



John Clay "JC" Earnest

March 26, 1928 - July 10, 2022

J. C. Earnest, 94, went to be with the Lord on Sunday, July 10, 2022. He is survived by his loving wife of 70 years, Rebecca Moore Earnest. At his passing she was, as ever, with him at his bedside at their home, along with their sons and several grandchildren. It was a peaceful and fitting end of the earthly life of a loving and faithful husband and father. His family glories in his transition and is thankful to God for his legacy.

He was born on March 26, 1928, in Flat Creek, Walker County, Alabama. His late parents were Oliver Clay Earnest and Myrtle Brown Earnest. He was the third of four children, and the last surviving. His three sisters were Martha Allen Polk, Polly Modarelli and Doris Raiford. His early childhood was spent in Powhatan along the Warrior River on the Walker-Jefferson County line, where he spent a wonderfully carefree and rambling outdoor life.

His parents moved the family to the Powderly section of Birmingham where he attended Jones Valley High School, graduating in 1945. He maintained lifelong friendships with many of his schoolmates, often attending reunions and smaller get-togethers until time and age left him the last man standing. He entered college, but his draft notice came on his 18th birthday. The U.S. Army trained him as a gunner on the 155mm "Long Tom" cannon and sent him to Japan as part of the Allied occupation force. There he reached the rank of sergeant in less than a year. He was characteristically modest about his military service, but it was a formative experience in his life. Almost to his last years, when he had to meticulously keep a notebook to remind him of his tasks for the day, he could still immediately recall his 8-digit service number, and count to ten in Japanese.

Notwithstanding the very real and natural anger felt by most Americans in WWII against the Japanese for the attack on Pearl Harbor, he learned to respect and appreciate the great courtesy and industry of the Japanese people.

After his honorable discharge from the Army, J.C. attended the University of Alabama and earned a degree in business. He "hired on" at GMAC, the finance arm of General Motors, where he worked some 30 years. One day as a young GMAC man assigned to Southeast Alabama and Northwest Florida territory, he happened to see an attractive young lady in a diner in Dothan, Alabama. It was a little forward of him, but he was interested enough to introduce himself to Margaret Rebecca Moore, a recent graduate of Auburn University

working for the Alabama Department of Welfare. From that meeting sprang a romance that resulted in one of the greatest partnerships of all time, and they married on June 28, 1952.

J.C. and Becky initially lived in Dothan but soon made their home in McCalla, Alabama, where her family had lived for generations. There they raised four sons, all of whom survive: John Clay Earnest, Jr. (Carroll), David Moore Earnest (Teresa), Joel Slone Earnest (Cami) and Philip Brown Earnest (Beth). He is survived as well by nine grandchildren: Joshua David Earnest (Jessica), Jessica Earnest Hughes (John), John Clay Earnest, III (Bethany), Sarah Elizabeth Earnest, Daniel Andrew Earnest (Shanna), Carolyn Rebecca Earnest, Joel Slone Earnest, Jr., William Brown Earnest and Matthew James Earnest. He is also survived by six great-grandchildren. He was also very close to his wife's brother and his wife, E.H. "Buddy" Moore, Jr. and Paddy Hulsey Moore (deceased), and was particularly fond of his Moore nephews and nieces: Richard Alan Moore, Susan Moore Kirkpatrick, Cary Eugene "Buck" Moore and Melissa Moore Ethridge.

Although "Sonny" to his immediate family and childhood friends, he was "J.C." to colleagues and acquaintances, "Jay" and "Pef" to his wife, "Daddy" to his sons and "Daddy J" to his grandchildren and greats. He was the most loyal and faithful of husbands and loving of fathers. Every weekday for 30 years he made the grueling interstate-less drive from McCalla into Birmingham's Southside to the GMAC, and came home every night at 6:00 p.m. to be met by a passel of his boys hugging his knees and grabbing at his arms. He lived a life of duty and was completely unselfish with his time, and was always directly involved in his sons' and grandchildren's lives, devoting countless hours to helping with Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts, swimming at the YMCA, countless school performances and recitals and scores of tee-ball, baseball, football and basketball games. He was an avid vegetable gardener, every year raising a bounty of tomatoes, beans, peas, onions, potatoes, okra, cabbage and squash. He would work to exhaustion in repairing and improving the family home, with never a daylight moment wasted. He never stopped learning, and his nights were devoted to reading, most often Biblical study or history, biography and Agatha Christie mysteries. He was particularly a student of the English language, and was careful to instruct his sons and grandchildren in the importance of correct grammar and pronunciation.

Even after leaving GMAC he remained active and involved. For some years he and Becky continued running the "E.H. Moore Feed and Grocery" after the retirement of her father, E.H. Moore, Sr., who had operated the store as a center of the McCalla Community since 1941. Later he accepted an appointment to serve as a Deputy Tax Assessor in the Bessmer Cutoff, serving in that capacity over a decade in the 80s and 90s.

As a young adult he became concerned about what he saw as the growing threat of socialism and moral degeneracy in America. He and Becky became intensely involved in

Republican Party politics in 1961, devoting untold hours to personally canvassing neighborhoods, organizing meetings, working phones and stuffing envelopes to spread the word about conservatism and the very real choice presented by the GOP. He was instrumental to the building of the tidal wave of political and social change which washed over Alabama in the 1980s, reversing over 150 years of dominion by the Democrat Party. He took his Christian life absolutey seriously, having long ago come to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. He and Becky were founders of McCalla Southern Methodist Church, which later became McCalla Bible Church, of which he had been a member since 1964. He devoted his life to discipleship, serving for decades in virtually every lay capacity in his church, from steward and chairman of committees to unsung grass-cutter and fellowship-hall-setter-upper/taker-downer. He was the most disciplined and upright man, who lived a Godly life which has served as an inspiration ad standard for his entire family. His legacy is that of sacrificial love and duty to one's family. He was the embodiment of Micah 6:8 - He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?

His family mourns the passing of J.C. Earnest, a good, upright and decent man, and grieves for the pain of separation. But they glory in his victory, and are lifted up and sustained with the sure and certain knowledge that, as believers and followers of Jesus Christ, the Savior, one day they too will be reunited with him for eternity.

"Please no flowers. Any memorials may be sent to <http://mccallabiblechurch.org/> or any Christian Church of your preference."

Cemetery Details

Moore Cemetery

6043 Moore Cemetery Road
Mc Calla, AL 35111

Previous Events

Visitation

JUL 13. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

McCalla Memorial Funeral Home
4780 Letson Farms Parkway
P.O. Box 629
Mc Calla, AL 35111
info@mccallamemorialfuneralhome.com
<https://www.mccallamemorialfuneralhome.com>

Funeral Service

JUL 13. 11:00 AM (CT)

McCalla Memorial Funeral Home
4780 Letson Farms Parkway
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<https://www.mccallamemorialfuneralhome.com>

Tribute Wall

DA

“ *With Sincere Condolences,
Mr. & Mrs. Dennis R. Armstrong*

Dennis Armstrong - July 12 at 10:09 AM

BG

“ *Richard & Beth Green*



Beth Green - July 12 at 09:57 AM

JE

“ *John & Sarah Elam lit a candle in memory of John Clay
"JC" Earnest*



John & Sarah Elam - July 12 at 09:26 AM