

*School of Religion*  
*Faculty Publications and Presentations*

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Memorials 1997

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## MEMORIALS

ROBERT LESLIE ALDEN

Robert Leslie Alden was born on December 10, 1937, in Brockton, Massachusetts, and grew up in that area. He graduated with his B.A. degree in Bible and English from Barrington College in 1959 and three years later received his B.D. degree from Westminster Theological Seminary. His Ph.D. degree in Bible, archeology and ancient Near Eastern history was earned from Hebrew Union College–Jewish Institute of Religion in Cincinnati, Ohio, in 1966.

It was in Cincinnati that Bob met his future wife, Mary Jane. They were introduced at a singspiration at Norwood Baptist Church, where they were later married on June 4, 1966. Soon thereafter the Conservative Baptist Theological Seminary in Denver appointed Bob to teach OT. He continued to teach there for thirty years.

Bob and Mary Jane traveled extensively throughout Europe, Africa, the Middle East, and more recently New Zealand. He taught in Germany, Sweden, Amsterdam, Russia, the Ukraine, the Ivory Coast, Uganda and many other places. He wrote a three-volume commentary on Psalms (Moody) as well as commentaries on Job (Broadman) and Proverbs (Baker). Many of his articles have appeared in journals and Bible encyclopedias. He felt that perhaps his greatest contribution was his work as a translator of the *New International Version*. He specialized on OT poetic literature and had just recently finished chairing an editorial committee for the *New International Reader's Version*.

Robert Alden also enjoyed mountain climbing, cross-country skiing and model railroading. He had scaled all of the 14,000-foot peaks in Colorado and 341 of the 637 mountains in the state over 13,000 feet, mostly after bypass surgery in 1979. Bob loved the mountains so much that he is buried in a small cemetery near their family's cabin in South Park near Como, Colorado.

Bob passed peacefully out of this life and into glory on September 3, 1996, as the result of a heart attack. He is survived by Mary Jane, his wife of thirty years. They have two single adult children: John, a graduate of Wheaton College, who is in the nuclear Navy; and Grace Ann, a recent graduate of the University of Colorado, who presently lives with Mary Jane.

Robert was a member of the Evangelical Theological Society for over thirty years. He rarely missed an annual meeting and was one of the first to preregister for our annual fall conference. We shall miss him.

DONALD W. BURDICK

Donald W. Burdick was born on July 28, 1917, in Akron, New York. His elementary and secondary education was received in the public schools of

New York. In 1940 he graduated from the pastor's course at Moody Bible Institute and then married his high-school sweetheart, Violet Gamin, on August 16. They were married for forty-nine years before Violet preceded him in death in 1989.

In 1945 Donald received his A.B. degree from Wheaton College (summa cum laude), followed by his B.D. (1946), Th.M. (1952) and Th.D. (1954), all from Northern Baptist Theological Seminary. He pastored the Kostner Avenue Baptist Church of Chicago from 1945 to 1950 and also taught Greek and Bible part time at Northern Seminary from 1947 to 1950.

Donald Burdick joined the faculty of Conservative Baptist Theological Seminary in Denver first as associate professor of NT and then as full professor from 1954 until his retirement. He served as librarian for ten years and edited the *Conservative Seminarian* for twenty-eight years.

Burdick contributed to the *Wycliffe Bible Commentary* and *Wycliffe Bible Encyclopedia*. He authored *Tongues: To Speak or Not to Speak* and contributed chapters to several other volumes. He wrote the commentary on James in the *Expositor's Bible Commentary* as well as two commentaries on the Johannine epistles, one being an extensive commentary on the Greek text. He was a translator and member of the editorial committee for the *New International Version* and was an associate editor of the *NIV Study Bible*.

Burdick was a member of the American Schools of Oriental Research, spent months abroad studying the places of Paul's journeys, and lectured on study tours to Greece, Turkey, Jordan and Israel. He served several churches as interim pastor and was cofounder and acting pastor of Covenant Baptist Church in the Denver area.

Donald Burdick was an active member of the Evangelical Theological Society for forty years, from 1952 until 1992, after which he was too ill to participate. On January 4, 1996, after an extended illness, he went to be with the Savior he served so faithfully. He died at the age of 78 years. He is survived by a daughter, Sharon Ruth Sincock, her husband Greg, and their two children, Austin and Shannon; and by a son, Donald Douglas Burdick. Both children live in Thousand Oaks, California. He is also survived by a brother, Merlyn Burdick, and his wife Joline, who live in Commerce City, Colorado.

#### RALPH LESTER KEIPER

Ralph Lester Keiper was born on March 29, 1911, in Easton, Pennsylvania. At birth he was legally blind and only had limited vision in one eye. He attended the Yellowbrook School for the Blind in Easton. Ralph was saved as a teenager just after graduating from high school. He was invited to a Bible conference where Donald Grey Barnhouse was speaking. There he trusted Christ as his personal Lord and Savior.

Ralph then took the pastor's course at Moody Bible Institute, finishing in 1936. He was graduated from Lafayette College with a B.A. in 1940 and received his B.D. degree from Eastern Baptist Seminary in 1943.

While speaking one Sunday in a teacher-training program at Lehigh Baptist Church in Philadelphia, Ralph met Nan Michelsen. They were married in that same church on December 20, 1952. Ralph and Nan had no children, but they labored together in the Lord's vineyard for more than forty-four years.

For nine years Ralph pastored two churches in Jersey City, including the Greenville Heights Baptist Church. He taught at Philadelphia College of the Bible for an additional nine years. From 1957 to 1967 he joined Barnhouse in Philadelphia, where he served as associated editor of *Eternity* magazine and also wrote for *Moody Monthly*. He spoke on the Bible Study Hour and penned some fifteen to twenty booklets, besides *The Power of Biblical Thinking* (Revell, 1977).

In 1967 Ralph joined the faculty of Conservative Baptist Theological Seminary, Denver, as professor of English Bible. From 1976 until 1991 he served the seminary as a conference speaker. Recently he developed Alzheimer's disease and had internal bleeding due to a stomach problem. He passed quietly into the presence of Christ while in his sleep on November 12, 1996, at the Rose Hospital in Denver. He died at the age of 85 and is buried in Nan's family cemetery in Sultan, Washington.

Ralph Keiper traveled the world over, spoke at countless Bible conferences and will be remembered for his courage and vision. He had been a member of the Evangelical Theological Society since 1969.

#### THOMAS EDWARD McCOMISKEY

Thomas Edward McComiskey was born on August 22, 1928, in Paterson, New Jersey, where he also grew up and was graduated from high school in 1946. He was saved as a teenager at church under the godly influence of his father, who taught Sunday school. Thomas took art training and professional lettering and did a series of cartoons before being called to the gospel ministry.

Tom received a diploma from Philadelphia College of the Bible in 1953 and graduated with honor from The King's College with a B.A. in 1953. There he served on gospel teams and was art editor of the yearbook and student body president. He used the next three years to complete his B.D. in OT at Faith Theological Seminary, studying under Allan MacRae and Laird Harris.

Tom was ordained to the gospel ministry by the Park Avenue Baptist Church in Paterson in July 1956. He pastored churches in Folsom, Pennsylvania, and Trenton, New Jersey, until 1961. During his first pastorate Tom was united in marriage to Eleanor Mary Carp on June 22, 1957, at Haddon Heights Baptist Church with Kenneth Masteller presiding.

Tom received the M.A. and Ph.D. degrees in Near Eastern and Judaic studies from Brandeis University, finishing in 1963 and 1965 respectively. His teaching career began at The King's College, where he served from 1964 to 1969. During that time he earned his Th.M. degree at Westminster Theological Seminary in NT.

Thomas then completed twenty-three years as professor of Semitic languages and OT at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in Deerfield, Illinois, retiring in 1992.

Besides his teaching, pastoring and guest lecturing, McComiskey was a prolific writer. He penned almost ten books and commentaries, authored many articles, contributed countless entries to various Bible dictionaries and encyclopedias, and wrote dozens of book reviews that appeared in *JETS* and in other journals. Tom delivered a number of papers at ETS, SBL and IBR.

Tom and Eleanor were married for thirty-nine years. They had three children. While visiting their daughter Karen, son-in-law Scott Pickard and grandsons Jonathan and Stephen in Texas at Thanksgiving of 1995, Tom suffered from collapsed vertebrae due to multiple myeloma, cancer of the bone marrow, and spent nearly seven weeks in the hospital and then more than three additional months recovering at Karen's home. Shortly after returning home to Illinois, Tom died on March 4, 1996, from a pulmonary embolism. He walked across the room, sat down and was suddenly gone—to meet his Master in heaven.

Besides his wife, daughter and two grandsons, Tom is survived by his son Douglas and his wife Robin, both graduates of TEDS. Douglas teaches at North American Baptist Seminary in Sioux Falls. Tom is also survived by his son Bruce, a professor at East Carolina University, and his wife Cynthia.

Thomas McComiskey had been a member of the Evangelical Theological Society for nearly thirty years.

#### HAROLD GENE STIGERS

Harold Gene Stigers was born on June 5, 1917, in Spokane, Washington. His father Robert was a teamster, and the family moved to California's central valley during Harold's early years. Harold was saved late in high school, partly due to the influence of his Christian mother. He studied architecture at the University of California at Berkeley and received his B.A. degree in December of 1941. Harold met his future wife, Mary J. Olson, from Ripon, California, in the Bible League, a Christian organization at the university.

Harold and Mary were married on January 4, 1943, in Wilmington, Delaware, during the time Harold studied at Faith Theological Seminary where he received his B.D. degree. He served in a Bible Presbyterian Church in Columbus, Ohio, in the mid 1940s, then worked for *The Christian Beacon* in Collingswood, New Jersey, from 1948 to 1956. During all those years Harold supported his growing family with his architectural work, but his great love was to serve the Lord.

Harold earned a Ph.D. degree from Dropsie College in Philadelphia in 1953, specializing in archeology and languages. He taught part time at Faith Seminary from 1953 to 1955 and then moved to St. Louis where he lectured at Covenant College from 1956 to 1960 and continued to work as an

architect. He also lectured at Washington University of St. Louis and was a visiting professor at Wheaton College.

Harold spent many seasons on the archeological dig at Abila in Jordan. As an architect he drew many of the diagrams needed to display the findings. He felt that one of his most lasting contributions was his 352-page commentary on Genesis, published by Zondervan in 1976.

Harold was a member of the Archaeological Institute of America and the Near East Archaeological Society and was an ordained minister in the Presbyterian Church in America. He had been a member of the Evangelical Theological Society for more than thirty-one years and rarely missed a national meeting.

Harold loved photography and reading mysteries. He also loved to travel. He and Mary continued to live in St. Louis until ill health earlier in 1996 caused them to move to Chattanooga. There Mary died of cancer on April 1, and the loss of his wife of fifty-three years took a heavy toll on Harold. He passed into the presence of Christ on October 9, 1996, at the age of 79 years. He died of kidney failure in a hospital in Rossville, Georgia, and is buried in Forest Hills Cemetery in Chattanooga.

Harold Stigers is survived by his three daughters, one son, six grandsons, two granddaughters and two sisters. Daughters Sarah E. Lambert and Rebecca Dodson reside in Chattanooga, while Robbie Donaldson lives in Lookout Mountain. Son Tim Stigers lives in Yorktown, Indiana. Harold's sisters are Margaret Byrd of Coleville, California, and Dorothy Hunter of Sun Valley, Nevada. His grandchildren are Rachel Dupee, Andrew Lambert, Joel, Jeremy and Sarah Donaldson, and Joshua, Peter and Luke Stigers.