

John Edward Martin

John Edward Martin, son of John Aiken Martin and Mrs. Pernecy Frances Gary Martin was born in Fairfield County, S. C., March 19, 1843. In youth he made a profession of faith and became a member of the old Brick Church, where the A. R. P. Synod was organized in 1803. Mr. Martin graduated from Erskine College in 1861, then only two or three months above eighteen years of age.

In 1867, at Bethel Church in Laurens County, S. C., he was received as a student of Theology by the Second Presbytery. He took the course in Erskine Seminary, and was licensed by the Second Presbytery at Prosperity, S. C., in 1869. By the same Presbytery he was ordained at Due West in 1871. For two years he labored as a home missionary, serving in Newberry, S. C., in Middle Tennessee, northern Mississippi, and Georgia. In the fall of 1871 he was called to Hopewell, Georgia, and in due time he was installed pastor of that congregation. In this charge he spent the remainder of his life, till he received his crown December 18, 1907. He sleeps in the cemetery there hard by the church. On his stone is inscribed these very precious words: "In Thy presence is fullness of joy; at Thy right hand are pleasures forevermore." Psalm 16:11. On account of ill health he resigned his pastoral charge in 1890. From that time he lived on his farm a mile from the church, which, though an invalid, he was able to manage with surprising success.

At Due West, S. C., October 27, 1864, he married Miss Margaret Isabella Grier, daughter of Dr. R. C. Grier and Mrs. Barbara Moffatt Grier. Mrs. Martin proved "an helpmeet indeed" to her husband during all the years of his enfeebled health. She did much to keep the church together and going, and her name is often heard there, and always to praise. To the Martins were born eight children, at least seven of whom lived to maturity and to fill places of usefulness in the Kingdom. The seven: Grier Martin, prominent as a Bible teacher and worker in the churches of Atlanta; Edward Martin, a successful farmer and business man, died many years ago at his home at Covington, Georgia; Mrs. F. J. Coledge, deceased, married a successful business man of Atlanta; Laura married L. W. Jarman, now and for many years President of a college at Staunton, Virginia; Alice married J. R. Stephenson of Covington, founder of the J. R. Stephenson Hardware business. Mrs. Stephenson died in 1918 of the "flu," leaving three sons; Mary Lois married first Rev. Robert Y. Mills, and after his death she married Dr. T. G. Boyce. She died January 22, 1940. Among her five children is Rev. Edward Gilmore Boyce of the Southern Presbyterian Church; Pauline married James Ross McCain, Ph.D., now and for many years President of Agnes Scott College of Decatur, Georgia.

Of Rev. J. E. Martin the Centennial History has this to say: "He was a devout Christian. For many years he was an earnest and faithful minister of the New Testament." Still remembered and revered by those among whom he lived and served for many years, his work abides long after the workman has gone to his rest.