

127 Ninth Avenue, North

Nashville, Tennessee

January 22, 1952

BAYLOR EX-PRESIDENT DIES  
OF HEART ATTACK IN WACO

WACO, Tex. --(BP)-- Pat M. Neff, long-time Baptist and political leader in Texas, died at his home in Waco Sunday morning, January 20, following a heart attack. The former president of Baylor University and ex-governor of Texas was eighty years old. He had made Waco his home and served actively in the First Baptist Church there for over fifty of his eighty years.

A graduate of Baylor and the University of Texas law school, Dr. Neff served Texas government in many capacities while maintaining his law practice in Waco. In 1901 he was elected to the Texas House of representatives and two years later became the youngest speaker of the House ever to serve at that time. In 1921 he was elected governor of Texas and served two terms.

Dr. Neff was named president of Baylor University in 1932 after twenty-nine years as chairman of the university's board of trustees. He retired from the college presidency in 1947 but was until his death a popular figure on the Waco campus. He still kept his office on the fourth floor of Pat Neff Hall, administration building.

In 1942 he began four years of service as president of the Southern Baptist Convention, although he presided for only two Convention meetings as war-time conditions prevented meetings in 1943 and 1945.

He was president of the Baptist General Convention of Texas, 1927-1929.

Funeral services were held January 21 at the First Baptist Church in Waco with Dr. Forrest C. Feezor, pastor, officiating. Dr. W.R. White, president of Baylor University, assisted. Burial was in Oakwood Cemetery, Waco.

--30--

SMITH NAMED SUCCESSOR  
IN LOUISIANA SECRETARYSHIP

ALEXANDRIA, La. --(BP)-- Dr. R. Houston Smith, pastor of the First Baptist Church in Pineville, has been elected executive secretary of the Louisiana Baptist Convention. He has not yet announced his decision.

If he accepts the secretaryship, he will succeed the late Dr. W.H. Knight, secretary since 1941, who also once served as pastor of the Pineville church.

--30--

CANAL ZONE MISSIONARY  
ILL IN DALLAS HOSPITAL

DALLAS, Tex. --(BP)-- Dr. Paul Bell, missionary of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, is seriously ill in a Dallas hospital and is not expected to recover.

He has been superintendent of the Spanish work in Panama and the Canal Zone.

--30--

BAPTISTS TAKE LEAD  
TO FIGHT RACE TRACKS

MEMPHIS, Tenn. --(BP)-- Baptists in the Memphis area on both sides of the Mississippi River took the lead in an organized fight to keep Arkansas politicians from establishing a race track with pari-mutual betting in West Memphis.

One feature of the fight was an all-night prayer meeting in the new million-dollar First Baptist Church, R. Paul Caudill, pastor. Representatives of all protestant denominations from three states participated.

--30--

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION ASSOCIATION  
RECOGNIZES FT. WORTH SEMINARY SCHOOL

FT. WORTH, Tex. --(BP)-- The School of Religious Education of Southwestern Baptist Seminary in Ft. Worth is among the first seven such schools to be recognized by the American Association of Schools of Religious Education.

The accreditation covers all work on graduate level, both the master's and doctor's degrees.

The Association announced its approval of the seven schools at its fifteenth session recently in Cincinnati. An Accreditation Commission has been working for several years to set up accreditation standards for the Association.

Dr. J.M. Price, director of the Southwestern School, has served the Association as president five terms since its organization in 1936. The Seminary School was also one of the charter members of the association.

--30--

SOUTHWESTERN SEMINARY STAFFER  
NAMED LIBRARIAN OF ZURICH SCHOOL

FT. WORTH, Tex. --(BP)-- Miss Vella Jane Burch, catalogue librarian and teacher of church library work at Southwestern Baptist Seminary in Ft. Worth, has been appointed by the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board to be librarian for the European Baptist Seminary at Zurich, Switzerland. She is already on the field.

Miss Burch, a graduate of Duke University, the University of North Carolina and Southwestern Seminary, has been granted a leave of absence by the Ft. Worth institution.

--30--

GROUP TRIES TO STOP  
NASHVILLE FREEDOM RALLY

NASHVILLE, Tenn. --(BP)-- Governor Gordon Browning has been strongly pressed by a group led by H. Frank Taylor, leading Tennessee legislator, to cancel an agreement with Nashville protestants leasing the War Memorial Auditorium for a Religious Freedom Rally, February 1, at which Paul Blanshard is to be principal speaker.

The group argued that Blanshard's address will desecrate the memory of Catholic boys among those for whom the auditorium was established as a memorial. The governor tried to get the protestants to relinquish the contract.

Rev. J. Harold Stephens, pastor of the Inglewood Baptist Church in Nashville, replied to the governor that the Catholic objection was no more valid than a possible objection from republicans saying that the inauguration of a democratic governor in the hall would desecrate the memory of the republican boys memorialized there.

--30--

DR. HEAD IMPROVES

FT. WORTH, Tex. --(BP)-- Dr. E.D. Head, president of Southwestern Baptist Seminary, is reported as recovering progressively from a recent severe heart attack.

He is still a patient in Harris Hospital where he was taken January 6. Doctors have said he can return to work in a few weeks.

--30--

SAN ANTONIO MAY NOT BE BIG ENOUGH  
TO HOLD TEXAS EVANGELISM MEET

FT. WORTH, Tex. --(BP)-- The 1953 annual Baptist Evangelistic Conference has been invited to San Antonio next year but the Texas Baptists may have to come back to Ft. Worth unless sufficient room can be provided for the meeting, according to Dr. C. Wade Freeman, superintendent of evangelism of the Baptist General Convention of Texas.

The First Baptist Church in San Antonio will not hold an attendance such as this year's conference saw recently in Ft. Worth's Will Rogers Coliseum -- Freeman estimated that 90 per cent of Texas' Baptist pastors were on hand and the five sessions totaled over 24,000 attendants.

The conference is already set for Ft. Worth in 1954 and may soon adopt Ft. Worth as a permanent meeting place, Freeman said.

--30--