

**THE HISTORY OF  
SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION'S  
MINISTRY TO THE DEAF**

**by**

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## PREFACE

This thesis is directed to the reader of church history in the field of the deaf--the missionary to the deaf, the interpreter for the deaf, the interested layman (deaf or hearing), and the religious worker--who desires to understand the development of Southern Baptist mission work with the deaf during the past sixty years.

The colorful career of Dr. J. W. Michaels is treated fully in this account in a partial answer to the request of many workers and laymen within the fold of the Southern Baptist Convention. Dr. A. J. Roddy, then Superintendent of Deaf Missions, Home Mission Board, Southern Baptist Convention, and Editor of The Deaf Southern Baptist, penned these lines: "Some day there should be a book about the life of this courageous man of God. That life will always be an inspiration to all of us who seek to follow in his steps."<sup>1</sup> This need is fulfilled in this thesis which, in part, portrays the life and work of this great man. The writer is indebted to Mrs. Miriam Johnson, one of the four daughters

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<sup>1</sup>Dr. A. J. Roddy, "Dr. J. W. Michaels," The Deaf Southern Baptist, I (January-March, 1958), 1.

of Rev. J. W. Michaels, for the many details which went into the making of this biographical narrative of her illustrious father.

Three years have been spent in painstaking research of the history of the Southern Baptist Convention's ministry to the deaf. Conflicting dates and events have been shifted so as to present an accurate account of the mission work as far as humanly possible. Even though the student of historical research will find that a statement by Dr. J. W. Michaels in reference to the dates of his work and appointment under the Home Mission Board is at variance with the dates presented in this thesis, the writer, however, depends upon the typewritten and handwritten minutes of the Committee meetings of the Home Mission Board, Southern Baptist Convention, for the accuracy of the dates and other details. The same may be said of the dates of certain deaf church groups, the accuracy of which the writer has sought from the early editions of the Home Mission Board's periodicals, which are kept in the vault of the Board and are not readily available to the readers today.

The writer acknowledges his indebtedness to many of his missionary colleagues for information concerning their life and work treated in the first chapter of this thesis as well as to the interpreters and deaf people within the bounds of the Southern Baptist Convention for the history of their

church groups which is given in the second chapter. Without their cooperation and assistance the greater part of this thesis could not have been written. They have helped this writer present a factual account of the Southern Baptist ministry to the deaf which will be a permanent record for generations to come and a part of which will be a primary source of information to the future students of Christian history in the field of the deaf.

## CHAPTER I

### THE GENERAL HISTORY OF DEAF MISSION WORK

This chapter is to a great extent the history of mission work among the deaf by the Southern Baptist Convention. We will deal with the lives and labor of J. W. Michaels and A. O. Wilson at length and briefly those of other missionaries.

#### The Years of J. W. Michaels' Leadership, 1850-1926

The story of Baptist work among the deaf begins with John Walter Michaels. Prior to the emergence of this young man, there were many Southern Baptists who desired to provide religious instruction for the deaf but did not know how to go about doing it. John Walter Michaels was born in Petersburg, Virginia, on December 19, 1850, the youngest of six children.

When war was declared between the states, the oldest brothers in the Michaels family joined the 15th Virginia Cavalry. Their father, too old for active service on the battlefield, was stationed as a guard at Libby Prison in Richmond, Virginia. As the times grew harder and the family funds diminished, the mother and sisters turned to baking as

a means of livelihood. Young Johnnie, the only man of the house, assumed the responsibility of marketing the bakery products as well as nuts and apples from the family orchard.

During the seige of Petersburg, Johnnie became a familiar and welcome figure to the half-starved Confederate soldiers. "Nice pies and cakes! Nice pies 'n cakes!," he would cry out as he lugged a basket filled with tempting wares from group to group. "Nice pizen cakes, you mean," the soldiers would tease--looking for a chance to laugh even in the horrors of the terrible seige.

But to this sturdy, flaxen-haired, blue eyed little fellow, selling of pies and cakes was a serious business. In keeping with his Scottish ancestry, he could drive a good bargain for one so young. Never a day passed that he did not return with his basket empty and his pockets well filled with small change.

A day came when the young salesman failed to appear. As is always the case, disease followed close upon the disaster of war. As a lad of seven, Johnnie contracted a strange malady called erysepelas in a Confederate hospital camp at Richmond, Virginia.<sup>2</sup> He lay in a serious condition for six weeks with inadequate medical attention as most of the local

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<sup>2</sup>Frank E. Burkhalter, "The Home Board's Ministry to the Deaf," Home and Foreign Fields, V (November, 1921), 9.

doctors in Petersburg and Richmond were with the Confederate Army tending the sick and wounded soldiers. Three white scars on his forehead attested to the remedy suggested by neighborly women to effect a cure. Scars were left by leeches applied to draw blood and thus reduce the inflammation.

While convalescent, he contracted a cold.<sup>3</sup> His mother one day left him in the care of his sister to take food and fresh clothing to the father in Richmond. The sister, thinking Johnnie too deeply absorbed in a book to miss her, slipped out to visit a neighbor girl. But Johnnie heard her leave. Although he had heard the doctor caution his mother that exposure to the cold could affect his eyesight, he was tired of the indoors and craved the excitement of the outdoors. So he bundled up good and ran outdoors to play with the other boys in one of the cantonment buildings. Soon there was the noise of gunfire outside so the boys ran to the edge of the hill to watch the battle in progress in the valley below.

There was cannon firing on both sides.<sup>4</sup> With each

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<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid. Burkhalter reported in his article that there was an artillery practice, but Mrs. S. D. Johnson, one of Rev. J. W. Michaels' daughters, told the writer that the war was going on in the valley below. The fact, however, remains that there was cannon firing, regardless of the circumstance surrounding it.

burst of the cannon, the roar in Johnnie's head became louder and louder. He knew something dreadful had happened. Cold and numb from exposure to the cold, gale-like wind and frightened because of his disobedience and the noise in his head, Johnnie ran back in the house and put away his cap and coat.

Neither his mother nor his sister had returned so he decided not to confess his adventure. Perhaps in a day or two the roaring would leave, and he would be all right. For several days he was very alert and attentive, realizing more and more that he could not hear and trying desperately to anticipate or understand every word or action of his mother and sisters. He succeeded for two days, but on the third day in an unguarded manner, his mother entered the room where he was reading. She spoke to him, but he did not answer. She spoke his name still louder. Still no answer. Then she went out and brought back a dishpan and a metal spoon and beat upon the pan. When there was no response, immediately she knew that her boy was totally deaf. She took Johnnie to a doctor in Richmond. After a thorough examination it was decided to take him to an ear specialist in Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore, Maryland, for consultation and treatment. After several months of treatment, however without improvement, the doctors in consultation

decided nothing more could be done to restore his hearing.<sup>5</sup>

To most youths, the very thought of suddenly becoming deaf might have had a most depressing effect. But this boy was no ordinary youth. He had seen much worse handicaps resulted from action on the battlefields. He accepted his handicap, thankful that he still had good speech. He determined to do everything he could to build a good life for himself and for those around him.<sup>6</sup>

In the lean years after the war, John Michaels did his share toward the support of the family. Deafness failed to lessen his interest in life and learning. His mother at first was opposed to his going to an institution for deaf children but at last gave her consent to his entering the Virginia School for the Deaf and Blind in Staunton, Virginia.<sup>7</sup> Four years later he had completed the eight-year course. It was the school's custom at that time to award a gold crescent-shaped pin to a young man who stood at the head of his class and to present a gold star to a young lady of similar attainment. John Michaels won the crescent. Mary Whitcomb Steers, the young lady with whom he had fallen in love, won the star

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<sup>5</sup>"John Walter Michaels," The Virginia Guide, LXIX (October, 1942), 2.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid.

at their respective graduations.

After graduation, young Michaels entered Gallaudet College for the Deaf in Washington, D.C., where he spent three profitable years.<sup>8</sup> Not only did he excel in his studies, he demonstrated leadership ability in literary, dramatic, and religious activities and in captaining the college's championship baseball team.<sup>9</sup>

While a student, he was converted in 1873. Immediately he became active in religious activities on his campus. He organized prayer meetings and spent his vacation in evangelistic work among the deaf.<sup>10</sup>

After leaving college, he went to Knoxville, Tennessee, where he learned the saddle, harness, and horse collar business, afterward becoming a partner with his brother, Melvin Michaels, in the firm of Michaels, Duncombe and Company, horse collar manufacturers.<sup>11</sup> In 1878 he returned to Virginia where

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<sup>8</sup>Ibid., 3.

<sup>9</sup>James E. Gallaher, "John W. Michaels, Teacher, Little Rock, Arkansas," Representative Deaf Persons of the United States of America (Chicago: Chicago Public Schools for the Deaf, 1898).

<sup>10</sup>"Death Takes Pioneer Deaf Worker: Service Began in Schools in 1873," Southern Baptist Home Missions, XIII (November, 1942), 7. For further treatment of the dates of the birth, education, and conversion of Dr. J. W. Michaels, see Appendix I.

<sup>11</sup>Gallaher, loc. cit.

he married the petite Quaker girl, Mary Steers, who had just lost her mother. They settled in the little resort town of Goshen, Virginia, where Mary had been raised. Again, Johnnie demonstrated that deafness was not an insurmountable obstacle in the way of success. This time in the business field, he operated a photograph gallery, making tintypes for the socialites who came to relax beside the two springs in the vicinity. He was proprietor of the livery stable, ran an ice house, built homes, and became the town constable.

Then came an opportunity to join the faculty of the Virginia School for the Deaf and Blind as a teacher of the deaf. In the summers the Michaels returned to Goshen where he reestablished his various business enterprises.

After several years with the Virginia School for the Deaf and Blind, he accepted a teaching position at the Arkansas School for the Deaf, then called the Arkansas Deaf-Mute Institute. In the summers he returned to Virginia to pursue his businesses there. This practice was discontinued in 1882 or 1883 when he became principal of the school, and Mrs. John Walter Michaels was appointed to a teaching position so the family moved to Arkansas.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup>"Death Takes Pioneer Deaf Worker: Service Began in Schools in 1873," Southern Baptist Home Missions, XIII (November, 1942), 7. For further treatment of the approximate date of his appointment as a teacher of the Arkansas School for the Deaf, see Appendix II.

The Arkansas School for the Deaf at that time was in its infancy in its present location. A ninety-two acre tract had been donated for its use, and the buildings could not compare with the present fine plant. The buildings then as today were situated on a high ridge overlooking the Arkansas River to the North, except that it was in a dense forest of tall nature pines. It was separated from the Little Rock proper, a mile and a half away by a deep ravine. The only transportation to the city was by horse-drawn carriage by the river road. Each lady teacher could be taken to the city once a week in the Institute carriage and the students only when absolutely necessary.

Only three or four teachers had homes off the campus with their families. The rest lived on the grounds. Because of the isolation of students and faculty alike from the civic and cultural activities of the city, the school itself became the center for all activities, literary, dramatic, social, and religious. As principal of the school, Mr. Michaels was largely responsible for a well-balanced program. In addition to his supervision of the academic and industrial curricula of the school, he coached athletics, lectured on current events, gave book reviews, produced skits and dramatic plays, some of which he wrote himself, and developed a well-rounded religious program, including Sunday School classes with the regular teachers as Sunday School teachers, worship services

on Sunday mornings and evenings, and mid-week prayer services. He became the school photographer and became proficient in the art of sleight-of-hand, much to the delight of the students. In recognition of his leadership and ability in the field of education, Gallaudet College conferred the degree of Bachelor of Pedagogy upon him in 1902.<sup>13</sup>

After his conversion, he became more active in religion. His parents were devout Christians, and he often spoke of attending church with them. In a letter to one of his daughters in 1916, he recalled some of his childhood experiences and graphically described the comedy of his mother, sisters, and other women of the day entering the pews in their hoop skirts. Many of the deaf still living remember his delightful pantomime of this scene. But then he turned to the serious side and blessed his Christian parents for the heritage that was his. Christ was a member of their household and an ever-present comfort during the trials and turbulence of the days of his youth.

The following inscriptions found on the fly leaves of an old Bible he possessed is an evidence of his deep interest in study of the Bible and his regard for it as a young man, his love for Christ, and the deep spiritual need he had as well as his church membership:

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<sup>13</sup>"John Walter Michaels," The Virginia Guide, LXIX (October, 1942), 3.

I belong to the Baptist Church  
J W M

John Walter Michaels's Bible of Life.

Lord Bless this Book and let it lead me to heaven.  
let me always Believe it and read it more and more for-  
ever and ever Bless Be to our Beloved Saviour Jesus Christ  
Aman

Written by J. W. Michaels  
July 20th 1871  
BaltimoreMd.

On the second fly leaf it is written:

This Book is above all Books. all people read it and  
obey it for the Sake of Jesus Christ, for the last day  
will Pass away after a while. Hurry up and repent and  
turn to the Path of righteousness and to Heaven for Ever

By J W M

From manhood, everywhere he went, John Walter  
Michaels identified himself with the work of the Master,  
administering both materially and spiritually to the needs  
of his fellow deaf. His wife, Mary, worked constantly at his  
side for the glory of God, praying and willing for him to do  
whatever God had for him to do. Soon after he went to Little  
Rock, Mr. Michaels heard that there were several deaf adults  
living in the city. Feeling a need to reach them for Christ,  
he made arrangements with a Baptist church for a room for Sun-  
day afternoon services. On the following Saturday afternoon  
he walked to town and visited printing shops, tailor shops,  
and shoe shops in downtown Little Rock in the hope of giving  
personal invitations to attend services on the following day.  
It was a cold, drizzling day. His efforts seemed to be of no

avail until the proprietor of one shop told him that two deaf men usually frequented a pool hall down the street on Saturday afternoons. With new hope, he went in search of the pool hall and found it in the back of a saloon. Undaunted, he walked through the saloon to the pool hall and found the two deaf men alone in the room at a table. Both had been drinking, and neither was completely sober. Mr. Michaels introduced himself, explained his mission, and invited both men to come to the church for Bible study the next day. Both scoffed at the idea of going to church. Before he left, he asked if he could pray with them. There in that room, with the men draped over the table, he went on his knees and prayed for the service the next day and also for God's mercy and guidance in the lives of these two men. The next day the rain poured down in torrents. None too hopeful, Mr. Michaels walked to town to keep his appointment. Much to his joy, one of the two men was there, waiting for him, apologizing that his wife could not come and that he could not reach others because of the rain. Mr. John Michaels described this as the beginning of the Little Rock Silent Bible Class. The same afternoon the sun burst through the dense clouds and rain as if to reveal God's presence and blessing on these two men. Years later the members of this class presented him with a gold-headed mahogany cane, which was his constant companion in his declining years. His deep affection and sentimental regard for these dear Christian

friends was manifested in his request that upon his death the cane be placed in his coffin, clasped in his right hand.

He was not content to confine his witnessing to Little Rock alone. In the summers when he was relieved of most of his school responsibilities, he would go at his own expense to nearby towns in Arkansas and to Memphis, Tennessee, to organize Sunday School classes, to preach, to visit or to hold a prayer meeting in a local church or home. He was never too busy to travel all day "on the slow train" through Arkansas to spend one evening to speak of Christ and his everlasting love and pray with even one deaf person.

His missionary efforts as a layman came to the attention of Dr. J. F. Love, Secretary of the State Mission Board of Arkansas Baptist Convention. Dr. Love's recognition of and interest in the spiritual needs of the deaf led him to propose that a missionary for the deaf be appointed to work in the state of Arkansas alone. Thus, Arkansas became the first state to inaugurate the Baptist deaf work.<sup>14</sup> Mr. J. W. Michaels accepted the call to the post and was ordained a full-fledged minister at the Immanuel Baptist Church in Little Rock in late 1905, with the governor of Arkansas who was also a Baptist minister, James P. Eagle, bringing the charge.<sup>15</sup> As

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<sup>14</sup>Our Home Field, XVIII (November, 1906), 25.

<sup>15</sup>Burkhalter, loc. cit.

his work required constant travel over the state, the Rev. Mr. Michaels resigned his position as principal of the Arkansas School for the Deaf so that he could devote full time to his evangelistic work in Arkansas and then in the South. Later, after long, careful, prayerful study and thought by Dr. B. D. Gray and the Home Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, it was suggested that the mission work be extended to the entire South.<sup>16</sup>

On September 4, 1906, a Committee was appointed to consider the new work which was recommended to the Board. Services were held for the deaf in Atlanta, Georgia, Knoxville, Tennessee, Fort Worth, Texas, and Corinth, Mississippi.<sup>17</sup>

In Fort Worth two services for the deaf were held, with the result that eight were converted and four of them were baptized by Rev. E. N. Bell, pastor of the North Fort Worth Baptist Church. It was estimated that sixty deaf people lived in this city "Where the West Begins" and that the majority of them were Baptists.<sup>18</sup>

Rev. J. W. Michaels succeeded in interesting the North Fort Worth Townsite and Land Company sufficiently to induce them to donate a pretty lot as site for a Baptist

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<sup>16</sup>Our Home Field, XVIII (November, 1906), 25.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid.

church for the deaf people. The lot at this time was valued at \$330.00. The deaf people of Fort Worth promised to raise \$150.00 as a fund for the building of worship. Contributions among hearing friends were also solicited. Mr. J. W. Michaels wrote, "The prospects of having first Baptist Church ever built in the world for deaf people to worship in are bright and it will be in readiness for use next spring."<sup>19</sup>

Through the efforts of Dr. J. P. Love and Dr. B. D. Gray, the position of missionary to the deaf under the Home Mission Board was created. After satisfactory inquiry and examination, Rev. John Michaels was called in December, 1906, to fill the new position, thus becoming the first Southern Baptist missionary to the deaf.<sup>20</sup>

The Home Mission Board made the announcement of Rev. Mr. Michaels' appointment in its monthly magazine. It says:

Rev. J. W. Michaels, a deaf mute, has been elected by the Board an evangelist to the deaf mutes of the South, and we hereby introduce him and his work to our people . . . . Until his engagement by the Home Mission Board he was for many years principal of the State Institute for the Deaf, of Arkansas. While holding this position he has on Saturdays and Sundays done effective

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Minutes of the Meeting of the Executive Committee, December 4, 1906, Home Mission Board, Southern Baptist Convention, Atlanta, Georgia. From May 1st, 1903 to May 1st, 1907, 367-368.

mission work among the deaf of the State under the appointment of the Arkansas State Board . . . . After due deliberation, the Home Board elected him as one of its evangelists, thus enabling him to give his whole time to this work. The scope and impetus of the work which he has undertaken will appear when the reader is informed that there are within the bound of the Southern Baptist Convention about 25,000 of this unfortunate class to whom he is to minister. No other people among us is so much in need of special denominational service. Their affliction puts them beyond the pale of ordinary spiritual ministrations, and submits them to painful isolation from our churches, worship, and Christian influence. Prof. Michaels is perhaps the best informed man in the South concerning the deaf mutes, their location and condition, and is the only Southern missionary to these needy people, though the Episcopal of the North have a man employed for such work, who occasionally tours the South. Prof. Michaels' address for the present is Little Rock, Arkansas.<sup>21</sup>

Mr. Michaels felt his new assignment keenly. He realized this was a new, untouched field for Southern Baptists that was white unto harvest. So deep was his conviction that the Lord had called him for this special mission. It would sustain him day by day, and he knew that he must not, could not fail. With the prayers and encouragement of his good wife, he set an exacting schedule for himself. He made a tour of the key cities of the entire South, meeting pastors of local Baptist churches, arranging for meeting places, meeting with old and new deaf friends, holding prayer meetings, and organizing Sunday School or Bible classes as well as preaching. After three or four months, he would return to

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<sup>21</sup>Our Home Field, XVIII (January, 1907), 6-7.

Little Rock for a ten-day or two weeks' rest and relaxation with his family. But so great was his concern for the spiritual welfare of the deaf people, that within three or four days he would feel an urgency to be about the Lord's business.

The Arkansas Optic, the Arkansas School for the Deaf's paper, says:

It was with the keenest regret that the many friends of Prof. J. W. Michaels here learned of his decision to resign as principal of the literary department of this school. He had been connected with the school for 22 years as a teacher and his influence has stamped his ideals upon the hearts and minds of hundreds of deaf children who have attended this school. This influence has helped largely in the formation of the character of every intelligent pupil who has entered the doors of this Institute for twenty-two years. It will be passed from them to other children and handed on down from generation to generation until time shall cease. There is no way of estimating the power it may wield or of calculating the greatness of his reward. God alone can deal with these immeasurable and fathomless problems.

As a teacher Prof. Michaels was capable, enthusiastic and untiring, and he exerted over his pupils an influence which few teachers can wield. In our societies he has been the leading, inspiring and controlling spirit for twenty years. In our Sabbath School he has been the central figure. On the lecture platform he was entertaining, logical, convincing and captivating, and could carry his audience in a moment and at will from the "deepest depths of pathos" to the merriest peals of laughter.

Such a man with strong and splendid character was needed in our school, but such men are in demand in every walk of life. He believed that God had placed a call upon him to preach. He heeded the call and was ordained a Baptist minister about three years ago. Since that time he has been making short trips to other cities and preaching there and to the adult deaf of Little Rock. The Lord seems to have blessed his labors and for three years he has felt that God wished him to devote all his time to ministerial work; therefore he applied to the Mission Board of the Southern Baptist

Church and was recently appointed by this body a Missionary to the deaf of the Southern States. He tendered his resignation as a teacher to the Board of Trustees of this Institute at its November meeting and it was accepted.

On December 7, he severed his connection with the school by an impressive "heart to heart" talk with the pupils in the chapel, in the course of which he brought tears to almost every eye.

His many friends here regret to see him go, but feel that God does all things wisely and well and that, if he is called to preach, he did right by accepting it. We all pray that the Lord will greatly bless him in his new field and he carries with him the best wishes of every one here.<sup>22</sup>

With Sunday School or Bible Study classes functioning in some larger cities and in the localities of the state schools for the deaf, Mr. Michaels turned to contact the deaf in smaller cities and towns. In some of them there were enough deaf people to establish classes if a competent leader or teacher could be found. In others, tracts, New Testaments or Bibles, and suggested materials for Bible Study were left with the few deaf that were there. Prayer services and personal consultations were held, with the result that many were convicted of their sins and were led to accept the Lord Jesus Christ as their Saviour. Seldom did an evening pass that he was not engaged in a service of some sort. So hungry were the people for the preached Word of God that he found himself almost every evening preaching in a different city or town. In addition, he was much in demand as a guest speaker and

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<sup>22</sup>"Prof. J. W. Michaels Resigns," The Arkansas Optic, XXVI (December 15, 1906).

lecturer at special functions. When his ability to do sleight-of-hands became generally known, he received many requests, especially from schools for the deaf, to give a performance. Many times he would end a twenty to thirty minute performance with a poignant message from the Bible. In different areas, this would bring some deaf people into church who would not have come otherwise. And many of these were led to a saving knowledge of Christ.

Realizing the great need of the deaf, he welcomed to his services any deaf person, regardless of creed or color. Many a service, especially in larger cities, found all faiths represented in the congregation, including Jewish and Catholic. Oftentimes there would be present a group of deaf Negro friends. Although a staunch Baptist, Mr. Michaels counted them all God's children and was ready to counsel and help any individual to resolve his material and spiritual needs.

In March and April, 1907, Rev. John W. Michaels spent some time in his work in Texas.<sup>23</sup> On March 19th he preached at the Liberty Avenue Baptist Church to the deaf living in Houston. Several accepted the Saviour and indicated the desire to unite with the Liberty Avenue Church. "Eleven mutes were present . . . . It is said there were 20 or 30 mutes in and around Houston. The services were solemn and

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<sup>23</sup>Our Home Field, XVIII (May, 1907), 3.

impressive." Many of the Liberty Avenue members attended and were impressed with the solemnity of the services.<sup>24</sup>

In his report to the Home Mission Board Rev. John Michaels stated:

During the month of April forty-four professed faith and applied for church membership. Of these thirty-four have, or will soon be, connected with the Baptist churches at their homes. Eight prefer the Methodist and two the Presbyterian churches because their people belong to these churches.<sup>25</sup>

He wrote to the Board explaining that the field was too large and that he needed more men. He had a vision of at least "one colporteur to each state." He suggested to the Board to set one faithful man over the whole and to place colporteurs in areas of two or three states.<sup>26</sup>

The story of the church for the deaf in Fort Worth, Texas, was first told in Our Home Field dated November, 1906. The second article carried the following:

This church was founded by Rev. J. W. Michaels, evangelist to the deaf, in 1906 by securing a lot from a land corporation at North Fort Worth, and starting a popular subscription among the deaf of that city and their hearing friends. In early part of September 1907, the foundation was laid and the work begun and money promised was collected. By the latter part of the same year the little church had been completed inside and out. Upward of \$800 spent for material and work, all gotten at three fourth's value. A good many things

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<sup>24</sup>Ibid., 10

<sup>25</sup>J. W. Michaels, "Silent Evangelism," ibid., XVIII (June, 1907), 14-15.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid., 15.

and considerable work thrown in gratis by the good people and the deaf themselves.<sup>27</sup>

The church was a frame structure, forty-four feet long, twenty-four feet wide, and fourteen feet high. It was planned and constructed under the workmanship of Mr. G. W. Sheppard, who was deaf. The entire work was done by the deaf of the city of North Fort Worth. The church was built on a beautiful lot located on the corner of Lincoln and Park Avenues opposite the Circle Park and commanded a beautiful view of the city.

The 'deaf congregation called Rev. J. W. Michaels to become their pastor to preach as often as his time would allow. They with the assistance of Mr. Michaels organized a Sunday School, with Mr. A. F. Pennington as Superintendent. The Sunday School had two teachers who taught every Sunday afternoon. The trustees of the church were Rev. Mr. Michaels, pastor; H. B. Pool, secretary; G. W. Sheppard, treasurer; W. W. Churchill, J. G. Wolverton, and F. L. Tice, all deaf gentlemen.

The property as a whole was valued at \$1,750. Whenever Rev. J. W. Michaels preached, between forty-five and one hundred twenty-five deaf people of all creeds attended.

Mr. Michaels wrote a letter to the Home Mission

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<sup>27</sup>"The First Evangelical Church for the Deaf," ibid., XIX (March, 1908), 234.

Board from Waco, Texas, in either May or June, 1908:

I have been doing well in Texas for the last month and have been doing very well. Texas is a great state and I do believe it would take me several months to reach all the 3,500 or more deaf people that now live in this state . . . . I preached here last night and will have a service this afternoon at which a deaf couple will be united in the holy bonds of matrimony. The parties are highly connected. The groom is a son of Judge Talbot of Dallas, and the young lady is connected with the oldest families of Waco. Three were immersed at Fort Worth last Wednesday night.

The high waters have retarded my progress considerably. After service this p.m., I started on my way to Little Rock. I feel tired now, and I shall take a week or so rest at home. I am sorry I could not be at Hot Springs to see you and the brethren.<sup>28</sup>

His other letter to the Board was published in the Board's monthly magazine dated October, 1908. It was written from Little Rock at home where he had a week's rest. In it he reported fifty-nine professions of faith from August 11 to September 7.

The largest number was at Fulton Mo., when twenty-six came up. Among these were many grayhaired men and women. There were one hundred and fifty mutes present . . . .

Mr. Cruselle wrote me of the beautiful baptismal services by Dr. Landrum at the First Baptist Church, Atlanta, where he baptized four deaf men and one young lady in a pool of water amid blooming roses, and of his giving each a rose to keep as a memento. Thank Dr. Landrum for the kindness to, and the beautiful services for, the deaf mutes at the baptizing. I wish I had one of the roses.<sup>29</sup>

In 1910 Mrs. Michaels with the youngest daughter

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<sup>28</sup>Ibid., XIX (July, 1908), 378-379.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid., XX (October, 1908), 89.

moved to Louisville, Kentucky, to be near the center of her husband's current activities. Here she became a teacher of a Sunday afternoon Bible study class in the Broadway Baptist Church. Here in the city of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Rev. John W. Michaels thought it would be an ideal location for another Baptist church for the deaf. He felt it would be an ideal situation for a prospective missionary to the deaf, either deaf or hearing, to receive an education to prepare for his ministry while receiving the experience of pastoring a church. There, however, was some opposition to the plan, and this dream was abandoned. It was in 1914 when he wrote to the Home Mission Board that for two or three years he tried to raise funds to secure a lot and a building for a church for the deaf in Louisville. He said that he encountered much disappointment in this attempt. Illness in the last year (1913-1914) handicapped him.<sup>30</sup>

In 1913 Rev. J. W. Michaels suffered a serious illness which required bone surgery and left the left side of his face partially paralyzed. To cover the scars of surgery, he grew the sideburns and goatee so familiar in the latter days of his ministry. During his illness and convalescence, Mrs. Michaels was constantly at his side. She became ill and died. This was a great bereavement for him. Together with

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<sup>30</sup>J. W. Michaels, "Preaching to the Silent People," The Home Field, XXV (June, 1914), 9.

his beloved companion, he reared four daughters, all of whom became teachers of the deaf and served as Sunday School teachers and interpreters wherever they lived. They were Elizabeth Gallaudet Wriggle, who for more than forty years was a teacher in the Arkansas School for the Deaf and served as Sunday School teacher and interpreter for the deaf in the First Baptist Church of Little Rock; Mrs. Samuella Vaiden Simons, who taught in the Oregon School for the Deaf and taught Sunday School classes and interpreted for the deaf at the First Baptist Church in Fort Smith and Van Buren, Arkansas; Mrs. Mary Bess Riggs, who taught at the Tennessee School for the Deaf and was appointed in 1926 as Superintendent of the Arkansas School for the Deaf which she held until her death in 1935; and Mrs. Miriam Hoult Johnson, who taught in the Oklahoma and Texas Schools for the Deaf and has identified herself with religious activities for the deaf wherever she lives. After Mrs. Michaels' death and his recovery, Rev. John Michaels literally buried himself in his evangelism.

In 1914 Mr. Michaels had been an evangelist to the deaf under the Home Mission Board for eight years. At this time approximately twenty deaf classes were in existence.<sup>31</sup>

Mr. Michaels reported that some classes were started but disbanded for lack of leaders for the time being. Cities

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<sup>31</sup>Ibid., 8-9. For a full report of deaf classes in 1914, see Appendix III.

and churches were listed as follows:

Little Rock, Arkansas	First Baptist Church
Louisville, Kentucky	Broadway Baptist Church
Kansas City, Missouri	Calvary Baptist Church
Dallas, Texas	Baptist Church
Columbia, South Carolina	Methodist Church
Augusta, Georgia	Baptist Church 32

Speaking of the church for the deaf in Fort Worth, Texas, in the same report, he said:

The little Deaf-Mute Baptist Church at Fort Worth, Texas, has been paid for by the deaf people and friends and has been deeded over to the Home Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention. The church is in good hand, yet some who did nothing to help the church in time of need wish to create a dissension because of the deeding of the property to the Board. We sadly need a good deaf Baptist preacher to live in Fort Worth, preach every Sunday and make daily pastoral visits, and to help the deaf in many ways. There are about sixty deaf people living in North Fort Worth, and about a hundred more within reach of the city by trolley lines.<sup>33</sup>

In 1917 Mr. J. W. Michaels wrote:

You would suppose that it costs a great deal of money to do all this traveling. On the contrary, in my case it costs but very little, from the fact that the large railroads all accord me annual complimentary passes to reach the unfortunate ones to whom I minister. My traveling expenses sometimes amount to less than two dollars per month.<sup>34</sup>

These statements help us to understand how he was able to reach many mission points which later were extended

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<sup>32</sup>Ibid.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid.

<sup>34</sup>J. W. Michaels, "Preaching the Gospel to the Deaf," Home and Foreign Fields, I (April, 1917), 12.

to Illinois and western regions with limited expenses allocated him and other missionaries by the Home Mission Board.

Mr. Michaels' statistics of his work for the year, 1920-1921, were: 277 sermons preached, 47 additions to the church, and \$259.81 collected.<sup>35</sup>

In 1921 he was married to Miss Nyra Marshall of Richmond, Virginia, also a former student at the Virginia School for the Deaf and Blind in Staunton, Virginia.<sup>36</sup>

Frank E. Burkhalter, Publicity Director of the Home Mission Board, wrote an article about the Board's ministry to the deaf which was published in November, 1921,. This news was designated to create interest among the hearing Baptist readers in the deaf work and to enlist more workers for the deaf field. It gives an insight into the work being done during that year and a list of the classes in existence.

Brother Michaels' daughter, Mrs. S. Douglas Johnson of Dallas, serves in this capacity (interpreter) at the First Baptist Church of that city, and thus the deaf persons attending that congregation have the privilege of enjoying the sermons of Pastor Truett at the same time the other members of the church do. Several deaf persons have been led, under Dr. Truett's and Mrs. Johnson's ministry, to accept Christ as their Saviour, and Mrs. Johnson has interpreted the words of the pastor at the baptism to the candidates and thus they realize the import of the step they are taking . . . .

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<sup>35</sup>Ibid., V (June-July, 1921), 33.

<sup>36</sup>"John Walter Michaels," The Virginia Guide, LXIX (October, 1942), 2.

Sunday School classes for the deaf are organized in about forty of the leading cities of the South . . . . Among the cities where classes for the deaf have been organized in the Baptist churches are Washington, Baltimore, Richmond, Norfolk and Staunton, Virginia, Durham and Charlotte, N.C., Columbia and Greenville, S.C., Atlanta, Birmingham, Nashville, Memphis, Knoxville, and Bristol, Tenn., Little Rock, Fort Smith, and Van Buren, Ark., Oklahoma City and Tulsa, Okla., Kansas City and Fulton, Mo., and Dallas, Fort Worth, Houston, Austin, San Antonio, Waco, Temple, and Denton, Texas. In only two of these places do the leaders among the deaf receive any compensation for their services.<sup>37</sup>

In 1923 Rev. J. W. Michaels, one of the few living authorities on the language of signs—a language he used with such dynamic effect in his ministry—completed a Handbook of the Sign Language of the Deaf. This manual was designed primarily as an aid to hearing ministers, laymen, seminary students, and missionary workers who might be interested in spreading the gospel message among the deaf. Mr. L. B. Dickerson, a deaf linotypist, of Atlanta, Georgia, now deceased, assisted Mr. Michaels in the preparation of this book. In his preface Rev. J. W. Michaels penned these lines:

Thanks Due Dr. B. D. Gray

The thanks of the deaf people of the world over are due Dr. B. D. Gray, Corresponding Secretary of the Home Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, because of his great interest in the mission for the deaf, and the issuing of this little handbook of the sign language which will be placed with religious workers that may be able to help the deaf spiritually and in whatever way they can for their betterment. Without his earnest inquiry as to the condition of the deaf people in every

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<sup>37</sup>Burkhalter, loc. cit.

phase of life, and his earnest efforts to help them from a religious standpoint through their missionary, there would be no Baptist missionary for the deaf. Verily he takes his place as one of the benefactors of the deaf in the world.

Thanks Due to Dr. J. F. Love

When Dr. J. F. Love was Corresponding Secretary of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, some twenty years ago, he graciously espoused the course of a missionary to the deaf in the State of Arkansas and your present missionary for the deaf was called to take up the work in that state alone. Later on he suggested that the mission work be extended to all the Southern States. This led to the Home Mission Board's, through Dr. B. D. Gray's efforts, creating the present position of missionary to the deaf. Dr. Love, now Corresponding Secretary of the Foreign Mission Board, still takes interest in the deaf in foreign lands.

Great thanks are due him and he will be revered by all deaf people who may know of these facts.

All hail to these two benefactors of the deaf - Dr. B. D. Gray and Dr. J. F. Love.<sup>38</sup>

The volume was prepared as

a labor of love and its dedication to the Home Mission Board is a token of appreciation for what the Board is doing for the deaf mutes of our land in helping the deaf to hear and the dumb to speak the story of the Cross.<sup>39</sup>

The Years of the Leadership of Michaels and Others,  
1926-1945

It was in 1923 that Mr. Michaels was most fortunate in finding a deaf man, Adolph O. Wilson, to share his work

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<sup>38</sup>John W. Michaels, Handbook of the Sign Language of the Deaf (Atlanta: Home Mission Board, Southern Baptist Convention, 1923).

<sup>39</sup>Ibid.

who was acceptable to the Home Mission Board on February 4, 1926, and whose work under the Board was effective on June 1, 1926.<sup>40</sup> Mr. Wilson was born in Sweden and was a member of the Swedish Baptist Church in Stockholm. He came to the United States in his late teens. His parents were devout Christians and gave him an English Bible to take with him to the new country. During his passage across the ocean, Mr. Wilson made comparison of Scriptures from his old Swedish and new English Bibles. In this way came his first self-taught lessons in the English language. A number of years later he became a teacher of tailoring in the Arkansas School for the Deaf. He and Principal Michaels became close Christian friends and workers. In the early part of the twentieth century, Mr. Wilson accepted a similar position at the Texas School for the Deaf in Austin, Texas. He was connected with the Swedish church in that city. Together he and Rev. J. W. Michaels organized the Sunday School for the deaf people of Austin on the campus of the school for the deaf as well as the Christian Endeavor Society for the older students of the school. Mr. Wilson became the teacher of the class and the sponsor of the Endeavor until he was called to work under the Board. During these years he had studied and prepared

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<sup>40</sup>Minutes of the Meeting of the Executive Committee, February 4, 1926, Home Mission Board, Southern Baptist Convention, Atlanta, Georgia. From May 1, 1925 to April 25, 1927, 122.

for the ministry. He had served as lay preacher on many occasions. He moved his membership from the Swedish church to the East Avenue Baptist Church in Austin to become layman helper and a licensed preacher for the deaf.<sup>41</sup>

In June, 1926, the property of the church for the deaf in Fort Worth, Texas, had gone up to \$15,000. The parsonage next to the church was used by Rev. J. W. Michaels as his headquarters. On the thirteenth of that month Mr. A. O. Wilson's ordination took place in the Baptist Deaf-Mute Church there. The council of moderators were Dr. Forrest Smith, Broadway Baptist Church; Dr. C. V. Edwards, College Avenue Baptist Church; and Rev. J. W. Michaels. Approximately two hundred deaf people from Fort Worth and nearby towns attended this special occasion. Mrs. Miriam Johnson interpreted the service.<sup>42</sup> The two evangelists worked well together, and thus their combined efforts strengthened their ministry.

The South Carolina Alumni Association of the Deaf met at the Citadel Square Baptist Church in Charleston, South Carolina, July 26, 1928. Dr. Pursor, pastor of the church, offered them the use of the church. The alumni meeting was

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<sup>41</sup>J. W. Michaels, "Baptist Church for the Deaf Ordains a Deaf Minister," Home and Foreign Fields, X (August, 1926), 16.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid.

closed with a sermon by Dr. Pursor with a hearing interpreter on Sunday morning. The deaf missionaries, Rev. John Walter Michaels and Rev. Adolph O. Wilson, were too far away to attend this meeting.<sup>43</sup>

Rev. A. O. Wilson and Rev. J. W. Michaels attended several conventions of the deaf in order to render the spiritual part of the meeting. Mr. Wilson attended the convention in Louisiana, Tennessee, and Virginia, while Rev. Mr. Michaels attended those in Arkansas and Virginia. It is not known whether one or both of them did attend the conference in North Carolina held during that year.<sup>44</sup>

In 1928 Rev. Mr. Michaels visited the deaf Baptist Young People's Union, commonly known as B. Y. P. U., at the Tabernacle Baptist Church in Atlanta, Georgia. He founded it the previous year (November, 1927), and its membership grew from seventeen to sixty-five, the average attendance being thirty-four. This union had its first annual supper on November 22, 1928. The Union leader at this time was Mrs. Murace Bishop, nee Campbell, who was a product of the Florida School for the Deaf.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>43</sup>"Conventions of Deaf-Mute People in the United States," ibid., XII (November, 1928), 26.

<sup>44</sup>Ibid.

<sup>45</sup>"Deaf-Mute B. Y. P. U. in Atlanta," ibid., XII (January, 1929), 32.

In the same year Mr. Michaels expressed his surprise that the Catholic clergy bought his Handbook of the Sign Language of the Deaf more than all others combined, though his book was prepared primarily for the Baptists and Protestants. It was thought that the Catholics used the signs with foreigners who had little or no previous knowledge of the English language and who had come to this country as immigrants. The volume on the language of signs was sold for either seventy-five cents or a dollar, depending upon the grade of paper.<sup>46</sup>

The name of the Baptist Deaf-Mute Church in Fort Worth, Texas, was changed to the First Baptist Church for the Deaf in 1930. Mr. Michaels wrote:

The deed to the property is made over to the Home Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, to have and to hold forever for religious purposes for the deaf mutes of Fort Worth and Texas in general. Your missionary understanding the mental attitude of the deaf mutes deemed it best for the safety and continuity of the church to have the two following provisions embodied in the deed: First, that the pastor of the church should always be of the Baptist denomination, and Second, that in case the deaf should neglect to use the property for religious purposes for a duration of twelve months, then the Home Mission Board should use the property for whatever purpose it deemed proper. These two specifications have already protected us on two occasions.

In every community of the deaf people there are some of different denominations, and this place is no exception. We invite and encourage all denominations

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<sup>46</sup>J. W. Michaels, "The Handbook of the Sign Language of the Deaf," ibid., XIII (March, 1929), 30.

to worship with us, with the understanding that the church is under Baptist management. Other denominations are allowed to invite their ministers to use the platform for religious purposes, provided that one-third of the collections from their meetings be given for the upkeep of the church expense.

We have had on our roster as many as seventy-eight members. However, because of commotions brought on by floating deaf people, and removals from the city, we now have forty-two members. There are some two hundred deaf people living in and around the city and at times our church is filled to its full capacity.<sup>47</sup>

By January 1, 1930, Mr. Michaels had his home at 704 Park Street in Fort Worth, and his work was now confined mostly to the area west of the Mississippi River. Mr. Adolph Wilson had his home at 29 Prescott Avenue, N.E., in Atlanta, and his work was that of covering the territory east of the River.<sup>48</sup>

Speaking of his work during the year of 1930, Rev.

A. O. Wilson wrote:

Since January 1, 1930, until November 25, 1930, I have visited, once or more, eighty-nine of the 117, or perhaps more, mission points established. My labor has mostly been in the East, Brother Michaels' labor being confined to the West with occasional visits to the East.

During this time I have preached 141 sermons, delivered 131 religious lectures, conducted fifty-four prayer-meetings, five baptisms, contributions \$279.88, visits to shut-ins, hospitals, etc., 349.

Have preached to about 4,000 of our deaf people. The large majority of them are settled on out-of-the-

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<sup>47</sup>"The Gospel Reaching the Deaf," ibid., XIV (June, 1930), 12.

<sup>48</sup>"Work Among the Deaf," Southern Baptist Home Missions, I (January, 1930, 19.

way farms but they long to hear the Word of God so when one of us comes to a given point, they will attend from a radius of sixty-nine miles when the weather and roads are favorable.

Scattered among these 117 stations, we have sixty-two Bible classes, B. Y. P. U. or Sunday Schools, some of them strong and outstanding such as at Dallas, Houston and Waco, Texas, Atlanta, Ga., Nashville, Knoxville, Tenn., Columbia, S.C., Charlotte and Raleigh, N.C., and Louisville, Ky. . . .<sup>49</sup>

During the March Week of Prayer in 1931 Rev. J. W. Michaels collected \$4.55 from the deaf of Fort Worth for home missions, while Mr. Wilson collected \$5.00 from the deaf of Little Rock. The contribution of more than nine dollars was considered very good, since many deaf people were out of work during the early years of the depression. Mr. Michaels wrote to Mr. Wilson the following lines:

Our church members are dependent upon their jobs for food and clothing and most of them are out of work and could give but very little but I told them that the little will help, that little drops of water make the great ocean.

Conditions among the Deaf in Arkansas are appalling. I have been trying to do some relief work for the Deaf in the drouth section of this State. I have loaned the Deaf about \$175.00 to date and trust to get it back when better times come.<sup>50</sup>

Mr. Wilson attended the fifth annual convention of the deaf of four states in Monett, Missouri, in 1931. The meeting was concluded on Sunday afternoon, with Mr. Wilson

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<sup>49</sup>"The Deaf Mutes Hear the Gospel," Southern Baptist Home Missions, II (January, 1931), 7.

<sup>50</sup>"Deaf Offerings for March Week of Prayer," ibid., II (April, 1931), 11.

in charge. The deaf people expressed their appreciation for the hospitality and kindness of the Monett people but voted to go to Joplin next year. Mr. Wilson opposed this move and expressed the sweet memories the deaf would always retain for Monett. There were two conversions at this time. Mr. Wilson later wrote that as a result of the Monett meeting three more were to be baptized at Joplin on his next visit.<sup>51</sup>

Rev. A. O. Wilson conducted worship services for the deaf at the Fourth Avenue Baptist Church in Louisville, Kentucky, October 24-25, 1931, and at the Central Baptist Church in Corbin, Kentucky, October 30-31, 1931. Of the latter, he wrote:

We have a small but fine Bible class at Corbin, Kentucky, where I was October 30th and 31st in the Central Baptist Church. We, the deaf, were royally entertained after the service by the pastor S. W. Ellers, and the good ladies of the church with a fine dinner in the basement, and as one present expressed herself: 'It was as good as any Thanksgiving or Christmas dinner I ever ate'; to which all agreed. God bless those fine people.

Corbin is a fine little city with beautiful surroundings. An effort will be made to arrange for an all day service like the one at Monett, Missouri, some Sunday the coming Summer. We think that over 100 can come from all parts of the State and I am sure that both the pastor and the good people of the Central will cooperate with us.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>51</sup>"Deaf Close Successful Convention at Monett," Baptist Home Missions, II (October, 1931), 11 and 13.

<sup>52</sup>A. O. Wilson, "Among the Deaf," ibid., III (January, 1932), 16.

Since October 1, 1931, Mr. Wilson visited six state schools for the deaf in Mississippi, Louisiana, Kentucky, Tennessee, North Carolina, and South Carolina. Speaking of the religious instruction offered in these institutions, he stated:

The religious training in these schools is fine. South Carolina has very impressive Chapel services each morning before school, others every Wednesday, prayers in the classrooms before study, and of course, Sunday School and Chapel service. This is fine and as it should be but after leaving school it is up to us Missionaries and Sunday School teachers (where we have them) to keep up the work begun.<sup>53</sup>

The first mention of Rev. and Mrs. J. W. Gardner was made in Baptist Home Missions issued January, 1933. A list of mission volunteers was given in this issue. Rev. J. W. Michaels wrote: "Texas: Rev. and Mrs. Gardner, a hearing preacher who has become partially deaf and is taking up signs so as to preach to the deaf."<sup>54</sup>

February and March, 1933, were bad months for Rev. A. O. Wilson who experienced a wind and rain storm in Beaumont, Texas, a wet and extreme cold weather in other places, and rain and hail in Springfield, Missouri. While he was in Fulton, Missouri, where he spoke at the state school for the deaf and also at the First Baptist Church, he had a spring-

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<sup>53</sup>Ibid.

<sup>54</sup>Dr. J. W. Michaels, "Volunteer Missionaries to the Deaf," ibid., IV (January, 1933), 14.

like weather. From Fulton he went to St. Louis, Missouri, where he preached to the deaf at the Lansdowne Baptist Church, East St. Louis, Illinois, on a Wednesday night in March and at the Third Baptist Church, St. Louis, the following Sunday. In his letter to the Board about the work in St. Louis, he said:

St. Louis is the hardest place in the whole field to organize. We have a class there at the Third Baptist Church but only a few members, yet there are more than 800 in the city.<sup>55</sup>

In 1933 the Home Mission Board gave the statistics of the deaf work for the previous year:

Numbers of Workers	2
Days of Service	661
Classes in Various States	99
Number of Sunday Schools	100
Sermons and Addresses	356
Conversions	89
Baptisms	51
Religious Visits	377
Prayer Meetings Conducted	48
Mission Stations Visited	219
Cash Collected	\$270.21 <sup>56</sup>

In April, 1934, the summary of the deaf ministry was as follows: two workers, 110 classes, 278 sermons and addresses, 113 conversions and baptisms, and 425 mission stations visited.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>55</sup>Ibid., IV (April, 1933), 16.

<sup>56</sup>Ibid., IV (July, 1933), 6.

<sup>57</sup>"Among the Deaf Mutes," ibid., V (April, 1934), 28.

On September 1, 1934, Rev. C. F. Landon was appointed by the Home Mission Board as a student missionary. He was born to deaf parents at Fort Smith, Arkansas, on August 2, 1908. There were several deaf relatives in the family, and Mr. Landon grew up in the deaf atmosphere, thus enabling him to possess a keen insight into the thinking and feeling of the deaf. He was converted at the age of twenty-three in Commerce, Oklahoma, on April 8, 1931. Soon he felt the call of God to preach to the deaf. He took summer courses at the Oklahoma Baptist University for two years. He attended the Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, for a year and a half. He accepted the call to pastor the church for the deaf in this city. Mr. Michaels then retired to his beloved farm near Mountainburg, Arkansas, with his second wife, Nyra O. Michaels, who proved to be a great helpmate and inspiration to him through his declining years. Rev. C. F. Landon was pastor of the First Baptist Church for the Deaf until its abandonment. (It was not until 1949 when the Home Mission Board took complete possession of the church property according to the stipulations in the deed.)

The summary of the year of the deaf work given in the report in the mid-year of 1935 was:

We have four faithful workers who gave 845 days of service to the evangelization and spiritual welfare of the 45,000 deaf in the Southern Baptist Convention territory last year. These workers report 114 classes of groups of deaf that meet with some regularity. In

their personal work they report 166 persons that have been reached, and 105 baptisms. They have distributed 118 Bibles and Testaments, made 514 religious visits, conducted 57 prayer meetings, delivered 285 sermons and 263 other addresses.<sup>58</sup>

In his 1936 report to the Home Mission Board Rev.

Mr. Michaels summarized the work in this manner:

Six workers; 1020 days of service; 116 classes; 226 sermons; 188 religious addresses; 58 prayer meetings; 565 religious visits; 20 Bibles and 1330 tracts distributed; 190 baptisms; 96 Sunday Schools; 60 reached in personal work.<sup>59</sup>

Despite his advanced years, Rev. J. W. Michaels continued to take an active interest in the ministry to the deaf until his death. His correspondence with deaf friends seeking counsel, advice, and financial assistance was voluminous. He accepted many calls for special services or to appear as guest speaker or to resolve differences that sometimes occurred in the Sunday School groups.

In 1936 classes for the deaf were found at the following places:

- (1) Washington, D.C. - 1 class.
- (2) Maryland - 2 classes; Baltimore and Frederick.
- (3) Virginia - 7 classes; Richmond, Lynchburg, Roanoke, Bristol, Staunton, Harrisonburg, Danville.
- (4) Kentucky - 5 classes; Louisville, Lexington, Danville, Covington, Corbin.
- (5) North Carolina - 14 classes; Raleigh, High Point, Winston-Salem, Greensboro, Wilmington, Salisbury,

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<sup>58</sup>"Missions to the Deaf," Southern Baptist Home Missions, VI (April-July, 1935), 40ff.

<sup>59</sup>Ibid., VII (July, 1936), 40.

- Ashland, Turkey, Durham, Charlotte, Concord, Goldsboro, Statesville, Morganton.
- (6) Tennessee - 6 classes; Memphis, Nashville, Chattanooga, Dumas, Johnson City, Jackson.
  - (7) South Carolina - 4 classes; Columbia, Greenville, Cedar Springs, Filbert.
  - (8) Alabama - 5 classes; Birmingham (2 places), Montgomery, Mobile, Gadsden.
  - (9) Mississippi - 3 classes; Jackson, Vicksburg, Meridian.
  - (10) Louisiana - 6 classes; New Orleans (Baptist, Episcopal and Catholic), Shreveport, Baton Rouge, Monroe.
  - (11) Missouri - 8 classes; St. Louis, Fulton, Kansas City (2 places), St. Joseph, Joplin, Springfield, Monett.
  - (12) Arkansas - 5 classes; Little Rock, Fort Smith, Benton, Jonesboro, Rogers.
  - (13) Oklahoma - 3 classes; Oklahoma City, Tulsa, Sulphur.
  - (14) Texas - 8 classes; Dallas, Fort Worth, Waco, Austin, San Antonio, Denton, Houston, Temple.<sup>60</sup>

In July, 1938, Rev. J. W. Gardner was appointed by the Home Mission Board as a full-time missionary to the deaf. He was born in Melbourne, Arkansas, October 30, 1884, and was converted at the age of ten. He was a graduate of the University of Arkansas, having received his Bachelor of Arts degree in 1906, and a graduate of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, with a Master of Theology degree conferred upon him in 1914. He pursued additional studies in 1918-1920. He traveled all over the Southland preaching to the deaf and speaking to the hearing people about the deaf and their needs. He spoke at Ridgecrest Baptist Assembly in North Carolina and

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<sup>60</sup>J. W. Michaels, "Location of Home Mission Board Classes for the Deaf," ibid., 14.

in the schools of missions on several occasions.

In 1939, at the age of eighty-nine, Rev. John Walter Michaels and his wife journeyed to Washington, D.C., where the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity was conferred on him by Gallaudet College. Realizing that this would probably be his last journey, he made arrangements to preach in all the larger cities en route and return. Friends who came from miles around to hear him preach at each service attested to their love and appreciation for his long years of service to them.

On January 26, 1939, Rev. A. O. Wilson passed away in Dallas, Texas. A tribute to him appeared in the Southern Baptist Home Mission magazine:

Fifty Years Service Ends as Missionary  
Is Claimed by Death

After nearly a half century of religious and educational work with the deaf, Rev. A. O. Wilson, missionary for thirteen years under the Home Mission Board, died at home in Dallas, Texas, on Thursday morning, January 26.

Death came suddenly early in the morning, Mrs. Wilson being present.

Brother Wilson was appointed by the Home Mission Board in 1926 after he had taught in schools for the deaf in Arkansas, Texas, and Oklahoma for over thirty years. He had been active in the church even while engaging in the teaching profession, this activity leading to his appointment.

Born in Stockholm, Sweden, June 2, 1867, he was reared in a devout Christian home. An attack of scarlet fever at the age of ten deprived him of his speech and hearing.

Trained for the tailor's trade in the Swedish schools for the deaf, young Wilson came to the United States at

twenty, and joined a brother who also was a tailor at Corsicana, Texas. He soon became prominent in the Association of the Deaf in Texas, being elected president in 1893.

A year later he became a teacher, a profession he followed until he entered the ministry upon being appointed by the Board in 1926.

His mission work was chiefly in the states west of the Mississippi River, preaching to groups in the larger cities and in schools for the deaf, and enlisting volunteer workers wherever possible to carry on Bible classes regularly.<sup>61</sup>

It is uncertain in what year Rev. Grady O. Watson began his ministry to the deaf. It is in all probability that he entered into the picture around 1939 or 1940. He preached to the deaf at Lexington, Danville, and Covington, Kentucky, while he was a student at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville. In one service at Danville twenty deaf persons were converted. Mr. Watson then moved to New Orleans to attend the Baptist Bible Institute, currently known as the New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, and served through the First Baptist Church as minister to the deaf while attending the seminary.<sup>62</sup>

As Dr. B. Locke Davis, pastor of the First Baptist Church in Springfield, Missouri, stood in the pool about to baptize a young deaf woman, the baptismal service was stopped

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<sup>61</sup>"Fifty Years Service Ends as Missionary Is Claimed by Death," ibid., X (March, 1939), 10.

<sup>62</sup>"Minister to Deaf Dies," ibid., XX (February, 1949), 15.

in order to receive into the church membership the husband of the candidate. This unique incident, which took place in the summer of 1940, was described in a report.

This moving scene was a high point in special service for the deaf conducted by Dr. Davis at the conclusion of annual convention for the deaf last summer at Monett, Mo.

Following the convention, in which Rev. C. F. Landon, Home Mission Board missionary to the deaf, spoke daily, the Springfield Church welcomed the deaf as their special guests at Sunday morning service.

The pastor's message was interpreted by Bro. Landon. During the baptismal service which follow, Brother Landon stood where both the candidates and the deaf group could see him and interpreted the ceremony.

It was during this service, according to Dr. Davis, that the young man interrupted the baptizing to profess Christ and join his wife and other candidates. He and his wife stood in the baptismal pool together, the last two to be baptized in the service.

With the exception of these two, the twelve candidates were all saved in services conducted by Bro. Landon.

The larger auditorium of Springfield First Church, including the balcony, packed for this special service, Dr. Davis reports. Many told the pastor that it was the most impressive service that they had ever witnessed.

"It opened the eyes of many for the first time," Dr. Davis added, "to the great need for this type of work, and assured a greater interest on the part of our membership in the fine program for the deaf which centers in our church. This special service in our church will likely prove to be an annual affair."<sup>63</sup>

In May, 1941, there were five southern Baptist missionaries to the deaf: Rev. and Mrs. C. F. Landon,

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<sup>63</sup>"Deaf Converts, Won in Annual Convention, Welcomed by Church," ibid., XI (October, 1940), 4.

serving the deaf west of the Mississippi River; Rev. and Mrs. J. W. Gardner, contacting the deaf all over the Southland, especially east of the river; and Dr. J. W. Michaels, though retired, still being active at the age of eighty-nine and contacting the deaf classes by correspondence.<sup>64</sup>

By May of the following year there were only two Home Mission Board missionaries to the deaf, not counting their wives, with C. F. Landon and J. W. Gardner serving the deaf in the same sections mentioned above.

The church for the deaf in Fort Worth, Texas, was again featured in the Home Mission Board's monthly magazine, this time in the September, 1941, issue:

The Deaf Baptist Church of Fort Worth, Texas, organized on July 27 as the result of Home Missions, is the only one of its kind in the world.

Twenty-two charter members, including five baptized by Home Mission Board missionary C. F. Landon, constituted this new church which was organized by a presbytery of eight Fort Worth pastors.

Present to deliver the inaugural sermon was Rev. J. W. Gardner, the second of the Home Mission Board's staff of two workers among the deaf.

The sermon, delivered simultaneously in the sign language and vocally for the benefit of visitors, was on the text, "On this rock I will build my church."

Both church ordinances--baptism and the Lord's Supper--were features of the full day of services.

Brother Landon, who has been in charge of the work at the mission since 1934, is pastor of the new church and will divide his time between the pastorate and his work as missionary to the deaf west of the Mississippi

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<sup>64</sup>Ibid., XII (May, 1941), 10.

River.

L. R. Hiatt was elected church clerk and Tom Davis church treasurer.

"I never saw such an enthusiastic group," Brother Landon commented jubilantly. "Even those who will not join the church for family reasons agreed that this was something that should have been done long ago."

Fort Worth pastors composing the presbytery were Jesse Garrett, moderator, Malcolm W. Stuart, H. T. Brannon, C. R. Bullock, Earl W. Hatchett, Jimmy Morgan, James W. Baldwin, and E. M. Agee, Tarrant County Missionary.

Work with the deaf in Fort Worth was begun in 1906 by Dr. J. W. Michaels, pioneer missionary, who led the deaf themselves to raise funds and to build a chapel which is the only mission building for the deaf ever built by a worker of the Home Mission Board.

A product of the mission was Rev. A. O. Wilson who for some twenty years prior to his death in 1939 was a missionary of the Board among the deaf.<sup>65</sup>

The Lord was gracious to the Rev. Mr. Michaels in his death on September 29, 1942. There was no pain or last throes. Throughout his last illness, he made weak attempts during periods of consciousness to sign the hymns or passages of Scripture he loved so well. His last words to one of his daughters at his bedside in a moment of recognition was "Do your best for Jesus." As he took his last quiet breath, he was signing the Twenty-third Psalm. So softly did the angel of death come that none realized this beloved man was gone until one of his friends at his bedside noticed that the paralyzed lid of his right eye had closed.

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8. <sup>65</sup>"Deaf Church Formed," ibid., XII (September, 1941),

To the dear Christian friends whom he had loved and served for so many years, he had become known as "Our Little Minister." His was a dynamic personality, and his Christian influence had been felt throughout many parts of the country, because he had accepted preaching calls to many large cities in the Union. He was extremely versatile with an inexhaustible repertoire of wit and wisdom. His had been a long and colorful career, best remembered for his countless sermons that were a source of inspiration to his listeners. One of his favorite passages of Scripture was the conversation between Jesus and Peter as recorded in the Gospel of St. John 21:15-17. And to the last, the little minister loved the lambs and sheep of the field.

No more fitting tribute could be written than one by one of his daughters, Mary Bess Riggs, shortly before her death, which read,

The world would not have censured this grand old man whose hands preached the Gospel had his sphere of activity been one of much smaller diameter. He might easily have chosen a life of dependence on hearing brothers, but instead he broadened his life into one of unlimited service, in which has been no room for envy of his more fortunate men blessed with the gift of hearing.

No more fitting tribute could have been paid to Dr. J. W. Michaels in the presence of his beloved friends from miles around than the Scripture used by his close friend and fellow-minister, the Rev. O. F. Dingler, pastor

of Congress Avenue Baptist Church, Austin, Texas, as the central thought of his message at the graveside--the words of the apostle Paul: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith" (2 Timothy 4:7).

The Years of Missionary Expansion,  
1946-1964

Rev. and Mrs. Leslie Gunn were appointed by the Home Mission Board in April of 1946. Rev. Leslie Gunn was born in Durant, Oklahoma, on November 24, 1908, and was converted at about the age of twelve in Mount Pleasant, Texas. He attended Oklahoma Baptist University for a year. His wife was born in Drumwright, Oklahoma, on July 29, 1916, and was saved in Corpus Christi, Texas, when she was twenty-three years old. They lived and worked in Corpus Christi for a number of years until 1942 when they moved to Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. Most of his mission work has been spent in the State of Oklahoma, with occasional visits to Kansas City and Joplin, Missouri.

On June 1, 1947, the sixteenth annual convention for the deaf of the Ozarks was held at Monett, Missouri. It was founded in 1927 and is a religious association for the deaf. Of one day's duration, it affords an opportunity for the deaf to hear the gospel. Mr. Landon participated in nearly all Monett conventions. Dr. J. W. Michaels was the first Home Mission Board representative at the meeting.

Monett, Missouri, was voted by the convention as a permanent place of meeting as a memorial to Miss Cora Withers, founder of the organization.<sup>66</sup>

In 1947 Rev. Grady O. Watson moved to Meridian, Mississippi, where he served Macedonia Baptist Church as pastor, at the same time ministering to the deaf in Meridian. A year later on November 16, 1948, he died of a heart attack near Meridian.<sup>67</sup>

Rev. J. W. Gardner felt the need of a Southwide conference for the Baptist deaf and their workers, and this idea germinated in the mind of Mr. W. L. Asbridge, a deaf deacon of the First Baptist Church in Memphis, Tennessee, who conferred with Rev. J. W. Gardner and Mrs. Fay Lanham, interpreter of the Silent Department of Mr. Asbridge's church, about various problems arising in the deaf work. Rev. J. W. Gardner's vision coupled with his zeal brought this need into realization on December 29, 1948, in Memphis. Eighteen messengers from four or five states were present at the first meeting, and thus, the Southwide Baptist Conference of the Deaf came into existence.

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<sup>66</sup>"Christian Fellowship Convention for the Deaf," ibid., XVIII (September, 1947), 13.

<sup>67</sup>"Minister to Deaf Dies," ibid., XX (February, 1949), 15.

The article regarding the ordination service of Mr. Carter Bearden appeared in the monthly magazine of the Home Mission Board as follows:

Sunday, April 24, a council of pastors from the Austin Baptist Association organized at Congress Avenue Baptist Church to ordain to the gospel ministry a young man of great promise, Rev. Carter Bearden. The house of worship was packed with people from Dallas, Waco, Fort Worth, Houston, and Austin. Several busses were chartered for the event. Intense interest was focused on the service.

When the special music was brought by Mr. and Mrs. Walter Johnson of Baylor University, a quartet of girls interpreted to the eager congregation. When Dr. W. C. Raines questioned the candidate, the accurate and spirit-filled answers were conveyed again through a third person. Deacon Carey Shaw from Houston led the ordination prayer, and as he did so God heard not words, but saw quick nimble fingers plead the cause of a newly commissioned servant. Rev. C. A. Baskin, president of the Austin Pastors' Conference, made the charge as he placed "the sword of the Spirit" into Carter's agile hands that were not only the medium of giving and receiving, but hands which would in coming years voice the eternal verities of God to men whose voices and whose ears are closed to the world.

The sacred service seemed to reach the climax when Dr. Blake Smith of the University Baptist Church spoke to the great host of silent friends on "The Church." Dr. Smith renewed the assurance that the greatest power in the world is a silent prayer.

Serving just as inconspicuously as an interpreter was Mrs. S. D. Johnson, daughter of Dr. J. W. Michaels, first Southern Baptist missionary to the deaf. The hours she had spent as superintendent of the Silent Department in the Sunday School of Congress Avenue Baptist Church and in personal contact with the hundreds who have passed through it are inestimable and invaluable to the kingdom of God. She saw Mr. Bearden as a boy to the Silent Department, advance to Gallaudet College for the Deaf in Washington, D.C., and then go back to Baylor University, where by reading lips alone, he has become a student of high standing. Her kind, patient hours of service have silently brought many a youth to the knowledge of God. Her mind is an epitome of thrilling stories concerning

boys and girls who have succeeded despite their handicaps.

When Rev. Jarrel Gaddy closed the minutes of that meeting, we are reminded that in the providence of God that Rev. Carter Bearden becomes the only living silent preacher to be ordained in Texas.<sup>68</sup>

The organization of the Texas Baptist Conference of the Deaf was a great milestone in the history of Baptist deaf of that state. In the early part of 1949, Mrs. S. D. Johnson realized the need of a Baptist organization for the Texas deaf and their workers, and it was under her leadership with the cooperation of Rev. Carter Bearden, then a Baylor student, and of the Congress Avenue Baptist Church in Austin that such a conference was organized in August, 1949. It can be said that it was the first Baptist conference for the deaf that meets for three days in a year for inspiration, for problem discussions, and for the exchange of ideas for improvement of the local Sunday Schools, Training Unions, and worship services; whereas, the Missouri conference at Monett meets only one day in a year for fellowship. The deaf congress is patterned after the Texas General Baptist Convention and is affiliated with that Convention. Other states have followed suit in this manner.<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>68</sup>John B. Davidson, "Silent Preacher Ordained," ibid., XX (July, 1949), 5 and 14.

<sup>69</sup>See Appendix IV for a list of states, dates, and founders of other conferences.

The delegates adopted a constitution and elected officers. Rev. Carter Bearden of Dallas, Texas, was elected president of the new organization. Other officers included: Jack Hensley, Austin, first vice president; J. D. Loftin, of Waco, second vice president; and Webster Wheeler, Houston, secretary-treasurer.

Dr. A. C. Miller, secretary of ministries to the minorities of the Texas Baptist Convention, delivered the principal address of the day.<sup>70</sup>

In February, 1949, the Silent Department of the First Baptist Church in Houston, Texas, had a revival, with Rev. J. W. Gardner preaching. This department was started by Rev. J. W. Michaels and had at its inception only five members which grew to be over a hundred at the present. The result of the revival led by Rev. J. W. Gardner was that four were converted and that six united with the church by letter. This meeting was concluded with a banquet in which Dr. Boyd Hunt, pastor of the church, delivered the message interpreted by Mrs. Louis A. Beard.<sup>71</sup>

In October of the same year the Home Mission Board deeded to the Tarrant County Baptist Association, in which the church is located, the property of the church for the deaf in Fort Worth, Texas, which had been abandoned and as

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<sup>70</sup>Carter Bearden, "Texas Organize Deaf Work," Southern Baptist Home Missions, XX (September, 1949), 13.

<sup>71</sup>J. W. Gardner, "Texas Deaf Have Revival Campaign," ibid., XX (April, 1949), 15.

stipulated in the deed was turned over to the Board by Dr. J. W. Michaels, pioneer missionary and founder of the church.

At the regular meeting of the Executive Committee on October 6, 1949, a report of Missions Committee concerning the property of the church for the deaf was presented to the Board along the following lines:

Upon recommendation of Rev. R. Elmer Dunham, missionary of the Tarrant County Baptist Association, in which Fort Worth, Texas, is located, we recommend that the church property for the deaf located at 1801 Lincoln Avenue, Fort Worth, Texas, belonging to the H. M. B., be deeded to the Tarrant County Association on the following conditions: (1) That the building be used for a Mexican mission and that the Tarrant County Association, or churches therein, be responsible for all the expenses in moving and remodeling the building and in carrying on the mission program. (2) That the H. M. B. be given a gift lien contract for the amount of money invested in this property. (3) That the Deaf church which has not used the property for worship for many years be asked to send the H. M. B. the accumulated rentals on this property and that this Board then decide upon the proper distribution of funds, keeping in mind the investments which some of the Deaf people have made in this property.

We further recommend that upon the fulfilment of the above conditions, the proper authorities of the Board be authorized to sign the papers of transfer.

We further recommend that a representative of the Board go to Fort Worth and work this out with the Deaf.<sup>72</sup>

In June, 1952, the fourth annual meeting of the South-wide Baptist Conference of the Deaf was held at the First Bap-

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<sup>72</sup>Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of the Executive Committee, October 6, 1949, Home Mission Board, Southern Baptist Convention, Atlanta, Georgia. From May 1, 1949 to March 1, 1950, 89.

tist Church in Knoxville, Tennessee, with Mrs. S. P. Wright of Columbus, Georgia, presiding. Approximately 125 messengers from several states attended the convention. The new officers for the year of 1952-1953 were: Mr. W. L. Asbridge, Memphis, president; Mrs. Z. W. Embry, Louisville, vice president; Mr. Ted Marsden, Little Rock, secretary; Mrs. Laura Formwalt, Knoxville, assistant secretary; J. W. McCandless, Jackson, Mississippi, Arthur Crow, Little Rock, and Rev. Leslie H. Gunn, Oklahoma City, trustees. The First Baptist Church in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, was chosen as the site of the 1953 meeting.<sup>73</sup>

In 1953 the First Baptist Church in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, observed the fifth anniversary of the Woman's Missionary Society for the Deaf. It was first organized with six members present and had grown to an average of attendance of sixteen members. At the Royal Service program they dressed in Mexican style, and at the home of one of the members some rooms were decorated with all kinds of pictures, potteries, and so forth. The program depicting the Mexican life, culture, and mission was impressive. The gifts were increased by more than seventy-five per cent, and the break-

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<sup>73</sup>"Deaf Hold Southwide Conference," Southern Baptist Home Missions, XXIII (August, 1952), 11-12.

down of the gifts was: \$32.25 for the Lottie Moon Offering, \$14.35 for the Annie Armstrong Offering, and \$4.30 for medicine for a needy lady. The planned program for the following year was to pray for the state mission and to minister to the deaf women in some rest homes and deaf people in a mental hospital in Norman, Oklahoma.<sup>74</sup>

On December 31, 1953, Rev. J. W. Gardner retired as missionary to the deaf.

In March, 1954, the members of the Silent Sunday School and Training Union of the First Baptist Church in Houston, Texas, sent sixty dollars to Miss Pearl Johnson, then Southern Baptist missionary in Formosa, to be used in reaching the deaf of that section with the message of Christ. They were prompted to make this offering after receiving a letter from Miss Johnson in which she told of her efforts to start a class for the deaf in the mission church there.<sup>75</sup>

The Southwide Baptist Conference of the Deaf met at the First Baptist Church in Memphis, Tennessee, June 10-13, 1954. Prior to this meeting, Dr. Robert Hughes attended the Southern Baptist Convention in another city in May and in-

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<sup>74</sup>Mrs. Leslie H. Gunn, "WMS for Deaf Women," ibid., XXIV (October, 1953), 16-17.

<sup>75</sup>"Deaf Group Helps Deaf in Formosa," ibid., XXV (April, 1954), 4.

formed another pastor that he was going to attend the deaf conference, and the latter asked if it was "an off brand." The former replied that the said conference was cooperating with the Home Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention. So at the June meeting he suggested that the name of the convention for the deaf be changed to the "Southern Baptist Conference of the Deaf" and that it be affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention. This resolution was passed unanimously by the messengers present there. They then passed another resolution by Dr. Robert Hughes that an information booth be set up at the Southern Baptist Convention at its annual meeting in order to inform the hearing Baptists about the deaf work and its needs. The Home Mission Board offered to work with them in this direction.

Mrs. Bundock, interpreter of Trinity Baptist Church, Lubbock, Texas, who passed away the following year, made a motion that a special fund be set aside for the purpose of making silent motion pictures, and it was passed, collections being made for this purpose at this time. The following fall the Home Mission Board allocated \$100.00 to this fund. Thus, a film library of sermons and songs in the language of signs to be used to take the gospel to churches where no interpreters and missionaries are working with the deaf was created.

The messengers also voted to secure scholarships for

boys and girls, either deaf or hearing, who feel the call of God into the ministry to the deaf. The means of this scholarship fund were to secure more much-needed workers with the deaf, especially trained workers.

From November until January 1, 1955, an average of ninety New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary students attended the class of the language of signs during the practical activities period. The idea of the sign language class for the seminary students at this seminary was conceived in the mind of Dr. Robert Hughes, then a graduate student, who outlined the plan to Rev. Ollie Key and Rev. Carter Bearden during the lunch hour in the seminary cafeteria. Mr. Ollie Key endorsed this plan enthusiastically, while Mr. Bearden hesitated because he felt that he was not capable of teaching the class orally. The two men persuaded Mr. Bearden to give it a try. Then all these three men decided to wait until the following fall to organize a class in the language of signs for those interested in acquiring the silent language so that they might render a ministry to the deaf in their own churches.

In July of that year Mr. Glen Prock, a pharmacist by profession, felt the call to become a minister to the deaf, and that fall he enrolled in the seminary as a ministerial student. He was instrumental in getting Dr. A. J. Roddy,

then associate professor of Greek and Hebrew, interested in the deaf.

In September, Dr. Robert Hughes started the movement by writing a letter to Mr. Carey C. Shaw, then president of the Southern Baptist Conference of the Deaf, and asking him to speak to the student body in the seminary chapel. In October, Mr. and Mrs. Carey C. Shaw, both deaf, accompanied Mrs. Louis A. Beard, an interpreter of the First Baptist Church in Houston, Texas, to New Orleans for the Billy Graham month-long revival.

Mr. Carey Shaw spoke to the students about the deaf and the Baptist work with them, his message touching the hearts of the students and the faculty. Mrs. Louis A. Beard interpreted his address. The result was that many students were interested in learning the language of signs. Many came to the class every Tuesday morning during the practical activities period.

Dr. Robert Hughes and Dr. Jack Roddy conferred about making the course in the language of signs a part of the seminary curriculum. Mr. Hughes had a talk with Dr. Wash Watts, dean of the seminary, about the ministry to the deaf, and Dr. Wash Watts became interested in helping them start a regular class.

One Wednesday in November Dr. Jack Roddy spoke to the

faculty members about the dactylogy class. Dr. Robert Hughes was near the faculty office, praying that the Lord would bless their efforts. He was scheduled to hold his prayer meeting in his church in McComb, Mississippi, that evening, but he felt that the dactylogy class was very important so he remained in New Orleans to help Dr. A. J. Roddy.

The faculty of the seminary granted permission that the class in the language of signs be established, beginning the third term (January, 1955). Mr. Bearden was the instructor for two terms, with twenty-five students enrolled. Then in the fall of 1955 Dr. A. J. Roddy was the teacher of the class until November when he felt that God wanted him to work with the deaf in Dallas, Texas. Dr. Roland Q. Leavell appointed Mr. Glen Prock to succeed Dr. Roddy. Mr. Prock served in this capacity for approximately twenty months. The Rev. Mr. George Thomas, Rev. Calvin Williard, Rev. Clifford Bruffey, and Rev. Robert Boltz have taught the class.

From the seminary campus came some students who had become pastors of local Baptist churches and who, with their knowledge of signs, had ministered to some of the deaf families in their communities. Some of these churches are now supporting a full church-centered program for the deaf.<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>76</sup>Carter Bearden, "Seminary Has Sign Language Class," ibid., XXVI (April, 1955), 17.

Deaf Baptists owe much to Dr. Robert Hughes, Dr. Jack Roddy, and others who have had a part in making this program successful. Two years after its inception, Rev. Glen Prock moved to Berkeley, California, and later organized a dactylology class at the Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary there. Rev. Roy Cissna, Director of Special Ministries of the Missouri Baptist Convention; Rev. William Goble, missionary to the deaf in Kentucky; and Rev. Jerry St. John, missionary to the deaf in Mississippi, are products of this extended program.

Rev. Glen Prock was born in Alanreed, Texas, on January 18, 1917, and was converted at the age of eleven. He attended the University of Texas and received his Bachelor of Science degree in pharmacy in 1940. He married Miss Ruth Davis, whose birthdate is March 6, 1915, and from this union came a lovely deaf daughter, Mary Glenelle. For some time Mr. and Mrs. Prock tried to lead Mary Glenelle to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ but failed in the attempt. Being greatly concerned for her spiritual welfare, they took her to the First Baptist Church in New Orleans, Louisiana, where Mary Glenelle had finally understood the message of salvation. Mr. Glen Prock felt the call to preach on June 27, 1954, and resigned from the position of pharmacist in a downtown New Orleans drugstore in order to enroll the New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary to prepare himself for the ministry. He

graduated from the seminary with a Bachelor of Divinity degree in 1957. He was first appointed by the Home Mission Board as a student missionary to the deaf at the First Baptist Church in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, March 1, 1955, and upon his graduation was transferred to California as a full-time missionary.

The Southern Baptist Conference of the Deaf had its seventh meeting at the First Baptist Church in Houston, Texas, June 9-12, 1955. Mr. Carey C. Shaw was reelected president, and the following officers were: Mrs. Carl Brittain, Atlanta, vice president; Mr. Ted Marsden, Little Rock, secretary; and Mr. James Fair, Houston, treasurer. The Inman Park Church, Atlanta, Georgia, was voted by the messengers as the place for the June 7-9, 1956, meeting.<sup>77</sup>

In 1955 Rev. J. W. Gardner came out of retirement and worked for the Home Mission Board for a year.

To superintend the Board's work among the 70,000 deaf people in the Southern Baptist territory, the Board elected Mr. Carter Bearden who had served as student missionary to the deaf in Texas and later in New Orleans and surrounding areas. Rev. Carter Bearden attempted to reorganize the work among the deaf and to lead Southern Baptists

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<sup>77</sup>"Deaf Elect Officers," ibid., XXVI (October, 1955), 26.

to do more to reach the deaf for Christ.<sup>78</sup>

The first silent sermon films for the deaf were made by the Sunday School Board in cooperation with the Home Mission Board in Nashville, Tennessee, September 12, 1955. This marked the beginning of the film library. Later Dr. Jack Roddy and Mrs. Louis A. Beard helped the Board make four more films but this time with sound on the film tracks for the benefit of hearing viewers. At the end of 1964, there were seven films for use among the deaf.

March 18, 1956, marked the official opening of the Deaf Temple, a church for the deaf established in Los Angeles, California. At the morning service there were one hundred fifty present. During the day at least three hundred people came by to express their interest in the new project. The Rev. Mr. E. J. Combs, Director of Foreign Language Missions in California, made a presentation of the building on the behalf of the Home Mission Board. Representatives of Life magazine and Floyd Looney, editor of California Southern Baptist were on hand to take the pictures. At the close of the morning service thirty deaf people joined the church by letter, and five professed faith in Christ asking for baptism at the hand of the church. This church was a result of prayer

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<sup>78</sup>"Home Board Picks New Leaders," ibid., XXVI (November, 1955), 20 and 28.

and vision begun in the fall of 1938, at which time the deaf work was carried on in the Temple Baptist Church where Dr. Kearnie Keegan was pastor. The deaf work was sponsored by a Texas woman who wrote Rev. C. F. Landon while he was in Fort Worth, Texas, and asked him to conduct a revival for the deaf in Los Angeles. Mr. Landon went to Los Angeles for the special meeting and after the revival stayed there for a month, planning for the future. In 1955 the Board transferred Rev. C. F. Landon and his family to Los Angeles.<sup>79</sup>

In the spring of 1956 Mrs. Carter Bearden suggested to her husband that a pictorial leaflet be published by the Home Mission Board for distribution among hearing Southern Baptists for promotional purposes, knowing that the public in general prefer to look at the pictures with captions rather than to read a three or four page booklet about the deaf ministry. On the front of the leaflet, "Southern Baptist Conference of the Deaf," was a picture of the hands signifying "Jesus" in the language of the deaf. The superb picture of the talking hands was made by Rev. Glen Prock, whose hobby was photography and who first saw a poor reproduction of the work being done by Rev. and Mrs. Carter E. Bearden and refined it to the point of making the picture of

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<sup>79</sup>"Deaf Temple Dedicated," Home Missions, XXVII (June, 1956), 11.

professional quality. This picture of talking hands has since become a favorite of the deaf in many quarters.

The Southern Baptist Conference of the Deaf at the Inman Park Baptist Church, Atlanta, Georgia, June 7-10, 1956, had as its theme, "Higher Ground." The meeting was opened with the theme song, "Higher Ground," with James Fair leading the congregation in sign singing.

Approximately two hundred messengers from Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Florida, Tennessee, Georgia, Mississippi, Louisiana, Arkansas, Missouri, Oklahoma, and Texas attended the conference. Texas led in the number of messengers, having forty in attendance.

The climax of the morning session, June 8, was special music by Mr. George Crawford, Minister of Music at the Inman Park Baptist Church, followed by a stirring message by Dr. E. G. Shivers, then pastor of the church.

The afternoon session featured addresses by speakers from the Home Mission Board. Dr. S. F. Dowis spoke on "Overcoming Handicaps." Dr. John Caylor's subject was "The Church First in Christian Advance." He emphasized the important role the church plays in the life of the home, hospital, and other surroundings as well as in the lives of its members. Dr. L. O. Griffith talked about the "Hearing Eyes" of deaf people and of others, using illustrations from real-life drama. He said we learn to understand the feelings and actions of other people, irrespective of language barriers, through our "Hearing Eyes." Rev. Carter Bearden spoke on "Advancing for Christ in Missions." Dr. James L. Baggott, superintendent of city missions, Atlanta, Georgia, gave a soul-stirring message. W. L. Asbridge, a deaf deacon of Memphis, talked about the value of having state Baptist conferences for the deaf and gave suggestions how to

start them. Mrs. Jewell Duvall, interpreter of Columbia, South Carolina, addressed the group on "Our Television Program Possibilities." She dramatized a make-believe television program.

That night the messengers had a banquet in the basement of the Inman Park Church. Entertainment and laughter were provided by a deaf magician, Billy Barton, who performed some tricks, followed by a ceremony in honor of Rev. J. W. Gardner who spent nearly fifteen years of his life as a Home Mission Board missionary to the deaf.

The fitting climax of the whole conference program was a challenging sermon by Dr. Courts Redford, executive secretary-treasurer of the Home Mission Board. He challenged the messengers to "Go up at once and take possession of it; for we are well able to overcome it" for Christ.

The Saturday morning session was devoted to the business matters. Saturday afternoon was spent on a sight-seeing tour to Stone Mountain. Sunday morning the Sunday School lesson was taught by Carey C. Shaw, past president of the Southern Baptist Conference of the Deaf. Mrs. Louis A. Beard interpreted Dr. Shivers' message for the deaf messengers attending the morning worship service.

The new officers for 1956-1957 were Mr. James Fair, president; Mr. W. L. Asbridge, vice president; Mrs. Henry Feux, secretary; Mr. Robert Cave, treasurer; and Mr. Ted Marsden, trustee. The next meeting was to be at the New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary May 23-26, 1957.<sup>80</sup>

With the coming of the third child, a daughter, Rev. Carter Bearden realizing the additional burden on the family since his three children were of pre-school age, resigned from the superintendency of deaf missions of the Home Mission Board on October 1, 1956, the resignation being effective on December 31, 1956. His mission work then was limited to the area of Georgia, South Carolina, and Florida.

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<sup>80</sup>Carter Bearden, "200 Attend Deaf Conference," *ibid.*, XXVII (August, 1956), 12-13.

Dr. Andrew Jackson Roddy, at this time assistant pastor to Dr. W. A. Criswell and minister to the deaf at the First Baptist Church in Dallas, Texas, was appointed by the Board to succeed Rev. Carter Bearden as superintendent of deaf missions. He assumed his new duties March 1, 1957. Prior to going to the First Church, Dallas, he was assistant professor of Greek and Hebrew at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary from 1950 to 1955. He was for three years an assistant in Spanish at Tulane University. He has served as pastor in Prairieville, Louisiana, Pensacola, Florida, and Hammond, Louisiana. He speaks several languages and gained the respect and confidence of the deaf people. The purpose of his new work was to encourage the churches of the Southern Baptist Convention to provide adequate opportunities for Bible study, worship, and training for the deaf of their communities and to speak to the deaf groups and to help them in the work as well as to speak to the hearing churches on the behalf of the deaf. "He is married to the former Irene Baxley and has three children, all boys."<sup>81</sup>

The second quarter of 1957 found the coming of the new quarterlies, Sunday School Lessons for the Deaf, published by the Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist

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<sup>81</sup>Mildred Dunn, "A. J. Roddy to Head Work with Deaf," ibid., XXVIII (April, 1957), 23.

Convention in cooperation with the Home Mission Board. It succeeded a previous publication of the Home Mission Board entitled Sunday School Baptist Deaf which began in the fall of the previous year. These printed materials were adapted to the deaf's distinctive manner of expression.

Due to the conflict of dates of engagements at the New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, the executive committee of the Southern Baptist Conference of the Deaf agreed to have the ninth annual meeting held at the First Baptist Church in Houston, Texas, June 27-30, 1957. Mr. James Fair of Houston presided at the conference.

Rev. George Thomas was employed by the Home Mission Board July 1, 1957. He was born in Buffalo, Kansas, February 2, 1924, and was educated at Bethel College in 1952-1953 and Furman University in South Carolina in 1953-1956, graduating from the latter with a Bachelor of Arts degree and from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary with a Bachelor of Divinity degree. He served the deaf at First Baptist Church in Baton Rouge and Amite, Louisiana. He served as missionary of the Home Mission Board until January 15, 1960, when he accepted the call to become the associate pastor of the First Baptist Church and minister to the deaf in Birmingham, Alabama, which position he held until July 1, 1963. Then he and his family were appointed by the Home Mission Board to work with the deaf in Northern California.

On July 11, 1957, Miss Geneva Singleton became the first deaf Negro to be appointed by the Home Mission Board. She was born in Knoxville, Tennessee, on March 17, 1924, and was the fourth of five girls born to Frederick Charles and Mariah Glenn Singleton. In her second year of school, she was stricken with spinal meningitis, and as a result she became deaf. The following fall she entered the colored Tennessee School for the Deaf in Knoxville and attended that school for eight years and then Austin High School for three years. She graduated from Knoxville College with a Bachelor of Science degree in 1950 and attended Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, working toward a Master of Religious Education degree. She was converted at the age of thirty in Knoxville and participated in the program of the deaf at the white First Baptist Church. She served the Negro deaf in the Fort Worth-Dallas area until she resigned from the Board on account of health on September 30, 1957.

Rev. Joseph Newton was employed by the Board on February 15, 1958, as a student missionary to the deaf in the northwestern part of South Carolina and then in the western part of Florida, especially in the Pensacola-Dothan area. He was born on January 26, 1937, as the fifth child of Carlton and Dora Newton. The date of his conversion is uncertain, but it took place in a Youth for Christ rally in Columbia, South Carolina. He did lots of religious youth

work, even among the Negro children, some of whom he had the privilege of leading to Christ. He attended a dactylology class taught by Mrs. Jewell Duvall at First Baptist Church, Columbia, South Carolina, at this time having no inkling that he soon would be drawn into the deaf ministry. When he went home in Wilmington, North Carolina, he attended the Lutheran deaf class for a while. In March, 1956, he surrendered his life to God for special service, and in December of the same year he joined a small Baptist church ten miles out in the country near Wilmington. In the spring of 1957 the Whiteville, North Carolina, deaf invited him to preach the gospel to them every third Sunday during the summer months. Soon the Fayetteville group asked him to visit them in the way of ministering to their spiritual needs on many occasions. Some deaf friends in Wilmington expressed a desire for organized Bible study and worship, and after conferring with the pastor of the church, Mr. Joseph Newton helped organize the deaf work at the Temple Baptist Church on July 21, 1957, with only five members. The membership grew from five to eight by November. On January 1, 1958, he enrolled the Toccoa Falls Bible College and was soon appointed student missionary by the Home Mission Board. A year later the Board transferred him to serve the western part of Florida, and he became a student of Florida Baptist Bible Institute in Graceville. He served the deaf in the

Pensacola area and was transferred to Georgia where he had worked from March 1, 1963, until December 31, 1963. He did extensive work in Griffin, Newnan, and LaGrange, Georgia. He is married to the former Margaret Wise, a product of the South Carolina School for the Deaf, and they have three children. They are active in the deaf work at First Baptist Church in Marietta, Georgia, where they had organized a class for the deaf September 6, 1964.

Rev. Murial DeMeree and his wife were appointed by the Board on March 1, 1958. Mr. M. R. DeMeree was born in Canon City, Colorado, March 14, 1904, and was a student of the Colorado School for the Deaf, having attended the public school for a number of years. He was converted on a mountain-side at Divide, Colorado, just three days before his marriage on May 6, 1927, to the former Helen Madalynne Wood, a product of the Kentucky School for the Deaf. The DeMerees did religious work in Louisville, Kentucky, prior to moving to Tampa, Florida. They organized a class for the deaf at the Ballast Point Baptist Church in Tampa, called the "Silent Crusaders," and Rev. Murial DeMeree pastored this group for approximately five years. They organized several deaf classes in nearby towns, and in 1956 Mr. M. R. DeMeree was ordained for the full gospel ministry, being sponsored by the Ballast Point Church. He traveled over the area of South Carolina, part of Georgia, and most of Florida, ministering to the needs of the deaf and

speaking to hearing people in schools of missions. In the summer of 1962 the Home Mission Board transferred him and his wife to Colorado where they are now laboring among the deaf for Christ.

Rev. Roy Cissna was appointed as missionary to the deaf in Missouri by the Home Mission Board May 1, 1958, and resigned fifteen days later to begin work with the deaf under the full auspice of the Missouri Baptist Convention.

Mr. Roy Cissna was born in Weleetka, Oklahoma, on March 1, 1927, and was converted in 1934. He was ordained to the gospel ministry in Ada, Oklahoma, in 1950, and graduated from Oklahoma Baptist University, Shawnee, with a Bachelor of Science degree in 1952. In 1958 he received his Bachelor of Divinity degree from the Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary, Mill Valley, California.

In 1957, while a student, Rev. Roy Cissna was introduced to the work with the deaf at Berkeley, California, through the ministry of Rev. Glen C. Prock. His call to the deaf ministry was a dramatic one, in that he was instantly drawn into the work after watching Mr. Glen Prock interpreting for a deaf couple.

Shortly after meeting Rev. Glen Prock, he began working with the deaf in churches and missions in California. When he was invited by the Missouri Baptist Convention in 1958, he accepted. His missionary duties include: 1. strength-

ening all existing deaf work in Missouri; 2. beginning other deaf work over Missouri; 3. unifying all Baptist deaf work in the state; and 4. promoting this work.

This same year he helped organize the Teachers of Oral Sunday Schools (T. O. S. S.). This organization was started to help the teachers of oral Sunday School classes improve their communication.

Mr. Roy Cissna is noted for his organizational ability and has been instrumental in founding several conferences. One is an annual Interpreter's Conference, a meeting where the interpreters come together to share their problems, successes, procedures, and methods as well as enjoy fellowship and inspiration.

In Missouri they now have a group called "Talking Hands of Missouri." The members of "Talking Hands of Missouri" are awarded certificates and pins by their churches giving them recognition for their role as active interpreters for at least a year. A conference for the workers came into being through the ministry of Mr. Roy Cissna. It is composed of both the deaf and the hearing who meet to discuss their problems and ideas in relation to the program for the deaf in their churches.

In 1963 Rev. Roy Cissna expanded his program to include the mentally-retarded, the blind, and other handicapped groups. Due to the development of this new work, he is now

the Director of Special Ministries of the Missouri Baptist Convention.

The Southern Baptist Conference of the Deaf met at the First Baptist Church in Memphis, Tennessee, June 26-29, 1958, marking the tenth anniversary of the organization. More than three hundred messengers attended for a splendid program of inspiration, fellowship, instruction, and mutual encouragement. Dr. Courts Redford brought his personal challenge to the group Friday night, challenging them to establish four hundred new classes by 1964.

The significant among the devotional ideas presented by Mrs. Lillian Beard at the conference was one morning's theme which called for yielded hands, reminding of the prayer of the song writer:

"Take my hands and let them move  
At the impulse of thy love."<sup>82</sup>

By September, 1958, the Home Mission Board had ten missionaries to the deaf: Dr. A. J. Roddy, Superintendent of Deaf Missions; Rev. C. F. Landon, Los Angeles, California; Rev. Leslie H. Gunn, Oklahoma; Rev. Glen C. Prock, Northern California; Rev. Carter Bearden, Tennessee and Northern Georgia; Rev. David Richardson, Alabama; Rev. Murial DeMeree, South Carolina, part of Georgia, and Florida; Rev. Joseph Newton, northwestern part of South Carolina; Rev. George

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<sup>82</sup>Dr. A. J. Roddy, "Random Glances at Your Work with the Deaf," ibid., XXIX (October, 1958), 6-7.

Thomas, Baton Rouge and Amite, Louisiana; and Miss Ila Ruth Jennings, Baptist student work among the deaf children in Berkeley, California.<sup>83</sup>

On October 1, 1958, Rev. Charles Horton, Jr., was employed by the Board as student missionary to the deaf in Waco, Wichita Falls, Sherman, Tyler, and Fort Worth, Texas. He was born to deaf parents, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Horton, Sr., in Wichita Falls, Texas, on November 18, 1935, and was converted at the Turner Memorial Baptist Church in Fort Worth in 1945. He was president of several organizations at the Turner Memorial Church for a number of years and was very active in his church work. He received the Bachelor of Arts degree from Baylor University and the Master's degree from the Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth. At present, he is working for the State Vocational Rehabilitation Office as a counselor to the deaf students at the Texas School for the Deaf in Austin.

In the fall of the same year (1958), the Brotherhood under the leadership of Mr. Paul Young at the First Baptist Church in Fulton, Missouri, began the enlistment of deaf children in the Sunday School. Permission was obtained from Mr. Lloyd Harrison, superintendent of the state school for

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<sup>83</sup>Ibid., XXIX (September, 1958), 18.

the deaf for the men to transport the children to and from the church each Sunday morning. Later arrangements were made with Mr. Russell Jennings, member of the church, to charter one of the school busses. A year later (1959) the enrollment rose to sixty-three, and the teaching responsibilities are shared by Mrs. Russell Dzurich, teacher in home-making, and Mr. Leonard Taylor, an instructor in baking.<sup>84</sup>

In March 1959 Home Missions a list of Home Mission Board missionaries was tabulated, and the number of the missionaries to the deaf, including their wives, stood at nineteen, fourteen full-time workers and five student missionaries.

More than two hundred fifty churches sponsor their own local programs with interpreters or other leaders; four have full-time pastors for the deaf. North Carolina and Missouri have state missionaries . . . .

The year 1958 saw the beginning of the Sunday School Board's printing of Training Union Lessons for the Deaf, a companion volume to the Sunday School Lessons for the Deaf, the production by the Home Mission Board of four black-and-white motion picture films in the sign language, with sound track, each containing two songs and an evangelistic sermon, designated primarily for the deaf without pastors, but useful to all groups as well as to the hearing, as promotional aids; the inception of The Deaf Southern Baptist, a quarterly magazine for the deaf; and the reprinting of promotional tracts.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>84</sup>Lewis Krause, "Revival for the Deaf," ibid., XXX (July, 1959), 10-11.

<sup>85</sup>A. J. Roddy, "Missions with the Deaf," Southern Baptist Convention Annual, 1959, (Nashville: Southern Baptist Convention, 1959), 219.

Rev. Clifford Bruffey was appointed as a student missionary to the deaf in Jackson, Mississippi, by the Home Mission Board in cooperation with the Mississippi Baptist Convention on December 17, 1959. He was born as the third of five children to Mr. and Mrs. Hode P. Bruffey, Sr., in Buckhannon, West Virginia, January 29, 1930. While in the second grade of Webster Public School in 1936, he was stricken with spinal meningitis and soon became deaf. In the fall of 1937, he entered the West Virginia School for the Deaf in Romney, and in the spring of 1945 a Baptist minister spoke to the deaf children in the chapel of this school, arousing his interest in spiritual matters; whereupon, he went up to him after the exercise to talk with him. The minister did not have time to speak to him, for he had to be in his pulpit at the First Baptist Church in town and invited Mr. Clifford Bruffey to his home. So Mr. Bruffey visited the Baptist minister on several occasions and as a result became converted and was baptized along with a number of other pupils. He enrolled at Gallaudet College in the fall of 1948, and a year or two later he and a Christian friend organized "Ambassador Bible Club" which was well-received. He felt the call to mission service in Washington, D.C., in 1950, while he was a college student, and spoke to the students of the Virginia School for the Deaf in Staunton once a month from 1950 to 1953. He was licensed by the Elk Valley Baptist

Association in West Virginia in May, 1952, and ordained by the same organization in August of the same year. He graduated from Gallaudet College in May, 1953, receiving his Bachelor of Arts degree. He was a camp teacher and counselor of deaf children in Oregon, Oklahoma, North Carolina and other states for a number of years, except 1955, and traveled to different parts of the country in the summer of 1953. Though he was a Baptist minister, he accepted the call to become pastor of the deaf congregation at the Covenant Presbyterian Church of Charlotte, North Carolina, which position he held until his resignation on December 31, 1956. Then he became a printer but still carried on active religious work and became president of the North Carolina Sunday School Association of the Deaf for the year of 1958-1959. Soon thereafter the Home Mission Board employed him as a student worker, and he enrolled in the New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. While a student, he worked with the deaf in the state of Mississippi and graduated from the seminary with a Bachelor of Divinity degree in 1962. He was transferred to Florida on December 1, 1962, and has been working with the churches and missions in that state. His first wife was killed on July 1, 1960, and he is married to the former Ruth Ann Melton, a product of the Mississippi School for the Deaf, whom he had wedded on July 11, 1964. Their first child, a daughter, was born to them

on January 21, 1966.

Rev. Glen Prock reported an increase in enrolment of the Sunday School from twenty-seven in 1957 to sixty-seven in 1959 in his work in Berkeley, California, where he and his family were transferred from New Orleans, Louisiana, by the Board in June, 1957. He was jubilant over the conversion of Billy Bob Simpson, a twenty-year-old student, and foresaw the possibility of this young man's entering the religious work among his own people. He brought four boys to Sunday School and preaching service, and as a result of this service, three of the boys were converted and baptized later.<sup>86</sup>

Dr. Andrew Jackson Roddy led the first revival for the deaf at the First Baptist Church in Fulton, Missouri, and spoke to the deaf Friday and Saturday nights. He preached orally Sunday morning and evening, with the regular interpreters relaying the messages to the deaf congregation. The first invitation was given on Saturday night when twenty-three students of the state school for the deaf responded, nineteen coming for baptism and four uniting with the church by transfer of church membership. All of them were instructed and then came for membership during the worship service Sunday morning. It was an impressive service for the hearing congregation of the church, many of whom became

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<sup>86</sup>"Among the Missionaries," Home Missions, XXX (April, 1959), 17.

interested in this type of work and also in learning the language of signs.<sup>87</sup>

More than 35,000 deaf live in California, yet Southern Baptists have only two missionary couples working with them; one (Robert Jackson) at Riverside for the southern part of the state, and one (Glen Prock) at Berkeley for the northern part.<sup>88</sup>

Dr. A. J. Roddy felt led to accept the mission work in Panama and resigned from the superintendency of deaf missions for the Home Mission Board. The article in the Board's monthly magazine illustrates this call.

The blond, gentle-featured man stands, stretches, then tosses the German classic he had been reading onto the sofa beside him. Moving across the room to the piano, he flexes his hands above the keys; then a vibrant, flowing Chopin concerto fills the room. The door bursts open revealing a six-year-old. The music ceases just in time for the hands to catch the boy as he leaps into his daddy's arms. He has been summoned by his wife for an errand. On the way, he stops at the corner delicatessen for a chat in Hebrew with the proprietor. He is just as at home with the Greek at the laundry.

Up the street, in the neighborhood church, a motion picture is being shown to a group of people who cannot hear or speak. The man's serene face and graceful movements speak to them from the screen. After dinner, he and his wife muse quietly over a game of chess, and he later pens a letter in Japanese to a friend.

This is A. Jackson Roddy. In August Jack, Jane, and their younger sons, Plunkett and Robin, will leave for Panama as Southern Baptist missionaries under the denomination's Home Mission Board. It is the fulfillment of a 20-year dream.

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<sup>87</sup>Lewis Krause, op. cit., 11.

<sup>88</sup>"Language Missions Widespread," ibid., XXXI (June, 1960, 14.

New mission work in Panama City and teaching at Panama Baptist Seminary will fill the life of Roddy. The Spanish and Cuna languages spoken there will be no barrier. Neither will prejudice, for in this brilliant linguist and accomplished musician, one becomes aware of the ethereal and asthetic combined with human love, kindness, and compassion.

The question, "Why does Jack not do something greater with his brilliance and talents?" can be heard among his acquaintances.

Once in a great while men of keen intellect and rare talents exhibit "foolishness" in the eyes of men. These break with the conventional seeking of professional, social, political, and economic gain and yield their lives to a greater cause. This is the case with Jack Roddy. He is the epitome of humility. He cares less for using his capacities for personal position, power, and fame than for yielding these capacities to the glory of God and the betterment of mankind.

Let him speak for himself.

"This wish to go to Panama is no new desire," he says. "In school in Cincinnati in 1937, Jane and I were drawn together by a common interest in missions in Latin America.

"This action (their appointment as missionaries) is the result of that interest and follows four months of deliberation, prayer, committee discussion, and doctor's reports. The fact that God has not checked the progress of this move strengthens our confidence that he has been leading. Jane and I are jubilant in the face of this dream about to be realized and are grateful to God for this opened door."

Jack goes to Panama after six years of working with the deaf and using dactylology, the sign language for communication. He was, at first, minister to the deaf in the First Baptist Church of Dallas, Texas. He assumed Southern Baptist leadership as superintendent of deaf work with the Home Mission Board in 1957, from which work he requested transfer to Central America.

Programs for silent people have been established in local churches and several missionaries to the deaf have been appointed by the Home Mission Board. Four motion pictures of sermons in the sign language and sound have been made by him. His enthusiasm for work among the deaf has heightened interest throughout the Southern Baptist Convention.

Before becoming a Baptist, Jack went to Latin America as a missionary--first to Costa Rica, then to Panama. After a doctrinal change, he embarked upon many years of

study.

"Jane followed suite (doctrinally) when we were married in October of 1939, and we started all over as new Baptists," he said.

Next on the agenda for him were four degrees (a Bachelor and Masters of Arts from Tulane University in New Orleans, La., and a Bachelor of Divinity and Doctor of Theology from the New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary) and three boys (David, Plunkett, and Robin).

"Too old for Foreign Mission Board appointment by this time and ignorant of the Home Mission Board's Central America work, we gave up hope of getting down there." That was in 1953; again in January of 1960 he speaks: "A trip to Panama in January not only revived old fires, but it revived the hope that this drama of 20 years might be possible of fulfillment."<sup>89</sup>

"Car Wreck Kills Deaf Missionary," so ran these bold letters under "Missions Today" of Home Missions issued in August, 1960. Mrs. Clifford Bruffey, nee Ila Ruth Jennings, was killed as the result of an automobile wreck near Sidon, Mississippi, July 1.

She and her husband of three weeks, both deaf, were missionaries to the deaf in Jackson, Mississippi.. Mrs. Bruffey . . . received a certificate from Clarke Memorial College in Mississippi, and attended Mississippi College and Baylor University. While attending Riverside Baptist College in California, she was a student missionary to the deaf.<sup>90</sup>

In September, 1960, Mr. Robert Boltz, a young deaf man, entered the New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary and roomed with Rev. Clifford Bruffey, who became the spiritual "Paul" to this "Timothy."

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<sup>89</sup>Jacqueline Durham, "Linguist, Musician, Scholar Follows Dream to Panama," ibid., XXXI (August, 1960, 2.

<sup>90</sup>Ibid., 4.

Rev. Robert Boltz is the youngest of the three children born to Mr. and Mrs. John Robert Boltz. His father is a deacon of a Presbyterian church in Newark, New Jersey, and his mother is a Sunday School teacher and organist. His oldest sister is also deaf. The middle child is also a girl possessed of normal hearing. Robert became deaf at birth due to an unknown cause, and at the age of four he attended the Bruce Street Day School which is an oral school. After seven years there, he was transferred to the New Jersey School for the Deaf in West Trenton where he graduated in the Spring of 1955. Upon his graduation, he enrolled at Gallaudet College majoring in art and education, and in June of 1960 he graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree. In the fall of the same year he entered the New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary which conferred on him the Bachelor of Divinity degree in January of 1963.

In spite of his early religious training, Robert Boltz did not have a personal encounter with the Lord until he was in his last year at Gallaudet College. There were two factors which had considerable influence upon his life. One was the late Ila Ruth Jennings Bruffey whose winning testimony touched his heart, and the other was Dr. Billy Graham's book, Peace With God, which also proved to have wrought the turning point in his life.

Originally Robert thought of entering the teaching profession. Yet during his college days he came to a realization that God had called him into the deaf ministry, and upon his graduation from college he let the Lord use him as the instrument of the dispensation of His grace. On October 4, 1961, he was ordained to the gospel ministry at the First Baptist Church in New Orleans, with Rev. Clifford Bruffey bringing the charge.

Robert's first mission point was in Meridian, Mississippi, where he went on week-ends for a year while he was a student at the New Orleans seminary. The following summer he acted as interim pastor of the Silent Department of the First Baptist Church in New Orleans. It was during this summer that he was baptized into the Baptist faith. Since then, he has been serving the deaf in New Orleans as pastor. On several occasions he has been called to lead revivals for the deaf and also to preach the Word of God to the deaf in some of our Southern cities.<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>91</sup>Carter Bearden, "A Brief Biographical Sketch of Rev. Robert Boltz," The Messenger, XV (March-April, 1963), 3.

Rev. Robert Boltz and Miss Mira Miller were united in marriage by Dr. J. D. Grey at First Baptist Church, New Orleans, Louisiana, June 19, 1965. To this day Rev. Robert Boltz continues to serve the deaf congregation of this church.

The Home Mission Board and the State Mission Board of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina entered an agreement regarding Rev. Jerry Potter who came under the joint-auspice of both boards on January 1, 1961. Mr. Jerry Potter was born in Lumberton, Mississippi, October 6, 1929, and was converted and baptized at Burns Baptist Church in Burns, Oregon, in 1935. His father was an itinerant laborer constantly on the move in search of work, and Mr. Jerry Potter entered high schools in different sections of the country until he finished one in Oregon.

Rev. Jerry Potter's interest in mission work stemmed from the occasion of his meeting a young hitch-hiker whom he had picked up on the road. The young hitch-hiker turned out to be a deaf person, and he taught Jerry Potter the manual alphabets and some signs. This interest was heightened during the Billy Graham meeting in Portland, Oregon, in 1950. On July 14, 1950, he married Mary Ruth Orr, who was born in Lynnville, Tennessee, May 31, 1932, and who was baptized at the Walnut Street Baptist Church, Louisville, Kentucky, in 1943.

In 1952 Mr. Jerry Potter felt the call to preach to

the deaf and was ordained at First Baptist Church in Thomasville, North Carolina. He was appointed as a missionary to the deaf in this state by the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina in the same year.

One of Rev. Jerry Potter's finest contributions to the deaf ministry is his television program, "A Light Unto My Path," which was started in 1961. This program is designed and produced in a way that is appealing to the deaf and hearing alike. Everything that is spoken is conveyed into the language of signs. The songs are sung vocally by accomplished singers and skilfully interpreted into signs by a versatile young lady. Background music for the program is provided by an organist. Distribution of the program is provided for by taping the programs. They can be shown on any number of stations without much extra expense. For each new station that joins the network now carrying the program, it is necessary to add a new tape to the "pool." The program consists of two parts. The first part is exactly a half-hour in length and is the segment of the program designated for the deaf. The second part is designated for shut-ins and other handicapped people. It is not provided in the language of the deaf. The whole program is designed and timed so that a station can carry a half-hour or full hour, depending on the time available. As a result, television stations in North Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Okla-

homa, Tennessee, Kentucky, Maryland, and Virginia are showing this wonderful program to the deaf viewers at their local schedules each Sunday.

On July 1, 1958, Rev. Robert Jackson, a native of Memphis, Tennessee, was appointed by the Home Mission Board to work with the deaf in Southern California, and he resigned from the Board September 8, 1960.

Rev. Neal Peyton was appointed as a student missionary to the deaf in Kansas City, Missouri, by the Home Mission Board January 12, 1961. He was born in Sac City, Iowa, May 24, 1934, and was a graduate of the Sac City Public School. He was converted at the age of twenty-one and attended Iowa State College in Ames, Iowa, for two years (1952-1954), majoring in forestry, and then Howard College (now Samford University) in Birmingham, Alabama, having obtained his Bachelor of Arts degree from the latter institution in 1959. While a student at Howard College, he was minister to the deaf at the Woodlawn Baptist Church in Birmingham from 1957 to 1959. Mr. Neal Peyton made a surrender to special service at the First Baptist Church in Columbus, Georgia, in 1956, when the Lord had laid upon his heart to work with the deaf people with whom he had come in contact at this church. At this time he was a soldier stationed at Fort Benning, Georgia, just a few miles from Columbus. At the time of his appointment by the Board, he was a student at Midwestern Baptist

Theological Seminary in Kansas City, Missouri; several months later he was transferred to North Carolina to work with Rev. Jerry Potter, then the only state Baptist missionary to the deaf, and attended the Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, North Carolina. He graduated from the seminary with a Bachelor of Divinity degree and is currently working with Rev. Jerry Potter in North Carolina. He is married to the former Agnes Joan Blackwood, and they have three boys.

The handbook of the basic language of signs, Basic Sign Language, which was prepared by Rev. Roy Cissna and published by the Office of Deaf Missions, Missouri Baptist Convention, made its first appearance in February, 1961. It was intended for use with hearing people learning the language of the deaf and for use in sign language classes. In the promotion of his book and work, Rev. Roy Cissna recommended to the Baptists in Missouri, who taught sign language classes, to use it for the purpose of achieving uniformity in the religious language of signs in Baptist churches of his state. His office has sold hundreds of copies of Basic Sign Language since its publication in January, 1961.<sup>92</sup>

Rev. James Calvin Willard accepted the call to serve

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<sup>92</sup>"Sign Language Book Prepared," Signs, III (February, 1961), 1.

as pastor to the deaf congregation of the Congress Avenue Baptist Church in Austin, Texas, and preached his first sermon on February 19, 1961.<sup>93</sup> He was born in Mobile, Alabama, November 15, 1930, and was converted and baptized at Springfield Avenue Baptist Church, Mobile, in 1944. He graduated from Murphy High School, Mobile, in May, 1949, and answered the call of God to special service while attending camp that summer, which was sponsored by the Mobile Baptist Association. He was greatly influenced by Rev. J. W. Gardner to consider the deaf ministry, and his participation in the program of the Royal Ambassadors, a Baptist organization for boys, helped him to have a keener appreciation for missions.

Mr. Calvin Willard received his Bachelor of Arts degree from Mississippi College, Clinton, Mississippi, in 1955, and a Bachelor of Divinity degree from the New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary in 1958. While a student at the New Orleans seminary, he was a part-time minister to the deaf of First Baptist Church in Shreveport, Louisiana, for a year (1956-1957). He was ordained by this church in 1957, in which year he resigned from his position with the Shreveport church to accept the call of First Baptist Church, New Orleans, Louisiana, to work with the deaf in the "Crescent City." He

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<sup>93</sup>"Austin, Texas," The Messenger, XIII (June, 1961), 5.

labored in this field until 1961 when he and his wife, Ella Ophelia Cody whom he had married on June 16, 1957, moved to Austin, Texas, to begin the new work. Rev. and Mrs. Calvin have two children.

Rev. George Bernard Joslin was the next student missionary to be employed by the Board on March 16, 1961. He was born in White River, South Dakota, June 11, 1933, and was converted at the age of nine and baptized at the Friendship Baptist Church in Pulaski County, Missouri, in May, 1942. He attended several schools in the state of Missouri and was a graduate of Central High School in Springfield, Missouri, in 1951, and of the Southwest Missouri State College, Bolivar, with a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1955. He enrolled at Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary later and graduated with a Bachelor of Divinity degree in 1961. He served as a staffer at Ridgecrest, North Carolina, in the summer of 1951 and as a student summer missionary during 1952 and 1955. He was a pastor of North Star Baptist Church in Strafford, Missouri, from December, 1952, until June, 1954, and was ordained by the same church on April 12, 1953. Mr. Joslin was also pastor of the First Baptist Church of Newman, California, while a seminary student, from August, 1955, to May, 1957. He became interested in the deaf after hearing a message by the missionary to the deaf from Oklahoma, Rev. Leslie H. Gunn, at a college Baptist Student Union ser-

vice. He soon learned some signs and had an opportunity to acquire more training in this special field from Rev. Glen Prock at the Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary, Mill Valley, California, and in personal contact with the deaf themselves. He began directing the deaf department of the Baptist Temple in San Jose, California, September, 1958. Later he was a full-time home missionary to the deaf in the southern part of California. On February 1, 1964, he was transferred to Dallas, Texas, by the Board to minister to the spiritual needs of the deaf in Texas. He is married to the former Betty Lorene Hallett, and they have two boys.

Rev. Waverly Atkins' appointment by the Board was made on the first of May, 1961. He was born in Greensboro, North Carolina, on February 7, 1938, and was saved during a Spring revival in April, 1953. He was educated at Campbell Junior College in Buies Creek, North Carolina, 1958-1960, and at Carson-Newman College in Jefferson City, Tennessee, where he graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree in May, 1962. He organized a class of the language of signs at Carson-Newman College and called it the "Dr. J. W. Michaels Class." His appointment by the Board was no new experience for him, for he was a student summer missionary under the Board serving in New Mexico in 1960. He relates his life story in this manner: He worked in a Winn-Dixie store in his home town and met a deaf man there, thus for the first

time becoming interested in learning the signs as a normal teen-ager would do. In 1956 at Ridgecrest, North Carolina, during the Sunday School Week he acquainted himself with some deaf people attending the assembly, and one night near the window he heard God calling him to become a missionary to the deaf.

While a student at Carson-Newman, he was an interpreter and student missionary to the deaf in Knox County (Knoxville), Tennessee, ministering to the deaf children and adults through the Island Home Baptist Church which is near the Tennessee School for the Deaf. Upon his graduation from college, he entered the New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, New Orleans, Louisiana, and labored among the deaf of Louisiana under the Home Mission Board until January 1, 1965, when he graduated with a Master of Religious Education degree and became an associate missionary to the deaf in Louisiana. He was married to Marie Goodwin in Shreveport, Louisiana, December 23, 1962.

The Third Annual Interpreter's Conference was held in Jefferson City, Missouri, May 6, 1961, under the direction of Rev. Roy Cissna. Twenty-seven interpreters and speakers registered at the meeting.

Out of state speakers were Dr. Loyd Corder, Secretary, Language Group Ministries, from Atlanta; Mrs. Lillian Beard, Interpreter, Houston, Texas. Missouri speakers were: Mr. Gene Vescovi, Coun-

selor, State of Missouri, Department of Vocational Rehabilitation, Jefferson City; Mr. Leonard Taylor, Fulton, Dr. Earl Harding, Jefferson City; Miss Marian Johnson, Kansas City; Mrs. Olga McCoy, Joplin; Rev. Roy Cissna, Jefferson City.

The keynote of all discussions was presented by Mrs. Lillian Beard when she said that for any person to have JOY he must put Jesus first, Others second, and Yourself last. The first letter of each word spells JOY.<sup>94</sup>

Alabama witnessed several revivals, with Rev. David Richardson preaching to the deaf at First Baptist Church, Birmingham, June 23-25, 1961, and at First Baptist Church, Anniston, July 2-7, 1961; Rev. Joseph Newton speaking at First Baptist Church, Gadsden, June 9-11, 1961; and Rev. M. R. DeMeree conducting one at First Baptist Church, Montgomery.<sup>95</sup>

Rev. George Thomas found the horizon of deaf ministry enlarged when he began to assist the deaf and blind in Birmingham, Alabama, during the closing months of 1961.

In recent months George Thomas, in cooperation with the Rehabilitation Service, was instrumental in helping a young man who both entirely blind and deaf to begin training at the Adult Blind Workshop in Talladega.

Thomas received a surprise letter in Braille from the young man. This became the stimulus which caused Thomas to begin to learn Braille. He was provided a Braille slate and a reference book by Rehabilitation.

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<sup>94</sup>"Interpreters Meet in Jefferson City," Signs, III (June, 1961), 1.

<sup>95</sup>Alabama Baptist Deaf, III (May-June, 1961), 1-2.

Over a period of a few months Thomas' ministry has enlarged from deaf to deaf-blind, and now includes those who are only blind, as he uses this new and fascinating means of serving our Lord.<sup>96</sup>

#### The Years of Intensive Activities 1962-

The year, 1962, marked the beginning of intensive activities which culminated in the establishment of many deaf classes in Baptist churches in numerous states and which contributed to the rise of local, regional, and nationwide conferences and workshops and which led to more active participation in the state conferences directed by the state Baptist agencies.

The Southern Baptist Conference of the Deaf met at the New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, New Orleans, Louisiana, August 18-22, 1962. Two outstanding features highlighted the meeting. One was the creation of a Committee on the Religious Language of Signs which was authorized to prepare a new manual of religious signs for use in Southern Baptist work with the deaf. The other was the worship service conducted by Rev. David Dean at 11:30 A.M., Monday, August 20, 1961, and dramatized by a huge display which affected changing scenes by means of lighting effects. On the large canvas was depicted a serpent on the pole which with

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<sup>96</sup>Ibid., IV (January-February, 1962), 1.

the aid of black light changed into the cross of Jesus Christ whose figure was visible to the audience who strained their necks to view the magnificent display of art.

Robert Boltz of New Orleans was elected president of the Southern Baptist Conference of the Deaf meeting at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary August 18-22.

Named vice-president was Clifford Bruffey, Jackson, Mississippi. The new secretary is Troy Bradley, Little Rock, Arkansas; and treasurer is Edward B. Kolp, Dallas, Texas.

Members elected to the SBCD Board of Trustees are J. U. Liner, Monroe, Louisiana; Arthur Crow, Little Rock, Arkansas; Eugene Elkes, Tampa, Florida; Earnest Barnes, Dallas, Texas; L. A. Beard, Houston, Texas; and William S. Smith, Beaumont, Texas.<sup>97</sup>

Rev. William Nelson Goble was first appointed as a student summer missionary to work with Rev. Roy Cissna among the deaf in the state of Missouri in 1961 and then as an associate missionary to the deaf in Kentucky September 1, 1962. He was born in Paintsville, Kentucky, April 4, 1940, and was baptized at First Baptist Church (an American Baptist Church) in Madison, Indiana, in 1952. When his family moved to California, he attended Garfield High School in East Los Angeles and then Montabelle High School from which he graduated in 1959. In 1957 he surrendered his life for foreign mission service and in 1958 joined the First Southern Baptist Church of East Los Angeles where he was introduced to the Southern

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<sup>97</sup>"Boltz Is Named President of Deaf," Home Missions, XXXIII (November, 1962), 29.

Baptist program. Beginning the Spring semester of 1959, he enrolled at California Baptist College in Riverside where he continued his studies until 1962 when he was appointed by the Home Mission Board to serve the deaf in Kentucky and was transferred to Georgetown College, Georgetown, Kentucky, where he majored in biology to prepare himself for medical missions. While he was a student of California Baptist College, Riverside, in 1959, he was introduced to the language of signs and took the course under Rev. Robert Jackson. During the first two years he interpreted the worship services and taught the Sunday School class for the deaf in Riverside. In 1964 he moved to Middletown, Kentucky, the seat of Kentucky Baptist Convention, and is currently working with the deaf and other handicapped people in his state.

Rev. John Alfred Cooper came under the Board's appointment on June 15, 1962, but his work began, effective September 1, 1962. He was born in Christiana, Rutherford County, Tennessee, October 26, 1926. He attended Christiana High School where he graduated in 1947 and Middle Tennessee State College from 1947 to 1955, having received from the institution the degrees of Bachelor of Science and Master of Arts. During the summer months, 1955-1958, he took several courses in mental retardation at George Peabody College in Nashville, Tennessee, and had several years' experience of teaching in public schools in Tennessee. He enrolled at Southern Baptist

Theological Seminary, Louisville, Kentucky, and graduated with a Bachelor of Divinity degree in 1962. He was pastor of the Fourth Avenue Baptist Church for the Deaf and worked in a dentention home in Louisville for a year and a half (1960-1962). He was married to Miss Ina Bell Evans August 21, 1953, and from this union came three lovely children. Rev. J. A. Cooper has been laboring among the deaf in the Great Lakes States and has been instrumental in the establishment of numerous Sunday School and Training Union groups for the deaf in Southern Baptist churches in Michigan, Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio as well as in the organization of classes of the language of signs in other churches in these states to prepare for the day when they will be ready to meet the spiritual needs of the deaf in their communities.

The ordination of Rev. Robert Boltz blazoned under the headline of Home Missions, "Answer to the Deaf," which is described in the following manner:

Ordination services are common among Southern Baptists. When a young man is ready to be set aside by a church for full-time Christian service and when the church is convinced of his sincerity and call, an ordination council is assembled and a time is scheduled for an ordination service.

Perhaps all ordinations are pretty much the same. But recently the ordination service at First Baptist Church of New Orleans was given a new significance and the members of the church felt a sense of purpose which might have been absent in an ordinary ordination.

For the church ordained to the Gospel ministry, Robert Howard Boltz, who can neither speak nor hear. Bob Boltz is a student at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary and pastor of First Church's Silent Department.

Sitting down front in the church's well-appointed auditorium were members of the Silent Department. Miss Hetty Corey, also a seminary student, interpreted for the hearing audience as Boltz, a native of Verona, New Jersey, explained by the use of sign language that he is grateful for the opportunity to work with the deaf people in New Orleans; that this is where God wants him to serve.

Giving the charge to the candidate for the ordination was Clifford Bruffey, seminary student, who is missionary to the deaf in Mississippi.

Miss Corey reversed her earlier interpretation to the hearing audience and translated into sign language the words of First Church's pastor, J. D. Grey, as he expressed the feelings of the church members about the opportunity which the church and Boltz share in the ministry to the deaf.

Admitting that he had been concerned about a ministry to the deaf for some time, Dr. Grey said that the church was indeed fortunate to be able to supply a pastor for this group in New Orleans.

Included in the presbytery, in addition to Dr. Grey and Rev. Bruffey, were seminary professors Frank Stagg, V. L. Stanfield, and Claude Howe, as well as Billy Murphy, seminary student who is assistant to Dr. Grey.

Dr. Stagg offered the ordination prayer and Dr. Stanfield presented Boltz with a Bible on behalf of the church. After the ordination service, members of the Silent Department adjourned to First Church's fellowship hall for a reception in their newly ordained pastor's honor.

Specially honored guests of the church were Mr. and Mrs. J. R. Boltz who traveled from their home in Verona, New Jersey, for their son's ordination.

As the ordination service was completed, members of the church were convinced that this was not just an ordinary ordination, but that one had been set aside who could carry from a heart of conviction the Gospel to an often neglected group, the silent people.<sup>98</sup>

Several deaf people attended the Alabama Baptist State Convention at First Baptist Church in Montgomery Novem-

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<sup>98</sup>Charles Arrendell, "Answer to the Deaf," Home Missions, XXXIII (November, 1962), 29.

ber 13-15, 1962, with Rev. David Richardson and other interpreters assisting. A section in the sanctuary of the church was reserved for the deaf each night, and Dr. Herschel H. Hobbs, president of Southern Baptist Convention and pastor of First Baptist Church, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, and Dr. W. A. Criswell, First Baptist Church, Dallas, Texas, were featured speakers at the Convention.<sup>99</sup>

"Board Chips," an inter-office publication of the Home Mission Board, announced that Carter Bearden, Jr., served as interpreter for his father who spoke to the Baptist Student Union at the University of Georgia in Athens, Georgia, on Friday night, February 8, 1963, and that he was ten years old at the time of his first public appearance in this role.<sup>100</sup> Mr. Thomas Laurie, then a student at the University of Georgia and later a teacher at Georgia School for the Deaf wrote in The Baptist Bulldog, a monthly publication of the Baptist Student Union of the University of Georgia:

The BSU Mission Room is now open and the display concerns missions to the deaf. There is information about sign language and also several interesting and inspiring stories on display. There is also information about mission work in Texas and California.

Are you aware that about two percent of our popu-

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<sup>99</sup>"Baptist State Convention Meets in Montgomery," Alabama Baptist Deaf, V (September-October, 1962), 1.

<sup>100</sup>"Board Chips," II (February 6, 1963), 1.

lation are deaf or severely hard of hearing?

This point was made at Vesper February 8 when the Rev. Carter Bearden communicated to those present . . . through sign language.

Rev. Bearden, Home Mission Board Missionary to the deaf in Georgia, was interpreted by his ten-year-old son, Carter, Jr. Rev. Bearden's message was about deafness and Baptist mission work among the deaf.

The address was both interesting and informative and many of those who attended remained after the address for a question and answer period of about 30 minutes.<sup>101</sup>

Efforts in reaching deaf children for Christ at the state schools for the deaf were intensified in several states by Home Mission Board missionaries, especially in California whose case was illustrated by Rev. George Joslin in the monthly publication of the Board.

One of the most challenging phases of our ministry is the after-school religious education classes in the California School for the Deaf in Riverside.

There we have several classes of elementary age pupils. These pupils differ greatly from the typical junior Sunday school boy or girl. Most of them have few religious terms in their limited vocabulary. Only after showing the pupils the words on the blackboard, and demonstrating how to make the sign with their hands, can the teacher proceed to define and explain it through pictures and stories.

Once, while teaching the Christmas story, Mrs. Joslin realized, too late, that most of her pupils had not made the transition from their earlier story of "Baby Moses" to the present story of "Baby Jesus."

The responsibility for the religious education of these pupils is often left entirely to the missionary to the deaf when he is available. Neither the parents nor the school faculty has any program for this.

The parents, who are usually not deaf, often cannot communicate with their children, and the school is

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<sup>101</sup>Tommy Laurie, "Mission Room Opens," The Baptist Bulldog, XXXV (February, 1963), 1.

prohibited by law from any religious instruction. There are, however, fine exceptions where the parents have learned to communicate and are responsible for their children's religious education.

A normally rational parent will sometimes make unfortunately irrational decisions concerning a deaf child. In one instance both parents were Christians and members of a Baptist church in Texas. All the children, except one son who was deaf, became Christians early in life and grew up in the environment of the church. The only reason which the deaf boy gave later for not following the same pattern is that his parents "didn't think it was necessary for me since I was deaf."

He wanted to join the church, but no one explained the way to him. He moved to California and established a home of his own, yet no one offered him an opportunity to trust Christ as Saviour until he was 35 years old.

When he heard the plan of salvation he readily accepted Jesus as Saviour. The unfortunate decision of his parents had forced him to remain without this joy and peace for over twenty-five years, "because he was deaf."

If this were an isolated experience it would be serious enough, but it occurs again and again in the lives of deaf persons. They look to Southern Baptist churches to fill this vital need in their lives. We must carry the gospel to them or they will remain without Christ.

An excessive degree of material protection is sometimes the plague of a deaf child.

Earl attended the state school for the deaf where he resided in the dormitory for the greater part of the year. His mother transferred him to a day school so he could be closer to her. Long before he was prepared for life, he left school to live completely under his mother's care. When he did find employment it was as a laborer, and his mother handled all his financial matters for him.

When he was 38 years old his mother passed away, and through the influence of a Christian landlady, he turned to our church for the security he had lost at home. Here he faced the problem of communication, for he had not associated with the deaf enough to understand the sign language easily. At the same time he did not read lips or understand hearing persons either.

He has since been led to salvation and church membership and his entire life has been revolutionized. Because of this experience, he has found himself as a

real person.<sup>102</sup>

Since his appointment by the Home Mission Board July 1, 1963, Rev. Jerry St. John has served as missionary to the deaf in Mississippi. He was born in Bastrop, Louisiana, October 13, 1932, and attended Warren High School, Warren, Arkansas, and the Coast Guard Academy, New London, Connecticut, receiving his Bachelor of Arts degree from Ouchita Baptist College, Arkadelphia, Arkansas, in 1955, Bachelor of Divinity degree in 1959 and Master of Theology degree in 1962 from Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary, Mill Valley, California. He was pastor of New Liberty Baptist Church, Hermitage, Arkansas, 1951-1952, and Wooster Baptist Church, Wooster, Arkansas, 1953-1955; he served as Music Director, Calvary Baptist Church, Berkeley, California, 1959, and Director of Deaf Work, University Baptist Church, Oakland, California, 1959-1963. He married the former Erkle Eldean Kessinger of Conway, Arkansas, and they have two children.

In the same month of Rev. St. John's appointment by the Home Mission Board, the Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, Nashville, Tennessee, announced the change of the title of the Sunday School periodical for

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<sup>102</sup>George B. Joslin, "California Ministry Reaches Deaf Children," Home Missions, XXXIV (January, 1963), 19.

the deaf from Sunday School Quarterly for the Deaf to Sunday School Lessons Simplified, the first issue being published for the fourth quarter, October-December, 1963, and being designed to include other minority groups possessing limited English vocabulary to its readership. Miss Doris Cutter was chosen editor of this new quarterly.

The new book has a bright and shining cover with an attractive and meaningful picture. The printed page is large and clear. In the front of the book is a word list and their meaning. A helpful Biblical map is also in the book.

At the beginning of the Sunday School lesson is the daily Bible reading for the week preceding each Sunday.<sup>103</sup>

The Southern Baptist Conference of the Deaf had its sessions in the basement of the new modern library of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Kentucky, August 10-14, 1963. This Conference boasted a galaxy of missionary speakers, with Rev. Waverly Atkins giving devotional messages, Rev. Neal Peyton teaching Bible lessons, Rev. David Richardson presenting inspirational talks, Rev. Jerry Potter speaking on "Willing to Share Christ With the World," Rev. C. F. Landon preaching a Tuesday morning sermon, and Rev. William Goble proclaiming "Count the Cost."

Messengers from nineteen states attended the Confer-

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<sup>103</sup>"New Sunday School Lesson for Deaf," Alabama Baptist Deaf, V (October-December, 1963), 1.

ence and were represented statistically:

<b>I. BY WORK REPRESENTED</b>			
Preachers	15	T. U. Directors	6
Interpreters	24	T. U. Leaders	4
Superintendents	8	W. M. U. Workers	14
S. S. Teachers	40	Brotherhood Leaders	14
Deacons	9	Charter Members	5
<b>II. BY STATES</b>			
Alabama	18	Mississippi	5
Arkansas	7	Missouri	8
Arizona	1	New Jersey	2
Florida	14	North Carolina	2
Georgia	11	South Carolina	3
Illinois	1	Ohio	6
Indiana	1	Oklahoma	6
Kansas	3	Tennessee	7
Kentucky	40	Texas	32
Louisiana	13	Virginia	7
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Speaking of his experience at the Billy Graham Crusade held in the Los Angeles Coliseum, Rev. George B. Joslin wrote an article which appeared in the Board's monthly magazine, explaining that:

Records of many kinds were made and broken at the Billy Graham Crusade in the Los Angeles Coliseum during August and September. It is not known whether the participation of the deaf in this crusade reached or surpassed any previous records for number or quality, but those who joined with the deaf in the crusade felt this to be something significant.

From an average of about 75 deaf people at each service during the crusade, more than 50 decisions for Christ were registered. Several of these are being reached by our ten Southern Baptist churches with a ministry to the deaf in the greater Los Angeles area.

At the Sunday afternoon and Friday evening services there were as many as 100 deaf people present, with

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<sup>104</sup>"S. B. D. D. Messengers," Southern Baptist Bulletin, III (July-August-September, 1963), 8.

their families and friends, seated high in the stands on the 50-yard line, with one or more interpreters standing directly before them interpreting everything that was said and sung.

Ten of the 20 interpreters for the deaf participating in the crusade were from Southern Baptist churches. Some of them also served as counselors for those who made decisions for Christ.<sup>105</sup>

Rev. Glen Prock reported in his letter to Rev. C. E. Bearden in October, 1963, that he had established work with the students of Gallaudet College at Metropolitan Baptist Church, Washington, D.C., and stated:

In four weeks we have grown from one student to nine students and expect fifteen this Sunday (October 27). We have six people in the class who can interpret and a sign language course going for some thirty others. It looks like our work at Gallaudet is at last on the road.<sup>106</sup>

The interpreters for the deaf held a conference on the campus of Mercer University, a Baptist institution, in Macon, Georgia, on the second Saturday of October, with Dr. Loyd Corder, Secretary of Language Missions Department of Home Mission Board, presiding. It was decided that an Interpreter's Conference be organized and that it be held on the second Saturday of October each year. Mr. Charles Fanshaw, then minister of education of Morningside Baptist Church,

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<sup>105</sup>George B. Joslin, "Southern Baptists Aid Deaf in Billy Graham Crusade," Home Missions, XXXIV (December, 1963), 27.

<sup>106</sup>"News from Near and Afar." Southern Baptist Bulletin for the Worker with the Deaf, III (October-November-December, 1963), 3.

Savannah, Georgia, was elected president of the 1963-1964 Baptist Interpreter's Conference.<sup>107</sup>

The deaf ministry in Ohio was met with notable success and was a year old at this time (October, 1963). Rev. John Cooper assisted the churches in the state in inaugurating the deaf work and taught the language of signs to some members of Southern Baptist churches in Ohio and Indiana to prepare them for future work with the deaf.<sup>108</sup>

During the same month Rev. George Joslin presented his report to the Southern Baptist associations and churches in Southern California, in which he reported that:

We now have 88 deaf people who are members of Southern Baptist churches in South California. Counting the pupils from CSDR who go to Arlington Avenue Baptist Church in Riverside, we have 254 enrolled in our Sunday Schools (also including workers who may not be deaf). The average SS attendance for the year was over 100. There have been 17 baptisms reported among deaf people, with 12 more baptisms from hearing members of deaf families. Fifteen deaf people joined churches by letter. We gained 3 new deaf groups (Whittier, Highland, Simi) and lost one.<sup>109</sup>

Following the steps of Rev. Roy Cissna, Rev. Clifford Bruffey, Rev. Carter Bearden, Rev. David Richardson, Mr. Ed Davis, and Rev. George Joslin who have published their news-

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<sup>107</sup>Loc. cit.

<sup>108</sup>Ibid., 4.

<sup>109</sup>George B. Joslin (ed.), Newsletter, II (October 1, 1963), 1.

letters or periodicals as mediums of information and news for the deaf and the workers in their states, Rev. Jerry St. John launched his own paper, "Mississippi Baptist Newsletter for the Deaf," and reported in the first issue that the Woodland Hills Baptist Church, Jackson, Mississippi, baptized twenty-seven deaf people from January 1, 1964, to May 1, 1964. He stated that the revival accounted for a considerable part of the conversions of these deaf people and that several students from Mississippi School for the Deaf were privileged to attend the Thursday night revival service which was interpreted by Mrs. Clifton Tate, Miss Margaret Keough, and Rev. Jerry St. John.<sup>110</sup>

Dr. Durwood Cason, secretary of Department of Negro Work of Georgia Baptist Convention and the father of a deaf son, Lamar Cason, challenged the messengers at Georgia Baptist Conference of the Deaf at Mercer University, Macon, Georgia, June 20, 1964, to work constructively toward the salvation of the Negro deaf people in their state and pointed out that there was only one church in Georgia that ministered to the spiritual needs of the deaf Negroes and that there were no known Negro interpreters available or in training to assure future growth. He suggested to the au-

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<sup>110</sup>Rev. Jerry St. John (ed.), "Jackson News," Mississippi Baptist Newsletter for the Deaf, I (May, 1964), 1.

dience that they either train one or more Negro workers to interpret the Word of God for the deaf in their own churches or that the white Southern Baptist churches accept the deaf Negroes into the already established classes for the deaf if the churches are ready to welcome them. Dr. Searcy Garrison, Executive Secretary-Treasurer of Georgia Baptist Convention, and Rev. Leslie Gunn, Home Mission Board missionary to the deaf in Oklahoma, were other featured speakers at the conference.<sup>111</sup>

Dr. A. J. Roddy was reappointed for deaf mission work August 1, 1964, and was assigned to Southern California to fill the position left vacant by Rev. George Joslin who had been transferred to Texas the previous February.<sup>112</sup>

The Southern Baptist Conference of the Deaf met at Glorieta Baptist Assembly, Glorieta, New Mexico, during Home Mission Week August 3-5, 1964, and the messengers attended their own day sessions, with Rev. Joe Johnson, Little Rock, Arkansas, teaching Bible lessons and Rev. George Joslin, Garland, Texas, preaching the morning worship sermons, and the evening sessions with the hearing people, with the inter-

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<sup>111</sup>"Cason Challenges Interpreters," Interpreter's Forum, ed. Charles Fanshaw, I (July 9, 1964), II.

<sup>112</sup>Southern Baptist Bulletin, IV (July-August-September, 1964), 8.

preters taking turns in relaying the services into the language of signs for the benefit of the deaf.

On Tuesday morning, August 4, 1964, Dr. Courts Redford, Executive Secretary-Treasurer of Home Mission Board, spoke of his love for the deaf and stated that though there are communication problems, the deaf have a communication of the heart which is common with all Christians. He pointed out that three things which act as common communication for understanding around the world are a smile, a tear, and a drop of blood (spirit of sacrifice) and concluded his introductory remark with his appreciation for the beautiful expression of love through the means of the language of the deaf and with his praise for mission work among the deaf. At the conclusion of his speech, the Rev. Mr. Bruffey, president of the Conference, informed him that the Southern Baptist Conference of the Deaf had ordered a plaque to be presented to him which, unfortunately, was not ready. Dr. Courts Redford replied that when he received the plaque, he would cherish it most of all, for it came from the dear friends in the Southern Baptist Conference of the Deaf.<sup>113</sup>

Dr. Loyd Corder, Secretary of Language Missions,

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<sup>113</sup> "Message from Home Mission Board," Southern Baptist Bulletin, IV (July-August-September, 1964), 3.

Home Mission Board, conducted a question and answer period, and some of the questions and subjects discussed were:

1. How can the girls in YWA camps serve the deaf?
2. Deaf young people need higher educational opportunities to prepare them for the ministries. He spoke of plans for special courses being prepared to be offered on various campuses.
3. Will they have to go to Gallaudet College?
4. Will this open opportunities for qualified teachers for the deaf?
5. Is there any practical training for the deaf under the Home Mission Board. Rev. C. E. Bearden encouraged summer work for young people.
6. Bible schools for the deaf through student summer mission program.<sup>114</sup>

The Baptist Press sent its news release over the wire service that "Glorieta Soloist 'Sings' Without Words to An Unseen Congregation."

When the soloist at Glorieta sang she neither heard the words nor saw the audience. Neither did she open her mouth.

She is both blind and deaf.

But Mrs. Elia Brownell of New Orleans, La. sang with graceful movements of the Language of Signs of the deaf. An interpreter translated her signs into words and music.

The solo by Mrs. Brownell was a part of the worship service for the closing night of Home Mission Week at Glorieta (N.M.) Baptist Assembly. She was one of the 147 deaf persons and workers with the deaf, attending the annual conference for the deaf, this year meeting in connection with the Home Mission Conference.

Mrs. Brownell has been a Baptist for only one year. She was converted a year ago through the deaf ministry of First Church, New Orleans. Her pastor, J. D. Grey, calls her "our Helen Keller."

Immediately after Mrs. Brownell was saved she wanted to learn to sing, a task first thought to be impossible. She did not even read Braille, the printed language of the blind.

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<sup>114</sup>Ibid., 3-4.

She learned the deaf language of signs, however, which she understands by placing her hands over the hands of the person making the signs. She feels the formation of the letters, making her sensitive hands her only communication with the world.

Through the teaching hands of her oldest daughter, Mrs. Brownell has memorized 19 songs.

Mrs. Brownell is married to a deaf man she met while attending the school for the deaf at Baton Rouge, La. He makes his living building door frames. They have two daughters, 12 and 10, and a son, three.

The messengers at the Southern Baptist Conference of the Deaf passed a motion made by Rev. Carter Bearden that the Conference suspend its operation during the year of 1965 in order to permit the Sunday School Board of Southern Baptist Convention to inaugurate the Sunday School conference for the deaf and their workers and teachers to be held at both Southern Baptist assemblies (Glorieta and Ridgecrest) the following summer. The new program included a conference for teachers and interpreters, and its purpose was to increase the ability of these persons to teach the Bible. Included in the new set up was a conference for class members which sought to help them understand the nature and purpose of an adult class as well as how it functions.<sup>115</sup>

Rev. Clifford Bruffey, Home Mission Board missionary, Jacksonville, Florida, was reelected president of the Conference, and other newly elected officers were Rev. Neal

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<sup>115</sup>"Sunday School Workshop," ibid., IV (October-November-December, 1964), 2.

Peyton, Home Board missionary, Wake Forest, North Carolina, vice president; Rev. Joe Johnson, State Board missionary, Little Rock, Arkansas, secretary; and Mr. Max Floyd, a deaf man, Midland, Texas, treasurer.<sup>116</sup>

On October 1, 1964, Rev. Charles Albert Fanshaw was appointed by the Georgia Baptist Convention as a state missionary to the deaf in Georgia. Prior to his appointment by the Georgia Baptist Convention in 1964 and by the Home Mission Board on January 1, 1965, Mr. Fanshaw was minister of education at the Morningside Baptist Church, Savannah, Georgia, and First Southern Baptist Church, Santa Maria, California. He was born in Hampton, Virginia, September 15, 1932, and was converted in Long Beach, California, July, 1954. He was licensed to preach by Walnut Avenue Baptist Church, Long Beach, in 1954, and he felt called to mission service in Riverside, California, February, 1959. He received his Bachelor of Science degree in Social Work at California Baptist College in 1958 and his Master of Religious Education degree at Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary in 1962. He was a vocational nurse for the County of Riverside, Riverside, California, 1955-1957, and then at Community Hospital in the same city 1957-1958, and a coun-

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<sup>116</sup>"Max Floyd Elected SBCD Treasurer," The Baptist Messenger, XVI (September, 1964), 1.

selor at California School for the Deaf in Riverside, California, 1957-1959. He married Miss Wanda Lorine Sentelle June 6, 1955, and they have two children. Rev. Charles Fanshaw and his family reside in Cave Springs, Georgia, the home of Georgia School for the Deaf, and he devotes one-half of his time to the deaf children there and the rest to deaf work over the state.

Texas was the first among Southern Baptist states to sponsor a Workshop for Workers with the Deaf on a state Baptist convention basis, and Rev. George Joslin and the Language Missions Department of the Baptist General Convention of Texas, Dallas, Texas, cooperated with the Texas Baptist Conference of the Deaf in this project, with Rev. G. B. Joslin directing. The theme of the Workshop was "Working Together." Seventy-eight messengers representing twenty churches attended group discussion conferences moderated by outstanding leaders in the religious field of the deaf, and they produced excellent guidelines and invaluable information which were published through the courtesy of First Baptist Church, Amarillo, Texas, and distributed by the Language Missions Department, Texas Baptist Convention.<sup>117</sup> Rev. John A. Cooper and Rev. Carter Bearden assisted in the meeting.

At the conclusion of the Waco, Texas, Workshop, Rev.

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<sup>117</sup>"Waco Workshop," Together, I (November 1, 1964),

John Cooper was stricken with a ruptured intestine on his way to Dallas and underwent an emergency operation in Garland, Texas. This necessitated the slow-down of his work in the Great Lakes States for nearly a year.

Rev. John Cooper, Missionary to the Deaf, Plainfield, Indiana, is fully recovered from the surgery he had while here in Texas last October, Rev. George Joslin reported.

Rev. Cooper reported, "Our work is developing well. We have 13 churches with a ministry to the deaf now. Many more are interested."<sup>118</sup>

Rev. John Cooper reported in the Mid-West Deaf News, of which he is editor, that the State Convention of Baptists in Ohio planned to provide summer camps for deaf boys and girls and that Southern Baptist churches in Michigan, Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois had established religious services for the deaf as well as expanded their visiting ministry to the deaf.<sup>119</sup>

Following the organizational plan of a state-wide crusade for the Spanish-speaking people of Texas, which was sponsored by the Baptist General Convention of Texas, Rev. George Joslin inaugurated a Texas Baptist Deaf Crusade for the months of April and May, 1965, and led nearly all the churches having a deaf ministry in this great undertaking.

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<sup>118</sup>"Rev. John Cooper Fully Recovered," The Baptist Messenger, XVII (March, 1965), 10.

<sup>119</sup>Mid-West Deaf News, March-April, 1965.

A galaxy of missionary personnel of Home and State Mission Boards convened in Texas to assist Rev. G. B. Joslin in bringing the crusade to a successful conclusion.<sup>120</sup>

Southern Baptist Bulletin presented a lengthy article about the Texas Baptist Deaf Crusade, which is reproduced here in part:

Some churches have reported "a deeper spiritual impact" and have had gratifying results from their meetings. Other churches are in the stage of having their own services this month and in June.

Scores of home and state missionaries to the deaf have contributed to the success of this crusade and have been greatly used of God to win some of the deaf to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ and also to inspire many others to rededicate their lives to the Lord and to His work.

The idea of reaching many deaf people in one state with the Gospel within a period of time, that is to say--one month, is not something new as it was first tried out by Rev. Jerry Potter in 1963. It, however, must be said here that it is the first time that the services of many of our missionaries to the deaf have been employed for this purpose. It can be readily seen that this idea is not only good but very practical as well. It has proved to be very constructive to the program of the churches as a whole. Rev. Potter and Rev. Joslin are commended for their contribution to our deaf ministry in this respect.<sup>121</sup>

The exhibits of the Southern Baptist Conference of the Deaf were prominently displayed at both the Southern

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<sup>120</sup> See Appendix V for a list of participating churches and crusade speakers in Texas.

<sup>121</sup> "Texas Crusade," Southern Baptist Bulletin, V (April-May-June, 1965), 4.

Baptist Convention, Dallas, Texas, and Baptist World Alliance, Miami, Florida. Rev. Carter Bearden, who attended both conventions, wrote in the Southern Baptist Bulletin that:

Our exhibit at the Southern Baptist Convention in Dallas, Texas, May 30-June 4, 1965, was a smashing success from the standpoint of creativity and interest. The outstanding feature of the exhibit was the display of human hands making signs. Mr. David Dean, pastor of Silent Friends Baptist Mission in Dallas, was the creator of this unique presentation. He had a black light installed in a large box which had its three slides surrounded with a black net or cheese cloth, draped with black velvet valance. Behind the curtain of the exhibit sat one of our workers who rested his elbows near the rear edge of the box, protruding his "make-up" hands about midway to the front edge for the people to see. The people saw only the hands making some signs. The moving of hands inside the box aroused the curiosity of some 16,000 messengers and visitors who drew near to look at the display and to pick up some tracts from the table or to talk with some of our workers about the deaf work. Our workers who were at the Convention to lend a helping hand were Mr. and Mrs. David Dean, Mr. and Mrs. George Joslin, Mr. and Mrs. C. F. Landon, Mr. and Mrs. Calvin Willard, Miss Jan Humphrey, Mr. and Mrs. Bill Johnson, and a few others, including Mrs. Hiner and the Brammall sisters. The director of the exhibit and the S. B. C. D. program was George Joslin, and his assistant was Mr. John Cooper.

More than 10,000 Baptists from 101 nations of the world convened in Miami, Florida, for the World Congress June 25-30, 1965. Thousands saw several of our interpreters in action at the Orange Bowl during evening sessions. Many were deeply impressed and inspired by the agile hand-and-arm movement and the ready smile of Miss Jan Humphrey, the pride of Texas. Other able interpreters who assisted her were Mrs. Williams of Virginia, Mrs. McGlamery of Arizona, Mrs. Golden of Texas, and Dwayne Carroll of Florida.

Twenty-eight persons from several states and eight Baptists from other countries registered in the guest book at the exhibit of the Southern Baptist Conference of the Deaf and expressed some interest in starting

the deaf work in their communities and in securing information about this ministry. Mr. Clifford Bruffey was the director of the exhibit.<sup>122</sup>

The Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention sponsored Sunday School conferences for the deaf at Glorieta, New Mexico, July 8-14, 1965, and Ridgecrest, North Carolina, August 5-11, 1965, with Miss Doris Cutter coordinating the meetings. Miss Cutter, Assistant Editor, Adult Lessons Courses, led a conference for teachers and interpreters, based on the book, Preparing to Teach the Bible, by Howard P. Colson. Mrs. Louis A. Beard, First Baptist Church, Houston, Texas, led another conference for adult participants, using the manual, The Sunday School Ministry to Adults, by John T. Sisemore. Each conference consisted of class participation, practical demonstrations on the art of teaching as well as conducting a Weekly Teachers' and Officers' Meeting. These courses proved to be very helpful to those who attended the conferences.<sup>123</sup>

Having experienced new methods and organized several successful workshops, Texas once again laid another claim to being the first to sponsor the Workshop on Ministries to Deaf

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<sup>122</sup>"Southern Baptist Convention" and "Baptist World Alliance," ibid., V (July-August-September, 1965), 1.

<sup>123</sup>George B. Joslin, "BSSB Conferences at Glorieta and Ridgecrest," The Baptist Messenger, XVII (March, 1965), 1 and 9.

Children under the leadership of Rev. George Joslin and the Language Missions Department of the Baptist General Convention of Texas. Congress Avenue Baptist Church, Austin, Texas, was privileged to be chosen as the host church of the Workshop. Distinguished program speakers included Dr. Annie Ward Byrd and Mr. Eugene Chamberlain of the Baptist Sunday School Board, Nashville, Tennessee; Mr. Roy Van Hoove of the Travis State School, Austin; and Texas School for the Deaf faculty members: Mr. John F. Grace, Superintendent, Mr. A. W. Douglas, Principal, Miss Golda Caldwell and Mrs. Elizabeth Wiggam, both teachers. Mrs. Lee Abbott, Mr. Jerry Hassell, and Rev. and Mrs. Calvin Willard, all members of Congress Avenue Baptist Church, participated on the program, since they had considerable experience in working with school children for many years.<sup>124</sup> As a result of the Workshop, Baptist Sunday School Board workers gained a better understanding of the needs and problems of deaf children with a view to expanding their ministry to include children of minority groups and to providing them suitable literature in the near future.

Dr. A. J. Roddy resigned from the Home Mission Board as missionary to the deaf in Southern California to accept professorship at California Baptist College in Riverside,

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<sup>124</sup> Calvin Willard, "Deaf Department," The Challenge, X (November 19, 1965), 3.

California, beginning the fall of 1965.

Prior to and in pursuant to the action of the Southern Baptist Conference of the Deaf in reference to the deaf ministry in the Orient, Rev. Carter Bearden has had a lengthy correspondence with Dr. Winston Crawley, Secretary for the Orient for the Foreign Mission Board, Southern Baptist Convention, and with several Foreign Mission Board missionaries and Japanese leaders in Japan. After an initial survey had been made to investigate the possibilities of a deaf ministry in Japan, Dr. Winston Crawley sent his report to Rev. Carter Bearden July 26, 1965, stating:

The evangelism committee of the Japan Baptist Convention (which corresponds to our Home Mission Board) is proposing an initial program of information to the churches about opportunities for evangelism among the deaf and the sponsoring of area retreats for deaf people. In addition, one of our missionaries has been working with some deaf people in an area near Fukuoka and has recently been given an allocation of \$100 towards the expense involved. The Convention Committee has proposed a budget of \$300 for its initial approach to evangelism among the deaf.

At this point probably the most helpful action the Southern Baptist Conference of the Deaf might take would be to make available on a special gift basis through the Foreign Mission Board the amount of \$400, which would correspond to funds now being expended and projected in the work in Japan. If along with such a gift there is an assurance of a continuing interest and a desire to do as much or more in the future, this will be a great deal of encouragement to the Evangelism Department of the Japan Convention.<sup>125</sup>

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<sup>125</sup>"Deaf Work in the Orient," Southern Baptist Bulletin, V (July-August-September, 1965), 1.

In response to the report of Dr. Winston Crawley the Southern Baptist Conference of the Deaf raised \$843.95 for the deaf ministry in Japan and presented this gift to the Foreign Mission Board through its president, Rev. Clifford Bruffey, January 5, 1966. Between December 28, 1965, and January 17, 1966, other Baptist church groups contributed their gifts to the Japan Deaf Mission Fund, thus raising the amount to \$945.51.<sup>126</sup>

In a letter from one of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board missionaries in Japan to the Foreign Mission Board dated February, 1966, it is said:

Perhaps you would be interested in a preliminary report, incomplete though it is, concerning the activities which contributions from the Southern Baptist Conference of the Deaf for deaf work in Japan have made possible. These include a retreat at the Mountain House in Fukuoka during last summer and more recently a nationwide retreat held at the Torikai Church for January 3rd to 5th. This was attended by about 22 deaf people, about 12-15 pastors and 3-4 seminary students. The meeting was small, but it was very meaningful. The fellowship was wonderful, and a number of the decisions were made. A special program concerning deaf work was presented at the meeting of Japan Baptist Convention at Amagi last August and small booklets and tracts on the sign language for the deaf have been prepared or are in preparation. A number of churches connected with the convention have special services for the deaf, and interest in projecting a meaningful witness to the deaf seems to be growing.<sup>127</sup>

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<sup>126</sup>See Appendix VI for a list of churches which contributed their gifts to the Japan Deaf Mission Fund.

<sup>127</sup>Letter from R. H. Culpepper to Dr. Winston Crawley, Fukuoka, Japan, February 3, 1966.

In January, 1966, the Baptist Sunday School Board, Nashville, Tennessee, released and made available on a Southern Baptist Convention basis through its Baptist Book Stores a forty-eight page booklet, What the Bible Tells Us, by Miss Doris Cutter which deals with important Christian beliefs written for adults in easy-to-read form and also contains a word list at the beginning of the book. This new work met one of the definite needs of the deaf and was welcomed by both the teachers and the laymen who had long felt such a need.

In memory and honor of Dr. J. W. Michaels, the Texas Baptist Conference of the Deaf set up the Michaels Scholarship Fund, which was created by Mr. N. S. Draughon and Rev. George Joslin, at its annual meeting in 1965 and appointed a Committee to propose regulations concerning the Fund. On December 19, 1965, Mrs. S. D. Johnson, Austin, Texas, daughter of Dr. J. W. Michaels, presented the first check in the amount of \$500.00 to Mr. Jack Hensley, treasurer of the Michaels Scholarship Fund Committee. In presenting her gift in the memory of her father, Mrs. S. D. Johnson commented that December 19, 1965, had special significance since it was the one hundred and fifteenth (115) anniversary of his birth.<sup>128</sup> The fund enables any qualified deaf person to enrol

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<sup>128</sup>"Michaels Scholarship Fund Presentation," The Baptist Messenger, XVIII (January, 1966), 1.

in a Baptist college in Texas.

On January 8, 1966, the Executive Committee of Texas Baptist Conference of the Deaf convened at Congress Avenue Baptist Church, Austin, Texas, to discuss and adopt the policies formulated by the Michaels Scholarship Fund Committee. A special announcement concerning this matter was reported in the Conference periodical:

Every year the month of February shall be designated as "Michaels Scholarship Emphasis Month" in all Baptist churches across the breath of Texas. The last Sunday in February shall be the day of offering and pledges.<sup>129</sup>

In explaining the nature of the Michaels Scholarship Fund in her letter to the writer dated March 3, 1966, Mrs. S. D. Johnson wrote:

The proposal is the brain-child of N. S. Draughon and George Joslin. It was adopted last summer by the TBCD. Its purpose is not to assist the boy who surrenders for the ministry but to provide or encourage a deaf boy or girl who wants an education in a Christian atmosphere where emphasis is given in a major in Bible--with the thought in mind that we need lay workers who are able and capable of giving Christian service in their home area in a more inspirational and prepared way than our deaf ordinarily have. It is not intended, in any way to conflict with HMB scholarship program.<sup>130</sup>

1966 is a far cry from 1906 when Dr. John Walter

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<sup>129</sup>"Special Notice," ibid., 1.

<sup>130</sup>Letter from Mrs. S. D. Johnson to Rev. Carter E. Bearden, Austin, Texas, March 3, 1966.

Michaels first began mission work under the Home Mission Board, and modern conveniences speed the travels of the missionaries of today between mission points; yet the labors of the pioneer missionary would be termed herculean when the statistics of his work is compared with that of any one modern missionary to the deaf. God had raised up a man to lay the groundwork, and He in His wisdom had chosen Dr. J. W. Michaels to be His "voice crying in the wilderness," making the way of the Lord open to the deaf.

## CHAPTER II

### THE HISTORY OF DEAF CHURCH GROUPS

The second chapter deals with the history of deaf church groups. There are more than two hundred forty Sunday School classes for the deaf in the Southern Baptist churches throughout the United States. Only fifty-one groups provided the writer the information concerning the beginning and growth of their work until 1960. The history of some classes has been brought up to date.

#### ALABAMA

##### Birmingham

The first efforts toward organizing the Baptist work for the deaf of Birmingham, Alabama, were made at the Southside Baptist Church in the early 1900's, and the work collapsed at the time of the fire which destroyed the church.<sup>131</sup> Another effort was made by Rev. David Richardson and Miss Ruth Peer during the summer and fall of 1956, during which time Rev. David Richardson was serving as a student mission-

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<sup>131</sup>For further information concerning the early work among the deaf in Birmingham, see Appendix III.

ary to the deaf in the upper part of Mississippi and in the state of Alabama. From a survey he had made, Mr. Richardson learned that there were some 300 deaf people in and around Birmingham. Invitations to these people drew forty deaf persons to a meeting to organize the Baptist work in this city.

On March 3, 1957, the newly organized deaf group met at the Woodlawn Baptist Church, with only seven members. A search for an interpreter uncovered Rev. Neal Peyton who was a member of the Woodlawn Church.

Rev. Neal Peyton shared teaching honors with Edwin Goin, himself deaf, and also interpreted the hearing services, the deaf meeting in the balcony where a section was reserved for them.

Upon becoming leader of the deaf group, Mr. Neal Peyton and his newly acquired wife, Agnes Joan, plunged into the extensive visiting program which was to lay a firm foundation for the growth of the Silent Friends as they were called. Sometime during 1958, Mr. Peyton was given permission to lead the group in a separate worship service. He felt the deaf would benefit much more from such an arrangement than by using an interpreter. A report published in April, 1959, shows that the hard work of the Peytons was rewarded with fifty-four on the Sunday School roll.

August, 1958, through January, 1959, were crisis

months for the Silent Friends, for Rev. Peyton had graduated from Howard College during the summer and had then wanted to enter the seminary. No replacement could be found so Mr. Peyton postponed his seminary entrance until January; meanwhile, the group resorted to fervent prayer for guidance.

As January approached, despite a constant search, there was still no replacement available. To add to the burden, the Woodlawn Baptist Church trimmed its budget, leaving little for the deaf ministry.

The Silent Friends now felt led to change their membership, and after much prayer, discussion, and finally voting, it was decided to move to First Baptist Church of Birmingham, which among other things was nearer the center of the deaf population of the city. On January 3, 1959, Rev. Neal Peyton led his group of church members to the First Church where thirty-six deaf people had joined as a body. They were enthusiastically received by the hearing congregation. Fifty-eight Sunday School members also made this transfer.

Mr. Peyton was now sorely tried. He was due to leave for Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Kansas City, Missouri, on January 10, but there was still no replacement. There was only one prospect. This was Rev. George Thomas who was just graduating from New Orleans Baptist Theological

Seminary, New Orleans, Louisiana, on the nineteenth of that month. The church pastor, Rev. Grady Cothen, made a special trip to New Orleans to interview Rev. George Thomas. Then Mr. Thomas accepted the invitation to visit Birmingham and came on January 10. He was quickly accepted by the Silent Friends.

Now the crisis was over; a replacement had been found just in the nick of time. Mr. Peyton rushed to Kansas City to enroll in the seminary. Rev. George Thomas returned to preach the Word of God to the Silent Friends on January 17. On the nineteenth he graduated from the seminary and began his move to Birmingham. Finally on the twenty-third, Mr. Thomas, his wife Margaret, and son Gregory began their stay in "Little Pittsburg."

The Silent Friends made much progress under Rev. George Thomas' ministry. A deaf choir was organized and has sung several times during the hearing services and once at the Alabama Baptist Convention. A deaf committee was organized to further the work. This Committee was made up of three deaf and three hearing people, all members of the church. A newsletter was begun and proved to be very successful. As of January, 1961, its circulation was about 225. Fifty church and sixty Sunday School members were reported.

The Silent Friends lost their pastor who accepted

the appointment as missionary to the deaf in Northern California on January 10, 1963. Mr. Thomas' move to California was effective on the fifteenth, and once again a crisis in the deaf ministry set in. A replacement, however, was found in the persons of Rev. and Mrs. Billy McDonald who worked with the Deaf Department of the First Church until September, 1963, when they were replaced by Mrs. Mary Lou Bingham, a daughter of deaf parents, who resigned from the position of supervisor at the Florida School for the Deaf in order to accept the role of interpreter at First Baptist Church.

Mrs. Mary Lou Bingham is still carrying on an active work among the deaf which has been stabilized and strengthened through her efforts.

#### Dothan

In October, 1956, Rev. George Zbinden, then associate minister of First Baptist Church of Dothan, became the first minister to the deaf, having learned some signs at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary while a student. A Sunday School class was organized, and a year later a Training Union came into existence. In May, 1958, Mr. Zbinden accepted the call to become the pastor of First Baptist Church in Winfield, Alabama. Mr. Perry Brannon, the superintendent of Sunday School and the director of Training Union, worked with the members until a ministerial student at Baptist Bible Insti-

tute of Graceville, Florida, Rev. Joseph Newton, felt led to work with this group. Mr. Newton was later ordained into the full gospel ministry by Dr. Samuel E. Maddox, pastor of the church.

For approximately two years the Silent Class met on the second and fourth Sunday afternoons. They now meet each Sunday afternoon, with about eighteen members and usually several visitors present.

Rev. George Zbinden and Rev. Joseph Newton served as interpreters for the group, making it possible for the deaf to attend regular services of First Church. Mr. Perry Brannon again became director and interpreter for the group when Mr. Newton left to accept new work in Georgia.

Mr. Bobby Love, himself deaf, was the first teacher of the Silent Class. Later Mr. Brannon, Mrs. <sup>Ada</sup> Ogden, and ~~Miss Gladys King~~ became teachers; ~~Mrs. Maurice Shoupee~~, ~~Miss Adie Davis~~, and ~~Mr. Rex Heisler~~ <sup>WRS</sup> were the assistant teachers.

The first revival was held by Rev. Carter Bearden, then superintendent of deaf missions. Other revivals have been led by Rev. David Richardson, Rev. M. R. DeMeree, and Rev. Neal Peyton.

## ARKANSAS

### Lake City

The Sunday School class was organized at First Baptist

Church in 1939, with seven members: Miss Zelma Hook (now Mrs. Carter); Leo, Theo, and Woodrow Hook; Mr. T. S. Mooneyham; Mr. Luther Adams; and Miss Nettie Sofers. The hearing members of First Church saw the need of a Sunday School class for the deaf, and a motion that a class be organized was made by a Dr. Hardwig and was passed. A room was set aside for the deaf, and Miss Edith Hartwig (now Mrs. Edith Atkerson of Jonesboro) was their first teacher. Then Mr. Harold Wright and Mrs. Reba Hook took turns until November, 1948.

In November, 1948, Mr. John Carter was asked by the church to teach the class as he knew the language of signs. At this time the class had only seven or eight members. During 1950 they began a fourth Sunday meeting for the deaf who live several miles away or too far away to be there every Sunday, and their attendance began to improve. They still have Sunday School every Sunday, but on the fourth Sunday of each month someone from Little Rock comes to hold services for the deaf. The average attendance in the winter is about sixteen but in the summer goes up to about twenty-four on every fourth Sunday. The ladies of the Woman's Missionary Union of First Baptist Church bring basket dinner on fourth Sunday in order that the deaf people may have an afternoon service, too. Rev. J. W. Gardner of Little Rock was their missionary at first but since his move to Texas, Mr. Ted Marsden, Mr. Arthur Crow, and Rev. Joe Johnson, all

of Little Rock, take turns in ministering to the Lake City group.

The deaf people of Lake City have an annual get-together with a basket dinner on the fourth Sunday in July of each year. In 1958 there were ninety-four deaf people, not to mention the hearing people, present, but in 1959 the attendance dropped to forty-eight.

## CALIFORNIA

### Bakersfield

The deaf class in Bakersfield was organized at First Southern Baptist Church in 1953, with Mrs. Faye Wilkie as interpreter and first Sunday School teacher. In the summer of 1954 Mrs. Wilkie moved to the Los Angeles area for six months. While she was away, her sister, Irene Stark, carried on the deaf work as interpreter, and Mrs. Eula Lueallen taught the Sunday School class. After Mrs. Wilkie returned, the class grew from five members to about twenty-five, eight united with the church by letter and twelve came for baptism.

The deaf members have an active Training Union and attend study course classes held by the church. In the summer of 1959 they had their first Vacation Bible School for the deaf children who were home from Berkeley, California, with twelve children enrolled and two deaf ladies as teachers and an interpreter.

The Sunday School class was divided into two groups. Mrs. Eula Lueallen was the teacher of the ladies' class, and Mr. James Craft was the teacher of the men's class.

A hearing lady, inspired by the deaf in her church, penned the beautiful poem:

#### In Silence

I wish that I had words to tell  
The blessing I received.  
As silently they sang their praise  
Dear Father, unto Thee.  
Though not a word could they speak  
And nothing could they hear,  
Still - as they sang, oh Precious Lord  
Thy presence seemed so near.

I bowed my head in mortal shame  
It seemed I had so much  
I counted blessings - one by one  
And yet, I couldn't touch  
The faith and love of these dear souls,  
The glory in each face,  
As silently they praised Thy name  
With hands washed in Thy grace.

By Vera Ehert

#### Manhattan Beach

In September, 1956, the deaf work in the South Bay area of Greater Los Angeles was organized in a small but wonderful church, First Baptist Church of Manhattan Beach, by Mrs. Irene Stark and some deaf people. Since that time they have had as high as twenty-four members of the deaf group, but at present they have only seventeen members.

In the spring of 1957 the hearing and deaf church members, having rented a community hall for quite a while,

moved into a new church building of their own. One of the deaf friends, Oren Calkin, painted a very beautiful baptistry scene over the baptismal tank which is a source of pride of contribution to the Lord's work on the part of both the deaf and hearing members.

The deaf members have been an inspiration to all the hearing people of the church. The former pastor, Rev. J. O. Sanders, loved the deaf very dearly. The next pastor, Dr. P. Boyd Smith, founder of California Baptist College in Riverside, and his wife also loved the deaf and were willing to promote the work among the deaf. They started a Woman's Missionary Society for the deaf ladies in the fall of 1957. The circle was named the "Beverly Jackson Circle," and eight deaf women belonged to the circle. The deaf men attended the Brotherhood with the hearing men.

Mr. David McClary was the Sunday School teacher from the Spring of 1957 until August, 1959, when he and his wife moved to Medford, Oregon. Then the Sunday School class was disbanded due to lack of a teacher.

Every two months the deaf met together for pot-luck dinners and a Christian fellowship. On February 19, 1960, they had a pot-luck dinner and had Dr. H. M. Liechty, then superintendent of city missions in Los Angeles, and Rev. Robert Jackson, then Home Mission Board missionary to the deaf in Southern California, to speak to them. Soon the

regular Sunday class was reorganized.

A dactylology class for hearing members of the church was organized, and ten people enrolled for the course. Out of this group came a young man, Gordon Thompson, who felt that God had called him into the deaf ministry.

## COLORADO

### Colorado Springs

In the city of Colorado Springs it was found that the Lutheran Church has had religious instruction and services for the deaf students for many years and has its property adjoined to that of the Colorado School for the Deaf and Blind. The Methodists enjoyed having a large group brought to them each Sunday by school bus under arrangement with the school. The Catholic Church also ministers to the Catholic students, and the Episcopalians have a deaf ministry. Trained religious workers with the deaf come to Colorado Springs to hold services regularly and to minister to the deaf. The Baptists did not have a work among the deaf at all.

It was then that Mrs. John Baker called at the school for the deaf and secured permission to have some students, who wished to attend Baptist services, picked up each week. Mr. Fred Gustafson, a deaf baking instructor at the school for the deaf, and his mother were very helpful in securing class members and in assisting with the early stages of the

work. Mr. Fred Gustafson was the first deaf person baptized in the Skyway Baptist Church of Colorado Springs.

As a result of Mrs. John Baker's ministry among the deaf, at least twenty deaf persons were converted, and almost all had been baptized. As of March, 1960, there were seven members in the class. Previously some of the deaf had gone over to the Conservative Baptist Church because of difficulty between two deaf members and was not the fault of the teacher or the church.

Through Mrs. Baker's efforts the Baptist ministry among the deaf had the respect of the local school authorities. There was reason to believe that the Baptist work would grow among the students enrolled at the school for the deaf.

After Rev. and Mrs. John Baker had moved to Denver to take up new work with the Colorado Baptist Convention, the deaf work at Skyway Baptist Church collapsed. The First Southern Baptist Church, Colorado Springs, has taken over ministry to the deaf, and Rev. and Mrs. M. R. DeMeree have visited this church for encouragement and inspiration.

## FLORIDA

### Jacksonville

In 1923 Rev. J. W. Michaels, pioneer Home Mission Board missionary to the deaf, founded the first class at

First Baptist Church in Jacksonville. Mr. Nathan Harris, who was deaf, taught the class, and his son interpreted the worship services for the deaf. This work which Mr. Michaels had begun continued until 1930.

In 1930 Rev. Finch, a hearing pastor appointed by the Home Mission Board, worked with the class and taught a Sunday School class at night.

Mr. William Wright, himself deaf, taught the group Sunday nights from 1943 until 1951. In 1950 Mrs. V. D. Whatley began work with the deaf and taught the class and interpreted the services until 1955. It was under her leadership that the Sunday morning class came back into existence.

Mrs. J. W. Pritchard, Jr., became the Sunday School teacher for the Adult class in 1957 and held this position until June, 1964. In March, 1958, Mrs. Betty Wright, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John McFarlane, assumed the duties of interpreter for the deaf of this church and helped organize the Training Union for the deaf in the same year. In January, 1960, a Sunday School class for the young people was begun with Mr. Charles Wright as teacher. This class collapsed when Mr. and Mrs. Wright moved to Atlanta in July, 1961.

Mr. Johnny Chambers moved to Jacksonville from Wilmington, North Carolina, where he had assisted in the Baptist deaf work in cooperation with Rev. Joseph Newton. He began

to help Mrs. Wright in the work and later took over the duties in her place when she and her family moved to Georgia.

There are approximately fifty deaf members on the church roll.

#### Saint Augustine

Mrs. Leonora Hopkins was instrumental in starting the deaf work at Ancient City Baptist Church, and the first interpreted service for the deaf was held on Sunday morning, October 23, 1955. Mrs. Kitty Blalock was the first interpreter, and a good crowd was present for the service. Mr. Waldo Heber was the second interpreter and is still doing this type of work at this church. There were several additions to the church by profession of faith and by letter. The success of the deaf services has been greatly aided by the interest and support of the church pastor, Dr. T. J. Powers.

There is no Sunday School class for the deaf due to lack of facilities for such a purpose.

#### Warrington

The deaf work was begun at Warrington Baptist Church in Warrington, which is a suburb of Pensacola, January 24, 1960, under the leadership of Rev. Joseph Newton, home missionary to the deaf and a student at Baptist Bible Institute at Graceville, Florida. The name of the group was the "Silent

Christian Mission" which met for Sunday School each Sunday morning, with Mr. Newton teaching. The duties of teaching the class and interpreting the worship services were passed into the hands of Mr. Jerry Gibson in March, 1963, when Rev. Joseph Newton departed for Georgia to begin his new work. Mr. Gibson carried on the deaf ministry for almost two years and left Florida in 1965 to attend college in Alabama. Due to lack of a teacher or an interpreter, the class for the deaf in the Warrington-Pensacola area was disbanded.

Since Dr. Robert Hughes moved to Pensacola, Florida, from Natchez, Mississippi, in 1966, and united by letter with the First Baptist Church of Pensacola which is now investigating into the possibility of initiating a ministry to the deaf in its area, there is reason to believe that the work will be revived sometime this year.

## GEORGIA

### Columbus

On November 8, 1928, a Silent Class was organized at First Baptist Church by Professor Louis T. Chase, head and owner of Chase's Conservatory of Music. This came as a result of Mr. Chase's wonderful Christian experience and call in trying to follow the Lord. He asked a friend how he could make a contact with the deaf people. The reply was that he could do so "by just writing" and that "one of them is work-

ing in my shoe shop." Thus, he made some contacts with the deaf, starting with Mr. Alec Thompson and telling him that the Lord wanted him and other deaf friends to go to Sunday School. He had a room provided for them, and several deaf people came to church. Mr. Chase gave them some books to use for their Bible study.

The class for the deaf disbanded for the summer of 1930 but returned with renewed enthusiasm and met in the balcony of the church. Around 1935 or 1936 it became a part of the personal service work of the Woman's Missionary Society and met in one of the rooms off Harris Hall.

Mrs. S. P. Wright manifested her interest in the deaf children around 1929, and her close association with the deaf began in 1932. For many years she served as Poster Chairman in a Junior A Department of the church, and one Sunday in 1932 she took a poster of the three wise men and the Star of Bethlehem to the children's class. As she walked through the corridor, a deaf person stopped to admire the poster and gestured to her to show it to his own class. She entered the deaf class for the first time, marking the beginning of her interest in the deaf ministry which she carried on for many years. By 1936 it was reported in the church bulletin that she had two duties, serving as associate superintendent of the children's group and teaching the deaf class.

In 1937 Mrs. Wright began to work full time with the deaf class of the Sunday School by giving supplements to the lesson taught by the regular teacher. Soon she had organized a Training Union for the deaf; a Woman's Missionary Society was formed for the women; and the deaf began to attend the worship services. For the worship services, they would sit at the back of the sanctuary, and Mrs. Wright wrote sentence notes on the message which were passed around until she later developed enough speed in signing to interpret all of the pastor's message to the deaf.

In 1938 Mrs. Wright, realizing the need for training the deaf in the work of a church, taught the first study course the deaf of Columbus ever had. The book she taught was Building a Standard Sunday School. In the years that followed the deaf class studied other courses and received numerous awards.

April 14, 1940, marked the appearance of Rev. J. W. Gardner for the deaf revival from April 29 to May 3, and Rev. J. W. Gardner spoke and used the language of signs at the same time for all those attending a special series of evangelistic services. At this time Mr. Alec Thompson was the teacher of the deaf class which position he had held for several years until Mrs. Garrett took over the task of teaching the class. Beginning in 1940, Mr. Gardner often returned for speaking engagements at this church, and Mrs. Laura

Formwalt came to assist whenever possible.

Mrs. Wright and Mrs. Garrett represented the class at the organization of the South-wide Baptist Conference of the Deaf in Memphis, Tennessee, in 1948.

In 1959, illness compelled Mrs. Wright to relinquish her duties, and Mrs. Helen Raiford, daughter of Alec Thompson, took over the reins as interpreter. Mrs. Raiford is fluent with the language of signs as her father and husband are deaf. She is still carrying on the work. Since 1958, Rev. Carter Bearden and then Rev. Charles Fanshaw have visited the group whenever possible.

#### Macon

The deaf class of the First Baptist Church was organized by Mr. and Mrs. James W. Belk in May, 1953. Miss Jo Ann Blackwood, a Mercer student, was the second teacher, taking over in January, 1957, when the Belks moved away. The third teacher was a Mercer University student, Miss Gloria Martin (now married and living in California). She taught the class for a little more than three years and interpreted the pastor's sermons each Sunday. Upon Miss Martin's marriage, the work was carried on by another hearing worker, with two or three members present, and then Mrs. Barbara Wade, daughter of deaf parents, came to assist in the work.

Mrs. Barbara Wade interpreted the services for the

deaf for many years until 1965 when she and her family moved to Arkansas. Upon learning that Mrs. Horne, daughter of deaf parents, was a member of another Baptist church in Macon and that she was willing to help teach the class and interpret the worship services for the deaf in her church, the members of the deaf class of First Baptist Church decided to move to Mrs. Horne's church and to unite with it by letter. Mrs. Horne is a capable teacher, and about ten deaf people reside in Macon; therefore, the enrollment of the class is small.

#### Moultrie

It all began many months ago when the Schools of Missions was planned for the Colquitt County Baptist Association, and in February of 1959, missionaries assembled in Moultrie to tell about God's work across the world as carried out by Southern Baptist missionaries.

Among the missionaries representing the Home Mission Board at the School of Missions were Rev. and Mrs. M. R. DeMeree, missionaries to the deaf in South Carolina, South Georgia, and Florida. In their engagements in the churches of Colquitt County they discovered that there were some deaf people of Baptist and other denominational inclination. It was at Funston that the DeMerees met Mr. and Mrs. Cullen Mobley and Mr. Riley Tucker. From this engagement and meeting came an action that has had and will continue to have

tremendous effects upon this area.

A Sunday School class for the deaf was begun at First Baptist Church, Moultrie, Georgia, immediately following the Schools of Missions, February 15-20, 1959. A worship service each Sunday followed the lesson. Miss Diane Mobley, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Cullen Mobley, served as interpreter and assisted in other ways.

Mr. and Mrs. Perry Brannon of Dothan, Alabama, were present to teach the class on March 15 and 22. On the fifteenth there were seventeen present, even though it was a very rainy day. The average attendance for March was nineteen. Miss Mobley also began to teach a class for the hearing who were interested in aiding in the work with the deaf. Rev. James Byler, pastor of the First Church, and Mr. Clay McElroy, superintendent of Sunday School, assisted the class in the early stage of its growth. On Friday evening, April 3, 1959, the class had its first period of fellowship at a covered dish supper with the DeMerees present. The DeMerees returned to Moultrie the first Sunday of each month until 1962 when they were transferred to Colorado by the Home Mission Board.

In April the class was organized with Mr. Riley Tucker as president and Miss Margie Croy as secretary. The name "Silent Christian Soldiers" was chosen by the class. Mr. Brannon taught the lesson on April 19. Miss Margie Croy,

herself hearing and a member of Mt. Olive Baptist Church, became active in the class at this time and was a teacher for several months. The group first went to worship in the church sanctuary on May 3 with Miss Mobley and the DeMerees as leaders. It was also on this Sunday that the class began to have a fellowship meal at the noon hour on the Sundays the DeMerees were present.

The first baptismal service for members of the class was in First Church on November 1. In July the church paid the expenses for Misses Mobley and Croy to attend a conference at Glorieta, New Mexico, with the DeMerees.

The members of the class were present for the organization of the Florida Baptist Conference of the Deaf at Tallahassee, Florida, July 11-12, 1959. At the second meeting of the Georgia Baptist Conference of the Deaf in the Student Center of Mercer University, Macon, Georgia, July 25-26, 1959, attended by several from the class, Mr. Riley Tucker was elected vice president and Rev. T. S. Roote as one of the two members of the board of trustees.

In June, 1960, the enrollment of the class had reached seventy-seven and in September, twenty-eight. Average attendance through the summer months was eighteen. In the same year the Church Committee and the Woman's Missionary Union joined in making possible a Christmas party at the church on the Saturday evening when the DeMerees were scheduled to be pre-

sent. It was well-attended, and all had a great time.

The Training Union was also organized. Attending the deaf class have been friends from Albany, Quitman, Macon, Blakely, Douglas; and other points in Georgia and Florida.

The first death among the membership was Tillman H. Pearce, aged 87, on Friday, March 11, 1960, with burial in Westview Cemetery, Moultrie, Georgia, on Sunday, March 13.

## ILLINOIS

### Pontiac

Rev. and Mrs. Jerel Williams moved to Pontiac, Illinois, upon Mr. Williams' graduation from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, in July of 1956. A year later Mrs. Helen Williams discovered a young deaf couple residing in Pontiac and just recently married. She talked to them for a long time on her visit with them and found that they were Catholics but did not like to go to the Catholic Church due to the lack of an interpreter and they were bound to attend because of parental influence. She invited the deaf couple to come regularly to her church whenever she visited them and received rebuttals of excuses.

Time went on, and a baby boy was born to them; thus, they moved around town, and Mrs. Williams lost track of them for a while.

Then one evening Mrs. Williams had a telephone call

from the local shoe factory foreman, who was also a member of her church, Water Street Baptist Church, telling her that Joan Coyne (the girl whom she had visited but lost track of) had applied for a job in his department and that he would give it to her but would like for her to come and interpret for him so that she would be sure to understand about the job. They arranged a meeting, and Joan got the job.

Then one Sunday evening Mr. and Mrs. Don Coyne came to church, and Mrs. Coyne signed to Mrs. Williams that her husband was tired of having his parents interfere with them concerning church attendance when he could not understand about Catholicism. So they came to the Baptist church where they could understand.

In April, 1959, the Water Street Baptist Church had a revival. There were at least some deaf people each night of the revival, and one night eleven deaf were present. Afterwards, four of them joined the Sunday School, and since then, Mrs. Williams was the interpreter and teacher of the newly-formed group.

The last Sunday Rev. Jerel Williams was at this church as pastor, he baptized Joan Coyne into the fellowship of the church as she had made a profession of faith the week before. Mrs. Coyne's boss, Mr. Badger, learned the signs through being in contact with her, her husband, and other deaf people at the factory. When the Williams left the church, Mr. Badger

continued in trying to teach the deaf. There is still a continuing effort to minister to the deaf at this church in Pontiac.

## KANSAS

### Olathe

In the fall of 1958, Mrs. Marian Reyburn secured permission from Mr. Stanley Roth, superintendent of the Kansas School for the Deaf, to begin Baptist services at that school. The Bible classes were started January 13, 1959, with sixty pupils enrolled in five classes. Mrs. Everett Smith assisted Mrs. Reyburn in teaching the classes. In the spring, Mrs. Reyburn contacted the new pastor, Rev. Glen Wood, of the Ridgeview Baptist Church in Olathe about providing services for the pupils of the Kansas School for the Deaf at his church on Sunday. After several conferences with Mr. Roth and the Ridgeview Church, Rev. Glen Wood proceeded with plans for a ministry to the deaf, but he did not have anyone to interpret for him. In August, Miss Kathleen McCoy, interpreter from Joplin, Missouri, informed Mrs. Reyburn that she would be teaching at Smithville, Missouri, a town near Kansas City, and wanted to assist her with the deaf work in Kansas City. After corresponding with Miss McCoy and telling her of the need in Olathe, Mrs. Reyburn felt the Lord leading her to be the interpreter at the Ridge

view Baptist Church. They held their first service November 15, 1959, with one hundred fifty deaf people attending.

Mrs. Wilford Hostin, mother of a deaf son who attends the school for the deaf, is the director of the deaf work at Ridgeview Church.

Rev. Roy Cissna and Rev. Carter Bearden have ministered to the deaf in Olathe.

## KENTUCKY

### Harlan

The deaf work in the southeastern section of Kentucky began at the Central Baptist Church in Corbin in 1934. Mr. Alex Cummins pioneered in this work soon after his conversion and baptism at the hand of Dr. J. Hatler, pastor of the Central Church. Every month for a year in 1935, Mr. Cummins went with a missionary friend to Harlan County and taught God's Word to approximately twenty deaf people in Kenvir which is about ten miles from Harlan. He sought out the deaf people in the mountains and walked many miles to tell them about God's love. He recalled that the hearing people were afraid of the deaf in those days, because the deaf always held guns in their hands. He asked God to take care of him in this ministry to the mountain people and often recited the Twenty-third Psalm to calm his fear and anxiety. Upon meeting the deaf people, he was surprised to find them

in a calm frame of mind, willing to receive him and serve him good food. They were very happy to have him visit them, because it had been many years since other outside deaf people had paid them a visit. They wanted him to move to Harlan to teach them about God and the Bible, but Mr. Cummins went back to Corbin and assisted his preacher friends in their work.

A preacher from Harlan came down to Corbin to invite Alex Cummins to move to Harlan to work in his shoe shop in the mining village. This minister had a deaf uncle in Tennessee and wanted very much for Mr. Cummins to teach the deaf the Word of God. Mr. Cummins found it difficult to teach the backward people in the mountains so he drew large charts and explained the drawings to them. This method helped his twenty-five pupils understand the lessons better.

Mr. Cummins felt that the deaf needed a church where they could meet for lesson study and worship and talked to the bus manager about providing free rides to the deaf on Sundays. He then went to see Dr. Bolt, pastor of the Harlan Baptist Church, about a room in which the deaf could meet for their lesson study. Mr. Cummins was the first deaf person Dr. Bolt had met since his boyhood days in South Carolina when he had played with several deaf boys. Dr. Bolt was interested in working with Mr. Cummins in the ministry to the deaf and wrote letters to the pastors of Pineville and Middlesboro enlisting their churches in this special ministry.

Mr. Cummins taught the lessons to the deaf in Harlan, Pineville, and Middlesboro for five years, and he spent two weeks in Danville, Louisville, Indianapolis and Terre Haute, Indiana, as a special speaker in local Baptist churches. He also taught ten deaf people in Tazewell, Tennessee, near Knoxville. When the deaf class was organized in Pineville, Kentucky, Mr. Cummins got a good job in the shoe shop in this town.

During World War II, many deaf people left for defense work in large cities. Mr. Cummins' good friend wanted him to move back to Harlan and offered to help him buy a shoe shop. Mr. Cummins and his wife, whom he had married in 1940, moved to Harlan.

In 1942, Rev. J. W. Gardner visited Harlan for a week and preached to the deaf. It was his last trip to Kentucky. After that the deaf work in western Kentucky suffered due to the lack of workers and also to the fact that no Baptist missionary to the deaf visited that area to give assistance and encouragement.

The deaf work in Harlan continues under the leadership of Alex Cummins and under the care of the Harlan Baptist Church.

#### Louisville

The Deaf Bible Class of the Fourth Avenue Baptist

Church in Louisville was begun by Rev. J. W. Michaels as far back as 1910 but met in various homes once or twice a month until the fall of 1920 when Rev. J. W. Michaels held a revival for the deaf at the request of the Fourth Avenue Church. This resulted in the organization of the class at the church to be held from 3:00 P.M. to 4:00 P.M. every Sunday afternoon. The first teachers were Mr. and Mrs. Fugate and Mr. and Mrs. Hartman who rotated each Sunday. Other succeeding teachers were: Mr. and Mrs. Elkins, Mr. William Wright, Mr. (now Rev.) and Mrs. M. R. DeMeree, Mr. Truett George, and Mrs. Alice Embry.

In 1941 a Southern Baptist Theological Seminary student, Rev. David Mein (now a Foreign Mission Board worker in Recife, Brazil), became the first pastor to the deaf congregation and held worship services immediately following the Sunday School hour on Sunday afternoons. Carrie Elkins and Dorothy Hartman served as interpreters for Rev. Mein for a short time. Mrs. Alice Embry came upon the scene as interpreter and proved to be an indefatigable worker ever since. She tried to offer many excuses for not taking the position of interpreter, but Rev. David Mein would accept none. Finally, Mrs. Embry accepted the role of interpreter for David Mein and later served for Rev. Curry, Rev. Watson, Rev. Coffee, and others.

The class usually had an average of thirty-five in

Sunday School, but very few were members of the church. In the summer months the class closed, but Rev. David Mein kept the worship services going by sending other young seminary students to take his place during the summer. Among the students were Rev. Curry, Rev. Watson, and Rev. Coffee. In 1945 Rev. David Mein graduated from the seminary and had to resign from the pastorate.

The Deaf Bible Class was without a pastor for a year. Mr. Truett George, Mr. Ben Warren, and a few others had a conference with the hearing deacons of the church about securing a pastor for the deaf, resulting in the Kentucky State Mission Board, the Long Run Baptist Association, and the Fourth Avenue Baptist Church, all cooperating in the work. The state board contributed \$50.00, and the association and the church, \$25.00 each for a total of \$100.00 per month. In 1946 Rev. R. Brown came to the deaf as pastor, and Mr. C. Ford became the deacon of the deaf group. Rev. Brown divided the class into three groups, the Men's Class, the Women's Class, and the Young People's Class and formed a social activity meeting for the deaf which was held every Friday night. He started the annual Thanksgiving banquet for the deaf.

Under Rev. Brown's leadership a regular monthly business meeting was begun for the deaf group, and Mr. Ford was chosen as mediator between the hearing church and the deaf group. The first act of the meeting was to change the name

from "Silent Class" to "Fourth Avenue Baptist Church for the Deaf."

Mr. Truett George was ordained a deacon on June 6, 1948, and it is believed that he was the first deaf person to become a deacon in the state of Kentucky.

Training Union for the deaf originated in September of 1949 but did not fare well because of the afternoon services. The afternoon service did not end until 4:30 P.M., and Training Union began at 6:30 P.M. Few showed up for the evening services.

During Rev. Brown's pastorate the deaf had a Sunday School class some Sunday mornings in the summer but moved back to the afternoon time, because there was no room for them to meet in the morning until a new educational building was erected.

After Rev. Brown had resigned upon his graduation from the seminary, Rev. Martin and Rev. Cash served as pastors, the latter being the first of all to study the language of the deaf. On December 4, 1955, Rev. Darrell Ellsworth became the pastor.

Rev. Darrell Ellsworth was the only pastor whose heart and soul had been given completely to the deaf. He organized the Wednesday prayer meeting and had the members attend the youth night service once a month. He secured a room for the deaf to meet in for their Sunday School every

Sunday morning and preached to them at 10:45 A.M. and 7:30 P.M.

In 1959, Mrs. Ruth Ellsworth helped start a Woman's Missionary Society for the deaf, and the Circle was named the "Helen DeMeree Circle" in honor of Mrs. M. R. DeMeree, who with her husband served as a Home Mission Board missionary to the deaf.

Rev. Darrell Ellsworth was instrumental in organizing the Kentucky Baptist Conference of the Deaf in Louisville May 8-10, 1959. Special speakers attending the conference were Dr. A. J. Roddy, then superintendent of deaf missions of the Home Mission Board; Rev. Friedly of Lexington; Rev. Dudley of the State Training Union Department; and Rev. Walters of the Fourth Avenue Baptist Church. Mr. Fugate of Saint Augustine, Florida, one of the first teachers of the Bible Class back in 1920, attended the meeting.

In January of 1961 Rev. Darrell Ellsworth resigned to accept the call of another church in Louisville. Rev. John Cooper, who had studied under Rev. Darrell Ellsworth, became the new pastor. He organized the first summer Vacation Bible School for the deaf children. He was pastor of the church for the deaf until 1962 when he was appointed by the Home Mission Board to serve the deaf in the Great Lakes States.

Beginning 1962, Rev. Robert Landes has been serving the deaf as pastor of the Fourth Avenue Baptist Church for the

Deaf.

### Paducah

The deaf work in Paducah, Kentucky, began at the Twelfth Street Baptist Church on Sunday morning, October 11, 1959, with seven deaf persons present. The first few Sundays were a difficult struggle. Then help came from an Intermediate daughter of one of the deaf families. From the beginning, Mrs. Kathy Roberts accepted the responsibility of visitation, keeping records, and keeping the church informed about the deaf work. When the work first began, Mrs. Roberts did not know any of the language of signs. In a period of five or six weeks she had learned over 600 signs and the manual alphabet. She became a very efficient teacher and interpreter. On November 20, 1959, Mrs. Roberts interpreted the first worship service.

This church has a Sunday School class with approximately fourteen enrolled, and a Training Union for the deaf, plus the interpretation of both Sunday worship services. Rev. Denzel L. Dukes, pastor, baptized eight deaf persons and received two others into the church by letter in 1960.

## LOUISIANA

### Baton Rouge

The earliest knowledge of any organized work among Baptist deaf in the Baton Rouge area began with deaf children

in the Louisiana State School for the Deaf. This work was started between 1898 and 1900 when Mrs. Ida Austin began teaching a Sunday School class for deaf children in First Baptist Church of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, and from time to time interpreted the sermons for the group. This teaching was profitable, for the minutes of the church dated March 30, 1902, carried the names of Misses Lillian Matthews, Viola Oxford, and Mary Groves as newly baptized converts.

Miss Lillian Matthews was at the time a pupil in the State School for the Deaf but as she grew older she began teaching a class of children in the Sunday School group supervised by Mrs. Austin. Yet later as a teacher in the State School for the Deaf she assumed the responsibilities of a Sunday School class and taught regularly in the church school many years. As Mrs. Lillian Gainnie even later, she was largely instrumental in establishing the permanent work with the deaf in First Baptist Church in New Orleans.

The church minutes of 1904 carry records of the baptism of twelve pupils from the Louisiana State School for the Deaf. In 1908, however, a new superintendent at the State School stopped the children from attending the local churches and began Sunday School on the campus. This arrangement lasted until 1920 when the state board of education ruled that such teaching must be stopped. At this time a Miss Hauborg, not herself a Baptist, volunteered to do

religious work with the children, and classes were reestablished in First Baptist Church with Miss Hauborg in charge and Mr. L. L. Hennigan helping her. Miss Hauborg was a hard-of-hearing teacher and Mr. Hennigan, a totally deaf man who was in charge of the woodworking shop in the school for the deaf. Sunday School classes for deaf children have been continuously held in First Baptist Church since this time.

It is impossible to secure a full and correct list of the teachers who have worked with the deaf in First Church, but there are three workers whose names should be mentioned for long and faithful service: Mr. L. L. Hennigan, Mrs. Gervais Gainnie (Lillian Matthews), and Mrs. E. Rogers Jones, Sr. (Lillian R. Jones). Mr. Hennigan taught from 1920 well into the 1930s and when he could no longer teach, his son, Dr. Walter Hennigan, took up his work for a while. Mrs. Gainnie taught first as a young girl, then as a mature woman, continuing her work until she could no longer climb the stairs to the third story where the classes for the deaf were held. Mrs. Jones did religious work with the deaf as teacher and interpreter from 1922 to around 1927. At that time Miss Hattie Harrell became the liaison officer between the church and the school for about four years. She did not teach in the Sunday School because she did not know the language of signs. She reenlisted Mrs. Gainnie as teacher, and Mr. Hennigan continued his work as previously. When Miss

Harrell left Baton Rouge in 1932, Mrs. Jones returned to the city and to this work and has served continuously as superintendent of and teacher in the Department of the Deaf and interpreter for the group as necessary since that time. Among the other teachers who have served for longer or shorter periods of time may be mentioned the names of Miss Ruby Moore, Mrs. Alan B. Crammatte, the three Ferguson sisters--Emma, Elsie, and Anna Mae--and Mrs. Eli Richard (Adaltha Martin Richard).

Sunday School classes through the years had been for pupils from the school for the deaf. It was, and still is, difficult to secure teachers who could communicate with the deaf and such teachers as were available worked with the deaf children. Deaf adults were invited to the Department of the Deaf for special services from time to time and made to feel welcome at all times.

Organized work with the adult deaf in Baton Rouge began around 1954 when Rev. Carter Bearden was enrolled in the Baptist seminary in New Orleans. Mr. Bearden was invited to talk to the Sunday School group and preach to the adult deaf on several occasions.

In November, 1954, when he spoke to the group, Mr. Bearden brought with him a group of friends from the New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. Among the group was Rev. Glen Prock, who had a daughter in the state school for

the deaf. Mr. Prock became so impressed with the field that he felt the call to offer his service in the Baton Rouge area. Work began immediately. Arrangements were quickly made for Mr. Prock's ministry in the church, and his position was later regularized with the Home Mission Board.

Mr. Prock's ministry continued from this time until April 15, 1957, when the completion of his seminary work was near. His place was filled by Rev. George W. Thomas who served as minister to the deaf from May 1, 1957, until February 1, 1960. The church then actively engaged in searching for another minister for the deaf and later secured Rev. White as minister to the deaf. He left the field about two years later, and the duties of pastor to the deaf were assumed by Rev. Tom Berry who accepted the call of another church in 1964. At present, no replacement has been found. Rev. Waverly Atkins, Home Mission Board missionary to the deaf in Louisiana, has visited this group occasionally.

A Training Union for pupils from the state school functioned briefly from 1932 to 1934 when a young student from the Louisiana State University doing part-time work at the school made arrangements to take a select group of young people to the Baptist Training Union for the two-year period.

Revival services were held for the Baton Rouge group by Dr. A. J. Roddy in 1958 and by Rev. David Dean in 1959.

The enrollment of the Sunday School department during

the school year is around 115 with seven teachers of children and young people and one organized adult class. Church attendance under most favorable circumstances has averaged around twenty. Services are held in the main sanctuary of the older church building which was turned over to be used as the Department for the Deaf. Annually from seven to ten or more pupils from the department unite with the church.

## LOUISIANA

### New Orleans

During the early years there were no Sunday School classes for Protestant deaf adults, and religious services for the deaf of New Orleans were made possible by visiting missionaries. In the summer of 1950 Mr. and Mrs. Gervais Gainnie retired from teaching at the Louisiana School for the Deaf in Baton Rouge and moved to New Orleans to live. Around this time some of the deaf talked about starting a Sunday School class, and Mrs. Gainnie was very much interested in this project. After several months of seeking advice and help from friends and relatives and of praying and studying, they decided to give it a try. Dr. Frank Stagg, then professor of New Testament at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary and his wife, the niece of Mrs. Gainnie, helped them a great deal. Rev. J. C. Wells, superintendent of city missions, helped them get this work started and secure a room

for the deaf to meet in. All these friends and relatives had a hand in the organization of the deaf class in this area.

On February 18, 1951, the first class was organized at First Baptist Church in the old building which was then on St. Charles Avenue and Delachaise. The first officers were Mrs. Murl French, president; Mr. Maynard Fulford, vice president; Mrs. Elsie Broussard, secretary; and Mrs. Gervais Gainnie, teacher. They named the class, "EPHPHATHA Bible Class," from Mark 7:34; the word "ephpatha" means "to be opened."

The class met every Sunday afternoon, for there was no room available for them in the morning. A few months later the deaf realized that Sunday School lessons were not enough and felt that they needed a preacher to come and preach the Word of God in their own language. Rev. C. F. Landon came on two occasions, and his messages were enjoyed by those in attendance. Dr. J. D. Grey, pastor of First Church, was very eager to help them find a preacher. This led to the call of Rev. Carter E. Bearden to New Orleans, who at this time was a student missionary at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas.

In August, 1952, Mr. Bearden and his wife moved to New Orleans so that he could be transferred to New Orleans Seminary from Southwestern Seminary in his second year. He became the first pastor of the deaf congregation, at the same

time ministering to other deaf groups in Louisiana and Mississippi. Several weeks later he organized the first Training Union and a Wednesday night prayer meeting for the deaf. The name of the class was changed to the Silent Bible Class.

Sometimes when Mrs. Gainnie was absent from Sunday School, Mrs. Murl French, Miss Margaretsa Middleton (now Mrs. Louis Cannon), and Mrs. Peggy Mirus (now Mrs. Ralph Mebane of California) taught Sunday School lessons at alternating times. After Mrs. Gainnie resigned in September, 1954, Mrs. Mary Feux took her place as Sunday School teacher and continued to serve until February, 1959. When she was absent, Mr. Clarence Walker, Mrs. Cannon, Mrs. Broussard, and Miss Barbara Carver (now Mrs. Elwyn Williams) took turns in teaching Sunday School lessons. After Mrs. Feux resigned, Mr. and Mrs. Leslie Broussard, Mr. and Mrs. Oliver Childress, and Mr. and Mrs. Louis Cannon took turns monthly in teaching the class until September, 1959. From October 1, 1959, to February, 1960, Mr. Childress, Mr. Broussard, and Mr. Cannon served as teachers.

The class was blessed by having wonderful hearing friends to serve as interpreters for them. At the first meeting they were honored to have Mrs. Lillian Jones, principal of the Louisiana State School for the Deaf in Baton Rouge, with them to interpret the services. Miss Edith Berry (Mrs. Garland Romagosa) interpreted on numerous oc-

casions; other succeeding interpreters were Mrs. David Dean, Mrs. A. J. Roddy, Miss Barbara Carver, Miss Hetty Cory, and Mrs. Calvin Willard.

Rev. Carter Bearden resigned in September, 1955, to accept the position of superintendent of deaf missions of the Home Mission Board. He and his family were to move to Atlanta but stayed in New Orleans for sometime, continuing to assist the deaf in their services and seeing that there was someone to preach to them whenever he had to be out of the city. The Beardens moved to Georgia in December, 1956, and now reside in Decatur, Georgia.

After Rev. C. E. Bearden resigned, some of the seminary students attending the dactylology class preached to the deaf. Dr. A. J. Roddy, associate professor of Greek and Hebrew and instructor in dactylology, filled the vacant preaching schedule and ministered to the deaf's spiritual welfare until First Baptist Church secured Rev. Ollie Key, a seminary student, as pastor to the group. Rev. Ollie Key stayed with them until his graduation in July, 1956.

Then the deaf were without a pastor, and during these months they had different students to deliver sermons to them. Rev. David Richardson, Rev. Glen Prock, and Rev. Calvin Willard had places of service but would arrange their different schedules between them so that the New Orleans group could have someone to preach to them.

This plan continued until September of 1956 when Rev. David Dean, a second year seminary student came to them as pastor. His wife served as their interpreter, and the deaf members had the privilege of going into the hearing church for some of the revival meetings. Mr. Dean worked with them until the latter part of February, 1957, when he accepted the pastorate of the First Baptist Church, Dallas, Texas, which position was vacated by Dr. A. J. Roddy when he accepted the work of superintendent of deaf missions and moved to Atlanta, Georgia.

The class was blessed by having Miss Carver as interpreter, and Miss Carver made arrangements with the church and the students of the class of the language of signs to have a preacher nearly every Sunday morning and evening. Mr. George Thomas, Mr. David Richardson, and Mr. Calvin Willard alternated.

It was not until September 1, 1957, that Mr. Willard accepted the call and began his pastoral duties in the "Crescent City." Previously, he was pastor of the Silent Department of First Baptist Church in Shreveport, Louisiana, for two years. Then the deaf congregation started to have the Lord's Supper in their Chapel, and two of the church's deacons, Mr. Green and Mr. Willie, assisted Mr. Willard. He resigned from the pastorate to accept the new field in Austin, Texas, in June, 1961.

In the summer of 1961 the First Baptist Church called Rev. Robert Boltz to become the pastor to the silent congregation. This church ordained him to the full gospel ministry in October of the same year. Mr. Boltz is currently serving the deaf of the New Orleans area.

### Ruston

For a number of years the deaf in the surrounding area of Ruston, Louisiana, had been meeting in various homes for religious services, and one day they decided to organize a class at one of the churches in town. Mrs. E. P. Whelan expressed a desire to meet in a church, and this started the ball rolling toward the organization of a Sunday School class for the deaf at First Baptist Church sometime in the summer of 1951. Mr. Oliver Liner was able to get his hearing daughter, Miss Ellie Jo Liner, to speak to Rev. Avery Lee about a meeting place in his church for the deaf. Prior to the organization, the deaf took turns in teaching the lessons and continued to do the same in the early stage of their meeting at the church. They attended church services with the hearing members, with Miss Ellie Jo Liner interpreting Dr. Lee's sermons. The actual establishment of the Sunday School class for the deaf in Ruston took place in the fall of 1951.

From 1952 to 1954 Rev. Carter Bearden attended sev-

eral meetings and preached to them. Rev. Calvin Willard then preached to those people once a month from 1955 to 1956. The following year found Rev. David Richardson looking after the work in this area. Rev. Glen Prock came to Ruston on numerous special occasions in 1957. From 1958 until 1960 Rev. Charles Owens, a New Orleans Seminary student and pastor to the deaf group of Shreveport, visited the Ruston class every second Sunday of the month. From 1960 to 1962 visitations by missionaries were infrequent. Since he was transferred from Tennessee to Louisiana as a student missionary under the Home Mission Board, Rev. Waverly Atkins has often visited the class for the deaf in Ruston.

## MISSOURI

### Kansas City

The first services for the deaf in Kansas City were started January 6, 1957. Six deaf people, Mr. and Mrs. Uel Hurd, Mr. and Mrs. Keith Hagins, Miss Helen Lile, and Mr. William Wilcox attended the Sunday School class and the worship service, and Miss Johnson taught the class and interpreted the pastor's message. On March 10, 1957, Mr. and Mrs. Hurd and Mr. and Mrs. Hagins joined the church, the latter couple being the first to join by profession of faith.

In June, 1957, Miss Johnson was employed on an ex-

perimental basis by the Kansas City Baptist Association, Calvary Baptist Church, and the Michigan Avenue Baptist Church to work with the deaf. During the same month, she dedicated her life to full-time Christian service, and in the fall she was called to serve as director of the deaf work for the Kansas City Baptist Association and the Calvary Baptist Church.

Separate Sunday School classes for the deaf men and women were begun in the fall of 1957. Up to that time, both men and women attended one class. Mrs. Uel Hurd was elected as the first teacher of the women's class, and her husband was the teacher for the men's class. In April, 1958, a Sunday School class for young deaf men was started with Mr. Harold Schelp serving as teacher. In December, 1959, Miss Johnson began a Sunday School class for young deaf women. In January, 1960, Mrs. Uel Hurd was asked to teach the young women's class, and Mrs. Margaret Sherman took her place as teacher of the adult women's class.

Some of the other activities for the deaf at Calvary Baptist Church include a choir and a Woman's Missionary Society for deaf women which started in October, 1957. The deaf have their own social activities and also participate in the all-church recreation program.

Miss Sue Leftwich, Mrs. Hazel Fawks, Mr. Earl Finks,

and Miss Martha Howell, members of the Calvary Church, have learned the language of signs and are assisting with interpreting to the deaf. Rev. Neal Peyton, then a student at the Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and a former minister to the deaf in Birmingham, Alabama, Mrs. Peyton, and Miss Ula Hurd also assisted with the services for the deaf in various ways until the Peytons moved to North Carolina around the early part of 1960.

A Vacation Bible School was provided for deaf children for the first time in June, 1957, with seven children enrolled. The manual method was the means of communication for teaching these boys and girls. Miss Anderine Farmer assisted Miss Johnson in teaching the deaf children. In the spring of 1958 Miss Johnson was invited to speak to the Woman's Missionary Union at Wornall Road Baptist Church in Kansas City. One of the members gave her the name of a little boy who attended the oral classes for the deaf in the Kansas City public school. Miss Johnson contacted the boy's mother and was told that he attended Sunday School and Vacation Bible School in another Baptist church. A week later the same mother called Miss Johnson to let her know that she had contacted some other mothers of deaf children and that they were interested in a Vacation Bible School for deaf children who communicated by the oral method. The mother indicated an interest in having a Sunday School class for

these children. Plans were made to have both oral and manual departments in Vacation Bible School for the deaf in 1958. By 1959 the number enrolled in the Vacation Bible School had grown from seven in 1957 to twenty-eight. Some of the children who communicate orally attend Sunday School at Calvary Baptist Church.

On August 1, 1965, Mrs. Marian Johnson Reyburn resigned from Calvary Baptist Church as director of deaf work, because her husband was transferred to Oklahoma. Rev. and Mrs. Donald Otwell of Atlanta, Georgia, were called by the church and the Kansas City Baptist Association to assume the responsibility of directing the deaf ministry in the Greater Kansas City area in November, 1965.

The deaf people in the Kansas City Baptist Association participate in various programs and conferences sponsored by the association. They attend the Missouri Baptist Conference of the Deaf and the Southern Baptist Conference of the Deaf and have served as officers in both organizations.

#### Fulton

The Gross Memorial Class of First Baptist Church in Fulton was founded in 1904 by Henry Gross, a deaf man. Mr. Gross was the first teacher and taught up to the time of his death in 1928. Rev. George Swift was pastor of the church at the time when the class for the deaf was organized.

After Mr. Gross' death, Mr. Clyde McKern, Sr., also deaf, became the teacher. Mrs. Fannie Worsham was the leader and interpreter for the deaf at the Baptist Young People's Union and the Woman's Missionary Society for several years.

Later Mr. Charles Boss, himself deaf, was the teacher of the class and remained in that capacity for many years. Eldon Shipman interpreted the worship services for a short time. In 1950 Mrs. Russell Dzurich began to teach the class and to interpret the services. In 1957 Mr. Leonard Taylor, baking instructor at the Missouri School for the Deaf, started assisting Mrs. Dzurich in interpreting the services and in 1958 began alternating the teaching job with her. They have been working together ever since.

One of the highlights of the deaf class was a revival conducted by Dr. A. J. Roddy, resulting in the conversion of nineteen deaf school children. The class now has about thirty-five members, sixty-eight Sunday School members, and two interpreters and teachers.

#### Saint Louis

The deaf work in the St. Louis area was begun in November, 1955, by Mr. Raymond Atwood with the assistance and encouragement of Rev. and Mrs. J. Edwin Hewlett. This work involved the tearing down of the resistance of other denominations and has met with such success in that there are three

deaf groups using the language of signs and one using the oral method. At the inception of the work, Southwest Baptist Church hired Mrs. O. A. Schneider and Mrs. Leonard Outman to interpret the pastor's messages for the deaf until they were replaced by Misses Georgia Dunlap and Diane Krauss who were trained through the sign language class and association with the deaf members.

First Baptist Church of St. John's began its deaf ministry in November, 1959, with Miss Loretta MacDonald interpreting the services. Upon her entrance in the University of Arkansas, Miss MacDonald's capacity as interpreter was filled by Mrs. Thelma Brewer whose parents and husband are deaf. Others have assisted in the interpreting.

In the fall of 1961 some of the deaf members of Southwest Baptist Church transferred their membership to the Tower Grove Baptist Church and then in 1963 to the Third Baptist Church. Mr. Raymond Atwood is the teacher of the class.

## MISSISSIPPI

### McComb

One day many years ago Rev. Robert Hughes met a deaf man, Mr. James Davis, who is employed as an embalmer by the Hartman Funeral Home in McComb, Mississippi, and became interested in the deaf. Later he enrolled in New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, while he was a pastor of Navilla Baptist

Church in McComb, and in 1953 he attended the Southern Baptist Convention in Houston, Texas, where he observed several interpreters and Home Mission Board missionaries to the deaf relaying the messages for the benefit of the deaf. He then contacted Rev. C. F. Landon who suggested that he get in touch with Rev. Carter Bearden who at this time was a second-year student at the New Orleans Seminary. Rev. Robert Hughes and Rev. C. E. Bearden made plans to begin deaf work in the McComb area.

The first deaf service was held October 18, 1953, in the sanctuary of Navilla Baptist Church with eleven deaf present. Mr. James Davis was named teacher. Until 1956, Rev. Carter Bearden ministered once a month to the deaf class, which became one of his mission stations. Rev. Robert Hughes taught the class occasionally.

When Rev. Carter Bearden and Dr. Robert Hughes moved away following their graduation from New Orleans Seminary, Mr. James Davis felt led to continue the deaf work in McComb. Eventually the deaf class moved to First Baptist Church because of its central location, and the work is still being carried on.

#### NORTH CAROLINA

##### Wilmington

Sunday morning, July 21, 1957, a group of deaf people

met at Temple Baptist Church in Wilmington, North Carolina, and organized the "Temple Silent Bible Class" with Rev. Joseph Newton acting as teacher. The initial meeting was composed of nine persons, seven becoming charter members of the class, while two registered as visitors. Mr. Newton served as teacher for several months prior to his departure for college in Georgia.

Mrs. George W. Applewhite, one of the silent members, was chosen teacher of the class, and under her capable leadership and excellent teaching the class began to grow.

On September 30, 1958, Mr. Johnny Chambers retired as general Sunday School superintendent at Temple Church and accepted the responsibility of interpreting to the deaf in the Sunday School. He interpreted the worship services from February 15, 1959, until the summer of 1960 when he and his wife moved to Jacksonville, Florida, where he is director of deaf work at First Baptist Church.

Such remarkable interest was shown by the deaf people that the "Signers' Union" in the Training Union was organized. The men were members of the Brotherhood, while the women formed the Potter Circle in the Woman's Missionary Society. Less than three years after the Sunday School class was organized, six had united with the church by letter, and nine had joined on profession of faith in Jesus Christ. The deaf served as a constant challenge to the other members as they worked in

Vacation Bible School, attended church study courses, participated in church socials, assisted in the class of the language of signs each Monday night for hearing people, and led in their Sunday School and Training Union departments. During the 1960 Church Forward Program of Financing, Mrs. Applewhite gave a personal testimony in a morning worship service in the language of the deaf, interpreted by Mr. Johnny Chambers.

After Mr. Chambers' move to Florida, Mr. Jack Marshburn has been in charge of the deaf ministry.

#### OKLAHOMA

##### Ponca City

The Kay Baptist Association has had several meetings for the deaf in the Ponca City area in the past few years but has not been able to get a permanent work established because no one who uses the language of signs is available. As many as fifteen deaf people have been present in the meetings conducted under the leadership of Mr. D. E. Strahan, superintendent of missions and Mr. James Still, chairman of the mission committee. On several occasions they have been able to secure the services of Rev. Leslie Gunn, Home Mission Board missionary to the deaf.

##### Shawnee

It was in 1951 when Jerry Ashcraft was promoted to the third year department in the nursery of First Baptist

Church of Shawnee. Mrs. Alfred Hunter, a nursery worker, visited the home of the parents of Jerry Ashcraft and learned that they were deaf. The following year when Jerry Ashcraft was a Beginner, Mrs. Floyd Ashcraft came to Mrs. Hunter, asking her to find some church work for her to do. Her son Jerry told her that she "didn't love God or she would go to church." Mrs. Hunter knew of nothing she could do but suggested that she attend an all day Woman's Missionary Society meeting with her. After that, Mrs. Ashcraft asked if she could wash the dishes, and this she did without pay for nearly three years. By that time she was familiar with the church activities and served as Vacation Bible School secretary, helped serve refreshments, and did other chores.

Mrs. Hunter realized Mrs. Ashcraft's sincerity and ability and decided to take a census of all the deaf in the community who might come to church when they got an interpreter. Mrs. Hunter and Mrs. Ashcraft requested the church to write to Rev. and Mrs. Leslie Gunn to come and meet with them. Many deaf people came to the first service.

That very week Naomi Calvert of Oklahoma City came to them stating her feeling that there must be some place she could serve among the deaf, since she knew the language of signs. The Lord answered their prayers, and Miss Calvert drove forty-five miles every Sunday to help the deaf hear the Word of God. She usually remained during the afternoon

until she had contacted the deaf in the tri-county area. One deaf family came by bus from Seminole.

There were seven conversions, and all were baptized. A fellowship meeting brought twenty deaf persons with their families who had a wonderful time there.

Miss Calvert worked with them from November, 1954, until she moved to Lubbock, Texas, where a Silent Class was waiting for her. Mrs. Ashcraft taught the Sunday School class and held the class together for a while, using visual aids, filmstrips, and the silent sermon films from the Home Mission Board.

In the summer of 1957 the Ashcrafts moved to Oklahoma City, and that fall Miss Peggy Gunn, daughter of Rev. and Mrs. Leslie Gunn, began working with the Silent Class. Miss Gunn was faithful and even returned on Sundays during the summer.

The class members were often assigned parts of the Sunday School program to keep the work going on until one after another dropped out of the class. One member, Mr. W. L. Lane, walked five miles every Sunday, even after Miss Gunn was married, and paced through the halls, hoping to be greeted by a new worker.

A replacement was found in the person of Miss Georgia Dunlap, a student at Oklahoma Baptist University in the city of Shawnee. She has been working with the class ever since.

### Sulphur

In 1936 Mrs. Tommye Gene Hall, teacher and wife of Superintendent Hall at the Oklahoma School for the Deaf, began to sponsor Sunday night services at First Baptist Church for the older deaf pupils. Mrs. Ellen Faulkner Fair, now a teacher in the Indiana School for the Deaf, interpreted the sermons. Mrs. Hall arranged for the children's transportation and supervision and soon learned to interpret the services herself.

In 1941 the deaf children from the school for the deaf were allowed to go to Sunday School in town. The deaf department at First Baptist Church was organized at this time, and Mrs. Hall has been a teacher and department superintendent ever since. Mrs. E. S. Foltz taught the young people's class, and Mrs. Eldon Davis was teacher of the primary class for two years. The succeeding teachers of the primary class were Mrs. James Carr, daughter of deaf parents, two years; Lawanda Burgett, a high school pupil, two years; and Norma Crews, a high school pupil, who was teaching the class at the time this report was given in 1960.

Through the years the department had an average attendance of forty to seventy during the school year and only six to ten during the summer months.

First Baptist Church purchased an old school bus to be used by the deaf department for transportation to and from

church. Mr. L. B. Hall was driver of the bus until his retirement as superintendent of the school for the deaf.

The pastor comes to the deaf department each Sunday to give a devotional message, since the pupils do not remain for church service very often. The church has an average of fifteen to twenty conversions each year among the deaf and also calls from other churches for the letters of the deaf children.

## SOUTH CAROLINA

### Charleston

On the first Sunday in May, 1928, there was organized in Charleston, South Carolina, at the Citadel Square Baptist Church, a Sunday School class for the Deaf. Four members (Mr. and Mrs. George Strong, Miss Meta Bierfischer and Frank Leonard) were present for the first meeting. From June 6th to September 12th, there were from eight to fifteen or eighteen attending the class. Miss Clara B. Rogers, a teacher at the South Carolina School for the Deaf, who spent the summer in Charleston, never missed a Sunday attending this Sunday School. When the school opened on September 12, Miss Rogers and about eight deaf left Charleston,--leaving about six or eight, to attend Sunday School through the winter.

The class was organized under the direction of Rev. W. A. Huey, assistant pastor of the church. He knows Rev. J. W. Michaels well. That is how Rev. Huey came to take interest in the deaf. He help entertain the State Convention of the Deaf held in Charleston July 25-29.

This class organized May 6th, 1928, had its genesis, however, fifteen years ago in a boy's curoosity. Mr. Wilfred V. Patterson, now a clerk in the office of the Clerk of Court for Charleston, was interested, as all boys are, in signs and signaling. At that time there was no wireless in the international code nor its successor, the radio, which has become a nationwide hobby. So young Patterson set himself to master the intricate

finger language that the deaf use in conversation with each other.

#### Teacher Now Pupil

Frank Patterson, the boy's father, and George Strong, now himself a student in Mr. Patterson's Sunday School class, were good friends as they were co-workers together in a railroad shop, and Mr. Strong offered to act as the boy's instructor, for young Patterson learned rapidly, but did not have the opportunity to use the language to a great extent until the Rev. Mr. Huey instigated a search for one capable of teaching the Sunday School class. He had come to Charleston from the First Baptist Church of Richmond, Va., where under his guidance a class of several hundred deaf members had been founded. Here he planned a similar endeavor and began his search for a teacher, ending with Mr. Wilfred V. Patterson. Last July Mr. Patterson explained how the work was carried on in his class. "I have a rather difficult time getting the entire lesson taught in the class period, as I know only the letters of the language. After the State Convention, I expect to learn many of the signs and this will enable me to go through the lesson more quickly. Signs, you know, sometimes stand for whole sentence and it is a job spelling out the Biblical names. At times, I have to think pretty quickly to get the ideas across in our limited time." By September 12th, he had learned about three hundred and fifty signs and could talk well in the sign language. One of the reasons why he is so anxious to know the sign language so well, is to be able to interpret the sermons to the deaf. The deaf hope he can do this next summer.<sup>132</sup>

The first and succeeding teachers were: Miss Clara Belle Rogers, Mr. W. V. Patterson, and Mr. Albert Stender. The class disbanded for lack of teacher or leader. From 1940 on, the class resumed with Mr. Wilson Sherril teaching, followed by Mr. Albert Gibson, Mr. Charles Pollock, Mr. Thomas

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<sup>132</sup>"Unusual Friend of the Deaf," The Silent Worker, June, 1929, 177-178.

Owens, Mr. Frank Coltrane, Mr. Gerald Winstead, and Mr. Luther Thompson. Under Mr. Coltrane's leadership the class made promotions in departmental organizations. This class also organized Sunday Schools for the deaf in Greenwood, South Carolina, and Savannah, Georgia. In cooperation with Mr. Owens, the class sent out good teachers to teach in Sumter, Florence, Greenwood, Spartanburg, and Columbia, South Carolina, and Savannah, Georgia, for a while until each class in the towns mentioned got a teacher of their own.

Present teachers of the class are Mr. Luther Thompson and Mr. Charles Pollock. The class has Training Union and social activity for the deaf.

#### Columbia

For approximately thirty-five years the deaf of Columbia met in the educational building of First Baptist Church on Sunday afternoon. Mr. Charles Wilson, a deaf man, was secretary and liaison officer between the group and the church. This was in 1941. The hearing members of the church knew nothing about the deaf group. The church secretary gave them extra copies of Young People or Adult Sunday School Quarterly, and the deaf group in turn shared their love of-fering with the church.

Mrs. Jewell Duvall became secretary to the pastor and was elected as educational director of First Church in

January, 1941. Wanting the deaf group to know that the hearing people, members of the church, were interested in them, Mrs. Duvall asked the pastor, Dr. R. C. Campbell, for messages to the group, which she wrote on the blackboard before the deaf people arrived for their regular Sunday afternoon class. Sometimes she would come down to the church to greet them by writing notes to them. This continued until 1947 when she resigned from her position with the church to raise a family.

In 1949 the deaf group sent a committee to Mr. J. P. Coates, then superintendent of the Sunday School, requesting permission to attend the regular Sunday School at ten o'clock each Sunday morning in order that their hearing children could attend the graded Sunday School classes. The committee requested that the church appoint Mrs. Jewell Duvall as their teacher. At this time Mrs. Duvall taught a large class of women known as the Adelpian Class, but she was genuinely interested in the welfare of the deaf in her community. She informed Mr. Coates that she would give this matter her prayerful consideration. After much prayer she accepted her new assignment and made an immediate step to learn the language of the deaf.

Mrs. Duvall wrote a letter to the deaf committee, which was composed of Mr. Earl Chainey, Mr. Edward Baker, and Mr. R. L. Cave, and asked them if they would come to her

home for two hours each night for the purpose of teaching her the language of signs. They came in relays of one or two couples and taught her some lessons. This continued for five nights a week for three weeks. Finally, Mrs. Duvall was ready to teach the Sunday School lesson in simple language, and since then, she has picked up many new signs which have helped to make her more proficient in her work with the deaf.

The deaf group of twelve grew to thirty-seven. As Mrs. Duvall became more skilled in the use of the language of signs, she opened up for the deaf new doors of participation in the life of the church. Recognizing her efforts and also manifesting a deep interest in the deaf, the pastor offered her and her group a reserved section at the front right of the sanctuary where she could hear the pastor sufficiently to interpret his message for the deaf worshipers. As a result, several deaf persons who were already Christians united themselves with First Church by letter, and others came upon profession of faith, seeking baptism at the hand of the church. Within three years twenty-two deaf people were baptized, and others rededicated their lives to Christ.

The group was most enthusiastic about trying new endeavors. They began attending the Sunday morning and evening services and the Wednesday evening prayer meeting. They had Training Union of seventeen active members. The deaf group participated in the City-wide Church Census in 1952

by using a pre-typed card explaining their visit and was responsible for ten blocks of homes for the census. In addition, they presented a drama, "The Cooperative Dollar," which was written for them and which was very impressive. Rev. J. W. Gardner, a home missionary to the deaf, visited this church and stated that the deaf group was able to accomplish more within the framework of the church than any other deaf group he had ever known.

There was no area in the life of the church in which the deaf could not take an active part. In 1958 a Woman's Missionary Circle was organized by the ladies of the deaf class and was named "The Jane Roddy Circle" in honor of the wife of the former superintendent of deaf missions, Dr. A. J. Roddy. The deaf men became members of the Brotherhood. In the same year the new pastor, Dr. R. Archie Ellis, appointed a church committee for the deaf work, which passed on all recommendations from the deaf group to the church and which met regularly with the other committees of the church.

From the dactylology class, which was organized in 1956 for the interested hearing members of the church, came several new workers: Rev. Joseph Newton, Miss Frances Abrams, Mrs. Bertha Robinett, and Mrs. Vee Bonner who is now the Sunday School teacher of the deaf class. In 1958, Mr. and Mrs. Van Porter began their work with the deaf of this church. Mr. Porter is now the department superintendent of the deaf.

## TENNESSEE

### Chattanooga

It was in the year, 1939, when Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Duke and their daughter Mary Jane came to Chattanooga from Nashville in search of employment and established residence in East Ridge. They attended East Ridge Baptist Church and enrolled in a class of their hearing friends until other deaf people joined them to establish the Silent Workers Class. Mr. Thomas was the first teacher until 1964 when he was replaced by Mr. Jack Tyree, his assistant teacher.

Mr. and Mrs. Wilbur Matthews were members of the class before they departed for Dayton, Ohio. Mrs. Walter Spaulding, Miss Mettie Higgins, and Mr. Lawrence Churchwell of Red Bank (upper end of Chattanooga) are former members, having established a class of their own at a neighborhood church due to the long distance to East Ridge. Mr. and Mrs. James Overall and Mr. Jack Tyree joined the class upon their arrival in East Ridge from Atlanta, Georgia, and Louisville, Kentucky, respectively. About the middle of 1953 Mr. and Mrs. Wayne Upchurch took up residence in East Ridge and became members of the class, having moved to Tennessee from Marietta, Georgia. Then came Mrs. Martha Archuleta from Denver, Colorado, Mr. and Mrs. Dale Whitehead from Cleveland, Tennessee, and Mr. and Mrs. William Fore from Chattanooga. The class has about thirteen members.

For several years Mrs. Mary Jane Duke Pendley interpreted the regular services for the Silent Workers Class until the end of 1959 when her family moved to Greenville, South Carolina. Mrs. Iva Sue Duke Tallent interpreted on many occasions, but after her marriage transferred her membership to another church. Mrs. Bonnie Lee Upchurch Kilgore filled in the vacancy and helped interpret the messages of the pastor until Mrs. Pendley and her family moved back to East Ridge. Mrs. Pendley is at present the interpreter of this group, and Mr. Tyree continues to teach the class.

#### Elizabethton

A Sunday School class for the deaf was organized at First Baptist Church in August, 1929, by the officers of the Sunday School Department with Dr. Richard N. Owen, pastor, and Mr. J. Frank Seiler, superintendent. Seven members were present. The officers elected were: president- Mr. General L. Moreland; vice president- Mrs. Otis Jackson; secretary- Mr. Henry Rosenmund, Sr.; and the teacher- Mrs. Otis Jackson.

Mrs. Laura Formwalt of Knoxville, Tennessee, was very cooperative in coming to this church to interpret for revivals, funerals, and other special occasions. For many years the church had Mrs. Formwalt each summer for a week of study course and counseling.

Mr. Wayne Waller, who was then a student of the Uni-

versity of Tennessee and is now an instructor in electrical engineering at that university, visited the church as interpreter on numerous occasions. Mr. Arden Hill, assisted by Tommy Lee, has been interpreting the morning worship and other meetings of the church. These interpreters are members of the church with no previous experience, but they have taken up the language of signs in order to assist in this part of the church work. This has helped immeasurably in giving the deaf group more participation in the church program.

The Silent Class was the only one East of Knoxville, Tennessee, which served a territory from Bristol, Tennessee, to Surgoinsville, Tennessee, until 1964 when a Sunday School class for the deaf was organized at First Baptist Church in Bristol.

#### Knoxville

The Island Home Baptist Church property joins that of the Tennessee School for the Deaf. Through the years there has been a close tie of friendship between the school and the church. The church has used an interpreter from time to time for the students and faculty who attended the services there. This person was usually a Baptist who was a member of the faculty or the staff of the school for the deaf.

Rev. Kiser became pastor of Island Home Baptist Church January 1, 1959. At that time they had no interpreter,

but soon after Rev. Kiser's coming, four deaf individuals joined the church. Three of them were faculty members. Since that time several others have joined the church which has seven deaf or more deaf members. Ten members of the church, who are not deaf, are connected with the school as faculty or staff members.

Rev. Waverly Atkins was appointed as a student missionary in Knox County under the joint auspice of the Knox County Baptist Association and the Home Mission Board in September, 1960, at which time he began his work as interpreter for the deaf at Island Home Church. The attendance at this church was composed of students, staff members, and the deaf who live in Knox County. A large group of deaf people met for the Training Union on Sunday evening.

A Sunday School class was organized for the pre-school age deaf children and was taught by Rev. Waverly Atkins or one of the deaf members.

After his graduation from Carson-Newman College in 1961, Rev. Waverly Atkins left for the New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary in New Orleans, Louisiana, and the church has carried on the local work with the assistance of several deaf and hearing people.

### Memphis

Baptist work with the deaf had long before been

organized in Memphis, Tennessee, in the year of 1907, at Seventh Street Baptist Church. In 1913 Rev. J. W. Michaels organized a class at Central Baptist Church, which was located on South Second Street. Perhaps due to the lack of leadership the Baptist work with the deaf collapsed not long after the class was established.

In the early part of 1945 a letter from Dr. R. Paul Caudill, pastor of First Baptist Church, was sent to Rev. J. W. Gardner, a home missionary to the deaf, inviting the deaf to meet in his church. Rev. J. W. Gardner wrote a letter to Mr. Morris Campbell who, leaving Memphis to work in Kansas City, turned the letter over to Mr. W. L. Asbridge.

On September 26, 1945, Mr. Asbridge called a meeting of deaf people and had the letter read to the group. A suggestion was made to decide the issue of whether they were to remain in a Presbyterian Church, which had manifested little interest in the deaf ministry, or to move to the First Baptist Church. The vote showed thirty-six to three in favor of the move to the First Baptist Church, providing that a full-time interpreter be secured for this new work. The deciding factor of this move was the fact that seventy-five per cent of the group were Baptists by faith, if not by practice.

Through a little Miss Alice Cantrell, now Mrs. Alice Norwood of Nashville, Tennessee, the deaf group learned that

Dr. Paul Caudill had visited her and informed her that an interpreter would be at the First Baptist Church on October 10, 1945, if the deaf group were ready to move to First Baptist Church. The group had another special meeting in which the matter was decided that the transfer would be made.

The information taken from the files of Dr. R. Paul Caudill is given as follows:

Upon coming to Memphis, I learned there was a considerable number of deaf people here in the city, and that they had been greatly neglected by the ministry of the churches. We turned to our Seminary at Fort Worth and engaged the services of the then Miss Fay Osborne to interpret in our church-wide revival. The attendance mounted to more than thirty, during the evenings, and we succeeded in winning a number to Christ and to fellowship in the church by transfer of letter.

The impact of the work on our church was so tremendous that the church voted to undertake, on a continuing basis, a work among the deaf. Each weekend Miss Osborne would fly to Memphis, via American Airlines, fill the appointment on Sunday as the interpreter to the deaf, and then return to her studies at the Seminary on Monday morning.

Happily, one of our fine young men, Mr. Bill Lanham, fell in love with Miss Osborne, and the two were married and began to build their home in our midst.

This work, began in 1945, continues to be a vital part of our church life. With the help of Mrs. William Lanham, our chief interpreter, and several other interested souls, First Baptist Church continues to grow in her concern for silent ones about us.

It was through our efforts that the first South-wide Conference for the Deaf was held. The meeting was planned and held at the First Baptist Church of Memphis.

We thank God for the progress made in the work among the deaf here during the past sixteen years. One of our deaf men has been licensed to preach, Brother W. L. Asbridge. Our church has two ordained deaf deacons. The Silent Department now has a class

for women and a class for men.

Our church provides materials and equipment for publishing the Tennessee Volunteer, a paper for the deaf in Tennessee. This paper is gotten out each month through the untiring efforts of Mr. and Mrs. W. L. Asbridge.

Mrs. William Lanham is still the interpreter, and Rev. W. L. Asbridge continues to preach to several deaf groups in Mississippi. Now the Missions Department of the Tennessee Baptist Convention publishes the Christian Volunteer each month after having taken over the responsibility of this paper from Mr. W. L. Asbridge. Dr. Paul Caudill is still the pastor of First Baptist Church which now boasts beautiful buildings erected on a new site purchased a number of years ago.

#### Nashville

The Silent Bible class was organized at First Baptist Church on September 12, 1908. Rev. Lansing Burrows was pastor of the church at the time of the organizing of the deaf work. Mr. Jesse T. Warren under the helpful guidance of Rev. J. W. Michaels brought several deaf persons and organized a Sunday School class. He was chosen as teacher, and among those who became members of the early class were Mr. Ollie Burke, Mr. Tom Ogilvie, Mr. Robert Nead, Mr. Gordon Midgett, Mr. Cowell, Mr. Armstead, Mr. Rutledge Osborne, and Mr. Clarence Olinger.

First Baptist Church fully cooperated in the estab-

lishment of the Silent Class. A room was obtained for the deaf to meet in, and they met until they were forced out by a fire which nearly destroyed the church. Several fires at the church had almost completely wrecked the Sunday School organization. The classes were kept together as much as possible in various buildings in the downtown district, some meeting at the Masonic Building, Hume-Fogg High School, and the old Princess Theater on Church Street.

Because of illness, Mr. Warren retired as teacher of the class temporarily, and the class began to disintegrate. For a time it was taught by a Mr. Key and about 1922 moved to a church of a different denomination on Woodland Street in East Nashville.

Dr. W. F. Powell, who became the pastor of First Church, had frequently come in contact with the members of the Silent Class, and noting that the class was not at church, he began to investigate the whereabouts of the group. He was soon able to persuade the class to "come home," and "come home" they did.

Mr. Jesse Warren died in January of 1931. Dr. Powell called a meeting of the class to the church. At this meeting there was a young lady, Miss Nancy Rossen, daughter of deaf parents, her father being employed by the Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention. She was at this time a student at Hume-Fogg High School. The Silent

Class suggested that Miss Rossen be named teacher of the class, and Dr. Powell went further and asked that she be appointed official interpreter for the deaf. The church as a whole accepted her as teacher and interpreter of the class. As Miss Rossen was then in school and wished to become a public school teacher, she insisted that she needed an assistant. Mr. Monroe Carter's name was suggested and accepted. Mr. Joe Carter learned more signs and soon became adept. He and Miss Rossen would rotate in teaching the class each Sunday, while she continued to interpret in the sanctuary at the morning and evening services. "Miss Nancy," as she was known, was also director of the Rossen Baptist Training Union, named for her by Dr. Powell.

In 1937 Miss Rossen's health was not very good, and she asked and received an assistant interpreter in the person of Miss Fay Osborne (now Mrs. Lanham), who was at this time a student.

"Miss Nancy" felt that it was necessary that she continue her studies at Peabody College while earning her living as teacher in the Nashville City Schools; therefore, she asked to be allowed to resign as teacher of the Silent Class. She continued as interpreter and Baptist Training Union director. Miss Fay Osborne assisted in both capacities. At this time Mr. Carter assumed the position of teacher of the class, which he still holds.

Miss Osborne later entered Peabody College and then Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, from which she entered into the deaf work of the First Baptist Church of Memphis.

The Silent Class is now in its fifty-eighth year; yet only three hearing persons have been directly connected with it in the capacity of interpreters: Mrs. George Morris (the former Miss Nancy Rossen), Mrs. Fay Lanham now of Memphis, and Mrs. Jimmie Moore (the former Miss Pepper Osborne, sister of Fay Lanham).

In 1953 Mrs. Moore was called as interpreter and assistant teacher of the class. She is a conscientious worker and works in the Primary Department on call as an alternate teacher.

Rev. J. W. Michaels, Rev. J. W. Gardner, and then Rev. Carter Bearden have visited this group in their ministry.

#### Oak Ridge

On the first Sunday in January, 1960, a Sunday School class for the deaf was organized at Central Baptist Church, Oak Ridge, Tennessee, by Mr. Don England, who was nineteen years old and a junior in the engineering college of the University of Tennessee. During summer vacations he worked at the Oak Ridge Swimming Pool as a Red Cross swimming instructor and a life guard. In this work he became acquainted with

several deaf young people in the city of 28,000 and grew deeply concerned when he learned there was no place for these young people to go for Bible study and worship. All the time he was busy learning the language of signs from these new deaf friends.

Immediately, Mr. England talked with his pastor, Kenneth B. Combs, and together they planned the beginning of a deaf work at Central Baptist Church. Soon the work grew until most of the deaf in Oak Ridge were attending the Sunday School class. After a few months the church became concerned that Sunday School was the only phase of church life offered for the deaf. Mr. Ed Davis, then minister of music became very interested in the deaf work and was elected as the director of deaf work on October 1, 1960. Having little knowledge of the language of the deaf, he received invaluable help from Mr. England and the deaf people. His great concern was to become proficient enough to interpret the pastor's sermons for the deaf, since there was no one with sufficient speed to do it. The many years of using his hands playing the piano and organ paid off, and the signs came easily and stuck well. After six weeks of intensive work Mr. Davis began interpreting the worship services for his deaf friends.

Mrs. Betty Ellis, a wife of a deacon and mother of five children, became interested in the work and served as a secretary of the class faithfully. When Mr. Davis resigned

his position with the church to accept the new jobs as coordinator of deaf work for the Tennessee Baptist Convention and counselor for the Vocational Rehabilitation Administration, Mrs. Ellis and several other workers took over the function of interpreting the services for the deaf.

Now the work is six years old (1966), and the church has the deaf people in every regular activity, Sunday School, worship services, Training Union, study courses, and social activities.

Many people in Central Baptist Church are heard to say, "This is one of the greatest things our church has ever done."

## TEXAS

### Beaumont

The Sunday School class for the deaf was organized at Calvary Baptist Church in 1954 with the assistance of Mrs. Louis A. Beard and Mr. Carey Shaw, both of Houston. Mr. William Smith, Sr., taught the men's class, and Mrs. B. P. Cameron, now at Baytown, was teacher of the women's class. The first interpreter for the group was Mrs. C. T. Golden of Liberty, and the succeeding interpreters were Rev. Francis Fraize, now at Van Nuys, California, Mrs. Shirley Ann Rhodes, and Miss Ella Smith, daughter of Mr. William Smith, Sr.

The class was later transferred to the First Baptist

Church.

Dallas

In the fall of 1919 Dr. George W. Truett's secretary called Mrs. S. D. Johnson, inquiring if she could help organize a Sunday School class in First Baptist Church and also interpret Dr. Truett's sermons. An afternoon class met at First Presbyterian Church, and a Mrs. Washington interpreted the sermons of Dr. William M. Anderson. Rev. J. W. Michaels was unable to organize a Baptist class due to the lack of hearing leadership for the deaf, even though over seventy-five per cent of the deaf came from Baptist homes. With Dr. Truett's prayers, guidance, and cooperation a morning Sunday School class for the deaf was established with approximately fifteen members, and soon thereafter Mrs. Johnson made her long-delayed profession of faith in Christ and was baptized at the hand of Dr. Truett. At a Christmas banquet approximately one hundred persons attended, and Dr. Truett was the guest speaker. The pastor encouraged Sunday School attendance and then stressed the importance of Training Union attendance and ended by saying, "I want the best for your group of people. I want a growing Sunday School, and I want a Training Union." Before they left the banquet hall, the deaf themselves had enthusiastically voted to establish the union immediately after the first of the year of 1920. Dr. Truett

appointed his youth director, Miss Effie McDaniel, now Mrs. E. D. Head, to lay the groundwork, to assist the deaf in visitation, and to help them with good and interesting programs. "Miss Effie," as they called her, was a great inspiration to them all.

In September, 1921, Mrs. Johnson went to Austin to fill a brief vacancy in the Texas School for the Deaf due to the injury of one of the teachers. Soon she and her husband moved to Austin, and she regretted leaving the deaf group of First Baptist Church of Dallas but was pleased to find that Mrs. Truett's class had assumed sponsorship.

In the spring of 1924 Mrs. William Jones, now residing in Houston and then a member of Mrs. Truett's class, was able to secure Mrs. Flint as an interpreter who came once a month and whose salary was paid by the class. A section in the balcony continued to be reserved for the deaf.

Following Mrs. Flint were daughters of deaf people who interpreted for the deaf: Josephine Pickett Williams, Frances Talbot, Mary Kolp Foster, and Mary Anderson Conner.

Mrs. Jones moved to Houston in 1932, and Mrs. W. O. Barton was appointed by the class to sponsor the work which she did for some fourteen years. By this time the work had grown to over one hundred members. At Mrs. Barton's suggestion the class was able to secure Rev. C. F. Landon, missionary of the Home Mission Board, to move to Dallas and become

a part-time pastor to the deaf there. He was their pastor for ten years before the Board moved him to California. The class then invited Mrs. Mary Anderson Conner to take the work which she kept for nine months. At her suggestion the class secured Dr. Andrew Jackson Roddy who was then professor of languages at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. After one year and four months the Home Mission Board asked Dr. A. J. Roddy to become superintendent of deaf missions under the Board. In March of 1957 after much prayer, Dr. A. J. Roddy, Mrs. Conner, and Mrs. Paul P. Cooper with their pastor, Dr. W. A. Criswell, called Rev. David Dean, Jr., a student at New Orleans Seminary, to assume the duties of pastor to the deaf. He and his wife, whose parents are deaf, accepted the call.

During Rev. C. F. Landon's pastorate the church was asked to take over the work as one of its missions, since it had grown to the extent that the class was unable to take care of the pastor's salary. During the ministry of Dr. Jack Roddy and Mrs. Conner the church started renting a building at 709 North St. Paul Street for the deaf, and this building was furnished by the Anderson Furniture Company. In 1958 First Baptist Church bought this building, and today the Silent Friends Mission rents it from the church for \$250.00 a month.

In 1958 the deaf work became financially separate

from the mother church and assumed the name of Silent Friends Mission. During Dr. A. J. Roddy's ministry four deacons were ordained, and a deaf Negro work was begun in Southeast Dallas.

On September 1, 1965, Rev. David Dean resigned from the pastorate of Silent Friends Mission to accept the call to work with the deaf in Houston as a part-time minister to the deaf of Baptist Temple Church and a counselor for the Vocational Rehabilitation Administration.

On December 15, 1965, Rev. Carlie Hill, who ministered to the deaf of First Baptist Church in Shreveport, Louisiana, took over the duties of pastor to the deaf of First Baptist Church in Dallas. Today there are approximately one hundred ninety members and an average attendance of seventy-eight.

#### Galveston

A Sunday School class for the deaf was founded by the inspirational work of Mrs. Blanche Thompson with the assistance of Mr. Robert E. Kleberg at the First Baptist Church in Galveston during November of 1950. Dr. Harold Pickett, who was pastor of the church at that time, was very much pleased over the interest of the deaf group planning to organize the class. Only six deaf people were in the beginning group.

Mrs. Thompson was the first teacher and held this

position for a year until she and her husband moved to Kansas. Mr. Kleberg succeeded her and taught the class until the summer of 1961 when he accepted the job as a printing instructor at the Texas School for the Deaf. The class had no interpreter until 1955 when Mr. Billy Smith, then a freshman medical student at the University of Texas Medical College, was asked to interpret to the class during the month of December. Mr. Smith, whose parents are deaf, accepted and served as their interpreter for four years. Upon graduation in June of 1959, he left to go to Austin for internship at a hospital. Mrs. Lillian Bengé, who became interested in learning the language of signs a number of years ago, and Miss Donna Gunter, daughter of deaf parents, interpreted the services for the deaf for several years.

#### Fort Worth

In September of 1939, Rev. C. F. Landon and Miss Bertie Mae McDonald, now Mrs. Hiner, established deaf work at Broadway Baptist Church with Sunday morning worship services for the deaf in the sanctuary and a Training Union. In 1954 or 1955 a Sunday School class for the deaf was organized. The person behind all this work, however, was Mrs. R. E. Henry, a member of the Woman's Missionary Society, who had the vision of such services for the deaf. The first teacher was Mrs. F. R. Booker.

Mrs. Bertie Mae Hiner has been the only interpreter

since the organization of the deaf work at Broadway Baptist Church and has had helpers such as Mrs. Fay Lanham, Mrs. J. E. Sellstrom, Miss Estella Horton, Rev. Charles Horton, Mrs. Don Hawkins, Mrs. Preston Purifoy, Mr. Johnny Chambers, and Miss Frances Jones.

#### Gatesville

The class was organized at First Baptist Church by Mr. J. W. Dudley of Waco on the first Sunday of March, 1950, and the work continued until November, 1958. Mr. Dudley, a hearing man having a deaf daughter now deceased and also a deaf brother, was the only interpreter for the deaf group.

#### Houston

Under the kind advice and encouragement of the late Dr. J. W. Michaels the Sunday School class was organized in First Baptist Church on February 3, 1924, with Dr. W. G. Bryan, a hearing teacher, and Miss Lillian Fitzgerald, then in her teens and now known as Mrs. Lillian Beard, interpreter. There were five members in the first meeting, among which only two are still active in the class: Mrs. Beard and Mrs. Carey C. Shaw as all others are either deceased or have moved away.

The class grew and gained in numbers during the following years under the leadership of Dr. Bryan and Miss Lillian Fitzgerald and was then called "Ephphatha Class" for many years.

Mrs. Beard continued as the interpreter in the Sunday School class for many years, except the few years when Mrs. Mollie Burchardt Rigmaiden and Mrs. Geraldine V. Horton, both daughters of deaf parents, interpreted for the deaf.

In 1940 Mr. Carey C. Shaw was appointed as the first deaf teacher of the class, and Mrs. Beard was left free to interpret the worship services for the deaf in the sanctuary. The class manifested spiritual growth and gained in number of members, necessitating the dividing of the group into two classes, one for the older members and another for the younger ones, in 1950. Mr. Shaw continued to teach the senior class, and the junior class was taken over by Mr. James Fair. During the summer months Mrs. Beard taught a class of young deaf teenagers from the school for the deaf.

The name of the class, "Ephphatha Class," soon vanished and in its place is now known as the Silent Department of First Baptist Church. This department has seven classes and a roll call of approximately one hundred nineteen deaf members and also an average of fifty-five in attendance.

Through the years Mrs. Louis A. Beard has served as interpreter and has often recruited a wonderful array of young interpreters, some of them being daughters of deaf parents.

First Church recognizes the deaf department's work and has ordained three deaf men, Carey Shaw in 1944, James

Fair in 1956, and Eugene Piercy in 1959 as deacons of the church.

### Kilgore

It all began on the last Sunday of January in 1946 as Mr. and Mrs. Joe Shriver started for Sunday School at Eastview Baptist Church in Kilgore and two of their deaf friends came by and wanted to know where they were going. Mr. Shriver told them that he and his wife were going to church and asked them if they ever went to Sunday School and church. He learned that they did not have any place to go for worship in his community. He conferred with his pastor, his Sunday School superintendent, and others who could help him. Later he secured a room and then visited the deaf for miles around, inviting them to come to Sunday School. Three months passed before they finally met in the classroom, with six or seven present. Mr. Shriver was the teacher, and his wife, the secretary of the class. They bought a nine passenger Plymouth station wagon so that they could take some deaf people to the Baptist camp and other towns for special services and conferences. Rev. Charles Horton visited the class occasionally. Later the class moved to the First Baptist Church. Mr. Shriver is still active in this work.

### Lubbock

Mrs. John P. Baker was instrumental in getting the

deaf work in Lubbock started. The work in the Lubbock vicinity received a big boost when Miss Beatrice Hale, now Mrs. Preston Purifoy of Fort Worth, accepted an invitation to come to Lubbock over a weekend and help organize the ministry. Invitations and advertisement brought about forty deaf people to the Sunday services at Trinity Baptist Church on Sunday morning, June 29, 1949. Reporters and photographers were on hand and gave excellent coverage. The president of the local deaf club reported that it was the first time in twenty years that a meeting of such proportions and usefulness had been held. A dinner was prepared for the deaf, and afternoon sessions led to real interest and organization. It was decided that a revival for the deaf was needed, and soon Rev. Carter Bearden, then attending Baylor University, agreed to come and preach. His meeting heightened interest, and there were eleven baptized by Rev. C. E. Bearden at the close of the meeting, all deaf adults but one young boy. Rev. Carter Bearden came to this area frequently through the years until he moved to New Orleans, meeting and counseling with the group and always assisting Mrs. Baker in teaching and learning new signs.

Then Mrs. Stella Rudolph moved with her family to Lubbock from Wichita Falls and soon undertook the teaching of the Bible lessons to the deaf class, and Mrs. Baker would assist her in her preparation each week. In turn, Mrs. Rudolph helped Mrs. Baker with new signs as well as corrected old

ones, and they spent many profitable hours to their mutual benefit. Early in the deaf ministry Mrs. Baker would sit up in bed with the manual of the language of signs and spend hours learning new signs and recalling old ones. Now with Mrs. Rudolph's assistance, she became more and more proficient in her interpreting. While still in Lubbock, Mrs. Baker often invited interested people to come to her home for sign lessons. Many came, few stayed, but one splendid architect, Ridjel Lee, became quite interested and learned amazingly fast. Soon he was substituting as teacher and began interpreting from time to time until the day when the Bakers moved to Colorado Springs to start a new mission station there. Mr. Lee served as teacher and interpreter until he moved to another town in New Mexico. Now Mrs. Joe Benet, daughter of deaf parents, is serving in the capacity of interpreter, and her husband is a teacher of the class. They are doing good work and carrying on the ministry begun by Mrs. John Baker.

#### Midland

There seems to be some controversy as to when the deaf first started attending First Baptist Church of Midland. It seems that one couple, Mr. and Mrs. Hyson Smith, met in the back of older hearing people's classes. Mr. Smith met with the older men, and Mrs. Smith, with the older women.

There was no interpreter at this time, and it is not known whether they studied and were taught a lesson or if they just attended and sat in the class. In 1954 another deaf couple, Mr. and Mrs. Max Floyd, visited First Baptist Church for the first time. Miss Sandra Smith, the teenage daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Hyson Smith started interpreting the Sunday School lessons for these two deaf couples. Then in May, 1955, after the birth of the second child, the Floyds moved their membership from Bellview Baptist Church to First Church.

These two couples met in the back of the Young Married People's class which was taught by Mrs. Robert Donnell, and Miss Smith interpreted. They did not stay for church during this time.

Mrs. Donnell felt led to begin a deaf class separate from her hearing Young Married Class. The deaf met as an independent class of their own for the first time the first Sunday in July, 1956. Mrs. Donnell was the teacher, and Miss Smith interpreted for her. The deaf were encouraged to stay for church, and there were ten deaf in attendance for the great eventful first Sunday.

The beginning of this new department was announced on the radio broadcast of the morning worship service. A member of another church, Miss Carolyn Kastner, heard this announcement on the radio and later began her work with the deaf. Miss Kastner replaced Miss Smith, who left for college

in September, 1956, as interpreter, with Mrs. Donnell still teaching the class.

The class continued in this manner until January, 1947, when Mrs. Donnell resigned from the group to have some dental work done. Since Miss Kastner was not a Baptist, she was not authorized to teach. The deaf were once again placed in the back of a hearing class, and Miss Kastner interpreted what the teacher of the hearing people taught.

The arrangement was not satisfactory as the hearing women were all of college level education. It was impossible for all the deaf to understand what was being taught, because of the varied mental aptitudes. Then, in July, 1957, after much discussion the deaf were once again an independent class, with Miss Carolyn Kastner as teacher, interpreter, and director of the department. The class met in the stairway landing of the balcony, and everyone was happy.

Some of the deaf attended the Texas Baptist Conference of the Deaf at Highland Lakes Encampment in Austin in the summer of 1957.

Palm Sunday, March 18, 1958, the deaf moved into their very own Sunday School room. It was a great event for them.

Shortly after moving into the new room, Miss Kastner's health became so bad, making it impossible for her to keep up with all the activities. Mr. Max Floyd became the teacher

of the Sunday School class, while Miss Kastner continued to interpret the services and to direct the deaf ministry.

Between December, 1958, and March, 1959, Miss Kastner had surgery twice which left the deaf without an interpreter most of the time. She tried to continue her work, but it proved more than her health would allow. In August, 1959, Mr. Ridjell Lee offered his services to interpret the worship services once a month and came to this church on numerous occasions.

There are now eight deaf members enrolled in Sunday School. Mr. Max Floyd is still teaching the class.

#### San Angelo

The deaf class was first organized at First Baptist Church in San Angelo by Rev. A. C. Donath in 1944 and lasted for a few months. It was reactivated in 1951 with Rev. James Leavell as pastor of the church. The renewed interest in the deaf was begun by Mrs. A. D. Mosley and Mrs. Toby Proctor, hearing ladies who were concerned for the spiritual welfare of the deaf.

The class does not have a regular interpreter or teacher; therefore, the members of the class take turns in giving the lesson each Sunday. The class has been blessed with the services of interpreters who have passed through their town. Among the interpreters were Mrs. Billy Gresham,

daughter of deaf parents; Mrs. Walter Johnson, daughter-in-law of Mrs. S. D. Johnson; Mrs. Willis Williams of San Antonio, missionary to the Latin Americans; and Miss Patsy Rivers, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Rivers of Houston.

#### Sherman

The Silent Bible Class was organized at North Park Baptist Church in February, 1953. Rev. Clyde Johnson and Mrs. J. N. Henry, mother of Mrs. Joan Picou, assisted in getting them a room for their Sunday School. Mr. Herbert Picou was chosen as president of the class, and Mrs. Alice Shaller was secretary-treasurer. From 1955 to 1962 Rev. Charles Horton was the interpreter for the class and came to the church on the second Sunday of each month to interpret Rev. Blaine's sermons. Every other month he preached the Word of God to the deaf. Mrs. Teet Byrne was Sunday School teacher for eight years. Mrs. Raymond Lewis and Mrs. Edna Jamison began to teach the lessons in 1956 or 1957 in rotation each month. The Training Union was organized in 1958. The leader of the Silent Bible Class is Mrs. Lewis.

#### Texarkana

The class for the deaf was organized at First Baptist Church in 1947 when a group of deaf people came to Dr. Carl Bates, pastor, and requested a room in which to meet.

Dr. Carl Bates asked Mrs. Edwin Fore to meet with them.

One of the deaf, Mrs. C. E. Thompson, now residing in Kansas, was the first teacher, and Mrs. Fore acted as sponsor and helper of the class. Rev. J. W. Gardner came once a month for preaching services for one or two years and often came for an occasional week of services.

The first interpreter was Miss Betty Dillard who was employed by the church in 1957 and who came every Sunday. After her marriage, a young man named Victor Carver who had joined the church in February, 1958, was asked to teach and interpret the church services as a paid worker. Other teachers assisted, and one was Mrs. Edward Lacy.

During his Baylor days Rev. Carter Bearden came to Texarkana once a quarter to minister to the deaf.

The class now has Mr. Wylie Rolfe as director of the deaf department who has been a great help to them.

### Tyler

Mrs. Lola McCameron, a graduate of the Arkansas School for the deaf and mother of five children, picked up her paper one morning and read of the tragic accident of her school friend, Mr. Paul Elrod, who was drowned in Freeport, Texas, and whose body had been brought to Tyler for burial. Immediately, she went down to the funeral home to see the bereaved family and to offer her service to them.

She tried to interpret the service for Mrs. Elrod and failed miserably. Mrs. Elrod knew that Mrs. McCameron understood her grief over the loss of her husband and was grateful to her for her service and presence. A few days later Mrs. Elrod visited Mrs. McCameron, and together they decided to organize a class for the deaf in Tyler.

Mrs. McCameron contacted ten known deaf families and invited them to gather as a body at First Baptist Church. Dr. Porter M. Bailes, pastor of the church, learned of their plans and quickly appointed a committee to work with them. Thus, the first class for the deaf was organized in Tyler in 1940, and Mrs. McCameron was elected teacher of this group.

Mrs. McCameron taught the class for a year, but because of gas rationing during World War II and her loss of hearing, she had to give up teaching the class. As a result, the class was disbanded.

After the war was over, Mr. O. R. Smith, a deacon of First Baptist Church, urged her to reorganize the class. Realizing that her hearing aid had helped her considerably, she consented to accept the task of reorganizing and teaching the class which was established the first Sunday in May, 1948. One of the first unpleasant tasks she faced was to interpret the funeral service of Mr. Grover Jones, one of the charter members of the class.

The class, although small in number, continues to

exist, with Mrs. McCameron teaching and interpreting.

### Waco

In February, 1912, the first Texas Sunday School class for the deaf in a church of hearing people was organized at Columbus Avenue Baptist Church in Waco. Mrs. O. M. Weatherby, daughter of a Baptist minister and who had a deaf brother, invited the Waco deaf to meet there. It is believed that eight young men responded to the invitation. A blackboard was used and questions were asked. Mrs. Weatherby discovered that most of those present had a fair knowledge of the Bible. She told them she wanted to organize a regular Sunday School class and would like to have all the deaf in Waco in it. She knew the manual alphabet, but soon became proficient in the use of signs. The class grew larger, and Mrs. Weatherby set about converting them. Most of them were converted and baptized that same year.

After about twenty years of teaching the class, Mrs. Weatherby retired and asked Rev. J. W. Gardner to take over. Rev. J. W. Gardner was a hearing man, but he had a hearing impairment so he learned the sign language. His wife was an instructor at Baylor University. Rev. J. W. Gardner taught the class for a number of years until he took work as a regular minister to the deaf of the South under the Home Mission Board.

Mr. Roy Wilson, whose wife was deaf, taught the class after Rev. J. W. Gardner left. It is not remembered how long he was with them. For some time the older members of the class took turns at teaching.

Mr. J. W. Dudley, son of deaf parents, took over the reins for a number of years. He retired in favor of Rev. Carter Bearden, a young deaf man who was attending Baylor University. Mr. Bearden continued until his graduation and suggested as his successor Mr. Louis Fant, who was the son of deaf parents and who was to enter Baylor in the fall. Mr. Fant led the deaf work all the years he was a student.

Mr. Charles Horton, also the son of deaf parents, often assisted. Miss Barbara Barber, a Baylor student, was the teacher for two years; she was succeeded by Miss Nancy Crookshank, another young Baylorite. The group continued to have the good fortune of having the help of Baylor students and with the services of Miss Clairice Booker for two years.

Mr. Dean Cunningham and Miss Judy Fuhrman, Baylor students, were teachers and interpreters. At present, Miss Jan Humphrey of Amarillo, Texas, is the interpreter for this group. Of the original eight members, only one Mr. Harvey Ford is still living in Waco, the seven others having passed on to the Great Beyond.

**APPENDIX**

## Appendix I

Several possible theories are offered for the different dates of the birth, education, and conversion of the Rev. Mr. J. W. Michaels.

In the main thesis the year, 1850, is given as the date of his birth on the strength of the statement made by Mrs. S. D. Johnson, one of the four daughters of Dr. J. W. Michaels. In her letter to the writer Mrs. Johnson states:

There is much confusion about Papa's birth date. I do not have the family record to prove that he was born in 1850, but I have seen the old Family Bible that my uncle had with all of the records of the Michaels family births, marriages and deaths. In addition, Papa was 10 years older than my mother and she was 52 the day after her death in 1913, which would make Papa 91 at the time of his death in September, 1942. I recall at one time when Papa was in his eighties, he told me that he had lowered his age by two years when he went into the ministry because he was over 40 years old and he was afraid he would be rejected because 40 in those days was old to begin a new career. In his latter years I remember that the HMB was concerned about his traveling at his age, and he didn't want to give up. If I remember correctly, although his traveling ministry was limited, he was 87 or 88 when he went on an annuity although the HMB thought he was 85. Anyway so far as the family is concerned, Papa's birth occurred in 1850 regardless of HMB records.

Three sources point out 1852 as the year of Dr. J. W. Michaels' birth. One is an article "Southern Personalities" by Edgar B. Chestnutt in which Dr. J. W. Michaels was fea-

tured and which was published by Holland's Magazine, June, 1935, issue. Mr. Chestnutt mentioned at the time of writing that Rev. J. W. Michaels would be eighty-three soon. On this basis 1852 is reckoned as the approximate date.

The other source for the contention of the year, 1852, is an article by R. Aumon Bass in his book, History of the Education of the Deaf in Virginia in which he wrote: "He was born December 19, 1852, in Petersburg."

The third source is a postcard used by Rev. J. W. Michaels to pass out or send to his friends. On the left side of the card, which is reserved for a message, an excerpt is given:

J. W. Michaels, B. Ped., D.D. at his home, Mountainburg, Ar., born Dec. 19, 1852, became deaf at 9, begun work among the Deaf 1876 as teacher and Sunday School worker, ordained as minister to the Deaf 1905, retired to deaf work 1935. Will answer special calls and correspondence, The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

Mr. James E. Gallaher in his Representative Deaf Persons of the United States of America, which was published by the Chicago Public Schools for the Deaf in 1898, said: "Mr. Michaels was born in Petersburg, V., December 19, 1854."

All the sources thus far examined concur that Mr. J. W. Michaels entered the Virginia School for the Deaf and Blind in 1869 and graduated from this institution in 1873 and that he enrolled at Gallaudet College in 1873 and left

there in 1876. Dr. Joe R. Shinpaugh, Superintendent of the Virginia School for the Deaf and Blind says in his letter to the writer:

We have other records indicating, which agrees with the part stating his age of entry (16), that Mr. Michaels entered V. S. D. B. the fall of 1869 and graduated the spring of 1873, therefore, he was here for four sessions.

In reference to the date of his conversion, there is, first of all, a prima facie case or evidence, i. e., the inscription of Rev. J. W. Michaels in his Bible that he was already a Christian and a member of a Baptist church in 1871 when he was in Baltimore, Maryland, once again in connection with his hearing.

The second source for this conflict of dates is the Home Mission Board's periodical, Southern Baptist Home Missions, dated November, 1942. This raises the possibility that Dr. J. W. Michaels first became interested in religion and affiliated himself with a Baptist church prior to or in 1871 and was genuinely converted in 1873 as purported in the article of the Board's magazine. This is sometimes the case among some of our deaf friends who come to a saving knowledge of Christ at a later date after being members of their respective churches for a number of years.

## Appendix II

In respect to the date of his appointment as a teacher of the Arkansas School for the Deaf, we have at least four sources of information which will aid us in determining the approximate date. The first source is The Arkansas Optic, the publication of the Arkansas School for the Deaf, December, 1906, issue, which asserted the fact that Dr. J. W. Michaels had been connected with the Arkansas School for twenty-two years. From this information we compute the dates and reach a conclusion that he was appointed to the position of a teacher in 1883 or 1884.

Mr. J. E. Gallaher in his Representative Deaf Persons of the United States of America contended that Mr. Michaels went to Arkansas in 1884 after having served as a teacher of the Manual Department of Virginia School for the Deaf and Blind from 1882 to 1884.

Mrs. S. D. Johnson in her letter to the writer stated that she possesses a copy of the Centennial Reunion book which deals with the history of the Arkansas School for the Deaf and which has a picture of J. W. Michaels and under it the words: "Principal from 1883 to 1905.

Thence turned to be a Baptist minister to the deaf in the South."

Another source to warrant the assertion of 1882 as the date of his appointment as a teacher of the Arkansas School for the Deaf is The Virginia Guide, a school paper published by the Virginia School for the Deaf and Blind in October, 1942, in which an article about John Walter Michaels appeared. This same source stated that Mr. Michaels went to Arkansas in 1882.

Two other publications, indicating the support of the year, 1882, as the date of Mr. Michaels' appointment are the Holland's Magazine in connection with "Southern Personalities" by Edgar B. Chestnutt and the History of the Education of the Deaf in Virginia by R. Aumon Bass. The former said: "When Mr. Michaels came to Little Rock in 1882, the Arkansas School for the Deaf was just in its infancy." The latter explained: "In 1882, Mr. Michaels went to Little Rock to become a teacher in the infant Arkansas School for the Deaf."

In all probability Mr. Aumon Bass used the article from Holland's Magazine as his source of information or vice versa. On the other hand, he may have known Rev. J. W. Michaels for a number of years, had access to the files of the Virginia School for the Deaf and Blind where he had

taught for many years until his retirement two or three years ago, or had other reliable sources for his materials.

Appendix III

CLASSES FOR THE DEAF IN 1914

Fort Smith, Arkansas	First Baptist Church	Mrs. S. V. McLendon, Leader
Fulton, Missouri	First Baptist Church	Prof. Harry Gross, Leader
Danville, Kentucky	School for the Deaf	Mrs. Supt. A. Rogers, Leader
Fort Worth, Texas	Deaf-Mute Baptist Church	Mr. W. G. Sheppard, Leader
Waco, Texas	Columbus Avenue Baptist Church	Mrs. Featherstone and Mr. Tilden Smith
Memphis, Tennessee	Central Baptist Church	Miss Teutor, Leader
Chattanooga, Tennessee	Methodist Church	Mr. W. A. West, Leader
Knoxville, Tennessee	Presbyterian Church	Miss Rebecca Davis, Leader
Bristol, Virginia	Methodist Church	Mrs. J.
Richmond, Virginia	First Baptist Church	Mr. A. G. Tucker, Leader
Norfolk, Virginia	Freemason Baptist Church	Mr. Paxton Pollard
Washington, D. C.	Calvary Baptist Church	Mr. G. Erickson, Leader
Baltimore, Maryland	First Baptist Church	Mr. E. A. Feast, Leader
Durham, North Carolina	First Baptist Church	Rev. G. C. Wilder, Leader

Greensboro, North Carolina	At his home	Mr. Peter Ray, Leader
Charlotte, North Carolina	Pitchard Baptist Church	Mr. William Hackney, Leader
Raleigh, North Carolina	Tabernacle Baptist Church	Mr. Odie Underhill
Atlanta, Georgia	St. Mark's Methodist Church	Mr. Cruselle, a hearing gentleman who took great interest in the deaf and had a Baptist wife. He tried to get the Methodist Mission Board of his denomination to create a missionary for the deaf in the South.

Birmingham, Alabama

The class was at first organized at Southside Baptist Church, Birmingham. When the church was destroyed by fire, Mrs. W. W. Silk, a hearing lady who had a deaf sister, reorganized the class at Wesley Chapel on the Northside. Mrs. Silk moved West, and the class decided to move to a more centrally located church. Dr. Dickerson and Rev. J. W. Michaels made efforts to get them to come to First Baptist Church and felt that their plan would succeed, but the Episcopal Church in some ways induced the class to go into one of its parish houses where the deaf could meet at most any time for gymnastics and other amusements.

Appendix IV

STATE BAPTIST CONFERENCES OF THE DEAF

<u>State</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Founder</u>
Alabama	Shocco Springs near Talladega	May 29-31, 1959	Rev. David Richardson
Florida	Tallahassee	July 11-12, 1959	Rev. Reeves C. Dean
Georgia	Columbus	August, 1958	Rev. C. E. Bearden Mrs. J. C. Raiford
Kentucky	Louisville	May 8-10, 1959	Rev. Darrell Ellsworth
Louisiana	Ruston	August, 1956	Mr. J. U. Liner
Missouri	Monett	August, 1951	Rev. C. F. Landon Mrs. Oliver Steinhaus
Oklahoma	Falls Creek near Davis	August 30-September 1, 1958	Rev. L. H. Gunn
South Carolina	Columbia	November 19, 1955	Mrs. Jewell Duvall
Tennessee	Nashville	August, 1956	Mr. W. L. Asbridge
Texas	Austin	August, 1949	Mrs. S. D. Johnson Rev. C. E. Bearden

Appendix V

TEXAS BAPTIST DEAF CRUSADE

Abilene, First Baptist Church	April 30	David Dean, Dallas
Amarillo, First Baptist Church	April 19-25	Leslie Gunn, Oklahoma
Austin, Congress Avenue Baptist Church	April 7-11	Carter Bearden, Georgia
Bartown, Memorial Baptist Church	April 20-May 2	Calvin Willard, Austin
Borger, Calvary Baptist Church	April 29-30	George Padgett, Houston
Corpus Christi, Second Baptist Church	April 29-30	Jerry St. John, Mississippi
Corsicana, Calvary Baptist Church	June 5-6	Joe Johnson, Arkansas
Dallas, First Baptist Church	April 19-25	Jerry St. John, Mississippi
El Paso, First Baptist Church	March 25-28	George Joslin, Texas
Fort Worth, Broadway Baptist Church	April 19-25	C. F. Landon, Arizona
Fort Worth, North Fort Worth Baptist Church	May 24-30	Joe Johnson, Arkansas
Groves, First Baptist Church	April 29-30	Leslie Gunn, Oklahoma

Houston, Baptist Temple Church	April 27-29	Jerry St. John, Mississippi
Houston, First Baptist Church	April 12-18	Carter Bearden, Georgia
Irving, First Baptist Church	April 26	C. F. Landon, Arizona
Kilgore, First Baptist Church	May 1-2	David Dean, Dallas
Lubbock, Trinity Baptist Church	May 23-29	Jerry Potter, North Carolina
Midland, First Baptist Church	May 20-22	Jerry Potter, North Carolina
Nederland, Seventh Street Baptist Church	April 26	Jerry St. John, Mississippi
Pampa, Calvary Baptist Church	April 27-28	George Padgett, Houston
Sherman, North Park Baptist Church	April 27-28	C. F. Landon, Arizona
Texarkana, First Baptist Church	August 20-22	Robert Boltz, Louisiana
Waco, Columbus Avenue Baptist Church	April 12-18	Calvin Willard, Austin
Wichita Falls, First Baptist Church	April 26-28	Leslie Gunn, Oklahoma

Appendix VI

CONTRIBUTORS TO JAPAN DEAF MISSION FUND

ALABAMA

First Baptist Church	Birmingham	\$ 20.00
First Baptist Church	Dothan	15.00
First Baptist Church	Mobile	7.00
Highland Baptist Church	Florence	86.06

CALIFORNIA

Mr. and Mrs. R. R. Golden	Downey	10.00
Jerry K. Baker (for Southern Baptist churches)	Riverside	35.00

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Calvary Baptist Church	Washington	15.00
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FLORIDA

Springfield Baptist Church	Jacksonville	25.00
Riverside Baptist Church	Fort Myers	8.50

GEORGIA

Curtis Baptist Church	Augusta	15.00
Mr. and Mrs. Jim Whitworth	Cave Springs	5.00
Mr. and Mrs. S. E. Hinson	Marietta	25.00
Mr. and Mrs. C. E. Bearden	Decatur	15.00
Mrs. McFarlane and Family	Atlanta	15.00
Mr. and Mrs. J. F. Ponder	Atlanta	5.00

Mr. and Mrs. F. A. Dubberly	Forest Park	2.00
<b>MISSISSIPPI</b>		
First Baptist Church	Gulfport	16.55
<b>MISSOURI</b>		
Missouri Baptist Conference of the Deaf		15.00
Mr. and Mrs. Leslie Hall	Grandview	15.00
<b>NORTH CAROLINA</b>		
Mabel Hayne Class, First Baptist Church	Raleigh	10.00
First Baptist Church	Charlotte	20.00
Mr. and Mrs. N. L. Peyton	Wake Forest	10.00
First Baptist Church	Whiteville	75.00
<b>SOUTH CAROLINA</b>		
First Baptist Church	Columbia	11.00
Citadel Square Baptist Church	Charleston	24.00
<b>TENNESSEE</b>		
First Baptist Church	Memphis	14.25
First Baptist Church	Nashville	15.00
First Baptist Church	Knoxville	50.00
First Baptist Church	Elizabethton	11.00
First Baptist Church	Bristol	37.75
Central Baptist Church	Oak Ridge	93.50
West LaFollette Baptist Church	LaFollette	29.30
East Ridge Baptist Church	Chattanooga	25.00

Miss Annie Puckett	Knoxville	15.00
Miss Doris Cutter	Nashville	10.00
Mr. and Mrs. W. L. Asbridge	Memphis	15.00
Mr. and Mrs. Jimmy Adams	Chattanooga	15.00

**TEXAS**

Silent Friends Baptist Mission	Dallas	15.00
North Fort Worth Baptist Church	Fort Worth	17.00
North Park Baptist Church	Sherman	15.00
First Baptist Church	Houston	15.00
First Baptist Church	Amarillo	15.00
Mrs. Mickey Freeman	Midland	2.00
Mr. and Mrs. Max Floyd	Midland	20.00
Mr. and Mrs. L. A. Beard	Houston	15.00

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