

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

MISSION BIOGRAPHICAL SERIES

BISHOPS – MISSIONARIES

ID#

141

MC COY, BISHOP JAMES H.

James H. McCoy is too well known in Alabama and West Florida, and, indeed, throughout the Church to require many words here. He was born in Blount County, Alabama, August 6, 1868, being the son of the late Rev. W. C. McCoy, who, after serving in the Confederate Army under Stonewall Jackson, came to Alabama to live, marrying Miss Annie Vaughn. James H. McCoy, the oldest child of this union, was educated at the Southern University, receiving his A.M. degree there. He joined the North Alabama Conference in 1889, serving, first, Oakland Circuit, and then a number of stations, including South Decatur, Tuscaloosa, Huntsville, and Highlands, then called South Highlands, in Birmingham; then four years as editor of the *Alabama Christian Advocate*; then president of Birmingham College, now Birmingham-Southern. He was elected Bishop in 1910. Bishop McCoy was twice married. His first, wife, Miss Annie Bradley, was a granddaughter of one of our pioneer preachers, Rev. J. G. Gurley. She became the mother of his children, William Richard, Margaret, Jean and James. His second wife was Miss Mary Norman Moore, former President of Athens College, who now (1955) lives at Athens. Bishop McCoy was a brother-in-law of Dr. L. D. Patterson and Dr. G. M. Davenport, both of whom are now members of the North Alabama Conference, and of Mr. Jesse Wadsworth, longtime active layman of this conference, these three having married daughters of Dr. and Mrs. W. C. McCoy. Bishop McCoy died in Birmingham on March 22, 1919.

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ume in the Alabama Conference; and
then transferred to the Louisiana
Conference, serving several pastorates

This interesting and in-
formative article by Dr.
Lazenby tells of the four-
teen bishops contributed
by Alabama Methodism to
the Church. Every Ala-
bama Methodist should
read this inspiring chapter
in our history.

ed in New Orleans. In connection with
one of his pastorates in New Orleans,
he edited the **New Orleans Christian Advocate**,
launched in 1855 by the Louisiana and Alabama
Conferences. It is interesting to note that
the Publishing Committee representing the
Alabama Conference was composed of
Jefferson Hamilton, grandfather of Dr. A. P.
Hamilton, formerly a professor at Huntingdon
College; and now a member of the faculty
of Millsaps College; William B. Murrah,
father of the late Bishop W. B. Murrah,
and T. W. Dormer, so long secretary of the
Alabama Conference; while the Committee

McCoy, Bishop J.H.

see

Missionary Voice, July 1919, p.201

BY GUY E. SNAVELY, CHAIRMAN

BIRMINGHAM

CHRISTIAN ADVOCATE for four years, until his election as president of Birmingham-Southern in 1906. Four years later he was elected a bishop at the same General Conference where Bishop Murrah was elected. He was called to the other world on March 22, 1919 after suffering from tuberculosis.

Though I never met Bishop McCoy, I have closer relations with more of his family than of any other of our alumni bishops. Over the years I have worked closely with two of our distinguished ministerial alumni who married his sisters--George M. Davenport and Lorenzo Dow Patterson. I knew also the distinguished Methodist layman, J. B. Wadsworth, who married his other sister. His second wife, Mary Moore McCoy, was quite a close friend as we were fellow college administrators for years, both when she was president of Athens College and later when she was dean of Alabama College. Several of Bishop McCoy's children and quite a few of his nieces and nephews are alumni of Birmingham-Southern.

The college church to which we have belonged for many years is named in his honor. It was called McCoy Memorial Church when located in an unimpressive, somewhat dilapidated wooden structure a block south of its present location, near the corner of Graymont Avenue and Eighth Street West. There on Sabbath mornings the sparrows would slip in through holes under the eaves and try to compete with the choir. While serving on the official board, the building committee and other committees I made bold to suggest the dropping of MEMORIAL from the name. The family name certainly indicates fully that it is a memorial.

A story concerning the bishop abides vividly in my memory. When he became president of the college, its treasury was in a most precarious condition, but the late Robert S. Munger, a most loyal supporter at the time, came to the rescue by paying the salary of the president, \$3,000 per annum. When he was advanced to the bishopric I believe his salary was not much larger.

JAMES HENRY MCCOY, also the son of a Methodist clergyman, W. C. McCoy, was born on August 6, 1868 in Blount County, Alabama. He received his Birmingham-Southern diploma in 1888 and joined the North Alabama Conference in 1889. After serving one circuit and three stations he was appointed to South Highlands Church in Birmingham. From there he became editor of the ALABAMA

James Henry McCoy
1868-1919

I don't feel we will know all the
 act on ways open to us without wholly
 tempted to say it is a part of the total
 church. A vital church with a self-conscious
 servants in great abundance. Technical
 btedly draw many into the demanding fields
 and science. Medicine is complaining even
 ministry: some statistics claim a shortage of
 14000 doctors per year. Analysts in the medi-
 jointing to these same technological condi-
 eased aggressiveness of business and industry
 ting programs has not been matched by the
 right-wing hate groups have so generally
 s and teachers the scrape-goats of modern
 this has doubtless frightened some away.
 he image of the church itself is most to blame.
 the ministry place upon a young man who sees
 s just another club or organization with the
 private chaplain? And what if he sees the private
 ss concerned with declaring the good news than
 he club members happy? Too often young people
 h merely reflecting the culture, preoccupied
 nd prestige, often irrelevant in dealing with
 issues.

I
 to face the problem under three headings to
 nd a little more like a sermon than a lecture,
 ense for the subject as a sermon is the fact
 ition in the life of the church, the whole church,
 be delegated to its ministers or to a General
 ncy such as we have already developed. This,
 my first of three points: recruitment for the
 e concern and responsibility of the whole

a great blessing to the whole family if one o
 ighters was called into full time service in the
 often when this happens today, we hear parents
 want a son or daughter of mine in the ministry.
 ld. Too much sacrifice is expected of them.
 e what we are saying? We want a comfortable
 at does not interfere with our own designs
 this just isn't Christianity. Such a remar
 ve still believe we can have the benefits of th
 e Cross. What claim can a pastor put upo
 f they are discouraged at home, if their ow
 is world's rewards higher than the clai
 s is why the attitudes and conversations o
 who calls himself a Christian are involved i
 the ministry.

we are also suffering somewhat from a chang
 rd God's call. Those who are forty-five an
 ember that in the past generation the call t
 s looked upon as something quite different fro
 other vocations. But now for many years w
 is sheer arrogance on the part of the ministry
 "vocation" derives from Christian theology
 g to the pulpit is no more sacred than God'
 r judge or plow the fields. A Journal

s,	Woman's Society of Christian	
s,	Service	8
s	Birmingham Area News	9
	If I Had My Ministry to Live	
	Over	10
n	Three from Birmingham Area	
at	Attended Prayer Life Con-	
of	ference	11
-	A Tour in the Andalusia	
n	District	12