

Bucklesberry, Back in the Day

Match Made in Heaven (Part 9)

After they married in 1890, Lurah Wood Swain (1856-1934) of Bucklesberry faithfully supported her husband Rev. William Ellis Swain (1856-1923) as he served in the ministry. A well-regarded teacher, there is no evidence to suggest she ever taught school again after they wed. She remained a homemaker and lovingly reared their three children.

In 1907, William completed a four-year pastorate at the Asheboro Methodist Protestant (M. P.) Church in Randolph County. That year also ushered in the epoch of his ministerial career. He transitioned from pastor to President of the North Carolina M. P. Conference. Although not assigned to an individual church or circuit, he continued to preach at constituent churches across the State for the next five years in his role as Conference President.

William's prominence as the leader of a statewide religious organization made him an increasingly public figure. Numerous news outlets covered his busy preaching itinerary. Information about Lurah and the children was also of interest. The following news items were reported from May, 1907 to June, 1908 in his first year as Conference President:

1907, May 16: "Mrs. W. E. Swain was operated upon Wednesday evening at St. Leo's Hospital in Greensboro. Mrs. Swain has been resting well since the operation and every indication points to a speedy recovery. Her many friends will regret to learn of her illness, but hope for her speedy restoration to health." (*The Randolph Bulletin*, Asheboro)

1907, May 23: "Rev. W. E. Swain went to Greensboro Tuesday to see Mrs. Swain who is in the hospital. A card from Mrs. Swain Tuesday morning stated that she was improving rapidly." (*The Randolph Bulletin*, Asheboro)

1907, May 30: "Mrs. W. E. Swain is expected home today from St. Leo's Hospital at Greensboro." (*The Randolph Bulletin*, Asheboro)

1908, February 27: "Miss Fannie [Henrietta Francis] Sutton and little brother [George Bennett Wynne], of Greensboro, spent Sunday with Rev. W. E. Swain's family." (*The Courier*, Asheboro)

1908, May 7: "Rev. W. E. Swain returned home Monday night. He came to High Point on [Train] No. 35 and as he left the car to get on Asheboro train some one snatched a wallet from his pocket. Turning he began to search a suspicious passenger, and one of the chums of the man he was

searching secured the purse and threw it on the floor of the car, where it was found." (*The Courier*, Asheboro)

1908, June 18: "John [Paris Swain], the little son of Rev. and Mrs. W. E. Swain, is quite sick." (*The Randolph Bulletin*, Asheboro)

1908, June 25: "Master John, son of Rev. and Mrs. W. E. Swain, is ill with fever." (*The Courier*, Asheboro)

More on the lives of Laurah Wood Swain and Rev. William Ellis Swain will be shared in an upcoming Bucklesberry article.