

to consider organizing a new state association so that "all cooperative work might be controlled by the churches."⁸

In 1899 He was Financial Agent for Buckner College, and saved the college from passing out of the hands of the Baptists. For one year he was missionary for the Friendship Association, and for two years was missionary for the State Association. At the time of his death, he was chairman of the Missionary Committee of the State Association and Assistant Moderator of the General Association.

The last two years of his life were spent serving small churches near his home in Chalmers (Saline Co.), and doing some mission work for the State Association. His last service was at Hurricane Church on the first Sunday in September, 1908. He preached and baptized that day. He died on October 11, 1908, and was laid to rest in China Grove Cemetery. Funeral services were conducted by Elders William Tucker and Ben M. Bogard.⁹

Dr. Ben M. Bogard (8) **Moderator, 1908 - 1909**

For a complete biography of Dr. Ben M. Bogard, please refer to the two-volume **Life and Works of Ben. M. Bogard** by L. D. Foreman and Alta Payne.

For our purposes, we will concentrate on the period of Dr. Bogard's ministry beginning in 1899 and continuing until 1921 when he became pastor of Antioch Baptist Church in Little Rock. In June of 1895 Ben M. Bogard accepted the pastorate of the church in Charleston, MO. He served as pastor at Charleston until he resigned in January, 1899, to accept the pastorate at Searcy, Ark. The work in Searcy began Feb. 1, 1899. In his "Recollections," Bro. Bogard wrote:

"When I came to Searcy as pastor they were worshipping in an old dilapidated house. Efforts had been made to get money enough to repair the building and they could not raise four hundred dollars, the amount necessary to make the repairs that were absolutely necessary to make the decency and comfort of the building. I held a protracted meeting in which about thirty were received for baptism. I suggested to the church that we build a new ten thousand dollar house. They said it could not be done...."

"At the time it was completed it was the finest Baptist Church house in the state of Arkansas... I stayed on and preached the Gospel in



⁸ **Pioneer Faith, The History of Missionary Baptist Associations and Churches in Arkansas**, p. 442.

⁹ **1961 Yearbook**, Pine Bluff Missionary Baptist Association, p. 46.

that meeting house for three years... My work in Searcy was a glorious success. I suppose I baptized not less than one hundred during the five years I was there....

"The Searcy work was the envy of the convention people. It was a strong church and had a fine church house and they wanted it... no sooner than I left they began to set their plans to steal the church. There were a few convention men in the church and they objected to every preacher that was suggested... Their real reason was they did not want an association Baptist preacher... They got a bunch of exactly nine convention men and one lady who was not a conventionite together on a very rainy day and called J. S. Rogers... When the membership learned that had been done, they made a mistake in not meeting at once and declaring the action of that faction void and calling a preacher in harmony with the church. But they reasoned that one year will soon be out and we can get rid of Rogers and call another preacher then.

"But they reasoned incorrectly. They had not had any experience with convention schemers. Rogers came and began work when he knew that the situation was as I have related it. The brethren refused to support him and they thought they would freeze him out. But the STATE BOARD came to his rescue and put up enough to tide him over. Meantime four of our leading brethren died. Some moved away. Rogers held a protracted meeting and got in near seventy young members who of course were largely subject to his will,... Thus by death and removals and the new members who had come in he secured a majority by the end of the year and he continued until he landed the church in the convention. That was the first big church steal we experienced."

It could be this experience motivated Bro. Bogard in his extensive travels among the churches and associations, particularly during the ensuing two decades. According to the testimony of older brethren, the church "stealing" which was experienced at Searcy occurred rather frequently during this period. It might be noted this was the same J. S. Rogers who edited a history of Arkansas Baptists soon after World War II.

Bogard attended the Caroline Association at Beebe in 1899 as a messenger from the Searcy Church. He made a report on Foreign Missions and "preached at the Baptist Church by appointment of the body." He also attended the Baptist State Convention in 1899 in Jonesboro as a messenger from Searcy Church. He reported, "I preached by appointment on Sunday night at the Second Baptist Church."¹⁰

Bro. Bogard reported on helping organize Bethlehem Church and his first acquaintance with Dr. W. A. Clark:

"When I was pastor at Searcy, I was asked to come to Little Rock and help organize a church and when I came I met Elder W. A. Clark and a few of his friends and we gathered in a little three-room house at 26th and Bishop Streets, away out in the suburbs of Little Rock. Possibly

¹⁰ Foreman and Payne, I, pp. 130-131.

fifteen or twenty were there...The prospect pleased and it seemed the Lord's will that a church be established. It was done."

"Several preachers labored in the early years of the church and it grew and prospered. It ran up in numbers until possibly seventy or eighty members belonged there. For several years it was a full time church and Elder Frank Davis preached every Sunday there."

In May, 1901, Bro. Bogard brought the Baccalaureate Address at Southwest Baptist College, Bolivar, MO. Southwest Baptist College conferred the Doctor of Divinity degree on Bro. Bogard on May 29, 1901.

Bro. Bogard continued his ministry at Searcy until November of 1903, when he accepted the call of First Baptist Church, North Little Rock, and began pastoral work December 1, 1903. He had completed nearly five years of pastoral ministry at Searcy.

The Arkansas Baptist and Dr. W. A. Clark

It was while he was pastor in Searcy that the division occurred in the State work. The issue that caused Bro. Bogard to first become involved was in defense of Dr. W. A. Clark. Bro. Bogard explained:

The contention over mission methods came on and Dr. Clark and Secretary A. J. Barton clashed. They sought to force Clark to submit to their dictation and the fight waxed warmer. The first clash in the annual convention was at Hope. They whipped Dr. Clark into line and under pressure he promised to fall into line with the work as outlined by the dictation of the secretary. In turn they promised to stand by the Arkansas Baptist. I was there and watched the fight and took some part in it and was humiliated by the compromise that was made. I went back to Searcy, where I then lived, and decided that there was no use to continue the fight, but the leaders in the convention thought ... that the next thing was to get rid of Clark and thus destroy the man who had dared to call in question their high handed movement, no matter if he had promised to fall into line.

So they began their scheming and were working to get rid of Clark. Clark found it out and he decided that since they had broken faith that he was no longer bound to stand by his promises. Right at this juncture I bought a half interest in the paper and began to add what I could to Clark's efforts to win the fight for the churches against the usurpers of power. Being young and full of energy I pushed and pushed and worked and worked until the debts of the paper were all paid and the old General Association was organized. It was a hard fight and most unpleasant and I think now that if I had known all the mean things that I have found that some of them did and all the unpleasant and even dangerous things I have passed through that I should have backed out and not undertaken the work but looking back at it I thank God for having made the venture. There has been much work accomplished because of the division. The rivalry has caused both sides to work harder and our fight on the

convention has held the convention back from what it would have done in departing from the faith and practice of orthodox Baptists.¹¹

In another article, Bro. Bogard stated,

During the last four years of Clark's service Ben M. Bogard came in as half owner and joint editor with Clark, coming August 1, 1901. This arrangement caused the paper to take on new life as Dr. Clark had more than one man could do alone. Bogard wrote his part of the editorials and kept much in the field, visiting associations and holding meetings. In the fall of 1904 Bogard bought Clark's interest and Clark retired for good.

After serving four years as editor, and two years of that time as business manager as well, there came a merger proposition from J. N. Hall to Bogard. In order to accomplish this merging Bogard organized the present Baptist Publishing Company and secured stock amounting to ten thousand dollars with much more subscribed. J. N. Hall subscribed twenty-five thousand dollars and agreed to put up his printing plant and the list of the **Baptist Flag**, which was located at Fulton, Kentucky, into the company in payment for his stock. This was in 1905.¹²

After the death of J. N. Hall, Mrs. Hall refused to recognize the business arrangement between Bogard and Hall, and engaged W. M. Barker as editor of the **Flag** and retained the printing plant in Kentucky, and also the subscriber list. As a result the Baptist Publishing Company elected W. R. Cross as President and C. R. Powell as Editor.

W. R. Cross was able to arrange financing "to float the concern again." Dr. Bogard continued, "Powell built up a fine list. We all helped him. In three years Powell became dissatisfied and the company accepted his resignation and Bogard was elected 'editor-in-chief' which position he held three years.

"By the earnest effort of W. R. Cross, J. E. Newman, his son-in-law, was put in as editor and manager." W. M. Webb, who had been business manager resigned "and Bogard was given a department known as 'Doctrinal and Practical Department'. As a result of further actions, Dr. Bogard eventually resigned from his association with the paper. Dr. Bogard also stated, Newman" not only failed to successfully run the Arkansas Baptist, but fell out with his father-in-law and endeavored to sell out to the Convention people."¹³

In his "recollections, Bro. Bogard reported:

"He [W. R. Cross] took me down as editor and gave me a page in the paper ... I took my medicine and meekly accepted my subordinated place. Elder J. M. Newman was made editor and manager. He had never succeeded in anything in his life and he made a flat failure as editor and

¹¹ **Pioneer Faith**, p. 488.

¹² **Pioneer Faith**, p. 488.

¹³ Foreman and Payne, I, pp. 201-202.

manager of the paper. In order to keep from being in an unpleasant situation continually I accepted the pastorate of the First Baptist Church, Itasca, Texas, and left Arkansas and spent three happy years in Texas. Went there expecting to stay, but because the situation changed I came to Texarkana and went in with Elder M. P. Matheny and established the Baptist and Commoner."¹⁴

First Baptist Church, North Little Rock

It should be noted Bro. Bogard pastored this church three different times. The first tenure ended late in 1904, when he resigned, and stated, "It is my purpose to spend some time in general field and evangelistic work."

During the first part of the year he preached at churches in the central Arkansas area, including the dedication sermon at Bethlehem on the first Sunday in May. In June he made a tour of Kentucky in the interest of the Baptist Publishing Co., which included preaching at his home church. He reported that on this trip he "did some business for the company and had a very pleasant visit among my friends and former pastors."¹⁵

In the summer evangelistic meetings were held with G. W. James at Strawberry, S. P. Davis in Austin, J. W. Avery in Redfield, also Bethlehem in Little Rock, Philadelphia Church near Prattsville, Zion Church near Lowell, and Mt. Olive Church near Bauxite.

Foreman and Payne reported, "At the close of the year 1905, he wrote in his journal: 'I was extended a unanimous call to the care of Argenta [North Little Rock] Church on November 1, my work to begin December 1, 1905. I accepted the work. Having previously served the church as pastor, the call was hardly to be expected.' Again in 1906 he wrote, "A call for another year as pastor was extended to me by unanimous vote of Argenta Church at the regular annual business meeting November 11 and I accepted the work." He closed his work with the First Baptist Church of Argenta, 1907, and W. R. Crutchfield, at his recommendation, was called as successor, Once again on November 15, 1908, he 'accepted a call to become pastor of the First Baptist Church. This makes the third term as pastor of this church'. This time he remained as pastor until September, 1909, then "closed his work there."¹⁶

After Buckner College was endorsed by the General Association, Bro. Bogard represented the college as financial agent, beginning April 8, 1907. He wrote, "I accepted the work as agent for Buckner College, Witcherville, AR, and began work April 8 and made a tour." This tour lasted through June. He continued, "May 26, I preached the

¹⁴ Ben M. Bogard, "Recollections," reprinted in **Missionary Baptist Searchlight**, Oct. 10, 1963.

¹⁵ Foreman and Payne, I, p. 148.

¹⁶ Foreman and Payne, I, p. 148

commencement sermon for Buckner College. I also preached that night in the college chapel." Foreman and Payne summarized, "During his lifetime, Ben M. Bogard was to spend many such years of travel, raising money for colleges so that young men could be trained. From the beginning of his ministry, he was ever busy doing all he could for young preachers...."¹⁷

By 1909 interest in Buckner College was declining. At the 1909 meeting of the State Association, the messengers from Big Creek in Sheridan proposed the establishment of a college at Sheridan, which would be a more central location. A resolution passed supporting the effort to establish a college at Sheridan, and named M. P. Matheny and Ben M. Bogard as two of the trustees. It should be noted that after the establishment of the Missionary Baptist College at Sheridan in 1919, Bro. Bogard became a member of the board and also secretary in 1926. On February 5, 1927 he was elected President of the Board, a position he held until the college closed in 1934.

Mission Work

Ben M. Bogard was endorsed by the Bethlehem Church, Little Rock, to do Missionary work for the General Association. The form of Mission work he did was in the interest of the General Association. In his report to Bethlehem Church in October of 1908, he stated: "Beginning December 16, 1907, I have put in full time taking only an occasional day to rest between engagements. I have labored in Arkansas, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana and Texas... My chief work has been to indoctrinate the people and to propagate General Association principles and therefore the chief results cannot be put in figures."¹⁸

On December 15, 1907, Bro. Bogard was endorsed by Bethlehem Church, Little Rock, as a missionary. At the meeting of the General Association at Argenta, he was elected as Clerk, and also endorsed for missionary work. This missionary work continued until he accepted the Argenta Church the third time in November, 1908.

In January of 1908 he made a tour of Southern Mississippi, and visited twenty-two churches. In February, March and April, he preached as a missionary to sixteen churches in Arkansas, Alabama and Mississippi. Most of the year, he continued with preaching tours.

During 1908 he regularly reported to Bethlehem Church in Little Rock, first on February 10, 1908: "According to the teaching of the Scriptures (Acts 14:24-28), I submit my first report to the Bethlehem Church... I have spent two months in the work mostly in Mississippi. I have preached fifty sermons and held one public debate." He next reported on May 10, 1908: "Since my last report I have preached 103 sermons in Arkansas, Mississippi, and Alabama...I have traveled about

¹⁷ Foreman and Payne, I, pp. 428-429.

¹⁸ Foreman and Payne, II, pp. 323-325.

fifteen hundred miles and preached in fifteen churches and school houses. Held one public debate of four days duration."

Then in October he reported, "Beginning December 16, 1907, I have put in full time taking only an occasional day to rest between engagements. I have labored in Arkansas, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana and Texas. Sermons preached, 333; debates held, 6; total sermons and addresses, 453; professed conversions, 116; ...total additions, 138. My chief work has been to indoctrinate the people and to propagate General Association principles and therefore the chief results cannot be put in figures."¹⁹

Bro. Bogard attended the State Association at Malvern in 1908, where he was elected as Moderator and also was a member of the Executive Committee. He was a messenger to the December 15-16 meeting of the Baptist General Association at Fulton, KY, where he was also elected as Moderator. He was Moderator in 1909 for the meeting at Magnolia, AR. That fall he also attended the Mt. Vernon, Current River and Russellville Associations, and also the State Association at Forrest City.

Once again on November 15, 1908, he accepted the call to become pastor of the First Baptist Church of Argenta. After resigning the church in September, 1909, Bro. Bogard traveled extensively in missionary and evangelistic work; he also represented the Baptist Publishing Concern, and debated extensively. His travels included Tennessee, Texas, Missouri, Oklahoma, Florida, and Kentucky.

Baptist Publishing Company

The publishing of literature was of prime importance to the brethren. So much so, that in 1903, the Baptist Publishing Co. was established. As president of the company, Ben M. Bogard also wrote literature and supported the establishment privately with funds for printing and distribution. A short time later, G.S. Anderson joined Bro. Bogard as half owner and also wrote literature.

At the State Association in 1904, a suggestion was made to organize a Landmark Baptist Publishing Society. Bro. Bogard had a plan to organize the Publication Society which was laid out to the Committee on Publications.

Six years later, in 1910, Ben M. Bogard, W.M. Webb and G.S. Anderson formed a partnership to establish the "Landmark Sunday School Concern," which published Sunday School helps, test books and also sold books.

The business prospered and Bro. Bogard proposed it be given to the Association. The partnership was disbanded after the Association agreed to pay Dr. Anderson for his half.

¹⁹ Foreman and Payne, II, pp. 323-325.

W. M. Webb soon left the business. Foreman and Payne wrote, "The work became too heavy for the two men after Webb left. M. P. Matheny came into the business as a partner. The literature slowly increased in circulation and its influence began to be felt. They were publishing a "Catechetical Series' and also the International Lessons Grade Series."²⁰

Bro. Bogard explained, "For the first few years the literature was in catechetical form altogether. Seven grades of question books were published and thus a course of seven years was provided for the student. After finding a strong demand for quarterlies, a little over seven years ago [about 1913], quarterlies began to be published."²¹

It might be noted that Dr. Bogard's two publications, **Fifty-two Doctrinal Lessons** and **Fifty-two Lessons Exposing Heresy**, were part of this series.

Please see the account of the State Association meetings from 1904 through 1914 for the development of the literature, at which time the Sunday School Committee of the General Association assumed the literature publication and distribution in 1915. Also, see the biographical sketch after the report of the 1918 meeting for the involvement of M. P. Matheny, who was Bro. Bogard's partner during this time, and also the first Business Manager of the Sunday School Committee.²²

Therefore, Dr. Bogard was able to report in the April 8, 1915 issue of the **Baptist and Commoner**, "The negotiations which began at the last session of the General Association to the end that the Sunday School literature, published by the Landmark Sunday School Concern, be taken over by the General Association were completed on Wednesday, March 31, and the literature is now the property of the General Association.

"...Elder G. S. Anderson is the editor of the literature, and Elder M. P. Matheny is the business manager and these gentlemen will work under a publication committee who will supervise all that is done. The special committee is Elder C. C. Winters, Elder T. H. Carter and Ben M. Bogard."²³

Pastor at Itasca, Texas

Bro. Bogard accepted the pastorate of the church in Itasca in June, 1912. This placed him in a strategic position to influence the Texas churches, fellowshiping in the Baptist Missionary Association, to abandon their convention ties, and look favorably toward the General As-

²⁰ Foreman and Payne, II, p. 259.

²¹ Ben M. Bogard, **Baptist and Commoner**, April 14, 1920.

²² Also see "Origins of the Publication Work of the Sunday School Committee," **The American Baptist Association**, by C. N. Glover and A. T. Powers.

²³ Ben M. Bogard, **Baptist Commoner**, April 8, 1915.

sociation, and eventually the union movement in 1924, which resulted in establishment of the American Baptist Association.

During his tenure at Itasca, Bro. Bogard continued his extensive travels. He held meetings in Texas, Arkansas, Oklahoma and Missouri.

Foreman and Payne stated Bro. Bogard "entered into the Texas battle with all the energy and zeal he had hitherto exhibited in Kentucky, Arkansas and Mississippi."²⁴ In November he was a messenger to the Baptist Missionary Association meeting at Dallas, and in December he was a messenger to the General Association at Bay Springs, MS, where he preached one sermon and gave three addresses. In 1913 he was a messenger to the B.M.A. meeting at Clebourne, and he preached the Introductory Sermon for the General Association meeting at Texarkana in December.²⁵

Missionary Work for the General Association

Near the end of 1914, Bro. Bogard left the church at Itasca, and moved to Texarkana to begin work as a missionary for the General Association, and also to assist M. P. Matheny with the literature business which was assumed by the General Association in 1915. He continued to live in Texarkana, until he moved to Little Rock, to become pastor of Antioch Baptist Church on May 1, 1920.

During 1915 Bro. Bogard preached to churches in Mississippi, Oklahoma, Louisiana, Tennessee, Missouri, and Arkansas. He attended many local associations, and also the state associations in Oklahoma, Texas, and Arkansas. Although some of this mission work consisted of holding protracted meetings, and one resulted in the organization of a church, most of Bogard's travels were actually in behalf of the General Association in encouraging churches to support the associated work.

Also during this period, Bro. Bogard pastored the following churches: "in 1916 accepted work as supply pastor for the church in Blue Ridge, Texas, preaching there on the third Saturdays and Sundays each month until December. During this time, he served as fourth time pastor to the Farmington Church near Howe, Texas. In 1917 he accepted the call as pastor of the church at Waldo for half time and the work at Friendship Church in Arkansas one Sunday a month. During 1916, 1917, 1918, and 1919, he served as part-time pastor in Waldo, to the Friendship Church, the Farmington Church, and from September, 1919, churches in Chidester and Taylor, AR, as well as Kerr Chapel and White Rock, TX."²⁶

During this period he also held revival meetings in Arkansas, Texas, Missouri and Oklahoma.

²⁴ Foreman and Payne, II, p. 326.

²⁵ Foreman and Payne, II, p. 326.

²⁶ Foreman and Payne, II, p. 326-327

The Baptist and Commoner

It was during this period Dr. Bogard again became associated in the paper business. He wrote: "It looked to all of us as if the Texas brethren would also in some way be betrayed into the hands of the Convention. So, a council was held at Texarkana in which Texas and Arkansas men were about evenly numbered and the unanimous decision was that Matheny and Bogard should start a paper right on the line between Texas and Arkansas and let the paper circulate in both states and thus, if possible, save the two states from the humiliation of having both state papers²⁷ leading the churches into conventionism. The issuing of the **Baptist Commoner** from Texarkana had the desired effect. The brethren in Arkansas got hold of the situation and got rid of Newman and the brethren in Texas took hold with a strong bond and sidetracked Slaughter and thus both papers were restored to their former principles. There was no longer need for the Baptist Commoner and so in 1917 the Baptist Commoner was consolidated with the Arkansas Baptist and has been called the Baptist and Commoner from that time on."²⁸

In another article, Dr. Bogard reported:

When Bogard resigned as editor of his department, he, in a few months, with Elder M. P. Matheny, and Elder H. M. Cagle, established The Baptist Commoner at Texarkana, AR. This was done at the earnest solicitation of forty or more brethren who met at Texarkana in connection with the General Association. They all declared that a paper was needed to stand for the principles of the General and State Associations and especially since both the papers in Texas and Arkansas were catering to convention ideas. That Newman was going convention ward is now evident for he offered to sell out the Arkansas Baptist Publishing Company, paper and all, to the convention forces and was caught in the act ... he has since gone into the convention.

During this period Bro. Bogard waged an effort to counteract what he considered as being the deception of S. H. Slaughter, who was at the time editor of the official B.M.A. paper, **The Baptist Progress**. In writing of Slaughter's relationship to the Southern Baptist Convention and the General Association, Bogard stated,

If you had asked him I am sure he would tell you that his relation to the Southern Baptist Convention is that he is generally a delegate each year and is a full-fledged member of it and a believer in it...

What is his relation to the General Association? It is the relation that any enemy sustains to it. He is open in his opposition to it.

These facts are so well known in Texas it is a surprise that anyone should ask about it. Slaughter not only confesses but is proud of the fact

²⁷ Ben M. Bogard, **Baptist and Commoner**, June 5, 1929.

²⁸ Foreman and Payne, II, p. 203.

that he favors the convention and opposes the General Association."²⁹ In reporting on the 1915 meeting of the B.M.A. in Hillsboro, Bro. Bogard wrote,

...there is a convention element in the B.M.A. that is a menace to its very existence. Just why they remain in the B.M.A. when its principles are against conventionism, is a strange thing.

The sound forces were in large majority but for fear of a rupture which was loudly hinted by the convention element they allowed themselves to be SLAUGHTERED again... Doctor Slaughter thinks he is under the load but the fact is he is the biggest part of the load the B.M.A. has to carry. But the B.M.A. is strong and can carry a big load.³⁰

During this same period Bogard was also working to establish associational principles in Oklahoma and Arkansas. His main opponent in Arkansas was E.J.A. McKinney, editor of the **Baptist Advance**. It might be noted that McKinney was responsible for printing the circular in 1918, which accused Bro. Bogard of being drunk at Princeton, KY.

To counteract some of the opposition, a tract, "Conventionism from Four Angles," written by J. A. Smith, G. S. Anderson, M. P. Matheny and Ben M. Bogard, was published in 1915. Bogard's article was on the "Origin of Conventionism." The tract was first published in editorial form in the **Baptist Commoner**.

In another article, Bro. Bogard explained,

For these reasons that were perceptible to all discerning men, **The Baptist Commoner** was established to have something to fall back on when the crash came. The crash was avoided by Mr. Newman resigning. When Brother Smith became manager he suggested that the two papers merge. This arrangement was carried out three years ago [1917] and J. A. Smith was continued as 'editor and business manager' and Ben M. Bogard was elected 'editor' and M. P. Matheny and J. L. Brown were elected 'associate editors'... This arrangement has continued up to this writing (April 14, 1920)...³¹

In writing of the unification prospects in 1924, which led to the establishment of the American Baptist Association, Dr. Bogard wrote:

Slaughter and Hayden taught the Texas brethren that the General Association was a bad and dangerous thing. Thus a strong prejudice was created against the General Association. The brethren who were thus prejudiced against the General Association were AGREED ALL THE TIME WITH THE GENERAL ASSOCIATION BUT THEY DID NOT KNOW IT. Some of us knew they were as sound as we and were really agreed with us

²⁹ Ben M. Bogard, **Baptist Commoner**, July 29, 1915

³⁰ Ben M. Bogard, **Baptist Commoner**, Dec. 2, 1915.

³¹ Ben M. Bogard, **Baptist and Commoner**, April 14, 1920.

but we could not make them listen to us because of the strong prejudice which existed in their minds.³²

Thus, it should be obvious that Ben M. Bogard's untiring efforts were largely responsible for the unification of the two state groups--Arkansas and Texas--that led to the establishment of the American Baptist Association.

Ben M. Bogard and the Convention

The charge has been made that Ben M. Bogard supported the convention system when he first came to Arkansas, and that his opposition to the system was "sour grapes".

Foreman and Payne noted, "One of the things he regretted until the day of his death was that he was instrumental in leading his home church into convention methods. Through the years they had held aloof from it until he came home from college and 'taught them better' encouraging them to go along with the new ways."

In 1894 Ben M. Bogard made a report on Foreign Missions in the General Association of Kentucky "in which he mentioned that there were two plans--the convention plan and the other, 'Gospel Missions'."³³

Writing in the 1929 **Baptist and Commoner**, Dr. Bogard reviewed:

I attended the meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention at Nashville, Tenn. when they would not allow Royal to come before the convention and make his plea [against the commercializing of religion in China]. I was an ardent convention man at that time. But I saw that free speech was denied the missionaries. I saw the log rolling methods they used with Royal and I was convinced that it was all wrong.

He then recounted the influence of J.A. Scarborough, and J. N. Hall, who "made the **Baptist Flag** ring out against the evils of the board system," and S. H. Ford and his wife. Bogard noted,

...and the fight became hot. About all the brethren saw was the evil of boardism and the fight was strictly a negative fight.

Some of us saw the need of cooperation among the churches so that the fight could be carried on positively and affirmatively and constructively as well as negatively...

But enough of us believed in constructive cooperative work that we formed the General Association which has since been merged with some other groups and we now have the American Baptist Association. It is nothing but Gospel Missions ORGANIZED. We have all the Gospel Mission features that are essential.³⁴

Dr. Bogard prepared an article on "J. R. Graves and the Organized Work." In this article he made several quotes from J. R. Graves:

³² Ben M. Bogard, **Baptist and Commoner**, Oct. 2, 1924

³³ Foreman and Payne, II, p. 304.

³⁴ Ben M. Bogard, **Baptist Commoner**, July 10, 1914.

The first radical fault in our missionary scheme is that it is a centralization--a centralizing operation. It takes out of the hands of the many of the churches and places our missionary operations in the hands of a few. Such has ever been the character of our missionary organizations and they have failed; the present is a failure; ... The churches are called upon to surrender all intimate concern in the management of and planning for and directing the missionaries and the mission work into the hands of a central board and content themselves with supplying the funds when called upon by the agents.

He then concluded:

It will be noted that Dr. Graves used almost the same words and exactly the same argument that is now used in opposition to the modern 'organized work'. The Civil War came on and left Baptists in such a condition that Dr. Graves stopped his agitation, but to his dying day he was opposed to the 'organized work'.³⁵

Foreman and Payne editorialized: "As long as Bogard worked with the Convention, he tried to get their methods on what he termed Scriptural grounds so he could consistently work with them."

In 1900 he attended the Southern Baptist Convention at Hot Springs, and the Caroline Association meeting at Argenta. He noted in his personal journal that he "introduced a resolution to the State Convention to abolish the office of corresponding secretary which was carried by an overwhelming majority."

Also in 1900 he was a messenger from the Searcy Church to the State Convention meeting in Hope. He noted in his journal, "Introduced a resolution calling for the abolition of the office of corresponding secretary which failed to pass favorably with the convention. It was manifest that the Baptists of the State favored the resolution but those attending the convention were opposed to it."

In October, 1901, he attended five associations: Russellville, Caroline, Mt. Zion, Current River and Pine Bluff. He preached at 11:00 AM [the favored time] at the Current River, Russellville and Caroline Associations, and brought three messages 'by appointment of the body' to the Pine Bluff Association." His reception at these local associations indicates his views were being widely received.

Then in November, 1901, he attended the Arkansas Baptist State Convention at Paragould as a messenger from Searcy Church. He noted in his journal:

I made a speech of one-hour and forty-five minutes length in the great debate on the propriety of having a corresponding secretary to superintend the mission work of the state. I argued against such an office but by manipulation and wire pulling the vote was not taken until after nearly half the messengers had left the convention and the vote went

³⁵ Foreman and Payne, II, pp. 314-315.

against me. Ecclesiastical politics is no better than any other politics and I became thoroughly disgusted with it.³⁶

After the organizational meeting of the General Association in April, 1902, in September and October, Dr. Bogard attended nine associations making a "hard and victorious fight against the Baptist State Convention and in favor of the General Association." The November, 1902, meeting was held at Searcy, with over 400 messengers and visitors present. Bro. Bogard wrote, "Being pastor I was necessarily host of the occasion. It was a triumphant meeting to be remembered."

During the months of September and October, 1903, Bogard visited the Stevens Creek, Independence, Current River, Spring River, Carroll County, Clear Creek, Caroline and Jonesboro associations. He reported, "At these I preached thirteen sermons... I made fifteen public addresses...discussed Sunday Schools, Temperance, missions, religious literature, etc. At the associations, of course, represented the **Landmark Baptist**, being one of the editors and president of the Publishing Company."

He was again a messenger to the General Association in 1903 at Little Rock. He was elected assistant clerk and appointed chairman of two committees. He noted, "It was the greatest meeting of messengers that was ever seen before in Arkansas."³⁷

In 1907 he visited the Mt. Vernon, Red River, Saline and Caroline associations. He was a messenger from Bethlehem Church, Little Rock, to the State Association meeting at Benton. He wrote, "It was an enthusiastic and successful meeting. I was elected moderator, an honor which I highly appreciated."³⁸ As maybe noted in the official records, he was also moderator in 1908 at Malvern and 1911 at Bald Knob.

It should be noted the records indicate that Dr. Bogard continued to make associational meetings, particularly when a decisive issue was to be presented. Without doubt, he did more than any other one man to preserve the principles of Landmarkism among Arkansas churches during the first two decades of this century.

T. H. Irwin (9) Assistant Moderator, 1909

T. H. Irwin was a resident of Tyler, TX and pastored churches in Smith and Henderson County. At the age of 32, he was elected assistant moderator of the General Association in 1909. He was pastor of Grace Baptist Church, Tyler, TX in 1909. He was born in Rusk County, Texas, November 27, 1876 to Charles and Marie Armstrong Irwin. He married his wife, Belle McCoy, in Smith County on October 25, 1900.

³⁶ Foreman and Payne, II, pp. 314-315.

³⁷ Foreman and Payne, II, p. 319-320.

³⁸ Foreman and Payne, II, p. 323.