

## **Carrie L. McMillan**

(1844-1932)

*Methodist Episcopal youth (and missionary)*

Caroline Louisa McMillan was born in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. The daughter of David and Louise Hetzer McMillan, who died at Caroline's birth, she graduated from the Gettysburg Female Institute in 1863, just before the battle, and received her teaching certificate in 1868. Her home was situated on the Gettysburg battlefield, and she lived there until entering the mission field. She was present on the platform when President Lincoln delivered the Gettysburg Address, an event about which she later wrote, and she lived to be one of the last surviving witnesses of that memorable speech.

In 1871 she went as a missionary to India, where she met and married Philo Melvin Buck. They spent their lives in India as missionaries and raised their family of four children there: Philo Melvin, Lois Mathild, Caroline, and Oscar McMillan. The article on her husband in the 1974 *Encyclopedia of World Methodism* reads, in part, as follows.

PHILO M. BUCK (1826-1924) was a highly successful early American missionary to the North India and North West India Annual Conferences. A graduate of Drew Theological Seminary, he arrived in India in 1870. He labored five years at Shahjahanpur, five years as presiding elder of the Kumaon District, one year at Kampur, and five years as principal of the Philander Smith Institute in Mussoorie. He was then appointed to the Meerut District and remained there until his retirement in 1922. He made a profound influence.

His wife Carrie McMillan Buck was an ardent missionary evangelist. His son Oscar McMillan Buck was for some years an instructor at the Bareilly Theological Seminary, and later for decades professor of missions in Drew Theological Seminary. A daughter [Caroline] married James H. Wilke and served with him many years in the Lucknow Annual Conference.

Carrie's experiences during the Battle of Gettysburg prepared her well for the hardships of the mission field. During the July 1863 battle, the McMillan home on Seminary Ridge was caught in the middle of the fighting. The family fled before "Pickett's Charge," the last Confederate attack of the battle – when the McMillan home was torn apart by cannonballs and ransacked by Confederate troops, and trenches were dug in the yards. The family returned to find the bodies of soldiers in the fields and in the basement. A lead slug said to have been fired during the battle remains stuck to this present time, as a reminder of that terrible day, in a white-plank interior door.

As portions of the Confederate army were in full retreat at dawn on July 4, 1863, they passed through Seven Stars, a small community a few miles west of Gettysburg on the Chambersburg Pike. There a rebel soldier handed

something to Mrs. John Shank, who was standing beside the roadway. The item was a book that had been looted from the David McMillan house during the battle. Written in two places on the flyleaf was the name "Carrie McMillan." The other flyleaf had this written on it: "S. R. Doolittle, Company A, Georgia Volunteers, Sumter's Artillery Battalion [sic], Anderson's Division, A. P. Hill's Corps." And opposite of that was written: "S. R. Doolittle, a Georgian by birth, Alabamian by adoption, and a Pennsylvanian by a damn misfortune."

While Carrie was the one who carried the memories of Gettysburg to another continent, the events of July 1-3, 1863, certainly affected others in the McMillan family. Their stories may be summarized as follows.

### **David McMillan (1798-1885)**

In the days when Methodists were still considered to be uneducated, overly emotional, second class people, David McMillan was an exception. A respected citizen, and numbered by one account among the community's 100 most affluent residents, he erected a new home for his family just outside town on Seminary Ridge in 1840. That six-bedroom home received a sizable addition in 1890 and remained in the family until 1953, when it was sold for \$14,500. Today, because of its historic connections, it would sell for more than one million dollars.

David McMillan was active in the old Methodist Episcopal Church on Middle Street, now the GAR building. According to Gettysburg circuit quarterly conference records, he was class leader of the Gettysburg appointment in 1835 and was licensed as an exhorter in 1839. He later became a local preacher. During the July 1863 Battle of Gettysburg, his oldest daughter Selma Jane was married and living in Clearfield County, his son Oscar was serving in the Union Army, and his three younger daughters (Adelaide, Laura and Caroline) were living with him at home (until they all had to flee the premises).

The following obituary of Carrie's father leaves no doubt as to his character and Christian commitment.

David McMillan of Gettysburg, Pa., was born Feb. 28, 1798, and died in great peace Jan. 19, 1885. For more than fifty years he had been an active, consistent and happy member of the Methodist Episcopal Church. He occupied various official positions in the church, retaining those of leader and exhorter until his death.

For thirty years and until the infirmities of age precluded it, his private religious life was marked by the habit of secret devotion four times a day – morning, noon and night, and midnight. His spirit was that of cheerful obedience to God and of unwavering faith in the Divine promises. In the exercise of the functions of an exhorter he frequently walked fourteen miles to hold meetings for exhortation and prayer, returning on foot the same day. For a series of years he had a regular appointment, every two weeks, five miles from

his house – to and from which he almost invariably walked, leaving his horse to remain in the stable at home.

In his earlier life his winters were employed in teaching, and he always felt the most lively interest in educational matters. For nearly fifty years he was a constant reader of *The Christian Advocate*, and was always well informed concerning the doings of the Church. When his youngest daughter, now the wife of Rev. P.M. Buck, Presiding Elder of Kumaon District, North India Conference, gave herself to the work of God in heathen lands, he rejoiced in it as the acceptance of a vow he had made when she was in infancy.

Unswervingly faithful, he illustrated the efficacy of grace to renew and sanctify the nature, and leaves to his surviving children the rich legacy of an example full of faith and the memory of a life triumphant.

### **Selma Jane McMillan Drum (1835-1927)**

Selma was thirteen when her mother died in childbirth, and she was immediately pressed into service to aid in raising her younger brothers and sisters. In 1859 she won the heart of Gettysburg's young Methodist Episcopal pastor, Martin Luther Drum (1834-1898), and labored with him in central Pennsylvania appointments for 39 years.

Selma and Rev. Martin L. Drum maintained a thoroughly Methodist home, having their children educated at the conference's Williamsport Dickinson Seminary [now Lycoming College] – from which Martin had graduated in 1857, and where their daughter Edith Myrtle Drum served on the faculty 1890-92. The Drum Admissions House at Lycoming College is named for their son Charles McMillan Drum (1861-1926) and his wife Mary C. Blodgett Drum (1861-1937). For seven years, at Williamsport Dickinson Seminary and the University of Pennsylvania, another of their sons, J. Marcellus Drum, was a roommate to William H.G. Gould, whom the family introduced to the Christian faith. Mr. Gould married their daughter E. Myrtle, served as General Counsel for the Board of Home Missions and Church Extension of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and was repeatedly elected a lay delegate to General Conference. Rev. William D. Gould (1897-1992), son of William H.G. and Myrtle Drum Gould, was a ministerial member of the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference.

### **Oscar David McMillan (1839-c1910)**

Oscar enlisted in Company E, 2<sup>nd</sup> Pennsylvania Volunteers, on April 21, 1861, just days after the start of the Civil War. He was one of the many who answered President Lincoln's call to serve for three months, estimating that it would take only that long for the Union forces to put down the rebellion. Little could he have imagined at the time, that one of the fiercest battles of the War would be fought in the fields surrounding his childhood home.

He re-enlisted on July 26, 1861, wanting this time to serve in the cavalry. Since Pennsylvania was not then forming such a unit, he joined "Cole's Cavalry"

– Company C, 1<sup>st</sup> Regiment Calvary Maryland Volunteers, where he was given command as a junior officer over a group of men. Several letters survive that he wrote to his sisters, mostly while his company was based at Bolivar WV [then still VA] protecting the supply lines near Harpers Ferry.

July 14, 1862 – He writes to sister Ada during a lull in war-related activities that a number of his men “are out helping Union men to cut their grain.

September 4, 1862 – He tells of a skirmish with the rebels that had casualties (which he graphically describes) on both sides and during which he was taken prisoner – but “paroled” after two days. “I hardly expected to get off the field alive,” he writes, “but a kind Providence protected me.”

February 5, 1863 – In a letter to Carrie, he tells of the snow and cold and how he and his men captured two Confederate soldiers. “It was not by dash but stratagem as we caught them in bed,” he wrote. “I suppose they didn’t like the change from a good warm bed to a seat behind a Yankee soldier and a ride over rough roads in the cold, but the way of the transgressor is hard and they certainly cannot claim exemption.”

On February 11, 1895, congress passed “An act to establish a National Military Park at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania.” Part of that land came from the McMillan homestead, for on June 15, 1895, Oscar D. McMillan and wife conveyed 1.7 acres of the property for the project. He is buried in the Evergreen Cemetery at Gettysburg.



The McMillan House on Seminary Ridge, Gettysburg PA