

**Bishop
Monroe
Hortensius
Davis**



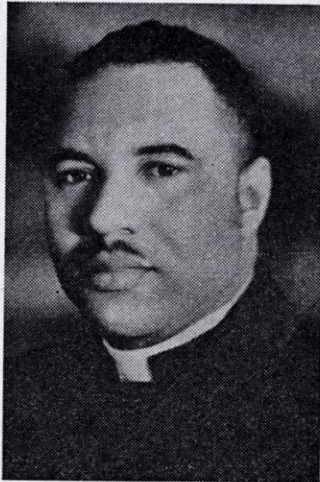
Monroe Hortensius Davis, Fifty-third Bishop of the A.M.E. Church, was born in South Carolina about 1886; attended Al-
len University, Howard University, A.B.; and Drew Theologi-
cal Seminary, B.D.; pastored in Madison, N. J., and St. John's
Church, Baltimore, Maryland, from which, in 1928, he was
elected Bishop. He was assigned to West Africa, made one
short trip. After the death of Bishop A. L. Gaines, he was
assigned to the Second Episcopal District. Charges were
brought against him for malfeasance and misappropriation of
funds, and he was tried by a committee at Richmond, Vir-
ginia, Bishop R. C. Ransom being the chairman of the Council
of Bishops—president at the trial. After two days' hearing,
Bishop Davis was found guilty and suspended until the next
meeting of the Virginia Conference, at which time his case
was reviewed and he was restored, and held his Annual Con-
ference as usual. However, other charges were brought against
him and he was again tried at the special session of the Gen-
eral Conference in November, 1946 at Little Rock, Arkansas,

where he was suspended again until the meeting of the ensuing General Conference in 1948, when he was put on the inactive list of Bishops with no assignments but with full salary, but no expense allowance. He was retired in 1952.

He was large in stature, weighing around 220 pounds, black in complexion, forceful speaker, a man generous and kind to his friends and, as he himself said, "a terror to his opponents". He liked to debate and experienced much pleasure when he won his point. He owned a farm in South Carolina where he raised hogs and cattle. For years he was secretary of the Council of Bishops; however, it was later proved that some of his records were inaccurate.

His wife was Miss Catherine Beckett, daughter of Bishop W. W. Beckett; they had two children, one of whom is the wife of Rev. S. H. Lewis, pastor of Ward Church, Kansas City, Missouri, and is a social worker in Kansas City, Missouri. Bishop Davis died on February 9, 1953; his widow lives in Baltimore.

**Bishop
Decatur
Ward
Nichols**



Decatur Ward Nichols, Fifty-ninth Bishop of the A.M.E. Church, son of Rev. Lewis Ruffin and Anna Elizabeth Nichols; born in Charleston, South Carolina, October 15, 1900; educated in the public schools of Charleston, Avery Institute, Charleston; Howard University, Washington, D. C., A.B., 1923; Drew University, Madison, N. J., A.B., in Missions, 1924; and B.D., 1926; and Columbia University, New York City; D.D. from Allen University, Wilberforce University, Morris Brown College, Western University, Shorter College, and Daniel Payne College; LL.D. from Wilberforce University. He was converted in Morris Brown Church, Charleston, South Carolina in 1912; licensed to preach in St. Luke, Charleston, S. C., by his father, 1923; admitted to New Jersey Conference under Bishop Heard in 1925; ordained deacon 1926 by Bishop Heard, elder, 1927, and appointed pastor of Jamestown, Rhode Island 1925 (supply); Emanuel Mission, 1926, which he served until elected Bishop in 1940. Emanuel Mission with 28 members at 316 W. 52nd Street, New York City, was developed to a membership of 2,400; in 1927 a new building was purchased at 119th Street

valued at \$100,000 not including improvements made to the amount of \$56,000; he organized in the church the departments of Christian education, music, Daily Vacation Bible School, day nursery, employment bureau, and other auxiliaries. He was married twice. His wife was Miss Susan Bailey of Denton, Maryland, who died in 1931; they had two children, Wardean Elizabeth and Susan Bailey Nichols. Later he married the sister of the first wife, Miss Kay Bailey, A.B., Howard University and a student of New York University. He was elected Bishop in 1940. assigned to Alabama, the 9th Episcopal District; there he increased the membership of the churches of Alabama and finances accordingly; he paid mortgages of \$83,000 on Daniel Payne College, Birmingham, renovated property to extent of \$110,000; built episcopal residence, president's home, boys' cottage, teachers' cottage, college luncheonette, girls' dormitory, library, and remodeled chapel and completed the main building, installed new lighting system, roadways built, and had grounds landscaped and beautified; presided over the First Episcopal District from 1948 to 1956; was a member of the General Conference from 1932 to 1956; served on Church Extension Board; chairman of Board of Education, and of Pensions; instrumental in organization of Pension Department, and was its first president; member of the General Conference Commission, 1936-1940, 1940-44, 1944-48; entertained the General Conference in 1936; member of the compilation committee; executive board of Urban League, New York; Omega Psi Phi fraternity; was trustee of Wilberforce, Allen University, and was president of trustee board of Daniel Payne College; sponsored missionary society and made special provision for mission preachers in Alabama; increased Dollar Money from \$10,000 to \$12,000; the 11th Episcopal District, 1956-57. About a year after the 1956 General Conference he was accused of violating the discipline with regard to the Budget and brought to trial on charges made by Rev. M. M. Lindsay, of Florida. After five days' hearing, and representation by an able lawyer, the trial committee, consisting of Bishop H. T. Primm, Revs. T. W. Gaines, A. A. Shaw, B. H. Hill, and H. E. Walden, found him guilty and he was suspended. He appealed, and the matter

was finally brought before the General Conference of 1960, and it did not lift his suspension. Beside the ecclesiastical trial he was tried in the civil courts, being indicted on many counts, including accounting and mishandling of church funds. The final decision has not yet been reached, after several years. He occupies the status of a suspended Bishop without salary or expenses, or the privilege of functioning ecclesiastically.

Bishop Nichols is about five feet six inches, weighs around 175 pounds, of light complexion. For him are named churches at Phenix City, Ozark, Sheffield and Ensley, Alabama, and New York, and Charleston, South Carolina.