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Basil S. Brown, A cloud of witnesses: Seventy memorable Baptists in Victoria, Victorian Baptist Historical Society, PO Box 377, Hawthorn, Victoria 3122, Australia, 1999, 156pp.

The lives of sixty-three men and seven women who played a prominent part in Baptist life in Victoria are described briefly by a professor emeritus of Whitley College, Melbourne. Each article has at least one photograph and typically 500 words summarizing the life and service of the subject. Half the subjects were born in Australia and half came from the British Isles, some emigrating after ministerial training and experience in Britain. Most of the emigrants remained in Australia for life, though one, W.T. Whitley, stayed only ten years before returning to Britain and founding the Baptist Historical Society. Forty-two of the seventy were missionaries, ministers or ministers' wives, but here too are dedicated lay church members, including lawyers, businessmen, carpenters, a distinguished metallurgist, the first professor of engineering at Melbourne University, and a pioneering plastic surgeon.

Historians will regret that what is evidently a thoroughly-researched ready reference to seventy leading Victorian Baptists has no indication of sources or direction to further information. A short chapter on the growth of the State of Victoria would also have been useful, to enable the reader to see the individual subjects in context. Nevertheless, this attractively produced volume will give inspiration to many and should provide sermon illustrations and subjects for short talks. Let us hope it also inspires others to pursue some of these 'witnesses' in more depth.

BRIAN BOWERS