

Harrison and  
Barfield's



# Observations



Regarding the  
Bethel Conference  
After 1842

Transcribed for the  
Free Will Baptist  
Historical Collection  
By Robert E. Picirilli



## Observations Regarding the Bethel Conference after 1842

Editorial Note: The following material has been transcribed from *History of the Free Will Baptists of North Carolina* by Harrison and Barfield.

Conference met at Wheat Swamp, Lenoir Co., Thursday before the 2nd Sunday in Nov. 1843.

At this Conference and the three following Conferences, the Volcanoe bursted that had been burning for thirteen years. The Campbellites, during all this time, had been vigorously proselyting the Free Will Baptists. In less than three years they almost annihilated the Bethel Conference, for in 1847, when the scattered remains of the Bethel Conference and the Shiloh Conference were united, we find that twenty-five of our ordained preachers' names left off the minutes; Viz: Robert Bond, Jacob Utley, J. H. Dixon, Wm. McGowan. B. Parrott, P. Rackley, J. L. Clifton, Wm. Latham, J. Rice, J. Powel, J. Lewis, L. F. Williams, J. Cox, H. Smith, W. T. Mobley, J. Gurganus, J. Howering, T. J. Latham, Wm. Gardner, W. R. Fulcher, N. Stancil, S. D. Collins, B. Meeks, D. Watson and J. P. Dunn.

Experience teaches a dear lesson, and we have learned in this school to watch those who visit our Conferences pleading for union.

Our Campbellite brethren got so bold in their proselyting work, that Elder Josephas J. Latham, who left us, tried to organize a Campbellite church in Piney Grove, and when our brethren forbade it, he pulled out enough weak-kneed members in that church to organize what is now Red Oak. Bro. Latham was not satisfied with this, for he even tried to secure the land to build a church in a few yards of Piney Grove church.

Incident after incident could be given to show how we have been treated by our Campbellite brethren, but we have no desire to resurrect them now.

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