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The Virginia Conference Annual

CONTAINING THE

Journal of Proceedings of the One Hundred
Sixty-Ninth Session of the Virginia
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Methodist Church

HELD AT

Roanoke, Virginia
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TOGETHER WITH

Reports, Memoirs and Statistics

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TAMPA

In Memoriam

L. HUNTER EARLY

By Frank L. Wells

born at Arnold's Valley, Rockbridge County, 1866, the son of John William and Sarah Agnes as a Presbyterian home. His father was an or 56 years. However, the son decided to be a teacher. This decision was influenced to some extent by Bishop John Early, of the Methodists, was

at Eubanks Sunnyside Academy in Bedford County, Virginia, and Macon College at Ashland. He entered the Virginia Annual Conference at its session held at Portsmouth, Virginia in 1891 and was appointed to the following charges in the circuit, in Nelson County; Stevensburg, Culpeper, Amherst County; Nelson Circuit; Amherst; Louisa Circuit; Charlotte Circuit; Clarksville and Harrison Heights.

He was united in marriage to Louise Wheeler, of Lynchburg, Virginia. Their happy union was blessed with five children: William Ashby Early, now Superintendent of Arlington County, Virginia; Mrs. Claude Early, Lynchburg, Virginia; and Mrs. Neville Early, Lynchburg.

He was a member of the Masonic Fraternity. He was a strong worker, of strong convictions, and was often a speaker for the Temperance cause.

He was granted superannuate relation and went to Lynchburg on his retirement after 45 years of serving the church.

He died at his home on Amherst Road, near Lynchburg, Virginia, 1950. His funeral service was conducted by the pastor of Court Street Church, Lynchburg, as a special honor, Superintendent of the Lynchburg District, J. C. Dickwell, Pastor of Centenary Church, Lynchburg.

Throughout his busy and earnest ministry he was an earnest and faithful worker of the Gospel. He was esteemed in the charges he served as pastor. He practiced daily what he preached and was friendly and warm-hearted. His life was a blessing to his family, his Church and his Lord.

Throughout the Conference can paraphrase the words of this man of God: he fought a good fight, he kept the faith, and he has received the crown of life.

Well done!"

ARTHUR BRITTINGHAM

By A. E. Acey

Arthur Brittingham was born in Brooklyn, New York, when he was twelve years of age his family moved to Virginia, where he attended local schools

and later studied at the College of William and Mary, Williamsburg, Virginia.

Returning to Portsmouth after his studies at William and Mary College, Arthur Brittingham served his apprenticeship as a typesetter on the old Norfolk Landmark. Later he entered, and for a number of years, conducted a successful clothing business in Portsmouth. During this time he was an active member of the Board of Stewards of Monumental Methodist Church. He also served for many years as the teacher of the Toomer Bible Class and as assistant teacher of the West Bible Class. Later he became a Lay Leader, preaching in many Methodist pulpits in the Tidewater area.

In 1924 he entered the employ of the Board of Missions of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, incident to closing up the collection of pledges to the Centenary Movement.

At the age of 54, he was admitted on trial in the Virginia Annual Conference at the 1925 session. During his 22 years he served the following charges: Monroe Circuit, 3 years; Melfa and Locustville, 4 years; Spottsylvania Court House, 3 years; Colonial Beach, 3 years; Middle Bedford, 2 years; Greenbackville, 4 years; Pungo-leagus, 4 years.

In 1944 he accepted the superannuate relationship. There followed six years of service as a retired supply.

After one year of residence in "Pinewell", Norfolk, Virginia, he passed to a better and richer life on November 17, 1950.

Funeral services were held at Snellings Funeral Home, Portsmouth, Virginia. The writer had the privilege of conducting this service. Burial was in Oak Grove Cemetery, Portsmouth.

Arthur Brittingham's survivors were his wife, the former Vera Edwards of Portsmouth, two sons, Wallace and James, and two brothers, O. J. Brittingham of Newport News and T. A. Brittingham of Portsmouth. Mrs. Brittingham now makes her home with her son Wallace at Virginia Beach, Virginia.

As was said of the Master whom James Arthur Brittingham served with such devotion, "he went about doing good".

ARCHIE BOOTH SAPP

By T. M. Swann

Archie Booth Sapp, son of Walter D. and Sarah A. Sapp, was born in Caroline County, Maryland, March 21, 1883. From DePaul Hospital, Norfolk, Virginia, he went to be with his God Nov. 20, 1950.

He was married to Mary Margaret Mohler of Caroline County, Maryland, June 15th, 1910. To this union two children were born: Archie M. and Emeleen, both of whom, with his widow, survive him.

After receiving his preparation for the ministry, Brother Sapp united with the Baltimore Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, March, 1915.

He served the following appointments in Maryland, La Plata, Flint Stone, Forest Grove, Trappe, Laurel and Colesville. In Virginia he served Goshen, Remington, Gainesville, Linden, New Castle, and Montvale. In West Virginia he served Hampshire Circuit and Hedgesville.

Archie Booth Sapp was a Christian gentleman; kind, gentle and faithful in his home and among those whom he served in the Gospel. His appointments were far from being among the best from the standpoint of financial remuneration. Frequently the major portion of his salary must be spent to serve his people. Yet, he served each

and all in the spirit of his Lord, counting it a joy to sacrifice for Him who made the supreme sacrifice for us all on the cross. His devotion to his wife and children was genuine and deep. His was a happy home, and his children will remember him as a patient, understanding and loving father.

His funeral was conducted from the Miles Memorial Church, Norfolk, Virginia, November 22nd, by his lifelong friend, T. M. Swann, assisted by Dr. Edgar A. Potts and Dr. R. Orman Bryant. His body was laid to rest in the Prospect Hill Cemetery, Front Royal, Virginia—the committal service being conducted by the Rev. Roscoe C. Johnson. We shall remember him as a man of God who passed our way in his pilgrimage toward the Eternal City, and be thankful

DAVID GILLIAM TRENT

By C. C. Bell

October 12, 1878 was a day upon which a supreme blessing came to the world. On that day David Gilliam Trent was born in Campbell County, Virginia. His parents, Gilliam Hardwick Trent and Laura Smith Trent, were Christians of the highest order. With this blessing he began life. Truly, behind him there stood one of the finest families of Campbell County. This background disclosed itself in every phase of his life, until his passing to the Heavenly Home on February 24, 1951, at Appomattox, Va.

No man ever graced the Virginia Conference with a finer character. The principles of the Christian faith were the foundation of his life. Ever was he characterized by a sense of the highest loyalty to these principles, without ever a compromise in that which he knew to be the truth. This loyalty reached its height in his devotion to Christ and His church. Truly, his affections were upon Christ at the right hand of the Heavenly Father. This gave to him supreme power, as he preached the gospel to the churches and to the world. When David Gilliam Trent preached, the words that came from his lips were with unction from on high, but the sermon behind it all was the life of devotion and consecration that he lived. Into thousands of homes he went with a ministry of comfort, hope, and truly of sustaining grace.

In such a ministry, his hands were ever upheld by his faithful wife and devoted family. His family was ideal. May God multiply such in our midst.

He married Edna Elizabeth Maddox, December 14, 1897. She still lives and through her and the children he still speaks the Christian message to the world.

To them were born: L. A. Trent, Lynchburg, Va., a faithful minister of the Methodist Church; L. G. Trent, Lynchburg, Va.; E. E. Trent, Charlottesville, Va.; T. M. Trent, Appomattox, Va.; D. M. Trent, Roanoke, Va.; Mrs. John M. Tabb, Matthews, Va., and Mrs. James E. Marshall, Buchanan, Va.; and nine grandchildren.

Brother Trent became a member of the Virginia Conference in 1921 and served the following pastorates: West Campbell, 1918-1919; Bedford Springs, 1920-1924; Appomattox, 1924-1928; North Garden, 1928-1932; Gloucester, 1932-1936; Matthews, 1936-1940; Monterey, 1940-1942; Buchanan, 1942-1946; Clover, 1946-1950.

October, 1950, marked the date that his name was removed from the active roll of the Virginia Conference and placed upon that of the sainted retired ministers of our Conference. Truly, the Conference can rejoice in such a ministry. Thousands throughout

Virginia call him "blessed". He did bless them. He ever kept alive that which had been committed to his trust. He was ready to receive the crown of life which had been prepared for him.

The summer suns will warm his grave. The winters will lay white blankets of snow upon it. Friends will drop their tears there, but his soul is not in that grave. Redeemed, glorified, David Gilliam Trent is forever with the Lord.

CHARLES ELAM BLANKENSHIP

By Wm. Archer Wright

As I write, from the somewhat yellowed page of a book before me, a face looks out. It is the face of one in the first flush of vigorous young manhood. The high and thoughtful forehead, the face serious, not solemn, the calm, smooth brow, bespeak the dignity of self-respecting, confident, courageous manhood, and command, without seeming to demand, respect.

The head is flung up a little as if to face a sudden glory, or to dare. The eyes intrigue me, clear, direct, they look past me, toward a far horizon from which there comes a call, a challenge, opportunity, opposition. These eyes accept, they dare; they say, "Come on, I'm ready". It is not the look of one content to stand and wait. The generous mouth is too firm for that. The line of the jaw is too strong. There is aggression there. The chin has a forward thrust. It is the face of one who hears a trumpet call, who sees an ensign lifted in the face of danger. It is the face of one whose soul responds, "Lead on, I follow".

It is Charles Elam Blankenship as he was fifty years ago and more, when he went to his first rugged appointment amid a rugged people in the rugged hills of Franklin County where he laid spiritual foundations for the later structure of Ferrum College by building St. James Church at Ferrum, Virginia, in the face of conditions that "would have daunted" (and had) "men of greater age" and experience.

It is Charles Elam Blankenship as I knew his best, in his retirement at Highland Park Church, in Richmond, mellowed by the years, but with his eye undimmed and his spiritual force unabated, a brother beloved, staunch friend, wise counselor, sympathetic, confident, courageous and vigorous advocate of the right, a man not lightly to be dealt with because he himself was no light man.

He was a man who until the day of his death with unwavering purpose, unflinching courage and unfailing kindness followed still, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ, the forward sloping banner of the Captain of his soul. His strong soul was no "diamond in the rough". His nature was adorned with gentleness, and kindness shone in all his attitudes. He loved a good story, and could tell them to the delight of his friends.

Never a candidate for the honors, if there be such, of back-slapping popularity, he won the respect of all men and the sincere affection of those who knew him. Witness the grief upon the faces of the host of members of the Boggs Wesley Bible Class of Highland Park, who formed a guard of honor for their beloved teacher and friend at his funeral.

His appointments, beginning in 1895, were as follows: West Franklin, 4 years; Washington Street, Danville, 2 years; Barton