

W. L. SIKES, M. D. In a calling in which progress is dependent upon knowledge and skill, success is achieved only through the medium of individual merit. It is a wise provision of nature that learning cannot be inherited, and that each human enters the world on a fairly equal intellectual basis, for therefore each is dependent upon his own labors and application for the knowledge which fits him for the practical duties of existence. Each individual is called upon to master the same rudimental principles of knowledge and when this is accomplished it is found whether or not he has developed the ability to carry his energies still farther along special lines to fit him for particular work. While it is true that some may enter certain lines of business and attain success with only an elementary education, in professional life advancement and success depend fundamentally upon the efforts of the individual—his close application, his mastery of scientific principles and his ability to apply the possession of these to the affairs of life. There is no profession or calling perhaps which demands more from its devotees than that of medicine. Great credit is therefore due one who owes his prosperous and substantial professional standing to his own labors, as does Dr. W. L. Sikes, of Sylvester. Steadily he has advanced step by step until he has long since left the ranks of the many to stand among the successful few, until today he is accounted not only one of the leading members of the Worth County medical fraternity, but an influential and helpful citizen who has frequently represented his fellow-citizens in office of public trust and importance.

Doctor Sikes was born in Dooly County, Georgia, January 31, 1851, a son of Eli and Charlotte (Burch) Sikes. His parents were natives of Georgia, where they passed their entire lives. Eli Sikes was an agriculturist and stock raiser throughout his active career, with the exception of the time he spent as a soldier in the Confederate army, during the war between the states, when he was a member of the Georgia State Militia. In his later years he became a large land holder of Worth County, did much in the way of stock raising, and was known as one of the influential and wealthy men of his community at the time of his death, which occurred in 1896, when he was seventy-seven years of age. Mrs. Sikes passed away in 1892, in Worth County, Georgia, aged eighty-two years. There were six children in the family, as follows: Miss Sarah, who resides in Worth County; Miss Cynthia, who is deceased; John Wesley, who enlisted in the Confederate army during the Civil war, and met a soldier's death on the bloody battlefield of Gettysburg; Benjamin Franklin, who is a resident of Sylvester; Mrs. Elizabeth, who is deceased; and Dr. W. L.

The youngest of his parents' children, W. L. Sikes received his education in the public schools of Worth County, and his boyhood was spent on the homestead of his father, for whom he worked for several years after leaving school. The life of the planter, however, did not appeal to him, and, with the laudable ambition of entering professional life, he secured employment as a school teacher. With the money thus earned, at the age of twenty-two years, he entered the Louisville Medical College, and at the end of three years was graduated. He furthered his education along medical lines by a course at the Atlanta Medical College, from which he was graduated in 1879, with his cherished degree, and at once began practice in Worth County, where he has continued ever since. For a number of years he has had his office at Sylvester, but his patronage is not confined to this immediate community, for his rare skill and ability have gained him patients in all parts of the county. He is a valued member of the American Medical Association, the Worth County Medical Society and the Georgia State Medical Society.

Aside from his professional achievements, Doctor Sikes is well and favorably known in other lines, particularly as a citizen who has advocated all measures calculated to be of benefit to his community. The confidence in