

March 8, 1954

127 Ninth Avenue, North

Nashville, Tennessee

GEORGIA SECRETARY TO  
RETIRE IN DECEMBER

ATLANTA, Ga.--(BP)--James W. Merritt, executive secretary of the Georgia Baptist Convention since 1930, is to retire in December.

Notice of the retirement was given to the Executive Committee of the Georgia Convention at its recent meeting.

The almost quarter-century of service as executive secretary which Dr. Merritt will have on his retirement in December gives him the longest record for service of any state secretary in the Southern Baptist Convention.

His denominational service is ten years longer than this. He came to the Georgia Convention as a member of the Sunday School Department staff and then joined The Christian Index, as business manager. He was serving in this capacity when elected to his present position.

The Executive Committee voted to elect his successor at its regular meeting in September.

Other action taken by the Executive Committee included final approval of plans to financing and construction of a \$1,400,000 medical building to be erected adjacent to the Georgia Baptist Hospital, and authorization of a special committee to report in September on a program for establishing a home for the aged. Final approval would be left to the Convention meeting in November.

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FIRST RECREATION  
WORKSHOP HELD

NASHVILLE, Tenn.--(BP)--The Church Recreation Service of the Baptist Sunday School Board held its first workshop recently in Nashville. Mrs. Agnes Durant Pylant, secretary of the Board's new service directed the program. Purpose of the workshop was to correlate suggestions from leaders in Southern Baptist schools, colleges, and churches in setting up an adequate church recreation service for Southern Baptists.

College and seminary professors, and church workers from over the Convention attended the workshop.

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SURVEY REVEALS  
FEW CHURCH VISITORS

NASHVILLE, Tenn.--(BP)--Regularly employed church visitors are not too numerous in Southern Baptist churches, it was revealed recently in a survey conducted by the Baptist Press. Questionnaires were sent to 300 larger churches over the Convention. Out of the 202 replies received only twenty indicated employment of a church visitor. Seven of them worked full-time and thirteen part-time.

Salary for the visitors varied greatly. Two churches pay \$6000 annually, two from \$200 to \$300 monthly, eleven from \$100 to \$200 monthly, and two from \$25.00 to \$100 monthly. Five also pay car allowance. In most instances the visitor is under the direction of the pastor.

Duties are varied greatly. The visitor visits the sick in nine churches, visits prospective members in eight, and promotes visitation through the organizations in nine. Other duties listed are as follows:

Counseling, visit newcomers, enlistment, assists pastor in responsibilities, visits shut-ins, responsible for census file, distributes Home Life magazine, relief work, writes welcome letters to newcomers, keeps books, helps office secretary, youth director, choir director, educational director, church financial secretary, and makes any visits necessary for the church.

Prospects come from commercial records, visitor cards, census, new baby lists in newspapers, and various other sources.

Twelve of the visitors help organize others for visitation. Fifteen have offices in the church building.

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BAPTIST ENCYCLOPEDIA  
COMMITTEE MEETS

NASHVILLE, Tenn.--(BP)--The Editorial Committee for the proposed Southern Baptist Encyclopedia, Clifton J. Allen, chairman, met here recently. The committee made a study of format, space allocation to cover the various areas that are to be served, a consideration of a necessary table of contents, and all subjects that will lead to securing a proposal from a publisher to publish the work when it is completed.

The work of the committee is preparatory to submitting to the General Encyclopedia committee an adequate blueprint and specifications for the new encyclopedia.

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BAPTIST BRIEFS

PAVEY NAMED  
KANS. R.A. HEAD

WICHITA, Kans.--(BP)--Ernest G. Pavey, pastor, First Southern Baptist Church, Belle Paine, Kans., was elected Royal Ambassador secretary of the Kansas Convention of Southern Baptists.

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MISSIONARY DIES

EASTLAND, Tex.--(BP)--F. A. R. Morgan, retired Southern Baptist missionary to Brazil, died March 1, at his home here. He was the father of Mrs. G. Kearnie Keegan, Nashville, Tenn.

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JORDAN ACCEPTS  
GEORGIA CHURCH

DULUTH, Ga.--(BP)--Dupree Jordan, Jr., Atlanta, Ga., has accepted the pastorate of the Duluth Baptist Church, Duluth, Ga.

Former acting director of the Radio Commission, Jordan is working on his doctorate at Emory Univeristy, Atlanta, Ga., and teaching at the Atlanta Division of the University of Georgia.

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NEW LAW CAMPUS

DE LAND, Fla.--(BP)--Stetson University, De Land, Fla., has received an unrestricted title to a million-dollar campus where a fully accredited College of Law will be opened next September. The campus was a gift from citizens of St. Petersburg, Fla.

The Stetson College of Law, the oldest in Florida, has been on the De Land campus since it was founded in 1901.

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GEORGIA BAPTIST HEADS  
ANNOUNCE RETIREMENT

ATLANTA, Ga.--(BP)--H. C. Whitener, secretary of evangelism, and Arthur Jackson, executive secretary of the Georgia Baptist Foundation and Endowment Committee, will retire at the end of this year.

Announcement of the retirements was made at the recent meeting of the Executive Committee of the Georgia convention.

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# BAPTIST FEATURES

Released by BAPTIST PRESS  
127 Ninth Ave., N., Nashville, Tenn.

JIMMY MADE UP HIS MIND  
BY: J. W. Buckner

Jimmy Cowan walked swiftly toward the little red brick church where he would begin his duties as choir director, where, too, his folks had worshiped all his life. This morning he was happier than he had been for a very long time and a load was completely lifted from his mind. God had talked to him very intimately.

Two weeks ago his pastor had approached him about becoming student music director for the church. Jimmy had heard his pastor eagerly and was sure at the time that he would take the position.

"It's a wonderful opportunity for you, Jimmy, and you can earn a little while you are doing what you most enjoy." His pastor had explained carefully.

Two days later the director of the leading jazz orchestra of the city approached Jimmy with a similar offer.

"Jimmy, you are the best trombonist in the city. We need you and we're willing to pay what you're worth. How about beginning in two weeks?"

The director of the orchestra had offered Jimmy over two times as much as the little church was able to pay him. Moreover, Jimmy needed almost everything, clothes, shoes, books, money for tuition, and a new horn. His father made a fairly good living but there were six children and it took a lot to go around.

"I'll think it over. I surely could use the money," Jimmy told the director.

"No need to think it over. Ain't you going to school and don't you need the money? Anyway, we just play on Fridays and Saturdays and rehearse on Wednesday nights."

"I'll just have to have some time to think it over," Jimmy said, already feeling conflict in his heart.

"Okay, make up your mind. I'll give you two weeks to get with us."

Jimmy wrestled with the problem almost all week and then mentioned the matter to his parents. His mother was loyal to her church and advised him to take the pastor's suggestion. His father was a casual member and thought it just as well for him to take the orchestra job; it paid more and wasn't much work.

Jimmy was so much like his father, blond, six foot, brown eyed, and athletic. Yet, he respected his mother's religion for she always seemed to have most of the piety in the family. Everyone said she did.

He went back to his pastor on Thursday and he was kind and thoughtful.

"Jimmy, this is your decision. I wouldn't force you to do what I want

(more)

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for all the world. Talk to the Lord about it and do what he says."

Thursday night, Jimmy went to see Alice, his girl. They prayed together and the Lord was very close to them. Jimmy felt as though the Lord spoke directly to him. He could feel his presence.

"I think you'll decide to lead our singing. However, it's your decision, yours and the Lord's." Alice had said.

Friday of the last week came and Jimmy had not yet gotten the Lord's word, though prayer was easy and sweet. In the afternoon, he went to the hall where they practiced for the dances, just took his horn along in case. The boys were rude, vulgar, and they said some things very uncomplimentary about the church. He had never seen some of the boys at church. He did not practice, just walked away, a bit sick at heart.

That night, he went to his little church and walked in at the side door, the one that lead right up to the pulpit. He knelt. God was there, all around him. Jimmy could feel his presence, almost hear his voice. There was peace in God's house. He didn't pray much, just listened to God through the sacred stillness.

Then, as real as though he had heard a voice, God said, "Jimmy, I'll meet you here every time you rise to lead my people."

The choir was already assembled Sunday morning when Jimmy met the pastor at the door of the choir room.

"I knew you would come through. A man of God always does."

The pastor's handshake was firm and the gleam in his eyes showed that he knew of the struggle and had prayed over it too.