

While he was in the Editorial Office he pastored Midway Baptist, AR, 1956-1959 and College Hill, TX, and Pleasant View, McNeil, AR 1959-1962.

He left the Editorial Office in 1964 when he was called as pastor of Spring Creek Baptist, Benton, AR. He was there until 1975, when he was called to pastor the Winburn Drive Baptist Church, Lexington, KY. In 1992 he was called to pastor Unity Baptist Church, Hattiesburg, MS. During that time he was President of Gulf Coast Baptist Institute from 1992-1996.

The Crumleys then moved back to Texarkana and he retired from pastoring. He worked part-time with the Editorial Depart of ABA Publications until his death. He also served as supply Pastor for nearby churches when needed.

Bro. Crumley was a very active leader in the American Baptist Association. He served as a pastor, the Associate Editor in Chief of the Baptist Sunday School Committee from 1955-1964, a Vice President of the American Baptist Association in 1994-1998 and as the Assistant Chairman of the Literature Committee for many years.

As a writer, he authored the following books: **The Pentateuch, Emotions in the Psalms, Treasures of the Word**, and **Revelation of Jesus Christ**, and **Home and Family**. He also wrote Sunday School and Baptist Training Course studies, articles of a devotion nature and also freelance articles. He did some extensive mission work and worked with at least two theological schools, both as an instructor and in administration. At the time of his death, he was busy writing literature for the editorial office in Texarkana.

He departed this life in Texarkana, TX, to be with the Lord on February 4, 2000. He is survived by his wife, Jean; one son, Ben; one daughter, Susan; three grandchildren, four great-grandchildren.

The good influence of Dr. G. F. Crumley as author, editor, pastor, educator and the profound influence he had as husband, father, brother, grandfather and friend is a good testimony to his Savior-Jesus Christ. He will be sorely missed by many people.

Oran Heaton Griffith (66) Editor-in-Chief, 1955-1980

At the June, 1980 meeting Bro. O. H. Griffith announced he was retiring as Editor-in-Chief, after twenty-five years of service. A plaque and a \$1,000 check were presented to him in appreciation of his years of faithful service.

ORAN HEATON GRIFFITH 1914 - 2004

Oran Heaton Griffith was born to Greer and Ethel Griffith on November 24, 1914. He was saved and baptized at Mt. Bethel MBC in Gary, Texas, in 1928. In the summer of 1931, he began to court Alice Marie Bradbury while his father, Greer Griffith, was pastoring the Smyrna Church in Oak Flat Community, and in 1934 they were married

on the front porch of his father's house, by his father (Greer Griffith).

He was licensed to preach (1936) and ordained in 1938 by Smyrna Church in Mt. Enterprise, Texas. During his early ministry, he pastored small rural churches in Panola and Rusk counties. Due to the financial situations of most churches of that day he remained bi-vocational and made his family a living by preaching and teaching school. He received a Bachelor of Science Degree from Stephen F. Austin and Doctor of Theology from Texas Baptist Institute and Seminary.

There was once a time when he pastored two churches at one time, one church would have first and third Sunday services while the other had second and fourth Sunday services. He taught at Jumbo, Texas, and Sulphur Springs, Texas, and later at Mt. Enterprise, Texas. Finally in 1948 he was called to pastor the church at White Oak, Texas, and that was his first full-time pastorate. He pastored the church until 1955 when he was elected to be the Editor-in-Chief of the American Baptist Sunday School Committee. During his ministry as editor-in chief, he additionally served as the first pastor of Lowell Street Baptist Church until 1985.



Bro. Griffith then decided to completely retire and move back to Laneville, Texas, where he had graduated high school. During his retirement in Laneville, he became a member of the church which ordained him and taught Sunday School, continued to fill preaching appointments, conduct lectures, and generally enjoyed staying active in his retirement.

Oran Heaton Griffith had a full life. In reading a book he had written called *Memoirs*, he speaks of his injury and life and says this: "Some have asked, 'What have you learned from this that might be helpful to others?' I don't know if I really learned anything. But I do have a far greater appreciation and understanding for the efforts, physical stamina, and endurance of physically handicapped people. If those without such handicaps worked as hard to succeed as they do, there is no telling what might be accomplished.

Second, I certainly have learned to appreciate friends more than before. The many, many visits, phone calls, cards and letters were very helpful. Every one was cherished because each brought a ray of sunshine with it.

Third, I think I have a greater appreciation for life itself. I came so very near to passing through the exit from earth into eternity. I have often wondered why the Lord closed the exit. At this writing I will soon be seventy-two years old and have realized my major goals in life. I know that the afterlife is much to be desired to this, but when to terminate the physical life is God's decision. I will patiently, and I pray cheerfully, await His call. Until then, I pray that I can somehow serve the Lord acceptably

and be a help and encouragement to others on life's often-wearisome journey. I pray that God will grant me a peaceful exit. It is my desire to live openly before Him who saved me, keeps me and will some day enthrone me in glory."

Oran Heaton Griffith went to be with the Lord January 28, 2004, at around 4:45 p.m. He had reached the age of 89 years, 2 months and 4 days. He is survived by: his son and daughter-in-law, Leo and Jody Griffith of Georgetown.

---William Griffith, Nephew

Vernon Lee Barr (67)
Vice President, 1944, 1973, 1977, 1978
President, 1980-1981

Dr. Vernon L. Barr served as President of the American Baptist Association in Phoenix, AZ in the same year that he celebrated fifty years in the gospel ministry.

Vernon L. Barr was born November 18, 1906 to John and Lydia Barr in Jacksonville, Cherokee County, TX. Later the family moved to Madisonville, TX. At the age of three years, Vernon was afflicted with polio, which debilitated his right foot and leg. From that time until his death, he depended upon a set of crutches, but he never permitted this physical impairment to be a handicap.



His grandfather whittled his first pair of crutches out by hand. At the age of seven his mother died, leaving the husband and small children. His father moved the family to Oklahoma and then Kansas. He graduated from High School in Oxford, KS.

At the time of his salvation in 1931 at age 24, he was living at Waco, TX. Three days after he was saved he felt God's call to preach. He was ordained to the gospel ministry in 1932 by the Tabernacle Baptist Church in Waco.

Like a train engine with an overload or steam which is suddenly set at full throttle, he immediately began a ministry that, until a short two weeks before his death, had not run out of steam.

Over the length of his ministry, he attended various schools both as student and as a teacher. He received the Doctor of Theology degree from the Texas Baptist Institute at Henderson, Texas.

Bro. Barr led in organizing the first church he pastored, Whitehall Missionary Baptist Church in Falls County, TX. He was assisted by Dr. D. L. Hamilton, who was on furlough from his mission field in Brazil. He also pastored the Carter-Munch Baptist Church near Marlin, TX.

This began a long and fruitful ministry which was to leave Texas, go to Oklahoma for about eight years involving several churches, then back into Texas. His ministry was as diversified as it was fruitful. He was