

TRIBUTE TO ALLAN A. MACRAE

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*A Biographical Sketch and Appreciation of Dr MacRae
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the 50th Anniversary of his Ordination*

My purpose this evening is not to attempt the audacity of evaluating another man's life. It is much more modest. I wish merely to sketch some of the outlines of one man's lifetime of service, and to attempt to say something meaningful concerning his impact.

Allan Alexander MacRae was born to John MacRae, M.D., of Calumet, Michigan, and Eunice Jennison of Hartford, Connecticut, on February 11, 1902. The fruit of this union between descendants of Scottish Highlanders and English Puritans showed at an early age his inclination toward scholarly pursuits. In grammar school he studied Latin; and at home he often read the Latin of a six-language edition of the Bible. One Sunday afternoon a Boston preacher visiting Calumet saw Allan and his boyhood chum poring over the Latin text, and was so impressed that upon his return to Boston he proudly informed his fellow Bostonians in a newspaper article that Boston culture was alive and well in Calumet, Michigan! And in fact, Allan's home was a hub for the activities of literary clubs, political groups, and church groups. Having come to Christ at an early age, he set himself the task of reading the entire Bible, often covering 20 or 30 chapters at a sitting.

When Allan was 11, his family went to Italy for several months for the benefit of his father's health. In Rome, Allan attended school in the morning, and in the afternoon he rolled his hoop through the ancient streets between visits to the Forum, the Arch of Titus, the Coliseum, the Appian Way, St. Peter's, the Vatican galleries, and many other sites about which he had previously read. It was probably in Rome that his desire to travel was born.

Soon after the family's return from Italy, Allan's father's health necessitated a move to a warmer climate; and so Allan's high school years, having begun in Calumet High School, were completed in Franklin High School in Los Angeles. During this stay in California, Allan got his first taste of real hiking and mountain climbing, an activity which was to become a lifetime hobby, and would lead to hiking trails and mountain peaks in 30 states and 15 foreign countries on four continents.

In 1918, at the age of 16, Allan entered Occidental College, a fine school with a conservative Presbyterian background, but one which was undergoing a transition to a more liberal emphasis. Allan was at the top of his