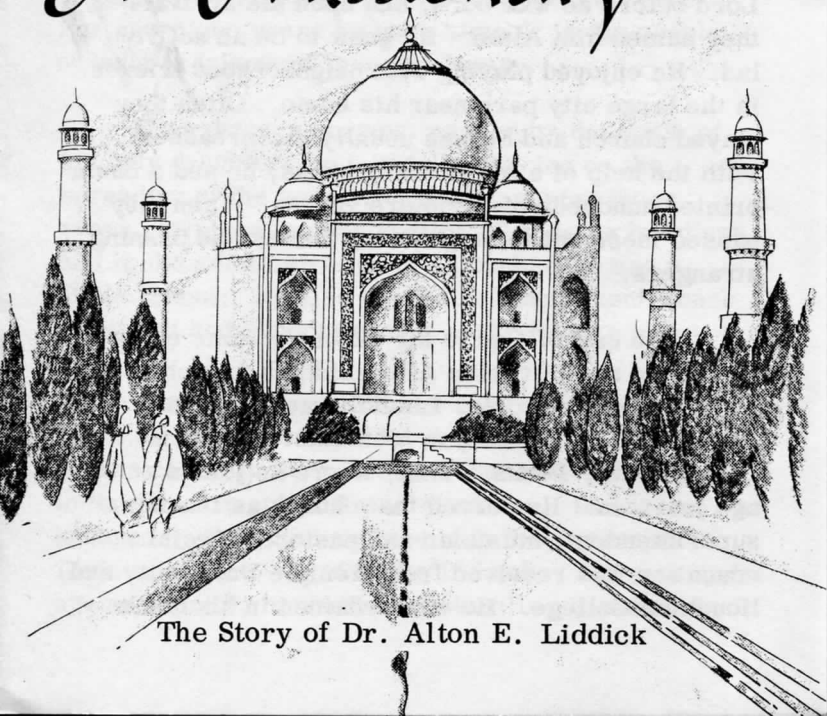


A Blind Man, A King, and A Missionary



The Story of Dr. Alton E. Liddick

At a well side in India, a blind man was intently washing some of his clothing. He dropped them and they fell into the well. The person who drained the well and rescued the clothing, is the missionary hero of this story.

His godly parents had promised him to the Lord before he was born, and upon his arrival they named him Alton. He grew to be an active lad. He enjoyed playing with neighborhood friends in the large city park near his home. Often they played church and he was usually the preacher. With the help of a toy printing press, he and a chum printed hundreds of Scripture verses. Then they passed these out to neighboring homes and passing strangers.

The call of God to the ministry came early and at the age of twelve Alton Liddick preached his first sermon. Mr. Liddick was a charter member of The Wesleyan Methodist Church in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, where he joined at age fourteen. He served that church as teacher, superintendent, musician and pastor. Special education was received from Temple University and Houghton College. He was ordained in his home

church just before he and his young wife sailed to India. Mrs. Ruth Sension Liddick, also a radiant child of God, was a trained nurse who had been called by the Lord to India when she was a child.

In India, Mr. Liddick made friends among the rich and the poor. A king of a state once invited him to a meal. Dinner was served in beautiful English china upon a linen table cloth stretched over a handsome Persian rug. Seated upon the floor, they ate with their fingers. Mr. Liddick was once the teacher of the daughters of Mrs. Pandit, sister of Prime Minister Nehru. Mrs. Pandit became the first woman president of the Security Council of the United Nations.

There were dangers which Mr. Liddick faced. He traveled dangerous oceans during war days when no lights could be used and all passengers had to wear life jackets day and night. He spent two weeks in a prisoner-of-war camp while awaiting transit during one of his journeys. Once a train trip was canceled because of special mission work. That train had a wreck, killing everyone in the compartment to which he had been assigned. He baptized converts in a river where men had to slap the

water in order to scare away the crocodiles.

At one time in tiger country when car lights failed, he rode on the outside of the car holding a weak flashlight.



He could actually hear and even smell tigers in the darkness. He had malaria fourteen times. He submitted himself as a "guinea-pig" in order that a cure for the bite of the blister bug might be discovered. He answered the call of villagers to kill snakes that had crawled into their huts. He saved the life of a bullock that had been bitten by a deadly cobra. He heard the troubled croak of a frog one day and ran to see the reason for such odd noises. He found that it had already been swallowed by a snake. He killed the snake and released the frog to freedom again. He has had daily combat with monkeys, rats and snakes in the effort to maintain safety for his adopted people. At the Sanjan school he offered a two cent reward toward Y. M. W. B. dues for every snake or rat killed and delivered by a child.

Many poor and sick were his friends as he ministered to them in Jesus' Name. Repeatedly he told the story of God's love and of the great invitation

to be born again. He proved his concern for their salvation by being a friend in time of need. In one village, white ants had eaten portions of paper money so Mr. Liddick took the fragments to Bombay and received good money for the needy owners. He taught young boys the skills which made them able craftsmen in carpentry. He acquainted them with the dignity of labor and the majesty of the Lord. For seventeen years he gave himself to the people of India in labors of love for Jesus.

Even through sorrow, caused by the death of his only daughter, he faithfully carried on the spreading of the gospel. He was, during those years, involved in construction of mission buildings, and in the administration of an orphanage and a Bible School. He also served as annual conference president and superintendent of the field.

The Wesleyan Methodist Church continued to honor him, and at its General Conference in 1959, he was called to the position of Executive Secretary in the Department of World Missions. In 1960 he was honored by Houghton College with the Doctor of Divinity degree. In 1968 the Liddicks, for reasons of age and health, moved to Brooksville, Florida, to

take up semi-retired life. CYC'ers and Wesleyans around the world are thankful for so fine a friend and missionary as Dr. Alton E. Liddick. He is a man who not only drained a well to help a blind man but has invested his whole life in sharing water from the well of salvation for men blinded and made thirsty by sin.

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