

Parents' sacrifice made possible future seminary president's education

BY DOUG WEAVER | *Baylor University*

L.R. Scarborough was the second president of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, serving from 1914 to 1945. Previously, he was pastor of several Texas Baptist churches and served as the seminary's first chair of evangelism, beginning in 1908. Scarborough's parents cultivated his investment in ministry and ministerial education.

Martha Scarborough began praying when "Lee" was an infant that he would follow in his father's footsteps as a Baptist minister. Later in life, he remembered he wept his first tears at the gospel story at age 10 after hearing his mother share it with him. As he grew up, Lee's father was more direct, saying, "My boy, God's plan is for you to preach."

The Scarborougs moved to West Texas when Lee was only 4 years old. He was raised in a log cabin and spent most of his days on a horse. He definitely was a cowboy, and educational opportunities were sporadic. Scarborough later reflected the only thing he recalled from his first experience in school was the irreverent poetry, "My head is large, my breast is small; God bless the girls, I love them all." Even so, Scarborough showed academic potential.

The Scarborougs desperately wanted Lee to attend Baylor University and would not let the costs of education stand in the way. For years, they had been saving money to build a "real house" on a scenic hilltop. One day during a visit to the proposed site for such a house, Martha told her husband, George, she was willing to give up her dream for the new house in order for Lee to have the funds to attend Baylor.

Scarborough graduated from both Baylor and Yale University. His life in education rested upon the sacrificial investment his parents made to education for ministry.