

The death of this well-known minister, which occurred Saturday night, May 25, brought sorrow to a wide circle of friends. He had lived in Columbia as pastor of the Arsenal Hill Church for thirty-one years. Consequently he was familiarly known by the larger part of the citizens, and was held in high esteem by many among them.

He was a man of strongly marked characteristics. In his early ministry, he took his stand against instrumental music in church worship. He adhered to this position through life, and this eliminated to no little extent the sphere of his ministerial activity. There are not many churches which would consent to part with an organ to secure a pastor. Doubtless this had something to do with keeping Dr. Blackburn in one pulpit, and that not a pulpit of great prominence. He had the mental vigor, and the personal force to lift him to high position and to give him commanding influence. We take the following summary of his life from the Columbia State:

Dr. Blackburn was born October 16, 1861, in Greene County, Tennessee. His father was Rev. John Watson Blackburn, of pure Scotch-Irish descent. After completing his studies in the high school in Athens, Ala., he entered Southwestern University, at Clarksville, Tenn., when he was eighteen years old. Completing the prescribed four-year course in 1883, he matriculated at the Columbia Theological Seminary, from which institution he graduated in 1886. Dr. Blackburn's ministerial career was given exclusively to two congregations. The first was Olivet Presbyterian Church, McConnellsville. After a brief pastorate at McConnellsville, he was called to the Arsenal Hill Church in 1887 as the successor of Rev. John L. Girardeau, D.D., to whose daughter, Miss Annie Williams Girardeau, he was married in 1886.

As a man Dr. Blackburn was deeply devoted to his family, his friends and his congregation. He was a man of deep piety, earnest prayer, simple faith and unflinching courage. His health had been failing the last ten years, and he was often compelled to leave home in search of health. Wherever he went, whether in Chicago or Florida, Dr. Blackburn made many friends, who will be pained to hear of his death.

Dr. Blackburn was a great admirer of the late Dr. John L. Girardeau, his teacher and father-in-law. Recently he edited a book entitled, "Girardeau's Life Work," the several phases of Dr. Girardeau's character being treated in the separate chapters. Dr. Blackburn also edited two other books by Dr. Girardeau, "Philosophical Questions," and "Sermons."

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