

MEMORIAL MINUTE

The Rev. Charles Ernest Scott, D.D.

1876 - 1961

The Commission made record of the death on November 25, 1961, of the Rev. Charles Ernest Scott, D.D., in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, at the age of 85 years. Dr. and Mrs. Scott, who served in China for 33 years, were retired on October 31, 1941.

Dr. Scott was born on June 22, 1876 in Alma, Michigan. He attended the public schools and then studied at Alma College graduating from that institution in 1898. One one of his furloughs from China he was given the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity by his Alma Mater. In 1899 he received his M.A. from the University of Pennsylvania. That same year he entered Princeton Theological Seminary taking lecture courses at Harvard University the following summer. The year 1900-1901 was spent on a fellowship at the University of Munich, Germany. He completed his theological course at Princeton Seminary and certain graduate work at Princeton University in 1903. He then served for a short time under the Board of Home Missions of the Presbyterian Church among the lumbermen of Northern Michigan and, later, held a brief pastorate in Albion, Michigan.

On September 9, 1903, he was married to Miss Clara Emily Heywood. Dr. and Mrs. Scott sailed for China in 1906 under appointment as missionaries of the then Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions. For several years they were stationed in Tsingtao, the port city of Shantung province. Dr. Scott spent the next dozen years in itinerating extensively and continuously in the rural villages of the Tsingtao area, superintending country churches and becoming thoroughly familiar with with life of the people. Meanwhile Mrs. Scott carried on the home in Tsingtao where both parents were of a mind in developing wide and worthy interests in their growing children. Theirs was a home where good books and fine music formed a significant cultural background and enrichment of the Christian heritage of the family.

When the family was transferred to Tsinan, the provincial capital, Dr. Scott continued his work as an itinerating evangelist. The pastors in his field encouraged him to feel that he had an especially valuable ministry to perform in conducting Bible classes in the churches of the area and he gave himself eagerly to this service.

This work was interrupted by floods and famines that visited the Yellow River region and Dr. Scott became active in relief tasks. At one time he directed a veritable army of Chinese famine relief workmen, estimated at 100,000, in repairing embankments, digging out silted-up rivers and running trench drains through the countryside. He thought that this effort was "a great and practical way to show an anguished people.....that Christ's religion is full of compassion, caring for bodies as well as souls of humans."

When this task in behalf of the stricken populace was finished the leaders of a number of villages united to honor their benefactor by erecting a monument to Dr. Scott. On one side of the pillar was inscribed their own tribute. When he was asked what he would like to have engraved on the other side he requested that John 3:16 be carved into the stone. He gave Bibles to the magistrate and other headmen who had united to honor him and, later, he was assured that the Scriptures were being diligently read. In a letter written home at this time he affirmed his belief that "these men seem, like Cornelius, to be near the Kingdom" and he asked that prayer be made for them.

As the years went by, Dr. and Mrs. Scott experienced personal loss in the death of their daughter and her husband the Rev. and Mrs. John C. Stam, at the hands of Chinese communist bandits, and they witnessed the hastening ills to which the land of their second love was becoming a prey. In 1939 the Japanese encroachments upon China led to the permanent withdrawal of Dr. and Mrs. Scott to the homeland.

After their retirement on October 31, 1941, Dr. Scott maintained an active interest in China. He travelled widely and lectured on behalf of China and the Christian Church in that land. He was also an active member of organizations devoted to fostering interest in China. Among these were the American-China Policy Association, the Council against Communist Aggression, the American-Asian Educational Exchange, and the Committee of One Million. He was the president of the American Board of the North China Theological Seminary and was a member of the Corporation of the Presbyterian Hospital in Philadelphia. Dr. Scott was also constructively active in his local church and hundreds of friends, both locally and around the world have given expression to their affectionate regard for him.

All of the five children of Dr. and Mrs. Scott have served on the overseas mission field, one of whom, Mrs. John C. Stam, died there.

Dr. Scott is survived by his wife, Clara Heywood Scott, now residing in Ardmore, Pa., and two daughters and their husbands, Dr. and Mrs. Theodore D. Stevenson, and the Rev. and Mrs. G. Gordon Mahy, Jr., and two sons and their wives, Dr. and Mrs. Kenneth Scott and the Rev. and Mrs. Francis Heywood Scott.

To them the Commission extends its sincerest sympathy in their bereavement and expresses its gratitude for the life and service of their loved one who did his Lord's bidding, earnestly and triumphantly, with all his powers, until he was called to his eternal home.