

THE COMMUNITY SURVEY

"ALONG THE FRIENDLY WAY WE JOURNEY TOGETHER TO ACHIEVE THE BEST IN LIFE."

VOL. 1. NO. 8.

GASTONIA N. C., JANUARY, 1921.

PRICE: 50c PER YEAR

COL. C. B. ARMSTRONG PASSED AWAY ON DECEMBER 27, 1920

Following An Illness of Two Months Col. Armstrong Passed Away at 1 O'clock Monday Morning, Dec. 27--- Was Gaston County's Leading Citizen and Cotton Manufacturer---Leader in Civic and Municipal Affairs ---Funeral Tuesday at Three O'clock.

Following a serious illness of two months from a complication of diseases brought on by high blood pressure and kidney trouble, Col. Charles B. Armstrong, Gastonia's foremost citizen, passed away quietly and peacefully at home here at 1:05 o'clock Monday morning, December 27, 1920. Surrounded by his family, intimate friends and business associates, Col. Armstrong died calmly as if passing into a sleep. Since Sunday, December 19, he has been in an unconscious condition. Only his vigorous, rugged constitution and powerful vitality has kept him alive so long. Throughout the Christmas holidays the end was expected momentarily. At 10 o'clock Sunday night attending physicians made the announcement that he could not live more than two or three hours, and the end came at one o'clock.

Colonel Armstrong was stricken on the night of October 26 while making a speech at the Osceola Mill, introducing the county candidates. He was attacked then by a fainting spell, but his condition at that time was not regarded as serious. Shortly afterwards, he was well enough to get out of the house and ride around town. During the Gypsy Smith meeting in November he was able to attend one or two of the services toward the close of the meeting. Following this, he suffered a relapse and was again seriously ill for a few days. He gradually regained strength and was able to sit up and to take an occasional ride. Plans were made by the family that he should spend the winter in Florida, and he entered into and discussed the proposed trip with his friends. On Tuesday, December 14, he was able to go riding. On Thursday, the 16th, he suffered another serious attack. Dr. L. N. Glenn was a visitor at the home at the time. Since that date, his condition had been precarious, and physicians had entertained small hopes of his recovery.

Charles Beauregard Armstrong was without doubt the foremost citizen of Gastonia. Since his entry into the textile world in 1906 his has been a name to conjure with in the financial and textile world. Starting from a small beginning, the Clara Manufacturing Company, he had added mill after mill to a chain that now numbers fifteen. He was president of all these, as follows: Armstrong, Clara, Dunn, Monarch, Mutual, Piedmont, Seminole, Lockmore, Wymojo, Victory, Winget, High Shoals, Champion, Helen and Mildred. The last three named are in course of construction. In addition these businesses he was president of the Citizens National Bank, the Armington Hotel, the Armstrong Land & Investment Company, and a director in numbers of other enterprises in and around Gastonia.

Col. Armstrong was not only a leader in the financial world, but in affairs of church and state he took a foremost part. As mayor of Gastonia for two or three terms he established a record for civic improvements. During his terms of office the present magnificent system of streets and sidewalks was laid out. Under the directing hand of Col. Armstrong many other civic improvements were made, all of which stand as a monument to the clear foresight and business sagacity of the man.

As chairman of the city school board he has always evidenced a keen interest in the education of the youth of the city. It is due to his efforts that the school teachers of Gastonia are paid the highest salaries of any teachers in the State. He was

an earnest advocate of a new high school building for Gastonia.

In his church, he was one of the mainstays. He had been a deacon in the First Presbyterian church of Gastonia for a number of years. He loved his church and his pastor. It was a frequent saying of his that his church and the causes it represented came first with him. He was particularly interested in the financial affairs of the church. No cause for needy purposes, for orphans, aged ministers, education or extension of church work ever found him not a champion and a leading giver and pacemaker in contributions. He was especially interested in the extension of the work of his church in Gastonia in the outlying sections.

He was one of the first to visualize the future in the cotton mill industry in this section and met conditions as they arose. He was among the first to establish the community work among the employes and operatives of his mills. Along with W. T. Rankin, he was also among the first to adopt the plan of profit-sharing among the mill employes. For the past two years, the Armstrong mills have paid out at Christmas time, large amounts in profits to the operatives.

Col. Armstrong was a member of several fraternal organizations, including the A. F. & A. M., Royal Arch, Knights Templar, Oasis Temple, Knights of Pythias. He was 59 years of age, having been born September 6, 1861.

Col. Armstrong began life as a country boy under many handicaps. The South was in the midst of that long and arduous struggle to recuperate from the devastating effects of the War Between the States. Her farms were laid waste, her few factories were demolished or dismantled, nearly all property of every kind was either destroyed or was so depleted that it required all the strength of the people to keep body and soul together. Schools were few and far between and the subject of this sketch was denied the advantages of an education. He, together with the other young men of his time and section, had to work to make a living. Life was hard. But young Armstrong had an ambition that could not be dampened even by the ravages of war. He struck hard places all along the route, but he never gave up. He possessed that "never-say-die" spirit which guarantees success against all obstacles.

These characteristics were, in large part, inherited from a fine old family of Scotch-Irish ancestry. They were strong and sturdy men. They were men of mental and physical force. Of his ancestors Lewis' History of North Carolina says: "The ancestors of the Armstrongs owned Margerton Castle, near Carlisle, Scotland, and were among the last to yield to England's rule in Scotland's struggle for independence. Because of their resistance the English king confiscated their estates and many of the family moved to Ireland and thence to America, coming to the latter country between 1720 and 1750 and settling in Pennsylvania, Virginia and North Carolina."

It was but natural, in view of the family's experiences in the old country that they should enter heartily into the Revolution, being among the first to organize "Committees of Safety" and taking the initiative in raising companies to fight for the freedom of America.

Among the Armstrongs who figured prominently in the Rev-



CHARLES BEAUREGARD ARMSTRONG

It was no unusual sight to see a number of people congregated on Main Street, with eager eyes and animated faces and to find that the center of attraction was Col. Armstrong. Keen of wit, clear of intellect, he was always ready with just the right story or just the right joke, at just the right time. The fact that a crowd gathered as soon as he began talking was proof that he always said something worth while.

The ideals he held up to us, the suggestions he offered, the friendly criticisms and the advice given, when most needed have become proverbs. They bore fruit at the time and will continue to bear fruit for many, many years. Now they hang on Memory's wall among the rarest gems.

Sayings of Col. Armstrong That Will Endure.

A young man had just returned from France and was recommended to Col. Armstrong by a mutual friend as a man of splendid ability. Col. Armstrong said, "I always try to give a deserving young man an opportunity in life. Yes, I'll put him on. Tell him to come and see me."

One day, as a well known grouch passed by, Col. Armstrong remarked, "That man has the most even disposition I ever saw. He stays mad all the time."

On one occasion in visiting the mills Col. Armstrong walked quietly up to a man who looked rather dejected and down cast. Putting his hand on his shoulder he said, "Cheer up! Some one may be taking your picture."

I always like to see my young people in Sunday School. Then I know who I can depend on to run the business when I am gone.

Go to Church. Have faith in your church and in your fellow man.

A young man who gets up early on Sunday morning and attends Sunday School and church never loses anything by so doing.

Save your money and never fail to connect yourself with some church and some Sunday School and attend regularly. It is the best paying business I know and will pay dividends when all others fail.

When a man tries and fails he deserves much credit, for he has at least tried.

An ability to meet difficulties is the measure of a man.

You'll never be sorry for helping those who need your help.

You are all my partners in business.

Often a man thinks himself very smart when he says that he always looks out for number one. However it happens that when he finds his correct number, it turns out to be number thirteen.

More people go around telling bad news than good. It doesn't make any difference how long a man lives, it's how he lives.

A man doesn't need an education to make money, but when he has made money he does need an education to enjoy it and to make the best use of it.

I try to finish each day's work with the day. If anything should happen during the night a man's business should be in shape so that some one else could begin just where he left off and go right on with it.

I am sorry for the growing boy. He hears so many Don'ts.

C. B. ARMSTRONG.

Charlotte News.

The life of C. B. Armstrong of Gastonia, who died early Monday morning, was an epic in accomplishment. Any poor boy reading his biography ought to catch the vision of the possibilities that reside in any man, no matter of how humble circumstances in youth, no matter how disadvantageously placed at the start of his career, no matter how modest in means, and catching this vision, reach the conclusion that nothing is impossible for him who has faith in his own capacities and confidence in his fellow-men. Colonel Armstrong started life peddling clocks; he ended his life with millions having been made, with honors in industry having been heaped upon him, with the plaudits of the multitude ringing in his ears. He began at nothing; he concluded his career with crowns of achievement upon him.

And so have many other of the greater men of the times come to their graves. They fought their way through the world. Theirs were not ease and complacency and idleness. They worked and they toiled and they sweated as they plowed on under the dynamics of a great determination and they succeeded in spite of the many-sided obstacles placed in their path.

To read the record of this man's material accomplishments is to gain a fresh outlook upon the possibilities of any man. All of the boys of this country know that Andrew Carnegie started off as a newsboy and there were many nights when he knew not where he was to sleep. His youth was thorn-picked, but gradually ascended the scale of success until at length, he came to be the second richest man in this country and died, leaving a plethora of millions to his relatives even after he had given away \$350,000,000 to charity. But here is an instance just over the river from us, an instance of a poor boy starting life a half century ago with no assets, with an absence of material out of which to weave the fabric of success save the material of a grim determination to get there and a dauntless spirit of perseverance. By degrees, he kept climbing toward achievement until when death overtook him at the age of 59, he had come to be known as the greatest promoter of the textile industry in the South, a veritable Saul among his fellows in business. It is a record that ought to inspire any man who thinks he is handicapped and who is grumbling because he is having to move out into the uncertain sea of experience without sailing facilities.

COL. ARMSTRONG

Yorkville Enquirer.

"Passing of Col. C. B. Armstrong in Gastonia early Monday morning marks the going from earth of a real big man—a man who had done much for this section and who had he lived his allotted three score and ten would have been a still greater power for industrial development of this section of the Piedmont," said Tuesday a man who knew him well. "I had known Charlie Armstrong for many years and I never knew a finer man. My earliest recollection of him was when as a young man he and I peddled clocks and other things for the late Joe Neil. He was a success as a salesman even as he was a success at everything else he went into. I hadn't seen a great deal of him in recent years; but I recall that whenever I did see him he was still the same, pleasant, big hearted, smiling fellow that he was as a young man. He had accumulated big holdings in the years that had followed since he peddled clocks. I haven't accumulated very much of this world's goods. But it was all the same to him. He was as much my friend as when we tramped together—when neither one of us had enough to buy food for the morrow. Peace to his ashes."

HOME LIFE OF COL. ARMSTRONG

The news of the death of Col. C. B. Armstrong which reached us at the early hour Monday, December 27th, was a shock and a source of unspeakable sorrow to all in our community. It means the taking away from us a real man—a man who had done much for us—a truly wonderful good friend with a big heart, a genial spirit and comradeship and as has been aptly said before, "A Prince of men among men."

Col. Armstrong's interest even to the minor details in each of his employes from "doffer" to his chief officers was always obvious.

When the writer entered upon her duties in his employment, he expressed his desire to visit among the families in order that he might know them as those whose duty it is to visit them professionally and socially. He made frequent trips through our Mills and, if his time was limited and he could not talk to all, he would pass in view that each and every one might exchange smiles with him.

One could not be in the home of Col. Armstrong without being impressed with the home life. Harmony and hospitality prevailed to a degree that is not found in every home. Two of the greatest factors which brought about this situation was the fact that he left his business in the office when he went home to his wife and children, and the influence which radiated from that personality known as "Daddy" to every member of the family.

Should we have been so fortunate as to have had him in the capacity of a home visitor, the atmosphere which permeated his own home may have been wafted to others. Never an unkind word nor a harsh tone was uttered to any member of his family nor to an employee.

Hence, the keynote of the home was congeniality, which could not help but inspire those who came in contact with it.

The massive throng of sorrowing people who attended his funeral, packing the church, filling the yard and crowding the street, with the wonderfully sweet expressions of sympathy told with flowers, was a beautiful tribute to his memory, one he justly deserved and one he would have appreciated.

We extend to the members of his family our deepest sympathy.

"Let us be patient! These severe afflictions

Not from the ground arise; But often times celestial benedictions

Assume this dark disguise." W. B. OTEY.

COL. C. B. ARMSTRONG

Uplift.

Col. C. B. Armstrong, the master builder of Gaston County, and one of the most conspicuous industrial leaders of North Carolina, after a very short illness, died at his home in Gastonia on the 26th.

From a humble, honest birth, via a clock peddler, store keeper, sheriff, mayor he became the largest owner of cotton mill industries in his section. Becoming rich, he never fell into the horrible habits of the "new rich" he loved and was loved by his people; he pulled and worked for his town, never milking it. He contributed largely to every public cause — he lead, never learning the mischief of throwing monkey-wrenches. His greatest office was a trustee of the local Graded School—he regarded it so.

The whole state sustains a loss in Col. Armstrong's death.

In the death of Col. Armstrong North Carolina lost a loyal and noble citizen; Gastonia and Gaston County a favorite son; the industrial world a model captain of industry; merchants and bankers a worthy associate but just the poor folks suffered most of all in losing a friend. His was the hand,

"Stretched forth to aid a brother in need;"

His the heart to feel the throb that made Him a friend indeed."

(Continued on last page.)