

THE LIFE OF LOLA PHELPS MASSIE

Born in Bluefield, West Virginia, on June 1, 1902. Mother, Amelia Elizabeth Tucker; Father, John Walter Phelps.

Father worked as Yard Conductor on N&W Railroad until his health failed and he was told he could not work anymore. He had a liver condition. They were members of First Baptist Church in Bluefield until coming to Victoria. They first stayed with John Tucker, 1st Street and Main. He met us at 2:00 a.m. at the train station.

The house I am presently living in on 6th Street was built about 1912. I have lived here all my life since coming to Victoria. I have a lot of dear friends still living as of now and also a lot of friends that have gone on to glory. I have seen Victoria grow from mud streets to cement walks and roads. From a 3-room school to many buildings - now high school education. From one church to seven now. Rev. Thompson was Pastor. His daughter was my first grade school teacher. She also helped my Mother care for me when I had spinal meningitis. I must have been around 5 or 6 years old. We had relatives in Crew, VA. My Father's Mother, Grandmother Robinson, lived in Crew after coming from Church Roads where they lived. She was a member of Crew Baptist Church, taught Sunday School for years and was a blessing to all who knew her. My Mother had relatives in Crew also. So we visited Crew often. Then in 1910 we moved to Victoria. My Father's health was so much better and he was asked to take a job on the Virginian Railroad and try it. We stayed in Victoria. I was 8 years old in June, my first birthday in Victoria. They joined Victoria Baptist Church and have enjoyed being a part of it. My Mother taught Sunday School for years, helped in Ladies Aid and anywhere she could. They built the home I now live in. She kept boarders and roomers and Dad was Yard Conductor on the Virginian Railroad.

I was converted in the Methodist revival meeting and then became a member of Victoria Baptist. I was baptized in the old Church by Mr. S. S. Robertson. The Lord has been so good to me, letting me serve Him and my Church a number of years. I had 27 years of perfect attendance plus played the organ for 76 years; helped as Superintendent in the Beginner's Department for 50 or more years and was given a silver tray. What a joy to watch those little lives grow up and take their stand for God. I followed Mrs. Blanch Williams who was our first Superintendent of the Beginner Department.

Some notes on Victoria Baptist Church history:

First service was held in old original Church in 1908.

Rev. Daultry

Mr. Gaines - a student

Mr. S. S. Robinson

Paul Watson was first to live in parsonage in 1920 and 1921.

First organ was a pump organ and someone had to pump the pedals for me to play as I was only 12 years old and couldn't reach the pedals.

Hammond Organ purchased February 19, 1947. Dorothy Rist

And I went to Richmond to take three free organ lessons.

Chimes were added February 23, 1947, in honor of Rev. Harwood.

Choir robes were purchased January 2, 1949.

In 1957 two lots were given by Mrs. Jackson. The houses were

Torn down and the property is now used as our parking lot.

The Allen Organ was purchased October 3, 1960.

New Educational Building was added 1967.

I started to school and was put back in 1st grade (coming out of West Virginia) and I attended the original old schoolhouse on Grove Avenue until the new school was built and I was then in 3rd or 4th grade. Our Principal was Miss Fannie Phelps and Mr. Coleman and Mrs. Alenia Irby Abbitt taught me in the 5th grade. She was Miss Irby then. I graduated from Victoria High School in 1920. Went to State Teachers College in Fredericksburg for two years and taught school for one year in Lunenburg County and substituted for one year or more in Victoria School. Had two sets of twins in 1st and 2nd grade.

Our class had five to graduate - Elvyra Kelley (Hardy), Majorie Shultz, Rainey Moses Harris, Lucetta Banks, and myself. At this date, October 1996, I am the only one living.

I was married to Hume W. Massie on December 19, 19__ (54 years). Raised two wonderful sons, John Arnold and Hume Edwin. Lived to see them happily married and baptized as members of our Church and living the Lord. I have 7

Grandchildren, 12 great grandchildren, 3 step grandchildren and 3 step great Grandchildren.

The old Church was moved and given to some interested people to move it. Now it is a lovely, well kept Church. This Church was moved to its present location. There were two houses back of the old Church. One was sold and moved to its present location on 8th Street and Daton's now live in it. The other house was torn down by my husband Hume and others. My husband was injured by the chimney falling on him and had to spend some time in the hospital. Our present Church was built in 1922 at 8th and Washington Avenue, and dedicated in 1924 with Rev. Harrell as Pastor.

Things I remember:

Old choir members:

Gallion

Mrs. Stockley was organist

Mrs. Hollaman

Ruth Abbitt

Walter Williams

J. H. Abbitt

Jesse Morgan

Mr. and Mrs. Morgan

Ann Wade

Mr. and Mrs. Huddleston and others

First services held in old red Church in 1908.

Daultry - 3 years

Mr. Gaines - a student first _____, Richmond, VA.

S. S. Robinson 1912

My Father worked until 19___. He lived to be 91 years old. My husband worked for the Virginian Railroad as Fireman and Engineer until the strike in 1923. We lived in Florida for 2 years during the railroad strike. My husband worked on the Seaboard Railroad for several years, then came back to Victoria and worked

for the Victoria Supply Company for several years. He then opened the Massie Furniture Store where we both served the public for 30 years from 1939 to 1969. At this point, he went back full time to his pride and joy, the apple orchard which he purchased in 19___. He enjoyed raising apples until God called him home on February 1, 1977. We both had made many good friends over the years which we are proud of.

Through the years life was saddened by losing my Mother and Dad and then my husband, but I have tried to put my trust in God and be thankful for being raised in a Christian home. I remember my Grandmother taking me to Sunday School when we visited her in Crew.

The Golden Years are hard to write about as so many changes have taken place. I have always been thankful for the many good neighbors and friends who have been so good to me and most of all, for the Lord looking after me. I can look back and see how important it is to have a Christian home and been able most of my life to try to serve God. We had such good pastors to come through the years. I have enjoyed working with all of them and had the honor of playing for Dr. Long's wedding. We built two parsonages through the years plus adding on to our main building.

I have lived to see my sons married and also enjoyed many grandchildren and great grandchildren.