
PREFACE

By Elder David Montgomery

In 1985, my wife's grandfather gave me a book entitled, "Biographical Sketches of Old School or Primitive Baptists Ministers of the United States" by Elder R. H. Pittman. This was a 1979 reprint of the original, which was published in 1909. Elder H. D. Fulmer published this reprint. I read this book with great interest. It introduced me to men that I have heard about, but now could know them better. This book became one of my most important resources. When I became interested in Primitive Baptist church history, I referred to this book often. It put faces to names and reminded me that history is more than cold facts and dates, but it involves people who lived lives, suffered for their convictions, and had emotions as I did. It is hoped that this second volume will do the same for our people today.

We are not attempting to glorify or exalt our ministers, but we wanted for them to express how good the Lord has been to them. To "let their light shine unto men" for the glory and praise of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. It is also desired to share the rich and colorful history of the Primitive Baptists. I have spent much time listening to our people tell stories about our old fathers and the things that they had to undergo to preach the gospel. Some of the accounts were humorous, some were very sad, but all were edifying. You will find some of those stories in this book.

I began gathering information in February 1998. Shortly after this, Elder Mark Green expressed an interest in the work, and I invited him to become co-editor with me. He accepted, and my appreciation for his labor and effort to make this book a reality cannot be expressed. Nor could I properly thank the many dear people who labored so hard. I will mention these:

Elders Sonny Pyles, Hugh Montgomery, Gene Thomas, Joe Hildreth, Mark Rowell, Sonny Huckaby, Ricky Harcrow, H. D. Fulmer, G. H. Crain, Vince Hardy, Lonnie Mazingo, Jr., Lasserre Bradley, C. D. Shafer, Daryl Siegel, Alvie Davidson, Jay Harris and Ed Green.

Brothers Murl Dalton, Ed McGee, Joseph Weyel, C. E. Matthews, Nathan Montgomery, Benjamin Montgomery, Blaine Owens, Jeff Fallon, Carroll Osborn, Eric Winchell, Deral Clour, and Logan Green.

Sisters Nettie Montgomery, Robbie Montgomery, Darrene Collins, Julie Snyder, Betty Denton, Terre Shill, Patti Robertson, Lynn Bruce, Cheri Craine, Adele Ferrell, Geneva Lilliard, Mary Moder, Sharon Miller, Lela Dale, Jean Shepherd, Waynell Harris, Katy Collins and Ima Dora Haile.

The materials that were used to produce this book were drawn from an amazing assortment. Personal writings and testimonies, church and associational minutes, church periodicals, autobiographical and biographical books, diaries, newspapers, county and parish records. We have tried to give credit to the source materials. I must mention one input source in particular: "Primitive Baptist Ministers" by Emma West, published in 1970. Her work in its entirety is included with updated information as much as could be obtained. I commend Sister West for her book and I share her passion to record the experiences of our ministers.

Like all other works of man, this is an imperfect work. I ask the reader to cast the mantle of charity over the compilers. Most of all, I hope the readers will be edified by what they read and will be encouraged to serve our Lord in a more fervent way. Without the grace of God, this would be an empty book.

In His service,

David Montgomery

By Elder Mark Green

It has been 92 years since Elder R. H. Pittman published his worthy volume of information about Primitive Baptist ministers. Several collections of our ministers' biographical sketches have been published in the interim, but none as comprehensive as we believe this one to be, and so we felt strongly that the work needed to be undertaken once again.

Quite frankly, it has entailed much more labor than we had initially envisioned. The response by our people was such that the scope of the work swelled to the point that some condensation of the material was necessary. As a result, we feel confident that a reasonably representative collection has been assembled.

When the announcement was first made soliciting material for the book, we stated that we were limiting our inquiry to the main body of orthodox Primitive Baptists. Beyond that, we have made no stipulations.

Obviously, we do not know every person for whom information was submitted, and thus we must place a disclaimer to that effect. We have done the best we could. No doubt fault can easily be found with the book, but we trust that any who are critical will first attempt a work of similar scope, for after they do so, we believe they will be more inclined to be charitable toward any of our errors in judgment or editing. We have tried to be as accurate as we can, but given the volume of information, there inevitably will be some mistakes. Information has been derived from friends and relatives, association minutes, obituaries, other similar collections, and even verbal statements.

Some may feel that we are glorifying man in printing such a book, but that is not our intent. We do not glorify these men, but we do honor them and the cause for which they have contended. If the apostle remembered and recorded the faithfulness of the saints, surely we are not wrong to do the same.

One final note: Elder R. H. Pittman was among the first rank of our ministers both in ability and dedication. His labors need no rehearsal here, for they are well known. We feel it to be most appropriate that this volume should be respectfully dedicated to his memory. We trust that he would feel this book, which we have designated as Volume 2, is a fitting successor to his own. Trusting, then, that God will make it a blessing to those who love the truth and the men who proclaim it, we present this volume to you - and to history.

Elder Mark Green