

**Self-Guided  
Restoration History Tour  
Nashville, Tennessee**

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# Introduction

This self-guided tour booklet focuses on the initial arrival of the Campbell Movement to Nashville, plus a focus pertaining to Black Restoration History in Nashville, and the eventual establishment of the Jackson Street church of Christ. This is considered by African American members of the church to be the “mother” church of the Alexander “Aleck” Campbell, S.W. Womack, G.P. Bowser, and Marshall Keeble movement. The booklet is in logistical travel order.

This booklet is a self-guided tour, which includes the tour stops, their addresses and GPS coordinates. Each section is filled with short historical essays and pictures. Please note the pictures will help you locate everything, especially the grave markers. The last section is information about locations and people whom I could not find any historical place associated with other than where they may have worshipped.

I am positive there is more information out there pertaining to where many of these men lived, but I have not found the information as of yet and will update this material when others share information with me.

# **Self-Guided Tour**

## **Locations and Timing**

1. South Harpeth church of Christ – 8727 Old Harding Pike, Nashville, TN, 37221. N36°19.317, W086°41.352. Start tour here at the oldest remaining congregation in Nashville worshipping at original location. You will need 15-20 minutes here unless you can get in the Meeting Houses. Note the original entrance to the old building is in the back.
2. David Lipscomb Homes – 3901 Granny White Pike, Nashville, N36°06.347, W086°47.753. Directly across the street from Subway as of 2023. 17 miles, approximately 30-minute drive from South Harpeth. Spend 15 minutes there unless you can get in and tour the house.
3. Woodlawn Memorial Park Cemetery - 660 Thompson Lane, Nashville, TN. 3 miles from David Lipscomb Homes, approximately 10-minute drive. Expect to spend at least 75-90 minutes there, seeing 10 graves. The cemetery is split into two sections by Thompson Lane. There are five graves on each side to note. Please see the section below for directions, pictures, and information about each person. Note there are many famous Country Music stars buried here just in case you would like to extend your tour. They are found online.
4. Tolbert Fanning Historical Marker – Corner of Vultee Blvd and Briley Parkway. The address across the road is 1330 Vultee Blvd, Nashville. It is now a Shell Station. From Woodlawn Cemetery it is 4.4 miles, approximately a ten-minute drive. N36°06.834, W086°45.664.
5. Samuel Lowery Historical Marker – Found inside the grounds at Fort Negley. 1100 Fort Negley, Nashville. N36°08.518, W086°46.4667. Enter the fort grounds at the main entrance, take the path to the right, and walk up the hill and it is towards the top of the hill on the right-hand side. From Tolbert Fanning Historical Marker to Fort Negley is 6.7 miles, approximately 15 minutes. Inside, it is a 5-to-6-minute walk to the marker.
6. Philip Fall Historical Marker – Scientology Church. 1130 8<sup>th</sup> Ave South, Nashville. N36°09.708, W086°46.771. Just ¼ mile from Fort Negley entrance. There is a car park at the Scientology Church. The historical marker is at the corner of Chestnut & 8<sup>th</sup> inside the fence (Chestnut turns into Edgehill at the light). It is a 2-minute drive.

7. Gospel Advocate – 1006 Elm Hill Pike. N36°14.44, W086°73.70. GA is 2.7 miles from the Fall Marker, about a ten-minute drive. Note the physical location is there but the store is totally online.

8. Historic Greenwood Cemetery – 1428 Elm Hill Pike, Nashville. N36°08.679, W086°43.445. Note that there are two Greenwood Cemeteries near each other. You do not want the one at 820 Elm Hill Pike. Historic Greenwood is .7 miles from GA, a 3-minute drive. There are three graves here to note. That are all close to each other. The estimated time to see all is 20-25 minutes.

9. Mt. Olivet Cemetery – 1101 Lebanon Pike. N36°09.088, W086°440017. 1.2 miles from Greenwood, approximately 3–4-minute drive. There are seven gravesites to note here. You can expect to spend 30 to 45 minutes seeing these seven gravesites.

10. Lea Avenue Christian Church – Located on Lea Avenue near Lafayette Street. The corner of Lafayette and Lea Avenue is 600 Lafayette Street (tattoo parlor as of 2023). N36°10.023, W086°47.170. From Mt. Olivet to here is 6.6 miles, about a 15-minute drive. There is a large parking lot across the road from 600 Lafayette Street

11. Downtown Nashville - Drive to downtown Nashville and prepare to walk approximately 2.0-2.5 miles. Best parking spot is across the road from McKendree Methodist Church at 523 Church Street. If that location is full, there are two others down Church Street, and two more near St. Mary's of the Seven Sorrows Catholic Church. There are seven locations to see here. All walking times are assumed a starting point across the road from the McKendree Methodist. Note you must pay for parking anywhere in downtown Nashville.

There is approximately 50 minutes of walking. Time needed for walking and stopping to take pictures, etc. 75-90 minutes, unless you decide to tour the Ryman Auditorium.

#1 – Life & Casualty Towers – 401 Church Street. At the corner of Church & 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue. N36°94.963, W86°46.444. 4-minute walk from parking lot.

#2 – Ryman Auditorium – 116 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue North, Nashville. N36°09.669, W086°46.748. A 4-minute walk from L&C Towers.

A. As you walk to Ryman Auditorium, please note on right the Nashville church of Christ at 145 Rep. John Lewis Way, N. A.M. Burton financed the construction of their original building and started what might be the first day-care center in America for working mothers in this location.

#3 – Church Street Christian Church – Original Location, 615 Church Street. N36°94.501, W086°46.554. Today it is the Nashville Public Library. A 6-minute walk from Ryman Auditorium.

#4 – Vine Street Historical Marker, 181 7<sup>th</sup> Street N. At 7<sup>th</sup> and Church Street. N36°00.702, W087°01.588. 2-minute walk from the library entrance. Continue walking up the same sidewalk and at the end of the library, at the next intersection, the historical marker is on your left, directly across the road from the Fred D. Thompson Federal Building.

#5 – Black Churches Historical Marker. Across the Street from Avon Williams Campus – North Entrance. Below YMCA Street and Dr. Martin Luther King Drive, and above 10<sup>th</sup> Ave & Dr. Martin Luther King Drive. 10-minute walk from Vine Street Historical Marker. N36°09.795, W086°46.997. Follow 7<sup>th</sup> Street uphill, turn left at Dr. Martin Luther King Drive, and walk straight to North Entrance of Avon Williams Campus. Historical Marker is directly across the road.

#6 – Gay Street Christian Church – Original Location. 600 Dr. M.L.K. Blvd, Nashville. The original location is described in more detail in the notes below. From the Black Churches Historical Marker, walk back towards Capitol Hill, take the sidewalk along Capitol Hill, down the hill, to the front of the Capitol Building. Facing steps going up to building, the original location would be in the trees. 8-minute walk from Black Churches Historical Marker. N36°09.826, W086°47.231.

#7 – Womack/Keeble Homes - Sixth Street North – While facing the Capitol, turn around and face Victory Park. One road headed to Capitol Hill is 7<sup>th</sup> Street, it originally went up one side of where the Capitol Building is today. Then on the other side of the Capitol Building is where 6<sup>th</sup> Street originally ran. 6<sup>th</sup> Street ends at Capitol Hill and picks up behind the hill. Somewhere on 6<sup>th</sup> Street N is where the Womacks and Keebles lived as neighbors. You can walk up to the Capitol and around it and pick up 6<sup>th</sup> Street and head back to the parking lot. 15-minute walk from original location of Gay Street Christian Church to parking lot.

12. Jackson Street church of Christ – 1408 Jackson Street, Nashville. N36°10.082, W086°48.014. From 315 Church Street to Jackson Street location is 1.8 miles, approximately an eight-minute drive. Do not leave without seeing Marshall Keeble Historical Marker. You should call ahead and make arrangements to see the Keeble Display inside.

13. Marshall Keeble Historical Marker – At the corner of Jackson Street and 14th Street, is the Keeble Historical Marker. N36°10.572, W086°47.592. This lot is also the location of

the original Jackson Street congregation, and the site of the first school started by G.P. Bowser.

14. Fisk University – Continue down Jackson Street for .3 miles and you will come to the Historical Main Entrance of Fisk University. Located at 17<sup>th</sup> Street and Jackson. 36°09.990, W086°48.766.

15. Gay/Lea Christian Church (New Covenant Christian Church) - 2201 Osage Street Nashville. This building is .7 miles from Fisk University. About a three-minute drive. Check out their markers on the building when you arrive.

16. Nashville Christian Institute – 2420 Batavia Drive, Nashville. N36°09.683, W086°48.774. Only the old gymnasium is still standing. 1.4 miles from Gay/Lea. About a 6-minute drive.

17. Bowen/Campbell/Stone House – 705 Caldwell Drive, Goodlettsville, TN. These directions take you to the Mansker Center Frontier Life Center. If you choose to tour the Bowen/Campbell/Stone House, remember it was not restored because Barton Stone lived there. They restored the home because of the historical significance it has for his in-laws. The property is beautifully restored. Cost for the tour is \$8.00 (adults).

If you just want to visit the old house, it is in Moss Wright Park at 745 Caldwell Drive. If you drive into the park and take the first right, you can't miss the old house. This is 17 miles from NCI property, about a 25-minute drive.

Conclusion:

To see all of the above, it will take you at least 9 hours without bathroom and food breaks. If you decide to tour the Ryman Auditorium, Bowen/Campbell/Stone House, or more please adjust. I would set aside a day and a half to two days to slowly see everything.

## **Short History of Restoration Movements in Nashville**

Compared to the Lexington, Kentucky, area the Restoration Sites in Nashville are not as numerous. Nashville at the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century was nothing more than a frontier town. History says James Roberson and John Donelson agreed to settle near the Cumberland River in 1760, though the city was not chartered until 1806. By 1825 there were less than a dozen buildings with a 3<sup>rd</sup> story and 75 log houses in city limits with about five hundred buildings in total. None of those structures are still standing, because all the old have been destroyed or demolished for modern development. Therefore, almost all the original buildings are gone, and even many of the original locations are forgotten.

Though Restoration congregations had existed in Tennessee for many years prior to the Stone/Campbell movements, the congregations became a movement in Nashville by the preaching of Phillip Fall in 1825, who was the first Baptist Pastor converted in Kentucky by Alexander Campbell. At the time, the Nashville Baptist Church was quite young itself and their preacher died. They had heard of Fall's reputation and knew that he was teaching Restoration Doctrines. They wanted him to come and preach for them and his doctrines didn't matter if they were truthful from Scripture. They wrote him a letter on August 23, 1825 seeking to hire him and in the letter it said, "some people have stated a report among us that you have become a "Campbellite"... you need have no apprehensions on his ground...you will find enough here to support you who are tied to no doctrines but those that are indubitably scriptural." Oh! How I would love to hear that today! Philip agreed to become their preacher and the very first week in the pulpit he introduced weekly communion, and soon, the entire congregation, save five members, left Baptist Doctrine for the truth. These New Testament Christians then organized themselves as the Church Street Christian Church.

Part of the historical witness of Nashville is the eventual birth of the Jackson Street church of Christ in 1896, which is considered by many to be the "mother" church of Black churches of Christ in America, and the Black Restoration Movement. There were black congregations scattered all throughout the south in the early to mid-1800s, but they were not unified, nor could you say they were a movement. Often these congregations were formed only by permission of the local white leaders and/or slave owners. Historians believe the first black members in Tennessee associated with the Stone Movement were found at the Post Oak Springs Christian Church in Murfreesboro, TN. In 1812, a racially inclusive church, often meant that slaves would worship with their owners.

Pertaining to Nashville it appears that 16 out of 35 charter members on the Nashville Christian Church established in 1820 were black. However, the Black Restoration Movement's roots in Nashville started with two Sunday School programs started by whites for slaves or black freedmen. One school was established at the Belle Mead Plantation owned by General Harding at the time. This was an almost 5,400-acre plantation with over 100 slaves. In those days, only a handful of slave owners owned over 100 slaves. This was considered a huge slave population on a central plantation in those days. In the 1840s on his property the Grapevine Christian Church was established and from it they started a Sunday School program for slaves. The second program established at that time, was established by what is called the Vine Street Christian Church today. They also started a black congregation under their leadership. But soon a self-freed slave named Peter Lowery (1810-1888), became the leader of one or both programs and soon had over 100 members worshipping in truth. After the program grew that large he was allowed to establish his own congregation in his house on 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue North (would be above and behind the Tennessee Capitol building.) it was called Lowery's Chapel Christian Church. Almost all the slaves from Grapevine left to worship with him, and only a handful stayed behind to continue to worship with the white congregation.

Peter Lowery soon moved Lowery's Chapel to Gay Street and started the Gay Street Christian Church, also called the 2<sup>nd</sup> Colored Christian Church. The congregation continued to grow and eventually they employed Preston Taylor (1849-1931) who earned his freedom from slavery serving the military during the Civil War and went on to become a huge business mogul in Mt. Sterling, Kentucky, and eventually in Nashville. Preston Taylor preached for the Christian Church in Mt. Sterling, then for Gay Street Christian Church in Nashville, proving himself to be a political visionary but unfortunately a religious liberal and was eventually fired from Gay Street for moral issues. From there, he decided to start the second black congregation in Nashville called the Lea Avenue Christian Church (Disciples). Once Preston Taylor died, the two black congregations united and formed the Gay/Lea congregation that worships on Osage Street today.

Preston Taylor was theologically liberal and tied with the Disciples of Christ. His liberal theology not only brought in the mechanical instrument in worship, but he also started a Missionary Society for black churches and allowed denominational preachers in their pulpits. At that time there were many well educated and versed men in the congregation who were not going to put up with these false doctrines. One was named Alexander Cleveland Campbell (-1930) known as Aleck, who was a scholar and close personal friend of David Lipscomb. Took a strong stance against this new liberalism even before

Lipscomb took his public stance. Brother Aleck literally one day took a stand in the middle of worship against the false teachings and ideas of Taylor, and as he stood up to denounce their sins, they called upon the organist and choir to sing, play, and drown him out. From his stance, soon S.W. Womack (Keeble's neighbor and father-in-law), G.P. Bowser (the Father of Black Christian Education), and a young preacher named Marshall Keeble left Gay & Lea congregations to start the Jackson Street church of Christ in 1896.

Jackson Street's leaders were quite ambitious, starting publications, schools, colleges, preacher training programs and from the works of these four men Campbell, Bowser, Womack, and Keeble, they started a "Black" Restoration Movement amongst the black population in America which swept the nation. From their training programs they trained men like R.N. Hogan (1902-1997) and J.S. Winston (1906-2002) who traveled across America "Preaching to beat the Devil."

There were other Black conservative Restoration Preachers and other movements with the original Restoration Movement in the early 1800s. Brother Samuel Robert Cassius (1853-1931) was a famed Black conservative based out of Oklahoma. However, the Jackson Street movement was the most influential and a lot had to deal with Marshall Keeble's magnetism and financial backing from the famed A.M. Burton (1879-1966) who owned the Life and Casualty Insurance Company. The church at Jackson Street today has between 600-700 members and some of Keeble's family continue to worship and serve there.

## South Harpeth Church of Christ

The exact history of the beginnings of this congregation is blurred; however, the congregation was established on May 13, 1812. The members believe the Barton Stone movement is responsible for this congregation, which means it predates the arrival of Philip Fall by 10 years, but there is no direct historical evidence proving Stone's movement was responsible for the establishment of this congregation. Today it is known as one of the first five congregations established in Tennessee and it is the oldest congregation in Tennessee still worshipping at the original plot. This is the oldest congregation that remains in Davidson County. The first two log cabin buildings burned down. However, the brick structure that still stands on the left was built in 1845 by slave labor. What appears to be the front of the old structure, beside and connected to the newer building, is actually the back. Walk around the stone graveyard by the building, and you will see the two entrance doors, one for women and men. Not only did they use two entrance doors, the men and women also sat on the opposite sides of the building. Inside, the pews of old are gone, however they still have the original oil lamp fixture in the middle of the room. Notice one lamp is larger than the others; it was initially constructed that way so that it would be the only light lasting through the night. Also, facing the original front of the building, notice the rock steps to your far right. Those steps were for women getting off their "high" horse and/or horse and buggy. Also, within the graveyard are several surnames of families that still attend this congregation. Tolbert Fanning and Alexander Campbell visited and preached at this congregation.



South Harpeth



**L-Original Oil Lamp, R-Carriage Steps (For women hopping off their carriages and horses).**

## David Lipscomb and Nashville Bible School

David Lipscomb (1831-1917). His historical marker and two homes are found left of the main entrance at Lipscomb Academy at 3901 Granny White Pike, and all is found on the original campus of Nashville Bible School, which became David Lipscomb College, then University, and now known as Lipscomb University. The marker is where Morrow Avenue dead ends into Granny White Park in front of the fence and houses are behind it.

Words cannot describe the influence David Lipscomb held over the Restoration Movement in the south. Both white and black church leaders saw Lipscomb as a beacon of truth and light. He was exactly what was needed to fight the false teachers of the Christian Church and Disciples of Christ. Racially speaking, his mother died during his youth, and he was raised by a black woman with her children. Him having a multicultural upbringing, mingled with pure faith in God, helped him understand white and black, and caused him to take a huge stand against slavery and racism. Therefore, very little was done in the church in Nashville during his life without both white and black church leaders running it through him. He was loved and appreciated.

In 1857 he and William Lipscomb bought a farm from Fanning at Belle's Bend. This is where he and his wife moved in 1862. Due to his work with the Gospel Advocate, he had to travel to Nashville daily. So, he built this small log cabin in Nashville and he and his family moved to it full-time in 1883. He soon bought a dairy farm on Granny White Pike and built his wife a new home, Avalon, as pictured. Seeing the need for Nashville Bible School to have room to grow to succeed, they donated 60 acres of their farmland. Avalon then became a girl's dorm, but eventually burnt down, and he built her a second one, which survives today. The log cabin was moved beside Avalon in the mid-1980s.



L – Last remaining oak on Lipscomb Farm,  
R – Lipscomb's first house on property.



**L-Steps made out of original farm fence stones,  
R-Avalon, his second home on farm**

## **Nashville Bible School**

Nashville Bible School – established in 1891 by David Lipscomb and JA Harding (Mt Sterling, KY) and their intentions were to start a Liberal Arts College. Lipscomb donated 60 acres of his land to establish the school. JA Harding was the first president. Lipscomb was never the president but one of the leading trustees. Due to his influence in 1918, they changed the name of the school to David Lipscomb to honor him. As of 1988, it is now just known as Lipscomb University.



**The First Class**



## Woodlawn Memorial Park Cemetery



660 Thompson Lane, Nashville, TN.

Note the cemetery is split by Thompson Lane.

There are at least 39 preachers associated with the churches of Christ buried in this cemetery. You can find the entire list at [www.restorationmovement.com](http://www.restorationmovement.com). We are only considering five burial plots on the South Side of Thompson Lane, Woodlawn Cemetery South. 1) B.C. Goodpasture, 2) A.G. Freed, 3) A.M. Burton, 4) A.C. Pullias, 5) H. Leo Boles, and five more graves on the northside. 1) James Wilson "J.W." Brents 2) Price Billingsley 3) Willie Cato 4) Willard Collins 5) Batsell Barrett Baxter.

### Directions & Pictures of Southside

(Personal Information on each person is after the Directions & Pictures)

1. There are two entrances, take the one higher on the hill, beside a parking lot for Pepsi semi-trucks and trailers as of 2023. Drive in, take the first left in between Parkview and Resthaven plots, drive until you circle right and stop in between Resthaven on the right and Lakeview on the left. Right at this stop is a cluster of graves of seven different gospel preachers; we will focus only on three. Right behind the Resthaven marker you will find the Goodpasture family - 1) B.C. Goodpasture's grave (Resthaven 278-8). N36°09.262, W086.44.509



2. A.G. Freed - Directly across the road from the Resthaven marker, 5<sup>th</sup> row down, straight in front of tree is (Lakeview 134, 2 & 3). N36°06.653, W086°45.599



3. A.M. Burton - Then 3 rows diagonally left down is A.M. grave marker. There is another Burton, two rows down just above his marker (Lakeview 189-3). N36°06.657, W086°45.592.



4. A.C. Pullias - Take the first right after Resthaven and drive in between Resthaven on the right and Graceland on the left. Then take the first left and drive until you see the large Companion Gardens Terrace A and Terrace B on the left with a fountain in the middle of both. Park 15 to 20 yards in front of the Masonic sign, in between small trees on both sides of the road. On the 11<sup>th</sup> row back from the Terraces, their grave marker is the 25<sup>th</sup> in the row, not counting the two rows that run alongside the road. Or you can go to the fountain, walk straight out 11 rows and their stone will be 2 or 3 to your right. Terrace Garden – 398, 4 & 5). N36°06.548, W086°45.638.



5. H. Leo Boles - Drive all the way to the back and you will see a sarcophagus 10 yards in front of Crystal Lawn marker. Stop before you get to the Shuler Sarcophagus, two rows back up from sarcophagus, five grave markers deep are the Leo Boles grave markers under a tree. (Crystal Lawn – 387-B-2). N36°06.439, W86°45.599.



### **South Side – Biographical Sketches**

#### **1) BC Goodpasture - 1895-1977**

He preached his first gospel sermon in 1912 and preached for 64 years. During his career he preached Gospel Meetings in over 20 states. He edited the Gospel Advocate for 37 years and is known as center/medium voice in the brotherhood shying away from extremes. He was known as a rare book collector, having collected over 10,000 books, of which many were housed in a special room at Freed-Hardeman.

#### **2) A.G. Freed – 1863-1931**

He was born in Saltillo, Indiana, and educated at Valparaiso College. Upon graduation in 1889 he moved to Tennessee to establish his first school in Essary Springs, TN. He then moved to Henderson, TN, and established West Tennessee Christian College. He accepted the challenge to establish a Christian College in Denton, Texas, called Southwestern Christian College. After a few years, he moved back to Tennessee and

established Freed-Hardeman College, and he worked there until 1923, when he moved to Nashville, TN, and became Vice President of David Lipscomb.

He was known as a very sound and logical preacher. He never went looking for a fight, but was a great debater, one of the best of his era, and was constantly prepared to stand for truth. He baptized hundreds into Christ and established a few congregations.

### 3) A.M. Burton - 1879-1966

Raised on a farm in Trousdale County, TN, he was known as an honest and hardworking young man. On one occasion he walked a dairy cow 40 miles so that the family could have her for their young child. He only had two years of education and with his hard work ethic he established the Life and Casualty Insurance company of Tennessee, which was bought out after his death, and worth over 3 billion dollars today. He built L&C Towers in Nashville, the tallest skyscraper in southeast United States for a short time. He also owned a radio and tv station.

He is known as a huge benefactor. He built church buildings and established one of the first day-care centers for children in America. He donated to over 1,000 congregations, funded a lot of Marshall Keeble's work, and donated to Nashville Christian Institute, and David Lipscomb college. His last donation was in the form of a scholarship in honor of his relationship with Marshall Keeble for Lipscomb. It is estimated he gave away (at today's value) over 100 million dollars.

### 4) A.C. Pullias – 1910-1985

Brother Pullias preached his first gospel sermon when he was 15 years old. He was an extremely bright young man and was admitted to the Tennessee State Bar at 20 years old. He is known for his service to David Lipscomb College and University. He served the school for 43 years and for 31 years as her president. He became president of Lipscomb at 35 years old, making him the youngest college president in the nation. When he announced his retirement in 1977, he was the longest serving college president in America.

He was also a famed preacher. He allotted himself to ten Gospel Meetings each year, and he would preach/visit 26 different congregations annually to support the school. He also, was the one that headed up and organized Lipscomb's growth from a college to a university.

It has been said, "David Lipscomb planted. A.M. Burton watered and Athens Clay Pullias gave the increase."

##### 5) H. Leo Boles – 1874-1946

Born in Jackson County, Tennessee, he was related to “Raccoon” John Smith on both sides of his family. From his mother’s side, Raccoon was his second uncle. From his father’s side he was a great grandson of Raccoon.

While young he attended various schools to get his education. In 1903, he started attending Nashville Bible School (Lipscomb), and in 1920 he graduated with a M.A. from Vanderbilt. In 1906 he started teaching various subjects at Lipscomb and studied Bible under Brother Lipscomb. He then served as President of Lipscomb from 1913-1920 and 1923-1932. While serving as President, he taught various classes and Bible. He personally was involved in training 1500 preaching students.

He was also known for his debating and writing. He wrote for Gospel Advocate for 40 years. He also wrote commentaries on Matthew, Luke, Acts, and other books. He had two debates and is known for his debate against Premillennialism and Boll. He, along with Foy E Wallace, are accredited with stopping the premillennial movement in the brotherhood.

## Northside - Woodlawn

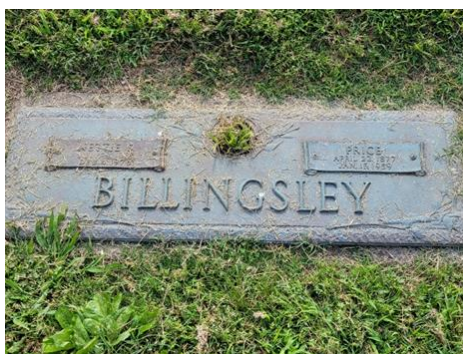
The main entrance off Thompson Lane is marked by the huge cemetery sign. Though there are at least 39 preachers buried in this cemetery we are only going to consider five on the northside. 1) James Wilson "J.W." Brents 2) Price Billingsley 3) Willie Cato 4) Willard Collins 5) Batsell Barrett Baxter.

### Directions

1) James Wilson Brents - Enter the main gate and take the first right, circle around Garden of Rachel to the path that separates Garden of Rachel and Garden of Rebecca and stop. Take the path and count the markers on left, at marker 8, turn left and walk towards the large trees and you will find the James Wilson "J.W." Brents grave in the Garden of Rachel, 37-6. N.36°06.815, W086°45.532.



2) Price Billingsley - Stay parked between Rachel and Rebecca Gardens, and right behind the Garden of Rebecca sign you will see Price Billingsley's grave marker – Garden of Rebecca. N36°06.832, W086°45.514.



As you travel to the next stop, famed singer and entertainer George Jones is buried in the Garden of the Grand Tour that you will pass on the left. There are many famous country music stars buried in this cemetery; you can search for them online.

3) Willie Cato - Drive up the road and take the first left at the Sermon on the Mount sign, then take the very first right, and on your left you will see the funeral home and a huge four-story mausoleum. Continue that road and take the first left and you will see the back entrance to the mausoleum. This building closes at 5:00 pm. Enter the back doors, on the left take the stairs to second floor, then on far right is a spiral staircase up to the fourth floor. When you exit the staircase, walk straight back to the last section. On your left, on the left side of the last section, you will see Cato's crypt. Southern Cross Mausoleum, 4<sup>th</sup> floor, 32-33B. N36°06.985, W086°45.514.



4 & 5) Batsell Barrett Baxter and Willard Collins - To get to the next graves, go back and circle around the mausoleum and take the first right in front of the funeral home, and then the first left between Garden Chapel and Chapel Garden. Drive all the way down, and on your right, stop and park at the sidewalk in between Fountain Lawn A and Fountain Lawn B. Walk up the sidewalk to the 5<sup>th</sup> row, from the road, turn left and you will find their stones are the sixth and seventh beside each other. The GPS coordinates are set in the middle of the two markers. Baxter's – Fountain Lawn A – 61 #2. Collin's – Fountain Lawn A – Lot 60. 36°06.828, W086°45.677.



## **Northside Preachers – Biographical Sketches**

### **1) J. W. Brents – 1884-1963**

Born in Petersburg, TN, he was baptized by Allen Barrett the founder of Abilene Christian. He studied under A.G Freed, David Lipscomb, and finished his education at Trinity University in Waxahachie, Texas.

Brother Brents is known as being a great traveling preacher. He traveled all over America, especially west of the Mississippi, and even into Canada preaching the gospel. He had numerous home bases over the years in Texas, Oklahoma, Colorado, Missouri, Alabama, and Tennessee. While in Oklahoma, he worked with establishing congregations amongst the local black and Indian communities and raised money to purchase hundreds of Bibles for the local Indian Nations. He wrote a famed book called, “The Great Day of Pentecost” in 1959, printed by Firm Foundation. He once traveled from Texas to Tennessee and reported to others he had a great Gospel Meeting, only baptizing one. Today we would celebrate only baptizing one, but back then, they expected many more baptisms than that. The one he baptized was a 13 year old boy named Hubert Dixon, who became a gospel preacher and president of Freed-Hardeman. He also baptized a young man who became head of Oklahoma Christian’s Bible Department.

He is also the one who convinced Brother Hardeman to transcribe his sermons at Ryman Auditorium, of which tens of thousands of the Hardeman Tabernacle Sermons have been printed over the years. As he aged and slowed down, he moved to Nashville, and worshipped at the University congregation at Lipscomb Campus, and taught at NCI until he died.

### **2) Price Billingsley – 1877-1959**

Many people today would not consider Price Billingsley a successful preacher. He was born and grew up in Corinth, Mississippi, and received little to no education in his youth, and only managed to receive a little in his adult life. He became one of the best preachers of his era, leaving behind a legacy few can match. Most information about his life is in a very detailed personal diary that Abilene Christian’s Center for Restoration Studies has today. He was baptized in 1889 and began preaching, according to his diary, in 1898, though the family says he started much earlier.

In those days, the concept of a located preacher was not common. Most men who desired to preach, preached here, there, and anywhere someone would give them an audience and he was no different. Early in his preaching career he moved to Texas,

preaching anywhere anyone would allow him. What he did along the way was help establish many congregations and help many young and weak congregations mature, and he was an important part to the beginnings of Abilene Christian College.

Early in his Texas ministry, he used Hamilton, Texas as sort of a base. From there he went to Thorp Springs to hear J.D. Tant preach, and went to Paris, Texas, to hear T.B. Larimore preach. He spent time helping and establishing congregations in Hamilton, Thorp Springs, Joshua, Lufkin, Daingerfield, Paris, Gainesville, Center, Crockett, Wichita Falls, Abilene, and more in Texas, and some in Louisiana and Oklahoma as well. He helped fund his work by selling Firm Foundations.

While in Abilene he was able to secure some housing and he worked with a local congregation that soon moved toward the organ. The liberals eventually took the building and that left Abilene without a faithful congregation. Along with support from others he helped establish the first sound congregation in Abilene. While doing that he brought in Brother Price Billingsley for a Gospel Meeting, who eventually decided to start what is Abilene Christian University today.

He had several debates during his time, wrote for Firm Foundation and Gospel Advocate and in his later years he took on full-time local works in Nashville, TN; Hopkinsville, KY; Meaford, Ontario; and in Fort Worth, Texas. He also wrote a book called "Springs of Church Might," which became very popular in the brotherhood then.

He died very poor. His family had to take care of his needs in his last months. But, he left a huge legacy in Texas, unknown to most Texans today, establishing and maturing congregations and baptizing many along the way.

### 3) Willie Cato – 1923-1991

Born in Whitescreek, Tennessee, he was educated at David Lipscomb and George Peabody College where he earned an M.A. He taught at Lipscomb and served as the President of NCI after Marshall Keeble. He, also, served as the President of African Christian Schools Foundation.

In America he preached full-time for several congregations, but his heart was in education and missions. He worked in Fiji, New Zealand, Nigeria, Samoan Islands, and Singapore. He also was a very good friend of Marshall Keeble and during the 1960s, the two traveled extensively together throughout America and the world. Note how unusual that partnership was. On one hand, America was racially divided in those days, and here you have an older African American preacher running the roads with a much younger

white preacher. Brother Cato wrote a biography about Keeble called “His Hand and His Heart: The Wit and Wisdom of Marshall Keeble.”

#### 4) Willard Collins – 1915-2007

Brother Collins was born in Lewisburg, Tennessee. He graduated Lipscomb, Vanderbilt, Pepperdine, and Harding. From 1946-1954, he preached full-time at Farmington, Old Hickory, and in Nashville, TN. From 1955, on he would preach over a dozen Gospel Meetings each year and preach by appointment. At one Gospel Meeting, he had 166 responses and 111 were baptized. They say with his booming voice and ability to use scripture, along with his smiling, jovial, and kind demeanor, this helped him baptize 6,793 souls into Christ and he restored 5,430.

From 1946-1977, he served as Vice-President of Lipscomb, and in 1977 became president and inherited 3.2 million dollars in debt, not much in 2023 for a college, but quite a bit then. Through hard work, and receiving a large farm left to the school by A.M. Burton after the death of his wife, he was able to get the school out of debt and made the school financially strong. He was a beloved and appreciated leader at Lipscomb. He was always seen as kind and loving toward all.

#### 5) Batsell Barrett Baxter – 1916-1982

Born in Cordell, Oklahoma to a very educated preacher, he was trained well by his father and became the face of the churches of Christ in America for several decades as TV was entering every home in America.

He began preaching in 1933 in Nashville. He graduated Lipscomb, Abilene, USC, and Vanderbilt. While studying at USC, he also preached for two congregations in California.

His father served as college presidents with Abilene, Lipscomb, and Pepperdine. While his father was serving at Lipscomb, and Batsell was teaching there in 1956, his father died, and Batsell became Chair of the Bible Department.

He wrote for Gospel Advocate, 20<sup>th</sup> Century Christian, and wrote several books. He also was the first preacher for “Herald of Truth” television program starting in 1959 and was a regular on “Herald of Truth” radio program. He worked with both until 1981. Though his television and radio work made him the most famous preacher in the brotherhood, he also, became the most divisive preacher in the brotherhood because Herald of Truth raised the money needed for operation from local congregations.

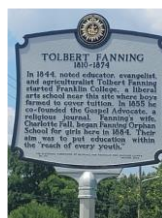
## Tolbert Fanning

Brother Fanning was a very important figure not only for the Restoration Movement but also for Nashville and Tennessee. He was a great preacher, writer, editor, farmer, professor, and college founder. He was an innovated farmer and wrote for two different agriculture magazines from 1840-1850. And His writings in The Christian Review and the Gospel Advocate provided a platform for truth in the south and helped lead the way for the eventual “Church of Christ” movement in the Restoration.

Brother Fanning, a widower at the time, married Charlotte Fall (Phillip S Fall’s sister) on Dec 25, 1836, while he was in Georgetown, Kentucky, teaching at Bacon College, which opened its doors in Nov 1836. Together they established several schools. In 1837 they moved to Franklin, Tennessee, and established a girl’s school that operated from 1837-1840. They operated a school at Elm Craig (near Nashville) for two years. Then in 1844/45 they opened Franklin College with a men’s department operated by him and a women’s department operated by her. The schools and his work with Gospel Advocate stopped during the Civil War from 1861-1865. Shortly after reopening the schools, fire destroyed several buildings, which caused them to purchase buildings owned by Minerva College and they renamed it Hope Institute, which closed in 1874 after his death. Then ten years later, Charlotte opened the Fanning Orphan School, where she taught until shortly before her death. Notable Alumni are David Lipscomb, T.B. Larimore, E. G. Sewell, Samuel R. Lowery and more. Please note “Peter Lowery” section about his son Samuel. He became a lawyer and was the first black man to ever argue before the Supreme Court!

Tolbert Fanning’s land was taken by local government and is now part of Nashville International Airport. He and his wife Charlotte both were buried there, and their bodies have been buried three times over the years and are now buried in Mount Olivet Cemetery.

It should be noted that Brother Fanning took a fervent stand against slavery from the time he was old enough to have a voice. He would write and speak out against it even in congregations with members who were slave owners. He was kind to the black man.



## **Peter and Samuel Lowery**

Peter Lowery 1810-1888 – There is no information about where he lived or was buried, other than he lived somewhere on 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue North which is filled with modern skyscrapers now.

Peter was a self-freed slave and primary organizer of the Grapevine Sunday School program for slaves. He is the first known black Restoration leader in Nashville. He was married to Ruth Mitchell, a free Comanche Indian. In 1855/1859 he organized, with permission from white members from Grapevine and Vine Street congregations, the first African American congregation in Nashville on Gay Street “The Second Christian Church” in between 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Avenues. This places the congregation, as facing the Capitol Building, on the right, front side of Capitol, in the midst of the trees not far from the Capitol Building.

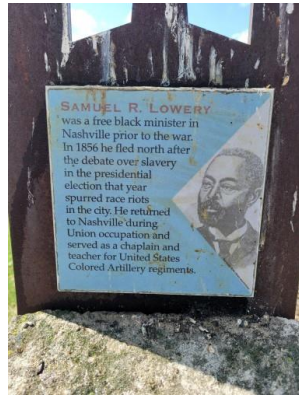
After Peter purchased himself from slavery, he started a famed and successful real estate business and through it he purchased the freedom of his mother, three brothers, and two sisters. By the mid-1800’s he was worth over \$40,000.00, about \$1.1 million as of 2016. He also was able to send his son Samuel to the best schools money could buy, enabling him to eventually become a lawyer.

After his freedom from slavery, he also worked for Franklin College and became a great personal friend of Tolbert Fanning, who became his spiritual mentor.

Samuel Lowery (1830/32-1900), Peter’s first son, leaves a mixed legacy behind. He too worked and studied at Franklin College and became a preacher like his father. After horrible race riots in Nashville in December 1856, he moved north to Cincinnati, Ohio. There he was introduced to the American Missionary Society and petitioned it for financial support to work with local congregations.

After slavery he worked for the American Missionary Society out of Cincinnati, Ohio, and then moved to Chatham, Ontario, Canada and established a congregation that aligned itself with the liberal part of the brotherhood. However, his partnership with the AMS soon fell apart after being accused of taking credit for other people’s works. This caused him to move back to Ohio to live on a farm purchased by his father near west Lancaster, and he and his family lived there until the Emancipation Proclamation, which allowed him to move back to Nashville, where he preached for the freedmen and for the 40<sup>th</sup> U.S. Colored Troops, and later became a chaplain and teacher for the 9<sup>th</sup> United States Heavy Artillery U.S. Colored Troops. During all this, he became a famed lawyer and was the first black man to argue before the United States Supreme Court.

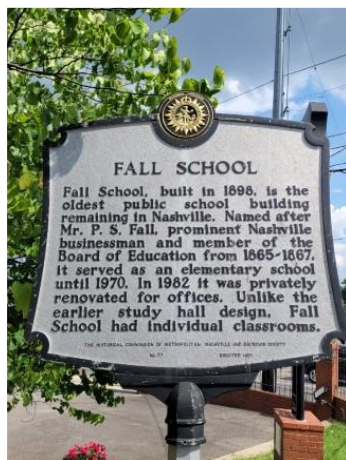
Samuel Lowery has a historical marker inside Fort Negley. When you visit his marker, please read the other historical markers you will pass by going up the hill to get to his. You will see this location was the largest fort inland during the Civil War, and eventually was used as a refugee camp for African Americans during the war.



## Phillip S. Fall

### First Restoration Preacher in Nashville

Philip S. Fall (1798-1890) – Philip Fall Historical Marker is located at corner of 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Chestnut at 1130 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue. The marker is behind the fence on the left corner of Scientology building. More is written about him in the Lexington, KY, booklet. Brother Fall was Campbell's first Baptist Pastor convert in Kentucky and the man who brought the movement to Nashville. He was a pastor for the Baptist church in Louisville when converted to the Restoration and he quickly led this congregation into New Testament Christianity. The congregation in Louisville became the fourth congregation accepted into the Campbell Movement behind Brush Run, Wellsburg, and Pittsburgh. He was the one who brought the movement to Nashville. He is simply an unsung hero. Very few understand how important he was to the beginnings of the Restoration Movement in Nashville. From his works, Nashville eventually became the most influential city for the Restoration Movement in America. Men like Tolbert Fanning, David Lipscomb, S.W. Womack, G.P. Bowser, Aleck Campbell, Marshall Keeble, and more were huge parts in the Restoration, and all can trace their spiritual heritage back to Fall's works. Fall's sister, Charlotte, married Tolbert Fanning. Fall and his wife are buried in Frankfort, Kentucky, and his library has been preserved by the First Christian Church (Disciples) in Frankfort. Not only was he a spiritual leader but he was very interested in providing young minds with the best secular education possible, and therefore Nashville honored this work by naming this school after him. It is the oldest remaining school building in Nashville.



## Gospel Advocate

The Gospel Advocate was established by Tolbert Fanning and William Lipscomb in 1855. Brother Fanning wrote and edited for the journal until 1861 when the Civil War disrupted all supply and mailing routes. After the Civil War, Brother David Lipscomb revived the journal in January 1866 editing it for 45 years. The Gospel Advocate became the leading voice for conservatism in the south. David Lipscomb's childlike faith didn't cause him to question why, he just accepted the Word and preached it. As liberalism was leading the church to the official 1906 split, he managed to influence large portions of the south, keeping them from falling into false doctrine. Today, the building is no longer an active open bookstore; everything is now catalog or online based.



## Historic Greenwood Cemetery

Historic Greenwood was founded by Preston Taylor in 1888. He purchased 37 acres in 1887 for \$30,000.00. "It's purpose was to provide low cost, first class burial plots for African-American residents of Nashville."

There are three gravesites to note: Marshall Keeble, Preston Taylor, and Samuel W. Womack. (Brothers Aleck Campbell is buried in St. Louis and G.P. Bowser in Detroit, Michigan).



### Directions and Pictures

1. Preston Taylor - N36°08.679, W086°43.445. When you enter the graveyard, drive straight to the first roundabout and the Taylor Monument is in the middle. If you don't see it as soon as you entered, then you entered through a side road.



2. Marshall Keeble - N36°08.653, W086°43.439. As soon as you pull in, on right, the fifth row is where the Marshall Keeble grave is found. Also, note perhaps a grandchild of Keeble who died in infancy, Melissa L Cummings, is buried beside him and his wife. You can park at the 5<sup>th</sup> row and start walking up the hill. The grave is as the incline of hill starts, more than halfway through row. Or you can take the entrance road and take the

first right to a very large Walker Gravestone to the right. Drive another 20 feet and stop. When you get out and look down the hill you should see a plot that was cemented and has a large picture on it, walk by it, walk straight down to five rows from front fence and Keeble marker is found there.



3. S.W. Womack - N36°08.745, W086°43.439. 1850-1920. The father-in-law to Marshall Keeble is buried in an unmarked grave. Instead, there is a family marker. Take the first road directly behind the entrance roundabout and drive downhill. Look toward the right and you will see a large Dr. Mattie Coleman grave marker. Directly to the left is a big tree, keep walking left and you will see this pairing of grave markers. It has been said, but as important as this man was to the Black Restoration History, we need to find someone willing to place a marker for him.



## Biographical Sketches

1. Preston Taylor (1849-1931) was born into slavery, earned his freedom by serving the Union Army, and became a very power businessman, philanthropist, and the most influential preacher in the African American part of the Restoration Movement in Nashville in the mid-1880s-1890's. From there he remained very influential in the

Disciples denomination, even establishing the National Colored Christian Missionary Convention in 1917.

After he received his freedom from slavery, he moved to Louisville, Kentucky, where he worked with the local railroad, learning the industry and learning to preach there as well. In 1870, after already converting to the Stone/Campbell movement, he accepted a preaching job in Mt. Sterling, Kentucky, and served there from 1870-1884. During his time there he became a very powerful businessman, securing a contract to build the railroad from Mt. Sterling, Kentucky, to Richmond, Virginia. (Some books say to Richmond, and there is a Richmond, Kentucky, not too far from Mt. Sterling. I am not exactly sure which Richmond he secured the contracts to.) This was quite an impressive feat because during Reconstruction there were very few opportunities for black men.

While he preached at Mt. Sterling, the congregation there grew to be the largest in the state and they built what was considered to be the finest worship building in all of Kentucky. The building seems to no longer be there it was located four blocks from the building they moved into on Hill Street in 1964.

In 1884 he moved to Nashville and married Georgia Gordan, a Fisk Jubilee Singer (A group that traveled America and Europe performing.) He then in 1855 became the preacher for the Gay Street Christian Church, and it was there he met Brother Marshall Keeble and baptized him into Christ.

In 1891 or 1894, Preston was fired for immoral conduct, and he along with more liberal minded brethren left and started worshipping at Spruce St until they could finish a new building at Lea Avenue. After he died the Gay Street and Lea Avenue congregations united and today worship at Osage St.

He continued his business pursuits at Nashville and became a very powerful businessman. With his money he purchased land to build Greenwood Cemetery, the 2<sup>nd</sup> oldest Black cemetery in Nashville. The intent was to have a nice cemetery for African Americans. He also purchased 40 acres and established Greenwood Park for African Americans. It was quite an impressive urban park and recreational area, across the road from the cemetery. The park closed in 1949, but it had a roller coaster, rides, theater, roller rink, zoo, baseball field and more. This location also became the site for the annual State Colored Fair where as many as 14,000 would attend daily.

When he died, the black community in Nashville mourned, and funeral services lasted seven days to commemorate what he did for the community there. Unfortunately, as far as the Restoration is concerned, though he baptized Marshall Keeble and built some nice

buildings, he is known more for the division and false teaching he brought to our movement.



2. Marshall Keeble – Turn to page 53 to see his biographical sketch.

3. Samuel W Womack (1850-1920) He was born and raised in Lynchburg, TN, and it appears he was born a freeman. He received an education and became a schoolteacher. One of his three daughters was Minnie Womack who married an up-and-coming preacher named Marshall Keeble.

Brother Womack was baptized in 1866 by T.J. Shaw, and he worshipped at an integrated congregation in Lynchburg. In 1915 he said, "The attitude of the white people of that church toward the colored people was great then, and is now, a great uplift to me."

After moving to Nashville, and settling on 6<sup>th</sup> Street, he began to worship at Gay Street, and became great friends with Brother Aleck Campbell, the preacher at Gay Street at the time. They both preached before the congregation and their personalities and pulpit presence complimented each other. Brother Aleck was very loud, powerful, and bold, while Womack was more reserved and analytical. They both became circuit preachers spreading the word to Black communities in the area.

There are very few records about Brother Womack in comparison to others. But he was in high demand; it is recorded in 1908 he preached 43 different religious services in Arkansas. By reputation in 1911 – J.M. McCaleb from the Gospel Advocated wrote S.W. Womack "is to the colored people what Brother Lipscomb is to the white people." "A man with a good name." They say brothers Womack, Bowser, Campbell, and Keeble forged a dynamic force. He preached 40 years upon his death.

## Mt. Olivet Cemetery



There are at least 38 Restoration preachers buried in this cemetery. Please search [www.therestorationmovement.com](http://www.therestorationmovement.com) for list. We are only going to concentrate on seven locations. 1) Jessie B Ferguson 2) E.G. Sewell 3) Joe McPherson 4) Lipscomb Plot 5) J.W. Shepherd 6) J.C. McQuiddy 7) Tolbert and Charlotte Fanning. The first section here is directions and pictures of the grave sites. Following that section is a section with Personal Information.

### Directions and Pictures

1) Jesse B. Ferguson – N36°09.088, W086°44.017. Enter the cemetery at the main entrance and turn right, and wind around a large hill, notice the graves dug into the hill as you drive. Take the first right and stop at “Tour Stop #2” sign. Look right and you will see a very tall monument with Jesus on top. One minute drive from entrance and two minutes to walk to monument. This is Jesse B Ferguson’s grave – Section 1 – Lot #53

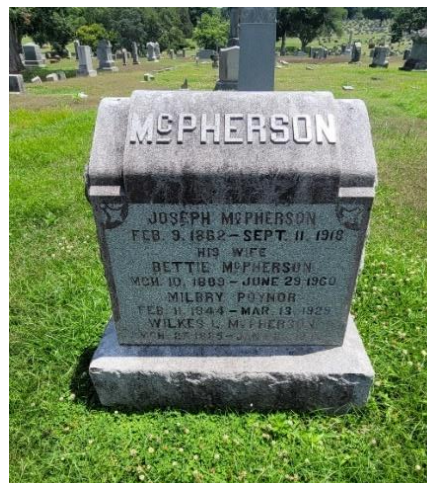


2) E.G. Sewell – N36°08.975, W086°44.501. Turn around and go back to the original cemetery road and turn right and to your left is Section 6. Stay left (Don’t go far at all). And pass a small mausoleum on the right. Then stop and look left in Section 6 for a large red granite stone with an urn on top. Look to the right of the “red granite” marker, you

will see a large monument with Mary on top. Two yards behind the “Mary” marker you will see the E.G. Sewell family markers – Section 6 – Lot #103.



3) Joe McPherson – N36°08.895, W086°44.016. Continue driving along Section 6. Circle the top of Section 6, pass War Monument on right, pass gravel road on right, and take the next right in between Section 16 and Section 11. Section markers are low to the ground. Turn right and you will pass a small family mausoleum by the road on the right, and at the second small family mausoleum on the right stop, look left and you will see a large Throop gravestone, behind it is Joe McPhearson’s gravestone and it is facing the road. Should only take a minute to drive there. Section 16 – Lot #7.



4) Lipscomb Graves – N36°08.814, W086°44.057. Slowly drive along Sections 16 and 11, and take the next right in between Sections 11 and 14 at the Scoggins obelisk marker. Right behind the Section 14 sign under an old tree, behind the Perkins tall grave marker is the Lipscomb family plot. Drive time from the last grave is about a minute. Section 14 – Lot #19. Don’t get back in the car. There are the Shepherd and McQuiddy graves here too.



5) James W Shepherd – N36°080.814, W086°44.053. Right behind Lipscomb family plots, pretty much together in death as in life, is James W Shepherd grave. Section 14 – Lot #19. The next grave is deeper into this section.



6) J.C. McQuiddy – N36°08.802, W086°44.039. At Lipscomb and Shepherd plots continue walking deeper into Section 14, four more rows, look toward Section 16 and you will find J.C. McQuiddy grave. Section 14 – E ½ of Lot #66. Or go back to road, look left of section 14 sign by road, at Morgan gravestone, and 12 rows directly behind it is McQuiddy's grave.



7) Tolbert and Charlotte Fall Fanning – N36°08.730, W086.43.824. Turn around and take the first right, circle around Section 16 passing Sections 14 and 17 on your right. Then where Sections 21, 22, and 27 come together take a hard right. You will see a bench grave marker with the name Anderson at turn on Section 21; turn right. Circle around Section 26 and you will come to a small roundabout, with an Ishee family marker. Take the third right around roundabout between Sections 25 and 33, and directly ahead you will see another roundabout with a large Reed family mausoleum. Turn right at this roundabout and stop at the first right at the corner of Section 25, where you will see a large Perkins Gravestone with a cross. Behind it is the Tolbert and Charlotte (Fall) Fanning marker. Drive time is 2-3 minutes. Make sure you check out both sides of the gravestone. Section 26 Lot #26



## Biographical Sketches

### 1) Jesse Ferguson – 1819-1870

Born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania to a well-to-do family that fell on hard times, when it was time for him to attend college like his older brothers did he was unable to attend college. He went into the printing trade.

If you are somewhat familiar with the Restoration Movement 19<sup>th</sup> century leaders, you may have never heard of this man. The reason for it is his ego was as large as his grave marker. He started preaching in 1838 in Kentucky. He primarily preached to rural villages establishing congregations in many places. While doing so, he took great care to work on his orating skills to make himself the best of them all! Along with being considered a very handsome man with great Bible knowledge, an ability to break down his sermons in a way everyone can understand, along with a brilliant mind, and an eloquent approach, he indeed became the best. His audiences knew he was the best they had ever heard, and for the worse, he knew it. Fellow preachers of his time said he was “spoiled by compliments.”

In 1842-44 he found himself in Nashville, TN, preaching a gospel meeting. The people of Nashville had heard great preaching by Philip Fall and Alexander Campbell who traveled there quite often to stay and preach. But, there was something special about Ferguson. As said by others, “he flattered them, and his audiences flattered him.” So much so, they begged him to leave Kentucky and move to Nashville to work with the churches there. He eventually did and became the preacher of the largest congregation in Nashville and known as a “Prince among Educators.”

Then in 1852 he began to preach that those who have never heard the Gospel would not be lost. Brother Alexander Campbell fought him on this in his writings and from the pulpit. Mr. Ferguson couldn’t handle the attacks against him. He felt he was above reproach and criticism from anyone; after all, he was the best! He simply dug in and started teaching that people would even have a second chance to obey God after death. Soon, the largest congregation in Nashville was aflame, literally, on fire. A few conservative men who were pushed from the congregation following his false doctrine, took the congregation to court over the building, and won! They won because the congregation that believed one way built that building, and people who believed another, took the building from them. Mysteriously, the night the false teacher lost the building, on April 8, 1857, it was burnt down!

Mr. Ferguson could not handle the fact that he lost his reputation and the church building. He then moved on to Mississippi and then to New Orleans, and along the way, he continued to fall deeper into false doctrine. He eventually began to believe he was communicating with spirits, and he accepted spiritualism and universalism. Like a star destined to fall, he shined so bright for a short time, only to flame out just as quick.

## 2) E.G. Sewell – 1830-1924

Born in Overton, Tennessee, and baptized in 1849, he began delivering lessons that very year. Before his baptism his family had been divided over the Restoration Movement, some influential members were Baptists and others left for what many called the “New Baptists” being the Campbell/Stone movement. He decided to read the entire New Testament and note certain sections to reread again. After studying for a year, he determined that the Baptist church was not the New Testament church and was baptized into Christ.

After marrying, he attended Burritt College for 2 ½ years and their president left. When he left, Brother Sewell then transferred to Franklin College and studied under Tolbert Fanning.

E.G. Sewell was blessed in many ways, but one of his greatest earthly blessings was his friendship with David Lipscomb. It has been compared to a biblical David and Jonathan friendship. One writer described their friendship as “a sacred league and hallowed covenant.” In 1870 he started writing for Gospel Advocate and became the co-editor. He wrote for G.A. for fifty years and his writings are considered clear, precise, and simple to understand. Together, they stood for the truth against the prevailing liberalism of the north that began to attack the southern congregations. Together, they knew each other’s strengths and weaknesses and had no problem turning to each other when necessary. For example, Brother Lipscomb once went and held a 2-week revival and didn’t have a single conversion. That was simply unheard of with him in those days. Well, he told his audience he would go home and send Brother Sewell to them. Sure enough, Brother Sewell showed up, preached the gospel, and baptized sixty! It has been said, except for Brother Lipscomb, Brother Sewell did more for the churches and truth in the south than any other restoration leader.

### 3) Joe McPherson - 1862-1918

Born in Posey County, Indiana, his parents moved to Tennessee when he was 16. Two of his brothers were Baptist preachers and so was he. At 17 he decided to preach for the Baptist, and he did so for 5 years. He then married Bettie Poyner of Longview, Texas. They lived together in Nashville, and he served as a mail carrier and his route was 14 miles a day.

While in Nashville he happened to stop by the Church Street Christian Church, which was originally a Baptist Church until Philip Fall converted most everyone and he heard Brother Larimore preach. He went forward and after a short discussion he was baptized for the remission of his sins at 22 years old.

He became a famed preacher in Nashville. He was known as the Walking Preacher, for he would walk his 14-mile daily route and then go preach in the evening. He preached all over Nashville and hosted many revivals, some of which lasted five to six weeks. During one revival he held at Charlotte Avenue, he walked a total of 350 miles delivering mail and to the meeting and baptized forty-seven and restored four.

Eventually the 10<sup>th</sup> Street congregation began to financially support his preaching and he established 14 congregations in destitute places all throughout the Nashville area. During his time, he baptized nearly 2,000 into Christ and held 4 debates, one lasting 10 nights against a Baptist preacher.

### 4a) David Lipscomb – Please see notes on page 13 for his biographical sketch.

#### 4b) William Lipscomb – 1829-1908

Brother William was born in Franklin County, TN, the elder brother of David Lipscomb by 18 months. They both lost their mother young and were raised for a large portion of their lives by a slave woman who had many children, and this relationship helped mold them, alleviating them of racism that many suffered with in America in those days.

Their father saw to it they both got a good education and William graduated Franklin College in 1848 and was recognized for his wit, intelligence, and ability to retain anything he ever read. After graduation, he was made professor of languages at Franklin, where he served until the Civil War closed the school.

William's personality was not nearly as large as David's. William was strong, inquisitive, meek, somewhat shy, and never forced himself on people. He was considered the best teacher at Franklin, not only for his knowledge and teaching ability but also because he was a man of high moral character. This made him an encourager and someone the students could lean upon. Also, the students loved the practicality of William's instruction. Though a scholar, his primary focus in the classroom was on practical religion.

William, also, helped Tolbert Fanning begin the Gospel Advocate in 1855, unfortunately, history has forgotten that, and Brother Fanning typically always gets all the credit for establishing GA.

#### 5) James W Shepherd – 1861-1948

He was possibly born in Clark County, Kentucky. It was there when he was just 13 years old that James A Harding held a weeklong gospel meeting, after which people lamented the fact that only one person was baptized, and it was that young Shepherd kid. Someone once said about Shepherd, "You can count the number of seeds in an apple, but you cannot count the number of apples in a seed."

When he was old enough, he started attending the College of Bible in Lexington, Kentucky in 1884. After graduation he did mission work, taking the gospel to New Zealand and Australia, laboring in many different cities. This developed a love of travel and he traveled the Orient and loved traveling the British Isles.

Once he returned to America, he preached full-time in Detroit, Michigan; Washington, DC; Richmond, Virginia; and Birmingham, Alabama. During this time, he wrote "Handbook on Baptism" which Brother McGarvey called "the best and most comprehensive work of its kind."

In 1905, he turned his attention to Gospel Advocate. He was editor from 1905-1912. He also helped compile and edit some of the most famed brotherhood books in that era. In 1910 he compiled "Queries and Answers" by David Lipscomb. He took Bible questions written to Lipscomb and answered in the GA publication over the years and compiled them together. He also took notes from Lipscomb and compiled them into a book called "Salvation From Sin." Plus, he took a lot of Lipscomb's writings and turned them into commentaries for Gospel Advocate.

As David Lipscomb aged, Bro. Shepherd became his right-hand man, thus very appropriate they are buried beside each other.

#### 6) J.C. McQuiddy – 1858-1924

Born in Marshall County, Tennessee, he was known as a very successful man; whatever he touched prospered.

At 17 years old he enrolled at Mars Hill College which was founded and operated by T.B. Larimore in New Florence, Alabama. From there he attended Winchester Normal in Winchester, Tennessee and studied languages and English Literature.

After college he took on his first full-time preacher position in Columbia, TN. He did a lot of evangelistic and gospel meeting work in Tennessee and Alabama. He, also, became editor for "The Old Path Guide," which was the first journal in magazine form for the brotherhood. In 1885 he became the office manager and an editor for Gospel Advocate, moving to Nashville to work with them at 27 years old.

Brother McQuiddy worked with GA until his death. He was the backbone behind the scenes of this powerful publication. With his organizational and business expertise he laid a foundation to help GA exist even until now. He was also a powerful editor, editing works for David Lipscomb, E.G. Sewell, F.D Srygley, E.A. Elam, T.B. Larimore, and many more. Some have said that all these great authors would have been nothing without McQuiddy.

In 1902 he established the McQuiddy Publishing Company. This company outgrew GA and became one of the largest publishing houses in all of the south. He continued to run this until his passing.

#### 7a) Tolbert Fanning – 1810-1874 – See his biographical sketch on page 25.

#### 7b) Charlotte Fall Fanning – 1809-1896

Perhaps the greatest woman in the 19<sup>th</sup> century Restoration Movement, and just like her brother Phillip Fall, neither one gets the credit they deserve.

Born in London, England, the last child of ten, her parents moved the family to Kentucky. Not long after moving to America their mother died, and their father followed in death not long after.

Her brother Philip was left in charge of the family and became one of the most beloved preachers in Kentucky and took the Campbell Movement to Nashville, TN in the 1820s.

Brother Fall saw a great mind in his youngest sibling and personally tutored her and saw to it that she received the best education possible. She received a classical education, learning five languages: Hebrew, Greek, Latin, German, and French, and trained as a teacher.

Philip moved to Nashville in the early 1820's to become the preacher of the Baptist Church at Church Street. They hired him knowing he was already leaning to Restoration thought. During their time there she met a young widower named Tolbert Fanning and married him in 1837 when she was 28 years old, which was quite old in those days for a young lady to marry, and they had no children together. This became a perfect union of two great educators. Once married they moved to Franklin, Tennessee, and opened a school for girls, which lasted three years and had remarkable success. They knew from this they had an understanding of schooling and they moved to Nashville and purchased 300 acres and started Franklin College, specifically training young men and then later added a girls program, which she led and taught at and the school thrived until the Civil War then it was closed.

Education was not co-ed in those days. The boys and girls were always separated except for chapel, worship, and singing times.

As the Civil War was winding down, they reopened the programs in 1865, but unfortunately a student accidentally caught the main building on fire, burning it down. Fortunately for them the Minerva College on the property beside them had closed, so they bought the property and opened a girls orphan's school called the Hope Institute. They defined an orphan as a girl that had at least one parent who passed away.

Hope Institute was more than a school. This was "Aunt Charlotte's Room." Having no children, they were her children. Not only did she teach them, but she spent quality time with them in devotion and fellowship.

She was known as a kind, energetic, gentle, yet firm person. She also was known for her benevolence, so much so that after she had her massive stroke, which took her life a year later, they found she had no clothes. She had just given the remaining clothing she

had to a black woman in need. We must remember the time this happened. Racism was rampant, yet she just saw a person in need, and gave all that she had.

After Tolbert's sudden death in 1874, she deeded the property to 13 men, one of whom was David Lipscomb so long as they raised the property's value and used that money for improvements to the school. She passed before she could see the results of this labor but in 1905, they finished the improvements and 80 young "orphan" girls enrolled. Before her death she asked to be buried in the front yard of the school, knowing this was a playground, so that the girls would play on the earth above her. They did what she requested and then moved Tolbert's body to lay beside her. There they laid in rest until 1943 when Nashville purchased the land to use it for the Nashville Airport. All the money from the purchase was then put in the Fanning Foundation and continues to supply scholarships to "orphan" girls today.

## Lea Avenue Christian Church

Modernization has left no traces of the Lea Avenue Christian Church meeting house. We know it was located on Lea Avenue near Lafayette Street, about  $\frac{3}{4}$  a mile from where Gay Street existed. Preston Taylor, a liberal headed to eventually unite with the Disciples of Christ, was dismissed from his preaching position at Gay Street for moral indiscretions in 1891 or 1894 (Historical documents disagree with the year). To have done so to such a great, powerful, and rich man would have been quite a stand for Gay Street. But Taylor then used his influence and established the second black congregation downtown. For a while they worshipped at Spruce Street (Then became 8<sup>th</sup> Street and now Rosa Parks) and in 1903 they finished construction of a building at Lea Avenue. After Taylor died both Gay and Lea Avenue congregations aligned with the Disciples of Christ and became a united body, known as the Gay-Lea Christian Church, and today are located at 2201 Osage Street, Nashville, until they recently changed their name to New Covenant Christian Church.



L-Lea Avenue and Gay/Lea on Osage Street

## **Downtown Nashville**

### **1. Anew Mizelle Burton (1879-1966) - Life & Casualty Tower – Central (Nashville) church of Christ**

Strange that so little is known about this great man, a man, Marshall Keeble called, “the greatest missionary in the church today.” Born and raised on a farm in Trousdale County, Tennessee, and with about 20 months of elementary school education, he worked on a tobacco farm for fifty cents a day, until he moved to Nashville. While in Nashville he started to sell life insurance and soon worked his way into a management position. However, the company he worked for from Cincinnati, Ohio, decided to pull their operations out of Tennessee. With a challenge of sorts from his superior, he established his own insurance company called Life and Casualty Insurance Company. His goal was to make policies affordable to the common man, the farmer, the blue-collar worker. After serving 48 years as the company’s president, he was nationally and internationally known and respected in the business world. His company was sold in the mid to late 1960s and today it is worth over 3 billion dollars. The L&C tower, which he constructed in Nashville in 1957 on the corner of 4<sup>th</sup> and Church Street stands 409 ft, a memorial to his business savvy.

His faith is what we celebrate today. Baptized in 1910, he donated an estimated \$100,000,000.00 to over 1,000 churches of Christ, David Lipscomb University, Nashville Christian Institute, Marshall Keeble, and more. One of his favored works was the establishment of the Central church of Christ (Nashville church of Christ) in downtown Nashville (Two blocks from Ryman Auditorium), which from her doors he made certain the poor and disenfranchised were fed and clothed. Not only that, but through his leadership the church opened one of the first daycares in America to help watch and educate the children of the poor and single as they worked. He also funded a Braille Bible project making God’s word available to the blind at no cost.

Though he did all this and more than anyone will ever know, he truly loved Marshall Keeble and his work, and was a big benefactor to it all. After studying the history of his relationship with Keeble and NCI, I wonder had he known what would happen to NCI after his death if he would not have taken care of the college for years to come. Either way, the last donation he gave was for the A.M. Burton and Marshall Keeble Scholarship Fund set aside for the poor.

Some have said they are amazed there are no monuments made for such a generous man. Even his tombstone is just a plain common stone, nothing more. But the reality is

David Lipscomb, Nashville Christian Institute, Braille Bibles, Central church of Christ and more all stood at his death as monuments to this great man.

Side notes: he is the great grandfather of Amy Grant. He owned a radio and tv station in Nashville and both still exist. The L&C Tower was the highest skyscraper in southeast United States for a short while.



## 2. Ryman Auditorium - Hardeman Tabernacle Sermons 1922, 1923, 1928, 1938, and 1942

Thomas Ryman (1843-1904) a prominent businessman in Nashville in the late 1800's went to a tent revival held by a denominational preacher named Samuel Porter Jones to heckle the man. But, instead, he was converted to Methodism. Soon after his conversion he decided to use his money to build a building large enough to hold large-scale revivals indoors.

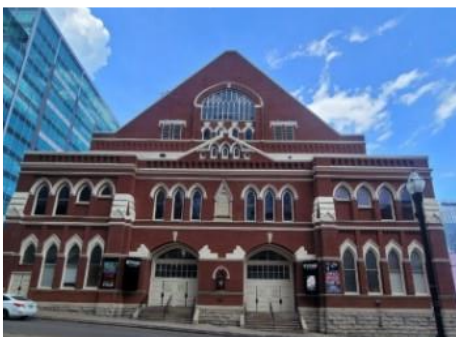
This auditorium is important to the churches of Christ because it was from here as others have said, "we crossed the railroad tracks." Prior to the Hardeman Meetings located here, the churches of Christ lost the numerical battle between the Christian and Disciple churches during our split. In some states we lost as many as 90% of our congregations and memberships. The south fared better, but the liberal push in the church didn't stop at the 1906 census, when the government recognized our divisions. Therefore, many congregations were still suffering and being influenced by false teachings. Plus, most of the congregations that remained loyal to the truth were small, country congregations and at the time some of our most famous preachers like JD Tant were not considered eloquent and cultured by city-folks, so, by some the churches of Christ were seen as backwoods, country folk. But, Brother Nichols was different. He was educated, articulate, clean cut, and just what the brotherhood needed, at the right time, to stop the march of liberalism.

Brother Hardeman held his first of five revivals here in 1922, plus he debated Boswell in 1923 about mechanical instruments in worship. The debate held from May 31-June 5, 1923, which was attended by thousands, is accredited with breaking the back of liberalism in the church.

The first of his Gospel Meetings was held from March 28-April 16, 1922. According to The Tennessean and the Nashville Banner, each night was a packed house with as many as six-eight thousand people packed inside and two-three thousand surrounding the auditorium on the outside.

Brother Pullias was the main song leader at the first meeting, and this is what he said, "The greatest thrill of my career was perhaps in leading the song service in the Ryman Auditorium in Nashville in 1922 when there were from seven thousand to ten thousand people present and all singing, without an instrument, without the present hearing aids, and without loudspeakers. It was really a thrill to lead that many in song. We led three hundred songs or more; we never missed a pitch nor had to correct the audience a single time."

Sadly, today, the church has forgotten about what took place at Ryman Auditorium. Through the efforts of one man, liberalism was stopped, the mechanical instrument question was answered, and now the fight belongs to us to keep "pure gospel" and "pure worship" the battle cries of the first generation of Jackson Street church of Christ.



3. Nashville's First Congregation (Campbell Movement) - Church Street Christian Church  
Church Street about ½ mile behind Capital Building is where the Campbell Movement started in Nashville. Please see Philip S. Fall biographical sketch and the introduction on page 28 to learn more about Brother Fall.

On July 22, 1820, a Baptist church was founded on Church Street. In April 1826, they hired Philip Fall of Louisville, Kentucky, knowing he had entered the Restoration Movement to be their preacher. The very first week, he introduced the Lord's Supper as a weekly observance. After two years they became the first Campbell Restoration congregation in Nashville. On May 24, 1828, the congregation separated themselves completely from the Baptist, writing, "...we take the New Testament as the rule of our faith and practice and will form such rules from it for our worship and government as may be consistent with its spirit and meaning, and with the peace and good order of the church." The congregation was then known as the Church St Christian Church and is known as Vine Street Christian Church today. Please see Vine Street notes for more information. When the church officially dropped their Baptist roots, they had 218 members with 117 being African American.

Church Street was filled with denominational buildings. Very few survive today but can still be found on this street surrounded by skyscrapers. A portion of Gay Street has been immersed into Gay and Transgender bars, so don't be shocked to see such on this street.

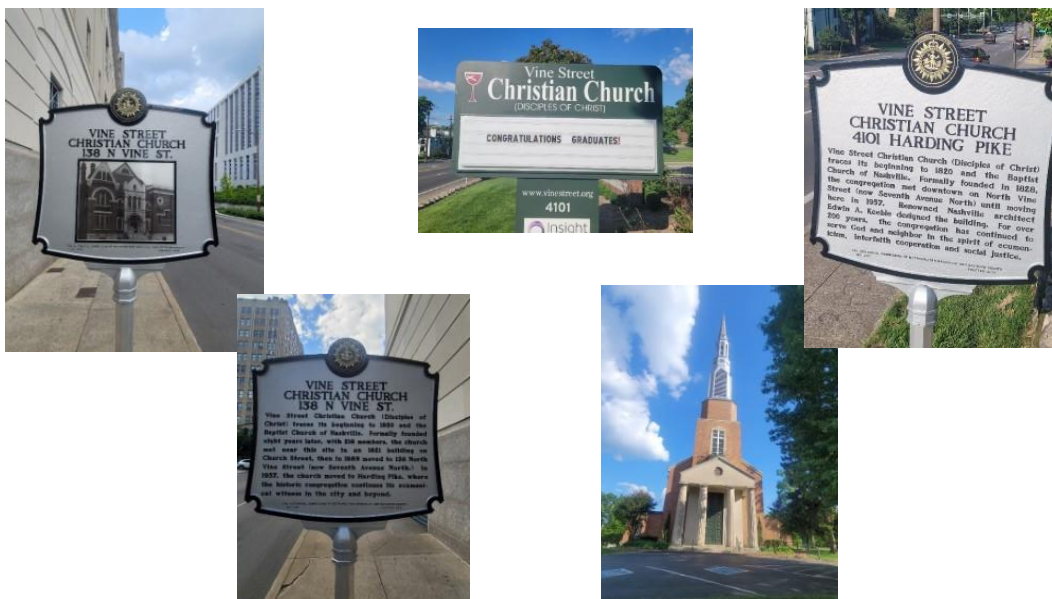


#### 4. Vine Street Christian Church – Historical Marker

Historical Marker is located on 7<sup>th</sup> Ave N on left hand side of the road across the street from the Fred D. Thompson Federal Courthouse. Close to this postal address - 181 7<sup>th</sup> St North, Nashville. The congregation was originally on Church Street known as the Church Street Christian Church, which was established by Philip Fall. The congregation then moved a block or two to 138 N Vine in 1889, just two blocks from Church Street and took the Vine Street name. After the congregation left Church Street the spot became the Vendome Theatre, and its address was 615 Church St.<sup>i</sup> Today the main branch of the Nashville Library sits on the original site. Then in 1957, Vine Street Christian Church moved across town, four miles southwest, to 4101 Harding Pike. Neither of the first two buildings survive.

We must remember that Restoration Congregations associated with Campbell used the name Christian Church, and congregations from the Stone movement used the name churches of Christ. Vine Street was a faithful congregation for decades but was lost to the 1906 split and now is a Disciples of Christ denomination. Prior to their departure to the Social Gospel Movement, this was the oldest Restoration congregation in Nashville and from it many congregations were established.

Vine Street, which was Church Street, had 117 African American members in the late 1920s. By the 1940s many religious bodies in Nashville were starting Sunday School programs to teach slaves how to read and write and to allow them to study the Bible together more in depth. There were two of these programs started in the Restoration Movement around the 1840s, here and the Grapevine Christian Church, which worshipped and studied at what is called Belle Meade Plantation. In 1859 (1855?), African Americans, most who were still slaves then, were allowed to organize their own congregation in 1859 at Gay Street, just a ½ mile downhill or so from the Vine Street congregation. From the 1820s-1859 the congregation was integrated. Today, Gay Street is now part of the New Covenant Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

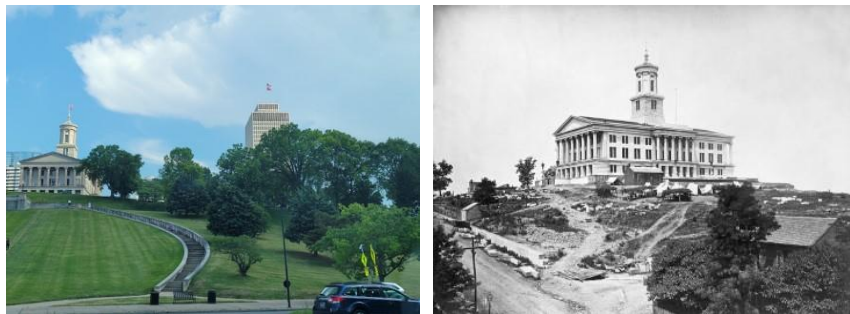


## 5. Black Churches Historical Marker/Gay Street Christian Church

This downtown area was known as the Black Business District in the mid to late 1800s, and even Marshall Keeble had a grocery store or two in this part of the city. However,

because of the Capitol Reconstruction Project, all land in and around the hill was taken over by the state. Six different worship complexes were demolished for the reconstruction project. The capitol building itself is built on the largest hill in Nashville and the original construction finished in 1859. Notice in the original picture the front of the capitol is on the left and notice a lack of a skyline in comparison to today. Gay Street can be seen in the original picture. 7<sup>th</sup> Street originally ran along the front side of this picture. Today, Gay Street still runs on both sides of the hill, east to west, and standing on the hill you can see both sides and know where Gay Street was located. 7<sup>th</sup> Street goes north and south and ends at the foot of Capitol Hill and picks up again on top of Capitol Hill. Gay Street Christian Church is #2 on the marker. That places Gay Street's original location on the front of Capitol Hill. If you look at old picture the Gay Street Building would have been on up the road from the electric pole. Today, standing where 7<sup>th</sup> Street ends at bottom of Capitol Hill, look right of the long steps and you will see a large cluster of trees. That would have been the, or quite near the original location of Gay Street Christian Church. Today, at the top of the hill 7<sup>th</sup> picks up and separates the front of the old picture and the State Library and Archives building.

Gay Street Christian Church, as noticed in this history above, was the first black Restoration church in Nashville. Peter Lowery, who worked with both Sunday School programs for African Americans at Grapevine and Vine Street, was allowed to establish a congregation there. He continued as their preacher (1859-1885) until Preston Taylor moved from Mt Sterling, Kentucky to Nashville. Then Preston took the pulpit. He remained their preacher from 1885-1891/94, until he was charged with some immoral indiscretions. Alexander (Aleck) Campbell replaced Taylor as the preacher at Gay Street. Preston and other members left, and they established the Lea Avenue congregation, about  $\frac{3}{4}$  a mile north. Then once Taylor passed, the two congregations united and became the Gay/Lea Christian Church. Then in the early 1900's there was a split from Gay/Lea because of false teaching promoted by Taylor, as he was aligning himself with the Disciples of Christ. Brother Alexander (Aleck) Campbell led a small group of conservatives, who became Spiritual Giants, and they established Jackson Street church of Christ in 1896, which is known as the "mother" church for many Black churches of Christ in America today.



Notice the original picture on the right. What appears to be the front is now considered the side. The road seen on the picture is Gay Street, and the meeting house would have been near the electric pole on bottom left.

## 6. North Sixth Street - Residence of the Womacks and Keebles

I am not aware of exactly where the Womacks and Keebles lived beside each other on North Sixth Street. But sixth street ends at the bottom of capitol hill today and picks up on the other side. Sixth Street would have been on the left-hand side of what appears to be the front of the capitol today. They clearly lived in the Business Section of the city at that time near the Gay Street congregation. As you walk back to your vehicle up Sixth Street you can imagine a young Marshall Keeble falling in love with Minnie Womack, while learning to preach. History has recorded that many men were great influences in his life, from a postman who helped work on his delivering technique, to his first wife Minnie, whom he has called his greatest teacher.

## Jackson Street Church of Christ

The original building was located on the parking lot across the street. Don't forget the Marshall Keeble historical marker on the corner. Plus, there is a Marshall Keeble exhibit inside a small fellowship hall.

The Jackson Street church of Christ was officially started in 1896. This was the third African American church associated with the Restoration Movement in Nashville. The other two, Gay Street and Lea Avenue, eventually united and today are known as New Covenant Christian Church, a Disciples Denomination. Thus, making this the first African American church of Christ in Nashville.

Jackson Street split from the Gay/Lea congregation because of doctrinal issues. The entire movement was dividing over the Silence of Scripture, was it prohibited or permissive. The Christian/Disciples wanted to keep their missionary societies and bring in the mechanical instrument into worship. Plus, the Gay/Lea church was allowing denominational preachers to instruct the church.

Alexander Cleveland Campbell was the first to make a stand in the middle of worship one day when a Baptist preacher stood up to preach. Since that stand, several other famed, and many members slowly started to leave false doctrine for what they were calling "a pure gospel that practice a pure worship."

As of 2023 the congregation has between 600-700 members. Some of Marshall Keeble's family still attends Jackson Street and Clinton Cummings, Sr., one of their elders, is married to a grand or great granddaughter of Keeble, Gwen Cummings, who spent quite a bit of time with Brother Keeble as she was growing up.



Top L – Parking Lot and plot of old meeting house on Top R  
Bottom L – Jackson Street Meeting House. Bottom R – Part of Marshall Keeble Display

## Marshall Keeble Historical Marker

Brother Keeble was born in 1878, a son of former slaves, near Murfreesboro, TN, and passed on to his reward in 1968. When he was four years old his family moved to Nashville, living beside the Womacks on then High Street today, 6<sup>th</sup> Street North. He attended school through the 7<sup>th</sup> grade and went to work, working at bucket and soap factories. After marrying Minnie Womack in 1896, he opened a grocery store, owned a produce wagon, and eventually owned two grocery stores.

Brother Keeble was baptized into Christ by Preston Taylor at Gay Street Christian Church in 1895 and then a year later he married Sister Minnie, and in 1914 he gave up his secular pursuits and started preaching full-time.

Due to the spiritual demise of Gay-Lea Christian Church (Disciples), he was persuaded by the faithful for the need to keep the truth, and he joined others at Jackson Street. It was there he fell in love with preaching, and from Jackson Street he and many others who labored with him established congregations of the Lord's church from coast to coast, baptizing as many as 30,000-40,000 souls into Christ.

Volumes could be written about this great man. But I have decided to finish this portion by speaking about his family. Even today, descendants of this man call Jackson Street their home congregation and his granddaughter (maybe great granddaughter) Gwen Cummings is married to an elder of Jackson Street. What a great testament to his faith that almost 120 years after Jackson Street started his family is still there!



## Fisk University

Fisk University was founded in 1866 after the Emancipation Proclamation as a private institution for African Americans. It is located on a 40-acre plot in a historic district in Nashville. This school was the first black institution to gain accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools and is the oldest university in Nashville.

There are many reasons this school is important to the Restoration Movement. But, perhaps the most important reason is Minnie Womack ( - 1932), Marshall Keeble's first wife graduated from here in 1896. Note, Marshall only had a 7<sup>th</sup> grade education. He credited her with being his greatest teacher!



# **Nashville Christian Institute (NCI) 1940-1967**

NCI was an African American school originally opened as an adult night school in 1940 under the direction of A.C. Holt and became a fully accredited elementary and secondary school in 1942. From 1942-1958 Brother Marshall Keeble was her president and primary fundraiser. In 1958 two white church leaders named Lucien Palmer and Willie Cato took over her leadership. The school was primarily funded due to charitable gifts from brethren and A.M. Burton, a huge insurance magnate, helped fund not only this school but some of Keeble's ministries. Due to "white money" being used they had control over the board and for the school to offer secular degrees David Lipscomb College would send teachers there to teach. But various reasons led to her demise. Construction of Interstates 40 and 65 divided the local black community and many of their businesses closed. Also, during the early to mid-60's many of her graduates ended up in Vietnam. Plus, school fees and donations were not large enough to pay their teachers decent salaries, causing a teacher shortage. Though DLC sent teachers to help, when integration at Lipscomb took place in the mid 1960's, claiming financial issues, the board decided to shut NCI down in 1967. They sold the property and put that money in a fund and as of 2012, the fund has never really satisfied promises made to black leaders to help educate black students at Lipscomb. Even until today, there is a strain between NCI alumni and DLU due to the closing of the school and the handling of the sale and promises made that were not kept according to NCI alumni.

The school building stood on the field, and the remaining structure was their old gymnasium. Today it belongs to some Church of God denomination.

About 40% of her graduates became preachers.



## Bowen/Campbell/Stone House

The oldest remaining brick home structure left in Tennessee is a Historical Landmark.

Captain William Bowen, received this land for his faithful service in the Revolutionary War, and built this house in 1787. His grandson, Brigadier General William Bowen Campbell, was born in this house. He served Tennessee as their Governor from 1851-1853 and in the US House of Representatives from 1837-1843.

Barton Stone married his first wife Elizabeth from Greenville, Kentucky in 1801. He was 29 and she was 17 years old. Elizabeth passed away on the 30<sup>th</sup> of May, 1810, just shy of nine years of marriage and left him with four young daughters in 1810. After her death Barton traveled by horseback with another widower preaching the gospel. Along those trails he met Celia Brown, a cousin to Elizabeth, and married her on October 31, 1811, in this house. He would have been 41 and she was 20 years old when they married. Then in November they moved together into this home for two years to help take care of her widowed mother. After a disagreement over the inheritance, he either sold the home or just left and moved to Lexington, Kentucky, where he then established the Hill Street congregation where the Campbell/Stone merger would take place. There is confusion between Restoration Historians and Local Historians on why Stone didn't remain with this property. Restoration Historians will say that he owned the house, and after some misunderstanding, thought he had to sell it and he did and later once he realized he didn't need to sell the property he tried to buy it back, but the new owner wanted too much. Local historians as seen in the book "The Journey and Sojourn of The William Bowen Family of Mansker's Creek" written by Anne Cato Sowell and sold at the Visitor's Center claims the mother-in-law owned the deed and didn't want to leave the land to Barton Stone, so he left. Either way, he moved back to Kentucky where the Restoration Movement needed him to help unite the Campbell/Stone movements.



## **Extra Material**

The people and places in this section are here for several reasons, but with the people I could not find a standing site to associate them with in Nashville other than where they worshipped, and they are not buried in Nashville. Also, Silver Point Institute is too far from Nashville (40 miles) to visit for my tour and move on to Lexington, Kentucky area. Then with Belle Meade, though a lot of church history happened at the plantation, nothing relating to the congregation and Bible Class program remains today. Everything is in alphabetical order.

### **Alexander (Aleck) Cleveland Campbell**

I have found no pictures or house locations of this great man. History has even forgot the year he was born, but he died in 1930. He was born in Wartrace, TN and died in St. Louis, Missouri. He was baptized into Christ by D.M. Keeble, an uncle to Marshall Keeble.

History records he moved to Nashville and befriended David Lipscomb and became the preacher at Gay Street after Preston Taylor was dismissed. As Preston was leading the new congregation to the Disciples Movement, Brother Aleck, heavily influenced through the Bible studies he had with Lipscomb over the Silence of Scripture, took a major stand against the liberalism sweeping Nashville churches even before David Lipscomb took a strong public stand.

The story goes that Taylor had brought in instruments, a choir, and was allowing denominational preachers in the pulpit. One day when a Baptist preacher took the pulpit at Lea Avenue, Brother Aleck stood up and started to denounce these monstrosities, and the choir leader directed the choir to drown out his voice. From here he left Lea Avenue and started worshipping in his home, and he was soon joined by the Womack and Bowser families, then after more instruction, even the young Marshall Keeble followed them.

In 1906 the conservatives purchased a frame building from Fisk University on Jackson St, and established the first church of Christ amongst African Americans in Nashville. This congregation is still located beside where the original structure stood. Today there is a Historical Marker dedicated to Keeble at the corner of Jackson and 14<sup>th</sup> where the old meeting house stood.

Jackson Street church of Christ is considered the “mother” church of the Black Restoration Movement amongst churches of Christ in America. And though everyone knows Brother Marshall Keeble as they should, he may have never been what he became without the great stand for truth by Aleck Campbell. Keeble indeed baptized

tens of thousands, but Bro. Aleck was this voice and cornerstone of this movement. A lot like Thomas Campbell was to the Restoration Movement as a whole, Aleck Campbell is to the Black Restoration Movement in America.

## **GP Bowser**

I could not find any information where Brother Bowser lived and worked in Nashville. Below is a little biography about this great man who did begin his preaching career in Nashville.

George Phillip Bowser, 1874-1950, was born in Maury County, Tennessee, south of Nashville. Though his grandfather Frank Sowell was a preacher for the Christian Church, and his mother Charity was a member in the Restoration Movement, he ended up a Methodist preacher student studying at Central Tennessee College.

Brother Bowser excelled at college and quickly became a favorite of the staff, whom some wanted to train as a missionary to send to Africa. Going to Africa wasn't going to happen for him, but with the support of a loving wife, he became very educated and mastered five languages: Greek, Hebrew, French, German and Latin. By 1893 he was licensed to preach with the Methodist Denomination, and he took a position in Cleveland, TN.

Unable to make ends meet as a Methodist preacher, he left for Nashville, and quickly began to question some of the Methodist doctrines. While in Nashville, he heard the truth from Sam Davis, a former-slave, and was baptized into Christ. After his baptism the restoration movement was in turmoil in Nashville over mechanical instruments and societies. Brother Bowser joined with Brothers Campbell, Womack, and the young Keeble, speaking against said additions.

While in Nashville he worked in the printing trade. He turned his attention to two great needs for black members of the brotherhood, periodicals, and Christian schools. In 1902 he began what might be the first religious publication called "The Christian Echo," when he was 28, for African American Christians (Some say, Brother Marshall Keeble had a short-lived periodical before Brother Bowser). Also, he understood the need for a sound Christian education, especially amongst black brethren, who were just a generation removed from slavery. In 1907 he established his first school in the Jackson Street building, with the help of Brothers Campbell and Womack, and due to student population growth in 1909 he moved his school to Silver Point, Tennessee, with the understanding things were cheaper in the country, plus the students would have land to grow their own crops. They purchased 10 acres, and built several buildings, including dorms. They named the school the Putnam County Normal, Industrial and Orphan School. Later it was known as the Silver Point Christian College or Silver Point Christian Institute.

Brother David Lipscomb was a huge supporter of the school, and a de facto head and a primary fund raiser for the program, but when he passed financial contributions dried up and the school was forced to close, but not the dream of having a university level college for African Americans associated with the church. By 1920 the school closed for financial reasons.

The closing of Silver Point was not the end of his dream to establish an educational center for African Americans. He tried working with Southern Practical School in Louisville, Kentucky, but left due to racism. When he went back to Nashville, he put a down payment on another building to start a school which would later become known as the Nashville Christian Institute. Due to financial problems, he left the property in the hands of others and moved to Fort Smith, Arkansas, in 1933, taking the Christian Echo and his dreams of establishing a college with him.


He didn't live long enough to see the brotherhood unite behind a Christian College for African Americans. In 1947/48 the Southern Bible Institute was established in Lake Como's church building in Fort Worth, Texas, and in 1948/49 the school moved to Terral, Texas, then being named Southwestern Christian College. The plan was to get the college going and Brother Bowser would move there to help operate the school.

Today the Southwestern continues to thrive, and I have heard the Christian Echo is still in operation, though I have not been able to verify that. Without question, Bowser is the Father of Christian Education in the Black Restoration Movement. He died in 1950 in Detroit and was buried there.

For those from Oklahoma, East and North Texas, many of us have known or heard of Brother Richard Nathaniel Hogan (1902-1997). At 14 years old he was sent by his parents to train underneath Brother Bowser, and some at Silver Point. He became one of the most popular preachers in the brotherhood in the mid 1900's. Also, for those associated with Brown Trail School of Preaching, a graduate named Adolphus Smith, personally trained under Brother Bowser as a young teenager.



**Hear  
R. N. Hogan**



R. N. Hogan, nationally noted colored evangelist, will preach nightly at 7:30, November 11-25 under the big tent at the corner of 2nd and Oak street, Paso Robles. Everyone within reach of Paso Robles, white or colored, and especially soldiers from Camp Roberts, are cordially urged to attend. Leave your pocket-books at home; no collections except on Lord's Day.

## **Grapevine Christian Church/Belle Meade Historic Site**

Belle Meade is located at 110 Leake Avenue, Nashville or 5025 Harding Pike, Nashville. Belle Meade is approximately 8 miles from the Vine Street historical marker downtown by the Federal Courthouse. Historically it was also known as the Harding Plantation, named after General William Harding. Today the location is a modern tourist trap, and only the mansion and a few small buildings survived from before slavery ended. Pictured above is a reconstructed slave house on a small portion of the farm that still exists today.

This plantation was built in 1807 by John Harding and became one of the most “successful” plantations in the south. The plantation was 5,400 acres large and had over 300 slaves that worked on the plantation and 136 enslaved just prior to the Civil War. After the Civil War General Harding tried to hire all his prior slaves and 72 decided to remain and work for pay, though few continued to live at Belle Meade.

The Grapevine church is believed to have been established in the late 1820's or early 1830's. By the 1840's the white leaders of the congregation decided to start a Sunday School program for their slaves, where over 100 would attend. Eventually Peter Lowery (See Peter Lowery section), a self-freed slave, took the lead of this Sunday School, and it appears he must have worked with the Vine Street Sunday School program for African Americans as well. Then in 1855 Lowery was allowed to invite the slaves to worship with him and many did on his property at 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue North, and it was possibly called Lowery's Chapel Christian Church. All the slaves but 20 went with Lowery, the remaining 20 continued to worship at Grapevine. At around the same time 1855/1859 the Vine Street congregation allowed the African Americans to unite with those from Grapevine and they moved to Gay Street and named the congregation the Second Christian Church. (Note – history is not well recorded about exactly how these two groups organized as one.)



## **Silver Point Christian Institute (1909-1918)**

14360 Center Hill Dam Rd, Silver Point, TN

G.P. Bowser is known as the “Father of Christian Education” for the Black Restoration Movement in America. When he was just a child his mother, a preacher’s daughter, and member of the church, was determined that Brother Bowser would receive the finest education possible. Though he went to a Methodist College and trained to become a Methodist preacher, he soon found himself in Nashville and was converted to the faith. Instantly he knew he wanted to found a higher education school for African American members of the church. In 1906, he, along with several other church leaders at Jackson Street church of Christ met and decided to use their property for a school. On January 8, 1907 the “Nashville Normal Industrial and Orphan School” opened with seventeen students. Within two years of magnificent growth, the need for land to grow and operate cheaper was necessary. They purchased ten acres for \$25.00 an acre in Silver Point, Tennessee, about 75 miles from Jackson Street. Brother A.M. Burton then financed the construction of a nice brick building used for chapel and worship. The first two teachers were Brother Bowser and his daughter, Miss P. H. Womack.

The school continued to grow but unfortunately Brother Lipscomb passed away in November 1917, a primary influence in fund raising, and without his backing the funds quickly dried up, and after graduation on April 11, 1918, Brother Bowser announced the school must close.

Over the years a congregation has continued to worship at the location known as the West End church of Christ. Today, the building sits empty, and is taken care of by local members of the church and from time-to-time local members will gather there for singings.



