

**THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH,  
ROME, GEORGIA,  
*1865-1913***

Robert G. Gardner

**FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH**  
*Rome, Georgia*  
1980

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## ROME FROM 1864 TO 1913

Rome stepped back from the brink of death late in 1864. The town had been pillaged and the bridges burned when the Confederate troops left in May 1864, and some of the downtown section—except for the churches—was set to the torch when Federal forces evacuated six months later. Thereafter the nonmilitary citizens who had fled south before the invaders slowly began coming back. Civilian guards were organized against the “Independent Scouts,” deserters from both Confederate and Federal armies who preyed on the left-over people. The scarcity of provisions and the necessity of rebuilding a community made life difficult. The city government was restored, a few business establishments were opened, and the newspaper resumed publication in August of 1865.

Peace—if not local pride—was improved when Rome was placed under Federal military rule in June 1865. As headquarters for the north-west portion of the Military District of Georgia, Rome was controlled by an army officer and several companies of soldiers through at least mid-1868. Under their watchful eyes, a Freedman’s Bureau was opened on Broad Street to benefit the jubilant blacks and the oath of loyalty was administered to the reluctant whites. In 1867 registered black voters outnumbered the whites 342 to 256, but the 1868 presidential election saw the white voters outnumber the blacks two to one. Gradually, control of Rome affairs was quietly assumed by the local whites, and a condition of usually quiet repression resulted. Exceptions are known when, for example, at the turn of the century, blacks in Rome sponsored an unsuccessful streetcar boycott. Later, in apparently unrelated incidents, they were terrorized by two lynchings, one of which was carried out by unmasked men on Broad Street. On the whole, however, white authority was exercised in much more subtle forms.

Within this context, Rome grew in numbers and prosperity. Population jumped from 2,748 in 1870 to 12,099 in 1910, showing a 79 percent increase in the decade of the 1880s and a 66 percent in the first decade of the new century. In 1870 blacks comprised 38 percent of the population; in 1910, about 29 percent. Based on the cultivation of cotton, vegetables, and fruit trees, and the exploitation of iron, other mineral deposits, and timber, Rome developed a diversified economy that did not appreciably suffer from widespread monetary alarms experienced elsewhere in 1873, 1893, 1896-1897, and 1907.

Of course businesses to meet the daily needs of the people were quick to be reestablished. In addition, over the years larger companies were formed or re-formed—cotton gins, warehouses, and sellers; manufacturers of cotton goods, furniture, stoves, plows, other small metal goods,

various kinds of wood, leather, and marble products, carriages and wagons, bricks, scales, and cigars; foundries and machine shops. Attorneys and insurance agents contributed to local growth—as did the first of several building and loan associations formed in 1871. Many newspapers were published for greater or lesser periods of time, with files of the *Courier*, *Commercial*, *Hustler*, *Tribune*, *Herald*, and *Tribune-Herald* being best preserved. Physicians and surgeons increased in numbers as needed, setting up hospitals that included one led by Dr. J. B. S. Holmes about 1890 and another led by Dr. W. P. Harbin in 1908. Having both private and public gain in mind, the Rome Land Company was started in 1887, aiding in economic expansion. Water was furnished by city-owned facilities updated in 1871 and 1892-1893, and providing the community with its familiar symbol, the 1871 water tower and clock situated on Neely School Hill. Gas lighting was restored in 1868, but by 1888 some business and street lighting had already turned to electricity. In the 1890s this form of power became a growing part of Rome life. Starting about 1885, the streetcars eventually connected the major areas of Rome with Mobley (DeSoto) Park and Lindale. By 1884 telephone service had been installed in Rome. Other ties with the outside world were provided by steamboats on the Coosa and Oostanaula rivers, but by the turn of the century this type of transportation had declined precipitately due to increased competition from railroads. No fewer than seven rail companies sent their trains through Rome, effectively connecting it with major cities in Georgia, Alabama, Tennessee, and beyond. Even as the sale of horses and buggies continued, “the honk colony of Rome” began its unrelenting growth shortly after 1900 and contributed to the sharp increase of “paved” streets and roads that achieved a county-wide total of 125 miles by 1909. Significant economic stimulus was afforded to the entire area in the first decade of the twentieth century by the presence of Anchor Duck Mill in East Rome, the Massachusetts Cotton Mill in Lindale, and the Floyd Cotton Mill on Eighth Avenue. Growth of another sort was claimed by a dry goods proprietor who insisted that his store—264 feet long and extending all the way from Broad to East First Street—was the longest in Georgia. Another superlative was locally asserted by one concern said to be the largest insurance company based in the South. Not yet extensively organized, Rome nevertheless had unions for iron moulders, carpenters, engineers, retail clerks, and typographers. Throughout all of this, local financial leaders maintained an organization to boost area development, known successively as the Rome Commercial League, the Board of Trade, and the Manufacturers and Merchants Association.

Rome continued to be governed by a mayor and council, with the clerk, treasurer, and city police under their direction. The volunteer fire

department was founded in 1868, eventually growing to four proud companies and in 1908 becoming full-time and professional. A city hall was located at Broad and Fifth Avenue and after 1883, at West Fourth Avenue, on the site of the present Greyhound Bus Station. The present municipal building was not erected until 1915-1916. The courthouse, with its various county and state officials, was on East First Street, where it remained until a large and modern structure was provided on Fifth Avenue in 1893. The Federal building on Fourth Avenue and East First Street was occupied in 1896.

At first Rome was surrounded by independent villages—Forrestville (North Rome), DeSoto (Fourth Ward), South Rome, and East Rome—each with its own government. DeSoto officially became a part of Rome in 1886, South Rome in 1890, and East Rome and Forrestville in 1907.

It must not be thought, however, that Rome was given over entirely to things commercial and governmental. Several private, secondary schools opened as soon as conditions permitted in the fall of 1865. By 1880 their number had become six, five for whites and one for blacks. In 1884 the public school system was initiated, growing from 343 white and 283 black pupils during the first year to about 1,500 white and 550 black pupils in 1909. Some private schools existed alongside the public schools—including secondary classes at the two colleges and at Darlington School, founded in 1905. Collegiate-level instruction was again provided when the Rome Female College reopened in 1871, continuing until its demise in 1890. Cherokee Baptist Female College was established in 1873, soon becoming Shorter College. Specialized classes were offered by the Southern Conservatory of Music from 1885 to 1901, by the Rome Business College at the turn of the century, and by Berry Industrial School, founded in 1902.

Rome's attachment to music was reflected in its schools, and in a multitude of other organizations and programs. For at least two decades the Rome Silver Cornet Band existed, followed in 1910 by the Lindale or Nixon's Band. Late in the nineteenth century the Lanier Circle was devoted to literary and musical matters, while the first Rome choral club performed for many an appreciative audience. The Rome Music Lovers' Club was started in 1904. Providing a thousand seats for those interested in music and drama of all kinds, the Nevin Opera House exerted a powerful influence from 1880 until about 1914. Somewhat less classical forms of music were featured by the visiting minstrels, traveling vaudeville acts, and—in a different vein—by the Floyd County [Sacred Harp] Singing Association or the Chautauqua programs staged in the Airdome completed in 1910 or in a huge tent pitched on the present site of the city hall.

Literary pursuits were furthered also by the Library and Historical

Association beginning in 1870. From this came the Young Men's Library Association in 1879 and the Carnegie Library completed in 1911.

Fraternal organizations and clubs of almost every conceivable kind were in abundance—the Masons, who erected their temple in 1877; the Odd Fellows; the Knights of Honor; the Knights Templars; the Royal Arcanum; the Woodmen of the World; the American Legion of Honor; and the Elks. Others were related to the Civil War—the Rome Light Guard; the Hill City Cadets; the Cherokee Artillery; the United Confederate Veterans; the United Sons of the Confederate Veterans, who erected the monument honoring the Southern women; and Co. F, Second Georgia Regiment for the blacks. Ladies' groups included the Daughters of the American Revolution, the United Daughters of the Confederacy, the Ladies Memorial Association, and the Women's Club. From the enthusiasm of the Memorial Association came the monuments honoring the Confederate soldiers and Nathan B. Forrest. Constantly changing their names and constituency, a multitude of social organizations sponsored frequent dances, receptions, and other parties.

In 1869 the Agricultural Fair Association held its first fall exhibition. Mobley (later DeSoto) Park was the site of music, picnicking, and other forms of amusement for several generations of Romans, dying when Darlington School occupied the site in 1923. Also a part of the past were the horse and car races at the Driving Park between Rome and Lindale.

The religious life of the community was fostered chiefly by its churches, growing from four in 1865 to about forty-five in 1909. As will be seen, the Baptist church helped form several other churches, black and white. Both the Methodists and Presbyterians assisted in the establishment of new congregations, including the Second (Trinity) Methodist Church led briefly by the later-famous Sam Jones. Saint Peter's Episcopal Church maintained a steady, if somewhat aloof, witness. Churches of other denominations were eventually added: Saint Mary's Roman Catholic (1868), First Christian (1896), Salvation Army (about 1900), First Church of Christ, Scientist (1902), and Church of Christ (1910). The Rhodef Sholem Synagogue was formed in 1874, but utilized only rented quarters during these earliest years.

### *THE OPENING MONTHS OF A NEW LIFE*

The chaos that marked life in Rome gradually diminished during 1865. The newspaper recorded the events of that summer: "Since the return of some of the refugees, a few scattering pews and seats from the City Hall and other places have been brought together at the Baptist church, enough to seat, say one hundred and fifty persons, and most of the preaching we have had this past Summer, has been there." Apparently

the pulpit was filled rather regularly by Charles H. Stillwell, a former pastor who still lived in Rome, and by J. Courtney Browne, who came over from Cave Spring. A committee was named to secure preachers "when [the pulpit was] not occupied by the other denominations." By March 1866 all four downtown congregations were back in their own buildings and had assumed their separate corporate lives.

Regular services and conferences at the Baptist church were initiated on October 13, 1865. The congregation numbered 80 white females and 44 white males—two women and a man who had previously been forgotten were belatedly added to the roll. (For thirteen years the blacks had been somewhat loosely related to the church; by now, of course, they were forming their own independent organization.) A committee canvassed the congregation to procure funds for the support of a pastor, and J. Courtney Browne was elected for 1866.

Although the church financial records had been destroyed by the 1864 fire, the treasurer reported that on May 17, 1864, he had had a balance on hand of \$254.10—unfortunately in Confederate money that soon became worthless. Offerings for the last quarter of 1865 amounted to \$29.30, expended entirely on church repairs and other local causes.

Grim though the monetary conditions were, the Baptist congregation stood apart from three programs sponsored by the Rome Amateur Club, the proceeds of which were to benefit the churches. When the treasurer received a share of the profits, the conference thanked the club for its "kind motives" and "respectfully" returned the money because "such methods of raising money for church purposes are inconsistent with our views, and our Church Decorum."

As the year drew to a close, the church restored its organization, electing a new deacon, clerk, and treasurer, and six new executive committeemen. A group was appointed to examine a hymnal, and for the first time in its history, the church seems to have purchased a supply. The basement of the building was put to good use as a school; white children met there during the week, and a Sunday school for freedmen was started in the spring of 1866.

The only instance of church discipline during 1865 reflected the altered conditions of government. One member had become postmaster of Rome, taking an oath that he had never voluntarily borne arms against the American nation. Because he had very plainly worn the Confederate grey, he was quickly accused of false swearing. His defense rested on his assertion that he had always opposed the war as morally wrong and had entered the army only because of overwhelming public opinion. Thus, he insisted, his service had been involuntary, not voluntary. His retention as a member came only after he acknowledged his error, asked forgiveness, and accepted the stern order "to abstain from all appearance of evil."

## THE DECLARATION OF FAITH, THE CHURCH COVENANT, AND THE RULES OF ORDER

As the post-war period opened, the church continued to be governed by the three documents previously adopted to provide for corporate direction.

The confession of faith, accepted in 1837, was replaced in April 1866 by what was called a "Declaration of Faith." Although no copy is known with assurance to exist, the 1881 printed roll of church members included such a statement. Church records between 1866 and 1881 reveal several changes in the decorum but none for the declaration of faith, leading to the conclusion that the 1881 version probably reflected the 1866 document. Much shorter than the New Hampshire Confession of Faith (1833), it nevertheless contained the moderate Calvinism of that statement and placed the Rome church well within the mainstream of contemporary Southern Baptist theological life.

The 1837 constitution surfaced briefly in 1874 and then silently disappeared. The church in conference agreed to read it in February 1874, but this was probably not done. Thereafter, absolutely nothing was said about it. In the 1881 printed roll of church members, it should have appeared after the declaration of faith and before the rules of order, but instead a covenant was there. No church action prepared the way for such a covenant, but its local acceptance was adequately shown by its inclusion in a 1900 printed roll of members—which omitted the declaration of faith and the rules of order. Somewhat surprisingly, it was not a reprint of the covenant usually published with the New Hampshire Confession—the covenant still used in 1980—but was instead a variation of a covenant first found in William Crowell's *The Church Member's Manual* of 1847 and 1852.

The evolution of the decorum and church order is a matter of some uncertainty. An 1852 version is extant, but an 1861 revision is not. After one change in 1865, this document was supplanted in April 1866 by another "Declaration of Faith, Church Decorum and Rules of Order." While no copy exists, changes are known to have been made in 1867 and 1871. Another decorum and church order was adopted in 1874—surely the one printed with the 1881 roll of members. Its ten rules called for, among other things, an executive committee for the church, the attendance of all *male* members at "the stated meetings of the church," the regular partaking of the Lord's Supper by "all members not under censure," the avoidance of "these diversions commonly known as popular amusement" and "ardent spirits," and a reading of these rules and the church covenant at the regular conferences four times a year.

Probably by 1874 and surely by 1881 the church had altered—or tacitly ignored—each of its constituting documents. Through the long pastorate of R. B. Headden, nothing of record was done in this regard. Obviously a consensus had been reached.

### *THE PASTORS*

#### JAMES COURTNEY BROWNE, 1866

J. Courtney Browne, the first pastor after the Civil War, was born on May 10, 1836, in Clarke County, Georgia, where he was baptized at about the age of sixteen. From 1857 to 1859 he was a student at Mercer University, being graduated at the head of his class. Soon he moved to Cave Spring, Georgia, as principal of Hearn School. In 1863 he married Eva Culbertson of Cave Spring; they subsequently had seven daughters and two sons. While a Confederate soldier, 1861 to 1865, he first began to preach. After the war he returned to Cave Spring and was ordained to the gospel ministry in 1865. He was elected as pastor of the Rome Baptist Church for 1866 at a salary of \$1,000—evidently his first pastorate. With his wife he moved to Rome, uniting with the church on January 19, 1866.

His year as pastor produced no spectacular results. As has been seen, the congregation was reestablishing itself after eighteen months of enforced inactivity. Burdened with a building in great need of repair and faced with a depressed economy, the membership evidently met their financial obligations to him with difficulty. Dissatisfaction of some sort existed—perhaps because he then objected to pulpit exchange with other denominations—and when he accepted a call to serve in 1867, some pledges were withdrawn. Browne thereupon resigned. Resolutions of appreciation were adopted upon his departure, but obviously his ministry had not been satisfactory to important members of the congregation.

Going back to Cave Spring, Browne was pastor there and at Cedar-town until 1874. A move to South Carolina occurred in 1875, after which he led churches that included Aiken First, Tabernacle, and Philippi Baptist churches and was prominent in the affairs of the Aiken and Edisto Baptist associations and the South Carolina Baptist Convention. Death came at Aiken on August 26, 1914.

#### ALBERT PEYTON WOODFIN, 1867-1868

The next pastor was Albert Peyton Woodfin, who led the church amidst much personal suffering in 1867 and 1868. Born at Richmond, Virginia, about 1840, he was educated at Richmond College, the local Baptist school. His wife was the former Miss Anna S. Jackson of Pen-

field, Georgia; they evidently had no children. After being pastor of the Ashland (Virginia) Baptist Church for two years, he was an itinerant army evangelist and missionary in Virginia from 1863 to 1866. Briefly he worked in Texas and Louisiana, raising money for the Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention. Not liking the country, he headed back to Virginia, passing through Rome on the way. He made himself known to the pastorless church, preached there, and was called on February 20, 1867, at an annual salary of \$1,000. In November 1867 he was extended an indefinite call, and his salary was raised to \$1,300 per year.

While at Rome he seems to have stressed building renovation and church growth. He appealed for funds in his native state, but raised \$200 mostly in Rome to repair the spire and replace the pews. Eighty-one persons joined the church during his two years as pastor, and membership expanded from 137 to 185.

However, his work was hampered by his own declining health, and two furloughs in 1868 did not halt the loss of vigor. Resigning in September, he was retained at full salary until the conclusion of the year.

Upon his departure, he and his wife moved to her parents' home near Penfield, where he tried unsuccessfully to regain his health by farming. Months of pain ensued, being ended by death because of a pulmonary disease on October 5, 1879, at nearby Greensboro, where he is buried.

#### LUTHER RICE GWALTNEY, 1868-1876

One of the most gifted men ever to serve the church, Luther Rice Gwaltney was pastor from 1869 to 1876. He was the son, grandson, and great-grandson of Baptist preachers. Born in Isle of Wight County, Virginia, in 1830 and named for his father's most famous friend, he was educated at home, at a nearby academy, and at Columbian College, Washington, D.C., receiving the Bachelor of Arts degree in 1853, the Master of Arts degree in 1857, and the honorary Doctor of Divinity degree in 1876. After teaching five years in Virginia and two years at Columbian College, he was ordained in 1855. Subsequently he led Baptist churches in Greenville, North Carolina, and Edgefield, South Carolina, for thirteen years. For one year he was professor of Latin and mathematics at Chowan Female Collegiate Institute, Murfreesboro, North Carolina, and for several years in Edgefield he combined teaching with his pastorate. Gwaltney was married twice—to Miss Louisa Davidson of Virginia, who died in Edgefield leaving two children, and to Miss Sophia B. Lipscomb of South Carolina, who bore him seven children. "No home is complete without a little baby," he asserted. His reputation grew as an eloquent preacher, an experienced and successful teacher, and

*Pastors of the First Baptist Church, 1866-1913*



J. Courtney Browne  
1866



Luther R. Gwaltney  
1869-1876



Gustavus A. Nunnally  
1876-1883



Robert B. Headden  
1883-1913

A portrait is not available for Albert P. Woodfin (1867-1868).

a gentleman of deep piety and broad culture. Of average size and wearing a long beard, he became pastor of the Rome Baptist Church, which then had about 185 members. He began his ministry during the last week of 1868 at an annual salary of \$1,675. This was increased to \$2,000 plus a house in August 1870 and to \$2,400 in January 1874.

Rome was in an economically expanding situation, and Gwaltney was a man to match the mood. Active and aggressive—in marked contrast to his unfortunate predecessor—he led the congregation to more than double its annual income, to expand the membership to 336, and to renovate the sanctuary and add a fine organ. When his flock failed to meet his expectations, he resigned late in 1870, rescinding his action only after exacting promises of greater devotion to the work of the church and slightly increased financial support for the minister. Admittedly, however, there was a constant struggle to raise money. Gwaltney had high ambitions for the church, and the congregation could not or would not keep up with him.

As a preacher, he seems to have been the first to deliver regular children's sermons. When he spoke "for some months" in the evening on the theme "Christ is King," he thereby produced the first known series of sermons. His forceful insistence on orderliness must have produced some elderly expressions of approval when in the midst of one Sunday evening service he reproved "two young bucks."

His loyalty to the church was expressed in at least one unexpected way. The church minutes for August 6, 1871, read: "It was Resolved to grant to our Pastor a vacation of 4 or 5 weeks, whereupon he stated that he could not avail himself of a vacation this year, and at his request the motion was withdrawn."

Surely the members felt honored when their pastor was invited to deliver baccalaureate sermons for colleges at Jackson and Murfreesboro, Tennessee, in 1873, the annual sermon before the Georgia Baptist Convention in 1874, and the baccalaureate sermon at his son's graduation from Mercer University in 1875. Displaying his broad interest in Baptist life, he addressed the Centennial mass meeting held at Armuchee church in the summer of 1876.

Probably his most significant contribution during these years at Rome was his part in founding Cherokee Baptist Female (now Shorter) College, providing it initial leadership while still in the pastorate, and gaining the eventual support of Colonel and Mrs. Alfred Shorter. Although the school enjoyed an auspicious opening, it soon accumulated enough financial problems to threaten its existence. Gwaltney turned to an apparently unresponsive Shorter early in 1876, and grew progressively despondent regarding its decline. Thus, in the summer of that year he agreed to become president of Judson Institute, a Baptist female school

in Marion, Alabama. The Colonel's belated decision to rebuild Cherokee College did not alter Gwaltney's decision, and he left both the school and the church at the end of August.

However, Gwaltney was twice more to be active in Rome. After six years at Judson, he returned to Shorter College at Colonel Shorter's urgent request as president and professor of mental and moral philosophy from 1882 to 1891. Having another son to educate in college, he became pastor of the Baptist church in Athens, Georgia, part-time in 1890 and full-time from 1891 to 1893. Thereafter he was again pastor of the Edgefield Baptist Church, 1893 to 1901. For a third time he became associated with Shorter College as financial agent, chaplain, and professor of Christian morals, from 1902 until his death in 1910.

### GUSTAVUS ALONZO NUNNALLY, 1876-1883

Having been a successful teacher and pastor in and near Monroe, Georgia, Gustavus A. Nunnally was the next man to assume leadership at the Rome Baptist Church. Raised in Walton County, Georgia, where he was born in 1841, he was graduated from the University of Georgia in 1859. That year he married Miss Mary C. Briscoe; they had at least two children. For ten years he taught in his home county and served in the Confederate army. After the war he entered the ministry, becoming for almost a decade pastor of several Walton County churches.

Nunnally started his work in Rome on November 19, 1876, at \$1,800 per year. Within a year he was called on an indefinite basis, but apparently his salary was never raised from its earliest level.

He inherited—among other things—the enthusiasm that his predecessor had engendered in Alfred and Martha Shorter for Cherokee College. In matters related to the school, Nunnally became Shorter's adviser, watching him with growing amazement and admiration as he financed the erection of three spacious buildings and finally provided for a generous endowment. A grateful community insisted that the school be renamed for the couple. It became Nunnally's sad duty to deliver the funeral sermon for Mrs. Shorter in 1877 and for Colonel Shorter in 1882.

A gregarious, outgoing individual, "Brother Gus" was described during his first year at Rome as "an able and fast rising preacher." Net membership grew by 106 to a total of 442 in 1883. Despite this, the regular gifts fluctuated only between \$2,474 and \$2,887 annually—although the erection of a new meetinghouse during his last year produced marked additions to the building fund. In 1881 he prepared the first complete roll of members in printed form, a twenty-page, three- by five-inch pamphlet that listed 414 names.

Nunnally recognized the value of the printed word, publishing

numerous essays and sermons in the *Christian Index*. For parts of three years he edited monthly journals in Rome, the *Missionary Church and School* and the *Baptist Sun*, but unfortunately no copies of either are known to exist.

Outside the church, he helped to form and was a leader in a society to prevent cruelty to animals and in the Young Men's Library Association. He was chaplain in a local Masonic lodge. For two years he was moderator of the Cave Spring Baptist Association. A diligent supporter of state and Southwide Baptist conventions, he was on the State Mission Board and the Home Mission Board while in Rome. A Mercer trustee for a decade, he was awarded the honorary Doctor of Divinity degree in 1883. Major addresses were delivered at the DeKalb Sunday School Association, Mercer High School, and Hearn Academy. In 1882 he was an official guest from Georgia at the New York meetings of the Northern Baptist missionary and publication societies.

At least four offers to leave Rome were turned down by this "young, ardent, energetic and strong" figure. Mercer University issued invitations to become a traveling fund-raiser in 1877, 1879, and 1880, and he formally accepted the first two before finally deciding against them. Late in 1882 he was called as pastor of the First Baptist Church, Dallas, Texas, but evidently had little difficulty in refusing it. No doubt he had more than an inkling of the new Home Mission Board position that was soon to be created.

Apparently a restless man, Nunnally resigned his Rome pastorate after almost seven years, preaching a farewell sermon on October 28, 1883. There followed—with one notable exception—a succession of two- and three-year positions: secretary of the Church Building Fund of the Home Mission Board, SBC; pastor of six churches in Alabama, Tennessee, and Georgia; president of Mercer University, Southern Female College in LaGrange, Georgia (for eight years), and Columbia College in Lake City, Florida; and secretary of the Board of Education, GBC. While in this last position he returned to live in Rome, where he experienced the death of his first wife. He married Mrs. Alla Holmes Cheney, whom he had baptized as a sixteen-year-old single girl back in 1878. Twenty-one years his junior, she outlived him. His death occurred on August 14, 1917, in Rome, and he is buried in the Myrtle Hill Cemetery.

#### ROBERT BENJAMIN HEADDEN, 1883-1913

On November 1, 1883, a forty-four-year-old man from nearby Cartersville arrived in Rome, beginning a ministry at the Baptist church that was to extend for almost thirty years — longer than any other to date. Robert B. Headden was a Bartow County native, educated at the

Cherokee Baptist College in Cassville. His 1860 Master of Arts diploma, written altogether in Latin, is now in the possession of the Rome First Baptist Church. Following a period in the Confederate army, during which he was seriously wounded at Gettysburg, he was ordained to the gospel ministry in 1868. The next year he married Miss Mary E. Dyer, whose father had been a pastor of the Rome Baptist Church in the 1840s. Briefly Headden was pastor of country churches in his home county, and then for twelve years of the Cartersville Baptist Church. In 1873 he preached a sermon from the text, "Lift up your eyes and look upon the fields, for they are white already unto harvest" (Matthew 9:38), and Miss Lottie Moon, a local schoolteacher, made public her decision to volunteer as a missionary to China. Before coming to Rome, Headden was already a member of the Georgia Baptist State Mission Board and the Mercer University board of trustees, and had delivered the 1881 introductory sermon at the Georgia Baptist Convention. The Rome church had secured a mature and stable man highly regarded in state Baptist life.

Once in town, Headden firmly established himself in the affections of the people. Known to be fond of taffy candy, he would gladly accept invitations to visit those members who shared — or would contribute to — his sweet tooth. His salary started at \$1,800 annually, gradually grew to \$2,400 in 1894, declined to \$2,000 in 1896 (where it remained for fourteen years), and then suddenly jumped to \$2,500 in 1910. Shortly thereafter he recommended that it be reduced to \$2,000, but the offer was refused. His sermons were carefully planned and related to one's devotional, ethical, and church life. A few of them were printed; no more than a dozen exist in the form of handwritten notes that he used in the pulpit; for a decade most of them were summarized in the Tuesday newspapers. One of his auditors declared a sermon to be "a beauty and eighteen minutes long." As a pastor he counseled, baptized, married, and buried hundreds of individuals in and out of his church. It was said of him: "If there is one thing that he can perform more gracefully than another it is a marriage ceremony."

Early in his ministry a new building to house the congregation was dedicated — eventually to be pictured on a paperweight manufactured for the church in New York. Without a formal motion to support him, the church clerk began using the designation "First Baptist Church" on September 3, 1893. Headden concurred, however, when he introduced the use of printed church stationery later that decade. (Probably popular usage had dictated this change in 1887 when DeSoto Baptist Church became Second [now Fifth Avenue] Baptist Church, but the change became imperative when both churches held membership in the same association for the first time in 1893.) Intermittently from 1896 to 1910 Headden was editor of and chief contributor to the *Cherokee Messenger*,

a monthly or semimonthly religious newspaper of four to eight pages. Costing fifty cents a year and claiming a circulation that reached two thousand, it carried news of many Northwest Georgia Baptist churches — with an emphasis on local items. One year it actually made a \$40 profit which Headden contributed to missions! From 1898 to 1911 he spent two mornings a week when school was in session teaching Bible at Shorter College.

He led the congregation in mission-giving that was unparalleled in proportion before or since. Such gifts grew from about 9 percent of the total budget early in his ministry to 79 percent near its close, and averaged almost 52 percent over a period of thirty years. For several years early in the twentieth century, the First Baptist Church was the largest Georgia contributor to Baptist missions.

Headden was the first pastor of the Rome church to travel outside the United States. In 1892 he took a trip to Canada on his usual one-month vacation. Two years later he visited a missionary in Mexico supported in part by the church. He attended the first meeting of the Baptist World Alliance at London in 1905, sending letters back to Rome which were printed in the paper.

As a valued part of Rome's ministerial leadership, Headden was called upon for many services outside the church: prayers at the installation of officers for the Knights of Pythias, at a meeting of the Hardware Dealers' Convention, and at the dedication of the new Floyd County courthouse, the Forrest monument, and the Southern Women's monument; sermons at the Floyd County Singing Convention and a three-state meeting of the Masons; and speeches at the Rome High School and Berry chapel. He was also invited to be the central participant in functions away from Rome: revivals at Cave Spring, Cartersville, Dalton, and Newnan, Georgia, and Lexington, Kentucky; the dedication of new meetinghouses at Armuchee, Kingston, and Fort Valley; commencements at Monroe College, Dalton Female College, and Cherokee Baptist High School; and veterans' meetings at Cartersville, Calhoun, and Dalton.

In 1903 an elaborate reception honoring Headden's twentieth anniversary as pastor was held, a gift of china was presented, and Headden expressed appreciation — to which a response was made by one of the deacons in these words: "If [as Headden had just said] you had rather be pastor of this than any other people, this people had rather have you than any other for their pastor." A similar affair marked his twenty-fifth anniversary.

As his years in Rome turned into decades and Pastor Headden became a vigorous septuagenarian, thoughts of retirement naturally occurred — both to him and to the congregation. For six months serious considera-

tion was given to employing an assistant pastor, but this was finally termed "inexpedient" by the deacons in March 1912. Some members were by then ready for a younger pastor, but Headden's first resignation at that time was nevertheless refused. On January 23, 1913, he made the page-one headline of the Rome *Daily Press*: "DR. HEADDEN TO QUIT FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH," and this time his resignation was accepted and he was named pastor emeritus for life. The news writer commented: "Loved by young and old, rich and poor, revered for uncompromising righteousness in all matters of moral import, a preacher of conservatism, eloquence and brevity, a pastor attentive, sympathetic and kind, Dr. Headden has in all the years become a structural part of the First Baptist church of Rome, that time nor tide can ever efface." He concluded his active pastorate on June 25, 1913, at which time the church owed him \$1,090 in back salary.

Making a sentimental journey back to Gettysburg, he suffered a stroke on July 1 near the spot where he had been wounded almost exactly fifty years before. This proved to be fatal; he died in Rome on August 14, 1913. His successor, W. L. Walker of Charlotte, North Carolina, was elected by the church ten days later. Undoubtedly Headden knew and approved of the upcoming action; Walker had conducted a revival at First Baptist Church in 1910 and had preached a trial sermon about three weeks prior to Headden's death. Later Headden was memorialized by a birdbath now found at Myrtle Hill Cemetery where he was interred. Mrs. Headden lived until 1915, apparently being aided physically and financially by the Woman's Missionary Society and the deacons.

## LAY LEADERS

### DEACONS

The deacons numbered only three at the close of hostilities — and soon dropped to one — but the full complement of seven was not reached until 1875. Thereafter the group slowly grew until eleven men were active in 1900 and sixteen in 1913. A total of forty-one acted as deacons from 1864 to 1913, while four others were elected but declined to serve. Of these forty-one, thirty-six were ordained by this church. The other five entered by letter as deacons and were subsequently added to the body after formal election, but without reordination. Two other men also entered the church as deacons but were never invited to join the group.

The relationship of the church and deacons got off to a shaky start, and all sorts of trouble marred internal harmony. Obviously the members in 1867 resented what was viewed as an unseemly grasp of power by the deacons when they approved pew rentals, and a committee

comprised of nondeacons was named to define the duties of the deacons. Claiming divine appointment and accusing the church of belittling their role, the entire group of six resigned. The church relented, the deacons returned, and the pews were rented. Discontent evidently smouldered until 1875, when a motion was made restricting the length of time that a deacon could serve. Because the majority still favored an indefinite term, the motion was tabled. Without any warning in the records, the deacons all resigned in August 1879, but withdrew their resignations the following month. All was not well, however. By 1881 the deacons were urging additional rules concerning personal behavior that were considered by most church members to be adequately covered by the current rules of order. In an effort to overthrow the power of older deacons and to introduce some new blood, a three-year term of office was adopted, with two or three men to be elected each year. The four senior deacons promptly resigned, leaving three men active — all ordained only three months earlier! Confusion reigned until February 1882 when the older deacons got their way. The church agreed to rotate the deacons on three-year terms — but to elect no new deacons as long as already ordained men were available. Accordingly, six former deacons were reelected in 1883 and 1885, and not until 1889 were any new men ordained. Additional new deacons were named as the church determined their necessity, and the system of rotation was not again mentioned.

In the midst of and following this uncertainty, the deacons were charged by the church with a multitude of duties. They often relieved cases of physical destitution, investigated and recommended action for disciplinary cases, and increasingly supervised the financial life of the church. When parking became an issue in 1870, they were directed to provide additional hitching posts.

So far as is known, the group called itself a “board” for the first time in 1892, when O. H. McWilliams was the first known chairman. In 1908 McWilliams was again (or still) chairman. Others occupying that position were George D. Pollock (1909-1912) and A. Felix Cantrell (1913-1917).

Surely regular meetings of the deacons were being held well before 1900, but not until then does information exist that pinpoints the time. Meetings were being scheduled on the Friday afternoon before the first Sunday of each month, just prior to the regular church conference. When the conference was changed to the third Sunday, the deacons’ meeting was also changed. In 1911 it was again shifted — to the third Wednesday, after prayer meeting. Usually the men gathered at the church, although once in a while at the downtown office of the chairman. On at least one occasion, the group met at the Headden house where six o’clock dinner was served.

The availability of manuscript minutes from the deacons' meetings beginning in January 1908 throws much light on the detailed activities of the body. Officers of the board were a chairman, vice-chairman, and secretary. In addition to many temporary committees, standing committees were appointed, as follows: finance, discipline, orphans' home, music, baptism, ushers, house property, relief, communion, the sick, public worship, and Sunday school. Monthly reports were usually made — sometimes as brief as "Nothing" from the discipline committee or "Money fairly well" from the finance. Sometimes they were very lengthy and extended over numerous consecutive meetings, as for example when the weighty matter of individual communion cups was gravely considered.

It is very evident that the power of the board had expanded dramatically over the years. The deacons selected new members for their board, asking the church to confirm their choices. Church committees paralleled the various deacons' committees, but the deacons nominated their members also. Although the deacons had no formal control over these church committees, they constantly referred matters of business to them as if they were subordinates. The deacons did not make many important decisions solely by themselves, but their recommendations to the church conference were virtually always accepted.

The names of the deacons and their years of service follow. Those marked with an asterisk were on the board past 1913. Those marked with a dagger entered the church by letter as deacons and were later added to the board after formal election, but without reordination: A. B. Ross (1851-1866), W. F. Ayer (1860-1865), Charles E. Hills (1860-1881, 1883-1885), Thomas J. Swanson (1865-1870), †Alexander McDonald (1867), J. H. Nowlin (1867-1875), C. O. Stillwell (1867-1881, 1883-1895), †Carter W. Sparks (1869-1870), G. W. F. Lamkin (1870-1881, 1883-1889), Ed F. Shropshire (1870-1875), J. C. McDonald (1875-1881, 1883-1888), J. W. Janes (1875-1881), James B. Sullivan (1875-1881, 1883-1908), O. H. McWilliams (1875-1881, 1885-1914), J. M. Proctor (1881-1883), C. M. Harper (1881- 1909), A. W. Ledbetter (1881-1893), †J. B. Patton (1881-?, 1889-c.1898), J. B. Carver (1889-c. 1898), Junius F. Hillyer (1889-\*), James A. Smith (1895-1913), Charles E. Woodruff (1895-1913), Fred G. Govan (1895-c.1904), J. A. Glover (1899-1910), W. J. Neel (1899-c.1905), A. Felix Cantrell (1899-\*), A. H. Cundell (1899-c.1902), J. R. Cantrell (1903-1908), G. W. Campbell (1903), George D. Pollock (c.1904-\*), Leonard G. Todd (c.1903-1913), J. T. Wooten (c.1904-1908), †O. L. Betts (1909-\*), Dr. Robert M. Harbin (1909-\*), Ed Proctor (1909-\*), J. F. Dupree (1910-\*), Dr. Will P. Harbin (1910-\*), R. M. Johnson (1910-\*), Will T. Ledbetter (1910-\*), T. W. Lipscomb (1910-\*), †Azor W. VanHoose (1910-\*).

## CLERKS

Eleven men served as clerks of the church from 1864 to 1913, ranging in length all the way from eight months (Rhodes) to seventeen years (Moseley). Their names follow: Charles E. Hills (1862-1865, 1866), J. S. Panchen (1865-1866), C. O. Stillwell (1866-1875), A. E. Ross (1875-1883), John J. McDonald (1883-1888), W. J. Griffin (1888-1890), R. J. Gwaltney (1890-1891), W. J. Nunnally (1891-1893), J. H. Rhodes (1893-1894), A. B. S. Moseley (1894-1911), and H. J. Arnold (1911-1917).

Three books remain as testimonies of their labors. A large, leather-bound volume that begins in 1835 carries the record down to August 28, 1870 — 274 pages of minutes and two membership lists started in 1835 and 1866. A larger, leather-bound volume picks up the story at September 11, 1870, and ends at December 30, 1896 — 437 pages of minutes and a membership list compiled in 1870 and extending through 1890. A third volume covering the years from 1897 to 1910 was maintained, but a committee appointed in 1912 to locate it apparently was unsuccessful. The clerk responsible for those years had died early that year and his widow could not find it. A fourth volume commences on January 15, 1911, and exists in the form of neatly typed pages in a loose leaf binder.

## TRUSTEES

Required by the 1837 act of incorporation, the church had elected a total of fifteen trustees before the war, three of whom retained their offices afterwards. Surprisingly enough, they were never mentioned in that capacity, and in 1876 the deacons were ordered to have the church incorporated. Perhaps this was not done, because no trustees were then named. In 1883 five men were elected and then ordered to have the congregation incorporated as the Rome Baptist Church by the Floyd Superior Court. Thereafter the record falls silent for thirty years, during which two men were added and seven were lost by death or removal. In 1913 three were elected, bringing the active group up to five.

The names of the trustees and their years of service follow. Those marked with an asterisk were trustees past 1913: Alfred Shorter (1852-1882), Charles H. Stillwell (1856-1887), Cunningham M. Pennington (1856-1885), William T. McWilliams (1883-before 1900), D. B. Hamilton, Sr. (1883-1911), Joel Branham (1883-\*), J. C. McDonald (1883-1888), Arthur R. Sullivan (1883-1909), James A. Smith (probably after 1896-1913), A. F. Cantrell (probably after 1896-\*), D. B.

Hamilton, Jr. (1913-\*), W. J. Griffin (1913-\*), and T. W. Lipscomb (1913-\*).

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The executive committee was late in arriving on the scene, being formed in 1861 by the pastor, deacons, and two others. Late in 1865 the church rules were altered to provide for a committee comprised of the pastor, deacons, and six others. Because the deacons were said to be of full strength, the committee was abolished in 1867. Without explanation it was brought back from 1871 to 1875, and then for the last time allowed to expire. Doubtlessly the deacons resented such outside interference — they had already informed the congregation of their divine appointment — and worked for its discontinuance.

During its eight-year postbellum life, the executive committee involved itself in disciplinary matters, in church finances, and in church repairs, revised the constituting documents of the church, and led in entertaining delegates to the 1872 meeting of the Cave Spring Baptist Association which met in Rome. Admittedly, all of their duties could have been performed by the deacons.

The names of the executive committeemen and their years of service follow: Charles H. Stillwell (1861-1865), C. O. Stillwell (1862-1865), Addison Maupin (1865-1866), J. H. Nowlin (1865-1867), J. S. Panchen (1865-1866, 1875), A. S. Sullivan (1865-1866), D. M. Hood (1866), Cunningham M. Pennington (1866), W. F. Ayer (1866-1867), Thomas J. Perry (1866-1867, 1871-1875), Thomas G. Watters (1866-1867), C. G. Samuel (1871-1874), W. I. Brookes (1871-1872), Joel Branham (1873), and J. W. Janes (1874-1875).

## OTHER CHURCH COMMITTEES

Of course the church had from almost the beginning operated through committees, related chiefly to finances, discipline, pastoral supply, and meetinghouse construction and repair. Countless other committees were temporarily given other assignments and then allowed to lapse.

However, G. A. Nunnally at the beginning of his ministry induced the church to name permanent standing committees for the first time in January 1877, as follows: strangers, social religion, sick, Sabbath school, Sabbath school attendance, finances, and church repairs. Thirty-two men and thirty-five women were elected to office. The equal division was disregarded by the church repairs committee that had three men on it and by the finance committee that had ten women and only five men. Monthly reports were initially expected, but such did not prove to be the case.

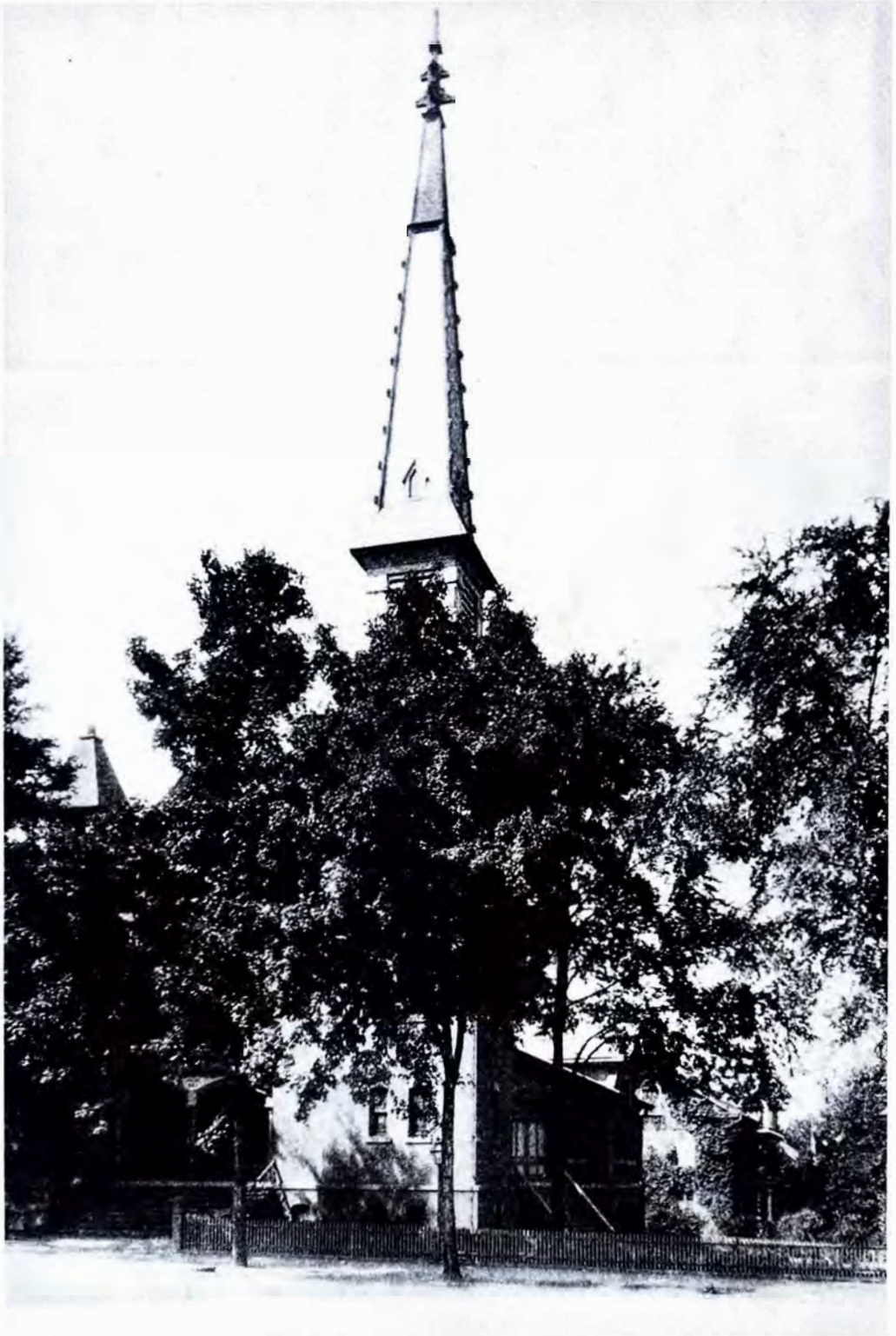
By 1881 a committee of ushers had appeared and committees on baptism, church property, and music were named in 1892, although likely they had been around well before those times.

The committees again clearly come into view in 1903: finance, house property, discipline, relief, orphans' home, communion, music, baptism, and ushers. Seventeen men and no women were on them, and ten of the men were present or past deacons. The remaining seven were ushers, headed by a deacon. In 1909 three new committees were added — public worship, sick, and collectors — but all twelve committees were identical with those elected by the deacons, with the exception of thirteen additional ushers chosen from the broader male membership. Three years later the structure was again shuffled, this time providing for committees on "strangers who are Baptist and others," membership, advertising, music, special services, decorations, beautifying church and grounds, Sunday school, poor, sick, and finances. Five women were among those appointed, joined by thirty nondeacons and eleven deacons. The following year the committees reverted to an earlier format, containing mostly deacons and no women. When clerk's or deacons' records are available, it is made plain by the monthly reports — or lack of them — that committees varied in their efficiency and that the same committee varied from year to year.

### *LOTS AND BUILDINGS*

Completed in 1855, the second church building adequately met the needs of a growing congregation. During the Civil War, however, it was used by Federal troops as a hospital and stable, and was severely damaged as a consequence. In 1866 and 1867 money was sought from sister churches in Georgia and Virginia, but most of the \$200 raised for repair came from Rome. Gas heating and lighting had been installed in 1860, but after 1864 this was rendered useless until lines were repaired and new fixtures secured in 1869. Because of decaying timbers, the steeple was pulled down that summer, forcing the storage of the huge bell cast and hung in 1855. At an expenditure of almost \$1,500, in the summer of 1870 the sanctuary was completely renovated and the roof braces strengthened. When the building was reopened in July, "the recent elegant improvements" and "the fine new Organ in perfect tune" were objects of favorable comment. Attention was then turned to the basement area which was put in first-class condition at a cost of about \$600 just before the Georgia Baptist Convention met at the church in April 1873.

Normal wear and tear, the need to supplement the gas heating system with coal heaters, and an 1877 fire doing about \$400 damage forced



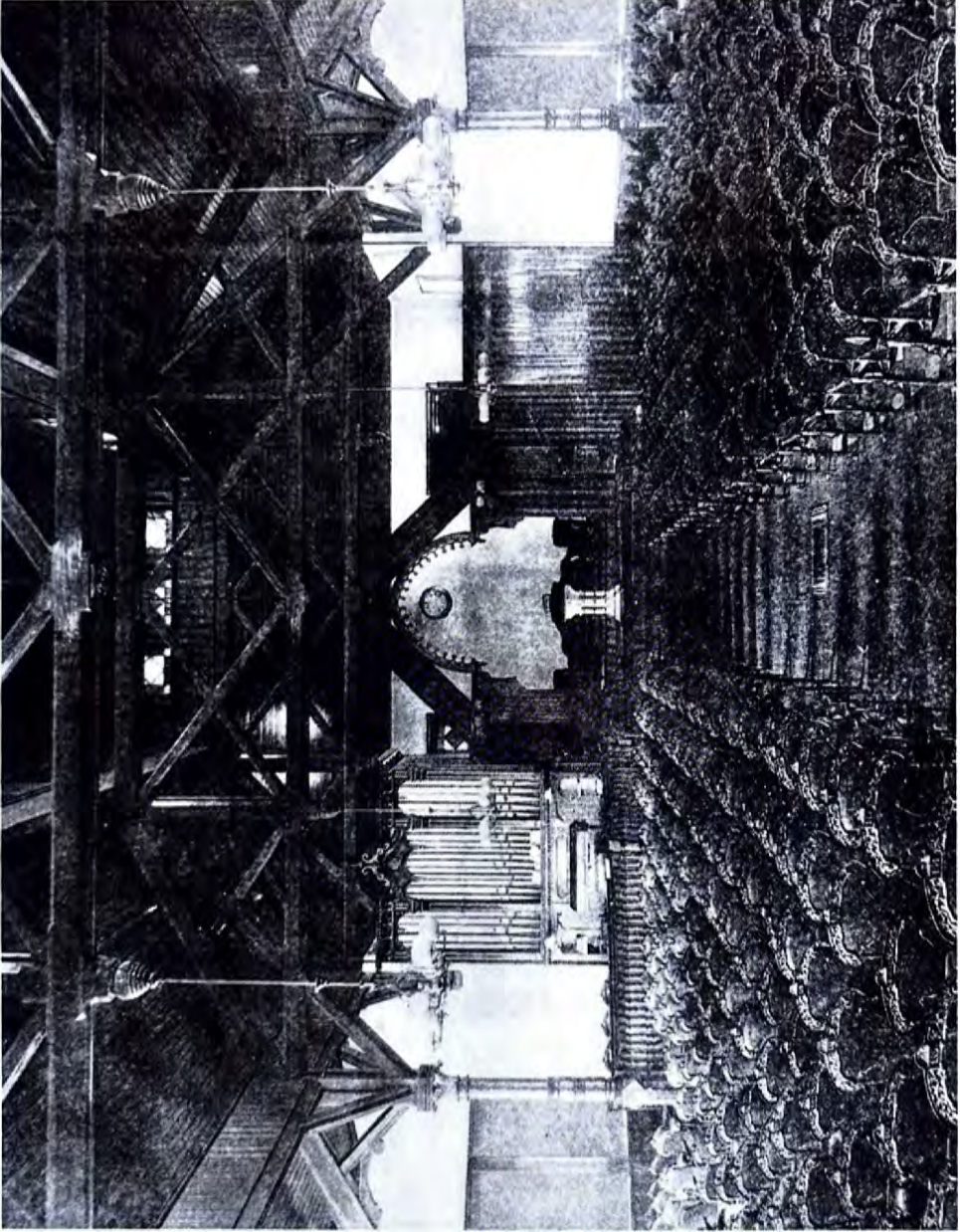
The third building of the First Baptist Church, completed in 1884, is seen in this photograph published in 1890.

sizable expenditures. Furthermore, under Gwaltney and Nunnally the congregation began to expand markedly. Thus, in August 1878 a committee was appointed to explore the cost of enlarging the building. In February 1880 another one was ordered to explore enlarging *or replacing* it. The recommendation to erect a new meetinghouse was adopted the next month.

The road to a new building was rocky. In April a little more than \$10,000 was pledged on a church to cost no more than \$15,000. The building committee was instructed to collect half of each pledge three months later. The *Christian Index* reported that a Boston firm had drawn up the plans and that most of the money had been promised. Without explanation, however, the building committee was discharged in September. There followed two years of minor repairs and investigations into major repairs that were quickly seen to be unwise.

With a deteriorating house holding only 350, a membership of 477, and a popular pastor who might—it was feared—accept the call to the First Baptist Church of Dallas, Texas, the Rome Baptist Church finally agreed in October 1882 that a \$20,000 structure seating seven or eight hundred must be started. One committee was empowered to collect money and another to oversee construction. In July 1883 the congregation began to meet in the newly completed city hall on West Fourth Avenue. Perhaps some of the night services were held in the Presbyterian church. After the old building had been removed, a few members and friends gathered to lay the first bricks. A participant described the event in these words: “A few minutes after three the people present began to assemble in the northern corner where the first work was to be begun . . . . After a solemn and fervent prayer by the pastor, . . . [he] stated that as Mrs. E. A. Bowen was the first to contribute to the building and was one of the oldest members she was entitled to lay the first brick, and when they had been blessed and immersed, the old lady, with feeble hand, took the brick and with a prayer for God’s blessing upon it and the church, laid it in its right position. The next brick was laid by Mrs. Mary Shropshire and the third by Mr. R. S. Norton, a good old Presbyterian, who—they say— wanted his brick sprinkled . . . . Each person present who wished to laid one.” Until Nunnally left town, he “acted as supervisor and ‘watched every brick as it went into the walls.’ ” The plans had been prepared by Mozer and Lynn, architects, and the contractor was William Bensel.

Money for the project was gradually received. The *Rome Courier* reported: “One of our citizens who has been laying up \$100 for several years to buy him a watch has given it to the new Baptist church, and says he will wait five years more for the watch and take the new church now.” Sponsored by the Willing Workers, the younger ladies’ division of the



The interior of the third building is seen in this photograph published in 1890.

missionary society, a cantata added money to the fund. The land and building were mortgaged to gain some income, and frequent anguished calls for cash—not pledges—were heeded. According to a final committee report, the structure cost \$22,858.17—and that included a clock which the preacher could see, a lightning rod, a fence, and grass seed for the yard.

The result was described in the *Christian Index* as “by far the handsomest Baptist church edifice in the State.” A graceful steeple once again gave the 1855 bell a home. A 1890 photograph of the red brick exterior is duplicated on page 101 of this book. The main floor included “the gorgeously beautiful auditorium with its unique chairs instead of pews, each one with a patent rack for hat and books,” an “admirable pulpit, beautiful doors and windows,” and “a splendid baptistry . . . .” The auditorium normally seated 617, and could accommodate 900 with the addition of chairs. A photograph published in 1890 is reproduced on page 103 of this book. In the basement were found “the lecture room . . . a large ladies’ committee room, an elegant infant class room, cosy pastor’s study, [and] convenient robing room . . . .” The new meetinghouse was first used late in June 1884, and apparently Gwaltney, Nunnally, and Headden all participated in the service. A resolution was passed thanking the city council for the use of the city hall.

Of course the building was not debt-free at the time of its occupancy; not until November 1886 was the final payment made. A dedicatory service was accordingly set for Sunday, November 28, 1886, with G. A. Nunnally as main speaker. When he could not come, the service was postponed indefinitely—and was never mentioned again in the extant records!

Throughout the remainder of the century, the building required only modest repairs and additions. Shades were placed over the auditorium windows. The organ was moved from the loft to the left corner of the sanctuary near the pulpit. Almost nine dollars was expended on fifty feet of hose so that the grass seed could be properly nourished. A hot air furnace was installed in 1887. The auditorium and basement were frescoed. A sidewalk was laid. The ladies contributed a fine new carpet. The vestibule and spire were repainted. Many spectators gathered for the latter event, described as follows: “‘Steeple Jack’ from his ‘throne on high’ splashes paint drops in your eyes and hair.” By 1895 the physical plant was valued at \$30,000.

Starting late in 1900, a two-story annex was added to the building. Two rooms upstairs provided enlarged space for baptismal candidates and their tubs, while a modern baptistry was installed. Two rooms in the basement were devoted to the growing Sunday school and a much-needed kitchen. In addition, woodwork was repainted and the bricks

scraped and cleaned. By March 1901 the work was completed, at an expense of about \$1,800.

No major building projects were deemed necessary during the remainder of the period under consideration. In the sanctuary, the growingly shabby carpet vexed the Woman's Missionary Society constantly for three years, until they finally collected \$300 and replaced it. The baptismal pool did not prove entirely satisfactory and, although it remained in use, large numbers of candidates were immersed in the Etowah River. While the sanctuary was being painted white "in a most beautiful manner," the congregation met in the basement lecture room. This area was heated by a large, central stove and by individual gas heaters in some of the smaller rooms surrounding it. The lecture room had been remodelled, painted, and carpeted in 1910. Gas lighting was replaced by electricity throughout the church, a telephone (number 840) was placed in the lecture room, and "a step of improvement" was taken when the fence was torn away—all in 1911. The property value was at that time still declared to be only \$30,000.

Occasional threats to the property added a little excitement to the life of the congregation. A "miscreant" broke into and "desecrated" the church in 1901, stealing only some sacramental wine. Unfortunately, it was noted, he was not apprehended. Later a storm hit the church and caused \$75 worth of damage. Early one Monday morning in January 1910 a "huge volume of smoke" probably caused by a faulty furnace poured out of the vestibule, suggesting that the structure was doomed. The professional, full-time fire department was prompt in reaching the scene, however, and damage was held to about \$150.

Since 1848 a janitor had been employed, at a salary that increased to \$75 annually in 1862. White men were secured to do the work starting in 1868—at a rate that varied from \$50 (1869) to \$100 (1870, 1874). There was some talk of a full-time "sexton" when the new building was entered, but apparently he was continued on a part-time basis and a part-time female "house cleaner" was added. Through 1893 he was paid from \$81 to \$151.50 a year and she from \$63 to \$74.50. Although a few scattered references to the positions remain after this time, the absence of financial records prevents any definite statements concerning compensation.

The *Rome Weekly Courier* in 1869 carried this typical one-sentence half-witticism: "A church steward being asked why he did not furnish his minister with a parsonage, replied that the preacher could *dwell* on his text." Had one word been changed to *deacon* and another to *pastorium*, the sentence would have aptly summarized part of the first thirty-two years in the life of the Rome Baptist Church. The Brownes probably rented a residence for the year that they were in town. In 1867 the church

purchased a lot and house for \$1,000, spending an additional \$425 on repairs. The Woodfins lived here for parts of two years, after which it was sold. When the Gwaltneys arrived, they were promised a salary and house, and for a time a pastorium was rented for them. At their departure in 1876 they sold a home, suggesting that they had made a purchase three or four years earlier. The Nunnallys rented a house near the corner of Elm (Third Avenue) and Cherokee (East Fourth Street). In 1882, 1885, and 1887 there were discussions of buying or erecting a residence, but nothing was finally done except to discharge a committee. The Headdens, who had been renting at the corner of Third Avenue and East Fifth Street, solved the problem in a typically mild manner by having their own home built in 1888 at 310 Fourth Avenue. Although the number was later changed to 314, they remained there until they died.

One additional topic must be considered in connection with church property. In August 1911 Headden and the deacons initiated action against the Federal government, claiming \$1,800 in Civil War damages, plus rent for an uncertain number of months. A Washington attorney, Fred G. Coldren, represented the church throughout. Late in 1914 the court of claims awarded \$870 in the case—"very much less than we claimed and much less than I think should have been allowed," wrote the attorney. A bill authorizing payment slowly made its way through Congress and was signed by President Wilson in February 1917. In it, the erroneous affirmation was made: "The First Baptist Church of Rome, Ga., as a church, was loyal to the Government of the United States throughout the late Civil War." The church was able to deposit an \$870 check on April 14, 1917, and soon thereafter sent the attorney his commission. After almost six years of pursuit, a net profit of \$580 had been realized.

### *CHURCH SERVICES AND CONFERENCES*

With rare exceptions, regular services were held each Sunday morning and evening. While eleven o'clock was the usual time for the former, under Nunnally it was changed to 10:30 from May to October. The evening hour varied over the years: 7, 7:30, 7:45, and 8.

Virtually nothing is known about the order of worship in the early years. A few Sunday bulletins have been preserved from 1889, 1908, and 1909, but they list only the music. Pastor Headden absentmindedly left some notes in the pulpit Bible used in and after 1884, two of which outline the order to be followed, but no dates are indicated. One of them is as follows: doxology, invocation, hymn, Scripture, quartet, prayer, hymn, collection, sermon, prayer, hymn, benediction. The other is similar, listing a prelude, including the Lord's Prayer, and using the term

*anthem*. Because by 1908 Headden had added responsive readings, the deacons requested him to discontinue them as being “not in accordance with Baptist usage.”

The sanctuary was at least sometimes decorated with flowers—once some golden rod in “a vase of rare beauty.”

Then as now, the sanctuary was filled by individuals and families who regularly occupied the same pews. An unidentified lady in 1927 reminisced about the days of Pastor Gwaltney and had no difficulty recalling the appearance of the sanctuary, the composition of the choir, and the favorite pews of many whose names would not have been familiar to most of those reading her words.

Occasionally services would be called off—or moved. Especially under Headden, his vacations or his trips to the Southern Baptist Convention would be times when a visiting speaker might be engaged or, just as often, when no speaker would be engaged. During a period of “extreme cold” in February 1901, Sunday services were held in the basement which, it was widely announced, could more easily be heated than the auditorium.

That the congregation sang hymns is beyond dispute, but precisely what they sang from is often a matter of question. In 1866 a committee was named to procure a supply of hymnals, and *The Baptist Psalmody* (Charleston: Southern Baptist Publication Society, 1850) was selected. Some members of the congregation owned their personal copies—one belonging to Miss Annie Morel was given to the church many years ago. The older books were wearing out by 1884 and thought to be unsuited for the fine new sanctuary. Hence the congregation introduced the use each Sunday of long narrow slips of cheap paper with the words of the hymns printed on them. A few of these remain—three to four inches wide and nine to eleven inches long, containing the affirmation, “Strangers and all Welcome,” a motto, “Saved to Serve,” and the words of three hymns. They also include hymn numbers, referring to the new *Baptist Hymnal for use in the Church and Home* (Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, 1883), copies of which some worshippers probably owned and other copies of which the church probably furnished members of the choir. Briefly in 1908 and 1909 a larger folder that included also the church directory was used. In 1910 the deacons decided that new hymnals “would add much dignity to the songs,” and eventually twelve new hymnals were purchased. Their identity is not known, nor the reason for the small number.

The singing was usually accompanied by an organ. The 1856 instrument wore out, and in 1869 a “perfect and powerful” pipe organ costing \$1,500 was shipped from New York through Savannah and placed in the balcony over the vestibule. The New York organ-maker installed it free

of charge. Except for a major outlay when it was moved down near the pulpit in 1886, the organ performed satisfactorily at minimal expense for four decades. However, \$500 worth of repairs were found to be needed in 1911, and by the next year the estimate had jumped to \$1,500 or \$2,000. One repairman failed to help it—practically ruining it, declared the music committee. A new \$3,500 instrument was considered, and Andrew Carnegie was invited to send a donation. At the close of this period the aged organ was still in place, emitting an uncertain sound, and in obvious need of replacement.

Organists are sometimes known: Mrs. C. E. Hills (1869?-1879), Miss Mary Jane Dagg (1876-1882), Miss Georgia Hills (1884-1887), Miss Annie Cothran (1887-1888), Miss Alice Pettengill (1888), Prof. A. Bidez (1888-1889), Prof. Samuel P. Snow (1889-1892), Mrs. W. O. McHenry (1892-1910?), and Howard Tinsley (1910-?). The earliest indication that the position had become professional came in January 1884 when—typically—the church was behind two months' salary, \$20. This was raised to \$160 annually in mid-1888, to \$220 in 1889, and to \$250 in 1890. Probably at Mrs. McHenry's request, it was reduced to \$150 annually when she came. No subsequent figure is recorded.

A choir was an unfailing part of corporate worship. Never very large, its size varied from eight or nine to the much more familiar four. Long-time members included Miss Battie Shropshire, Miss Lillie Shropshire, Mr. and Mrs. W. A. Patton, and Charles E. Woodruff. Sometimes led by the organist, the choir had two other directors who remained for an extended period of time, Charles E. Hills and Charles E. Woodruff. At least some of the singers were being paid by 1888. Individual monthly payments are mentioned in the records: \$20 in 1889, \$10 in 1892, and \$7.50 in 1909. As a group the singers received \$118.75 in all of 1888, \$60 in 1892, and \$120 in 1893. In 1910 it would appear that salaries had ceased.

The church sponsored what was called an orchestra. Comprised of violins, a cornet, a cello, a clarinet, a trombone, and a piano or organ, it performed several times between 1900 and 1902 and then, after a lapse, between 1909 and 1911.

The deacons usually provided overall supervision for personnel and expenditures, although at times they turned the responsibilities over to a church committee. The total outlay for the entire program is known only rarely. A high of \$320.50 was spent in 1888 and a low of \$291.85 in 1893. Included in the total was \$20 or \$30 a year for the nameless pumper who someplace out of sight kept the organ from wheezing to an unmelodious halt.

The level of music utilized in the church was of course influenced by

three nearby schools, Rome Female College, Shorter College, and the Southern Conservatory of Music, each of which had a strong music program. That being the case, some First Baptist members went elsewhere on occasion to enjoy the old-fashioned Sacred Harp type of music, which they did not hear in their own church. And, truth to tell, the regular First Baptist music was not always appreciated by the worshippers. One young lady described it in these words: "We were just getting still & I was thinking that may be I'd get through safe after all when something in the left corner commenced thundering and squealing at such a rate that I thought the whole thing was tumbling down. The thunder grew louder and louder, the squealing got higher and higher and amid all this four or five rose and began to squeal too. One of the ladies hollowed till she got out of breath then another took it up and held on till her breath gave out then another and another and by this time the first one had managed to catch her breath and chimed in again. Then they took it in couples. When the first gave out, the second took it up & continued thus till it went all around. The[y] hit it high, they hit it low and once in a while struck it in the middle. I kept thinking that when they got the thing tuned up, they'd give us a time [tune(?)], but about the time I thought they had it fixed, they all sat down. I learned later the thing that squealed so was 'a orgin' and the folks that hollowed so were the 'quare.' " Or was this 1892 coed simply jesting?

Midweek prayer services were resumed after the war, first coming at 5 P.M. on Tuesday. Soon Wednesday became the customary day and 7, 7:30, or 8 became the customary hour. The pastor was usually in charge, being replaced by laymen periodically. Nunnally announced his topics and texts for the first quarter of 1881 and invited members to "come prepared with a song, a word of exhortation or a prayer." That attendance would vary is to be expected, but it was thought worthy of note that the deacons be told in 1909 that prayer meeting was "booming."

Baptism and the Lord's Supper were the two ordinances observed by the church. Until the renovation of 1870 when the first indoor pool was installed persons were immersed "near the junction of the rivers" not far from Myrtle Hill. Ladies were "arrayed in robes of spotless white"; male attire was not described. New pools were installed in 1884 and again in 1900. Shortly after the latter event, a call went out for towels and tubs. The towels were for those folks who had failed to bring their own. Because the floor nearby was not waterproof, the tubs were for them to stand in while drying off. By 1910 the pool was in such poor condition that increasing numbers of persons were taken to the Etowah for the rite.

The subject of alien immersion—usually defined as immersion by a non-Baptist minister—was raised only once, and that not by the church in conference. At the 1903 meeting of the Floyd County Baptist Associa-

tion, a First Baptist member succeeded in having a resolution adopted declaring that the association would name as delegates to the Southern and Georgia Baptist conventions only those not accepting alien immersion. Even though the church did not directly treat the matter, no case of this practise is known in this period.

The Lord's Supper—more often called communion—was observed at 3 P.M. on the third Sunday of each month. Eventually it was moved to the time immediately after the morning worship service. Between 1900 and 1903 it was changed to the first Sunday of each quarter.

Common cups were used, probably one for the men and one for the women. In October 1871 the church voted to purchase two additional plates and goblets—when the condition of the treasury would permit. One financial report contained an amount of money spent for what was called, probably literally, *wine*. The bread was distributed perhaps in metal plates, later in baskets, and after 1910 certainly in metal plates.

By 1909 the deacons were discussing the purchase of individual cups, but after two years decided that they were too expensive. Hygiene finally won out, however. In 1912 Deacon Dr. R. M. Harbin offered this motion which was passed: "After some investigation as to danger to health, etc., . . . we recommend to the [church] conference that we adopt individual communion cups." A new outfit was borrowed on approval for use in January 1913 and was soon purchased. The old set was given to the Mark McDonald (now Trinity) Baptist Church, which had been sponsored in large part by First Baptist. Unused since about 1930, at least part of the set is still preserved, a 15½-inch silver-plated pitcher and two 7¼-inch goblets.

Usually an appendage to the morning service, the Lord's Supper early in this century sometimes came to occupy the major portion of the hour. In 1902 there was no sermon, simply a roll call of members (all 675?) and communion. Requested to do so by the deacons, Headden began in 1910 to deliver a brief communion meditation, focusing the entire service on the ordinance. In the absence of definite word to the contrary, it must be assumed that the custom of closed communion prevailed.

Special days were observed, but the absence of complete records must suggest caution when asserting "firsts." By 1873 Thanksgiving services were being held, usually in union with the Presbyterians and Methodists. There is reason to think that Christmas was first celebrated at the church in 1879. The *Weekly Courier* approved of a Christmas morning service in these words: "If the day is recognized as the birthday of our Saviour, surely worship in his temple is more reasonable than frolic and revelry." A special sermon and music were noted in 1887 and a large choir in 1902. As will be seen, this season made its biggest impact on the Sunday school. In 1901 Easter attracted large crowds. By 1909 Mothers' Day was

calling for a special sermon.

Other, occasional observances were held: a day of fasting, humiliation, and prayer in 1866; services in a draped church at the death of Robert E. Lee; an "Old Folks' Day . . . in Honor of the Aged Servants of God" sometime after 1884. Headden spoke on the life of Christ, using stereopticon slides that were said to be "life-like" and to have "beauty and realism." When revivals came or visitors occupied the pulpit on behalf of various Southern and Georgia Baptist institutions and agencies, those days became "special."

One special day never occurred. The church minutes for October 1874 recognized the coming of an important date: "Next year being the 40th Annaversary of the Organization of this Church, Brethren . . . were appointed a committee to make suitable arrangements for its observance." Unexplained troubles developed and the committee "were relieved at their own request, and the matter turned over to the Executive Com." Without a single word of explanation, the January 1875 conference acted as follows: "It having been determined to have some suitable service to celebrate the 40th Annaversary of this Church, it is now Resolved not to do so."

Church conferences came on the Friday or Saturday before the third Sunday of each month. In 1869 this was changed to the second Sunday and a year later to the first Sunday. Between 1897 and 1903 it was shifted to the third Sunday, where it remained. The business conducted in conference was not drastically different from that of the antebellum period, except that matters of discipline were greatly reduced and deacons' recommendations were greatly increased.

Numerous persons occupied the Rome pulpit as visitors, some of whom are not mentioned elsewhere in this essay: J. R. Graves of Memphis, W. T. Brantly, Jr., of Atlanta, J. B. Hawthorne of Atlanta, President P. D. Pollock of Mercer University, L. G. Broughton of Atlanta, Will D. Upshaw of Atlanta, President L. E. Hicks of a Baptist college in Burma, Mrs. Mary H. Armor, Georgia president of the WCTU in 1909, and former pastor S. G. Hillyer.

### *MEMBERSHIP*

The membership of the First Baptist Church grew slowly and unsteadily from 124 in 1865 to 702 in 1913, according to the clerk's records. Baptisms numbered only one in 1883, but soared to 132 in 1913. Accessions by letter were as few as 10 in 1895 and as many as 47 in 1892, 1900, and 1913. Total additions ranged from 15 (1895) to 179 (1913), with an average of almost 53 per year.

Overall, the growth of the church did not keep pace with the growth of Rome. The following chart is instructive:

	population of Rome	percent of increase from previous decennial year	membership of church	percent of increase from previous decennial year
1870	2,748		238	
1880	3,877	41.08	455	91.18
1890	6,957	79.44	509	11.87
1900	7,291	4.80	622	22.20
1910	12,099	65.94	766	23.15

Through 1880, the church grew more than twice as rapidly as the city. From 1890 to 1900, it grew four times as rapidly. In the other two periods, however, it grew much more slowly. Between 1870 and 1910, Rome increased by 340 percent, while the church increased by only 222 percent. Of course two conditions existed which help to explain this. In the first place, the membership was altogether white, whereas the population of Rome was about 29 percent black. Furthermore, eight other Baptist churches were formed in and near Rome between 1867 and 1913, each of which reduced the membership potential of First Baptist.

One instructive approach to church membership growth is taken when the ratio of total additions is compared with the total membership. Details are presented in this chart:

pastor	years as pastor	average size of cong. per year	average number added per year	ratio
Browne	1	137	55	40.15
Woodfin	2	174	42	24.34
Gwaltney	8	289	46	15.80
Nunnally	7	438	40	9.19
Headden	30	610	58	9.52
[1st decade		522	51	9.73]
[2nd decade		582	61	10.56]
[3rd decade		727	62	8.55]

As the church increased in size, it obviously decreased in efficiency. It grew at a smaller percentage than did the local population. The expanding congregation actually attracted proportionately fewer new members.

Almost immediately after the Civil War, a new membership roll was started, and a revised list contained 124 names (44 males and 80 females). In October 1871 the church in conference agreed to remove the names of those who could not be found, but postponed action the following month. Three years later the approximately 40 nonresident members were written and encouraged to move their membership, but no mass exodus ensued. *Perry's Church Register*, prepared and copyrighted in 1876 by Thomas J. Perry, a member of the church, was adopted for local use, but no copy has been found. Under G. A. Nunnally, a printed list of members appeared in January 1881, containing the names of 175 males and 239 females—at a time when the clerk was claiming about 465 members. Revised lists were prepared in 1882, 1885, and 1887, but these have not been found. R. B. Headden led in compiling a printed booklet in March 1900 that listed 215 males and 390 females—about 40 fewer than the clerk then claimed. Like the 1881 booklet, this one showed the names of church officials, a schedule of events, and a copy of the church covenant. Unlike the earlier booklet, this one carried advertising on virtually every page—including a professional horseshoer, a dentist, a manufacturer of “pure distilled water ice,” a cigar seller, a barber who cut boys' hair for fifteen cents, and a funeral director who furnished a “rubber-tired Ambulance free for moving the sick or wounded.” In 1903, about 1906, and in 1908 Headden made lists in his own handwriting, all contained in a leather-bound, four- by seven-inch book. At long last, in 1911 the roll was revised to remove the names of those members whose locations were not known, and 97 names were erased.

One custom would make the absentees especially noticeable, the roll call. This was initiated in August 1867, but dispensed with six months later. The next known instance was announced in the *Rome Hustler* of February 2, 1896: “The roll call and reunion at the First Baptist church next Wednesday night will be a most pleasant occasion.” That it required no explanation would indicate that it was not something new. At an 11 A.M. Sunday service in 1902 the roll was called and the Lord's Supper was observed, while later that year a roll call and reading of the covenant were featured. “The regular roll call of the church”—as the clerk termed it—came on Sunday morning, October 8, 1911, being performed by Headden. These scattered references span virtually this entire period, but are much too brief to be entirely satisfactory. Not even such an elementary fact as the frequency of the occurrence can be deduced from them.

In addition to each of the active pastors, a number of ordained ministers held membership in the church. Three who had once been pastors either remained or returned in different capacities: Charles H. Stillwell (1849-1887), Luther Rice Gwaltney (1882-1891, 1902-1910), and

Gustavus A. Nunnally (1910-1917). Three ordained Shorter College presidents were within the congregation: R. D. Mallary (1876-1882), L. R. Gwaltney, and A. J. Battle (1891-1898). Other clergymen were as follows: David Blount Hamilton, Sr. (1867, 1873-1911), James McDonald (1869), Otis M. Sutton (1891), William J. Durham (1896), and W. B. Mitchell (?-1913).

Three men were ordained to the gospel ministry by the church during this period. (1) After joining by letter in 1870, Jacob H. Smith, Jr., requested and received a license to preach the following year. On September 28, 1873, he was ordained. Soon he was commissioned by the Domestic Mission Board as a missionary in Florida, and briefly the Rome church provided a portion of his salary. He died in Florida of what was called "consumption" in 1875. (2) Spencer B. King, Sr., was baptized by Pastor Headden in 1892. He was ordained on March 10, 1907, to become pastor of the New Prospect Baptist Church. Later he was pastor of other Georgia Baptist churches, on the Georgia Baptist Convention staff in Atlanta, and treasurer of the convention. (3) Tillman R. Braddy was ordained on October 31, 1913.

One former missionary to China, Thomas W. Tobey, was in the church from 1882 to 1883 while on the Shorter faculty.

Three persons later to become foreign missionaries were also associated with the church. (1) W. Harvey Clarke, a clerk in the office of the C. R. & S. Railroad, was in the fellowship from 1889 to 1891. For about three decades (c.1899-c.1930) he was to be a missionary in Japan. (2) Mrs. Ida B. Elliott was principal of the academic department at Shorter College from 1901 to 1904. She became a missionary in Burma about 1908 and evidently in India later. (3) Miss Hattie Brown was an English, speech, and history professor at Shorter from 1882 to 1887. She seems never to have affiliated formally with the Rome Baptist Church, but was apparently active in it. As Mrs. L. E. Hicks she was later a missionary in Burma with her husband.

## REVIVALS

Revivals were held virtually every year during this half-century, with April and May as the most popular months and August and September next. These events were usually page-one news until 1900, after which they were generally buried inside the Rome paper. The first sermon one year was described as "the opening gun in the seven days battle which the pastor and congregation of the First Baptist church have opened against the powers of darkness and sin in its local strongholds." Extending in length all the way from one week to eight, "protracted meetings" most

often lasted ten days to two weeks. They were ordinarily held in the church building, but a tent meeting was attempted in 1887, being successful enough for the congregation to rent five hundred chairs to seat the crowds. By 1870 the complexity of the revivals had already started to increase, as services were scheduled for prayer at 9 A.M., for the youth at 3:30, and for everybody in the evening. Later this pattern emerged: a prayer service at noon, songs and a short talk at 4, and a full service at 7:30. In some years a Sunday afternoon mass meeting was held.

As a general rule, a visiting speaker was invited, usually a preacher from elsewhere in Georgia. These included E. W. Warren of Macon and later Atlanta; R. B. Headden of Cartersville, who came while Nunnally was pastor; J. A. Wray of Milledgeville; and H. C. Buckholz of Atlanta. In 1878 the seventy-year-old Thomas C. Teasdale, former secretary of the SBC Sunday School Board and then a professor at the University of Tennessee, preached for six weeks with great numerical results. Early in this century J. Whitcomb Brougner of Chattanooga conducted another notable meeting. Later to be Headden's successor, W. L. Walker, a Home Mission Board evangelist, spent two weeks in town in 1910. During the first two decades of Headden's ministry he often conducted the services himself, inviting the local Methodist and Presbyterian pastors to assist.

Rarely were the talents of a visiting musician utilized. For three consecutive years at the turn of the century, H. A. Wolfsohn of Atlanta participated. At least one other man followed him, but little publicity was given to him.

Two interdenominational revivals involved the Rome Baptist Church. D. W. Whittle and P. P. Bliss used the lecture room in the basement during April 1876 for what was judged to be a "successful" "protracted union meeting." Sam Jones stormed into town for a ten-day revival at the big Howell cotton warehouse on East Second Street and First Avenue in May 1888. Rome Baptists cooperated in the venture, Headden being spoken of by the visitor as having the "highest Christian integrity."

Additions to the membership as a direct result of revivals are known to have exceeded 50 five times: 69 in 1878, 51 in 1879, 67 in 1901, 73 in 1903, and about 90 in 1908. When the size of the congregation is taken into consideration, however, these are far from being the most active years. The ratio of total additions to total members for those five particular years averaged about 14 percent. Of course momentary exultation and the benevolent influence of an attractive personality cannot be measured statistically, and some weight must be given to those less tangible considerations. Actually, though, the three most active years—whether because of revivals or not—were 1866, 1867, and 1913,

when the additions-membership ratios were 40, 30, and 25 percent respectively.

### *DISCIPLINE*

When discussing the disciplinary actions of the church, it must be borne in mind that trustworthy records are available for only thirty-seven years in this period, 1866 to 1896 and 1908 to 1913. Furthermore, at least nine cases were brought up but never disposed of within the available materials. Therefore, every figure used in this section must be considered only an approximation.

In thirty-seven years, more than 95 cases involving 72 men and 23 women were considered. In 1908 and 1912 the discipline committee reported on "cases" without giving names or numbers; at least some of these would probably not be included in the above totals.

Charges were varied. Looking at excommunications alone, persons were guilty of living disreputable lives, sinful conduct, profanity and other un-Christian conduct, habitual drunkenness, selling liquor on Sunday, keeping a bar, frequently being with lewd women, being on the chain gang, larceny and forgery, and—harsh though it sounds—joining the Jewish synagogue or the Mormons. One was excommunicated at his own request, while no reason was given when six were excluded.

Cases were brought up in numerous ways. Charges would be brought by one or more members of the church to the conference, the executive committee, the deacons, or the discipline committee. The accused would then be interviewed by a committee and/or notified to appear at the next conference. At this point many things happened. The church action might be ignored or, because the accused had moved away, letters might be sent and ignored. Sooner or later the accused was excluded. The church action might be heeded, as the accused appeared in person seeking forgiveness or sent written acknowledgements. In these cases, the conference almost always dropped the charges.

Several situations merit closer examination. A committee was appointed in 1868 "to notify each male member, who has been absent from Conference three successive times, to appear and give reasons for absences." The following month the "report on absentees was read and Committee discharged." Since nothing further was done in the case, one might wonder if already there were too many to discipline for this reason. In 1876 a brother left town without paying in full his church pledge and without making any kind of explanation. The deacons acted as a court to try him. After hearing a long report, they decided that business losses relieved him of the obligation to meet his pledge, and it

was cancelled. A recommendation emerged from the deacons in 1880 to discipline all members who danced or engaged in raffles, actions counter to the eighth section of the rules of order. After being postponed, a month later the recommendation was tabled. Was the rule really not being broken enough to worry about or were local Baptist mores changing? At a time when the congregation was experiencing difficulty in collecting money, "a motion was made that every member of the Church not dependent on it be required to contribute to the support of the Church or be amenable to the discipline committee." Without comment about any possible discussion, the clerk simply added: "This motion was lost."

As time passed the church was faced with growing numbers of members joining other denominations. Because they were still considered disciplinary cases, this wording was often used: "The fellowship of the church was withdrawn from so-and-so." Rather amazingly, situations are on record where a hardened sinner and a person transferring to another mainline Protestant body are both included in the same exclusionary sentence. Except for the two instances cited in the third paragraph of this section—and one where a lady avoided expulsion by ceasing to attend the Roman Catholic Sunday school—all of these cases have been ignored in the statistics of this study. Late nineteenth century Rome Baptists put the Jews, Mormons, and Roman Catholics in a different category from Presbyterians, Methodists, Episcopalians, and Christians, and that difference has been here recognized.

At least 95 disciplinary cases were handled in the thirty-seven years under consideration. Thirty-four persons were excluded, 26 male and 8 female. Charges were preferred and later withdrawn against 34—23 male and 11 female. At least 12 persons made voluntary acknowledgements, all male. Having earlier been excommunicated, 7 were restored, 4 male and 3 female. Eight cases were initiated, against 7 males and 1 female, but their outcomes are not on record.

Obviously the church was far less inclined to discipline during this period, as compared with the first. From 1835 to 1864, the average size of the congregation per year was almost 93. Eighty-nine cases were handled in these thirty years, an average of almost 3 per year. Thirty-eight persons were excluded, an average of almost 1.3 per year. From 1866 to 1896 and 1908 to 1913, the average size of the congregation per year was 455. Ninety-five cases were handled in these years, an average of almost 2.6. Thirty-four persons were excluded, an average of .9 per year. Taking the vastly increased size of the congregation into consideration, its membership was about six times less likely to discipline and about seven times less likely to exclude than in the earlier years.

One final numerical observation is instructive. In the four years of the sixties, 29 cases were handled. In the seventies and eighties, 21 and 22 respectively. In the first seven years of the nineties, 16. During the last seven years of this period, 7. However, when the congregational size is noted, the trend is really much more dramatic. In the sixties, 1 person in 24 was discipline. This became 1 in 157 in the seventies and 1 in 225 in the eighties and nineties. From 1908 to 1913 this became 1 in 614. Plainly, serious discipline was already a thing of the past.

### *FINANCES*

The financial life of the church was supervised by the deacons or executive committee and at times by a financial committee elected by the membership in conference. The latter committee was assuredly in existence from 1865 to 1867, in 1879, and from 1891 to the close of the period. These groups were supplemented by a succession of special committees named to solve exceptional monetary problems.

Almost always the church had a treasurer who handled the accounts, divided into two distinct sections: (a) pastor's salary and other local expenses and (b) missions. By 1894 each account was being kept by a separate treasurer, but exactly how much earlier the first treasurer of the mission fund had been elected is unknown.

Sixteen men were treasurers of the church: C. O. Stillwell (1863-1865), A. T. Sullivan (1866-1867), T. J. Swanson (treasurer of the deacons, acting as church treasurer 1868-?), Charles E. Hills (?-1870), J. S. Panchen (1870-1873, 1875-1880), J. C. McDonald (1873-1874), James B. Sullivan (1874), George Rhodes (1875), A. R. Sullivan (1880-1881), J. R. Cantrell (1882-1884, 1885-1891, 1893). W. W. Martin (1884), A. Felix Cantrell (1892), C. M. Harper (1894-probably after 1896), M. B. McWilliams (in 1900 at least), J. A. Smith (by 1903-1912), and Luke McDonald (1913-1914). Most funds were channeled through them, although exceptions were permitted. The treasurers for the Sunday school and the various women's missionary groups handled some funds apart from his observation, and the building committee from 1882 to 1886 raised and disbursed monies independently. A paid "collector" at \$50 per annum and an assistant treasurer at \$25 were authorized in 1873 and 1875, but apparently neither job was ever filled. Four unpaid assistant treasurers are known: T. M. Gates (1870-?), Charles E. Woodruff (1895-?), W. W. Brookes (1895-?), and W. J. Griffin (1895-?). The identities of the mission fund treasurers are less certain. The first probably was Park Harper (?-1894). He was succeeded by A. Felix Cantrell, who occupied that of-

fice in 1903 and perhaps in between also. Thereafter, nothing is recorded on the subject.

Local church finances were initially treated in a rather haphazard, uncentralized fashion. Separate committees were named to seek funds for the pastor's salary, building repairs or construction, the purchase and maintenance of a pastorium, and the liquidation of debts. Often a person would report the critical need of funds for a particular project, the conference would become the scene of on-the-spot pledging (they used the term *subscribing*), and the resulting list would be given to someone for collection. Concerning one leader at his death, the church minutes read: "His purse was always open." It needed to be; constant requests were being made for its contents.

One method of raising money was brought back after the war, the practice of pew-rentals. In 1867 the deacons proposed to rent alternate pews, marking the others "free." After much opposition the deacons resigned in disgust—but were soon restored to their offices and given permission to pursue their plan. Although this system was evidently phased out in 1870, the memory lingered on for many years and the church directory printed in the 1881 newspapers included the comment: "Seats free to all."

Offerings (usually called *collections*) were taken every Sunday for a few months, after which a box was placed in the vestibule where money could be placed. In 1868 the church returned to the public offering, taken at first during the singing of the closing hymn. When it was moved before the sermon is not known. If a Sunday evening offering were included before 1913, no record has been found. Each month at the Lord's Supper an extra offering was taken for the poor, being halted in 1871 when it was decided to use money from the general fund for their needs. Later an offering for the poor was initiated on the fifth Sunday, but how long prior to 1908 cannot be determined.

As early as 1866 some members were making annual pledges for the support of the local program. The use of envelopes was begun in 1871, and evidently continued thereafter. The church minutes for 1872 noted that the total pledges were under the projected needs, suggesting that a budget had been prepared. This was surely the case in 1885 when the deacons were ordered to prepare one and assess members on "a fair and equitable basis . . . ." By 1903 pledge cards were being collected annually, though this might well have been true long before that time.

Making pledges did not assure that members would pay promptly and fully. Beginning in 1872 a constant observation in the treasurer's report was that varying amounts were unpaid from the previous year.

Not surprisingly, another recurring theme was that of the church's indebtedness. By 1870 the figure had mounted to \$744.79, after which it fluctuated between \$173.08 and \$2,596.57. With some frequency the church owed money on the pastor's salary; Gwaltney, Nunnally, and Headden all had this experience. Each major building construction and repair project likewise involved a deficit. Special offerings and special committees were designated in profusion. In 1874 a committee of three ladies achieved temporary success by removing the debt. When problems arose in the mid-nineties, Headden suggested that his salary be reduced from \$2,400 to \$2,000 and this was soon done. Again in 1910 collections for local expenses were seriously lagging, so the deacons decided to publish quarterly lists of members and the amounts of their offerings. Although the First Methodist Church was already doing this, the Baptist members expressed such objection that a page-one newspaper story was headlined: "Kick Is Made Against Publishing Church Dues." The deacons announced that they would refrain from printing such a list, and within a year the church was again out of the red. This condition did not persist, however, and by mid-1913 the congregation was encumbered with the largest deficit in its history to that time. Headden again recommended that his salary be cut, this time from \$2,500 to \$2,000, but it was not done. A special committee headed by the wealthy J. Paul Cooper raised some funds, and some hackles, by a very frank report. In it they pointed out that only 21 percent of the members contributed to the church and that the total annual income of the members was "several hundred thousand dollars." They proposed to send all members notices of their fair shares, but this seems not to have been done. Nor were the noncontributing members cited for disciplinary action, as some desired. Thus, at the close of this period the church owed about \$1,300.

The mission fund was entirely separate from the fund for pastor's salary and other local expenses, although the same person looked after both accounts for about the first thirty years of the period.

During the lean years following the war, each Southern Baptist institution and agency had agents on the road, visiting churches and taking special offerings for their particular concerns. Thus, the larger churches were constantly being bombarded with requests for money—from good-hearted persons operating within a wasteful system that had emerged without conscious design. The Rome church sought to counter this, to some extent at least, by a unified system adopted in 1871. Thereafter, no special collections were to be made—except for foreign missions, home missions, ministerial education, the Sunday School Board of the SBC, the Rome Baptist Sunday school, and the Rome Baptist choir, once each year under the pastor's leadership. Exceptions could be made only by

order of the church conference. The offerings from all other Sundays were automatically earmarked for local expenses. At the invitation of the pastor, denominational representatives could speak in the church but special offerings were prohibited except on the six special Sundays. Three years later the executive committee was commissioned to perfect a specific plan for raising mission funds, but nothing seems to have come of it. Pastor Nunnally in 1879 bemoaned the situation—both locally and generally—in the *Christian Index*: “We scatter, we dissipate our energies, we divide, we run to and fro . . . . We shoot with a crooked barrel that has no sight—or stock and, what is worse, it has only a blank cartridge, and we send back to each [institution or agency] a great volume of noise, and a very little package of greenbacks.” Perhaps a workable plan came in 1884, not long after Headden’s arrival. A committee was named to collect for missions, and maybe at this time the mission fund treasurer became a separate job. In any event, missions gifts jumped abruptly and soared thereafter. Because of Headden’s tremendous concern for such offerings, this was probably the main reason that he requested his salary to remain so low over such an extended period of time. For years the First Baptist Church was the largest Georgia contributor to Baptist missions. In 1908 it gave more to foreign missions than any other church in the Southern Baptist Convention, and in 1910 more to home missions than any other church in the Southern Convention. When the GBC “Committee on Co-operation” appealed to the church for \$5,500 in 1908 and \$4,000 in 1909, those sums were easily surpassed.

In the midst of this latter-day success, it is somewhat surprising to observe that the method employed for raising missionary funds is not clearly described in the records. A few special offerings were permitted, eventually adding one for the orphans’ home. Beyond this, apparently the mission fund treasurer and/or a missions committee solicited funds on a person-to-person basis without the use of churchwide pledge cards or offering envelopes. The various women’s missionary organizations had their own practices that will be described. But, whatever the system, its incredible efficiency will soon be seen in some detail.

The financial statistics summarized below and listed year by year in the appendix are based on information found chiefly in the church minute book and the minutes of the Cave Spring and Floyd County Baptist associations. Beginning in 1872 the presence of associational records helps to make these figures rather complete and accurate. However, it must be admitted that they are still only approximate. The chart is found on page 123.

As may be seen, the church during Headden’s years prospered as never

before, both in total gifts and in per-member gifts. During the eight years of Gwaltney's pastorate, virtually the same level of per-member giving was reached, while in other years that figure was significantly less.

Truly remarkable was the amount and proportion of mission giving during the last three decades. Missionary offerings ranged from a low of \$335.37 in 1884 to a high of \$18,764.60 in 1910. Understandably, until the new building was paid for, the proportion of such offerings was reduced, averaging only 9 percent per year. Beginning in 1887, however, the mission gifts amounted to 31 percent of the total budget, falling lower than that only once thereafter, 30 percent in 1890. The percentage rose to 79 in 1912, Headden's last full year as pastor. Under his leadership the church contributed almost 52 percent of its total income to missions over a thirty-year period—and it amounted to an astonishing 68 percent in his last decade.

Based on wholesale prices for all commodities, the last column of the chart indicates that the inflated dollar of 1866 steadily gained strength, becoming more than twice as valuable during Headden's pastorate. This being the case, the church's financial accomplishments in those years is seen to be all the more notable.

### THE SUNDAY SCHOOL

Although no proof seems available, the Sunday school—or *Sabbath school* as it was often called for the first two postwar decades—probably was reconstituted in the fall of 1865. Usually it met at 9 or 9:30 A.M., although at least in 1874 it convened in the afternoon and in 1904 was changed to 9:45.

Leadership was provided by a superintendent, one or more assistant superintendents, a secretary, a treasurer, and a Sunday school committee. Beginning in 1881 all of these were to have been elected by the church; before that time the method of selection is not clear and after that time the Sunday school committee gradually decreased in vitality. All of the superintendents are known, as follows: Charles E. Hills (1861-1882), Luther R. Gwaltney (1882), J. M. Proctor (1882), J. C. McDonald (1882-1888), J. B. Patton (1888-1891), W. J. Neel (1891-1894), Robert J. Gwaltney (1894-1896), Charles E. Woodruff (1896-1909, 1911-1913), O. L. Betts (1909-1911), and Paul Doyal (1913-\*).

As was true prior to the war, classes were at first only for children. Precisely when adult classes were formed is uncertain, but surely by 1881. Thereafter it would be reasonable to expect at least one class each

*CHURCH FINANCES, 1866-1913*

pastor	years as pastor	total local gifts	total mission gifts	total gifts	percent of mission gifts	average size of congregation per year	average yearly offerings total	average yearly offerings per member	wholesale prices for all commodities (Index: 1957-59= 100)
none	¼	\$ 29.30	\$	\$ 29.30		124	\$ 29.30	\$ .96	
Browne	1	1,200.00		1,200.00		137	1,200.00	8.76	66.7
Woodfin	2	2,648.46	330.16	2,978.62	11.08	174	1,489.31	8.56	60.9
Gwaltney	8	25,377.85	2,585.53	27,963.38	9.25	289	3,495.42	12.09	48.5
Nunnally	7	18,961.67	3,304.89	22,266.56	14.84	438	3,180.94	7.26	36.7
Headden	30	113,315.88	122,308.81	235,624.69	51.91	610	7,854.16	12.88	31.6
[1st decade		43,574.48	12,834.52	56,409.00	22.75	522	5,640.90	10.81	30.7]
[2nd decade		30,294.23	25,394.12	55,688.35	45.60	582	5,568.84	9.57	28.5]
[3rd decade		39,447.17	84,080.17	123,527.34	68.07	727	12,352.73	16.99	35.7]
Totals		\$161,533.16	\$128,529.39	\$290,062.55	44.31	503	\$ 6,011.66	\$11.95	

for ladies and men and several for children. While often not even the number of classes is known, eventually the records present a rather clear picture. Classes numbered about 12 in 1886, 27 in 1897, 30 in 1898, 29 in 1900 and 1906, 27 in 1908, and 19 in 1913. Usually they were designated by the teacher's name, but not always. The infant or primary class apparently came under Miss Battie Shropshire's care in 1877 and remained so for more than half a century. The home department was organized about 1904, being comprised the next year of 97 women and 2 men who were unable to make the trip to Sunday school. The Baraca class for young men was started by 1905, while the corresponding class for young ladies, the Philathea, appeared by 1909. Made up of about 50 men, the Berean Bible Class taught by Headden in the sanctuary, existed from 1907 to 1911. Apparently this became the Gaines and Hillyer class in 1912 and the Scrap Iron class in 1914. G. A. Nunnally selected its title, suggesting that when the raw material of scrap iron was exposed to the heat of religion, Christian teaching, and fellowship, the finished product would be a good Christian. Sometime prior to the First World War, one of the ladies classes was named the Matrons' Class, an earlier manifestation of what was about 1920 the TEL class.

As would be expected, enrollment increased, although careful records are not available until 1876. The known low of 210 came in 1880-1881; the high of 465 was in 1901-1902 when a mission school was included in the figures. The average attendance is shown for almost half of the years, ranging from 140 in 1883-1884 to 350 in 1899-1900. Attendance averaged zero for three consecutive Sundays late in 1901—everything in Rome involving children was shut down by the board of health because of scarlet fever. Because this occurred at the start of the last quarter, students were urged in the newspapers to stop by a downtown store and pick up their literature so they would not miss any lessons.

Virtually all of the classes met in the church basement. Because by 1881 the area was too small, the sanctuary was brought into use. The new building gave additional space, and the 1900-1901 wing increased it. The older men's class seemingly met upstairs. The tiny children, older ladies, younger ladies, and younger men had separate basement rooms. All of the other children attended classes in the central assembly room, fitted with benches the backs of which could be switched, enabling the students to form little circles.

Though no evidence remains prior to the turn of the century, opening exercises were conducted after that time for all but the infant class in the large basement room. Led by the superintendent or one of his assistants, it included spirited singing—frequently "Loyalty to Christ" and another, less familiar hymn that begins: "A call to loyal soldiers comes

to one and all.” One former pupil still recalls the cold, wintry walk from her home and then, opening the side door, the rush of warm air produced by the huge stove in the middle of the assembly room.

Music played an important part in the Sunday school. Evidently the basement had some kind of organ until a piano was purchased about 1910. New song books were secured in 1899 and about 1910, the former being titled *Sacred Songs*.

There is no definite word about the type of curricular materials initially used. Perhaps *The Child's Delight*, produced by the Baptist Samuel Boykin, was the basis of instruction at first. When the first Southern Baptist denominational literature was released in 1866, maybe the Rome Baptist Sunday school started using it. In 1876-1877 the church ordered two hundred Sunday school papers, but no name is shown. By 1880, and probably before, denominational literature was employed, and almost surely it was provided thereafter.

Starting in 1893 manuscript Sunday school records were kept that have been preserved. These are four thin paperback sewn notebooks and two larger ledger-type books. While even these records are incomplete, they include minutes of the officers' and teachers' meetings, treasurer's reports, class rolls, and records of attendance. The official year ran from July 1 to July 1.

The officers' and teachers' meetings have been held since 1895 or before, the records giving no indication that anything novel was being scheduled. The brief minutes portray a small group planning to obtain new members and better attendance from the old ones, spending money on worthy causes, providing recreation for their members, drafting resolutions for their deceased colleagues, and securing new officers and teachers. For a few years they attempted to limit all classes to no more than 8—and while the infant and adult classes were always permitted to be exceptions to the rule, most classes seem to have conformed.

To focus attention on the school, a Sunday school rally was planned for September 1905, probably the first of many. Beginning at 9:45 on a Sunday morning, it featured a processional, responsive reading, music, and a few brief speeches. On one of the two printed leaflets remaining from these events, this motto is prominently displayed on page one: “If you would train a child in the way it should go, go that way yourself.”

During most of these years, each class was directly related to the superintendent. However, in 1912 the school was graded into departments: adult, senior, young adult, intermediate, junior, primary, pre-school, home, and music.

Hardly the main purpose of the school, recreation was nevertheless a part of its total program. This took several forms. In May 1866 the Bap-

tist, Methodist, and Presbyterian Sunday schools resumed the familiar annual union picnic that over the years attracted two to fourteen hundred persons and at least once involved fourteen schools. Excursions were taken to Dykes Creek, Proctor's Landing, Cave Spring, Silver Creek, Mobley Park, Chickamauga, or Grant Park in Atlanta, often including exciting rides on "the iron horse" or a steamboat. Games included croquet, baseball, grace, and steady partners; sometimes the Silver Cornet Band played; one of the pastors might speak; and always the baskets would be opened to satisfy the ravenously hungry participants.

Individual classes or departments likewise enjoyed picnics and parties—as, for example, outings to Mobley Park for the infant class in 1898 or 1900. In the latter year a children's picnic was the scene of much juvenile delight caused by the deer and the monkeys. Quite matter-of-factly the newspaper commented: "Some 25 were working in the Rome Cotton factory and could not get off." After the younger ladies and men formed their classes, Valentine's parties became a predictable type of activity.

A further time of pleasure came at Christmas. In 1881 a "Santa Claus entertainment" for the Sunday school children was arranged at the Nevin Opera House—apparently the only such event that early. By 1897 the annual Christmas tree celebration was a regular occurrence. That year's event, termed a "success" in the minute book of the officers and teachers, featured "a telephone in connection with Santa Claus. Another [feature] was a gramophone." Usually Saint Nick put in his appearance—a partially disguised L. G. Todd or Charles Woodruff—distributing presents to the younger portion of the more than five hundred who would customarily attend. In 1902 the festival involved "a full rigged ship . . . on the platform [in the sanctuary]. The hull of the ship was pited sady [?] of candy and nuts. The rigging was filled with cotton, giving the appearance of ice." Despite the secretary's uncertain penmanship, it was a gala affair!

The First Baptist Sunday school was related to four other local churches and schools in helpful ways. Constituted in 1893, the West Rome Baptist Church apparently stemmed from a mission school led by Joe B. Patton and other First Baptist members in 1892-1893. Six years later the school contributed almost \$100 to West Rome. Lindale Baptist Church was formed in 1898 with assistance from First Baptist. The next year the Sunday school gave its old song books to the fledgling congregation. Mobley (now DeSoto) Park Baptist Church, organized in 1904, was initially a Sunday school that was a mission of First Baptist under Mrs. W. S. McHenry. She and other leaders, money, and equipment came

from the parent body. The Eighth Avenue Mission (to become Mark McDonald [now Trinity] Baptist Church in 1913) was from about 1903 an arm of the nearby First Baptist Church. The Sunday school was considered a part of First Baptist's, for a time being led by Emmett Cole and throughout receiving financial assistance. As many as 80 pupils were enrolled here and counted on First Baptist rolls.

Local Baptists were willing to cooperate with associational and convention Sunday school efforts. The Cave Spring Baptist Association took several approaches to Sunday school work. For a year or two in the early seventies a Sunday school depository was open in Rome, but this seems never to have been very successful. Briefly the North Georgia Sabbath School Convention was fostered by the association. The use of scholarly and "safe" literature was encouraged—either from the Philadelphia-based American Baptist Publication Society or from the Southern Baptist Convention. Although the Rome Baptist Church utilized the latter's "Kind Word" series and thereby supported the still-faltering regional publication efforts, fully a third of the schools in the association were willing to use northern materials.

The Floyd County Baptist Association publicized Sunday school work through a standing committee that secured statistics which were printed almost every year in the minutes. Increasingly the committee urged the use of Southern Baptist Sunday School Board materials. At least two countywide Baptist Sunday school workers' conferences and teacher-training programs were held at First Baptist. Both in 1909 and 1911 several sessions were scheduled, resulting in the conferring at the 1911 Georgia Baptist Convention of the degree of King's Teacher on twenty-five Romans.

Both associations formed Sunday school conventions which involved First Baptist members and occasionally met at the church. D. B. Hamilton, Sr., was a president of the former, while A. B. S. Moseley and W. J. Neel were presidents of the latter. C. H. Stillwell, J. M. Proctor, R. J. Gwaltney, C. E. Woodruff, L. R. Gwaltney, G. A. Nunnally, and R. B. Headden were speakers on their spring programs.

The Georgia Baptist Sunday School Association, formed in 1868, met with the Rome Baptist Church in 1873, 1881, and 1885. On three occasions the Sunday school sent a delegate or delegates to the annual meeting held elsewhere. In 1874 the state convention employed Thomas C. Boykin as a Sunday school missionary; he held conferences in the Rome church, and the church assisted in raising his salary.

Interdenominational Sunday school activity was not unknown. Throughout almost the whole period, the annual union picnic was a high point. In addition, Rome Baptist Church members attended a citywide

Sunday school workers' convention in 1881, helped to form and lead the Baraca-Philathea City Union in 1909, and took an active role in providing housing, food, and leadership for a statewide Sunday school convention in 1911.

Probably the Sunday school began to take up offerings as soon as it was reconstituted, but its early finances are shrouded in mist. In the sixties and seventies the church sent \$509.85 to the Sunday School Board, SBC, but whether this was a gift or payment for lesson helps is unclear. Envelopes were passed out to the children in 1871 to solicit funds for this purpose. A local Sunday school depository and the GBC Sunday school evangelist both received a small amount from the church. Later interest in the orphans' home might imply that the Sunday school was responsible for the \$88 contribution in 1872. In 1877 the treasurer reported that the debt declined from \$65 to zero.

Greater detail is available for six years in the eighties, when \$632.82 was spent for local needs and \$523.40 went for various mission causes, 45 percent of the total. Quarterlies cost about \$100 for the entire year, while the expense of the big summer picnic was \$25 to \$50.

The nineties are known with rather great accuracy, although at times the church book, the Sunday school treasurer's account, and the associational report do not all agree. The Sunday school collected \$2,576.70, of which 39 percent (\$1,015.79) was contributed to missions. A favorite cause was the orphans' home, the gifts for which were increased when Headden suggested in 1892 that a birthday offering from each pupil be designated for that purpose. According to the first report of this suggestion, in the *Christian Index*, the Rome Baptist Church was the first in the state to initiate such an offering, though others soon followed suit.

During the first fourteen years of the new century, total income amounted to about \$4,458.64. Almost one-third was spent on missions, with the orphans' home receiving the lion's share. Regular offerings for it came every fourth Sunday or once each quarter, and special days were added. When a hundred orphans' home children attended the 1902 GBC meeting at First Baptist, the Sunday school fed them lunch in the church basement.

Twice in this period ladies—both already members of the church—were employed as Sunday school missionaries. In 1902-1903 Mrs. Josie Boozer received \$62.50 in five months; and in 1909-1911 Miss Ella Schirmer, \$50 in ten months. The earlier position was variously called "city missionary" or "Sunday School visitor" and the later, "superintendent of the home department." Apparently the ladies' major responsibilities were to visit the needy, home-bound, and unchurched.

## *THE LADIES AND THEIR MISSIONARY ORGANIZATIONS*

Well before the Woman's Missionary Society was reorganized at the Rome Baptist Church, the ladies were active in the life of the church and community. Two of them were on an 1865 committee to investigate the purchase of hymnals. Three of them opened schools in the basement in 1865 and 1866. Some of them met at the church, along with other ladies, to plan for an April 26, 1866, tribute to the Confederate dead, which was carried out. Later that year the ladies raised \$216 for the benefit of their church by sponsoring a supper and entertainment. Other contributions followed—a "beautiful cushion" for the pulpit from the young ladies in 1869; \$83.46 to the pastorium fund from what the church clerk called the "Ladies aid" in 1870; and an undisclosed amount from "the ladies Sewing Society," as the newspaper termed them, who provided a supper in Good Templars Hall in 1872.

The traditional date for the reconstitution of the WMS is 1873, the year when its manuscript record book resumed after about a ten-year break. Unfortunately this book, known to exist in 1912, has since dropped out of sight. Actually, some sort of organization existed at least briefly in 1870 and 1872. The newspaper continued to call the group the "Baptist Sewing Circle," describing a spelling match at the city hall and a churchwide social outing (that included music, football, ice cream, and other food) to raise money for benevolent purposes. In the mid-seventies ladies were on two committees collecting money to remove the church debt, after which this function evidently ceased. Quite obviously the ladies thereafter exercised their greatest influence through their missionary organizations.

Leadership for what was variously called the Ladies' or Woman's Missionary Society was furnished by a succession of officers headed by a president. The following list includes those who are known: Mrs. C. M. Harper (about 1879-1900, 1904; honorary president, 1900-1905), Mrs. S. F. Brame (1900-1903, 1904-1905), Mrs. D. B. Hamilton, Jr. (1903-1904, 1906-\*), Mrs. (B. F.?) Clark (1904), Mrs. W. S. McHenry (1905), and Mrs. R. B. Headden (1905-1906).

The WMS met on Monday afternoon—at 3, 3:30, 5, or 5:30—and this day was continued throughout the period, with frequent changes in the hour. By 1888 the society had 50 members. Interest in temperance and missions was in the forefront. Starting in 1883 they evidently formed an auxiliary organization called the Woman's Christian Temperance Society which probably was still active in 1889. Miss Anna J. Mayberry, a Southern Baptist missionary in Mexico, was supported in part for six

years by the group. From \$60 to \$150 annually was sent to the board on her behalf. The first Christmas offering for China on record came in 1889, when \$19 was raised, and probably others were taken each year after that. When Miss Mayberry died in 1892, the ladies directed their financial support toward Rev. and Mrs. W. D. Powell of Mexico, who received \$300 in 1893. Other funds went for more general mission purposes, for reducing the church debt, and for improving the appearance and equipment of the building.

Activities in the new century are made clearer because a secretary's manuscript record book has been preserved. Designated book no. 5, it devotes 289 large pages to the period from 1901 to 1914. Weekly meetings were conducted on Monday afternoon, comprised of an opening devotional, business, an offering, often a religious talk, and a benediction. Not infrequently Pastor Headden was present and took part on the program. In 1902 the total membership was 64, dropping to 50 in 1909, and being further reduced when the list was purged in 1912 of those making no financial contribution during the preceding year. The actual meetings usually attracted 20 to 30, which would occasionally plummet to 7, 6, 5, 4, or even 2. Almost always gathering in what they called "our room" or "the Mission Room" in the church, they were forced by the frigid winter of 1905 to utilize the pastorium when the basement became too difficult to heat. Refreshments were sometimes served; occasionally they adjourned "to the soda fount where they enjoyed a pleasant half hour"; and at least once the meeting turned into a Tuesday afternoon tea in one of the member's home. The offering ranged from fifty cents to \$107.30, and was more often less than \$10. Programs covered the broad interests of the group, dealing with Southern Baptist missions to many countries and to the Indians, the work of the Home Mission Board, religion among the blacks, and the mission Sunday school at Mobley Park. These monthly programs were usually taken from the *Foreign Mission Journal* or the state WMU paper, the *Mission Messenger*. One notable program occurred in 1905 when the speaker was Miss Annie Armstrong, corresponding secretary of the southwide WMU. An additional fortnightly mission-study group met from 1910 to at least 1913, usually led by Mrs. A. W. VanHoose.

Three separate weeks of prayer and offering came to be observed. By 1900 the Christmas offering for China (later named for Lottie Moon) was a regular thing, while soon a week of prayer for foreign missions was added early each January. The amount raised progressed from a low of \$10.95 in 1900 to a high of \$75 in 1913. The home mission offering and week of prayer (later named for Annie Armstrong) apparently started in March 1903, resulting in offerings ranging from \$22.33 in 1906 to \$125 in

1913. The last to be instituted was the state mission offering and week or day of prayer in November 1905. Contributions amounted to only \$11 the first year, but climbed to \$160 in 1912. This offering was later named for Mrs. W. J. Neel, a member of the First Baptist WMS in 1905 and later a president and historian of the Georgia WMU.

The society financially assisted two additional missionaries and took a personal interest in several others. From 1901 to 1904 Dr. and Mrs. T. W. Ayers, medical missionaries in China, received about \$25 per month from Rome. When a daughter of theirs joined this church, interest was renewed, money was sent for their hospital a couple of times, and a reception in their honor was scheduled when they were on furlough. Miss Julia Meadows in China was adopted by the society in 1904, letters were frequently exchanged, and money was appropriated for her use. In 1911, the year that her financial support ceased, she visited Rome for several days. The friendship and letters persisted after that date, however. Once a member of the Rome church, W. Harvey Clarke corresponded with the WMS and in 1906 spoke and showed his Japanese curios to them. Lottie Moon penned at least one letter to the group, and perhaps many others to the Headdens. Rev. and Mrs. Emmett Stephens wrote from China and on furlough addressed the society. Not under the Southern board, Mrs. L. E. Hicks and Mrs. Ida B. Elliott, both then in Burma, occasionally sent news or requests for help.

Boxes full of clothing and household goods were sent from the group, chiefly to missionaries in Oklahoma and Texas, once to the orphans' home, and once to disaster victims in Florida. The methodical WMS secretaries carefully listed the value of these nine shipments, totaling almost \$1,000.

The ladies spent a good deal of time and money in local charitable work which they approached in a rather elitist and maternalistic fashion. They helped to finance and lead a sewing school for underprivileged girls, gave used clothes to the schools, and provided nursing and medicine for a destitute elderly lady. The "Poor Fund"—sometimes replenished from "poor boxes" placed in the church vestibule—furnished food, wood, rent, medical treatment, travel expenses, spending money, and house repair for many. For the "worthy poor," as one newspaper described them, the WMS gave a Christmas dinner starting in 1901 and for several years thereafter. As early as 1903 Rome leaders were contemplating a united approach to local charitable needs, and the First Baptist WMS was involved. After further discussion in 1907, the outcome in 1910 seems to have been a "district nurse" who was in part supported financially by the First Baptist ladies. Obviously considering Berry Schools to be worthy of their attention, the ladies sent turkeys to

the boys for their Thanksgiving feast of 1903 and a supply of dining room linen and china to the girls in 1909. One young lady in the factory district was rescued from "a life of shame" by the tent meeting of 1908 and was assisted in attending an industrial school where she could learn domestic skills and the Bible.

Affectionately mindful of their pastor, the ladies four times honored him. In 1903 they held a reception at his twentieth anniversary and presented a gift of tableware. Two years later they sent him on his way to the Baptist World Alliance meeting in London with a \$50 gift from them. At his twenty-fifth anniversary another reception occurred. When it was realized in 1909 that Headden, Nunnally, and Gwaltney were all members of the First Baptist Church, an elaborate reception for them featured Nixon's orchestra, coffee and cheese straws, and ice cream and cake.

Reflecting the interest of the church, the society supported the missions at Mobley Park with a contribution of at least \$76 and at the "Cotton Factory District" (later Mark McDonald) with at least \$50.

The 1855 church bell became a concern of the group in 1909. Having received a request that it be sent to China, they investigated the cost of its shipment and of its replacement with a new one. Soon they decided to take up the matter officially with Headden and the deacons—who knew about it anyway, their respective wives being in the society. Perhaps each man quietly convinced his wife that the scheme was impracticable—at any rate the matter was tabled.

A fairly accurate assessment of the society's finances can be made for twenty-eight years starting in 1881. Gifts were as low as \$240.55 in 1886 and as high as \$832.01 in 1907. The annual average was about \$513.

Over the years, six auxiliary organizations were formed. By 1883 the Willing Workers was in existence—made up of younger ladies who got older and older but did not enter the WMS. Only four presidents are known: Miss Mamie Jones (1900), Miss Lilly Shropshire (1908, 1912), Mrs. Clarence Todd (1908, 1909), and Mrs. J. J. Reece (1910, 1911). The group had 60 members in 1909, the only year that such information is available. They met on Saturday afternoon in 1900, Monday afternoon in 1902 to 1904, and Tuesday afternoon in 1909—sometimes joining the WMS for the monthly missions programs. By the turn of the century they were gathering twice a month, once in their room at the church for business and study, and once in a member's home for quilting and socializing. This enabled them to contribute their wares to the orphans' home or missionary boxes—and to consume dainties that were often carefully described on the newspaper society page. They gained statewide publicity for almost a generation by supporting Mercer ministerial

students, of whom the best known was Spencer B. King, Sr. Local needs—seats for the Sunday school room and assistance for the dispossessed—were also met. Other than by voluntary offerings, they raised \$27.44 at a “Measuring Party,” in which participant paid five cents for every foot of height and one cent for every inch over. At times they sold their homemade fancywork or held rummage sales. For years they sponsored a lunch stand at the Floyd County Fair, becoming famous for their Brunswick and oyster stews. When former President Theodore Roosevelt came to Rome, they served meals downtown all day. Their finances are partially known for only twenty-four years after 1886. Eighty dollars was raised in 1892 and \$636.96 in 1906—with an average of about \$200 annually.

From 1899 to 1904 the Junior Willing Workers was comprised of little girls whose first project, in the words of the *Christian Index*, was “to clothe a dear little curly head orphan boy . . . .” Annie Griffin was the first and only known president. Meetings came on Saturday afternoon, supervised by ladies who helped them to send aid to the orphans’ home and to provide food for the old, sick, and poor. In five years their parents allowed them to contribute about \$310.

The Home Missionary Society evidently started in the fall of 1903. Its members raised funds for local needy families and for missions, about \$200 from 1908 to 1910. Known presidents were Mrs. Joe Glover, Miss Joy Harper, and Mrs. Ed Smith. The organization disappeared in 1910.

Two groups were constituted in 1908. The girls’ Sunbeam Band and the boys’ Royal Ambassadors, both of which persisted well past the close of this period, had mission study programs and presented offerings of about \$15 a year. They met on Saturday morning, the boys once holding a debate on African missions and later enjoying an Easter egg hunt.

The Young Woman’s Auxiliary was begun in 1909. Very little is known of them at first. Mrs. Ed Rankin was president in 1912. They conducted mission study programs, participated in some of the weeks of prayer, and raised money by charging admission to music recitals and visiting lectures. In four years they gave about \$160 annually.

Encouraged by Pastor Headden, the First Baptist WMS organized and furnished the first president of the Floyd County Woman’s Missionary Union in 1898. Under Mrs. W. J. Neel the group encouraged the formation of missionary organizations and raised money for various related causes. First Baptist ladies were present at most of the annual meetings, and provided competent but less spectacular leadership after Mrs. Neel moved to Cartersville in 1905.

At the state level, the Woman’s Missionary Union may be dated from 1878 when a central committee was formed and officers chosen. Despite

opposition from some of the brethren, men such as Nunnally and Head-den supported the calling of a statewide meeting of local missionary societies in 1884. Thereafter the state organization developed in a pattern followed by the Rome church. The earliest involvement came in 1897 when Mrs. Neel attended the state meeting and was promptly assigned to the memorials committee. She and/or others attended most annual sessions after this, acting on committees and presenting reports on many aspects of the work. Mrs. Neel was a state vice-president while a Roman from 1899 to 1904 and Mrs. D. B. Hamilton, Jr., at least from 1908 to 1911. The state meeting was twice held in Rome; the local ladies were proudly pleased to entertain the many visitors in 1902 and 1911, serving them in the church basement meals that included, according to one news account, "ice cream in the Shorter colors . . . ." Apart from the fact that Mrs. Neel attended the 1900 SBC WMU meeting in Hot Springs, Arkansas, there is no evidence of any Rome participation outside the state.

Interdenominational woman's missionary activity seems to have been almost nonexistent. In 1910 and 1911, the ladies of the downtown Baptist, Methodist, Presbyterian, and Christian churches met quarterly, attracting as many as 200. Their gatherings were both instructional and social, apparently with an emphasis on the latter. After four meetings, evidently no more were held.

#### *THE BAPTIST YOUNG PEOPLE'S UNION AND ITS ANTECEDENTS*

Immediately after the war, a young people's prayer meeting convened each Friday evening in the basement of the Baptist church, probably for males of any denomination. By 1867 it was called the "Young Men's Prayer Meeting," and was encouraged by Pastor Woodfin. Its fate is unknown; extant sources do not again mention it.

In 1879 "Baptist sociables" were noted in the *Rome Courier*, held on a regular basis in various homes and said to be "always well attended and . . . a source of much pleasure for the young ladies and gentlemen of the city." Twenty years later the Headdens invited the young people to the pastorium for a reception—but surely many unrecorded social functions had intervened.

Precisely when the Young People's Gospel Meeting was started is not a matter of record; by 1881 it was regularly scheduled each Sunday afternoon at 3:30 during the winter and 5 in the summer. The relation between this and a young men's prayer meeting held Tuesdays at 7:30 P.M. in 1881 is unclear. Its name was changed to the Young Men's Aid Society

no later than 1888; presumably the founding of the Willing Workers would cause this organization to be for males only. Only one president is known, W. H. Clarke in 1889. The group's devotional programs were sometimes presented by one person, but more often by several. One four-page leaflet remains from this society, listing the officers, "programme" topics, and speakers for November and December of 1889. At least twice the circle—as it was also called—conducted Sunday services in Headden's absence. It raised money for foreign missions and for diminishing the church debt, a total of \$1,430.50 in six years between 1892 and 1898.

The twelve months from September 1899 to September 1900 were transitional. The group's name was altered to the Young People's Prayer and Aid Society and young ladies were invited to join. J. L. Bass was president of this organization that numbered 53 members. In the list of officers, Mrs. Josie Boozer was shown as the city missionary. During the single year of its life, its members contributed about \$250 for unspecified purposes.

The final change in name occurred when the group became the Baptist Young People's Union on September 16, 1900. Bass continued as president until the 1902 election of Leonard G. Todd, who probably retained that post throughout the remainder of this period. In 1901 the meeting time was changed to the evening, frequently shifting all the way from 6:15 to 8. The customary program continued to consist of several brief talks on a related topic, including occasionally a cornet or violin solo. Details of the group's financial life were seldom recorded; in 1901-1902 they gave \$19.50 for the Rome city missionary.

A citywide BYPU was formed at the First Baptist Church in March 1901 with Todd as first president. Meeting at various churches one Sunday afternoon each month, the group named J. L. Bass president in 1902. Shortly thereafter the body disappeared, probably because the three member unions (the only ones in Rome) simply could not engender sufficient enthusiasm.

Interest in the BYPU on the associational level was late in developing. Promotional reports were given each year starting in 1903, often by Todd. He was elected "BYPU Organizer" for the association in 1910, claimed to be the first in the state. He voluntarily worked on behalf of the association, assisting about ten churches in initiating their youth organizations. Although stressing the value of unions as promoters of daily Bible reading, he sadly had to report in 1913 that the movement was not flourishing in Floyd County.

Founded at Macon in 1895, the BYPU of Georgia made its first major impact on Rome in June 1901 when its annual meeting was held at the

First Baptist Church. Registration reached a total of 549, the second largest crowd attracted to that date. Newspaper coverage was extensive; Rome stores—groceries, meat markets, and china shops—advertised their products at “good prices” so that their customers could entertain their guests more easily. The First Baptist orchestra performed, and Todd was elected third vice-president. Several First Baptist members attended the 1902 meeting at Savannah, Headden preached the introductory sermon, and Todd was named first vice-president. In 1904 the state Bible Readers’ Banner was awarded to the First Baptist union. Members went to the 1909 meeting in the new auditorium of the Blue Ridge summer assembly. The following year at Cordele, Todd was elected third vice-president. Back in Rome, reports were sometimes made to the local union about these state events.

On the national scene, the First Baptist BYPU was relatively inactive. Headden attended an annual mass meeting at nearby Chattanooga in 1897, even before a local union had been formed. He and others were present at national meetings at Cincinnati, Ohio (1900), and Providence, Rhode Island (1902). The union won a Bible Readers’ Banner at the 1904 convention in Detroit. Strangely, no evidence seems to exist linking the local union with the BYPU Auxiliary to the Southern Baptist Convention, organized at Atlanta in 1895, although literature from that source was likely used in Rome.

### *THE SACRED LITERATURE CLASS*

For at least a decade Robert B. Headden taught the Sacred Literature Class usually at 7:30 on Tuesday evenings during the fall, winter, and spring in the basement of the new church annex. Beginning in September 1901, it was publicized as being open to anyone from 12 to 112, but apparently it attracted mainly the young adults. In 1902 about 50 were on the roll, the only such figure available. The curriculum for only four years is known: the early church (1901-1902); *The Christian Life* by R. Grenell (1902-1903); one of two books on the early Christian church written by John W. Conley and published by the American Baptist Publication Society (1908-1909); and *Training in Church Membership* (Nashville: Sunday School Board, SBC, 1908) by I. J. Van Ness (1909-1910). Students purchased their own textbooks at a cost of about one dollar per year. Final examinations were administered and diplomas for successful study were awarded. Because of uncertain evidence, no more than one or two presidents can be identified—Mr. and/or Mrs. J. B. Owens. In 1902 the group held a Friday night social with the BYPU, and doubtless others have escaped notice. Presumably the class was officially separate from

the BYPU, but the fact that many of the same persons were involved in both resulted in a combining of the two on occasion—a relation that is now far from being clear.

### *THE CHURCH AND EDUCATION*

Members of the Rome Baptist Church continued to display an interest in education beyond the Sunday school.

(1) *Preparatory Schools.* Two preparatory schools conducted by three Rome ladies were operated in the basement of the church for three years. Mrs. Susan Smith made use of the facilities for a year, 1865-1866, rent-free, with the understanding that she would keep the premises in good repair. Mrs. E. H. Reeves and Mrs. H. C. Cooper were permitted occupancy rent-free from 1866 to 1868, after which the latter opened her school elsewhere.

(2) *Shorter College.* Shorter College originated from the congregation of the Rome Baptist Church. The cofounders of the Cherokee Baptist Female College, as it was first called, were Luther R. Gwaltney, pastor, and Colonel and Mrs. Alfred Shorter, lay members. In 1872 Gwaltney conceived the idea of “a college for the daughters of Cherokee, Georgia,” to be located in Rome. After preliminary discussions extending about a year, a general meeting of persons interested in the venture was held on August 2, 1873, probably in the basement of the Rome Baptist Church. A board of trustees, comprised mainly of Rome Baptist members, was elected, with Alfred Shorter as chairman. Over the next forty years, the church furnished at least twenty-five trustees, including the following: W. F. Ayer, J. L. Bass (chairman, 1910-1913), W. W. Brookes (chairman, 1909-1910, 1913-1917), J. Paul Cooper (chairman, 1917-1927), L. A. Dean, L. R. Gwaltney, C. Harper Hamilton, D. B. Hamilton, Sr. (chairman, 1882-1904), C.C. Harper, Charles M. Harper, J. W. Janes, A. W. Ledbetter, T. W. Lipscomb, John C. McDonald, Mark McDonald, G. A. Nunnally, J. S. Panchen, C. M. Pennington, T. J. Perry, A. E. Ross, C. G. Samuel, Alfred Shorter (chairman, 1873-1882), Arthur R. Sullivan, J. B. Sullivan, Sr., and James B. Sullivan.

Gwaltney maintained a close relationship with the fledgling institution, as acting president twice and as professor of moral and mental philosophy. When the venture seemed doomed financially, he was able to interest Colonel and Mrs. Shorter in providing new buildings, a large endowment, and funds for current expenses. In all, the couple contributed about \$200,000 to the college, an amount that was “princely” in those days.

Support for the school from the church continued long after the Shorters died. Money came from many members in smaller amounts—and from three in substantial amounts: J. L. Bass, \$50,000; W. W. Brookes, \$35,000 (to which his widow added almost \$62,000 in later years); J. Paul Cooper, about \$166,000.

The pastors of the church expressed their concern in a variety of ways. Gwaltney's key role has already been described. Nunnally was a valued adviser to Colonel Shorter as the new structures were being constructed, and for one semester was professor of natural science. Headden frequently spoke to different groups on the campus, preached the commencement sermon in 1887, was part-time professor of Bible and Biblical literature from 1898 to 1911, and received a high honor from the students when the 1899 college yearbook was dedicated to him.

Shorter College has not failed to make a large contribution to the life of the fostering church. Each college president but one has been a member of this church, as have many members of the faculty, administration, staff, and student body. President R. D. Mallery was interim pastor in 1876, and other guest speakers from the college included Presidents Gwaltney and A. J. Battle. Prof. J. D. Gwaltney and President A. W. Van Hoose were both superintendents of the Sunday school. Shorter faculty members have served as organists for or presented recitals at the church, and the choir has been supplemented and sometimes replaced by Shorter persons.

The college girls attended the church in sufficient numbers to reserve pews for them in the late seventies, and their presence at the annual spring revivals was noted a number of years. In those days, the young ladies were required to attend the church of their parents' choice and were marched to the services in a group. One student wrote to a friend: "Well, honey, I went to a fashionable church last Sunday. Of course I was scared nearly to death before we entered the house, because I was not accustomed to be marched around like I was a convict trying to make his escape. Dr. Battle headed the procession and some other teacher footed it." One alumna recalled that they were lined up and roll was called at 10:30. If inspection revealed that any had on rouge or lipstick, it was wiped off. She also recalled, however, that some always managed to replace a little on the way down to the church.

Because the Shorter baccalaureate service was held in the church sanctuary each year except 1883, when the new building was being erected, the church also benefited from hearing a succession of speakers who enjoyed a statewide or regional reputation. These included President A. J. Battle of Mercer University, A. C. Cree of Moultrie, E. C. Dargan of Macon, Junius W. Millard of Atlanta, President Edwin M. Poteat of

Furman University, John E. White of Atlanta, R. J. Willingham of the Foreign Mission Board, and E. T. Winkler of the Domestic Mission Board.

(3) *Hearn Academy*. Founded in 1838 and designated by several different names, Hearn Academy was controlled until 1903 by a self-perpetuating board of trustees comprised mostly of Cave Spring men who were jealous of their power. Trustees from the First Baptist Church of Rome in the nineteenth century were D. B. Hamilton, Sr. (1871-1873, 1879-1885; president, 1880-1882), W. F. Ayer (1880-1885), R. B. Headden (1887-1889), W. J. Neel (1893-1902), and George W. Fleetwood (1896-1902). Nunnally was invited to give the commencement sermon in 1879, and Headden was on a crucial committee that settled a squabble between the trustees and the Georgia Baptist Convention in 1893.

When the academy became a part of the Mercer System in 1903, its trustees were named by the GBC and drawn from a broader area. These included four from this church: J. A. Glover (1897-1902, 1905-1914; treasurer, 1905-1914), J. F. Hillyer (1903-\*; president, 1904-1906, 1909-\*), Mark McDonald (1906-1910), and R. B. Headden for a second time (1909-1913). Indeed, after 1903 the board met in Rome more frequently than in Cave Spring as active supervision of the school was placed increasingly in Rome hands. Headden and McDonald served on important committees related to finances and building construction; Headden attempted to raise funds for the school; and the WMS contributed to its support. The long-time president of the trustees, Hillyer, also provided extensive free legal counsel. The large ledger-type trustees' record book was taken to Rome, where it was preserved after the institution was dissolved about 1925.

(4) *Mercer University*. In 1873 the trustees of Mercer University requested L. R. Gwaltney to take a three-month leave of absence and solicit aid for the endowment, but the church refused permission and this was not done. Three years later the trustees tried to secure Nunnally's services full-time, but again they failed. After this rather inauspicious start, the church took an interest in the school that increased as the years passed. Contributions for Mercer were made on at least six occasions during Headden's pastorate. He gave the commencement sermon in 1888, represented the college at a meeting of the nearby Oostanaula Association three years later, and helped raise funds locally in 1900. Five First Baptist men served as trustees: Gwaltney, Nunnally, Headden, W. J. Neel, and J. F. Hillyer. Honorary degrees were awarded to Nunnally, Headden, and A. W. VanHoose. The fact that A. J. Battle came to Rome directly from the presidency of Mercer and that former Pastor Nunnally succeeded him as president would heighten local interest. The

support of ministerial students at Mercer for twenty years by the Willing Workers has already been discussed.

### THE CHURCH AND BLACKS

In some ways the blacks in Rome were hurt even more by the war than the whites, and consequently were later in effecting a religious organization. Under Jeff Milner they sought and were given permission to use the Rome Baptist Church basement for a Sunday school. According to the *Rome Tri-Weekly Courier* it was formed on Sunday afternoon, May 27, 1866, by over 80 pupils with "some of our best citizens and first ladies of the place . . . [as] teachers . . . ." Four months later the white church conference passed a resolution "that we tender our sympathies to the colored members of our church and appoint a committee to aid in reorganising their conference, and we also assure them the same privileges extended to them heretofor[e] an[d] still freely tendered." Although the blacks had been accorded semiautonomy in 1852, it is clear that in 1866 they were still considered "members of our church." In November a conference for the blacks was held, with Pastor J. C. Browne as moderator and C. E. Hills as clerk, calling for a conference each first Sunday thereafter and instructing the church clerk to write all nonresident members, asking them to call for their letters within three months or face exclusion. After stability had been achieved, the blacks constituted their own church, probably in early September of 1867. In a letter dated September 17, 1867, Pastor A. P. Woodfin termed the event "recent," recording that about 50 members were on the roll and that the group met Sunday afternoons in the Rome Baptist Church basement. The white conference on October 1, 1867, noted: "The coloured members have been organized into a seperate church." By the end of 1868 the black congregation had purchased a lot and was planning for a sanctuary. On December 25, 1868, they held a fund-raising supper, with separate tables for whites who were encouraged to attend, and realized a profit of \$276. By April of 1869 they had left the white church basement, meeting at the home of Coleman McKenzie. Construction was under way in May of 1869, on a lot described as being in the north part of town near the lime sink. Its completion the next month was observed in the Rome Baptist conference: "The seats and Benches used in the Basement of the church were donated to the Coloured Baptist Church of this city." The structure was of wood and named the Thankful Baptist Church because one member said: "We are thankful to be here."

Thereafter the relationship between the white and black Baptist churches was not strong. The wooden building was destroyed by fire and

the present brick one erected in 1881. There is reason to think that Alfred Shorter contributed heavily to this new structure, which was very similar to the one which the whites entered in 1884. A visiting white female temperance leader spoke at the Thankful church in 1883 and Headden, at least once in 1887. Pastor Milner—the newspaper announcement observed that he had widely been called “Uncle Jeff”—died in 1895. His successor, J. G. Poindexter, was the subject of disputes within the church which Headden was asked to arbitrate in 1900, resulting ultimately in Poindexter’s resignation. The First Baptist WMS ladies attended “the Negro Woman’s Missionary Society” in 1902, apparently to help them strengthen their own society. Eight years later “several prominent white ladies,” as the paper described them, were invited to speak to the Thankful ladies on the home, missions, and educational work, and presumably they went over for the occasion.

On a broader canvas, the black Baptist state convention met at Rome in 1874 and the North Georgia Baptist Association in 1909, and Luther R. Gwaltney was among the visitors both times. A request came to Pastor Headden in 1896 to adjust a difference between the Springfield and Thankful churches, which he probably honored. Five years later he preached once during the African Methodist Episcopal revival.

Race relations in Rome took an ugly turn in 1901 and 1902, both times involving the First Baptist Church. After an alleged Wednesday evening attempted assault on a white lady, a black man was arrested and jailed in January 1901. Removed forcibly by an unmasked mob that grew to 2,000, he was taken down Broad Street and out Second Avenue to his accuser’s home. There she declared that he was innocent, and he was released. Later she changed her mind, and he was seized by a 150-man mob and summarily lynched Thursday in North Rome. A local Presbyterian attorney and state legislator publicly protested the event Friday and Sunday. None of the city’s ministers—not even Headden, the dean of the group—referred to it in their sermons, “though,” added the Rome *Tribune* editor, “it was rather expected that some of them would do so.” When the pastor of the Christian church registered his objection to such mob action a week later, he spoke only for himself. No outcry was forthcoming from the other local clergy or congregations, and the event did not long remain newsworthy.

Coming even closer home was a similar incident the following year. An alleged attempted assault on the niece of a prominent First Baptist member resulted in an arrest the next day. At the police station the enraged uncle shot at the suspect several times, wounding him twice. In the confusion the suspect escaped. Recaptured and returned to jail, he was taken by an unmasked mob, hanged from a telephone post at the corner

of Broad Street and Fifth Avenue, and shot at several hundred times. Editorial approval followed—and, apparently, no other judgment from any Rome minister or congregation. That the attempted murder by the uncle was condemned by the First Baptist Church is unlikely; although almost no church records exist for 1902, he remained an honored leader in the church until his death several years later.

Thereafter conditions moderated and business as usual was resumed, under white control in all matters of importance. Black orphanages in Macon and Rome received little attention. The WMS in 1902 declared the former institution to be “worthy,” but felt that they could not help just then. About 1908 an orphanage on Blossom Hill was started. Its request to the WMS for funds was investigated and tabled. Headden and others late in 1910 appealed to the city council for governmental financial assistance. The request was referred to the city attorney, whose response is not known.

After an unsuccessful 1871 effort to found a college in Rome, the blacks did establish the Rome High and Industrial School early in this century. One female teacher spoke to the First Baptist WMS in 1908, but later requests for money were brushed aside. A citywide mass meeting was held at First Baptist Church in 1910, with speeches by Gwaltney and G. A. Nunnally and participation by lay members of the host church, but little seems to have come of it. Two years later the church conference tabled a request for help from James H. Gadson, president of the school and pastor of Thankful. From First Baptist member L. R. Gwaltney the school gained far more significant support on a purely personal basis. Acting on his own initiative and in the face of widespread public disapproval, he taught Bible and ethics there for the last two years of his life. When Gwaltney died in 1910, the Thankful pastor suggested that Shorter be renamed Gwaltney Memorial College. Of course his recommendation was not followed, but it clearly indicated virtually the only extended, affirmative relationship between Baptist blacks and whites in the concluding years of the period now under review.

### *THE CHURCH AND OTHER ETHICAL ISSUES*

During the years when the Social Gospel was gathering strength in this country under such Baptist leaders as Walter Rauschenbusch and Shailer Mathews—with a curious blind spot concerning race relations that was mirrored by Baptists in Rome—the pre-industrial and urbanized gospel of individualistic ethics held the day locally. Of the several issues faced, the struggle against alcohol consumed the greatest time and energy.

L. R. Gwaltney and G. A. Nunnally were leaders in the early drive for prohibition. Both spoke widely on the subject. Gwaltney was prominent in the International Order of Good Templars, elected chaplain of the Cold Water Temple and Sacred Promise Lodge in Rome and later Grand Worthy Chief Templar of the Grand Lodge of Georgia. A temperance paper, the *People's Friend*, was published in Rome with his assistance. Such was his fame that one Chattooga lodge was called the Gwaltneyans. He vigorously fought for a vote restricting the sale of alcoholic beverages in 1875, but the decision that first went in his favor was evidently soon declared to be illegal and spirits flowed as usual. Both locally and through the Georgia Baptist Convention, Nunnally expressed his support of temperance, scheduling a rally at the church and favoring the work of the Woman's Temperance Society. This activity helped to produce a referendum in 1885, with the dry forces being led by Shorter President Gwaltney and by Nunnally, who apparently paid several visits to Rome. Despite their efforts, they lost the skirmish. Vindication came to them in 1887, however, when another vote was taken and the saloons were closed. This situation was short-lived, for two years later they were reopened by a decision that many thought—but could not prove—had been illegally rigged. Hence, by 1900 about thirteen bars operated on or near Broad Street.

A new approach was successfully attempted in 1902, when R. B. Headden and others adopted the idea of a dispensary fathered initially by Seaborn Wright, local political and lay religious leader. Under this provision, a single store would be opened in the city, strictly controlled by county and city, both of which would share the profits. Although Gwaltney was among those preferring private bars to a government-owned dispensary (and prohibition, as an ideal), the election overwhelmingly favored replacing saloons with the dispensary. However, even this was closed in 1908 as a result of a statewide prohibition bill that was enacted into law. Of course this did not control the importing of alcoholic beverages from nearby Tennessee, and in 1911 "blind tigers" were said to be menacing the populace. These were clubs and businesses illegally storing and selling beer and whiskey. Headden preached a lead-off sermon, "Who is Responsible for the Blind Tiger," chaired a mass meeting protesting the condition, and helped to form the "Law Enforcement League." Speeches were made; the names of clubs and businesses were carried in the paper; and then the furor subsided and disappeared. The outcome may be suspected, but evidence leaves it in doubt.

Lesser emphasis was given to other evils in the community. Headden called a church conference in 1897 about banks, building and loan associations, and other corporations "that [he said] are going to ruin."

He declared: "They are left in the hands of a few who mismanage and neglect and soon bring ruin and desolation upon the heads of every stockholder." No minutes from this meeting exist, and its consequences are unknown. Some clergy and political leaders denounced a street fair planned by a civic club in 1902, charging that its moral level would be too low for Roman consumption. While Headden attended a special city council meeting dealing with the issue, he made no statement that has been preserved. The fair came as planned; surely he was relieved when it conformed to local moral standards. At least once he preached against card-playing and dancing, and probably this could be multiplied many times over if proper records were available. He and other Rome pastors favored closing the post office on Sundays, an action also approved by the clerks and carriers. Their success was apparently limited. The Rome Ministerial Association was formed, recommending earlier closings on Saturday nights and shorter hours for the post office and other places that had to be open on Sundays.

Over the years one final approach to ethical issues was taken, that of providing relief for the poor, sick, and elderly of the community. As has been seen, the church and the various ladies' and girls' missionary circles spent funds for such purposes. Relevant records are far from complete, but in thirty-three years the per-annum expenditures averaged about \$132. While much useful relief work was unquestionably done, virtually nothing of significance was attempted to remedy by law the social conditions producing the suffering, except in the area of temperance.

#### *OTHER DENOMINATIONS AND ECUMENICAL ORGANIZATIONS*

Relations between the Rome Baptist Church and other non-Baptist churches—singly or in groups—continued to be cordial. The Presbyterians invited the Baptists to use their sanctuary at night while the meetinghouse was being erected in 1883-1884, and perhaps this was done. Headden preached at least once during a Presbyterian revival in 1909. When the Cherokee Presbytery twice met in Rome, the Baptist pulpit was filled each time by a Presbyterian guest—as was true when the synod later assembled in Rome. The First Methodist Church dedicated its new sanctuary in July 1888, being joined by their Baptist neighbors who had called off their services. Headden preached revival sermons at the African Methodist and Howard (now Second) Avenue Methodist Episcopal churches. The North Georgia Methodist Conference convened at Rome in 1867, 1869, 1901; the Baptist pulpit was open to them each time; and once the Baptists gave their monthly mission offering to help

with Methodist home missions. During a suspension of services at Saint Peter's Episcopal Church, the members were officially invited to worship with the Baptist congregation. Twice the Christians were granted use of the baptistry, and once the Salvation Army worshipped in the Baptist sanctuary.

Even more abundant were examples of interdenominational cooperation on a union basis. The Rome Bible Society had numerous Baptist members from 1866 to at least 1876, including two who were presidents, Charles E. Hills and L. R. Gwaltney. Briefly in 1866 and 1867 the Benevolent Association of Rome attempted to provide relief in the stricken community under the leadership of D. B. Hamilton, Sr., president. Monthly union prayer meetings involved the Baptists, Methodists, and Presbyterians in 1873, 1877, and 1881—and probably during the entire nine-year period. At least by 1873 union Thanksgiving services included the same three denominations, seemingly becoming a regular feature through at least 1911. The Baptist church reopened its doors to the Young Men's Christian Association which was reorganized in 1875, had numerous Baptist leaders, and met in the church frequently through 1877. A six-week union revival was conducted in April and May of 1876, with the Baptist, Methodist, and Presbyterian pastors preaching in each other's churches on a one-week rotating basis. After the turn of the century the three denominations cooperated in a memorial service following President William McKinley's death (the Episcopalians were unofficially present too), in a couple of young peoples' rallies, in a Bible conference, and in a layman's meeting. The Baraca and Philathea Sunday school classes were active in the interdenominational parent body, and the WMS participated for a time in a citywide organization. Responding initially to evils perceived in businesses and the post office being open on Sunday, the Rome Ministerial Association was formed in February 1911 with R. B. Headden as the first president. Members made plans to gather on the Monday morning after the second Sunday of each month at the First Baptist Church, but the immediate future of the group is now obscure.

### *OTHER BAPTIST CHURCHES*

The Rome Baptist Church was instrumental in giving life to several Baptist churches and missions and support to others.

(1) *Thankful and other Black Baptist Churches.* As has been seen, the Thankful Baptist Church came out of this church in 1867 and later, along with the Springfield church, called on her for various forms of assistance.

(2) *North Broad Baptist Church.* Formed in 1867 as the Forrestville Baptist Church, this congregation invited the downtown church in 1870 to send committees to hear the reading of their articles of faith and to help in the ordination of deacons. In 1892 the older congregation gave the church \$100. As the Third Baptist Church, the congregation heard R. B. Headden speak in 1898, 1900, and 1904. In 1906 it assumed its present name.

(3) *Fifth Avenue Baptist Church.* In December 1880 the Rome Baptist Church appointed a committee to confer with the Georgia Baptist State Mission Board with reference to erecting a church building across the Oostanaula in DeSoto (Fourth Ward). The committee purchased a lot about March 1881, and the building was constructed with considerable financial assistance from Alfred Shorter. G. A. Nunnally spoke at the dedication of the cornerstone in December 1881, but the work was still in progress in April 1882. Seventeen persons formed this church in 1881, which existed as an arm of the parent body until December 1882 or January 1883. On January 14, 1883, the Rome Baptist Church conference issued letters to the DeSoto church for 26 persons, the first letters issued to that body. In 1887 it became the Second Baptist Church; in 1919, Fifth Avenue.

(4) *West Rome Baptist Church.* On March 12, 1893, the West Rome Baptist Church was organized with R. B. Headden as moderator of the presbytery. Apparently the church had emerged from a First Baptist mission Sunday school. Further assistance from First Baptist came in 1899 when \$99 was given.

(5) *Lindale Baptist Church.* The First Baptist Church and the Georgia Baptist State Mission Board cooperated in forming missions in East Rome and Lindale in April 1896 under the direction of W. J. Durham. The Lindale mission was considered a part of the Rome church, 6 persons entering the mission arm of the church by letter in June 1896. Headden was on the constituting presbytery in 1898 when the congregation left First Baptist. The next year the First Baptist Sunday school donated old song books to the new church; in 1902 members of First Baptist contributed to the offering taken for the erection of the Lindale meetinghouse.

(6) *DeSoto Park Baptist Church.* The Mobley Park mission Sunday school was founded July 7, 1901, by Mrs. W. S. McHenry, with Ed Proctor as first superintendent. Attendance for the first month was 75. Initially using the Exposition Building, they moved into a \$500 frame building erected in large part by the First Baptist Church in January 1903. Money for operating expenses came from the First Baptist WMS and Sunday school, and some old song books from the latter. The mis-

sion was considered sufficiently large to set it off as a church in 1904 with about 20 members. Its name was changed to DeSoto Park Baptist Church in 1910.

(7) *Trinity Baptist Church*. Started about 1903 as a mission without local-church support, the Eighth Avenue Mission was adopted by the First Baptist Church in October 1906. Services were held successively in a tent, in a borrowed chapel building, and in the First Baptist basement, the enterprise being directed by Emmett Cole and Leonard Todd. A lot was purchased for \$300 and efforts were started to raise funds for a building. In 1910 a tent revival was conducted and the Sunday school enrollment grew to 80. To memorialize her recently deceased husband, Mrs. Mark McDonald in 1911 offered \$1,000 to the First Baptist Church if a building worth \$2,500 were erected. The proposal was accepted, and the building was commenced in the summer of 1912. A large tent was purchased and utilized for a revival that summer, resulting in the conversion of about 150 persons, most of whom joined the First Baptist Church. On February 16, 1913, the Mark McDonald Memorial Baptist Church was constituted by 74 persons from the First Baptist Church; by the end of the year 134 had transferred their membership to the new church. Together with its equipment, the structure cost \$3,850. In 1963 the church adopted its present name.

(8) *Second Avenue Baptist Church*. By February 1888 an East Rome mission, the origins of which are unclear, was firmly enough established that R. B. Headden successfully sought permission to receive by letter some who were attending its meetings. Presumably this closed, because in April 1896 the First Baptist clerk spoke of establishing new mission stations in East Rome and Lindale. Under W. J. Durham, those ventures were funded jointly by the Georgia Baptist State Mission Board and the First Baptist Church. For the East Rome mission, the church took special and quarterly collections. Persons were received by letter into the mission, thereby becoming members of First Baptist. When its place of meeting—apparently a public hall—was closed, it accepted the invitation of a Methodist church in East Rome to use its building in the afternoons for a Sunday school. Committees from First and Second (later Fifth Avenue) Baptist churches in 1896 investigated the possibility of erecting a church in the vicinity, but the idea was soon abandoned. The mission probably continued, however, being reported in “good condition” eight years later. This gradually developed into the East Side Baptist Church, founded on February 6, 1907, with 13 charter members. A total of 58 left First Baptist to unite with this congregation during the first year of its life. Soon it selected Maple Street Baptist Church as its name and, in 1954, Second Avenue Baptist Church.

(9) *South Broad Baptist Church.* Starting in 1908 as a Sunday school led by First Baptist members, this church was constituted on January 3, 1909, by a presbytery with R. B. Headden as moderator. It occupied a house of worship constructed with funds raised from the city at large. Its charter members numbered 82; during its first year, 89 transferred to it from First Baptist Church.

(10) *Other Baptist Churches and Missions.* The Rome Baptist Church allowed Primitive Baptist Elder Kinchin Rambo the use of its sanctuary for a Friday evening service in April 1866. Later that year the Armuchee Baptist Church asked for help in investigating charges against its pastor, and the Rome church responded by sending three of its members to act on the council. In 1878 former Pastor C. H. Stillwell met with the Ebenezer Baptist Church of Chattooga County to advise them on a matter of internal difference concerning baptism. R. B. Headden was moderator of the presbytery forming the New Armuchee Baptist Church in 1901. Located out on West Tenth Street by 1909, the Avenue C Mission was led at times by First Baptist member Emmett Cole. In 1913 the mission used the tent employed the previous summer on Eighth Avenue.

(11) *A City Missionary.* A Baptist city missionary was active off and on during the first decade of the twentieth century. Mrs. Josie Boozer, a member of First Baptist Church, was designated by that title in 1900, and probably again in 1901. She was probably sponsored by her own church, but the nature of her work and her possible salary are both matters of uncertainty. In December 1901 R. B. Headden was named to a Floyd County Baptist Association committee with power to put a local missionary on the field, but none is known under that aegis this early. To be supervised and paid by the First Baptist Church, a city missionary to represent the Sunday school was employed in August 1902 at \$12.50 a month. She was Mrs. S. K. Graham, who resigned because of poor health before embarking on the work. She was succeeded by Mrs. Josie Boozer, who was sometimes called the "Sunday School visitor." After drawing \$62.50 for five months' labor, she resigned and was not replaced. A similar position was filled for at least ten months in 1908-1911 by Miss Ella Schirmer, a First Baptist member who was paid \$5 per month as the superintendent of the home department in the Sunday school. The activity of neither person satisfied the ladies of the WMS who in November 1909 set forth the need of a city missionary. Programs on that subject were presented to the WMS and BYPU late in 1910. On balance, it must be admitted that this aspect of the church's life is now scarcely more than obscure.

## ASSOCIATIONAL CONNECTIONS

The Rome church was a member of three local associations during this period: Coosa, Cave Spring, and Floyd County.

(1) *Coosa Baptist Association.* Due to an absence of printed minutes, comparatively little is known of Coosa's earliest postwar activities. Annual meetings were resumed in the fall of 1866, and the Rome church sent delegates for the next five years. Charles H. Stillwell, former pastor at Rome, attended regularly, was clerk for at least four years, and preached the 1870 introductory sermon. In three years the church contributed \$47.10 for associational expenses. The Rome congregation requested a letter of dismissal in 1870 so that it might help to form a more localized association, concluding a thirty-five-year relationship with Coosa.

(2) *Cave Spring Baptist Association.* At the Cave Spring Baptist Church on October 28, 1870, 13 churches with 1,112 members in Floyd, Polk, and Chattooga counties met to constitute a new association that took its name from the host church. In terms of membership, the Rome church was the largest with 238, having 43 more than the next largest church, Cedartown. Pastor L. R. Gwaltney immediately took a leading part in the proceedings as a member of the committee on constitution and by-laws and the executive committee, while Stillwell was named clerk.

For twenty-three years the Rome church stood in the forefront. G. A. Nunnally was elected moderator two years; Stillwell, clerk eight years; A. E. Ross, treasurer fifteen years; and A. F. Ross, treasurer one year. Rome men at one time or another headed every major committee, composing reports dealing with missions, Sunday schools, temperance, education, publications, ministerial education, deceased ministers, and associational finances. The introductory sermon was delivered twice by Stillwell and once by R. B. Headden; the missionary sermon, once each by Gwaltney, R. D. Mallery, and Nunnally, and three times by Headden; and the Sunday school address, once by Stillwell and Nunnally and twice by Gwaltney. At various times Rome men were selected to represent Cave Spring as corresponding messengers to the annual sessions of other associations. Each year at least one Rome man was named a delegate from the association to the Georgia Baptist Convention—notably, Gwaltney and A. E. Ross twelve times each, Stillwell ten times, Nunnally eight, and Headden six. The Rome church was host for the meetings in 1872 and 1879; the association paid a special visit to nearby Shorter College in the latter year.

Not a remarkably active organization, the association met to provide fellowship and inspiration, to raise money for state and southwide Baptist causes, and to encourage the training of ministers and Sunday schools. Being numerically and financially the strongest congregation in the association, the Rome Baptist Church consistently contributed more to missions than all the other churches combined, varying from about \$117 (1877) to about \$1,353 (1889) and averaging about \$596 annually. When, under Pastor Headden's leadership, the association sought to raise \$2,000 for state missions and \$2,400 for home missions, it was thought appropriate to suggest that the Rome church raise half the amounts. Although the goals were far from being reached, the usual proportion of contributions was maintained. Somewhat unexpectedly the association termed "*unnecessary and inexpedient*" a proposal to form the Baptist State Mission Board. After it was initiated anyway and for a year supported Stillwell as a Floyd County missionary, the association gave its approval and called upon its members to finance it. Because of the limited program of the association, it needed only limited funds. Chiefly for the expenses of the associational clerk and the printing of minutes, the Rome Baptist Church averaged contributing almost \$5 per year.

A board of ministerial education was established in 1886 with Head-den as chairman and A. E. Ross as treasurer. Under its guidance the association gathered modest amounts of money to educate a few local ministerial students at Hearn Academy, Mercer University, and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. The Rome church provided about \$100 each year for this purpose, starting in 1887. The Willing Workers, a society of younger ladies, actually collected most of this money. Much less successfully, Nunnally led an effort to provide ministerial training institutes in 1881 and 1882, but little came of the venture.

Much more productive in its way was the action of the association as related to the Georgia Baptist Historical Society. Nunnally was appointed associational historian in 1879, with instructions to help the churches in writing their histories. Half of the 1880 minutes was devoted to a dozen informative sketches from member churches.

The several approaches taken to Sunday school work by the association have already been described.

By the early nineties the association had almost doubled in size to include 24 churches with 2,135 members. The Rome church continued to be much the largest in membership, mission gifts, and Sunday school enrollment. However, the 1892 meeting proved to be the last one. Local expressions favoring countywide associations produced the Chattooga

and Polk County associations in 1892 and the Floyd County Baptist Association in 1893.

(3) *Floyd County Baptist Association*. The Floyd County Baptist Association was constituted at the First Baptist Church of Rome on October 4, 1893, the only time during this period that it met there. Nine churches from Cave Spring Baptist Association and 21 from Oostanaula united to form a single body of 2,755 members, thereby causing the two former associations in the county to dissolve. Within the group, the First Church was and remained by far the largest congregation—measured, for example, by membership and total budget. R. B. Headden was selected as the temporary, but not the permanent, moderator. Layman C. M. Harper was the first treasurer. The two served on a committee to write the constitution, by-laws, articles of faith, and gospel order for the new association, while Headden was active on a committee to divide it into districts and to form a Sunday School Convention.

In the years that followed, Rome First was represented each year by three to twelve delegates. In 1906 two of the six were women, Miss Eula Sloop and Miss Lillie Shropshire, a situation that somehow passed without comment in the minutes and was not duplicated for many years to come. Upon their return to Rome, former Pastors Gwaltney and Nunnally were frequently named to the delegation.

Members of the Rome First Church held many offices in the association. Moderators included Headden (1895-1896), J. F. Hillyer (1907-1908, 1910-1911), and George W. Fleetwood (1912-1913). A. B. S. Moseley was clerk (1894-1898, 1902-1905), as was Fleetwood (1907). Three First Church men were treasurers: C. M. Harper (1893-1896), Albert B. Ross (1898-1900), and Paul Doyal (1906-1907). While having relatively little to act upon, the association's executive committee met between sessions, being comprised in part of Moseley (1893-1899), W. J. Neel (1894-1904), A. W. Ledbetter (1894-1901), Hillyer (1900-1913), Fleetwood (1901, 1913), Headden (1908-1912), and J. A. Glover (1912). As was true of its predecessors, the Floyd County Association appointed committees to report annually on a wide range of Baptist life. First Baptist provided chairmen and members for these groups to a significant extent—at least forty-six in the former category in twenty-one years. Furthermore, each year First Church men were appointed as corresponding messengers to neighboring associations.

One special committee involving Headden started in 1901, as the association explored the possibility of employing an associational missionary. Although the investigation continued until 1905, it was not until 1914 that such a person was actually secured.

Preaching opportunities were provided at the annual associational meetings and at the quarterly general meetings. Pastor Headden delivered the associational introductory sermon only once, 1896, but preached at least once during the course of virtually every meeting. Twice a general meeting assembled at First Baptist; on nine other occasions Headden was a main speaker. Essays concerning the Bible, Baptist doctrine, and church organization were also read as a part of the program at these mass meetings, with some coming from Headden's talented pen.

The only financial contribution made directly to the association was an amount each year for the clerk and minutes. This ranged from \$2.50 to \$15, and averaged no more than \$6.25.

Ministerial training continued to be a concern of Floyd County Baptists as they operated within their own association. In the 1890s the Board of Ministerial Education existed, including D. B. Hamilton, Sr., and Headden as members, and raising as much as \$225 annually. Men at Hearn and Mercer were thereby furnished financial support, with perhaps half of the money coming from the First Baptist Willing Workers. Between 1896 and 1909 the association sponsored several annual or semiannual Bible institutes. Headden and Moseley were among the more vigorous exponents of this activity.

For fellowship, study, and inspiration, separate meetings for preachers and deacons were convened at irregular intervals. The Floyd County Baptist Preachers' Association, with Headden as chairman, existed in 1894. Essays were to be read by various participants at the monthly sessions in the First Baptist Church, but the group seems not to have survived even a year. Perhaps it was perpetuated in the Baptist Ministers' and Deacons' Meeting, of which Headden was president, that met in the First Baptist Church two or three months in 1895 and then dropped out of sight. In any case, the newspaper announced the formation of a "new" group in 1909, the Floyd County Ministers' and Deacons' Association. Three or four monthly meetings are known, with Headden a prominent participant, after which this organization also dropped out of sight.

The association promoted three major local-church functions, the Sunday school, Woman's Missionary Union, and Baptist Young People's Union. Each of these has already been discussed.

### *THE GEORGIA BAPTIST CONVENTION*

Of the forty-nine meetings of the Georgia Baptist Convention during this period (two were held in 1902), the Rome church was represented all but five times. Once eleven messengers attended (in 1911 when the body

met in Rome), but the usual number was two to four. Frequently, of course, the delegation was supplemented by Shorter College leaders.

Only Luther Rice Gwaltney preached the introductory sermon while he was pastor in Rome (1874), but Robert B. Headden had that honor before coming (1881) and G. A. Nunnally after leaving (1891).

Leadership was provided by the Rome church in a variety of ways. Headden was a vice-president of the convention in 1899, and D. B. Hamilton, Sr., in 1903. Over the years committee chairmanships relating to the selection of convention preachers, temperance, Sabbath schools, Christian education, foreign missions, deceased ministers, the auditing of the treasurer's report, and the orphans' home were held by Gwaltney, Nunnally, Headden, Hamilton, A. J. Battle, and laymen Joel Branham, W. J. Neel and J. L. Bass. Doubtless the ladies were somewhat less than enthusiastic in 1888 when Headden, chairman of a committee to study the relationship of the Woman's Missionary Society to the convention, read a report recommending that they be invited to make financial contributions and be accorded representation at convention meetings through male delegates—but, unlike some, he did not oppose them.

During and after his Rome pastorate, Nunnally was frequently heard during convention sessions on a wide variety of subjects, and was named to several important committees concerning Christian education and temperance.

Headden made far fewer speeches, but gradually revealed himself as a quietly competent and thoughtful man. Hence, he worked from 1905 to 1910 on the highly significant Committee on Co-operation that actually helped to pave the way for the Cooperative Program in Georgia. In 1910 he was on a small committee that prepared a careful report about reforming criminal law (surely attorney J. F. Hillyer of his congregation gave him much help with this assignment). At about the same time, he acted on a committee that laid the groundwork for the convention's taking over what eventually became the Georgia Baptist Hospital. His last major appointment was to a committee that reviewed and streamlined the order of business for the convention's annual sessions. That he was held in high esteem by his colleagues might also be suggested by the fact that for many years he was the one invited to pronounce the benediction as the convention was concluded.

The convention has held four meetings at Rome, and each one came during the period now under consideration. In 1873 the 250 to 300 "delegates" were for the most part housed in local private residences—and a list of guests and hosts was printed in the *Tri-Weekly Courier*. Unfortunately, reported the church's committee on ar-

rangements, a few persons were “unavoidably” sent to hotels, resulting in a bill of about \$145 which the congregation was expected to pay.

Just prior to the 1886 meeting, Rome was hit by the worst flood in its history, and some wished to cancel the invitation. The church clerk recorded these actions by the conference: “Bro[.] W. T. McWilliams moved that we request the Ga[.] Baptist Convention to postpone their meeting one month, on account of the damage by the recent flood[.] Bro[.] J. F. Hillyer offered a substitute—that the pastor be authorized to issue an address to the Ga[.] Baptist Convention re-affirming our invitation to that Body to meet with us on the 22nd inst [April] [.] Carried[.]” Apparently no hotel bills were incurred this time; more than 200 homes welcomed the visitors. In the midst of the convention, one visitor exclaimed: “You folks can dispense more genuine hospitality in a sea of mud than anybody [else] I ever knew!” The *Christian Index* reported: “The Rome people are entertaining the delegates and visitors in a royal style . . . . The Romans are erect, cheerful, bouyant and full of purpose to forget all damages and to rebuild their fortunes . . . . They are not praying for another flood, and they are prepared to wait very patiently for a long, long time for the coming of the next overflow; and we think that they are ready to postpone its advent indefinitely . . . .”

In 1902 over 100 children from the Georgia Baptist Orphans’ Home attended the convention and appeared on the program. The Rome Sunday school provided dinner for them in the church annex. Having offered an editorial welcome, the local paper gave the services extensive coverage, including a six-column banner headline and a listing of all 600 visitors and their Rome hosts. When excitement had subsided, the paper provided a concluding editorial approval.

At the 1911 convention, the popular host pastor was nominated for the presidency—and then found to be ineligible because he was not a registered messenger, having given his usual spot to a lay member of the church. Shorter President A. W. VanHoose opened his sparkling new campus to the group. As the convention clerk wrote, after a “splendid luncheon served in their lovely dining-room,” the body held one session “in the Music Hall [now Brookes Chapel] of the New Greater Shorter College.” While almost always the frontispiece of the convention’s book of minutes pictured a recently deceased Georgia Baptist leader, both in 1902 and 1911 Pastor Headden was featured there—without the usual prerequisite, a funeral.

The Rome church was involved in numerous agencies and organizations related to the state convention. (a) The state convention sponsored ministers’ institutes dealing with topics such as preaching, systematic giving, missions, and Sunday school methods. The Rome church hosted one

(1869), Nunnally and Headden led one in Dalton (1881), Headden preached at one in Calhoun (1899), and Headden and W. J. Neel participated at one in the local Second (now Fifth Avenue) Baptist Church (1901). (b) State missions were at first under the convention's executive committee that appointed C. H. Stillwell as a missionary in Floyd County, a post that he occupied for about a year. After the Georgia Baptist State Mission Board was formed, it included two Rome pastors, Nunnally (1879-1884) and Headden (1881-1891). (c) The Orphans' Home in Hapeville was a favorite recipient of First Baptist aid, both financial and material. Trustees of the home included Mrs. W. J. Neel and Headden. (d) Headden was selected to present the annual address before the Georgia Baptist Historical Society in 1884, presumably because he was chairman of the centennial program committee marking the formation of the Georgia Baptist Association. (e) Preceding the 1901 convention, Headden spoke at the Preachers' and Workers' Conference on "New Testament Principles for Supplying Pastorates." (f) When the Blue Ridge Summer Assembly was opened in 1909, Headden was one of the vice-presidents and occasionally spoke at the services held there. (g) As has been seen, several First Baptist men served on the Mercer and Hearn boards of trustees.

To persons publicizing the various aspects of Georgia Baptist life, the First Baptist Church tendered a welcome, a pulpit, and often a cash contribution or pledge. Speakers included J. H. DeVotie, S. Y. Jameson, and J. J. Bennett, corresponding secretaries of the State Mission Board; H. C. Buckholz of the convention staff; and J. B. Taylor of the Orphans' Home.

One final means whereby the Rome church supported the Georgia Baptist Convention must be noted, that of financial contributions. Admittedly, the records are hardly ever complete in this respect, although they become far more precise after the turn of the century. Money staying within the state supported the State Mission Board, colleges and other schools, ministerial education, the Orphans' Home, and ministerial relief. Of these activities, the Rome congregation was most generous with the first two. At least partial figures are preserved for forty-three years, reflecting total GBC gifts that grew to \$4,856 in 1909-1910. As will be seen, however, Rome's greatest generosity was reserved for Southern Baptist causes, chiefly home and foreign missions.

### *THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION*

Although the First Baptist Church displayed a growing interest in the various programs of the Southern Baptist Convention, Rome men played

no prominent part in the meetings of that body. A total of fifteen messengers represented the church, chief of whom were G. A. Nunnally (four times while pastor, plus eighteen times before and after), D. B. Hamilton, Sr. (five times), and R. B. Headden (twenty-two times while pastor, plus six times before). Surely the church had earlier borne the expense of the trip to the convention, but not until 1883 was this expenditure made a part of public record. In 1895 Headden tried to fill a special railroad car for the journey to Dallas, Texas, advertising also a stopover at Hot Springs, Arkansas. When only he and two others departed, the newspaper noted that no car was small enough to give the party special accommodations.

Nunnally was chairman of one committee dealing with convention statistics and served on four others. In 1880 he was a featured speaker at a missionary mass meeting held in conjunction with the convention. If that pleased the ladies of the Rome WMS, his somewhat surprising objection at the same convention to printing reports of women's missionary work in the convention minutes surely did not. No doubt the Rome ladies rejoiced as the majority of the brethren voted against Nunnally's position.

The year that Headden came to Rome, he was chairman of one committee related to Sunday school lesson materials and later was appointed to at least nine others concerned with Sunday schools, mission work, and miscellaneous matters. Several times he conducted devotional exercises and led in prayer.

Three Rome First Baptist men were on the governing boards of two SBC agencies. Headden was a trustee of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. Nunnally and L. R. Gwaltney were on the Home Mission Board (the latter was a vice-president in 1890-1891).

In Rome, support for SBC projects was given consistently through the various women's missionary organizations, as has already been described. In addition, the pastor preached occasional sermons informing his congregation of the broader work and led in taking special offerings. A mission study week for the entire membership came in March 1895, when President A. J. Battle of Shorter and other local men were teachers. A special service on Brazil one Sunday afternoon in 1900 was conducted by both women and men, but this pattern seems not to have been widely utilized. Headden's paper, the *Cherokee Messenger*, carried a great deal of news about missions in the August 1904 issue, and this might well have been typical of others now lost.

Occasionally speakers representing Southwide Baptist concerns filled the Rome pulpit. H. A. Tupper and R. J. Willingham, corresponding secretaries of the Foreign Mission Board, and Emmett Stephens, a mis-

sionary under the board to China, gave addresses. F. C. McConnell and E. T. Winkler, corresponding secretaries of the Home Mission Board, and W. H. Whitsitt of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary did likewise.

Throughout this period, the First Baptist Church financially sustained Southern Baptist activities. Even though the records are incomplete, it may be justifiably estimated that gifts for Southern Baptist agencies grew to \$11,853 in 1909-1910. During Headden's pastorate, offerings for foreign missions exceeded \$5,000 annually for six years, and in 1908 it was announced that First Church had given more to that cause (\$6,062) than any other church in the entire Southern Baptist Convention. During the last three full years that Headden led First Baptist the average annual income was \$19,962; home and foreign mission gifts averaged \$11,361—57 percent of the budget. Apparently not always included in the above totals were substantial gifts to foreign missions made by W. W. Brookes, a Rome attorney, who contributed about \$70,000 to that purpose in 1904-1908.

### *CONCLUSION*

With the death of Robert B. Headden in 1913, an era came to a close in the life of the First Baptist Church of Rome. After a shaky start under two pastors—J. C. Browne and A. P. Woodfin—who together served only three years, the congregation found congenial, competent, and progressive leadership for the next fourteen years in the persons of L. R. Gwaltney and G. A. Nunnally. The size, organizational pattern, and financial support of the church expanded. The erection of a new meetinghouse temporarily strained the resources that the members were willing to devote to their church, but this was soon overcome. Under Headden three decades of disappointing and heartening activity transpired. This activity was disappointing because, in the presence of racial, urban, and industrial problems present even in Rome, the group held tightly to the paternalistic and individualistic ways of the past. It continued to be "a captive, not a transformer, of its sectional culture." However, this activity was also heartening because the congregation developed a program which, for the time, was something of a model for other churches to emulate. Internal vitality was marked especially by substantial membership increases (even though they did not keep up with population increases) and financial growth that far outdistanced the growth of the economy. Pastor Headden was a man well known in Georgia Baptist circles and in later years almost as well known in Southern Baptist circles. Locally he was virtually revered by people of all

sorts and conditions. Never before in the life of the church had such a combination of pastoral personality and congregational expansion existed. When the combination was terminated by Headden's death, an era in the life of the church was concluded.

APPENDIX: MEMBERSHIP AND FINANCES OF THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

Year ending 9/30	Ch Mem	Bs	TA	Local Gifts	Mission Gifts	Total Gifts
1835	8	0	8	\$	\$	\$
1836	8*	0	5			
1837	17*	3	25		3.00	3.00
1838	21*	1	7		2.00	2.00
1839	24*	1	15		2.00	2.00
1840	27*	2	10		2.06¼	2.06¼
1841	25*	0	1			
1842	22	0	4		1.00	1.00
1843	17	1	1		1.00	1.00
1844	32	1	11		1.00	1.00
1845	41*	1	9	500.00*		500.00*
1846	41	0	0		1.00	1.00
1847	39	0	4		10.00	10.00
1848	61	10	29	1.20	15.60	16.80
1849	84	0	30	100.00*	14.15	114.15*
1850	118	18	58	200.45*	24.34	224.79*
1851	140	10	24	325.25*	21.20	346.45*
1852	122	8	24	1,092.55*	16.70	1,109.25*
1853	102	1**	5**	482.50*	85.06	567.56*
1854	119	11**	25**	325.00*	21.00	346.00*
1855	108	7**	7**	8,425.00*	26.80	8,451.80*
1856	118*	6**	24**	1,016.70*	3.00	1,019.70*
1857	128	1**	19**	239.05*	165.30	404.35*
1858	162*	17**	32**	830.75*	3.00	833.75*
1859	155*	0**	6**	965.66*		965.66*
1860	233*	39**	63**	743.67*	12.00	755.67*
1861	219*	0**	16**	1,222.00*		1,222.00*
1862	203*	10	27	1,966.30	126.25	2,092.55
1863	204*	24	34	875.00*	639.00	1,514.00*
1864	184*	3	6			
1865	124	0	0	29.30		29.30
1866	137	22	55	1,200.00		1,200.00
1867	162	3	48	1,168.20	200.13	1,368.33
1868	185	15	33	1,480.26	130.03	1,610.29
1869	226	12	52	4,447.61	405.95	4,853.56
1870	238	4	30	2,983.86	200.50	3,184.36
1871	248*	20	53	3,087.66	368.64	3,456.30
1872	285	45	65	3,261.04	343.65	3,604.69
1873	298	10	39	3,343.97*	373.83	3,717.80*
1874	342	41	59	3,456.60*	235.98	3,692.58*
1875	337	21	34	2,766.62	275.12	3,041.74
1876	336	7	33	2,030.50	381.86	2,412.36
1877	348*	3	29	2,308.62	165.24	2,473.86
1878	410*	62	82	2,125.82	571.58	2,697.40
1879	450	36	56	2,678.22	209.11	2,887.33
1880	455	3	19	2,300.00*	419.35	2,719.35*
1881	486*	30	56	2,300.00*	584.44	2,884.44*
1882	477	4	21	2,300.00*	725.00	3,025.00*
1883	442	1	19	4,949.01	630.17	5,579.18

*APPENDIX: MEMBERSHIP AND FINANCES OF THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH  
(continued)*

Year ending 9/30	Ch Mem	Bs	TA	Local Gifts	Mission Gifts	Total Gifts
1884	475	48	70	11,980.89	335.37	12,316.26
1885	493	38	72	5,735.75	597.80	6,333.55
1886	529	38	63	6,157.21	1,440.78	7,597.99
1887	528	20	32	2,840.93	1,297.40	4,138.33
1888	522	11	47	3,067.34	1,408.35	4,475.69
1889	540	17	61	2,789.61	1,568.39	4,358.00
1890	509*	5	24	2,839.00	1,231.94	4,070.94
1891	513	13	31	2,871.84	1,369.75	4,241.59
1892	569	41	90	2,450.50	1,451.09	3,901.59
1893	544	3	18	2,841.41	2,133.65	4,975.06
1894	480	36	56	3,150.24	1,738.51	4,888.75
1895	458	4	15	3,201.40	3,279.56	6,480.96
1896	534	32	77	2,740.50	1,576.74	4,317.24
1897	546	22	33	2,841.40	2,293.39	5,134.79
1898	525	20	48	2,967.68	1,940.12	4,907.80
1899	562	28	74	3,084.22	2,663.38	5,747.60
1900	622	17	64	3,078.68	1,864.69	4,943.37
1901	679	68	97	3,565.25	2,839.11	6,404.36
1902	672	8	32	2,581.56	2,466.86	5,048.42
1903	738	85	118	3,083.30	4,731.76	7,815.06
1904	744	10	39	3,999.69	4,217.25	8,216.94
1905	772	23	67	3,662.50	7,576.18	11,238.68
1906	715	20	44	3,581.36	3,218.07	6,799.43
1907	740	14	30	3,626.28	3,629.97	7,256.25
1908	734	8	25	3,494.49	8,205.69	11,700.18
1909	754	77	115	3,473.47	8,530.85	12,004.32
1910	766	32	50	5,145.58	18,764.60	23,910.18
1911	653	11	33	4,632.25	14,563.04	19,195.29
1912	686	19	39	3,488.07	13,304.26	16,792.33
1913	702	132	179	4,343.48	2,070.26	6,413.74

- Ch Mem = Total church members
- Bs = Baptisms
- TA = Total additions
- \* = estimates
- \*\* = black additions not known

Note: Principal sources for these statistics are the First Baptist Church clerks', Sunday school, and deacons' manuscript minutes and the published minutes of the Coosa, Cave Spring, and Floyd County Baptist associations and of the Georgia Baptist Convention. Before 1870 the financial statistics are seldom to be considered entirely complete or accurate.

APPENDIX: BIOGRAPHIES OF PASTORS, FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH,  
1866-1913

JAMES COURTNEY BROWNE

Born in Clarke County, Georgia, May 10, 1836. Baptized by the Big Spring Baptist Church, Clarke County, about 1852. Attended preparatory school in Newnan, Georgia, 1854-1857. Attended Mercer University, Penfield, Georgia, 1857-1859, graduating at the head of his class. Principal, Hearn School, Cave Spring, Georgia, 1859-1861; superintendent of the Sunday school, Cave Spring Baptist Church. Soldier, Cherokee Artillery, Confederate army, 1861-1865; wounded in action at Jackson, Mississippi, June 1863; prisoner of war in Ohio, April-June 1865. Married to Eva Lila Culbertson, Cave Spring, August 11, 1863; 7 daughters, 2 sons; his wife died, 1881, in Aiken, South Carolina. Principal, Cave Spring Female Seminary, June-December 1865. Ordained to the gospel ministry by the Cave Spring Baptist Church in 1865. Pastor, Rome Baptist Church, 1866. Teacher at Cave Spring and pastor of nearby country churches, 1867. Pastor, Cave Spring Baptist Church, 1867-1874. Pastor, Cedartown Baptist Church, 1868-1874. Pastor, Beech Island Baptist Church, Aiken County, South Carolina, 1875. Pastor, First Baptist Church, Aiken, 1875-1881. Pastor of nearby Baptist churches: White Pond, Green Pond, Tabernacle, Philippi. Moderator of Edisto and Aiken Baptist associations. School Commissioner, Aiken County, about 1875-1880. Received honorary Doctor of Divinity degree from Furman University, 1904. Died August 26, 1914, in Aiken, South Carolina. *Chief sources:* Samuel Boykin, *History of the Baptist Denomination in Georgia* (Atlanta: Jas. P. Harrison & Co., 1881), Biographical Compendium, pp. 69-70; B. D. Ragsdale, *Story of Georgia Baptists*, 3 volumes (Atlanta: Foote and Davies Co., 1932-1938), I, 130; Aiken Baptist Association, *Minutes*, 1914, p. 25; South Carolina Baptist Convention, *Minutes*, 1914, pp. 116-117; Gasper L. Toole, II, *Ninety Years in Aiken County* (n.p.: n.p., c.1956), pp. 172-173.

ALBERT PEYTON WOODFIN

Born at Richmond, Virginia, about 1840. Baptized by a Richmond church. Received A.B. degree from Richmond College, 1861. Ordained to the gospel ministry at a meeting of the Dover Baptist Association, 1861. Married to Anna S. Jackson of Penfield, Georgia; probably no children. Pastor, Ashland Baptist Church, Hanover County, Virginia, 1861-1863. Evangelist to the army, under Virginia Baptist Sunday School and Publication Board, 1863-1864. Evangelist in Campbell County, Virginia, under the same board, 1864. Independent evangelist in Campbell County, Virginia, 1865. Preaching in Williamsburg, Virginia, area, March-April 1866. Fund-raising agent for the Foreign Mission Board in Texas and Louisiana, May-August 1866. Preaching in Ashland, Virginia, area and in South Carolina, September-December 1866. Pastor, Rome Baptist Church, 1867-1868; resigned because of poor health. Lived on a farm near Penfield with his wife's parents, hoping to regain health by farming, 1869. Unemployed because of poor health, 1869-1870. Died, October 5, 1870, at Greensboro, Georgia, where he is buried. *Chief sources:* *Religious Herald* (Richmond, Virginia), 1859, 1861, 1863-1867, passim; B. J. Pleasants, *History of the Ashland Baptist Church, Ashland, Virginia, 1858-1908*, p. 8; *Christian Index & South-Western Baptist*, November 1867, p. 142; March 5, 1868; August 20, 1868, p. 130; October 8, 1868, p. 158; November 1870, p. 170; *Rome Tri-Weekly Courier*, December 1, 1868, p. 3.

LUTHER RICE GWALTNEY

Born, Isle of Wight County, near Smithville, Virginia, November 10, 1830. Educated at home and at Littleton Academy, Sussex County, Virginia. Attended Columbian College, Washington, D.C., 1846-1848, 1853; B.A., 1853; M.A., 1857; D.D., 1876. Baptized at E Street Baptist Church, Washington, D.C., 1847. Teacher, Valley Union Seminary (now

Hollins College), Botetourt Springs, Virginia, 1848-1853. Tutor, Columbian College, Washington, D.C., 1853-1855. Ordained to gospel ministry, June 27, 1855. Pastor, Greenville Baptist Church, Greenville, North Carolina, 1855-1857. Professor of Latin and mathematics, Chowan Female Collegiate Institute, Murfreesboro, North Carolina, 1857-1858. Pastor, Edgefield Baptist Church, 1858-1868; Mount Tabor Baptist Church, 1858-1864; Horns Creek Baptist Church, 1858-1859, 1860-1861; Ridge Spring Baptist Church, 1865-1868; Edgefield County, South Carolina. Taught, Edgefield Female Collegiate Institution, 1861-1862(?); Principal, Edgefield Male Academy, 1867-1868(?). Moderator, Edgefield Baptist Association, 1862-1868; organized first Sunday school convention in the association. Pastor, Rome Baptist Church, 1869-1876. Cofounder, Cherokee Baptist Female College (now Shorter College), 1873; acting president, 1873-1874, 1875-1876; professor of moral and mental philosophy, 1873-1876. Vigorous temperance leader; associate editor, *People's Friend* (Rome), 1873; Grand Worthy Chief Templar of the Grand Lodge of Good Templars of Georgia, 1873; member of committee appointed by Georgia legislature in 1875 to investigate the possibility of a treatment center for alcoholics. Chaplain, Knights of Honor, Hill City Lodge, 1875. Vice-president, Rome Bible Society, 1874. Active in Cave Spring Baptist Association; helped form the associational Sunday school convention, 1872. Active in Georgia Baptist Convention; preached convention sermon, 1874. Trustee, Mercer University, 1874-1876. President, Judson Female Institute, Marion, Alabama, 1876-1882; pastor of Mount Zion Baptist Church, Alexandria, Alabama, and perhaps other churches. Active in local association and state Baptist convention; preached convention sermon, 1878. Board of managers, Domestic Mission Board, Marion, 1878; vice-president, Home Mission Board, Atlanta, 1890. President, Shorter College, 1882-1890; associate president, 1890-1891; professor of mental and moral philosophy, 1882-1891. Pastor, DeSoto (now Fifth Avenue) Baptist Church, 1883; Cave Spring Baptist Church, 1886-1887. Pastor, First Baptist Church, Athens, Georgia, 1890-1893; active in Sarepta Baptist Association. Pastor, Edgefield Baptist Church, 1893-1901; active in Edgefield Baptist Association. Financial agent, chaplain, professor of Christian morals, Shorter College, 1902-1910. Pastor, Mobley Park (now DeSoto Park) Baptist Church, 1906-1907. Teacher of Bible and ethics, Rome High and Industrial School for Negroes, 1909-1910. Died, Rome, July 18, 1910; buried at Myrtle Hill Cemetery, Rome. Mason. Married Louisa Davidson of Charlotte County, Virginia; 2 children; she died in Edgefield, S.C. Married Sophia B. Lipscomb of Edgefield; 7 children; she died in Rome, January 14, 1906. *Chief sources:* Boykin, Biographical Compendium, pp. 237-239; Rome *Tribune-Herald*, July 19-21, 1910; Edgefield Baptist Association, *Minutes*, 1910, pp. 21-23; Floyd County Baptist Association, *Minutes*, 1910, pp. 34-35; G. W. Lasher, ed., *The Ministerial Directory of the Baptist Churches in the United States* (Oxford, Ohio: Ministerial Directory Co., 1899), p. 309; Rome, Georgia, newspapers, passim; R. G. Gardner, *On the Hill* (Rome: Shorter College, 1972), pp. 11-125; Georgia Baptist Convention, *Minutes*, 1910, p. 64.

#### GUSTAVUS ALONZO NUNNALLY

Born Walton County, Georgia, March 24, 1841. Attended University of Georgia, 1855-1859, from which he was graduated. Baptized in the Athens Baptist Church. Married Miss Mary C. Briscoe, 1859; they had at least two children; she died in Rome in 1912. Taught mathematics, Hamilton Female College, 1859-1860. Principal, Johnston Institute, Walton County, 1860-1868. Confederate soldier. Ordained to the gospel ministry. Pastor, Monroe Baptist Church, and country churches in and near Walton County, 1868-1876. Moderator of the Appalachee Baptist Association. Also a mechanic, salesman, farmer, editor, and county school superintendent for Walton County. Pastor, Rome Baptist Church, 1876-1883. Adviser to Alfred Shorter, 1876-1882; preached funeral sermon for Mrs. Alfred Shorter, 1877, and for Alfred Shorter, 1882; professor of natural science, Shorter College, 1878; trustee, 1878-1885. Active in Cave Spring Baptist Association; moderator, 1879-1880. Special contributor, associate editor, co-editor, or contributing

editor, *Christian Index*, 1876-1879, 1883, 1889. Editor, *Missionary Church and School* (Rome), 1879-1880, and *Baptist Sun* (Rome), 1881. Member, Home Mission Board, Atlanta, 1882-1883; secretary, Church Building Fund, 1883-1885. Pastor, Eufaula (Alabama) Baptist Church, 1885-1887; Anniston (Alabama) Baptist Church, 1887-1889. President and professor of theology and history, Mercer University, 1889-1892; trustee, 1874-1884; awarded honorary Doctor of Divinity degree, 1883. Assistant pastor, First Baptist Church, Macon, 1889-1891. Active in the Georgia Baptist Convention; member of State Mission Board, 1879-1884; preached introductory sermon, 1891; vice-president, 1903. Pastor, Central Baptist Church, Memphis, Tennessee, 1893-1895. President, Southern Female College, LaGrange, Georgia, 1895-1903. Pastor, LaGrange Baptist Church, 1896-1899; Grantville Baptist Church, 1901-1902. Pastor, Newnan Baptist Church, Newnan, Georgia, 1903-1906. President, Columbia College, Lake City, Florida, 1907-1909. Secretary, Board of Education, GBC, 1910-1913. Returned to live in Rome, 1910. Married Mrs. Alla Holmes Cheney; she lived in Rome until her death in 1950. Floyd County Baptist Association, introductory sermon, 1911. Author of *A Good Minister of Jesus Christ. A Sermon* (Anniston, Alabama: n.p., 1889); "The Divinity of Jesus Christ," in J. F. Love, ed., *The Southern Baptist Pulpit* (Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, 1895), pp. 115-139; *Bible Studies in Bible Words* (1st ed.; Atlanta: American Baptist Publication Society, 1905; 2nd ed.; Atlanta: Foote and Davies, 1905). Mason. Died August 14, 1917, in Rome; buried in Myrtle Hill Cemetery. *Chief sources*: Boykin, Biographical Compendium, pp. 407-408; Georgia Baptist Convention, *Minutes*, 1917, pp. 32, 50; Floyd County Baptist Association, *Minutes*, 1917, p. 14; Ragsdale, II, 41-58, 297-300; III, 167-168; Rome, Georgia, newspapers, passim; E. E. Joiner, *A History of Florida Baptists* (Jacksonville: Florida Baptist Convention, 1972), pp. 121-123.

#### ROBERT BENJAMIN HEADDEN

Born Cassville, Georgia, December 25, 1838. Received Master of Arts degree from Cherokee Baptist College, Cassville, 1860. Soldier in Confederate army; wounded at Gettysburg, 1863. Baptized in Ramah Baptist Church, Campbell County, Georgia, 1868. Ordained to the gospel ministry, Cassville Baptist Church, December 1868. Married Mary E. Dyer, April 22, 1869; 5 children; 1 adopted child. Pastor, Crow's Spring Baptist Church, Bartow County, Georgia, 1868-1870. Pastor, Cartersville Baptist Church, Cartersville, Georgia, 1871-1883. Active in Middle Cherokee Baptist Association; clerk, 1871-1875; preached introductory sermon, 1871, 1874; preached missionary sermon, 1876, 1881, 1883. Active in Georgia Baptist Convention; preached introductory sermon, 1881; member of State Mission Board, 1881-1891; vice-president of the convention, 1899. Trustee, Mercer University, 1882-1892; awarded honorary Doctor of Divinity degree, 1884. Pastor, First Baptist Church, Rome, Georgia, 1883-1913; pastor emeritus, 1913. Active in Cave Spring and Floyd County Baptist associations; moderator of Floyd County Association, 1895-1896; preached introductory sermon, 1896, 1898. Member of Oostanaula Lodge of Masons; Rome Chapter and Rome Commandery, Knights Templar, prelate, 1887-1913; Grand Prelate of the Grand Commandery of Georgia, 1897-1898. Trustee, Hearn Academy, 1887-1889, 1909-1913. Editor, *Cherokee Messenger* (Rome), intermittently from 1896 to 1910. Professor of Bible and Biblical literature, Shorter College, part-time, 1898-1911. Trustee, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Kentucky, 1895-1913. Trustee, Georgia Baptist Orphans' Home Association, 1900-1906. Attended Baptist World Alliance, 1905 in London, 1911 in Philadelphia. Died August 14, 1913, in Rome; buried at Myrtle Hill Cemetery, Rome. His wife died in 1915 in Rome, and is buried at Myrtle Hill Cemetery. *Chief sources*: Boykin, Biographical Compendium, pp. 258-259; Georgia Baptist Convention, *Minutes*, 1913, pp. 47-48; Rome *Tribune-Herald*, August 15, 1913, p. 1; Rome, Georgia, newspapers, passim.

## SOURCES AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Principal primary sources consulted in the preparation of this essay, all of which are located in manuscript form at the First Baptist Church, are as follows: church clerks' minutes, 1865-1896 (also on microfilm) and 1911-1914; Sunday school minutes, 1893-1914; Woman's Missionary Society minutes, 1901-1914; deacons' minutes, 1908-1914; assorted letters, sermons, bulletins, and newspaper clippings; Hearn Academy trustees' minutes, 1858-1914 (also on microfilm); and Floyd County Baptist Association executive committee's minutes, 1911-1915. Filed in duplicated form at the church (the originals are owned by Mrs. Frank Brazelton) are three issues from 1903, 1904, and 1910 of the *Cherokee Messenger*. Available at Shorter College on microfilm are these: published and manuscript minutes of the Cave Spring Baptist Association, 1870-1892; and published minutes of the Floyd County Baptist Association, 1893-1913, Georgia Baptist Convention, 1866-1913, and Southern Baptist Convention, 1866-1913. Available at Mercer University, Macon, Georgia, in original form and on microfilm is a virtually complete file of the *Christian Index*, 1865-1913. Other local primary sources are as follows: Rome newspapers for part or all of 1865-1879, 1881-1882, 1887-1888, and 1894-1913, either on microfilm at Carnegie Library, Rome, or in physical form or on microfilm at the Floyd County courthouse; special issues of or pamphlets printed by the Rome newspapers for October 2, 1888, February 1904, June 27, 1909, February 9, 1922, and June 18, 1938, at Carnegie Library; and city directories for 1880, 1883, 1888, 1898, 1904, and 1913, at Carnegie Library.

Many of the principal secondary sources are listed in the biographies of pastors in the appendix. Others are as follows: Robert A. Baker, *The Southern Baptist Convention and Its People, 1607-1972* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1974); *Encyclopedia of Southern Baptists*, 3 volumes (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1958, 1971); George M. Battey, Jr., *A History of Rome and Floyd County* (Atlanta: Webb and Vary Company, 1922); Ethel Wilkerson, *Rome's Remarkable History* (Rome: Rome Music Lovers' Club, 1968); Roger Aycock, *All Roads to Rome*, read in manuscript form.

Some secondary sources relate specifically to the First Baptist Church, and are in the church files: Mamie H. Kennard, "Facts of Interest Concerning First Baptist Church, Rome, Georgia" (3-page typed manuscript, about 1954); Richard Venable Mitchell, "A short history of the First Baptist Church of Rome, Georgia" (1-page typed manuscript, March 19, 1935); Bunyan Stephens, "History of the First Baptist Church of Rome," *Christian Index*, May 16, 1935, pp. 3-4.

A completely documented version of this essay is available at the First Baptist Church.

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Robert G. Gardner