

JOURNAL
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ANNUAL
CONFERENCE
OF
THE METHODIST CHURCH

Twentieth Session
(One Hundred Fifty-Eight Years
of Methodism in Tennessee)

HELD IN
FIRST METHODIST CHURCH
PULASKI, TENNESSEE
June 25-29, 1958

BISHOP ROY H. SHORT
Presiding

VERNON T. McGHEE
Secretary

Reverend George J. Creswell of Knoxville of the Conference, helping us to serve and not man.

Methodist Church, Pulaski, and pastor, The staff and membership we give thanks for the arrangements, ushering, and floral arrangements, ushering, and membership we have been enriched by the hours we have spent by the people of Giles County. We, President and Board of Trustees of the Conference in providing dormitory space, rooms, and gates, and to the District Superintendent Reverend Charles J. Hawkins.

We wish to express appreciation to the Board of Trustees of the Conference, Nashville. For their reporting and express gratitude to the Pulaski District of the Nashville *Tennessean*.

Many of those who through years of service as men and women of the Middle Tennessee Conference have retired from the active

positions, the Secretaries, and all of us for concise reports.

Presented to the City of Pulaski our deep appreciation of the Annual Conference.

Respectfully submitted,

Your Committee:

CARROLL J. HICKMAN
DEAN STROUD
MRS. O. D. MASSA

IX. MEMOIRS

JAMES THOMAS BLACKWOOD

James Thomas Blackwood, son of Isaiah and Eliza Curtis Blackwood, was born November 19, 1857, in Wayne County, Tennessee. His father was born in Scotland. Isaiah's father, John Blackwood, came with his family to America and settled in the Carolinas when Isaiah and his brother James and three sisters were quite young. Later they moved to Wayne County, Tennessee, and Isaiah married Eliza Curtis, the daughter of Squire Curtis. James Thomas was the second son born to this home.

That he had a Christian heritage is attested by his mother walking three miles to a little Methodist Church and presenting him to God in Baptism when only a few months old. At the age of fourteen he joined The Methodist Church and on May 4, 1878, he was licensed to preach. In the fall of 1879 his home Church of Lowryville was need of a pastor. Out of several local preachers he was selected to supply as pastor. In 1880 he was admitted on trial at the Annual Conference meeting in Pulaski. When the appointments were made, James T. Blackwood was sent to Fernvale Circuit.

At White's Chapel, a Church on the Fernvale Circuit, he met Mattie Love Overall. And on June 1, 1886, he and Mattie Love Overall were married. Four daughters were born to this home: Lillian, Lucy, Mattie Love, and Allassie.

After the death of his wife, he married Clara Wooten of Monteagle on January 3, 1929, who survives him. His last years were happy years; he never lost interest in the ministry and the activities of the Church. Much credit for his continued good health in his last years must be given to Clara Wooten Blackwood in her loving care of him.

Brother Blackwood served fifty years as an active minister, one year as a supply previous to his admission on trial and one year as a superannuate supply. He served the following charges: Lowryville, as a supply, Fernvale Circuit, Bethlehem, Cumberland Circuit, Smithville, Bethesda Circuit, Alexandria, Waverly and McEwen, South Clarksville, Clifton and Mallory, Adams and Sadlersville, Olivet and Lynnville, Douglas Circuit, Park Avenue and Epworth, Bellevue, Medium Circuit, Pleasant View, Fayetteville Circuit. For sixteen years he served as a Presiding Elder of the following Districts: Savannah, Dickson, Lebanon, Clarksville, Murfreesboro. Returning to the pastorate, he served Park Avenue, Arlington, Monteagle, Lynchburg and Mulberry, Livingston, Celina, Gainsboro, and after superannuating in 1930 he served Palmer one year. He was a delegate to the General Conference in 1918 in Atlanta; in 1922 in Hot Springs; and in 1924 at a called session in Chattanooga. For four years he was a member of the General Sunday School Board.

For the twenty-six years, Brother Blackwood served in the Pastorate, his average salary was \$363.00 a year, and for the sixteen years he served as a Presiding Elder, his average salary was \$2,272.00 a year.

In his seventy-seven years of service as an active and superannuate minister in the Tennessee Conference he missed only five sessions of the Annual Conference. The results of his many years of service are known to Him who called James Thomas Blackwood to be His Servant as he labored in the Tennessee Annual Conference.

At the Annual Conference meeting in Clarksville, August 29, 1957, it was voted to set aside November 19, 1957, his one-hundredth birthday, as "Blackwood Day," asking all Methodists within the bounds of the Tennessee Annual Conference to meet in Morton Memorial Methodist Church, Monteagle, Tennessee, in a special service to honor his long and useful life as a Methodist minister. This service was held but Brother Blackwood was unable to attend. Tribute was paid to him by Bishop Roy

H. Short and a number of his friends. Two hundred Methodists attended this service. Bishop Short said of him: "He was interested primarily in people, not in material things, houses, land, popularity and friends. He looked on people as ends, not as means; he helped them instead of exploiting them—he is representative of the type of pastor every clergyman wants to become, simply a good minister for Christ."

A scroll signed by Bishop Short and his Cabinet was presented to Mrs. Clara Blackwood which reads as follows:

Whereas, the Reverend James Thomas Blackwood has on November 19, 1957, reached the one hundredth anniversary of his birth; Whereas, Brother Blackwood will have served The Methodist Church continuously since October 15, 1879; making his ministry to cover a longer period than an living Methodist preacher; Whereas, the Tennessee Annual Conference in Session at Clarksville, on August 29, as "Blackwood Day," calling upon Methodists to meet at the Monteagle Church to do honor to this noted minister: We therefore salute James Thomas Blackwood, Preacher, Presiding Elder, Member of General Conference, Administrator, friend of young preachers, servant of God and servant of man. His ministry is not counted in years but in usefulness and the strength of his testimony as he carried forward the work of his Lord."

On December 6, 1957, eighteen days after "Blackwood Day," this noble, stalwart Christian gentleman and minister passed to his reward, having reached, as he had hoped to, his one-hundredth birthday. He is believed to have been the world's oldest Methodist minister. Funeral services were conducted in Morton Memorial Methodist Church, Monteagle, Tennessee, by the Reverends Allen Hardison, R. M. Johnson, W. L. Hayes, R. L. Benton, and J. Dallas Bass.

Burial was in Mount Hope Cemetery, Franklin, Tennessee.

R. M. JOHNSON
R. L. BENTON

WILLIAM ELDRIDGE DOSS

William Eldridge Doss, son of William Green and Phoebe Katherine Doss, was born near Pleasant Grove, Sumner County, Tennessee, November 3, 1872. He was married to Miss Fannie Holmes of near Liberty Church, Sumner County, October 17, 1895. On March 31, 1958, he passed through the portals of death at the age of 85 years, 4 months, and 28 days to the realms of glory, to fullness of life and service unending. Funeral services were conducted in the First Methodist Church, Gallatin, in the afternoon of April 2 by the Reverends E. P. Anderson, E. U. Robinson and W. M. Cook; and his body was laid to rest in the Pleasant Grove Cemetery near Westmoreland. He is survived by his good wife and their only daughter Veronica, who continue to reside in the house that Brother Doss had built just off North Water Street, Gallatin, shortly before his retirement.

For the first time in the long period of one hundred fourteen years the name of Doss disappears from the roll of the Tennessee Conference. No other name has appeared continuously on the roll of this Conference as long as the name Doss. William (Bill) Doss, uncle of William Eldridge Doss, joined the Conference in 1843 and served in the pastorate until the year 1879. His son, W. H. Doss, joined the conference in the year 1875 and transferred to the Central Texas Conference in 1910. William Eldridge Doss joined the Conference in 1906, retired in 1945, and passed to his reward in 1958. The three gave 110 years of active service to the Tennessee Conference. We may have to wait many years for this record of continued service to be surpassed.

Eldridge Doss first prepared himself for teaching and for twelve years taught school in Sumner County. He received his training for teaching mainly at Bethpage and Pleasant Grove, two good schools of that day. In 1905 he answered the call to the ministry and was admitted on trial