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Easom, Horace (Education & Music Minister)

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Alex Vaughn

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One Word Best Describes Horace Easom: Enthusiasm

By Alex Vaughn

Compress 45 years of labor by Horace Easom into a single word and you come up with enthusiasm.

Those who know him need no further explanation and any others would be in a minority, for here is a man who has scaled the heights of layman work for Tar Heel Baptists and is known throughout the state and the Southeast.

Practical, well organized and graced with a pleasing, outgoing manner, Easom has an almost contagious enthusiasm about anything in which he believes and about life in general. A campaigner extraordinary, his success and skill at his chosen profession of music and education are often pushed to the background.

"I feel peppy," said Easom recently as he relaxed in his living room and described a recent operation which he says has made him good for at least another 25 years. Mrs. Easom, the former Margaret Stevens of Clinton, who has apparently become infected with her husband's effervescent nature, came in on that subject to restrict the telling of his age.

"Oh well," retorted Easom, "Just say I'm old enough to have retired twice and still have the same wife."

This Is Retirement?

Retirement to Easom is serving as executive secretary of the \$108,000 Cleveland County United Fund Drive, serving as music and education director at Buffalo Baptist Church near Waco and working in numerous revivals.

But perhaps to a man like him it is retirement. He has made his mark upon the state as surely as if he had lifted a huge stamp and compressed it onto the physical features.

Unlike many in his position, Easom doesn't express much philosophy but seems to take life as it comes, using his Christian philosophy to handle each



HORACE EASOM looks out window of his Shelby home. He is a former Brotherhood secretary for the State Convention and earlier in his career worked with Dr. George W. Truett in the music and education program of First Church, Dallas, Texas.

task as he meets it. On several topics he does feel strongly. One of these is church music. "It seems to be getting right classical and that's fine for choir training but the average church goer needs a message in song."

"You've heard that old song, 'Everybody's Doing It—Doing It Now?' Well, many churches and others doing it too—they feel the church must comply with the modes of the present to be in style. We must keep a Christian atmosphere in our schools and churches, it's so easy to drift," states Easom.

Continuing, Easom said, "We have simply got to have more witnessing on the part of Christians. The majority of memberships in churches are now living on a certain plane when they need to move up to a higher plane and witness for Christ. Doing good and witnessing for Christ are two different things. If I'm trying to sell a wonderful book and keep it in my briefcase, I wouldn't make many sales would I?"

Conversation returned to the present and to the Easom's only child, Mrs. Margaret (Dr. Robert B.) Litton and

three grandchildren, Robert Litton, Jr., six; Lu Litton, 10 and Margaret, 1½. Margaret would have been Horace, if she had been a boy, laughed Easom.

Plan Trip Around World

Now in the plans is a trip around the world. The Easoms toured Europe and the Near East several years ago and it whetted their appetite for more travel.

Easom, a Smithfield native, was a seventh grade dropout working in a Smithfield print shop when he decided to return to high school. He completed Buies Creek Academy, went on to Wake Forest College and then into the army during World War I before studying music in New York City.

Perhaps the faith of this man is better shown in his act of acceptance of the \$1½ million drive for Wake Forest. "I accepted the task but I had no speech. You know when a man starts a job he needs something but in this thing the strangest thing happened to me.

"I was worrying about the project day and night and suddenly while taking a shower one day an outline came to me as clear as a bell. I leaped from the shower and tracking wet prints all the way to the bedroom, I wrote down the outline. As I wrote, the subheads for each point came to me. This was used from one end of this state to the other in large city churches and in small country churches also." Based on Psalms 24, the remembrance of this campaign and the talk still excite Easom as he tells the story.

And as always, those who listen are absorbed into the dynamics of the man's spirit and they too marvel at the great needs which need accomplishing.

ON THE COVER — Student night at Christmas, a popular observance in many Southern Baptist churches since 1923, is the voice of young people saying in their own words what their Christian training and educational opportunities are meaning to them. The annual event is sponsored by the Sunday School Board's student department in cooperation with the state departments of student work. (See page 11.)

What They're Doing Now

Another in a series of articles on the current activities of men who have made valuable contributions to N. C. Baptist life.