

Obituary

EDGAR LEGARE PENNINGTON

Edgar L. Pennington was born at Madison, Georgia, on January 15, 1891, a son of Hinton Crawford and Helena Ligon Reeves Pennington. From Madison High School he went to the University of Georgia, where he was graduated B.A. in 1911 and LL.B. in 1914. For three years he practiced law in Georgia, and then entered the Navy as an Ensign in the supply corps. He was on the USS *President Lincoln* when it was sunk by a German submarine.

After leaving the Navy, Mr. Pennington studied for the ministry, and was ordained on February 2, 1921, by the Bishop of Central New York. The next year he became Rector of Calvary Church in Homer, New York, and took the opportunity to study at Cornell, where he received an M.A. in 1923. In that year he moved to St. Luke's Church in Marianna, Florida, and thence to St. Andrew's in Jacksonville, Grace Church in Ocala, and Holy Cross Church in Miami. In September, 1941, he was recalled to active duty as Lieutenant-Commander (Chaplains' Corps), USNR. He passed the greater part of the next five years in hospitalships at Auckland, New Zealand, the Submarine Base at Pearl Harbor, and at Camp Lejeune. After his discharge he became Rector of St. John's Church at Mobile. Here he raised funds for the erection of a new church building in a more desirable location.

Aside from his personal charm, the most remarkable thing about Mr. Pennington was the breadth and depth of his intellectual curiosity. He never missed an opportunity for study; he attended the University of Auckland when stationed in New Zealand, and Union Theological Seminary when he returned. The STD which he received from the University of the South was highly deserved. His interests included art, astronomy, and music. In the last he took advanced university courses, and composed for the piano and violin. He took instruction in oil painting and practiced that art with some success. Even

his law remained an absorbing hobby, and in 1942 he qualified to practice before the Supreme Court of the United States.

Of all these arts, Pennington found history the most attractive. He was one of the founders of the *Historical Magazine of the Protestant Episcopal Church*, and to its pages, beginning with the first number, he contributed many articles. In 1949 he was deservedly appointed Historiographer of the Episcopal Church in the United States. His largest work was *Apostle of New Jersey: John Talbot, 1645-1727*, Philadelphia, 1938. At the present moment there are in press no less than three of his books, dealing with Christianity among the West Saxons, the Church of England and the Reformation, and the Episcopal Church in the Confederacy. There is a selective bibliography of his lesser works in the *Historical Magazine* for March, 1952.

We first came to know Mr. Pennington when in the course of his development as an historian he had just discovered that references to books should describe them exactly; he called upon us to identify some of the works in his own bibliographies. When he submitted for our *Proceedings* an article on "The Beginnings of the Library in Charles Town, South Carolina," we found it so interesting that we accepted and printed it before his election to membership, which occurred in 1935. To later issues he contributed papers on George Ross, Robert Jenney, Nathaniel Evans, and the Thomas Bray Associates and their work among the Negroes. It was typical of the man that he appreciated rather than resented our editorial revisions. He appreciated membership in the Society, and made many small gifts to the Library.

Last November 13 Mr. Pennington went to the hospital because of a severe cold. The doctors discovered an unsuspected heart condition and convinced him that he should remain and rest for three or four weeks. All was going well when on December 10 he experienced his first seizure, and died immediately. He is survived by his wife, Gertrude Guerry Barnett, to whom he was married on June 25, 1940.

C. K. S.

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