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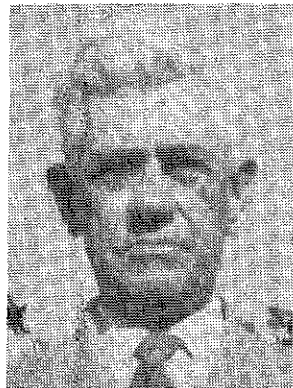
**DILWORTH METHODIST CHURCH**

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## MARTIN ALEXANDER MATHESON

May 23, 1873—June 19, 1955

The Reverend Martin Alexander Matheson was called to his heavenly home about three weeks after reaching his eighty-second birthday. The memorial service was held at Abernethy Memorial Methodist Church, Newton, G. N.



Dulin, pastor, conducted the service, assisted by J. J. Holmes and G. W. Bumgarner.

He was licensed to preach at Leicester in 1899 and served as a supply 1899 to 1903. The Blue Ridge Atlantic Conference, of the former Methodist Episcopal Church, received him on trial in 1903 and appointed him to the Unaka Circuit. In 1907 he was ordained deacon and received into full connection; in 1909 he was ordained elder. Appointments were Hiwassee Mission, 1904-06; Irwin, 1907-08; Marion, 1909-10; Etowah, 1911; Casar, 1912; Parmele, 1913; Zion, 1914-15; Newton, 1916-19 and Gastonia, 1920.

Due to the ill health of his wife, the former Miss Eura Blackwell of Hendersonville, he took the supernumerary relation in 1921. As her illness continued, he took the retired relation at a later

time with due honor. Let it be said that his faithful companion was a true parsonage heroine, having endured for more than twenty years the most rugged type of pioneer itineracy.

Following 1921 he was not idle; he taught in the public schools of Catawba County for several terms, and during the depression years he taught adult schools. It is well to recall, also, that during the years of his active ministry he was the schoolmaster in a number of communities. His preparation at Tennessee Wesleyan College at Athens, Tennessee, made him the man of the hour in most of the communities in which he served.

During his years of retirement in Newton he made Abernethy Memorial, a former pastorate, his home church. The pastors found in him much encouragement. They also found in him an unofficial associate who made numerous calls and served in many capacities without hope of reward. He was for years the superintendent of the Nursery Home Department and Adult Home Department. The folk remember with love this minister who delivered hundreds of Cradle Roll Certificates.

The surviving children are sons, Willard of Gastonia, Clyde of Taylorsville, Luther and McKinley of Newton and Eugene of Charlotte, and daughters, Mrs. Ethel Martin of Bethel, Miss Willie Matheson of Charlotte and Mrs. Annie Kanipe of Newton. Also surviving are two sisters, Mrs. Hattie Hampton of Newton and Mrs. Walter Scott of Lenoir; two half-brothers, John Matheson of Conover and Boyd Matheson of Hickory; one half-sister, Mrs. Lenora Luckado of Morganton; 16 grandchildren and 11 great grandchildren.

When Martin Matheson itinerated in Western North Carolina, he served communities which were, in many cases, in the rugged hills where the trails ran out or stopped at the river's edge. The hills were filled with folks who looked up to the circuit riders and schoolmasters who suffered with them. Many changes have been made and some pioneer communities no longer exist but the people whose lives were blessed by Christian precepts and examples live on blessed by the memories.

He knew not the success which we call fame or the kind which brings public acclaim. He left no more in his estate than did John Wesley and Francis Asbury, but he, like these and others, moved on out into his eternal home to receive the "well done" of his Lord and the accumulated treasures which do not tarnish, rust or fade away.

—George W. Bumgarner

## WILBUR GALLOWAY MCFARLAND

October 6, 1896—April 2, 1955

It takes more than one generation to produce Christian nobility in a man, we see clearly demonstrated in the life of Wilbur Galloway McFarland. The proud clan of the McFarlands, with distinct rootings in the best history

of Scotland, can boast of no finer specimen than this son of Miles Mebane McFarland, born October 6, 1896, at Clayton, North Carolina.

This lad was also blessed with the priceless possession of a good mother, Mary White McFarland, of the old Hawfields section of Mebane. She, a descendant of Ira Ellis (who was present at the ordination of Asbury), quietly seasoned the life of Wilbur with mental curiosity, singular and stubborn courage for the right, and undying devotion to Christ and the Church.

Imbued with this heritage, it was a natural consequence that Wilbur chose a proper and charming mate. She was Frances Mary Smithwick, daughter of Dr. and Mrs. Daniel T. Smithwick, of Louisburg. The three children born to this union are acquitting themselves well: one a



college professor, one a dentist, and one a minister of the Gospel, respectively, Daniel Miles McFarland, Dr. Wilbur G. McFarland, Jr., and the Reverend Francis Smithwick McFarland.

When Wilbur was only four years of age, Dr. T. N. Ivey asked him what he was going to be when he grew up. The boy replied, "A doctor." "Medical?" queried he further. "No, a missionary doctor," came the quick answer. Thus a child's remark cast its shadow on the man's future experience, for this urge to go on mission for the Almighty ever increased in his life, and he truly became a doctor to all lonesome, sinful, and needy souls with whom he mingled.

A vision of the Divine is a call to preparation for service, and so "Mac" was always been a student; and his sermons and lectures invariably carried a sense of hidden, though profound, scholarship. In pursuit of learning that he might make it subservient to his Christian purpose, he secured an A.B. degree from Trinity, did graduate work at Guilford College, Duke and Emory Universities and received a Doctorate of Theology from American Bible College.

"Mac" joined the North Carolina Conference in 1918 at Rocky Mount and was ordained Elder in Monroe, 1922, at the hands of God as well as those of the Bishop, as his subsequent and successful pastorates have so amply proven. He served Oak Ridge, Kernersville, Cherryville, Charlotte: Wesley Heights, Rutherford College, Andrews, Bessemer, Asheville: Haywood Street, Salisbury: Coburn Memorial, Brevard, High Point: Main Street, and Charlotte: St. James, since transferring to the Western North Carolina Conference in 1922.

A most chivalrous interlude was his term as U. S. Army Chaplain, 1942-1945, when he and his three sons were in the armed forces at the same time. Surely this was valor above the usual expectation. While overseas, an officer said to McFarland, "Chaplain, I have just seen my son off on the train, and I can't take it. You have three sons in the service and can still smile. If you can't perform any other service than that for the army, you are worth every penny they pay you."

Loving people with a natural cheeriness to it came easy for McFarland, and because of this, he was honored with leadership in many spheres of life. He was State Chaplain of S.A.R., served many years on the Conference Board of Missions, was on the Board of Managers for Duke Pastors' School, was an active officer in the Historical Society of the Conference, and held membership in many fraternities and civic clubs. Masonry especially appealed to him. He

was a Knight Templar, member of Acacia Lodge number 674 of High Point and Past Grand Chaplain of the Grand Lodge of North Carolina.

This my friend, Wilbur Galloway McFarland, was a man who could be trusted with friendship, one who consistently sought the things of God in Jesus Christ through study, prayer, orderly and dignified worship and unremitting service.

His parishioners everywhere loved him much, and he in turn was the true shepherd. At his last service in St. James, Charlotte, he received into the membership an Eagle Scout, a blind woman seventy-five years old, and a young adult couple. Realizing his serious illness, he remarked, "If this should prove to be my last pastoral service, I can conceive of no more glorious finish."

Although he was dying on April 2, 1955, in Durham, he insisted that his preacher son, Francis, return to Charlotte for the Palm Sunday service so that the children's class at St. James might be received by one they already knew rather than by a stranger. This thoughtfulness was typical of the father, and such dutifulness typical of the son.

No wonder Wilbur Galloway McFarland could approach his grave like one who wraps the draperies of his couch about him and lies down to pleasant dreams. He was unashamed and unafraid. He talked of dying as you and I would talk of catching a train for a better land. When we attended his funeral service at Mebane, and were watching gentle hands bearing his remains to the resting place at Burlington, I recalled the words of the poet, and they seemed so fitting a tribute to this whole-souled minister:

"Though giant rains put out the sun,  
Here stand I for a sign;  
Though earth be filled with waters dark,  
My cup is filled with wine.  
Tell to the trembling priests that here  
Under the deluge rod,  
One nameless, tattered, broken man  
Stood up and drank to God."

—Herman F. Duncan

### ELZIE MYERS

February 16, 1887—April 30, 1955

Elzie Myers, son of William and Martha Linder Myers, was born February 16, 1887, in Bamberg, South Carolina, and died April 30, 1955. He was educated in Bamberg Fitting School, Wofford College, and Vanderbilt University.



He was reared on and in the vicinity of the Historic Sims Plantation. Early in life his father died and Elzie became breadwinner for the family of brothers and sisters.

Following his conversion in a revival at Little Swamp Church, he felt a definite call to the ministry. Without financial aid he left home for school with the encouraging words of his mother, "Go on, son, the Lord will find a way."

He joined the South Carolina Conference in 1910 and served several charges in that conference before transferring to the Western North Carolina Conference in 1919. Among the pastorates served were Sparta, Webster, Cullowhee, Marshville, Pineville, Hickory Grove, Davidson, Albemarle, Henrietta, Hiddenite, Longview. He retired in 1945 from Elmwood. While pastor at Davidson he was presented the Algernon Sydney Sullivan award, by Davidson College.

He was first married to Miss Annie Lee Thomas of York, South Carolina, who died in April, 1928. His second marriage was to Miss Claire Eulalie Reid who survives. Mrs. John Bolen, a daughter of Charlotte, and seven grandchildren survive the first marriage.

Elzie Myers had certain anchors in his faith. He believed in a definite Christian experience; he "was converted"; he was humbly proud to be called a Methodist preacher. His preaching was to call "sinners to repentance." His simplicity was refreshing and inspiring; he loved the hymns of the church. In the years of declining health, with the developing of a brain tumor, which affected his mental processes, he on occasion flashed his old time spirit of congeniality for which he was so well known.

I like to think of Elzie Myers in the words of a poem written by his wife:

"I lay me down upon my bed to rest—  
And sleep—if sleep should come my way.  
I humbly fold my hands across my breast,  
And when too tired to speak, I dumbly pray . . .  
What need for words?"

"I know that He, who sees and understands  
Both great and petty joy and pain,  
Will soothe my heart, and touch my toil-worn hands  
"Til His great love renew my strength again.  
What need for tears?"

The Reverend C. C. Herbert, Jr., the Reverend Mr. Bauknight and the minister conducted the funeral services at York, South Carolina. Burial was in City Cemetery.

—A. C. Swofford

### WILLIAM HENRY NEESE

February 24, 1881—April 8, 1955

William Henry Neese was born in Guilford County, North Carolina, on February 24, 1881, and passed to his heavenly home April 8, 1955, having attained the age of 74 years, one month and fourteen days.

His early educational advantages were limited to the common schools of the state; this work he completed with credit. Later he completed two years in Elon College. On December 23, 1909, he was married to Miss Maud Myrtle Amick who died July 11, 1952. He was admitted into the Methodist Protestant Conference on December, 1913; ordained and admitted to full membership in December, 1918.

He traveled the following fields: LaGrange, Gaston, Guilford, Uwharrie, Vance, Randleman, Fairview-Glen Raven, Why Not, Spring Church, North Davidson, Crabtree, Todd, Saint Paul, North Kannapolis, Ansonville, Harmony. From Harmony he was retired, and on April 8, 1955, he passed to his heavenly reward. His body was laid to rest in Mt. Pleasant cemetery on Mt. Pleasant



Brother Neese was not born of opulent parents. After giving him the indispensable care of a child, there was not much else his parents could do for him; the other he had to do for himself. In the preparation of his lessons he was diligent, always standing at the head of his classes; his deportment was