

of Rockingham M. E. church, all were invited to come forward and take part in this big feast, which was probably no larger or better than the ones in the past for the simple reason that, having already reached so near perfection, little else was left to be done. Noticing that big baked ham that Mr. London has made famous, and the crowd that was swarming around it, the writer, who is no ham eater as long as anything else is in sight, insisted that Mr. W. Cole Nichols make his helping very small. Going to one side to bite into it, we instantly regretted using that word—small. Really, it was delicious.

ZION CHURCH

Home Coming Held Sept. 11, 1938.

Sunday, Sept. 11th, Zion Methodist church held its 18th consecutive "Home Coming." Among the old country churches of the county it was among the first, if not the first, to co-operate in this deservedly popular movement, and a widening circle of former Zionites and loyal friends of the church now look forward to the second Sunday in September with keen anticipation. The attendance last Sunday was not quite as large as usual, due no doubt to the threatening storm clouds of the early morning hours. The absence of John F. Everett of Bennettsville, was a cause of many expressions of regret. Mr. Everett joined the church in September, 1863—75 years ago! He later transferred his membership to Bennettsville. For 18 months, including the whole of 1900, the writer was employed in the office of the Pee Dee Advocate and there learned to know Mr. Everett well in his home town. For all these years we have admired him. Hardly could a man possess more good qualities of citizenship than does Mr. Everett. He is a brilliant-minded American citizen in all that this term implies, and the writer sincerely hopes he may yet be spared to attend more Zion Home Comings.

I shall not attempt to write in much detail of this 18th Home Coming. It is enough to say that the program measured well up to the high standard Zion has maintained from the beginning of this special series of services. Also, no attempt will here be made to revive the history of this famous old church, since this has been rather fully covered, as far as it is known, by several newspaper writers in recent years.

The congregation was called to order at 11 a. m. Pastor M. D. McLamb conducted the devotional services.

Other numbers included: Words of Welcome—Mr. W. Cole Nichols.

Offertory—Mrs. Fred Henry. Solo—Mrs. J. H. Ellerbe. Sermon—Rev. M. C. Ellerbe.

An address by Commissioner Chairman John W. Covington featured the afternoon program, which began at 2:00 o'clock. Mr. Covington spoke in a much more serious vein than is customary with him, pointing out the desirability and the necessity of personal righteousness. His talk lasted 30 minutes.

Among other speakers called to the floor for short talks were Julian Carr and Dr. J. H. Ellerbe.

Mr. Carr, who lives at Stoneham, Mass, and had to travel farther than any other home-comer, spoke feelingly of his early recollections of Zion—the home church of his deceased mother and father and of the other members of the family. To him Zion means much more than just a little white building, and this trip back to it is one of the real joys of his life.

Then came Dr. Ellerbe, always witty, who may have saved the life of a future preacher. Rev. Mike Ellerbe and himself were in school together when they were small boys—he didn't say how long ago. One day at recess he heard agonizing cries for help. Dashing over behind the schoolhouse he found a drove of puppies chasing Mike with all the fury of a pack of hounds in close pursuit of a fox. He stopped the dogs and brought relief to the fleeing Mike. "The puppies would hardly have hurt Mike," said Dr. Ellerbe, "but he would have run himself to death."

Mr. W. C. Ellerbe (Mr. Bud) was present but for the first time took no part in the program. No man in the last 50 years has worked harder for the success of Zion in both church and Sunday School. He well deserves a rest, but no doubt many were disappointed in not hearing his talk, which has been such a bright spot in former Home Comings.

As usual, dinner was served from the big table across the road. After the blessing was invoked by Pastor J. F. Herbert,

The music at both morning and afternoon services was one of the most enjoyable parts of the whole program. The home choir, never lacking in talent, was assisted by good singers from Rockingham and Hamlet.

Rev. M. C. Ellerbe, a native of this section, is pleased with Zion's progress. He thinks that both church and Sunday School are in much better condition than they were only a few years ago. The Sunday School has an enrollment of 168 and a good average attendance. Since last Home Coming a new carpet has been laid, pew cushions provided and other improvements made.

There are many old churches in Richmond county, representing several denominations. Together they have a powerful influence for good and as long as they can continue to go forward and make gains we should have no fears that our civilization will not hold its own.

—W. H. C.

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