

Funeral largest ever seen here

Gleaner Staff Reporters.

THE PRAYERS and tears of thousands of mourners accompanied the Hon. Sir Harold Allan, Kt., O.B.E., on his last journey yesterday afternoon from the Church of St. Margaret, Hope Road, to the flower-lined vault in the churchyard of St. Andrew Parish Church.

The funeral of the statesman, who died on Wednesday, was a State ceremony and was the largest ever seen in the island.

Headed by His Excellency the Governor, Sir Hugh Foot, members of the Privy Council, of the Executive Council, of the Legislature, the Judiciary, the Military, of every branch of public service and phase of life in the island, people of every occupation, profession and social position joined in sorrow at the passing of a man who served to the last, and in sympathy for his wife.

Lady Foot supported Lady Allan on one side, with Mrs. L. Fletcher, matron of the Nuttall Memorial Hospital, on the other, on the journey from St. Margaret's to the waiting car, into the church and to the grave. As the casket descended slowly from sight into the vault, Lady Foot gently led Lady Allan away.

Leading Police role

Police, members of whose department had fallen within Sir Harold's portfolio as Minister for Finance and General Purposes, played a leading role. Police provided a guard of honour for the catafalque as it lay in state in the Church of St. Margaret's from 1 p.m. until 3.15 p.m. They acted as pall-bearers and provided a route-long guard at every cross-road, another guard of honour at the Parish Church, through which the procession passed, and kept in order the surging, mournful, curious crowd of well over 20,000 from St. Margaret's to the square at Half Way Tree.

Traffic was blocked at all entries along the entire funeral route. Nothing moved in that area but the procession. In front of the Parish Church, the Jamaica Military Band played mournful airs.

During the lying-in-state a steady stream of people, estimated at 3,000, passed by the bier. Some of them had travelled from Portland by special trains and special buses, provided by Mr. Bustamante to the church. Men without jackets, women with handkerchiefs over their heads, men and women of all races, of all stations in life, from every parish, paid respect to the dead statesman and in many an eye there was a tear.

The people filed through the northern door, and came out by the eastern door of the church.

At 3 p.m., the congregation rose as Lady Allan entered from the eastern doorway and took her place on the front bench in which were seated also Mrs. Fletcher, the Hon. F. V. Grossett, Custos of Portland, and Mrs. Grossett and Dr. H. L. Morrison of Montego Bay, a close friend of Sir Harold and Lady Allan.

Bustamante's grief

Five minutes later Mr. Bustamante arrived accompanied by the Hon. Donald Sangster and Mr. W. M. Dickson, M.H.R. The Minister for Communications, in black coat, striped trousers and black string tie, recently from his own bed of illness, looked haggard with grief.

For a few moments he remained bowed in prayer, then rose, accompanied by Mr. Sangster, and went to gaze for the last time on the man with whom he had been for so long associated in the arduous affairs of Government. A tear glistened in his eye as he walked slowly back to his place. Throughout the time preceding the service there was subdued organ music.

His Excellency the Governor and Lady Foot arrived at 3.10 o'clock, and were received at the entrance by the Rev. J. Leslie Macpherson, the Rector, and Messrs R. A. F. Macpherson and Wilfred Fox, Churchwardens and Mr. Easton Soutar.

On arrival of the Governor and party the congregation sang the first verse of the National Anthem.

After the Governor's arrival the clergy entered, led by altar servers with crucifix and lighted candles. Members of the clergy were His Lordship Bishop Basil Dale, Canon Walter Brown, Canon R. O. C. King, Canon E. L. Maxwell, the Rev. B. C. Jones, Rector of Port Antonio, the Rev. A. F. Bullock, the Rev. Vere Stead.

In the sanctuary were members of the Constabulary who were pall-bearers.

The ceremony followed the printed order of service distributed before the commencement.

First there was the hymn "Pleasant Are Thy Courts Above", sung with deep feeling by the congregation. Lady Allan joined in the singing and there were tears in her eyes. This was followed by the singing of the 23rd Psalm. The Lesson was read by the Rev. B. C. Jones from the 21st Chapter of Revelations.

Eulogy by Rector

After the Lesson the congregation sang "The King of Love My Shepherd is", and then the Rev. J. Leslie Macpherson delivered the eulogy in which he paid tribute to

Sir Harold Allan as a true Christian gentleman, a patriot and a statesman.

Coupled with the tributes he expressed the sorrow and sympathy which went out from all to Lady Allan in her hour of bereavement.

Prayers by the Rector followed — the Lord's Prayer, a prayer "for those whom we love and see no longer?" a prayer for those who mourn, a prayer for fortitude. The blessing was pronounced by the Bishop after the singing of the hymn "There is a Blessed Home", and the congregation slowly filed out of the church to the "Dead March in Saul" in the wake of the carriage bearing the casket.

A gentle sigh seemed to rise from the throngs outside the church and massed in the roadway as the procession emerged and the casket was lifted into the waiting hearse by the pall bearers.

No delay

There was no delay in setting in motion the largest funeral procession ever seen in the Corporate Area.

The Police under Commissioner Walter Calver, Area Superintendent Crosswell and Senior Assistant Holley maintained a smooth flow of traffic that proceeded in almost endless stream down the length of the Hope Road to the square at Halfway Tree.

Hundreds of motor cars were there, and bicycles by the score. Throughout the whole three-mile driveway there were crowds of silent, reverent spectators, thickest at the entrance to King's House, surpassed only by the throng that filled the square at Halfway Tree by the Clock Tower.

The order of the procession from St. Margaret's to the clock tower was as follows: the clergy, the motor hearse; Lady Allan, His Excellency the Governor and Lady Foot, the Chief Justice, Privy Councillors members of the Executive Council members of the Legislature, the Mayor wearing his Chain of Office.

In the cleared space of the square at Half Way Tree, by the clock tower, the procession halted for a short time during which the casket was taken from the hearse and replaced on the carriage controlled by the pall-bearers. A slow march followed, mourners walking to the Parish Church for the interment in the church grounds.

Lady Allan drove ahead to the Parish Church, and received the bier at the door, falling in with Lady Foot, and Mrs. Fletcher, immediately behind the casket.

Muffled drums

In front of the Church the Jamaica Military Band under command of Major Robert Jones, had been playing appropriate music during the time of waiting. On the arrival of the cortege the Police Guard of Honour under Senior Assistant Superintendent Holly came smartly to attention, and the muffled drums of the Band solemnly proclaimed its approach.

Through the Church went the solemn march, out through another doorway and along the paved pathway to the grave.

At the graveside the body was committed by the Rector of St. Margaret's.

Officials, clergy, lay people, of every class and creed and colour gazed with saddened glances as the floral tokens rose yet higher and higher over the new-made mound.

There were hundreds of wreaths, among them one by Commander Douglas Marshall M.P., a member of the United Kingdom delegation here, on behalf of the British Empire Parliamentary Association.

As people laid their wreaths and moved away, their places were immediately filled by the seemingly endless procession of others who kept pouring into the churchyard, too late to join in the general graveside service, but anxious to say a last prayer for Sir Harold Allan.

Radio broadcast

The funeral services were broadcast by Radio Jamaica, and two loudspeakers in St. Margaret's churchyard enabled the hundreds outside the building to follow the services within.

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