

Non-profit
 U.S. Postage
 PAID
 Columbia, MD
 Permit #350

Baptist LIFE
 10255 Old Columbia Road
 Columbia, Maryland 21046-1716

Picturing Annie Armstrong (left)



The portrait of Annie Armstrong was etched by Laura Talbot, a member of Eutaw Place/Woodbrook Church, who personally knew Armstrong.



The gavel, commemorating the Maryland WMU during 1888 - 1963, was made from

the spindles of a staircase that was part of the original "church house" (educational building) of Eutaw Place Church. The Baltimore Housing and Urban Development inadvertently destroyed the building in an urban renewal project.



The Holy Bible, once owned by Edward L. Robinson, a member and deacon of Eutaw Place Church, contains notations of sermons, dates, and speakers alongside scriptures that were preached during Armstrong's days at Eutaw Place Church.



The staircase-shaped chip, presented to the Maryland WMU Executive Board on March 26, 1963, was a part of Eutaw Place Church during Armstrong's membership.



Throughout her life, Armstrong maintained an interest in ministering to Baltimore's immigrants, most notably the Chinese who frequented the port.

Annie Armstrong Biographical sources:
 • *Sorrill, Bobbie. Annie Armstrong: Dreamer in Action, 1984;*
 • *"Annie Armstrong", Shapers of Southern Baptist Heritage pamphlet series. Southern Baptist Historical Society.*

Following in the footsteps of Annie Armstrong in Baltimore

By Shannon Baker
 National Correspondent

BALTIMORE, Md. — Some call her "indefatigable." John Roberts calls her "indomitable."

Roberts is pastor emeritus of Woodbrook Church, formerly known as Eutaw Place Church, where Annie Walker Armstrong spent three-fourths of her life in ministry.

Beginning his ministry at Eutaw Place in 1959, Roberts followed Armstrong's pastor, W. Clyde Atkins, in the pastorate. Though he never met the woman who is the namesake of the annual Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for North American Missions, her legacy has left an astounding impact on his church, on Baltimore, and beyond.

Who is this indomitable Annie Armstrong?

Born in 1850 in the industrial port city of Baltimore, Md., Armstrong, or "Miss Annie" as she was affectionately known, attended Seventh Church, which at the time met at Paca and Saratoga Streets (the current site of the Shrine of Saint Jude).

At Seventh, Armstrong was baptized at the age of 19, and shortly thereafter, joined over 100 members from Seventh to pioneer a new work at Eutaw Place Church at Eutaw Place and Dolphin Street. There, Armstrong remained an active member for nearly 70 years, until her death in 1938.

Describing Armstrong as "a tall, stately, outspoken, strong-willed leader," author Bobbie Sorrell credits Armstrong's Harvard-educated pastor Richard Fuller for building her deep convictions about missions.

With his preaching described as "logic on fire," Fuller's passionate Southern lawyer roots paved way for his influence in framing the Southern Baptist Convention, of which he preached its first annual sermon, giving Armstrong and others an insider's view into the birth of the denomination.

At the local church level, Armstrong taught in the Infant class (also called the Primary Department, for children up to age 12) for 50 years. All the while, she maintained an interest in ministering to mothers, immigrants, the underprivileged, the sick, African Americans, Indians, and later in her life, her Jewish neighbors.

Accordingly, she worked at the Home of the Friendless, where she served on the board of managers for over 20 years.

continued on page six

Photo taken on Ms. Armstrong's desk at the Eutaw Place room at Woodbrook Church

Following in the footsteps of Annie Armstrong

continued from page one

Echoes of Miss Annie's Impact

"It is impossible to calculate the difference [Miss] Annie has made in our denomination, our continent and the world. She was dedicated to doing what she could and God has combined that effort with millions of other Southern Baptists through the years. Each one of us, doing what we can, in obedience to God's Word can still have a mighty impact on this world." – *Robert E. Reccord, President, North American Mission Board*

"Although Annie Armstrong's name is synonymous with the North American Mission Board, she is one of our heroes too. About half of our missionaries' total financial support comes from the Cooperative Program, and the remainder comes through the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering. That simply would not be possible without the Lottie Moon offering, and ultimately, without the contribution of Annie Armstrong in establishing this tremendous giving fund." – *Jerry Rankin, President, International Mission Board*

"Seventh Baptist Church has a great heritage. We are excited that Annie Walker Armstrong heard the Gospel, accepted the free gift of salvation and subsequently was baptized through our

ministry. Our mission is to continue equipping the next generation of 'Annie's' as we take the life-changing Gospel of Jesus Christ to Baltimore City and beyond." – *Ryan Preston Palmer, pastor of Seventh Baptist Church and trustee of the North American Mission Board*

"Go Forward!"

"The future lies all before us...shall it only be a slight advance upon what we usually do? Ought it not to be a bound, a leap forward, to altitudes of endeavor and success undreamed of before?"
– *Annie Armstrong*

"WMU has a rich history of engaging people in the mission of God. The first corresponding secretary of WMU set the stage for what our organization would become. Annie Armstrong was nicknamed "Strong Arm" because she had the strength and determination to do whatever was necessary to get a new organization off the ground. Not only did she get WMU "off the ground" but through her efforts WMU led the way in focusing attention on missions

education, tithing, concern for native Americans, immigrants and others in the local church. A woman of personal wealth." – *Wanda Lee, Executive Director, Woman's Missionary Union*

"What I think is so interesting is that the folks at Eutaw Place and Seventh churches didn't see her as a saint, but as a growing Christian, as they were." – *Maryan Brown, a former historian for the Baptist Convention of Maryland/Delaware*

She started the Ladies' Bay View Mission, in the same site as today's Johns Hopkins Bayview Medical Center, which was formerly known as Baltimore City Hospital.

Armstrong's ties to Baltimore were even more numerous. Her great-great-grandfather was Henry Sater, who built the first known Baptist church in Maryland. A childless widow at 50, Sater later married Dorcas Towson, of the family whose name lives on in the community Towson, who became Armstrong's great-great-grandmother.

Like most Baltimoreans, Armstrong lived in row homes—on North Calvert Street with her parents James Dunn and Mary Elizabeth Armstrong and later on McCullough Street, when her father died. In her elder years, she

moved to Cecil Apartments, which adjoin Eutaw Place Church.

Not only did Armstrong embrace Baltimore with the love of Christ, but her reach also extended to the uttermost parts of the world. Most notable are her efforts in missions education and missions support.

In 1880, in her first prominent leadership position, Armstrong served as the first president of the Woman's Baptist Home Mission Society of Maryland, which involved women in supporting the Home Mission Board (now North American Mission Board) of the Southern Baptist Convention. The society's first priority locally was forming an Indian school and ministering to Chinese immigrants. The organization also provided support for work in Cuba and New Orleans.

Armstrong later became the corresponding secretary of the Maryland Mission Rooms, later called the Mission Literature Department, SBC. This department served as a missions library and reading room and ultimately became a publisher and distributor of missions literature.

Beginning in 1888, Armstrong led in framing the constitution of the Woman's Missionary Union (WMU), an auxiliary to the Southern Baptist Convention. She served as corresponding secretary—a position equivalent to executive director today—until 1906, always refusing a salary for the work she did through WMU to further the gospel.

Without today's technology, Armstrong wrote letters by hand to all the Southern Baptist foreign societies. On one occasion, she asked them to contribute to the first Christmas offering, which resulted in enough money to send three—not one, as had hoped—missionaries to assist Lottie Moon in China.

The Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for Foreign Missions, so named at Armstrong's recommendation, has raised over \$2.6 billion for foreign missions to date.

In 1895, Armstrong led the WMU to contribute \$5,000 to help alleviate the Home Mission Board's \$25,000 debt and prevent the withdrawal of missionaries from their missions fields. In response, WMU instituted the Week of Self-Denial as a time of praying for and giving to home missions. Since that time, a week of prayer and a home missions offering have continued. In 1934, the offering was named the Annie Armstrong Offering.

To date, the annual Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for North American Missions has accumulated over \$1.1 billion.

Armstrong also assisted organizations for Negro Baptist women and children and published literature for them.

"To me, Miss Armstrong was a symbol – a marvel at what a woman could do. She fired my soul," wrote Nannie Burroughs, corresponding secretary of the Woman's Convention, auxiliary to the National Baptist Convention.

Year after year, Armstrong came up with new ways to get missions information out to the churches, to stir up missions efforts and to raise more prayer support and money for missions. In later years, she took up the cause of the Church Building and Loan fund, enabling struggling churches to build.

Armstrong resigned from the WMU in 1906 in opposition to the

inclusion of the WMU's training school with a men's seminary in Louisville, Ky. It was her belief that the organization could not devote attention to missions and women's work in churches while raising funds to manage a school. She also disagreed with the establishment of a salary for the organization's officers.

Armstrong died in 1938, the year of WMU's 50th anniversary. She was buried at Greenmount Cemetery in Baltimore, in the same cemetery as John Healey, the Second and Fourth Church pastor, who started the first Sunday School in this country and Richard Fuller. How did she do it all?

Roberts asked the same question. Those who knew Armstrong personally told him she had a really intense prayer life that gave her real spiritual energy.

"It comes down to dedication, to doing your best in every category of ministry, with dedication, energy and prayer support," Roberts also noted, recalling an adage of Fuller, who resolved "never to insult the Master with indolent preparation or superficial and ineffectual performance."

"Fuller's high standards surely influenced Miss Annie," Roberts said.

That quality of Christian service shouldn't be misunderstood as elitism, but instead should stress the importance of using all our faculties to do the very best for the Lord, Roberts said.

"Through her steadfast prayer, her focused determination and her willingness to put her faith into action, Annie Armstrong modeled for us the difference one person can make when she is obedient to allow God to work through her," said Bob Reccord, current president of the North American Mission Board.

"So much of the International Mission Board's work depends on the generous and faithful giving of Southern Baptists to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering, and we have Annie Armstrong to thank for creating the offering," agreed Jerry Rankin, president of the International Mission Board. "Annie's legacy to the IMB began with a single missionary, Lottie Moon, and today, because of her tireless effort and passion for reaching the lost, the number of missionaries overseas has grown to more than 5,000."

One of Armstrong quotes still inspires: "The future lies all before us...shall it only be a slight advance upon what we usually do? Ought it not to be a bound, a leap forward, to altitudes of endeavor and success undreamed of before?"

Indeed! 

The power of one person: Annie Armstrong's early efforts to raise money for missionary support has blossomed to nearly \$3.7 billion for SBC mission causes

The impact of Annie Armstrong's efforts in the last century can still be felt on Baptist life today, especially in the following ministries:

Founder and President, Ladies' Bay View Mission

Armstrong started the Ladies' Bay View Mission, an organization that cared for the poor, located on the site where Johns Hopkins Bayview Medical Center now stands.

Corresponding Secretary, Woman's Home Mission Society of Maryland

The Woman's Home Mission Society of Maryland was formed after Armstrong and other women called a meeting of Baptist church representa-

tives to cooperate with the Home Mission Board's causes. As president for 24 years of this organization, Armstrong led support in projects in New Orleans, Cuba, among Chinese and German immigrants in Baltimore, and with African American women in their church work.

Corresponding Secretary, Missions Rooms

Armstrong became the corresponding secretary of the Mission Rooms in Baltimore. Sponsored by the Maryland Baptist Union Association (the predecessor to the Baptist Convention of Maryland/Delaware), the missions library and reading room ultimately became a publisher and distributor of missions literature for the Southern Baptist Convention.

The work was given to the SBC Sunday School Board in the early 1900s.

Corresponding Secretary, Woman's Missionary Union


Armstrong became the first corresponding secretary (a position equivalent to today's executive director) of the Woman's Missionary Union, an auxiliary of the SBC, which formed in Richmond, Va., and whose headquarters were located in Baltimore from 1888-1921. "Go Forward," a rally cry synonymous with Armstrong's personal efforts, was adopted as WMU's first motto.

Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for Foreign Missions

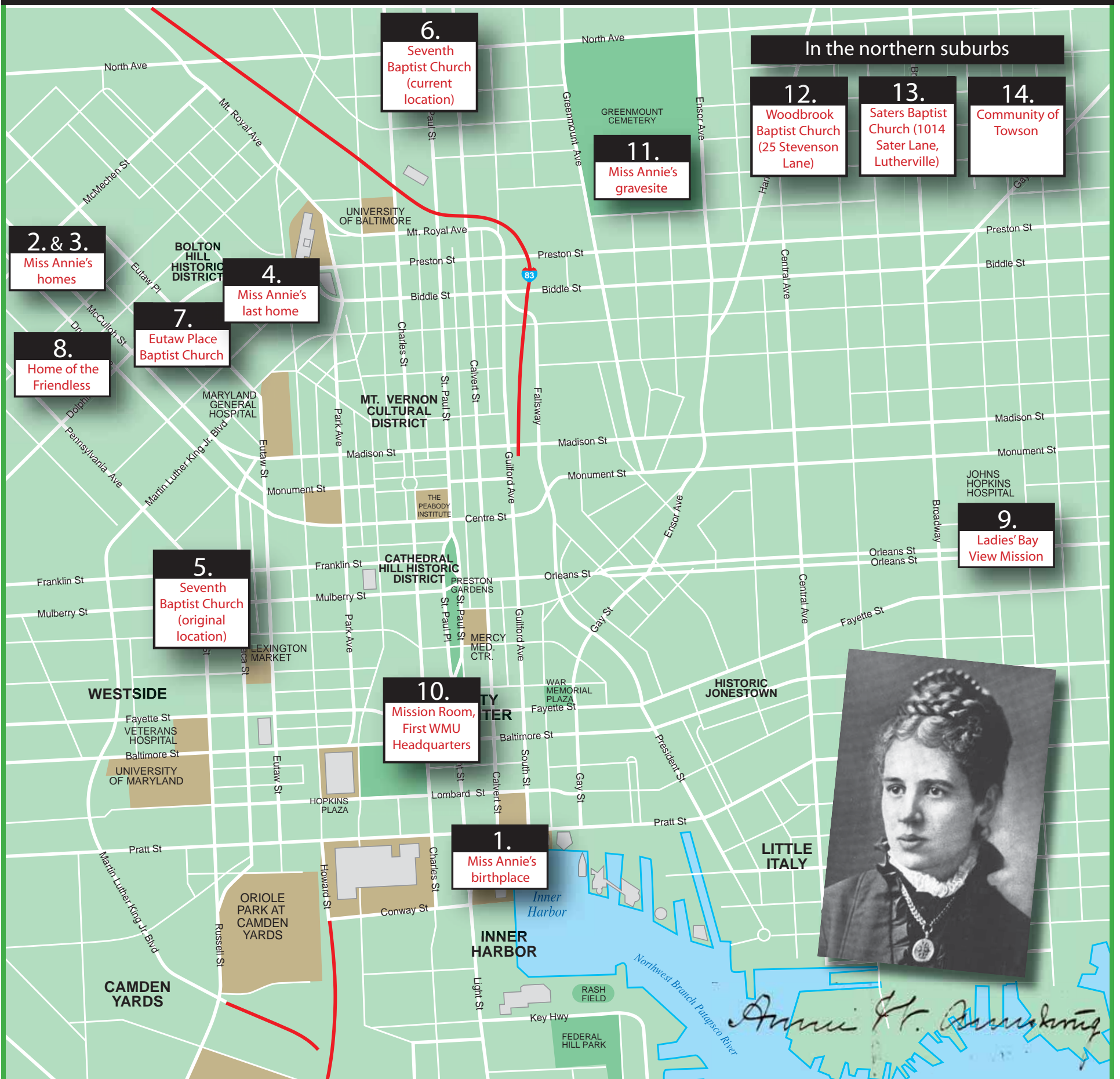
Armstrong and Lottie Moon proposed a Christmas Offering to

raise money to send single women to China to work with Moon. Enough money was raised to send three missionaries instead of just one. This offering became the precursor to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for Foreign Missions, so named at Armstrong's recommendation, which has raised over \$2.6 billion for foreign missions to date.

Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for North American Missions

Armstrong proposed the first WMU self-denial offering for Home Missions. Renamed after Armstrong in 1934, the annual Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for North American Missions has accumulated over \$1.1 billion to date. 

Embracing Baltimore: Miss Annie's imprint lingers in our beloved city



1. Armstrong's Birthplace:

41 North Calvert (now called the Galleria in the Inner Harbor) Armstrong first lived at the corner of Pratt and Calvert Street, over a tobacco shop owned by her father.

2. Second Home:

1020 McCulloh Street (building was torn down) Armstrong's family moved to the "suburbs" after Armstrong's father's death in 1856.

3. Third Home:

1423 McCulloh Street (Baltimore townhouse still used today) Armstrong lived here from 1863 until 10 years before her death.

4. Last Home:

1123 N. Eutaw Place in the Cecil Apartments directly behind Eutaw Place Baptist Church (now City Temple of Baltimore-Baptist)

5. & 6. Seventh Baptist Church:

Corner of Saratoga and Paca Streets (now the Shrine of St. Jude) Current location of Seventh Baptist Church is on 30 E. North Ave. Armstrong was baptized in this church in 1870.

7. Eutaw Place Baptist Church:

Corner of Eutaw Place and Dolphin Street (now City Temple of Baltimore-Baptist) This church was Armstrong's home church from 1871, when it was formed, until her death in 1938. There, she taught the Infants class and led a Mother's Club for under-privileged women.

8. Home of the Friendless:

Druid Hill Avenue Armstrong volunteered at this shelter for destitute children.

9. Ladies' Bay View Mission:

At the current site of Johns Hopkins Bayview Medical Center Organization Armstrong founded and served as president to help the destitute and poor of Baltimore.

10. Mission Room/First WMU Hdqs:

10 East Fayette Street The Mission Room served as a missionary library and reading room, which became the missionary literature department of the SBC until the work was given to the Sunday School Board in the early 1900s. Armstrong was in charge and when she became corresponding secretary of WMU in 1888, this also became the national WMU headquarters.

11. Greenmount Cemetery:

Greenmount Avenue at Oliver Grave site of Armstrong (Go to cemetery, see map of cemetery P, site #40, plot #63.)

In the northern suburbs

12. Woodbrook Baptist Church (25 Stevenson Lane)

13. Saters Baptist Church (1014 Sater Lane, Lutherville)

14. Community of Towson

9. Ladies' Bay View Mission



12. Woodbrook Baptist Church:

25 Stevenson Lane (formerly Eutaw Place Baptist Church) The church's Eutaw Place Room contains Miss Annie Armstrong's antique secretary and other items of historical interest.

13. Saters Baptist Church:

1014 Sater Lane, Lutherville (now called Chestnut Ridge Baptist Church) Founded in 1742, this is the oldest Baptist church in Maryland, started by Armstrong's great-great-grandfather, Henry Sater.

14. Towson:

Suburbs of Baltimore City in Baltimore County Dorcas Towson, of the family whose name lives on in the community Towson, was Armstrong's great-great-grandmother.