

JOURNAL OF
1959 SESSION

of the

WESTERN NORTH
CAROLINA CONFERENCE

of

The Methodist Church



George R. Stuart Auditorium
LAKE JUNALUSKA, N. C.

to them: Mrs. Frances Cranford, Mrs. J. Frank Scott, and Mrs. W. B. Ward, Jr., of Concord; Mrs. R. G. Faircloth of Reidsville, and Mrs. W. E. Houck of Morganton. There are three sons: the Reverend Robert M. of Concord, Roy of High Point, and Dr. John W. of Lexington. Twenty grandchildren survive and seventeen great-grandchildren.

When the time for retirement came in 1940, Brother Varner moved to 25 Kerr Street, Concord, where he lived the remaining years of life. Funeral services were conducted at Epworth by the pastor, G. F. Houck, and Paul W. Townsend, Salisbury District Superintendent. Interment was in Oakwood Cemetery. This minister did constructive work wherever he served. He was a good preacher, a beloved pastor, a man of sincerity, good judgment, and brotherly kindness. He found great joy going about doing good. He always had a lively interest in the church. This interest continued through the years of his retirement.

Recently a minister conducted revival services in a church served by him many years ago. He heard many commendable words still being spoken for his effective ministry there. Through the years of his ministry he thus served his churches and assisted the people in obtaining the abundant life.

"A man's not dead when he is dead
If he was living when alive.
Is Moses dead? Have prophets ceased to cry
"Thus saith the Lord?" Is harpist David silent?
. . . So help us live, O living God, that each
Day's work may be a partnership with Thee;
And grant that after honest toil,
When numbered tools are gathered in,
Then may our ended lives begin."

—G. F. HOUCK

BASCOM ARLENDO YORK

August 10, 1858—March 4, 1959

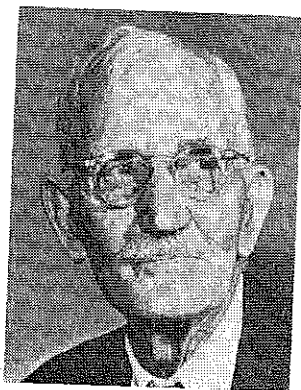
Bascom Arlando York was born at York Institute, near the foot of Rocky Face Mountain in Alexander County, on August 10, 1858, next to the youngest son of the Reverend Brantley York, D.D., and Mary Wells Lineberry York. He died in nearby Statesville just a little more than 100 years later, on March 4, 1959. His life in the century between was an incarnation of the Methodist itineracy, and when he died, one of the last links with another age had passed.

His father was the blind local preacher of the Methodist Church and itinerant schoolteacher who did so much to inspire the educational revival in North Carolina in the two decades before the Civil War and then did so much to keep alive a spark of education in the difficult period after that war, best remembered because the first of his numerous academies developed through a series of stages until it became Duke University.

His mother was Brantley York's second wife, sister of three ministers of the Methodist Protestant Church, one of whom, Reverend A. W. Lineberry, D.D., was president of the North Carolina Conference for many years. Bascom York describes her as "a great woman, a faithful wife, and a kind mother to all her children, and just the same to our half-sister." The few references to her in Brantley York's autobiography confirm that judgment.

Bascom York's early education was mainly under his father at Ruffin Badger Institute, south of Durham, although he had earlier gone to a private school at York Institute taught by Colonel G. W. Flowers, father of Dr. R. L. Flowers, former president of Duke University. In 1872, he went to Rutherford College, where his father was teaching, and graduated from there with an A.B. degree in 1878. Later the same institution conferred the A.M. degree on him.

Just before his graduation he guided his blind father to a stint of teaching school in Arkansas, and after his graduation he taught school, either by himself or with his



father, until he joined the North Carolina Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, at Wilmington in 1884. He had been licensed to preach before graduating from Rutherford College and had been active in meetings the year before he joined the conference.

During his teaching days he married an old schoolmate from Ruffin Badger days, Miss Katie Moring, daughter of Alfred Moring, a great granddaughter of Reverend James O'Kelly, the first rebel against the Methodist episcopal system, and a sister of John M. Moring, twice speaker of the lower house of the North Carolina Legislature. They were married April 27, 1881. She died at their home at Lincolnton on December 1, 1929.

Bascom York's own designation of himself was that of "a pioneer Methodist minister." Although he lived and preached at least two generations after the pioneer days of Methodism in the charges where he was sent by the conference, his description is apt. In most of them, the work was characterized by pioneer conditions. So often there was no parsonage to which to take his family, and his first care was to rent or buy one.

His first appointment was given to Wilkes Circuit. At the next meeting of the conference he was appointed to Dobson Circuit, where he stayed two years. Then followed in order Bick Lick Mission in Stanly County, Rowan Circuit, Forest City Circuit — where he was living when his father died at his home in 1891 — Lilesville in Anson County, Summerfield Circuit in Guilford County, and Kernersville Circuit in Forsyth.

In 1900 he was appointed to the Rock Springs Circuit in Lincoln County. His four years there was the high point of his ministerial career, with a good parsonage, finances always paid in full, and the Rock Springs campmeeting every August. Then followed appointments to Shelby Circuit, Cherryville Circuit, and Concord Circuit. After a year's supernumerary relationship, when he lived in Lincolnton, he was appointed to Webster Circuit in Jackson County, Ruffin Circuit in Rockingham County, Mocksville Circuit in Davie County, and Hickory Circuit. At the conference in Reidsville in 1915, he retired permanently from conference work and settled at Hickory.

His retirement from regular conference work did not mean his retirement from the ministry. For a year and a half he preached twice a month at the foot of Grandfather Mountain while the Ritter Lumber Company was located there, and he was guest minister whenever and wherever called upon, frequently taking over for a minister where he lived during vacations.

Nor did his retirement mean an end of the itinerant life he had known since boyhood. In 1917 he moved to be with his son at Lincolnton, and it was there he came nearest establishing a permanent home. After the death of his wife in 1929, he moved with his daughter, Alleine, and her husband, Joseph E. Reinhardt, to Cherryville and then to Charlotte. His last years were spent with his daughters in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, and Charleston, South Carolina, with summers in Hendersonville.

From the time he joined the Conference in Wilmington until he went with his daughter from Hendersonville to the Asheville Conference in 1954, when he was 96 years of age, for 71 years, he did not miss a session, but from 1954 on, a growing blindness and feeble health kept him away. For the past dozen years, since 1947, his name has been the first on the chronological roll of the Western North Carolina Conference.

His only son, Alfred York, died in 1919. His second daughter, Katie, wife of L. B. Parris of Cherryville and the one with whom he lived in Florida, died just a year before he did. After the death of Joseph Reinhardt, his daughter brought him from Charleston to live with her daughter and son-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. E. M. Berry, in Statesville, 16 miles from where he had been born. It was there he died just past the middle of his 101st year. He was buried in the family plot at Lincolnton, where his oldest daughter, Bettie, Mrs. M. M. Rudisill, still lives.

Little we know here below wakes to the morn of its hundredth year, but Bascom York did, and in that 100 years he had known the real Methodist pioneers and had been part of the development of Methodism to a newer era as American life developed into a newer era. The last part of his life was that of an onlooker, but an onlooker who never lost interest.

—HOMER M. KEEVER