

He's dedicated his life to education

97-year-old serves
as Gospel Doctrine
teacher for 65 years

BY KRISTEN ROGERS
Church News contributor

COALVILLE, UTAH

When C. Bryant Copley accepted a call to teach the Gospel Doctrine class in the Coalville 1st Ward, Coalville Utah Stake, he never dreamed how long the calling would last.

Brother Copley began teaching more than six decades ago in the old Coalville Tabernacle, in an improvised "classroom" made of denim curtains for walls. The classroom has changed since then, but the teacher has not. At age 97, Brother Copley has been teaching Gospel Doctrine, uninterrupted, for more than 65 years.

He said he has the background to understand many of the names and places in the scriptures that younger people don't. It is his responsibility to explain them, he said.

Brother Copley starts preparing his lessons in the middle of the week so he has plenty of time to ponder the lessons and look through his large home library of Church books for related topics.

Education — spiritual and secular — has been a hallmark of his life. He has found continual joy in both learning and helping others learn.

Brother Copley and his wife, Clara, were both school teachers. Early in their married life, they agreed to save whatever they could from their modest income. The goal was to some day be able to help young people obtain a college education. Although Sister Copley passed away a few years ago, that dream has become a reality. Brother Copley recently endowed a graduate scholarship in physics and astronomy at BYU. In addition, he has for the past 15 years given two scholarships a year to graduates of North Summit High School.

A love of learning began early in Brother Copley's life. He remembers when the Summit Stake Academy in 1912 sponsored a lyceum course, with visits by musicians, artists and scholars. The young people were given an opportunity to earn a free ticket if they could



Photo by Jeffrey D. Allred

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sell five additional tickets. It wasn't an easy task, but young C.B., as he was known, was determined to go. He finally sold his tickets, and eagerly went to hear the poet Edmund Vance Cook.

Mr. Cook recited a poem called "Don't You Know." Brother Copley still remembers some of the lines: "You can only wear one tie, One eyeglass in your eye, And one coffin when you die, Don't you know."

The boy who heard these words had already learned to play the piano and organ. Ever since he was 10, he had worked at jobs such as sweeping, fetching lumber and pitching hay for 50 cents a day, saving his money so he could go to college. He also tended to his Church duties; as a deacon he cut wood every Saturday. The wood was for the 35 wid-

ows living in Coalville.

This young man went on to receive his bachelor's degree in math, physics and Latin. He then returned to Coalville to teach school, where he met Clara. The couple married in 1921.

In the schools, Brother Copley was a much-loved teacher known for his humor. When he retired he put a sign over his front door that reads: "After Math." "I thought that after teaching 47 years I could notify people I was through," he said.

But he wasn't really through; he continued tutoring math students until he was 96, and his grandchildren still think of him first whenever they're stuck with a math problem.

Brother Copley is delighted to help. "Young people should know very early that what they're going to take with

them is what they can put in their heads," he related. "Nobody can steal that. Stuff your head when you're young, and maybe when you're old some of that stuff may help you."

Brother Copley hopes his scholarships will help motivate young people to "stuff their heads" for years to come. The C. Bryant and Clara C. Copley Endowed Graduate Scholarship in Physics and Astronomy will provide \$4,000 yearly to deserving students at BYU.

Brother Copley is convinced that he was blessed with the means to provide these scholarships because of two principles: obedience to the law of tithing and consistent saving.

"Mrs. Copley and I decided a long time ago that if we could save a little money, we could help boys and girls who needed a little help." The couple began saving by "putting a few dimes aside" whenever they could, consistently. In the meantime, Brother Copley took summer jobs. "I had the lowest paid job in the world at the time," he says, "as section helper on the railroad."

But Brother Copley had learned the most important principle of money management from his mother. When he was only 3, young Bryant's father was killed in a railroad accident. His mother received a settlement that totaled \$6,000 after attorneys' fees.

Although she was a widow with no means of support, Mrs. Copley didn't hesitate. "The first check Mother wrote was for \$600 in tithing," Brother Copley says. That tithing check has had a lasting impact; Brother Copley has always lived the principle of tithing faithfully.

As their funds grew, the couple chose not to buy material things. The modest home in Coalville where Brother Copley still lives is furnished with wallpaper, fixtures and furniture pieces that are now decades-old. The Copleys chose to invest in the things that last: education, missions, family and tithing.

Brother Copley is still investing in learning. He has made the study of the gospel and Church history a lifelong pursuit. He still plays the organ. He subscribes to and reads five periodicals. His daughter, Dorothy Hope, says that he has an almost photographic memory. He types regular letters to grandchildren, filled with intellectual problems that they must study to solve.

And of course, he still teaches Sunday School.

Dates are near for 165th semiannual conference

The 165th Semiannual General Conference of the Church will convene in the Tabernacle in Salt Lake City on Saturday, Sept. 30 and Sunday, Oct. 1.

In addition to general sessions each day at 10 a.m. and 2 p.m., the General Priesthood Meeting will convene in the Tabernacle Saturday, Sept. 30, at 6 p.m. (MDT).

The First Presidency has requested that in those areas where members of the Church can conveniently attend the conference in Salt Lake City or participate by listening or watching on radio, television or satellite transmission, they should be encouraged to do so. Under these circumstances, the First Presidency said, the usual Sunday meetings need not be held Oct. 1.

In areas where only one Sunday session is broadcast, local leaders have the option to readjust meeting schedules or, where appropriate, to rearrange the agenda of regularly scheduled meetings to permit their members to listen to or watch general conference on radio, television or by satellite transmission.

Children's Sacrament Meeting focusing on Articles of Faith

Throughout the Church, Primary youngsters are participating in Children's Sacrament Meeting Presentations. Some wards and branches are having their Children's Sacrament Presentations during September; others have scheduled them for October.

"These presentations are the culmination of all the children have been taught by devoted Primary leaders during the year in sharing time," said Anne G. Wirthlin, first counselor in the Primary general presidency. "This year the children have been learning about the Articles of Faith. They will share the gospel teachings they have learned along with

the experiences they have had as they have applied these principles in their lives. They will sing special Primary songs that express love and praise for their Heavenly Father and His plan of happiness."

Throughout the year, Primary leaders have taught lessons and songs, and have directed children in activities designed to help them understand the Articles of Faith, be strengthened to live gospel principles, and have a foundation for sharing the gospel with others.

The Children's Sacrament Meeting Presentation is under direction of bishops or branch presidents.