

[Van Schaick, John]

VAN SCHAICK WAS ALUMNUS OF CANTON U.

The Rev John Van Schaick, a leading Washington clergyman, editor and civic worker, died there last week after a brief illness at the age of 75.

For many years he was pastor of the Universalist National Memorial Church, becoming eventually its minister emeritus. He was president of the District Board of Education for several years just before the first World War.

From 1922 to 1945 Dr. Van Schaick was editor of the Christian Leader in Boston and during the first World War he served as a relief commissioner for the American Red Cross in a small section of Belguim [Belgium] that remained outside German occupation. Upon his return to the United States he wrote about his war experiences in a book entitled "The Little Corner Never Conquered." He was also the author of a number of other volumes.

Born in Cobleskill, N. Y., Dr. Van Schaick received his education at Union College, St. Lawrence University, Tufts College and at the Universities of Liege and Brussels.

He taught English and history briefly before entering the ministry in 1898 as assistant pastor of the Church of Divine Paternity in New York. He came to Washington in 1900 as pastor of the Church of Our Father and continued in that pastorate until 1918.

Surviving are his widow, the former Julia Asenath Romaine; a sister, Mrs. Arden L. Norton of Cobleskill, and a brother, George S. Van Schaick, a lawyer of Bronxville, N. Y.

Rev. Dr. Van Schaick well known in northern New York. In 1910, he was awarded an honorary degree of doctor of divinity by the theological school at St. Lawrence University. He wrote numerous articles for the Universalist Leader, the denomination's magazine. He attended many commencements at St. Lawrence.

His brother, Attorney George S. Van Schaick, was one of the most prominent students at St. Lawrence University in the class of 1905, being graduated with honors. He was a classmate of the late Robert S. Waterman of Ogdensburg. With Louis H. Pink, New York, a member of his class, and Rev. Clarence Skinner, he was responsible for bringing debating to a high level in the institution.

After graduating from St. Lawrence, George S. Van Schaick studied at Yale and later established a law practice in Rochester. In 1931, Franklin D. Roosevelt, then governor of the state, appointed him state superintendent of insurance.

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DR. JOHN VAN SCHAICK

Dr. John van Schaick has joined the Comrades who have gone on ahead, on his seventy-sixth year. His death occurred in the Walter Reed Hospital in Washington, D.C., on May 23. He was born in Cobleskill, the son of former Senator and Mrs. John van Schaick, who were of Holland Dutch extraction. "Dr. John" was always proud of this background. He graduated from the village high school and in 1894 he received the degree of bachelor of arts from Union College. His interest was in teaching and for two years he served as principal of the public school in Sharon Springs. Leaving this position, he became professor of English and history in the College of Emporia, Kansas. Four years of teaching was enough for this young man, for his major interest was in the ministry of the Universalist church.

In 1898, he became assistant minister of the Church of the Divine Paternity [Fourth Universalist] in New York City, with Dr. Charles F. Eaton as the minister. Here he found his life-interest and began a remarkable ministry which was to continue for fifty-one years. In this church, he found his loved one, Miss Julia A. Romaine, and she had been indeed the devoted and loving wife. Their pastorate in the Universalist church in Washington, D.C. began in 1900 and ended in 1918, when they were abroad in Red Cross work. He was a community minister and for several years he served as president of the Board of Education of the District of Columbia. He was pastor emeritus of the church that he served illustriously for eighteen years and was closely associated with Dr. Seth R. Brooks in all church activities. This church is now known as the Universalist National Memorial Church.

In 1915, with Mrs. Van Schaick, he went to Rotterdam to help the Rockefeller Foundation War Relief Commission and the Commission for Relief in Belgium. In 1917, they served in France with the Red Cross Commission. Their first work was behind the German lines and their second assignment was behind the lines of the Allies. His book, "The Little Corner Never Conquered," published in 1922, described their activity in a small area of Belgium which was not occupied by the Germans. His book, "Love That Never Faileth," published in 1933, gives a complete picture of their work and associations in western Europe, directly after the end of World War I. As a lieutenant colonel and commissioner for Belgium of the Red Cross, Dr. John attained wide prominence and was decorated by the late King Leopold as an officer in the order of Leopold. Then came honorary degrees from the Universities of Liege and Brussels. His honorary degrees were doctor of divinity from St. Lawrence University and doctor of literature from Tufts College.

From 1922 to 1945, he was editor of "The Christian Leader," our national magazine, and his work in this field was likewise outstanding. Under his

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editorialship the magazine became one of the leading religious journals. His editorials were fearless and vital on matters relating to the church and society. His cruising articles, signed "Johannes," were always a feature, possessed as he was with the ability to see what so many could not see. It was saddening in his last decade to note his failing eyesight and he resigned from the editorship for this reason. His other books were: "Cruising Cross Country," "Nature's Cruisings," and "The Little Hill Farm."

This farm was a hallowed spot. It was located near Richmondville, [Schoharie Co.] N.Y., in a section known as Beard's Hollow and his writings made it appear as Heaven's best and to him it was. Near this summer home, there was an abandoned church which he reopened fifteen years ago. The summer program of services attracted folk from every section and every Sunday was a day of re-union for former residents. This project was always a source of great satisfaction to Dr. John.

He was always Dr. John to younger associates and to them he was always friend and helper. His benefactions were many and rarely publicized. His salary as editor of "The Christian Leader" was a nominal sum. As a host, he was always royal and fortunate were they who were his guests. He was truly a friend to every man and all were his brothers. He proved it. Home was always in Washington, so he commuted between Boston and Washington every week-end.

He is survived by his widow; a sister, Mrs. Arden L. Norton of Cobleskill and a brother, Attorney George S. van Schaick of Bronxville. The memorial service was conducted in the Universalist National Memorial Church in Washington on May 25 by Dr. Seth R. Brooks, Dr. Emerson H. Lalone, his successor as editor of "The Christian Leader," and Dr. Robert Cummins, general superintendent.

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