

IN MEMORIAM: CYRIL RICHARDSON

The Rev. Dr. Cyril Charles Richardson, Washburn Professor Emeritus of Church History at Union Theological Seminary, New York, died at his Manhattan home following a heart attack on November 16, 1976. His age was 67.

Dr. Richardson was elected President of the American Society of Church History in 1944, but was unable to serve owing to hospitalization for tuberculosis. He established an international reputation as a patristic scholar and historian of Christian spirituality through his numerous articles and books. Among the latter are *The Christianity of Ignatius of Antioch* (1934); *The Church Throughout the Centuries* (1938); *The Sacrament of Reunion* (1940); *Zwingli and Cranmer on the Eucharist* (1949); and his edition of the first volume of the "Library of Christian Classics," *Early Christian Fathers* (1953). He was perhaps best known for his pathbreaking book, *The Doctrine of the Trinity* (1958), which argued that this classical Christian teaching is an "artificial construct" that deals with genuine theological problems but ultimately fails to provide illuminating solutions. This book typified his labors as scholar and teacher, combining a mastery of historical detail with bold philosophical criticism and creative insight, yet pervaded by a deep piety and spiritual intent.

He was a man of insatiable curiosity and encyclopedic knowledge, whose interests and expertise ranged far beyond his areas of specialization. He lectured and wrote on the relationship of Christian faith to such contemporary issues as mental health, faith healing, psychic phenomena and ecology. He long advocated the ordination of women into the priesthood and in recent years regularly conducted seminars on female and male roles and images in early Christianity.

Dr. Richardson was born in England on June 13, 1909. After early schooling there, he went to western Canada and was graduated, with great distinction, from the University of Saskatchewan in 1930. He received the Licentiate in Theology, with high honors, from Emmanuel College, Saskatoon, in 1931. He then went to Union Theological Seminary, New York, taking the degrees of Master of Sacred Theology, *summa cum laude*, in 1932, and Doctor of Theology in 1934. During the fateful years 1933-1936, he pursued further graduate and post-doctoral studies in Europe at the Universities of Göttingen, Dijon and Basel. In 1940 he became a naturalized American citizen.

Dr. Richardson joined the Union Seminary faculty in 1934 and remained there throughout his career, serving the seminary for forty-two years as teacher and administrator. As a young professor he quickly established his reputation as an outstanding lecturer, widely admired for his clarity of thought and expression, incisive wit and genial regard for

his students. In 1949 he was named Washburn Professor of Church History and in 1954 he became Director (later Dean) of Graduate Studies, continuing in both roles until his retirement in 1974. He was an organizing member of the joint Union—Columbia University Committee on Graduate Studies in Religion, and was an Adjunct Professor of Religion at Columbia from 1963 to 1974. From 1974 to 1976 he served as the seminary's first Union Scholar, an appointment reserved for distinguished faculty members upon retirement. At the time of his death he was continuing to lecture weekly to a large class of students in introductory church history.

In addition to his academic labors, Dr. Richardson was long active in church circles. In the summer of 1930 he did student pastoral work among the Cree Indians in Manitoba. In 1934 he was ordained deacon and priest in the Protestant Episcopal Church; in 1974 he was installed as an honorary Canon of the Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine, New York. He was the author of a hymn, "God of the Prairies," published in the Anglican Canadian Hymnal. Honorary doctorates were awarded to him in 1949 by Emmanuel College, Saskatoon, and in 1972 by the General Theological Seminary, New York.

He is survived by his wife, the former Louise Burbank Shattuck.

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David V. Lotz