

Elder Lawrence Scarborough Earliest European Settler of Bayou Corney

by Timothy Dean Hudson

Elder Lawrence Scarborough arrived along the banks of Bayou Corney in what is now northwestern Union Parish, Louisiana about 1825, the earliest American of European ancestry to settle there. He chose a spot on the east side of the Corney, near where today's Barnes Bridge Road crosses the bayou and then eastward to Ten Mile Creek. Upon his arrival, his only neighbors were a small group of Choctaw Indians whose village lay a few miles away. The closest white families, including the Honeycutts, Stows, Farmers, and Colvins, lived along tributaries of Bayou D'Arbonne near modern Downsville and Vienna.

Scarborough brought with him his new and much younger wife, Sarah, and their arrival in the Bayou Corney country served as an escape from the religious controversy back in Mississippi caused by their relationship. The respite from drama proved only temporary, as it soon followed them into the wilds of north Louisiana. They weathered the storm, and Elder Scarborough spent the next two decades preaching across north Louisiana and south Arkansas.



According to descendants, Lawrence Scarborough's birth occurred on 22 October 1767 in Edgecombe County, North Carolina, the first child of Major James Scarborough, an officer in the North Carolina Militia during the Revolutionary War. Major Scarborough led militia troops in various skirmishes with the Tories. Lawrence Scarborough later told his children and grandchildren that as a young boy of fourteen, he made a trip to take some new clothes to his father, who was then participating in the Siege of Yorktown, Virginia. Lawrence claimed to his children and grandchildren that on one trip, he happened to arrive in time to witness the surrender of Lord Cornwallis, commander of the British forces, to General George Washington [1].

On the Georgia Frontier

Although his father remained behind in North Carolina, Lawrence Scarborough joined his Scarborough uncles and cousins in their migration to Georgia in the mid-1780s. He originally settled in Burke County but later moved on to Bulloch County, where he received a 500-acre land grant in 1807 [2].

After roughly two decades in Georgia, the wanderlust that characterized Scarborough's life struck in the fall of 1807, and he applied for passports from Georgia's governor to travel with his family through both Cherokee and Creek territories westward. Two Bulloch County Inferior Court Judges and two other well-known Bulloch County residents signed this affidavit on 1 October 1807 in support of Scarborough's application to the Georgia Governor Jared Irwin for passports (original spelling and punctuation retained):

This is to Certify that the Reverend Laurance Scarborough has Lived in this State for the turme of fifteen Years as a good sitizen will disposed amongst His neighbours and has used Industry for The interest of his family.

On October 13th, Georgia's Executive Department ordered officials to issue passports for Lawrence Scarborough and his family "*thro the Cherokee & Creek Nations*" [3].

Virtually all settlers requesting passports from Georgia's governor had a specific destination in mind when they applied, and thus very few requested passports through both Indian territories. What the whites then knew as the "*Creek Nation*" constituted western Georgia and eastern Alabama, whereas the "*Cherokee Nation*" included northwestern Georgia, eastern Tennessee, and northern Alabama. Crossing Creek lands took settlers towards the Mississippi Territory, whereas crossing Cherokee lands took them to Tennessee and Kentucky. That Lawrence requested passports through both Indian nations suggests that at the time he applied, he had not decided where to settle.

Shortly after obtaining his passport, Lawrence Scarborough decided to move due west, taking his family along the recently completed Federal Road through Creek territory towards Mississippi Territory. In 1808, the Scarboroughs settled in Jefferson County, located on the Mississippi River just north of Natchez [4].

Baptist Ministry

On 24 October 1804, a group of citizens living near the border of Burke and Bulloch Counties constituted Skull Creek Baptist Church. Later that year, the founding members along "*with others called Laurence Scarborough who was ordained to the pastoral care of s^d church*" [5]. Over the course of his adult life, Lawrence Scarborough preached at Baptist churches in Georgia, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Arkansas.

After arriving in Mississippi about 1807 or 1808, Scarborough actively worked to establish Baptist churches and associations among the few white settlers of that region. The Baptists of that region soon regarded him as one of their leading ministers. Writing a half-century later, a Mississippi Baptist Association historian gave this description of Elder Scarborough [6]:

He was plain in person, manners and style of preaching, but was zealous and energetic, and acquired considerable influence as a preacher.

Lawrence Scarborough became active in the Mississippi Baptist Association soon after his arrival in the territory. In 1809, he attended the associational meeting at Salem Church on Cole's Creek. When New Hope Church presented their letter to have their delegates seated at the associational meeting, they mentioned trouble in the church. The Association appointed Lawrence Scarborough as one of three ministers *"to visit the church and if possible remove the difficulties"* [7].

In October 1810, a group of Baptists from Opelousas, Louisiana petitioned the Mississippi Baptist Association, requesting assistance to ordain a minister to serve their congregation. The Association sent Elders Scarborough and David Cooper to Opelousas to *"set apart, by ordination, to the work of the ministry"* Mr. Joseph Willis, *"if they, upon examination, should think it expedient."* They chose not to ordain him that year. In 1812, the Mississippi Association met with Zion Hill Church in Amite County, and the Association minutes included this entry:

Brethren Hadley and Scarborough were appointed to ordain Brother Willis in the Opelousas, and constitute a church in the vicinity where he lives [8].

Scarborough and Hadley traveled to Bayou Chicot in St. Landry Parish, where Willis preached to a congregation of six members. On 13 November 1812, they constituted them as Calvary Church, the first Baptist church in Louisiana. At the same time, at the church's request, Scarborough and Hadley ordained Joseph Willis as a Baptist minister [9].

In 1817, the Mississippi Baptist Association met with the Bogue Chitto Church in Pike County from October 18 to 21. The Association formed a special committee of seven and vested it with the right and authority to solicit funds for the educational fund *"for the special purpose of promoting the proper education of pious young men called to the great and important work of the gospel ministry."* The Association also charged the special committee

...to judge and determine of the moral character, piety, gifts, and graces of those who may apply for the benefit of this fund; to accept such as may be deemed worthy and are called of God to preach the gospel; also to conduct and superintend their education; and to defray all necessary expenses out of the funds collected for that purpose.

The Mississippi Association appointed Lawrence Scarborough to this special committee [10].

On Thursday, 18 December 1817, one week after Mississippi became the twentieth state admitted to the Union, several Christian denominations in Mississippi held a unique meeting at Washington. Located in Adams County along the Mississippi River near Natchez, Washington

served as the territorial capital from 1802 until 1817, with the statehood convention meeting there.

The interdenominational meeting convened at the Clear Creek Baptist Church, one of the oldest Baptist churches in the state. Lawrence Scarborough participated in the meeting, along with his many other ministers and laymen from a variety of denominations, including his fellow Baptist, William Snodgrass. The group met

...for the purpose of mutually reciprocating the expressions of Christian friendship, and endeavoring unitedly to promote the common interests of the Redeemer's Kingdom.

The organizers hoped to promote *"as strong a bond of union among the different denominations of Christians as possible,"* and to demonstrate *"to the unbelieving and the ungodly"* that as much as various Christian denominations might differ on minute subjects, they all held *"a common interest—a common cause—the cause of virtue and of God."*

In two days of sermons delivered by various denominations interspersed by business meetings, the group organized themselves as *"The Religious Convention of Christian Denominations"* and selected officers. The Convention passed a series of resolutions that promoted *"a spirit of Christian affection and unanimity"* among all denominations, the necessity of personal and family religion, and stressed the importance of religious education *"of the rising generation."* Regarding religious education, the group resolved that *"the utmost vigilance be recommended to prevent the diffusion of infidel principles in the instruction of youth."*

The formation of such a religious organization comprised of multiple Christian denominations caught the attention of the media across the United States, especially in New England. They found the idea novel and seemed especially curious that such a unique group would form on the country's southwestern frontier [11].

The Religious Convention of Christian Denominations met the following year on Thursday, 19 November 1818, again at Clear Creek Baptist Church in Washington, Mississippi. Lawrence Scarborough had planned to attend that day but was delayed. He sent word that he would be late, and the convention seated him anyway. In anticipation of arrival later that day or the next, the convention appointing Scarborough to serve on a *"committee of overtures,"* to prepare and bring forward the business of the meeting. He arrived at the meeting and worked with the committee. On Friday, the 20th, Scarborough's committee presented resolutions to the convention regarding the vital importance of children's education, earnestly recommending that *"all friends of religion...inculcate a thorough knowledge of the Scriptures on the minds of the rising generation."*

The convention appointed Lawrence Scarborough and two other ministers as a committee to prepare a *“plan of the principles and objects of union in this Convention.”*

On Saturday, November 21st, Scarborough’s committee reported back with more business for the Convention. They adopted a resolution regarding slaves:

Whereas that degraded portion of our population, the children of Africa, must be regarded as possessed of immortal souls like ours, for whom as well as for us the blood of atonement has been shed, and whose salvation, like our own, is only to be accomplished through sanctification of the spirit, and belief of the truth.

The Convention resolved that they

...strongly recommended to all masters and employers of slaves, to see that they be initiated into the principles of the Christian faith; to grant them as often as possible, the privilege of attending on stated family worship, and of hearing the sacred Scriptures read; and by every practicable means to facilitate and encourage their attendance in the sanctuary from Sabbath to Sabbath.

They also passed resolutions stating their strong opposition to *“not only gross intemperance, but even the moderate use of ardent spirits,”* the *“pernicious and wicked”* practice of the *“irreverent and profane use of the holy name of God and Christ,”* and even *“the introduction of God’s reverend name, by way of exclamation.”*

After that business, Rev. William Montgomery and Lawrence Scarborough preached sermons to the convention, followed later by a report of Scarborough’s committee, then more business. The Convention then adjourned, planning to meet in November 1819 at the Jersey Church at Homochitto [12].

The Religious Convention of Christian Denominations met at the Jersey *“meeting-house”* in Homochitto on Wednesday, 24 November 1819, but Elder Scarborough did not attend. In fact, *“considering the present sickly season”* that detained many members from attending the meeting, the Convention determined that too few were in attendance to conduct any business. They only heard several sermons during this abbreviated session [13].

In 1819, eight churches in the Mississippi Baptist Association living north of the Homochitto River, the region that included Scarborough’s home in Jefferson County, petitioned to form a new association. These churches formed the new Union Baptist Association on 17 September 1820, and Lawrence Scarborough became very active in the new association over the next few years. A month after helping to form the Union Association, the Mississippi Baptist Association held their annual meeting with Zion Hill Church in Amite County from October 14 to 17. Lawrence Scarborough attended the Mississippi Association’s meeting as a visiting minister, and the Mississippi Association received and seated him as such. In 1822, the Union Baptist Association selected

Lawrence Scarborough as one of her delegates to the associational meetings of both the Mississippi and Pearl River Baptist Associations [14].

Lawrence's first wife, Agnes Stringer Scarborough, died around the time he moved to Mississippi in 1807. He soon remarried to Elizabeth Given, a widow with six children by her first husband, but she died before 1820. Her death appears to have prompted a recurrence of his wanderlust, luring Scarborough westward once more [15].

On 1 June 1820, Lawrence Scarborough wrote that

I intend to depart from this state and travel in other states, for a long time, and perhaps forever, and wish to make preparation for my children and step-children.

He then named his son-in-law, Bryan Gardner, as trustee, together with Bryan's father, Ashel Gardner, to manage Scarborough's property that he distributed to his children and stepchildren. He gave them all of his lands and improvements thereon, all horses and bridles, sheep, cattle, hogs, household furniture. He retained only one riding horse for his own use. Among the witnesses to the transaction was William Snodgrass, a Jefferson County merchant and influential businessman who was active in Baptist churches and associations [16].

By this point, Mississippi Baptists described Lawrence Scarborough as "*an exceedingly useful man for many years*" [17] and a "*prominent minister*" in that region [18]. Another contemporary wrote that

Mr. Scarborough was conspicuous as a preacher among the Baptists in Mississippi about fifteen years, and was the pastor of some of their best Churches [19].

Despite the careful preparations he made in July 1820 to leave Mississippi, Scarborough remained and continued his active participation in the Mississippi and Union Baptist Associations through 1822 [20]. According to one church historian, Scarborough then "*committed a blunder that overthrew him completely in this country*" [21]. The resulting church scandal soon caused Scarborough to cross the Mississippi River permanently. Differing versions of the subsequent events tell a conflicting tale, making it questionable whether the charges against him were entirely legitimate and based upon his actions, or if they resulted from vicious church politics of the day.

Between about 1815 and 1840, the Baptists in the United States experienced much internal strife over the introduction of missions, Sunday Schools, seminaries, etc. into their denomination. Both sides polarized against one another, and in an era when religious faith governed most aspects of daily life in the Deep South, these issues divided and literally ripped apart both families and churches. As the churches formerly split over the matter in the 1830s, the pro-missionaries

became “*Missionary Baptists*” (later Southern Baptists), whereas the anti-missionaries became known colloquially as “*Hardshell Baptists*,” or as they styled themselves, “*Primitive Baptists*” [22].

In later years, records show that Elder Scarborough favored the anti-missionary cause, whereas the Baptist associations he affiliated with during his years in Mississippi retained staunchly Missionary Baptist beliefs. Could Scarborough’s anti-mission views have contributed to the church scandal?

When he described the Missionary Baptist version of events in 1866, a church historian showed clear disdain and contempt for Scarborough. As recounted by the historian, in about 1820 or 1821, Scarborough remarried for the third time to a widow, “*apparently every way suitable for him as to age and circumstances in life*,” but their union proved unhappy, and “*It was not long...before they disagreed and parted*.” The Mississippi historian charged that Elder Scarborough failed to justify himself in leaving his wife, and without bothering to obtain a legal divorce [23],

...he hastily married a young woman, which brought down on him, not only the censure of the Church, but the indignation of the community.

According to a Louisiana Baptist historian, the Mississippi Baptists claimed that Scarborough [24]:

Having separated from his wife, he left Mississippi in company with another woman, to whom he was married in Louisiana.

Rather than defend himself at a church conference, basically a church trial, Scarborough “*precipitately left the country in disorder*,” finally making a permanent move across the Mississippi River. He settled along Bayous D’Arbonne and Corney in north Louisiana [25].

If the Mississippi and Louisiana church historians provided an accurate account of the scandal that embroiled him, Scarborough’s actions would seemingly have prevented him from any future work as a Baptist minister. On the contrary, he continued to preach and perform other pastoral duties among Baptist congregations for the next quarter-century.

We have no information on Lawrence Scarborough’s third wife from whom he separated, although family tradition does confirm that Scarborough married four times. He married about 1824 to Sarah Cann, born about 1800 in South Carolina. At the time of their marriage, Scarborough was fifty-seven, while his bride was about twenty-four, so she was considerably younger than he [26].

About 1824 or 1825, Lawrence and Sarah Scarborough settled on Bayou Corney in what is now Union Parish, Louisiana. Scarborough chose an extremely remote area in which to settle, for this region had very few white residents at the time. The government had not yet completed surveying the lands across north Louisiana, making it impossible for settlers to obtain a clear title to their

lands. The Scarboroughs' closest neighbors were a band of Choctaws who had a village on the bayou a few miles downstream [27].

After his arrival in north Louisiana, Elder Scarborough began actively preaching in the few small communities that had formed across northern Louisiana. He frequently preached at the Black Lake Baptist Church located near modern-day Minden, then in Natchitoches Parish, and their members developed a special devotion to Scarborough [28]. He became the first Baptist minister to preach in Claiborne Parish, located to the west of his home on Bayou Corney. Scarborough preached *"the Bible; nothing more or less as the only rule of faith and practice for Christians"* [29].

Elder Scarborough's closest white neighbors lived in the *"Pine Hills"* settlements located to the south of his home along the reaches of Bayou D'Arbonne in modern Lincoln, Ouachita, and southern Union Parishes. Early residents there constituted the Pine Hills Baptist Church in 1821, and it joined the Louisiana Baptist Association in 1822 [30]. Scarborough began attending and preaching at the Pine Hills Church, and he joined the church on 4 January 1827. On that date, church Clerk Haywood Alford wrote Scarborough's pastoral credentials [31]:

*State of Louisiana Know all to whom this may come that the Church of Christ at Pine Hills in
Conference...have
Parish of Ouachita received our beloved Brother Elder Lawrence Scarborough into our
fellowship by letter and acknowledgment and we hereby authorize him to act and perform all the
functionary duties invested in him by his Ordination And do hereby recommend him to favour
[sic] and respect and whatever call God in providence may cast his lot.*

Lawrence Scarborough's preaching at the Pine Hills, Blake Lake, and other churches across northern Louisiana attracted the attention of Baptists who had close ties with the Mississippi Baptists. Rumors of the Mississippi scandal began to swirl, eventually leading to formal charges against Scarborough in his church. The Pine Hills Church appointed a committee to examine the allegations against Scarborough, and *"after a careful investigation of the case, honorably acquitted him"* [32].

Scarborough's former church in Mississippi had excluded him from membership after he left the state in 1822 or 1823 without submitting to a church trial. Upon learning of his membership in the Pine Hills Church, they

...sent a deputation to Louisiana to inquire into his case, collect any available testimony that might turn up, and report to the Church on their return.

Upon their return to Mississippi, the deputation that had visited the Pine Hills Church reported their findings to the church there, and as a result, Elder Lawrence Scarborough was [33]

...wholly discarded by the Church in Mississippi as an unworthy and fallen minister.

Dissatisfied with the Pine Hills Church's exoneration of Elder Scarborough, the Mississippi Baptist Association took the matter to the Louisiana Baptist Association. As a result, the Louisiana Association threatened to withdraw fellowship from the Pine Hills Church unless they either excluded Scarborough or managed to provide satisfaction to his former church in Mississippi [34].

According to a history of Claiborne Parish religion written in the 1880s, despite his acquittal by the investigating committee at the Pine Hills Baptist Church, the continued turmoil with the Mississippi Baptists convinced Lawrence Scarborough that [35],

...his teaching [was] more offensive than his practice, [and he] withdrew from the church to avoid further trouble, and a number of his Baptist brethren withdrew with him.

Another source claims a different outcome of the case. Louisiana Baptist historian W. E. Paxton wrote that in 1830, the Pine Hills Baptist Church excluded Lawrence Scarborough over the trouble. He said that many members of the Pine Hills and Black Lake Baptist Churches in north Louisiana adhered to Elder Scarborough for a while, but they *"were finally convinced that he was wholly unworthy."* Paxton also reported that the Pine Hills Church excluded their members who supported Elder Scarborough, an action that the Louisiana Baptist Association commended in 1831 [36]. Although Scarborough retained much support from members at the Black Lake Baptist Church to the west in Natchitoches Parish, he lived a long distance from them, and *"Scarborough being poor...could not be with them often."* As a result, many of them eventually returned to their church [37].

Lawrence Scarborough's anti-mission views were at loggerheads with the pro-mission viewpoints of the majority of the Baptists in both Mississippi and Louisiana, including those who later wrote historical accounts of early Baptist activities in those states. The historians wrote with derision in later decades of the nineteenth century of those ministers who affiliated with the *"anti-missionary Baptists,"* more formally known as Primitive Baptists [38]. We will likely never know a completely accurate account of the basis behind the scandal that prompted Scarborough's emigration from Mississippi in 1822 or 1823 and caused so much turmoil after his arrival in Louisiana. However, any careful analysis of these events must be viewed with the strife over missions in mind.

The troubles surrounding Elder Lawrence Scarborough left religious affairs in north Louisiana in a chaotic state for a while. In fact, the Pine Hills Baptist Church dissolved in the early or mid-1830s, possibly over lingering hard feelings of Lawrence Scarborough's departure from the church.

However, beginning in the early 1830s, settlers from the Carolinas, Georgia, and Alabama began steadily immigrating into north Louisiana and south Arkansas, many holding anti-mission views similar to those espoused by Lawrence Scarborough. He continued preaching in Claiborne Parish, Louisiana and across the state line in Union County, Arkansas, and he attracted a significant following. In his preaching, Scarborough "*commemorated the death and sufferings of Christ,*" and he and his followers

As disciples or Christians, they discarded all unscriptural names and practices and took as a motto... 'the word of God as a lamp to our feet in the pathway of life,' offering to meet and unite with any and all on this, the one and the only foundation for the universal union of the children of God. Many ugly and offensive names were applied...but we relied on the promise of God, and cared for none of those things.

Members in Claiborne Parish near his home built a church in the 1830s, and within a few years, Scarborough's new church had a membership of sixty, with another one of a similar membership near the Arkansas state line [39].

Elder Lawrence Scarborough possessed a very unique style of preaching that made significant impressions upon eyewitnesses, one of whom recalled a half-century later:

His manner of preaching was rather boisterous, and his gesticulation violent. He had acquired 'the heavenly tone' in great perfection, and could sing and wail out his hymns, prayers and sermons equal to any man we ever heard.

The preaching style known as "*the heavenly tone*" was one highly prized by all Baptist preachers prior to the 1820s and retained and cultivated by Primitive Baptist preachers into the twentieth century. It had become unfashionable by Missionary Baptist preachers as that denomination evolved and had disappeared among them by the mid-nineteenth century. According to a minister who in his youth had heard him preach, Elder Scarborough's "*heavenly tone*" preaching style [40]

...was made up of assumed intonations of the voice, expressive of great earnestness, and was composed of the cadences of whining, mourning, lamentation and wailing, and was intended to arouse the sympathies of both preacher and auditors. We seldom meet with "the heavenly tone" at this day, except as very imperfectly imitated by some of our colored brethren in their public prayers and exhortations.

Later Years in Arkansas and Louisiana

As shown by his putting the bulk of his property in the hands of trustees in 1820 to distribute to his children, Lawrence Scarborough expressed great concern for his children and their financial support in the event of his death. He showed similar concern for his fourth wife, Sarah Cann Scarborough. Upon or after their marriage, Scarborough took possession of money or property

Sarah received from her parents, and presumably assumed ownership of a female slave, Molly, born about 1780. On 15 October 1829, he went to Russellville, then the parish seat of Claiborne Parish, and made a deposition before Parish Judge Chichester Chaplin. Scarborough gave his wife full title to Molly, his improvements on Bayou Corney, “*a stock of cattle, hogs, and horses,*” and all of his household furniture. He made the sale

In order to replace certain dotal effects of said Sarah which have been alienated the said Lawrence has sold and by these presents does sell deliver and forever alienate the said property above mentioned to his aforesaid wife Sarah her heirs and assigns for ever [sic]. Said slave Molly is declared to be free from all mortgages and incumbrances whatsoever.... I do hereby certify that no mortgage exists on my records against the negro slave Molly belonging to Lawrence Scarborough.

As the records do not show Scarborough owning any slaves, it is possible that Sarah inherited Molly from her parents. By selling Sarah his rights to “*anticipated by law an improvement on public land situated on the loutre,*” he referred to the anticipated passage of preemption laws that gave squatters on public lands the right to purchase it before land speculators. Although Congress passed several preemption laws during the 1830s, it took until the latter 1830s before the lands on which the Scarboroughs had settled in 1825 became available for sale to the public [41].

Although Lawrence Scarborough maintained his improvements on Bayou Corney that he had made in the 1820s, he also spent time across the state line in Union County, Arkansas Territory, where four of his sons, Asa, John, Silas, and Allen Scarborough, settled in the latter 1820s and 1830s. John Scarborough settled on the Ouachita River in Union County during the 1820s and operated a store at a landing. As steamboat travel increased, the location’s importance increased, and the landing soon became known as “*Scarborough’s Landing.*” In the latter 1830s, the location became the county seat of Union County, with a courthouse constructed and functioning by 1839 [42]. When the census enumerator visited in 1830, Lawrence lived beside John and near Silas at Scarborough’s Landing [43].

In the early 1830s, Lawrence Scarborough settled in Union County, Arkansas near the Louisiana line. In October 1834, the Union County Court appointed him as a commissioner

...to view and mark a Road the nearest and most Eligable [sic] Route from Joseph Neeleys by the flats in Smith Settlement to intersect the Road Leading to the Louisiana Line at or near Lawrence Scarbouroughs [sic].

Scarborough and another commissioner, John Hogg, reported to the Court in April 1835 that they had viewed and marked out the road. In April 1836, the Court appointed Lawrence Scarborough

as overseer of the road leading from *“the bayou Smackover to the Louisiana line by Way of John H. Cornishes...”* [44].

In early 1839, the Union County Court ordered a road built from the Union County Courthouse at Scarborough’s Landing on the Ouachita River *“to Lawrence Scarborough’s house passing near the houses of Isaac Ogden and Stanley Ogden”* [45]. On 4 October 1839, a tragic event occurred *“near the residence of Lawrence Scarborough, in Jackson township, Union co. Ark.”* Someone found the body of Miss Martha Davis *“suspended to a tree”* near the Scarborough home. A coroner’s jury held an inquest and ruled that *“the deceased came to her death by hanging, committed by her own hands”* [46]. In 1840, Lawrence and Sarah resided in Union Parish on their Bayou Corney farm with their three young daughters and two sons [47]. These records show that Lawrence and Sarah maintained two farms with homes on each during this period, probably spending time at both depending on which churches Elder Scarborough served that weekend. His Bayou Corney farm lay in closer proximity to his church in Claiborne Parish, whereas his home in Jackson Township, Union County, Arkansas lay close to his churches near the state line [48].

In 1829, Lawrence Scarborough had sold his anticipated preemption rights to the land on Bayou Corney on which he had settled about 1825 to his wife, Sarah. The United States Congress passed several preemption laws during the 1830s, but the lands across the northern half of modern Union Parish where the Scarboroughs lived did not become available for purchase until the latter 1830s. Sarah Scarborough appeared at the Ouachita Land Office in Monroe, Louisiana on 15 April 1839 and paid \$99.96 in cash for a 79.97-acre tract, and she returned to the land office later that year on November 4th to purchase another 39.98-acre tract for \$49.97. She went back to the Ouachita Land Office on 27 April 1841 to purchase the final 80 acres of their Bayou Corney farm, paying \$100.11 in cash [49].

Three of Scarborough’s four wives bore him nineteen children who survived to adulthood, and during his own lifetime, Lawrence’s descendants scattered across Mississippi, Arkansas, Louisiana, and Texas. Margaret Ann Scarborough, Lawrence’s daughter born in 1834, wrote a letter to her brother, Isaac Polk Scarborough, on 24 July 1879 from Oenaville, in Bell County, Texas. She described a holiday celebration she experienced as a child during her father’s lifetime:

Since I am engaged in telling old stories, I will give you a brief account of the first celebration of Independence that I ever witnessed. It was given by Pa, on the fourth of July, 1841. The ground chosen for the occasion was beneath those large spreading oaks which stood in front of the old homestead. They furnished ample shade for speaker, audience, pits, and table. The Declaration of Independence was read by brother P.D., then about twelve years old, which was printed on a large linen handkerchief, which was a present to Pa when he was a young man. It was treasured and

kept by him as a trophy, and he had placed it in a frame for this occasion. After the reading, Pa delivered a short, but pathetic address, judging from his appearance, which my memory retains vividly, and from the large tear drops that I saw chasing each other down the furrowed cheeks of the more aged ones in the assembly.

I said that Pa gave the dinner, which is strictly true, with two exceptions. Some kind friends had offered their services in dressing and barbecuing the meats, and had loaned some old pewter basins. The meats were: beef, pork, mutton, venison, wild turkey, and buffalo fish, all nicely dressed and well cooked. Memory does not serve me so well in regard to breads, cakes and pies, and I can not give a list of them, but the quantity was ample, and of various kinds, and just as Ma was capable of preparing. Table room was commodious, and the table was built in half square, constructed in such a manner in order to have the advantage of shade. The plates were made by Pa of cypress, of usual size, round and very thin and smooth [sic]. The knives and forks were made of well polished canes.

While the crowd was appeasing their appetites, Pa moved around with quick but steady steps for one of his age bearing a small cane basket full of roasted peas, telling the astonished listeners that was what he lived on, as a boy, during the Revolutionary War.

Margaret Ann Scarborough moved to Texas with her siblings and taught school for many years, which explains her excellent grammar and writing style [50].

Lawrence Scarborough appears to have remained in good health and continued preaching well into his seventies. He died in October 1846 at the age of 79. Sarah buried her husband on their farm on the banks of Bayou Corney [51].



Notes

1. Jewel Davis Scarborough. *Southern Kith and Kin: A Record of My Children's Ancestors; Major James Scarborough: His Ancestors and Descendants*, pp. 81–113.
2. Georgia Headright and Bounty Land Records, 1783–1909. Register of Grants 1785, Vol. GGGGG (1805–1809), p. 116 (Lawrence Scarborough, 500 acres in Bulloch County, October 1807). Bulloch County GA Plat Book A, p. 356 (Lawrence Scarborough, 500 acres on Ashes Swamp, surveyed 3 June 1807).
3. Potter, Dorothy Williams. *Passports of Southeastern Pioneers, 1770–1823*. Baltimore, MD: Gateway Press, 1982, p. 221.
4. Jones, Rev. John G. *A Concise History of the Introduction of Protestantism into Mississippi and the Southwest*. St. Louis: P.M. Pinckard, 1866, p. 63. Speaking of the Mississippi Baptist Association minutes, Jones writes that “Lawrence Scarborough first appears in the minutes in 1809...” This proves that by that time, he had settled in Mississippi.
5. Hebron Baptist Church Minutes, p. 3. The first few pages of the Hebron Baptist Church minutes have details about the 1804 formation of the church, originally named “Skull Creek Baptist Church.”
6. Jones, p. 63.
7. Leavell, Z. T. and T. J. Bailey. *A Complete History of Mississippi Baptists, From the Earliest Times*. Vol. I. Jackson, MS: Mississippi Baptist Publishing, 1904, pp. 40–41.
8. Jones, pp. 53–54. Levell, pp. 41–42.
9. Paxton, Rev. W. E. *A History of the Baptists of Louisiana from the Earliest Times to the Present*. St. Louis: C. R. Barns Publishing, 1888, p. 142–143.
10. Leavell, pp. 44–45.
11. “Connecticut Courant” (Hartford, CT), 17 March 1818, p. 1, column 6, p. 2, columns 1–2. “Newburyport Herald” (Newburyport, MA), 31 March 1818, p. 1, columns 3–4, p. 2, column 1. “Spooner’s Vermont Journal” (Windsor, VT), 13 April 1818, p. 1, columns 1–2. “Essex Patriot” (Haverhill, MA), 18 April 1818, p. 1, column 1.
12. “The Mississippi State Gazette” (Natchez, MS), 28 November 1818, p. 3, columns 2–3. “The Weekly Recorder” (Chillicothe, OH), 15 January 1819, p. 1, columns 2–3, p. 2, columns 1–2. “Boston Recorder” (Boston, MA), 13 February 1819, p. 2, columns 2–4. “The Southern Evangelical Intelligencer” (Charleston, SC), 3 April 1819, p. 4, columns 1–3. “Concord Observer” (Concord, NH), 26 April 1819, p. 2, columns 1–2.
13. “Mississippi Republican” (Natchez, MS), 18 January 1820, p. 1, columns 4–5. Before adjourning, the Convention resolved to meet on Wednesday, 22 November 1820 at Port Gibson, Mississippi. There is no known record of the 1820 or future meetings of this novel interdenominational group.
14. Leavell, pp. 48–49, 72–74.
15. Scarborough, Jewell Davis. *Southern Kith and Kin: A Record of My Children's Ancestors, Volume 3, Major James Scarborough: His Ancestors and Descendants*. Abilene Printing Company, 1957, p. 82. Union Parish LA Succession Book A-3, p. 99.
16. Jefferson County Mississippi Deed Book A, p. 131. (Lawrence Scarborough to his children, 28 July 1820). Jones, pp. 72–73. Lawrence Scarborough transferred his property via a deed of trust for the benefit of his children. Scarborough named his son-in-law, Bryan Gardner, husband of Zillah Ann Scarborough, and Gardner’s father, Ashel Gardner, as trustees to fulfill the provisions of the deed. Jones described Snodgrass as “a polished gentleman as well as an earnest Christian, and commanded respect as such wherever he went.”
17. Leavell, p. 74.
18. Paxton, p. 152.
19. Jones, p. 64.
20. Leavell, p. 74.
21. Jones, p. 64.
22. Hassell, Elder Cushing Biggs and Elder Sylvester Hassell. *History of The Church of God, From the Creation to A.D. 1885; Including Especially The History of the Kehukee Primitive Baptist Association*. Middletown, New York: Gilbert Beebe’s Sons, Publishers, 1886, pp. 736–743. Holcombe, Elder Hosea. *A History of the Rise and Progress of the Baptists in Alabama: With a miniature history of the denomination from the Apostolic age down to the present time, interspersed with anecdotes original and selected, and concluded with an address To The Baptists of Alabama*. Philadelphia: King and Baird, 1840, pp. 88–105, 205–206, 242–243, 246. Rev. Holcombe includes information on Primitive Baptists throughout his work, as the divisions had just occurred when he wrote his book between 1839 and 1841. As Holcombe staunchly supported the missionary cause, he writes in a derogatory manner about the Primitive Baptists, or the “antis” as he calls them.
23. Jones, pp. 64–65.
24. Paxton, p. 180.
25. Jones, p. 64.

26. Scarborough, p. 82. 1850 Union Parish LA Federal Census, p. 388a, Household #559: Mrs. Sarah Scarborough, age: 50 years, born in South Carolina.
27. Union Parish Louisiana Civil Suit #124-D, "*Lawrence Scarborough to Sarah Scarborough, wife.*" United States Original Survey, Township 22 North, Range 2 West, "*Land District North of Red River State of Louisiana,*" surveyed in June 1822. The civil suit petition gives Scarborough's settlement on Bayou Corney. Scarborough deeded property to his wife, including "*anticipated by law an improvment [sic] on public land situated on the loutre.*" Despite the statement that his land lay on Bayou d'Loutre, surveys clearly indicate that it was on Bayou Corney, and he had the incorrect bayou name. The "*by law*" statement refers to anticipated passage of the right of preemption, which was not passed until 1841. Scarborough's land lay in Sections 20 and 21, T22N, R2W on the banks of Bayou Corney. The June 1822 survey shows an "*Indian Village*" located two miles south of where the Scarboroughs settled about 1825. At this time, the Choctaws were the only Indians who hunted in north Louisiana.
28. Paxton, pp. 152, 177. Minden, Louisiana now lies in Webster Parish, but at the time the region was in Natchitoches Parish.
29. Davis, Rev. J. B. "History of the Christian Church in Claiborne Parish, Louisiana." In D. W. Harris and B. M. Hulse. *The History of Claiborne Parish Louisiana*. New Orleans: W. B. Stanbury, 1886, p. 141.
30. Paxton, pp. 176, 238. Perhaps due to a typographical error, this work gives both 1822 and 1823 as the year in which the Pine Hills Baptist Church joined the Louisiana Baptist Association.
31. Union County AR Deed Record A, p. 77 (Lawrence Scarborough credentials, recorded 21 September 1839).
32. Davis, pp. 141–142.
33. Jones, p. 64
34. Paxton, p. 180.
35. Davis, pp. 141–142.
36. Paxton, pp. 152, 180.
37. Davis, p. 142.
38. Paxton, pp. 152, 180.
39. Davis, pp. 142–143.
40. Jones, p. 63.
41. Union Parish Louisiana Civil Suit #124-D, "*Lawrence Scarborough to Sarah Scarborough, wife.*" Although this document was transacted in Russellville, Claiborne Parish in 1829, it was filed as a civil suit in Union Parish on 7 December 1841 by Union Parish Judge John Taylor, presumably since Lawrence and Sarah Scarborough's residents was then Union Parish.
42. "*Arkansas State Gazette*" (Little Rock, AR), 1 January 1840, p. 10, column 5. In advertisements of two upcoming divorce petitions before the Union County Circuit Court, the Clerk advertised that the Court would hear the cases at the session scheduled in April 1840, "*in the court-house at Scarborough's Landing.*"
43. 1830 Union County AR Federal Census, p. 143, line #9: John Scarborough; #10: Larance [sic] Scarborough; p. 145, line #4: Silas Scarborough.
44. Union County AR Court Record A, pp. 35 (October 1834), 44 (April 1835), and 49–50 (April 1836).
45. Union County AR Court Record A, pp. 80 (April 1839) and 84 (July 1839).
46. "*Arkansas State Gazette*" (Little Rock, AR), 30 October 1839, p. 2, column 5.
47. 1840 Union Parish LA Federal Census, p. 344, line #25: Larance [sic] Scarborough.
48. Baptist churches in that era typically held services one weekend a month, allowing preachers to provide services to multiple churches across the region.
49. Ouachita, Louisiana Land Office Cash Entries to Sarah Scarborough for land in Township 22 North, Range 2 West:
 - #5072, 15 Apr 1839, W½ of NW¼ of Section 20, 79.97 acres for \$99.96
 - #5863, 4 Nov 1839, NE¼ of NW¼ of Section 20, 39.98 acres for \$49.97
 - #7170, 27 Apr 1841, W½ of NW¼ of Section 21, 80.09 acres for \$100.11
50. Scarborough, pp. 90–91. 1870 Jasper County TX Federal Census, Subdivision No. 23, p. 511a, Household #429, line #11: Margaret A. Scarborough, age: 35; profession or occupation: "*Teaching School.*" Bell County TX Marriage Record H, p. 157 (Elder William Thomas to Miss Maggie A. Scarborough, 26 October 1886).
51. Union Parish La Succession Book A-3, pp. 99–101 (Succession of Lawrence Scarborough, filed November 1846).

