

Another installment of the history of our Paluxy Baptist Association Part II

Baptist associations are all uniquely different. Serving along side their supporting churches, they exist to provide valuable resources to meet the needs of the surrounding communities.

Few if any, have the rich history that the Paluxy Baptist Association possess. In Today's installment we will be looking back to review the impact that one Pastor had on our community as well as our Paluxy Baptist association; his name was Fighting Joe Robinson.

During the early days of Hood County, a church building or meeting house as it was often called was built in Acton. It served as a meeting place for the Methodists, Presbyterians, and as well as the Baptists. A bold and strong man of God entered the scene in 1850 by the name of Joseph Robinson. Many knew him by his nickname; "Fighting Joe". Here is a brief example of his style of preaching: *"the Baptist church was organized by Jesus on the banks of the Jordan River, and was named after John the Baptist. John baptized Jesus in the Jordan, thus the New Testament church was a Baptist church. Since Jesus was a Baptist, he would not have organized any other church but a Baptist church. Jesus said, 'the gates of hell shall not prevail against it'...thus, if Jesus spoke the truth, (who would dare to say he didn't) then his church is in the world today, has been since the first century and will be until He comes again. Anyone who does not believe this does not believe the Bible, all who are not members of a Baptist church are not members of any church at all."* Remember, I am merely quoting here.

Needless to say, anyone preaching such a bold and brash message had to be known as a fighter. Preacher Robinson was far more than a pulpiteer, he was also a member of the vigilantes and was fond of fighting Indian, rustlers, and all types of criminals and evil in every form.

Someone has said that Fighting Joe would arrive for his preaching assignment, hitch his horse to a nearby tree, stand his rifle against the pulpit and begin to bellow out his message. Often found preaching under a shade tree in the summer, he would thunder out his wrath against Satan, sin, criminals and other denominations. A book I have been reading describes one typical Sunday in the life of this association man. *"On one occasion, he was interrupted by a group of men on horse back who rode up to announce, some Indians have just driven off a bunch of horses from a farm on Fall Creek: Preacher Joe immediately stopped preaching, closed his Bible, and garnered his rifle."* The following month he was questioned about the thieves and his reply was, and I quote: *"...the thieves were apprehended, the horses recovered and returned to their owner, and the thieves were dealt with in such a way that they will never again drive off another man's horses."*

This standard barrier of the faith led in the organization of Acton Baptist Church on August 25, 1855. He served as its first pastor. You can visit his grave in the old part (eastern section) of the old Acton cemetery. If you are curious about this flamboyant character simply visit his grave site.

Fighting Joe later served Hood county as one of our first county commissioners. He was known by his peers for his fighting spirit, contagious smile, and firm handshake. Perhaps the most enduring legacy of this man is the fact that he stood for what he believed, and was willing to fight to preserve his faith. On the final page of the story that I have been studying is this remarkable statement with which I conclude this article: *"...we who follow after Fighting Joe, and his peers, owe a debt of gratitude to them for the heritage we enjoy which they have given to us...we can only hope to partially repay this debt by holding high the torch they have handed down to us, thus giving to our posterity the same glorious heritage we enjoy."*

May God bless You, please pray for our beloved association.
Boots Hubbard, Interim D.O.M