

Rev. Wendell Holmes Rone (1913-2003)

By Jerry Long



Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, 31 July 2003, p.2C:

Dr. Wendell H. Rone Sr.

LIVERMORE - Dr. Wendell H. Rone Sr., 89, of Livermore died Tuesday, July 29, 2003, at Owensboro Mercy Health System. He was born Aug. 17, 1913, in Butler County to the late Jacob and Isa Carey Taylor Rone and was reared in Livermore. Wendell Holmes Rone Sr. was married to the former Beulah Lee Kirtley on June 30, 1934, in Evansville by his late uncle, Dr. Pryce E. Gatlin. He was a member and clerk of Company K, National Guard. Wendell Rone graduated from Livermore High School and holds bachelor's and master's degrees from Murray State University, the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and the Doctor of Divinity degree from the Mid-Continent College, where he served as president from 1978 to 1980. Mid-Continent College recently named the church history chair in honor of Dr. Rone and his years of committed service. His 67 years as a Baptist minister to advance the cause of Jesus Christ included pastoring Hopewell, Macedonia, Curdsville, Pleasant Grove, Utica, Seven Hills and Bellevue churches, all in Daviess County, Memorial Baptist in Murray, First Baptist in Middlesboro, First Baptist in Newport and East Baptist in Paducah. He is a member of the Livermore Missionary Baptist Church, a member of the Robert Moseley Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution, a

member of the West Central Kentucky Family Research Association and a member of the Society of Kentucky Pioneers. He was also a member of the Old Hebron-Hunt Family, a member of the McLean County Historical-Genealogy Society and a member of the Kentucky and Southern Baptist historical societies. He is also a past president of the Daviess County Historical Society. Dr. Rone served as moderator and clerk of the Daviess-McLean and Bell County Baptist Associations, served as moderator of the Kentucky Baptist Pastors Group and has served in several capacities in the Kentucky and Southern Baptist Historical and Conventions. With the pen of a ready writer, he authored some 27 Kentucky Baptist church histories, taught genealogy classes in several counties and authored numerous church-related books and pamphlets. His genealogy work of "Kentucky and Her Counties" is now in its seventh printing. Dr. Rone, the 27th minister from the maternal side of his family, served God, home and country in various areas of life as a minister, teacher, genealogist, counselor and friend. In spite of his too numerous to mention accolades and accomplishments in his nearly 90 years, he still contended that he was "Just a Sinner Saved By Grace." The song has ended, but the melody lingers on and on ...

Survivors include his wife of 69 years, Beulah; three children and their spouses, Wendell H. and Gail Rone Jr. of Lake Quivira, Kan., Ila Faye Rone and Bob Miller of Las Vegas and Kyle Yates and Metta Rone of Nassau Bay, Texas; a sister, Edith L. Bennett of Owensboro; eight grandchildren; 14 great-grandchildren; and a great-great-granddaughter.

Funeral services will be held at 3 p.m. CDT Saturday, Aug. 2, at the Livermore Missionary Baptist Church with Dr. LaVerne Butler and the Rev. Gary Shockley officiating. Private burial will be in the Oak Hill Cemetery in Livermore. Friends may visit with the Rone family from 2 until time of services Saturday at the church. Muster Funeral Homes, Livermore Chapel, is handling the funeral arrangements. The family requests that expressions of sympathy take the form of donations to the Mid Continent College Church History Chair, 99 East Powell Road, Mayfield, KY 42066 or Camp Schafer, c/o Daviess-McLean Baptist Association, 1003 Scherm Road, Owensboro, KY 42301. Memorial contribution envelopes will be available at the church and at Musters in Livermore. Online memorial condolences to the family may be made at www.musterfuneralhomes.com.



Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, 31 July 2003, p.6C:

Area minister leaves his history behind

By Jay Lively, Messenger-Inquirer

A well-known local Baptist minister, the Rev. Wendell H. Rone Sr. of Livermore, died Tuesday at Owensboro Mercy Health System. He was 89.

In his 67 years as a minister, Rone was a visible part of the Daviess County community where he pastored at seven churches - Bellevue, Seven Hills, Utica, Pleasant Grove, Curdsville, Macedonia, and Hopewell.

His work included 13 years as Bellevue Baptist Church's first minister beginning in 1959.

Rone later became dean of graduate studies and then president of Mid-Continent Baptist Bible College in Mayfield, where he also earned his doctor in divinity degree before he and his wife, Beulah, moved back to Owensboro in 1980.

The couple first met when they were 6 years old; they courted for five years before marrying at age 21.

"But I didn't go to college until I was 34," he said in August 1999. "We're children of the Depression."

Before joining the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Rone worked as a company clerk in the National Guard and had stints with the Green River Chair Co., as a telephone operator, a tea company salesman and an ice man.



Rone was also an avid historian.

He wrote 27 Kentucky Baptist Church histories, taught genealogy classes in several counties and served as president of the Daviess County Historical Society. His genealogy work of "Kentucky and Her Counties" is in its seventh printing.

The Rev. Jerry Tooley, director of missions for the Daviess-McLean Baptist Association, said Rone was writing up until the day he died.

"I was always amazed how he was still trying to learn about the histories of these churches in the area," Tooley said. "He wanted to continue to do that."

Tooley said he knew of Rone by reputation while living in Henderson but didn't realize the influence he had had until moving to Owensboro in 1999.

"He left quite an impact," Tooley said. "He was very well-known and well-respected. He helped minister to a lot of people through the years."



Messenger & Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, Sunday, 13 September 1936, p.8A:

To Enter Seminary

Wendell H. Rone, 109 East Seventeenth street, who was recently ordained to the ministry at Hall Street Wendell Baptist church, will leave September 20 for Louisville where he will enter the Southern Baptist Theological seminary. Young Rone is a son of Mrs. D. S. Bennett, of Livermore, and has been prominent in church work at the Hall Street church. The Rev. B. F. Waite is pastor of Hall Street Baptist church.



Wendell H. Rone



Owensboro Messenger, Owensboro, KY, Sunday, 28 March 1937, p.10:

Rev. Wendell Rone To Be Ordained to Ministry Today

The Rev. Wendell Rone will be ordained to the ministry at special services to be held at the Hall Street Baptist church at 2 p. m. today. The Rev. W. S. Coakley, pastor of the Walnut Street Baptist church, will lead in the examination of the candidate. The ordination sermon will be preached by the Rev. James B. Leavell. Assisting in the services will be the Revs. Robert E. Lee, Edwin Hewlett, McKinley Brown, and the Rev. A. F. Cagle will pronounce the benediction. There will be special music.



**A History of the Daviess-McLean Baptist Association of Kentucky, 1844-1943,
Wendell H. Rone, 1943, pp.412-414:**



Wendell H. Rone

The author has often wondered what one could say about himself. To say much would be boasting and to say little would be unnatural. He therefore gives a brief sketch of his life's particulars and leaves praise or condemnation to others.

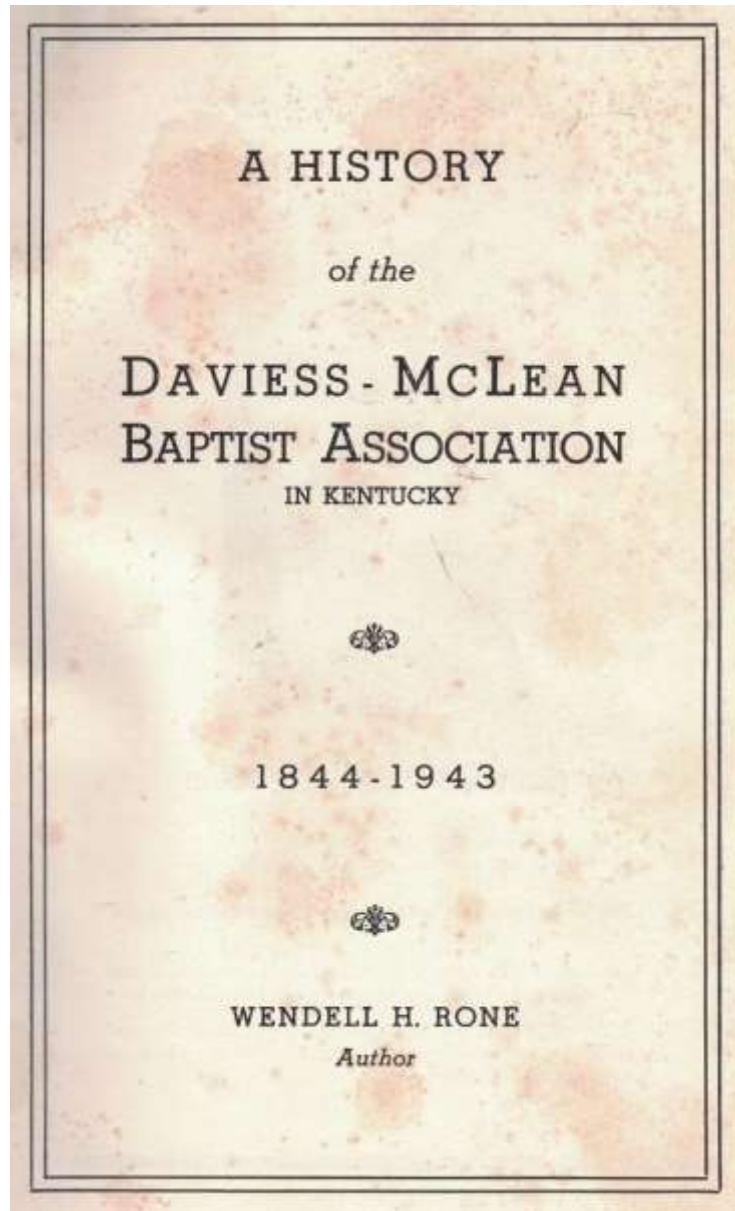
Wendell H. Rone, Sr., was born in Rochester, Butler County, Kentucky, on August 17, 1913, and is the son of Jake and Isa Taylor Rone. On his maternal side he is a descendant of all the Taylor preachers who have served the Churches of the Green River country and elsewhere for over one hundred and thirty-five years. His great-great-grandfather was Joseph Taylor, who was ordained a Baptist minister in the year 1805. His great-grandfather was Alfred Taylor, one of the outstanding preachers in the Green River country from 1835 to his death in 1865. His grandfather was James P. Taylor, also a Baptist preacher for over forty years. He is a second cousin of Elder H. Boyce Taylor, for thirty-five years the pastor of the Murray Baptist Church. He is the twenty-third Baptist preacher in the lineage of Joseph Taylor, and of that number about five are still living.

His education was secured from the public schools of Livermore, Kentucky, where he moved at the age of seven. He also attended the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Kentucky, graduating with the Th.M. Certificate in May, 1939. He was converted at the age of thirteen and baptized into the fellowship of the Livermore Baptist Church by Rev Roy Mason, now a pastor in Florida. He later moved to Owensboro, Kentucky, in 1934, and was licensed to preach by the Hall Street Church in July, 1936. After being called to the Hopewell Baptist Church he was ordained at the Hall Street Church on March 28, 1937, by Revs. B. F. Waite, J. B. Leavell, J. Edwin Hewlett, E. L. Skiles, J. J. Willett, W. S. Coakley, H. M. Brown, and deacons from sister Churches. Rev. J. B. Leavell preached the ordination sermon.

He has pastored the following Churches, all within the bounds of the Daviess-McLean Baptist Association: Hopewell, 1937-1940; Macedonia, 1937 -1939; Curdsville, six months in 1937-1938; Pleasant Grove, three months in 1940; Utica, March, 1940, to November, 1941; Seven Hills, November, 1941, to date. He has been a member of the Associational History Committee, with Brother B. Smith Jenkins, since December, 1939, and served as clerk of the Executive Mission Board from March 1939, to 'October, 1942, succeeding Rev. J. J. Willett, who had filled that position for twenty-five years. He has served on the Baptist Hour Committee since its inception in December, 1941, with Brethren L. C. Roberts and B. Smith Jenkins. At the Associational session of 1941 he was elected as Assistant Moderator with Rev. O. L. Weir. Because of the physical indisposition of the Moderator, B. Smith Jenkins, he was elected to that position by the Association at the October, 1942, meeting, and in consequence is occupying that honored office at present. He preached the doctrinal sermon before the Association at Calhoun, Kentucky, in 1941, and served as President of the Owensboro City-wide Baptist Training Union in 1942. At the 1942 "session of the General Association of Kentucky Baptists he was elected to preside over the 1943 session of the Kentucky Baptist Moderators' meeting.

He was united in marriage to Miss Beulah Lee Kirtley, daughter of Ernest S. and Annie Alexander Kirtley, of Livermore, Kentucky, on June 30, 1934. Three children have blessed this union--Wendell H. Jr., Ila Faye, and Kyle Yates. His wife was formerly a Methodist and a member of the Breckenridge Street Methodist Church. She was the first of over two hundred persons he has baptized. He has also officiated at 87 weddings and has conducted 119 funerals to date. He is the author of a History of the Hopewell, Macedonia, Utica. and Seven Hill, Churches, all completed while serving as pastor of these Churches. By virtue of being Moderator of the Association he also occupies the position of Chairman of the Executive Mission Board.

More has been said perhaps than should have been said. The author thanks God that “he is what he is” and that he was counted faithful and “called into the ministry”. After all, he is only “a sinner saved by grace.”



Owensboro Messenger, Owensboro, KY, Tuesday, 15 February 1944, p.8:

NEWS AND VIEWS

By W. E. Daniel

A history of the Daviess-McLean Baptist Association – 560 pages – prepared by Wendell H. Rone, pastor of the Seven Hills church, Owensboro, that came recently into our office library, is a valuable addition to information books upon which a newspaper must rely. In the preparation of the history, the gathering of statistics, the compilation of facts carefully assembled, and their separation into periods for the convenience of those who use the books as a ready reference, the Rev. Mr. Rone has performed a real service, not alone to the Baptists of this section who are primarily interested in the story of their church as represented by the association but to other people who accept his product as a dependable review.

That information it contains may be more easily adapted to a variety of uses the author has traced the progress of the association from its organization at Bethabara church in 1844, with nine churches, listing the steps in its expansion by periods, as the Formation Period, the Period of Growth, Consolidation and Progress. These several steps are clearly cut into the pattern of the story. and the reader having taken the first is unwilling to stop until he gets back to old Bethabara, for the anniversary meet in 1943, rounding out the 100 years. It is an interesting journey for a member of another denomination to follow the Baptists. They knew where they wanted to go, and they refused to be turned aside, by wars, depressions and other barriers.

Daviess county must yield to McLean for having the oldest church, Buck Creek, organized in 1798, or 15 years before the formation of Yelvington church near Owensboro in 1813. The association now includes the seven churches and one mission in Owensboro, 26 in Daviess county outside, and 14 in McLean, and within the neighborhood of 15,000 members. Each church is a unit of religious activity, for the Daviess-McLean Association are a militant people. They do not lag when a religious movement is proposed, They not only fall in line, they usually lead. They adopt whatever progressive measures appear feasible, and having adopted them make work to their advantage. Not a bad thing to do.

As history is in the main biography, Author Rone devoted 244 of the 560 pages to telling about the men and women who have been prominently identified with churches in the association. Again, thinking for the convenience of those who will use the book, he groups those mentioning, as he separates the growth of the churches into periods. And from reading about the pioneers of Baptist expansion in this part of Kentucky we follow through sketches of deceased leaders, on to study the lives or those who now lead, and from the pastors pass to the author's picture gallery of men ana women, not pastors out ministers of a high order in their contributions to Baptist church history, necessary in its making.

Having traced the way of Baptists in the two counties that belong to the association the author does a bit of visiting with his neighbors. He takes us over to see what the Gasper River Baptists have done and are doing, and lets us peep at those in the Ohio Valley and Little Bethel, the Ohio County Association, and others, by mentioning them and their churches, ever keeping before us the fact that his story mainly concerns the Daviess-McLean Baptists. It is a book to read with interest, to file as reference, and one that reflects the hard work of the author in the four years while he ranged about after material and stayed on the job of pastoring so well he earned and gained promotion.



Murray State University Yearbook, Murray, KY, 1949, p.59:



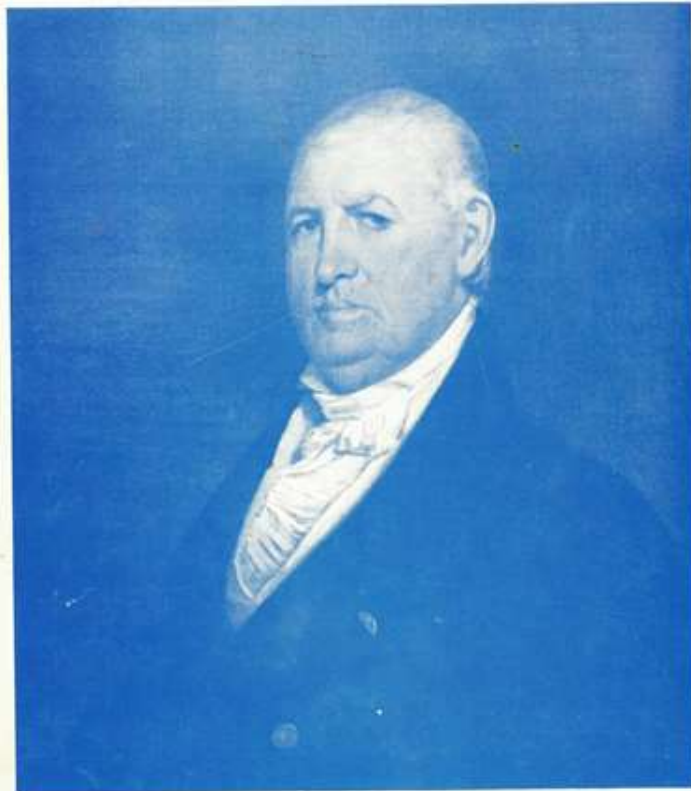
Messenger & Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, Wednesday, 2 June 1965, p.1A:



Leadership Change – The Rev. Wendell H. Rone Sr., will succeed Sidney A. Neal as president of the Daviess County Historical Society and the group officials and their wives were among the honored guests attending the opening event of the 150th anniversary celebration. From left are Mrs. Sidney A. Neal, Mrs. Wendell H. Rone, the Rev. Rone, and Neal, who discuss the historical factbook now being sold by the society.



KENTUCKY AND HER COUNTIES



ISAAC SHELBY
KENTUCKY'S FIRST GOVERNOR 1792-1796
SERVED AGAIN 1812-1816

**WRITTEN AND COMPILED BY
WENDELL H. RONE, SR.**

B. A., M. DIV., Th. M.



Messenger & Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, Tuesday, 22 June 1965, p.5A:

**Historical State Atlas Published;
Written Locally**

A gap which had heretofore existed in historical and geographic books on the State of Kentucky has been filled with the publication of "An Historical Atlas of Kentucky and Her The Atlas was written and compiled by the Rev. Wendell H. Rone, after about three years of research.

The current edition, containing 67 pages, a 5,000 volume printing, has been brought out in conjunction with the Daviess County Sesquicentennial celebration and contains 12 pages devoted to the origin and development of Daviess County, pictures of the court house, Joseph Hamilton Daveiss, and a facsimile of his signature, a picture of the sword scabbard and belt he wore when killed in battle, and a map of the battlefield showing where he was killed.

The Atlas progressively shows the division of the counties from the time the state was a part of Virginia in 1684 through 1912 when the last county was formed. It will be available at newsstands, bookstores and at magazine sale points for one dollar each.



**OWENSBORO'S
FIRST
CHURCH
1835-1985**

**THE SESQUICENTENNIAL
HISTORY OF THE
FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
OWENSBORO, KENTUCKY**

**WRITTEN AND COMPILED BY
WENDELL HOLMES RONE, SR.
A.B., M.DIV., TH.M.
1985**



Since 1938, Wendell Holmes Rone, Sr., has shown an intensive interest in Baptist History. He is a Member of the Southern Baptist and Daviess County Historical Societies, and is Chairman of the Kentucky Baptist Historical Commission.

A native of Rochester, Kentucky, he is a graduate of Murray State University and the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. He served as a Pastor of Churches thirty-five years, and as a College Teacher, Dean, and President before retiring in 1980. This is his fifth Church History, and "Magnum Opus", since 1982.



Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, Saturday, 8 March 1986, p.2A:



Local Baptist historian Dr. Wendell H. Rone, Sr., left, shares the Presentation as First Baptist pastor Dr. David Nelson, on behalf of his congregation, accepts a first edition copy of "Owensboro's First Church" from Progress Printer Co., president Bob Puckett. Ready for distribution, the sesquicentennial history of First Baptist was compiled and written by the Rev. Mr. Rone and printed locally by Progress. The book is available at First Baptist Church office.

Rone's history of First Baptist Church Published by Progress Printing Co.

Owensboro's oldest organized congregation and its 150 years of dedicated mission in this community is the subject of a recently published history of First Baptist Church, 3rd and Lewis Sts.

Entitled "Owensboro's First Church," the in-depth account of the city's first of any denominational body is the work of the Rev. Wendell H. Rone, noted area Baptist historian and pastor. The writing was commissioned by First Baptist as a part of its recent sesquicentennial observance.

With four major divisions in its contents the 670-page hard-bound volume focuses on early Owensboro and Daviess County history; the first 50 years of the church's life; its history from 1885 to 1935 and its expanding role of ministry until this day.

Visionary old-time Baptist preachers Thomas Downs and Reuben Cottrell led the membership in its early days, leading to a succession of distinguished clergy and outstanding lay leaders. However, in the last 59 years the church has had but three pastors: Dr. Robert E. Humphreys, served from 1927 to 1955; Dr. Jess Moody, 1956-1961; and its present pastor, Dr. David Nelson, was called to the ministry here in 1961.

The book, in addition to church chronology, has many historical insights about the development of the Owensboro area. Available at First Baptist Church office (683-3505), copies are \$17.50.

"Mindful of our role of service to the community and our 77-year commitment to graphics excellence, we are pleased to have had a part in the publication of this vital link of Owensboro heritage," Bob Puckett, president of Progress Printing said.



Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, Monday, 20 April 1987, p.1C:

Pastor's hobby puts him in the history books

By Karen Owen, Messenger-Inquirer

The Rev. Wendell H. Rone Sr. seems to get a kick out of the idea of people reading and re-reading one of his books because it tells them things about their own church they didn't know.

That desire to discover the unknown was what prompted him to eventually write 25 different history books, said Rone, 73, of 1200 E. Byers Ave.

When he became the pastor of a church, he always wanted to know its history, the retired minister said Friday.

Rone has been pastor at several churches in Owensboro and Daviess County sometimes to as many as three at a time has held state denominational offices and served as president of a Bible college.

Preaching and evangelism were always his first love; writing was the hobby he turned to for relaxation, Rone said.

The pastime that started out with a mimeographed history of Hopewell Baptist Church in 1940 has grown to a collection that today includes a 664-page hardback history of First Baptist Church in Owensboro.



The Rev. Wendell H. Rone Sr. has been a minister for 50 years and is an author of church history.

He writes at home on a typewriter, but he isn't a fast typist. "I use the hunt and peck method," he said. "I call it the Biblical method. 'Seek and ye shall find'"

Once his books are in print, "I just turn them loose, and hope they'll do much good," Rone said.

Most of his books are histories of individual churches, although the group includes two histories of the Daviess-McLean Baptist Association and a historical atlas of Kentucky counties.

Rone has been president of the Daviess County Historical Society, vice president of the Kentucky Baptist Historical Society and is in his second term as chairman of the Kentucky Baptist History Commission.

He has always been interested in history, he said.

He majored in history at college and church history at seminary. As a boy in Livermore, he was fascinated by a multi-volumed history of World War I in the local library, Rone said. "I read it from beginning to end."

Rone's longest stint as pastor was 13 years as the first pastor at Bellevue Baptist Church. He left there in 1972 to become first the dean of graduate studies and eventually the president of the Mid-Continent Baptist Bible College at Mayfield.

He retired there at age 68 in 1980, but today, Rone said, he's busier than ever.

He and his wife of 53 years, Beulah Lee, are active in their church's senior citizens group, walk a lot for exercise and he lifts weights at First Baptist Church's Christian Life Center, Rone said.

And nearly every Sunday he has an invitation to go somewhere to preach, he said.

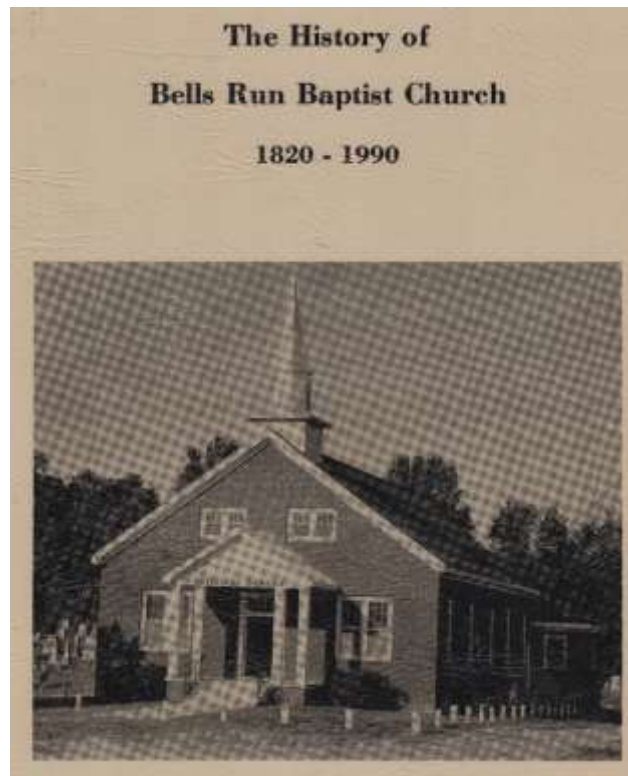
His writing isn't being neglected either. He already has assignments for 1988 to write histories of a church near Murray and another at Earlington.

He has no plans to retire from writing, Rone said. "I hope I can stay busy right on up to the end."

As an adult, though, he sometimes had to shove aside his history projects for his duties as pastor.

One of his early positions was at Utica Baptist Church in 1940-41, where he can remember conducting baptismal services in an indoor pool that had no running water. Water had to be pumped in through a window by an old steam engine before the service could take place, Rone said.

In 1941, he became pastor at Seven Hills Baptist Church, three Sundays before the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor. Because building materials were in short supply, the church postponed its plans to build a new educational building and invested its savings in war bonds, he recalled. "When the war was over, the church had a nice little nest egg."



**The History of Bells Run BAPTIST Church 1820-1990,
Wendell H. Rone, McDowell Publications, Utica, KY, 1990, pp.237-241:**



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Wendell Holmes Rone, Senior, the writer of this History of the Bell's Run Baptist Church, is a native of Rochester, Butler County, Kentucky, having been born there on August 17th, 1913. He is the son of the late Jacob "Jake" Rone (1882-1960) and Isa Carey (Taylor) Rone (1890-1945). His parents were married on October 12, 1912, in Evansville, Vanderburgh County, Indiana, by Baptist Minister Pryce E. Gatlin, the brother-in-law of the bride. Mrs. Mary (Taylor) Gatlin was an older half-sister of the bride, as their father was Baptist Minister James Pendleton Taylor (1841-1911).

His father was the son of William Hardin Rone (1850-1928) and Josephine (Fortner) Rone (1855-1886). His paternal Great-grandparents were Jacob Rone (1823-1864) and Sarah Jane (Doolin) Rone (1828-1903) His paternal Great-great-grandparents were George Washington Rone (1791-1842) and Fannie (Bozeman) Rone (1800-1865). George Washington Rone was a son of Adam Rone (1762-1829) and Barbary Ann Rone (1772-1839), natives of Holland. The four generations of grandparents mentioned above are buried in Butler County, Kentucky.

Brother Rone's great-great-grandfather, on his mother's side of the family, was Baptist Minister Joseph Taylor (1765-1853), a native of Craven County, North Carolina, who came with his parents, Moses Taylor (1729-1819) and Elizabeth (Prevatte) Taylor (1743-1833) in a trek of "THE TAYLOR PIONEERS" to Warren County (then Logan), Kentucky, in 1795, and settled near the present Hadley on Gasper River. There were about forty persons in the migration.

Brother Joseph Taylor had been a Methodist and a Lay Preacher among them; but, on the way from North Carolina to Kentucky, he and his wife, Mary (Slade) Taylor (1766-1840), became Baptists, being baptized by Baptist Minister Nathan Arnett. into the fellowship of the Head of Sulphur Fork of Red River Baptist Church, which settled near Springfield, Tennessee, in 1795. It was then a "Traveling Church" on its way from the State of North Carolina to what became the

State of Tennessee, in 1796. It was pastored then by Baptist Minister, Joseph Dorris. Brethren Dorris, Arnett and Daniel Buford, together with Brethren Isaac Thompson, Clifton Allen, James McCaleb and David Enochs ordained Joseph Taylor to the Baptist Ministry that year, too. From him and his father. Moses Taylor (also a Baptist Minister), have come over twenty-five Baptist Ministers (including Brother Ron), as well as ministers in other Denominations, within the past two-hundred years. Joseph Taylor and his wife, Mary (Slade) Taylor, also lived in Butler County in 1811-1836, and spent their last days on earth in Ohio County. Both are buried in the Taylor Cemetery near Slaty Creek Baptist Church. Brother Joseph Taylor and Brother Benjamin Tolbert, Pastor at Beaver Dam Church in Ohio County, were the Presbytery or Council of Recognition at the organization of the Walton's Creek Church, in Ohio County, on July 9, 1814, together with Baptist Minister George Render, also of Beaver Dam Church. Brother Taylor was then a Member of the Midway (now Monticello) Baptist Church, in Butler County, which was organized in 1805.

The maternal great-grandfather of Brother Rone was Baptist Minister Alfred Taylor (1808-1865), the youngest child and fourth son of eleven children born to Joseph Taylor and Mary (Slade) Taylor. Baptist Ministers Joseph Taylor and Alfred Taylor, together with George Render of Beaver Dam Church, formed the Presbytery at the organization of the Green River Baptist Church, in Ohio County, in the month of July (the 16th), 1836. The Charter Members of Walton's Creek and Green River came from the old Beaver Dam (1798) Church.

Three of Alfred Taylor's sons, born to his first wife, Mary Ann (Mahon) Taylor (1812-1852) became Baptist Ministers - Judson Slade Taylor (1838-1889), James Pendleton Taylor (1841-1911) and William Carey Taylor, Sr., (1845-1888) - following in the steps of their father.

Brother Rone's mother, Isa Carey (Taylor) Rone, was born at Center Point, Texas, in the year 1890, but spent much of her life in Butler County, Kentucky. She graduated from Texas Baptist College, in 1910. At the age of thirteen, in 1903, she became a Christian and was baptized into the fellowship of the Big Muddy Baptist Church, in Butler County, being baptized by her minister-father, the Pastor, and at this Church she played the old time pump Organ during her upper teens.

Brother Rone's father entered the United States Army at the age of seventeen and served in the Phillippines during the Aguanildo Insurrection there, in 1899, he was later stationed at Fortress Monroe, Virginia; and, during World War 1 (1914-1918) served as a First Sergeant in the 12th Recruiting Company from the State of Ohio. As a young man he became a member of the old Monticello (1805) Baptist Church, and was baptized by his later father-in-law, Pastor James Pendleton Taylor. For many years before his death, he was a member of the First Baptist Church, Huntington, West Virginia. Mrs. Rone united with the Green River Baptist Church, in Ohio County, by letter, in September, 1907, remaining until June 17, 1916, when she was lettered out to the Rochester Baptist Church. She served as an Operator for the Home Telephone Company at Rochester, Kentucky, from late 1910 to early 1920.

The home being severed by divorce in 1914, Brother Rone was reared by his grandmother, Mrs. Mildred Evelyn (Bunch) Taylor (1854-1945), the widow of Baptist Minister James Pendleton Taylor, as his mother worked to support the two of them. They moved to Livermore, McLean County, Kentucky, in April, 1920; where she became Chief Operator for the old Cumberland Telephone Company Exchange at that place. She continued to work for that Company until the year 1926, when it was sold and merged with the Southern Bell Telephone and Telegraph System. She retired, after eighteen years of service, in 1938. She died, on December 22, 1945, at age fifty-five, and is buried in the Oak Hill Cemetery, at Livermore. She had married, second, Dorsey Slade "Doss" Bennett, on May 27th, 1925, at Livermore, Kentucky. Miss Edith Lillian Bennett, long-

time worker with Radio Station WOMI, Owensboro, Kentucky, was born to this last union, on May 27, 1931. She is at present the Financial Secretary of the Third Baptist Church, Owensboro, Kentucky. She is a half-sister to Brother Rone.

EDUCATION: Brother Rene spent one year in the Rochester Elementary School, and later attended and graduated from the Livermore Grade (1927) and High Schools (1931). From 1931-1934 he served as Company Clerk, with the rank of Corporal, of Company "K", 149th Infantry, Kentucky National Guard, 38th Division. In the years 1933-1934, he was employed in the painting and finishing room of the Green River Chair Company, Livermore, Kentucky. He also worked as a Night Operator in the Telephone Exchange under his mother, in 1930-1932. In 1934-1936, after marriage, he served as a Salesman for the Great American Tea Company. He also served as an Ice Man in the Summer of 1936, in Owensboro, Kentucky, before entering the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Kentucky.

Entering the Baptist Ministry in July, 1936, he entered the Seminary the following September, earning the Th.M. (Master in Theology) Certificate and graduating, in May, 1939. The A.B. (Bachelor of Arts) Degree was at Murray State University in 1948-1950, where he graduated with High Distinction in the top of his class and earned the same. He was awarded the Bachelor of Divinity (B.D.) Degree from the Seminary, in 1950, as he had done the work previously and had now earned the College Degree required. He completed the Master in Theology (Th.M.) Degree in the Spring of 1951, and received it from the same Seminary. The B.D. Degree was upgraded to a Master of Divinity (M.Div.) Degree in June, 1973. He maintained intensive studies in Theology and Church History while serving as the Dean of Graduate Studies at Mid-Continent. Baptist Bible College in Mayfield, Graves County, Kentucky, in 1972-1980.

FAMILY: He was united in marriage to Miss Beulah Lee Kirtley of Livermore, Kentucky, on June 30, 1934. They recently celebrated their fifty-seventh Wedding Anniversary. She is the only daughter and middle child of five children born to the late Ernest Speed Kirtley (1886-1962) and Anna Victoria (Alexander) Kirtley (1887-1987). They were married on a Knox County, Indiana License, at Carlisle, Indiana, in a double-wedding ceremony, as her double-first cousin (mothers married brothers), Mona Mai Kirtley, was married to John Oliver Swanks at the same time. Mrs. Rone was born at Kirtley's Landing, on Green River, in Ohio County, Kentucky, near the present Wilson Big Rivers Power Plant. J.O. Swanks died in 1962. The Rones have three children, as follows: Wendell Holmes Rone, Junior (b. December 29, 1938), who married Miss Jane Elizabeth Flynn (b. February 1, 1935); Ila Faye (Rone) Miller (b. January 24, 1941), who married Robert Charles Miller, Sr. (b. December 9, 1936); and Kyle Yates Rone (b. March 12, 1943), who married Miss Metta Ann Edmondson (b. May 3, 1941). The Rones have eight grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren (1990).

CHRISTIAN LIFE AND MINISTRY: The writer became a Christian under the preaching of Pastor Roy Mason, in April, 1926, and was immersed into the fellowship of the Livermore Baptist Church, on April 25th of that year. After he married and moved to Owensboro, Kentucky, he united with the Hall Street Baptist Church by letter, in April, 1935. There he felt anew the call of God to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ, under the ministry of Pastor Benjamin Franklin Waite. He was licensed to preach by that Church, in July, 1936; and was ordained by that same Church at the request of the Hopewell Church, on March 28, 1937. Baptist Ministers B.F. Waite, W.S. Coakley, J.J. Willett, Walter W. Harvey, Robert E. Lee, James B. Leavell, Jr., J. Edwin Hewlett and H. McKinley Brown served on the Ordaining Council or Presbytery; as did Deacons Lofton McCormick, Will Kade Nichols, Ollie McPherson, Otis Sublett and Ules Griffin.

He served as Pastor of the following Baptist Churches. Daviess County, Kentucky, in 1937-1940: Hopewell, Macedonia, Curdsville and Pleasant Grove. He served at Utica Baptist Church, in 1940-1941, in the same County. From November, 1941, through September, 1945, he served the Seven Hills Baptist Church, Owensboro, Kentucky, during World War II (1941-1945). he served the First Baptist Church, in Newport, Kentucky, from October, 1945, through October, 1947; and the Memorial Baptist Church, Murray, Kentucky, from November, 1947 through August, 1951. From September, 1951, through August, 1956, he served as Pastor of the First Baptist Church, Middlesboro, Kentucky. This was followed by a pastorate at the East Side Baptist Church, Paducah, Kentucky, from September, 1956, through June, 1959.

He returned to Owensboro, Kentucky, in June, 1959, and entered the Charter Membership of the new Bellevue Baptist Church, on June 28th, together with his wife, daughter, youngest son, and son-in-law. He became the first Pastor of this new congregation, sponsored by the Walnut Street Baptist Church, and served it through May, of 1972, a period of nearly thirteen years. The Pastor's home and initial Educational Building-Auditorium were erected in 1959-1960, while a new Pastor's home was erected for the East Baptist Church, Paducah, Kentucky, in 1958. His pastorates experienced growth in numbers and increases in giving to Missions and Benevolent Causes while he served them.

He became Dean of Graduate Studies at Mid-Continent Baptist Bible College, Mayfield, Kentucky, on June 1, 1972, after over thirty-five years in the pastorate; and continued holding that office until retirement, on December 31, 1980. He also taught undergraduate courses in Bible, Theology, and Church History. He was appointed Chairman of the Building Committee for a new Campus (the Harris Campus), in November, 1974, and led the school in the erection of the Administration, Library-Chapel, Class Room, and Book Store (now Dormitory for Men) Buildings, from September, 1975, through February, 1978, at a cost of over \$800,000.00; almost all of which was paid for by the time of his retirement. Upon the death of President O.C. Markham in a car wreck, he served as the acting President from October, 1977, and became President of Mid-Continent College, in May, 1978, continuing therein until retirement. Since then he has served as an Interim and Supply Pastor, held Bible Conferences, taught Study Courses, and has been writing the Histories of individual Churches. He has also been doing research on his and his wife's "Family Trees." He has also taught, since 1985, a course in "Beginner Genealogy" in the Adult Program of Education for the Owensboro Board of Education.

His Denominational Activities, among Southern Baptists, include being Moderator of the Daviess-McLean Baptist Association, in 1943-1944, as well as the Bell County Association, in 1953-1956, both in Kentucky; as Assistant Moderator of the Kentucky Baptist Convention, in 1952-1953; Moderator of the Kentucky Baptist Moderator's Meeting, in 1955-1956; a Member of the Kentucky Baptist Executive Mission Board, in 1941-1945 and 1949-1956; as a Member of the Executive Committee of the KBEMB, In 1955-1956; as a Member of the "Western Recorder" Board of Managers, in 1952-1962; on the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Historical Society (1946-1951); V.P. Kentucky Baptist Historical Society (1952-1972); Chairman of Kentucky Baptist Historical Commission (1967-1972 and 1983-1987); and Member of the Southern Baptist Convention Commission on the American Baptist Theological Seminary's American Baptist College (1987-).

He has served as the President of the Daviess County Historical Society in 1965 and in 1985, as well as the Jackson Purchase Historical Society in 1980-1981. He was President of the Lt. Robert Moseley Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution (SAR), in 1983-1985. He is a Member of the Daviess County and the McLean County Historical Societies, the Kentucky

Baptist Historical Society, the Southern Baptist Historical Society, the National SAR, and was a Charter Member of the Society of Kentucky Pioneers.

HIS WRITINGS: They have been: (1) A History of Hopewell Baptist Church (1940); (2) A History of the Utica Baptist Church (1940); (3) A History of the Daviess-McLean Baptist Association in Kentucky - 1844-1943 (1943); (4) A History of the Seven hills Baptist Church, in Owensboro 1908-1943 (1943); (5) The New Birth - a Pamphlet (1943); (6) Justification By Faith - A Pamphlet (1944); (7) The Differences Between Baptists and Catholics (1945); (8) The Baptist Faith and Roman Catholicism (1952); (9) Southern Baptists and the Concept of a Catholic (Universal) Church (1959); (10) Believer's Immersion and the Lord's Supper (1961); (11) Historical Atlas of Kentucky and Her Counties (1965); (12) The Glenville Church Story - 1865-1965 (1965); The Chestnut Grove Church Story - 1867-1967 (1967); (13) A Short History of the Daviess-McLean Baptist Association for 125 Years - 1844-1968 (1968); (14) Green Brier Church-Milestone 150 - 1820-1970 (1970); (15) The New Concord Baptist Church Story - 1873-1973 (1973); (16) An History of the Graves County Baptist Association - 1893-1973 (1973); (17) Old Bethel Primitive Baptist Church Story - 1824-1974 (1974); (18) Celebrating Three Jubilees - The Trace Creek Baptist Church Story - 1824-1974 (1974); (19) Commemorating the First Century of the First. Baptist Church, Arlington, Kentucky - 1876-1976 (1976); (20) Bellevue of Owensboro, Kentucky - 1959-1969 (1969); (21) A History of the Hall Street Baptist Church, Owensboro, Kentucky - 1908-1983 (1983); (22) A History of the Sorgho Baptist Church - 1884-1984 (1984); (23) Owensboro's First Church - A Sesquicentennial History of the First Baptist Church, Owensboro, Kentucky - 1835-1985 (1985); (24) A History of the Pleasant Grove Baptist Church - 1835-1985 (1985); (25) A History of the Union Baptist Church - 1835-1985 (1985); (26) The Centennial Story of the Livermore Baptist Church 1885-1985 (1985); (27) A History of the Sugar Grove Baptist Church - 1861-1986 (1986); (28) The Sesquicentennial of the Green River Missionary Baptist Church, Ohio County, Kentucky - 1836-1986 (1987); (29) The Centennial History of the Cherry Hill Baptist Church, Muhlenberg County, Kentucky - 1887-1987 (1987); (30) The Centennial History of the First Baptist Church, Earlington, Hopkins County, Kentucky - 1888-1988 (1988); (31) The Taylor Pioneers of North Carolina and Kentucky (1989) Revised Edition of 1968 by L. Ray Taylor; (32) History of the Macedonia Baptist Church - 1889-1989 (1989); and (33) A History of Bell's Run Baptist Church - 1820-1990 (1991), which now takes its place with all the above writings.

In 1983, he revised and republished the Biography of Elder Alfred Taylor - 1808-1865 - on the occasion of his Great-grandfather's Birth, first published in 1878 and written by Alfred Taylor's son, William Carey Taylor, Senior (1845-1888). Also, in 1987, on the occasion of Brother Rone's Fiftieth Anniversary of his ordination (1937-1987), he wrote and published a twenty-four page Brochure having eighty-nine pictures from childhood to the present in it, Illustrating his life and that of his family and their ancestry and kin. A total of 1,100 copies were distributed freely on the day of the Observance of the Anniversary at Hall Street Baptist Church, Owensboro, Kentucky, and later. Furthermore, he edited the "Baptist Herald" published by Mid-Continent Baptist Bible College, Mayfield, Kentucky, in 1976-1980.

Having served as the Clerk of the Daviess-McLean Association in 1970-1971, he served again in the same capacity in 1986-1990, supervising the production and distribution of the Annuals of 1986-1990. The History of the Bell's Run Baptist Church - 1820-1990 - now takes its rightful and respected place as the twelfth (12th) Church history he has written since retiring (?) at the end of 1980. Furthermore, he has recently been officially commissioned to research, collect materials, and write the History of the Hazel Creek Baptist Church (1797), Muhlenberg County,

Kentucky; the oldest Baptist Church in the State west of Elizabethtown (Severn's Valley - 1781) and Bowling Green (Old Union - 1795). It was organized on December 3, 1797, and has now had a continuous existence of One Hundred and Ninety-Three Years. It and the Beaver Dam Church, organized on March 5, 1798, are the "Mother Churches" of the Baptist Churches in the lower Green River Country.



Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, Saturday, 14 August 1999, p.1C:

Rones will explore new History in move to Vegas

By Karen Owen, Messenger-Inquirer



The Rev. Wendell H. Rone Sr. and his wife, Beulah, are moving to Las Vegas to be close to their daughter.

Wendell Rone can't seem to help talking about history.

Ask him about his impending move to Las Vegas, and it's not long the 86-year-old minister is talking about Owensboro founder Bill Smeather's grave along the Brazos River.

Rone, a well-known local Baptist preacher, will be learning the history of a new area when he and his wife, Beulah Krtley Rone, move to be near their daughter in Las Vegas this week. But he leaves behind the legacy of several history books he wrote on local Baptist churches.

He's loved history since a local doctor donated a series of books on World War I to Livermore High School, said Rone, who spent most of his childhood in Livermore. "I started with volume one," and devoured the series, he said.

He and his future wife met when they were 6 years old. They dated five years and married at age 21, but "I didn't get to college 'til I was 34," said Rone. "We're children of the Depression."

His journey to Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville included detours to work as a company clerk in the National Guard and stints with Green River Chair Company, as a telephone operator, a tea company salesman and an ice man.

After seminary, Rone was pastor of seven churches in Daviess County as well as others in Paducah, Middlesboro and Murray and Newport.

His work here included 13 years as Bellevue Baptist Church's first pastor. "When I started there in 1959, I told people I was called to a vacant lot," he said recently, sitting in a living room filled with boxes packed for the latest move.

Bellevue's congregation built the pastor's residence first and worshiped for more than two years at Newton Parrish Elementary School across the street.

Later Rone was dean of graduate studies and then president at Mid-Continent Baptist Bible College in Mayfield for eight years before the couple moved back to Owensboro in 1980. Beulah Rone, in the meantime, taught children and adult Sunday school classes, served on the state board of the Baptist women's organization and led a group at Mid-Continent for future pastors' wives.

"I did anything that needed to be done nobody else wanted to do," she said. Back in Owensboro, Wendell Rone was president of the Daviess County Historical Society in the mid-1960s during the sesquicentennial celebration and taught adult education classes on genealogy.

"I tell people retirement to me meant I put on a new set of tires and started all over again," said Rone.

Now the Rones are moving out of Kentucky for the first time. Except for their time in heavily Catholic northern Kentucky, it will also be their first experience in an area without many Baptists.

They're moving to Las Vegas to live with their daughter and son-in-law, both special education teachers. A son is a retired pilot living near Kansas City, and another son works in aeronautics in Clear Lake, Texas, near Bill Smeathers' grave.

The Rones don't seem at all upset or apprehensive about moving to "sin city" or Mormon country.

"We've worked with people so long we love people," Beulah Rone said. "And they always love us back."

Wendell Rone only chuckles about seeing 100 \$10,000 bills on display at a Las Vegas restaurant during a visit with their daughter. "That's the nearest I've ever been to \$1 million," he said.

He's more interested in talking about the new church the Rones will attend, "one of the oldest Southern Baptist churches in Nevada," said Rone, who has already researched its history.

The church uses a lot of drama and contemporary music in at least some of its four Sunday services and one Saturday night service.

"I think well like it," he said.

