

# Words of Life

# Area Obituaries

## TWO MEN WHO DEALT WITH CHRIST.

by Rev. R. T. HOUTS

In the twentieth chapter of the Gospel of Luke, we have an account of two men who were forced to deal with Christ. The first was Herod. According to the Lukan tradition Herod was in Jerusalem at the time of the Passover and Jesus' accusers brought him before Herod's Court. Luke reports that when Herod saw Jesus he was "exceeding glad." It is difficult to understand why Herod would have been glad to see someone whose goodness and truth stood out in such stark contrast to the evil in his own heart. We can assume, though, that Herod looked upon Jesus as a worker of miracles, or perhaps as one of the prophets who had been raised from the dead. His curiosity was aroused and he wanted only to see this person about whom he had heard so much. He did not care at all about learning from him, and he cared still less about giving him a fair trial.

We read in the Gospel that he questioned Christ carefully. It would be interesting to know just what line the questioning took. If they had been serious questions, Jesus would have welcomed them. No honest seeker ever went away from Jesus without new understanding. People who keep minds and eager questions were most often the ones who were deeply influenced by Jesus. But Herod's questions were evidently not of that sort. They were the kind of questions a person asks when he wants to justify himself or to appear well-versed in many affairs.

Herod reminds us of the countless people who approach God with their list of questions carefully made out, and they expect God to be quick about filling them. No one who I talk with a member of Alcoholics Anonymous, who told something of his personal experience. Like all men in his predicament, the time eventually came when he realized that he must give up drinking or die. He went on the wagon for six agonizing months and during all that time he realized he was in constant danger of breaking his good resolution. Continually he prayed that

God would take away his craving for alcohol, but his prayers did not seem to help. Only when he reached the point where he was honestly and sincerely willing to let God take over his life and direct it did he begin to find release from his anxiety and fear.

Herod was not willing to make such a concession. When Jesus did not measure up to his expectations he mocked him. Someone has said that when a man reaches the point where he surrenders to goodness he has gone about as far as it is possible to go. In other words, sin has reached its ultimate destination. That does not fit the popular picture of sin. We think of the sinner as the man who is in the gutter. But the sinner, the scoundrel, is in a far worse predicament than the man who is conscious of sin and wants to do better even while he is in the grip of his sin.

When Jesus shunted back from Herod's Court to Pilate, we meet a different kind of man. Pilate was a good administrator and an able jurist. He was essentially a fair man. He had a good legal head on his shoulders and he realized that the only charge against Jesus which could possibly stand up in the charge of sedition. After examining Christ, he realized that this charge could not be substantiated. Pilate did what most of us would have done under similar circumstances. He sought some sort of compromise.

Since it was the season of the Passover and it was the custom to release a prisoner to the people, Pilate reasoned that perhaps Jesus could be released. He used what he had learned from Herod and he had a shrewd strategy. Everybody knew Herod by reputation. They knew that it would be dangerous to turn him loose among the people. Surely, reasoned Pilate, they would not hesitate at a choice between Jesus and Barabbas. But Pilate did not reckon with the pent-up hate and hostility of the mob. He failed to realize that when hate is urged on by a bad conscience human beings will stop at nothing.

Both of these men, Herod and Pilate, were forced to deal with Christ. One mocked Him and the

other took Him seriously. Herod was incapable of understanding truth and goodness. Pilate though he could compromise. Compromise is necessary when we find ourselves in a situation where one person cannot claim his rights without invading the rights of another, but we cannot carry the principle of compromise into the realm of morals. It is not possible to be moderately honest, for example. A person is either honest, or he is not. There is no such thing as a husband or wife who is half faithful. We are either faithful, or unfaithful. All that loses its meaning when we begin to compromise with it.

There is good reason to believe that Pilate honestly thought he could save Christ until he very last. He felt he could face up to the final reality later. All that while, though, he was being pushed into a position from which he could not retreat until it was too late. How often we attempt to put off the really important decision until we have drifted too far. Do we not reason with ourselves that Christ can wait? Meanwhile we have an important business deal and his presence would be too embarrassing. Or do we not say that Christianity is all right and we really want to be a good person, but we don't want to be too closely associated with Christianity? After all, a person has to go where the crowd goes and do what the crowd does in order to have a good time.

The treacherous thing about life is that we have often gone farther than we realize. Have you ever looked through the drift meter on a plane? It is a little device through which you can sight from the plane to the ground, and it tells just how much you are drifting to the right or to the left from your course. The plane may seem to be going straight ahead, but unless the pilot allows for the drift the result will be fatal. So it is with life. We often fail to account for the drift until it is too late.

These two men dealt with Christ. One was a sinner. The other sought a compromise and a delay. The way in which they sought to deal with him is an accurate picture of the way in which men seek to deal with him today. They tried everything else that was possible except the kind of complete surrender to Christ that it takes to find forgiveness and peace.

# Area Obituaries

## BOB WEST

Robbinsville — Bob West, 86, of Robbinsville Rt. 3 died at 7:30 a. m. Monday March 21, in his home after a long illness.

He was a native of Graham County, a son of the late William B. and Nettie Raines West, was a member of Bear Creek Baptist Church and of the Robbinsville Masonic Lodge.

His wife died in 1945.

Surviving are a daughter, Mrs. Hazel Keith of Robbinsville; a grandson; a sister, Mrs. Ida Hooper of Greensboro; and two half brothers, William R. and Wayne West of Robbinsville.

Services were held Wednesday at 2 p. m. in Bear Creek Baptist Church.

The Rev. Buck Ledford and the Rev. O. C. Day officiated.

Townson Funeral Home was in charge of the arrangements.

## MRS. RHODA GARLAND

Robbinsville — Mrs. Rhoda Lull Garland, 67, of Robbinsville died in an Andrews hospital at 10:35 p. m. Sunday March 20, after a long illness.

Surviving are the husband, Grandfather; two daughters, Mrs. Ethel Hancock of Robbinsville, and Mrs. Fannie Ramsey of Conway; a son, Nathan of Robbinsville; 19 grandchildren; five great-grandchildren; two brothers, Clifford and Ira Lull of Robbinsville; and a sister, Miss Dixie Lull of Robbinsville.

Services were held Tuesday at 2:30 p. m. in Sweetwater Baptist Church.

The Rev. Dillard Jordan officiated, and burial was in Old Mother Cemetery.

Townson Funeral Home was in charge of the arrangements.

## ROBERT J. CHAMBERS

Robert J. Chambers, 84, of Murphy Rt. 3 died in a Murphy hospital at 12:45 a. m. Friday March 25, after an illness of six days.

He was a son of the late Marion and Eliza Jane Chambers and was a lifelong resident of Cherokee County.

Surviving are three brothers, Tom of Knoxville, Sam A. of Murphy Rt. 3, and J. M. of Murphy; and several nieces and nephews.

Services were held Saturday at 2 p. m. in Unaka Baptist Church.

The Rev. Carl Cunningham officiated, and burial was in Oregenta Cemetery. Farris Bryson, Gudez Garrett, Cecil and Hermand Jones, Oscar Davis and Charles Brax were active pallbearers. Townson Funeral Home was in charge of arrangements.

## TERESA LUNSFORD

Andrews — Teresa Annette Lunsford, infant daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Lley B. Lunsford of Andrews Rt. 1, died in an Andrews hospital late Monday afternoon, March 21.

Surviving, in addition to the parents, are eight sisters, Mrs. Janice Baker of Murphy, Miss Lucille Lunsford of Atlanta, and the Misses Shirley, Atha, Kay, Karen and Deborah Lunsford; all of the home; two brothers, Lloyd B. Jr. and Robert, both of the home; the paternal grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. B. B. Lunsford of Andrews and the maternal grandmother, Mrs. W. F. Blalock of Gastonia.

Services were held at 10:30 a. m. Wednesday, March 23, in Valley River Cemetery at Andrews. The Rev. Jim Truitt officiated.

Townson Funeral Home of Murphy was in charge of arrangements.

## FRANK D. BRADLEY

Andrews — Frank Dobson Bradley, 77, formerly of Andrews died at 8:30 a. m. Sunday March 27, in a Gastonia hospital after a year's illness. He had lived with a daughter, Miss Opal Bradley of Gastonia, for seven years.

Mr. Bradley was a native of Andrews and was the son of the late Mart and Mattie Phillips Bradley. He was a retired carpenter.

Services were held at 11 a. m. Monday in Gaston Avenue Church of God in Gastonia with Carothers Funeral Home of Gastonia in charge.

Then the body was brought to Andrews where services were held at 2 p. m. Tuesday in Valleytown Baptist Church.

The Rev. Ralph Matheson officiated. Burial was in Valleytown Cemetery. Townson Funeral Home was in charge.

Surviving are three daughters, Miss Bradley, Mrs. Harry Lovegrove of Jonesboro, Tenn., and Mrs. Norma McConnell of Andrews; three sons, John and Claude Bradley of Andrews and Zed Bradley of Gastonia; a sister, Mrs. Jessie Clark of Burlington; two brothers, Home and Jap Bradley of Andrews, 18 grandchildren and 11 great-grandchildren.

## ARTHUR FORD

Robbinsville — Arthur Ford, 81, of Robbinsville, a former clerk of

Graham County Superior Court, died at 5:30 p. m. Monday March 21, in an Andrews hospital.

He had worked for the Southern Railway, then for the Graham County Railroad and was retired at the time of his death. He had served as clerk of court for eight years, had been Sunday School superintendent of the Robbinsville Baptist Church for 20 years and had been a deacon of the church. He also was a 32nd Degree Mason.

He was born in Cooke County, Tenn., and moved to Robbinsville in 1925.

Surviving are the widow, Mrs. Pearl Williams Ford; three sons, Earl, Ernest and Harry of Robbinsville; four daughters, Mrs. J. E. Brown of Knoxville, Mrs. J. D. Fullam and Mrs. James Reigard of Asheville, and Mrs. R. W. Atwell of Pollock Pines, Calif.; 15 grandchildren; and a great-grandchild.

Funeral services were held Saturday at 2 p. m. at the First Baptist Church of Robbinsville.

The Rev. E. F. Baker and the Rev. Juel Orr officiated, and burial was in the Old Mother Church Cemetery. Rites at the grave were held by the Robbinsville Masonic Lodge.

Townson Funeral Home was in charge.

## STEPHEN C. HEMBREE

Fort Campbell, Ky. (AHTNC) Army Specialist Four Stephen C. Hembree, son of Mr. and Mrs. Noah W. Hembree, Route 1, Murphy, N. C. is participating with other personnel from the 101st Airborne Division in Exercise Puerto Pine in Puerto Rico. The 18-day exercise, which includes the largest peacetime airlift ever attempted, is scheduled to end March 31.

During the exercise, participating troops of the Strategic Army Corps (STRAC) are being air transported.

30 Grandchildren and many Great Grandchildren.

Funeral services were conducted Tuesday afternoon at 2:00 p. m. at the Violet Baptist Church, Rev. Willard Graham and Rev. Leonard McClure officiated. Burial was in the Landman Cemetery.

Townson Funeral Home was in charge of the service.

## LEONARD DAVID PAYNE

David Leonard Payne, age 86 of Route 1, Murphy passed away at 9:25 p. m. Sunday March 27, after an illness of three weeks.

He was the son of the late Haswell and Martha Panter Payne of Cherokee County.

He is survived by his wife, Mrs. Beulah Morrow Payne, eight daughters; Mrs. Pickens Hamby of Marietta, Ga. Mrs. Edward Moore of Brownington, Missouri, Mrs. Ernest Benfield of Santa Monica, Calif. Mrs. Ben Cantrell of Talkinrock, Ga. Mrs. Creed Taylor of Garner, Tenn. Mrs. Poley Morrow of Hiwassee Dam, Mrs. Hoyt Dean of Copperhill, Tenn. and Mrs. Gene Yow of Copperhill, Tenn. two sons; Clarence Payne of Rt. 4, Murphy and Tom Payne of Mt. Vernon, Tenn. two brothers; Elish and John Payne of Hiwassee Dam,



## Area Men In Service

**WALTER R. RAXTER**  
FORT BELVOIR, VA. (AHING) Army Pfc Walter R. Raxter, son of Woodie H. Raxter, Andrews, N. C. recently completed the ten-week topographic surveying course at the Engineer School, Fort Belvoir, Va.

He received training in map and aerial photograph interpretation, mathematics and drafting which will assist him in providing ground control data for millary photogrammetric mapping and artillery survey purposes.

Raxter entered the Army in January 1959 and completed basic combat training at Fort Jackson, S. C.

The 23-year old soldier is a 1955 graduate of Andrews High School.

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