

Sketches of Tennessee's Pioneer Baptist Preachers, 1919
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Being, Incidentally, a History of Baptist Beginnings in the Several Associations in the State

Containing, Particularly, Character and Life Sketches of the Standard – Bearers and Leaders of Our People

Commencing with the oldest communities of Baptists and covering substantially, but not in detail, a period of one hundred years (1775 – 1875) of Baptist effort and achievement in Tennessee; with photo illustrations and an Appendix of Curious Documents and Bits and Fragments of Church History.

Mary Gentry – b. ca. 1762, Albemarle, VA – d. ca. 1784, TN – md Mr. Drake md 1st ca. 1783, Dandridge, Jefferson, TN, - Marmaduke Kimbrough “Rev. Duke” – b. 19 November 1762, Rowan Co., NC – d. 21 September 1849, Jefferson Co., TN – s/o Bradley Kimbrough & Sarah Thompson - Buried: Family graveyard, Mossy Creek Iron Works, about two miles from Jefferson City, Jefferson, TN –

*See *Story of Marmaduke Kimbrough – Gentry*.

*See *Chapter 7: website: ajlambert.com*

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Pg. 285 – 292 & Chapter 7 of www.ajlambert.com

Duke Kimbrough (*Marmaduke Kimbrough*)

For fifty years pastor of the Danridge Baptist Church, Jefferson County, Tennessee.

On a tombstone in the old family graveyard, near Jefferson City, Tennessee, is this inscription: “Sacred to the memory of Rev. Duke Kimbrough: Born November 19, 1762; died September 21, 1849; aged 86 years, 10 months, 2 days.”

The Kimbroughs are a numerous and noted family. According to history, believed to be authentic and reliable, the first Kimbrough to come to this county was John, who came over from England in early colonial times. The original stock is from England in early colonial times. The original stock is said to be Irish, as the name Kimbrough would seem to indicate. The patriarch of the family in this county, the distinguished head of a noted line of preachers and a man of marked ability, was **Elder Duke Kimbrough**, the subject of this sketch. He was the third son of **Bradley Kimbrough, Sr.**, and was born in Rowan County, North Carolina, date of birth as above given. His mother, before marriage, was Miss **Sarah Thompson**, a daughter of a wealthy planter in South Carolina. At the age of 21 young Kimbrough left his native state and came to what is now Jefferson County, Tennessee. Here he met a Miss **Mary Gentry**, daughter of **Robert Gentry**, who lived near Dandridge, and owned a fine farm on the French Broad River.

Falling in love with Miss Gentry he sought and obtained her hand in marriage. His father-in-law not only gave him his daughter but also a handsome farm near Dandridge, where he lived for some years, and then bought a farm near Mossy Creek (now Jefferson City), where he lived the rest of his life. To this union was born one only child, a daughter, Mary who married William Chilton. His second wife was **Susan Hunter**, daughter of **Isaac Hunter** of Washington County, Tennessee, who became the mother of four sons, William, Isaac, John and Elisha. William

became the father of the widely known **Dr. I. B. Kimbrough**, formerly of Tennessee, later of Texas. His third wife was **Eunice Carlock**, daughter of **Christopher Carlock**, of near Dandridge. To this union were born nine children, six sons and three daughters. Of the issue of this marriage two of the sons, Bradley and Robert G., became distinguished Baptist preachers. Isaac Kimbrough, a son of the second marriage, also became a useful preacher. I also note, in passing, that Rev. I. N. Kimbrough, of Indiana, a great-grandnephew of Duke Kimbrough, is one of the strong men East Tennessee and Carson and Newman College have given to the world.

Of Elder Kimbrough's conversion we have no particular account, except that when the Lord made him a Christian the New Testament made him a Baptist, in spite of his inherited prejudices, which were strongly Episcopalian. Also the record of his baptism has perished. It is reasonably certain, however, that he joined what is now the Dandridge Baptist Church, by experience and baptism, soon after the organization of that church, the record of which is as follows: "The Church of Christ on French Broad River, constituted March 23, 1786, by Jonathan Mulkey and Isaac Barton, being twelve in number, with their names," etc. The church was constitute and for several years held its meetings at what was known as "Koonts' Meeting House," three miles northeast of Dandridge. Duke Kimbrough's name does not appear among the names of the constituent members; it is the twenty-fifth name on the membership roll; and, in July, 1793, he figures as a leading member of the church.

As soon as converted, like Saul of Tarsus, he began "straightway to preach Christ." He was called to ordination by the above church, "August, fourth Saturday, 1797," and Elders Richard Wood and Jesse Fears were requested by the church to act as a presbytery at the "following October meeting," the minute of which has perished. Elder Kimbrough became pastor of this old historic church in July of 1799, and continued pastor until his death, in September, 1849, a period of more than fifty years. As long as the old shepherd lived the church would have no other pastor, but when, by reason of the infirmities of age, Father Kimbrough was no longer able to attend his appointments regularly the church called first Elder James Kennon and afterwards Rev. William Rogers as "assistant pastor."



From 1803 to 1839 Elder Kimbrough was pastor of the Dumplin Church, Jefferson County. In the last year of this pastorate the church divided on the question of missions, conventions, and so forth, with protest and counter-protest. The pastor tried hard to hold the church together, and by his influence succeeded in postponing the split, but division was inevitable. The “antis” were in the majority. The missionary minority declared themselves “on constitutional principles to be the church,” and as such resolved to hold their meetings on a different day. They also said, in their minute of May, fourth Saturday, 1839: “Father Kimbrough has declined being pastor of either party, but believing him to be in principle with us we invite him still to be our pastor.” The invitation to remain pastor was declined, we cannot certainly say why, but most likely on account of existing complications, prejudices and “bad blood” incident to a church split, and with the hope, perhaps, that by a conservative and independent bearing he might be able to heal the breach in this particular church, and help to keep back other churches from a general denominational split. It is just to say, however, that, notwithstanding his conservative position, Elder Kimbrough was a missionary in sentiment, and affiliated with his missionary brethren.

Like most of the preachers of his day, Elder Kimbrough received little from the churches in the way of temporal support. One of his favorite saying was that the “Missionary Society,” from which he received his principal support, was his wife and children – a number of them stalwart and faithful sons.

Not only was he active and in demand as pastor; his labors in revival meetings were abundant and successful.

With great regularity, also, he attended the associational gatherings of the churches, and was often otherwise in the councils of his brethren. He seems to have been a popular preacher on such occasions, often preaching the introductory or other sermons.

“In the pulpit he was remarkable for earnestness, gravity, and unpretending dignity of manner.” He had a deep, full voice, and was a natural orator. Years ago I visited the home of old Uncle Peter Bryan, then an octogenarian, and sat spell-bound for hours, listening to his reminiscent descriptions and his boyhood recollections of Elder Duke Kimbrough. He described him as having a “remarkable voice” and great “natural ability” as a speaker, expressing it as his “opinion” that if “Duke Kimbrough had been educated he would have been one of the greatest pulpit orators in the State of Tennessee.” He told me also about his singing; how he loved to sing the songs of Zion, in family devotions as well as in the church; how happy he would sometimes get when singing; and how his voice, when singing, was as “clear as a girl’s,” even when it had become tremulous with age.

Practically, Elder Kimbrough was a man of only two books – Bible and hymn-book. These he kept with him and constantly used. To young ministers; especially, he was a “living concordance to the Scriptures.”

In his old age the spirit of prophecy seems to have come upon Elder Kimbrough, and at times he seems to have had the vision of a seer. A notable instance is related by one of his sons and published in Borum’s “Sketches.” The father, when about 70 years of age, had a serious spell of sickness, and was given up to die. During this sickness he had uncommon travail of soul, and predicted a glorious and widespread revival of religion, through which he would be permitted to live and preach, and in which his children would be converted. In confident anticipation of this event he would get happy and say: “The Lord has cut me down with one hand and raised me up with the other.” Beginning to recover from his sickness he said to his wife, “Bring me my staff.” She told him he could not walk; but he was sure “the Lord had sent his angel to bid him get up

and walk, and he would obey the Master.” He arose, therefore, and walked across the room, leaning upon his staff. He regained his strength and lived to see the “glorious revival” and preach through it, witnessing the conversion and baptism of a number of his children.

Following is the tribute of the Dandridge Church to the man who had been their shepherd for fifty years: “the piety and Christian character of Father Kimbrough were unsurpassed. He retained his mind to the last, and manifested a firm and unshaken faith in the Son of God. He felt that all was right. He had no doubts. His dying testimony was, “Grace! Grace! It’s all of grace!” And with those triumphant words upon his lips and a farewell tear in his eye, he passed without a groan beyond the veil, where, face to face, he could behold Him whom he had loved and preached for more than fifty years.” (From the Tennessee Baptist.)

ANECDOTES OF DUKE KIMBROUGH

1. In his old age Elder Kimbrough was quite bald, and was accustomed, when sitting in the meeting-house, to wear a cap or handkerchief on his head, for comfort. This he sometimes kept on even in the pulpit, till ready to begin the service. There happened, occasionally, to be in the congregation a certain brother who had a particular weakness in wanting to be recognized as a fell-fledged preacher. He was a great admirer of Elder Kimbrough, and would have given his head, almost, for the honor of sitting with the old Elder in the pulpit. At length the coveted invitation was given and accepted. The unsophisticated brother had observed the peculiar headgear of the distinguished pastor, and supposing it to be the proper style for the pulpit, pulled out his pocket handkerchief, bandaged his head, and took his seat in the pulpit, to the great amusement of the congregation. My authority for this incident is the lamented Robert Reedy Bryan, erstwhile professor in Mossy Creek College, and principal founder of the same – a truthful man. He used frequently to relate the circumstance, affirming that he actually witnessed the occurrence.
2. As illustrating the confidence which worldlings and outsiders generally had in Elder Kimbrough’s religion, take the following: At a certain place a Presbyterian meeting was in progress. A proposition was made to a worlding, who was a Methodist by prejudice, to go to the meeting, and “get religion.” “No”, said the worlding, “that is no place for me. Those fellows won’t do. But if they will let Preacher Kimbrough examine them and he says they have got religion, I will take stock in the meeting.”
3. A peculiarity of Elder Kimbrough’s preaching was a sudden and unexpected pause in his discourse. The use of this surprise power, like the sudden stopping of a train of cars, was sometimes very effective. On one occasion, however, the surprise came the other way. The preacher was urging upon his members the importance of looking after their religion – “fencing it up” – and with the exclamatory statement that “circumstances alter cases,” came to a sudden pause. “Yes,” broke in one of the sisters, “that’s what I told John! I told him if he planted corn before he built the fence the hogs would root it up – and they did.”
4. In one of Elder Kimbrough’s churches was a crooked preacher who had been excluded from the church a number of times, but, on making his confession, had been restored. Finally the church refused to restore him. What could he do? Changing his tactics, he came before the church with a “new” experience, asking that he be received for baptism. He was deceived before; now he is all right. A motion was made to receive him and seconded. Elder Kimbrough, whose head had been hanging pretty low, straightened himself up in the moderator’s chair, and said: “Brethren, it is my duty as your moderator to put the question to a vote. But I have no confidence in him. All who are in favor of receiving him say, ‘I’. Nobody responded. The meeting closed and the congregation dismissed, the tricky preacher came out to where the old pastor was ready to mount his horse, and asked to be prayed for. “all right,” said the Elder, “let us pray.” The pastor knelt on one side of the stump and the

hypocrite on the other, and the petition was, “Lord, if this man has religion, give me faith to believe it. If he has none, give it to him. Amen.” (R. Newman, in Borum’s Sketches.)

Isaac Kimbrough

Pg. 292 – 293 * See Chapter: 7 of www.ajlambert.com

Isaac, second son of **Elder Duke Kimbrough** by his second wife, a Miss **Susan Hunter** before her marriage, a daughter of **Isaac Hunter**, of Washington County, Tennessee was born in Jefferson County, Tennessee, April 26, 1788. He made a profession of religion at the age of fourteen and, uniting with the French Broad (now the Dandridge) Baptist Church, was baptized, most likely, by his father, Elder Duke Kimbrough, who at the time was pastor of the church. Isaac Kimbrough served the church as clerk and deacon for a number of year and, as shown by the minutes, was often appointed on committees to “wait on” delinquent and erring members. On Monday following the date of a regular meeting day, “March, fourth Saturday, 1842,” invited ministerial brethren being present, to begin a “protracted meeting,” the church “concluded to have Brother Isaac Kimbrough ordained, which was done by the following presbytery, day and date as above: Duke Kimbrough, John Lockhart, Caswell Tipton, Robert G. Kimbrough.” He continued a member of the Dandridge Church for some years after his ordination, frequently serving the church as a supply pastor and as acting “moderator” in the absence of his father, the old pastor now nearing the termination of a fifty years’ pastorate of the church. In 1849 he moved to Polk County, where he organized a church on his own farm, to which he ministered efficiently for a number of years. Belonging to a family of preachers and living in an atmosphere favorable to the development of preaching tendencies, it might be considered natural, in a sense, that he should become a preacher. In addition to this his brethren put him forward, encouraged and used him, until the matter of preaching providentially assumed in his mind the form and character of duty and a divine call to the ministry. He entered formally into the ministry late in life, with little equipment except native ability and great familiarity with the Word of God. In his preaching he quoted, it is said, a great deal of Scripture, comparing Scripture with Scripture, and so making his preaching strictly biblical. He was a “living concordance” to the Scriptures.

He rode one year as a missionary of the Tennessee Association, preached to many churches, and did good work for the Lord and the Baptists, but his most lasting work, perhaps, was the foundation work which he did in the community where he was brought up and the church of which he first became a member.

He was married, in young manhood, to Miss **Mary Randolph**, a daughter, I assume, of **James Randolph**, a constituent member of the Danridge Church, and a sister of Henry Randolph, who became a Baptist preacher of ability, joining his fortunes, in 1839, with those of the old school or so-called “Primitive Baptist.”

Isaac Kimbrough reared a large family of well-to-do children, and has at least one grandson who is a preacher, Isaac Z. Kimbrough, who has held good pastorates in Tennessee, Arkansas and other states.

Bradley Kimbrough

Pgs. 294 – 297

In the following sketch I follow Borum Catheart, and an obituary notice in the Tennessee Baptist (September 22, 1849), signed “W.R.,” which I take to be William Rogers, the first president of

Mossy Creek College. The facts thus gleaned and re-stated as compactly as possible will form the outline history of one of the largest and most interesting figures in the early history of Tennessee Baptist.

Bradley Kimbrough was born November 3, 1799, in Jefferson County, Tennessee, three miles from Mossy Creek (now Jefferson City). He was the oldest son of Elder Duke Kimbrough and his third wife, Eunice (Carlock) Kimbrough, of near Dandridge. He was born and reared on a farm. His father being a preacher, and away from home most of the time, and his four older brothers having married or gone to the War of 1812, was up against the necessity of taking the lead on the farm and supporting the family. This circumstance interfered with his getting an education. Nevertheless, when it was possible for him to be spared from the farm, he attended the neighborhood schools, and was an apt scholar. His father also sent him three months to a grammar school, five miles from home, then three months to the Dandridge Academy, and next to the Columbian Academy, where he made considerable attainments in science and philosophy, and studied Latin. This ended his schooling; but he and his brothers read and studied at home, and attended debating societies far and near, always taking a part.

In 1822 he commenced reading law with Judge Jacob Peck, who was then on the supreme bench with Haywood and White. Two years later the supreme court, which sat at Rogersville, gave him license to practice. He then located at Madisonville, where he practiced as a leading attorney for ten years.

As a representative of Monroe County, in 1834, he was a member of the State Convention which remodeled the Constitution of the State of Tennessee. The following year he refused to be a candidate for the legislature, choosing rather to be a preacher of the gospel, and was accordingly ordained to the ministry by the Madisonville Church in the year 1835. His first experience in preaching was a delightful seven months' missionary tour through Georgia and into South Carolina, preaching to churches and collecting his support as he went from place to place, making his circuit around through Hot Springs, North Carolina, to his father's home in Jefferson County, Tennessee, thence to Madisonville.

In December, 1826, he received an appointment as missionary under the direction of the Board of the Tennessee, or Middle Tennessee, Convention, operating mostly in Middle Tennessee and North Alabama. He continued two years in this work, with great opposition from brethren who did not much believe in missions, and were particularly opposed to conventions and general associations. However, he sowed the good seed, introduced the leaven of missions in the churches, created disturbance, excited discussion, aroused opposition, caused division, all of which was better than stagnation.

August 31, 1837, he was married to **Martha H. Whitaker**, a daughter of Deacon **John J. Whitaker**, of Mulberry, Lincoln County, Tennessee, a pillar of the Mulberry Baptist Church, and a liberal supporter of the Lord's cause. To this union were born five children, all daughters.

For the next few years he was pastor of churches. He served the church in Columbia twice a month for two years, giving one-fourth of his time to the Rutherford Creek Church, six miles north of Columbia, and the rest of the time to an interest in a school-house near his home, where a house of worship was afterwards built, as a result of his labors in connection with others. Not being able to give his whole time to the ministry here, for lack of support, he sold his farm and moved his family to Mulberry. His labors with this church and in the country round about, were blessed of the Lord. With the aid of other brethren he constituted a church at McMinnville,

another at Winchester, another in Cornersville, and still another six miles from Shelbyville. His labors were extensive and abundantly blessed.

In 1845 an educational mass-meeting was held near Murfreesboro, for the purpose of taking steps toward the endowment of Union University. The society voted to endow the university with fifty thousand dollars, and appointed a committee to secure an agent to raise the money. The committee employed Elder Kimbrough, who gave himself unreservedly to the work, going on horseback from church to church and from house to house, completing the proposed endowment in less than two years. He now gave himself for a time to evangelistic work, holding meetings here and there, giving special attention to weak churches. But the Domestic Missionary board at Marion, Alabama, offering him work, he accepted an appointment as missionary and served the board one year. He was solicited to serve the board at Marion longer, but having offers at the same time from the Bible Board and Union University, he chose the harder job, collecting the money due on bonds that had been given to endow the university. Railroads in this county in Kimbrough's day were few and far between and riding thousands of miles on horseback, along unbeaten roads through dismal wilds, was no easy job. It took moral courage and physical energy and endurance.

In the course of his ministry Elder Kimbrough witnessed many remarkable religious revivals, and the Lord gave him many seals to his ministry.

He assisted in the organization of Liberty Association, was a member of the body thirty-eight years, and several years its moderator. He was also the honored president of the General Association or Convention of Middle Tennessee and North Alabama.

Elder Kimbrough had ministerial gifts of a high order, and they were wholly consecrated. He also had good native ability and a legally trained mind. All these were assets which guaranteed his success in whatever he undertook. He closed his earthly labors June 30, 1874, "falling on sleep" in Jesus the Lord, whom he had faithfully served.

Elder Bradley Kimbrough was a "bright and shining light in our beloved Zion. He had a stately form and a benignant face. He was courageous, but tender and humble as a child. He was quick and impulsive, reached his conclusions, at times, by intuition rather than by reason, but his conclusions were generally correct. He had a zeal for the Lord's work that knew no discouragement."

Robert G. Kimbrough – pg. 297

Robert G., the youngest son of Elder Duke Kimbrough, by his third wife, Eunice (Carlock) Kimbrough, a daughter of Christopher Carlock, was born July 24, 1806, in Jefferson County, Tennessee. Young Kimbrough was brought up to farm-life, with such educational advantages as a preacher's son would have in the community where he was brought up, one hundred years ago. He tutored some in a Methodist college at New Market, having what studies he could carry in the meantime, but, finding there were objections to having a Baptist teach in the school, he resigned his position, at the same time ending his college days. The rest of his education he dug out at home and by dint of hard study in the school of life and experience. His first serious religious impressions were on this wise: His oldest brother, William (a half-brother), many years his senior, was on a visit to his father's home. He had just made a profession of religion and was all aglow with his new-found hope. By request of his father, he told before the entire family his Christian experience, which made a deep impression upon Robert. At the same time he heard Elijah Rogers preach "one of his soul-stirring sermons, which greatly increased his interest on the

subject of religion.” He stifled his convictions, however, and went on in his unbelief and indecision till he came under the influence of a great revival, at the age of twenty-five, when he fully resolved to “seek the Lord.” The second Saturday in June, the darkest and brightest day of his life, the light of God shined into his darkened soul. The following Saturday he was approved for baptism, and the next day was baptized by Elder Augustine Bowers into the fellowship of the Mill Spring Church, Jefferson County, Tennessee, with twelve other converts. Standing on the bank of the river, witnessing the scene, was a vast throng of people, and his venerable old father, whose deep-toned, solemn “Amen” to each immersion, made the occasion memorable. After some months of prayerful study and struggle of mind with reference to a call to preach, his impressions ripened into a decision, and he answered, “Here am I: send me.” He was licensed to preach, December, the first Saturday, 1833; and at the July meeting (first Saturday), 1836, he was ordained to the full work of the ministry, by a presbytery consisting of Elders Duke Kimbrough, John Lockart, Augustine Bowers, and James Kennon.

January 23, 1836, he was married to Lemira A. Wheeler, a daughter of Thomas and Elizabeth Wheeler, of Campbell County, near Jacksboro, Tennessee. They had seven children, four of them dying in infancy, two sons and a daughter living to become members of a Baptist church.

Elder Kimbrough’s first efforts at preaching were in Jefferson County. But it was not long till he received an appointment, with Brother J. S. Coram, from the East Tennessee General Association, to do mission work and to preach to the destitute in the counties of upper East Tennessee. After another year or two these brethren were appointed by the same body to do similar work. He then left his native county, moving to Jacksboro, the county seat of Campbell County, where he taught for one year in the County Academy, and organized a Baptist church, which he served as pastor in connection with a small interest at Fincastle, a nearby village, where the anti-mission influence had reduced the church to a membership of five. Both these churches were built up and strengthened by his ministry, and he had the pleasure of baptizing something like a hundred persons during his one year’s stay in the county, some of them being Methodists. In 1844 he moved to Knox County, and became pastor of two large country churches. Third Creek and Beaver Ridge. The last mentioned was the largest church in the Tennessee Association, having a membership in 1846 (Benedict) of 258; third Creek being the third largest, with a membership of 226. These churches were blessed under his ministry, Beaver Ridge especially, receiving large accessions to her membership. In 1847 he accepted a commission to be an assistant to his brother, Bradley Kimbrough, in raising money to endow Union University, at Murfreesboro. He continued in this work about fourteen months, laboring mostly in East Tennessee and North Alabama. At one church he told the people the Baptists were wanting \$50,000 for Christian and ministerial education, whereupon an anti-mission and anti-education preacher said: “I have now found where the missionaries’ bank is; Bob Kimbrough has let the cat out of the wallet.”

In 1848 he moved to Marshall County, locating at Cornersville, where he spent most of his remaining days, when not away from home on a missionary tour. He now accepted an agency under the appointment of the Foreign Mission Board, and was the first agent the board ever appointed for Tennessee and North Alabama. He traveled over most of this territory, generally on horseback making his own appointments, preaching not only in churches but in schoolhouses, private houses, in groves, anywhere, in order that he might reach the people with his message. His desire was to preach the gospel to sinners wherever he might find them, and to stimulate the churches to send the gospel where it was not, that the whole world might hear it. Many churches and individuals responded to his appeals for money; some had their suspicious and doubts, and turned a cold shoulder. During his missionary operations he had frequent opportunities to help his preaching brethren in protracted meetings, in which line of work he had many seals to his ministry. After eleven years of seed-sowing, and a little reaping, in the foreign mission work, he

returned to the pastorate, taking charge of the Mount Zion and Marshall churches. In 1868 he traveled as agent for the Home Mission Board. By request of the General Association he moved to Murfreesboro, and taught a class of young ministers for two years. In 1872 he took charge of the Marion Church, in Cannon County, witnessing a goodly number of additions to the church. In January of the following year he moved back to his farm in Marshall County, where he finished his course, dying peacefully at his residence, near Mars Hill, on the 22nd day of July, 1879, age 73 years.

“Resolved, That our church has lost a devout and earnest member, the community a good citizen, and the cause of Christ a zealous and able minister of the gospel; that we regard Brother Kimbrough as a Bible Christian, sound in his doctrinal sentiments, unswerving in his defense of the gospel, etc. Done by order of his church.” Signed by the moderator and clerk.

Anecdotes.

1. During on of his missionary campaigns with Brother Coram, in Roane Couty, as they were on a still hunt for Baptists they changed, one day, to meet up with a gentleman, to whom they made known their business. He informed them that the lady of the house near by was a missionary Baptist. They rode at once to the house, and at first found no one within, but soon they heard some one coming down stairs, who proved to be the lady of the house. They told her who they were, that they were Missionary Baptist preachers. She immediately wept profusely, at which they were greatly surprised, but, calming herself, she told them that when she heard them enter the house she was upstairs on her knees praying to the Lord to send Missionary Baptist preachers to her house, and that when she found two already in her house her prayers were answered sooner than she expected, and she couldn't help but weep. The husband was an elder in the Cumberland Presbyterian church, but was glad to help arrange for a meeting in an old house near by. He took the preachers as his guests and the meeting began and continued for some days. One evening, when the man of the house was out, Brother Kimbrough, feeling a little mischievous, bantered Brother Coram “All right,” said Coram humoring the joke and himself wanting some fun. Said Kimbrough to Coram: “I suppose, sir, you are a Baptist preacher?” He acknowledged that he was. Then said Kimbrough: ‘For the time being I am a Presbyterian preacher, and I attack you on your strange doctrine, that only immersion is Scriptural baptism, your opposition to the baptism of infants, and you close communion.” So the argument began, but as Coram was pressing the argument and forcing his opponent, not unexpectedly, to surrender one position after another, the man of the house came in, and seemed to want to help Brother Kimbrough to stand his ground; in a little while, however, he turned the matter over to the combatants, to knock it our in their own way. Kimbrough got his whipping all right, and enjoyed it immensely, as did also the woman of the house.
2. As Elder Kimbrough was traveling in Alabama, in the interests of Union university, he met up with a man by the name of Kitchen, and inquired of him the way to Elder Roach's. Mr. Kitchen was an enthusiastic Whig, and was more interested in politics than religion. So his first question to brother Kimbrough was, “Where are you from?” and his second, “Whom are you for-how do you vote?” Dodging a little, and wishing to give the conversation a turn, Elder Kimbrough replied: “I am for the Lord Jesus Christ; he is my candidate. I think we all might be for him. Are you a Christian?” “Yes, sir.” “Are you a preacher?” “Yes, sir.” “Well, light and come in. I just left the table; there is plenty, and you must eat.” Brother Kimbrough insisted on being directed to Elder Roach's, but Mr. Kitchen positively refused to give him directions till he should “eat,” insisting that it was his custom to “feed the preacher.” He introduced the preacher to “the old woman,” his wife, who would not hear to his eating a common dinner with the family, but directed him to a chair till she could make suitable preparations, saying: “I will not set the like of this before a preacher. I was raised to feed the

preachers, and I glory in it. Take a chair. I will boil the coffee, sir.” The dinner being replenished with coffee and other “extras,” Elder Kimbrough sat down to a hearty meal. While he was eating Mr. Kitchen talked and walked around the table, expressing his gratification, wondering at the admiring the physical “build” of the preacher, for he was “put up from the ground.” The dinner finished, Elder Kimbrough got his directions to Preacher Roach’s, and went on his way rejoicing.



I.B. Kimbrough

Isaac Barton Kimbrough, namesake of Elder Isaac Barton, of pioneer fame, was born near Madisonville, Monroe County, Tennessee, February 10, 1826. His parents were William and Elizabeth (Molder) Kimbrough, of Jefferson County, Tennessee. He was the seventh in a family of eight children. He had three uncles who were Baptist preachers of distinction and ability. His grandfather, Elder Duke Kimbrough, was among the early settlers of the new country, was nearly sixty years a minister and fifty years pastor of French Broad (now the Dandridge) Church. Young Kimbrough was left an orphan at the tender age of seven, and grew up without a father’s counsel or a mother’s care. Thus early in life became to him a battle and a struggle. He was brought up on a farm, with few advantages of an education. July 29, 1847, at the age of twenty-one, he was married to Miss Mary J. Henderson, of his native county. At this time he could scarcely read intelligently. At the age of twenty-four he was converted, and with the call to Christ there came a call to preach his gospel. He was now awakened to a sense of the imperative need of an education and, with both hands and an iron will, he took hold of the double task of making a living for “ween and wife” and preparing himself to preach. By “sweat of brow: by day he made the “living” and by sweat of brain by night (mostly by the light of a torch) he made an acquaintance with books, acquired a knowledge of the Bible and dug into the deep mysteries of theology.

He united with the Madisonville Church in the spring of 1850, and was baptized by Elder A. Stapp. He was ordained by Shady Grove Church in the autumn of 1852, Elders H. C. Cooke and T. J. Russell acting as a presbytery. For two years he served as missionary and evangelist in Monroe County, Tennessee, North Carolina and North Georgia. He then became pastor, and served at different times the following churches: Spring Creek, Big Creek, New Hopewell, Tellico, Madisonville, Hopewell, Sweetwater, Mount Harmony, Eastanallee, Salem, Union, Fork Creek, and possibly other churches. At this early period of his life, as missionary and pastor, he baptized into the fellowship of Baptist churches more than 1,000 persons, who were converted under his ministry, constituted eight new churches, and afterwards had the pleasure of seeing several of his converts become Baptist preachers.

In 1873 he accepted an appointment as missionary under the auspices of the General Association of East Tennessee; his two years’ work under the direction of the Mission Board, stimulating, enlisting, collecting, put missions among East Tennessee Baptist on higher ground.

In 1875 he moved his family to Mossy Creek, putting some of them in college, while he himself undertook the herculean task, as financial agent of the college, of raising money with which to provide larger and better quarters for the overflowing school. Just how many thousand dollars, in cash and bonds, he raised for the college cannot be accurately stated, since the college records were burned in the disastrous fire of December 13, 1916, which destroyed our administration building; but a sum not less than from \$16,000 to \$18,000, funds sufficient to secure the purchase of the Major Mountcastle property, which was used for classroom purposes for several years, then becoming Carson hall, a dormitory for boys, at present belonging to Jefferson City, and used for a

public school building. So active, insistent, persistent and ubiquitous was I.B. Kimbrough as a financial agent and moneygetter, with his eye on every Baptist pocketbook, to collect the Lord's dues, that Dr. T. T. Eaton, then pastor at Chattanooga, was more than once heard to say of him: "When Kimbrough dies it will have to be said of him, that the beggar died also."

I.B. Kimbrough was a good parliamentarian, knowing well how to handle a deliberative body. He was ten years moderator of the Sweetwater Association and three years president of the East Tennessee General Association. He was active in the organization of the Baptist State Convention. He was one of the vice-presidents of the Convention, and ever labored for the unification of Tennessee Baptists in co-operative effort. He was one of a committee appointed by the Convention to investigate and report on a suitable location for the Southwestern Baptist University, locating it at Jackson.

Not the least of his services to the Baptists was that which he rendered as their standard bearer in several public discussions, a dozen, perhaps, with Pedit-baptists, Campbellites and Adventists. He was a skilled debater, an able defender of the Baptist position. He carried the standard with a steady nerve, never lowering the flag, and the cause of truth never suffered in his hands. His premises were like the impregnable rock of Holy Scripture upon which they were laid, his arguments were logic linked and strong, his quotation of Scripture was a steady fire upon his opponent, his sarcasm was merciless, withering, unrelenting. It has been said that not one of his opponents ever remained on the ground to fight to a finish all the questions scheduled for discussion, but invariably cut short the allotted time for debate, quitting the field before the battle had been joined on all the questions at issue.

Elder Kimbrough was a Fullerite in theology, holding to Andrew Fuller's theory of the Atonement. He read with delight and profit Abraham Booth's "Reign of Grace." He was a great admirer of J. R. Graves, and was a "Landmarker" in faith and practice.

His greatest endowments were a strong intellect and a soul of fire. Next to these were a wonderful physique and a powerful voice. His usual weight was 230 pounds; height, five feet, ten inches; hair, a chestnut brown; eyes, a deep blue; skin, fair; complexion, florid. He was a giant in strength. His will was imperious, his imagination lofty at times and entrancing. Few men were more positive in their convictions, few, if any, had more decision of character or had more energy and perseverance. He was at times eccentric in manner, and sometimes rough. His peculiar oddities of expression were not always pleasing. He was educated but not polished, was a diamond, but a diamond in the rough. I suppose it would have been impossible to polish him. While his outstanding characteristic was rugged strength, still he combined with the a tenderness that was eloquent, at times, with feelings of suppressed emotion, and strangely touching. In one sense he was sui generis, a genius of his own order, distinctly original and unique, without a duplicate, standing apart, and a law unto himself. In another sense he was a fellow servant and a brother, a typical mountaineer, an East Tennessean, "to the manner born," and proud of the fact that he had been born and reared and had spent his life, to quote one of his favorite expressions, "among the vine-clad hills and rock-ribbed mountains God's county, bounded by the Cumberland range on the north, which is the backbone of the world, and the Alleghenies on the south, a country including East Tennessee, the Switzerland of America." His strength was as the strength of the mountains under whose shadows he lived; his eloquence as the dashing streams and swiftly-flowing rivers of his native land, untutored, untrained, but having in it spontaneous, original and, sometimes, irresistible force.

As illustrating the more winsome and appealing side of his nature and as showing what grace can do in subduing, softening and refining the untamed nature of man, the writer distinctly recalls an

experience of his schoolboy days. A protracted meeting was in progress. Elder Kimbrough, having come in from his travels and labors to take some needed rest, was out at the meeting, and it was at night. The war-worn veteran got up to talk. The spirit of exhortation came upon him with great power, and he was supremely happy. With walking stick in hand he walked the floor with as much liberty and ease as if he had been at home in the presence of his own family, talking to us eloquently of heaven, our future home. Gradually bringing his powers of imagination into play he carried us all, a vast throng, up with him through the gates into the city and had us walking with him on the streets of gold and looking with him upon the jasper walls. He introduced us to the heavenly company and to the Savior himself. It was a marriage feast, and many guests were coming in. But the time came when the door must be closed, and some who had been invited would be shut out and, hearing the words, "too late, you cannot enter now," would go away disappointed and lamenting their sad fate. It was a feat of sacred and really inspired eloquence, possible only to a gifted orator, under the enthralling power of the Holy Ghost, and the effect was electrically thrilling throughout the entire audience.

In the year 1876, perhaps, Carson College, in recognition of his ability and merit, conferred upon him the honorary title, Doctor of Divinity.

In 1879 Dr. Kimbrough moved with his family to Texas, settling in Collin County. He was pastor at McKinney, and organized several new churches in the surrounding territory. Later, he was pastor at Westherford, Plano, Henrietta and Bowie, Texas. In 1890, following his missionary and pioneer impulse, he went to a remote unorganized district of the extreme western part of Texas. Here he organized many small churches at ranches, under trees (where trees could be found), and in other destitute places, throughout a large and sparsely settled section, since organized into counties and developed into a magnificent country. Under his ministry was built at Plain View the first church house within a radius of a hundred miles of that center. That section has since developed into a Baptist stronghold, one of the denominational colleges being located in its center. In Texas, as in Tennessee, he was imbued with the missionary and pioneer spirit, labored for harmonious and organized denominational effort in carrying out the great commission, was active and outspoken for local and state-wide prohibition of the liquor traffic, and was not afraid to meet a religious opponent in public discussion. When the time came for him to put off his war harness and lay his armor by he was with one of his daughters at Barstow, in the Pecos River country. He had been preaching fifty-two years, and tired and wanted to rest. His mind wandered at times, but his faith in God was unflinching. He died as he had lived, in the triumph of an overcoming faith, passing to his reward December 21, 1902. He was buried at Plano, Texas, beside his companion, who had preceded him to their new home above. On the tombstone of the veteran soldier is the inscription: "He fought the good fight, he kept the faith." The epitaph of his companion in early days reads, by her own request: "A sinner saved by grace."

Out of a large family five are still living, three sons and two daughters, all living in Texas and all making good, I am told, in their several vocations.

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Pg. 43

CENTENNIAL JOURNAL, the oldest Record in Jefferson County, political or ecclesiastical, is the quaint church record book of the Church of Christ on the French Broad River (now the First Baptist Church of Dandridge). This rare artifact consists of 16 large pages between two hand-hewn pine boards bound together with thin bearskin thongs. The first page, in graceful goose quill penmanship states, "French Broad River Church, Charles Gentry, Clerk, constituted March

25, 1786 by Jonathan Mulkey and Isaac Barton. Being twelve in number, with their names, viz.: Michael Coons, James Randolph, Henry Haggard, John Fryder, Wesley White, Charles Gentry, Rebecca Coons, Margaret Smith, Sarah Fryder, Dolly Haggard, Tabitha Gentry, Elizabeth Gentry.”

It is interesting to note that one column referred to men and the other to women, with an equal number of each. Following the list of members is a simple statement: “Concluded that our church meeting be the first Saturday in every month, Charles Gentry, Appointed Clerk.”

The first church building was a log house, located at the mouth of Coons Creek, two and one-half miles east of Dandridge. Glenn A. Toomey, in his book, describes the founding of this church. He states that he believes Isaac Barton was the pastor for the first ten years. By May 1, 1796, when Rev. James Fears became its second Pastor, the membership had grown from 12 to 42. A year later Bro. Duke Kimbrough was ordained a preacher by Rev. Barton and Rev. Fears. When John Cate of Dumplin petitioned the Lower French Broad River Baptist Church (as it was then called) to establish a church of the same faith in Dumplin, Rev. Duke Kimbrough, Robert Gentry, Joseph Witt and Thomas Snelson organized it on July 29, 1797. Rev. Kimbrough was elected its first pastor.

In 1799, Rev. Duke Kimbrough was elected pastor of the Lower French Broad River Baptist Church and remained pastor until 1859. This spiritual giant pastored five Jefferson County churches for a total of 175 years. He was the pastor of two to four churches at the same time. Under his leadership, in 1845 the congregation moved from Coons Creek to a new location on Church Street in Dandridge. That building was destroyed by fire in 1913 but the pulpit was saved and is in the prayer room of the present building.

Within 90 days after the fire in 1913, the third Dandridge Baptist Church building was dedicated debt-free. Rev. Kimbrough, while preaching at Mill Springs Church, suggested that Mossy Creek Baptist Academy be organized by the Nolichucky Baptist Association to train young preachers in the art of preaching. Fifteen years later, in 1849, what is now Carson-Newman College had its organizational meeting at this Dandridge Baptist Church building. In 1958 the name of the church was changed to The First Baptist Church of Dandridge.

On April 3, 1983 the first service was conducted in the new one million dollar facility on Highway 92. The stained glass windows and church bell from the third building, and the old pulpit which was saved from the second building, were moved to the new building, giving historic continuity.

Sketches of Tennessee's Pioneer Baptist Preachers, 1919 By J. J. Burnett, D. D.
ISBN: 0-932807-11-9 - pgs. 411 & 412.

Henry Randolph:

In the cemetery of the old Friendship Church, Jefferson County, Tennessee, is a tombstone bearing this inscription: "Scared to the memory of the Reverend Henry Randolph, pastor of the Primitive Baptist Church at Friendship; born 4 July 1778; died 15 February 1849. This tribute of affection (the monument) was erected to his memory by his friends." He was born in what is now Jefferson County, Tennessee - what was then Washington County, North Carolina. He was a son of **James Randolph**, whose name occupies the second place in a list of the "twelve constituent members" (1786) of the French Broad, or Dandridge Church. The same year also this same James Randolph was a representative of his church (Lower French Broad) in the organization of

the Holston Association. The writer has made diligent but unsuccessful search for the old "family Bible," which, if it could be found, would doubtless give something of the genealogy of the Randolphs we should like to know. In the absence of family records I give this statement of Brother Wilson C. Witt, now more than 100 years old, who knew Elder Randolph well and whose information and recollection are remarkable: "Henry Randolph was a son of James Randolph, and had a son James, who was the father of Judge James H. Randolph, late of Newport, Cocke County." According to this bit of genealogy, which is entirely trustworthy, the subject of our sketch was the grandfather of Judge Randolph, the great-grandfather of Mrs. Ben D. Jones, of Newport, and the great-great-grandfather of the wives of ex-Governor B. W. Hooper and James R. Stokely, of Newport, all of them Baptists.

The fourth Saturday in April, 1814, Henry Randolph was received by "experience" for baptism and membership in the French Broad (now the Dandridge) church. The fourth Saturday in August, 1817, he was "liberated" by the church and encouraged to exercise his ministerial gifts. In 1818 he was a messenger of his church to the Tennessee Association. The fourth Saturday in December of the same year the church granted him a "letter of dismission," and the following year we find him in attendance upon the Association as a "messenger of Friendship Church." The second Saturday in October, 1819, Friendship Church called him to the "improvement of his gift," and the first Saturday in March, 1823, he was "ordained" to the full work of the ministry, Elders Caleb Witt, Isaac Barton and William Wood acting as the ordaining council. He was a messenger of Friendship Church to the Tennessee Association some twelve to fifteen years, rarely missing a meeting. he represented Friendship Church in the Nolachucky Association from 1834 to 1839, when the Association (meeting with Concord Church, Greene County) divided. In the division Elders Henry Randolph and Pleasant A. Witt, with about one-third of the constituency of the Association, withdrew from the body, left the house where the body was in session, and went to the grove, where they organized, "on the fourth Friday in September, 1839," what they called "the Old School Nolachucky Baptist association," with **Henry Randolph**, Moderator, and Pleasant A. Witt, Clerk.. In separating from their missionary brethren they declared in strong terms "non-fellowship for the societies and institutions of the day." It is said that Elder Randolph, as he went out of the house, with his company of adherents, stopped at the door, turned around, and, putting his hand upon the door-facing, said in the hearing of all in the house: "Whichever side is right will live and prosper; the side that is wrong will go down."

Glancing over the minutes of the Nolachucky for 1836 I see that the introductory sermon was preached by Elder Henry Randolph, from the Book of Revelation, 22:9, last clause, "Worship God." It was doubtless a characteristic sermon, emphasizing the divine prerogative to bestow mercy, receive worship, and be Sovereign of the Universe.

Elder Randolph held the extreme Calvinistic views of most preachers of his day. He was a thorough believer in the doctrines of grace. "Salvation is of the Lord," was a favorite theme with these old preachers, and anything that smacked of Arminianism was to them an "abomination." Being a strong predestinarian in his doctrinal belief, he did not subscribe, of course, to a gospel of "free salvation to all who will believe" - the doctrine preached by his missionary brethren. The popular charge brought against him and his associates of the old school persuasion, that "they preached infants to hell," he stoutly denied. The "charge" was the result of a natural and easy inference on the part of his opponents, but was not, he contended, a justifiable or necessary conclusion from his premises.

"Uncle" Wilson Witt, who is a thoroughly competent Judge, pays this final tribute to Elder Randolph as a man and a preacher. "Brother Randolph was strong denominational man and had a wide influence. He was able in the pulpit and wonderfully gifted in prayer. His voice and

manner were unusually impressive. He was as firm in principle as he was hard in doctrine. He had a reputation for firmness, honesty and integrity of character. Everybody had confidence in him as a man and a minister, and that gave him great influence with the people."

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William Allen Montgomery:

William Allen Montgomery is an only son of **William H.** and **Sarah Montgomery**. He was born in Jefferson County, Tennessee, November 16, 1829. His mother was a daughter of **Chesley Jarnagin**, of Welsh descent. His grandfather, **William Montgomery**, was of English extraction but born in South Carolina. The family into which he married, in North Carolina, was partly Irish. Coming to Tennessee at an early day he settled in Jefferson County, a little below Dandridge, where his son, William H., and his grandson, William A., were born. His grandmother, on the maternal side, a daughter of Elder **Isaac Barton**, was of Dutch and Huguenot descent. His great-grandfather, Isaac Barton, was one of Tennessee's earliest pioneers - a Baptist preacher who had the honor of giving to the United States Senate a gifted son and to the Tennessee bar a great-grandson of ability and distinction.

At the age of 14 young Montgomery professed faith in Christ and was baptized. In 1845, at the age of 16, he entered the University of Tennessee, graduating in his twenty-first year (1850), with the first honors of his class.

He read law with Hon. E. Alexander, Judge of the Knoxville Circuit Court, and was admitted to the bar in the fall of 1851.

He was married May 9, 1854, to Miss **C.E. Franklin** of Jefferson County, Tennessee, a daughter of **Major Lawson D. Franklin**, a wealthy planter and slaveholder of the antebellum days. In 1855 he went to Texas to raise cotton and make money. In 1861 he was a member, from Washington County, of the Texas convention that voted for the "secession" of Texas from the Union; and then entered the Confederate service. In 1862 he was "licensed" to preach to the soldiers by the Independence Church, Texas. In 1867 he returned with broken fortunes, to his native East Tennessee, and settled down on the old Franklin homestead, near Leadvale. In 1868 the Leadvale Church ordained him, Elders Ephraim Moore, T.J. Lane, S.H. Smith, and J.M. L. Burnett acting as a presbytery.

As pastor he served efficiently the following churches: Leadvale and Dandridge, for 1868 to 1872; First Church, Lynchburg, VA, six years; First Church, Memphis; First church, Chattanooga; Greensboro, GA; Thomaston, GA; Leadvale, Rogersville and Hot Springs, NC; Mossy Creek (now the Jefferson City First). In his Lynchburg pastorate he did monumental work. The church, when he took charge, numbered 400. During his pastorate there were added by experience and baptism 250, and others by letter; 200 were sent out to form the College Hill Church; at the close of his pastorate the church was left 650 strong.

To his exceptional administrative ability as pastor Dr. Montgomery added the rare gifts of an evangelist, as witnessed by his wonderful meetings at Trenton, Milan, Jackson, and other places in Tennessee and elsewhere. In his evangelistic tour of West Tennessee and Mississippi there were 1,000 professed conversions under his ministry in a single year. This was the year of richest

harvest in his ministry, perhaps, but his labors on other fields and at other times were signally blessed of the Lord, and hundreds were added to the churches through his instrumentality.

As Secretary of State Missions he did a most valuable work in unifying the Baptist of the State. It was through his efforts and influence, in large measure, that the East Tennessee General Association was brought into organic union and active co-operation with the Baptist State Convention.

As President of Carson College, and later of Carson and Newman (1888-1892) and professor of metaphysics and theology, he showed himself a fine organizer and an able teacher. It was during his administration that the marriage of Carson and Newman took place and co-education became the order of the day for East Tennessee Baptists. It was also during his presidency that the magnificent new Administration Building, recently destroyed by fire, was erected for the larger work of the college. On the occasion of his resignation as President the Board of Trustees by resolution testified to "the great ability, untiring faithfulness and unswerving integrity with which the President had advanced the important interests which had been committed to his charge," and to the gratifying fact that he had "devoted his fine talents and rare scholarship to the up-building of our beloved institution."

From Carson College he received his D.D. in 1870; from his alma matter, the University of Tennessee, he received the honor of an L.L.D. degree in 1876.

As associate editor with Dr. J. R. Graves of the Tennessee Baptist, the same with Drs. Jeter and Dickinson, of the Religious Herald, and as "staff" correspondent of the Baptist and Reflector, by his crisp, pointed and pungent editorials and sundry articles he contributed much to the enrichment of our denominational literature.

It was as a preacher, however, that he excelled. Preaching was his forte. He had preaching gifts in an eminent degree. The marked elements of his strength were originality, a mind trained to think, the power of clear, forceful statement, ability to drive the plowshare of incisive propositions through a subject laying out all its contents and exposing them to view. He preached on great subjects, handling them masterfully, his full-orbed mind illuminating them on all sides. He could think on his feet, without notes, with a mental intensity that was electrical in its effect. He gripped his subject and his audience alike—was alike master of subjects and "master of assemblies."

While never failing to emphasize the "doctrines of grace," he pressed home on the sinner with powerful argument and appeal his immediate and urgent duty and responsibility of accepting the divine offers of mercy and salvation, at the peril of his soul. He was not characteristically an expository or textual preacher, but uniformly chose subjects – great subjects, as already intimated – for pulpit treatment, and discussed them, not homiletically, as a rule, but logically and persuasively, with a view to immediate, practical results. He was not always at his best, but take min in a series of subject-sermons, say for a month or six weeks, every day, or twice a day, and the writer has never heard his equal as a sermonizer.

Perhaps his most intimate associate in the ministry, and one of his most confidential friends, was J.M.L. Burnett. They were like Jonathan and David, wholly unlike, but co-laborers in the Lord's work, and socially and otherwise were a self-constituted "mutual admiration society." They were both fathers in the ministry to the writer, and were greatly helpful to him in his early ministry, both of them serving in the council at his ordination, and Dr. Montgomery performing the ceremony on the occasion of his marriage. So the writer, reverencing Dr. Montgomery as a father and appreciating fully his great worth and eminent abilities, feels free to speak of him as he was

and to mention his faults as well as his virtues. He was a noble “man of God” and a truly great preacher, but he was not perfect. He was not a Pharisee and made no claims to perfection. If he were alive, I doubt not he would have me paint him as he was. So, in candor I would have to say, he was always strong but not always sweet. He was not equally pleasing at all times, was not always gracious. He was sometime caustic; he sometimes dipped his tongue or pen in the “waters of Marah.” He was ambitious and proud and had an infirmity of temper which he, no less than his friends, deplored.

The writer has sometimes thought that the devil had a particular grudge against W. A. Montgomery, for sometimes, when he had preached like a seraph-preached as few men ever preached, and there was “glory all around,” the hand as of some malignant spirit, appearing out of the darkness, would dash the feast with pitch from the sulphurous regions below. But it is exceedingly gratifying to know that this battle-scarred veteran soldier and distinguished leader, as he faced the setting sun, through trials and through grace abounding, became sweeter, tenderer, more gracious, and more sympathetic – chastened by affliction, sweetened by sorrow, mellowed by the frosts of adversity, ripened for glory. His last pastorate was at Decatur, GA, during which he was President of the Pastors’ Conference of Atlanta, respected and greatly loved by his brethren. The last two years of his life were spent in the home of his daughter, Mrs. A. C. Moore, of near Rankin, Tennessee not far from the old Montgomery home. It was here that he died, 16 December 1905. His funeral sermon was preached by his pastor, Elder W. C. Hale, and his body was interred in the Beth Car Cemetery, near Leadvale, TN. He was survived by his beloved companion, four sons and three daughters.

Dying Testimony: “Oh, thou God of universal peace, to whom all eyes must turn for everlasting salvation, blessed be they high and holy Name! Amen!” “It is so sweet to die.” “What a glorious privilege to hear the music on the way home.” “I shall see Jesus face to face, and walk the streets of the New Jerusalem.” “Put on the plain marble slab above my grave – ‘A sinner saved by grace.’”

A. Tribute:

“Deep teachings from the Word he held so dear,
Things new and old in that great Treasure found;
A valiant cry, a new, strong note and clear,
A trumpet, with no false, uncertain sound-
These shall not die, but live, his rich bequest
To that beloved church, whose servant is at rest.”