

JOHN MULKEY

John Mulkey of Tompkinsville, Kentucky preached 53 years, delivering nearly 10,000 discourses. He immersed many into Christ. He and Elizabeth are buried southeast of Tompkinsville, Kentucky.

There were many Mulkeys who came to pioneer Oregon in addition to those who preached. John H. Mulkey was Superintendent of Schools in Coos County for many years and was followed in office by his wife at his death. He had preached at Kellogg in Douglas County, Oregon on Sundays.

John F. Mulkey preached in Harrisburg, Linn County, Oregon and is buried within sight of Interstate 5.

Future profiles will include the McBride family.

Learn More —

A slightly more extended story of John Mulkey is on the Internet at: NCBible.org/nwh/ProMulkey.html It includes a list of the children.

The official State of Kentucky site featuring this story is at: www.state.ky.us/agencies/parks/mulkey.htm

Sixteen photos of the *Old Mulkey Meeting House* can be seen on this link:
tinpan.fortunecity.com/goldie/295/mulkey.html

The burial place of John and Elizabeth Mulkey can be seen on this link:
NCBible.org/nwh/PLMulkey.html

PIIONEER PREACHERS

PAGES FROM OUR PAST

by Charles Dailey

JOHN MULKEY

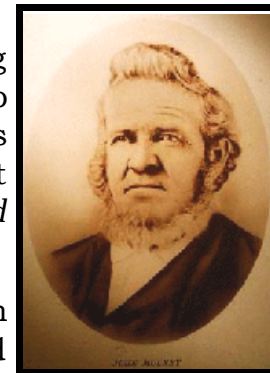
Unlike the others who will be profiled in this series, John Mulkey did not come West. He did not cross the plains. He was struggling with his final sickness before the first wagon trains left for Oregon.

Then why is he profiled here among the pioneers? Because his decision to break with his Baptist heritage was one of the compelling events that influenced those preachers who *did* travel the Oregon Trail.

John Mulkey was born in South Carolina in 1773. His father and grandfather had been Baptist preachers before him and John followed in this honorable path. He married Elizabeth Hays and moved to East Tennessee and began preaching by the age of 20.

An article in the *Restoration Quarterly* shows the geography of John's work:

John Mulkey was born in South Carolina, January 14, 1772. His father, Jonathan, moved into East Tennessee and established probably the first Baptist church in Tennessee (Buffalo Ridge) in the 1770's. Jonathan had three sons who all became Baptist preachers: John, Philip, and Isaac. John began



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preaching in East Tennessee at the age of 20, studied hard and soon won a reputation as a fine preacher. He and his brother Philip moved to Kentucky and preached. He located at Mill Creek but extended his labors beyond the Green River.

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Mr. Mulkey's earliest contact with "Christians only" was with David Haggard, preaching brother of Rice Haggard. The Haggard brothers were connected to the work of James O'Kelly, all of them former Methodists. John Mulkey, in company with David Haggard, had attended the Cane Ridge Revival.

The idea of not testing the faith of others with a denominational creed was intriguing to John Mulkey. His *Mill Creek Baptist Church* held to the Philadelphia Confession of Faith in addition to the Bible.

Partly because of his success and influence, John was selected as the Moderator of the *Stockton Valley Baptist Association*. Some of his circuit riding work found him preaching at the *Roaring River Baptist Church* in White County, TN. This is where Thomas Crawford McBride was a church leader.

By 1809, when John was 36, he spoke out against the Philadelphia Confession of Faith. That year the *Mill Creek Baptist Church* voted on John's orthodoxy and a majority voted to side with John Mulkey.

The *Mill Creek Baptist Church* split at that point. The larger group that stayed with John Mulkey became known as the Old Mulkey group. The *Old Mulkey Meeting House* is now owned by the State of Kentucky and is a tourist attraction. The minority built a new *Mill Creek Baptist Church* where they could hold to the Philadelphia Confession of Faith.

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John influenced his brother Philip. They both preached that a believer could be a Christian alone and not part of a denomination. They joined forces with Barton W. Stone and others. Stone had recently come to the same realization.

The story of John Mulkey's separation from his Baptist heritage is the plot of the historical novel *A Fork in the Road* by E. Clayton Gooden, available in used book stores.

Thomas Crawford McBride, mentioned earlier, was another Baptist preacher who left the *Stockton Valley Baptist Association* and began preaching the "ancient gospel" as they chose to call it. McBride lived directly south of John Mulkey in White County, Tennessee. White County was larger then than it is today.

By 1816, T. C. McBride, with his new enthusiasm, moved on to the freshly opened territory of Missouri. He planted churches and raised his family. Two of his sons, Dr. James and Dr. Thomas McBride, preached throughout Missouri, then crossed the plains to Oregon in 1846. Their father, now a widower, followed them the next year.

The McBrides and those they influenced were the men in the trenches. They were the men who preached night-after-night in school houses, barns and public buildings. They planted and nourished churches, particularly in Yamhill and Polk Counties of Oregon.

While John Mulkey did not come to Oregon, his influence did. And we must include his son Philip. He settled west of Eugene in Lane County, preaching for many years and influencing the direction of the Gospel message in that area.