.¹³ While pastor at Cottage Grove, Cox also served as pastor of other Baptist

¹⁰Business conferences of November, 1894 and October, 1895. MUBC, 1879-1904.

¹¹Business conference of October, 1896. MUBC, 1879-1904.

¹²Annual meeting, 1889. MWDA, 1877-1956.

¹³Annual meetings, 1889, 1890, 1894, 1895. MWDA, 1877-1956.

Churches in Henry County. In 1890, for example, he was pastor at North Fork Baptist Church and Point Pleasant Baptist Church as well as Cottage Grove.¹⁴

During the years, 1885-1896, the church elected and ordained additional deacons. In March, 1888, three men were chosen to become deacons. These included W. M. Coffman, Authur Alexander and Lynn Bowden.¹⁵ The ordination service was one year later. Asa Cox, the pastor, led the examination of the candidates, a Brother Hearn gave the lecture or charge, and A. T. Bussell assisted. Deacon J. Wade Barton was clerk of the ordaining presbytery.¹⁶

In 1891 the church voted to elect still two more deacons in the persons of R. W. Phillips and A. L. Wrinkle.¹⁷ The presbytery gathered for this ordination included Asa Cox A. T. Bussell, J. B. Swanner, J. Wade Barton, and W. M. Coffman.¹⁸ L. C. Alexander was elected as a deacon of the church in 1896.¹⁹ Thus, the church was adding to the

¹⁴Annual meeting, 1890. MWDA, 1877-1956.

¹⁵Business conference of March, 1888. MUBC, 1879-1904.

¹⁶Business conference of March, 1889. MUBC, 1879-1904.

¹⁷Business conference of June, 1891. MUBC, 1879-1904.

¹⁸Business conference of August, 1891. MUBC, 1879-1904.

¹⁹Business conference of October, 1896. MUBC, 1879-1904.

list of persons set aside to give spiritual and practical leadership to the congregation.

During this general period too there were changes in the leadership of other areas of the church's life. Sister Minnie Dumas was elected as the new church organist in May, 1896.²⁰ The next month, J. M. Todd was elected church clerk replacing J. Wade Barton who had held this office for over thirty-five years.²¹ Previously, in 1887, Lynn Bowden resigned his position as church treasurer and I. M. Wrinkle was elected.²² In the fall of that same year,²³ Wrinkle resigned the position and William Coffman was elected.²⁴ Finally, in 1891, Coffman resigned and L. C. Alexander was chosen to replace him.²⁴ These frequent, almost repeated, changes in leadership of both pastors and church officers, suggest the sort of directionless atmosphere which seemed to prevail throughout the entire period.

The services of the church remained basically unchanged from earlier periods between 1885 and 1896. The Saturday and

²⁰Business conference of May, 1896. MUBC, 1879-1904.

²¹Business conference of June, 1896. MUBC, 1879-1904.

²²Business conference of April, 1897. MUBC, 1879-1904.

²³Business conference of September, 1887. MUBC, 1879-1904.

²⁴Business conference of January, 1891. MUBC, 1879-1904.

Sunday services at the first of each month continued to be the business conference and worship service respectively. The time for meeting was likewise unaltered.²⁵ Efforts to change the meeting time were frequent but vain.²⁶ However, in 1892 it was agreed that the church conference on Saturday was to be held at two o'clock in the afternoon instead of at the traditional time in the morning. This was to be for only six months out of the year, however.²⁷ The next year this was made an annual change whereby the church met at two in the afternoon "...from April to October inclusive."²⁸ All of this change from one time of day to another resulted in a rather humorous event in 1895. The following record by the church clerk relates the story:

...through mistake Brother Spaulding and several of the members met at 11 O'clock instead of 2 O'clock and had services. Brother D. T. Spaulding giving a short discourse and etc. and postponed conference till some time in the future. Then in the evening, I and others met and learned what had been done, went home without further ceremony. ²⁹ [sic]

The communion services were also the object of change from 1885 to 1896. The regular time for the services was

²⁵Business conference of July, 1888. MUBC, 1879-1904.

²⁶Business confereces of September, 1888 and July, 1889. MUBC, 1879-1904.

²⁷Business conference of February, 1892. MUBC, 1879-1904.

²⁸Business conference of April, 1893. MUBC, 1879-1904.

²⁹Business conference of October, 1895. MUBC, 1879-1904.

changed from every other month to every third month. This meant that instead of six times a year, the communion would be held four times.³⁰ In 1888, R. D. Bowden and his wife were made a committee on preparation to prepare the elements of the service.³¹ L. C. Alexander had replaced Bowden and his wife by 1894, and in that same year, Alexander himself was replaced by R. W. Phillips.³²

The annual protracted meetings continued to be an important part of the services of the church. The pastor was placed in charge of organizing the meetings and getting an evangelist,³³ But during this time of stagnation, the protracted meetings lost much of their former vitality. The 1888 meeting, for example, was discontinued, thus indicating that it did not go well.³⁴ In 1892, the meeting was postponed altogether.³⁵ There had been times in previous periods when the meetings were postponed but this was not

³⁰Business conference of June, 1893. MUBC, 1879-1904.

³¹Business conference of January, 1888. MUBC, 1879-1904.

³²Business conference of January, 1894. MUBC, 1879-1904.

³³Business conference of August, 1885. MUBC, 1879-1904.

³⁴Business conference of August, 1888. MUBC, 1879-1904.

³⁵Business conference of July, 1892. MUBC, 1879-1904.

a common practice before the period, 1885-1896. Despite the fact that the protracted meetings were often not held during this period, many of those that were held from 1885 to 1896 were highly successful insofar as additions to the church were concerned.³⁶

The business side of church life during this period also suggests something of the stagnation which prevailed in other areas of church life. Little really significant business was transacted in this period. Most financial matters related to the salary for the pastor or the payment of some other person who had rendered service to the church. Raising funds was still a rather pressing problem. In July, 1886, it was decided that:

...the Treasurer together with the members present be requested to see all the members who have not paid anything and try and get them to pay their part of build-said expenses....

The result of this fund raising drive was an astounding seven dollars and twenty-five cents.³⁷

Another primary matter of business which occurred during the period was the frequent repairs that were necessary on the church building. In June, 1887, "...R. H. Todd and J. Wade Barton was [sic] appointed to repair the Church

³⁶Note the membership records in Appendix II for the additions to the church during the period in question.

³⁷Business conference of July, 1886. MUBC, 1879-1904.

house by placing rods across same."³⁸ This sort of repair work indicates that the walls of the building may have been pulling apart. Further evidence can be seen of the condition of the building by the fact that in August of that year "R. H. Todd was given contract to recover the Church house, we as a Church agree to pay him one-hundred dollars to do the work...."³⁹

Despite the apparent rundown condition of the church building, the church still retained a rather selective attitude toward what the building might be used for. In 1886, the church refused to rescind a previous ruling which prohibited exhortations, shows, and political speakings in the church house.⁴⁰ Other groups of religious and social bent, however, were allowed use of the building.⁴¹ In 1891, the local literary society was allowed the use of the building.⁴² The following year the Masonic Lodge was allowed to use the building for the purpose of installing its officers.⁴³ Where matters of public interest were concerned, the church

³⁸Business conference of June, 1887. MUBC, 1879-1904.

³⁹Business conference of August, 1887. MUBC, 1879-1904.

⁴⁰Business conference of June, 1886. MUBC, 1879-1904.

⁴¹Business conference of February, 1887. MUBC, 1879-1904.

⁴²Business conference of October, 1891. MUBC, 1879-1904.

⁴³Business conference of October, 1892. MUBC, 1879-1904.

waived some of the prohibitions to the use of the church for certain purposes. In 1894, it was agreed:

...to suspend the resolution of the church which prohibits political speakings in the church house for candidates for Congress and representatives for the county. 44

However, along with this flexibility in some areas of the use of the building, there was also some rigidity concerning the use of the building for other purposes. In 1894, the church refused to allow the Christian and Holiness Brethren the use of the church house.⁴⁵

The general stagnation of this period is also reflected in matters relative to the membership of the church. Some of this stagnation is seen in the policies that lished relative to the reception of members from other faiths. In 1895, the church voted to reject "...from this day on the Baptism of the so called Primitive Baptist denomination."⁴⁶ This policy tended to exclude persons who might have otherwise joined the church but likely would not if they were requested to be rebaptized before admission to the church.

The relative liberalness of the church toward members guilty of offenses is perhaps additional evidence of a change

⁴⁴Business conference of August, 1894. MUBC, 1879-1904.

⁴⁵Business conference of October, 1894. MUBC, 1879-1904.

⁴⁶Business conference of October, 1895. MUBC, 1879-1904.

in attitude on the part of the church concerning discipline. Examples of this change in attitude are numerous. A member named Willie Wrinkle, for example, was charged with dancing, an offense which previously would have warranted exclusion, but received no discipline. Wrinkle did request that the church forgive him but he made no promise that the act would not be repeated.⁴⁷ Another member named W. P. Erwin was proven guilty of drinking and upon making a statement of his guilt received forgiveness. L. Jones received forgiveness from the church for striking Brother Olive in what Jones described as a situation of self-defense.⁴⁸ W. M. Coffman, a deacon in the church, was found guilty of drinking to excess and was approached by a committee of investigation.⁴⁹ After the committee made its report to the church, Coffman was excluded by a vote of sixteen to one. He was later restored, however, by virtue of his admission of guilt.⁵⁰ Later, he was again charged with the same offense and upon his confession was again forgiven.⁵¹ Each of these cases indicate a new leniency which must be understood as a lessening of the original convictions as to what a church member should be and do.

⁴⁷Business conference of March, 1885. MUBC, 1879-1904.

⁴⁸Business conference of July, 1885. MUBC, 1879-1904.

⁴⁹Business conference of April, 1891. MUBC, 1879-1904.

⁵⁰Business conference of May, 1891. MUBC, 1879-1904.

⁵¹Business conference of February, 1893. MUBC, 1879-1904.

The outreach of the church was practically non-existent from 1885 to 1896. This is true with the exception of one matter in which the church participated, and the regular annual associational meeting. In 1885, the church sent a committee of B. D. Bowden, I. L. Alexander, George Janes, and J. Wade Barton to the Oak Hill community "...to assist in constituting a Church."⁵² The Cottage Grove Church also continued to send men and money to the annual Baptist Associational meeting. However, beyond these two things, the church seldom reached outside of its own small community.

It seems obvious that in practically all areas of church life during this period the most common characteristic was stagnation. This stagnation may have been caused by many factors; but probably none was more influential than the church had lost that fire and conviction which was so much a part of its life in the beginning.

⁵²Business conference of May, 1885. MUBC, 1879-1904.

CHAPTER V

REVITALIZATION: 1898-1908

The final period to be considered in the life of the Cottage Grove Baptist Church is the period from 1896 to 1908. This is primarily a time of revitalization in the life of the church. It is a period of renewal from the stagnation which had set in from previous periods. This final period encompasses the ministries of three different men but covers four different ministries.

In October, 1896, the church agreed to elect a pastor for the following year. This election resulted in the choice of Elder Fleetwood Ball and the defeat of the current pastor, Asa Cox.¹ With this election also came the beginning of an entirely new era in the church. October, 1897, saw the election of Ball again as pastor.² Then again in 1898 he was asked to continue in this position.³ The same was true in 1899.⁴ These elections continued year after year until October, 1905, at which time Ball resigned

¹Business conference of October, 1896. MUBC, 1879-1904.

²Business conference of October, 1897. MUBC, 1879-1904.

³Business conference of September, 1898. MUBC, 1879-1904.

⁴Business conference of October, 1899. MUBC, 1879-1904.

the position and declined election for the next year.⁵ Ball's salary during the period ranged between one-hundred and one-hundred and fifty dollars. This money was raised by subscription as previously.⁶

Upon the receipt of Ball's resignation in 1905, the church elected a committee of R. A. Coley, H. W. Brisendine, J. E. Janes, L. A. Simpson, and C. W. Crutchfield to find another pastor.⁷ This is one of the first times that the church delegated this responsibility to a committee. The practice of appointing such a pulpit committee by the Cottage Grove Church originated at this time.

In January, 1906, another pulpit committee was appointed. This new committee was composed of Will Roan, L. A. Simpson, Joe Janes, G. W. Janes, and J. R. Harding. In that same month, Rev. T. J. Petty was presented to the church and was elected as pastor for that year.⁸ By August of that year, however, another committee consisting of Crutchfield, Janes, and Harding was appointed to "...see after a Pastor

⁵Business conference of October, 1905. Minutes of the United Baptist Church. Record Book for 1904-1920. Hereafter referred to as MUBC, 1904-1920.

⁶Business conference of October, 1904. MUBC, 1879-1904.

⁷Business conference of October, 1905. MUBC, 1904-1920.

⁸Business conference of January, 1906. MUBC, 1904-1920.

for another year."⁹ The committee reported to the church in October and Fleetwood Ball was elected "...by a large majority," but the next month Ball sent word to the church that he would not accept the position.¹⁰ Consequently, it was necessary to choose another pastor. The man chosen was C. H. Bell. No information is available as to why Elder Perry did not serve the church the entire year for which he had been elected, but whatever the reason may have been the church nevertheless voted to give him a full year's salary.¹¹

C. H. Bell served the church just one year and in December, 1907, he resigned and a committee of Joe Janes, L. A. Simpson, and C. W. Crutchfield was appointed to serve as the pulpit committee.¹² The next month the church was presented with two men to consider for pastor. The vote was twenty-seven for Fleetwood Ball and four for W. S. Castleberry. A motion to elect Ball unanimously was defeated and Ball was elected pastor by a vote of twenty-eight to three.¹³ Ball's salary was raised in the

⁹Business conference of August, 1908. MUBC, 1904-1920.

¹⁰Business conferences of October and November, 1906. MUBC, 1904-1920.

¹¹Business conference of December, 1906. MUBC, 1904-1920.

¹²Business conference of December, 1907. MUBC, 1904-1920.

¹³Business conference of January, 1908. MUBC, 1904-1920.

fall of that year to two-hundred dollars a year.¹⁴ Ball's second ministry at Cottage Grove Church reaches beyond the limits of this period, but it is nevertheless the time which most completely symbolizes the revitalization of the church during the whole period. This second ministry ultimately extended through the year 1909 at which time Ball was replaced in the position of pastor by G. T. Mayo.¹⁵

Ball, like other outstanding pastors at Cottage Grove, served as pastor of other churches in Henry County while he was pastor at the Cottage Grove Church. Between 1897 and 1902, he served the following churches: Friendship Baptist Church, Oak Hill Baptist Church, Bethany Baptist Church, and Cottage Grove Baptist Church.¹⁶

During this period, 1896-1908, Cottage Grove Church underwent changes among the other leadership as well as the pastor. In 1897, H. W. Brisendine was elected as a deacon.¹⁷ Three years later, Brother Harding was received as a deacon.¹⁸ J. B. Lamb and Edward Dumas were elected deacons in August of 1902,¹⁹ and still other men were chosen

¹⁴Business conference of October, 1908. MUBC, 1904-1920.

¹⁵Business conference of October, 1909. MUBC, 1904-1920.

¹⁶Annual meetings, 1897-1902. MWDA, 1877-1956.

¹⁷Business conference of May, 1897. MUBC, 1879-1904.

¹⁸Business conference of September, 1900. MUBC, 1879-1904.

¹⁹Business conference of August, 1902. MUBC, 1879-1904.

to serve the church as deacons in 1908.²⁰

The position of church clerk was also the object of change during this period. M. B. Alexander was replaced as clerk by E. C. Brisendine in 1898.²¹ Sidney Austin, who later replaced Brisendine, was himself succeeded by C. W. Crutchfield in 1900.²² Crutchfield resigned the position later, and L. A. Simpson was elected to fill the resulting vacancy.²³ Simpson continued as clerk until May, 1908, at which time George Janes was elected to the position.²⁴

The same sort of flux and change was evident in relation to the position of church treasurer. In November, 1895, L. C. Alexander resigned the job and R. W. Phillips was elected to fill the post.²⁵ Henry Brisendine came to the position in 1900, but in 1901, he resigned to become a member of the Associational Executive Board as a representative from Cottage Grove Church. Chosen to replace

²⁰Business conference of October, 1908. MUBC, 1904-1920.

²¹Business conference of October, 1898. MUBC, 1879-1904.

²²Business conference of September, 1900. MUBC, 1879-1904.

²³Business conference of March, 1905. MUBC, 1904-1920.

²⁴Business conference of May, 1908. MUBC, 1904-1920.

²⁵Business conference of November, 1895. MUBC, 1879-1904.

Brisendine was C. W. Crutchfield who was also church clerk.²⁶ Crutchfield was reelected to the position in 1904, but was replaced by J. R. Harding in 1907.²⁷ The next year, Harding resigned as treasurer and asked for a letter of dismissal from the church. Succeeding him in the position was a man named Yancy Morris.²⁸

Still another area of change in the church during this period in the history of the church was the Sunday School. M. E. Woolridge was elected as Sunday School Superintendent in 1897. Chosen as his assistant was G. W. Janes. Woolridge was re-elected to this same position the next year, but E. C. Brisendine replaced Janes as his assistant.²⁹ Emma Jones was elected in 1898 as the secretary and treasurer of the Sunday School.³⁰ G. W. Janes, however, replaced Woolridge as superintendant for the Sunday School in 1899.³¹ Later in the period an entirely new slate of Sunday School officers was chosen. Will Roan became the new superintendant and

²⁶Business conferences of October, 1900, and January, 1901. MUBC, 1879-1904.

²⁷Business conferences of January, 1904, and January, 1907. MUBC, 1879-1904.

²⁸Business conference of January, 1908. MUBC, 1904-1920.

²⁹Business conference of January, 1897. MUBC, 1879-1904.

³⁰Business conference of January, 1898. MUBC, 1879-1904.

³¹Business conference of June, 1899. MUBC, 1879-1904.

J. R. Harding was chosen as his assistant. Dollie Crutchfield became treasurer.³²

In all of these cases, the changes may be viewed as the church reaching for new vitality. Of course, the church may not have been aware in the least that this was the case, but the results that came from these changes indicate that the trend toward new life was beginning. These evidences will be considered below.

The characteristics of revitalization can be seen in the worship services of the church from 1896 to 1908. Later in the period, in 1904, the church discussed having services two Sundays a month. It was necessary, however, to check with the Methodist Church in the community to arrange with them for the Cottage Grove Baptist Church to have the first and third Sundays of each month.³³ Church action was taken on this in December of the same year and it was agreed to have services on the first and third Sundays.³⁴ However, this change represented a striving for new life in the church by only some of the membership for a month later, the decision to have

³²Business conference of January, 1906. MUBC, 1904-1920.

³³Business conference of October, 1904. MUBC, 1879-1904.

³⁴Business conference of December, 1904. MUBC, 1879-1920.

two services a month was rescinded. The decision was instead made that "...Bro. Ball will only preach at this Church as he always has, the 1st Sunday in each month...."³⁵

The annual protracted meetings during this period also indicate something of the new life for which the church was reaching. These meetings again became the major services for evangelistic outreach and the results of these meetings during the period indicate that they were unusually successful. This was particularly true of the meetings in 1889, 1891, 1895, and 1908. As a result of the 1908 meeting, for example, there were some seventy-three additions to the church of which sixty-eight were by baptism.³⁶ This period, then, was obviously a time of real revival insofar as actual numerical growth was concerned.

The communion services also indicate the renewal of interest in the church from 1896 to 1908. The services became more numerous and the membership of the church took more interest in their observance. In 1902, the previous practice of having communion six times a year was resumed.³⁷

³⁵Business conference of January, 1905. MUBC, 1879-1904.

³⁶Note Appendix II for additions during the period.

³⁷Business conference of January, 1902. MUBC, 1879-1904.

In 1897, Henry Brisendine was elected to take charge of the preparations for the service,³⁸ and in 1906, Mrs. J. Wade Barton presented the church with "...a handsome supper set...."³⁹ Each of these events or changes relative to the communion services are suggestive of the renewal which was taking place in the church.

Special services which occurred during the period, 1896-1908, also indicate the growth and revival of the church. Of particular interest are those services that related to the licensing and ordaining of members of the church who expressed a desire to enter the ministry. In 1899, the church voted to license M. E. Woolridge to preach. The following is the wording of that license:

To whom it may concern: Whereas we have found in our midst and fellowship our beloved Brother M. E. Woolridge, who feels that God has called him to the work of the Gospel ministry, therefore,

Be it resolved, that the Missionary Baptist Church worshipping at Cottage Grove, Tennessee, in conference, after due deliberation do hereby authorize our Brother, M. E. Woolridge, to preach the Gospel and hereby request and encourage him to exercise his gifts wherever God in His providence may cast his lot, and we do most cordially commend him to the Baptist brotherhood wherever he may go as a pious and exemplary member. 40

³⁸Business conference of August, 1897. MUBC, 1879-1904.

³⁹Business conference of September, 1906. MUBC, 1904-1920.

⁴⁰Business conference of June, 1899. MUBC, 1879-1904.

Woolridge began his actual ministry in the fall of that same year when the Cottage Grove Church requested him "...to give his assistance to the Pastor and Church during the protracted services which are to follow,"⁴¹ The month following this protracted meeting, the church voted to ordain Woolridge.⁴² This suggests that he had demonstrated that he had rather outstanding ability as a minister for the usual practice was that a man was not ordained until after some church had called him as pastor. However, there is no indication in this period that he ever served a church as pastor. Woolridge's ordination took place in November 1899. Below is the wording of the credentials granted him by the church:

The Baptist Church of Christ at Cottage Grove, Henry County, Tennessee with the aid and counsel of Elder Asa Cox, Martin Ball, J. J. Herterson, J. E. Blevins, W. C. Green, and our Pastor as a Presbytery to all whom it may concern greetings:

Our much esteemed brother, M. E. Woolridge, being a member of this Church and a man of good moral and Christian character and having given evidence satisfactory to us of his call of God to the work of the Christian ministry, also being found sound in the faith of the Gospel and having considerable knowledge of Divine things, we here this day solemnly and in the favor of God, set him apart to that work by prayer and laying on of the hands of this Presbytery. He is authorized to administer the ordinances and to perform all the other

⁴¹Business conference of September, 1899. MUBC, 1879-1904.

⁴²Business conference of October, 1899. MUBC, 1879-1904.

functions of the sacred office of a minister of the Gospel. And we do recommend him to all persons with whom God, in His providence, may cast his lot as a good and worthy Baptist Minister praying that the blessing of God may attend him and that his burden may be carried with abundance and success. 43

Later in the period, the church granted a license to preach to a member named Husly Penticost.⁴⁴ The granting of a license to preach to these two men and the ordination of Woolridge certainly suggest the renewed vitality in the life of the church between 1896 and 1908.

The business conducted by the church from 1896 to 1908 also suggests the presence of a renewed spirit during the general period. In 1904, a committee was appointed to look into the possibility of trading the old church organ for a new one. This committee consisted of Coley, Brisendine, Harding, and Crutchfield.⁴⁵ Though it is not known if the trade was completed, the very fact that it was considered indicates the progressiveness of the thinking of some in the church at this time.

Another item of business which had not appeared previously which was now considered was the question of purchasing insurance on the church building.⁴⁶ In August, 1901,

⁴³Business conference of October, 1899. MUBC, 1879-1904.

⁴⁴Business conference of November, 1908. MUBC, 1904-1920.

⁴⁵Business conference of February, 1904. MUBC, 1904-1920.

⁴⁶Business conference of January, 1901. MUBC, 1879-1904.

the church agreed to purchase this insurance and then proceeded to raise the necessary funds.⁴⁷

A major item of business which was common to all periods was again present between 1896 and 1908. This was the matter of the finances of the church. In 1897, the church was still trying to raise money which was owed to Elder Asa Cox for his previous services as pastor.⁴⁸ Two years later the issue was still unsettled so G. W. Janes and L. C. Alexander were appointed to see Cox about "...the amount due him by the church."⁴⁹ It was not until 1907, however, that the debt to Cox was finally paid. In settlement of the debt, the former pastor accepted seven dollars and fifty cents and some things of value donated to him by George and Joe Janes.⁵⁰

The problem of a salary for the current pastors during the period was also a vital issue. Generally the church elected a committee to settle on a salary and to raise the necessary funds.⁵¹ Few figures are available relative to the salary for the pastors but there is no reason to believe that it was much different from the past

⁴⁷Business conference of August, 1901. MUBC, 1879-1904.

⁴⁸Business conference of June, 1897. MUBC, 1879-1904.

⁴⁹Business conference of April, 1899. MUBC, 1879-1904.

⁵⁰Business conference of February, 1907. MUBC, 1904-1920.

⁵¹Business conference of September and October, 1902. MUBC, 1879-1904.

The church was also still faced with the annual problem of raising funds for current expenses for just operating a program and maintaining a building. However, in this period of revitalization there was an attempt to solve the problem. In 1906, a committee of Harding, Brisendine, Coley, Janes, and Dumas recommended an "...apportionment plan for getting up church expenses."⁵² For special financial needs, separate finance committees were set up to raise funds. In 1906, Sisters Ludie Dowdy, May Coley, and Ludy Harding were appointed as a finance committee for raising money to pay the expenses of the protracted meeting for that year.⁵³ Later that same year, "a collection was taken for the burial expenses of Sister Bettie Pettie."⁵⁴ A finance committee to raise and collect a subscription for payment for a new church building was organized in 1908.⁵⁵

The church building itself was a major item of business from 1896 to 1908. In the first two-thirds of the period it was necessary for the church to have a considerable amount of repair work done on the building.

⁵²Business conference of February, 1906. MUBC, 1904-1920.

⁵³Business conference of August, 1906. MUBC, 1904-1920.

⁵⁴Business conference of November, 1906. MUBC, 1904-1920.

⁵⁵Business conference of March, 1908. MUBC, 1904-1920.

This was a frequent matter of business in the monthly conferences.⁵⁶ The condition of the church building was such a problem that in 1907 a committee of Joe Janes, L. A. Simpson, R. A. Coley, Edward Dumas, and J. R. Harding was appointed to determine the actual condition of the house before further repairs were authorized.⁵⁷ This committee made its report to the church in September of that year and was dismissed.⁵⁸ As a result of this committee's report, "... a vote was taken to decide which we would do, repair the old house or build a new one, the majority favored building." J. R. Harding, J. E. Janes and G. W. Janes along with Sisters Janes and Crutchfield were appointed "... a committee to draw plans and estimates on a new building."⁵⁹ In the following months this committee saw the addition of new members and the replacement of older ones. Rufe Lamb, for example, replaced J. R. Harding on this committee in 1908.⁶⁰

In February, 1908, the building committee was given the authority to get the new building underway by contracting

⁵⁶Business conferences of March, April, and May, 1904. MUBC, 1904-1920.

⁵⁷Business conference of July, 1907. MUBC, 1904-1920.

⁵⁸Business conference of September, 1907. MUBC, 1904-1920.

⁵⁹Business conference of October, 1907. MUBC, 1904-1920.

⁶⁰Business conference of January, 1908. MUBC, 1904-1920.

for the needed workmen and materials.⁶¹ Three months later, the committee contracted for brick for the structure from a local citizen for a total of eight-hundred and twenty dollars.⁶² In June, 1908, the old church building was sold for one-hundred and eighty-two dollars and fifty cents. The same month "...the contract for the new building was let for the sum of two-thousand" dollars.⁶³ At the same conference in which this business was transacted, the church instructed the clerk "...to secure the use of the school building for use while our house is being constructed."⁶⁴

It seems obvious from this discussion of church business from this period that in the business affairs of the church as in the other areas of its life there is evidence of revitalization. The last year of this period, 1908, the church saw the completion of the new building and the beginning of a new and more vital era in the life of the church.

Matters relative to the membership of the church also indicate a revival of the earlier strength and

⁶¹Business conference of February, 1908. MUBC, 1904-1920.

⁶²Business conference of May, 1908. MUBC, 1904-1920.

⁶³Business conference of June, 1908. MUBC, 1904-1920.

⁶⁴Business conference of September, 1908. MUBC, 1904-1920.

conviction of moral standards. In 1897, the church appointed a committee of J. Wade Barton, H. S. Dumas, H. W. Brisendine, and L. C. Alexander to recommend a policy to the church relative to a prevalent social problem in the community.⁶⁵ The following quotation reveals both the problem and the policy:

The committee on making and selling whiskey made their report and was discharged. Said committee presented a resolution to the church for her consideration, by motion and second said resolution was adopted by the Church:

it resolved, that we, the Baptist Church at Grove, Tennessee will not receive or keep in the fellowship of the Church any person or persons who may be engaged to work in manufacturing for sale, or in the sale of intoxicating liquor as a beverage.⁶⁶

Church discipline became even more a part of church affairs during this period also. In 1897, Jeff Phillips was excluded from church fellowship for "...disobeying moral law, declaring non-fellowship with the Church and disobeying Christian laws...."⁶⁷ The next year R. W. Phillips was excluded for non-fellowship.⁶⁸ J. M. Lowry was the object of church discipline for leaving his family.⁶⁹

⁶⁵ Business conference of October, 1897. MUBC, 1879-1904.

⁶⁶ Business conference of November, 1897. MUBC, 1879-1904.

⁶⁷ Business conference of October, 1897. MUBC, 1879-1904.

⁶⁸ Business conference of June, 1898. MUBC, 1879-1904.

⁶⁹ Business conference of July, 1898. MUBC, 1879-1904.

Fellowship was withdrawn from Gertrude Driver on an immoral conduct charge in 1900.⁷⁰ In 1902, J. R. Harding and W. M. Coffman were subjects of church discipline as a result of their being at odds with each other.⁷¹ W. A. Loyd was excluded in 1904 for unchristian conduct.⁷² In 1907, James Dumas was excluded on the same charge.⁷³

All of these cases mentioned here seem to be saying one thing; there was a renewed desire for an honorable church membership during the period, 1896-1908. Here then is further evidence of the renewed vitality of the Cottage Grove Church in this period.

The ministry of Cottage Grove Church outside of its own community continued much like that of previous periods. Messengers were sent annually to the associational meetings, and small amounts of money were sent to aid in financing the associational missions program.⁷⁴ Some special efforts were made during the period to increase the church's gifts to missions. In 1906, Sudie Dowdy, May Coley and Dollie Crutchfield along with Mona Blake were appointed a committee

⁷⁰Business conference of October, 1900. MUBC, 1879-1904.

⁷¹Business conference of April, 1902. MUBC, 1879-1904.

⁷²Business conference of January, 1904. MUBC, 1879-1904.

⁷³Business conference of January, 1907. MUBC, 1904-1920.

⁷⁴Note Appendix III for listing of messengers and gifts to the association.

to take up additional funds for missions.⁷⁵ In the fall of the same year Bettie Speight, Kate Barber, and H. W. Brisendine were appointed as a committee to collect still other mission funds.⁷⁶ Thus, in its mission concern, the church was reaching out for new life and greater service.

⁷⁵Business conference of February, 1906. MUBC, 1904-1920.

⁷⁶Business conference of September, 1906. MUBC, 1904-1920.

APPENDIX I*

(Part 1)

"ARTICLES of FAITH"

1st Of the Scriptures,

We believe the Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired, and is a perfect treasure of Heavenly instructions, that it has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth without any mixture of error for its matter; that it reveals the principles by which God will judge us, and therefore is, and shall remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct and opinions should be tried.

2nd Of the true God,

That there is one, and only one true and living God, whose name is Jehovah, the Maker and Supreme Ruler of Heaven and earth; inexpressibly glorious in holiness; worthy of all possible honor, confidence and love; revealed under the personal and relative distinctions of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, equal in every divine perfection, and executing distinct and harmonious offices in the great work of redemption.

3rd Of the Fall of Man,

That man was created in a state of holiness, under the law of his Maker; but by voluntary transgression, fell from that holy and happy state in consequence of which, all mankind are now sinners; not by constraint, but choice being by nature utterly

* Appendix I is divided into three parts. Part 1 is the "Articles of Faith," Part 2 is the "Church Covenant" and Part 3 is the "Rules of Decorum." These materials are presented with the exact wording and punctuation as they appear in the Minutes of the Church even when such is crude or questionable.

void of that holiness required by the law of God, wholly given to the gratification of the world, of Satan, and of their own sinful passions, and therefore under just condemnation to eternal ruin without defense or excuse.

4th Of the way of Salvation,

That the salvation of sinners is wholly of grace; through the Mediatoral offices of the Son of God who took upon him our nature, yet without sin; honored the law by his personal obedience, and made atonement for our sins by his death; being risen from the dead he is now enthroned in heaven; and uniting in his wonderful person the tenderest sympathies with divine perfections, is ever qualified to be a suitable, compassionate and in all-sufficient Savior.

5th Of Justification,

That the great Gospel blessing which Christ of his fulness bestows on such as believe in Him is Justification; that Justification consists in the pardon of sin, and the promise of eternal life on principles of righteousness, that it is bestowed not in consideration of any works of righteousness which we have done, but solely through His own redemption and righteousness; that it brings us into a state of most blessed peace and favor with God, and secures every other blessing needful for time and eternity.

6th Of the Freeness of Salvation,

That the blessings of salvation are made free to all by the Gospel; that it is the immediate duty of all to accept them by a cordial and obedient faith, and that nothing prevents the salvation of the greatest sinner on earth, except his own voluntary refusal to submit to the Lord Jesus Christ, which refusal will subject him to an aggravated condemnation.

7th Of Grace and Regeneration,

That in order to be saved, we must be regenerated or born again; that regeneration consists in giving a holy disposition to the mind and is affected in a manner

above our comprehension or calculation by the power of the Holy Spirit, so as to secure our voluntary obedience to the Gospel; and its proper evidence is formed in the holy fruit which we bring forth to the glory of God.

8th Of God's Purpose of Grace,

That election is the gracious purpose of God, according to which he regenerates, sanctifies, and saves sinners; that being perfectly consistent with the free agency of man, it comprehends all the means in connection with the end; that it is a most glorious display of God's sovereign goodness, being infinitely wise, holy and unchangeable; that it utterly excludes boasting and promotes humility, prayer, praise, trust in God, and active imitation of his free mercy; that it encourages the use of means in the highest degree; that it ascertained by its effects in all who believe the Gospel, is the foundation of Christian assurance, and that to ascertain it with regard to ourselves, demands and deserves our utmost diligence.

9th Of the Preservance of Saints,

That such only are real believers as endure unto the end; that their persevering attachment to Christ is the grand mark which distinguishes them from superficial professors, that a special Providence watches over their welfare; and they are kept by the Power of God through Faith unto salvation.

10th Of Harmony of the Law and Gospel,

That the Law of God is the eternal and unchangeable rule of his moral government; that it is just and good; and that the inability which the Scriptures ascribe to fallen men to fulfill its precepts, arises entirely from their love of sin; to deliver them from which, and to restore them through a Mediator to unfeigned obedience to the holy law, is one great end of the Gospel, and of the means of grace connected with the establishment of the visible Church.

11th Of a Gospel Church,

That a visible Church of Christ is a congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the Gospel observing the ordinances of Christ, governed by his laws, and exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by his word; that its only proper offices are Bishops or Pastors, and Deacons, whose qualifications, claims, and duties are defined in the Epistle to Timothy and Titus.

12th Of Baptism and the Lord's Supper,

That Christian Baptism is the immersion of a believer in water, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, to show forth in a solemn and beautiful emblem, our faith in a crucified, buried and risen Savior, with its purifying power, that it is a prerequisite to the privileges of a Church relation, and to the Lord's Supper in which the members of the Church, by the use of bread and wine, are to commemorate together the dying love of Christ; preceded always by solemn self-examination.

13th Of the Christian Sabbath,

That the first day of the week is the Lord's Day or Christian Sabbath, and it is to be kept sacred to religious purposes, by abstaining from all secular labor and recreations; by the devout observance of all the means of grace, both private and public, and by preparation for the rest which remaineth for the people of God.

14th Of Civil Government,

That civil government is of divine appointment, for the interests and good order of human society; and that magistrates are to be prayed for consciously, honored, and obeyed, except in things opposed to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the only Lord of the conscience, and the Prince of Kings of the earth.

15th Of the Righteous and the Wicked,

That there is a radical and essential difference between the righteous and the wicked that such only as through faith are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus; and sanctified by the Spirit of our God, are truly righteous in his esteem, while all such as continue in impenitence and unbelief are in his sight wicked and under the curse; this distinction holds among men both in and after death.

16th Of the World to Come,

That the end of this world is approaching; that at the Last Day Christ will descend from Heaven, and raise the dead from the grave to final retribution; that a solemn separation will then take place; that the wicked will be adjudged to endless punishment, and the righteous to endless joy; and that this judgment will fix forever the final state of man in heaven or hell, on principles of righteousness.

(Part 2)

"CHURCH COVENANT"

Having been, as we trust, brought by Divine Grace to embrace the Lord Jesus Christ, and to give up ourselves wholly to him: We do now solemnly and joyfully covenant with each other, to walk together in him in brotherly love to his glory as our common Lord, We therefore, in his strength, engage that we will exercise a mutual care, as members, one of another, to promote the growth of the whole body in Christian knowledge, holiness and comfort to the end that we may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God. That to secure and promote these objects, we will uphold the public worship of God and the Ordinances of his house; and hold constant communion with each other therein; that we will cheerfully contribute of our property for the support of the poor and maintenance of the faithful ministry of the gospel among us; that we will not omit closet and family Religion at home, nor allow of the too common neglect of the great duty of religiously

training up of our children and those under our care, with a view to the service of Christ and the enjoyment of Heaven; that we will walk circumspectly with the world, that we may win their souls; remembering that God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind; that we are the light of the world, the salt of the earth--as a city set upon a hill which cannot be hid. That we will frequently exhort, and if need be, admonish each other in love, according to Matthew chapter eighteen in the spirit of meekness, considering ourselves lest we be tempted also. As is in our Baptism we were buried with Christ and raised again to walk in newness of life, there is on us a special obligation henceforth to walk with him. And may the God of peace, who brought again from the dead, our Lord Jesus Christ, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make us perfect in every good word and work to do his will; working in us that which is well pleasing in his sight through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.

(Part 3)

"RULES of DECORUM"

Article 1:

We agree to meet in conference once in every month, or more often if necessary.

Article 2:

A moderator shall be chosen by the suffrage of the Church, who shall observe good order and explain questions before he takes the vote of the Church on them. He shall have liberty of speech as any other member, but he shall not vote unless the Church be tied then he shall give the casting vote.

Article 3:

All business brought before the Church by motion and second, which is in gospel-like order, shall be attended to by the Church, unless withdrawn by the mover.

Article 4:

Any person wishing to speak shall rise from his seat and address the moderator; and if two rise at the same time, the moderator shall decide which shall speak first. And no member while speaking shall cast reflection on any person, but shall strictly adhere to the subject at hand.

Article 5:

It shall be the duty of all members to fill their seats in conference and bear a part of the expenses of the Church; and if any male member shall absent himself from two church meetings in succession, it shall be his duty at the third meeting to state his reasons for so doing; and if he miss three meetings, the Church shall appoint some two or three Brethren to visit him and cite him to the next meeting in course, and if he fail to appear and give satisfaction to the Church, he shall be dealt with as for other offences.

Article 6:

No members shall arraign another before the Church for any grievance without first taking gospel steps.

Article 7:

We agree to keep up the Brotherhood, and not speak nor act anything unbecoming each other as Christians.

Article 8:

No person shall speak more than twice on any subject without leave from the moderator.

Article 9:

No male members shall leave his seat during Church conference without permission by the moderator.

Article 10:

It shall be the duty of all members present at any Church meeting to vote on all questions before the Church, when called on by the moderator or by any other member who may desire to obtain the mind of the whole Church.

Article 11:

When any member shall remain silent during the transaction of any business, and afterwards complain or find fault with what was done by the Church, the same shall be deemed disorder; and the members so offending shall be dealt with accordingly.

Article 12:

No person shall be received into the fellowship of this Church by any other than unanimous vote of the members present; but a majority of voters shall govern in the transaction of all other business.

Article 13:

Any person breaking through these rules shall be called to order by the moderator.

Article 14:

These rules may be altered or amended at any time when such alternation or amendment shall be desired by a majority of members present at any regular (stated) Church meeting.

Article 15:

Our regular (stated) Church meetings shall be held on the first Lord's Day in each month and Saturday before; and we agree to celebrate the Lord's Supper on the first Lord's Day in April and June and September.

APPENDIX II*

MEMBERSHIP RECORDS (1850-1908)		
	(Additions)	(Losses)
1850: August-----	Moses Todd-L Penelope Todd-L Harvey W. Collier-L John H. Olive-L Oscar S. Stephenson-L Sarah Stephenson-L Candace Powel-L Jonathan Stephenson-L Nancy Stephenson-L Robert A. Wade-L Leron Olive-B Leondias Olive-B Erasmus D. Collier-B Isabella Hartsfield-B Samuel D. Mann-B Manalculus B. Todd-B James A. Highfill-B Rutha L. W. Highfill-B John B. Todd-B Martha H. Hartsfield-B Thomas Highfill-B Alexander Wade-B Jane Coley-B Mariah Coley-B Charity Powel-L Elizabeth Collier-L	
September---	Ann Freeman-B Rufus Todd-B	
November-----		Alexander Wade-Ex
1851: June-----	Ann E. Crutchfield-?	
August-----		John H. Olive-L

*The material in Appendix II relates to the membership activities for the total period, 1850-1908. This Appendix shows both additions and losses in the membership. The abbreviations B and L indicate the addition was by Baptism or Letter of Recommendation respectively. The abbreviations L and Ex indicate the loss was by either Letter of Recommendation or Exclusion respectively.

- 1852: January-----Ellen Tharpe-B
Acrissa Edwards-B
- June-----Leroy Olive-L
- August-----Hester Ann Todd-B
Sarah Highfill-B
Elizabeth D. Tharpe-B
Sarah J. Freeman-B
Moses S. Austin-B
Mann Stephenson?
- September----Frederic Austin-B
- 1853: February-----William S. Shaw-L
Francis A. Shaw-L
- August-----Sarah E. Shaw-B
Mary E. Todd-B
Margia Clapp-B
- 1854: February-----Moses S. Austin-L
- August-----Frederic Austin- Ex
Heturah Killebrew-L
Katherine E. Kelso-L
Joseph Jones-L
Elizabeth A. Jones-L
Nancy M. Powell-B
Caroline Coley-B
- September----Amanda Austin-B
- 1855: February-----Leonidas Olive- L
- May-----Joseph Shaw-L
Sarah Shaw-L
Armintha Caveness-L
- June-----Frotilla Bates-L
James L. Morton-L
Elize Morton-L
- July-----J. Wade Barton-B
- September----Thomas J. Magones-L Robert A. Wade- L

1855: October-----Hampton Highfill-L
(cont.) Sarah Highfill-L

1856: February-----William S. Shaw-L
Francis A. Shaw-L
Sarah E. Shaw-L

May-----H. W. Collier-L
Erasmus Collier-L
Elizabeth Collier-L

August-----Harriet Veach-L

October-----Margia Clapp-L

1857: April-----Thomas L. Magones-L

November-----James L. Morton-L
Eliza Morton-L
Harriot Veach-L
Martha Hartsfield-Ex

1858: April-----Elizabeth Hutcherson-L

July-----Mary Hall-L

November-----D.H. Highfill-L
Sarah Highfill-L
J.M. Todd-B
S.D. Scott-B
E. H. Todd-B
Lewis Graham-B
Minerva Mann-B
C. T. Graham-B
Bathsheba Graham-B

1859: March-----Katherine Kelso-L

April-----Elizabeth Jordan-L

July-----Geneva Stephenson-B
J.J.C. Stephenson-B
Josephine Riggs-B
James Jones-B

1860: December-----Josephine Riggs- Ex
 March-----Frotilla Bates-L
 Sarah J. Freeman- L
 Mann D. Stephenson-L
 June-----John W. Todd-L
 Hester Ann Todd-L
 November-----Arminta Caviness-Ex
 Yevine C. Todd-L
 Mary E. Watson-L

1861-1662: NO RECORDS ON MEMBERSHIP -----Mary Hall-L
 James Winn-L

1863: April-----"Jane", a servant of Sister Todd-L
 June-----W. T. Jones-examination
 Almida Todd-B
 Julia A. Todd-B

1864: July-----R.P. Olive-L
 J. S. Scott-L
 December-----D.H. Highfill-L
 Sarah Highfill-L
 Margaret Halcomb-L
 Sarah Halcomb-L
 Mary Halcomb-L

1865: February-----K.C. Rose-L
 Arrena Rose-L
 S.S. Watson- Ex
 May-----W.L. Woolverton-L
 Manaleus B. Todd-L
 August-----Mary E. Todd-L
 October-----S. S. Watson-L
 November-----Martha Coble-examination
 Miss C. B. Wilson-B
 Leonda Jones-B
 Louisa Rose-B

1866: July-----Genetta Scott-B
 August-----Nancy Ann Rose-B
 Martha Ann Woolverton-B
 Mary Tharpe-B
 Mary N. Tharpe-B
 December-----Thomas G. Richie-L
 Mary J. Richie-L

1867: January-----I. M. Wrinkle-L
 Clementine Wrinkle-L
 A. L. Wrinkle-L

April-----William Jones-L
 Sealy Jones-L
 Nathaniel Jones-L

July-----Mary Hall-L
 James Gwinn-L

August-----Jessie Burton-L
 Mary F. Wrinkle-B
 Mariam E. Todd-B
 Almidia Todd-B
 Julia A. Todd-B
 Sarah Ann Todd-B

1868: May-----James Halcomb-L
 Margaret Halcomb-L
 Sarah Halcomb-L
 Mary Halcomb-L

July-----S.S. Watson- Ex

September-----James A. Highfill- L
 E.B. Jeffry-B at Palmersville
 Laura Kilgore-B at Palmersville
 A. C. Brann-B at Palmersville

November-----Nancy Powell-L

December-----Amanda Austin-L
 Cora Wilson- Ex

O. S. Stephenson-L
 Sarah Stephenson-L
 Geneva Stephenson-L
 John C. Stephenson-L
 James Jones- Ex

Arrena Rose- Ex
 Louisa Rose- Ex
 Sarah E. Rose- Ex
 Nancy A. Rose- Ex
 S. D. Scott- Ex

J.C. Jones- L
 Elizabeth Jones- L
 E.B. Jeffry- L
 A.C. Brann- L
 Laura Kilgore- L
 Elizabeth
 Hutchenson-L

1869: January-----Sister Speight-L
February-----Sister Jordan- Ex
June-----Sister Coble-L
August-----Levi Killebrew-L
September----W.L. Wrinkle-B
 Bro. Richie and wife-L
 Nathaniel Jones-L
 Mrs. S. D. Mann-statement Humpherys-L
November-----K.C. Rose-L
December-----Arrena Rose- Ex
 Louisa Rose- Ex
 Sarah E. Rose- Ex

1870: August-----Nancy A. Rose-Ex
November----Sarah E. Woolverton-B
 Lucy A. Wrinkle-B
 S. D. Scott- Ex
December----Elder J. W. Bell-L
 Elizabeth Bell-L
 R. W. Murrell-L
 Dililah E. Johnson-B

1871: January-----S. D. Scott-L
 Martha A. Hasting-L
 Charity Powell-L
March-----W. L. Woolverton-L
 Sarah Woolverton-L
May-----A. H. Barton-B
June-----George Gresham-L
August-----Sarah Halcomb-L
September---S. D. Scott-restored to fellowship

- 1872: April-----S. M. Sparks-L
Johnson Sparks-L
- May-----Susan A. Crutchfield-B
- June-----Mary A. Gresham-B
Sarah A. Gresham-B
- July-----D. A. Sparks-L
W. A. Bell-L
- 1873: July-----Ann Humpherys-L
- August-----S. D. Mann-L
Walter Johnson-B
- 1874: February-----Lucy A. Wrinkle-L
C. W. Crutchfield-Ex
- July-----J. L. Bell-L
Francis J. Bell-L
- September---R. D. Bowden-B
B. D. Bowden-B
Mary Bowden-L
Eliza B. Bowden-L
Julia Ann Bowden-L
Lutitia Crowder-L
D. J. Bowden-B
R. L. Jones-B
Susan F. Bowden-B
C. A. Ward-L
O. H. Barton-B
John Gresham-L
- November-----Mary Halcomb-L
- 1875: May-----Jane, a servant-L
- September---M. B. Alexander-L
Sister A. J. Alexander-L
Joseph Janes-L
Sister Rebecca Janes-L
Sister Alleter J. Archer-L
Sister M. D. Janes-B

1881: February-----W. L. Jones-L
May-----Anna Moore-L
June-----Lule Coley-L
Bettie A. Palmer-L

1881: July-----Mittie Alexander-B
(cont.)

August-----Delilah Johnson-L
Susan Johnson-L
Fannie Street-L
Pardie Wrinkle-L

September---Elder W. B. Jones and wife-L
D. W. Jones-L
Lavinia F. Shelton-L
Emma F. Deans-L
Lynn Bowden-B
E. D. Owen-B
Sidney Olive-B
Eugene Todd-B
Ivan Alexander-B
Lonnie Crutchfield-B
E. M. Janes-B
A. E. Janes-B

October-----W. W. Smith-B

Bro. and Sister
Brown-L

November-----Minnie Lane-L

December-----Sister Petty-Ex
Bro. Bond and
and wife-L

1882: January-----J. R. McRee-L

March-----William Jones-L
Celia Jones-L

August-----N. C. Hill-B
Mollie Williams-B
A. W. Bowden-B
J. Q. Bowden-B
J. Moses Todd-B
C. L. Davidson-B
W. W. Wrinkle-B

November-----N. Jones-L
Rebecca Jones-L
S. R. Jones-L

1883: February-----E. W. Janes- Ex
 Lonnie Crutchfield-Ex
 Russia P. Olive- L
 Ella Olive- L
 Sidney Olive- L

March-----C. F. Davidson-Ex

April-----Laura Todd- L
 Eugene Todd-Ex

May-----H.H. Alexander
 and wife-L
 Martha Ann Bell-L

June-----Ann Wrinkle-B

December-----James Scott
 and wife-L
 Queenie Davis-L A. M. Alexander-L

1884: April-----Emma Fonville-L

November-----H.H. Barton-L
 S. C. Todd-L
 William Jones-L
 Celia Jones-L

December-----W.L. Wrinkle-L
 Mary Wrinkle-L
 W.B. Jones-L
 D.W. Jones-L
 L.H. Shelton-L
 Joseph Janes-L
 M.E. Janes-L

1885: January-----Annie Alexander-L
 Sister Coley-L

February-----M. B. Alexander-L
 J. W. Bell, wife,
 son and daughter-L

March-----J. Moses Todd-L

May-----Bro. Janes
 and wife-L
 Bro. Smith
 and wife-L

1886: March-----William Jones
and wife-L
O.T. Barton-L
Susan Barton-L
D.A. Wilson-L

May-----A.M. Alexander-L

November-----D.J. Bowden, wife
and sons-L
J.M. Todd and

December-----Y.P. Todd-L
F.H. Petitt-L

1887: February-----Anna C ? -L

March-----Queenie Johnson-L

September-----J.W. Wrinkle,
wife and daughter-L
G.W. Janes and
wife-L

November-----A.T. Bussell-L
Ella Bussell-L
Lula Dumas-B
Lula Erwin-B
F.H. Petitt-L

December-----Charles Bomar-B

1888: April-----Sallie Alexander-L

May-----Mary A. Shankle-L
Sarah A. Gresham-L
E.D. Bowden-L

1889: January-----A. M. Alexander-L
Sallie Alexander-L

February-----James Parker-L
Luerita Parker-L
Dora Meadows-L

1889: August-----Sallie Parker-L
 (cont.) Sara Meadows-L
 C.D. Bowden-B
 Andrew Foster-B
 Ida E. Shankle-B
 Melvin E. Shankle-B
 May Crawford-B
 Sallie Todd-B
 Mittie O'Daniel-B
 Myra Lee Bussell-B
 Mary Ann Bussell-B
 Cora S. Bussell-B
 Ella Jones-B
 E. H. Todd-restored
 Nellie McEhhan-B
 Mildred Hunt-B
 D. B. Emmerson-L
 J. N. Shankle-B
 W. T. McRee-B
 J. E. Erwin-B
 C. T. Greer-B
 Martha Greer-B
 Nancy E. Emmerson-B

September-----W. W. Wrinkle-L

December---Louisa E. Barton-B

1890: May-----Thomas Highfill-L
 Mana B. Todd-B

September-----J. N. Shankle-L
 Mary A. Shankle-L
 Melinda Shankle-L
 Ida E. Shankle-L

1891: January-----E. P. Alexander-L
 Ludie Janes-L
 W. J. Shankle-L
 P. H. Bomar-L

March-----Sallie Bowden-L
 S. W. Barton-L
 Alexander Barton-L

Mary E. Todd-L
 Mary Todd-L

1891: August-----A. T. Bussell-L
 (cont.)-----Ella Bussell-L
 Lee Myra Bussell-L
 Mary Ann Bussell-L
 Cora S. Bussell-L

Dona Sparks-B
 Doxy Sparks-B
 Pentona Hunt-B
 M. B. Alexander-L
 Martha E. Foster-B
 Eliza Erwin-B
 W. M. Coffman-restored
 J. P. Phillips-B
 T. S. Johnson-B

September--Tillman Johnson-L

Nancy A. Davis-L
 W. T. McRee- Ex

October-----J. J. Yates-L
 Nellie McEffan- Ex

1892: January-----Minnie Bowden-L

February-----Bro. Foster- Ex

March-----Lynn Bowden-L
 Alice Bowden-L

May-----Mary E. Todd-L
 Mary Todd-L
 Maude B. Todd-L

June-----N. C. Hill-L

August-----Bettie J. Speight-L

Roma R. Puryear-B
 H. W. Sears-B
 Nancy J. Hopkins-B
 Mattie W. Crowder-B
 Cammie Y. Todd-B

October-----E. H. Todd-L
 Sallie Todd-L

1893: February---Maude Todd-L

August-----George W. Jones-L
 Susan F. Jones-L
 Lorie L. Jones-L
 Yerena C. Todd-L

October----Mary E. Todd-L

1894: January----Ellen Todd-L

March-----J.J. Yates- Ex

June-----W. H. McFadden-L

August-----Mattie L. Jones-B
 Grizzly A Brisendine-B

October----L. M. McFadden-B

1895: February-----H. Johnson- L

March-----H. D. Byars- Ex
 Lieuella Parker-B
 J. B. Wrinkle-B

May-----Julia Crutchfield-B
 Julia C. Bowden-L

July-----Anna Q. Alexander-B
 Thomas Doran-L
 Anna Doran-L
 Mary Todd-L
 Abby Todd-L
 Ellen Todd-rebaptized
 Mattin Erwin-B
 Minnie Dumas-B
 Emma E. Jones-B
 Betty Speight-L
 Ada Petty-B
 Betty A. Bruce-B
 Lilly Ridgeway-B

October-----Lula May Erwin-L

November-----Bro. Parker- Ex
 Parker's wife
 and daughter-L

1896: May-----Anna Moore-L
August-----Roma Capplinger-B
Sister Tyler-L
December-----Joe Erwin-L
W. F. McFadden-L
1897: March-----B. J. Doran-L
Anna Doran-L
October-----Jeff Phillips- Ex
December-----Ada Petty-L
1898: February-----Anna Moore- L
April-----Ellan Todd- L
June-----R. W. Phillips- Ex
July-----J. M. Lowry- Ex
September-----Kate Smith- L
November-----Catherine
Alexander-L
1899: April-----Tommie Cates- L
Moses Todd- L
May-----W. P. Erwin- L
October----Catherine Alexander-L
Maud Todd- L
November-----Mary Todd- L
December-----Currie Lee- L
1900: February-----Eliza Erwin- L
Mattie Erwin- L
May-----Sallie Parker- L
August-----Willie Highfill-B
Lutie Harding-B
Julia Coley-B
Nattie Williams-B
Ada Coley-L
Mrs. F. A. Williams-L

1900: October----M. L. Camp-L
(cont.)

Gertrude Driver-Ex

1901: March-----Effie Olive-L

1902: January-----Melinda Strick-L

March-----Carlton Owen-L

May-----Sister Porter-L

June-----Ethel Harding-L
Lucy Harding-L
Lutie Harding-L

October-----Connie Todd-L

December-----Bro. McGhee-L

1903: July-----W. C. Cathey-L
P. C. Cathey-L
Leona Cathey-L

December-----Bill Cathey-L
P. C. Cathey-L and
Leona Cathey-L

1904: January-----Dora Bevil-Ex
W. A. Loyd-Ex

October----J. F. Phillips-L

December-----H. S. Dumas and
wife-L

1905: January-----Mollie Olive-L

March-----Harriet W. Speight-Ex
George Cote-L

May-----A. H. Barton-L
Miriam Barton-L
William Barton-L

June-----Mr. and Mrs.
Stacker Ward-L

(Appendix II cont.)

1905: August-----A. H. Barton- Ex
 (cont.) Tansil Jones- Ex
 Thomas McGhee-Ex
 Horace Sears- L

October----Dr. E. G. Maxwell-L

December-----J. D. Phillips- L

1906: July-----James Williams-Ex

September---Anna Moore-L

1907: January-----James Dumas- Ex

November-----Sudie Loyd- Ex
 Pearl Kirk- L

1908: January-----J. R. Harding- L
 J. A. Highfill and
 wife-L

February-----Anna Moore- L

April-----Mollie Parker-L

August-----John Alexander-B
 Eva Compton-B
 C. F. Lee-B
 Charley Barber-B
 E. C. Taylor-B
 Fred Ridgeway-B
 J. P. McClure-B
 Foster Smith-B
 Chester Coley-B
 D. D. Dumas Jr.-B
 D. G. Shankle-B
 C. C. Crutchfield-B
 C. A. McQuirter-B
 P. F. Clarry-B
 J. F. Webb-B
 Sallie A. Well-B
 Cledis Cole-B
 Odel Bell-B
 Eulie Taylor-B

1908: August-----J. C. Paschall-B
(cont.) (cont.) M. A. Bedwell-B
Mrs. M. A. Bedwell-B
Mrs. Ima Shankle-B
Mrs. Jodie Taylor-B
Frank Olive-B
Mrs. Frank Olive-B
H. H. Miligan-B
Mrs. H. H. Miligan-B
A. G. Taylor-B
D. B. Dowdy-B
Mrs. D. B. Dowdy-B
B. E. Walton-B
J. H. Dowdy-B
Liss Moore-B
Oce Stewart-B
William Nickles-B
Jack Moore-B
Elbert Rawls-B
Edward Chatman-B
Ora Stewart-B
Pearl Moore-B
Nettie Whitlock-B
Willie Freeman-B
Lou Z. Penticost-B
Ruby Lamkins-B
Mrs. Jessie Olive-B
Yancy Morris-B
Mrs. Yancy Morris-B
Celia Blake-B
Mary Barber-B
Alma Hayes-B
Hester Loyde-B
Dalla Brown-B
Vera Farris-B
Maude Spicer-B
Mamie Cate-B
Era Miligan-B
Mrs. Jammie Hayes-B
Howard Penticost-B
Asa Emmerson-B
Mrs. Dollie Hawks-B
O. T. Lee-B
Herman Milliken-B
Sallie Pennington-B
Ruby Roberts-B
J. T. Nickols-B
Mrs. J. T. Nickols-B
Dougair Nickols-B
Mrs. Jessie Taylor-L
Mrs. Aileen Wiggins-L

1908: August-----Mrs. B. E. Walton-L
 (cont.) (cont.) Mrs. Jimmie Hays-L
 Era Puryear-L

WILLIAMSON RECORDS

September--Tate Ring-L

Will Roan-Lts)

\$ 1.50

December---Era Milken-L

Allen Morgan-L

Order S. Stephenson 2.00
 (Alt.)

Order S. Stephenson 2.00
 (Alt.)

Order S. Stephenson 1.00
 (Alt.)

Order S. Stephenson 1.50
 (Alt.)

Order S. Stephenson 7
 (Alt.)

Order S. Stephenson 1.50
 (Alt.)

Order S. Stephenson 1.50
 (Alt.)

Order S. Stephenson 1.50
 (Alt.)

Order S. Stephenson 1.50
 (Alt.)

Order S. Stephenson 1.50
 (Alt.)

Order S. Stephenson 1.50
 (Alt.)

Order S. Stephenson 1.50
 (Alt.)

Order S. Stephenson 1.50
 (Alt.)

Order S. Stephenson 1.50
 (Alt.)

APPENDIX III*

ASSOCIATIONAL RECORDS

(Delegates)		
1850:	Moses Todd, Oscar S. Stephenson (Harvey Collier, Alt.)	(Gifts) \$ 1.50
1851:	Moses Todd, Oscar S. Stephenson (Harvey Collier, Alt.)	2.00
1852:	Moses Todd, Harvey Collier (Oscar S. Stephenson, Alt.)	2.00
1853:	Moses Todd, Harvey Collier (Oscar S. Stephenson, Alt.)	1.00
1854:	Harvey Collier, Oscar S. Stephenson (Moses Todd, Alt.)	1.50
1855:	Moses Todd, Oscar S. Stephenson (Rev. James L. Morton, Alt.)	2.00
1856:	Rev. James L. Morton, Oscar S. Stephenson (Moses Todd, Alt.)	1.50
1857:	Rev. James L. Morton, Moses Todd (Levi Killebrew, Alt.)	1.50
1858:	Oscar S. Stephenson, J. Wade Barton (J. W. Todd, Alt.)	1.50
1859:	J. W. Todd, J. C. Jones (Oscar S. Stephenson, Alt.)	1.50
1860:	Moses Todd, J. Wade Barton (Oscar S. Stephenson, Alt.)	1.50
1861:	J. Wade Barton, Moses Todd (Levi Killebrew, Alt.)	1.50

* This appendix includes the list of delegates and the annual gifts from the Cottage Grove Church to the Western District Baptist Association from 1850 to 1908. The abbreviation Alt. indicates the Alternate delegate.

1862:	Moses Todd, J. A. Highfill (Joseph Jones, Alt.)	\$ 1.50
1863:	Moses Todd, J. Wade Barton (Joseph Jones, Alt.)	1.50
1864:	Moses Todd, J. Wade Barton (Joseph Jones, Alt.)	2.00
1865:	Moses Todd, J. Wade Barton (S. D. Scott)	2.00
1866:	J. Wade Barton, Moses Todd (Elder S. D. Scott, Alt.)	?
1867:	William Jones, Moses Todd, J. Wade Barton (J. J. Gwinn, Alt.)	2.00
1868:	Elder William Jones, J. J. Gwinn, J. W. Todd (S. D. Scott, Alt.)	?
1869:	Moses Todd, J. M. Todd, I. M. Wrinkle ?	2.00
1870:	W. L. Woolverton, James M. Todd, I. M. Wrinkle (Elder William Jones, Alt.)	?
1871:	J. W. Bell, William Jones, Bro. Gwinn (J. M. Todd, Alt.)	2.00
1872:	J. W. Bell, J. Wade Barton, Moses Todd (William Jones, Alt.)	2.50
1873:	J. W. Bell, William Jones, J. Wade Barton (J. M. Wrinkle, Alt.)	3.00
1874:	J. W. Bell, J. L. Bell, J. Wade Barton (William Jones, Alt.)	?
1875:	J. W. Bell, J. Wade Barton, B. D. Bowden (D. J. Bowden, Alt.)	?
1876:	J. Wade Barton, J. W. Bell, B. D. Bowden (D. J. Bowden, Alt.)	?
1877:	J. W. Bell, J. Wade Barton, J. W. Todd ?	4.00
1878:	J. W. Bell, J. M. Todd, D. J. Bowden (B. D. Bowden, Alt.)	?

1879:	J. W. Bell, D. J. Bowden, J. M. Todd (B. D. Bowden, Alt.)	\$ 3.00
1880:	J. W. Bell, B. D. Bowden, J. M. Todd (I. J. Alexander, Alt.)	?
1881:	J. W. Bell, D. J. Bowden, J. M. Todd (B. D. Bowden, Alt.)	?
1882:	J. W. Bell, W. B. Jones, J. M. Todd (D. J. Bowden, Alt.)	3.00
1883:	J. W. Bell, W. B. Jones, I. J. Alexander (J. Wade Barton, Alt.)	3.00
1884:	J. W. Bell, B. D. Bowden, J. N. Bell (E. R. Owen, Alt.)	2.00 ?
1885:	B. D. Bowden, J. M. Todd, W. M. Coffman (I. M. Wrinkle, Alt.)	2.50
1886:	J. M. Todd, B. D. Bowden, W. M. Doffman (E. D. Owen, Alt.)	2.00
1887:	No information available	2.00
1888:	W. M. Coffman, J. Wade Barton, B. D. Bowden (A. J. Bussell, Alt.)	2.00
1889:	Lynn Bowden, L. C. Alexander, W. M. Coffman (E. D. Alexander, Alt.)	2.00
1890:	J. Wade Barton, L. C. Alexander, Lynn Bowden (W. M. Coffman, Alt.)	2.00
1891:	L. C. Alexander, A. L. Wrinkle, G. T. Green (R. W. Phillips, Alt.)	2.00
1892:	A. L. Wrinkle, L. C. Wrinkle, J. D. Phillips (R. W. Phillips, Alt.)	2.00
1893:	J. Wade Barton, L. C. Alexander, A. L. Wrinkle (R. W. Phillips, Alt.)	2.00
1894:	L. C. Alexander, R. W. Phillips, J. E. Erwin (H. W. Sears, Alt.)	2.00
1895:	L. C. Alexander, R. W. Phillips, J. E. Erwin (A. L. Wrinkle, Alt.)	1.75
1896:	L. C. Alexander, H. W. Brisendine, Ed Dumas (Robert Phillips, Alt.)	2.00

1897:	H. W. Brisendine, D. B. Emerson, L. C. Alexander (Sidney Austin, Alt.)	\$ 1.75
1898:	L. C. Alexander, Sidney Austin, H. W. Brisendine (D. B. Emerson, Alt.)	?
1899:	E. C. Brisendine, M. E. Woolridge, Witt Coley (George W. Jones, Alt.)	1.50
1900:	Harding, Brisendine, Jones (Crutchfield, Alt.)	1.50
1901:	Harding, Brisendine, Dumas (Crutchfield, Alt.)	?
1902:	Joe Janes, Ed Dumas, Bruce Lamb (Sam Brisendine, Alt.)	2.00
1903:	R. A. Coley, J. E. Janes, Ed Dumas ?	2.00
1904:	Joe Janes, Witt Coley, W. E. Bowden (Jim Dumas, Alt.)	?
1905:	L. A. Simpson, R. A. Coley, Dick Bruce (D. P. Byars, Alt.)	2.00
1906:	M. L. Camp, G. W. Jones Will Strother (L. A. Simpson, Alt.)	?
1907:	R. A. Coley, L. A. Simpson, W. E. Barber (Rufe Lamb, Alt.)	?
1908:	J. E. Janes, D. D. Dumas, Chester M. Dirle (Rufe Lamb, Alt.)	2.00

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