



# Quayana Washington



### **Heroes and Heroines Gone But Not Forgotten**



BY D. BELL

The late John Garlington, Jr., former pastor at Maranatha Church, was himself from an interesting family. Rev. Garlington, Jr. was born in 1937 in Buffalo, New York, the son of a successful barber. At the age of 40 John Garlington Jr. had a born-again experience and became saved. By the time he was 40 he owned two barber shops, one in Buffalo and one in Detroit, Michi-

Within a few years of his becoming saved, John Garlington, Jr. met a young woman named Valdese Piler whom

At this point in time they became involved with the denomination of The Church of God and Holiness, in which John Garlington, Jr. became a minister. Rev. Garlington Jr. subsequently experienced a religious revelation, and severed his ties with that church, and with his congregation founded the Church of

God and True Holiness. At the time of his death, Bishop Garlington, Jr. headed a group of 16 churches. The Church of God and True Holiness is still in existence today on the east coast of the United States.

His father died when he was only eight years old, leaving his mother to raise her family as a single parent, which she did by doing domestic work.

John attended elementary and high school in Buffalo and left home at the age of 16 for Cleveland, Ohio. After three years there he enrolled in the Cleveland Baptist School of the Bible. Upon completion of his studies, he pursued a ministerial career in the church his father had started, the Church of God and True Holiness. When not working in ministerial related duties, Rev. Garlington Jr. supported himself and family by working as a postman and

At the age of 29, Rev. Garlington Jr. was approached by his father's church to be a bishop, the youngest person to date to be approached for this position. Upon accepting the office of Bishop, Rev. Garlington moved back to Buffalo, New York.

In his new position, Rev. Garlington began receiving national recognition and exposure. He began to travel extensively. It was during his travels that he began to experience different points of view, and came to see his church as rooted in old inflexible pentecostal traditions, resistant to change. Consequently, he relinquished his responsibility as Bishop in the Church of God and True Holiness, and with his congregation he left the church and became non-denominational.

Rev. Garlington still traveled extensively; however, it was during one of his speaking engagements at the People's Church in Tacoma, Washington in 1975 that it was brought to his attention that the Maranatha Church in Portland, Oregon was looking for a pastor.

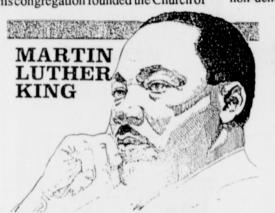
He applied for the position. After one interview and an extended month long visit to the "City of Roses," Rev. Garlington, Jr. accepted the open position for Pastor.

When Rev. Garlington, Jr. arrived in Portland there was a bussing controversy surrounding the Portland Public Schools system and except for Rev. John Jackson, few clergy were visibly involved in social issues such as bussing, the possum incident where police officers threw dead possums on the door step of a blackowned cafe, and the police audit committee. To these incidents, Rev. Garlington, Jr. brought with him the ability to mediate tense situations and the ability to find some common ground for compromise.

On January 16, 1986 at the age of 48, Rev. Garlington, Jr. was on a working vacation in Florida after making an evangelical stop in Jamaica. While driving on his way to church where he was to appear, Rev. Garlington, Jr. and his wife were both killed in a tragic car accident. The driver of the other vehicle, had he been in Oregon, would have been considered legally drunk.

At the time of his death, Rev. Garlington, Jr. was the president of the Albina Ministerial Alliance. He had earned the well deserved reputation as a bridge builder in the cause of social

Rev. Garlington Jr. leaves a cherish memory of one gone but not forgotten.



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