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| FT-049 |

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| FT-050 | | | |  | FT-051 | | | |
| Charles Crow, Sr. | | Elizabeth ? | |  | Aaron Harlan III | | Elizabeth Stuart | |
| 1717 | 1802 | Birth Year | Death Year |  | 1752 | 1806 | 1755 | 1835 |

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Reverend Charles Crow, Jr. | |  | Sarah Harlan | |
| **Born** | 1770 | Married: | **Born** | October 13, 1775 2 |
| **Where** | Chatham County, NC USA 1 | Oct 27, 1792 | **Where** | Chatham County, NC USA 2 |
| **Died** | June 12, 1845 1 | Where: | **Died** | 1820 to 1821-ish ?? |
| **Where** | Perry County, AL USA 1 | South Carolina (assumed) | **Where** | Perry County, AL USA 2 |
| **Buried** | Ocmulgee Baptist Church Cemetery, Perry County, AL USA | Source: | **Buried** | Ocmulgee Baptist Church Cemetery, Perry County, AL USA |
| **Sources** | 1. 476a  [FindaGrave](https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/13118675/charles-crow) | 476a | **Sources** | 2. 476a  [FindaGrave](https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/128324016/sarah-crow) |

**Children:**

| **Name** | **Born** | **Where** | **Source** | **Died** | **Where** | **Buried** | **Source** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Elizabeth | 15 Dec 1797 | Laurens County, SC USA | 484, p. 128.  FT-034  [FindaGrave](https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/13120034/elizabeth-smith) | 19 Nov 1889 | Perry County, AL USA | Ocmulgee Baptist Church Cemetery, Perry County, AL USA | 484, p. 128.  [FindaGrave](https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/13120034/elizabeth-smith) |
| Martha | 30 Mar 1800 | Laurens County, SC USA | 484, p. 129. | ~1829 | Perry County, AL USA |  | 484, p. 129. |
| Silas Harlan | 07 May 1803 | Laurens County, SC USA | 484, p. 129. | 1838 | Perry County, AL USA |  | 484, p. 129. |
| Jane F. | 09 May 1805 | Laurens County, SC USA | 484, p. 129. | 1841 | Perry County, AL USA |  | 484, p. 129. |
| Elijah Palmer | 1807 | Laurens County, SC USA | 484, p. 130. | 1861 | Bibb County, AL USA | Mount Olive Cemetery, Ocmulgee, Perry County, AL USA | [FindaGrave](https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/178491281/elijah-palmer-crow) |
| Mary | 1809 | Laurens County, SC USA | 484, p. 130. |  |  |  |  |
| Joshua Blair | 10 Nov 1810 | Laurens County, SC USA | 484, p. 130.  [FindaGrave](https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/32363105/joshua-blair-crow) | 14 Aug 1866 | Searcy, White County, AR USA | Crow Cemetery, Kensett, White County, AR USA | 484, p. 130.  [FindaGrave](https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/32363105/joshua-blair-crow) |
| Joseph W. W. | 07 Feb 1813 | Newberry, Newberry District, SC USA | 484, p. 130.  [FindaGrave](https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/32268769/joseph-w_w-crow) | 09 Nov 1866 | White County, AR USA | Crow Cemetery, Kensett, White County, AR USA | 484, p. 130.  [FindaGrave](https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/32268769/joseph-w_w-crow) |
| Jonathan Jackson | 1815 | Laurens County, SC USA | 484, p. 130.  [FindaGrave](https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/34828673/jonathan-j-crow) | 1899 | Mt. Vernon, Faulkner County, AR USA | Mount Vernon, Mount Vernon, Faulkner County, AR USA | 484, p. 130.  [FindaGrave](https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/34828673/jonathan-j-crow) |
| Rebecca A. | 09 Jun 1817 | Laurens County, SC USA | 484, p. 130.  [FindaGrave](https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/86350989/rebecca-a-greer) | 07 Feb 1890 | Judsonia, White County, AR USA | Crow Cemetery, Kensett, White County, AR USA | 484, p. 130.  [FindaGrave](https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/86350989/rebecca-a-greer) |
| Jesse M. | 01 Dec 1820 | Perry County, AL USA | 484, p. 130.  [FindaGrave](https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/13118640/j-m-crow) | 13 Feb 1853 | Perry County, AL USA | Ocmulgee Baptist Church Cemetery, Perry County, AL USA | 484, p. 130.  [FindaGrave](https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/13118640/j-m-crow) |

**Other Marrriages:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | **Sources** |
| Husband – Other wife | Sarah McCraw | [Genealogy.com](https://www.genealogy.com/ftm/l/e/b/Jesse-H-Lebaron/GENE1-0002.html) |
| **When** | 26 Feb 1827 |  |
| **Where** | Perry County, AL USA |  |
| **Other Children** | None that I know of |  |
| **Comments** |  |  |
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**Story:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Activity** | **Sources** |
| Pictures (people, gravestones, houses, etc.) |  |
| Marriage Certificates |  |
| Land Deeds |  |
| Slave Schedule Information |  |
| War Service Records |  |
| Social Security Applications |  |
| Newspaper Articles |  |
| Where lived? |  |
|  |  |
| 1790 US Federal Census, Newberry County, SC USA  I believe that in 1790, Charles Crow, Jr. was still living in his father’s household, based on the 1790 Census data. It looks like the Charles Crow family consisted of:   * 2 White males of 16 years and upward * 1 White male under 16 years * 2 White females   There were no other free persons or slaves in the household.  The 2 White males of 16 years and older were probably Charles Crow Sr. (who should have been about 74 years old), and Charles Crow Jr. (who would have been about 20 years old). The white male under 16 could have been a younger brother, or a cousin, depending on who the two females were (of which we don’t know any ages). I assume the females were Charles Crow, Sr.’s wife (Elizabeth ?) and either a daughter or a sister to either Charles Sr. or Elizabeth. | 530a, 530b |
| 1800 US Federal Census, Newberry District, SC, USA  In 1800, Charles Crow, Jr. was living in Newberry County, SC, USA. Charles Jr.’s household consisted of:   * 1 White male of 26 years but under 45 years (Charles Crow, Jr.) * 1 White female under 10 years of age (Elizabeth Crow – my ancestor!) * 1 White female of 26 years but under 45 years (Sarah Harlan, but she should have been just 25 at this time).   There is a nearby notation of 3 slaves, but I think this is for the person just above Charles Crow in the census (Thomas Clark). | 529 |
| 1810 US Federal Census, Newberry County, SC USA  In 1810, Charles Crow, Jr. was living in Newberry County, SC, USA. Living nearby were his father – Charles Crow, Sr. – and Stephen McCraw. Stephen is important to Charles, Jr. as Charles’ second wife was Sarah McCraw, a relative of Stephen’s. The McCraws moved to Perry County, AL about at the same time as Charles Crow, Jr.  Charles Jr.’s household consisted of:   * 2 White males under 10 years of age * 1 White male of 16 years but under 26 years * 1 White male of 26 years but under 45 years * 2 White females under 10 years of age * 2 White females of 10 years but under 16 years * 1 White female of 26 years but under 45 years * 1 White female 45 years and upward * 5 Slaves   In 1810, the slate of questions asked by assistant U.S. marshals was identical to the 1800 census. This census recorded the name of the county, parish, township, town, or city in which each family resided. Each family was listed by the name of the head of household and asked the following questions:   * Number of free White males and females aged, respectively:   + under 10 years of age   + of 10 years but under 16 years   + of 16 years but under 26 years   + of 26 years but under 45 years   + 45 years and upward * Number of all other free persons * Number of slaves   **First Economic Inquiries**  In addition to population inquiries, the 1810 census was the first to collect data about the nation's manufactures. A May 1, 1810, act directed that, "it shall be the duty of the several marshals, secretaries, and their assistants aforesaid, to take, under the direction of the Secretary of the Treasury, and according to such instructions as he shall give, an account of the several manufacturing establishments and manufactures within their several districts, territories, and divisions." The act did not outline specific questions or prescribe a schedule, leaving those matters to the Secretary of the Treasury’s discretion.  To facilitate data collection, the Treasury Department divided manufactured products into 25 broad categories, encompassing more than 220 kinds of goods. As the U.S. marshals and their assistants conducted the decennial census, they also visited the manufacturing establishments in their assigned areas to obtain economic data. These data generally consisted of the quantity and value of products manufactured.  In March 1812, Congress authorized $2,000 for the Treasury Department to prepare a statistical report on the kind, quantity, and value of goods manufactured and the number of manufacturing establishments in each state, territory, district, and county. The May 1813 report noted that the economic data were of poor quality because of serious undercounting and omissions during the enumeration. |  |
| 1820 US Federal Census  I can’t find an entry in the 1820 US Federal Census for Charles Crow. This is during the time that Charles and Sarah were moving from South Carolina to Alabama, so maybe they just got skipped?  The 1820 census built on the questions asked in 1810. The age questions were the same, except for the addition of a 16 - 18 years category for males.   * The number of free White males and females aged, respectively:   + under 10 years of age   + of 10 years but under 16 years   + of 16 years but under 18 years (for males)   + of 16 years but under 26 years (for males)   + of 16 years but under 26 years (for females)   + of 26 years but under 45 years   + 45 years and upward * The number of male and female slaves aged, respectively:   + under 14 years of age   + of 14 years but under 26 years   + of 26 years but under 45 years   + 45 years and upwards * The number of free colored males and females aged, respectively:   + under 14 years of age   + of 14 years but under 26 years   + of 26 years but under 45 years   + 45 years and upwards * Number of foreigners not naturalized * Number of persons (including slaves) engaged in agriculture, commerce, and manufactures |  |
| **Land Purchase**  On October 1, 1821, Charles Crow, Jr. was granted 157.80 acres in Perry County, AL. | 528 |
| 1830 US Federal Census, enumerated unknown date, in Lauderdale County, AL USA  In 1830 Charles Crow, Jr. was living in Lauderdale County, AL. Members of household were:   * 1 White male and 1 White female under 5 years * 2 White males and 1 White female 5 to 9 years * 2 White females 10 to 14 years * 1 White female 15 to 19 years * 1 White male 40 to 49 years   The Crows did not own any slaves at this time, so there is no Source 524b. For the rest of the information below, everything was blank, which means:   * There were no White persons or "slaves and colored persons" who were deaf and dumb aged. * There were no White persons or "slaves or colored persons" who were blind, respectively. * There were no White persons who were foreigners not naturalized, so everyone at this time was born in the US.   John Note: I wonder if this is the right Charles Crow. My Charles Crow should have been 60 years old at this time, and in Perry County, AL. Let’s look in Perry County and see what we can find.  In Ancestry.com, in 1830 in Perry County, I find another Charles Crow in the Census. I think this is my Charles Crow, Jr. Members of his household were:   * 1 White male 5 to 9 years old (Jesse M.) * 2 White males (Jonathan Jackson and ?) and 2 White females (Rebecca A. and ?) 10 to 14 years old * 2 White males 15 to 19 years old (Joshua Blair and Joseph W. W.) * 1 White female 40 to 49 years old (Sarah Harlan would be 55 at this time, so I don’t know who this was) * 1 White male 50 to 59 years old (Charles Crow, Jr.)   They also had the following slaves:   * 2 males and 2 females under 10 years old * 1 male and 1 female 10 to 23 years old * 1 male and 2 females 24 to 35 years old * 2 males and 1 female 55 to 99 years old   For the rest of the information below, everything was blank, which means:   * There were no White persons or "slaves and colored persons" who were deaf and dumb aged. * There were no White persons or "slaves or colored persons" who were blind, respectively. * There were no White persons who were foreigners not naturalized, so everyone at this time was born in the US.   The children match (roughly) and there are 12 slaves, and according to the 1840 Census, there were 18 slaves, so this matches up. | 524a  525a, 525b |
| 1840 US Federal Census for Perry County, AL  In 1840, the Charles Crow Jr. family was living in Perry County, AL. The family consisted of:   * 1 White male, 15 to 19 years old * 1 White male, 60 to 69 years old * 1 White female, 50 to 59 years old * 4 male slaves, under 10 years old * 3 male slaves, 10 to 23 years old * 2 male slaves, 24 to 35 years old * 1 male slave, 55 to 99 years old * 4 female slaves, under 10 years old * 1 female slave, 10 to 23 years old * 2 female slaves, 24 to 35 years old, * 1 female slave, 36 to 54 years old   8 people are employed in agriculture, and 1 person in manufacture and trade.  There are 3 white people and 18 slaves.  The 15 to 19 year old white male was probably Jesse M., who was born in December 1820 and would be 19 years old at the time of this Census. Rev. Charles Crow, Jr. would be almost 70 years old, so that matches. If Sarah was still alive, she would be 65 years old or so. So maybe the 50 to 59 year old white female is not Sarah? | 522a, 522b |
| **Life of Rev. Charles Crow, Jr.**  At the end of this section of the document, I am going to paste the entirety of a document titled “Sketches from the Life of Charles Crow, 1770 – 1845”. This document contains an enormous amount of detailed information on the life of Charles Crow, but I don’t see any references to the sources that this information comes from. So I can’t make any guarantees as to the accuracy of the information, what little I have been able to check out has checked out. | 520 |
| Rev. Charles Crow, Jr. died June 12, 1845 in Perry County, AL and is buried in Ocmulgee Baptist Church Cemetery, Perry County, AL USA. | [FindaGrave](https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/13118675/charles-crow) |
| Sarah Harlan died sometime after 1820 and is buried in Ocmulgee Baptist Church Cemetery, Perry County, AL USA. | [FindaGrave](https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/128324016/sarah-crow) |
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**SKETCHES FROM THE LIFE OF**

**CHARLES CROW  
1770-1845**

"One of Nature's great men, deeply pious  
sound in theology, and Versed in the  
truths of the Bible"

--McCraw Memorial

**by  
J. Hugh LeBaron  
Fourth Great-Grandson  
7 May 1995**

Chapter 1  
The Separate Baptists

The Bush River Baptists are known to have been Separate Baptists from a will prepared by Samuel Newman on November 12, 1770. Newman and Phillip Mulkey founded the Bush River Baptist Church in 1771 and Newman was its first minister. Newman built a meeting house on his property before the church was formed and willed two acres of land ". . . where the meeting house now stands for the use of the Sepparate [sic] Baptists. . ." Thus, Newman's will clearly establishes the Bush River Church as a Separate congregation.

The majority of early South Carolina Baptists entering the backcountry were at first known as Separates which is a name derived from the withdrawal from the Congregational Churches of New England after the Great Awakening. Shubal Stearns led the Separates into the South settling in North Carolina, and Phillip Mulkey carried the Separates message to Newberry County in 1762.

"The Baptists of Bush River, like the other Separates in the back country, were sternly puritanical. In a raw society, they endeavored to supply moral standards needed to improve society. Drinking, gambling, dancing, card playing, failing to attend church meetings, overreaching in trading horses, speaking disrespectfully to other members, and the use of profanity all brought severe condemnation and sometimes excommunication. Heresy embracing beliefs not sanctioned by the church meant dismissal as did adultery. In short, this church actively sought to regulate the behavior of its members and to improve that of the community."

Anyone familiar with the early history of Ocmulgee Baptist Church will recognize a connection between that congregation and the Bush River Church. Both were involved in monitoring the behavior of their members and disciplining offenders of the church's moral code. The Ocmulgee Church is in every sense the spiritual legacy of the Bush River Church, and an inheritor of the Separate Baptist theology and practices.

As shall be seen later, Charles Crow and other early members of the Ocmulgee Church came to know God at Bush River. They brought their ideas about God and how to conduct church business from Bush River to Ocmulgee. That they should apply what they learned at Bush River should not surprise anyone. It was at Bush River that Ocmulgee founders formed their ideas and learned the lessons taught by the Separate Baptists.

Although founded in 1771 with nine members, the Bush River Church did not dominate the region's Baptists until after 1802 over three decades later. In 1794, the church had a membership of only thirty-four, which is a growth of twenty-five members in twenty-four years or one member per year. By 1800, the membership had reached forty.

Chapter 2  
The Great Revival of 1802

In 1802, things began to change as a great revival of religion swept over the Bush River community " . . . which may have several times been equaled, but has certainly never been surpassed. It seemed as if the spirit of the living God was pervading the whole community and that all were rising up and crying out 'men and brethren, what shall we do to be saved?' " This great revival at Bush River Church lasted for seventy days, from August 22 through October 30, 1802, and ninety-four people were received and baptized on professions of faith. On Saturday, September 4, 1802, the thirteenth day of the revival, Charles Crow was seized by the Holy Spirit, made a profession of faith, was received by the congregation and baptized at the age of thirty-two years. The revival was part of the Second Great Awakening that spread across the South in the early years of the 19th Century.

In the process of events, the Bush River settlement was transformed from a place where God was little honored to a place where " . . . many were converted and became bright and shining lights in the Lord's house." Charles Crow was permanently changed too, and his life would never be the same again. He had seen a vision of God and was impressed to serve his God with greater devotion than he could have imagined before his conversion experience. He had become " . . . a chosen Vessel of the Redeemer, destined to bear the word not only to his neighbors, but to a distant land." During this great religious experience in the life of Charles Crow, his father, Charles, Sr., died on the thirty-first day of the revival. The elder Charles was laid to rest in the Bush River Church Cemetery and a monument erected reading:

CROW died Sept 22nd 1802 Age 86

Chapter 3  
Call to the Ministry

Following his conversion, Charles began to exhort the congregation with encouragement from the church as did others in the revived Bush River congregation. "The church carefully encouraged any gift of exhortation and put forward Levi Pitts, Joseph Johnson, James Teague, Charles Crow, John Pitts, Bordiwine Roberts, and Brother Moses, 'a man of color,' . . . " About August 1803, almost a year after his conversion, Charles' ministerial duties were first mentioned in the Journal of the Bush River Church.

Others, who would play a role two decades later in the move of Bush River people to Perry County, Alabama, began to develop their church leadership skills at Bush River. On October 13, 1804, Stephen McCraw was appointed clerk of the church, and he would serve in that capacity for the next thirteen years. Charles Crow would one day marry a relative of Stephen McCraw after the death of Sarah Harlan.

Charles continued to grow in the faith until the church recognized his gifts. On April 13, 1805, he was allowed to preach his first sermon. He apparently made a favorable impression because five months later, the church issued him a license to preach on October 18, 1805. By August 8, 1807, Charles was no longer satisfied exhorting sinners to repentance as a layman. He heard the call of God to the work of the Gospel ministry and announced his calling to the church. The church agreed to ordain him, and a double ordination ceremony for Charles and James Teague was conducted on August 29, 1807. James Teague's descendants would later become prominent members of the Alabama clergy, thereby forging another connection between Bush River and the state of Alabama. Following the ordination, the ordaining clergy issued the following document to Charles:

"Whereas Charles Crow has been called to Ordination by the Church of which he is a Member (Being Baptist) There Advertises All Concerned that We the subscribers have duly set him apart by the Imposition of Hands to preach and baptize wherever his Lot may be cast."

Done this 30th of August A D 1807

Joshua Palmer

John Cole

Jacob King

Charles continued to reside and preach in Newberry County after his ordination. "It is known that he served a neighboring church" at Upper Duncan's Creek. For many years, the Bush River Church was the only Baptist congregation in Newberry County and probably was the oldest church in the upper country. The church's third pastor was John Cole, Sr., a church member who was made pastor in 1781. Cole served the church for thirty-five years until his death in 1816. Charles Crow succeed Cole as pastor, but he had to wait nine years after ordination for the opportunity.

Chapter 4  
Raising a Family and Living Life

While he waited, Charles busied himself with church work, making a living, rearing a family and involving himself in the grist of life. A few glimpses of him are caught during the years between 1807 and 1816. In 1808, he received $10.50 for teaching Polly, Priscilla, and Lucretia Clark, the daughters of Thomas Clark. On February 9, 1808, he sold land to Robert Nichols. He appears in the third census of the United States in Newberry in 1810, the year he turned forty years of age. He obviously had an interest in education and, in 1811, he was appointed one of the first commissioners of the free schools of Newberry County created to educate poor children and orphans.

Crow's family expanded steadily during the first two decades of the 19th Century. He and Sarah Harlan were to have at least eleven children, ten of which were born in South Carolina.

The South Carolina born children were:

Elizabeth (Betsy) December 15, 1797

Martha (Patsy) March 30, 1800

Silas Harlan March 7, 1803

Jane F. May 9, 1805

Elijah Palmer 1807

Mary 1809

Joshua B. November 10, 1810

Joseph W. W. February 7, 1813

Jonathan Jackson April 15, 1815

Rebecca A. June 9, 1817

The youngest child, Jesse M. Crow, was born on December 1, 1820, shortly after the Crows arrived in Perry County, Alabama.

Chapter 5  
Bethel Baptist Association

According to the records, Charles' primary church related activity after his ordination was as a messenger to the Bethel Baptist Association. In 1808, he was elected as a representative of Bush River Church to the Association. In 1809, he was elected or appointed Clerk for the group and served in that position continuously until his departure for Alabama in 1819. He also wrote the Associations' circular letter and preached occasionally to the group. This work was to serve him well later in Alabama and " . . . provided him with his organizational abilities. He was an indefatigable worker and was eminently qualified for his work."

Once in Alabama, Charles quickly attached himself to the Cahaba Association of churches. He was instrumental in establishing the Alabama Baptist Convention and keeping it alive. He dreamed of a convention spanning many states, as the Southern Baptist Convention eventually did. It would appear that his vision and skills have their genesis in the experience and training he received in those years of service in the Bethel Baptist Association, and that God was preparing him for greater service later.

In 1819, Charles requested a statement from the Bethel Association regarding his service with that organization, thereby recording for posterity a testimony to his character, energy and dedication. The statement reads in part:

"For nearly twenty years past he has been connected with Bethel Baptist Association during which time he has been engaged in faithfully dispensing the word of life which has been blest to the awakening and conversion of many In the Association he has been an active and useful member, having, for many years, been clerk of said body. In his general deportment he has ever manifested the Christian character." " . . . We . . . do hereby recommend him to the Christian public, but to those of our own faith and order, in particular, as a faithful and orthodox Minister of the Gospels . . ."

"By Order of the Association from the 2nd to the 5th October 1819."

Chapter 6  
Advent of Cotton Culture and Large Farms

During the years between 1800 and 1820, Newberry County underwent a dramatic change which would affect the economic and social status of everyone living there. In fact, almost all of the older Southern states experienced the same change. By contrast, consider that Newberry County in 1800 was a district of small farms and frugal, hardworking farmers and artisans. The farms were self-sufficient family units, with small gristmills, cobblers, cabinetmakers, distillers, and weavers plying their trades. There were few Negroes in the county, and the slave population was 2,204 or seventeen per cent out of a total population of 12,906.

By 1810, the white population had declined eight per cent to 9,848, and the slave population had increased by 1,802 or 82 per cent. The reason for this growth in the slave population was the money to be made by planting short staple cotton which rapidly became Newberry's chief crop. In the face of growing competition from slave labor, non-slaveholding families migrated to Georgia and Tennessee. In the ten years between 1800 and 1810, the Newberry economy shifted to larger farms and more Negro labor. By 1820, slaves represented thirty-three per cent of Newberry's population. This growth in slave population was directly related to the growing price of cotton which sold for 30.8 cents per pound in 1818, and the profits were too attractive to resist.

Charles Crow continued on in Newberry County as the economy shifted to the large farm production of cotton. The forces that influenced Newberry soon affected the course of Charles' life.

Chapter 7  
Call of the Bush River Church

Near the end of the period, historian O'Neall records that "On the 9th of October 1816, Elder Charles Crow was called to, and took upon himself the pastoral care of the . . ." Bush River Church. "Never was any religious body confided to abler or better hands. Few preachers were better endowed with grace from on high; few men in and out of the ministry presented more lovable lives than Charles Crow. He continued to discharge the duties till . . . like many of his brethren, he thought it to be his duty to his family to seek his home in the Southwest. There he . . . preached most acceptably his Master's Kingdom, and . . . continued faithful, able and venerable . . . to labor in that work." As O'Neall's account foretells, Charles Crow would not remain long as pastor of the Bush River Church. In three years, he would be on a new field of service along the Big Oakmulgee Creek and other areas of Perry County, Alabama.

By 1820, cotton was king of Newberry County. The price of good land rose to $15.00 an acre, making 100 acres cost $1,500. General Andrew Jackson's military defeat of the Creek Indians at the Battle of Horseshoe Bend and treaties signed with other tribes, transferred much of the land in what became the state of Alabama to the United States government, who put it up for sale to white citizens for about $2.00 an acre. Thus, 100 acres in Alabama could be had for $200, or thirteen per cent of the same size plot of land in Newberry County.

The economics of the times dictated what happened next. An excitement was generated in the Bush River region to move to Alabama. This excitement was so intense that it came to be called "Alabama fever." The only cure was to move to Alabama. The congregation at Bush River Church was infected. Some people there wanted to expand their fortunes and were lured to Alabama when the state was opened to settlers in the period beginning in late 1817.

Newberry historian Pope reports that " . . . a sizable group went out from the neighborhood of Bush River Baptist Church." The Bush River migration was only part of a larger migration out of Newberry County to Alabama and Mississippi. With Newberry and the whole state on the move, Charles Crow could hardly escape the influence of communities abandoning their homes and farms and moving West. That he moved too is a natural conclusion.

Circumstantial evidence seems to indicate that Charles left South Carolina sometime in early 1819. He purchased land in Alabama on April 7, 1819. He may have traveled to Alabama first without his family and then returned for them later in the year. He asked the Bethel Baptist Association for a letter of recommendation in early October 1819 because " . . . our Beloved Brother the Reverend Charles Crow has signified to us that he intends to leave the state . . . " On November 13, 1819, he applied to the Bush River Church for a church letter for Sarah Harlan and himself, " . . . together with testimonials as to his ordination and reputation as a Minister of the Gospel . . . "

The only logical reason for these requests is because he was moving, or had already moved, as both of the requests could have been made through correspondence from Alabama. Whichever the case, Charles ended his Carolina years in 1819 for a new home on the Alabama frontier.

Chapter 8

The Decision to Migrate

Historian O'Neall in his 1890 work, The Annals of Newberry, states, somewhat indirectly, that Charles Crow moved to Perry County for two reasons. First, because others in the Bush River community were going, and he became caught up in the excitement along with his friends, neighbors and parishioners from the Bush River Church. The departure of so many with whom he had a close relationship probably caused him to come face to face with the reality that those relationships could be maintained only if he went along with them. There was the prospect of being left behind while the community was stripped of a large segment of its population. Staying in Newberry County would leave him in a Bush River settlement greatly depopulated and controlled by large cotton farms and dominated by increasing Negro slave labor. This prospect of ending thirty-year-old relationships must have been disheartening. O'Neall's record seems to state Charles' thoughts on the reasons for his move to Alabama. O'Neall says, " . . . he thought it to be his duty to his family to seek his home in the Southwest." The United States ended with Louisiana on the Gulf coast in 1819, and the Southeast of today was the Southwest then. O'Neall's use of "he thought" implies that the writer has access to Charles' thoughts. The only way this is possible is for Charles to have stated his thoughts in a way which came to the attention of O'Neall. One must believe that Charles is the source of this statement.

Charles evaluated the situation as any human would. He concluded that it was " . . . his duty to his family . . . " to join the westward migration. In 1819, Charles was forty-nine, and Sarah Harlan was forty-four years old. By March 1820, Sarah was pregnant with her last child, Jesse. The oldest child, Elizabeth, was twenty-two that year. She had married Solomon Smith about three years earlier, and already had two children of her own. Martha, the second child, was married to James Meredith and gave birth to a son in 1820. With the two oldest children gone from home, Charles still had eight children under his roof Silas, 16, Jane 14, Elijah 12, Mary, 10, Joshua, 9, Joseph, 6, Jonathan, 4, and Rebecca, 2.

This was a large economic responsibility for Charles. His position at the church was without salary, and he was required to support his family through his own efforts and resources. It was a strict principle among early Baptist preachers that the Gospel was free, and none received anything for their services except what might be given voluntarily and freely by them. It was his familial duty to support his wife and children independent of his ministry. In addition, Charles was a human with human needs and desires. While his eyes were upon Heaven, his feet were upon the earth.

As shall be seen later, he wanted the benefits prosperity could bring to him and his children. Land prices rose along the Bush River and throughout South Carolina. Large planters with capital were buying up land to expand cotton production and taking advantage of rising demand for cotton and increasing prices. Smaller farmers could not resist selling and moving on to cheaper land farther west. Under these circumstances, it was to Charles Crow's advantage to uproot himself and his family. He could perform "his duty to his family" best by moving to Alabama where he could improve his financial position and take advantage of the benefits of cotton production on the Alabama frontier. Therefore, when Charles spoke of his duty to his family, he was speaking in economic terms based on contrasting circumstances in South Carolina and Alabama. Neither O'Neall, nor any other Newberry historian, makes any specific reference to missionary work as a reason for Charles' migration to Alabama. O'Neall simply says that "There he . . . preached most acceptably his Master's Kingdom, and . . . to labor in that work."

So, did Charles Crow move to Alabama to do missionary work? The answer to this question, and the earlier theses regarding economic motivation for leaving South Carolina, is found in what Charles Crow did once he arrived in Alabama. There is no question that he was in Alabama as a self appointed missionary. One of the first things he did after arriving in Alabama was to begin preaching the Gospels, establishing churches and joining and establishing umbrella organizations to coordinate Alabama Baptist activities. He also set about to build a base for economic improvement. He acquired land and slaves, and entered into the production of cotton. By 1830, he had twelve slaves and in 1840 he owned eighteen slaves. When Charles died in 1845, he had twenty-three slaves and owned a prosperous plantation. He left and estate, after paying all his debts, which would probably be the equivalent of about a quarter million dollars today.

Chapter 9

Arrival in Alabama

The early pioneers were not foolish people who uprooted their families and plunged blindly into the wilderness. They gathered information, scouted the new territory and planned a route to the new country, as any sensible people would do. They also banded together in groups for mutual support and protection. From the records, it is known that Stephen McCraw, clerk at the Bush River Church, sent his son, Abner Gary McCraw, to Perry County in 1818 with the family slaves to prepare a home in the unpopulated forest for the family. Charles Crow moved to Perry County in 1819 and recorded his land purchase in the county tract book on April 7, 1819. Stephen McCraw recorded his claim twenty-one days earlier.

There is little doubt that these two families came to Alabama about the same time and were accompanied by other families from the Bush River Church and community. Charles Crow, Stephen McCraw, William Greer, Noah Haggard, Abraham Summer, Thomas Summer, Levi Martin, Joseph Prestridge, Providence McAdams, Thomas Lowe, John Walters, Joseph Persons, and Robert Sturdivant, all future members of the Ocmulgee Church, bought land in 1819 and 1820 in the immediate vicinity of site where the church located. Charles' land consisted of 158.4 acres, located one mile directly south of the church site, and Stephen McCraw acquired 475 acres adjacent to Charles. William Greer secured title to 813 acres directly north of Charles, and it is upon land originally belonging to William Greer that the Ocmulgee Church now stands.

Other pioneers such as John Persons, James Prestridge, Daniel H. Norwood, Claiborne Callicate, Jesse T. Butler, Samuel New and John Waugh moved into the Oakmulgee Creek area at the same time, but the heads of household were not church members.

There was a second wave of settlers in the 1830's who took up unclaimed land along the Oakmulgee and westward to the Cahaba River. These second decade settlers included Elias George, George Hopper, James D. Johnson, Leonard Butler, Solomon Smith, William and Jerman Fike, William G. Gary, William Henry, Samuel Kelly and John D. Walters.

The original settlers and their children bought unclaimed lands in the 1820's and 1830's to expand their land holdings and, in the case of the children, establish their own families. Charles' son, Elijah Palmer Crow, married Fedelia West on December 3, 1828 and purchased 79.7 acres of land a half a mile south of his father in 1832. Abner G. McCraw purchased 240 acres northwest of the church site in 1825 and 1831 and another 240 acres due west of the Crow family in 1833 and 1834. Charles' daughter, Jane F., and her husband, Abraham W. Jackson, secured 123.6 acres about three-fourths of a mile west of Charles in 1831 and 1834.

By 1855, almost all of the region's land passed from the government to private ownership. These lands were purchased from the United States Land Office at Cahaba in Dallas County. Prior to 1814, the land that Charles would occupy and build a home upon was Indian land ceded to the National government by treaty in that year. When Crow arrived in the Oakmulgee Creek area, the land was a wilderness without roads, cleared fields, houses, sources of commerce and little associated with what one would call civilization. He and his neighbors were pioneers in the truest sense that carved a community out of the lands along the Oakmulgee.

Chapter 10

Formation of a Church

It appears the early settlers occupied the period between April 1819 and April 1820 establishing themselves in their new settlement erecting homes, clearing land for crops, building roads and generally securing and organizing their lives. By May 4, 1820, matters had progressed to a point sufficient to consider forming a church among "The scattered members of the Baptist order in the neighborhood." On that day, twelve Baptists "living on the Oakmulgee" Creek met at the home of Jonathan Beason located East of the creek in Dallas County.

The assembled Baptists agreed to call a presbytery of officiating clergy and, if found in order, to be constituted into a church on June 10, 1820. A petition to accomplish this purpose was prepared and Thomas Lowe, one of the twelve neighbors, took it to the church at Mulberry, and John Tubb took petitions to churches at Union and Cahaba. The petitions were received and the presbytery necessary to constitute a church was formed. The officiating clergy included William Calloway, William Harrod, Charles Crow and Isaac Suttles. The presbytery met on Saturday, June 10, 1820 with the petitioners, conducted public worship and "proceeded to business." Isaac Suttles was chosen to moderate the proceedings and Charles Crow to record the business as clerk. Six males and seven females presented themselves for membership by letter in the church being formed. The presbytery ministers examined each person who asked to be accepted. The petitioners included Jonathan Beason, Clark Crocker, Tabitha Dunn, Alsey Jackson, Thomas and Winneford Lowe, Andrew and Nancy Mays, Elizabeth Traylor Liles, Ally Prestridge, Sally Scott and Charles Warren. The ministers concluded they were all " . . . united in Christian fellowship, sound in the faith and we believe capable of keeping up Gospel discipline. We therefore do constitute and pronounce them a gospel church, possessing full power and church authority to carry into effect every part of the business of a church independent of any other church whatsoever." The congregation began preparing an Abstract of Faith setting forth the principal beliefs of the church and Rules of Decorum governing the method of conducting sessions of the church congregation.

On July 1, 1820, the congregation held its second meeting electing Reddick Simms as clerk and received four new members by letter including Ann Crocker, Stephen McCraw, Robert Melton, and "bro. Bobb, a man of colour." At the August 5 meeting, four new members were granted membership Cynthia Jackson, William S. Norris, Rebecca Norris and Milly Warren. On August 12, the men of the church met to "fix on a site for a meeting house." In this way, the Ocmulgee Church continued to grow and attract Baptists in the neighborhood to its ministry.

On November 5, Mary Crawford, Nancy Dalton, Green and Clarisey Jackson and "Dafney, a woman of colour," were received by letter, and Joseph Prestridge, Cynthia Traylor Warren, Parthenia Dennis, and Elizabeth Prestridge by professions of faith in Jesus Christ. By the end of 1820, the church had thirty-three members, a growth of sixty-four percent since the founding. The church did not have a pastor after six months and moved in November to select one. November 18 was set aside "as a day of fasting and prayer to Almighty God to direct our minds a right in the choice of a pastoral supply." Three ministers had preached at Ocmulgee Church prior to November 18. John Tubb and William Harrod preached in September, and Charles Crow on November 5. On the appointed day, the congregation gave serious consideration to the matter and chose Charles Crow as pastor. He was not present, and Reddick Simms was sent to give him notice of his election. Charles continued as pastor at Ocmulgee until April 28, 1822, serving sixteen months during his first tenure.

Thirteen days after his election as pastor, Sarah Harlan gave birth to her final child who was named Jesse M., born on December 1, 1820. Sarah Harlan's fate is a mystery. She does not appear on the rolls of Ocmulgee Church and no grave or headstone has been found to supply the missing information. In all likelihood, Sarah lies buried in an unmarked grave on the property owned by Charles Crow south of the Ocmulgee Church site in the northeast corner of Section 30. The cemetery at the church was not established at the time of her death and burials in private plots were common in that day. In 1820, Sarah was forty-five years of age, and one wonders if she died as the result of complications associated with Jesse's birth. Whatever Sarah's fate, the last note of her this writer has found is Jesse's birth. Had Sarah Harlan lived much beyond the Crow family's early days in the county, one must believe that evidence would be available.

Chapter 11

Circuit Rider and Evangelist

The formation of a government for Perry County preceded the constitution of Ocmulgee Church by a mere fifty-three days less than two months. The county government was located at Perry's Ridge in a crude log building constructed to serve as a temporary courthouse. An 1819 map shows no roads leading to and from Perry's Ridge, which would serve as the seat of government for the next two years. In May 1822, the county seat moved to Marion, which did not exist in 1820.

This description of the first county seat in a log house on a roadless tract of land in the heart of the wilderness gives a feeling for the country to which Charles Crow moved in 1819. For decades, most roads were no more than stump filled trails or paths through the woods. Rain swelled unbridged streams causing the traveler to swim or abandon his journey. Travel on horseback or foot was the only practical mode of moving about in most cases. As late as 1832, only one person attending the Cahaba Baptist Association meeting at Hopewell Church in western Perry County arrived in a buggy. The rest came on horseback or foot. There was no ferry across the Cahaba River until August 6, 1822 and the price for a man and horse to cross was twelve cents.

While Charles was pastor at Ocmulgee, he did not serve that congregation alone to the exclusion of other churches. Ocmulgee met once a month leaving him free to direct his attention to other churches and activities. This was a necessity in those days due to the shortage of ministers in Perry County and the State of Alabama. There was no Baptist preacher in the state until 1808, eleven short years before Charles migrated to Alabama. In 1820, there were only sixty preachers in the entire state.

A review of Perry County marriages for 1820 shows that most marriage ceremonies were performed by judges and justices of the peace. Of the first forty-two marriages recorded, Ministers of the Gospels performed only nine, or twenty per cent. Isaac Suttles performed the first ceremony by a preacher on October 8, 1820, and Charles Crow performed the second on March 1, 1821.

During the first three years of existence, only four ministers Isaac Suttles, Charles Crow, William Calloway and John Ryan performed ceremonies. This indicated the dearth of ministers in Perry County. Once outside the Oakmulgee Creek community, ministers were rare. Siloam Church historian Lovelace records, "There were few preachers in Perry County at this time and every minister served several churches. Rev. Charles Crow was pastor at Concord, Hopewell, Shiloh, Oakmulgee, Siloam and perhaps other churches during the years of 1820 to 1845." These churches were widely separated. Hopewell was about twenty-five straight-line miles from the Oakmulgee Creek area. Concord was seven miles north and Shiloh about the same distance to the northeast. Siloam, in Marion, was about twenty miles away. Another writer states, "During the years of his ministry in Alabama, Charles Crow labored mostly as an evangelist; preaching, baptizing, organizing churches, yet always had pastoral care of one or two churches, preaching to them once a month as was customary in Perry County and Alabama at that time." The memorialist of A. G. McCraw writes of Charles Crow's early days, "at this period there were few evangelical preachers . . . consequently there was a destitution of faithful laborers. About this time, that holy man of God and eminent minister, Rev. Charles Crow, came to Alabama, and became pastor of the Ocmulgee Church."

There can be little question that Charles Crow labored as a circuit riding minister to several churches in Perry County and as an evangelist to others. To meet his appointments with scattered congregations, he traveled through mostly uncultivated country on horseback, swimming or fording streams and "resting at the close of a wearisome day in the log cabin of a poor brother who possessed only the scant necessities of subsistence yet welcoming with joyful heart the beloved messenger of good tidings."

In 1820, Charles was fifty years old. His exposure to the elements and routinely difficult journeys through unimproved woods must have become difficult as the years of his life added up one by one. He was doubtlessly a hardy and strong individual who was, in the words of Dr. W. B. Crumpton, a "heroic pioneer." Charles seems untiring in his efforts to preach the Gospel. Keynotes of messages from those days were God's sovereignty and man's dependence on God. The evidence seems to indicate that Charles was popular and well received by the people as he went from settlement to settlement calling people to faith in God. The reader should continue to reflect that preaching and church work occupied only a part of Charles' time and attention. He had to earn a living for his motherless family of nine children in those early years. It would be 1825 before his children would start to leave home and about 1842 three years before his death before the last child departed from his care.

Chapter 12

Siloam Ministry

Charles Crow continued to serve as pastor of Ocmulgee Church from November 18, 1820 until April 28, 1822, a period of seventeen months. During this time, he guided the congregation into a pattern of operation and behavior that was the mirror image of the Bush River Church. When one reads the Bush River Journal and the Ocmulgee Church Minutes, the similarities are strikingly obvious. Both were stern with members and required adherence to a strict code of conduct as judged by the congregation and its leadership; both injected the church into disputes between individual members and applied the church's discipline when the parties to the dispute did not respond in a way the church thought proper; both sought and accepted Negroes, free and slave, as members of the church and were sincere in their ministry to them, but maintained white superiority in the church leadership and government; both encouraged young ministers who rose out of the congregation and were careful to insure their suitability to become ministers of the Gospel; and both established and operated the church's government in almost exactly parallel ways.

It should be accepted that these characteristics of the Ocmulgee Church met with the approval and were supported by Charles Crow. As such, they give insight into his mind and thinking on these matters. During the 1820-1822 period, events progressed along the Oakmulgee. Jesse Crow was born and Sarah Harlan died. Stephen McCraw, Charles' old friend and neighbor died. Stephen grew ill in February 1821 and wrote his last will and testament. On April 2, 1821, he died and was the first person buried in the Ocmulgee Church cemetery. On October 4, 1821, Charles expanded his land holdings and was granted a land patent on 157.8 acres, six miles north of his Oakmulgee Creek property. The certificate # 123 was signed by James Monroe, President of the United States and reads in part, " . . . whereby it appears that full payment has been made by the said Charles Crow according to . . . the Act of Congress on the 24th of April 1820 entitled and act making further provisions for the sale of Public lands . . . " On April 28, 1822, " . . . br. Crow petitioned to be released from further obligations as pastoral supply for the church. The church agrees in the Affirmation." In this way the departure of Charles Crow from the Ocmulgee Church was noted in the church minutes.

Charles resigned to accept the invitation of the Siloam Woman's Society of Marion, Alabama to come to that village to found a church there. Dr. Holly states in the Alabama Baptist that " . . . he was becoming increasingly concerned about the moral status of the inhabitants of Marion. Open bar rooms, bawdy houses, street fights, were common in this frontier town . . . Marion has been represented as notorious for these displays of wickedness. . . . " Dr. Holly is correct about Marion in 1822 and the decade that followed. Marion had three hotels, three stores, but no less than eleven taverns. " . . . drinking at that period was as common as eating." There was " . . . no social stigma connected with heavy drinking." "Rowdyism, public drunkenness and bloody encounters were daily occurrences." Billy Price's dog dram shop across from the courthouse was the "lounging place for all the loafing population for many miles around." These men were " . . . the originates of all the mischief perpetrated in Marion for the succeeding ten years." Having established the Ocmulgee Church and launched it successfully, Charles turned the church over to his neighbor, Noah Haggard, who was elected as pastor by the congregation.

Crow now turned his attention and efforts to what he must have considered a fertile field for God's work wicked Marion. Marion was a small crossroads village when he arrived there to found the Siloam Church. "Siloam Church was constituted June 1822 by Elders Charles Crow and William Calloway . . . At that time only a few log cabins were located in the heart of the county . . . " From records available, it appears nine persons were present when the church was organized. A meetinghouse was erected on a quarter acre of land set aside for churches in Marion, and the congregation received title to it on June 4, 1824. Here Charles preached one weekend a month for the next eight years. It would be less than objective to call his ministry at Siloam Church a success. He did not reform "wicked" Marion as he intended. The people there did not respond significantly to his ministry. "Early records state that Crow's ministry at the Siloam Church was began under great discouragement. 'But few could be drawn out to hear the Gospel, while crowds were assembled at places of amusement and dissipation.' . . . during his ministry the church membership increased to thirty-nine members."

The Siloam Church would go on later to cast wide influence in the town of Marion and across the state of Alabama. The wicked of Marion would eventually come to repent their sins and make the town the center of the Baptist faith in the state. But in 1829, Charles was highly discouraged by his results there, which amounted to adding, on average, only 3.75 members for each year at Siloam. "After long prayer and contemplation, Charles Crow resigned his pastorate of the Siloam Baptist Church . . . and joined other members of his family and friends in the Oakmulgee community joining the church there by letter." The years at Siloam may have had discouraging results for Charles, but his contribution to God's work outside Marion was greatly successful. These were the years when his experience and organizational abilities were to shine brightly in his work with the Cahaba Baptist Association and the Alabama Baptist Convention.

Chapter 13

Cahaba Baptist Association and Alabama Baptist Convention

When Charles Crow went to the Siloam Church in 1822, he took with him a secondary interest rooted in his work in Newberry County with the Bethel Association. He could see that Baptist efforts in Alabama were disorganized, and in 1823, he attached himself to the Cahaba Baptist Association of churches located in central Alabama. He probably rose to prominence in the association on the strength of a circular letter he wrote at the 1823 meeting on "Church Discipline."

His talents and abilities were quickly recognized. He was elected the association's moderator the following year and served in that capacity for the next twenty consecutive years. His repeated choice as moderator is a tribute in itself to the esteem with which his fellow ministers and association laymen held him. Charles recognized and understood the Baptist view of individual and church freedom. The Baptist clergy and local churches demanded freedom from high church officials and guarded that freedom. When the presbytery constituted the Ocmulgee Church it gave the congregation " . . . full power and church authority to carry into effect every part of the business of a church independent of any other church whatsoever." In other words, Ocmulgee was constituted as a totally independent congregation free from any outside authority. All power rested with the congregation.

Understanding and supporting this view, Crow recognized that many Baptist pastors and churches were fearful and hesitant about entering any cooperative relationship with other churches. His job was to show these churches the necessity for the formation of working relationships among churches if Baptists were to be effective in their support of missions, education and benevolent causes beyond the scope and ability of a single local church. It was to this end that Charles directed his efforts for twenty years to promote an association composed of a voluntary fellowship of churches. He would take these same principles to the Alabama State Convention which grew out of the association meetings.

Preaching, debates and conversations characterized the Association meetings. The preaching was animated and the business usually conducted in harmony. In October 1826, the Association met at the Ocmulgee meeting house. Charles Crow again wrote the circular letter entitled "Practical Godliness" which is said to be worthy of note. In 1828, the meeting was held at Hopewell Church, which was one of the churches where Charles ministered. During the years of his tenure as Association moderator, there was a strong and progressive domestic missionary spirit. For many years, they kept one or more missionaries in the field. Charles Crow was sent as a delegate of the Siloam Church to the organizational meeting of the Alabama Convention at Salem Church near Greensboro, Alabama in 1823. He was chosen the first President of the Alabama State Convention, but the volume of business was small in the organization's first year. The consequences, however, were far reaching. Missionaries were appointed, ministerial education was planned, and closer cooperation among Baptists in the state was begun. Charles was reelected the sixth president in 1832 when the Convention met at Ocmulgee Church.

In its early years, the State Convention was plagued with conflicts and divisions and almost failed. Dr. Holly tells us that "Had it not been for a devout few such as Crow and Holcombe, the convention movement would have met with failure. Crow, with his enthusiasm and timeless energy, was a dominant factor in keeping this loosely knit organization together."

While struggling with problems facing the Cahaba Association and Alabama Convention, Crow had a vision of an even broader association of churches covering multiple states. "He was interested in furthering organization of the church and often expressed the desirability of organizing a Baptist Association to include other states in the region. His age and the disorganized state of transportation and communication precluded the pursuance of this objective. However, he lived to see this accomplished and when told of the organization of the Southern Baptist Convention in Augusta, Georgia, he expressed pleasure in that he had live to see his dream come true."

Chapter 14

The Crow Family in 1830

Charles Crow rejoined the Ocmulgee Church on January 24, 1829, having recently resigned his membership at Siloam Church. Dr. Holly states that part of the motivation was to " . . . join other members of his family and friends in the Oakmulgee community . . . " In 1829 30, Charles' family was expanded. Some of his children had married and left his household. The grandchildren were adding up and probably numbered ten. All of Charles' children except his oldest child Elizabeth, age 33, and her family were residing in Perry County in 1830. Six of his eleven children had established families of their own. Elizabeth was still in South Carolina with her husband, Solomon Smith and six children, which constituted her family at the time. She moved to Perry County six years later where she lived out her years. The Smiths eventually had at least ten children.

Martha Crow, age 30, married James Meredith in South Carolina around 1819 and, like Elizabeth, did not migrate with her father when he moved to Alabama. She and James moved to Georgia around 1821 where their second child, Permelia M., was born in 1822. James died, but when and where is unknown. Likewise, when Martha arrived in Perry County is unknown, but she was there by August 24, 1826, the date she married Thomas Harvill. Martha and Thomas are known to have had at least one child together. Nothing more is known about her except that she preceded her father in death.

Silas Harlan Crow, age 27, married Sarah A. Martin, daughter of Claiborne and Frances Martin, on August 13, 1827. Charles' friend and fellow minister, William Calloway, who was a member of the constituting presbytery at Ocmulgee Church in 1820, conducted the ceremony. The couple had four children before Silas' death in 1838. Jane F. Crow, age 25, married Abraham W. Jackson around 1825, but the date and place are unknown. Abraham was born in Greene County, Georgia in 1805. His parents, Green B. and Clarisey Jackson, had migrated to Perry County from Georgia in 1819 and settled along the Little Oakmulgee Creek about six miles north of the Ocmulgee Church. By 1830, Jane had given birth to at least three children - Charles Green, age 3; Silas C., age 2; and Sarah M. E., age 1. She would give birth to a total of nine children and die before her father. The date of her death is unknown, but she was alive in 1838. Abraham remarried in 1841 so her death occurred between those two dates.

Elijah Palmer Crow, age 23, married Fedelia West, the first of his two wives, on December 3, 1826. The couple did not have any children in 1830 but had two daughters before Fedelia's death around 1834 or 1835. After Fedelia's death, Elijah married Fanny Oldham Blakey on October 21, 1835 and had moved to Bibb County, Alabama in 1836. Mary Crow, age 21, married Thomas Billingsley on October 10, 1826. Mary was another of four Crow children who did not outlive her father. It is known that she died before 1837, the year Thomas remarried. They had two children, but their birth years are unknown. Thomas was born in South Carolina in 1799. The remaining five Crow children were still in Charles' household in 1830. Joshua was 19 and left home two years later; Joseph W. W. was 16 and did not depart for another five years; Jonathan was 14; Rebecca was 11; and Jesse was 9. It will be recalled that Sarah Harlan seems to have died in late 1820 or shortly thereafter. Charles remained a widower for about six years until he married Sarah McCraw in 1827 in a ceremony performed by Noah Haggard who was then pastor at Ocmulgee Church. In 1830, Charles was sixty years old and had been remarried three years. The 1830 census shows Charles with a household of ten people six males and four females. The age ranges listed for the household are consistent with the ages of Charles, Sarah McCraw, Joshua, Joseph, Jonathan, Rebecca, and Jesse. This leaves a male, aged 10 - 15, and two females, aged 10 - 15 and 50 - 60, unaccounted for. None of their age ranges are consistent with any of the other Crow children. The young boy and girl are probably the orphaned Henry H. and Permelia Meredith, the children of Martha Crow and James Meredith. The older female is a mystery.

The writer believes that part of the reason Charles returned to the Oakmulgee Creek community was so he could devote more time to his farm. Successful cotton farming was profitable and yields were high in Perry County making it one of the top cotton producing counties in Alabama. A cotton farmer's prospects for increasing his wealth were good for anyone who could accumulate capital, land and labor. In the 1830's, Perry County experienced a rapid transformation in population. The county was sixty-two per cent white in 1930 **[John Note: 1830?]**. This was the last census that would show a white majority.

By 1840, the black population would increase 240 per cent and represent fifty-four per cent of the county's population; in 1850, Negroes would be sixty-three per cent of the total. Cotton culture was the cause of this shift in population as people rushed to acquire land and labor in the 1830's. It appears Charles anticipated the pending growth. On September 15, 1828, he sold 555.6 acres of Dallas County land for $1,400, or $2.52 an acre, to his son in law Thomas Billingsley. Since Charles did not invest in land again until 1838, it is reasonable to presume he used the money to capitalize his expanded venture in cotton production. In 1828, he still owned 316.2 acres after selling the Dallas County land to Billingsley, and probably did not need more land. But he did need labor, and by 1830 he had acquired twelve slaves to go with his acreage. This workforce, combined with the three teenage sons still in his household, had the potential to achieve significant cotton production.

During the 1830's, Charles' children acquired land too. If one views a map displaying a layout of land owned by the children and sons in law, a picture emerges showing most of the Crow children clustered in plots of land around and near their father and the Ocmulgee Church. Only Silas, among the sons, breaks the pattern. His land is in the southwestern part of the county about fourteen miles due west of Charles. In the 1840's, some of the Crow children and grandchildren began to leave Perry County for homes further west in Mississippi, Louisiana and Arkansas, or in other Alabama counties. But in the early 1830's, the Crow family was still together living clustered along the Oakmulgee.

Chapter 15

Return to Ocmulgee Church

Charles' return to the Ocmulgee Church in 1829 was six years and nine months after his departure in 1822. It should not be assumed he moved his family out of the community and relocated them in Marion while he was at Siloam Church. There is evidence to indicate he did not move but commuted to his preaching obligations in Marion and elsewhere from his farm along the Oakmulgee. During this period, Charles continued to own the land he settled in 1819 near the church, and he did not own any Marion land or property. His family engaged in activities that indicate they were living in the Oakmulgee community. The men who married during the decade of the 1820's all married girls from families in the settlement. William Calloway, a minister who lived in the area, performed Mary and Silas Crow's marriages.

Charles also married a woman from an Oakmulgee family in 1827, and Noah Haggard conducted the ceremony. In 1823, Charles asked the Ocmulgee Church to settle a dispute between himself and James Woods of the Bogue Chitto Church. The nature of this dispute is unknown, but the church sent Reddick Simms, church clerk, James Griffin and Matthias Dennis to deal with the difficulty. In January and August 1827, Charles preached at Ocmulgee. In April 1828 one of the Crow boys " . . . gave himself to the Watch Care of the church, she therefore receives him with Christian affection and wish him to enjoy all of the privileges of the Church . . . " This son is not identified, but was probably Jesse Crow, the youngest son. On June 20, 1828, Sarah McCraw, who married Charles sixteen months earlier, joined Ocmulgee Church seven months before Charles. The inference here is that the children, or at least one of them, and the wife were living in the settlement.

Charles did not return to Ocmulgee Church as pastor. Noah Haggard had that job. Crow continued to supply the pulpit at Siloam through 1830 when he resigned and was succeed by William Calloway. It is obvious, however, that Charles' interest in 1829 was at Ocmulgee Church and in the community. Nearing sixty years of age, the rigors of primitive travel probably exhausted his strength, and he sought a more favorable field of service and the comfort of his plantation. At Ocmulgee Church, he could have both. During the years Charles ministered at Siloam, Pastor Noah Haggard, who also ministered at Providence Church for a period beginning in 1824, led the Ocmulgee Church. In Charles' absence, the church added about eighty new members, including eighteen slaves, twenty-three members were dismissed and five were excluded, giving a net of about fifty-two members gained.

The lack of response to the church's ministry was a matter of concern for the church, so they set aside the fourth of May, 1827 " . . . as a day of fasting and prayer to Almighty God that his people might have more of his Spirit kindled in their hearts . . . " The church struggled with a number of problems including mission support, members abuse of alcohol, disputes among members, need for a new meeting house, and member discipline. But it was a period when the church moved forward gaining in membership, erecting a new meeting house, maintaining a mission in the home of Henry Haynes for a year, supporting the Cahaba Baptist Association and Alabama Convention, and nurturing young ministers who rose out of the congregation. At first, the church refused to become involved with the Mission Board in support of domestic missions but was only cool on the subject in 1823. The church soon joined the mission support churches in the Cahaba Association under the influence of Charles Crow.

Intoxicants troubled prominent members of the church such as Ephriam Butler, James Griffin and William Greer. Consumption of alcohol was not a cause of church discipline, and abstinence was not an objective. However, the church condemned drinking to excess or intoxication. Selling alcohol was not an offense, but " . . . retailing spirits on the Sabbath . . . was considered unGodly conduct." The temperance movement would come later, and Carry Nation, the temperance agitator, was not born until 1846. The church recognized the evil of alcohol, but the message of the Bible was temperance, not abstinence, and the church did not forbid consumption entirely. At the July 1825 church conference " . . . the church agreed to build a new meeting house . . . " It is uncertain if there was an "old" meeting house. The only prior reference to a meeting house was five years earlier in 1820 when the men of the church met to " . . . fix on the site of a meeting house . . . " Whatever the case, the congregation set about building a meeting house in 1825. The house was rectangular shaped with adjacent walls of unequal length measuring thirtysix by thirty feet, yielding 1,080 square feet. The congregation constructed the walls of logs hewn to a flat surface on two sides and notched together at each corner. The cracks were filled with mortar of clay. The ground was the floor. The roof construction was contracted out and was doubtlessly made of hand rived boards.

The meetinghouse was built on land belonging to William Greer. The house had six windows and fourteen pews. The rafters were held together with eighty spikes made by William Burges, a member of the church. The roof contractor charged $40.00 to do the job and the church paid $5.50 for fifty-five pounds of nails making the total cost of the new meeting house $45.50. The structure was finished in December 1825, six months after deciding to build it. The log church would remain in use for about nine years when it would be replaced by a frame structure. During the decade, several guest preachers, other than Charles Crow, preached at Ocmulgee including William West, William Morely, William Norris, William Calloway, and John Dennis.

In 1827, the congregation established a fund for traveling preachers from which the clerk could pay two dollars to ministers who merited it. Young ministers began to rise out of the congregation. John Dennis was the principal congregational preacher of the period although some members thought him not "industrious" enough. Nevertheless, the church gave him permission to preach "in neighboring churches" and gave him a license to preach in September 1827.

Two other church members made professions of faith during this time who were destined for prominence as Alabama ministers. George Everett was converted on April 21, 1827 and Abner Gary McCraw on May 25, 1828. Both would be nurtured by the church and Charles Crow emerging to provide service and leadership for their Lord in later years. A fourth case ended differently. Cyrus, a "servant" belonging to Robert English, was silenced when it was discovered he was preaching to other slaves. Cyrus had been a member of the church since August 1820, but the ministry at the time was reserved for whites. Cyrus would leave the church in January 1829, the month and year Charles Crow returned to Ocmulgee Church. It is quite unlikely Charles found any of this a surprise when he rejoined the church. In the small, tight knit settlement where everyone's business was community business, it would have been hard for him to remain uninformed. He moved easily back into the congregation as a member, but his prominence as a preacher was sure to land him a leadership role at Ocmulgee.

Chapter 16

Call to Ocmulgee Pastorate

Charles did not immediately step into a leadership role at Ocmulgee when he rejoined the church. In fact, he went long periods without taking any official part at all. He still had to attend to his duties at Siloam Church for almost a year plus his responsibilities as moderator of the Cahaba Association. He also had State Convention interests to occupy his attention as well as a cotton plantation to oversee. Nevertheless, opportunities for service were abundant and a man of Charles' stature could not avoid drawing requests for help. On March 28, 1829, Charles was asked to interview and question a church member named Leticia Ann Griggsley who expressed a belief in the universalist doctrine that the wicked will not be punished eternally for their sins. After the session, Charles reported to the church that Leticia did indeed hold to the belief and would not recant it. Since Ocmulgee held the view of eternal punishment for the wicked, the church excluded Leticia as Charles recommended in his report.

In 1829, Charles served as a church delegate to the general meeting and Cahaba Association and on a committee to alter the rules of decorum. In September he rose in conference to " . . . inform the church that unfavorable reports are in circulation relative to sister (Pherila) Tubb," but the reports were later discredited. Beyond this, Charles took no further official role in the government of the church in his first year of membership. It is doubtful that he was without influence. Sitting quietly in the pews hardly seems possible for the venerable dean of Alabama preachers. One expects he moved among the members dispensing advice and counsel and addressing matters brought forward in church conferences. During the year, George Everett and Abner G. McCraw were encouraged by the church " . . . to exercise their gifts in neighboring churches."

In later years, these young preachers would attest to the influence of Charles Crow on their lives during this period. In 1830, the following year, Crow took no significant role in the church's business until August. One suspects he had resigned as minister at Siloam by that time and was more available to the Ocmulgee Church. Beginning in August, he was part of a presbytery traveling to Shiloh Church to ordain Jeremiah Reeves. He was again chosen a delegate to the Cahaba Association, and conducted the deacon ordination services of Providence McAdams giving " . . . a summary view of the qualifications of a deacon." The year 1831 was to see a change in Charles' status at the church. His mere presence in the church must have threatened the role of the appointed minister, Noah Haggard. Charles' honored standing and the esteem in which the membership and clergy held him had to impact on the mind of Haggard. Charles had been a member at Ocmulgee for over two years now, giving Haggard ample opportunity to measure and compare the membership's reaction to Charles' presence and availability.

March 25, 1831, seems to have been a pivotal date for Haggard. On that date the church "received a request from Salem Church praying the assistance of Bro. Crow to aid in the settlement of a difficulty on a doctrinal point." The church voted to send "father Crow," John Dennis, Abner McCraw and Reddick Simms to "perform that duty." This event seems to have had a major impact on Noah Haggard. He had been bypassed. The Salem Church had specifically requested Crow's assistance, ignoring Haggard's role as pastor. Then, the congregation named a delegation to accompany Crow, and Noah was not included. Haggard's reaction was to " . . . inform the church that his mind had become somewhat difficulted, and in consequence of which he gave up the pastoral charge of the church." Noah's feeling were injured by this incident, and he surrendered his role as pastor on the spot knowing the church wanted Charles Crow in that position. It must have been clear to Noah the church would never be satisfied until Charles filled the principal leadership role. Noah had served the Ocmulgee congregation as pastor for almost nine years. The church had experienced growth and progress under his pastorate. He deserves credit for his contribution and service as the second pastor at Ocmulgee. He would remain a member at Ocmulgee until February 1834, and would serve as moderator, on committees and preached on six occasions through 1838.

The following month the church met on Saturday, April 23, 1831. Charles Crow preached the sermon, which was followed by the church conference. The third order of business that day was to elect a pastor to replace Haggard. The church minutes recorded the event this way. "On motion of bro (Providence) McAdams, the church proceeded to vote for a pastor to serve the church twelve months. The voice of the church taken bro. C. Crow is made choice of which he accepts." With his election as pastor, Charles, at the age of sixty-one years, began the final stretch of his career. He served in that position for the next fourteen years. During this decade and one half, the church entered a period of progress and significant service to God. Charles saw his personal fortune improve and his children and grandchildren come to know God. He also witnessed the death of four of his eleven children, the departure from Oakmulgee community of other children, the rise of the slavery controversy in the Baptist Church, and other significant events of his day. But in 1831, Charles appears to have what he wanted. He was home in the settlement along the Oakmulgee Creek where he was comfortable and respected with his friends and family.

Chapter 17

Decade of the 1830's

Charles Crow's second term as pastor at Ocmulgee began early in the decade of the 1830's. During this decade, there were many changes in the church and in Charles' family. Crow's burdens as minister were greatly eased by the presence of a number of preachers in the congregation to assist him. These included Noah Haggard, John Dennis, Abner G. McCraw, O.M. Peterson, George Everett, William West, Malachiah Reeves, S.L. Larkin, and D.T. Dupree. In addition, traveling and neighboring preachers would make a contribution from time to time. During the decade, the preaching duties were shared by all of the preachers. George Everett preached more than any of the other ministers, including Crow who preached only one out of five sermons.

George Everett 31.5 %

Malachiah Reeves 1.9 %

Abner G. McCraw 25.9 %

S. L. Larkin 1.9 %

Charles Crow 22.2 %

O. M. Peterson 1.9 %

Noah Haggard 5.4 %

William West 0.9 %

John Dennis 2.8 %

94.4 %

The remaining sermons were preached by others such as J. Veasey, John Clark (a blind man), Jeremiah Reeves, and a minister named Thomas. In addition to carrying the bulk of preaching duties, these ministers regularly represented the church and assisted Charles with his duties at association and general meetings. Crow was a delegate to every meeting of the Cahaba Association and state convention.

Reddick Simms, church clerk, served as a delegate in the early years of the decade. In 1834, Abraham W. Jackson replaced him. Jackson was a delegate and alternate to the association in the later years and to the convention in 1836, 1838 and 1839. However, the two ministers who were the most frequently chosen delegate to church meetings were McCraw and Everett. One or the other, or both, were always by Crow's side during this period. The McCraw memorialist states: "This was an interesting period in the history of Ocmulgee Church marked by the number of young ministers raised up among her membership. These received the especial notice and instructions of the revered, Charles Crow. He was one of nature's great men, deeply pious, sound in theology, and versed in the truths of the Bible. He was a venerated teacher and example to his 'boys' as he with paternal love, termed the young preachers, and greatly rejoiced in their success." Charles took special note of Abner McCraw. "The experienced vision of" Crow "soon perceived in the growing talents and piety of his young brother, an evidence that God's spirit had called him to the work of the ministry." McCraw became one of the most outstanding Baptist ministers of his day . . . " Charles prepared young Abner well. When Crow died, Abner McCraw was ready to succeed him as pastor at Ocmulgee. He would go on to serve other churches and two terms as President of the Alabama Baptist Convention.

In September 1831, Charles presided at the ordination of McCraw and Everett, delivering a discourse at the Ocmulgee Church to open the ceremony. William Calloway questioned the young preachers regarding their beliefs and faith. Both men spoke of their call to the ministry under questioning by Malachiah Reeves. Their responses being affirmative and satisfactory, they were allowed entry into the presbytery. John Dennis closed the ceremony with prayer for their prosperity and success as the ministers of Christ.

Crow was also fortunate to have two sons in law, Solomon Smith and Abraham W. Jackson, to aid in his ministry. Solomon served as a deacon and in other ways. He was a Godly and upright man. Jackson was especially helpful, serving as a deacon, song leader, church clerk , representing the congregation as conference moderator, and as a delegate to meetings attending to church business. Jackson later became a minister and missionary to Louisiana and Texas. Charles needed plenty of help. His position with the Cahaba Association continued, and in 1832, he was reelected president of the State Convention when Ocmulgee Church hosted the annual meeting. The convention was failing and had no president in 1831. He struggled to keep the convention an effective organization when controversy was retarding cooperation among the churches. Fortunately, Hosea Holcombe would take over as president in 1833, and the succeeding five years. Working together, Crow and Holcombe rescued the convention from ruin. The convention returned to Ocmulgee Church again in 1835 and 1839. At the 1835 convention, held in November, the slavery issue occupied the attention of the delegates. Most leading Baptist laymen, and some pastors, such as Crow and McCraw, owned slaves and considered this morally acceptable. The 1835 convention passed a resolution denouncing certain northern "fanatics" whose purpose it was to interfere "With the relation of master and slave . . . " The slavery subject would be revived again in 1840 and 1844. It was the cause of much controversy. During the decade, the church added about 166 new members or, on average, nineteen a year. Of these, twenty per cent were Negroes. Separations from the church totaled 118 for a net gain of forty-eight members over the period. By arranging the members added and subtracted, the pattern of coming and going is seen.

Problems associated with the excessive use of alcohol among church members improved. During the decade, there was not a single disciplinary case brought before the church. This does not mean there were not problems. In 1835 Noah Haggard posed a query to the church: "Is it agreeable to gospel order for a baptist to visit a grog shop, or any place of wickedness, and there drink spirituous liquors with the drunken?" The church agreed to take up the question the following month. Unfortunately, the minutes for that month were "mislaid" and the church's answer is unknown. However, by asking the question, and asking it in a condemning way, Noah Haggard obviously had some church member in mind. Church discipline continued to be enforced, but the number of actions declined when compared to the previous decade. Actions against members who were slaves accounted for half of the discipline cases, including one excommunication for adultery. Charles' slave Wooly was excluded for " . . . living in disorder," but he was restored to fellowship two years later. The church remained intolerant of dissent. The congregation's decisions were law and, like court judgment, once the decision was made, it was final. William Tankersly discovered this in 1833 when he protested a decision settling a dispute with Sally Perry. The church promptly declared a "misfellowship" and excluded Tankersly from the church. Discipline cases of the period involved settling member disputes, two cases of "living in disorder," theft, making false statements, embezzling money, adultery, fishing on the Sabbath, using profane language and bigamy.

With Crow as pastor, the church continued to support missions strongly through the association and convention. In 1838, the congregation was moved by the pleas of missionaries in Burma after reading a publication about them. They took up a special collection to support the Burmese Mission. On January 26, 1833, the church began a building program. The deacons, including Abraham W. Jackson, were authorized to " . . . contract for the building of a new meeting house." Fifteen months later on April 26, 1834, the deacons were " . . . authorized to make sale of the old meeting house," and Charles Crow and Abraham W. Jackson were appointed " . . . to furnish the meeting house with a sufficient number of seats and steps . . . " and " . . . draft a bill of lumber and forward it to the saw mill." Over the coming months and years, the church would furnish and finish the meetinghouse. On June 19, 1834, the church ordered "a new table" which Abraham Jackson delivered in September at a cost of $4.50. On January 25, 1835, George Everett reported " . . . that he had got some paint and oil a remainder of that purchased for the painting of the meeting house." On July 25, 1835, Matthias Dennis reported " . . . that he has obeyed the request of the church in procuring a large Bible for her use."

The people of Ocmulgee Church were undoubtedly proud of their new church structure. Gone was the smelly old log meeting house with its dirt floor and spiders in the rafters. They had a painted frame structure with a real floor and new furnishings. The church was probably striving to finish the building before the Alabama Baptist Convention assembled there on November 7, 1835. One can only imagine the pride the Ocmulgee members felt when pastors and delegates from all over Alabama assembled there for the convention. As nice as the new meetinghouse must have been, it still did not have a ceiling or a means of heating. A ceiling was not authorized until February 1841. Charles Crow, Abraham Jackson, George Hopper, and Abner McCraw were appointed " . . . to prosecute the work and . . . to superintend the same . . . " In October 1841, with cold weather approaching, the church " . . . authorized bro. A. G. McCraw to furnish the house with a stove or stoves with instructions to have them up by the next meeting." The instructions to Abner McCraw have a sense of urgency and indicate that the brethren were tired of being cold at meetings. Hymn books preceded the ceiling and stove.

On March 26, 1836, Abraham Jackson was appointed to " . . . raise the tunes in the congregation." Without hymnbooks, Jackson had to read the lyrics one line at a time. This was called lining out the hymn, and he was probably delighted when, on May 27, 1837, the church authorized the purchase of Wats and Rippons hymnbooks and unspecified concordances. Charles Crow was authorized to select the concordances. Jackson's selection as congregational song leader must mean he had some musical talents. He possessed hymnbooks of his own. When the church needed additional books in June 1841, he sold them one dozen hymnals and called "upon the treasurer for an amount sufficient to pay for said books." In addition to building a new meetinghouse, the church secured title to the property upon which it was built, and increased the size of the property through a gift and by purchase. In March 1832, "Levi Martin made a donation of two and one-half acres of land adjoining the meeting house lot which the church thankfully received . . . " The meeting house stands on the extreme northeastern corner of section 19. Levi Martin bought eighty acres on January 26, 1832, directly north of the church in the southeastern corner of section 18. These two pieces of property join where the intersecting lines between the two sections meet. It is here that Martin's donated land is located.

The meetinghouse was built upon land belonging to William Greer which he had purchased in early 1819. Greer joined Ocmulgee Church in August 1823. He resigned in November 1831 and sold the land upon which the meetinghouse stood to H. G. Johnson. After building a fine new meetinghouse, the church realized they did not have title to the land. At first Mr. Johnson " . . . refused to make deed . . ." but relented and supplied a title when a church committee headed by A. G. McCraw called upon him relative to the matter. In July 1839, the church rounded out its property when it purchased " . . . a small portion (of) land adjoining from Abram Summer . . . " Abraham Summer owned the property directly east of the meeting house in section 20. Summer was a church member and an early settler in the community, arriving a few months after Charles Crow and Stephen McCraw.

The splendid new meeting house, furnishings, hymnals, stove, and land additions are all signs of a prosperous membership, and a significant upgrade from the forty-five dollars and fifty cents log meeting house built nine years earlier. This progress took money, and the membership had to have enough extra cash to pay for it all. The facts are that in 1835 farmers and planters were enjoying a measure of prosperity as the result of cotton production and the demand for it. It was a period when successful farming operations increased the number of acres in cultivation and their Negro laborers. Charles Crow was prospering, too. In March 1837, the church in a grand gesture to Charles, voted that the contents of the church treasury be " . . . paid over to the pastor of the church . . . " This is the first indication of any pecuniary offering to an Ocmulgee pastor. Charles " . . . refused to take it . . . " and the money was " . . . retained in the treasury." The church never brought up the subject of remuneration or monetary gifts again as long as Crow was pastor. There were probably two reasons he refused the money.

First, a strong conviction that the gospel was free, and he would serve without pay. In the early days of the church, this was a fixed principle among Baptists. Crow was taught by the Separate Baptists and receiving pay for serving God was repugnant to him. The second reason he refused the money may have been because his own farming operation was doing well. He was enjoying cotton profits along with the rest of the community. That he was doing well can hardly be questioned. On June 15, 1838, he purchased 120 acres of land from William and Sarah Davenport for a price of $1,183 or $9.86 per acre. This land was located in the southwestern corner of section 19, about three fourths of a mile from the Ocmulgee Church. It was originally owned by Stephen McCraw and was acquired by the Davenports after Stephen's death in 1821. The Davenport's migrated to central Arkansas from Perry County. Charles' son, Jonathan, would also move to Arkansas and marry the then widowed Sarah Davenport in 1871. Charles was not the only one buying land, and the Davenports were not the only people moving during the 1830's. Almost all the available land along the Oakmulgee Creek and the lower Cahaba River watershed was acquired during the decade. A study of the area's land plats attests to the fact that established landowners, their children, and recent arrivals, bought a large portion of the land available from the United States government.

Charles' daughter, Jane F. Crow , and her husband, Abraham W. Jackson, came to the community early in the decade. They purchased 126.8 acres of land from Joseph Person for $1,500 or $12.50 an acre, on June 5, 1830. Charles and Joshua Crow witnessed the transaction. The land was located one half mile directly west of Charles Crow's property. Abraham and Jane bought an additional 82.4 acres adjoining this property on the west side from the federal government on August 3, 1831. They joined the church six months later, and Abraham became the community's Justice of the Peace. Three years later on June 5, 1834, Abraham purchased another adjoining 41.2 acres from the United States government, giving him a total of 250.4 contiguous acres. Like most others along the Oakmulgee Creek, Abraham was a slave owner and cotton farmer. As cotton farming became more profitable, he expanded his land holdings again on October 25, 1838, by purchasing 176.3 acres from Aaron and Jane Moore. He paid $2,400 or $13.61 an acre for the land. In 1830 Abraham had four slaves, but by 1840 had acquired fifteen. His capital investments in land and labor indicate he was benefiting from the demand for cotton.

Before moving into the Ocmulgee Church community, Jane Crow had given birth to five children - Charles Green, Silas C., Sarah M. E., John B., and Mary Jane. Over the decade of the 1830's, she gave birth to four more children - Clara Matina, Elsa Frances, James W. and Rebecca J. The latter four were born in the Oakmulgee Creek area. Jane died sometime between the ages of thirty-three and thirty-six years of age. Like Sarah Harlan, no tombstone or evidence of her death has been found. Some grave markers have been lost in the Ocmulgee Cemetery, and Jane's may have been one of the one's destroyed or otherwise eliminated. After Jane's death, Abraham was left with nine children ranging in age from fifteen to three years in 1841. At the age of thirty-six, Abraham married twenty-six year old Sarah M. Corgill of Dallas County, Alabama. Silas Harlan Crow did not settle near, or join, the Ocmulgee Church. However, like others in the 1830's, he went about acquiring and selling land finally settling in western Perry County, northeast of Uniontown, along the Dallas County line in 1835. He and his wife, Sarah A. Martin, had four children before he died in 1838.

Elijah Palmer Crow married Fedelia West, the daughter of William West, a Baptist minister living in the area. Elijah and Fedelia married on December 3, 1826, and Charles Crow performed the ceremony. On January 4, 1832, Elijah purchased 79.7 acres, a half-mile southwest of his father, where he engaged in farming.

Ten months later, at the age of twenty-five years, he joined the Ocmulgee Church on a profession of faith. Fedelia died in 1834 or 1835, leaving Elijah with two daughters, age one and three years. Twenty-eight year old Elijah took as his second wife, Fanny Oldham Blakey on October 19, 1835. Fanny was eighteen when she married Elijah. Ten months later, Elijah resigned from Ocmulgee Church and moved to Bibb County, where he raised a large family totaling eleven children.

Charles' oldest child, Elizabeth, her husband, Solomon Smith, and family moved to Perry County from South Carolina in early 1835. They joined the Ocmulgee Church by letter in January 1835, and set about buying land. In April, Solomon purchased 210 acres from the United States Land Office. The land was in two tracts and located about two and one quarter miles northwest of Ocmulgee Church. Solomon added another forty acres to his holdings in 1836, and engaged in cotton farming employing Negro labor. Shortly after arriving in Alabama, he joined Gordon's Company of Alabama Militia and served during the Creek Indian Wars in Alabama during 1836 and 1837.

Elizabeth, known as Betsy, and Solomon lived out their years in Perry County and are buried in Ocmulgee Cemetery. Joshua B. Crow acquired 79.7 acres from his brother Elijah when he left for Bibb County in 1836, plus another 40.2 acres originally settled by John Waugh in 1819. Joshua married at the age of twenty-two to Lavina West and made a profession of faith in Christ at Ocmulgee Church on December 20, 1832. His father preached the day Joshua made his decision for Christ. Lavina came forward and joined the church the same day. Joshua did not remain long in the community. He resigned from Ocmulgee Church on February 27, 1836, three years after joining. He sold his land on February 13, 1837 to Jacob Leonard and moved to Marshall County, Mississippi, which is located on the Tennessee border just southeast of Memphis.

He remained in Mississippi for ten years, living briefly in DeSoto County, Mississippi before moving again to Harrison Township in White County, Arkansas. In Arkansas, Joshua became an extensive landowner and outstanding planter but lost his gains during the course of the Civil War. He fathered ten children and died in Searcy, Arkansas in 1866 at the age of fifty-five years. Joseph W. W. Crow married Elizabeth Hopper, daughter of George Hopper and Aquilla Williams, on February 4, 1834 at the age of eighteen years. He joined the Ocmulgee Church on a profession of faith on August 27, 1836 in his twenty-third year. Elizabeth joined the church two and one-half years later. Joseph purchased eighty-two acres of land a half mile northwest of the Ocmulgee Church from George W. Anderson on December 7, 1842, paying $300 or $3.66 an acre for it. This land originally belonged to Matthew A. Perry and Thomas Lowe. A. W. Jackson attested to the transaction as Justice of the Peace. Joseph remained in the community until 1860. He resigned from Ocmulgee on September 23, 1860 and moved to White County, Arkansas to reunite with his brothers, Joshua and Jonathan, and sister Rebecca who lived there. He died in Searcy, Arkansas on November 11, 1864 at the age of fifty-one years. He and Elizabeth were parents to ten children.

Jonathan Jackson Crow married Nancy McAdams, the daughter of Providence and Patient McAdams, in 1834. The couple had at least nine children. Jonathan joined the Ocmulgee Church on November 26, 1841 at the age of twenty-six years. He and Nancy resigned three years later on January 27, 1844 and moved to Union County, Arkansas. Jonathan lived there until 1850 when he again moved to Wilmington Township near West Point in White County, Arkansas where his brother Joshua lived. He later moved to Mount Vernon in Faulkner County where he is buried in the Mount Vernon Cemetery. Jonathan married three times. His second marriage was to Caroline Carmichael who died in 1871 and his third spouse was Sarah Davenport. He married Sarah on December 26, 1871 in Van Buren, Arkansas. He died on October 19, 1896 at the age of eighty-one years. Rebecca A. Crow married Abraham Dinet Greer at the age of twenty years on October 8, 1837. Abraham was born in 1813 in Georgia and was the son of William C. Greer and Delilah J. Haynes. In 1838 Rebecca and Abraham moved to Noxubee County, Mississippi. She had three children while living in Mississippi. In 1845, she moved to White County, Arkansas where three more children were born. Abraham died in 1850 at the age of thirty-seven but Rebecca lived to the age of seventy-two, dying at Judsonia, Arkansas on February 7, 1890. Unlike his brothers, Jesse M. Crow remained in Perry County and the Oakmulgee community all of his life. Jesse married Malissa C. Hopper, the seventeen-year-old daughter of George and Elizabeth Hopper, on June 10, 1842.

Four children were born to the union. Jesse joined the Ocmulgee Church on a profession of faith in November 1842 during a protracted meeting that lasted ten days and saved many souls. Jesse did not farm as an occupation like the other Crow children but established himself as a blacksmith and carriage maker in the Oak Grove settlement a short distance west of the Ocmulgee Church. Jesse died on February 13, 1853 at his home in Oak Grove at the young age of thirty-two. After Jesse's death, Malissa lived with her father until her own death six years later. Jesse and Malissa's three surviving children became the wards of her father. Jesse and Malissa are buried in the Ocmulgee Church. The decade of the 1830's brought Charles Crow a period of closeness with most of his family around him during at least part of the period. It also brought the sorrow of death and separation. Four of his children died during the 1830's - Silas, Jane, Martha and Mary. Elijah and Joshua moved away in 1836 and Rebecca in 1838. By the time he died, Charles had only three of his children living near him - Elizabeth, Joseph and Jesse.

Elijah was nearby in Bibb County but the others were far away in Mississippi and Arkansas. There was no shortage of grandchildren. Charles had about thirty-three grandchildren and six great grandchildren around him to bring joy, comfort and the sounds of youth. By the end of the decade, the Crow family began to separated into three groups. First, those children, grandchildren and great grandchildren who remained in Perry County and nearby counties. Some of the Crows, Smiths, Billingsleys, Kynerds, Fikes and other families remained in the area for decades after the death of Charles and down into the modern era. Second, the children of Jane F. Crow left in 1847 for DeSoto Parish, Louisiana where they remained for a quarter of a century before moving on to Texas, leaving descendants in both states. Third, four of the Crow children established a family branch in White and Faulkner counties in Arkansas, lived out their lives there and left children to carry out that segment of the family. As the decade ended, Charles Crow, at the age of sixty-nine, had less than six years to live.

Chapter 18

The Final Years 1840-1845

With the arrival of the year 1840, Charles Crow reached his twentieth year in Perry County. He turned seventy that year and had led a vigorous life on two frontiers in South Carolina, and in Alabama. It was a rugged existence with hardships and few frills. At seventy, he had already lived twice as long as was expected in his day. The years, however, were winding down for him. From here to the end, his strength diminished until he finally yielded to the superior power of death. Yet the record shows that he remained active at the Ocmulgee Church and on his plantation until the end.

However, the record also shows clearly that the torch was passing to the younger preachers and men in the congregation. After 1840, Charles preached only six sermons at Ocmulgee in six years. Once, he preached at the resolute demand of the congregation who "unanimously resolved that we request brother C. Crow to deliver the said sermon" at the next meeting. As in the previous decade, the plenteous preachers in the congregation carried the burden of Sabbath services. The principal preachers remained George Everett and Abner McCraw who delivered most of the sermons, but other preachers contributed, some new to the Ocmulgee pulpit. Abraham W. Jackson began to emerge as a preacher after a decade of serving the church in other ways. No longer satisfied to serve as a layman, Jackson entered the pulpit in 1843, preaching four of the sermons given that year at monthly meetings. In July 1843, the church licensed him to preach. Fourteen months later, he was ordained in services conducted by Charles Crow and a presbytery composed of Abner G. McCraw, George Everett and Elias George.

The young men were also representing the church as delegates at the various organization meetings. Charles continued to serve as moderator for the Cahaba Association until death ended that service. However, after 1841 he did not attend any district meetings or conventions. With the disorganized state of travel of that day, a man as elderly as Crow could probably not endure the journey. The Crow family was always represented at these meetings in the forms of Abraham Jackson, Solomon Smith or Joseph W. W. Crow. Slavery, the great divisive issue of the day, came to the surface again in 1840 as it had earlier in 1835. In that year, a convention of 110 Baptist delegates from thirteen northern states met in New York City in what was called the Baptist Abolition Convention. These delegates prepared a circular letter addressed to Southern slaveholding Baptists condemning slavery as a sin. They further resolved that no slave owner, or person connected with slavery, should be allowed to serve as a missionary.

This circular letter reached Ocmulgee Church in August 1840 and was laid before the congregation. Not everyone at the church owned slaves, but the leaders were mostly slaveholders including Charles Crow, his sons in law and his children. The church appointed a committee to draft a response to the letter for consideration by the church at the September meeting. The committee was composed of Charles Crow, Abner G. McCraw, George Everett, George Hopper, John E. Prestridge, Providence McAdams, Matthias Dennis, Robert Melton, Solomon Smith and Abraham W. Jackson. These men were the usual leaders of the church, mostly deacons, and were all slaveholders except Matthias Dennis.

The resolution resulting from this committee's deliberations took the position one would expect it to take. It characterized the circular letter of the Baptist abolitionist as attempting to " . . . effect a revolution in society and discord among Christians . . . " The committee resolved that " . . . the institution of slavery has existed since the days of Abraham . . . and is recognized by the Constitution of the United States . . . We believe that neither Northern fanatics or any other combinations have any right either moral or civil to interfere with that institution." The committee went on to suggest that southern Baptists develop another system to fund missionaries outside the Mission Board located in Boston and controlled by northerners. This controversy cooled down only to rise again four years later leading to the formation of the Southern Baptist Convention in 1845.

Charles Crow was a man of his time and his region. He lived with the traditions and institutions established by his ancestors and found them natural during his lifetime. As time passed, institutions changed and new ones were formed. But in 1840, slavery was firmly entrenched in the Oakmulgee Creek community. Charles Crow believed it to be moral and an acceptable social and economic practice. He also believed the Gospel should be preached to the Negro slaves, and that they should be taught the word of God. He undoubtedly believed those Christian principles of justice and owners in their dealing should practice righteousness with slaves. The Ocmulgee Church with Charles Crow as pastor was a reflection of Crow himself. The sixteenth member of the church was "Bobb a man of colour" who joined in July 1820, by presenting his letter. Bobb and other slaves were received into the church without distinction. Crow, and the church, was concerned about moral laxity in family relations and personal behavior of whites and blacks alike.

Not all Negroes at Ocmulgee Church were slaves. Mary King, a free black woman, came to the Oakmulgee Creek community in July 1843. She was born in 1790 in Tennessee and lived in Louisiana from 1825 until about 1840, when she arrived in Alabama. Four of her nine free children, Simon, Peter, Hester and Tom were members of the Ocmulgee Church. Mary was a next door neighbor of Jesse M. Crow and owned the property on which she lived. She could not read or write but operated a farm with the help of her children. Like most the whites in the community, Mary King was a slave-owner.

Life at Ocmulgee Church in the early 1840's was filled with practical and ordinary events less exciting than the slavery controversy. The church met annually to clean up the graveyard. The meetinghouse roof needed repairs, a ceiling was installed, stoves were installed for warmth in winter, and the graveyard was enclosed in a fence. Money was raised for missions. In 1840, the church "agreed to establish an arm of this church at Selma." In May 1842, the Selma Church became a reality, and six Ocmulgee members resigned to join the constitution of the Selma Church. Church discipline during the 1830's had been rather ordinary and subdued when compared with the early 1840's. The church, with Charles Crow as moderator, did the work of the Perry County courts by disciplining members for all manner of misbehavior and crimes. Oran Martin and Henry Burton were charged with bribery and taking a bribe. William Hesse acknowledged buying stolen goods. Green B. Jackson, the father of Abraham W. Jackson, brought his case against Washington Melton to the church rather than the courts. Washington had defrauded Green, then "run away." The abuse of alcohol became a problem once again, as it had been in the 1820's. George W. Anderson was excluded for drunkenness. Scott Vanderslice, John Marsh and Thomas Lowery were all accused of drinking to excess. Other cases involved profane swearing, attending a horse race, not attending church, improper conduct, lying, fighting, adultery, dancing and singing uncouth songs.

One of the central characteristics of the Ocmulgee Church in the 1840’s, was the "protracted meeting." This name was used to describe what in later times were called camp meetings or revivals. They were deeply spiritual meetings that promoted evangelism. The idea behind these meetings was to set a date to commence the meeting and continue with no established date to cease. They would continue as long as there was a response to the preached word of God. The first protracted meetings at Ocmulgee began in the late 1830's and were a failure based on the response. The first meeting began on June 24, 1837. It lasted three days and ended when only one slave came forward. The second was in July 1838. It lasted four days with the same result. Only one person responded. The results were so discouraging no meeting was attempted in 1839. In 1840, the meetings were revived. The results were apparently so dismal the church minutes did not even mention the results. Perhaps no one responded.

Charles Crow was not a supporter of protracted meetings and gave his consent for them only because the young preachers and congregation urged it upon him. These meetings were something new, and he resisted the change. The results of the first three meetings seem to support his position that God would not do his work through protracted meetings. "He had little faith in the extraordinary means of grace, and for a long time refused his consent to a protracted meeting at his church."

The year 1841 was the year he changed his mind about this means of evangelism. "He at length yielded to the solicitations of his brethren, and a meeting was appointed" to begin on November 26, 1841. "A large congregation assembled at the . . . meeting house . . . During the sermon by Elder A. G. McCraw, a deep feeling was manifested in the audience, and the old patriarch's heart melted; at the close of the sermon he rose, and with tearful emotion, exhorted his beloved people and bade his young brethren Godspeed. From this moment he entered with full soul into the work and fifty-seven converts were added to the church." Crow had only four years to live and during those years the protracted meeting would meet with success at Ocmulgee Church. The 1841 meeting lasted for ten days. ". . . eager listeners flocked to hear the story of the Cross. Often, when warmed by the fervid power of divine truth, the speaker closed his exhortations, the people rushed forward in scores, uncalled, to entreat the prayers of the pious. Again and again, strong men were so overwhelmed, that they sank down on the ground, unmanned and helpless. Repeatedly scores rose from their seats simultaneously, . . . rushing to the foot of the stand, cried out to the ministers to come down and pray for them."

Among those who rushed the speaker in 1841 were members of Charles Crow's family. His son, Jonathan and his grandchildren, Charles Green Jackson, Sarah Jackson, Rebecca Jane Smith and Mary Smith were among the converted during these services. Charlotte, a slave of Solomon Smith, was also converted. These scenes were to be repeated in 1842. The meeting that year lasted from Friday, November 25 through December 4, 1842. During these ten days, six different ministers preached the story of repentance. Fifty-five people were converted including Charles' son Jesse, granddaughter Catherine Smith, and her husband, Jerman Fike, and Celia, Harriet, and Ann, three of the Crow family slaves. This meeting was notable in that sixty-eight per cent of those making professions were slaves. The church attempted two protracted meetings in 1843. The first met in July and lasted seven days. There were fifty-one converts and another grandson of Charles Crow, one of his namesakes, Charles Crow Smith, made a profession of faith. The revival fervor burned out in July, and the meeting in November ended after four days with nine converts.

One of the great revival meeting occurred in October 1844. Charles was feeble and invalid at seventy-four years and could not travel. Out of respect for the old minister, who had been their moderator and leader for two decades, the Cahaba Association voted to meet at Ocmulgee Church so he could attend. The end was near for Charles and everyone realized it including Charles, who often spoke of it. The meeting was not intended to be a revival, but seemingly as a last tribute to the career of Crow, God visited the assembly. A revival erupted when the Cahaba Association finished its business, " . . . preaching was continued until Sunday . . . during which time the Lord was pleased to visit us with his Spirit during the meeting . . ." The preaching lasted nine days and nights and sixty people ". . . were added to the church." Again, Crow's grandchildren were among the saved - Clara Matina Jackson, Silas C. Jackson and Henry H. Meredith, along with five family slaves. "This must have brought Charles great satisfaction as minister of the church and it was a fitting end to a career of service to the church."

When the great meeting of 1844 ended, Charles Crow had seven months to live. He spent much of his time at rest in his two-story plantation house on a hill a short carriage ride of about a mile from the church he pastored. He and Sarah McCraw lived there alone with twenty-three slaves out in the quarters. His son, Joseph, and grandson, Henry H. Meredith, were overseeing the farm, tasking the slaves and handling matters. For this, Joseph was paid $20.50 a month, and Henry $15.00. Joseph, Jesse and Henry lived close by as did Abraham Jackson. Elizabeth was further away, but only a few miles. There were over thirty grandchildren living in the area. Charles had plenty of family to care for his needs. Charles survived the winter of 1844, and spring brought warm weather. He was still pastor at Ocmulgee but could do little. Still, in March, he attended services. George Everett preached, and Charles moderated the conference afterwards. On May 7, he attended services and preached his last sermon using Matthew 7:7 as his text.

"Ask, and you will be given what you ask for

Seek and you will find, Knock, and the door

will be opened."

He returned to the church eleven days later on May 18, and "said a few things by way of encouragement and prayed with and for us." Two days later he became critically ill to the point where he required constant medical care. He was given over to the care of young Dr. John E. Prestridge, a twenty-six year old Alabama born physician who lived in the community and was a member at Ocmulgee Church. Dr. Prestridge lived near Abner McCraw, Henry Meredith, Permelia Meredith Mays and Jesse Crow. One expects the news of Charles' condition spread rapidly to family and friends, and they journeyed up the hill to the Crow plantation to inquire about his condition.

Dr. Prestridge was to begin a vigil that lasted for the next twelve days. On Tuesday, May 20, he stayed by Charles' side in the downstairs bedroom for twelve hours administering medicines and applying his healing arts. Charles' condition worsened on Wednesday and the doctor remained all day and night introducing a cathartic to cause an evacuation of his intestines. Thursday through Sunday, he cared for Charles for fifteen hours each day, twice more applying purgatives and medicines. Monday, May 26, Dr. Prestridge did not go home at all, but was on duty in the Crow home all night. For the next three days, the doctor cared for Charles fifteen hours each day, twice more introducing cathartics. On the tenth day, he gave Charles four ounces of paregoric, a camphorated tincture of opium used especially for pain. The following two days, Dr. Prestridge reduced his hour of care to twelve each day and gave Charles medicine only once.

By Sunday, June 1, Charles appeared to recover. Dr. Prestridge packed his bags and went home. Guests came to visit the ailing, but recovering preacher. For three days, his recovery was promising and people concerned with his welfare were hopeful the old man would be restored to them. However, on Wednesday, the physician was summoned again, and Dr. Prestridge began what was to be a deathwatch. He stayed with Charles around the clock on Thursday, June 5, again introducing a cathartic and administering camphor, a compound from the wood and bark of the camphor tree used as a painkiller. On Friday, the doctor stayed eighteen hours; on Saturday, fifteen hours; Sunday and Monday, twelve hours; and Tuesday, eighteen hours. By Wednesday, June 11, the hope of recovery had faded. Charles was in his last hours, and Dr. Prestridge shifted his treatment to reducing Charles' suffering, giving him alcohol in the form of wine. On Thursday, June 12, Charles " . . . fell in a stupor and was speechless for several hours, but by the use of stimulants, he revived. He was asked what he thought of his own condition? he replied that he felt to be on the brink of eternity. Another inquiry followed, 'What about that hope you so long professed to trust in?' he replied with a firm voice, That hope! That hope! and continued 'bears me up even when the silver cord was rent asunder!' " Charles had fought death for twenty-three days, but succumbed on Thursday. Observers reported that he was "calm and peaceful" at the moment of death. He died at home in his own bed surrounded and cared for by his family and attended by his friends who mourned his passing. After a suitable church service, he was buried in the cemetery at Ocmulgee Church. In time, a large while headstone was erected at the head of his grave with an inscription reading:

In memory of Rev. Charles Crow late pastor of the Oakmulgee Baptist Church who was ordained August 30th 1807 whose sole made meet for Glory was taken to Emmanuel’s bosom on the 12th day of June 1845 and now lies in this grave in hope of joyful resurrection to eternal life and Glory. He was a man eminent in piety of humane benevolent and charitable disposition. He departed this life in the 75th year of his age and like his master was by some despised like him by many others loved and prized. The word of Charles' death spread rapidly. Two days after his death the Alabama Baptist published a memorial. We have received the painful intelligence this morning that the Rev. Charles Crow expired at his residence, Perry County, on yesterday the 12th instant. He was the first pastor of the Siloam Church, and served for six years. In the death of Father Crow, the churches in this region have sustained an irreparable loss. He was moderator of the last session of the Cahaba Association, and his affecting remarks at that time, contemplating this event, have proved too true. He will indeed meet with us no more. He rests from his labor and his works do follow him. Later, a second obituary notice was written by his friends and published in the Alabama Baptist reading in part: The subject of this article embraced the religion of the Bible about a half century ago, and united himself with the Baptist Church of which he was a consistent member to the time of his death. About forty years have elapsed since he was wet apart to the work of the Gospel Ministry. He received this authority from the Bush River Church in Newberry District, South Carolina, over which he exercised the Pastoral functions for a number of years. In 1819, he emigrated to Alabama and settled in Perry County, where he commenced his active labors in rearing the standard of the cross in this newly inhabited Territory; Many of our largest and most flourishing churches are indebted to his instrumentality, for their first existence. He became a member of the Cahaba Association, shortly after its formation, and was called to preside as Moderator, over her deliberations for about twenty of her annual sessions, he was the undeviating friend and advocate of missions. Upon the reception of the intelligence's which informed him of the great Southern Convention, held in Augusta, having formed separate organizations for the purpose of conducting the Southern and Western efforts which are being put forth for the evangelizing the world consistent with his own particular institutions, the old Veteran of the Cross rejoiced in spirit that he had lived to Witness such ominous events for the prosperity of that cause he loved so dearly. Brother Crow set out in the great world of preaching the Gospel, without the advantages of a liberal education, but, by diligent application his mind became stored with useful knowledge, which acquired for him a reputation far above mediocrity . . . His sermons were fraught with interesting truths; his illustrations clear and forcible, his doctrine were rather of the high toned Calvin order, . . .

In short, he was a good man, of which the best evidence by walking with God about fifty years, and by his calm and peaceful death. He appeared conscious that his earthly race was near at end for some months previous to his death. He often spoke of it with much composure and Christian resignation his temporal matters were all well adjusted, and he seemed to wait as one who was ready to depart at any moment. Following his burial, the estate of Charles Crow was dismantled and sold. Sarah McCraw received a dower of one third of the estate as provided by law to be used by her as Charles' widow during her lifetime. The balance of the estate was sold as prescribed by law, and the resulting sum divided among the twenty-five living heirs. Most of the slaves and other property were bought by family members and the rest by neighbors. The section six land northwest of Ocmulgee Church was sold for $318.90 to Henry H. Meredith. Fifty-three acres of the section thirty lands went to Jeptha Hays McCraw. The rest of the land went to Sarah as her dower right. Charles left an estate valued at $17,476 from which was subtracted the cost of estate administration, debts, and the dower lands of Sarah McCraw. Sarah died in 1849 and her widow's share returned to Charles' estate to be divided among his children and eligible grandchildren. The total of $13,727.33 was divided eleven ways and each received $1.247.93. Four years after he died, most of the things Charles had accumulated during his life had passed out of the family. Such is the fate of temporal things. The legacy of Charles Crow was not the money he left to those he loved in his family. His legacy was his children, and his children's children, and the succeeding generations down to the present day. He left behind people who gained eternal life and an understanding of the Gospel because Charles cared about their souls and paid the sacrifice to bring them the Gospel in a harsh and unforgiving land. His legacy included the churches he founded and served and which continue to serve Christians and the lost down to the present generation. He served longest at Ocmulgee Church. That institution lives on today in the same spot where it was founded spreading the Gospel and ministering to the people of today as does Siloam and other churches Charles served. As one looks over the life of Charles Crow, it is easy to see the connections with the modern world in his descendants, churches, and organizations which he started and which continue to serve mankind today in the glorious work of God.