

"FOR FURTHER STUDY"

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It is not uncommon at the end of a textbook for the author to present a narrative bibliography of books that he has found useful in preparation of his work and which readers would find helpful in further study of a topic presented only scantily in the text. In one sense of the word, *The Alabama Baptist Historian* is a kind of textbook on Alabama Baptist history. This article is an attempt, after some eighteen years, to provide a suggested reading list for those who desire to know more about the denomination, particularly in Alabama.

Any study of Baptists in Alabama (or any other state, for that matter) should be made in the context of the Southern Baptist Convention. The first complete history of the denomination was W. W. Barnes, *The Southern Baptist Convention, 1845-1953* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1954). In some 300 pages of text, Dr. Barnes, a longtime professor at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, brought together the fruits of a lifetime of research in a pioneering study. Unfortunately, this volume has long been out of print, although copies may be studied in a few older church libraries and in college libraries.

An able successor is Robert A. Baker, *The Southern Baptist Convention and Its People, 1607-1972* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1974), which serves as a college and seminary textbook. It is filled with many facts, tables, and statistics about Baptist progress in the South. Valuable analyses and original interpretations liven the text. A companion volume of readings edited by Dr. Baker, *A Baptist Source Book with Particular Reference to Southern Baptists* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1966), contains the relevant portions of historic documents to which the textbook makes reference. It is helpful to have these materials readily available. Another useful companion is the paperback atlas prepared by Albert W. Wardin, Jr., *Baptist Atlas* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1980).

A vital book for understanding the theology of Southern Baptists is William L. Lumpkin, *Baptist Foundations in the South* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1961). Baptist growth in America dates from the Congregational/Presbyterian revival called the "Great Awakening," when a theology known as evangelical Calvinism swept through these denominations and spilled over into Baptist ranks, creating a breed known as Separate Baptists who spread across the South and gave Southern Baptists their distinctive characteristics.

Invaluable for study of the Southern Baptist Convention, any of its leaders, its agencies, or any constituent state, is the monumental *Encyclopedia of Southern Baptists* in four volumes (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1958, 1971, and 1982). The first two volumes consolidated information on the denomination from earliest times through the late 1950s; decennial supplements have brought information up to date and added new materials. Every researcher should be familiar with the broad scope of this essential tool. Long out of print and not even available in many libraries is the very helpful biographical study edited by William Cathcart, *The Baptist Encyclopedia* (Philadelphia: Louis H. Everts, 1881).

Robert G. Torbet, *A History of the Baptists* (3rd edition; Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 1963), written by an American Baptist (formerly called Northern Baptist), meticulously details the European and non-Southern developments among Baptists. Its treatment of the Southern Baptist Convention reflects the less sympathetic position from which he writes. James E. Tull, *Shapers of Baptist Thought* (Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 1972), is a biographical study of a score of leading ministers and writers in the Baptist denomination (including Southern Baptists) who have been influential in the development of Baptist ideas.

Books about activities, agencies, and people of the Southern Baptist Convention are essential reading in relating the denomination properly to the states. One of the most popular is Walter B. Shurden, *Not a Silent People: Controversies That Have Shaped Southern Baptists* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1972), a brief, highly readable account of half a dozen movements that have had a bearing on the denomination both nationally and locally. The issues which he analyzes are known as the Whitsitt controversy on Baptist history and successionism, the anti-mission controversy of the 1830s, the segregation controversy of the 1960s, the Landmark controversy, the modernist-fundamentalist controversy, and the debate over various publications of the Sunday School Board. Many of these had ramifications in Alabama, and this small study is an excellent starting point for understanding them.

Almost every agency of the denomination has produced a history of itself at least once. Typical of these are Robert A. Baker, *The Story of the Sunday School Board* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1966), and William A. Mueller, *A History of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1959). A readable and helpful study is J. B. Lawrence, *History of the Home Mission Board* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1958), written by a one-time executive secretary of the Board. Because of the many Alabamians identified with denominational institutions, these and similar accounts must be examined for pertinent data.

Prior to his death, Joe W. Burton, longtime editor of *Home Life* magazine, produced three small volumes which sought to catch the spirit of the convention and two of its agencies through the lives of three prominent leaders. These are *Road to Augusta* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1976), the story of the founding and early history of the Southern Baptist Convention as revealed in the life of R. B. C. Howell; *Road to Recovery* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1977), the story of the Home Mission Board and Isaac Taylor Tichenor, its head from 1872 to 1899, and a longtime pastor, businessman, and educator in Alabama, and *Road to Nashville* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1977), the story of the Sunday School Board and its founder, J. M. Frost. Easy to read, these three volumes recount much of the history of the denomination between its founding and the first World War.

Several histories of Baptists of Alabama have been printed. Still available is the best of them: A. Hamilton Reid, *Baptists in Alabama: Their Organization and Witness* (Montgomery: Alabama Baptist State Convention, 1967). Dr. Reid, executive secretary of the State Convention for many years (1945-1963), was conversant with Baptist affairs in the state for most of the twentieth century. Faithfully chronicling the establishment and history of each agency and program of the state convention. Dr. Reid regrettably felt it was a betrayal of confidences he had shared to tell the human and political side of the denominational history. Nonetheless his work will long stand as the standard reference tool.

The first history was published in 1840: Hosea Holcombe, *A History of the Rise and Progress of the Baptists in Alabama* (Philadelphia: King and Baird, 1840). In 1974, the original edition was reproduced by the West Jefferson County Historical Society and published with a valuable introductory essay and an indispensable index. Benjamin F. Riley, who was a president of Howard College and was associated with a wide variety of educational institutions, wrote two volumes on Baptists of this state. These were *History of the Baptists of Alabama* (Birmingham: Roberts & Son, 1895) and *A Memorial History of the Baptists of Alabama* (Philadelphia: Judson Press, 1923).

A few histories of Baptist agencies and institutions in Alabama have been written. The only significant history of Samford University is Mitchell Bennett Garrett, *Sixty Years of Howard College, 1842-1902*, published in *Howard College Bulletin*, October 1927, Volume LXXXV. On Judson College, founded 1838, see Louise Manly, *History of Judson College* (Atlanta: Foote & Davies Co., 1913). Both schools, as well as Mobile College, founded in 1963, need a complete, readable, and up to date history.

Anne Kendrick Walker and James O. Colley, Sr., *The Story of the Alabama Baptist Children's Home* (Montgomery: Paragon Press, 1945), and Anne Kendrick Walker, *The Alabama Baptist Children's Home, A Mid-Century Decade* (Birmingham Printing Company, 1955) tell of one popular agency within the denomination.

The role of women in Alabama Baptist history cannot be overstated. Without their concern for missions, the organization of the state convention in 1823 might have been delayed indefinitely. Without their continuing support of missions, the denomination might never have achieved its present greatness. Hermione Dannelly Jackson, *Women of Vision* (Montgomery: WMU of Alabama, 1964), is the story of women's organized work for missions in the state. This local study should be used in conjunction with two other books of broader scope: Leon McBeth, *Women in Baptist Life* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1979) and Alma Hunt and Catherine B. Allen, *History of Woman's Missionary Union* (revised edition; Nashville: Convention Press, 1976). Miss Hunt, sole author of the original 1964 edition, was a longtime resident of Alabama while she served as executive secretary of Woman's Missionary Union, Auxiliary to Southern Baptist Convention. The revised edition, prepared by native Alabamian Catherine B. Allen, adds chapters on the Hunt years. Mrs. Allen is also author of *The New Lottie Moon Story* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1980). Although Miss Moon's connections with Alabama were brief, the biography touches the lives of missionaries from Alabama, including Dr. T. W. Ayers of Anniston and Cynthia Miller, the

nurse who was returning to America with Miss Moon at the time of her death. Irvin T. Hyatt, *Our Ordered Lives Confess* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1976) has a significant section on Lottie Moon.

Three important works which attempt to put Southern Baptists in their cultural setting are Rufus B. Spain, *At Ease In Zion: A Social History of Southern Baptists, 1865-1900* (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 1967), and John Lee Eighmy, *Churches in Cultural Captivity: A History of the Social Attitudes of Southern Baptists* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1972) and Samuel S. Hill, Jr., *Southern Churches in Crisis* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1967). These scholarly studies do not trace organizational growth but focus on popular response to the cultural setting and social forces affecting the churches and conventions.

Personal reminiscences and biographies of Alabama Baptist leaders have been published with circulation of varying degree. Among these are Joshua Hill Foster, *Sixty-four Years a Minister* (Wilmington, N.C.: First Baptist Church, 1948), a native of the state who served congregations in Greenville, Union Springs, Birmingham, and Anniston; Thomas W. Ayers, *Healing and Missions* (Richmond: Foreign Mission Board, 1930), the contemporary of Lottie Moon; Washington Bryan Crumpton, *A Book of Memories, 1842-1920* (Montgomery: Baptist Mission Board, 1921), who interestingly tells about the many people and events in his long and useful life.

Lee Compere, a native of England, was a missionary among the Creek Indians of east Alabama for seven years (1822-1829), leaving them to become the founding pastor of First Baptist Church of Montgomery (1829-1833). His son Ebenezer Lee Compere (1833-1895), born during the Montgomery days, became a leading missionary of the Home Mission Board among Indians of Oklahoma. The inspiring story of the Compere family has been recorded in Amy Compere Hickerson, *The Westward Way* (Atlanta: Home Mission Board, 1945). Isaac Taylor Tichenor, a native of Kentucky, came to Alabama in 1852 at the age of 26 and remained thirty years as a pastor, business man, and educator before moving to Atlanta to become head of the Home Mission Board. His biography, prepared by a son-in-law, J. S. Dill, *Isaac Taylor Tichenor: The Home Mission Statesman* (Nashville: Sunday School Board, 1908), has been supplemented by Burton, *Road to Recovery*, previously mentioned.

Histories of individual churches and associations are too numerous to mention. Many of them are models of historical research and writing and should be emulated. Most published histories have been deposited at Samford University in the Baptist Historical Collection. Anyone planning to write a church or associational history would be remiss not to visit this repository and peruse the various volumes that have been produced. The Collection includes physical copies or microfilms of almost all extant associational records and all known issues of the *Alabama Baptist* and its predecessors, as well as Baptist papers from many other states.

Anyone who reads all the titles mentioned in this essay and then produces a church history deserves a special award, which he/she will probably receive because of the balance, perspective, and general excellence which must inevitably follow so thorough a study of Baptist history.

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How can I give my account some depth of meaning? A church history is more than lists of pastors, clerks, and Sunday School teachers. In telling of the church activities and programs, the author should relate these developments to events in the community and the denomination. Local histories and other materials in the city library will help put the church in its community setting.

The church should also be positioned in the denomination. There are several tests of denominational loyalty. The obvious one is support of the Cooperative Program. Other tests that have evolved are the source of the pastor's seminary training, use of Sunday School Board literature, adoption of a Broadman Press hymnal, and following the recommended programs of the convention agencies.

The writer must understand what is happening within the denomination to determine how closely the church is adhering to the denominational scheme. This article recommended some reading that will provide background information and has listed reference works that might prove useful.

Since the writing of the article in 1982, Catherine B. Allen has written two volumes as part of the Centennial history of WMU and Dr. Leon McBeth has announced publication of another general history of Baptists.

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