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# JOURNAL

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## Fifth Session

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## Western North Carolina

## Annual Conference

*of*

## The Methodist Church



Edited for the Conference by  
EDGAR H. NEASE

BROAD STREET METHODIST CHURCH

STATESVILLE, NORTH CAROLINA

OCTOBER 18-22, 1943

rather detailed account of his life from ministry. This is most interesting to read to compare and contrast the times of the first quarter of the twentieth with the

rather he was determined to join the church. After earnestly seeking for quite some time he attended a revival and there felt that the work of one service he said, "I went to the church, complete the work thou hast begun in the world and preach the Gospel. The Lord is again." After this he held his private retreat place of prayer. There he heard of the world and preach the Gospel. The Lord is again. He kept a record of each year's amount of money received for the different of baptisms, and the number of acces-

several different hindrances. But in spite of that, "Save the moments and build years more than a match for these hindrances

1874, and to preach on December 20, 1874. Annual Conference while it was in session was the Bluestone Circuit and Flatop Virginia and West Virginia. This charge was preaching at twenty places. Out of preachers and one local preacher, whom

married to Miss Flora Pickens, daughter of the College Chapel. To this union six children were born: Miss Lochie Stover of Greensboro, Mrs. Gardner of Rutherford College, William Rutherford College.

is now the Western North Carolina Conference member of it. He served charges and he was widely known and dearly loved

at home in the Rutherford College community. On January 12, 1932, his faithful

This was a very great loss to him but everything pertaining to the welfare of the church continue to grow in grace. He served one charge loved the Bible and spent much time through more than fifty times and was a blessing of his life his hearing was very much to do all the good that he could. He was in the Bible Class in Sunday School and almost

inside the chancel at both the morning and evening services very great inspiration to this writer. He was of what was said during the services he was to begeth and pray for the pastor and the confidence in him because they felt that he would ever be loved by all who knew him. He was buried in the Memorial Methodist Church on Thursday, Bishop Clare Purcell, Rev. C. S. Kirkland, and the Weaverville and gently laid to rest in the

"Earth to earth and dust to dust"

Calmly now the words we say.

Left behind, we wait in trust

For the Resurrection Day.

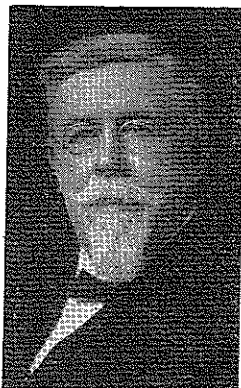
Father, in Thy gracious keeping,

Leave we now Thy servant sleeping."

J. R. DUNCAN.

\* \* \* \*

#### JOHN EDWIN THOMPSON



On Wednesday morning, September 22, a little before eleven o'clock, death came to Reverend John Edwin Thompson of Shelby, oldest member of the Western North Carolina Conference, and also the oldest alumnus of Trinity College—now Duke University. Though he had been failing in strength over a number of years, Brother Thompson was in usual health until Monday morning of that week when he fell in his room in the home of his daughter, Mrs. Lamar C. Gidney. His condition grew steadily worse until the end came on Wednesday. Thus closed the earthly part of a most remarkable and highly honored career.

Funeral services were conducted from Central Methodist Church, Shelby, on Thursday morning by the pastor, George B. Clemmer, assisted by the Reverend R. M. Hauss and the Reverend J. S. Gibbs. Prior to the service the body lay in state in the church with ministers of the county serving as an honor guard. Interment was in the family plot in Oakwood Cemetery,

High Point. The Reverend C. E. Rozzelle conducted brief services at the grave in which he was assisted by the Reverend R. M. Courtney.

Brother Thompson was born November 18, 1853, in Alamance County, the son of James Umstead and Fannie Allen Thompson, the youngest of four children. His brother, James Alexander Thompson, and his sisters, Mrs. Betty Thompson Murray and Mrs. Pauline Thompson Holt, died many years ago. A half-sister, Mrs. Fannie Johnson of Burlington, survives. Surviving also are two daughters: Mrs. Mary T. Kearns of Baltimore, and Mrs. Lamar C. Gidney of Shelby; five granddaughters, Mrs. Glenn Smith of High Point, Mrs. J. C. Borden, Jr., of Burlington, Mrs. J. E. B. Davis, Jr., of Raleigh, Mrs. W. R. Dixon of Ocracoke, and Miss Ellen L. Gidney of Shelby; and five great grandchildren. One niece, Mrs. Robert E. Hunt of Hudson, North Carolina, and a nephew, Mr. A. C. Holt of Greensboro, survive.

No appraisal of the life of this good man, this faithful servant of Christ, this able minister of the church and the New Testament can be attempted in an account as brief as this memoir must be. A few facts will be of interest. Had he lived a few weeks longer he would have been ninety years old, but length of days was of secondary importance to the other dimensions in his life. The things that mattered even more were the depth of his convictions, the height of his aspirations, and the breadth of his interests and sympathies. He was educated at Hughes' Academy in Alamance County and at Old Trinity in Randolph where he graduated in 1878, second in his class. He taught school one year in Catawba County and was admitted "on trial" into the North Carolina Conference in November, 1879, at Wilson. During the forty-seven years of his active ministry he served the following charges: Calvary Mission, Charlotte, 1879-81; Reidsville, 1881-83; Pineville Circuit, 1883-86; Wadesboro, 1886-88; Lumberton, 1888-90; Marion, 1890-91; Shelby, 1891-95; Lexington, 1895-96; Concord, 1896-99; Statesville District, 1899-1903; Charlotte District, 1903-07; High Point, Washington Street, 1907-10; Mooresville, 1910-12; Asheboro, 1912-16; Burkhead, 1916-18; Belmont, 1918-24; Kings Mountain, 1924-25; and Salisbury, Main Street, 1925-26. Brother Thompson was a member of the Conference Brotherhood and was one of the original promoters of this movement in the Con-

ference. He also took a leading part in the organization of the Conference Historical Society.

In December, 1881, Mr. Thompson was wed to Miss Rosa Pegues of Chesterfield County, South Carolina, near Cheraw. The marriage was a most happy one. The young lady of his choice walked faithfully by his side for more than twenty-six years then, suddenly, departed this life during the first year of their ministry in High Point.

Since his retirement in June, 1926, Brother Thompson had made his home in Shelby, living with his daughter, Mrs. Lamar C. Gidney. Few men have lived to a riper age; none has grown old more gracefully, or endeared himself more to all who knew him. Beauty and intelligence, sweetness and strength were outstanding traits of his character.

It was not the writer's privilege to know J. Ed Thompson until the evening time of his life. What a joy it has been to know him at any time! The outgoing of the day and the sunset were especially glorious! Having known him intimately in these last years, and having been blessed and inspired by the graciousness of his spirit, the nobility of his character, and the rich maturity of his mind and heart one can understand and appreciate what Dr. Braxton Craven, President of Old Trinity and Secretary of the Annual Conference when Brother Thompson was "Admitted on Trial," meant when he declared to the Conference, "Brother Thompson has been with us at Trinity College for four years; he graduated last June, and I will say, we never graduated his superior." He was superior but never sophisticated; humility and simplicity were cardinal virtues of his personality. For ninety long, toilsome, fighting years there was never anything against him. His record in every particular has been heroic and it will be an inspiration to encouragement forever.

Now the laborer's task is o'er;  
Now the battle day is past;  
Now upon the farther shore  
Lands the voyager at last.  
Father, in Thy gracious keeping  
Leave we now Thy servant sleeping.

There the tears of earth are dried;  
There its hidden things are clear;  
There the work of life is tried  
By a juster Judge than here.  
Father, in Thy gracious keeping  
Leave we now Thy servant sleeping.

GEORGE B. CLEMMER.

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