

## Henry Daniel Ryals

Rev. Henry Daniel Ryals, pioneer Baptist minister, was the son of Daniel C. Ryals and Molly Gill Ryals. Henry Daniel Ryals was born in Columbia County, Florida on October 29, 1845 and came with his family to Hernando County in 1849. The family settled near Buddy's Lake, a part of Hernando County which would become Pasco County in 1887.

In 1856, during the Second Seminole War, the family was forced up at Fort Broome on the north side of Pretty Pond, and young Henry was issued some bullets and jokingly told to bring in a deer for each one. He missed with one bullet and then stalked a herd, trying to maneuver two deer into line so that he could kill two with his remaining one shot. He fired and both deer dropped. As he went to them, however, one jumped up. He quickly killed it with his knife.

Henry was age 18 when he volunteered for the Civil War. He was mustered into service on April 15, 1864 at Fort Myers and served with the Union Army in Company A, Second Regiment of the Florida Cavalry Volunteers. Military records described him as a farmer at the time of enlistment, 5'2" tall, with a dark complexion, dark hair, and gray eyes. Henry's father served in the same unit.

In 1868, in Dade City, Henry married Rebecca Jane Kersey, born in 1847 at Buddy Lake, daughter of Libron Kersey, Sr. and Barcilla Boyett Kersey. Rebecca was the widow of Benjamin Turner who died August 28, 1867 when struck by lightning. Benjamin and Rebecca were parents of Henry Joel Adam Turner and Benjamin M. Turner. Henry and Rebecca were parents of Barcilla Ryals, born January 28, 1870; Mary Elizabeth Ryals, born July 28, 1872; Hardy Ryals, born February 15, 1875; William (Willie) Ryals, born August 15, 1877; Polly Van Ryals, born December 14, 1879; and Matilda Ryals, born May 26, 1883. Rebecca Jane died after the enumeration of the 1885 Florida State Census and was buried in a small Zephyrhills cemetery which has disappeared.

In 1889, in Pasco County, Henry married (2<sup>nd</sup>) Marietta Hurst, born May 2, 1872, daughter of Littleton Hurst. They were parents of Cleveland Henry Ryals, born October 29, 1889; Lula Ryals, born January 10, 1890; Bert Ryals, born January 23, 1892; Henry Daniel Ryals, Jr., born June 18, 1895; Thomas Jefferson Ryals, born May 12, 1897; James Powell Ryals, born December 12, 1899; and Mabel Ryals, born March 18, 1902. Mary E. Ryals died May 23, 1904 and was buried in Geiger Cemetery in Zephyrhills.

On October 11, 1885, the Six Mile Pond Baptist Church (present-day Westside Baptist Church in Zephyrhills), recorded the following: "This is to certify that our beloved Brother Henry D. Ryals by the request of Six Mile Pond Baptist Church has this day been set apart to the Ministry of the Gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ by the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery and prayer and is hereby recommended to the

confidence of all God's people as a worthy Brother and Minister of Jesus Christ of the regular Missionary Baptist Denomination." The ministers who served as the Presbytery were Elder R.T. Caddin and Elder J.G. Pittman.

During his ministry Henry D. Ryals served many area churches. Among those were County Line Baptist Church for various years from 1886 to 1901; Six Mile Pond Baptist Church in 1887, 1890, and 1909; Pleasant Hill Baptist Church in 1891; and Double Branch Baptist Church in 1880, 1888-1889, 1898-1899, 1905-1907, 1914-1916, and 1920. Henry D. Ryals also led in the establishment of present-day First Baptist Church in Zephyrhills. In addition, he was a missionary for the Pasco Baptist Association. The 1895 Minutes cite that "Our missionaries, Bros. Pittman, Ryals, Bryant, Guy and Bailey have labored earnestly and faithfully for the Master who has blessed their efforts."

The Rev. H.D. Ryals, age 88, died Sunday, December 17, 1933 in the Plant City home of his daughter, Mrs. L.S. Evans. His worthy legacy of 50 years as a member of the Baptist ministry was included in the notice in the *Tampa Tribune*. He was survived by his children, Mrs. Evans; Mrs. R.H. Whitcomb, Mrs. Barcilla Guy of St. Cloud; Mrs. Lizzie Hill, C.H. Ryals, Bert Ryals, H.D. Ryals, Jr., T.J. Ryals; and J.P. Ryals. He also was survived by 42 grandchildren and 24 great-grandchildren.

Following funeral services he was buried at Geiger Cemetery. Engraved on his memorial marker are the words, "Dear Father, Though we miss you much, we know you rest with God." In addition, a military marker honors his service during the Civil War.

Judith R. Jolly  
Dade City, Florida  
October 30, 2008

Sources:

*Daniel C. Ryals, 1816-1890, And His Florida Descendants*  
by Kenneth Cleveland Ryals, 1985

Census records

(Hernando) Pasco Baptist Association records

Six Mile Pond Baptist Church records (in above cited book)

Geiger Cemetery onsite research

Obituary - *Tampa Tribune*, Monday, December 18, 1933

Presented November 10, 2008 to the Florida Baptist Historical Society.

Edited version written for publication in *Pasco County - Its History and Its People*.

(proposed publication date of late 2009 or early 2010)



\*  
*The Wesley Chapel Church congregation after a morning service. The pastor, Henry Ryals, is at the right, top row, with white beard, shirt, and black bow tie. Second from left, back row, is Joe Cooper. Third from left, middle row, is Lula Cooper. Grandfather Cooper stands in dark suit between two ladies in hats in the back row at the top center.*

*From History of Zephyrhills, FL by Raymond Tretman*

\* Wesley Chapel was Double Branch BC (near FHC Wesley Chapel)

*Wesley Chapel  
10/31/02*

# Havana and in One Day w Air Line

the days of fast trav-

to Tampa from the  
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breakfast in Tampa.  
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Prado in Havana, and  
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hours in Havana and  
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American plane trip  
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traveling time than  
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are variations. The  
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hours of Jamaica and  
nes leave the Havana  
terminal almost hourly.

# wer Arms To Be Aired oman Meeting

17.—(A.P.)—The pos-  
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ictly supervised fascist  
s likely to be discussed  
fussolini and Foreign  
John Simon, of Great  
the latter arrives early

# The Rev. H. D. Ryals, 88, Retired Minister, Dies

PLANT CITY, Dec. 17.—(Special)  
—The Rev. Henry Daniels Ryals, 88,  
native of Florida and member of the  
Baptist ministry for 50 years, died  
here this morning at 11:45 o'clock at  
the home of his daughter, Mrs. L. S.  
Evans.

Mr. Ryals was born Oct. 29, 1845, in  
Columbia county. He is survived by  
five daughters and four sons. They  
are Mrs. Evans, of Plant City; Mrs.  
Barcilla Guy, of St. Cloud; Mrs. Lizzie  
Hill, Mrs. M. W. Bert and J. P. Ryals,  
of Zephyrhills; C. H. Ryals, H. D.  
Ryals, jr., T. D. Ryals and Mrs. R.  
H. Whitcomb, of Tampa. He also is  
survived by 42 grandchildren and 24  
great-grandchildren.

Funeral services will be held Mon-  
day afternoon at 3:30 o'clock at Deiger  
cemetery near Zephyrhills, with the  
Rev. Hammett assisted by the Rev. D.  
F. Sebastian, of the First Baptist  
church, Plant City, officiating. The  
funeral cortege will leave the home  
of Mrs. Evans at 2 o'clock. His sons  
will act as pallbearers.

# Attorney J. C. Cooper, Sr. Dies at Jacksonville

Judge H. P. Baya was notified in  
a telegram last night of the death in  
Jacksonville of John C. Cooper, sr.,  
prominent Florida attorney.

Mr. Cooper was the senior member  
of the firm of Cooper, Knight, Adair  
and Osborne of Jacksonville, and was  
the father of John C. Cooper, jr., a  
former president of the state bar as-  
sociation. For many years he was a  
member of the firm of Cooper &

Suarez, Bernave Diaz, Eli  
Francisco Gonzales, Aquillino  
dez, Jose Maria Gonzales,  
Menendez, Eduardo Perez,  
Menendez and Rogelio Bero  
Rev. Father Conde, S. C., in  
charge of the services. Bur-  
ial will be in Centro Asturiano cemet

# Christmas Play To B Presented at B

An original pageant,  
Scene" will be presented to  
7:30 o'clock at the Brandon  
dist church, directed by M  
Fussell.

Those who will take part  
clude Miss Marjorie DeW  
Corrie Wilder, Miss Carmole  
Miss Marcella Morgan, Miss J  
Leod, Miss Mary Louise Brye  
Alma Leemae Hanson, Grace  
Miss Jean Hampton and Mis  
Gunn.

Winton King, Robert DuBo  
ley Adams, Doel Rothwell,  
Dempsey, Col Stephens, M.  
Mr. Gill, Mr. Hayden, Cecil B  
Dempsey, Jim Morgan, I  
Waldhagen, Mrs. Milton Har  
Annie Ruth King, Mrs. Da  
Miss Carrol Meyer, pianist.

**CONVICTED OF MURD**  
FRANKLINGTON, La., De  
(A.P.)—A jury here today c  
Mrs. Allie Mae Purvis, 38, of  
with having conspired with  
servant to push her husband  
river on a fishing trip and  
him. The verdict carries the  
of death by hanging.

**CALLED TO GEORGI**  
Mrs. M. K. Christian, 5403  
avenue, has been called to Ma  
to the death of a relative.

OFFICE of VITAL STATISTICS

CERTIFIED COPY

State Board of Health  
OF  
FLORIDA



MAIL CARD

NO WRITING ON THIS SIDE.



STATE BOARD OF HEALTH,

Jacksonville,

Florida.

County of WALDO Florida.  
Certificate of Death.

Name Mrs H D Ryals

AGE—Yrs, Mos. and Days 38 SEX Female COLOR White

Single, Married, Widowed, Divorced. Married RACE American

Birthplace Florida

Occupation Housewife

Residence near Oklawaha

Name of Consort Wm H D Ryals

Name of Father William Strunk

Birthplace of Mother Georgia

Age of Mother

Birthplace of Mother

Date of Death May 13<sup>th</sup> 1904

Place of Death near Oklawaha

Place of Burial Greenwood

Cause of Death Child-birth complications

Length of Residence in Florida 38 years

Remarks None

See back of Regular Certificate for Instructions. MR R Ryals Signature.

VOID IF ALTERED OR ERASED

VOID IF ALTERED OR ERASED

**Pastoral Service to the Lord!**

Ordained Ministers at Founding of Double Branch Baptist Church, June 2, 1878  
T.H. Jaudon and R.T. Caddin

1878-1879.....B.L. Ray	1935-1940.....Ed Bryant
1880.....H.D. Ryals	1941.....Nathan J. Bennett
1881.....B.L. Ray	1943-1945.....Will Bryant
1882.....J.I. Spivey	1946-1949.....W.D. Hand
1883.....B.L. Ray	1950-1951.....Clarence Long
1884.....J.G. Pittman	1952.....Charles Swartz
1885-1887.....R.T. Caddin	1953.....Alex Hendry
1888-1889.....H.D. Ryals	1954.....Lawton Cothorn
1890-1894.....J.I. Spivey	1955.....William B. McKendree
1895.....G.A. Bryant	1955-1962.....William Hill
1896-1897.....R.T. Caddin	1963.....Carl Patrum
1898-1899.....H.D. Ryals	1964.....Robert Clark
1900-1901.....J.I. Spivey	1965.....Frank Dickerson
1902-1904.....J.W. Gideons	1965-1967.....Frank A. Scott, Sr.
1905-1907.....H.D. Ryals	1968-1970.....Jimmie Smith
1908-1910.....S.S. Pickett	1971-1972.....Lynn Foster
1911-1913.....N.T. King	1973-1974.....Clyde Livingston
1913-1914.....O.N. Williams	1975.....Rapley Armstrong
1914.....G.A. Bryant	1976-1978.....Randy White
1914-1916.....H.D. Ryals	1979-1981.....Gordon Henry
1917-1919.....B.F. McKinney	1982.....Duane Evans
1920.....H.D. Ryals	1983-1984.....Lyle Falkenhagen
1921.....O.N. Williams	1985-1991.....John Lennard
1922.....W.A. Holiway	1991-1992.....Frank A. Scott, Sr.
1923-1928.....E.E. Taylor	1992-1999.....Jim DuBols
1928-1934...No letters reported to Association	1999-Present...Frank A. Scott, Sr.

FBC, Wesley Chapel  
AKA Double Branch

**"Remember how the Lord your God led you all the way,"**

**Deuteronomy 8:2**

We give thanks and praise to our God who has guided and directed our steps as His church. It is to Him that we give the glory as we remember and share the history of this church and our ministry.

Deuteronomy 31:12 states "Gather the people together, men and women and children, and thy stranger that is within thy gates, that they may hear, and that they may learn, and fear the Lord your God, and observe to do all the words of this law."

In the 1840's, an influx of pioneers came to our area--central Pasco County formerly Hernando County, and the Florida Baptist Convention was founded in 1845. As Hernando County continued to develop, the need for a place to worship arose. On June 2, 1878, Double Branch Missionary Baptist Church was constituted with 34 adult charter members (24 female and 10 male). It was named for two branches of water converging nearby. The church originally met at Matchet (Magic) Lake off Elam Road near Holton Cemetery. The Church Constitution read, "Whose names are here in this book...believing it to be the duty of true believers who have been baptized be united in church capacity believing the New Testament to be our only rule of our Faith and Practice lay it as our Foundation to constitute this church."