The Rev. Dr. John R. Whitney
VTS Class of ‘53

The Rev. Dr. John R. Whitney, 86, of Wellsboro, PA, died Thursday, March 2, 2006 in the Green Home, Wellsboro, PA.

He was born January 28, 1920, in Coudersport, PA.

A graduate of Bradford High School, he acquired the following academic degrees: AB in Economics from Brown; M.Ed. from Alfred; Master of Divinity from Virginia Theological Seminary; PhD in Philosophy of Education from the Penn. State University.

Vastly more significantly, he was married to his beloved wife, the former Miriam Hagedorn, from 1943 until his death.

Miriam bore him a son, Richard, who like Miriam, loved him from start to finish, even as he loved them.

John grew up under the intimate guidance of his parents, Alvin and Nina Raymond Whitney, and his three sisters, Rae, twin Myra, and Jean. His grandparents doted on him, the only grandson.

Later in life he also enjoyed granddaughter, Erin, and great-granddaughter, Sophia.

Enlisting Dec. 8, 1941, he served in WW II as a Captain in Combat Intelligence for two and a half years in New Guinea and the Philippines.

Priested in 1953, he served at one time or another as Episcopal Chaplain at Penn State; Rector of St. Andrew’s Parish in State College; Instructor and Professor of Religious Studies at Penn State, headed the development of a high school course, “Religious Literature of the West” for the PA Dept. of Education, covering Judaism, Christianity and Islam; Rector of Christ Church, Williamsport; Professor of Christian Education and Pastoral Theology at VTS.

Bishop Stevenson of the Episcopal Diocese of Central PA named Fr. Whitney an honorary canon of the Diocese. Canon Whitney served as the first Presiding Judge of the Ecclesiastical Trial Court of the Diocese of Central PA, following sometime terms in his diocese as Examining Chaplain, Chairman of the Standing Committee, and other roles.

Canon Whitney wrote numerous journal articles and reviews in addition to the text,
“Religious Literature of the West.” At age 81 he wrote a novel, “Children of Noah,” privately printed for the entertainment and education of his friends.

Canon Whitney died a defender of the catholic Christian faith including heterosexual Ordination and Holy Matrimony, for which he offered no apologies.

A Memorial Service will be held 11:00 AM, Thursday, March 9, 2006 in the All Saints Episcopal Church, Brookland, PA. The Rt. Rev. Bishop Michael W. Creighton, the Rev. Gregory P. Hinton, and the Rev. Elaine Silverstrim will preside. Burial will be in All Saints Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to: All Saints Parish, c/o Joan Sampson, Ulysses, PA 16948, St. John’s Parish, Westfield, PA 16950, or to the Altar Guild, St. Paul’s Parish, Wellsboro, PA 16901.

Arrangements are entrusted to the Olney Funeral Home & Cremation Service, Ulysses, PA.

Taken from the Williamsport Sun-Gazette, March 23, 2006