

Hocutt Family Outstanding Teachers . . . 195

Wilmington



THE HOCUTT FAMILY of sixteen members shown above, was taken during one of their annual trips to Wrightsville Beach. The family stopped over in Wilmington for photographing and copies of this photo are prized possessions of all members of the

family. They are, left to right: (four sitting in front): Zelma, John, Naomi and Alma; second row: Rosa, Rev. Hocutt, holding Betsy; Mrs. Hocutt, holding Louise; and Manly; back row: J. D., Jr., Berta, Robert, Olivia and George.

Recently in conversation with Carl Schutt, Sr., a retired Wilmington merchant, and a subscriber to *The Pender Chronicle*, the subject arose on features of this newspapers—"Senior Citizens" and "Court of Honor".

Mr. Schutt brought to our attention an outstanding person, in his opinion, by the name of Mr. Hocutt. Mr. Schutt remembered, as a younger man, that Mr. Hocutt used to take homemade sausage to the merchants in Wilmington, including Schutt's father.

During the course of

and Wake Forest Colleges in North Carolina and two sons had graduated from Southern Baptist Seminaries. Each of the other four sons spent a year or more in one of the Baptist Schools in North Carolina, with the years spent in the Southern Baptist Seminaries included.

There were very few, if any, times when the Hocutts had the ready cash with which to pay all their bills; yet, by the providence of God, by their determination and ingenuity, and by their hard work and the cooperation of all members of the family, about \$28,000 was spent for educating the

as "Papa" did.

He kept the very best literature in his home and "trained up his children in the way they should go."

The struggles that came through the years called for thinking and planning together and it was said that often Mr. Hocutt would say to his helpmate, "O Katie, my dear wife, please help me to think."

Throughout the years together (she passed away in 1948—sixteen years after her husband's death), they looked to each other for help in the solution of every problem.

and his devoted wife provided educations for their fourteen children to "go and do" what they were unable to do themselves.

For a number of years, Rev. Hocutt served as pastor of some of the small churches near his home in the Wilmington Association. Before the days of automobiles, he drove a white horse (that was partially blind), leaving home on Saturdays for conducting services at the appointed times on Saturdays and Sundays. Back then services were mostly held once a month.

conversation, it was discovered that he was speaking of the late Rev. J. D. Hocutt. By coincidence, this newspaper had just recently received two nominations for "Senior Citizen" and "Court of Honor"—both being members of that same Hocutt family, who reside in Pender.

Thus, it was decided to feature the "entire" Hocutt family—truly, one of Pender's most outstanding families—a unique family in that it has produced a goodly number of preachers, teachers, missionaries, including those coming into the family by marriage. (A total of 195 years of teaching performed by some in this family). It would be difficult to single out any "one" of the family for an honoree; therefore, we hope to include the entire (immediate) family...beginning with Rev. J. D. Hocutt—"Papa".

Among The Greatest

Rev. Jefferson Davis Hocutt of Rocky Point (born in 1861-died in 1932), who was born under humble circumstances, was destined to take his place among men and was one who made his contribution along with others toward the betterment of mankind. He was given the name (Jefferson Davis) after the President of the Confederacy.

"Mr. Jeff" did not come to be known as a national leader; his name not found in the hall of fame, nor was he listed in "Who's Who in America", but among those who knew him, he was among the greatest. He was an humble man who lived an humble life. He entered no institution of learning from which he could receive a diploma or degree of honor. His sphere of opportunity was limited and due to circumstances was educated to about the fifth grade.

Married in December, 1890 to the former Hester Katherine Murray of the Murraytown community of Burgaw, this union made their home on the farm and to this union were born 15 children (one died at 7 months of age).

Mrs. Hocutt, like her husband, had a fifth-grade education, but they toiled and sacrificed for more than a quarter of a century to give their children a high school and college education for their children. When the task was completed, eight daughters and two sons had graduated from Meredith

spent for educating the children away from home.

This is no little accomplishment for a farmer and his companion who did much of their farming on rented land.

On the farm, located in the Ashton community, he worked hard and was willing to be a tiller of the soil...to him that was an honorable task. He took pride in his farming. He was the youngest of ten children (his twin brother died in infancy). Being the youngest, he was faced with the necessity of staying at home caring for his aging parents. He wanted an education as his older brother, John, was getting at Wake Forest in preparation for the ministry, but with "Jeff" this seemed to be a "closed door" for him.

He felt the call of God, but he also realized that God had entrusted into his care, the fourteen living children. He was aware of the "closed door", but he knew One who could open doors and with that faith the problem was solved. He would give himself to study, to prayer and to a life of service and not worry about what he could not do.

Rev. Hocutt studied every free moment he could find and it was said that even after his children had received their college diplomas, none of them knew as much about geography...the countries of the world and the conditions

solution of every problem.

It is said that in every task, she helped him to carry every load and in every struggle she was standing by his side.

Mrs. Hocutt never worked on the farm, but then her time was consumed by cooking, keeping the house, sewing, mending, canning foods for the winter months. But, there were the daughters who were well trained to help carry on this work, too.

"Papa" was a lover of preachers...to him they were a select and noble group of men.

He thought of the ministry as a work for God-called men who would give themselves willingly and completely into the hands of the Lord to be used of Him in the greatest of all fields of service. He would gladly travel a long distance (this was at a time when the horse and buggy was the mode of transportation, too), to hear one sermon by a man of renown in the ministry.

If Mr. Hocutt would have done the one thing he wanted to do most, he would have been a great preacher of the gospel.

Deep in his heart he felt the urge and call of God to this noble work and in all sincerity he yielded to the call and was ordained a Baptist minister.

Of necessity, his work in the ministry was limited, due to, in part, his being unable to get the preparation in school. But when a door was closed, God opened more...Rev. Hocutt

month. Mr. Hocutt's life was one of varied activities. He was looked upon by people in different walks of life as one who was a leader in his community and as one who was interested in all the things that went to make for a better community.

He was interested in better schools, better roads and was one of three men charged with the responsibility of selecting teachers and looking after all the business matters pertaining to the little school, located close to the Hocutt home. That was a logical location. After all, there were more pupils enrolled in the little school from the Hocutt home than from any other in the area.

His attention also went to public roads. There were no paved roads in Pender County. Mr. Hocutt could see the need (if for no other reason to get the delicious homemade sausage to the market in Wilmington.) He was a pioneer in the sausage business.

The roads were narrow and ungraded and many of the smaller streams had no bridges across them. He was among those who took an interest in improving the road system, even if it did call for higher taxes.

He agreed with those who said that good roads cost less than bad ones. This was especially true with the



A LIGHT ON THE HILL has been used to describe one of the abiding centers of the community that stood as a landmark through the years—the little unpainted, one-room school building in which one teacher patiently tried to teach all the subjects through the seventh grade. The building (seen in left photo) was a part of the Hocutts' farm and was located near the main road. There were more

pupils enrolled in the school than from any other farm is that of the new Ashton rooms providing space for improvement over the old younger Hocutt children in this building. In later years solidated with the school

... Preachers, Missionaries, Years of Teaching

coming of automobiles.

When the matter of whether the people would let their stock run free in the woods or build fences to confine them came to be a serious issue in the country, some politically-minded people who were concerned with this matter asked Rev. Hocutt to run for the state legislature and introduce legislation to decide this important issue.

He was interested in politics, but had no desire to run for public office. However, he announced himself as a candidate for election won.

He served and when he felt this particular task was done, when it came time to elect a representative again, he declined the request, because he felt there was no special controversial issue involved and he left this place of service open for others to seek.

Not nearly enough has been said in tribute to this dedicated Christian couple, but lack of space demands limitations.

Children

Rosa the first born, married J. Carlyle Powell whom she met while they were attending Delway Baptist High School in Sampson County. After his graduation from Wake Forest College and the Southern Baptist Seminary in Louisville, Ky., and after her graduation from Meredith College in Raleigh, they went to Nigeria, West Africa, where for 36 years they served as missionaries supported by the Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention. They retired in 1956 and located near his old home in Warsaw, Duplin County. He has been an invalid for a number of years.

Rosa taught school a year or two before their marriage, and she did much teaching in connection with their mission work in Nigeria. In all she taught about 17 years.

On one of their trips to

Scott of the Riley's Creek section of Pender County. He was a successful farmer until his death a few years ago.

Berta taught Mathematics for 25 years in the high schools of Pender and New Hanover Counties, and used much that she received in salary in the early years of her teaching to help pay the expenses of younger sisters and brothers who were in school.

Their daughter, Jeannette, a graduate of Meredith College, worked for three years in the treasurer's office of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board in Richmond, Va. She then served two years as financial secretary to the secretary-treasurer of the Baptist Mission Board of Nigeria in West Africa. She is at present in charge of the Book Store at the Southeastern Baptist Seminary, Wake Forest.

Jefferson Davis, Jr., born in September, 1895, never married. As a young man he took training in a business college, and he spent his life as a bookkeeper. A good part of his active life was spent in Richmond, Va. He had a severe heart attack some years ago, and following that he came to live with a sister, Mrs. Davie Chambers, in Warsaw until his death on March 6, 1972. While living in Warsaw, he did bookkeeping on a part-time basis as his health would permit. He was very efficient in his work. He wanted things to be right.

He asked George to be the administrator of his estate; and in going through his possessions, George found a diploma that J. D. had earned as a Certified Public Accountant. This is something the members of the family did not know.

(A Nominee For Senior Citizen Recognition)

Robert Leroy Hocutt is one of the nominees submitted to The Pender Chronicle to be honored as a "Senior Citizen".

Sylvia, whom upon graduation from Business college in Raleigh, married Larry Byrd, and they reside in Raleigh. The Murrays' son, Al, graduated this spring from Campbell college, is employed in his father's business and Al was married July 8 to Susan Campbell of Dunn.

Olivia (the sixth child) married the Reverend Frank Marshburn of Harrells in Sampson County. Prior to their marriage, she had graduated at Meredith College and had earned the M. A. degree from the University of North Carolina, and had taught English and French at Stoneville for three years; at Atkinson High School for one year; at the Thomasville Baptist Orphanage for four years, and at Campbell College for four years.

After their marriage she taught at Southwood College, Salemburg, for 36 years; was assistant librarian for three years; taught 48 years.

Her husband, Frank, graduated from the University of North Carolina with the B. A. and M. A. degrees and from the Southern Baptist Seminary in Louisville, Ky., with the Ph.D. degree. He

taught Bible, Philosophy, and Psychology at Southwood College, Pineville, for 38 years; taught in Simmon's University, Louisville, Ky., for one year, and taught in summer schools in Lenoir Rhyne College and in Furman University, Greenville, S. C. His first teaching was in Norlina High School. He spent a total of 44 years in teaching.

Rev. Marshburn's work was dual in nature. He was both teacher and preacher. For 44 years he served as pastor of Baptist churches in Sampson, Cumberland, and Bladen Counties. The churches where he served as pastor are Parkersburg, Ebenezer, Cypress Creek, Center, Ingold, Mt. Gilead, Garland, and Harmony.

They are now retired and are residents of the Baptist Home for the Aging at Winston-Salem.

Fannie Ruth lived only seven months. She was born April 23, 1900 and died November 27 of the same year.

Naomi Hull (the eighth child) married David T.

See Page Two



HOME PLACE of the J. D. Hocutt family is still

taught about 17 years.
On one of their trips to Nigeria, during World War II, Rosa was a passenger on the Zam-Zam, a ship that was sunk by the Germans. She was the last passenger to get off the ship before it sank.

They have one daughter Mary Hester, who is a nurse. She served as a missionary nurse for several years in Ogbomoso and in Eku in Nigeria. Due to her father's illness, she is now with her parents in Warsaw, but she stays busy in hospitals close by when she is able to be away from home. She has many speaking engagements on foreign missions.

David William, the second born, like a younger brother, John, spent many years with the railroad. As a young man, David worked with the Atlantic Coast Line (now the Seaboard Coastline).

During World War I he spent a year or more in France, and while there, he met and married Irma Victoria Deschamps. They returned to this country, and spent most of the time in New York where he was employed with the Subway. He retired some years ago and later died.

They have three children, William, Olivia and Harry.

Berta Mabel married Cleve



ool from the Hocutt home ly. The photo on the right School building with two or two teachers—a great iginal building. The three began their school work in ears, this school was con- l at Burgaw.

The Pender Chronicle to be honored as a "Senior Citizen". Therefore, more is being said about his family and also because he has remained a "local" resident during these years.

Robert L. (better known as "Bob") married Gussie Batson, daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. Tom Batson of the Burgaw community, and they have spent their fifty years of married life on the farm in their home community, just south of the town of Burgaw.

They built their home on some land that they received from Mrs. Hocutt's father.

Before their marriage, Bob attended Dell Baptist High School in Sampson County for at least one year.

In the early years of their marriage, Bob and Gussie were very helpful to his and her parents. Most of the other members of both families had located away from the home community, and Bob and Gussie lived in easy access to both homes. During the winters, Bob helped his father in making and delivering sausage each week where it was marketed in the stores of Wilmington. Bob's father depended on him much of the time for various helps.

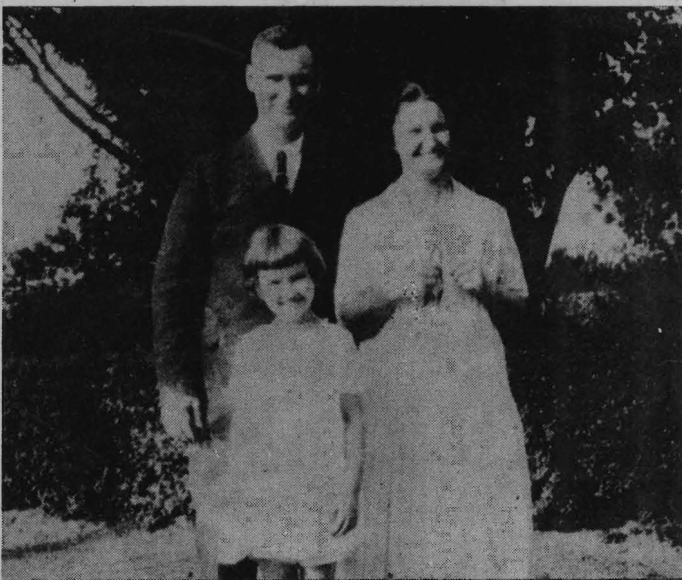
Both Bob and Gussie were active in the Riverside Baptist Church before it merged with the Burgaw Baptist Church (and more will be said about Riverside Church). They have been faithful in their attendance at the Burgaw Church. "Mr. Bob" has served as a deacon and in other capacities in his church.

They have two daughters, Ruth and Dorothy.

Ruth, their oldest, graduated from Wake Forest College and later married Willie E. Walker. They live at the Kennedy Baptist Home for Children near Kinston where he is in charge of the Freezing Plant. In addition to her helping part time at the Kennedy Home, Ruth has taught school for 22 years. They have one married son, Bob, who has just completed a tour of serving his country.

Mr. Bob and Mrs. Gussie's other daughter, Dorothy, attended Campbell College, Buies Creek and is married to Milton Murray of the Six Forks Community, just east of the town of Burgaw. They live in Dunn where he is owner of a thriving enterprise, Hardwood Deminsions, with branches in Dunn, Fremont, Goldsboro and near Swansboro. They have two wonderful children,

HOME PLACE of the J. D. Hocutt family is still standing, and sets off Highway 117, near Ashton Crossroads. This photo was taken in July, 1951. A daughter, Alma, her husband, Fulton, and their only daughter, Mary Emma, lived there until recent years.



THE POWELLS-Rosa Hocutt Powell is the oldest of the Hocutt children. She is pictured here with her husband, Rev. Carlyle Powell, and their daughter, Mary Hester-the picture being made while they were doing missionary work in Nigeria, West Africa. Mary Hester, a nurse, did missionary work in a Baptist hospital in Ogbamoso, while her parents were serving at Oyo. Upon Rev. and Mrs. Powell's retirement, they moved back to his home in Warsaw and Mary Hester returned to care for her aging parents. Mary Hester also stays busy in nearby hospitals and in speaking engagements.



RIVERSIDE BAPTIST CHURCH where the Hocutt family went to worship. The church was located near Northeast branch of the Cape Fear River and about six miles southeast of Burgaw. The church merged with Burgaw Baptist and the building still stands, though not being used as a place of worship.