

# Barber in West Point Serves Five Generations

WEST POINT—Not long ago there came a story from the Middle West of a barber who had served four generations of a family in that section. Here in West Point Charlie Clarke, colored, has gone this barber one better by having served five generations of one family.

"Uncle Charlie", as he is known to citizens of West Point and surrounding section, will have been living in West Point for 58 years on August 13. Born in Richmond, January 26, 1853, he can clearly recall the time Abraham Lincoln visited his native city after the War Between the States. He says that

word was passed around neighborhood, which was on Broad near the Broad Street Methodist Church, that the "President" was in town and women and children were crying with joy, thinking it was Jefferson Davis.



Charlie Clarke

Living in Richmond until August 13, 1876, he came to West Point to open a barber shop. He has been here ever since and was an active barber up to about two years ago. He has re-

tired but is able to get around town, despite his years.

Since living in West Point he has waited on the late David Treat, his son, the late Morgan Treat, who was at one time United States marshal; his son, Leland R. Treat, West Point business man; his daughter, Mrs. W. R. Phillips and Mrs. Phillips' little daughter, Evelyn Ray Phillips. Uncle Charlie has trained three sons, two of them whom are now carrying on his business for him.

Charlie Clarke, the subject of this sketch, was born near the corner of Ninth and Main Streets on the site of Rueger's Hotel but later moved up on Broad Street. He remembers quite distinctly the time a workman was putting a lightning rod on the Broad Street Church steeple and a hail storm came up. The man, he says, was beaten to death by the hail before he could get to the ground.

He recalls many stories of West Point in the days of Beach Park, operated by George Guvernator, up to 1911, when the amusement park was destroyed by fire. Older Richmonders will remember this place as it was a mecca for thousands of pleasure seekers each summer. Sunday-school picnics by the dozens would come to West Point each week.

He remembers when West Point was one of the leading deep sea ports of the Middle Atlantic

Coast, ships coming here to load cotton and tobacco.

"Charlie the Barber," as he has been known for decades, is affectionately remembered by hundreds who have lived in West Point.