

Attachment 8

Rev. James Milton Webb, first pastor of the First Baptist Church of Shelby, was born in Rutherford County, Oct. 12, 1802. I understand the Webbs came from England, settling first in Pennsylvania, thence Virginia, thence North Carolina. It appears that Rev. James M. Webb is the progenitor of the famous Webb family in Rutherford and Cleveland Counties. In his day there were few schools in this section of the state. According to Federal Judge E. Y. Webb, his grandson, he acquired an education reading by a pine-knot fire. It is said that he even carried books to the field with him while he was a lad and read between the plow handles. From what we can learn of him, he must have succeeded in educating himself; for he was Clerk of Rutherford Superior Court, Legislator, Newspaper Editor and Minister.

Though he was elected to the General Assembly at the age of twenty-six and served three one-year terms, and though he served as Clerk of Rutherford County Superior Court from 1833 to 1849, and was editor of the *Intelligencer*, published in Rutherfordton, we are mainly concerned about him as a Minister of the Gospel (in this sketch). He was ordained a Baptist preacher in 1834. His first pastorate was at Concord Baptist Church, of Rutherford County, and began one year prior to his ordination. He served this church as pastor from 1833 to 1848. Judge E. Y. Webb says that he helped to organize practically all the Baptist Churches in Rutherford and Cleveland Counties. To his honor, it may be further stated that he was the first Moderator of the Green River Baptist Association. Elder James Milton Webb served as pastor of the First Baptist Church of Shelby from its beginning in 1846 to 1849. Clarence Griffin says of him: "Mr. Webb was known far and wide as one of the leading Baptist ministers of his day."

He was twice married, first to Miss Katherine White, and, second, to Miss Nancy Hampton. To the first union were born 13 children--ten sons and three daughters; to the second were born three children--two sons and a daughter. He was the father of Rev. G. M. Webb, a widely-known and beloved Baptist preacher who was the father of the late James L. Webb, Judge E. Y. Webb, and ^{grandfather} Mrs. Max Gardner. James Milton Webb died April 24, 1854, and was buried in the old Webb Cemetery located on the original Webb plantation in Rutherford County, about two miles north east of the town of Rutherfordton, being on Highway No. 181. This old Webb Home is now of historic importance, and is owned by Judge E. Y. Webb and Mrs. O. Max Gardner. (See 1951)

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