

Vance Corporal Harry E. Spaulding

Larry was born September 2, 1948, in Gallipolis, Ohio. He attended Putnam Elementary School and then Athens High School where he graduated in June 1966. He entered the Academy of the New Church College the following September, where he attended freshman year and part of sophomore year, leaving February 7, 1967 to enlist in the United States Marines.

He always loved athletics. He played Pee Wee, Little League, Pony League, and was a member of the 1966 Bulldog baseball team at his high school. There he achieved what must be the dream of all pitchers--he finished with a perfect earned run average (0.00) for the 25 innings he pitched. He also created a fine record while playing on the American Legion team during that summer. Besides his active interest and participation in sports, he played a trumpet in the school band for four years, and out of school carried papers from the time he was 8 to 16 years of age. At the Academy he was an outstanding athlete and his pitching contributed to our team winning the Penn Jersey Baseball Championship in the 1966 season. He played on one of the Academy's finest Basketball teams. "He was fantastic at rebounding", said his coach, "but the thing that impressed me most about him was that he was such a nice, likeable fellow, and at the same time, an intensely loyal competitor. He was one of the finest competitors I have ever coached."

On March 7, 1967 he left for San Diego, California where he started his Marine training period, later moving to Camp Pendleton, California. When he graduated from Basic Training, he received top honors and was promoted to Private First Class for making "expert marksman"--the highest score in his class. He left for Vietnam, October 23, 1968.

In Vietnam he served with the 3rd Battalion of the First Marine Division. He was a Radioman in the Morter Platoon of that company. On the afternoon of May 12, 1969, his platoon was assigned as part of a battalion search and clear mission, approximately seven miles south of Da Nang, in Quang Nam Province. As they advanced towards a cluster of trees, they came under intense enemy automatic weapons and small arms fire. Larry was killed instantly by an enemy sniper in the initial burst of fire.

Larry left in the memories of his many friends an image of a smiling, cheerful young man, who loved baseball! "He was a sincere, hardworking young man who impressed everyone with his eager manner and courteous demeanor", wrote his Commanding Officer. "His attitude and personality were an inspiration to those who served with him." In his last letter home to his mother Larry wrote: "I know why I am here--to fight Godlessness."

Inspired by his baseball career and their affection for him, his graduating class in Athens, Ohio, established a Larry Spaulding Baseball Scholarship Fund, and the Cincinnati Circle of the General Church of the New Jerusalem presented the Larry Spaulding Trophy to the Academy of the New Church, to be presented to the outstanding College Athlete each season.

"These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."

John 16:33

M.A.Y. (10)

IN MEMORY OF
MARINE LANCE CORPORAL LARRY EUGENE SPAULDING

Born - September 2nd, 1948 - Athens, Ohio

Killed in action - May 12th, 1969 - Seven
miles south of Da Nang,
South Viet Nam



Note by the Rev. B. David Holm - Pastor of the South Ohio Circle

Larry is the son of Bernard and Bernice Spaulding of Athens. His mother is a loyal New Church woman who is one of the last remnants, still living in Ohio, of the old Middleport Society. His father is affirmative to the New Church and often helped teach their children the Religion Lessons sent out by the General Church. Together they take as active part in the church as their isolation allows.

They have always been an isolated family in the church and had not seen a New Church minister for many years when I came to the South Ohio Circle as Pastor in 1958. I began to visit them and teach the three children in the family. I have found them, over the years, to be a most unusually loving family. They have lived three, and now four, generations in the same home - all the way from great grandmother to great granddaughter. And they are devoted to one another, and leave each other in freedom.

Larry's older brother, Bernard, was the first in the family to go to the Academy in Bryn Athyn. Larry followed him in 1966 - attending college for one and one-half years until February 1968, at which time he enlisted in the Marines. His sister, Judith, will be going to Bryn Athyn in a year or so.

Larry may well be best remembered in Bryn Athyn for his athletic ability in both basketball and baseball. He was quite an exceptional pitcher. But something far more important happened to Larry at the Academy. He became a convinced young New Churchman. The Academy can be proud of what it did for Larry. When he first came to the Academy, he had only an affirmative attitude towards the New Church from his parents and what doctrinal knowledge I was able to teach him in my rather infrequent visits. When he left, he had a good basic knowledge and acceptance of the teachings of the New Church. Very definitely he considered himself a New Church person - even to the extent of trying to insist that the Marines put NC on his dog tags. This, together with his friendly personality, his loving nature and his very real patriotism made him a memorable person to know.

The South Ohio Circle, of which the Spauldings are a part, is made up of tiny, scattered groups and isolated families. Work such as in our area depends upon the Academy's great ability and willingness to take our partly trained young people and form them into New Churchmen. Time and geography make it all but impossible for us to complete the work ourselves. Our need of the Academy is great.

The South Ohio Circle wishes to express its fond memory of Larry and its respect for his ultimate act of patriotism. At the same time we wish to express our gratitude towards the Academy for all it did for him. Because of this, our little Circle is presenting an athletic trophy to the Academy to be awarded to the outstanding college athlete each year. It will be known as the Larry E. Spaulding Trophy. His parents enthusiastically approve of this gesture. Not only did Larry have a real appreciation and affection for the Academy, but he also deplored its lack of a developed sports program on the college level. If a trophy in his name might help stimulate such a program, Larry would be more than pleased. At the same time the trophy will be a lasting expression of the great need all our church groups have (both small and large) for the Academy in the training of our young people.

NOTE: A service for the immediate family was held shortly after we received the news of his passing. Also a service was held in the college chapel in Bryn Athyn. However, his funeral service could not be held until June 1st when his body was returned to Athens. Over 250 people attended this - only a handful of them New Church. This is why the enclosed Memorial Address is written in terms understandable to non-New Churchmen.

THE FOLLOWING PASSAGES FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT AND THE WRITINGS WERE ADDED TO THAT PART OF THE SERVICE WHICH PRECEDED THE ADDRESS.

"The Lord is my light and my salvation: whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? ... Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear: though war should rise against me, in this will I be confident. One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in His temple." (Psalm 27:1, 3-4)

"Fear thou not, for I am with thee: be not dismayed, for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee, yea I will help thee; yea I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness. ... They that war against thee shall be as nothing, and as a thing of nought. For I the Lord thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not, I will help thee." (Isaiah 41: 10-13)

"The work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance forever. And my people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings and in quiet resting places." (Isaiah 32:17)

"He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces." (Isaiah 25:8)

"One's country is more a neighbor than a single community, because it consists of many communities, and consequently love towards the country is a broader and higher love. Moreover, loving one's country is loving the public welfare. One's country is the neighbor, because it is like a parent, for one is born in it, and it has nourished him and continues to nourish him, and has protected him and continues to protect him from injury. Men ought to do good to their country from a love of it, according to its needs. ... That one's country should be loved, not as one loves himself, but more than himself, is a law inscribed on the human heart; from which has come the well known principle, which every true man endorses, that if the country is threatened with ruin from an enemy or any other source, it is noble to die for it, and glorious for a soldier to shed his blood for it. This is said because so great should be one's love for it. It should be known that those who love their country and render good service to it from good will, after death love the Lord's kingdom, for then it is their country. And those who love the Lord's kingdom love the Lord Himself, because the Lord is the all in all things of His kingdom." (True Christian Religion 414)

"Wars that have as a purpose the defence of the country and the church are not contrary to charity. The purpose in view declares whether it is charity or not." (True Christian Religion 407)

From the Doctrine of Charity: "Charity In The Common Soldier: If he (the common soldier) looks to the Lord and shuns evils as sins, and sincerely, justly and faithfully does his duty, he also becomes a form of charity. ... He is against unjust violence; he abominates the wrongful shedding of blood. ... He looks upon his captives after victory as neighbors according to their quality of good. Before the battle he raises his mind to the Lord, and commits his life into His hand; and after he has done this, he lets down his mind from its height into the body and becomes brave. The thought of the Lord - which he is then unconscious of - remains in his mind above his bravery. And then if he dies, he dies in the Lord; if he lives, he lives in the Lord." (Charity 166)

June 1st, 1969
Athens, Ohio

MEMORIAL ADDRESS

(Marine Lance Corporal Larry Eugene Spaulding)

We have gathered together to commemorate the passing into the spiritual world of Marine Lance Corporal Larry Eugene Spaulding. At this very time his spirit is alive and unharmed and fully conscious. For the third day following the death of the body, after a peaceful period of transition, each person's spirit awakens in the spiritual world which is to be their home forever - their's to explore and enjoy to the full.

There is, then, no such thing as actual death, for only the body can die. The spirit, the character, the mind with all its loves and delights and thoughts - still lives. Physical death cannot destroy such things for they are spiritual. What is lower can never essentially harm that which is higher.

So it is that all those qualities and characteristics which caused Larry Spaulding to be loved and respected still exist. Larry, the brave young man, lives on - not merely in our memories, but as an actual young man in an actual world of the spirit. Nor is he but some formless entity or being, for he now dwells in a spiritual body which is real and which is his basic character made visible in a spiritual world. It is a body exactly like the body he had in this world, except being spiritual, it is less limited and more wonderfully perfect - nor will it ever grow old. And the world Larry has now entered is a real world - far more real than this earthly existence. It is the world of the mind. Yet it looks much like this world, only more beautiful and filled with more delights. Our orderly and delightful dreams are confirmations of this, for when we dream our body is inactive, yet our spirit is still active in a very real body in a very real world.

Such are the teachings about life after death which Larry Spaulding believed. And these teachings bring profound comfort and peace to lessen the shock and grief caused by his passing. We need have no fears nor doubts, for it is of the Lord's infinite and tender mercy that each person who is born is born to have eternal life. The whole purpose of the Lord's creation is a heaven from the human race where we can be made happy to eternity by serving our Maker and our fellow men. No natural or human disorder can essentially interfere with this Divine purpose.

It is certainly true that the external circumstances of Larry's passing were disorderly. Only a few forms of physical death could be more disorderly, for war is from human evil. War is most reluctantly permitted by the Lord for the sake of mankind's freedom. If our freedom is not complete, then we are not truly alive or human. The Lord wills that we use this freedom rightly in loving service to one another in His name. But still we are free to pervert our freedom into the doing of evil - even to the extent of one nation attacking another in war. For our freedom's sake, the Lord never stops evils apart from our active cooperation with Him. And we cooperate with the Lord by resisting the evils we see.

We are to resist evil wherever we find it, then, be it within ourselves or outside of us. When forces of evil rise up that would deny God, worship material things, and inflict dominion over others, then those evils must be resisted with all our strength. If we find godlessness, materialism, or the love of dominion over others within our own hearts, they must be resisted. If we find them within our own nation, we must strive for reform. If we find them in other nations which work for our destruction, then we must reluctantly go to war. Such wars are justifiable in the Divine Law, for in such situations of godlessness, materialism, and love of dominion only victory can restore equilibrium and freedom - only victory can maintain that very expression of human life which is liberty and rationality. Without such a sphere of liberty and rationality no person here on earth can develop into a vital spiritual being who can truly approach his God.

Larry Spaulding believed in these things. It was very clear in his mind what he was fighting for. And he, a gentle young man who wanted to hurt no one, was willing to fight and die for these principles. Despite, then, the disorderly external circumstances of Larry's passing, still there is internal order within it. To protect mankind's liberty and rationality is noble. To lay down one's life defending it is glorious, for it is the ultimate expression of selflessness. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." (John 15:13)

The Lord's infinite and loving Providence acts within and above all human disorder - working for mankind's spiritual benefit constantly. Our limited minds cannot hope to fully understand these workings of Providence. "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." (Isaiah 55:8-9) Yet we can know that the Lord's Providence is constant and in every detail of life, even in dreadful disorders. In knowing this we can have full confidence and childlike trust that lifts us from despair and bitterness.

We can know that the Lord in His Providence will work some great good for mankind from this war. We can know that He will work some great good for all of us through the many young men who have fallen. For from the spiritual world in which they now live, they still influence this world. And here is comfort. We can know that not one of these brave young men have been hurt in any final sense. In offering their lives for us they have entered into the Lord's kingdom. They dwell safe in the Divine keeping - to go no more out forever. By knowing these things we can say with humble courage, "Thy will be done." Their young lives have not been wasted.

Larry Spaulding has joined these young men. He has been re-united with those of them with whom he served. Together they have begun that greatest adventure of life - life in the spiritual world - that world of marvels. Each of them will be mercifully and justly led to their full potential of service in the Lord's kingdom - and this forever.

Larry has lost nothing that was truly his. His unusually loving nature which is his basic quality goes on and will be uplifted to its highest possible plane of life. All his other qualities - his gentleness, his friendliness, his openness, and his complete masculinity - go on and will grow and fully serve the love in his heart for others.

Even his love of fun, his joy in sports, his delightful sense of mischief - even his memorable smile - go on and will serve a good and eternal use in the Lord's heavens. In all likelihood Larry will work with and for people, for here in this life he focused chiefly upon others and was concerned with them. Perhaps he will be prepared to work with those, newly come from this world, who are in sore need of love, gentleness, and a sense of fun. This would be a high form of usefulness indeed. Nor would he perform such usefulness alone, for Larry will be led to the young woman Divinely intended for him. They will enter into a most beautiful and complete marriage. Together they will serve the Lord and their neighbor - and this to eternity in delight and mutual happiness.

Larry will not miss anything that is genuinely worthwhile in human life. Indeed, life in this world is relatively little when compared to heavenly life. Here we are limited by our very body. And while many things here are genuine and good, still we are subject to sickness, pain, sorrow and temptation. But in heaven ours is the indescribable privilege of entering into eternal contentment, peace and usefulness. There the issue between good and evil is forever behind us - that issue which is the chief cause of unhappiness here on earth. It is hard for us to imagine a state of mind in which the good part is always chosen - a state of mind in which evil thought or temptation never enters. But this is exactly what the state of heaven offers, and it is promised by the Lord to all of us who genuinely desire it and are willing to work for it here on earth by trying to do the best we know how to do.

We are to look forward to life in the other world with anticipation. Larry Spaulding has entered that world sooner than most, and truly this is his gain. But this does not mean that his passing into the other life does not bring pain and sorrow to those who loved and knew him, for he is missed - deeply missed by his parents, family and friends. Yet we are to take comfort in the sure fact that he is not truly absent. Genuine love has always and will always bridge the gap between the physical world and the world of the spirit. From this communication of love we can derive comfort and strength until in the Lord's good time we too will enter into life eternal. Then actual and joyous reunion will take place.

In the meantime his parents and family can have a real sense of accomplishment. They have contributed a loving young man to human life - a young man who has the devotion of his family, a young man who has the affection of his schools and schoolmates, a young man who is respected by his community, a young man honored by his nation, a young man who has the fond satisfaction of his church, a young man welcomed by the heavens, a young man who has entered into the joy of his Lord.

Such a contribution is a contribution indeed!

Larry Spaulding lives, and his spirit is with us now!

"Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest." (Joshua 1:9)

Amen.