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# Robertson, Archibald Thomas

(Who's Who in America, Vol. 17, 1932-33)

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Theologian; born near Chatham, Va., Nov. 6, 1863; son of John and Ella (Martin) R; M.A., Wake Forest (N. C.) College, 1885, D.D., 1894, Litt.D., 1919; Th.M., Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, 1888; D.D., Ouachita College, Ark., 1894; LL.D., Georgetown College, Ky., 1911; married Ella Thomas Broadus, of Louisville, Nov. 27, 1894; children—John A. Broadus, Eleanor Martin, Charlotte Sinclair (dec.) Carey, Archibald Thomas. Asst. instructor N. T. Interpretation, 1888, prof. Bibl. Introduction, 1892, prof. Interpretation New Testament since 1895, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Author: *The Life and Letters of John A. Broadus*, 1900; *Syllabus for New Testament Study*, 1903; revised edition with critical notes of Broadus' *Harmony of the Gospels*, 1903; *Teaching of Jesus Concerning God the Father*, 1904; *The Students' Chronological New Testament*, 1904; *Keywords in the Teaching of Jesus*, 1905; *Epochs in the Life of Jesus*, 1908; *Short Grammar of the Greek New Testament*, 1908; *Epochs in the Life of Paul*, 1919; *Commentary on Matthew in Bible for Home and School*, 1910.

*Breve grammatica del Nuovo Testamento greco*, 1910; *Kurzgefasste Grammatic des Neutestamentlichen*, 1911; *Grammaire du grec du Nouveau Testament*, 1911; *John the Loyal, or Studies in the Ministry of the Baptist*, 1911; *The Glory of the Ministry*, 1911; *Beknopte Grammatica op het Grieksche Nieuwe Testament*, 1912; *A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research*, 1914, '31; *Studies in the Epistle of James, or Practical and Social Aspects of Christianity*, 1915; *Studies in the New Testament*, 1915; *The Divinity of Christ in the Gospel of John*, 1916; *Paul's Joy in Christ*, 1917; *Making Good in the Ministry*, 1918; *The New Citizenship*, 1918; *Studies in Mark's Gospel*, 1919; *The Pharisees and Jesus*, 1920; *Luke the Historian in the Light of Research*, 1920; *Paul the Interpreter of Christ*, 1921; *Harmony of the Gospels for Students of Life of Christ*, 1922; *Types of Preachers in the New Testament*, 1922; *The Minister and His Greek New Testament*, 1923; *The Christ of the Logia*, 1924; *New Testament History (airplane view)*, 1923; *Translation of Luke's Gospel (with Grammatical Notes)*, 1923; *An Introduction to the Textual Criticism of the New Testament*, 1925; *The Mother of Jesus, (Her Problems and Her Glory)*, 1925; *Studies in the Text of the New Testament*, 1926; *Minor Characters in the New Testament*, 1928; *Paul and the Intellectuals*, 1928; *Word Pictures in the New Testament (6 vols.)*, 1930-31; *A New Short Grammar of the Greek Testament*, 1931; *Epochs in the Life of Simon Peter*, 1933; *Passing on the Torch*, 1934.

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# The Home-going of Dr. Robertson

*By Don Norman*

On Monday evening, September 24, at six o'clock, Dr. A. T. Robertson, internationally known scholar, and professor of New Testament Interpretation in the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, died at his home on Rainbow Drive, near the Seminary campus.

Dr. Robertson's home-going is mourned throughout the world. Scholars of the Greek New Testament in every land have gladly accorded to him the place of highest rank. During his forty-six years as Seminary professor more than six thousand men have sat in his classes, and have then gone out to places of leadership in every corner of the world.

Characteristically, Dr. Robertson at his death was writing another book—this time a translation of the New Testament, at the request of Harper and Brothers. In addition to his forty-two published books, there is one completed earlier this year and due from the press within a few months, "Epochs in the Life of John."

The details of Dr. Robertson's passing are brief and simple. He became ill during Senior Greek class in the afternoon, and the class was dismissed thirty minutes early—an event without precedent in his forty-six years as teacher. Dr. W. Hersey Davis, in an adjoining classroom, heard Doctor Robertson's students leaving and sensed that something was wrong. Going to Dr. Robertson's office, he found his colleague—his own beloved teacher in years gone by—in pain. Under the impression that Dr. Robertson was suffering simply from the heat, he advised going to a private office for rest. A short while later, however, Dr. Davis dismissed his own class and carried Dr. Robertson home. The family physician, Dr. Hugh Rodman Leavell, was summoned. Shortly after his arrival, Dr. Robertson suffered a stroke of apoplexy. He died five minutes later, with his wife, Mrs. Ella Broadus Robertson, and the physician at his side.

Dr. Robertson's body lay in state at his home all day Tuesday and until a few hours before the funeral Wednesday afternoon. Every Seminary student, and hundreds of Louisville friends, visited the home during this time. Messages of condolence were received by the score. The front room of the Robertson home was flooded with floral offerings.

No classes were held at the Seminary on either Tuesday or Wednesday. On both days, however, the chapel hour was given over to memorial services for Dr. Robertson. Faculty members paid their tribute on Tuesday, and representatives from the student body on Wednesday.

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## Funeral Services

Funeral services were conducted at Fourth Avenue Baptist Church Wednesday afternoon at three o'clock. The capacity of the building was taxed by those attending the last rites of the great scholar and teacher. Many had to remain standing during the entire service.

The organist played a medley of the following hymns: "Jesus, Keep Me Near the Cross," "Rock of Ages," "My Faith Looks Up to Thee," and "I've Found a Friend." Passages of Scripture were read by Dr. Luther Rice Christie, pastor of the Fourth Avenue Baptist Church, as faculty of the Seminary, pallbearers, relatives and friends entered.

"O Love That Will Not Let Me Go," Dr. Robertson's favorite hymn, was sung by R. Inman Johnson, professor of music at the Seminary. Dr. Davis read the following selections from the Greek New Testament: John 14:1-7, 1 Corinthians 15:19-26, 50-58, and Revelation 21:1-7. Dr. W. O. Carver led in prayer.

### *Dr. Christie:*

This is an hour most of us will never forget. I pause just a moment, not to praise this servant of God. My words would be all too empty and useless; his own works do praise him. His name is upon the lips of thousands and thousands to-day, not only here but all around the world, and they bear their gracious testimony of praise and appreciation. I come as the pastor of his church to speak a word for my people, as they are too stunned and bewildered to have fully found themselves as yet. We loved him.

Others will give tributes about his greatness in manifold realms, but we know him in the simplicity of a brother in Christ Jesus. He may have been able to mount up with wings of the eagle in a world of scholarship, he may have known how to run and not be weary in leadership of great denominational programs, but the better part is to have walked a life of faith, a life of simple and singular beauty as a plain member of a plain church of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The best thing that can ever be said about him was and is: He was a loyal and true-hearted Christian. He was a good member of this church, one who let no responsibilities ever come in the way of his true and tried loyalty to the church which he attended. I speak for them all, from the least unto the greatest, when I say that our hearts bleed. We love him! We love him!

## *Dr. John R. Cunningham, President of the Presbyterian Seminary:*

I am here to speak for a wide circle of friends and admirers of our great and good friend, Dr. Robertson. We sincerely sympathize in the great loss which has come to you. Surely I am glad to be permitted to say on behalf of the Presbyterian Seminary a word of very high admiration which we have felt for Dr. Robertson. We share with you in a very real sense, as do thousands upon thousands of Christians around the world, the loss which you sustain, but also the great joy and victory which has come to him at the conclusion of the day because of his great service for the Master.

There are two or three words of Scripture which come to me at this time: "Know ye not that a great prince has this day fallen in Israel?" Then in Acts, "For he was a good man." "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy mind." "Be therefore ready, for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of Man cometh." One of God's great, good men has now gone to his reward.

Faber once said, "By thy grace there is no need that a sudden death shall be unprepared for." He was not unprepared. We are here to-day not to sorrow as those without hope. Indeed we are here to-day, as I think of it, to commemorate the home-going of a great soldier of Jesus Christ. We are here to thank God for his great gift to our generation and church. We are here ourselves to pray the prayer of the Psalmist, "So teach us to number our days." With Paul our brother might have truly said, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth, there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give to me that day; and not to me only, but to all who love his appearing."

How strange it seems that we should gather here to-day for this service when a few days ago we were active together! And on the other hand, how beautiful that after a life rich in years, mature in a noble faith in God, at the end of a day's work well done, he should lie down to a night of pleasant dreams. How gracious of God that a life could come to such an end, free from pain, but just to lie down peacefully to rest.

The other word I speak this afternoon, out of the many things we want to say, is this: I want to commend him as a friend or neighbor. A great deal can be said, and doubtless will be said later, about his contribution as a great Christian scholar, churchman, and leader in the denomination, but I wish to speak of him very simply as a true friend and neighbor. Years ago I came to Louisville as a stranger. I think I shall never forget, my family and I arrived in the community, and the very first to call were Dr. and Mrs. Robertson. We had found new friends. It was not just a call on another neighbor. We appreciated it the more when we found that it was customary with them. It was the love of true friends and neighbors.

Someone has said that the depth to which you can stoop is the height to which you have risen. I have seen in him something of the meaning of true neighborliness. For one who is known around the world as great teacher and preacher, for one whose time was precious, to go simply about his neighborhood being a true friend and neighbor and simple Christian, was all the more remarkable and appreciated.

Through Jesus Christ he has lived a great life. He leaves a noble heritage. We are not here to say "Good-bye," but simply to say "Good-night," through our faith in Christ. We will greet you in the morning.

### *President John R. Sampey:*

I shall say of this man as Paul said about Epaphroditus: My brother, fellow-worker, fellow soldier. I am just forty days older than he. I was teacher in the Seminary and it was his first year as a pupil. From the beginning we were drawn to each other. He was my most brilliant pupil. He led my Junior Hebrew class, and I taught more Hebrew in a year than I have been able to teach any class since.

I saw his brilliant mind and wonderful grasp. We became friends and brothers, and when it became known that the young teacher was doing too much, and his duties were becoming too heavy for him, Dr. Broadus said, in his fine judgment, "We must have another young man to help." Dr. Robertson was the first in my mind. And then Dr. Broadus asked, "Do you prefer to take the classes in Greek and New Testament or Hebrew and Old Testament? You have the right of choice." Dr. Robertson and I had become friends, and I became his Jonathan. I said, "This young man knows more Greek than I know, and for the good of the Seminary let me take the Old Testament." How often has this brother of mine played Jonathan for me! Oh, brother beloved, how I shall miss you these few days that remain!

He was my fellow-worker. He was the most prodigious and untiring worker since Dr. Broadus. Some years ago I stood in his study and saw the manuscript in long-hand of his great Grammar of the Greek New Testament. It stood more than three feet high. I had a new sense of appreciation for the work that was there under my hand, representing thousands of hours of work and research. My fellow-worker, he out-worked us all. I had fellowship with him, and he was willing to claim me as fellow-worker. What an inspiration and challenge to every young man here was his life!

My fellow-soldier, my comrade! A soldier must be brave, and a soldier must be willing to make the great sacrifice if necessary. Here was a true soldier of Jesus Christ. I have seen him tested and tried in many difficult situations. Without taking needless chances, he was willing to hazard his life for the sake of a great cause. He had all the fine qualities of soldiership, and it was my privilege to claim him as fellow-soldier.

Soldiers can be buddies. That is what they called each other in the war. We never fell apart on any problem of importance. In all things, somehow we were comrades. We fought for the same cause side by side, with enthusiasm as chums, buddies, comrades—there is no word that covers it all.

And then, he always stood for the deity of Jesus Christ and for the inspiration of the Scriptures. He had a sense of appreciation of the Scriptures. How he studied the Greek New Testament! If all men studied it as he did, there would come the millenium. He was courageous. He, with his prodigious energy, made research, and with fearless scholarship found that which could not be disputed. He recognized all the facts of the case, but he was true to the faith to the end. And all those who read his books can see his great mind, his simple style in every book. What a tireless worker he was!

I said to him (for we could confide in each other in such matters), that he should not cross the thirty year line as a bachelor. I was jealous of his love, but wanted him to have the love of a sweet woman. He said, "There is only one girl I can love, and that is Dr. Broadus' daughter. But I can't afford to marry her; I'd be known all my life as 'Dr. Broadus' son-in-law!'" I told him to follow the impulses of his heart, and that same year he was married, and it was a great day in his life. She made a wonderful wife and gracious mother. She is the only one to whom I yield place to-day.

I am here to thank God for my brother. On his seventieth birthday he said to me, "You are my spiritual brother." He had an older brother who died recently, who sacrificed that he might have a college education. I did not make such a sacrifice as did that brother on the farm so that his younger brother might have a chance at a college education.

O brother beloved, you are now in the presence of our Elder Brother. O fellow-worker, you have crossed over the river to rest under the shade of the trees! O comrade! O fellow-soldier! Receive from Him the reward of your service as a true soldier. How soon till we meet again! Au revoir! Auf wiedersehen! Till we meet again! It won't be long!

(Continued from Page 2.)

Associate editor and author of articles on New Testament books in Cross Reference Bible, 1910; The Master Bible, 1926. Contributor to Hastings' Dictionary of Christ and the Gospels, Hastings' Dictionary of the Apostolic Age, Standard Bible Dictionary, International Standard Bible Ency.; an editor "The 1911 Bible." Member revision committee of American Standard Bible, 1929. Member Am. Philol. Association, Soc. Bibl. Lit. and Exegesis, S. A. R. Club; Quindecim. Stone Lecturer, Princeton Theological Seminary, 1916, '26; Wilkinson Lecturer, Northern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1927.

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