

## Memorial Minute for George McCandlish

“Joyful” is the best word to describe George Edward McCandlish. With a twinkle in his eye and a bounce in his step, his life demonstrated a message he once gave in meeting for worship at Friends Meeting of Washington. On a cold day in January, with gloomy messages abounding, George told us that, although there are many serious problems in life, we must not let seriousness become joylessness. He pointed to the early Christians who suffered great difficulties; nonetheless, their writings demonstrate great joy.

George was born in Seattle, Washington in 1914. After attending Swarthmore, where he became a Quaker, George graduated from the University of Washington.

During WWII, George served in North Africa as an ambulance driver for the American Field Service. After the war, he was Executive Director of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration in Germany. He spoke and read French, German, Italian, Latin, and Greek.

George earned his doctorate in American Civilization from Harvard University, where he was a member of the Cambridge Friends Meeting. He transferred his membership to Friends Meeting of Washington in 1967, when he moved to a Washington, DC, as an Associate Professor of American Literature at the George Washington University. He became the chair of the Department in 1970 and a full professor in 1971.

Among his other adventures were a year spent studying theology at the University of Marburg in Germany, teaching as a fellow and editorial assistant at Harvard University, and teaching as a post-doctoral fellow at Brown University. He helped found the Cambridge, Massachusetts, Friends School and the Friends Meeting of Washington Quaker House. At the time of his death on May 19, 1975, he was clerk of the Friends Meeting of Washington Social Order Committee.

One of the memorable messages at his Memorial Service was from a fellow professor at George Washington University, who said that George never shirked from difficult problems at work. A travel minute for George, dated July 1972, said that “His sensitivity to social needs and his understanding of Quaker concerns and values has helped our Meeting seek appropriate expression of non-violent Quaker witness in this Capital city of our troubled country.”

George was a thoughtful and engaging teacher and an inspiration to his students. He was survived by his wife, Violet Brooks, two adult children, Joan and Brooks, and a son, David, who attended Friends Meeting of Washington and was a student at Sidwell Friends School, and two sisters, Laurine Lawson and Virginia.