

AN INCIDENT FROM THE LIFE OF J. FRANK NORRIS
Taken From Norris' Book, *Inside History*

By Dr. Raymond Barber

Fort Worth Mayor W. D. Davis
Addresses 3,000 People
 (Circa 1911)

No women were allowed, nor were any men or boys under the age of twenty-one. "He (the mayor) invented new words that had never been heard in either the chain gangs or the gambler's den." Norris sent a stenographer to take down the address, and he put a copy of it on doorsteps all over the city of Fort Worth.

The mayor closed that inflammatory address with these words: "If there are fifty red-blooded men left in this town, there will be a man hanging from a telephone pole tonight (meaning Norris, of course)." Norris said, "Someone called me, and I went down to the city hall and saw a man holding a rope in his hand. I walked up to him, since he was calling my name, and said, 'Are you looking for me?' He dropped the rope, and I had the whole place to myself."

Soon after this incident, the man who held the rope attended First Baptist Church on a Sunday night. According to Dr. Norris, "He had a long mustache, long enough to tie behind his ears." One day walking down Main Street, Dr. Norris met him. He had on a white sombrero hat, Confederate gray uniform, coat that came down to his knees, two rows of brass buttons, and a heavy walking cane over his arm. He had on boots with spurs and bells on the spurs. Norris stopped and asked him if he had been attending First Baptist. He squared his shoulders and said, "What do you want to know that for?: Norris asked him his name. He said, "Captain George B. Holland, Captain Company B, Confederate

Grays, R. E. Lee Camp, Fort Worth, Texas, United States of America." Norris repeated Holland's credentials, and then said, "I am J. Frank Norris, Pastor of First Baptist Church, Fort Worth, Texas, United States of America. I am glad to meet you, sir." A friend of Dr. Norris advised him that Captain Holland was reportedly the meanest man in the country. He served as captain of the Texas Rangers before the Civil War. He had so many notches on his gun that he had lost count. Later, Captain Holland brought thirty-five of his gang of gamblers and saloon keepers to hear Dr. Norris preach, and they sat in a reserved section near the front of the auditorium.

Time rolled on and one day Dr. Norris gave Captain Holland a Bible, and the Captain wrote in it exactly how the two had met. One morning, Holland woke up in a room over the saloon where he was living, reached over to get his bottle, and his hand fell on that Bible. Captain Holland tells his own story before the congregation at First Baptist Church:

I raised up to get my bottle for my morning drink, and my hand touched the Bible first. As I reclined on my elbow, I said to that bottle, "I have served you long enough, and you have robbed me of my manhood; you have robbed me of my family; you have robbed me of my happiness; and you have robbed me of my soul, and I will not serve you another day. And before I dressed, I opened that Bible, spread it out on the bed, got on my knees, buried my face in it, and said, "Oh, God, if there be a God, have mercy on poor George Holland, the meanest man living."

Turning to Norris, Holland gave him the half-filled bottle of liquor, held up the Bible and said, "This has won."

Norris' report of Holland's death is as follows:

Six years afterwards I got off the train returning from an evangelistic campaign. My wife met me and said, "Captain Holland is dying and calling for you." We rushed out to the edge of the city in Riverside and found him propped up in bed, his eyesight gone. I drew near and said, "Captain." He said, "Oh, oh, is it you? I am so glad you have come. I am going to stack arms today. I have fought my last fight. They have come for me, and I am not afraid." He reached his thin, emaciated hand under his pillow, pulled out that same Bible, held it up, and in a feeble gasp said, "This has won! This has won! Preach it on, and when you are through and tired, and you come to the crossing, old Captain George Holland, the man who had the rope to hang you, will be standing at the beautiful gate to be the first to welcome you home." And together we sang as his last words, "Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound!" And when he came to the verse, "Through many dangers, toils and snares," he could go no further, but grasped my hand in his, and whispered, "Praise God! Praise God!"

So closes another great episode in the ministry of J. Frank Norris.



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INDEPENDENT BAPTIST FELLOWSHIP INTERNATIONAL

The **Searchlight**
 September/October 2011 Volume 27 Issue 5

28TH ANNUAL
FALL FELLOWSHIP MEETING



Host: Pastor Barry & Cindy Bedwell

Join us for the Twenty-eighth Annual Fall Fellowship Meeting October 11-13, 2011 at Faith Baptist Church, Dearborn Heights, Michigan.

- Great Preaching
- Uplifting Music
- Trip to Cider Mill
- Ladies' Meeting
- Continental Breakfast each Morning
- Delicious Luncheon Tuesday & Wednesday
- Beautiful Fall Colors & Crispness in the Air

By God's Grace... For God's Glory

"... that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God." II Corinthians 4:15

TIME	TUESDAY Oct 11	WEDNESDAY Oct 12	THURSDAY Oct 13	Faith Baptist Church Dearborn Heights, MI
9:00-9:40 AM	Brad Gilbert Westland, MI	David Grice Grand Prairie, TX	Paul Gaymon Brown City, MI	Offering Goal \$35,000
9:40-10:25 AM	Lonnie Bocook Fairborn, OH	Robert Barrow Century, FL	Billy Kyle Marion, OH	
10:25-11:10 AM	Charles Pugh Paradise, TX	The President's Hour Jerry Siler, Dayton, OH	Dennis Riddick Hamilton, OH	
11:10-NOON	Mark Brown Columbus, GA	General Assembly Special Offering Business Meeting	R. B. Ouellette Bridgeport, MI	
LUNCH				Phone 313-274-3777
1:30 PM	Ladies' Meeting Board of Dir. Mtg.	Free Time		
7:00 PM	John Peebles Fort Worth, TX Dale Adkins Mansfield, OH	Danny Jones Missionary to Mexico Raymond Barber Fort Worth, TX		

A Word from the President

News & Events

Missionary Message