Thirty-two direct descendants of the late Rev. Benjamin G. and Nocia Godwin Early gathered recently for a family reunion in Chadbourn, including five of their children.

Rev. Early, who died in 1961 at the age of 92, was a Baptist minister serving many locations in eastern North Carolina, following his graduation from Wake Forest College in 1900.

His last pastorate was at Hinson’s Crossroads Baptist Church in Columbus County, 1943-1947. Following his retirement, Rev. Early and his wife continued to live in Cerro Gordo until moving in with a son in Raleigh because of failing health.

Mrs. Early reached the age of 95 before her death in 1966. The couple had 10 children, eight of whom reached adulthood. Three were in their 80s before dying — B. Grady, Henry G. and Waldo D. Early.

The five surviving children include Mrs. Theo Early Hammond, 91, who is the wife of James Palmer Hammond of Cerro Gordo, 101.

Others are Davie Lee and Woodrow W. Early, both of Raleigh, Nocia Clyde E. Lyons of Denver, Colo., and Irene Hamilton of Bridgeton.

FIVE LEFT - The five surviving children of the late Rev. and Mrs. Benjamin G. Early gathered in Chadbourn recently. From the left, Davis Lee Early, Theo Early Hammond, Nocia Clyde Early Lyons, Woodrow Wilson Early and Irene Early Hamilton.
MEMORIES OF MY FATHER AND MOTHER
B.G. and Nocia Godwin Early
By a son, Waldo D. Early

MEMORIES! How they flood my soul. MEMORIES never to be forgotten as long as I have my rightful mind. Thank God for parents who gave life, nurtured and cared for the eight children—all of whom survive—and left us a heritage of which we can be gratefully proud.

My father was born in Hertford County, N.C. on September 17, 1869. After a long and useful life of 92 years he went home to glory in October 1961.

My mother was born in the same county on May 27, 1871. She outlived her preacher husband by five years, going to join him, and her Jesus and the saints of glory on June 21, 1966.

During his more than 60 years as a Baptist minister and servant of the Lord, he was pastor of many rural and village churches in Eastern North Carolina. In the early years of my memory he lived and preached in the area of Chalybeatte Springt, Smithfield, Beulaville, Delway, Kenansville and Rose Hill. He would drive for miles his faithful horse, to reach the people in remote and scattered communities.

The salary was often small, but the rewards were great. The joy of serving, living, preaching the gospel, winning the lost, comforting the down-hearted were his meat. He must have gone to Beulaville about 1910. There was a need for a church building.

I have been told that he was the first with his hammer and saw on the job. His prayers, his plans, his labors, his life’s blood went into this building project as in a large number of like projects down through the years.

I wish I knew more to write. I was told that this was to be a short sketch of my recollections. There are a few of you who still remember my parents and their tenure in your community. As you gaze on their likeness and recall their devotion to duty, perhaps you like I will raise a prayer of thankfulness to the Lord, who I feel had a word of Commendation for His servants—Well done, ye good and faithful.
B. G. Earley was born in Hertford County, North Carolina, September 17, 1869. His parents were B. A. and Marina Lassiter Earley. Rev. Earley was educated in Winton Schools and Wake Forest College and was ordained on April 29, 1900. He married Nacia Godwin on March 13, 1891. Eight children were born of this union and a son, Waldo D. Earley, quoting: “Thank God for parents who gave life, nurtured, and cared for the eight children and left us a heritage of which we can be gratefully proud.”

Rev. Earley was a Baptist minister more than sixty years and was pastor of many rural and village churches in eastern North Carolina. He would drive his faithful horse for miles to reach the people in remote and scattered communities. The salary was often small, but the rewards were great. The joy of serving, living, preaching the gospel, winning the lost, comforting the downhearted were his biggest joy. In about 1910, he went to Beulaville. There was a need for a church building. Mr. Earley was the first with his hammer and saw on the job. His prayers, plans, and labors went into this building project as in many other building projects down through the years.

Rev. Earley passed away October 1961 at the age of 92. “He lived a long and useful life, and recalling his devotion to duty, let us raise a prayer of thankfulness to the Lord who I feel had a word of commendation for his servant. Well done, ye good and faithful.”
Give (for the printer) your full name: Benjamin Gustus Early

Date of birth—month, day, year: Sept. 17, 1869

Your father's name: B. A. Early

Your mother's maiden name: Marjina Foster

Where you were educated: Western and Wake Forest

Degrees received and the source: April 27, 1900

Where and when ordained: March 18, 1892, St. John's N. C.

When and where you were married: Maggie Maria Godwin

Give date of her birth—month, day, year: May 27, 1871

Her parents' names: H. O. and Saherica Godwin

Where have been your activities? Roxboro, Johnson County, Little Falls, Eastern, Moral Sovereignty, Raleigh, Ass'n.

Positions of honor and trust you have held—(Moderator, Trustee, Etc.): Andover, Ass'n

Baptist A. D. Convention, Eastern Union, Trustees of Free High School

You are the author of—(Books, Monographs, Special Articles, Etc.): 

Kindly give reference to any write-up, or other articles commendatory of your work which might aid in the preparation of a personal sketch.

Give on back of this sheet any further information: nationality, remote ancestry, names of children, foreign travel, industrial engagements and other items of interest.

The information here sought is for use in the preparation of a Biographical Work of the North Carolina Baptist leaders. We hope no name will be omitted.

A personal sketch written by yourself or some friend will be greatly appreciated. Fill and send this blank now; the sketch may come later.

Mail to 

J. T. ALDERMAN, Chairman,

Henderson, N. C.
REV. G. TITUS MILLS
Our Nineteenth Pastor -- 1916-1919

Rev. Mills was born on December 2, 1878, in western Wake County. He received his education at Buies Creek Academy at Wake Forest College. He was ordained in 1896 at Olive Chapel Church. Mr. Mills first married Callie Williams on October 23, 1904. Two boys and five girls were born to this union. After his first wife's death, he married Electra Farrar on June 11, 1921. Two children, a boy and girl, were born of this marriage. His son, Rev. W. T. Mills, is our guest speaker at the Centennial/Homecoming October 9, 1983. Rev. Mills preached over 40 years. He died October 11, 1944.

REV. B. G. EARLY
Our Twentieth Pastor -- 1920-1921

Rev. Early was born in Hertford County, North Carolina, on September 17, 1869. He was educated at Wake Forest College and was ordained on April 29, 1900. He married Nacia Godwin on March 13, 1891. Eight children were born of this marriage. Rev. Early was a Baptist minister for more than 60 years in churches in eastern North Carolina. Rev. Early passed away in October, 1961, at the age of 92.

No pastor reported in Raleigh Baptist Association minutes in 1922.
NAME: Early, B. G.

DATA: Photograph

SOURCE: LITTLE RIVER BAPTIST ASSOCIATION MINUTES, 1908, p. 3

NAME  B. G. Early  Sept. 17, 1869

Ancestry  B. A. Early  Married  Maggie N. Godwin

Wife  B.  d.

Ancestry  1900

Record  Excellent worker & church builder

Raleigh - 1922

See

File No.  (Over)