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Philadelphia Conference Minutes

The Methodist Church

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One Hundred Seventy-fourth Session

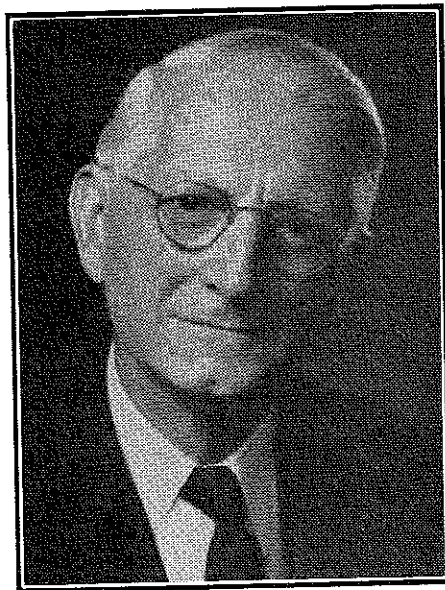
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struck it when he said of Wellington at his death, "We doubt not that for one so true there must be other and nobler work to do."

Certainly death is not the end, for God has a plan for the world. He has a plan for each individual life. The plan for the individual is that his life shall be as rich and full as he can possibly make it, that he shall literally become a son of the Most High. And if we have become sons and daughters of God, or have even progressed some distance toward the achievement of that goal, shall He whom we love and seek to serve permit death to draw a veil of darkness between us? To ask the question is to answer it. Indeed, death could not hold Him—neither can it hold any one of us if our faith is fixed in the son of God. Dr. W. B. Hinson of Portland, Oregon, died some years ago. He was a great preacher and one whom I was privileged to hear on several occasions. A short time before his death his physician told him he was in the grip of an unyielding disease. When he went before his congregation he acquainted them with the doctor's verdict and then added these words, "I walked out where I live, five miles out of this city and I looked at the river in which I rejoice, and I looked at the stately trees, that are always God's own poetry to my soul. Then, in the evening, I looked up into the great sky where God was lighting his lamps, and I said, 'I may not see you many times more, but Mountain, I shall be alive when you are gone; and River, I shall be alive when you cease running to the sea; and Stars, I shall be alive when you have fallen from your sockets in a great down-pulling of the universe.'"

This is the faith which looks through death and into the gates of that shining city where we shall ever be with the Lord. Of course God's son could not be holden of death, neither can these whom we remember this day, and neither can you if you are His son or daughter.

MAJOR JACOB DONALD HOCKMAN



Major Jacob Donald Hockman, Retired Chaplain, U. S. Army, "a good Soldier of Jesus Christ." Major Hockman was the son of Jacob and Amanda Hockman and was born at Craighead, Cumberland County, Pa., August 21, 1879.

He attended Mercersburg Academy and subsequently graduated from Dickinson College, Class of 1910. He was a member of Phi Delta Theta. He also attended Drew Theological Seminary. He was ordained to the ministry and became a member of the Philadelphia Conference.

At the beginning of World War I he resigned as pastor to enlist in the Ambulance Corps but, before being ordered to France, he was commissioned as a chaplain in the regular army. He served through World War I as chaplain of the 55th Infantry Regiment of the 7th Division and was awarded the Silver Cross for service beyond the call of duty.

In 1933, in what he often indicated was one of his most rewarding accomplishments, Chaplain Hockman organized the welfare, recreational and religious work of the Civilian Conservation Corps in Southern California and personally conducted services at many of the mountain camps, many times holding eight services a day. He continued this activity unaided until he enlisted the aid of civilian clergymen. He retired from the army in 1935 because of a heart ailment.

He died on October 22, 1959 at the Walter Reed Hospital in Washington, D. C., and was buried in Arlington Cemetery. Services were conducted in the Chapel of Fort Myer, Virginia, by Major General George F. Rixey, former Chief of Army Chaplains. Chaplain Hockman is survived by the former Edythe Stevens, daughter of the late Dr. Emory M. Stevens who was for many years District Superintendent of the Central Pennsylvania Conference, and three daughters.

Not many members of the Philadelphia Conference knew Brother Hockman. Those who did shared a wonderful fellowship with one of the most winsome characters and a true Christian "of purest ray serene." We who knew him loved him. He was an honor to the Philadelphia Conference.

In beautiful Arlington Cemetery, where lie the heroes of our beloved country, we leave our honored Comrade of the Cross until the day breaks and the shadows flee away.

GEORGE PAUL BECK, SR.

WILLIAM CHARLES SKEATH

William Charles Skeath was born in Mahanoy City, Pennsylvania, December 1, 1879, the son of James M. and Elizabeth Woodward Skeath. He attended Williamsport Seminary (now Lycoming College) and Dickinson College. He was ordained in Philadelphia in 1904. Dr. Skeath received the Master of Arts degree from Dickinson College in 1917, and two years later was given the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity by Oskaloosa University, Iowa.

On June 25, 1905, he was united in marriage to Ray A. Shirlock, and of this union there was one child, now Mrs. Catherine Skeath Beers. Mrs. Ray Skeath died during the Flu epidemic, March 1918. On April 14, 1921, William C. Skeath and Marie Hoffman were united in marriage. And, of this union there was one child, now Mrs. Marion Skeath Friend.

Dr. Skeath was a member of the Philadelphia Conference for forty-seven years before his retirement, in 1951 after a pastorate of sixteen years at Haws Avenue Methodist Church, Norristown. He served for twenty years on the Methodist Board of Ministerial Training, and was Chairman of the Board for several years. He was a Manager of the Philadelphia City Missionary Society, an organizer of the Good Fellowship Club and for many years the efficient Secretary of the Methodist Social Union. He was eighty when he died.

He was the author of several religious books, including "Building the Congregation," "His Last Words," "Joyful Mystery," and "Thou Preparest a Table."

Before his final pastorate at Norristown, he had served churches including Park Avenue, Fletcher, Sarah D. Cooper, Sioam (West Philadelphia), Mt. Hermon, Chestnut Hill and Wissinoming. During his stay at Norristown he directed an improvement program in the Church