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The Virginia Conference Annual

containing the

JOURNAL OF PROCEEDINGS OF THE ONE HUNDRED
SIXTY-FIRST SESSION OF THE VIRGINIA
ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE
METHODIST CHURCH

together with

REPORTS, MEMOIRS *and* STATISTICS

Edited and Published for the Conference by
C. A. TUCKER

ROANOKE, VIRGINIA

October 20-25, 1943

WARD SHAW

E. Forrest

Point Pleasant, West Virginia, October 3, 1900. He was the grandson of the late Jane Shaw. He was the grandson of the late West Virginia Conference from 1856. He served in the Episcopal ministry, the Rev. E. Forrest, and the Rev. George C. Shaw of

born in Columbus, Ohio, and was a graduate of Buckhannon, West Virginia. He was transferred upon him by the American Bible Society in 1942. Converted at Point Pleasant, he did supply work in various Methodist churches during college to prepare himself for the ministry. He felt the call. Following his graduation from the West Virginia Conference.

His wife, Della Gertrude Wheeler of Rowlesburg, West Virginia, and two daughters, Frances E. Willard and

His first pastorate in West Virginia, Mr. Shaw served in West Virginia. During this time, in 1921, he served at Galion, Ohio, who was a great help to him to his death. In later years he served in the Episcopal Church in North Carolina and in Waco, North Carolina, and Portsmouth, Virginia in 1939 and served Charlotte and

He was elected by the Bishops under whom he served in the Episcopal Discipline and was loyal to and supported it. He possessed a splendid library, unusual for a minister of his time.

His second year at Guilford charge, he was suddenly and tragically killed when his car was derailed as he attempted to cross the track while returning to their home from the post office. They were killed instantly. He was a man of noble character and to the people whom they served and to the par-

His funeral services were conducted in the Bloxom Church, of Parksley, President of the Eastern Virginia Conference, R. M. Robertson, T. J. C. Heath and were shipped to West Virginia to his old home

REV. ROBERT HARTMAN HUMPHREY

By Thomas Rosser Reeves

Among the many heroes of this war, probably the most unassuming, unheralded and unsung are those gallant soldiers of God, the chaplains, who are proving by their deeds and their deaths that they can "take it" with the bravest and best of the magnificent men to whom they minister. I speak of one of these.

Robert Hartman Humphrey was born in Garret, Indiana, July 11, 1900. His mother, a Presbyterian, died early. His father did not become a Christian until late in life. At sixteen, Robert Humphrey was out in the world "on his own." He was soundly converted in a Methodist Church in Tampa, Florida, just before his seventeenth birthday and two months afterward enlisted in the U. S. Army, 31st Division, was sent overseas and served in the 101st Infantry, 26th Division. After his return from France and his honorable discharge from the army, April 26, 1919, he visited a sister living in Hampton, Va., and there he became a member of our church and finally a minister in our Conference. Upon completion of three years of study at Randolph-Macon Academy at Bedford, Va., he married Miss Maybelle Plunkett, of Lynchburg, Va., on September 16, 1922, and came into the Conference on trial at the ensuing sessions. He was sent to South View, Lynchburg, and served for two years. There on May 27, 1924, Maybelle Clair Humphrey, his only child, was given. She and her mother survive him. He then served West Campbell Circuit four years, Middle Bedford Circuit four years, and Concord Circuit four years. During these pastorates he had been pursuing his work at Lynchburg College and he took his B.A. in 1936. Then followed three years at Wakefield, one year at Sledd Memorial, Danville, and after five months on Matthews Circuit he was called to the colors for active duty. He had held a commission as First Lieutenant in the Chaplains' Reserve Corps since May 2, 1931. He was at once assigned to the 104th Q. M. Regiment and was attached to the 116th Infantry, July 15, 1941. He was promoted to Captain February 1, 1942, and was attached to the 29th Division Headquarters, September 7, 1942. The following October he was sent to England. There he was promoted to Major on December 4, 1942. Upon the arrival of Bishop A. W. Leonard in England, Major Humphrey was given detached service as the Bishop's aid. He planned the trips and accompanied Bishop Leonard and his distinguished party first to Ireland, then to Scotland, next to Iceland where on May 3, 1943, he was killed in the plane that crashed and took the lives of 14 of the 15 persons on board including Bishop Leonard and Lt. Gen. Frank M. Andrews.

The funeral service for the group of fourteen was held May 8, 1943, at 9:45 a. m. in the State Cathedral Church at Borg Square in Reykjavik. The committal service was in Fossvogur Cemetery, located near an army camp, just outside Reykjavik, on a grassy plain sloping toward the bay. The weather was clear and cool with occasional snow flurries. The entire occasion was marked by the dignity of precise military performance and by the unusual beauty of the religious services. The burial was in that portion of the cemetery allotted to the American Army from the early days of the occupation and the graves were in a separate row, the westernmost being that of Gen. Andrews and the easternmost that of Bishop Leonard. Between these two graves, from west to east, the others were arranged in order of their military rank, Major Humphrey's grave being sixth in the row.

On May 11, in the Royal Military Chapel, Wellington Barracks, London,

at 12 noon, a memorial service of the utmost dignity and beauty was held for the entire group.

Many services were held in memory of Major Humphrey. On May 7th the Jews of his Division held a service in his honor.

On May 9th at 4:00 p. m. a memorial service was held in Memorial Church, Lynchburg, and that same evening a similar service was held in the Methodist Church, Andover, England.

On May 11th a special service in his memory was held at Camp Myers.

On May 16th a special memorial service for him was held by his Division in England at which one of our Virginia Conference chaplains had a part. On this same date the people of Wakefield, Va., had a similar service in the Methodist Church.

Brig. Gen. E. W. Opie wrote of him: "He did a wonderful work in the 116th Infantry while I was its commander, and all of us were better men for having known him and for his ministry to us. His consecration, his sincerity, his fine ability for expounding Christian precepts and values, his lovable nature, and his unfailing good humor, and his human qualities endeared him to us and influenced our lives strongly, as they did thousands of others he reached through his ministry. . . . Such men never die—their good works go on for generations."

From England Maj. Gen. L. T. Gerow wrote Mrs. Humphrey: "I knew your husband intimately, and not only admired him but also loved him for his unselfish devotion to duty; his steadfast adherence to the tenets of his faith; his untiring efforts to instill in us a more perfect knowledge and love of God to sustain us in our daily life and during the test of battle yet to come. He has passed on but before his passing he left with the officers and men of this Division a heritage that will carry on through eternity. I have not only lost a fine staff officer and a soldier, but a staunch comrade and devoted friend as well.

"I am deeply grieved that he could not continue to carry on in the many fields of service in our army today, where one can find people that so dreadfully need God. His guidance will be sorely missed. I only hope that I can do as well with my job as he did with his."

In the light of these warm praises there is no need of any tribute from me, who was his Presiding Elder for three years and knew him intimately and loved him well. I think it was Macaulay who said it is hard for people to realize that a man was born among them and with whom they touched elbows every day was made of finer stuff than themselves. The passing of no preacher whom I have known in my lifetime has evoked such universal grief and such unstinted praise, especially from those not normally in close contact with the church. A soldier boy from a camp in Florida wrote: "I know he will be sorely missed by all his friends at a time when they need him most, but I feel he has only been 'transferred' to a place where many of our country's bravest and best have gone and will go before the victory is ours—a place where he can carry on the work he loved so well." Like his Lord, he loved to serve. He inspired, planned, and put on the entertainments which our soldiers overseas gave last Christmas to more than 3,500 orphaned English children, victims of the war. He was happiest in making others happy. But enough!

Surely a land where a motherless lad "out on his own" can rise to such heights of selfhood and service is no mean country. It is worth living for; it is worth dying for. And yet, think of this fine man—dead before he was forty-three and a soldier in two World Wars!

He died in the service of his country, his church, and his Christ. The cross was on his collar, on his tongue, in his heart, in his life, in his death. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."

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*O arctic Iceland's rock-ribbed coast!
O lonely land forlorn!
Hold thou in trust his sacred dust
Till God's eternal morn.*

BISHOP COLLINS DENNY

By George Wesley Jones

Bishop Collins Denny came of English ancestry. It was Sunday, the day that he was born, at Winchester, Virginia, May 28, 1854. He died in Richmond May 12, 1943. His measure of days exceeded generously the expectation of the Psalmist. By other marks also he was an extraordinary man.

His education was thorough. An A.B. of Princeton; a B.L. degree from the University of Virginia; and again the Masters degree from Princeton. He also had graduate diplomas in Philosophy and English, from the University of Virginia. He began the practice of law in the city of Baltimore in 1877. His love for this profession remained with him all his life, and the courts of Richmond, recognizing this, welcomed him to be seated with the talented practitioners of the day. But the evangelistic note was sounded with commanding and persuasive power in Baltimore when Bishop Denny was a young man. It affected him with indefinable yearning. He turned from law to give his voice in an urge that men know and follow the Way, the Truth, and the Life. In the year 1880, he was admitted into the membership of the Baltimore Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. For eleven years he filled pastoral charges in Maryland, Virginia, and West Virginia. Then he was appointed chaplain to the University of Virginia. Following this came an invitation to fill the chair as Professor of Philosophy in Vanderbilt University. He remained at Vanderbilt nineteen years. During this time he was preaching continually in the pulpits of the Presbyterian, Baptist and Methodist Churches of Nashville. He was an eloquent preacher, and some of the churches would secure his services for months at a time.

Bishop Denny was elected to the General Conference in 1894 and at that session was made a member of the Book Committee. He became Chairman of this Committee four years later. By his wise management the publishing interests were established upon a sure and lasting foundation. He was appointed Fraternal Delegate to the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1908.

The General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, meeting at Asheville, North Carolina, in 1910 elected him to the Episcopacy. Great and good men of exceptional stature composed the College of Bishops at that time. Alpheus Wilson, Eugene Hendricks, Charles B. Galloway, Embree Hoss, Warren Candler and others—the excellency of the church. Bishop Denny was elected Secretary to this body almost from the first of his fellowship there, and retained this place to the near close of his service.

He came to live in Richmond in the spring of 1911. It was good to have him in our midst. In conversation, imparting a spirit that affected us with a pleasure in knowledge, and joy in accomplishment. He gave strength to the churches for every noble purpose. His official administration was most careful and painstaking. Tireless and conscientious, he guarded every interest of the church. The impulse was to go forward with closed ranks, and none straggling. A pungent editor wrote of Bishop Kavanaugh, presiding over an Annual Confer-

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