



## Coleman Ray Cameron

September 17, 1922 - April 4, 2014

"When one man dies, the chapter is not torn out of the book, but translated into a better language, and every chapter must be so translated," so averred the English poet John Donne, who also wrote "Death, be not proud, though some have called thee mighty and dreadful, for thou art not so;...One short sleep past, we wake eternally and death shall be no more; Death, thou shalt die."

Coleman Ray Cameron, of Conyers, GA entered into the Heavenly Kingdom Friday, April 4, 2014. He passed away in Conyers with his wife and son by his side holding his hands and stroking his head while saying into his ears that they will love him forever and always.

Ray was born in LaGrange, GA and was the last-born child. He was preceded in death by his parents, Lawrence Bruce Cameron and Bertha Langford Cameron (his mother died when he was six months old); his deeply loved stepmother, "Miss Norvell"; his sisters, Annie Lawrence Cameron and Bertha Mae Cameron; and his brothers, Robert Langford Cameron and Ralph Watson Cameron. Four siblings departed as young children of two years of age or less, Mary Sue Cameron, George Bruce Cameron, Sara Whitaker Cameron and Ben Lee Cameron, all of LaGrange.

He is survived by his loving wife, Frances Smith Cameron, of Conyers, to

whom he would have been married for 64 years as of June 3, 2014; his beloved son, Michael Patrick Cameron, of Conyers; his stepsister and her husband, Phyllis and Ernie Wilson, of Gray, TN; his nephew and his wife, Bobby and Babs Cameron, of Savannah, GA; niece, Joi Cameron, of Dunbar, WV; and several great-nephews and nieces.

Ray served on active duty in the U.S. Navy for almost six years from 1941 to 1947 and then in the United States Naval Reserve until 1961. He was a CPO (Chief Petty Officer) on board the USS Antietam (CV-36) in the Pacific Theater during World War II. His service also included a brief stint on the USS Hancock.

A lighthearted article titled "Privilege of Rank" that purports to describe the abilities of officers from admirals down to CPOs and which appeared in the Tale Winds section of a 1992 issue of the American Naval Association magazine Wings of Gold, proclaims: "Chief Petty Officer - lifts aircraft carriers and walks under them; catches speeding rockets in his teeth and eats them, freezes water with a single glance - because HE IS GOD!"

Ray was an Elder at Yeamans Park Presbyterian Church in Hanahan, SC. He had been a member of Conyers Presbyterian Church since 1986.

He was a member of the Association of Naval Aviation, the Fleet Reserve Association, the Tailhook Association, the USS Antietam Association, Navy Air Group 19 Association, Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), the Atlanta World War II Round Table and the American Legion. He was also the owner of a "plank," awarded for his early support of establishing the U.S. Navy Memorial in Washington, D.C.

Ray was a voracious reader, having read countless hundreds of books and still wanting more. His favorite genre of fiction was that of legal thrillers,

particularly if the stories included well-crafted courtroom dramas.

A true blessing was that, until the abrupt decline of his health in January, he read novels on his Kindle Paperwhite, watched C-Span and Atlanta Braves baseball games, enjoyed his wife Fran's home cooking and her loving and constant companionship.

Through the many years, he was devoted, in his quiet way, to his loved ones and close friends (especially the Rice family of Charleston, SC) and he never once let any of them down. During the winter of his life, he drew even closer to his family and also looked forward to hanging out with his "coffee-drinking buddies" at local Conyers coffee shops. Fran and Mike are blessed to have the loving support of her brother and sisters, W. Charles Smith and his family, Ann S. MacCarthy, Marian S. Norton and her family, James and Kathryn S. West and their family.

On one occasion in the 1950s, Ray came home from work and found his little boy, Mike, immersed in tears over having missed the ice cream truck. Ray quickly loaded Mike into the family car and drove up the street, waved to the ice cream man to stop, and then got out and bought Mike his green lime-flavored Popsicle. For Mike, during moments like these, Dad made all things seem right in the world.

Coleman Ray Cameron, a man of genuine honor and integrity, completed a life more than well-lived from beginning to end. He was impeccably honest, having never stolen as much as a candy bar as a child, and he was a firm believer that honesty is usually the best policy. He was - beyond dispute - a devoted son, brother, father and husband, having been faithfully married to the same woman for six-and-a-half decades.

A Memorial Service will be held Sunday, April 27, 2014 at 3 p.m. at Conyers Presbyterian Church with Dr. Al Myers, Pastor David Rogers and Dr. James P. West officiating; family will receive friends from 2 until 3 p.m. prior to the service at the church.

Although flowers will be appreciated, the family suggests that in lieu of floral tributes, contributions be made in Ray's name to Conyers Presbyterian Church, 911 N. Main Street, Conyers, GA 30012.

Scot Ward Funeral Services, 699 American Legion Road, Conyers, GA 30012, 770-483-7216.