

Dr. Harry Lee Upperman Obt.

HARRY L. UPPERMAN, FORMER PRESIDENT OF SEMINARY, DIES:

Services for Dr. Harry Lee Upperman, 88, former president of Baxter Seminary in Putnam County, will be at 2 p.m. Tuesday, January 29, 1984, at Belle Meade United Methodist Church.

The body will be taken to Hooper & Huddleston Funeral Home in Cookeville for visitation and services at 2 p.m. Wednesday at Baxter United Methodist Church in Baxter.

Burial will be in Odd Fellows Cemetery in Baxter.

The body is at Roesch-Patton Dorris and Charlton Funeral Home, where Masonic services are scheduled for 7 p.m. today.

Dr. Upperman died Sunday night at his home in Park Manor, 115 Woodmont Blvd. He was hospitalized with pneumonia in December and had a recurrence.

He was president of the Methodist Church-supported secondary school in Baxter from 1923 until his retirement in 1957. After his retirement, the school, then a part of the Putnam County public school system, was re-named Upperman High School.

A native of Baltimore, Dr. Upperman graduated from Dickinson Seminary and Junior College in Williamsport, PA, where he entered the ministry in 1915. While in college, he pastored several churches in Pennsylvania and New York. He received bachelor's and master's degrees from Syracuse University. Both alumni. In 1929, he received a doctor of divinity degree from Simpson College, Indianola, Iowa.

Dr. Upperman was twice president of the Midsouth Association of Private Schools, was president of the Middle Tennessee Principals Association and twice was president of the Putnam County Teachers Association.

He served as secretary of the Methodist Church's Central Tennessee Conference and its successor, the Tennessee Conference, from 1924 to 1944. He was a delegate to the quadrennial Methodist General Conference five times during the period 1928 to 1944.

He was a member of the Scottish Rite, Knights Templar and Al Menah Shrine Temple, holding offices in each.



Dr Harry Lee & Mrs. Elma Upperman

Mrs. Elma Clark Upperman Obit.

January 10, 1987 at her residence. She has no immediate survivors.

Remains are at the Broadway Chapel of Roesch Patton Dorris and Charlton where services will be conducted 1:00 p.m., Monday with Dr. Bill Starnes and Rev. Fred Blankenship officiating. Active pallbearers: Dr. Robert Fesmire, Herbert Ward, H. M. Marlowe, Bill Wade, David Slinger, S. G. Weller. Honorary pallbearers: Her boys and girls from Baxter Seminary.

Remains will then be conveyed to the Baxer Chapel of Whitson Funeral Home, Baxter, Tennessee, where funeral services will be conducted at 1:00 p.m., Tuesday by Dr. Bill Starnes and Rev. Ernest Cashdollar. Interment Odd Fellows Cemetery, Baxter. Memorial gifts may be made to the Upperman scholarship fund at Martin Methodist College, Pulaski, or Baxter Seminary Alumni scholarship fund at Upperman High in Baxter.

(Article by J. B. Leftwich, "Nashville Eye" column, *The Tennessean*, January 1987). Mr. Leftwich, before his retirement, was *The Tennessean's* state correspondent in Lebanon, Tennessee.

We gathered recently to bury Elma Clark Upperman, 87, retired teacher, widow of Dr. Harry L. Upperman, who was president of Baxter Seminary, homemaker, and member of the United Methodist Church.

That's about all you would know about her if you wrote a news story about her life and death. Of course, you could use more words - - you could pad the story - - but when you finished, the substance would be about the same. The number of organizations she served, the length of her tenure at the now defunct Baxter school, and the college degrees she earned are not the fiber and thread of her life. The things you do not write in an obituary are the things that made an enduring impact on her community and more especially on the graduates of Baxter Seminary.

Elma Clark Upperman was a cultural shock wave, and those of us who were swept to another plateau by her energy and persuasion, found our lives forever altered and enriched.

Think of the 13-year-old boy from rural Putnam County who had never listened to a bar of classical music, who thought literature was authored by Zane Grey and whose concept of art was limited to mountains, sunsets and streams.

Imagine the boy in the home of Mrs. Upperman, surrounded by shelves overflowing with books, classical recordings, paintings of significance and conversations about ideas instead of things. It was heavy stuff for an adolescent who found himself being talked *to*, instead of *down to*.

Mrs. Upperman encouraged us to foster great expectations, to believe in ourselves, to overcome, disappointment and to meet challenges. She was never surprised when we surprised ourselves by conquering our fears and subduing our inadequacies. She measured our success by our development of our own potential, not by the comparison with others. Though not on a grand scale - - after all, we were not students at Harvard or Yale - - succeed we did. We became preachers and teachers, doctors and lawyers, farmers and politicians, engineers and businessmen, designers and planners, employers and employees.

But more importantly, the graduates of Baxter Seminary became responsible citizens, and this pleased Mrs. Upperman. She was an encyclopedia, the ultimate source of the deeds of her boys and girls. She loved to boast of the achievements of "my children," and she was just as proud of a good corporal as of a good general. She maintained an interest in her grandchildren, the sons and daughters of the boys and girls of Baxter Seminary.

The boys wanted to write and, despite his humble efforts and poor sentence structure, she said she was sure he could learn. Others wanted to become physicians, and despite their limitations, they became physicians. And some wanted to become engineers, and they became engineers. And she was proud of them all!

And so her boys and girls buried Elma Clark Upperman in a cemetery beside her husband who died in 1984. Their graves are not far from the campus of Baxter Seminary which folded soon after their retirement in 1957. The school there now is Upperman High School.

One of her boys, the Rev. Bill Starnes, pastor of Woodbine Methodist Church in Nashville, preached her funeral. He quoted Robert Louis Stevenson who wrote of the lamplighter “knocking holes in the darkness.”

Truly, Elma Clark Upperman knocked holes in the darkness.

So we stand silent, having lost so soon
The best of us, the high and silver flute;
The loveliest voice of all out times is
Mute.

By Robert Nathan,
Author of “A Cedar Box,”
“For Elinor Wylie”
& “The Road of Ages”



Dr. Harry Lee & Elma Clark Upperman are buried in the Odd Fellows Cemetery, Baxter, Putnam Co., TN.





Pictured above: Home of Dr. Harry Upperman and his wife. This was their first home was located across the street from the old Baxter Seminary School. The building is now used as the Cornerstone Middle School, 371 First S Av, Baxter, TN 38544. Picture taken from the 1957 Baxter Seminary yearbook inside cover.

Pictured left: The house is now used as a dentist office in Baxter, TN.

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1930 census 20th Civil Dist., Baxter, Putnam Co., TN
 Baxter Town, Baxter Seminary: Dwl: 105: Sparta Road
 Upperman, Harry L. Head M W 34 M (26 yrs. old 1st marriage)
 MD VA KY Methodist Preacher
 Upperman, Emma Clark Wife F W 30 M (29 yrs. old 1st marriage)
 PA PA PA Instructor Baxter Seminary
 Hill, Evelyn F W 35 S MI MI MI Dean Baxter Seminary
 Hartley, Ann F W 21 S TN TN TN Keeper Baxter Seminary
 Prickett, W. M W 28 S GA GA AL Teacher Baxter Seminary
 Harris, Ann F W 25 S IN KY AL Teacher Baxter Seminary
 Morehead, Mary Ann F W 24 S IL TN KY Teacher Baxter Seminary
 McCumby, Evelyn F W 23 S IA IA IA Teacher Baxter Seminary
 Gephart, F W 26 S MO IL KY Teacher Baxter Seminary
 Runt, Phillip C. M W 27 S OH OH OH Teacher Baxter Seminary
 Runt, Marguerite F W 24 S OH OH OH Teacher Baxter Seminary



This was the 2nd residence of Harry Upperman and his wife located down the street from the old Baxter Seminary, Baxter, TN.