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Joint Heirs with Christ

BY

J. A. SHIRLEY, M.A., B.D.
Saint Stephen's Church
East Kildonan



1919

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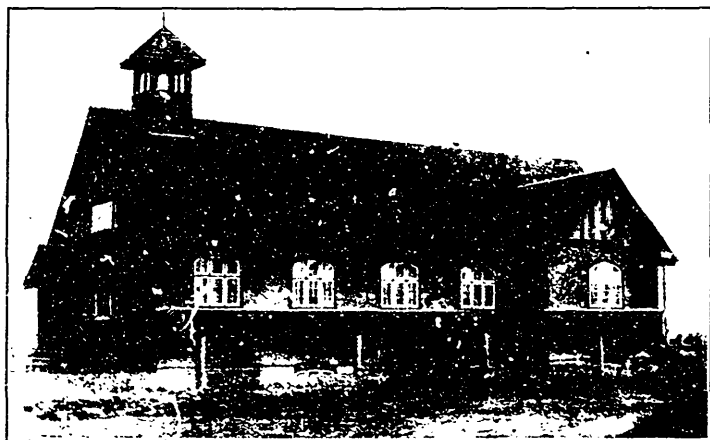
Author of

"The Second Man"



Dedicated to the memory of the men of the
Church of England in East Kildonan
who fell in the Great War.

*When conscription came into force
not a man belonging to the
congregation was affected
by the first draft.*



ST. STEPHEN'S CHURCH
Helmsdale and East Kildonan Road, East Kildonan.

Opened January 12th. 1913

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Men of St. Stephen's Church Who Gave Their Lives in the Great War

Anderson, John, 460012. Enlisted June 3rd, 1915, in 61st Batt. Fell in battle at Ypres, April 13th, 1916.

Anstiss, G., Enlisted Aug. 26th, 1914, in 27th Winnipeg Battn. Died of gas poisoning, June 6th, 1915.

Avery, A. A., 875344. Enlisted April 1st, 1916, in 184th Batt. Transferred to 27th Batt. Wounded at Passchendale, Aug. 23rd; died of wounds Aug. 29th, 1918.

Bailey, H., 475008. Enlisted early in 1915. Went overseas in July, 1915, with a draft of 90th Rifles. Wounded at Cambrai, Sept. 26th, 1918. Wounded twice on Sep. 29th, 1918. Died in hospital at Epsom, Nov. 10th, 1918.

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Barnes, Lieut. John Henry, M.C. Enlisted as private, Aug. 21st, 1915, in 61st Batt. Transferred to 44th Batt. Wounded Aug. 1916. Received his commission April 28th, 1917. Awarded the Military Cross March 1918. Awarded bar to Military Cross Aug. 15th, 1918. Wounded by sniper Aug. 17th, 1918. Died in hospital Nov. 2nd, 1918.

Battershill, Geo. W., 460445. Enlisted Sept. 1915, in 61st Batt. Left for England March 1916. Transferred to Princess Pats June 1916. Wounded Sept. 15th, 1916, at the Battle of the Somme. Wounded April 9th, 1917, at Vimy Ridge. Admitted to No. 13 General Hospital, Boulogne. Died April 17th, 1917. Buried at Boulogne Military Hospital.

Bishop, E. Adolphus, 15061. Enlisted Aug. 1914, in Fort Garry Horse. Went overseas with First Canadian Contingent. Transferred to Alberta Dragoons Sept. 1915. Shot by a snipe and instantly killed Feb. 7th, 1916.

Booth, Thos., 21338. Enlisted Aug. 6th, 1914, in 100th Grenadiers. Transferred in France to 4th Batt. Wounded Sept. 2nd, 1915. Died at Leicester Hospital Sept. 30th, 1915.

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Brames, Chas., 14916. Enlisted Aug. 31st, 1914, in Fort Garry Horse. Killed in action May 30th, 1916, at Vimy Ridge.

Care, E., Corpl., 700382. Enlisted Dec. 21st, 1915, in 101st Batt. Transferred to 16th Canadian Scottish Sept. 5th, 1916. Saw action in seven important battles including the Somme and Vimy Ridge. Instantly killed Aug. 15th, 1917, at Lens Front.

Cummins, George. Enlisted with 90th Batt., L.B.D's., in 1915. Wounded and missing Nov. 24th, 1916.

Dash, Herbert Guy, 529548. Enlisted Aug. 1914, in the Grenadiers. Transferred Sept. 2nd, 1915, to 10th Field Ambulance. Engaged in battles of Ypres and Somme. Killed in action at Courcelette Sept. 16th, 1916, at the age of nineteen.

Evans, William Henry, 153708. Enlisted June, 1915, in 43rd Batt. Cameron Highlanders. Wounded at the Battle of the Somme Oct. 8th, 1916. Died of wounds at No. 9 Clearing Station Oct. 11th, 1916. A veteran of the South African War where he had won the King's and Queen's Medal.

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Figures, Herbert Chas., Corpl., 460724. Enlisted Aug. 27th, 1915, in 61st Batt. Transferred to 44th Batt. Fell in battle Oct. 25th, 1916, in "No Man's Land" at Courcellette.

Harrison, Rev. H. A. B. Resigned from the parish of St. Stephen's in September, 1916, to take Military Hospital duty in Birmingham. Died of typhoid fever Oct. 23rd, 1916.

Hattersley, Chas. R., Enlisted in 79th Batt. Went under operation in hospital in England in 1916 and returned to Canada. Died of pneumonia in Winnipeg General Hospital Jan. 5th, 1919.

Jones, Richard Bathoe, 460757. Enlisted Aug. 1915, in 61st Batt. He had been but six weeks in France when he was killed in action Oct. 25th, 1916, at the age of eighteen.

Knowles, James, Corpl., 2378440. Enlisted Nov. 1916, in Depot Batt. Married when on leave May, 1917. Killed in action Oct. 1917.

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Lane, E. L., 460214. Enlisted June 3rd, 1915, in 61st Batt. Transferred to 8th Batt. Reported wounded and missing Sept. 26th, 1916, at Thiepval.

Large, Thomas H., 114405. Enlisted June, 1915 in 9th C.M.R's. Transferred to 1st C.M.R's. Buried by a shell June 3rd, 1916, at 3rd Battle of Ypres and injured internally. Wounded Sept. 15th, 1916, at the Battle of the Somme. Transferred to England where he died in hospital Oct. 29th, 1917, from injuries sustained at Ypres. Buried at Old Bramshott Cemetery.

Munn, Wilton, 216422. Enlisted Feb. 7th, 1916, in 100th Batt. Transferred to 2nd Canadian Railway Troops. Admitted to hospital in France Oct. 1917. Returned to Winnipeg March, 1918. Discharged as medically unfit Sept. 1918. Died in Hospital Nov. 9th, 1918.

Wilday, H. Enlisted Sept. 1915. Killed in action near Arras April 24th, 1917.

Williams, Lieut. Alan Gordon. Enlisted as private June 1915, in 61st Batt. Transferred to 43rd Batt. June 1916. Gazetted Lieutenant June, 1917, and attached to Staff of 2nd Infantry Brigade. Rejoined 43rd Batt. June, 1918. Died of wounds Aug. 27th, 1918, at Battle of Arras.

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(Romans 8:17).

Associated with our text we shall read the first three verses of the seventeenth chapter of St. Matthew "And after six days Jesus, taketh with Him Peter and James and John his brother, and bringeth them up into a high mountain apart: and He was transfigured before them: and His face did shine as the sun, and His garments became white as the light. And behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elijah talking with Him." From the passage immediately following we learn that there was a considerable multitude of people at the foot of the Mount, not far distant, but to whom the incidents narrated in the first three verses of the chapter were not visible.

This transfiguration scene is for us a master portrait of the Kingdom of Heaven. To grasp its meaning requires time and meditation. There are several people mentioned, Moses, Elijah, Christ, the three disciples, the multitude. Let us study them in turn.

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First we will turn our attention to the person of Moses in this transfiguration scene. We know something of his life on earth. By birth a slave, by adoption a prince. His great life work was to lead a nation of slaves from their bondage in Egypt to the freedom of the Promised Land beyond the Jordan. Of the trials and difficulties of the journey through the wilderness we need scarcely speak, save to remind ourselves that the patience and endurance of Moses were strained to the breaking point, and that it was there in the wilds between the Red Sea and the Jordan that he gave to the people of Israel as an inspiration and a heritage from God the greatest code of laws ever delivered to the human race.

And when at the end of the journey through the wilderness and at the end of his own life the great leader stood at last upon the banks of the River Jordan and looked across into the Land of Promise for which he had lived, but on whose soil he knew he never would set foot, he summoned there the Israelites around him and gave them his farewell address. He reminded them of God's dealings with them in bringing them out of Egypt, and in the wilderness; he reminded them of the commandments which had been given them; he exhorted them to remain true to God in their new home which they would soon possess—then carried away by the hand of death,—

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By Nebo's lonely mountain,
On this side Jordan's wave,
In a vale in the land of Moab
There lies a lonely grave;
And no man knows that sepulchre,
And no man saw it e'er,
For the angels of God upturned the sod
And laid the dead man there.

That is the last we know of Moses in this life. Here in this picture of the Kingdom of Heaven we see him again, the type, the representative of all faithful men and women who in their day and generation rendered true and acceptable service unto God, and have been carried by the angels through that experience which we call death from their earthly duties to a higher and better service.

Why then should we fear death? If we have lived as true servants of Jesus Christ why should we fear? Do we not believe that on the other side the grave there is a happiness and joy and peace which here on earth we never can possess? If the end of life were so uncertain that any man had reason to hope that he might avoid it, then there might be a shadow of excuse for unpreparedness. But when we know that, sooner or later, we must go—everyone of us—why are we not prepared, and if we are prepared, why do we fear?

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The next person in this Transfiguration Scene whom we will consider is Elijah. Whom does he represent in the Kingdom of Heaven? If we look up the account of his life we will find that Elijah did not pass through that experience which we call death but that he passed direct from earth to heaven by translation. As far as we know, apart from Christ Himself, after His resurrection, Enoch and Elijah are the only two on record who have left earth in any other manner than by death. "Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him." Does Elijah represent then in the Kingdom of God only these two, himself and Enoch? No, he represents a greater throng by far than that—he represents a multitude of people yet to come. In that passage of Scripture made so familiar to us by its association with the burial service, we read, "Behold, I show you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed; in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye at the last trump for the trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised incorruptible and we shall be changed." And again, in the First Epistle to the Thessalonians we read, "For this we say unto you by the Word of the Lord, that we that are alive, that are left unto the coming of the Lord, shall in no wise precede them that are fallen asleep. For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven, with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we that are alive,

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that are left, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words."

The Second Coming of Christ referred to in these two passages is the greatest of the unfulfilled prophecies of Holy Scripture, "that one far off divine event towards which the whole creation moves." And there are many who think they read between the lines of the Great War, especially in that phase of it which concerns the Land of Palestine and the probable return of the Jews to their Promised Land, and they believe that they see in these things an indication that the return of Christ may not be far distant. But whether we are to live to see that great day of the Lord and be translated like Elijah direct from earth to heaven, or whether we are to pass from earth, as Moses passed, by way of the grave, this much at least we know, we all must go and knowing this we all should be prepared to go. Oh! it makes one wonder why so many people will go on day after day, year after year, unprepared, yet knowing that any day and any hour they may be cut off from earth and have to stand before their God in judgment.

The third person whom we shall study in this Transfiguration Scene, there are really three of them, but we shall take them all as one, is Peter, James and John. Who are

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they and whom do they represent? They were the followers of Christ on earth, men still in the flesh. They represent all true followers of Christ on earth at the present time. They represent us insofar as we are worthy to be represented by them. But someone may say that if this is a portrait of the Kingdom of Heaven, men and women still in the flesh should not be represented in it. The objection arises from a limited conception of what the Kingdom of Heaven is. Christ said to His followers, "The Kingdom is within you." As soon as a man or woman has really found salvation in Christ by conversion, born again of water and of the Holy Spirit, that man or that woman is within the Kingdom of Heaven. True the followers of Christ while still on earth are only in the outer courts of the Kingdom of Heaven; the inner courts will not be reached until, like Moses and Elijah, we enter into the future life. "Now are we the sons of God and it doth not yet appear what we shall be."

Perhaps this can best be explained by an illustration from nature. We have all seen the beautiful moth or butterfly, its wings exquisitely mottled and exactly symmetrical—one of the most perfect works of nature. But the butterfly was not always beautiful. There was a time in its existence when it was in the larva stage, resembling an ugly grub or snail, as it lay in the dust. But there, confined in its earthly shell, it was slowly developing its wings until one day when

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the fulness of time had come the shell was broken and the butterfly emerged; not a new creature but the same creature transformed from its lowly earthly state into its higher and better form of life.

Now if we may use the expression of the human race, we are at present in the larva stage of our development. The soul, the real life of man is confined here in these earthly bodies, but all the time if we are living the life we are intended to live, the soul is gradually developing, until one day when in the sight of God the fulness of time has come, these earthly bodies will be broken and the soul, the real life of man, will enter into those inner courts of the Kingdom of Heaven; not a new creature but the same creature transformed from its lowly earthly state into its higher and heavenly abode.

The next group of people in this Transfiguration Scene—not really in it yet we know they are near—is the multitude at the bottom of the Mount. Some of them are acquainted with Christ; others have heard of Him and are anxious to learn more; some of them are there in opposition to Him; some that are at the bottom of the Mount have never even heard His name. Yet these all have a place in the Kingdom of Heaven, for these also are made in the image of God, stamped with His likeness. He has set His seal upon them that they are His. The coin stamped with

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the image of King George V., though that coin be lost in the gutter or in the jungles of Africa, needs only to be found to regain its full value. The image of the king is on it. And though a man be fallen into the depths of sin his soul needs only to be found and reclaimed to be worth its full value. Man is made in the image of God, stamped with the likeness of his Creator.

The three disciples, Peter, James and John, thought that the Mount of Transfiguration was the best and holiest place in which they had ever been. They wanted to remain right there. Peter suggested that three tabernacles should be built, one for Christ, one for Moses and one for Elijah. But it could not be. The purpose of their visit to the Mount was that these three disciples should have a more convincing revelation of the Kingdom of Heaven, that after the Resurrection when the work of carrying on the Christian religion was fallen upon them with greater responsibility they might be the better able to preach the Way of Salvation.

Is it not often true that in our church work we make the same mistake that the disciples would have made? We build here our tabernacles that we may enjoy the privileges and blessings of the Christian religion, where we may attend church services, where we may have our children baptized and instructed in the Sunday Schools, where we may have

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them confirmed, where we may see them united in the sacred bonds of marriage, where we may kneel with them and with our brother Christians to receive the bread and wine in commemoration of the sacrifice on Calvary, where we may have the last rites of the Church pronounced over these earthly tabernacles after the soul has winged its way to God. We build here our tabernacles, too often forgetful of the multitude at the bottom of the Mount to whom the Gospel of Salvation in Christ has never been preached. Young men, whose early deaths we commemorate tonight, laid down their lives in distant lands for the sacred cause of righteousness and freedom, and may God grant that some of our young men and women may be called to devote and if need be to lay down their lives in distant lands and in this land, ambassadors of Him who alone can bring salvation to the souls of men, and whose commandment that we should do to other men as we would have others do to us is the only hope of peace and justice here on earth.

We come now to the central figure—Christ. Throughout the ages He has stood, and will ever stand, the representative of all those who have laid life itself upon the altar, a willing sacrifice to save the human race or even to save one member of the human race. In the prime of life, at thirty-three or thereabouts, with such possibilities before Him, the multitude clamoring for Him to be their King,

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yet realizing that He could accomplish more for the human race in His death than in His life, He gave Himself of His own free will to face the agonies of death in dark Gethsemane and on Calvary's hill.

He who knew no sin bore the penalty of sin in death in order that the human race might, from that death, be saved. Our men upon the field of battle have learned something of the great love of Christ for the human race in that they who did not have the will to war, and innocent of its great offence, went forth to pay the penalty of war in order that their country and their loved ones might be spared the sufferings of invasion and destruction.

Sometimes our minds become bewildered when we try to comprehend the infinite greatness of the sacrifice made by Christ; we wonder why God did not devise some other way to save the world than by the crucifixion of His own Son on Calvary. Sometimes our minds become bewildered as we try to comprehend the stupendous magnitude of the war through which we have just come; we wonder why, if God is love and rules the world, that such destruction and desolation are permitted.

“He writes in characters too grand
For our short sight to understand:
We catch but broken strokes, and try
To fathom all the mystery

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Of withered hopes, of death, of life,
The endless war, the useless strife,—
But there with larger, clearer sight
We shall see this, His way was right.”

And here we pause a moment to reflect upon the infinite greatness of the love of God the Father, in that, seeing no other way, He was willing to give His only Son to suffer death upon the Cross in order that the human race might be saved from death. I know that we have often read that passage John 3:16 as though God had so loved the world that He loaned His only Son, loaned Him for thirty-three years to be despised and rejected of men, to be mocked and crucified; but that is not what Holy Scripture says. “God so loved the world that He GAVE His only Son,” and in this war parents have learned in a deeper, truer sense than they have ever known before, the meaning of the love of God the Father, in that they, as fathers and as mothers, have given their sons to save the world.

And standing now, as we so often stand, with bowed heads and throbbing hearts our thoughts far off

“in Flanders fields where poppies blow,
Between the crosses row on row,”

each little cross the noblest answer that a soldier true and brave could make to the challenge of that greater cross on

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Calvary which represents the summit of all sacrifice made for others; standing there in meditation on hallowed ground, we catch a vision of Christ in His transfigured glory, and we look up and through our natural tears of human sorrow we sing our hymns of resurrection joy. "Now is Christ risen from the dead and become the first fruits of them that slept" and because Christ is risen from the grave in triumph and in glory, they too, who sleep in Flanders' fields, joint-heirs with Him in righteous suffering and in death, will also rise joint-heirs with Him in triumph and in glory that shall never fade.

