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PAUL W. LAPP

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Paul W. Lapp was born in Sacramento, California, on August 5, 1930, the son of Mr. and Mrs. W. H. Lapp. He was trained at Concordia College, Oakland, California, and then at Concordia Theological Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri, receiving there his A.B. (1951) and his Diploma in Theology (1955). Concurrently, he received an M.A. in Education at Washington University, St. Louis (1952), and his Ph.D., in Education, from the University of California, Berkeley (1955). In the years 1955–57 he began his doctoral studies in Semitic Languages and Near Eastern archaeology at Johns Hopkins University, continuing them in Jerusalem in 1957–58 as Fellow of the American School of Oriental Research. In 1958 he returned to the United States and entered Harvard Divinity School as a candidate for the Th.D., receiving the degree in 1960. His dissertation, *Palestinian Ceramic Chronology; 200 B.C. to A.D. 70*, received the grade of “excellent,” and was later published by the American Schools of Oriental Research. In 1959 he joined the faculty of American University in Washington, D.C.

The extraordinary activity, and productivity, and the scholarly excellence of Paul Lapp as an archaeologist and Orientalist became more widely known when he took up an appointment as Annual Professor of the American School of Oriental Research in Jerusalem in 1960. For a period of eight years he served the American School as Annual Professor, as Director, or as Professor of Archaeology. During this period, a period comparable to the Albright and Glueck eras of the School's history, he excavated at numerous sites, among the most important being 'Araq el 'Emîr, where he identified and excavated the Jewish Temple, Tell el Fûl, the site of the Gibeah of Saul, the caves of the Wâdi Dâliyeh, from which came a group of papyri of the fourth century B.C., the incredibly rich and enigmatic necropolis at Bâb edh-Dhrâ' on the Lisân, by the Dead Sea, and the Canaanite city state of Ta'anach. At the time of his death he was preparing for a major excavation at Idalion, an important

Phoenician site in Cyprus. The continuation of this excavation by the staff whom he trained will be one of the best memorials to him.

In 1968 he joined the faculty of the Pittsburgh Theological Seminary as Professor of Old Testament and Archaeology. During his last years he enhanced his reputation as a teacher and scholar, while maintaining his work as a field archaeologist. In mid-April 1970 he travelled to Cyprus to begin work at Idalion. On Sunday, April 26, he and two colleagues went to the beach at Kyrenia for an afternoon of swimming. Strong currents were running, and all three were swept out to sea. Two were rescued in time. Paul Lapp was reached too late to save his life.

Paul Lapp was a complex and intense person. One who became acquainted with him quickly recognized his brilliance and unusual energy together with a certain shyness and abruptness. At work, as he was most of the time, he was an ascetic, but at play, gay and boyish. His views, scholarly, ecclesiastical, theological, and political, were strongly held and defended, and engaged him in frequent controversy. He was rigorously honest, but impatient with those whose scholarship and research lacked the fierce discipline he required of himself.

At thirty-nine, Paul Lapp had distinguished himself as the most brilliant and prolific Near Eastern archaeologist and Orientalist of his generation. His bibliography has reached in ten years some sixty items, virtually all based on original research — and much more awaits publication. He showed an extraordinary breadth of learning, publishing papers in epigraphy and philology, in theology and history, as well as in the several disciplines of the field archaeologist. He was ordained to the Lutheran ministry in 1955, and through his life was a dedicated churchman, preaching frequently during his years in Jerusalem. Perhaps one may add, to illustrate his versatility, that he was an accomplished organist and a connoisseur of wines, especially the wines of his native California.

He is survived by his wife and fellow-student of archaeology, Nancy Renn, and five children, Deborah, Daniel, Sharon, Diana, and David.

His friends and teachers on this faculty have themselves lost an esteemed fellow-scholar and friend. We send our respectful sympathies to Mrs. Lapp and the children on their yet more cruel loss.

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