

God Walks These Hills Pentecost in the Ozarks



Rev. Andy (Pal or Powell) Youngblood

Brother Powell Youngblood and his son George, spread Pentecost to Southern Missouri, Oklahoma, Arkansas and Kentucky.

Compiled by: Roger D Fortner Version 5-1-2019

FORWARD

GOD WALKS THESE HILLS - PENTECOST IN THE OZARKS

This book is being published to let people know how the southwest Missouri area participated in spreading the ministry of the Holy Spirit with the evidence of Speaking in Tongues. Most Pentecostals know about the Azusa Street Revival that started in Los Angeles, California in 1906. This revival was so powerful that word of Pentecost swept across the United States and the world. The purpose of this book is to show how our area was introduced to Pentecost and how it spread over the years. God sent preachers all over the country preaching his word and I don't think this is unique to our area. Similar stories happened all across the world.

Pentecost was introduced to our area about the same time it was introduced at Azusa Street. Actually the first Pentecostal revival held at the Brush Creek school house, now known as Cedar Valley, was held in 1905 by Powell Youngblood and his son George Youngblood. This was about a year before Azusa Street.

One of the most important things that I learned writing this is that all the churches in the area worked together to spread the word. A revival would start in one church and the whole community would attend. The preachers would take turns preaching during a revival meeting and sometimes the revival meeting would move to another church so that more people could be involved. Saving souls was on everyone's mind. In my church we have the following displayed in our foyer.

“Some have planted, Some have watered, But God has given the increase.”

This work will never be complete and will be updated as I get more information, check the version date. It is not my intention to promote any one church or denomination in writing this record. I would really appreciate any help in finding more information and people involved in the ministry during the early years of Pentecost in the area. If you would like to contribute information for this book, you can e-mail me at rdfortner@att.net.

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God Walks These Hills

Pentecost in the Ozarks

I was doing research about my father, Earl N. Fortner's life, when I found out about how involved he and his first wife were in the early Pentecostal movement in Southwest Missouri. His first wife Fern Pansy (Peebler) Fortner was from a family of preachers. Her Father, A.J. Peebler, her mother, Clemma Peebler, the three sisters, Fern Fortner, Esther Hawkins and Mabel Maddeford were all Pentecostal preachers. This family went from church to church along the Arkansas and Missouri border spreading the Gospel. Fern passed away at the young age of 37, in 1943 after a long illness. I was a child from Earl's second marriage and my father for some reason never talked much about Fern.

There was so much history about the Pentecost Faith in Southwest Missouri that I was uncovering in my research that I decided that I would record as much of it as I could find. I know I am not a good writer and I am not qualified to write about Pentecost, but I will try to put things together for others to build on. Remember, this was put together for my family, so I will include some items that may not be interesting to all. While thinking about what to call this research, I remembered hearing my pastor at Oak Ridge Church, Brother Earl Blanset sing the following song. I will use his wife, Melba, to introduce it.

[“God Walks These Hills With Me, Tommy Salsbe sang and recorded the first verse and chorus. Later Earl Blanset composed verse two and three. The following is as sung by Earl Blanset.” - Melba Blanset](#)

We all have treasures we call our own
Mine are these hills I call my home
Just let me live till eternity in these hills
My God He walks with me

Chorus: God walks these hills, these beautiful hills
Where my soul is always free
What a comfort to know, that were never alone
For God walks these hills with me

By the beautiful river, or highest mountain side
In the beautiful forest just let me abide
Where there's wild flowers and the honey bee
And God, He walks these hills with me

When life here is over, my work is done
I will meet my God at the setting of sun
And from sin be set free
In that land my God will walk with me

Original Songwriters: Marvin Hammond Hughes/Vic Mcalpin

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Time Line

John James was converted and filled with the Holy Ghost in Topeka, Kansas, where Charles Parham experienced the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. 1900->

Powell Youngblood and his son, George were converted to the Pentecostal faith in a meeting held at Siloam Springs, Arkansas, held by John James. 1905

Powell Youngblood and his son George held a revival at Brush Creek. 1905

The Azuza Street Revival. April, 1906

Powell Youngblood started Bowman Pentecostal Church 1907

The General Council of the Assembly of God was held at Hot Springs Arkansas in April of 1914

Marry Elizabeth Mahnkey moved to Oasis. 1922

Rev. Grove(s) from Omaha Arkansas, an able minister of the Pentecostal faith, held revival at Brush Creek September 1926

Oasis - Rev. Luther M. Pinkley and his wife, went with Mr. and Mrs. John Bennett to a Pentecostal camp meeting at Eureka Springs and stayed four days. . . August 1927

John Groves moves from Ridgedale MO to Blue Eye area Oct 1927

Clemma Peebler joined the Assembly of God 1928

Clemma Peebler visited - preached in the Hollister and Ridgedale area . . . 1928 - 1955

Mabel Maddeford preached her first sermon at Ridgedale revival. 1928

Earl Fortner married Fern Pansy. May 12, 1929

Rev. Durard Watson was considered pastor of the Bowman church. June 1930

Bob Grady - ordained by White River Association of General Baptist. . . Sept 13, 1930

Earl N. Fortner and Fern was in Ridgedale Missouri. June 9, 1933

Oak Ridge Church has a 100 day revival 1933

Bowman School was bought and was officially a church. 1934

Brush Creek school, church starts "Cinda's Sunday School". May, 1935

Bob Grady - Prays for Mrs. Silkman, a woman preacher of a small Pentecostal Church on the hill in Branson, owned by Mabel Maddeford. 1936 ?

Bob Grady holds the Chicken House Revival at Ridgedale MO. March - May . . . 1937

LaVonne "Pete" Snowden was saved at the Chicken House Revival . . . May 18, 1937

Powell Snowden was saved at the Bowman Church (Schoolhouse). . . . May 25, 1937

Bob Grady - required to turn in his ordination papers in Baptist Assoc. . . April 1, 1939

Earl N. Fortner was at West Fork of ??? River. . . ? took AJ and Clemma. 1940 ?

Clemma came to preach at the Bowman Church in the Spring. 1940

Townsend Godsey took photo's of John Groves and Brush Arbor 1941

The Bowman School was tore down and the new Bowman Church was built . . . 1943

Fern Pansy Fortner died. 2-23-1943

Albert James Peebler (A.J.) died. 7-27-1943

Asa Groves and Powell Snowden were deacons of Bowman Church 1945

John Groves passed away - large funeral at Bowman Church 6-28-1946

Danny Groves was pastor of Ponci Pentecostal Church. 1952

Brother Raymond L. Lasseter started pastoring at Bowman Pentecostal Church and was probably the first full time pastor October 1954 to March 2010

Moved a house from Kimberling City for parsonage - Table Rock. 1955

Tommy Peterson was saved under Brother Lasseter's ministry. 1954

John Ashcroft, Max Bacon and Donna Douglas (Ellie May) visited Bowman. . . 1976

New brick parsonage was built next to Bowman Church 1980

Brother Jeff Burkhart re-opened the Bowman Church. July, 2018

EARLY PENTECOST IN SOUTHWEST MISSOURI AND NORTHWEST ARKANSAS

According to Dr. Crockett, who was involved with the School of the Ozarks for many years, stated that the most prominent denomination that the early settlers brought with them into the area was the Presbyterian Church. Due to the remoteness of the Ozarks, this denomination died out because the Presbyterian Church demanded an educated ministry that the small communities just could not supply.

"After the disbanding of the Presbyterian Church, some United Brethren ministers drifted into the country, They held services in the scattered school-houses and in the brush arbors or in the homes of the people, and organized the little groups into churches. At one time the membership of the United Brethren Church numbered several hundred in Taney county, but the work of the church was carried on in a hap-hazard way because of the pioneer conditions which existed. The last minister of the United Brethren Church in the county was the Rev. J.K. Ross, "Old Matt" of The Shepherd of the Hills book fame. Mr. Ross quit preaching sometime before Harold Bell Wright came into the hills. The church gradually disintegrated and died, as Mr. Ross said, because his church did not have a vision on the needs and the opportunities among the people of the Ozarks."

"When the United Brethren Church began to disintegrate the Methodist Church started work in the county. At one time the Methodist Church had more members in the county than any other denomination. Capt. Van Zandt, who was a Mexican War veteran and also a Methodist minister, received over six hundred persons into the Methodist Church. When asked why the Methodist Church died in Taney county, quick as a flash he answered, 'Lack of vision, lack of vision.' And I thought what I have always thought was a very significant statement. 'If any church wants to live in these parts men of gumption and vision must be our ministers.' " Dr. Crockett

The General Baptist and Presbyterian Church slowly came back to life in the county in the late 1890's. Over the years these two denominations had dedicated preachers who worked and preached in this remote area without much reward. Some ministers had several flocks to take care of over a large area of the country and was only able to preach once a month at some places.

Although the hills of Missouri and Arkansas had few official Church buildings, the local School Houses were used for "Church Meetings". Some communities had circuit preachers who came by and held services when they could. This research is mainly about Branson, Ridgedale, Cedar Valley, Brush Creek, Oasis, Blue Eye and the Bowman School area. Besides personal family letters, I was able to get a lot of early information from the records of the Taney County Republican. Mary Elizabeth Mahnkey wrote a column in the Country Correspondent section for the community of Oasis. Oasis was located in a valley along Long Creek. When the Table Rock dam was built, it covered the little community with the new lake, Table Rock. The roads were

very bad and very few vehicles ventured down this isolated area. Reading the news from Oasis, Mary told about the vehicles that came through driving by every week and they all seemed to stop, to rest from the rough road.

PENTECOST

In October of 1900 a group of believers started the Bethel Bible School in Topeka Kansas, led by Charles Parham. This school wanted committed Christians and ministers who were willing to give up their worldly possessions and depend on God to provide their needs. Their only textbook was the bible. In December the students were told to study the Holy Spirit, and when they came back, they all came to the same conclusion. "When the baptism in the Holy Spirit came to the early disciples, the indisputable proof on each occasion was that they spoke with other tongues." During a watch night service on December 31, 1900, 75 people, including 40 students began to pray. A student named Agnes Ozman asked to be prayed for to receive the Holy Spirit and just after midnight on January 1, 1901, the Holy Ghost fell on her and she began speaking in Chinese and was unable to speak English for three days. Soon others received the Holy Spirit and revival began.

Pentecost was first introduced to Missouri by "The Parham Band" in 1903, when they decided to start what they called a "Faith Home" in El Dorado Springs, Missouri. People were coming to the mineral springs for health reasons and "The Parham Band" decided to hold meetings and pray for the sick. They held street meetings in a park across from the springs. People were healed and the Pentecostal movement was spreading into Missouri.

In the fall of 1904 Charles Parham brought his tent revival to Joplin, Missouri. This revival was a great success and was the beginnings of what would become the first permanent Pentecostal church in Missouri. Even after Charles Parham went to other parts of the country, the Joplin church held revivals every few weeks for over 30 years. God was moving, people were being healed and filled with the Holy Ghost. This church in 1910, sent 55 workers to Springfield, Missouri to establish a Pentecostal movement there.

The result was that people from all over heard of this experience and wanted to receive it their selves. One minister that came out of the Galena, Kansas revival was Reverend John James, who was converted and received the baptism of the Holy Ghost. Soon he was spreading the word, holding Holy Ghost filled revivals. In 1905 John held a revival at Siloam Springs, Arkansas, where Powell Youngblood and his son George, were filled, with the Holy Ghost. Powell, a half Cherokee Indian and George, were drawn to see what was going on at this large meeting. Powell Youngblood was filled with the Holy Ghost and George, after shutting himself up in his bedroom for three weeks, was baptized in the Holy Ghost and miraculously, was able to read the Bible even though he had never learned how to read.

Powell and George began preaching about the Holy Ghost and the evidence of speaking in tongues and holding revivals all over the southwest Missouri area. In 1905 they held a revival at Cedar Valley Church (School) near Oasis in Taney County that was well accepted. This was a year before the Azusa Street revival in Los Angeles, California.

The White River Association of General Baptist based in Taney County, was not happy with the introduction of Pentecost into the region and told their members not to have anything to do with it. Small community churches were told not to let "The Pentecostals" preach in their meeting houses. This is probably why that when Powell Youngblood came back to the area in 1907 to hold another revival, he decided to hold it in the Bowman School House up the hill from Oasis and Cedar Valley. From that time until now, 2018, the Bowman Pentecostal Church is the home of, as Mary Elizabeth Mahnkey, who wrote for the Taney County Republican called them, "The Pentecostals". Powell came back to the Bowman Pentecostal Church as often as he could to preach and the church ran for many years without an official pastor. Any time Bowman held a revival meeting, the whole region attended, with many preachers participating in the services. The Pentecostal faith grew. The community accepted "The Pentecostals" and would hold joint revivals that included all faiths. Even though they did not have a full time pastor until 1954 when Brother Raymond L. Lasseter started pastoring

The outpouring of the Holy Ghost with the evidence of Speaking in Tongues started getting world wide attention in "The Azuza Street Revival". It began in Los Angeles with a meeting held in a home on North Bonnie Brae Street that was held by an African American named William J. Seymour. The Movement grew so rapidly that they soon rented a building at 312 Azuza Street. This was April of 1906, people all over the L.A. area came to see for themselves how God was working. The crowds were so large people had trouble getting in. When people left, they started their own Pentecostal groups that spread across the country.

In April of 1914 the first General Council of the Assembly of God was held in Hot Springs, Arkansas. Powell Youngblood and his son George attended the meetings, but they for some reason did not join the Assembly of God at that time. The first three days was devoted to preaching, teaching and fellowship. By this time there were thousands of Holy Ghost filled Christians exposed to this new experience. These new converts were determined to spread the Good News of the Pentecostal faith. I am sure that during this time, the Good News of Pentecost was spread throughout the Ozarks. The isolated Ozarks had independent people who were already close to the Lord and were open to this ministry. Any preachers traveling through the area would be encouraged to stop and hold Revival Meetings at the community schools.

Here is an interesting story that was published in the Taney County Republican that shows how Powell Youngblood stayed connected to the community..

8-18-1931

Mr. and Mrs. Powell Youngblood of Seneca, Missouri are visiting friends at Cedar Valley and neighboring communities, Mr. Youngblood is a minister of the gospel. Every year he and Mrs. Youngblood come to Taney County to hold a series of meetings. They just closed a successful revival at Ridgedale. We are glad to have them with us.



SYCAMORE LOG CHURCH

The following stories about the Sycamore Log Church were in the Taney County Republican, although this church is not in the immediate area that we are looking at, it is an example of the times and is located close by, it is just on the north edge of Branson. The Sycamore Log Church is still standing and has a loyal following going there to this day, it is a few miles north of Branson and is well worth visiting. One interesting thing that I found out during my research was that the railroad didn't want ties made out of Sycamore because the wood would warp. The church was probably made using Sycamore because the logs were worthless, they were able to sell oak ties for up to \$1.00 each. This is a photo of how it looks today. R.D.F.

SYCAMORE LOG CHURCH TO BE DEDICATED SUNDAY

Taney County Republican - 2-9-1933.

Built By the People of the Community, It Will Serve the Congregation Well.

"The groves were God's first temples" so has Bryant spoken. Perhaps no verse would be more fitting to inscribe on the little church that stands in the hills near Gretna. Last summer the people of this community gathered in a brush arbor for their services. Here they could worship under the open sky. But this group knew that the services could not continue as the winter approached, but there was no money with which to build a church. They took their problem to Dr.

Crockett who has an understanding heart and whose work and mind is centered in the service of the people of this county. He suggested that they build a church which would not cost them any thing. The task at first seemed to be stupendous but the building was begun. The sycamore logs were cut and hewed. The lime which was used for chinking the logs was burned on the ground which was donated as a ninety-nine year lease by Mrs. George Wagner of Kansas City who is a former resident of the county and who's parents still live here. The building is thirty feet by twenty feet.

“At first it was suggested that the windows be sacks dipped in wax, but the builders were able to secure some windows cheap so that that problem was solved. The pulpit desk is a solid walnut stump properly hewed and placed. The benches are home made. The floor at present is the gravel from Roark Creek, but later it is planned to cover this with sand from that creek. The total cost of the church has been less than \$25.00

“To-day the little church is in use. It stands as a monument to the spirit of the pioneers who founded this country and shows us that that spirit is still awake and alive and needs but necessity to make itself come once more to the front. We need have no fear as long as that simple faith and trust is still alive. The people who have builded this little church can indeed have more reverence in this church because of the work they put into it. Indeed it was a labor of love; one that was truly inspired by Great Leader who taught us that the simple things of life are the ones most worthwhile. Faith, hope and trust are builded into this little log church.

“Sunday it will be dedicated to the service of those who have labored for its existence. The man who gave birth to the idea will deliver the dedication sermon. Sunday school will be held at ten a. m. and morning service at eleven. At twelve-thirty there will be a basket dinner. At two p. m. Dr. Crockett will dedicate the church. The public is cordially invited.”

Note: Dr. Crockett was a very popular preacher associated with The School of the Ozarks at the time and traveled between several congregations. One article in the Taney County Republican stated that at graduation time, so many Missouri and Arkansas schools wanted him to hold graduation services that he had to turn several down. R.D.F.

Taney County Republican - 10-10-1935

HOMEcoming TO BE HELD AT THE LOG CHURCH.

“Probably the most famous rural church in the state of Missouri is the Sycamore Log Church. This church building is in Taney county, on Roark Creek, about eleven miles north of Branson.

“On the third Sunday in October, October 20, the Log Church community is planning to have a Homecoming Day at the church. The program of the day will be:

10:00 a.m. - Sunday School
11:00 a.m. - Morning service
12:00 noon - Basket dinner

2:00 P.M. - Afternoon service

“Dr. Crockett will be the preacher of the day. The Gospel Team from the School of the Ozarks will have charge of the Afternoon service. Special numbers of music will be given by groups from Forsyth, The School of the Ozarks, and other communities.

“This meeting will give many who have wanted to visit The Log Church an opportunity to do so. The public is cordially invited to bring dinner and to enjoy the day of fellowship and worship.”

Taney County Republican - 10-17-1935

ALL DAY MEETING AT THE LOG CHURCH

“Eleven miles north of Branson, two and a half miles off of highway 65, stands a church of logs. It has a home made shingle roof, a gravel floor, and a walnut stump is the desk. The total cost to the people of the community is \$25.00. Sunday there are to be all day services in this building Sunday, the program for which we published last week. DR. Crockett will be the preacher for the morning services. The public is cordially invited.”

Taney County Republican - 10-15-1936

LOG CHURCH ANNUAL MEETING OCTOBER 18.

“Sunday, October 18, is Celebration Day at Log Church, nine miles north of Branson. The Log Church was originally built at an actual cost of less than \$25.00. It immediately became one of the famous churches of Missouri.

“In the past few months a floor has been put into the church.

“This annual meeting is held each 3rd Sunday in October. The program of the day will be:

10:00 a.m. - Sunday school.
11:00 a.m. - preaching service.
Noon - basket dinner
Afternoon, 1:30 - preaching service.

“Dr. John Crockett will be the preacher of the day. The public is invited to come and bring their dinner and enjoy the day at Log Church.”

Note: Before this 1936 annual meeting, a floor was installed in the church, up until this time, the floor was gravel taken from Roark Creek. R.D.F.



CEDAR VALLEY CHURCH

This is the Brush Creek school house, later called Cedar Valley. This is after it had been moved from where it would have been flooded by Tablerock Lake and remodeld. The congregation calls it "The Old Well"

Andy Youngblood, who was better known as "Pal or Powell", and his son George held a revival at the Brush Creek school house around 1905. Both father and son had just been filled with the Holy Spirit with the evidence of Speaking in Tongues at a meeting in Siloam Springs, Arkansas and were eager to spread the word. Among their earliest converts were Ben and Ella Beal, Frank Jackson (Ella's Dad) and Johnny Johnson. The Youngbloods spread the gospel of the Holy Ghost with the evidents of "Speaking in Tounges" throughout the region, going where God told them too. They held revival services in Southern Missouri, Oklahoma, Arkansas and Kentucky. The Youngbloods came back as often as they could to hold meetings. Although the church was not officially organized as a "Pentecostal" church, there was at least one annual meeting held with the "Pentecostals" of the Bowman Church every 4th of July with dinner on the grounds.

A Reverend Foote commuted from Springfield once a month for several years with members of the local community keeping the doors open for services. Reverend John Groves would fill in when he could. In 1955 the church was officially organized with Dofford Beal, Lex Bowman, and Dale Pinkley elected to serve as trustees.

After the Cedar Valley Cemetery and Church were moved to a hilltop along 65 highway the church sat vacant. The Long Creek Bridge had not been built yet and most of the Cedar Val-

ley members were isolated from their own church that was on the other side of the lake. A lot of their members started attending the Bowman Church, because the two churches had been working so much together. In July of 1957, Sister Mildred Beal started a Sunday School again at the Cedar Valley Church. See the chapter about BRUSH CREEK SUNDAY SCHOOL that was organized in May of 1935 and was a great success. Sister Beal started a revival meeting and nine people were saved during the first week. Women preachers were a big part of Pentecost at this time, but the sentiment was that they should not be Pastors of a church. During this revival Reverend Lawrence (Doc) Swift was asked to become pastor of the run down church that had been almost wrecked during the move to the existing location. It was almost a hopeless case, but he agreed to come. With borrowed money and hours of donated labor, the old building was ready to be used again. The old Cedar Valley members started going again and I believe the people who had been meeting in Ridgedale started going to this organized church instead of meeting at the Ridgedale School House. Several additions were made over the years and it served the people until 1990 when the existing building was built. Cedar Valley Church has served the community well.

After the church had sat empty for a time, the Grandson of the revivalist team that served the church in the early years of Pentecost felt led to Pastor this small community church. Reverend Rich Youngblood and his wife Mary became pastors of the Cedar Valley Church on November 1, 2010.

The following is from the Cedar Valley web site:

“God has not called us to establish another church on this hill to add to the roster of churches that are already in the area. We believe that God has ordained this house to be a revival center; a place of outpouring that will affect every church in the region as well as the nation. We believe that God is setting these Ozark Mountains on fire with Holy Ghost Revival. We believe that we are on the brink of a massive harvest of souls and that God is going to flood this area with both His Shekinah Glory and His Kabod Glory.”

“Cedar Valley Church is an Old Well that the devil had covered up and filled it in for a time, “BUT GOD” called Mary and I here to dig again this wonderful well that He established years ago, and dig we shall through the grace and mercy of God for His glory. We declare God’s ownership over every inch of this building and property in Jesus’ Name and we declare that His Kingdom come and His will be done here in the Ozarks as it is in Heaven.”

“Welcome to the Old Well--it is not by chance that you are here. There is a great amount of water here springing up.”

“Love, Pastor Rick and Mary Youngblood.”



Bowman Church

[“Here is a picture of the new Bowman Church built in 1943, the old schoolhouse stood in the same place, it was torn down and the material used in this building”. \(Pete Snowden\)](#)

Powell Youngblood started the Bowmen Pentecostal Church in 1907. He was saved and filled with the Holy Ghost with the evidence of Speaking in Tongues in the 1905 revival in Si-loam Springs, Arkansas. He was familiar with the area and had held a revival at the nearby Cedar Valley Church. When Mary Elizabeth mentions “The Pentecostals” in her Oasis column, she is talking about the Bowman Church. This church was probably the most influential church in the area over the years. The churches in the area would all attend each others revivals and let visiting pastors help preach, so eventually several of the independent churches started believing in the Pentecostal movement.

The first mention of Pentecost in the Oasis area by Mary Elizabeth Mahnkey was in her Oasis Correspondent column, one of her stories said that a Reverend Groves from the Omaha Arkansas area held a revival at Brush Creek in September of 1926 and stated that he was a “[very able Minister of the Pentecostal faith](#)”. When he lived in Omaha, Arkansas he probably held services at the Ridgedale School House when he could.

In September of 1926 Mary told of a large revival that was held at the Bowman School House: “[The Pentecostal Church has been holding a protracted meeting at the Bowman School House, which culminated Sunday in an all day meeting and basket dinner. One of the largest crowds ever assembled at Bowman enjoyed the day. There were people from Reed Springs, Baxter, and all the north Arkansas. The day was ideal, a real Indian summer day.](#)”

The people who lived in the Ozark hills were isolated and lived close to God. They depended on Him for their daily needs. No televisions, no phones, very little radio, and little outside influence. The whole community would go to the few community events that they had.

Church services were held at several locations along the Missouri and Arkansas border, mostly at the local school houses. Some of the communities involved were Ridgedale, Oasis, Cedar Valley, Brush Creek, Bowman, and Blue Eye. In addition to this was Brush Arbor Meetings held by Bob Grady and John Groves, both of whom were very respected Pentecostal preachers.

In October of 1927, John Groves, who had been living near Omaha, Arkansas, moved his family near the Bowman Church. Brother Groves had held revivals at Brush Creek and the Bowman Church in September of 1926 that were very successful. After moving there, Brother Groves started preaching at the church on a fairly regular basis, although he was not the official pastor. While interviewing "Pete" Snowden, she said that everyone considered, Brother John Groves and Brother Bob Grady, a former Baptist preacher, as joint pastors of the Bowman Pentecostal Church. Powell Youngblood still held revivals at the church when he was in the area. It is interesting to see in the Taney County Republican, the following stories.

5-3-1928 - Rev. Powell Youngblood, one of the leading Pentecostal ministers of the faith will conduct a revival meeting at the Bowman school house, beginning Sunday, April 29th.

6-7-1928 - Rev. and Mrs. Powell Youngblood have closed their meeting at Cedar Valley, and are spending a few days with friends. They were at Harrison Vaughn's from Wednesday until Saturday.

Powell Youngblood was holding a Pentecostal revival meeting at Cedar Valley. As I have said before, churches worked together and attended each others meetings. It looks like this "protracted meeting" started at the Bowman Church and then continued at the Cedar Valley Church. This was a common event that gave people from different areas a chance to attend.

Over the years, the Youngblood family was helping the Bowman Church. Powell Youngblood first, his son George and in later years, Powell's grandson, Paul Youngblood. They all

held revivals at the Bowman Church when they were in the area.

When the Bowman school was consolidated with the Blue Eye School District, the old building continued to be used as a meeting house, it was finally bought and was officially the Bowman Pentecostal Church in 1934.

Clemma Peebler and her daughter, Mabel Maddeford, both women Pentecostal preachers, held several revivals in the area beginning in 1928 and was invited to preach at the Bowman Church when they were in the area. Mabel continued holding revivals at Bowman on into the 1950's.

In October of 1954, the Bowman Pentecostal Church had its first full time pastor, Reverend Raymond L. Lasseter who moved from his farm at Mammoth Springs, Arkansas. Brother Lasseter learned about the Bowman church from a woman evangelist named Clymena Bowling from Crane, Missouri. She had been preaching at the Bowman church on a regular basis and knew they were looking for a permanent pastor. The Lasseter family moved into the two small rooms behind the sanctuary. The young couple and their two small children lived in this cramped space for about a year. In 1955 the church bought a small house near Kimberling City that was going to be flooded by the new lake, Tablerock, and moved it next to the Bowman church. In 1980 the church built a new brick parsonage next to the church.

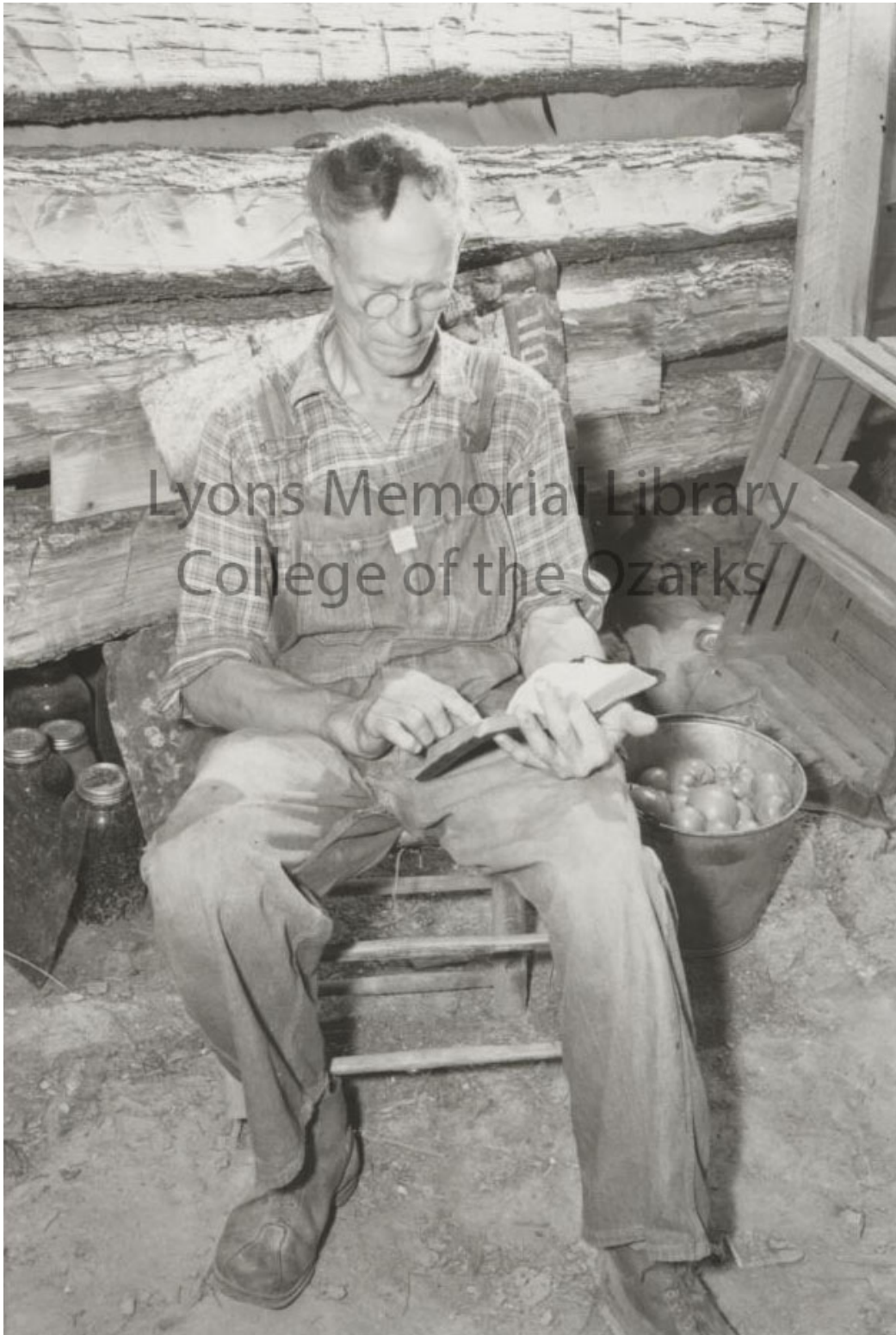
Brother Raymond L. Lasseter was a very successful pastor of the Bowman Church and was very respected in the community, he was paster from October 1954 to March 2010. Brother Lasseter did not envision spending over 50 years pastoring the Bowman Pentecostal Church, "but we have felt we were in the ongoing will of God for our lives through our service to this community".

Since Brother Lasseters retirement, the church has struggled to survive. Reverend Jeff Burkhart, of Real Revival Ministries has held old time Pentecostal revivals all over the state and was asked to move to Blue Eye last summer, 2018, to be the pastor of the Bowman Church. Since moving there, the church has opened a food pantry to help the community.

The church is between the small communities of Blue Eye and Oasis, Oasis is now at the bottom of Tablerock Lake somewhere under the highway 86 bridge. This small church is still in operation at this time (2018) and is the Bowman Old Time Pentecostal Church, Reverend Jeff Burkhart is the pastor.



“Now this other picture is the same building, but with the front and side built on. It is located on old 86 highway, but is located near Blue Eye - up the hill from where Oasis was before being covered up with water. It says Bowman Church across the front. This church is a great landmark, as many a soul knelt at alters and wept there way to a "Born Again" experience. Powell (Snowden) was saved there and I received the "Holy Spirit" there one morning about 1:00 A.M. (in 1937). He was always called the Holy Ghost then! Our daughter Pat (Snowden) was saved there one night at the age of 16, She got violently ill and we carried her into the little back room on this building, we had a bed there. The Lord not only healed her, but she too was filled with the Holy Spirit as in Acts 2:4. She is still serving the Lord. In the Summertime we had a big Brush Arbor when Brother John Groves was pastor and there we always had services out side. Our daughter Pat taught Sunday School out under the trees, weather permitting, and she lined her students on two fallen logs in the yard of the church. Our main preacher was Brother John Groves (in the picture by Townsend Godsey) and also Reverend Bob Grady, he was one of the great preachers of that day”. (Pete Snowden)



Brother John Groves, Photo by Townsend Godsey
Credit: Lyons Memorial Library, College of the Ozarks

BROTHER JOHN GROVES

I will insert the life of Reverend John Daniel Groves here. It is hard to keep this writing in a flowing time line, so I will give a description of this Holy Ghost filled preacher here. This will give the reader an idea of how hard life was for a rural preacher or evangelist in the Ozarks. The first mention of John Groves was in the Oasis column in the Taney County Republican newspaper that stated that [“Rev. Grove\(s\) from Omaha, AR held revival at Brush Creek”](#) in September of 1926.

John Groves was a great Pentecostal preacher and evangelist that was instrumental in the spreading of the Pentecostal faith along the Missouri Arkansas border. Brother Groves considered himself a “Free Pentecost preacher”, this was the belief that it was not required to belong to any denomination. This could be the reason that he didn’t consider himself as a permanent pastor of any one church.

Rev. John Groves moved from the Ridgedale area to the John Snowden place that was in walking distance from the Bowman School House in October of 1927. This is probably when he started preaching there. The Snowden and Groves families were involved in the Bowman Church clear up until the 1980’s at least. John Groves was a dedicated man of God who studied the Bible every day, he held family Bible study first thing every morning and every evening if they were not in church some where.

Preacher Groves lived near the Blue Eye community in a small log cabin not far from the Bowman School House. He and his wife Mary moved to the Hollister - Ridgedale area from El Dorado Springs, Missouri in the early 1900’s. John didn't read until he became a Christian and wanted to study the Bible. He studied the Bible so much during his life, you could read part of a scripture and he could finish it and tell you where it was located in the Bible.

He preached regularly at the Bowman Church, held in the Bowman School House, on and off for several years. <---1927 - 1941---> For a short time he pastored the Jones Church that was held in the Jones School House that was near Lampe Missouri near what is now H highway, this could be the beginning of the Assembly of God church there. He didn't ask for any offerings for himself. Wilma Groves Harryman, John Groves daughter, in her book "Ozark Mountain Girl", said her father's belief was "If one works for God, one shouldn't ask for payment for this service." So he and his large family had to scrape just to survive. Most of the time they walked to church, sometimes they would hitch the horses to the old wagon to make the trip.

The large Groves family worked together to feed the family. His wife, Mary and the children would get wild fruit and "greens" from the forest. John would grow as many crops as they could on the rocky ground. They raised enough tomatoes to be able to take wagon loads to the George Dodgen Canning Factory in Blue Eye. They raised sugar cane to make sorghum with the mill that the whole community used. This gave them the sweatn's for cooking and they were able to have enough to sell. When he delivered tomatoes to Blue Eye, he would visit and sometimes preach a sermon to his captive audience that had gathered around him. His heart was determined to spread the gospel wherever he went.

Brother John Groves traveled far and near to hold revivals. He would have to hire someone to take them to the train station to start on long trips. This is how his two daughters found their husbands. Two of his daughters would travel with him to sing and help with the music during the revival services, one played the guitar and the other played the mandolin. Naomi found her future husband, Lester Norris at a revival at Lathrop Missouri and Avenell found her future husband, Carl Roark at a revival in St. James Missouri. They left the area and moved to their new husbands locations.

As I stated before, Brother Groves' family told me that they didn't think that he actually was the permanent pastor of any one church. He would move around to pastor several churches over the years as he felt led by God. At that time, a lot of churches still depended on traveling preachers and welcomed them when they showed up. He did live in the Oasis and Blue Eye area for several years. During this time, he let God lead the way, he held brush arbor meetings every summer, and was available to preach or hold revivals anywhere God called.

At this time, the small community churches helped each other any way they could. When a revival in one community was held, people would travel for miles to attend. Preachers from other communities would attend and sometimes were asked to take over an evening service. Working together was a way of life among these early churches.

In 1941 a local area photographer named Townsend Godsey visited the Groves home and church to record a way of life that was gaining attention. The photos recorded a way of life that seemed foreign to the outside world. Townsend was able to get them published in area newspapers and then they were also published in the May of 1943 National Geographic Magazine. Later on he included them in a book called "These Were the Last". In his book he shows a brush arbor revival held by John Groves and the people who attended. The John Groves family built a small log cabin down the hill near Oasis in 1937, so I am not sure where this brush arbor was, but it probably was just outside the Bowman School House, some of his family said that the hot weather prevented them from having "meetings" in the building. Then he follows them a few days later to Long Creek where they had a creek side service and baptizing. These photos records the home life of the Groves family. How the cooking was done outside in the outdoor kitchen, because the house, also was too hot. The family had morning and evening Bible study when services were not being held. This is a short poem by his daughter Wilma Groves Harryman.

SACRED FOOD

The Bible was his food for life,
His strength and guiding light;
He read it faithfully with love,
Each morning and each night.

A Brush Arbor was constructed just outside the church every summer so the congregation could be outdoors in the cool breeze of the evening. I have heard that during these "Camp Meeting Revivals", at night you could go outside and hear people praying all over the hills. There was no other background noise, no cars going down the road to drown out the sound of people

praying for souls to be saved at the meeting. When people were saved and gave their heart to God, they were encouraged to be baptized. A special creek side service was planed and anyone who felt like they needed to be baptized were baptized in Long Creek near the old town of Oasis at the bottom of the hill. Oasis is now under water near the highway 86 bridge.



Pastor John Groves, photo by Townsend Godsey
Credit: Lyons Memorial Library, College of the Ozarks

Here is how Townsend Godsey, in his own words, described his experience taking the photo's of John Groves family and the 1941 Brush Arbor Revival:

“This is the story of John Groves, rugged back hills tomato grower who each year devoted nearly a month to intensive Bible study, a week to preaching in the neighborhood brush arbor and a day to baptizing the saved souls in the nearby creek. Groves was one of the rugged breed of men, fiercely independent and determined to wrest a living out of a hardscrabble tract of Ozarks woodlands with the same labor that he used to build his log house, and worship his God as he chose. When asked if he'd ever worked outside the hills he replied, ‘Yessir, once weuns went up to Kansas City for a short Spell but come back. Life outside the hills is too hard even with the WPA’.”

“Groves and his family enjoyed evening (that's late afternoon to outlanders) as a time for Bible reading, hymns and singing to the accompaniment of his daughters' mandolin and guitar picking. In summer most of the family cooking was done on the wood stove set up in the yard.”

“One week in September, when night came on, John Groves and his family changed from their work clothes to their Sunday best and traipsed up the hill to a rustic outdoor shelter known to hillfolk as a brush arbor there to hold services for their neighboring hillfolks. With the Bible as his literal and infallible authority, John Groves expounded on sins of the world in general and of his Ozark community in particular as he sought to bring salvation to his neighbors .”

“Children of all ages participate in most all social and religious gatherings such as play parties, square dances, funerals, weddings, so brush arbor meetings were no exceptions. They might not understand John Grove's reading of the scriptures but they were, nevertheless, exposed to the culture patterns of their community.”



Photo by Townsend Godsey
Credit: Lyons Memorial Library, College of the Ozarks

I think this brush arbor was just outside the Bowman Church, or close to the new log cabin that the Groves family built closer to Oasis. In “Pete” Snowden’s letter she writes the following: R.D.F.

“In the Summertime we had a big Brush Arbor when Brother John Groves was pastor and there we always had services out side”. Pete Snowden

“As the preaching became more intense and the youngens one by one grew drowsy, Groves exhorted his little congregation to repentance as the first step toward being saved. As the Groves girls led the singing their father invited the hillfolk to come kneel at the rude altar and pray through. The highly emotional experience of "praying through" and being "saved" so occupied the minds of the little flock that they were completely unmindful of the flash. Later, after the services had ended, Groves, also apparently unaware of the several flashes, asked if I had gotten any pictures.”

“The finale of the brush arbor meeting came with the "praying through" that made the converts or the redeemed backsliders, if such was the case, eligible for being baptized in the creek come Sunday. Gathering at the riverside, the friends, neighbors and relatives of the saved gathered on the banks of the creek to witness the baptizing conducted by Brother Groves.”



Photo by Townsend Godsey
Credit: Lyons Memorial Library, College of the Ozarks



Photo by Townsend Godsey
Credit: Lyons Memorial Library, College of the Ozarks

“Having baptized the three men, Brother Groves moved to one of the sisters and readied her for immersion. Holding a handkerchief over her mouth lest she gulp the creek waters and become gagged, the saved sister is quickly immersed and is raised from the symbolically watery grave. Holding tight to steady the saved convert lest in her ecstasy she slip on the gravelly creek bottom and fall into the stream, Preacher Groves helps the joyous woman steady herself. Her wet cotton garments clinging tightly to her sparse body the second woman also emerges from the baptism rite, her sins washed clean, as the scriptures promised.”

“John Groves, his religious duties fulfilled with the baptizing that has culminated the week of services at the brush arbor, now returned to his hardscrabble farm where he continued his independent if somewhat hard life, to another summer and another brush arbor meeting and hopefully more baptizings in the creek.” Townsend Godsey



Photo submitted by Johnie Groves, John Groves grandson.

In March of 1946 John Groves became very ill and ended up moving to town. They were able to rent two rooms in the "Ye English Inn" in Hollister. Even during his illness, he felt led to hold a revival in Holt, Missouri. This dedicated minister of God was determined to go, so he spent hours praying for his healing or his health to improve. His family feared that he was close to death. When two ministers came to pray for him, he improved so much that he went to Holt Missouri and held a successful revival, but his health failed as soon as it was over.

When they got back to Hollister, they found all their personal belongings in the hall outside of their rooms. The hotel had rented their rooms to someone else. Now they were homeless. The hotel did let them stay in another room until they were able to find something else.

Mid April of 1946, John, Mary and their youngest daughter Wilma moved into a 12 foot by 12 foot shack just outside Hollister. It was small, but was all they could afford. By this time John was bedfast. His belief in God, and trust in God was so great that he told his family, "If God wants me to live, He will heal me, but if it is my time to die, then i'll go".

In her book "Ozark Mountain Girl", his daughter Wilma, said - "Only a few moments before he died, he asked us if we heard the music in the yard. He said, 'The Angels are singing, and

it's such pretty music.' And then he died." It was June 28, 1946 and he was just 62 years old. A large funeral was held at the Bowman church.

Two of Johns sons, Asa and Perry, had started building a two room house near their homes during Johns illness, but John was gone before it was finished. Mary and their daughter Wilma was able to move into it soon after Johns death.

In 1951, Mary and her daughter Wilma was attending the Bowman Church, along with her sons Asa and Perry. Two women came to the Bowman Church to hold a revival in 1951. They were two sisters, Chloe and Erma Harryman, daughters of Reverend Ernest Harryman, I think from Oklahoma. Erma was the preacher and Chloe sang and played the guitar. This revival was held over an extended period, and was well received. This is where Wilma met their younger brother, Hugh Harryman, he was 22 years old and she was 15 and they were soon married and moved to California.

James Daniel Groves, "Danny"

Born 11-23-1910

John Groves wanted his children to be preachers, the only one that became a pastor was Danny Groves who was born November 23, 1910. When he was about one year old his mother, Mary, decided to try an old folklore test on Danny. Folklore said to put a Bible and a dollar bill in front of your baby and watch which one he picks up first. If he picks up the dollar, his life will be dedicated to working for the dollar. If he picks up the Bible, he will dedicate his life to God. He reached for the bible and became a Spirit filled preacher at the age of 17 years old and worked for the lord his whole life. There were 24 years between Danny Groves and his youngest sister, Wilma. She said that from her earliest memory of Danny, he did evangelical work. He later joined the Assembly of God.

Danny Groves became a well known preacher in the Southwest Missouri area, he held revivals all over the Ozarks including Bowman Church where his father had preached over the years. He pastured the Oak Ridge Full Gospel Church and the Ponce de Leon Pentecostal church that the Bradford family attended. At one time the Ozark Assembly of God voted him in as pastor, but he was not able to take over because he did was not ordained in the Assembly of God yet. My wife, Rita Glidewell Fortner was dedicated by Danny Groves in 1952 at the "Ponce Pentecostal Church".

There is so much that could be written about Danny Groves, but I will have to add it later.



Ponci Pentecostal Church

The Peebler Family of Preachers

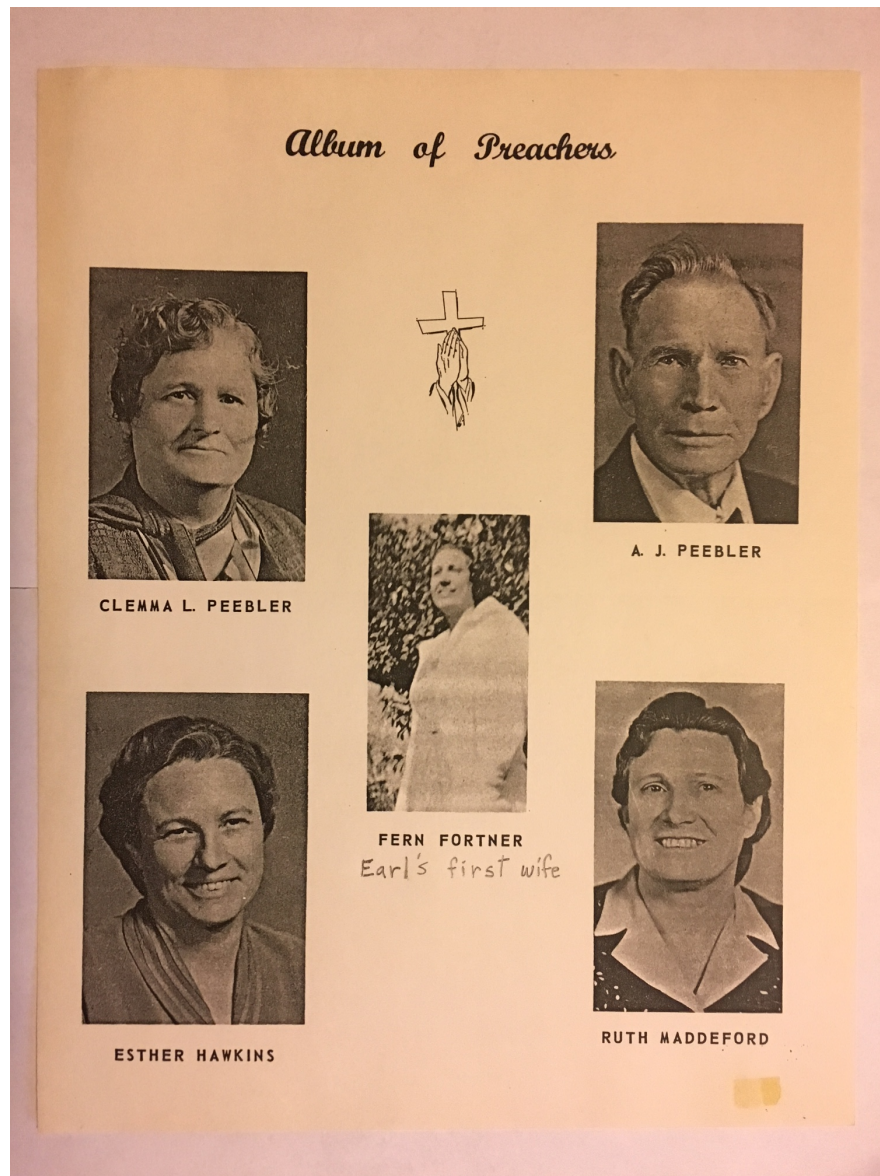
John Groves never learned to drive a car so he probably could not return to Ridgedale very often. This is where my family comes into the picture. The community of Ridgedale had been exposed to the Pentecostal faith and would be open to anyone who could fill in for Brother Groves. The first reference to Southern Missouri that I found in some old family letters was when Clemma (Fortner) Peebler held a revival at the Ridgedale School House in 1928, a year after Brother Groves moved away. Clemma was the first in the family to be baptized in the Holy Ghost and started teaching the Power of Pentecost and was well received. Soon the whole family was all baptized in the Holy Ghost with the evidence of Speaking in Tongues. The whole family, including Earl N. Fortner, returned in June of 1933 and held another revival at the Ridgedale School House. During this trip they traveled from community to community holding "meetings" at the small churches and school houses. I think during this time they held revivals at Ridgedale School, Oasis School, Bowman School, Blue Eye, Hollister and Branson.

It was in the 1928 revival at Ridgedale that A.J. and Clemmas's daughter Mabel Maddeford presented her first sermon. At the end of service one night, after Clemma closed the service, she announced that her daughter, Mabel was going to preach at the next night's service. This was the first that Mabel had heard that she was going to preach. Mabel became a great preacher and teacher of God's Word. Soon the whole family was preaching in Missouri, Oklahoma and California.

It is unclear where the family went to preach from here, but I do know that they went back to California and held services near home in Pomona California. In 1937 the family returned to Missouri and were involved in one of the biggest revivals ever held at Ridgedale. This revival was held by Reverend Bob Grady, I will tell that story later.

The next trip to the Ozarks that the family of preachers went on that I know of was in 1940, Earl Fortner drove the family from California and they probably held services at the same churches that they did the first trip. I do know that Clemma was able to preach at the Bowman Church in the spring of 1940.

Album of Preachers



This sheet is what started me looking for more information on this family of Pentecostal preachers. Fern Fortner in the center, was my fathers first wife who died in 1943. Mabel Maddeford explains a little about her family in the following letter.

"These photographs were all taken in or about the year of 1940. Clemma Louise and A.J. Peebler are the parents of me and my two sisters, Fern Fortner and Esther Hawkins and we were all preachers and in the ministry at the same time, though my Father only part time. There were five of us children, the others are Roy Peebler, a teacher in the school system in Southern California and the other is Pauline Cotton, who is a nurse and lives in Boise Idaho. Our brother Roy also ministered for a time and pastured a Church of the Brethren for some time in Wichita Kan-

sas. My Parents were of that organization also and they pioneered and established a number of the churches until the year of 1928 when our Mother was baptized with the Holy Ghost and very shortly afterwards we three sisters were saved, filled with the Holy Ghost and were called and ordained of God into the ministry and evangelistic work. The pictures of me and my husband were the ones used on our revival posters. We don't look the same today, by no stretch of imagination for "TIME" has taken it's toll. But so many have asked for pictures and I wanted this Album as you are so well acquainted with us all: as I write so often of them all."

"Daddy departed this earth plane in 1942 at the age of 96. Fern was called to join him in 1943 at the age of 37. Father had lived such a great and full life but we all were shocked at the departure of Fern at the age of 37 and so sadly missed. At this writing, I am 71 and Esther is 11 years younger. Roy is between us and Pauline is the youngest. Mama went home at the age of 85 while living with me and Esther in the city of Pomona California in 1960."

Clemma (Fortner) Peebler was so inspired by the Holy Ghost that she couldn't sit still, she had to work and spread the gospel where ever she went. From what I have gathered Clemma was the main preacher, with A. J. Peebler traveling with her and helping when he could. Other family members helped them travel and took turns preaching at the revivals. Mabel Maddeford, A. J. and Clemma's daughter, and her husband, Frank had moved near Hollister, Missouri. Frank got a job working on the new bridge connecting Branson and Hollister. This gave the family of preachers a connection to Southwest Missouri that lasted for many years.

On the June of 1933 trip through the Ozarks Earl Fortner, my Father, and his first wife Fern and the whole family held another revival at the Ridgedale School. During that trip Mabel's daughter, Agatha Lavonne, nick named "Pete" married Powell Snowden of Hollister. This is a photo of them with Earl Fortner's 1928 Chevy, that they borrowed to go on their short honeymoon.

They both were away from God at the time, but eventually were long time members of the Bowman Church. Powell Snowden was deacon of the church for many years. I was told by John Groves, Asa Groves son, that Powell and Pete operated a store next to the church until they moved to Orville, California.



These early trips were incredibly hard. Dad told me how it would take weeks to travel from California to the Ozarks of Missouri. Most roads were dirt and some in the desert of Arizo-

na was made of wood planks to keep you out of the sand. Flat tires was a daily event and you had to fix them yourself.

This is a photo of Earl Fortner picking up Clemma and A. J. Peebler in the middle of a stream on a trip they made in 1940. The photo was probably taken by Fern Fortner, one of Clemma and A.J.'s daughter.



After her husband died in 1942, Clemma kept going full time moving from church to church holding revivals, both here in Missouri and in California.

Reverend Bob Grady



Photo's from Find a Grave

Most rural churches were held in the local school building and the people would just have church. The communities didn't worry about denominations, they felt lucky if they had someone to preach. Some churches only had circuit preachers come in maybe once a month, the other Sundays they just had Sunday School or a member the congregation would preach.

An organization called the WHITE RIVER ASSOCIATION of GENERAL BAPTIST was formed in the area to help supply these communities with pastors and it was welcomed by everyone. The organization grew rapidly, preachers ordained by the Association would meet with a rural church and ask the church to organize under their leadership. This greatly helped to spread the gospel and supplied ministers that could meet on a more regular basis. The organization was very successful and was in existence for many years.

This brings me to Rev. Bob Grady, he was ordained in the White River Association of General Baptist on September 13, 1930.

In a column written on 10-13-1932, Marry Elizabeth Mahnkey wrote the following.

“Mrs. Mahnkey visited kinfolks last Saturday and Sunday and enjoyed a real old time Baptist revival in the old school house; different in this way, the services were in charge of four youthful preachers, assisted Saturday by a fifth, Dean Hall Jackson. It was beautiful and touching, their sincerity, courage and humility. Mr. Sims, a son of our old friend Doc Sims, Bob Grady, Clell Collier, and Ebsy Whorton, were the eloquent and inspired young men. Many young people are being converted. Roy and Roberta Jones were baptized on Friday by Bob Grady, and others will follow at the close of the meeting.”

Soon, Brother Bob Grady was very active in enrolling churches into the Association. He helped the following churches join the Association:

Meadows Church on May 26, 1935
Enterprise Church on August 4, 1935
Pine Ridge Church on October 11, 1934
Macedonia Church in November, 1936
Oak Ridge Church in 1936

This probably is not all the churches that Rev. Bob Grady helped bring into the Baptist Association, but it is all that I can confirm. During this time Brother Grady would hold revivals at the different churches and was well liked and respected in all the communities that he visited.

Here is the story of Bob Grady’s conversion to the Pentecostal faith as written by Lavonne Snowden, known by her friends as “Pete”. Her and her husband, Powell Snowden, were lifelong friends with Reverend Bob Grady.

“He had been a popular Baptist Preacher, But one day he went to pray for a lady that lived in a Branson Church Basement. The church was on the hill in Branson, (my mother, Mabel Maddeford, owned it). While praying for this lady preacher, a Mrs. Silkman - he was slain on his back on the floor. He said, (he told this often in years following) while laying on his back he saw himself in a gutter of the street simply being smothered in cigarettes, they were everywhere, could hardly breath for them. He cried, yes Lord I'll quit and he then was filled with The Holy Spirit and began speaking in Tongues. His experience was so electrifying that he told it everywhere and thousands came into Pentecost because of him. Anyway, I guess I'll continue this, the Baptist people put him out of his church, we went with him the day they told him to resign and had to turn in his papers. Well, of course that was the wrong thing to do to this handsome charismatic preacher, his popularity exploded thru all the region and untold ones were swept into the ‘Kingdom of God’ ". Pete Snowden

Now Brother Grady was a Holy Ghost Pentecostal preacher that belonged to the White River General Baptist Association. The following stories were published in the Taney County Republican.

September 3, 1936,

“REVEREND BOB GRADY CONDUCTS BIG REVIVAL”
“Sunday 22 Converts Baptized at Blackwell's Ferry. Church Work Prospers.”

“Rev. Bob Grady has been conducting a very successful revival service at Cedar Creek. It has been in progress for two weeks. Sunday an all day meeting was held on the gravel bar at Blackwell's Ferry and an old time basket dinner was served. In an addition to the devotional service the rite of baptism was given to 22 converts. The services at Cedar Creek will continue for at least this week and another baptismal services will be held next Sunday. Rev. Willie Coffelt is assisting Rev. Grady”.

9-10-1936,

“REVIVAL SERVICES AT CEDAR CREEK CLOSE”

“Thirty-eight Persons make Confession. Thirty-two Baptized into Baptist Church.”

“For the past three weeks, beginning August 16 and ending September 5, Reverend Willie Coffelt and Reverend Bob Grady have been conducting a meeting at Cedar Creek. During that time there were thirty-eight conversions, thirty-two were baptized and 36 united into the Cedar Creek Church. Following is the report as sent in by the ministers and likewise part of the information comes from a member of the Cedar Creek Church.”

“The conversions made during the meeting included: W.S. Blackwell, Tom Morgan, Lloyd Yeatman, Charley Brown, Jess Beaty, Hannis Wise, Hazel Fine, Ida Smith, Cordia Beaty, Eva Morgan, Myrtye Blankenship, Alva Hughey, Nail B. Watts, Willa May Watts, Esther Manes, John Brown, Bessie Brown, Goldie Summers, Bruce Manes, Daisy Manes, Willie Fine, Ophelra May Wise, Clara Brown, Andrew Brown, Jess Sims, Edith Sims, Floyd Brown, Blanche Brown, B.H. Compton, Ava Blackwell, Hampton Persinger, Daisy Persinger, Ida Smith, Byron Moore. Thirty-two were baptized and thirty-six united with the Cedar Creek church. On our record we have had thirty-eight conversions. Some of the names we failed to get.”

“There will be revival services start near Rev. Grady's at Powersite the 16th of this month. This will be an outdoor meeting. There is plenty of parking space available. This meeting is to be conducted by Reverend Almeda Brittain and Reverend Bob Grady. Every minister and every body is invited to attend.”

“Asking that every one will pray for this service, and thanking everyone for their prayers and offerings in the Cedar Creek meeting which has closed, and trusting the good work will continue in our country, Sincerely yours, Reverend Willie Coffelt and Reverend Bob Grady.”

60 Day Ridgedale Camp Meeting Revival

If you think a 60 day revival sounds like a long time listen to the following account of Thelma Bilyeu who was saved in a 100 day revival held at Oak Ridge Church in 1933.

“The revival that I was saved in did go on 100 nights and it seemed no problem at that time. The Holy Spirit would move on a preacher to start a revival. A starting date would be set but no mention was made of a closing date. Everyone understood it would close when the Lord said it was enough.....

“I remember with nostalgia the good old brush arbor meetings we used to have. The framework was set up of poles and trees. The sides were open and tree branches covered the top to keep out the rain and sun. The seats were rudely constructed of logs and planks. There were no cushions but no one complained of them being uncomfortable. Their attention was all on the services.” Thelma Bilyeu

Brother Bob Grady continued to preach and hold revivals, openly preaching the Holy Spirit and the evidence of Speaking in Tongues. In 1937 he started a revival meeting at the Ridgedale, Missouri School House, and was assisted by the “Album of Preachers”, who helped with the music and preaching. The Ridgedale School House had hosted Pentecostal meetings for years and had a large group of followers. It wasn’t long before Reverend Bob Grady was told he couldn’t use the Ridgedale School for his meetings, “because there was no place for Pentecost” at that time. God Supplied a building. The following is part of a letter written by Agatha Lavonne, “Pete”, Snowden about how this revival affected her life.

“I was saved on May 18, 1937. Brother Grady was preaching a revival out by Arkansas line, near Ridgedale (Grandma Peebler's Poem) in a Big Chicken Brooder House, been cleaned out carefully. You know there were no church buildings in those years for Pentecostal people. Anyway, crowds got so big they tore out one end of the building and then they tore out the other end and Brother Grady was preaching in the middle of the building. This revival had been going on for two months every night. We hadn't gone to this revival because we weren't Christians, but we went this LAST NIGHT just to see what it was all about! We really knew of course, because Powell was from a strong Pentecostal background and my mother by this time was preaching elsewhere. Anyway I suppose you guessed what happened. Brother Grady took his text from John 7:37-38. The Holy Spirit so convicted me (I was 20 years old) that all I could hear of the sermon was this is your day, I made a run for the old boards that was set up for the alters. Powell was real unhappy about this that all next week, he told me he did not want to live with a Christian, he had had enough of religion all his life. I calmly told him I was going to be baptized when they were going to have it. Anyway the Holy Spirit so convicted him, (he said he was sick all week) that the next Sunday night he came in from doing the chores and said do you want to go to church? I said our car is broke down, he RAN TWO MILES and hired a neighbor to drive us to the Bowman School House that night and he too rushed to the Alter and was saved. The next Sunday at the Cedar Valley School House, now under water, he received the Holy Ghost speaking in tongues, this was all such a shock to all his worldly friends. He was responsible for

MANY coming to God because of his stand he took and the drastic change in his life. He became a deacon and became a teacher of the Word. So forever we shall be grateful for Reverend Bob Grady.” Pete Snowden

The following is how the Baptist Association responded to Brother Grady and other preachers who had been “Filled with the Holy Ghost with the evidence of Speaking in Tongues”.

The White River Association of General Baptist made a resolution during the September 1938 organization meeting as follows: “Resolution #26 - That we require our pastors to carefully and prayerfully warn the flock against all false Doctrine.”

"On April 1, 1939 the Presbytery met in a called session and passed the following resolution: That the Presbytery of the White River Association call for the credentials to be turned in of Brother Bob Grady, Sister Effie Melton and Brother Albert Pierce. Must be turned in by the 5th Sunday Meeting in April, 1939, and if not, will be canceled by this body for preaching heresy or different doctrine." At least one other preacher, Frank Fletcher, was dropped from the roles on grounds of preaching heresies. Pentecost was spreading!

In the September, 1941 meeting the Baptist Association passed Resolution #20 - "That any church failing to represent for three years in succession be automatically dropped from our association and the following named churches has failed to represent as required by the association, to wit: Forsyth, Riverview, Walnut Shade, Oak Ridge and Central, and are therefore dropped from the list of churches in this association."

I think Brother Grady was proud of being ordained by the White River Association of General Baptist and hated to give it up. He waited several years before he officially turned in his ordination papers and was supported by several of his friends who went with him when he did.

Brother Bob Grady was one of the foremost Pentecostal preachers in southwest Missouri his whole life. He went on to pastor several churches including, Taneyville Apostolic Church, The Community Church at Powersite, and Old Branson Full Gospel Church. His granddaughter, Becky Roberts wrote;

“I did upon occasion as a child, go with my grandparents to the Community Church at Powersite, where I vividly remember my grandfather often times playing the piano. He didn’t read music, but however, was extremely talented at playing by ear, as were two of his three daughters. On occasions as I remember, no one in the congregation was present to play the piano, so he would do so.” Becky Roberts

This revival, in a chicken house, changed hundreds of lives across the Ozarks. People came from miles around and camped right on the grounds, praying and preaching all day and into the night. Fern, Earl Fortner’s first wife who was one of the preachers helping during this meeting was so inspired by the Holy Ghost Fire that she wrote the following to her family a few months before she died of cancer.

“The other day, Brother Mathews sent us some pictures, ... And then one of me by the chicken house camp meeting in Missouri, it was a good picture of big old fat me, Oh! how I wish I could turn the pages of time back there for one week. Wasn't that the grandest time a bunch of Christians ever had? Maybe Heaven will be something like that or BETTER”. Fern Fortner

I met Vivian Ireland in April of 2019, who told me she was from Ridgedale. I mentioned the Chicken House Revival and she didn't know anything about it, but told me about going to the “Grape Arbor Revivals” at Ridgedale when she was young, in the 1960's. Apparently Ridgedale still had the Pentecostal Fire.

xxxxxxxxxxxxxx need to find more about Ridgedale revival xxxxxxxxxxxxxx

If anyone has any information at all about this revival please contact me and I will include it in a later version. R.D.F.

A TRIBUTE TO RIDGEDALE MISSOURI

A highway 'long the top of a mountain,
A schoolhouse under a tree.
A gathering together for meeting,
That's part of Ridgedale for me.

Grey mists and a beautiful sunrise,
Glory of hills I see.
Wonderful, beautiful, splendid,
That's part of Ridgedale for me.

Tall pines, and oaks, and cedars,
Woodland so wild and free.
And all the friends so lovely,
That's part of Ridgedale for me.

Blackberries 'long the old rail-fence,
Grape vines climbing a tree.
The wild rose bush by the winding road,
That's part of Ridgedale for me.

Hearing the sound of a baying hound,
As he barked at the foot of a tree.
Waiting for one to come with a gun,
That's part of Ridgedale for me.

A little store by the side of the road,
A picture most lovely to see.
Little brown cabins 'neath the oak tree boughs,
That's part of Ridgedale for me.

By: Clemma Louisa Fortner Peebler - written in early 1939.

BRUSH CREEK SUNDAY SCHOOL

One ministry that had a big effect on the community was "Cinda's Sunday School" that was held at Brush Creek, later known as Cedar Valley Church. This Sunday School was well documented by Mary Elizabeth Mahnkey in her Oasis column in the Taney County Republican. The whole community of churches sent their children to this Sunday School. I will just include the columns as she presented them.

5-2-1935

Rev. Carter, Sunday School evangelical worker, from Aurora with his two children drove down Sunday, and passed the day with the Brush Creek folks, where a bountiful basket dinner was served, and a wonderful sermon by the Reverend Carter enjoyed. Mrs. Allen Kenner was elected Supt. Mrs. Walter Burnett, assistant supt. and Miss Elaine Burnett, Secretary of the new Sunday School, which we hope will flourish.

6-6-1935

Quite a number of folks attended Sunday School at Brush Creek Sunday. Gladys Bowman and little daughter went horse back, Evelyn sat up and held the reins to guide the horse, quite like a big girl.

John Bernett also went to Sunday School horse back, riding a nice fat, gray horse. It seemed like old times to see people go by riding horse back.

There will be children's day program at Brush Creek June the 9th. Every body is invited. The program will begin at 9:30 in the morning. Reverend John Groves will preach at 11 o'clock.

6-13-1935

Children's day was observed at Brush Creek on Sunday. An unusually good program was given. A large attendance was there in spite of the high water. Mrs. Kenner is superintendent of a good Sunday School there which meets every Sunday at 9 o'clock.

6-20-1935

The topics of conversation at Oasis are fishing in Long Creek, and Sunday School at Brush Creek.

MY SUNDAY SCHOOL IN THE OZARK HILLS

In the Ozark Hills to which I came
Two years ago last fall or spring
The hills so beautiful to see
Gave me to know, "I might help thee."

The feeling came late in my heart
A Sunday School I might help start
A way to help each little one
So the work at Brush Creek was begun.

Each one is ready when I call
So kindly, gentle, one and all
They love to help with all the work
Not one has even tried to shirk.

The hill school house sits on a hill
My dream came true - the bell once still,
Calls; Sunday School is for us all
Dear God, we will obey that call.

6-27-1935

There has been a good attendance at Brush Creek. The children had an organ given them and the good voices at Cinda's Sunday School will be in training for special music.

7-4-1935

The church at Bowman is holding a family dinner at Brush Creek the 4th of July.

7-11-1935 - Oasis

A good crowd spent the fourth of July at Brush Creek. Church and community dinner were a part of the program.

As usual, a good number attended "Cinda's" Sunday School at Brush Creek.

Brush Creek School will open two weeks later this year on account of sudden extreme heat.

7-18-1935

Brush Creek Sunday School has increased in numbers. Forty attended Sunday.

8-1-1935

Revival meetings at Brush Creek were transferred to Ridgedale.

9-5-1935

Cinda's Sunday School picnic dinner at Oasis was well attended. The table groaned with weight of good things. Everyone had plenty to eat and a friendly hour enjoyed. The program included class songs and recitations. Mr. Eychaner gave the address and Mr. Luther Pinkley made a few remarks to the older folks. The day was far too short for the guests.

Note: This is about the time Mary Elizabeth Mahnkey moved away from Oasis to the Forsyth area. The Oasis correspondent that took her place just told the facts and didn't write in the eloquent style as Mary did.

9-19-1935

Rev. Crockett gave a fine sermon at Brush Creek Thursday night.

3-26-1936

Cinda's Sunday School will re-open next Sunday at Brush Creek, 10:00 o'clock.

4-30-1936

Cinda's Sunday School children made a nice donation of useful articles for Asa Groves, who's house burned down last week.

5-6-1937

Brother Grove(s) will preach at Brush Creek School house Sunday night. Everybody come.

The Sunday school will have a Mother's day program Sunday if Long Creek goes down so the people can cross.

5-20-1937

We had a wonderful time at Brush Creek Sunday. At 9:30 there was Sunday school, and at eleven Brother John Groves gave a Mother's day sermon followed by Brother Flipho and Brother Finnermore. What a wonderful table of good things to eat. At two o'clock the Mother's day program began. Bowman church gave us their program and everybody surely had a good time and a big crowd attended.

Research Information And Complete Letters Used in Story

In the text of this book, I used portions of these letters. I am putting the complete letters here so you might be able to see the personal parts of the letters if you want. I also went through about twenty years of the Taney County Republican Newspaper and have included the stories that mentioned church events about the Ridgedale to Blue Eye area in the order that they were published.

Album of Preachers

By: Mabel Ruth Maddeford 1969

These photographs were all taken in or about the year of 1940. Clemma Louise and A.J. Peebler are the parents of me and my two sisters, Fern Fortner and Esther Hawkins and we were all preachers and in the ministry at the same time, though my Father only part time. There were five of us children, the others are Roy Peebler, a teacher in the school system in Southern California and the other is Pauline Cotton, who is a nurse and lives in Boise Idaho. Our brother Roy also ministered for a time and pastured a Church of the Brethren for some time in Wichita Kansas. My Parents were of that organization also and they pioneered and established a number of the churches until the year of 1931 when our Mother was baptized with the Holy Ghost and very shortly afterwards we three sisters were saved, filled with the Holy Ghost and were called and ordained of God into the ministry and evangelistic work. The pictures of me and my husband were the ones used on our revival posters. We don't look the same today, by no stretch of imagination for "TIME" has taken it's toll. But so many have asked for pictures and I wanted this Album as you are so well acquainted with us all: as I write so often of them all.

Daddy departed this earth plane in 1942 at the age of 96. Fern was called to join him in 1943 at the age of 37. Father had lived such a great and full life but we all were shocked at the departure of Fern at the age of 37 and so sadly missed. At this writing, I am 71 and Esther is 11 years younger. Roy is between us and Pauline is the youngest. Mama went home at the age of 85 while living with me and Esther in the city of Pomona California in 1960.

I am building a Book, if I can state it so; around these loved ones pictured here. Mother will be the central figure for she will be THE TALL TIMBER THAT ALWAYS HELD THE PEEBLER HOUSE TOGETHER IN THE MANY STORMS THAT RAGED AGAINST IT: especially in the Sense that God was calling forth Ministers of His Gospel from THIS HOUSE. I will Build this Book from Proverbs 31-10. "Who can find a virtuous WOMAN? For her price is far above rubies." I will title this Book, "I remember Mama". There will be the scent of much "GROUND SPICES" with now and then the fragrance of the ATTAR OF ROSES which portray the very ESSENCE OF GOD. This Book will reveal many PATTERNS FOR THIS HOUR FOR HOMES AND HOUSEHOLDS STEEPED IN DISTRESS: KNOWING NOT HOW TO OVERCOME. Hundreds of times you will see my Mother as she boldly and staunchly STANDS IN THE GAP AND MAKES UP THE HEDGE TO SAVE HER HOUSE FROM DESTRUCTION.

I need your prayers that God will enable me to leave this MEMORIAL to the Mother who really and truly KNEW GOD!

So enjoy these pictures. We sent them with our Calendar and many are writing saying how they enjoyed them. God bless everyone of you. We do pray that you will enjoy this book now in your hands. Look for me all through it: for I am there. Please write us, though we cannot say we are able to answer for certain reasons: but know for sure you are written in our own BOOK OF REMEMBRANCES and we will pray every day for you for as we write these final words it is now in the year of 1969. May this be the BEST YEAR EVER FOR ALL OF YOU,

With great Love,

Ruth Maddeford
OROVILLE, CALIFORNIA

Mabel Ruth Maddeford

This is a compilation of some of Mabel Ruth Maddeford's personal comments, taken from her 1966 booklet, "SONG OF SOLOMAN". It is a very in depth study of the Bible. I just took things out that I thought would let you know who this wonderful woman was. I really enjoyed reading her book, but only included some of the personal items in this writing. R.D.F

RUTH MADDEFORD
1657 EAST 9th Street
Pomona California 91766

As a minister and teacher of The Word for many years and the author and publisher of Bible lessons and studies for more than thirty five years; there came a time when I must know more about the Bible therefore I spent three years this year (1966) in almost continual Bible research. This was an EATING into my soul. It was MORE than desperate hunger. It was searching into the heart of God.

NOW TO THE MOUNTAINS IN THE SONG (of Solomon)

Only in research can one discover THE SPIRIT OF THE WORD in these mountains. They are patterns, planes, plateaus, realms and stepping stones for we all climb these same mountains for our Lord made the way before us.

We shall begin with the "beginning" - the UN-NAMED mountains and hills in Verse 2:8,

"The voice of my Beloved! behold he cometh leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills." Every Spirit-filled person is familiar with this experience for they have run, leaping and skipping with Him on every high hill and mountain. I will use my own personal experience the first time it happened to me.

For Years I had gone weeping to altars trying to "GET SAVED" not once ever having been told I was saved at Calvary and all I needed to do was to repent of my sins and accept a FREE GIFT of salvation because Jesus had bought and paid for me with His Life blood. Now that statement alone grates on a lot of folks.

The sight of Mount Calvary would break my heart but I could not or would not accept the Gift so I was very miserable for the Holy Spirit was dealing with my heart.

Then one night I heard a woman preacher say that there is joy even amongst the angels when a sinner accepts Christ. She said, "I believe God laughs (the Bible says He will laugh at your calamity so why shouldn't He laugh when a sinner comes home?) I believe Jesus is leaping on the hills and mountains in heaven and the angels are shouting. That's how important it is when sinners come to Christ."

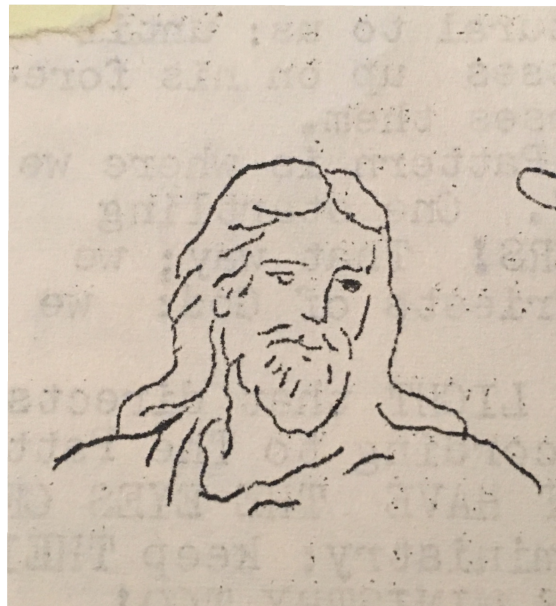
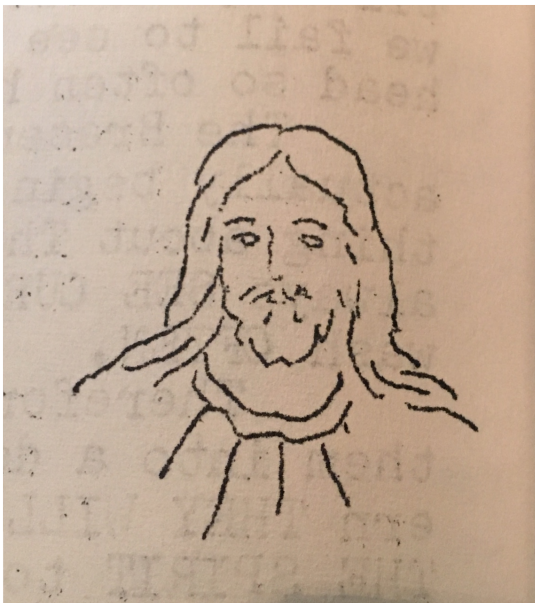
When I heard those words — not even knowing then, they were scriptural, the frozen icy dam in my heart gave way and a joy flooded my soul and I jumped to my feet and with cries of JOY I reached my hands high up to meet Him there "leaping on the mountains and skipping on the hills" and do you know I have met him there tens of thousands of times since. Three months later, again sitting in my seat in the choir, again He came leaping on the hills and skipping on the mountain's and right there in my seat - He baptized me with the Holy Ghost, and again I jumped to my feet and joined Him and my string of dime store beads flew every direction, my red ear rings came off as I danced with Him out over the hills and the mountains. And do you know Something - from that hour I have never put that junk back on, I have never touched scissors to my hair, I have never painted my face, I have never worn a sleeveless dress nor short skirts. And I was as young as a lot of you folks are who don't dare face criticism because of what the world might say or think, I can truthfully declare what God, through the Holy Spirit, delivered me from has NEVER had the least attraction for me since and I stood on platforms for seventeen years and boldly declared the truth.

.... Many ladies think it is alright to follow the styles of the world - dress like the world - look like the world; so they do! They say God cares nothing as to how they look on the outside. Then there are others to whom God has MADE TO KNOW FOR THEM they cannot do these things. Some even as I have: have made a COVENANT with God to suppress some things and they are glad to do so: in fact they are BOUND TO DO SO. I don't have long hair because some two by four preacher called me a "bobbed haired floosie". I wear long hair because it is A SIGN OR COVENANT between me and God. I wouldn't dare cut it of my own free will. But that does NOT make me a better person than you are by no means. I don't wear short sleeves nor short dresses - and haven't since I was saved out of the world, but that is no sign I am a better person than you by no means.

THE PORTRAIT

Many years ago when I, a rebellious soul with a hateful and stubborn spirit, was walking down the streets of Los Angeles with my young son, we passed a store that had a large picture of Jesus in the window. I gave it a fleeting glance in passing: but immediately I was stopped and I turned back to look again and as I stared at that face, painted as some artist felt as to how He looked - a very familiar portrait - I was actually pierced to the heart by the sweet beauty of the portrait. The next day I returned to see the picture again and I stood enthralled and could not budge away - I looked for over an hour at that picture. My soul was in torment in those days as God was so relentlessly pursuing me by His Holy Spirit and I was just as desperately rejecting Him.

But something about the pictured face held me there and as I have always been a person who closely examines details in everything that catches my attention: I saw the Love there: I saw sorrow: I saw the pain - tho only just a painting - I saw it on that face. At last I turned away in bitter weeping and knowing the Scriptures as I did having been trained from childhood by a very Godly Mother in the Bible I actually knew I SAW JESUS THERE. I never recovered from that hour of looking in a pictured face of Jesus, tho I did not surrender my own stubborn will until several years later. I HOPE THIS PICTURED FACE THAT I NOW PORTRAY ON THESE PAGES WILL TAKE EFFECT SOMEWHERE. IT IS A CHALLENGE! Our mother was a sort



of Grandma Moses artist and she painted many pictures of Christ. Her family were hard critics: tho none could compare with her pictures. We would say, "Mama you make His eyes too big", and she would walk over to the window and stare out at nothing and answer, "that's the way I see Him". So if we too, have made a real emphasis on His Eyes: it's because that's the way we see Him.

I returned to Pomona California in August 1965 from Oroville expecting to return shortly to Oroville. We write today on December 15, 1966 and still do not know when the (home com-

ing) will take place. When I returned here I was made aware of the vast damage done by false prophets. (She continued telling how ministers were telling people how much money God wanted them to give. I think she stayed trying to help minister to people who were upset about this practice.)

Having completed a series of lessons on "The Song of Solomon", begun in 1965, as a message of CHALLENGE to the Body of Christ which is The Church of which Christ is The Head. In answer to many request we are re—writing the lessons and printing them into booklet form. Constant study on the message has brought much more Truth and greater Light than was brought forth in the lessons so there seems to be need of further writings. So we now offer to our readers this Booklet.

We had considered and mentioned to others that we felt we should avoid so much personal experiences in this Booklet, only to be told these LIVED-OUT experiences verified the messages. We knew also, we love to read other's experiences in-all their writings.

I thought on this fact; in studying the background of the writers of the Bible, we found the authors were all experienced men who wrote of many personal experiences as they were led of The Spirit.....

I am always made glad when I get letters saying, Sister Maddeford I have to read your writings, very, slowly. I come to a statement that sets up a train of thoughts and .. often I go in THAT THOUGHT for days before I can read any other sentence of the lesson. Beloved friends, you could not write anything that pleases me more. I do not ask for exalting words nor compliments, but I do ask God to use me to CHALLENGE THE BODY OF CHRIST. It is not I; but the blessed Holy Spirit of God directing my thoughts, my pen and The Ministry He has given me.

Pressure Against Women Preachers

In the year of 1953, God began revealing to me and my sister Esther the wonderful Truths of Kingdom Wine found in "The Song" and in the Book of Esther: and also throughout the Bible. We both began to write of this in our publication "The Consolation" and sent it out to the several thousand on our mailing list then. (Since then we have cut our mailing list greatly.) At that time pressure was bad against "females" and it became much greater, and is just about to climax now in 1966, and WILL CLIMAX in 1967-1968.

In answer to many sisters who greatly felt the pressure that was manifested against them to have a special convocation FOR WOMEN ONLY, we set the date for this convocation here in Pomona. We knew we had to FIND TRUTH or forever keep silent. As the male constituency was demanding it. Women came from many states and we were given the use of a bran new little chapel here in Pomona. We had called a three day Convocation but it lasted six days as the Spirit of God moved in with GREAT REVELATION. We had sat out a little table of Grape juice and crackers and every time we partook of THIS TABLE God manifested in many ways. We came to the understanding of the Kingdom of Wine and of THE CHURCH as THE WOMAN

and of THE BODY OF CHRIST, as THE MAN - ALL ONE BODY - WITH TWO MANIFESTATIONS - AND CHRIST THE HEAD.

Yet, I am sorry to say, we did not really have the courage to STAND on this Truth until in the year of 1965 when God told me in the City of Oroville California "THIS IS MY TIME FOR YOU TO WRITE IT", and I did! TO MY GREAT SURPRISE IT HAS BEEN GLORIOUSLY ACCEPTED BY MANY.

We are sorry to report in 1966 MALES ARE PREPARING TO FOREVER KEEP THE WOMEN SILENT IN THE CHURCHES. UNDER THE LAW! Cor.14:34. However they will not succeed in this for GOD ORDAINS OTHERWISE. I have not faced this pressure nearly forty years for nothing. I know who called me and anointed me and ordained me and sent me....

The Latter Rain

Friends, do you realize that when the out pouring of The Latter Rain began in 1903 — 1906 that a great deal of Methodist TRADITION and BAPTIST TRADITION and a dozen OTHER TRADITIONS were just taken and POLISHED UP and MADE PENTECOSTAL? Did You know that ? It's a fact, AND IT ALL WORE OUT — BECAUSE IT'S BEEN TRADITION. WHAT WAS NEEDED WAS THE SIGN of touns of FIRE. We needed that SIGN OF FIRE right down inside us. We would not have required little two by four preachers calling us "painted up, bobbed haired floozies" to have gotten us to depart from the world; we would have found it for ourselves in The Bible. WE WERE TAUGHT TO LISTEN - NOT TO STUDY. I never did fit in too well as I WAS DETERMINED TO SEARCH FOR MYSELF - AND I DID - often to the discomfiture of the preachers and teachers. When we TOUCH FIRE dear friends; we KNOW IT. The Pentecostal FAILED TO APPLY THE FIRE - instead they settled for TOUNGS AS THE ONLY SIGN - and all can plainly see what's happened. ONLY TOUNGES - NO FIRE.

I recall when I was first saved while in the Ozarks of Southern Missouri; it was a common thing for the preachers to wade out into the Book of Revelation as they warned of the Antichrist; the false prophet; the beasts; the tribulation; the thunders; the trumpets; the earthquakes; the bloody moon; and darkened sun; the rivers of blood; the Wormwood waters; AND THE SUN CLAD WOMAN.

I guess I was a pain in the neck of the preachers (In Southern Missouri). As I had been taught the Bible from childhood with both parents being preachers, so when I was baptized in the Holy Ghost very shortly after I was saved: that meant I - AND YOU: RIGHT THEN - received the "SPIRIT OF TRUTH" and Jesus said He "WOULD GUIDE YOU INTO ALL TRUTH".

We were actually taught in those days that all these things will come to pass and we better know it. So that is how the Book of Revelation became one of my GROUNDS of study. For years I preached from Revelation linked to The Song, but I couldn't tell how many years it has been since I have heard any teaching at all from the Song or from Revelation either. Yet people call themselves FULL GOSPEL. So, we do thank God for the SELECT who do desire the REAL BREAD OF GOD.

(Just an extra thought.) I have a brother, Roy Peebler, here in California who for years has been a teacher to retarded children. He has had this position in the public schools for years. He has no children of his own but as we hear him speak of these unfortunate children we see his compassion for them. Esther and I have wondered if perhaps God planned it that way - no children born in his home but father to the unfortunate. The scriptures declare in Isaiah 54:1 these are the greater heritage.

Ruth Maddeford

Esther Hawkins

This is a short message by Esther Hawkins, she was a great friend to my mother, Bernice B. Fortner. She was faithful to the end. My mother and her were killed in a car accident on their way to church in Pomona, California. That Sunday morning they were recognized as being long time members of the Pomona Church of God. After church, a group of about twelve residents of a local halfway house took them out for lunch and loved them both as "Grandma", they knew that these women loved them. R.D.F.

Message on Queen Esther By: Esther Hawkins.

I never cared for the name Esther, which my Mother had named me until one day I looked up the meaning of the name Esther and found it to be, ESTHER-STAR-MESSENGER-MINISTER. Then He showed to me THE ESTHERS OF THIS HOUR. I saw them as a CHOICE COMPANY - CALLED OF GOD "to sit in heavenly places in Him." Eph. 2:16.

The King has made a feast: Esther 1:3-4. Wonderful is this gathering with hangings of purple and fine linen. They drank ROYAL WINE from out of VESSELS OF GOLD. None were compelled to drink, verse 8, and none are compelled now. It is for those who FOLLOW THE SPIRIT.

Wine is brought to sparkling perfection through MUCH POURING "from vessel to vessel; all the SETTLEMENTS left with the lees": Jeremiah 48:11. Many today are satisfied with just the "settlings", but how wonderful it is to drink ROYAL WINE "poured from vessel to vessel".

The plan of God is for The Church - His Body to be bright as the Morning Star - "fair as the moon, clear as the sun and TERRIBLE AS ARMY WITH BANNERS" - for this is the MIGHTY ARM OF THE LORD. It is the plan of God that His Body "stand in the gap to make up the hedge".

Esther came on the scene at a time when her nation was about to be destroyed and as the story goes in the Book of Esther SHE VOLUNTEERED TO "STAND IN THEIR STEAD" - and saved her people. However the process she had to go through to be able to STAND INSTEAD is a picture and pattern beyond comparison - but a perfect pattern for this HOUR when God is rais-

ing up a people "TO STAND IN CHRIST'S STEAD" for a world.

Esther must needs be made into the PURE WINE of the kingdom. The story tells it well - be sure you read it until body, soul and spirit are well ground in the press. Much incense, perfume, oils and spices were used in the preparation of Esther to become Queen Esther. The day came when she walked down the red carpet and the King held out to her, THE GOLDEN SCEPTER, which stood for THRONE RIGHTS. And she sat down by the King.

By: Esther Hawkins

Letter from, Agatha Lavonne Snowden "Pete"

Dear Roger,

Here is a picture of the new Bowman Church built in 1943, the old schoolhouse stood in the same place, it was torn down and the material used in this building. Now this other picture is the same building, but with the front and side built on. It is located on old 86 highway, but is located near Blue Eye - up the hill from where Oasis was before being covered up with water. It says Bowman Church across the front. This church is a great landmark, as many a soul knelt at alters and wept there way to a "Born Again" experience. Powell (Snowden) was saved there and I received the "Holy Spirit" there one morning about 1:00 A.M. (in 1937). He was always called the Holy Ghost then! Our daughter Pat (Snowden) was saved there one night at the age of 16, She got violently ill and we carried her into the little back room on this building, we had a bed there. The Lord not only healed her, but she too was filled with the Holy Spirit as in Acts 2:4. She is still serving the Lord. In the Summertime we had a big Brush Arbor when Brother John Groves was pastor and there we always had services out side. Our daughter Pat taught Sunday School out under the trees, weather permitting, and she lined her students on two fallen logs in the yard of the church. Our main preacher was Brother John Groves (in the picture by Townsend Godsey) and also Reverend Bob Grady, he was one of the great preachers of that day.

We were vacationing back there in 1984 and went to see him (Bob Grady) at Forsyth. October 6, 1984 it was, and he died that night! He hadn't seen us in 30 years and when we knocked on his door, he cried out, "Oh Pete (everyone called me Pete) and Powell" and he cried and cried. He said he felt such a failure at times since getting old. We knelt down beside him and we told him of the thousands ! that had been saved because of his ministry over all the surrounding communities, covering three generations, REALLY!!

He had been a popular Baptist Preacher, But one day he went to pray for a lady that lived in a Branson Church Basement. The church was on the hill in Branson, (my mother, Mabel Maddeford, owned it). While praying for this lady preacher, a Mrs. Silkman - he was slain on his back on the floor. He said, (he told this often in years following) while laying on his back he saw himself in a gutter of the street simply being smothered in cigarettes, they were everywhere, could hardly breath for them. He cried, yes Lord I'll quit and he then was filled with The Holy Spirit and began speaking in Tongues. His experience was so electrifying that he told it everywhere and thousands came into Pentecost because of him. Anyway, I guess I'll continue this, the Baptist people put him out of his church, we went with him the day they told him to resign and had to turn in his papers. Well, of course that was the wrong thing to do to this handsome charis-

matic preacher, his popularity exploded thru all the region and untold ones were swept into the "Kingdom of God".

If you ever want to know more about him, his daughter, Marcella Freeman still lives on the hill at Branson. She married Cleo Freeman, Powell's nephew, he died a few years ago. I could go on and on you know, I hope you can make something of this, it's so mixed up! When I start I never know when to quit. I will go on a little more since I started this.

I was saved on May 18, 1937. Brother Grady was preaching a revival out by Arkansas line, near Ridgedale (Grandma Peebler's Poem) in a Big Chicken Brooder House, been cleaned out carefully. You know there were no church buildings in those years for Pentecostal people. Anyway, crowds got so big they tore out one end of the building and then they tore out the other end and Brother Grady was preaching in the middle of the building. This revival had been going on for two months every night. We hadn't gone to this revival because we weren't Christians, but we went this LAST NIGHT just to see what it was all about! We really knew of course, because Powell was from a strong Pentecostal background and my mother by this time was preaching elsewhere. Anyway I suppose you guessed what happened. Brother Grady took his text from John 7:37-38. The Holy Spirit so convicted me (I was 20 years old) that all I could hear of the sermon was this is your day, I made a run for the old boards that was set up for the alters. Powell was real unhappy about this that all next week, he told me he did not want to live with a Christian, he had had enough of religion all his life. I calmly told him I was going to be baptized when they were going to have it. Anyway the Holy Spirit so convicted him, (he said he was sick all week) that the next Sunday night he came in from doing the chores and said do you want to go to church? I said our car is broke down, he RAN TWO MILES and hired a neighbor to drive us to the Bowman School House that night and he too rushed to the Alter and was saved. The next Sunday at the Cedar Valley School House, now under water, he received the Holy Ghost speaking in tongues, this was all such a shock to all his worldly friends. He was responsible for MANY coming to God because of his stand he took and the drastic change in his life. He became a deacon and became a teacher of the Word. So forever we shall be grateful for Reverend Bob Grady. If you are ever in Branson, talk to Renie and Red Creekmore who own the restaurant, The Shack, and ask them if they know us. These experiences of early Pentecost were so wonderful, could go on and on of course, but enough for now.

If you like, hunt up Doffard and Mildred Beal, they live out of Hollister on old 65 going toward Harrison. He is the son of the Beals who kept the Lantern lit at the old Bowman School House and their light shone to so many. Mildred is the daughter of a Baptist Preacher who preached with Bob Grady. Hope you can go see them. They are both ill, he has cancer. Tell them of our love for them. His mother is mentioned in mother's piece about the All Day Meeting.

A month later, I think, I'm so sorry I waited so long, but I hurt my back and have been laid up in bed. I'm better now tho, in looking thru these papers, may not be anything new to you, but will send what I have. I have not found them all, have looked and looked and will keep on. I write the poem about memories after hearing from you and as looking thru these papers and others. Anyway I thought you might have a little fun of what I do in my spare time? I write about the Bible to so many people, only lessons, that I am so busy, just can't keep up to all I write to.

Back at Hollister and also California I always "feel" the Spirit to write to people. Sent Antie Esther Connie a lesson and she wrote back yesterday rejoicing over it.

Dear Roger, Another few lines, still think you should write a novel, the truths, but with a lot of fiction. You have so much to start with. Why did this courageous Malinda come to Missouri, and what happened to her daughter she left behind? A persons imagination could run wild of why did she make such a move. Great mystery here? Also in the Peebler Chronicle, Susanah Peebler, how she coped with only buying salt. Ann Eliza, 13 years old walking barefoot to Oregon, a person could connect these episodes together! Of course the time element would have to be considered! Anyway just a thought! Also I never found out about Mellissa's turkey story.

I have somewhere the letter that Ray Peebler wrote to my grandma Peebler from London during the war. He was a Doctor and died of the flue. He wrote my grandma, his step mother, thanking her on a Mothers Day letter, for her concern for him, when she married his father. He thanked her for the grey-wool suit she had made him. Also, what a story here, when grandma Fortner came to Oklahoma and married A.J. Peebler, never met him. What a story here!! He was 25 years older than her!

About the turkey? I well remember when a little girl, my mother sent me and my brother to Salt Fork, Oklahoma from Wichita to stay with our uncle Louis and Aunt Maude to spend the summer. This was after my father left us, she raised turkeys and they would hide their nests out in the woods. Every day we would go hunting for them. She would always take huge loaves of fresh bread from the oven and she would cut me two big slices from the end, which I liked, she would put butter on one and butter and jelly on the other, of course I saved the jelly for last! We would go hunting the turkey nests, one time we found a nest full of babies. We would start down the road, I would be barefoot and still can feel the hot dust squeezing up between my toes. She taught me so much, they didn't have any children, about all the wild plants, bees, and all of nature. I still remember one kind of wild flowering plants that we sat down beside them. If you laid your finger on the wide leaves, the leaves would close up around your finger and you would have to pull it loose. Wish I knew what they were.

Uncle Louis ? raised huge Arabian horses, I was so frightened of them, I could go on and on here, anyway, one day we had peaches and cream for dinner, a real treat. Uncle Louis took me to the barn lot and one of his mares had twin colts. He said now Pete, you can name them. I was still thinking of the peaches and cream we had eaten. So I impulsively said, peaches and cream. And so they were named Peaches and Cream, could go on!

Now there was some reason my mother said, something stopped her from writing about her mother, "The Mother I Remember" was it's title. I don't know why, because she had planned and planned on that. Also there is something else my mother told me about my father, of why he might have left her. She thought he might of had another family some where? A story here?

Pete, Lavonne Snowden

Love and Prayers. Thanks so much for letting me sound off, LaVonne, In Our Precious Lords Name.

The Oasis Correspondent - Mary Elizabeth Mahnkey And other Taney County Republican Stories

The Taney County Republican published a lot of local news through their Local Correspondent columns. Mary Elizabeth Mahnkey was one of the best, who won national awards for her work. 1891 is when she started writing weekly rural correspondent columns about the communities that she lived in, she was 14 years old. She continued to write her column until shortly before her death in 1948.

She moved to Oasis in 1922, I found that she reported a lot of church meetings and events in her column and this is just a compilation of her comments about church events starting with the May 27, 1926 column. She writes about a lot of Pentecostal meetings in the area and it seems like she enjoys being able to attend them when she could. Another thing that she included in her columns was examples of her poetry, I have include a few. In 1934 Marry gave the Taney-hills Study Club the rights to published a book, "Marigold Gold" it is filled with her poems, and the proceeds went to fund the Branson Library.

I also included stories that the editors of the newspaper wrote and a few stories by other local correspondents. This will give the reader an idea of how important church was to the Ozarks people along the Missouri - Arkansas line.

I have included the complete column as published on the first two examples so you will be able to see how Marry Elizabeth Mahnkey's writing gave life to the goings on in the community. In the 1920's cars were just starting to explore deep into the hills and you can see in her writing how exciting it was to see them visit the little community of Oasis along Long Creek. The communities of Oasis and its close neighbors, Cedar Valley and Brush Creek, are now just memories at the bottom of Table Rock Lake.

5-27-1926 - OASIS

There was a show at Oasis last week. There was no performance but three loaded trucks and a Dodge roadster went into camp on Long Creek below the mill dam and the company rested and enjoyed the scenery; so can truthfully say that there was a show at Oasis last week.

The Kenner children have been enjoying strawberries sent up via the mail hack by their grandmother, Mrs., Laura Allen. The Allen farm is one of the White River estates to be obliterated by the proposed Table Rock Dam.

Dr. Spurlin and a party from Berryville, Arkansas, visited the Long Creek country Sunday afternoon.

There will be an all day meeting and basket dinner at Cedar Valley Sunday, the 30th.

7-8-1926 - OASIS

The "Great and Glorious" has once again passed into history. The creek was lined with fishermen and bathing beauties. The road was filled with cars Friday and Saturday on their way to Branson to the big picnic and Sunday, the annual celebration day at Cedar Valley, witnessed the gathering of the largest crowd ever assembled there. The basket dinner was a revelation of delectable - cookery and abundance and variety. The singing was unusually fine, also the sermons by Brothers Pinkley and Vaughn. A real Fourth of July oration was delivered by Doug Mahnkey, which was well received. He touched briefly but impressively upon the fundamentals that led up to this 150th anniversary.

9-16-1926

Rev. Grove(s) from near Omaha, Arkansas, an able minister of the Pentecostal faith, held church at Brush Creek, Sunday.

11-4-1926

The Pentecostal Church has been holding a protracted meeting at the Bowman school house, which culminated Sunday in an all day meeting and basket dinner. One of the largest crowds assembled at Bowman enjoyed the day. There were people from Reeds Springs, Baxter, and all the north Arkansas. The day was ideal, a real Indian summer day,

12-23-1926

L. M. Pinkley had the good fortune to kill a dandy wild turkey recently, which make some of the younger ones rather envious, as he is not a professional hunter, but one of the best ministers of the gospel in the county.

8-4-1927

Joe Snowden has moved back to his farm, and Tom Curbow's folks who were living there moved out to the old Willard Jones place on 65, so Flemett Blevins moved to the Pauley place vacated by Mr. Snowden.

8-25-1927

Mr. and Mrs. John Burnett and Mr. and Mrs. Luther Pinkley drove to Eureka Springs in the Burnett car Friday, remaining until Monday, to attend a Pentecostal camp-meeting.

9-15-1927

Uncle Charlie Snowden is in a critical condition, the result of a fall from the hack they had just arrived home from church in. His hip was broken, and as this happened Sunday, the 4th and he has steadily grown worse, it is feared that internal injuries were sustained. The community sympathizes with our aged friend in his suffering.

Evangelist Bond from Kansas City, Rev. Atchley from Green Forest, Pentecostal ministers, have conducted a three week's camp meeting at Blue Eye. Mr. and Mrs. G. F. Cross drove out Sunday, and Mrs. Mahnkey joyously accepted an invitation to "go too." There was a basket dinner, and several converts were to have been baptized that afternoon in Indian Creek, down near Oak

Grove, Arkansas.

10-13-1927

Esby Keeland moved the Groves family in his truck to the John Snowden place last Thursday. This family has been living at Ridgedale, and Mr. Groves is a minister.

11-3-1927

Mr. Kenner from Brown Branch, and his son-in-law, Shelby Thomas, have rented the Oasis blacksmith shop and Shelby will render first aid treatment to passing motors and the father-in-law will use his old-time skill with the forge and anvil.

2-23-1928

The Assembly of God church held services at Centerpoint Sunday. L. M. Pinkley of Cedar Valley delivered the message to a well filled house.

3-8-1928

The John Groves family from the Bowman district received a baby daughter into the house Monday, Dr. Elizabeth McEntyre "The shepherdess of the hills" being in attendance. Mother and babe are doing fine.

5-3-1928

Rev. Powell Youngblood, one of the leading Pentecostal ministers of the faith will conduct a revival meeting at the Bowman school house, beginning Sunday, April 29th.

6-7-1928.

Rev. and Mrs. Powell Youngblood have closed their meeting at Cedar Valley, and are spending a few days with friends. They were at Harrison Vaughn's from Wednesday until Saturday.

7-5-1928

A party of men from the Bowman district were down Monday morning with the Ben Beal truck, for a load of lumber from the old gin to use for seats for the big meeting at Bowman the 4th of July. This is an annual observance of the Pentecostal church, and the day is passed in preaching the Word, and in song service, excepting about two hours at noon, when a wonderful basket dinner is enjoyed.

7-26-1928

Rev. Frank Atchley, assisted by seven Pentecostal brethren from Oklahoma is holding a meeting at Oak Grove, and all the young friends and neighbors of Ben Beal are enjoying the meeting in Ben Beal's big truck, which makes the mileage inconsequential.

Uncle John Pinkley from Cedar Valley motored over Thursday afternoon with Mrs. Luther Pinkley and some other friends to visit Mrs. Burnett.

10-23-1928

The Oasis campground was once again the scene Sunday beautiful and impressive ceremony, when a great crowd from Stone County North Arkansas and this locality congregated for reli-

gious services, conducted by leading and powerful ministers of the Pentecostal church, to be followed by the baptizing of four young converts in Long Creek.

11-8-1928

John Blanset has purchased a farm out close to Chestnut Ridge store and is planning to move to it soon.

The Meadows boys made a home run the week end.

John Blanset (junior) has also moved out on Chestnut Ridge from Ozark.

1-3-1929

Mr. John and Rev. Almedia Brittain who have been on a preaching tour into Oklahoma have returned home. They have many wonderful facts to tell of how they were blessed on this trip, for the Lord blesses all that wait upon and serve Him.

The writer in his experiences as preacher in the small communities has found that many of the Sunday schools held in the small school houses are failing or growing smaller. Now the Sunday school in the small country school house is the foundation of other good works. It is the privilege as well as the duty of every countryman to attend. Let us all help to upbuild them and keep them going.

6-12-1930

Mrs. Dean of Springfield preached at Cedar Valley Saturday night and Sunday and Sunday night. She was accompanied to Cedar Valley from Springfield by four friends. It is possible that Mrs. Dean may come back later and hold a revival.

6-24-1930

The revival meeting which was to have begun at the Bowman school house Saturday night, July 12, was postponed on account of the illness of their pastor, Durard Watson.

5-21-1931

Miss Edith Goodall closed her very successful term of school at Bowman Saturday, and it proved to be quite a community gathering, as the good ladies of the district gathered in and spread a wonderful basket dinner. This is the last school to be taught at this little wayside temple of knowledge, as the district has now become a part of the powerful Blue Eye organization, and the children are now assured of a high school education. There was a universal rejoicing that their beloved Miss Edith to be a member of the Blue Eye faculty.

7-5-1931

The Pentecostals closed their meeting at Ridgedale with baptizing services, at Oasis, Sunday afternoon. The day before, the 4th of July, a basket dinner and all day service was held at Ridgedale, one of the largest crowds ever attending was present.

7-23-1931

The baptismal services Sunday as a result of Rev. Cunningham's and uncle Pal Youngblood's

meeting at Ridgedale, attracted a great number, and we enjoyed a brief sermon by Dr. Crockett from the School of the Ozarks. It was the first time many from here had heard Dr. Crockett, but we who had lived in the Kirbyville community, felt a great gladness listening again to that familiar voice, and hearing his message, always so timely, so well worded, so beautifully impressive.

8-6-1931

The Apostolic revival at the Brush Creek school house is still in progress, and many conversions made. The last ones to have been baptized were Mrs. Den Jones and her little daughter, Beulah, Mrs. O. C. White and her two daughters, Fern and Mrs. Edith Moore, and little Novilla Jones.

8-18-1931

Mr. and Mrs. Powell Youngblood of Seneca, Missouri are visiting friends at Cedar Valley and neighboring communities, Mr. Youngblood is a minister of the gospel. Every year he and Mrs. Youngblood come to Taney County to hold a series of meetings. They just closed a successful revival at Ridgedale. We are glad to have them with us.

9-3-1931

Dan Groves has traded for a car and according to the way Dan does everything, the first ones enjoying the rapid transit, were his own little brothers.

10-1-1931

Lewis Killman of Enon, Arkansas, has been conducting a very interesting Pentecostal meeting at the Brush Creek school house. He rides horseback from his home every night to meeting and his sincere earnest way has convinced the congregation that there is a better way. Christ calls us in various and different ways and the only thing to do is to drop the fish nets, or the tax records, as Peter and Matthew did and follow on.

11-12-1931

The "upper creek" folks have worked the Brush Creek school house road with a part of the Oasis Road District funds and now that pleasant country is easily accessible. There has been a Pentecostal revival in progress there for several weeks and the latest preacher of that faith to carry on the work is a lovely girl, Clara Hawkins, the eldest daughter of Gene and Lida Hawkins.

12-3-1931

A Pentecostal meeting has been in progress at Cedar Valley the past two weeks. Mrs. Cunningham, an evangelist who has conducted revivals at various points throughout the Ozarks this fall, had charge of the meetings. She was assisted by her husband and Mr. Jenkins, a minister from Cotter, Arkansas.

1-14-1932

The John Groves family have moved to Baxter, Missouri and it has been reported, that as soon as his papa and mamma were gone, Asa, the oldest son, married his self a wife. We did not learn the name of the little new bride, but wish them much joy and happiness. They will live in the home formerly occupied by the family.

2-11-1932

The Pentecostal revival is still in progress at Ridgedale. Mrs. Jesse Youngblood has been conducting services.

4-7-1932

We old-fashioned folk almost weep over the changes; and the greatest of all is moving our little schools into larger consolidations. We will just have to put away our hankies, for all the little Center Pointers, and the Bowman pupils, are delighted with the change to Blue Eye. The greatest grievance is that they lost their beloved Miss Edith (Goodall) as she was given the eighth grade.

7-21-1932 - HOME MADE ICE CREAM

I do not think that I shall ever care,
For frozen sweetness from the Frigidaire.
Plain old ice cream is good enough for me,
The kind we used to make out by the old peach tree.
There was the merry shouts of happy little kids,
With answering chorus from the katydids.
A hint of frosted cakes, all hidden out of site;
The back yard fair and lovely, in the clear moonlight.
Then "It's gettin' hard to turn, it surly must be done."
"No, No, a few more rounds, to make it smooth, my son."
And then a careful peeping, and then a carrying in,
To the jolly crowded dinning room with such a merry din;
Our records and the neighbors, a shrieking out gay times.
All the gold band saucers, all the neighbors' spoons.
And, then an earnest silence, until some youngster cries,
"My tounge's plum rozen stiff" yet gallantly he tries
To down another helping, like us all, from boy to man,
Just write one of the Frigidaire, that's as good, now if you can!

Mary Elizabeth Mahnkey

8-25-32

Oasis and Taney County received, all unconsciously, a very great honor Sunday, when Vance Randolph, the acknowledged authority on all Ozarkian dialects and other features, visited us. He was simple and sincere, eager and earnest. With him were Mrs. Vance, Mrs. McCord of Springfield, and Otto Earnest Rayburn, who founded Ozark Life, the first real magazine of the hill country. Mrs. McCord proved to be the lovely little May Kennedy who used to visit with Mrs. Wash Wade at Forsyth, and who was the secret envy and despair of us older girls because of her charm and vivacity and her musical talent. Still present, too, I will say.

10-13-1932

Mrs. Mahnkey visited kinfolks last Saturday and Sunday and enjoyed a real old time Baptist revival in the old school house; different in this way, the services were in charge of four youthful preachers, assisted Saturday by a fifth, Dean Hall Jackson. It was beautiful and touching, their

sincerity, courage and humility. Mr. Sims, a son of our old friend Doc Sims, Bob Grady, Clell Collier, and Ebsy Whorton, were the eloquent and inspired young men. Many young people are being converted. Roy and Roberta Jones were baptized on Friday by Bob Grady, and others will follow at the close of the meeting.

3-16-1933

Two evangelists from California have been holding an interesting meeting at the old Bowman Schoolhouse. And Sunday, the 5th, Mr. and Mrs. Amos Pinkley were baptized. The pastor Rev. John D. Groves, officiated at the baptismal service, and it is rather remarkable to study how fortunate this community is, in our good ministers, who not only preach the gospel, but drive afar, to help at funerals.

3-30-1933

Mr. and Mrs. Lewis Killman from the Ridgedale country, suffered a tragic loss week before last, when the dear little daughter, Ruth, died after an illness of only a day or so. She was eleven. Lewis Killman is an able minister in the Pentecostal church, and had come to Brush Creek that Saturday night to fill his monthly appointment; it seemed there was something urging him back home, and he went, to find the little daughter in a raging fever and on the following Monday she passed away. The doctors said it was an acute attack of valvular heart trouble.

4-27-1933

Miss Pansy Hollers of Blue Eye and Daniel Groves of this vicinity were married week before last, and friends extend best wishes.

9-28-1933

Rev. Powell Youngblood, and his wife who while not a preacher, yet has endeared herself so to the public, that her little testimonials mean much, have been visiting old friends in the Ozarks, and Uncle Powell, like St. Paul remembers the church he founded so long ago, and has been holding a very interesting meeting at Cedar Valley. There were four conversions, who were baptized Sunday at the deep ford near Brush Creek school house. The ones uniting themselves with the church were, G. F. Gross, Mrs. Lida Burnett, Miss Chloey Snowden, and Asa Groves.

12-7-1933

A women evangelist Oklahoma, Pentecostal, has been holding a meeting at Bowman, with very great success. Her name is Huddlestone, and I told them the reason she was such an interesting and powerful preacher was because she was formerly of the Christian Church. Several were converted and baptized, among them Mrs. G. F. Gross, and Andrew Hollars.

2-8-1934

Rev. Martin's meeting at the Bowman schoolhouse continues to hold the attention of the community, as the road is full of cars every night.

4-12-1934

Mr. and Mrs. Clarence Roberts of the Pentecostal church, who have been staying for some weeks in the old Kilpatrick house left for Mountain Grove Wednesday. The little wife and mother liked the place, and was sorry to leave, she said, but felt the call of this other field; eternal sacrifice, of

those who willingly follow on. In many and varied ways.

7-12-1934

The Pentecostal church had an all day meeting, and very bountiful dinner at Bowman school house, on the 4th.

8-16-1934

The baptizing Sunday, that terminated Mrs. Huddlestons interesting meeting at Bowman, was well attended, and Rev. John Groves performed the baptismal services for eleven converts. Many from a distance drove over for the occasion. I noticed Mr. and Mrs. Ben Welch and Henry DuVall from Branson. Mrs. Kinzy Stottle and her relatives from Hollister, the Ellisons; Mr. and Mrs. Jim Aubery from Kirbyville; and several whom I did not know from Blue Eye and Ridgedale.

9-27-1934

Willie Snowden, a brother of Frank and Joe, came in an unexpected visitor from California last week. He has been absent twenty-eight years. He said he could not resist the longing to see his mother once more, and the home place. But the old house on the old homestead was gone, burned in a brush fire some years ago.

3-7-1935

Reverend Willie Eaton, one of the most beloved of the Pentecostal ministers, has been preaching at Brush Creek, but Sunday, he did not hold his services as he was called away, to preach the funeral sermon of the Collins family who were killed in a motor accident. One of the Collins boys was a student of the School of the Ozarks. Their home was near Denvir, Arkansas on the head of Long Creek.

4-23-1935

Mrs. Huddleston, the Pentecostal evangelist, held baptizing services here Wednesday, and Mrs. Kate Sneed, and Troy Snowden were baptized. She is now preaching at Ridgedale. Many of the neighbors are going out there to attend.

5-2-1935

Rev. Carter, Sunday School evangelical worker, from Aurora with his two children drove down Sunday, and passed the day with the Brush Creek folks, where a bountiful basket dinner was served, and a wonderful sermon by the Reverend Carter enjoyed. Mrs. Allen Kenner was elected Supt. Mrs. Walter Burnett, assistant supt. and Miss Elaine Burnett, Secretary of the new Sunday School, which we hope will flourish.

5-9-1935

Mrs. John Groves was busy two days of last week, assisting Mrs. Huckstep cleaning house, and painting.

5-14-1935

Miss Stella Fraiser passed away Tuesday the 7th of May and interment was made in the Oasis cemetery Wednesday. Stella had been ill for some time, and her death was not unexpected but

sorrowful indeed for the family, as she was the last sister in the home. The devotion of her mother and brothers was unflinching and everything was done that was humanly possible to relieve her suffering. She was twenty eight years old, and a lovely Christian character. Rev. Luther Pinkley conducted the services at the grave, and paid a beautiful tribute to the sweet friend who has left us all. The funeral offering was wonderful, but I thought with sadness of the gentle little life that had ended in this time of blossom and beauty. The neighborhood extends sympathy to the bereaved family, and to the sisters and their families in Oregon and Idaho.

6-6-1935

Quite a number of folks attended Sunday School at Brush Creek Sunday. Gladys Bowman and little daughter went horse back, Evelyn sat up and held the reins to guide the horse, quite like a big girl.

John Bennett also went to Sunday School horse back, riding a nice fat, gray horse. It seemed like old times to see people go by riding horse back.

There will be children's day program at Brush Creek June the 9th. Every body is invited. The program will begin at 9:30 in the morning. Reverend John Groves will preach at 11 o'clock.

6-13-1935

Children's day was observed at Brush Creek on Sunday. An unusually good program was given. A large attendance was there in spite of the high water. Mrs. Kenner is superintendent of a good Sunday School there which meets every Sunday at 9 o'clock.

Hon. Doug Mahnkey was in Forsyth over Sunday visiting his parents.

6-20-1935

The topics of conversation at Oasis are fishing in Long Creek, and Sunday School at Brush Creek.

MY SUNDAY SCHOOL IN THE OZARK HILLS

In the Ozark Hills to which I came
Two years ago last fall or spring
The hills so beautiful to see
Gave me to know, "I might help thee."

The feeling came late in my heart
A Sunday School I might help start
A way to help each little one
So the work at Brush Creek was begun.

Each one is ready when I call
So kindly, gentle, one and all
They love to help with all the work
Not one has even tried to shirk.

The hill school house sits on a hill
My dream came true - the bell once still,
Calls; Sunday School is for us all
Dear God, we will obey that call.

6-27-1935

There has been a good attendance at Brush Creek. The children had an organ given them and the good voices at Cinda's Sunday School will be in training for special music.

7-4-1935

The church at Bowman is holding a family dinner at Brush Creek the 4th of July.

7-11-1935 - Oasis

Elane and Murel Burnett spent the week end with Lydia Burnett.

A good crowd spent the fourth of July at Brush Creek. Church and community dinner were a part of the program.

The camp at Oasis was crowded the fourth. Cars from Springfield, Illinois, Kansas and other states were seen.

Mr. and Mrs. Campbell and family from Salt Lake City, Utah, are spending their vacation with their parents, Mr. and Mrs. Huckstep.

As usual, a good number attended "Cinda's" Sunday School at Brush Creek.

Mr. and Mrs. Cecil Weatherman with friends from Chicago spent Sunday with the Eychaner's.

Brush Creek School will open two weeks later this year on account of sudden extreme heat.

Fred McConnell is holding a revival at Bowman Church.

Miss Garner and Miss Rhodes spent Sunday evening at Oasis.

7-18-1935

Brush Creek Sunday School has increased in numbers. Forty attended Sunday.

8-1-1935

Revival meetings at Brush Creek were transferred to Ridgedale.

9-5-1935

Cinda's Sunday School picnic dinner at Oasis was well attended. The table groaned with weight of good things. Everyone had plenty to eat and a friendly hour enjoyed. The program included class songs and recitations. Mr. Eychaner gave the address and Mr. Luther Pinkley made a few remarks to the older folks. The day was far too short for the guests.

Note: This is about the time Mary Elizabeth Mahnkey moved away from Oasis to the Forsyth area. The Oasis correspondent that took her place just told the facts and didn't write in the eloquent style as Mary did.

9-19-1935

Rev. Crockett gave a fine sermon at Brush Creek Thursday night.

3-26-1936

Cinda's Sunday School will re-open next Sunday at Brush Creek, 10:00 o'clock.

Revival is going on at Bowman.

4-30-1936

Cinda's Sunday School children made a nice donation of useful articles for Asa Groves, who's house burned down last week.

5-7-1936

Quite a number of folks went to church at Bowman Sunday night.

6-25-1936

Revival at Bowman.

Mrs. Mary Groves brought her baby girl to the Post last Thursday. She can afford to be proud of such a beautiful child.

9-3-1936

REVEREND BOB GRADY CONDUCTS BIG REVIVAL

Sunday 22 Converts Baptized at Blackwell's Ferry. Church Work Prospers.

Rev. Bob Grady has been conducting a very successful revival service at Cedar Creek. It has been in progress for two weeks. Sunday an all day meeting was held on the gravel bar at Blackwell's Ferry and an old time basket dinner was served. In an addition to the devotional service the rite of baptism was given to 22 converts. The services at Cedar Creek will continue for at least this week and another baptismal services will be held next Sunday. Rev. Willie Coffelt is assisting Rev. Grady.

9-10-1936

REVIVAL SERVICES AT CEDAR CREEK CLOSE

Thirty-eight Persons make Confession. Thirty-two Baptized into Baptist Church.

For the past three weeks, beginning August 16 and ending September 5, Reverend Willie Coffelt and Reverend Bob Grady have been conducting a meeting at Cedar Creek. During that time

there were thirty-eight conversions, thirty-two were baptized and 36 united into the Cedar Creek Church. Following is the report as sent in by the ministers and likewise part of the information comes from a member of the Cedar Creek Church.

The conversions made during the meeting included:

W.S. Blackwell, Tom Morgan, Lloyd Yeatman, Charley Brown, Jess Beaty, Hannis Wise, Hazel Fine, Ida Smith, Cordia Beaty, Eva Morgan, Myrtye Blankenship, Alva Hughey, Nail B. Watts, Willa May Watts, Esther Manes, John Brown, Bessie Brown, Goldie Summers, Bruce Manes, Daisy Manes, Willie Fine, Ophelia May Wise, Clara Brown, Andrew Brown, Jess Sims, Edith Sims, Floyd Brown, Blanche Brown, B.H. Compton, Ava Blackwell, Hampton Persinger, Daisy Persinger, Ida Smith, Byron Moore. Thirty-two were baptized and thirty-six united with the Cedar Creek church.

On our record we have had thirty-eight conversions. Some of the names we failed to get.

There will be revival services start near Rev. Grady's at Powersite the 16th of this month. This will be an outdoor meeting. There is plenty of parking space available. This meeting is to be conducted by Reverend Almeda Brittain and Reverend Bob Grady. Every minister and every body is invited to attend.

Asking that every one will pray for this service, and thanking everyone for their prayers and offerings in the Cedar Creek meeting which has closed, and trusting the good work will continue in our country,

Sincerely yours, Reverend Willie Coffelt and Reverend Bob Grady.

3-11-1937

The Revival is well attended at Brush Creek and much interest is shown.

Mr. T. Collier is slowly improving.

Mr. and Mrs. Bill Matlock spent a few days at the post.

Art Eyechaner visited the Weatherman' at Walnut Shade.

Mrs. Ted Waring is in Springfield for a few days.

Mrs. John Graves has moved his family to Oasis. Welcome home.

4-1-1937

Mrs. John Groves has been on the sick list for a week.

Mr. and Mrs. Edd Amos and two sons, Harold and Wilbur visited John Groves over the week end.

4-29-1937
RIDGEDALE

Mr. and Mrs. Powell Snowden and daughters were visitors, Saturday evening with Mrs. and Mrs. Aaron Gross.

5-6-1937
Brother Grove(s) will preach at Brush Creek School house Sunday night. Everybody come.

The Sunday school will have a Mother day program Sunday if Long Creek goes down so the people can cross.

5-20-1937
We had a wonderful time at Brush Creek Sunday. At 9:30 there was Sunday school, and at eleven Brother John Groves gave a Mother's day sermon followed by Brother Flipho and Brother Finnermore. What a wonderful table of good things to eat. At two o'clock the Mother's day program began. Bowman church gave us their program and everybody surely had a good time and a big crowd attended.

6-24-1937
Mr. and Mrs. John Groves visited Orval Bowman Sunday.

7-8-1937
Revival Meeting Planned

An old-fashsioned Camp Meeting and Bible Conference is being planned to begin Sunday night July 18, 1937 at Powersite Missouri, in which all churches and Sunday schools of Taney and other surrounding counties are invited to participate.

Everyone is invited to come an bring his tent, camp wagon or trailer cottage and camp. Plan now!

You will find a good clean grove, plenty of good water and the best people in the world to associate with. Further details will appear in the next week's issue of this paper or may be obtained by calling Rev. F.D. Carter, 21F21, Hollister, Missouri.

7-15-1937
CAMP MEETING AND BIBLE CONFERENCE TO BE AT POWERSITE

Rev. Franklin Carter, of Hollister, Missionary the American Sunday School Union, announces an old-fashioned camp meeting and Bible Conference to be held at Powersite, beginning Sunday night, July 18. All Sunday schools and churches are invited to come and to take part in the program.

On Monday morning, the 19th, a committee on arrangements will be selected. This committee

will be composed of every Sunday school superintendent present and one layman from each church represented.

The program will include a Sunrise Prayer Meeting at 6:30 each morning, Preaching at 11:30, Bible Study at 2:00 P.M., and Evangelistic Preaching at 8:00 P.M.

Plenty of good water and shade, Christian fellowship and good air assured at Powersite camp. All the visitors need to bring a tent, wagon cover or other shelter, a bed and a few things to eat. Rev. Carter especially requests that Bibles and hymnbooks be brought along to the meeting also.

8-26-1937

Brother John Groves is very sick at this writing. We hope for his speedy recovery.

Mrs. Huddlestone and her daughter Leona, are back with us again for a short time. They visited Brother Groves Saturday night.

Stella Jones is staying at Blue Eye, getting ready to enter high school there. We all wish her much success.

Dan Groves and family are visiting his father, John Groves, this week.

9-9-1937

Brother John Groves is much better at this writing.

11-25-1937

Excerpts from Taney County Republican:

According to Dr. Crocket, the most prominent denomination that the early settlers brought with them into the area was the Presbyterian Church. Due to the remoteness of the Ozarks, this denomination died out because the Presbyterian Church demanded an educated ministry that the small communities could not supply.

"After the disbanding of the Presbyterian Church, some United Brethern ministers drifted into the country, They held services in the scattered school-houses and in the brush arbors or in the homes of the people, and organized the little groups into churches. At one time the membership of the United Brethern Church numbered several hundred in Taney county, but the work of the church was carried on in a hap-hazard way because of the pioneer conditions which existed. The last minister of the United Brethern Church in the county was the Rev. J.K. Ross, "Old Matt" of The Shepherd of the Hills book fame. Mr. Ross quit preaching sometime before Harold Bell Wright came into the hills. The church gradually disintegrated and died, as Mr. Ross said, because his church did not have a vision on the needs and the opportunities among the people of the Ozarks."

"When the United Brethern Church began to disintegrate the Methodist Church started work in the county. At one time the Methodist Church had more members in the county than any other denomination. Capt. Van Zandt, who was a Mexican War veteran and also a Methodist minister, received over six hundred persons into the Methodist Church. When asked why the Methodist

Church died in Taney county, quick as a flash he answered, 'Lack of vision, lack of vision.' And I thought what I have always thought was a very significant statement. 'If any church wants to live in these parts men of gumption and vision must be our ministers.' "

The General Baptist and Presbyterian Church slowly came back to life in the county in the late 1890's. Over the years these two denominations had dedicated preachers who worked and preached in this remote area without much reward. Some ministers had several flocks to take care of over a large area of the country and was only able to preach once a month at some places.

As Dr. Crockett said,

"They have been God fearing, sincere, men (and women) who have held the day for Christ in the county. They should be honored and loved for their sacrificing work and conscientious faithfulness as they have done their work against odds: on the whole they have done a much finer work for their Master and have been willing to sacrifice more than many of those who laugh at them."

"The Pentecostal Church has services at a number of places in the county.

The General Baptist Church has about - 800 members.

The Presbyterian Church has about - 1200 members.

The Christian Church has about - 200 members.

The Missionary Baptist Church has about - 100 members.

The Seventh Day Adventist - I do not know.

The Pentecostal Church - I do not know."

1-6-1938

Quite a revival is going on at Bowman Church now.

Brother John Groves preaches at Brush Creek school every Saturday night.

1-13-1938

Meetings closed at Bowman. Mr. Groves began his meetings at Brush Creek Monday.

2-8-1938

The Revival at Brush Creek has closed.

3-17-1938

Brother John Groves came home yesterday from Mr. and Mrs. Grover Youngblood's. He reports that their little son, Hobart, was very sick with pneumonia. We hope for his speedy recovery.

4-21-1938

John Groves and family passed through Oasis Saturday.

Reference Books Used

Almeda Brittain: Pioneer Preacher of the Ozarks, by: Barbra Huff and Joseph Huddleston

Marigold Gold, by: Mary Elizabeth Mahnkey

Minutes of The White River Assoc, of General Baptist

Ozark Mountain Folk, These were the Last, by: Townsend Godsey

Ozark Mountain Girl, by: Wilma Groves Harryman

Ozarkswatch Magazine - Vol VIII, No 2, 1995, By Thelma Bilyeu

Perpetuating Pentecost, by: Newby, Griggs and Eutsler

The Spiritual History of Branson, by: Gaye Newman Lisby

Personal Interviews or Correspondence

Jimmy Groves

Johnie Groves

Vivian Ireland

Junior Lasiter

Brad Melton

Becky Roberts

Reverend Rick Youngblood