

# Bucklesberry, Back in the Day

## Match Made in Heaven (Part 13)

Nearing the end of their ministry years together, Rev. Dr. William Ellis Swain (1856-1923) and Laurah Wood Swain (1856-1934) of Bucklesberry enjoyed two final pastoral appointments beginning in 1919. The first was a two-year term at Haw River Methodist Protestant (M. P.) Church Circuit of five churches in Alamance County.

No doubt a challenge for William and Laurah, both 63 years of age, their time there nonetheless included significant family events soon after the New Year rang in. The end of World War I the previous year prompted the homecoming of their oldest son James Wood Swain (1894-1956):

1919, Jan. 16: "Lieutenant James Swain, son of Rev. and Mrs. W. E. Swain, formerly of Asheboro has returned from France. Lieut. Swain was connected with the *Greensboro News* before entering the service." (*The Courier*, Asheboro)

Not to be eclipsed by their son's return from war was the welcoming of Laurah's and William's first grandchild two weeks later. Their daughter Lynette Grimsely Swain Moss (1892-1957) gave birth to Lynette Swain Moss Boettner (1919-1987) on January 31.

For the next eight months, Laurah and William were involved in ministering to the five churches at Haw River M. P. Circuit and taking on their new role as grandparents. They also prepared for their son James' wedding:

1919, Oct. 9: "A double wedding ceremony, uniting two popular and well known young couples of this city, was performed yesterday morning at 11 o'clock at the home of Rev. [and Mrs.] W. E. Swain, D.D., at Brown Summit, pastor of the Methodist Protestant Church circuit. The contracting parties were Miss Judith Burton and James W. Swain and Miss Blossom Thacker and William R. Gordon. The ceremony, witnessed only by members of the immediate families, was performed by Rev. Mr. Swain, assisted by Rev. C. E. Whitaker, D.D., pastor of the Asheboro Methodist Protestant Church. There were no attendants. The officiating minister is the father of one of the bridegrooms." (*The Greensboro Patriot*)

Laurah's and William's second grandchild Richard Norman Moss (1920-1983) was born the next year on August 19, 1920. Shortly thereafter in November, William received his final pastoral appointment. The one-year term of service at the North Davidson M. P. Circuit of five churches was the last of his long pastoral career.

Whether William and Laurah decided in advance that 1921 would be their final year of ministry as a couple is unknown. Possibly experiencing mixed feelings on their impending retirement, as many do, the marriage of their other son John Paris Swain (1898-1983) surely brought them joy:

1921, May 15: "The marriage of Miss Mary Catherine Allen, daughter of Mrs. Rosa Fowler Allen, of this city, and Mr. John Paris Swain, also of Raleigh, took place yesterday at noon at the home of the bride's mother....The ceremony was performed by the bridegroom's father, Rev. W. E. Swain, of Lexington....Following the ceremony, a buffet luncheon was given by Mrs. Allen. After[wards] a wedding tour North [awaited] Mr. and Mrs. Swain..." (*The News and Observer*, Raleigh)

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