Fall 2016

Martha's Gift to Posterity: One Pulpit's Remarkable Story

McGarvey Ice
Abilene Christian University

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.acu.edu/library_pub

Part of the Christian Denominations and Sects Commons, History of Christianity Commons, History of Religion Commons, and the United States History Commons

Recommended Citation
TENNESSEE BAPTIST HISTORY

Tennessee Baptists and the Restoration Movement

Vol. 18  Fall 2016  No. 1
We visit museums because artifacts tell stories. We crave those stories for a variety of reasons: a few confirm us, some enlighten or educate us, most inform us, and still others transform us. Who hasn't paused before a poignant exhibit, stalled by captivated awe, as a result of the story on display? Indeed, artifacts hold tremendous possibilities for telling and retelling stories of persons and personalities, issues and ideas, events and initiatives. Latent in their description and interpretation is the perspective to help us better understand our past, our ancestors, and ourselves.

One such artifact, a pulpit, now used at Central Church of Christ in downtown Nashville, not only witnessed the division between local Baptists and Disciples, but served its principal players in a much larger national religious discourse. From the preaching it supported, both directly and indirectly, Nashville garnered a reputation as "Jerusalem" among Churches of Christ. Pivotal figures that later profoundly shaped Churches of Christ in the twentieth century both preached from it and were converted in front it. If the pulpit itself could speak as clearly as those preachers who heralded the gospel from it, what remarkable tales it would tell.

When the Whitefield of the West Came to the Athens of the West
The revival fires that swept through the Nashville area in the spring and summer of 1820 seemed especially favorable to the Baptists. Fanning the flame was the
physically impressive, rhetorically powerful, and organizationally adept evangelist Jeremiah Vardeman, hailed by some as the "Whitefield of the West."¹ Methodists and Presbyterians reaped their own harvests, but though the Baptists were—as one spectator put it—"hardly known" in the few months since, by the winter of 1820 under the labors of "Mr. Vardeman, an eloquent and evangelical preacher," many were baptized and plans laid for a new congregation.² Vardeman’s principal assistant was James Whitsitt, pastor of nearby Mill Creek Baptist Church. With Whitsitt at the helm, Mill Creek led the way in establishing the Baptist Church of Nashville, on July 22, 1820. The membership carried on the work of ministry while Whitsitt and Garner McConnico preached on an interim basis until a pastor could be secured.³

A Gem of Beauty
The congregation organized itself in the courthouse and met at times in the new Methodist church.⁴ Concurrent with the search for a pastor, they finalized plans for a permanent meetinghouse. The new congregation was indifferent about the old habit David Benedict described wherein Baptists sought the most "remote and obscure situation" for a meetinghouse equipped with little if any accommodation for comfort or attention to aesthetics.⁵ Nathan Ewing, one of the members, donated a lot on Spring Street (now Church Street) between High and Vines Street (now Sixth and Seventh Avenues) in the heart of Nashville’s business and residential district.⁶ The forty-five by sixty-feet brick meetinghouse cost $6,000. It had two stories, containing a gallery or balcony. Its small dome was crowned with a tall steeple.⁷ Men used one of the front doors, women, the other. Between the doors was a small platform with a pulpit in its center. The pulpit was moveable to provide access to a baptistry beneath a trap door in the floor.⁸

The Methodist church where Vardeman launched the revival
was itself rather new, as was the Presbyterian Church, and both were located on Spring Street. But the new Baptist chapel was hailed as a “gem of beauty” set in the Nashville skyline.  

“It is rich in all the elements of prosperity,” wrote one observer, “such as piety, intelligence, wealth, social position and influence.” R. B. C. Howell, later pastor of First Baptist Church, went a bit further, boasting in 1863:

In size, architectural taste, and finish, this house was then greatly superior to any other place of worship in the city, and compares favorably even now with the present ecclesiastical structures which adorn this metropolis.

The Nashville Baptists, in constructing this church, made quite a statement for a “hardly known” group. They intended to engage the life of the emerging Athens of the West with Baptist preaching and principles in a manner that commended itself as both competent and tasteful. As a body the thirty-five members doubled in size its first year, posting a membership of seventy-six meeting in a facility capable of seating ten times as many.

Their first choice as pastor was an Englishman whose life in the ministry was hardly older than the infant Nashville congregation. Philip Slater Fall was ordained in June or July 1820 at the Forks of Elkhorn Baptist Church in Kentucky. The twenty-three-year old was well-known and well-traveled among Tennessee-Kentucky Baptist circles. When he preached in Nashville in early 1821 the congregation warmed to him immediately. However, torn between a budding career in Kentucky and the ripe opportunities in Nashville, he declined Nashville’s offer to serve as their pastor.

Therefore, in late December 1822, the “old guard,” James Whitsitt and Garner McConnico, installed Virginian Richard Dabbs as first pastor of the Nashville church. Dabbs’s preaching varied from the allegorical to “clear and faithful exhibition of gospel truth.” In style and manner he was “exceedingly fascinating. With a musical voice and happy faculty of illustration he rarely, if ever, addressed a listless audience.”

Dabbs’s death in May 1825 came as a definite shock. Whitsitt and McConnico returned for the interim until the congregation prevailed upon Philip Fall who agreed to relocate. Like most of his Tennessee colleagues, including Jeremiah Var- deman, Fall encountered the writings of Alexander Campbell in the early 1820s, engaged the principles he advanced, and emerged with sympathy and allegiance to Campbell. Whitsitt,
McConnico, and other colleagues in the Concord and Cumberland Associations were also familiar with Campbell but were not in the least pleased. With Fall’s arrival, the distinctive Baptist preaching so characteristic of the Nashville pulpit waned.

Where We Met in Peace and Parted in Love
A substantial contingent within the church was agreeable to the Campbell reform principles. When in February 1827, Alexander Campbell made the first of five known trips to Nashville he spent some weeks there, preaching frequently, to the great delight of the church and community, amongst whom the welcome strangers formed many agreeable acquaintances and found many warm friends.

Fall availed his pulpit to other reform-minded Baptists: Anderson P. Craig, a Mr. Atkinson, and Jacob Creath. Campbell’s daughter Jane Caroline and her husband Albert Gallatin Ewing were among Fall’s parishioners. In October 1827 the church hosted the inauguration of Sam Houston as governor of Tennessee. The church was indeed in the center of Nashville civic life, local Baptist life, and the consciousness of the emerging Disciples.

The pattern of Sunday worship in 1828 included a meeting at sunrise for prayer, praise, and reading of the scriptures; at 10:30 a.m. they met for instruction and prayer; at 3:00 p.m. they came together to break bread and take up the collection; at 7:00 p.m. they read a passage of Scripture and several commented upon it. We do not know how long this rigorous schedule obtained, but it seems clear that the reading and proclamation of the word from the pulpit, joined with prayer and song, was a focal point of the congregation’s spiritual formation. Fall’s 1829 preaching was remembered “with pleasure [as a] clear, distinct, utterance, [with] lucid and forcible reasoning, and earnest, persuasive manner.”

The sermon manuscripts, if ever any were penned in the first place, of the earliest preachers at the Baptist Church of Nashville have evidently succumbed to time. We must rely on the scant descriptive references left here and there by their contemporaries and infer not what was said, but how. Additionally, most all such contemporary notes seem uniformly laudatory. Hagiography aside, the pulpiteers who held forth at the Nashville church were powerful in word, in rhetoric, in delivery, and in persona. All indications seem to agree they were as effective as
they were talented. Perhaps Baptist historian David Benedict's advice reflects the kind of effective preaching the Nashville Baptists employed. "Whatever may be a preacher's grade as to his speaking talents," he urged, "away with all flips, and twists and twirls, and twangs, and all guttural, sepulchral, and even ministerial tones; and finally, avoid a boisterous vehemence on the one hand, and a whispering cadence on the other." Benedict applied John Leland's rule to effective preaching: "He is accounted the best fisherman who catches the most fish."21 Judged by this rule, the Nashville preachers fared quite well: by decade's end the Nashville congregation grew sevenfold, boasting a membership of over 250.22

A Stand for Men Larger Than Life

When Campbell returned to Nashville in 1830, most all of the city's clergy heard his first address. He preached twice then immersed ten persons in the Cumberland River before an "immense crowd." Jacob Creath immersed another three the following morning.23 When Fall moved to Frankfort, Kentucky, in 1831, he left the erstwhile Baptist Church of Nashville as a leading congregation among the Disciples. In the absence of a pastor, the elders and other men of the congregation exercised gifts of oversight and teaching. Moses Norvell, Henry Ewing, Albert Gallatin Ewing, Thomas Claiborne, Robert C. Foster and others shaped the congregation through leadership in worship at the pulpit and the Table. Young preachers Absalom Adams, Tolibert Fanning, and W. H. Wharton preached as much at home as they did in surrounding areas in Davidson County and Middle Tennessee throughout the 1830s.24
Campbell returned in 1841 to raise awareness—and funds—for Bethany College. One observer described the totality of Campbell's pulpit presence, personal, rhetorical, and didactical, in this way:

This gentleman discoursed on the principles of Christianity, in the Reformed Baptist Church, in the forenoon of yesterday, and again at night. His sermons attract large crowds, and we may add, without pretending to pass upon the merits of his theory, that his compliment is not undeserved. We have rarely listened to a more finished or impressive argument, from the pulpit, than the discourse of last night. The distinct enunciations and Scottish accent of Mr. C. renders his delivery eminently pleasing.25

The following year an equally pleasing evangelist held a series of protracted meetings. Jesse Babcock Ferguson is arguably among the most charismatic, colorful, and controversial preachers of any denomination in Nashville's history. The Christian Church offered him the pastorate in 1842, and again in 1844—both times after hugely attended meetings—but he declined both times. He finally accepted in 1846 and by 1848 the church reported 500 members. By a significant margin it was the largest congregation in the Stone-Campbell movement.26

As spacious as the Church Street meetinghouse was, it could not contain the crowds who consistently turned out to hear Ferguson. Plans were soon made for a new, larger building on Cherry Street (now Fourth Avenue near where the Life and Casualty Tower stands). At a cost of $30,000, it was the largest church building in Nashville. Its 150-foot spire dominated the skyline, and its 1,200 seats were consistently full. It was dedicated on May 30, 1852, and served the Nashville congregation throughout Ferguson's troubled ministry. He became enamored with spiritualism, necromancy, séances, universalism, and, apparently, his own ego. When he was eventually and finally driven out of the Nashville congregation, he did not leave willingly or quietly.27

After the building burned, under suspicion of arson, in 1857, the decimated pastorless congregation purchased their old Church Street property from the Presbyterians. Philip Fall returned to his pulpit in a mission to resuscitate the congregation. He managed to assemble just fifty-six members by the spring of 1858, barely two-thirds the size of the congregation that first invited him in 1821.28
A Decade for Rebuilding

Two years into this mission all prospects seemed bright and hopeful. The congregation was at peace, members were busy and active in a host of good works, and Fall's regular teaching fed and sustained the congregation. Once the Civil War began, Nashville fell quickly and Union occupation troops swarmed into every church except the Catholic and Christian Churches. When Andrew Johnson demanded loyalty oaths of all the local ministers, even imprisoning seven of them, Fall refused. Claiming that if the naturalization oath he took in 1853 was null, he was again a British subject and immune to Union obligations. On this basis he respectfully declined to take a new oath. "You have my solemn pledge," he wrote Brigadier General R. B. Mitchell on April 30, 1863,

that together with my wife and daughter—both of whom are as conscientious as myself in regard to the taking of oaths—I will continue to be a quiet and peaceful citizen, and if, under the circumstances, we can remain here, and the cherished object of my life—namely the reconstruction of the Congregation of Jesus Christ in this city—a congregation in which I have desired to live and to die—can be carried out; and if, with my son I may still instruct the young people committed to our care; I assure you, General, that the permission will ever be held in grateful remembrance . . . ."29

Fall was allowed to continue weekly services unmolested, and he opened the building for use by other denominations. While Union forces briefly utilized it as a hospital after the Battle of Nashville, in the main the building, its furniture, and furnishings escaped unharmed, a remarkable feat considering the widespread damage wrought across the city.30

After the war Church Street Christian Church, as a result of Fall's patient ministry, grew again into a large congregation of over eight hundred members. When he finally retired, at age seventy-eight, to Frankfort, Kentucky, at the close of 1876:

tears of sorrow, which could not be checked flowed from the eyes of many as their venerable father in the gospel, in a voice choked with emotion, finally repeated those words of the Apostle Paul to the Corinthians; "Finally, brethren, farewell, be perfect, be of good cheer, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you."31
They were next served first by Samuel A. Kelly until 1878 then alternately by Robert Catlett Cave and Reuben Lindsay Cave from 1879 to 1897. R. C. Cave was a Confederate veteran who served in Lee's Army of Northern Virginia. Remembered as "an able pulpit orator, he found great favor with his audiences with brilliant and forceful speeches." As popular as the Cave brothers were, neither was the first choice to succeed Kelly. They initially invited Winthrop Hartley Hopson, but his Lexington, Kentucky, congregation refused to discharge him. Described as one of the most popular preachers among Christian Churches, especially in the South, Hopson "possesse[d], pre-eminently, the happy art of presenting great truths in the plainest and easiest terms." In a twist of irony, though, the congregation obtained Hopson's membership in his retirement years since his daughter was married to R. Lin Cave.

The Full Impact Is Not Yet Told

Among those who preached on occasion for the Nashville Church of Christ during the second Fall pastorate were David Lipscomb, Moses Laird, and Thomas Wesley Brents, all among the leading evangelists, writers, and theologians of the Churches of Christ. But of the many preachers who held forth from its pulpit after the Civil War, the 1885 meetings of Theophilus Brown Larimore, are arguably the most historically significant. The effects of that series of meetings endure even to this day among Churches of Christ.

Larimore was no stranger to Nashville. He was valedictorian of the class of 1867 at Tolbert Fanning's Franklin College on Murfreesboro Pike. Some of his earliest preaching was at Burnette's Chapel Church in far southeast Davidson County the same year. For two decades he accrued extensive evangelistic experience but "[n]ot till his first great meeting in Nashville, Tennessee, in 1885," wrote biographer F. D. Srygley, "did he himself ever preach any of consequence in important cities." With fifty conversions, that revival convinced him large-scale religious services in cities held tremendous potential. While it was a difficult decision to close his school at Florence, Alabama, and devote his full-time to meetings, time proved its wisdom. Over the next forty years an estimated 10,000 persons were converted under his itinerant preaching. The story of one convert from that revival stands out.

In the audience at Church Street in November 1885 were Joseph and Bettie McPherson with their infant son, Wilkes. Joseph responded to the invitation "after a careful and prayerful
consideration of the matter" and was baptized in the pool under the pulpit.\textsuperscript{38} Aside from the immediate impact on the McPherson household, which itself was significant, one of the repercussions of Larimore’s sermon was not felt for thirty years. The immediate impact was that McPherson was set upon a course that led to an earnest career in bi-vocational ministry. In 1914 McPherson preached a powerful revival at the Jackson Street Church of Christ, the leading congregation among black Churches of Christ. Present was a young man whose life would soon dramatically change. McPherson so impressed thirty-six year old Marshall Keeble, that he resolved to devote his full time to preaching. “Brother Joe McPherson did more,” Keeble remembered,

toward teaching me how to preach than any man I ever heard. . . . In this meeting I copied every lesson Brother McPherson preached; and though he is dead, I am still preaching his sermons, and these lessons are still bringing men to Christ.\textsuperscript{39}

\textbf{Fall’s Farewell}

In March 1887 the Church Street Church was once again strong, prosperous and numerous. Again they stood ready to build a new building. In a visit that would be at once a homecoming and a final farewell, Philip Fall mounted the pulpit to deliver one more “old fashioned gospel sermon.”\textsuperscript{40} The eighty-eight-year old preached one hour and twenty minutes. “I know not how to express the emotion that fills my breast,” he said, “when the responsibility of that earlier period of my life comes back to me.” He recounted some brief historical anecdotes, but drawing from 1 Corinthians 15:1–11, the “stress of [his] discourse” lay upon that which Paul entrusted to the church in Corinth. He urged them to keep in memory that Jesus is the Christ, that he was crucified, buried, and rose on the third day; and that baptism, the Lord’s Supper and the Lord’s day “are the essentials which present Christ in actual form to the world.” He concluded by reminding them of 1856.

Though not calling Ferguson by name, he said plainly a second crisis was upon the congregation. Begging them “not to build a sarcasm of your faith,” he predicted the new building would in fact be “monumental.” By that he meant that it “will be evidence of [their] spiritual character.”\textsuperscript{41} By the first week of May the “gem of beauty” that housed the Baptist Church of Nashville and Church Street Christian Church was no more.\textsuperscript{42}
Martha's Souvenir

In hindsight, Philip Fall's admonition about the new building, and the spirit it would manifest, seems ominous. The planned replacement was a finely appointed brick and stone structure on fashionable Vine Street. When complete it cost $21,000 and was the "most costly Christian Church structure in the state."43 Within just a few years Vine Street Church, alongside Woodland Street Christian Church in East Nashville, were at the forefront of those advocating missionary societies. It seems those at Church Street opposed to societies saw an opportunity to leave without a fight. Perhaps Fall counseled them to leave peacefully. In late 1887 many left, David Lipscomb and Joseph McPherson among them, and launched in an organized way the South College Street Christian Church. Also leaving Church Street were nearly a dozen Allens, including Martha Levinia Allen who in March 1887 "moved [the Church Street pulpit] into her home as a souvenir."44 Of the multiple hundreds of members at Church Street, why Martha obtained it and, further, how Martha obtained it remains a mystery.

South College had functioned as a mission since 1857 in the wake of the Ferguson fiasco, nurtured mostly by David Lipscomb's patient preaching. The sale of the Church Street property was in full view as they amplified efforts toward full organization. The building dedicated on November 12, 1887, was modest compared to the proposed one on Vine Street.

A hallmark characteristic of the South College Street Church was its propensity to grow by means of aggressive member-led grass-roots evangelism and service. When they planted a mission at Green Street, the Allens were foremost among its leadership.45 In 1892 Green Street church completed a simple frame building and needed a pulpit, so Martha supplied hers.46 From it her brother Jacob Garrison Allen preached alongside evangelist James A. Harding, co-founder with David Lipscomb of Nashville Bible School in 1891.

In a focused way they also identified and encouraged preaching talent from within. Jacob Allen started preaching in this manner. His son James, Martha's nephew, began in the same way at Green Street. It is doubtful his first preaching, when still a teenager, was as eloquent, studied, or forceful as any that preceded him from the same stand. However, it proved in time to be just as enduring, for James Alexander Allen enjoyed a sixty-five-year career as an evangelist, editor, and publisher among Nashville Churches of Christ. At some point the Green Street
church thought the old pulpit too large and heavy. Fortunately Martha moved it back into her home, for in 1928 the Green Street meetinghouse was damaged by fire. 

**A Christmas Gift for Central Church**

South College was only one example of David Lipscomb's sustained proactive effort to engage the city's neighborhoods with the gospel of peace. He nurtured congregations in each quadrant of the city and taught them to plant others. When he died in 1917, thirty-seven Nashville Churches of Christ owed their existence to this strategy. However, no congregation among the heirs of Stone and Campbell in downtown Nashville worshiped without an instrument or conducted mission or benevolent work independent of any society. In short, Nashville lacked the kind of congregation Philip Fall rebuilt in its downtown core and David Lipscomb planted across its suburbs.

Central Church of Christ, at Fifth Avenue, North, and Commerce Street, was established in October 1925 for the express purpose of melding conservative doctrinal commitments with aggressive personal evangelism through an embodied missional social consciousness. Much of David Lipscomb's spirit and ethos pervaded the founding eldership and membership at Central Church.

It may well have been this dynamic at work in Central Church that moved Martha Allen, just a few days before her death on Christmas Eve 1939 to donate a large, heavy, wooden pulpit with an extraordinary history. In time Central Church restored and installed it. No doubt Central elder—and former Nashville Bible School pupil of Lipscomb and Harding—Charles Elias Webb Dorris, swelled with pride the Sunday morning he reminisced about Nashville church history, telling stories about Fall, Campbell, and the Baptists, about Fanning and Ferguson, and about the host of preachers who held forth from the pulpit for one hundred and thirty years. Dorris understood the historic nature of the pulpit, and the significance of Martha's gift. Thankfully he also shared a consciousness for recording its history.

**Conclusion**

The pulpit behind which Fall, Whitsitt, McConnico, and Dabbs launched the first Baptist congregation in Nashville;
from which Campbell, Creath, Fanning, Wharton, and Adams advocated reform and restoration; which Ferguson mounted at the height of his universal popularity and which later supported Fall's, Lipscomb's, and Cave's weekly teaching; that cradled the infant sermons of dozens of young home-grown evangelists that Larimore used to ignite a passion for souls deep in the heart of Joe McPherson who in turn and in time impacted hundreds of thousands through the ministry of Marshall Keeble; that pulpit which narrowly skirted the ravages of a war and two church-house fires was saved from destruction by Martha Levinia Allen in late March 1887. While by then its storied past was well-known, the fullness of its unforeseeable future yet remained. Martha did more than bestow a gift upon a single congregation. She gave us all a gift by which we may tell and re-tell our stories and in them come to know ourselves, and each other, better and more fully.

MacGarvey Ice, a Nashville-area native, is archivist at Abilene Christian University, Abilene, Texas.

Notes


4. Located on present-day Church Street between Third and Fourth Avenues, it comprised the entire lot and was a substantial building in its own right (H. T. Tipps, "History of McKendree United Methodist Church," in Seven Early Churches of Nashville [Nashville: Elder's Bookstore, 1972], 5).


7. Eastin Morris, The Tennessee Gazetteer, or a Topographical Dictionary, Containing a Description of the Several Counties, Towns, Villages, Post Offices, Rivers, Creeks, Mountains, Valleys, etc. in the State of Tennessee, Alphabetically Arranged, to which is Prefixed a General Description of the State: Its Civil Divisions, Resources,

8. R. M. Van Noy, “Cedar Hill—1849,” The Nashville American (May 24, 1903), 19, for the author’s memory that the baptismery water was “bluer than the skies.” Van Noy remembered Ferguson immersing candidates in it. However, cf. below for Campbell and Creath immersing in the Cumberland River. In 1861 Fall noted the building was remodeled and a “beautiful baptismery constructed.” The baptismery was probably added between 1830 and Ferguson’s arrival in 1846 and remodeled in 1861; see P. S. Fall, “Letter from Eld. Philip S. Fall” Christian Pioneer 1:1 (June 1861), 38, for reminiscences about Fall’s preaching by Pioneer editor John R. Howard.


10. “The Baptist Church, Its Noble Record in the City of Nashville,” The Daily American (February 9, 1890), 11; and Benedict, 95.


12. Herring, 5; of the original thirty-five members almost half—sixteen—were African-American: nine men and seven women; see Philip S. Fall, Contribution to the History of the Congregation of Jesus Christ, Worshiping on Church Street, Nashville, Tennessee. [Typescript by P. S. Fall: 1890] Philip Slater Fall Papers, Disciples of Christ Historical Society.


17. The Ewing families were charter members, coming from old Mill Creek Baptist Church. Three generations of Ewings served as city clerks, in congress and in the Nashville congregation. Jane Caroline met her future husband when she accompanied her father on his first trip to Nashville.
20. John R. Howard, "Remarks" _Christian Pioneer_ 1:1 (June 1861), 40, which is appended to a letter from Fall describing his efforts to rebuild the congregation in the wake of Jesse Babcock Ferguson's disastrous departure from the pastorate.
22. May, 36-37 indicates the congregation added 143 members by the beginning of Philip Fall's reform; see also Eva Jean Wrather, "Time Line, Vine Street Christian Church, 1820-" manuscript, s.v. 1826, in Eva Jean Wrather Papers, Personal Papers #120, Series 2/no. 3 at Disciples of Christ Historical Society. Alexander Campbell reported in March 1831 the congregation, with over 250 members in Tennessee's capital city "is likely still to exert a happy influence over the whole state." See [Alexander Campbell] "The Church in Nashville" _Millennial Harbinger_ 2:3 (March 7, 1831), 121-22; Morris, 216, indicates the congregation had in 1834 a total of "456 members, of which 280 were colored." Morris has the Methodists in Nashville with 780 white and 819 black members; the Presbyterians, 200; Cumberland Presbyterians, 72; and the Catholic Church "in a state of dilapidation [had] no organized body of members, or officiating priest." He had the population of the city at about 7,000 (p. 213).
23. Campbell, "Incidents on a Tour," 111.
26. Alexander Hall, _The Christian Register, Containing a Statistical Report of the Christian Churches in Europe and America_ (1848), 38, which has the two congregations closest in size to Nashville as First Christian Church in Cincinnati, Ohio (400), and the Christian Church in Lexington, Ky. (382); H. Leo Boles, "Historical Sketches," _Gospel Advocate_ (December 11, 1930), 1197, has the membership of the Nashville church in 1850 at 550; M. C. Tiers, _The Christian Portrait Gallery: Consisting of Historical and Biographical Sketches and Photographic Portraits of Christian Preachers and Others_ (Cincinnati: Franklin Type Foundry, 1864), 36, says the numerical strength of this congregation (in the 1840s) was greater than any other in the movement.

106 _TENNESSEE BAPTIST HISTORY_

29. Philip Slater Fall to Brigadier General R. B. Mitchell, April 30, 1863; Fall's copy is in the Philip Slater Fall Papers, Disciples of Christ Historical Society.


32. Peyton Robertson, "Historical Sketch of the Vine St. Christian Church," *Nashville Banner*, January 6, 1912; the Cave brothers came to Nashville from the presidency of two Disciples schools: Robert from South Kentucky Female College in Hopkinsville, Ky. and R. Lin Cave from Christian University, Canton, Mo.

33. Porter Oakes, "Vine Street Christian Church Marks 110 Years of Progress," *Nashville Banner* (September 21, 1938), 8, col. 2.


35. Hopson was chaplain to John Hunt Morgan; see Ella Lord Hopson, *Memoir of Dr. Winthrop Hartley Hopson* (Cincinnati: Standard Publishing Company, 1887), 208; and J. W. McGarvey's obituary of Hopson in Mrs. Ella L. Hopson, ed., *Sermons of Dr. Winthrop Hartley Hopson, with Fugitive Pieces, Notes, Etc.* (Cincinnati: Standard Publishing Company, 1889), ix-xi. McGarvey conducted Hopson's funeral, likely in the Church Street building; see also Bell, 91.

36. See "Items and Personals" sections for *Gospel Advocate* 11, 18 and November 25, 1885 (pages 714, 722, and 747, respectively); and F. D. Srygley, *Smiles and Tears, or Larimore and His Boys* (Nashville: Gospel Advocate Publishing Company, 1889), 149. Larimore's city meetings, for Churches of Christ, are precursors to later efforts such as N. B. Hardeman's Tabernacle sermons in Nashville and Willard Collins, Batsell Barrett Baxter, and Jimmy Allen's work in coliseum meetings around the country. A helpful study is Michael W. Casey, *Saddlebags, City Street and Cyberspace: A History of Preaching in the Churches of Christ* (Abilene; ACU Press, 1995).


38. "Joe McPherson, the Mail-Carrier Preacher," typescript, A. M. Burton Papers, University Archives, Beaman Library, Lipscomb University.


40. So instructed Fall's wife before he left for Nashville; see P. S. Fall, "Personal Recollections of Alexander Campbell," *Apostolic Guide* (March 22, 1889), 274.


46. Dorris, 133.

47. By 1930 Green Street nurtured at least eleven preachers from within its ranks. Joseph McPherson delivered some of his earliest sermons from the pulpit while it was at Green Street. See Martha Allen, "Work of Green Street," *Gospel Advocate* (May 1, 1930), 424.

48. [A. M. Burton] *Real Religion, Practical Christianity* [Nashville: A. M. Burton, 1924]. Among the first elders were James S. Ward, early faculty member at Lipscomb's Nashville Bible School and C. E. W. Dorris, Lipscomb's pupil at NBS and member at South College Street Christian Church from 1892-98.