

THE RIGHT REVD GEOFFREY FRANCIS ALLEN (1902–82)

Formerly Bishop in Egypt, Bishop in Egypt and Bishop of Derby, Bishop Allen died on 8 November 1982, aged 80. He was a Scholar of University College, Oxford, and then Chaplain and Fellow of Lincoln College. In 1935 he gave up his Oxford career to go out to China as Chaplain and Tutor at the Union Theological College in Canton.

This work was halted by the civil war in China when he and Madeline his wife became refugees. He came back to this country for a short time before returning to China as Secretary of the National Christian Council of China 1942–44. He then had three years in England as Archdeacon of Birmingham before being consecrated Bishop in Egypt where he stayed for five years. There he pushed forward the work of building bridges between different communities, the established English residents, the servicemen stationed there, the Coptic Christians and the Muslim majority of the population. He had the qualities essential for a conciliator, clear thinking, forceful expression, patience and humility.

Coming home again in 1952, he was Principal of Ripon Hall, Oxford, a theological college then on the verge of folding. He rescued the college not only by his capacity for prolonged work and administrative ability, but also by his level of scholarship and even more by his deep spirituality. From 1959 to 1969 he was Bishop of Derby.

On his retirement he and Madeline made their home in Philcote Street. He continued to be active both in this district and internationally. The address at his funeral was given by Canon Geoffrey Tomlinson, who spoke of his large voice, his large mind and his large heart.