

BENJAMIN LLOYD PICTURE

Copy of an Article from "Zion's Landmark" Publication

Historic Rectification of History

All of us have childhood memories. It matters not how old we are, but we can always go back to the very first events, some of us even to the very first of all, of memories of things that took place in our youth or early stage of infancy. Perhaps, the first two things that I remember in my early youth took place when I was six years of age. One was when I started to school in the first grade, and the other was going to church with my mother and father. Both of these events today are very clear in my mind, or memory.

I remember my first day of school, back in September, 1938, and how I dreaded it. I well remember things that took place that year, of my poor beginning as a student and the obstacles I encountered in the learning process, which the Lord blessed me later in overcoming.

In going to church with my parents, I well remember the long two hour church services on Sunday , dreading them equally as bad as the first grade classroom on each Monday morning. It was always a relief when the pastor gave out the closing hymn, "Glorious Things Of Thee Are Spoken," or "Grace Tis A Charming Sound," and others, the former two being very frequently used. When one o'clock P .M. came, I felt like I had been released from bondage or jail, and look forward to my mother's dinner table, not too many miles distant. There was no being allowed to get up, go aside and wander around during the service. That was unacceptable and altogether impermissible. It mattered not how cold or how hot it was outside, I had to sit. So, in going to church on those Sundays over forty years ago, I learned to find whatever entertainment that was most easily accessible between those closing fitting, old fashioned meetinghouse hard benches (not pews)., as they were called in those days.

So, my one and only entertainment was the figure on the front side and advertising on the back side of the fans that I could easily reach and also searching the Lloyd Hymn Book, page by page. The greater portion of entertainment in the hymn book was found in viewing the image, as I thought at that time, of Elder Benjamin Lloyd. I suppose, if it were possible to count the times that I looked at this portrait from the time I was six years of age, until I was about fourteen years during these two hour services, would be into the thousands.

No doubt, many of us have viewed the image, of portrait, as currently contained in this hymn book, many times, thinking that we (as it was in my case) were looking at the image or portrait of the compiler of this old hymn book that contains so many lovely, beautiful hymns used today in many of our churches in the southern part of the United States. I would venture to say in this connection that just about any member of the Primitive Baptist Church in the southern part of the United States, or anyone who has been connected with the church, either in a direct or indirect manner, has been or is familiar with this hymnal.

Not until about the year 1969, did I discover that (during all of those years, as a child, when I went to church with my beloved parents, or since that time for that matter) that I was not looking at Elder. Benjamin Lloyd.

The discovery of the misplacement of the wrong photograph, now used in this hymn book, came about in the following manner and way. I am printing below a letter that was sent

under date of July 7, 1969, to Brother Adams and me from a granddaughter of Elder Benjamin Lloyd, as follows.

Elders T. F. Adams & Mewborn,
Editors of Zion's Landmark
Willow Springs, N. C. 27592

Dear Elders Adams & Mewborn,
Enclosed please find my personal check in the amount of \$4.00 for renewal of Zion's Landmark which expires August 1st.

Brother Adams and Brother Mewborn, do the churches in your association or union use the Lloyd Primitive Hymnbook?

If they do and you have not read the article of my grandfather's life, published in "The Alabama Review, A Quarterly Journal Of Alabama History," (The April, 1968, issue). I feel you would enjoy reading it. It is entitled "Benjamin Lloyd: A Pioneer Primitive Baptist In Alabama." It is a complete history of his life from birth in Georgia to his serving churches in Georgia and Alabama. his decision to stand firmly against the modern innovations that were introduced in the Baptist churches in the early 1830's and 1840's, thus making him a stalwart among those in the church who became known as "Primitive Baptists," his compiling of the Lloyd Hymnbook in 1841, etc. The minutes of many meetings are still preserved in the records, also records of the census taken in the several counties, his marriage, family, his appointment as Receiver of Public Monies for the Land Office at Greenville, Alabama, by President James Buchannon in 1857, his will and death in 1860, etc.

The Primitive Baptist Churches are in almost every state in the union. I am amazed at the membership. Out of 23 churches alone in one association in Florida, 21 use the Lloyd Hymnbook.

If you have not read it, I am sure you will enjoy it.
Yours very truly,

Mrs. LaVerte Lloyd Smith
5377 LaJolla Blvd.,
LaJolla California 92037
July 7, 1969

Upon receipt of the above letter from Mrs. LaVerte Lloyd Smith in 1969, I ordered a copy of the above historical account from the State of Alabama's Department of Archives and History) for my personal use.

At that time, 1969, I had been visiting in the home of the late Sister Kate Norris Alston; who was for many years a member of the "East Atlanta Primitive Baptist Church, (Yellow River Association), Atlanta, Ga. Sister Kate Norris Alston was the mother of the late Brother A. D. Alston, whose writings appeared in this paper for many years, also Brother Norris Alston, whose obituary appeared in the May, 1980, issue of Zion's Landmark, and Sister Florence A. Gibson of Jackson, Ga. It was while visiting her, Sister Kat · N. Alston, age 90, that I learned Elder

Benjamin Lloyd was her grandfather, while discussing the publication of the above historical paper.

On the occasion, when the above historical account was discussed, she told me the photograph in the hymn book was not her grandfather, Benjamin Lloyd, but was a photograph of his brother-in law, Jesse Cox. (Jesse Cox was a brother to Benjamin Lloyd's wife, Naomi Cox Lloyd.) Sister Alston also told me that her mother, Fannie Jo Lloyd Norris, was the only one of the nineteen children who lived well into adult life. The others had passed away relatively early in life, she said. She (Sister Alston) stated that her mother, Fannie Jo Lloyd Norris, said that her father, Benjamin Lloyd, had a full head of hair when he died. (If you will check your hymn book, the man in the portrait bald. Editor). It was through the kindness of Sister Kate N. Alston (Granddaughter of Elder Benjamin Lloyd) and her daughter-in-law, Sister Carolyn P. Alston, Atlanta, Ga., that the real portrait of Elder Benjamin Lloyd came into my possession. Sister Fannie Jo Lloyd Norris and her husband, Young C. Norris, resided for many years in Columbus, Ga., and at the time of her death, she was a member of the Monroe Primitive Baptist Church, (Old Oconee Association), Monroe, Georgia. This church, prior to its disbandment about 1947 or 1948, was visited by Elders T. F. Adams, M. F. Westbrook, J. W. Watt, J. E. Newborn, Oscar Broom and other of our ministers from North Carolina during their lifetime. The late Elder J. M. Adams, Monroe, Ga., grandfather of Sister Carolyn P. Alston and Sister Rachel Breedlove Chandler (now living) was pastor of this church for many years.

Just how the mix-up came about in putting the portrait of Jesse Cox, holding the hymn book, in the hymnal, and not the actual photograph of Elder Benjamin Lloyd, I am unable to say. I have in my possession the Lloyd Hymnbook of my paternal grandmother, Barbara Ann Fields Mewborn, 1854-1938. This hymn book was printed in 1908 and does not have any portrait in it. This establishes the fact that the portrait of Jesse Cox was entered at a later date than 1908. That issue was printed by Benjamin Lloyd's daughter, Mrs. M. E. Atkins, Temple, Texas. In this edition appears the following,

"I wish to add to the above that on the death of my dear mother-in-law (Mrs. Benjamin Lloyd) who requested that her son, J. C. Lloyd, my former husband, to purchase the type and business from the estate of his father, Elder Benjamin Lloyd, and keep up the publication of the Book, which he did as long as his life was spared, etc."

Mrs. M. E. Atkins,
Temple, Texas

In the 1967 edition of the hymn book, the following appears,

"Since the death of our dear mother, Mrs. M. E. Atkins, who so earnestly required that the publication of the Book be kept up and in the family, we wish to say that we have purchased the copyright, stereotype plates, all the claims, etc."

Opal Lloyd Terry, Manager,
Whittier, California

So, from reading the above two paragraphs, it would appear that the hymn book ownership descended from Elder Benjamin Lloyd to his son, J. C. Lloyd and after his death, to Benjamin Lloyd's daughter-in-law, Mrs. M. E. Atkins, and then after her death, to Opal Lloyd Terry and other family members. It would appear that the photograph of Jesse Cox, Benjamin Lloyd's

brother-in-law, was placed in the book after the death of his son and daughter-in-law, J. C. Lloyd and Mrs. M. E. Atkins.

About the year 1970, a group of Primitive Baptist ministers and members from eastern North Carolina formed a corporation, known as the Primitive Hymns Cooperation and purchased the entire ownership of the hymn book from the granddaughter and other family members. Today, this dear old hymn book is still being published at Rocky Mount, North Carolina, under the above named business or firm. Orders and information pertaining to cost of purchase may be forwarded to "THE PRIMITIVE HYMNS CORPORATION" care of Mrs. Bettie S. Woodard, 200 North Moye Street, Wilson, N.C. 27893, or Telephone A.C. 919-291-2439.

Believing that our people should be properly informed on all matters, whether truth or error pertaining to the church; it is with a sincere desire in my heart that I publish the portrait of Elder Benjamin Lloyd and the write-up that gives his outstanding qualities as a citizen and one of the truly, called ministers of God as follows:ⁱ

ⁱ NOTE: It appears there is more to this article but it is not in the copy that I have. Clarke Lee