

Church; Thursday, March 23rd The Thursday night session begins at 7 o'clock. and Sunday, March 26, 1972.

# Writers Forum

By GEORGE B. RUSS

## A BRIDGE BUILDER

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There was a time when the young men—teenage fellows, living in the North Durham, East End section could boast of having a young adult leader, "a buddy," a friend, a pal, comrade, a confidant.

Even before Scouting was introduced to the youth at Union Baptist Church, Malachi was popular with the "young sprouts, the choosers" in North Durham—East End section. A small amount of day dreaming will bring to mind late summer evenings when the fellows gathered under a street corner light and sang like bold, devil-may-care pirates, this tune:

"Come along little children, Come along while the moon is shining bright, we're going to raise ruckus tonight. My old mistress promised me when she died—she's set me free—

Boys: Raise ruckus tonight!

Leader: She lived so long her head got bald,

Boys: Raise ruckus tonight!

During the late '30s, Scouting was instituted at Union Baptist Church. Ironically as it may seem, Malachi was not selected to the leadership of Troop 111. Life comes with these little built-in inconsistencies. Nevertheless, a turn of events during the early '40s left no other alternative. "Mr. Malachi" was elected to serve as Scout Master of Troop 111. This was not the beginning of Mr. M. C. Hart's dedication to the development of boys. We can say, this was the first time he was working with an organized Council for boys.

Many were the time that M. C. marched, with Troop 111, down front, at Union Baptist Church and shouted in a sergeant's vocal tone: "Troop attention! Right face! Left face! Left Turn! Bout face! etc.

The congregation found cause to be greatly amused by what they felt were "antics" of Malachi and his scouts. Not so with M. C., he had a great belief in boys and he had a willingness to invest himself in them. His zeal was focused upon one point—the boy's happiness through his formative years—"a happy boy is a good boy, a good boy is a good citizen."

M. C.'s dedication to serving boys through scouting was not an easy task for him to pursue. Most of the "hindering causes" tossed his way were forgivable and we can rest assured that they have long since been forgiven. But there were occasions when his efforts were hampered by outright stubbornness on the part of adult leaders of the church, this retardation is less easy to forgive than most. All in all, everyone did what they knew to do. Through thick and thin, the boys were always loyal, they held fast to "mistah Hart's" hand.

The situation was never, really, first class; but there were times when the effort was actually worth the while and M. C. donned his twisted smile, squared his shoulders and pushed out his chest. Between "Honey," his wife,

Mrs. Pauline Hart, and the boys, Troop 111, M. C. weathered the dilemmas which beset the average leader: he purchased uniforms, paid registration fees, paid for cir-



HART

cus tickets, fed his boys. To him, this wasn't buying affection or trying to make a good showing for the record he was building a bridge for boys.

Declining health forced M. C. into retirement. He was a pathetic person trying to operate his troop from his "rocking chair," and the illness that he had kept under wrappers, eventually, drove him into retirement.

Over a period of years Mr. Hart was the recipient of many awards: 20 Red, Yellow and Blue Ribbons from Expositions and Scout O' Ramas; a Baden Powell Leadership Award; a Round Table Attendance Cord, containing 10 colored beads. These mementoes keep alive this Bridge-Builders' hope for all boys.

The pastor, Dr. Grady D. Davis, officers and members, Institutional Representative, Committeemen and parents; staged a special service for the "grand ole scouter" at which time he was awarded a bronze plaque on an Oak Leaf. "For distinguished service for 25 years in scouting and 22 years as Scout Master of Troop 111, at Union Baptist Church—June 20th, 1965."

Mr. M. C. Hart's church extends over a long period of years, as far back as 1919—he was teacher of the Metoka Bible Class. In 1920, he was appointed to the Trustee Board (the youngest man to serve on this Board at UBC.

Most of his church activities are traced to the Sunday School where he served as assistant director and teacher for male classes—Intermediate Boys; and, the Senior Usher Board. The latter awarded him a bronze plaque—an honorary award for outstanding services. And, he has served with the Union Baptist Chorus since its inception.

As we talked, Mr. Hart's eyes became misty with tears. "Bro. Russ, I think often of the years—Building for Youth:

An old man traveling along the highway, Came at evening time, cold and gray, To a chasm vast, deep and wide, Through which there flowed a sullen tide;

The old man crossed in the twilight dim And turned when safe on the other side, And built a bridge to span the tide.

"Old man," said a fellow pilgrim nearby, "You are wasting strength building here. Your journey will end with the evening tide." The builder lifted his old head, "In the path," He said, "there followeth after today, a youth Whose feet must come this way—the chasm which Has been so naughty to me, to him a pit fall may be, He too must cross in the twilight dim, good friend, I'm building the bridge for him."

## T. Cameron Speaker For Boys Class

Tyrone Cameron was speaker for the Junior Boy's S. S. Class at Union Baptist. He gave a brief, well-rounded, to the point, review of the March 12th S. S. Lesson: "Empowered by the Spirit" — But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and ye shall be witness unto me both in Jerusalem,



attention of Allen Collins, (center) a junior from Beaufort, are Cora Swope, (left), a freshman from Fayetteville and Alice Lathan, a sophomore from Spring Lake.

Other Junior Boys giving support to the success of the assembly worship service; Scripture readings by Anthony McKnight, Nikki Ross and Christopher Williams, Prayer by Willie Edward Muse. Songs included: "Jesus Is Calling Today," "At the Cross," "Have Thine Own Way."

Mr. Charles Cameron, Director of U. B. S. S. gave a progress report of the U.B.S.S. in the 5th District Convention and urged teachers and pupils to attend the March sessions of the Convention being held at the Greater St. Paul Baptist

we care



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