

# DENOMINATIONAL HIGHER EDUCATION DURING WORLD WAR II

Edited by  
John J. Laukaitis



Denominational Higher Education  
during World War II

John J. Laukaitis  
Editor

Denominational  
Higher Education  
during World War II

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*Editor*

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*To My Late Grandfathers  
For Their Love of Family and Service to Country*

*Victor Joseph Laukaitis, Sr.  
1924–2000  
US Navy 1943–1946*

*John James Macaluso  
1919–1987  
US Navy 1941–1945*

## PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Researching the history of North Park University During World War II, I came across the North Park College World War II Memorial Plaque in the F. M. Johnson Archives and Special Collections. Removed at some point and stored, the memorial plaque, heavily tarnished, showed its age. I, however, remained grateful that it still existed. The 45 names had become familiar to me. I had held and read the carbon copies of the letters North Park College President Algoth Ohlson had written to Gold Star families, and they impressed upon my heart the sense of loss that must have been felt across the campus and the great sacrifice made by each of the 45 young men.

My research ultimately led to writing “Service, Faith, and Race: North Park College During World War II.” I shared drafts of the chapter with colleagues and students, including student veteran Nico Canete (US Navy, 2011–2015). Upon learning of the memorial plaque through my work, Nico met with Interim President of North Park University Carl Balsam (US Navy, 1966–1971) about having the plaque restored and reinstalled on campus. Through Interim President Balsam’s assistance, support, and perseverance, the plaque went through an extensive restoration and is mounted near its original location on North Park’s campus. “For my fellow student veteran friends and me on campus, some of whom have served in Iraq and Afghanistan,” Canete wrote, “the plaque represents the university’s commitment to honoring and supporting those who have served.” If my research only led to this memorial plaque being rededicated, it was well worth every minute.

The reception that “Service, Faith, and Race: North Park College During World War II” received from the North Park University community ultimately led to proposing *Denominational Higher Education During World War II*. Through my research, I soon learned of a largely ignored area in the history of higher education. As scholars from across the country accepted my invitation to write chapters, my enthusiasm for this work grew. Updates such as those from Prof. Stephen Jackson at the University of Sioux Falls and Prof. Benjamin Brandenburg at Montreat College became representative of the interest surrounding the work. South Dakota Public Radio’s *In the Moment* featured Prof. Stephen Jackson and revealed the strong interest in the history of Christian liberal arts colleges during World War II in general and the history of the University of Sioux Falls in particular. Prof. Brandenburg’s work gained local attention and led to an exhibit at the Presbyterian Heritage Center in Montreat, North Carolina. In all, each historian’s research has been well received, and I have no reservation in saying that the work of each of the twelve scholars will strengthen the understanding of higher education during World War II.

My chapter on North Park College during World War II would not have been possible without the assistance of former North Park University archivist Anna-Kajsa (Anderson) Echague. Her dedication to both the institution and collection was beyond measure. My enthusiasm for this work was equally matched with hers, and I am indebted to her efforts locating documents and other primary sources, many of which would have escaped my search. I am also thankful for the interim archivist Stephen Spencer and now the new archivist Andrew Meyer for their assistance.

North Park University is an environment that values faculty research. I am thankful for Interim President Balsam’s leadership and service as well as his acknowledgment of my work on the history of North Park during World War II. I am also grateful for the support of Provost Michael Emerson who exemplifies the definition of both a leader and a scholar.

Last, I thank the student veterans of North Park University such as David Thompson, Edward Sanderson, Nico Canete, and Roberto Martinez who have all served not only their country but also their fellow veterans at North Park University.

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## CHAPTER 1

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# Introduction

*John J. Laukaitis*

World War II veteran and Medal of Honor recipient Corporal Hershel “Woody” Williams held the Super Bowl LII coin in his hand on February 4, 2018 before some 70,000 in the stadium and some 103 million through television. Standing on the 50-yard line alongside 15 other recipients of the nation’s highest military honor, the former U.S. Marine remains one of four living men to receive the Medal of Honor for conspicuous valor during World War II. According to the National WWII Museum, of the 16 million Americans who served their country, just over 500,000 are alive today. The United States faces the reality that its last living connections to the war become fewer in number each year. As part of the Greatest Generation, those who served in World War II take on an esteemed place in the collective memories of a country seemingly desperate for men and women of integrity and virtue. The honoring of Corporal Hershel “Woody” Williams during Super Bowl LII illustrates just one example of the esteem held for those who served in World War II. The receptions of the recent films *Hacksaw Ridge* (2016), *Dunkirk* (2017), and *Darkest Hour* (2017) provide additional examples. Their receptions convey not only America’s but also the world’s reverence for those who faced existential threats and stood firm

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in their resolve to serve and sacrifice in the name of freedom. As time continues to distance World War II, a collective expression is voiced that the service and sacrifice of those men and women of the United States and the Allied powers will not be forgotten and rightfully so.

Service and sacrifice appeared on many fronts during World War II. Just as they came in the fronts of war, they also came at the home front, and both are of importance. In what seems to be extensive collection of scholarship, a glaring gap is unexpected, but yet a glaring gap indeed exists. A largely ignored part of the history of World War II continues to be how colleges and universities responded to the war and contributed to the efforts abroad and in the United States. Where some historians of World War II have included higher education in their analyses, their focus has primarily focused on large-scale research through the federal government and massive training programs sponsored by the armed services. In beginning to establish a foundation on the history of higher education during the war, C.D. Cardozier deserves much credit for his work *Colleges and Universities in World War II* (1993) that brought great insight into the relationship between higher education and wartime America. In the scope of higher education during the war, however, Cardozier's work does not reveal the full complexity of issues affecting colleges and universities during the national crisis, nor should it be expected to do so as a single work. To understand more fully this history, additional works, such as this one, call attention to how the war affected colleges and universities and how colleges and universities furthered the United States' efforts toward victory. What appears through additional historical inquiry is that colleges and universities during the war possessed definite patterns or similarities and, at the same time, possessed distinct differences creating a history characterized by nuance. These nuances are well illustrated in the history of Christian denominational colleges and universities across the landscape of the United States during World War II.

Denominational colleges and universities faced the national crisis in relationship to their Christian tenets and particular religious communities. Within Protestantism, for instance, denominational positions ranged from justifying the war in light of the threat to the United States to maintaining long-held beliefs of nonviolence. The scope of religious diversity within Christian higher education and the central issues of faith and service to God and country become particularly apparent during the war. Shifting the focus from research and public institutions to

denominational institutions fills a gap in the history of higher education and the history of World War II. Through this, an expanded view of higher education during wartime and the relationship between higher education, faith, and war becomes possible. Additionally, since most denominational institutions can be characterized as liberal arts colleges, the ways in which the liberal arts intersected with the mission of higher education during the mid-twentieth century, Christian faith, and distinct religious beliefs demonstrate an often complex environment characterized by traditional foundations and new paths forward.

The diversity of Christian denominations makes any generalization about Christian higher education during World War II somewhat difficult. Select denominations fit larger, historic movements within Christianity, and their responses and contributions to the war seem in line with mainline Protestant and Catholic beliefs. Other denominations, however, are best characterized as the Protestants of the Protestants and dissenters of the dissenters, and their responses varied to the same degree as their doctrines. Regardless, whether on a large or small scale, denominational colleges often answered to religious authorities beyond the campus for their framing of the war and did not simply respond to the forces present during wartime whether that force be American patriotism, government directives, or old-world loyalties. Enveloping the denominational college, the call to serve God meant examining theologically and through Scriptures the actions necessary to be faithful to God in accordance with established beliefs. For some denominational colleges, being faithful to God and country did not cause a conflict of conscience. For others, the war and responsibilities to the country led to crises within the colleges and denominations.

The twelve chapters in this work analyze how denominational colleges framed World War II in relationship to faith, contributed and responded to the war effort, and adapted to changes facing higher education during wartime. Some aspects of the war seem similar across public, private, and denominational institutions. This history is part of this volume. The exodus, for instance, of men—students, faculty, and administrators—being drafted led to declines in overall enrollment. With this, the gender balance shifted significantly with student populations becoming largely female. Across the country, news of classmates serving across the world reached campus newspapers. As the war continued, the news of fallen soldiers, sailors, and pilots left a deep sense of loss among campus communities. With this sense of loss also came a patriotic pride in

knowing that former classmates and alumni paid the ultimate price for the American cause. Common events also occurred. Students sold war bonds, held scrap drives, and donated blood. They experienced gas and tire rationing and consequently limited travel. Football seasons and dances were cancelled. Technical training was often added to the curriculum along with accelerated programs, and many campuses sponsored military reserve programs. Higher education, indeed, changed with the war, and, in many ways, the changes possessed a degree of commonality across colleges as the twelve chapters show. Where the commonalities are part of this volume, the distinct differences that developed from denominational identities are part of the volume as well. From the theology of just war theory and the theology of pacifism and noncombatancy, for instance, to an assortment of middle positions, Christian colleges were able to frame and express their positions and feelings on war through faith where public universities could not and most private, secular institutions would not.

The twelve chapters collected here reflect a wide range of denominations and geographic locations and provide a significant investigation into denominational higher education during World War II. With their names as they appeared during World War II, their locations, and their denominational affiliations, the colleges include Pepperdine College in Los Angeles, California (Church of Christ); Sioux Falls College in Sioux Falls, South Dakota (Baptist); College of Mount St. Joseph in Cincinnati, Ohio (Catholic, Sisters of Charity); North Park College in Chicago, Illinois (Evangelical Covenant Church); Sterling College in Sterling, Kansas (Presbyterian); Walla Walla College in College Place, Washington (Seventh-day Adventist); Huntington College in Huntington, Indiana (Church of the United Brethren in Christ); Houghton College in Houghton, New York (Wesleyan); Whitworth College in Spokane, Washington (Presbyterian); Mississippi College in Clinton, Mississippi (Baptist); Louisiana College in Pineville, Louisiana (Baptist); and Montreat College in Montreat, North Carolina (Presbyterian). Together, they illustrate an intricate and significant history that brings attention to historical accounts that have been generally overlooked in studies of higher education and World War II. They also give voice to the many men and women from denominational colleges across the country, who served and sacrificed at home and abroad.



## CHAPTER 2

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# Staying “On the Beam”: Pepperdine College During World War II

*Loretta Hunnicutt*

When news of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor reached California in December 1941, George Pepperdine College (later Pepperdine University) on Vermont Avenue in Los Angeles, California was about to finish the first term of its fifth year. With a steady stream of students from Churches of Christ and significant support from local communities, the school had grown quickly from 167 students its first year to 357 students in the fall of 1941. The entry of the United States into the war would have profound effects on the young school. Enrollment declined and war-related activities assumed prominence on the campus. These activities culminated in the publication of a newsletter titled *On the Beam* which aimed to support the over 400 Pepperdinners that served in the armed forces and keep them “on the beam” in their fight against the threats to the United States abroad. Similarly, at home the Pepperdine community took up their challenge to keep the university alive during the war and support those that were away fighting. However, in the end the war, though exerting a powerful impact, would be more of an

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aberration than a turning point for the school. Pepperdine emerged from the war still on a path of growth and with its mission of Christian education intact.

The effects of the war years on Pepperdine are visible in three areas. First, the experience of Pearl Harbor and the growing recognition of Nazism's effects in Germany prompted a reevaluation by Pepperdine students and faculty of their role in American culture and society. This reevaluation reflected to a certain extent the experience of the broader Churches of Christ as it shed much of its formerly pacifist, culturally separatist heritage and embraced support of the war and a closer relationship with American culture.<sup>1</sup> Second, the War presented challenges to maintaining the Pepperdine community as a cohesive unit. The Japanese American students could not remain due to Executive Order 9066 and the creation of the internment camps. Furthermore over 400 students left the university to enter military service. Despite these separations many in the Pepperdine community sought to maintain cohesion despite the war as the *On the Beam* newsletter demonstrates. Third, the War coincided with the early growth years of the school and impacted its trajectory in significant ways. Pepperdine's faculty and student body grew both in number and in racial diversity in large part due to the social changes induced by the War.

George Pepperdine College originated in 1937 from the vision of wealthy entrepreneur and church member, George Pepperdine, with the encouragement of several Church of Christ preachers. Having made his fortune from a mail order auto supply business that flourished into the nationwide Western Auto chain, Pepperdine was searching for a worthwhile endeavor to which he could devote his considerable wealth. By 1936, he had decided a university would be the best legacy he could leave behind. He envisioned a school that would offer students a "practical education" but more particularly an education based on Christian principles. When the campus opened in 1937, he dedicated it to "higher learning under the influence of fundamental Christian leadership."<sup>2</sup>

The Stone-Campbell Movement, of which the Churches of Christ were a part, originated in the preaching and teaching of Barton Stone and Alexander Campbell. Both Stone and Campbell rejected what they viewed as the divisive creeds of their church of origin, the Presbyterians, and called for Christian unity based only on the teachings of the Bible. Though not intending to create another religious tradition, nonetheless the Stone-Campbell Movement ended up withdrawing from all Christian

denominations and establishing themselves separately. They focused their movement on restoring the congregational organization of the first century churches to which they looked for the pattern of their practices. As a result, they eschewed denominational structures and embraced a strong commitment to congregational autonomy. This message appealed to many Americans in the Antebellum era and the movement mushroomed to 200,000 members by 1860.

In common with most other Protestant faiths, the Civil War presented a significant test for the Stone-Campbell churches. Though most of the leadership claimed they could not divide because there was no denominational structure to facilitate such a separation, in practice, there were deep divisions that often, though not exclusively, reflected a sectional schism. Northern churches, though maintaining much of the original vision of congregational autonomy, embraced parachurch organizations such as missionary societies and state conventions in order to fulfill the functions of the church to spread the gospel and provide services to those in need more effectively. However, one of these emerging organizations, the American Christian Missionary Society (ACMS), became a battleground over the issue of slavery and the Confederacy. In 1861 and 1863, the ACMS passed pro-Union resolutions.<sup>3</sup> These both angered southern churches and confirmed in their minds the danger of parachurch organizations as corrupting influences on the individual congregation.

The growing theological and cultural differences between the northern and southern churches only solidified in the decades after the Civil War. The much poorer Churches of Christ profoundly mistrusted the wealth and influence of the northern churches as they increasingly built the most expensive buildings and raised large amounts of money through missionary societies some of which were led by women who wielded significant influence. Most southern churches viewed these practices as man-made and not sanctioned by Scripture. Committed to a vision of the absolute supremacy of the local congregation and the subordination of women, David Lipscomb, one of the voices for the southern churches requested a separate listing for the congregations who shared this critique as the "Churches of Christ" in the religious census of 1906. The northern churches, the larger portion of the movement, became the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).<sup>4</sup>

In the absence of a denominational structure, two overlapping entities exerted a unifying theological and organizational influence on the

individual congregation: journals and universities. Journal editors often functioned as “editor bishops.” Without a denominational hierarchy to settle matters of doctrine and practice, these editors provided a forum in which matters could be debated. Most church members subscribed to one or more publications which profoundly shaped their thinking.<sup>5</sup> However, universities also served as a forum for debates over doctrine and practice within the Churches of Christ. Most journal editors either led or supported a college and often, through the colleges, influenced the next generation of preachers who sought their education there.

The founding of George Pepperdine College in 1937 fit squarely into the development of higher education among Churches of Christ. It joined Abilene Christian University in Texas (founded in 1906) and Harding University in Searcy, Arkansas (founded in 1922), among others, as leading colleges and universities in the movement. These colleges in many ways led the churches in wrestling with theological, social, and cultural issues so it is not surprising that they played a key role in the response to the World War II.

#### PEPPERDINE, CHURCHES OF CHRIST, AND WAR

From its origins, many members of the Pepperdine community inherited a strong commitment to pacifism from their home congregations. This would profoundly shape the debate over the World War II on the campus. Indeed, pacifism had deep roots among Churches of Christ.<sup>6</sup> Its origins can be seen, for instance, in the theology and writing of one of its earliest progenitors, David Lipscomb of Nashville, Tennessee. Lipscomb edited a newspaper that enjoyed one of the largest circulations particularly among the southern churches then forming the Stone-Campbell Movement. He also led the Nashville Bible School (later David Lipscomb University) which trained a high percentage of preachers for the movement, a key source of influence in a religious tradition that had no organizational structure. In his writing and preaching, Lipscomb embraced a cultural separatism which labeled politics, government, and voting as man-made activities. Deeply influenced by the connections, he drew between government and the origins of the Civil War, Lipscomb argued that Christians not be involved in any type of military or government service (including voting) but instead spend their time advancing God’s kingdom through winning converts and supporting the activities of the local church.<sup>7</sup>

The pinnacle of pacifism in Churches of Christ came with the outbreak of the World War I. The Churches of Christ had the sixth largest number of conscientious objectors (COs) of all religious traditions in the United States.<sup>8</sup> Though the majority of church members supported the war, a sizable number obviously retained Lipscomb's attitude toward war.

After the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor and the official entry of the United States into the war, the debate over pacifism reached a new level in the churches. Michael Casey's study of pacifism among the Churches of Christ notes that World War II represented a significant change in views toward pacifism.<sup>9</sup> While the Churches of Christ produced so many COs during World War I, the intervening years had weakened commitment to pacifism significantly. Increasingly, members of the Churches of Christ embraced the need to support the democratic system in the United States and its commitment to free enterprise. George Benson, president of Harding College (now Harding University) represented this emphasis in a sermon he delivered at Pepperdine in 1942.<sup>10</sup> The experience of the Pepperdine community clearly reflects this shift in the connections between the Churches of Christ and war. Increasingly, the connections to pacifism had been weakening. For instance, as the college grew, the traditional Church of Christ commitment to cultural separation was eroding in the face of the growing fears about the consequences of fascism abroad. Also, the experience of Christian education tended to erode the commitments to cultural separation as many graduates of the institution entered into government and public service.

Despite the decreasing commitment to pacifism among Churches of Christ, a significant cohort of Pepperdine students proclaimed themselves COs rather than serve in the armed forces. Many did so because they were influenced by the tradition of pacifism they imbedded from the churches which they had grown up attending. Phil Himes, who graduated from Pepperdine in 1944, is one of the students whose experiences in the Churches of Christ led him to reject directly participating in war. Himes entered Pepperdine in the early 1940s as the fourth of seven siblings who would eventually attend the school. His father had planned to seek conscientious objector status during World War I but failed the physical examination and was therefore never called up. He nonetheless taught his son about his commitment to pacifism. The younger Himes had also been influenced by prominent pacifist Church of Christ preacher J.N. Armstrong, one of the founders of Harding College.



Himes' three elder brothers had all achieved CO status fairly easily by applying through the board in their hometown of Sumas, Washington. When Phil Himes registered, however, a Los Angeles Board took his case. He had applied for classification as IV-E which would allow him to serve in the Civilians for Public Service (CPS) with other COs but instead they classified him as I-A (available for military service). When Himes inquired as to the basis for his classification, the response was that the board had awarded him IV-E but an attorney for the board, concerned about the large number of Pepperdine students applying for the same status, intervened, and denied Himes the IV-E classification. When Himes appealed the decision, the board reclassified him to I-A-O (non-combatant status). However, Himes felt that required him to participate too closely in the war, so he informed the government in 1943 that he would remain at Pepperdine instead. Soon he was contacted by an FBI agent who indicated he would have to be arrested but could be released immediately pending adjudication of his case. When Himes arrived at the FBI agent's office, he was instead jailed. Wade Ruby, an English professor at Pepperdine and a pacifist himself, attended Himes' hearing to help. Despite Ruby's protestations, Himes' bail was set at \$1000. His brothers obtained the money and he was released a few hours later. It took over a year to settle his case, but eventually he was granted the IV-E status and later entered a CPS camp in March 1944.<sup>11</sup>

The CPS camps had been set up by peace churches as an alternative to military service. They offered no pay and required inhabitants to work on public service projects and live in camps most of which had once been occupied by the Civilian Conservation Corps. Initially, the Churches of Christ offered little financial support to the camps which were largely funded by peace churches such as the Church of the Brethren. However, as the war continued many Churches of Christ took up the cause to raise support for the men who entered the camps. In the end, approximately 200 members of the Churches of Christ would work in one of the CPS camps.<sup>12</sup>

While the commitment of some Pepperdine students and faculty to pacifism retained connections to previous theological commitments, Ray Simpson and Kenny Hahn's role as influential students on the Pepperdine campus represented many of the changing ideas about the Churches of Christ's relationship to culture. Simpson began a column in the student newspaper *The Pepperdine Graphic* (hereafter *The Graphic*) in 1938 in which he aimed to present a "digest of the world news of

the week” for “a surprisingly large number of students who do not follow the daily papers.”<sup>13</sup> For two years his column presented a weekly summary of news with a particular focus on international events. He frequently encouraged students to pay attention to events in Europe and Asia which he emphasized could have a significant impact even on people in the United States. His focus on international events represents how many church members were shifting their focus from purely local, congregationally focused concerns to the reaction of people of faith to larger international affairs.

Simpson’s columns also reflect the earliest beginnings of social consciousness for many members of the Churches of Christ as he noted the similarities between Nazism and racial intolerance in the United States. Due to its largely southern membership and its relatively conservative theological orientation, Churches of Christ had with few exceptions defended segregation and upheld a racial hierarchy that relegated black members and majority black congregations to a subordinate status.<sup>14</sup> Though not addressing churches directly, one of Simpson’s earliest columns noted that before it condemns Hitler, America should “look at herself and not throw stones as long as she lives in a glass house.” He concluded his column with a clear recognition of the incompatibility of segregation and racial intolerance with democracy.<sup>15</sup>

Despite his criticism of racial intolerance and his concern about the state of international affairs, Simpson’s writing, reflecting the sentiments of many Americans, but especially that of Churches of Christ, rejected any discussion of war and wholeheartedly supported the cause of peace.

The final transformation in student thinking about the War and the Christian response to it was evident in an editorial that appeared in *The Graphic* on November 20, 1942. Titled “No Armistice Celebration,” the article emphasized that the failure of the armistice and the world’s efforts at peace can be laid in large part at the door of the United States for its adherence to isolationism. The editorialists called on all Pepperdine students to rejection isolationism permanently and recognize that “the industrial age has so compressed the globe that each nation is on the other’s doorstep...there is no wide uncharted Pacific or a stormy Atlantic to keep the hemisphere isolated.” The article ended with a call to support global union as the only means to counter further conflict especially after the end of the war.<sup>16</sup>

Kenneth Hahn’s career at Pepperdine represents the changes occurring within Churches of Christ and its relationship with American culture

and international affairs. Hahn founded the International Relations Club (later the Decurean Club) which promoted public speaking and increased awareness of issues of international concern. The Decureans required all members to give a speech on a topic connected to international affairs as a condition of membership. The meetings of the society received frequent coverage in the pages of *The Graphic* which also reflected the interest of student body leaders in global affairs.

The real turning point for Pepperdine students as well as for the Churches of Christ came with the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. As Casey's studies of pacifism in the Churches of Christ uncovered, Pearl Harbor induced a reevaluation of the role of Christians in war. One event involving Pepperdine students and faculty encapsulates much of the theological and moral reflections prompted by the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in the Churches of Christ. Within hours of the news reaching the campus, several prominent students including Kenneth Hahn and Harry Marlowe arrived at the home of Dean E.V. Pullias seeking his counsel regarding how they should respond both as church members and as American citizens. Though sick in bed with the flu, Pullias still met with the students in his bedroom and later recalled the significance of the conversation. Attempting to understand the implication of the entry of the United States into the war, the students expressed their conflicting feelings to him. In particular, Pullias recalled that all had grown up rejecting violence (and even war itself) as sinful behavior. Through their experiences in the Church of Christ orbit, they had been imbued with a strong sense of pacifism. But each felt that the World War II presented a different challenge to Christians.<sup>17</sup>

The decisions made by Hahn and Marlowe in the wake of the discussion at Pullias' home reflect the larger changes among Churches of Christ. Though the student body president, Marlowe nonetheless did not return for the spring term. Instead he enlisted in the United State Army Air Corps and served for the rest of the war. Kenny Hahn graduated a few months later in 1942 and then enlisted in the United State Navy where he served for four years. In all, over 400 Pepperdine students answered the call to serve in the military.<sup>18</sup> Of those, six would not survive the war.<sup>19</sup>

In addition to students, other members of the Pepperdine community also entered military service. These included few faculties and a number of staff members. Among the staff, "Al (the Cook)" Soldo received some attention. In *The Graphic*, Soldo's decision to join the Merchant Marine

warranted official notice. The newspaper carried a description of his farewell including dinner as the guest of honor at the faculty table and the gifts of a leather jacket and "fitted travel case" from the students. The nature of the farewell is all the more remarkable given that Soldo was black. Soldo responded to the farewell with a promise to return to the kitchen at Pepperdine after the war ended.<sup>20</sup> After eighteen months of service, he did indeed return to resume his duties in the kitchen.<sup>21</sup>

*The Graphic* published several articles encouraging female students to serve in the military. One article noted that the war had reached a point where all types of service members were needed. The Women's Army Corps (WAC) currently enrolled only 62,000 of the 200,000 it was authorized to recruit. College trained women who joined WAC could expect a chance to become an officer and choose whether to service domestically or overseas. The other branch recruiting women was a unit of the Naval Reserves, the Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Services (WAVES). They offered college students a variety of opportunities for jobs in the area of their major and in other professional areas as well as the chance to become an officer.<sup>22</sup> At least two Pepperdine female students accepted the offer and joined the WAVES.<sup>23</sup>

Those students who did not enlist in the military faced a debate over the ethics of pursuing a college education during the war. *The Graphic* ran an article titled "What Do You Think?" which posed the question: "Is it selfish to spend time in getting a degree in war time?" The article recorded the answers of several students. Their perspectives ranged from emphasizing the many areas college-educated Americans could eventually aid in the defense of the country to the need for educators when the war was over.<sup>24</sup>

The fact that enrollments dipped precipitously for the first time in Pepperdine's history speaks to the challenge the war presented. As students departed dozens at a time, the young college struggled to maintain enrollments. The low point came in the fall of 1943, when less than 300 had registered as classes began. The student body would hover around 300 for the next year.<sup>25</sup> This represented an overall decline of 75 from the peak enrollment of 375 in 1942.<sup>26</sup> Though certainly a significant decline, it is nonetheless a remarkable achievement given that Pepperdine had contributed around 400 soldiers to the war effort. Not surprisingly, recruiting students became more difficult as the war intensified. Initially, a significant percentage of college students could avoid being drafted if they were enrolled full time, but as the war dragged on, these deferments

became more difficult to attain as the need for more soldiers grew. Thus, it became more difficult for many colleges, including Pepperdine to recruit students especially males. Additionally, as more and more of their peers entered military service, college students faced the possibility of accusations of avoiding their social obligation to serve. This represented a significant challenge to many schools.

At his opening address for the 1943–1944 school year, President Hugh Tiner tackled the issue of the ethics of seeking a college education in wartime head on likely in an attempt to retain the students who had already registered. He recognized that many students may feel “selfish” for attending college during such a crucial time in world history. Certainly with such a large percentage of students serving in the military, those still on campus were not surprisingly a bit ambivalent about their role. Tiner endeavored to reassure them that their choice was valid. He emphasized to them that an education due to its development of the individual was the bedrock of democracy. In particular he reframed education as a type of service to the country by noting the need for students to prepare themselves to engage in the global reconstruction that would have to follow a global war. He noted that the dictatorships that had led to the war had delivered as many spiritual and moral impacts as they had physical. The educated Christian, he believed, was uniquely qualified to assisting in the spiritual and moral reconstruction of the eventual postwar era.<sup>27</sup>

Some Pepperdine students reflected on the deeper meaning of the war in their lives. Russell A. Dow as a 2nd Lieutenant in the Marine Corps penned a poem that was subsequently published in *The Graphic* with the title “A Pepperdiner’s Thoughts on War.” Writing on the eve before his deployment, Dow’s words reflected his ambivalence toward the War he was about to enter. He expressed anger at being torn from his life in college to go address the world’s evil and called for an emphasis on what would come after the war to prevent it from ever happening again. On the other hand, he expresses his determination to do what is necessary and to carry his faith with him into battle.<sup>28</sup>

For Pepperdine students who did not serve in the military, other opportunities to serve the war effort on campus abounded. Just over a month after Pearl Harbor, the Red Cross initiated first aid courses on campus to aid in increasing the number of Americans with vital skills in a time of emergency. Pepperdine also organized a Defense Council led by students that would organize the university’s contributions to the war. The Defense Council spawned five different committees that

would sponsor significant activities in support of the war effort on campus. Titled the information, morale, first aid, auxiliary service and conservation committees, these committees did everything from informing students of military service opportunities to organizing air raid defense programs. Other wartime efforts included the Victory Book Drive which collected books to send to soldiers overseas. The book drive attracted the attention of local churches and other members of the Pepperdine community who also contributed funds to purchase books for mailing to service members.<sup>29</sup>

Senior Kenneth (Kenny) Hahn led the Auxiliary Services Committee, one of the most active wartime committees on the campus. The Auxiliary Services Committee oversaw air raid drills and preparations for any other wartime emergencies that may affect the campus. Students served as auxiliary police officers, wardens and firemen.<sup>30</sup> Even after Hahn's graduation the committee maintained a high profile at Pepperdine. By the fall of 1942, the student leaders of the committee celebrated the awarding of "V stickers" throughout the campus. Sponsored by the local Civilian Defense Council (Precinct 202), these stickers indicated that the Pepperdine campus complied with five stipulations:

- I. This home follows the instructions of its air raid warden, in order to protect itself from attack by air.
- II. This home conserve food, clothing, transportation, and health, in order to hasten an unceasing flow of war materials to our men at the front.
- III. This home salvages essential materials, in order that they may be converted to immediate war uses.
- IV. This home refuses to spread rumors designed to divide our nation.
- V. This home buys War Savings Stamps and Bonds regularly.<sup>31</sup>

To support these wartime measures students were instructed in how to turn their blinds so that the light would hit the ground and were organized into carpools to conserve fuel and tires. These efforts remained largely student led throughout the war.

Service to the war transformed the campus in a myriad of ways. In the spring of 1943, students initiated a Victory Garden program on the Pepperdine campus to "aid in the victory" and enable Pepperdine student to "eat more vitamins than they ever have before." Largely led by the social clubs, individual plots were dedicated to the growth of particular vegetable crops from chard to beets to cucumbers. Each social club committed to harvesting a specific plot. Several faculty and staff



Fig. 2.1 Students in line for blood drive, 1940s. From the Pepperdine student life collection, Pepperdine University special collection and archives

also participated. In all thirty-one plots grew mostly vegetable crops.<sup>32</sup> Additionally, the crops represented the visual transformation of the campus by its wartime service (Fig. 2.1).

Pepperdine also maintained support for the Red Cross throughout the duration of the war. The first blood drive occurred in February of 1943.<sup>33</sup> Frequent requests for donations appeared in *The Graphic*. Helen Pepperdine provided key leadership for the Pepperdine Red Cross efforts. It was she who organized the blood drives and took applications from students who wished to participate. She also led by donating herself which culminated in her achieving membership in the “Gallon club” by 1943 having donated a gallon of her blood.<sup>34</sup>

### MAINTAINING THE PEPPERDINE COMMUNITY DURING THE WAR

Maintaining the cohesion of the Pepperdine community faced significant challenges as the war intensified. Over 400 students, alumni, staff and faculty would depart the campus to serve in the war. Those remaining would

struggle with wartime shortages and meeting the needs of civil defense on the campus. One of the clearest examples of the challenge to maintaining community during the war was the fate of Japanese American students. In the wake of Executive Order 9066 in 1942, all Japanese Americans then living on the West Coast faced internment in government-run camps. Two Japanese American students then attending Pepperdine, Masaaki "Robert" Ishiguro and Yoneo Roy Ishihara, each faced leaving Pepperdine or being sent to internment camps. Ishihara, a sophomore, had been an active participant in the Decurean Society (an international relations club). However, to avoid the internment camps he left Pepperdine and accompanied his family to Utah where he continued his education.<sup>35</sup>

Ishiguro's story is more dramatic. Hugh Tiner, then the president of Pepperdine, procured admission and a scholarship for him to transfer to then Abilene Christian College (today Abilene Christian University) in Abilene, Texas where he would be spared internment. Though Tiner left no record of his motivation for intervening in Ishiguro's situation, it seems likely that the Christian mission of the school, a clear element in his decision-making, factored into his actions. Remarkably, opposition to internment camps was relatively rare which makes Tiner's (and Pepperdine's reactions) stand out. There was nothing in Pepperdine's short existence that predicted a rejection of what was an almost universally accepted wartime policy.

Ishiguro had been a relatively prominent member of the Pepperdine community. He had served as vice president of the social club Frater Sodalis. He was featured in several articles in *The Graphic*. Additionally, his father, Hiroshuke Ishiguro, led the Japanese Church of Christ in Los Angeles (later the Westside Church of Christ). His transfer from Pepperdine to Abilene Christian would profoundly shape his life.<sup>36</sup> Not long after his arrival in Abilene, Ishiguro met sophomore art student Ann Ramsey, who convinced him to pose for her artwork. The two grew very close and eventually announced their engagement. Unfortunately, the university administration objected and forced them to end the relationship. Reluctantly, they ended their public engagement but continued to meet in secret. When Ishiguro finished his degree and obtained a job in Chicago in 1944, they made plans to reunite there and marry. However, each received mysterious letters with false information about the other and these eventually sabotaged their relationship. Within a few years each had married someone else. The two reconnected in 1999 after the death of both of their spouses and quickly remarried.<sup>37</sup>



Tiner's efforts in arranging Ishiguro's transfer and scholarship to Abilene Christian already speak to the fact that if Pepperdine could not keep its community intact, it would at least defend those who were part of the family from further harm. In common with many other universities of the era, the Pepperdine community largely rejected the need for interning Japanese Americans as a wartime necessity.<sup>38</sup> Days before the issuance of Executive Order 9066, Pepperdine student Bess Litzinger addressed the Decurean Society on the topic of "American-Japanese and the War." Though *The Graphic* frequently published titles of student speeches to the Decurean Society, summaries of the speeches were rare. Thus, it is somewhat notable that the article on Litzinger's speech provided key details about the message of her remarks in which she offered a full-throated defense of Japanese Americans. According to the article, Litzinger described "the activities of this group of our citizens to show their loyalty in the current emergency." She also noted that "they are not only endeavoring to care for all of their own people, in the current distress, but are also making an appreciable contribution in the armed forces the sale of defense bonds."<sup>39</sup> She particularly defended the nissei (second generation Japanese immigrants) whom she observed had never even seen Japan.

Other Pepperdine students also evinced some support for a better relationship between the United States and Japan. Robert Rhodes, the son of missionaries who had spent much of his childhood in Japan, addressed the Decurean Society in January 1943 on the topic of "Japanese-American Relations." He noted that Japan had moved from a "backward" nation to "a leading power" in an 80-year time frame. His comments, though also reflecting some clear bias toward U.S.-style political and economic practices, showed sympathy toward the Japanese perspective by recognizing that much of the conflict between the United States and Japan stemmed from Japan's perception of being in a "have not group." He concluded that a reduction in conflict would best be achieved by creating a more cooperative framework for the postwar world.<sup>40</sup>

With the departure of over 400 students to serve in the armed forces during the course of the war, the need to maintain community only heightened. Certainly this was partly motivated by the sense that those served in the military were sacrificing on behalf of those left behind. Thus, those that remained owed a debt to them. Pepperdine established several means to maintain connections with students and alumni in the

armed forces partly to maintain community and partly to support the war effort. First, *The Graphic* published notices for a significant portion of the students who left the campus to enter the defense services. Eventually these notices would address the departure of two dozen or more at once.<sup>41</sup> Several letters from soldiers would also appear in the pages of *The Graphic*. Soldiers would express their affection for the Pepperdine community and assure them of their continued good health and safety even in the face of significant danger. The letters also detailed the experience of military life from rising early in the morning to description of the food.<sup>42</sup>

As the number of Pepperdine students and alumni in the armed forces reached into the hundreds, many sought to maintain a connection to the campus. *The Graphic* noted that it received hundreds of letters from soldiers but could not publish them all.<sup>43</sup> Army Private Dan Post remained on *The Graphic* staff even after he entered the service and sent reflections on military life for publication.<sup>44</sup> Eventually, there was such hunger for communication with and among these soldiers that the Pepperdine Mothers' Club and Basketball Coach Al O. Duer created a newsletter to connect soldiers both to each other and to the Pepperdine campus. Appearing monthly, *On the Beam* was published from June 1943 to at least February 1946. In its pages, Duer published short notes from servicemen and brief news items from the campus. Most of the notes from service members contained information about where each service member was stationed, news of their immediate family, and any changes in their rank. The pages of *On the Beam* were replete with expressions of soldiers' longing to return to campus both to visit and to reenroll when their service was done but they also clearly expressed their commitment to staying “on the beam” and seeing the war through to victory. The care Duer had for Pepperdine service members comes out clearly in the pages of the newsletter. “These letters from fellows who haven't written before have me so flustered that I can hardly think,” he wrote in one newsletter, “It's really an occasion when letters come in from you all! Keep it up!”<sup>45</sup> He communicated the pride the Pepperdine community took in the service of so many of its members as a form of encouragement to those fighting in difficult circumstances. He also maintained a database of addresses for each service member and kept contact with as many as 75% of the 400 service members produced by the Pepperdine community.<sup>46</sup>

*On the Beam* succeeded on several occasions in promoting community for Pepperdiners in military service. For example, Kenny Hahn,

then serving in the South Pacific, learned in its pages that Ensign Jim Young was stationed nearby. The two were able to meet each other for dinner and report their reunion to the editor of *The Graphic* which printed the story in its April 28, 1944, edition.<sup>47</sup> Another service member, Pepperdine alumni Gerry Ellis a Canadian who served in the Royal Canadian Air Force and was stationed in the United Kingdom wrote a letter to Coach Duer in which he confirmed that he awaited the next issue of *On the Beam* so that he could learn how to reconnect with any Pepperdine students who might also be stationed near him.<sup>48</sup> Additionally, Harry Marlow and Bob Goosen learned in the pages of the *Beam* that they were less than a mile from each other in North Africa and staged a quick reunion.<sup>49</sup> Goosen had been overseas for eighteen months, so likely such a reunion was a very welcome occurrence. When Pepperdine students aimed to send letters to servicemen during the war, they went to Coach Duer for contact information.<sup>50</sup> Staff Sergeant Bill Stivers, then stationed at Camp Ritchie, MD, confirmed the role *On the Beam* had when he wrote in his letter to Coach Duer “thanks to the ‘Beam’ I don’t feel too far removed from any of you.”<sup>51</sup>

As casualties in the war mounted, the news contained in *On the Beam* often reflected the danger the war posed to the participants. Readers learned in the June 15, 1944 issue, of the change in status of former student Herbie Dettre, spouse of Margie Lewis Dettre, to missing in action.<sup>52</sup> The November 1944 issue reported that he was now known to be in a German prison camp.<sup>53</sup> Though Dettre would survive the war and return home, a total of six Pepperdine community members did not.<sup>54</sup>

Several female Pepperdine students also served in the military. Information about their service did not appear in *The Graphic*, but Coach Duer documented their service extensively in the pages of *On the Beam*. For example, most newsletters in 1943 and 1944 carried news of Elizabeth (Betty) R. Eaton who served in the WAVES.<sup>55</sup> She provided regular reports to *On the Beam* about her experiences in Washington, DC, where she rose to the rank of Seaman First Class. Later, Deanne Brown also joined the WAVES although she remained stationed in the Bronx.<sup>56</sup> Another Pepperdine woman, Winifred Martin, served as a Cadet Nurse.

One of the most significant groups that would maintain the Pepperdine community during the war was its female members. Though military service was still relatively rare for college women, there remained a myriad of ways that women pursued in service to the war effort.

The Pepperdine campus hummed with dozens of projects all aimed at supporting wartime activities.

Even before Pearl Harbor, Pepperdine had begun to feel the demographic shifts the war would bring. As late as 1940, gender imbalance had favored men as there were one and a half male students to every female student. However, with the institution of the draft in September 26, 1940 by President Roosevelt in preparation for defending the United States, Pepperdine began to experience a shift in the male–female ratio of its incoming students. By 1941, the ratio had jumped to 3 female students for every 2 males. It would peak at four female students for every male student in the freshman class of fall 1943.<sup>57</sup>

This shift in gender ratios did not go unnoticed by the student body. Two articles appearing in *The Graphic* presented the male and female perspective on the demographic changes. The first to appear relied on interviews with male students about the gender disparity. Most of the article reflected the tongue-in-cheek glee of male students having the increased attention of female students. The larger significance was the awareness of the students that the war had fundamentally altered the gender balance of the college albeit temporarily. Additionally, the increased presence of women on campus naturally translated into a greater role for women in campus affairs including editing the student newspaper and service in the student body leadership.

Though wartime service involved every member of the Pepperdine community, several women's organizations provide key wartime service to the Pepperdine community. Many of these roles would largely conform to traditional gender expectations of women's role centering on marriage and motherhood but they nonetheless represented important contributions. The Mother's Club led by Mrs. Helen Pepperdine and consisting of women faculty, administrators' wives, and the mothers of current students opened the 1942–1943 school year with the presentation of a service flag honoring the members of the Pepperdine community currently in military service. The flag featured seventy stars to honor each serviceman. The Mother's Club vowed to update the flag regularly to reflect each student or alumni who entered the service. The club had formed during the previous school year as a mechanism to bring about cooperation between parents, teachers, and students in service of the university. It was geared toward the inclusion of mothers of students then in attendance at Pepperdine. However, for the duration of the war it largely engaged in service projects for soldiers. Among its sponsored

activities, the Mother's Club provided lodging for any soldiers visiting the Los Angeles area and organized the mailing of Christmas cards to each serviceman.<sup>58</sup>

Female faculty also provided leadership during the war effort. Dr. Callie May Coons, one of the most prominent female faculty members on the campus, sponsored the formation of the Home Economics Club in early 1942 which took as one of its first projects "remembering all the Pepperdine boys serving with the armed forces."<sup>59</sup> In 1943, they sponsored a dinner to honor departing Army reservists. The club members arranged the tables for the dinner into a "V" shape with the honorees sitting in the middle of the V. They donned red, white, and blue aprons and served a meal of traditional American food including steak, mashed potatoes, and iced tea.<sup>60</sup> Additionally, as the number of men entering military service escalated, female students organized departure ceremonies and sendoffs for male students.<sup>61</sup>

As the male population at Pepperdine declined, women's leadership increased steadily. Not surprisingly, the higher ratio of females to males led to more prominent roles for female students on campus. Women served as editors of the student newspaper for most of the war and the 1944–1945 President of the Associated Students of George Pepperdine College was a woman.<sup>62</sup> By 1943, the civilian defense functions of the campus fell under increasingly female leadership. The Pepperdine Victory Corps (PVC) formed in October 1943 and featured an all-female leadership. The PVC consolidated under its leadership the Pepperdine Red Cross Chapter and many of the activities of the Mothers' Club and the Home Economics Club. Additionally, this organization participated in the nationwide War Chest Drive to raise funds for a myriad of war-related causes and led in fundraising for the Red Cross on campus.<sup>63</sup> Dr. Leo G. Athans, a representative of the Los Angeles War Chest visited the campus soon after the organization of the PVC and describe the three beneficiaries of the drive: "the fighting forces, the suffering allies, and the homefront health and welfare."<sup>64</sup> The War Chest represented the apex of fundraising for the war.

By the spring of 1944, several female students successful organized a chapter of the Red Cross at Pepperdine, only the fifth chapter among southern California schools. Barbara Moore and Catherine Hyland organized the effort including securing permission from the director of college units in Los Angeles. Though open to the entire student body, the fifteen charter members were all women and the Dean of Women, Frances

Hinds, served as the faculty advisor. They staffed a center set up in the former first aid room in the gymnasium. The Los Angeles office assigned them tasks such as entertaining and caring for wounded soldiers who had returned from overseas, rolling bandages, knitting afghans for convalescents, and organizing regular donations to the blood bank.<sup>65</sup> One of the high points for the chapter was the fundraising drive in 1944 which yielded \$365.45 of which \$72, the largest amount of any individual, was raised by Dottie Rae Young whose husband, Ensign Jim Young, served the United States Navy in New Guinea.<sup>66</sup> In the fall of 1944, the women of the Pepperdine Red Cross chapter canvassed local neighborhoods and recruited 110 donors for their annual blood drive to aid soldiers.<sup>67</sup>

The pages of *The Graphic* increasingly incorporated a female perspective. Though women's voices had been evident since the early days of the publication (which had at least one female editor even before the war), other articles showing the interests of female students were prominent. For instance, in the spring of 1944, student Doreen Bond penned a review of fashions for that season that noted in particular the impact of the war on what women were wearing. She emphasized how the wartime need to conserve fabric had led to fashions that emphasized trimmer styles including shorter hemlines and lower necklines.<sup>68</sup> The 1944–1945 editor, Betty Nichols threw her support behind a letter-writing campaign that aimed to place a letter in the hands of each Pepperdine service member. Nichols championed the cause in the pages of *The Graphic*.<sup>69</sup>

## POSTWAR EXPANSION

The postwar expansion of higher education that accompanied the G.I. Bill and the returning soldiers prompted an era of tremendous growth at Pepperdine. By 1944, the school's population had regained what it was before the war began. Numbering 418 students at the start of classes, the school's enrollment would only balloon as more and more students returned from war.<sup>70</sup> By the end of the 1944–1945 school year, ten student veterans had already enrolled, accessing the funding for education provided by the G.I. Bill.<sup>71</sup> The college opened with 439 students in 1945.<sup>72</sup> Though the exact number is unknown, a significant percentage of the students who enrolled in 1945 were students now returned from war. One of the most prominent, Harry Marlow, stepped back into his role as campus leader with his election to Student Body Secretary

after an absence of three years while he served in the Army Air Force Intelligence Department.<sup>73</sup> By 1947, 1504 students had enrolled of whom 590 were veterans.<sup>74</sup>

As early as 1945, the university perceived the coming growth it would experience. Though one of the men's dormitories had been turned into women's housing, Dean E.V. Pullias announced in the spring of 1945 that as soon as they could procure the materials, a new dorm would be built.<sup>75</sup> Over the next two years, campus construction of dormitories added additional housing for hundreds of students. Additionally, Duer used *On the Beam* to publish the provisions of the Serviceman's Adjustment Act (G.I. Bill) under the title of "Government Sponsored Education."<sup>76</sup> Presumably, the Pepperdine administration wanted to inform previous students of the availability of government money to fund their return to the university to finish their degree. Given the presence of nearly 600 veterans by 1947, the campaign was fairly successful.

The postwar growth of the university had a significant impact on race relations. Prior to the war, issues of race had only seldom permeated the pages of *The Graphic* during the war. Even when discussions of race did come up, they heavily favored white privilege. For instance, in April 1944, the Timothy Club, a group of preachers in training, hosted a discussion of race relations. Only white speakers were represented and all agreed that while there should be "equal rights and opportunities" for blacks and whites, these did not extend to social equality. All the speakers supported segregation and one of the speakers, John Allen Hudson, blamed some racial tensions on "professional agitators who work to stir up trouble."<sup>77</sup> Thus, while Pepperdine did admit black students from its foundation, black students attending Pepperdine did not find a community entirely supportive of their presence. However, the postwar era placed new pressures on previous patterns of segregation. Some changes were evident during the war as Al Soldo, one of Pepperdine's black employees, received a sendoff described in *The Graphic*. While the sendoff was a rare moment of racial cooperation, it reflected more the perception of the existential crisis of the war partially suppressing racial discrimination. As postwar enrollment of black students increased fourfold from 1944 to 1945, the increasing presence of black students prompted new debates over issues such as integrating the Pepperdine dorms.<sup>78</sup> With the increasing presence of black students on campus over the next few years, there were significantly policy changes. For instance, local black newspapers documented the integration of the Pepperdine

dorms by at least 1950 when African American Pepperdine students Dick Meacham and Thomas Brooks lived on campus.<sup>79</sup> Meacham, an Army veteran, played football for Pepperdine until his graduation in 1953.<sup>80</sup>

Significantly, Pepperdine was the only Church of Christ school to admit black students (let alone provide them with housing) prior to 1960. Given its location in California (far from the southern base of the Churches of Christ), Pepperdine University has often stood at the front line of theological and cultural changes with the Churches of Christ. Whereas the South enjoyed relatively well defined racial boundaries through the World War II, the rapidly expanding southern California population of the twentieth century did not lend itself as easily to clearly delineated racial and cultural identities. Thus, Pepperdine has often straddled the line between its connections to the Churches of Christ on the one hand and the cultural environment in which it existed on the other. This was likely not merely a question of how much or little the Pepperdine community acquiesced to local cultural demands but more of how its culturally diverse environment attracted faculty and students who valued the inclusion of a wider variety of people in the church and embraced a more expansive theological position that supported this inclusion.

Pepperdine students emerged from the war with a greater awareness of global poverty and inequity. In the pages of the student newspaper appeared an increasing number of articles calling for engagement on more social issues. For instance, Harry Schaefer penned an editorial in 1946 that called upon Pepperdine students to contribute to postwar fundraising drives to assist those who were still suffering worldwide. His appeal presaged later arguments based on how white privilege had insulated many Pepperdine students. He reminded them of their advantages:

We live in warm houses while Chinese sleep on sidewalks. We complain about eating stew twice a week while Indians drink rice water. We think we need two pairs of shoes while Tibetans carry their 'bark' sandals across snow fields so they will last longer. We read the 'funnies' in a library of 20,500 volumes while Greek students read and reread torn yellow books by candle lights.<sup>81</sup>

The rest of the article called on students to contribute to campaigns designed to help all of these groups. Harry Marlow began a column



in the fall 1946 called “Marlow’s Mirror” that accepted the new international role of the United States and argued that Americans should be more involved in government and public service.<sup>82</sup> He particularly noted that Kenny Hahn, veteran and Pepperdine alumni, stood for election to the California assembly in 1946. Shaped by his Pepperdine education and his service in the army, Hahn went on to serve prominently in the government of Los Angeles including several decades as a county supervisor.

## CONCLUSION

W. David Baird’s recent history of the university noted that Pepperdine “was influenced by World War Two but not defined by it.”<sup>83</sup> Though declining enrollments and wartime exigencies shaped the school, in the end they were largely aberrations along the path of growth and maturity the school had embarked upon even before the war. By the war’s end, the school had matured in an institution that gained increasing recognition in its community and beyond. Despite contributing hundreds of students to the war, Pepperdine maintained a relatively stable student body. The college also added a graduate school of religion, the first among all Churches of Christ schools. Faculty salaries remained strong the future of the school seemed sure.<sup>84</sup>

Ultimately Pepperdine emerged from the war in almost every respect stronger than before the war. Enrollments hits record highs, the commitment of the college to its faith tradition remained strong, and the administration provided leadership both in the college and in the surrounding community. In its mission and its impact, George Pepperdine College emerged from World War II still “on the beam.”

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## CHAPTER 3

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# “In War as in Peace, Culture for Service”: Sioux Falls College and the Successive Crises of Depression and War

*Stephen Jackson*

“War is death, and regardless of how dull, dirty or dangerous your work, death is always just around the corner.”<sup>1</sup> Lt. Wayne Aberle, a bombardier-navigator in the Pacific theater during World War II, wrote this grimly prophetic line a mere two days before his death in 1943. Four years earlier, Aberle graduated from Sioux Falls College (S.F.C.),<sup>2</sup> a small denominational college in the city of Sioux Falls, South Dakota. While at S.F.C., Aberle served for two years as the editor of the college newspaper, *The Stylus*, and married the 1938 S.F.C. Homecoming Queen Sonja Manson. Aberle’s death was another reminder to S.F.C. students, faculty, alumni, and administration of the gruesome reality of war. Throughout the conflict, the S.F.C. community emphasized a desire to live lives of service to their nation and to their faith. “Whether it is on a lonely post, in service at home, or under the fire of battle, may your faith be your

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The title is a take on the traditional motto of the college Culture for Service, and came from *The Sioux Falls College Bulletin*, vol. 33, no. 1, April 1942, 2.

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guiding star,” wrote one student as friends enlisted in the military.<sup>3</sup> This accorded well with the school’s motto, “Culture for Service,” and typified their reaction to the sacrifices made during the conflict. For the leaders of Sioux Falls College, the Second World War dramatically exacerbated an ongoing crisis that began with the Great Depression. Keeping the doors open was a perpetual struggle.

World War II brought hardship to institutions of higher learning across the country. Historians have studied national trends and many larger institutions, but small schools on the edge of financial ruin, like Sioux Falls College, remain under-analyzed in the scholarly literature.<sup>4</sup> V.R. Cardozier noted that a 1945 survey of liberal arts colleges showed that “their faculties were depleted, course offerings had been slashed, extracurricular activities were sharply reduced or abandoned, and buildings and campus maintenance deteriorated.”<sup>5</sup> But there has been little sustained attention to small liberal arts colleges, particularly to those affiliated with a particular denomination. The location and denominational affiliation of S.F.C. profoundly shaped their experience of the Great Depression and the Second World War.

Sioux Falls College was founded in 1883 specifically to serve the needs of Baptist students in the region. Enrollment was never large, with a highpoint of 342 regularly enrolled students before World War II.<sup>6</sup> The Baptists were a small denomination in the state, which meant the school did not receive a high level of support from local congregations.<sup>7</sup> Out of the 582,795 residents of South Dakota recorded by the 1945 state census (a figure that reflects a major population loss resulting from the Depression and the war), only 17,701 registered as Baptist.<sup>8</sup> Baptist communities were spread across the state, though there were several large Baptist churches within the city of Sioux Falls. S.F.C., denominationally affiliated with the Northern Baptist Convention, relied on support from the Northern Baptist Board of Education, which, because they so frequently provided critical funds, became a key entity in the decision-making process for the college. S.F.C. relied on students and funds from the denomination to survive, but also needed a large degree of support from Sioux Falls in particular, and South Dakota generally, to survive.

Local conditions within the state made higher education, even under normal conditions, exceedingly difficult. The population was low and spread out across vast distances. This made it exceedingly difficult to create a sustainable institution of higher education. One scholar of the



region notes that "nearly every study of higher education in the state since 1918 has suggested the closure or consolidation of programs and institutions."<sup>9</sup> Making matters worse for S.F.C., Augustana College, affiliated with the Lutheran Church, was only a few blocks away from campus. Augustana College received more annual funding from their denomination than Sioux Falls College and, by the late 1930s, had a stronger reputation within the city of Sioux Falls.<sup>10</sup> Low enrollment, competition from nearby institutions of higher education, and the constant challenge of balancing the books put a major strain on S.F.C. Simply put, South Dakota was a tough place for higher education.

The late 1930s and 1940s were the most challenging periods in the history of Sioux Falls College as they faced the successive crises of the Great Depression and World War II. The college nearly collapsed during the Great Depression, made an ill-fated transition to a two-year junior college model, and rebounded to accommodate the post-World War II influx of veterans into the institution. Throughout, they had to negotiate the bitter divide between fundamentalists and modernists within the Baptist denomination, attempting to placate all sides to continue receiving support. In some ways, particularly the frequently devastating effects of macroeconomic forces, the college mirrored national trends. In others, particularly their often strained relationship with local and national Baptist educational organizations, the unique characteristics and personalities of the college and its leaders played a prominent role in the dramatic story that followed.

One feature that allowed the college to survive was the widespread conviction that the type of denominational education provided at S.F.C., embodied in the ideal of "Culture for Service," was vital not just for the students, but for the Sioux Falls community and, indeed, for the survival of democracy in the United States. Prominent South Dakota Baptist and, at one time, acting president of S.F.C. John Barton typified this sentiment in a 1939 report, saying "when democratic principles are endangered as they are today, there is need for review, for re-emphasis, and for re-evaluation of those fundamental principles of democracy for which the Baptist church has always stood."<sup>11</sup> This chapter examines the struggle of this small denominational school from the Depression years to the aftermath of the Second World War, highlighting in particular the way in which the college reflected regional and national trends while putting a decidedly unique stamp on the higher education landscape of the northern Great Plains.

## A “REAR-GUARD ACTION TOWARD OBLIVION”:<sup>12</sup> SIOUX FALLS COLLEGE, THE GREAT DEPRESSION, AND THE TRANSITION TO JUNIOR COLLEGE STATUS

The Great Depression was especially brutal in South Dakota and forced Sioux Falls College to the brink of collapse by the late 1930s. Even before the 1929 stock market crash, agricultural prices had been falling throughout the Great Plains region, but afterward, they plummeted to previously unseen depths, a disaster for a region so economically dependent on agriculture. The economic crisis was accompanied by an ecological catastrophe, as South Dakota was plagued by years of intense drought, grasshopper infestations, and dust storms that stripped the valuable topsoil.<sup>13</sup>

The environmental crisis and economic depression led to severe consequences that seriously affected the financial stability of the college. Between 1920 and 1934, 71% of the banks in the state failed.<sup>14</sup> At the height of the New Deal in South Dakota, 39% of the population received some form of government relief, compared with a national average of just 13%.<sup>15</sup> Thousands were forced to leave the state in search of better economic opportunities, and the population of the state decreased by 7.2% between 1930 and 1940, the largest drop in the nation.<sup>16</sup> After spending two months traveling through South Dakota to raise awareness and support for Sioux Falls College, Warren Behan, who would soon thereafter become president of the college, said, “Nothing but a personal and unhurried trip such as we have taken would have convinced me of the barrenness and the desolation which we found in so many sections. How these people have survived at all with repeated crop failures, extended drought, duststorms, etc., is a marvel...Without the financial aid of the government it would have been impossible for the people to have continued.”<sup>17</sup> Taken together, the Great Depression limited opportunities for student recruitment, the ability of students that *did* matriculate to pay their tuition and college fees, and the ability of Sioux Falls College to raise money through financial campaigns.

Though it certainly made the finances precarious, the Depression also presented opportunities for Sioux Falls College. Between 1929 and 1931, four other denominational schools of the region shut their doors and made some sort of arrangement with S.F.C., either a merger or acquisition of some property.<sup>18</sup> The most important closing was that of Grand Island College of Nebraska, which officially merged with Sioux

Falls College in 1931 and deposited all of its assets and equipment to the college. There was some dispute about the transfer of endowment funds, but by 1934 the Nebraska Supreme Court held that Sioux Falls College would receive more than \$46,000 from the merger.<sup>19</sup>

Arguably more important than the money and equipment they received from the closure of other schools in the region was a broader geographical platform to appeal to Baptists. By Northern Baptist Convention agreement in 1931, Sioux Falls College became the official Baptist college of a five-state region encompassing North and South Dakota, Iowa, Nebraska, and Minnesota.<sup>20</sup> This meant a much larger constituency and recruitment ground for the college and greater support from the Northern Baptist Board of Education. In reality, most students at S.F.C. came from South Dakota, and support from other state Baptist conventions was limited. The Depression also deeply affected the budget of the Northern Baptist Board of Education, curbing the amount of funds they could provide to S.F.C., a number consistently lower than S.F.C.'s Lutheran neighbor, Augustana College, received every year.<sup>21</sup> Nevertheless, the fact that the Northern Baptist Convention considered S.F.C. to be so strategically significant to Baptist educational efforts in the region explains their continued support even as the college's financial situation rapidly deteriorated in the late 1930s.

The assets received from closed Baptist institutions, continued support from the Northern Baptist Board of Education, and the attainment of accreditation by the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools were not enough to stave off the debilitating effects of the Depression.<sup>22</sup> Enrollment was highly unstable throughout the decade, but even when there was high enrollment, increased revenue did not necessarily follow, because many students could not pay their tuition.<sup>23</sup> The college received large amounts of land from donors, but much of this land was virtually worthless, costing more to manage and in taxes than it was worth. Earnings from the endowment funds were consistently down throughout the decade. The situation became increasingly dire, and the college routinely engaged in radical actions to stave off financial collapse. As Reuben Jeschke wrote in his history of the college, *Dream of the Pioneers*, "the College made short-term loans, sent out frantic appeals for more support, tried to practice economies, tried to collect from students, sold properties, delayed payments of accounts, appealed to the state Baptist Conventions and to the Board of Education."<sup>24</sup> The most desperate and dangerous development,

however, was the use of endowment funds consistently throughout the decade to make up for shortfalls in revenue. From the academic year 1936/37 through 1940/41, the college cannibalized \$57,386 from its endowment.<sup>25</sup> These actions sacrificed long-term financial stability to satisfy the emergency financial shortfalls the college experienced on a regular basis in the 1930s.

By academic year 1938/1939, the economic situation led to the first of two major crises over the next three years that threatened the existence of the institution. The problems were manifold: income from endowment decreased significantly; subventions from the Northern Baptist Convention were down during the late 1930s as they, too, struggled with a drop-off in fundraising; and income from student tuition plummeted that year, as a large percentage of students paid not in cash but in promises of future payment.<sup>26</sup> Behan presented the huge need of the college to the Northern Baptist Board of Education, asking for \$28,000 to save S.F.C.<sup>27</sup>


The Board considered many options and agonized over the proper course of action. Increasingly, they advocated that S.F.C. re-organize as a junior college, because there were more and more of these institutions in the 1930s, and “the future of the junior college movement seems assured.”<sup>28</sup> For his part, S.F.C. president Warren Behan thought that a junior college was “nothing but a glorified high school” and that such a transition “would mean our death knell.”<sup>29</sup> Ultimately, because of the strategic location of the college and the lack of other Baptist schools in the region, the Board of Education voted to give S.F.C. \$10,000 on the condition that they raised two dollars for every dollar the Board gave them. This pledge came with the condition that the college stays open for the fall semester, which was very much in doubt at the time. In explaining the reasoning of the Northern Baptist Board of Education, Executive Secretary Frank Padelford said, “The Board felt that it ought to make an heroic effort to help you this year to solve the problem at Sioux Falls, and for this reason we are asking the other schools to accept a reduction in appropriation in order to help you solve your desperate problem.” Padelford added a warning that “it would not be possible for the Board to repeat this contribution another year, in view of the fact that it has been made possible now only by robbing the other schools.”<sup>30</sup> From the perspective of the Northern Baptist Board of Education, supporting schools with meager resources was a zero-sum game, and S.F.C. could not count on such support again.

Though they needed an extension on the deadline to raise the additional funds, Behan and the S.F.C. community managed to raise the \$20,000 stipulated by the Northern Baptist Board of Education. Behan triumphantly telegraphed Padelford: "Victory achieved. Twenty thousand plus already in. Gladly await your check."<sup>31</sup> Though the college survived this emergency, the underlying causes of the financial crisis went unaddressed, and the institution would soon be facing fiscal calamity yet again.

Leaders of the college frequently framed the financial crises of Sioux Falls College through two lenses. One of these viewed local events in the context of developments within the Northern Baptist denomination. The other lens was international, emphasizing especially the rising threat of another global war. John Barton, chairman of the Board of Trustees, believed that Christian higher education was the only way to promote and protect democracy (Fig. 3.1).<sup>32</sup> In 1940 he said, "when democratic principles are endangered as they are today, there is need for review, for re-emphasis, and for re-evaluation of those fundamental principles of democracy for which the Baptist church has always stood. We believe that our own institutions can best perform that task."<sup>33</sup> In a similar manner, W.P. Behan, the college president from 1937–1941, repeatedly wrote and gave speeches entitled some variation of "The Way Out," in which he argued that Christian higher education was necessary for the preservation of the American way of life. When discussing the S.F.C. financial crisis, he said that "it is unthinkable that our one Baptist college, at once the bulwark of our denominational convictions and a link in the chain of first line defenses of independent colleges needed to preserve for the United States the ideals of liberty and freedom, should be held back from advancement—when failure to advance means certain decline and possible abandonment. The necessary support must and I believe will be forthcoming from all who are good Americans."<sup>34</sup> To Behan and Barton, Sioux Falls College needed to be saved as a critical piece in the effort to preserve and protect American democracy, which depended upon Christianity as a moral anchor for the nation.

The view that democracy was under global attack, and that Christian denominational higher education was a crucial bulwark of American values, was common throughout the college. In 1941, the S.F.C. History Department developed a new course entitled "Democracy Today and Tomorrow." The course was deemed so important that it was included as a general education requirement for all students.<sup>35</sup> The registrar,

• CHURCH  
 • EDUCATION  
 • DEMOCRACY



THEY STAND OR FALL TOGETHER



S I O U X  
 F A L L S  
 C O L L E G E  
 HAS KEPT  
 THE FAITH

MORE THAN 500 CHURCHES • MISSIONS •  
 COLLEGES • AND SCHOOLS • ARE SERVED BY  
 GRADUATES OF SIOUX FALLS COLLEGE •  
 SIOUX FALLS, S. D.

• • •

*"The Spiritual Interpretation of Life has been a precious possession  
 of the Church College • This is its Ark of the Covenant" • • •*

• • *Walter A. Jessup* •  
 President • Carnegie Foundation  
 for the Advancement of Teaching

Fig. 3.1 Sioux Falls College promotional material. University of Sioux Falls Archives

M.F. Martini, said that "while Sioux Falls College does not pretend to indoctrinate its students in any cut-and-dried creeds or idea," that "we do conceive of this study as a brief for democracy, and we frankly state as a major objective the development of appreciation for democratic ideals and institutions."<sup>36</sup>

Despite the widespread attitude enjoining Baptist higher education to support the fundamental values of democracy, there was an entrenched isolationist opposition to any involvement in World War II before Pearl Harbor. The student newspaper *The Stylus* was filled with student writings supporting neutrality. Harold Eastman, a student and columnist for *The Stylus*, wrote a regular column on international affairs that frequently espoused a strong stance against any form of interventionism. He argued that the only war America should fight was a war "for freedom from entanglement. God grant we win."<sup>37</sup> A campus poll from May of 1940 revealed that 85% of students opposed U.S. military intervention in the war, 75% of students did not favor sending any kind of economic aid to the Allied powers, and that 45% of students would refuse to bear arms if the U.S. entered the war under present conditions.<sup>38</sup> Indeed, to the editorial staff of *The Stylus*, refusal to fight or intervene in the conflict was the only way to preserve "the principles upon which our government was founded and upon which it is supposed to exist today, democracy and the brotherhood of man."<sup>39</sup> The focus on neutrality and isolationism demonstrated at Sioux Falls College reflected wider patterns of thought in the Great Plains region and among Northern Baptists generally.<sup>40</sup>

As they introduced new measures to, as they saw it, protect and promote democracy, leaders at the college also sought to strengthen their denominational affiliation with the Northern Baptists. Doing so was a complicated affair since the Northern Baptist Convention was riven by a major theological controversy from the interwar years through the 1940s (and, indeed, beyond). This was a split between fundamentalists and modernists. Modernists "promoted historical-critical biblical studies, challenged the immutability of creeds, and championed religious experience as the abiding reality of faith beyond culture-conditioned dogma," whereas fundamentalists believed in "a series of 'points,' including biblical inerrancy, the virgin birth of Christ, Christ's substitutionary atonement, his bodily resurrection, his miraculous powers, the need for all persons to receive him as Savior, and the uniqueness of the Christian revelation above all other world religions."<sup>41</sup> The clash between the two groups caused ruptures and denominational splits on a national level amongst Baptists.

The fight between these two groups raged intensely following World War I. George Marsden has written on the failed attempts by fundamentalists to capture the mainline Protestant conventions, including the Northern Baptists, in the 1920s.<sup>42</sup> Following this defeat, fundamentalist groups focused on building their movement at a grassroots level. One of the most influential movements was led by William Bell Riley and centered on Northwestern Evangelical Theological Seminary in Minneapolis. Riley wielded enormous influence over the graduates of his seminary, who spread throughout the region.<sup>43</sup> The Northern Baptist Convention, and particularly the Board of Education, remained in the modernist camp.<sup>44</sup> Baptist schools were a frequent site of battle between the two groups, with fundamentalists often charging that institutions of higher learning were not pure enough in their theology.<sup>45</sup> This presented a major challenge for Sioux Falls College leadership, who relied both on the support of the Board of Education and local Baptist congregations in the five-state region.

Gradually in the late 1930s and early 1940s, Sioux Falls College placed itself more and more firmly in the fundamentalist camp (often interchangeably used with the term conservative), but continued to give themselves wiggle room with the modernists as well. In particular, college leaders wanted to assure the Northern Baptist Convention of their loyalty to the denomination. A visible sign of this tension occurred when the college changed its statement of religious activities in 1939, saying “Sioux Falls College stands squarely and joyously on the anchor truths of the Christian faith as believed by the conservative majority of our Great Christian brotherhood, including Baptists.”<sup>46</sup> The Board of Trustees took an even bolder step by April of 1941, when they adopted an official declaration of faith. *The College Bulletin* stated, “young people of all religious faiths are welcome as students, but Sioux Falls College is a Baptist educational institution and the so-called ‘New Hampshire Confession of Faith’ has been adopted as its declaration of faith, although recognizing that the New Testament alone is authoritative and binding upon Baptists.”<sup>47</sup>

The adoption of the New Hampshire Confession of Faith, originally created by New Hampshire Baptists in 1833 but revised repeatedly in later decades, was a major victory for the fundamentalist position. Throughout the interwar period, fundamentalist Baptist groups lobbied for the New Hampshire Confession, called by one scholar “one of the more conservative confessions ever framed by Baptists in this country,”



to be adopted by Baptist organizations and institutions as a sort of theological purity test.<sup>48</sup> The move by S.F.C. won praise from fundamentalist leaders in the community. *The Northwestern Pilot*, a leading publication of the fundamentalist position in the Midwest and Plains region edited by W.B. Riley, declared that S.F.C. "was going in the right direction."<sup>49</sup>

Sioux Falls College could now meaningfully claim that their institution supported a strongly fundamentalist position, but college leadership also hedged their bets. The second half of the declaration stated that the New Testament alone was authoritative for Baptists. This reflected the official position of the Northern Baptist Convention as adopted in the national convention of 1922.<sup>50</sup> So while they endorsed a strongly fundamentalist confession of faith, they encouraged Baptists from both fundamentalist and modernist congregations to enter S.F.C.

By 1941, Sioux Falls College had taken definitive stances to strengthen their position among regional Baptist congregations, and to strengthen their curriculum to support democracy. But the decisions college leaders made regarding finances in the academic year 1940–1941 provoked another financial catastrophe for the institution and led to a wholesale reorganization of Sioux Falls College to junior college status. Despite repeated attempts at reducing costs and securing additional funding from the Northern Baptist Board of Education, the college ended academic year 1939/40 with a deficit of \$25,000.<sup>51</sup> In September of 1940 C.C. Caldwell, the chairman of the Finance Committee, despaired that "we are without means to pay salaries except with borrowings. We do not know what our credit at the bank will be but it will not be sufficient to meet our needs."<sup>52</sup>

The Northern Baptist Board of Education was increasingly unwilling to bail the school out following S.F.C.'s repeated financial struggles for much of the decade.<sup>53</sup> The Board was, in some ways, caught in a bind regarding S.F.C. A primary goal of the Board of Education was "to seek to maintain at strategic locations Baptist educational institutions offering outstanding programs or much needed services." Sioux Falls College, as the only Baptist institution in a five-state region, had a credible claim as a vital institution in any national program of Baptist higher education. On the other hand, another goal stipulated that the Board should "withdraw support from schools that apparently are too weak to survive."<sup>54</sup>

To meet this financial emergency, the Board of Trustees and President Behan launched a new finance campaign in the fall of 1940. The plan was ambitious: it called for a total campaign of \$600,000 to be raised by

1943 (coinciding with the 60th anniversary of the founding of the college), the first phase of which would be launched in 1940 with an initial goal of \$135,000. The anticipated money would be utilized to eliminate debt, raise salaries for faculty and staff, add to the endowment, and ultimately to build a new dormitory on campus. To help raise this money, the college contracted the New York fundraising firm Tamblyn and Tamblyn.<sup>55</sup> John Barton wrote to his fellow Board members that “this campaign must not fail, it will not fail if we put head and heart into it.”<sup>56</sup>

Sadly for Barton and S.F.C., the campaign was a colossal disaster. In a letter to Tamblyn and Tamblyn, Sioux Falls College Business Manager E.S. Olsen opined the following:

You should know that the total cash receipts on the campaign up to the present time amount to only \$6,890, which means that this campaign itself has been a liability so far as our operations are concerned....Any funds which they have raised have gone to meet the expenses of the campaign and previous to this time, such money as they were able to raise went into our current funds. You know the general results of the campaign and how disappointed we all are. It has embarrassed us to the extent that we did not have sufficient funds to meet the payroll on April 20. Nor is there any great hope for enough to anticipate the next payment on May 5.<sup>57</sup>

This campaign did not just fall far short of expectations, it barely raised more money than it cost the college.<sup>58</sup> In their final report, Tamblyn and Tamblyn cited numerous difficulties, but said problems “center chiefly in the fact that the Baptist Churches in the supporting states are in no real sense back of the College.”<sup>59</sup> When taking into account the debt from the previous year, S.F.C. faced an operating deficit of a whopping \$47,000 for the academic year 1940/1941, and no hope of rescue from a financial campaign.<sup>60</sup>

President Behan, for his part, cited five main causes for the lack of success. These included the fact that several other campaigns had recently been conducted in Sioux Falls and “burned out” the region of prospective donors, the increasingly serious situation regarding the war, a lack of contributions from the Board of Trustees (only 17 of 46 Board members contributed), and a lack of support specifically from the Minnesota Baptist Convention “because of certain alleged heretical tendencies on the part of some of our faculty and administrative officers.”<sup>61</sup> He also blamed Taymblyn and Tamblyn for their lack of local knowledge and ability to negotiate some of the difficulties encountered throughout the campaign.

In the summer of 1941, the Northern Baptist Board of Education stepped into flex their muscles over the flailing Sioux Falls College. The Board sent a special committee to investigate the situation at Sioux Falls and provide recommendations on what should be done to address the financial crisis of the college. The author of the report, Dr. J.D. Elliff, argued that continuing to spend large sums of money to finance the repeated operating deficits of Sioux Falls College would not achieve success. He wrote, "in studying the Sioux Falls problem the Board must keep in mind its obligations to other schools, some of which are in much the same condition as Sioux Falls."<sup>62</sup> In other words, the Board of Education had to look at the wider picture, and did not have the resources to repeatedly address financial emergencies for all Baptist schools nationwide.

Elliff's recommendation, however, was not to shut down the school, but rather for the school to reorganize as a junior college. For Elliff, this would be cheaper to operate and better serve the needs of the Baptist constituency of the college. The Northern Baptist Board of Education regarded junior colleges as the wave of the future or, as S.F.C. promotional material dubbed it a few months later, "ultra-modern and superior in its content."<sup>63</sup> The 1920s and 1930s witnessed explosive growth in junior colleges throughout the country, as "young people were encouraged to enroll at a junior college for vocational training in an effort to reduce the labor supply and ease the economic crisis of the 1930s a bit."<sup>64</sup>

Scholars examining the phenomena point to a disjuncture arising in the Depression years between the vision for junior colleges held by educators and that held by students and their families. For educators, the junior college was a way to democratically expand access to higher education, while still maintaining a hierarchically organized economic system privileging students at four-year institutions. Junior college students and their families, on the other hand, simply wanted affordable access to higher education, and often sought to use junior colleges as preparatory training preceding transfer to more prestigious institutions. As one scholar put it, "convinced of an inequitable distribution of talent in the society, and, even more important, of their ability to determine fairly those who were destined to lead and those others who were destined to follow, educators delineated distinctions between... four- and two-year colleges."<sup>65</sup> The redesigned curriculum of Sioux Falls College would emphasize terminal vocational training, matching

the preferences of educational theorists nationwide, and the wishes of the Northern Baptist Board of Education. Unfortunately for the college, the constituents of S.F.C. would prove to be very skeptical of the new plan.

The Northern Baptist Board of Education swiftly agreed with Elliff's conclusions and threw their whole weight behind the report, offering both a carrot and a stick. If the college made the transition to junior college status, they were willing to provide \$30,000 of Trust Fund money and \$10,000 raised by the Board to assist Sioux Falls College with the reorganization.<sup>66</sup> If S.F.C. leaders rejected the proposal, however, the Northern Baptist Board of Education would refuse "any assistance to the college," guaranteeing that "it would be compelled to follow our judgment, or close."<sup>67</sup> Facing a massive operating deficit and a failed financial campaign, this lifeline was too much for the S.F.C. Board of Trustees to pass up, and they adopted the change in July of 1941.<sup>68</sup>

The decision to reorganize as a junior college was not supported by the faculty or the administration. The Faculty Association presented a report advocating for a reduction in the number of total departments and majors offered at S.F.C., which would also have reduced costs.<sup>69</sup> President Behan believed that:

if the Board had been willing to make us the same financial arrangements now in effect and allowed us to stay on a four-year basis, we could have added the new terminal courses (as we had intended to do), had all the appeal they have now, reduced our budget, kept our juniors and seniors, retained our standing as a four-year institution, increased our enrollment, and...we could have pulled through this year and faced an encouraging future.<sup>70</sup>

He resigned as soon as the S.F.C. Board of Trustees voted for the adoption of the junior college reorganization.<sup>71</sup>

Less than two months before the start of the 1941/42 school year and six months before the start of World War II, Sioux Falls College embarked on a wholesale reorganization of the institution to junior college status. This change was forced upon them by the Northern Baptist Convention and did not have faculty, administration, or student buy-in. The relationship between local and national Baptist influences would continue to be critical to the survival of the college. World War II would magnify the crisis, adding a number of extreme challenges to

the already beleaguered institution. That Sioux Falls College managed to survive the intense dislocation of the war, as we shall see, was a testament to improved economic conditions and the persistence of its faculty, staff, administration, Board of Trustees, and the South Dakota Baptist community.

“TRYING DESPERATELY TO MAKE A GO AT THIS THING”:<sup>72</sup>  
SIOUX FALLS COLLEGE AND THE WORLD WAR II YEARS

In the start of the 1941 academic year, Sioux Falls College radically changed the organization and structure of the school, but held fast to the overall mission of maintaining a Baptist denominational institution in the Great Plains. The Second World War only added and deepened an already disastrous state of affairs for S.F.C. The tumult of war and reorganization proved an enormous challenge, but the school ultimately survived for three reasons. The Second World War revitalized the economy of the Great Plains region. The Northern Baptist Board of Education continued to support the institution, providing much needed assistance at crucial points. Finally, the faculty, staff, and leadership of the college creatively adapted to the challenges of the war years, seeking out opportunities to weather the disruption caused by the conflict.

The two immediate problems confronting the college were redesigning the curriculum and finding a new president. The Board of Trustees did both within a month, issuing a revised college bulletin with a totally new course of study in late July 1941, and hiring Barrett Lowe, the Superintendent of Schools in Yankton South Dakota, to the position of president.<sup>73</sup> The reorganized curriculum offered a variety of programs of study, including a heavy emphasis on terminal vocational courses that would “fit students directly for gainful occupations, as well as for advanced college or professional training, and for the fine art of living.”<sup>74</sup>

The new S.F.C. President Barrett Lowe quickly got to work to advertise, explain, and convince people in the region that this was the right move for the college. Lowe wrote an article entitled “Why Sioux Falls Changed” for the December issue of *The Stylus*. In it, he argued that the reorganization would provide more effective training at a lower cost. He explained that Sioux Falls College “lowers the torch of the liberal arts cause to the two-year level, but it takes up the new torch of practical semi-professional and vocational training. The values of a cultural

education are maintained on a two-year basis.”<sup>75</sup> In other words, the core Christian values of the institution had not changed and S.F.C. could meet an important educational niche for the community.

In fact, the reorganization would better serve not only the denomination, but also democracy in the United States. Lowe argued that,

Good citizenship in a democracy should rest upon a foundation of Christian philosophy and culture.... Anyone who believes in Christianity must believe in Christian education for young men and women who seek to be stenographers, home-makers, printers, farmers, clerks or soldiers. In other words, Christian education for common people is as important as Christian education for the highly educated. One must be able to make a good living if he is to develop a high degree of culture for himself and his family.<sup>76</sup>

The type of vocational training to be offered at Sioux Falls College would, Lowe expounded, combine the very best in Christian education and thought, but be ready made for “common people” and not just elites in the region.

In the midst of the reorganization, students, faculty, and staff were increasingly feeling the changes brought about by the new defense preparations made in the years preceding the Second World War. The National Youth Administration housed fifty female students at Sioux Falls College and stressed production of clothing in preparation for the war.<sup>77</sup> A new student organization advocating for peace formed with the goal of “a dynamic peace, which eliminates the causes and frictions of war.”<sup>78</sup> Humorously, a “Defense Club” also formed whose major goal was to save steel and wool by “wearing overall trousers and growing mustaches.”<sup>79</sup> To President Lowe, the increased spending on military preparedness prior to the official outbreak of war presented an opportunity and fit in well with S.F.C.’s junior college transition. He wrote that with the ramping up of military spending “together with the increased demand for trained workers in various semi-professional vocations there is a definite need for an institution which will prepare young men and women to go to work when they are about twenty years of age.”<sup>80</sup>

The first semester of the new junior college organization was very difficult for the college. Over the course of the academic year S.F.C. lost all of its juniors and seniors, and half of its freshmen and sophomores.<sup>81</sup> Administrative problems of redesigning the entire curriculum

entailed wholesale changes to the faculty and structure of the college. Lowe reported that S.F.C. stakeholders "were somewhat divided as to the wisdom of the new program. There was an element of defeatism among some, which needed to be overcome."<sup>82</sup> In a December report, he encouragingly stated that morale amongst the staff had "been rebuilt to where we can be greatly pleased," but it was clear that selling the new program continued to be a challenge, both internally with employees and externally in the community. Three days after he submitted that report, the United States entered the Second World War.<sup>83</sup>

As happened across the country, the mood at Sioux Falls College instantly changed. Whereas the campus community had largely been opposed to intervention in the conflict prior to the attack at Pearl Harbor, by December 8, 1941, the students and faculty passed a resolution in chapel stating: "we, the faculty and students of Sioux Falls College, believing in democracy and the righteousness of the American cause, pledge our unceasing loyalty and efforts to our country as it enters the war."<sup>84</sup> Throughout the war students, alumni, faculty, and staff demonstrated their support of the war effort by enlisting in the military, buying defense bonds, saving scrap, donating time and material to relief efforts for refugees and other causes, and suffered the privations of wartime rationing.<sup>85</sup>

The change to wartime profoundly affected life at Sioux Falls College, just as it did to higher education across the country.<sup>86</sup> The college very quickly made multiple changes to the academic year and course offerings. They introduced a "telescoped" course that created a year-round academic calendar with few breaks so that students could graduate quicker. Several new accelerated courses in commerce, mathematics, science, and education were offered.<sup>87</sup> In concert with the National Youth Administration (NYA) and the Civil Aeronautics Administration, Sioux Falls College introduced a "Defense Training" course to the curriculum that mixed academic work in the classroom with shop-work in welding, forging, machining, and sheet metal work.<sup>88</sup> During the war Sioux Falls College also offered courses in art especially designed for army wives and Saturday classes for children in intermediate grades from Sioux Falls city schools.<sup>89</sup>

Sioux Falls College leadership, already under great strain from the reorganization to junior college status, became ever more committed in the face of the challenges presented by the war. College leaders saw their task as defending "Christian patriotism in the national emergency."<sup>90</sup>

John Barton, Chairman of the Board of Trustees, clearly linked the position of the college as defending both Christianity and democracy, a task made fundamentally more difficult in the middle of a war. He wrote that the war made it difficult “to maintain a Christian balance. We are glad to say that, with all the changes made necessary by the emergency of the hour, Sioux Falls College has not forgotten for a moment that it is a Christian institution. We conceive it our task and responsibility in teaching even the terminal courses to make them Christ-centered.”<sup>91</sup>

But the challenges faced by S.F.C. mounted. The unprecedented drain on students and resources imposed by the military exigencies of World War II, a problem shared by colleges and universities across the country, was made significantly more acute by the difficulties involved in the reorganization to junior college status. The most pressing problem was that of recruiting students. The college had already lost a significant proportion of its student body with the move to junior college status, and the war created a major drain on student recruitment, particularly of male students. The total number of students in the regular academic year of 1939/1940 reached 342. By academic year 1943–1944, total enrollment for the regular session had plummeted to a total of 81, including only seven male freshmen that year.<sup>92</sup> Barrett Lowe once described the war as “a blow in the solar plexus,” and in another report he wrote, “the war caught up with the school before it had re-established itself under the junior college program, leaving it as of today more or less in a state of flux.”<sup>93</sup>

Lowe’s strategy was to lobby for government contracts and resources, which he thought of as the only way the college could survive. In December of 1942 he wrote, “we must have an assignment of cadets from the armed forces if we are to remain open. There simply will not be enough regular students to enable us to operate unless students are assigned to us under government contract. Unless a government contract is forthcoming, we shall undoubtedly have to close for the duration, with the grave danger of never re-opening.”<sup>94</sup> Lowe believed that even turning S.F.C. “over to the Army lock, stock and barrel” was better than continuing on with the crushing weight of financial pressure currently borne by the college.<sup>95</sup>

But an assignment of cadets, which could have been a lifeline for the university, never materialized for Sioux Falls College. There were two problems associated with getting these cadets. According to John Barton, “the location of our college with its limited facilities, makes it



of doubtful value to the government in the training of large numbers of cadets."<sup>96</sup> Another issue was that the Army chose Sioux Falls as the site of an airbase, and was, therefore, loath to also house military cadets in the town.<sup>97</sup> South Dakota senator Harlan Bushfield let Barrett Lowe know that "each state only received a certain quota, and that perhaps State College had already received South Dakota's quota."<sup>98</sup> That Sioux Falls College failed to secure these cadets is not all that surprising, since, according to a scholar of the subject, small liberal arts colleges "were least prepared to offer training programs for the military services."<sup>99</sup>

Faced with a plunging student body, a constituency that had not fully accepted the transition to junior college status, and the failure to secure valuable government contracts, Barrett Lowe abruptly resigned as president to take a military commission in March of 1943.<sup>100</sup> Rather than conduct a search for a new president when the war made a successful search a major challenge, the Board of Trustees appointed its chairman, John Barton, as Acting President of Sioux Falls College. Barton also served as Secretary of the South Dakota Baptist Convention and continued on as president of the Board of Trustees as well, ensuring that he wielded an enormous amount of influence over the future and direction of Sioux Falls College.

Lowe's departure sent shockwaves through the community, since the Sioux Falls "downtown [business] constituency looked upon Dr. Lowe's going as another indication that Sioux Falls College was on the way out. That same idea soon found fertile soil and flourished in the student-body. The Faculty became dispirited and was almost ready to disintegrate."<sup>101</sup> Barton took over at arguably the most vulnerable point in Sioux Falls College's history. The fall semester of 1943 opened with only fifty students enrolled at the university.<sup>102</sup> Ultimately, it took a new leadership vision in addition to the revitalization of the regional economy for the college to keep its doors open.

In September of 1943 John Barton asked the Board to vote on a simple yet dramatic issue: should the college continue? Ultimately, the Board decided by a 19-1 vote that yes, it should continue, demonstrating a continued commitment to S.F.C.<sup>103</sup> With this vote in mind, Barton unveiled a dramatic new plan to revitalize the institution. It rested on two basic assumptions: that the area continued to need a Baptist institution and that the junior college model did not meet the needs of the area. He called for a return to the status of a traditional four-year liberal arts model, a reorganization of the Trustees to infuse "fresh blood" into the donor base, and a particular emphasis on reaching out to regional

church congregations in close concert with the Northern Baptist Convention. The scheme also included an aggressive plan to increase faculty salaries, develop a retirement plan, and increase the housing capacity of the university: every item of which necessitated a strong financial campaign that would be launched that year.<sup>104</sup> Barton even briefly considered renaming the college, which he felt might possibly connote a ‘defeatist attitude,’ so that “when the reorganization is completed we will have a new college with a new president and a new faculty, a new program, a new board of trustees and a rejuvenated constituency which can and will be loyal to the new program.”<sup>105</sup>

Crucially, Barton’s plan relied on reenergizing the relationship between Sioux Falls College, local Baptist congregations, and the Northern Baptist Convention. He said, “we must have a constituency back in the churches, in the pulpits here and there and everywhere who believe in the ideals and are thoroughly committed to a higher education for the youth about them. This constituency must become itself a recruiting agency for the College.”<sup>106</sup> The Northern Baptist Board of Education agreed to provide \$10,000 to the college if the institution could raise an additional \$15,000 in new monies and agreed to conduct a survey as a first step in a new student recruitment campaign.<sup>107</sup>

As the college began preparing for yet another major organizational change and finance campaign, they did so in remarkably different economic circumstances. It is commonplace to suggest that the Second World War finally pulled the United States out of the Great Depression. But “this was not true in agrarian South Dakota until the weather cycles changed, the rain began to fall, and improved agricultural production began to find markets after 1939.”<sup>108</sup> Indeed, in and around Sioux Falls “Depression prices persisted into 1942.”<sup>109</sup> By that year agricultural prices rose significantly, providing a much-needed boost to the local economy.

Even more promisingly for Sioux Falls, the Army decided to begin construction of an Army Air Forces Training Command School for the training of radio operator-mechanics (ROMs).<sup>110</sup> The airbase increased the population of Sioux Falls by one-third, and provided jobs in construction, entertainment, retail, food-service, and civilian administration.<sup>111</sup> This was an enormous boon to the regional economy, and South Dakotans saw prosperity return after the hard times of the Great Depression.<sup>112</sup> For S.F.C., this meant that businesses and prospective donors had more money to give, and local students were more able to pay their tuition.

By the beginning of 1944 Sioux Falls College embarked upon the New Development Program, an aggressive finance campaign with a goal of raising \$140,000 from the community. This was part of a national effort by the Northern Baptist Convention Board of Education launched in May of 1943 to support Baptist educational institutions.<sup>113</sup> S.F.C. leaders believed that 1944 was a perfect time for a finance campaign, because "living men cannot recall a time when means were more plentiful, people more disposed to be generous. An investment in an institution of higher learning is an investment in future good citizenship, in the future Christian character of the whole world. Every loyal son or daughter of the church should feel it a privilege to have a part in this Sioux Falls College movement."<sup>114</sup> The plan was to raise \$100,000 from Baptist congregations in the five-state area and a further \$40,000 from the Sioux Falls community.<sup>115</sup>

*The South Dakota Baptist Bulletin*, edited by John Barton, made an explicitly denominational plea to its readers: the New Development Program was "the greatest opportunity Sioux Falls College has ever had to go forward and be built up into an outstanding Baptist College to serve the five state area."<sup>116</sup> Solicitors for the university argued that "a denomination that is building for the future will concentrate on the development of leaders for the churches, and will not turn over their young people for education to the schools of other denominations or state schools."<sup>117</sup> Barton's plan relied heavily on the denomination rather than on securing additional opportunities for government contracts.

As S.F.C. began sending out promotional materials for the New Development Program, they did so by emphasizing their twin commitment to the principles of democracy and Christianity. A pamphlet distributed to prospective donors proclaimed that "loyalty to God and loyalty to liberty are cardinal points of the Baptist faith."<sup>118</sup> Instructions to solicitors as they gave sermons to local congregations suggested that they promote education as one of the key forces bringing victory abroad. They claimed that the U.S. Army was winning because "they know more than their enemies, and they are beating them."<sup>119</sup> The mission of Sioux Falls College was to "guarantee that its graduates will be well trained citizens, sensitive to their responsibility in a democracy. It must also be a Christian college, with a Christ centered education."<sup>120</sup>

The New Development Program was a smashing success for S.F.C. on all fronts. The college met the money goals that they had established, and student recruitment picked up in the fall semester of 1944.

A jubilant John Barton could say that the outlook for Sioux Falls College was “as bright as the promise of God. There is a feeling of sympathy and interest in Sioux Falls College. The Five-State Area Baptists are beginning to realize, perhaps as never before, that without a good college the denomination in the Midwest cannot hope to grow to any great extent.”<sup>121</sup> S.F.C. Finance Committee chairman Tom Harkison noted that “there is no question in the minds of the members of this committee as to the growth and permanence of Sioux Falls College.”<sup>122</sup> Considering that one year previously the Board of Trustees were voting on whether or not the college should exist, this statement is a testament to the overwhelming success of the New Development Program.

By the end of the academic year of 1944 the survival of the college was assured. As the situation became less critical, S.F.C. hired Ernest Smith as its new president.<sup>123</sup> It was John Barton’s strategy of devising an appeal to Baptist congregations throughout the region emphasizing the value of Sioux Falls College for the preservation of democracy and Christianity rather than continually relying on opportunities produced by government contracts, that ultimately proved decisive. Of course, this level of success simply would not have been possible without a general economic recovery in the region, with the Sioux Falls Airbase being a key reason the city could support the college.

### CONCLUSION: AFTER THE WAR

Altogether, two hundred and seventy-three alumni and students of S.F.C. entered the armed forces to fight during World War II.<sup>124</sup> The conflict came to a close in 1945, and the Sioux Falls College campus rejoiced. “If you could have been on the campus that morning, when word came that victory had at last come in Europe, you would have noticed with what sincerity and seriousness every one talked of the occasion, with joy overflowing their very hearts,” one student wrote of the triumphant chapel session that followed the announcement of VE Day.<sup>125</sup> Due to the success of the New Development Program the college had managed to survive the war years, with leaders developing plans for admitting returning veterans. As a direct result of demobilization, the immediate postwar years provided a major increase in students as well as the acquisition of physical structures that significantly improved the campus.

As the United States brought soldiers home following the conflict in 1945 and into 1946, there was a major spike in enrollment of returning

veterans in higher education. Much of this was due to the G.I. Bill of Rights, which "was a huge federal government program of aid to higher education, the biggest in American history to that date."<sup>126</sup> Enrollment statistics at S.F.C. mirrored this national trend, showing a remarkable upward trajectory after the war. Enrollment, which had reached a nadir of only fifty students to open the fall semester of 1944, skyrocketed to three hundred and seventy-three students by the 1945–1946 academic year.

A jump in enrollment that large and sudden required major organizational planning and brought about a number of new challenges. By 1944 S.F.C. began planning for the enrollment of veterans, using some of the funds from the New Development Program to enlarge the faculty and repair some campus buildings.<sup>127</sup> But the school oftentimes lacked even basic equipment after the previous decade. It was only with the opportunities afforded by a demobilizing military that S.F.C. managed the post-war years.

The basketball team provides an illustrative example of S.F.C.'s lack of resources. Faculty member A.O. Larsen was tasked with re-starting the basketball team after the wartime hiatus.<sup>128</sup> A.O. focused his recruitment efforts on returning veterans, but struggled with a lack of equipment for the team. In particular, they only had one basketball to practice with after the rubber drives of World War II. When the S.F.C. team played a scrimmage match with the local Sioux Falls Airbase team, they lost by a score of 88-26. After the game the Airbase team suggested that S.F.C. could keep any remaining equipment. Larsen reported "in the locker room he found all neatly laid out on the bench, a dozen new basketballs, knee pads, whistles and a complete set of uniforms, complements of the US Air Force, along with a note saying, 'We'll be back in a couple weeks.'"<sup>129</sup> The presence of the Sioux Falls Army Airbase proved critical in providing material for the struggling S.F.C.

The most vexing problem after the war, however, was student housing. The college was not in immediate danger of collapse, but neither was there the possibility of a major building campaign. Here again the opportunities brought on by the war vitally assisted the college. Between 1946 and 1948 Sioux Falls College procured three decommissioned military buildings from the federal government at bargain basement prices, two of which came from the Sioux Falls Army Airbase. The first of these structures, formerly the nurses' quarters at the Air Base, became a dormitory earmarked specifically for veteran students. The greatest cost of

the building was moving it from the airbase to the S.F.C. campus.<sup>130</sup> The second building came from the Sioux City Army Air Base in Iowa. In this case a faculty member was instrumental in procuring the funds for transporting the building, used as a student union and home of the Art Department, to campus. S.F.C. President Ernest Smith estimated that the total value of the buildings was somewhere between \$55 and 65 thousand, whereas the college only spent about \$22,500 to move them and set them up in Sioux Falls.<sup>131</sup>

The third building became the Memorial Chapel. This building cost \$6,097 plus the cost of transportation and served as a center of campus worship for two decades.<sup>132</sup> Memorial Chapel was dedicated to the eighteen S.F.C. alumni servicemen who died during the conflict. "The chapel spire points heavenward in declaring our hope that truly 'peace on earth, good will to men' might permanently become a reality."<sup>133</sup> Taken together, the three buildings profoundly affected the social, religious, and physical landscape of Sioux Falls College, and proved to be a major boon following war.

In 1946, out of 305 regular students enrolled, 130 of them were veterans.<sup>134</sup> *The Sioux Falls College Bulletin* frequently provided information to students about how to take advantage of the G.I. Bill of Rights. The student newspaper provided a regular column about veterans' affairs. By 1946 Ernest Smith could confidently report that "due to the careful planning of our Veterans Advisor, Professor H.E. Bloom, and the hearty response of the people in Sioux Falls, we have been able to care for our housing needs. Additional teachers and classrooms have been provided for the enlarged enrollment. We are ever watchful and jealous of our academic standards as well as careful to set a Christian tone to all of our activities."<sup>135</sup>

Altogether, from 1938 to 1948, Sioux Falls College suffered the effects of depression and war in one of the hardest environments for higher education in the United States. Throughout this time period it was a college in crisis, experiencing low enrollment, giving, and economic prospects. The unique relationship between S.F.C., the South Dakota Baptist Convention, and the Northern Baptist Convention was critical. The success of the college very much depended on denominational giving and support, which was often irregular and, from the perspective of S.F.C. leadership, inadequate. The dependence on Northern Baptist Convention funds meant that the denomination was able to force

a complete reorganization of the college in 1941, even against the wishes of the leaders of the college.

The story of Sioux Falls College, the Depression, and the Second World War is a story of constant struggle and the ever-present specter of financial ruin. And, despite the success of the New Development Program, the college was not out of the woods yet. By the end of the 1940s enrollment numbers began to fall again, particularly after the failure to re-secure accreditation by the North Central Association of Colleges and Universities in 1949.<sup>136</sup> Rejection was the result of a number of problems that persisted after the war: "extensive faculty turnover: only four of the faculty on the staff had been there when the new president [E.E. Smith] came in 1945. Lab equipment was poor as well. Mention was made of the appropriations from endowment, operating deficits in the previous years, and the inadequacy of the gift income."<sup>137</sup> Part of this was the inability to secure regular financial support from the five-state Baptist conventions or the Northern Baptist Convention. Desperate campaigns could keep the doors open, but only regular giving could stabilize the college. It would not be until the late 1950s that the college managed to significantly expand in size, re-gain accreditation, and reach that elusive goal of financial stability.<sup>138</sup>

The story of Sioux Falls College during this time is not one of triumph but one of simple survival. Through tireless effort and a pragmatic approach to the denomination and the opportunities created by the war, as well as a bedrock faith that specifically Baptist denominational education met a critical societal need in the defense of democracy, the college managed to eke out of the dangerous Depression and World War II years. Ernest Smith summed this sentiment up best in the 1947 college yearbook *The Sioux Brave*: "Sioux Falls College is an institution built on the faith and patient strength of many years. It has demonstrated its fitness to survive."<sup>139</sup>

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## NOTES

1. "From Editor of Stylus to Mission in China: Lt. Wayne Aberle Typifies His Saga that 'War is Death,'" *The Stylus*, vol. XLIX, no. 3, December 1943, 1.
2. The institution's name has changed several times in its history. Founded as the Dakota Collegiate Institute in 1883, the college changed names to Sioux Falls University in 1885, to Sioux Falls College in 1931, and to the University of Sioux Falls in 1995. Throughout this chapter, I will use Sioux Falls College (S.F.C.), the name associated with the institution throughout the mid-twentieth century.
3. "They're In the Army Now," *The Stylus*, vol. XLVIII, no. 6, February 1943, 2.
4. For two examples of works that look at broad trends in higher education during wartime, see: V.R. Cardozier, *Colleges and Universities in World War II* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1993); Willis Rudy, *Total War and Twentieth-Century Higher Learning: Universities of the Western World in the First and Second World Wars* (London: Associated University Presses, 1991).
5. Cardozier, *Colleges and Universities in World War II*, 212.
6. *The Sioux Falls College Bulletin*, vol. 30, no. 2, May 1939. A 'regular' enrollee was a student present for the fall and spring semester. This number did not count for summer school students or a variety of other special categories of student.
7. Sioux Falls College was affiliated with the Northern Baptist Convention, formed in 1909 to unify a conglomerate of Baptist institutions. It was later named the American Baptist Convention (1950), and American Baptist Churches, USA (1972). For more on the history of the Northern Baptist Convention, see: H. Leon McBeth, *The Baptist Heritage: Four Centuries of Baptist Witness* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1987).
8. W.H. Bayles, *Finer than Fine Gold: The Faith and Fellowship of South Dakota Baptists* (South Dakota: South Dakota State Baptist Convention, 1956), 270.
9. Jason Lane and Francis Kerins, "Middle Border States: Higher Education in Idaho, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wyoming," in *Higher Education in the American West: Regional History and State Contexts*, ed. Lester Goodchild et al. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 121.
10. As an example of this, President Ernest Smith noted in 1949 that "Augustana College gets \$50,000 plus yearly from the denominational budget for current operating costs," whereas S.F.C. received a mere fraction of that from the Baptist denomination. E.E. Smith to Board of Trustees March 22, 1949. American Baptist Board of Education and Publication: Christian Higher Education Division Box 135, American Baptist Historical Society (ABHS Henceforward) Archives.



11. John Barton, "The Executive Committee Annual Report, 1939–1940," USF Archives RG1-55 Board of Trustees Minutes 1940–1941, 40-10.
12. The title comes from a letter written by H. Theodore Sorg on the transition to junior college status for S.F.C. Sorg said, "It may be that the recent change-over to that kind of institution was a form of rear-guard action toward oblivion," indicating that even this radical change could not save the college. H. Theodore Sorg to Dr. Luther Wesley Smith, August 12, 1942. American Baptist Board of Education and Publication: Christian higher Education Division, Box 134, ABHS Archives.
13. For more on the economic, political, and ecological crisis of South Dakota during the Great Depression, see: R. Alton Lee, *A New Deal for South Dakota* (Pierre, SD: South Dakota Historical Society Press, 2016); Catherine McNicol Stock, *Main Street in Crisis: The Great Depression and the Old Middle Class on the Northern Plains* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992).
14. Lee, *A New Deal for South Dakota*, 26.
15. *Ibid.*, x.
16. Herbert Schell, *History of South Dakota 4th Edition* (Pierre, SD: South Dakota State Historical Society Press, 2004), 323.
17. Warren Behan to Frank Padelford, May 15, 1937. American Baptist Board of Education and Publication: Christian Higher Education Division Box 133, American Baptist Historical Society Archives (emphasis in original).
18. These included Des Moines University in Des Moines, Iowa; Grand Island College of Grand Island, Nebraska; Cedar Valley Seminary of Osage, Iowa; and Parker College of Winnebago, Minnesota. For more on the collapse of these nearby institutions, see Reuben Jeschke, *Dream of the Pioneers: A Brief and Informal History of Sioux Falls College in Commemoration of Its Seventy-Fifth Anniversary* (University of Sioux Falls (USF henceforward) Archives: Unpublished Manuscript, 1958), 73.
19. C.C. Caldwell, "The Committee on Finance and Investment Annual Report 1933–1934," RG1-55: Board of Trustee Minutes 1933–1934, USF Archives, 75.
20. *The Sioux Falls College Bulletin*, vol. 28, no. 1, April 1937, 14.
21. John Barton to Luther Wesley Smith, September 11, 1943. American Baptist Board of Education and Publication Box 134: Sioux Falls College 1943–1944, ABHS Archives.
22. The college achieved accreditation as a four-year institution in 1933. John Bails, "Culture for Service: Sioux Falls College," found in *From Idea to Institution: Higher Education in South Dakota*, ed. Herbert Hoover et al. (Vermilion, SD: University of South Dakota Press, 1989), 176.

23. Carol Mashek, *To Raise a Candle for the College: A Centennial History of Sioux Falls College* (Unpublished Manuscript, USF Archives), Chapter VIII, 3–7.
24. Jeschke, *Dream of the Pioneers*, 111. Reuben Jeschke was president of S.F.C. from 1953 to 1970.
25. C.C. Caldwell, “The Committee on Finance and Investment,” USF Archives RG1-55 Board of Trustees Minutes 1942–1943, 42-4b.
26. Only 80 out of 342 students could pay their tuition in cash that year. “President Behan’s Plea to the Board of Education May 24, 1939,” American Baptist Board of Education and Publication: Christian Higher Education Division Box 133, ABHS Archives, 5.
27. *Ibid.*, 6.
28. *Twenty-Fourth Annual Report of the Board of Education of the Northern Baptist Convention* (Philadelphia: Judson Press, 1935), 17.
29. Warren Behan, “Questions Submitted October 21, 1938 to Sioux Falls College by Dr. Padelford to the Board of Education,” American Baptist Board of Education and Publication: Christian Higher Education Division Box 133, ABHS Archives, 4-5.
30. Frank Padelford to Warren Behan May 26, 1939. American Baptist Board of Education and Publication: Christian Higher Education Division Box 133, ABHS Archives.
31. W.P. Behan to Frank Padelford, November 14, 1939. American Baptist Board of Education and Publication: Christian Higher Education Division Box 133, ABHS Archives.
32. Barton also served as the Executive Secretary of the South Dakota Baptist Convention and the editor of the *South Dakota Baptist Bulletin*.
33. John Barton, “The Executive Committee Annual Report, 1939–1940,” RG1-55 Board of Trustee Minutes 1940–1941, USF Archives, 40-10.
34. Warren Behan, “The Only Way Out,” RG2-S1-SS22 W.P. Behan, USF Archives.
35. *The Sioux Falls College Bulletin*, vol. 32, no. 1, April 1941, 78.
36. “History Department Offers Democracy Course,” *The Stylus*, vol. XLVI no. 7, January 1941, 2.
37. Harold Eastman, “War,” *The Stylus*, vol. XLV, no. 1, September 1939, 2.
38. “SFC Campus War Poll Reveals Only 10% Favor Intervention,” *The Stylus*, vol. XLV, no. 15, May 1940, 2.
39. “U.S. Attitudes Toward European War Changing,” *The Stylus*, vol. XLV, no. 15, May 1940, 2.
40. For more on isolationism in the Great Plains Region prior to the Second World War, see R. Douglas Hurt’s masterful, *The Great Plains During World War II* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2008), Chapter One: Reluctance. For information regarding pacifism among Baptist communities following WWI, see: Bill Leonard, *Baptist Ways*:

- A History* (Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 2003), Chapter 16: Baptists in the United States: The Twentieth Century.
41. Leonard, *Baptist Ways: A History*, 399–400.
  42. George Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).
  43. William Vance Trollinger Jr., *God's Empire: William Bell Riley and Midwestern Fundamentalism* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1990), Chapter 6: The Revolt.
  44. Marsden, *God's Empire*, 9.
  45. Trollinger, *God's Empire*, see Chapter 5: The Empire.
  46. *The Sioux Falls College Bulletin*, vol. 30, no. 2, May 1939, 23.
  47. *The Sioux Falls College Bulletin*, vol. 32, no. 1, April 1941, 18.
  48. McBeth, *The Baptist Heritage*, 576.
  49. Earle V. Pierce, "The Spiritual Progress of Sioux Falls College," *The Northwestern Pilot*, vol. 21, no. 7, April 1941, 201.
  50. McBeth, *The Baptist Heritage*, 577.
  51. W.P. Behan, "The President of the College Annual Report, 1939–1940," RG1-55 Board of Trustees Minutes 1940–1941, USF Archives, 40-30.
  52. C.C. Caldwell, "The Committee on Finance and Investment," RG1-55 Board of Trustees Minutes 1940–1941, USF Archives, 40-12.
  53. A large reason for this was that the Northern Baptist Board of Education's budget suffered similarly in the Great Depression. In 1936 the Annual Report noted that "our current expenses have fallen from \$152,606.80 to \$62,027.49." *Twenty-Fifth Annual Report of the Board of Education of the Northern Baptist Convention* (Philadelphia: Judson Press, 1936), 21.
  54. "Preliminary Statement of the Long-Range Objectives of the Board of Education of the Northern Baptist Convention," 1943. Northern Baptist Convention Board of Education Minutes 1920–1943, Box 465, ABHS Archives.
  55. John Barton, "The Executive Committee Annual Report 1939–1940," RG1-55 Board of Trustees Minutes 1940–1941, USF Archives, 40-10.
  56. *Ibid.*, 40-11.
  57. E.S. Olsen to Lee Girton, April 30, 1941, RG5-S2-SS2 Activities, Events, Fundraising—Fundraising 1940–1941, USF Archives.
  58. A report in September 1941 replied that, if all outstanding pledges came in (which they deemed unlikely), "the entire campaign will have netted us only \$8403.73 instead of the \$135,000 which was our goal." Warren Behan, "The President of the College Annual Report (September 1, 1940–July 31, 1941)," RG1-55 Board of Trustees Minutes 1941–1942, USF Archives, 41-16E.
  59. "Final Report: Sioux Falls College," August 22 1940–March 1941, Tamblын and Tamblын, RG5-S2-SS2 Activities, Events, Fundraising—Fundraising 1940–1941, USF Archives.

60. "Statement of Financial Obligations of Sioux Falls College," August 31, 1941. RG1-55 Board of Trustees Minutes 1940–1941, USF Archives.
61. Behan, "The President of the College Annual Report," 41-16F. The statement about the Minnesota Baptist Convention reflects the fact that, at the time, William Bell Riley's ultra-conservative fundamentalists had taken control of the convention. Warren Behan noted that "we were effectively blocked in Minnesota by our fundamentalist brethren, who cast suspicion on the college for being 'modernist.'" W.P. Behan to W.W. Charters, April 17, 1941. American Baptist Historical Society Sioux Falls College Files Box 133, ABHS Archives. For a secondary source on this topic, see Trollinger, *God's Empire*.
62. J.D. Elliff, "Report of Dr. J.D. Elliff to the Special Committee of the Board of Education of the Northern Baptist Convention," June 10, 1941. RG1-55 Board of Trustee Minutes 1940–1941, USF Archives, 4.
63. Harold Engberg and Kenneth Ames to Friends of Sioux Falls College July 16, 1941. American Baptist Historical Society Sioux Falls College Files Box 133, ABHS Archives.
64. David Levine, *The American College and the Culture of Aspiration* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1986), 180. By 1938, 17.6 of the nation's college students were enrolled in two-year institutions, with about 2/3 of these going to publicly controlled junior colleges. *Ibid.*, 162.
65. *Ibid.*, 184. For another source on junior colleges during the interwar period, see Steven Brint and Jerome Karabel's *The Diverted Dream: Community Colleges and the Promise of Educational Opportunity in America, 1900–1985* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989).
66. *Ibid.*, 40–167.
67. Luther Wesley Smith to James Wood, President of Stephens College June 26, 1941. American Baptist Historical Society Sioux Falls College Files Box 133, ABHS Archives.
68. "Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Board of Trustees, July 3, 1941." RG1-55 Board of Trustees Minutes 1940–1941, USF Archives, 40-170.
69. E.W. Thornton, "Statement of the Faculty to the Board of Trustees Relative to the Junior College Proposal," July 2, 1941, RG1-55 Board of Trustees Minutes 1940–1941, USF Archives, 40-175.
70. Behan, "The President of the College Annual Report (September 1, 1940–July 31, 1941)," 41-16H.
71. "Minutes of the Board of Trustees Special Meeting, July 3, 1941." RG1-55 Board of Trustees Minutes 1940–1941, USF Archives, 40-171.
72. Title comes from a letter from John Barton to Luther Wesley Smith on July 15, 1941. American Baptist Historical Society Sioux Falls College Files Box 133, ABHS Archives.

73. "New Prexy," *The Stylus*, vol. XLVII, no. 1, 17 October 1941, 1.
74. *The Sioux Falls College Bulletin*, vol. 32, no. 4, July 1941, 7.
75. Barrett Lowe, "Why Sioux Falls Changed," *The Stylus*, vol. XLVII, no. 4, 19 December 1941.
76. *Ibid.*, *ibidem*.
77. "50 NYA Girls Live, Work on SFC Campus," *The Stylus*, vol. XLVII, no. 1, 17 October 1941, 1.
78. "Peace Group is Organized," *The Stylus*, vol. XLVII, no. 2, 30 October 1941, 2.
79. "Defense Club Members Grow Mustaches," *The Stylus*, vol. XLVII, no. 2, 30 October 1941, 2.
80. Lowe, "Why Sioux Falls Changed."
81. Barrett Lowe, "The Report of the President of the College," September 22, 1942. RG1-55 Board of Trustee Minutes 1942–1943, USF Archives, 42-13.
82. Barrett Lowe, "The President of the College Annual Report," September 23, 1941. RG1-55 minutes 1941–1942, USF Archives, 41-17.
83. Barrett Lowe, "President's Report to the Members of the Executive and Financial Committees," December 4, 1941. RG1-55 Board of Trustees Minutes 1941–1942, USF Archives, 41-57B.
84. "Resolution," *The Stylus*, vol. XLVII, no. 4, 19 December 1941, 2.
85. Repeated references to these drives and other war-related activities are made in *The Stylus*, *The Sioux Falls College Bulletin*, and the Board of Trustees minutes from 1942 to 1945.
86. For more on this topic across the country, see V.R. Cardozier, *Colleges and Universities in World War II*.
87. *The Sioux Falls College Bulletin*, vol. 33, no. 1, April 1942, 107.
88. *Ibid.*, 50.
89. "Baptist Churches Respond," RG 5-S2 Activities, Events, Fundraising, New Development Program, USF Archives.
90. *The Sioux Falls College Bulletin*, vol. 33, no. 1, April 1942, 107.
91. John Barton, "The President of the Board Annual Report, 1941–1942" September 1942. RG1-55 Board of Trustees Minutes 1942–1943, USF Archives, 42-9.
92. *The Sioux Falls College Bulletin*, vol. 30, no. 2, May 1939, 100. For the second number: *The Sioux Falls College Bulletin*, vol. 32, no. 1, April 1943, 51.
93. First quote: Barrett Lowe to Dr. B. Lamar Johnson, December 29, 1942. RG2-S1-SS23, USF Archives. Second quote: Barrett Lowe, "The Report of the President of the College," September 22, 1942. RG1-55 Board of Trustee Minutes 1942–1943, USF Archives, 42-12.

94. Barret Lowe to Dr. B. Lamar Johnson December 29, 1942, RG2-S1-SS23, USF Archives.
95. Barrett Lowe to Donald Faulkner, November 5, 1942. American Baptist Board of Education and Publication: Christian Higher Education Division Box 134, ABHS Archives.
96. John Barton, "A College With A Record," RG2-S1-SS24, USF Archives.
97. John Barton to Luther Wesley Smith September 11, 1943. American Baptist Board of Education and Publication: Christian Higher Education Division Box 134, ABHS Archives.
98. Harlan Bushfield to Barrett Lowe, January 5, 1943. RG2-S1-SS23 Lowe, Barrett, USF Archives.
99. Cardozier, *Colleges and Universities in World War II*, 113.
100. "Minutes of the Executive Committee Special Meeting March 19, 1943," USF Archives RG1-55 Board of Trustees Minutes 1942-1943, 42-64. Lowe resigned to take a commission in the military, where he served with distinction. He later moved into a career in politics and government service, at one point serving as the American governor general of Guam and American Samoa. For an account of his time as governor, see: Barrett Lowe, *Problems in Paradise: The View from Government House* (New York: Pageant Press, 1967).
101. John Barton, "Report of Acting President and President of the Board of Trustees," October 1943. RG1-55 Board of Trustees Minutes 1943-1944, USF Archives, 43-12.
102. *Ibid.*, 43-13.
103. "Minutes, Board of Trustees Annual Meeting of September 21, 1943," RG1-55 Board of Trustees Minutes 1943-1944, USF Archives, 43-10.
104. John Barton, "Report of Acting President and President of the Board of Trustees," 43-15.
105. *Ibid.*, 43-15.
106. *Ibid.*, 43-14.
107. *Ibid.*, 43-13.
108. Lee, *A New Deal for South Dakota*, 204.
109. Lynwood Oyos, *Reveille for Sioux Falls: A World War II Army Air Forces Technical School Changes a South Dakota City* (Sioux Falls, SD: The Center for Western Studies, 2014), 1.
110. *Ibid.*, 83.
111. Hurt, *The Great Plains During WWII*, 275.
112. *Ibid.*, 402. The author estimates that personal income rose from \$360 in 1940 to \$1497 in 1944, allowing an unprecedented rise in standards of living.
113. "Sioux Falls Opens New Development Drive: Board Seeks \$140,000 in Constructive Three Year Plan," *South Dakota Baptist Bulletin*, vol. XL, no. 10, April 1944, 9.

114. "Baptist Churches Respond," RG 5-S2 Activities, Events, Fundraising, New Development Program, USF Archives.
115. "An Inspiring Story of the Building of a College: How Sioux Falls Plans Greater Service to Area," *South Dakota Baptist Bulletin*, vol. XL, no. 10, April 1944, 8.
116. "An Inspiring Story of the Building of a College: How Sioux Falls Plans Greater Service to Area," 8.
117. "Proposed Plan for Solicitation in all Baptist Churches," RG 5-S2 Activities, Events, Fundraising, New Development Program, USF Archives, 11.
118. "Baptist Churches Respond."
119. "Proposed Plan for Solicitation in all Baptist Churches," 11.
120. "Proposed Plan for Solicitation in all Baptist Churches," 12.
121. John Barton, "Annual Report of the Acting President of the College and Chairman of the Board," September 13, 1944. RG1-55 Board of Trustee Minutes 1944–1945, USF Archives, 44-17.
122. Tom Harkison, "Annual Report of the Committee on Finance," September 13, 1944. RG1-55 Board of Trustee Minutes 1944–1945, USF Archives, 44-6.
123. Ernest Smith was born in England, but migrated to Canada and then to the United States. During the war he served for two years as a military chaplain. "Ernest Edward Smith: A Biographical Sketch," RG2-SS25, USF Archives. *The Sioux Brave* the school yearbook, had this to say about Smith in 1948: "When the British gave us Ernest Smith, they pre-paid us in advance for the Lend-Lease program." *The Sioux Brave*, 1948, 15. Though popular among students, he resigned in disgrace in 1949 following yet another financial crisis, and the failure to obtain accreditation from the North Central Association. E.E. Smith to Board of Trustees March 22, 1949. American Baptist Historical Society Sioux Falls College Files Box 133, ABHS Archives.
124. *The Sioux Falls College Bulletin*, vol. 37, no. 1, April 1946, 5.
125. "V-E Day of Prayer," *The Stylus*, vol. L, no. 9, May 1945, 2.
126. Willis Rudy, *Total War and Twentieth Century Higher Learning: Universities of the Western World in the First and Second World Wars* (London: Associated University Presses, 1991), 100.
127. Ernest E Smith to Friends of Sioux Falls College, August 19, 1946. RG2-SS25 Smith, E.E. Correspondence, USF Archives.
128. Athletics were suspended following the 1942/1943 academic year.
129. Bob Larsen, "Biography of AO Larsen Part IV 1945–1951," Unpublished Manuscript, 15.
130. Ernest Smith, "Annual Report of the President of the College 1945–1946." RG1-55 Board of Trustee Minutes 1946–1947, USF Archives, 46-16.

131. Ernest Smith, "Annual Report of the President 1946–1947." RG1-55 Board of Trustees Minutes 1947–1948, USF Archives, 47-13.
132. Ernest Smith, "President Ernest Smith to the Board of Trustees," January 22, 1948. RG1-55 Board of Trustee Minutes 1947–1948, USF Archives, 47-47.
133. *The Sioux Brave* (Sioux Falls: Sioux Falls College, 1949), 66.
134. E.E. Smith to Area Pastors, October 4, 1946. RG2-SS25 Smith, E.E. Correspondence, USF Archives.
135. Ibid.
136. S.F.C. continued to be accredited as a two-year institution, but lost their four year accreditation status with the transition to a junior college in 1941. The institution would not regain accreditation until 1957. This proved to be a devastating blow to recruitment for much of the next decade. Jeschke, *Dream of the Pioneers*, 136.
137. Jeschke, *Dream of the Pioneers*, 136.
138. Jeschke, *Dream of the Pioneers*, Chapter XIV: Year of Jubilee.
139. Ernest Smith, *The Sioux Brave* (Sioux Falls: Sioux Falls College, 1947), 15.





## CHAPTER 4

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# “The Charity of Christ Urges Us”: Women, War, and the Four Freedoms at the College of Mount St. Joseph

*Peter M. Robinson*

Americans waged World War II for diverse reasons. Many fought to vanquish fascism, which by 1941 had subjugated nearly all of Europe under Adolf Hitler’s Germany and Benito Mussolini’s Italy. Comparatively, few were fighting to save Europe’s Jews, despite the knowledge by President Franklin D. Roosevelt’s administration of the Nazis’ extermination efforts by 1942. The vast majority of Americans looked first and foremost to avenge Japan’s attack on United States forces at Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, a date, as it was branded by Roosevelt, “which will live in infamy.” Of course, those on the front lines fought to stay alive and return to their families.

As troops began to cross the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, those left safely behind also could ponder more abstract, idealistic war aims. Americans on the home front looked to spread the “American way of life”—commonly defined as the embrace of democracy, economic opportunity, and upward mobility—especially after the decade of economic depression that had so imperiled it.<sup>1</sup> Roosevelt voiced these ideals in

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internationalist terms in January 1941, nearly a year before the country entered the war. Pressing Congress to approve his Lend-Lease plan for providing vital war materiel to Great Britain, he concluded his speech by envisioning a postwar “founded upon four essential human freedoms”:

The first is freedom of speech and expression everywhere in the world.

The second is freedom of every person to worship God in his own way everywhere in the world.

The third is freedom from want, which, translated into world terms, means economic understandings which will secure to every nation a healthy peacetime life for its inhabitants everywhere in the world.

The fourth is freedom from fear—which, translated into world terms, means a worldwide reduction of armaments to such a point and in such a thorough fashion that no nation will be in a position to commit an act of physical aggression against any neighbor—anywhere in the world.<sup>2</sup>

Roosevelt’s words did not preoccupy the thoughts of Americans day-to-day, but the ideals behind them resonated, and for the staff of the *Seton Journal*, the student newspaper of the College of Mount St. Joseph on-the-Ohio, they did so powerfully enough to warrant prominent placement in the paper’s special “V-E Day Edition” of May 7, 1945, more than four long years and millions of lost lives after Roosevelt’s speech. For these student journalists representing the Mount, an all-female institution on the western outskirts of Cincinnati and Ohio’s first degree-granting Catholic college for women, the Four Freedoms and their apparent fulfillment not only justified the national reasoning for waging war, but also the mission of their college and its founders, the Sisters of Charity of Cincinnati.<sup>3</sup> Barely two decades old when World War II began, the College of Mount St. Joseph—Mount St. Joseph University since 2014—aimed “to inform the mind, to train the heart, to stimulate the will so that the result will be a true woman ready to take her rightful place in the social, the business, and the religious world.”<sup>4</sup> These goals aligned closely with the Four Freedoms in the minds of women whose access to them had only recently been formalized through the vote and wider access to higher education. Although pursuit of these objectives was subjugated in profound ways by the war effort—what one alumna flamboyantly called “the rubescent crucible, in which glows the sacrificial

offerings of all who have learned that freedom is not a gift but a trophy"—students at the Mount nonetheless pursued them for the duration out of allegiance to their nation, their faith, and their individual callings.<sup>5</sup>

### FREEDOM OF SPEECH

For Mary Agnes Scherer, higher education and war had been inseparable. A member of the Class of 1945, she entered college with much of the world already embattled and the urgency of the Mount's mission to produce women ready to take their "rightful place" for the war effort rapidly rising. It is not surprising, then, that her interpretation of the newly won Freedom of Speech in the *Seton Journal's* V-E Day edition exuded relief and liberation:

O brave new world! Where men speak, unafraid  
 Of lurking horror, censors without ruth.  
 No more will men in bondage fear the blade  
 Poised close to tongues long wont to speak the truth.  
 Men free in speech can laugh, can sing, dispute;  
 Can shout the truth, mouth words of addleplate.  
 Nor wise nor foolish men must now be mute,  
 To writhe unheard beneath the heel of state.  
 In peace, in war, some men will speak as seers  
 While others to their ignorance give vent.  
 God-given is their right; their mouth and ears  
 From freedom's body are no longer rent.  
 Has victory loosed your chains, O men, O land?  
 Know by these signs: free speech, and truth unbanned.<sup>6</sup>

Notwithstanding the prominence of the masculine third-person, which was in customary usage in formal speech until the late twentieth century, Scherer's declaration would have registered powerfully with her fellow "Mountees." By virtue of their birthright as Americans, further validated by their contributions to the war effort, these young women, too, belonged to this "brave new world," a place where, in Scherer's vision, wisdom, and truth could return unassailed to a free marketplace of ideas. While victory in Europe brought no guarantee that either would prevail—wisdom remained in perpetual competition with confused thinking ("addleplate") and truth would continue to contend with falsehood—critical thinking, the centerpiece of a liberal arts Mount

education, was being given new voice and students felt renewed empowerment to add theirs. From the war's first shots in 1939, American Catholic leaders, Chicago Bishop Bernard Sheil and Father Edward Flanagan, the legendary founder of Boys Town among them, had recognized "the young generation [as the nation's] most idealistic and the best educated" and they exhorted young people to prepare so they would be "assured...of victory when the crisis comes."<sup>7</sup> With the crisis met and victory now at hand in 1945, young people like Scherer could claim a large measure of the triumph thanks to their skill, fortitude, and sacrifice, qualities that would prompt many to refer to them later as "the greatest generation."

Scherer's final lines resonated most powerfully. Like students at other religious institutions, Mountees considered freedom of speech a "God-given" blessing. For the faithful, defense of what they considered the First Amendment's most vital protection—the free exercise of religion—rested on the cornerstone freedom to speak openly about it. This was true for Presbyterians, Baptists, and all denominations in the predominantly Protestant United States, but it was also true for religious "others" such as Jews, Muslims, and especially Catholics who, despite being the largest single religious constituency in the nation by the mid-twentieth century, had endured generations of disdain, persecution, and political voicelessness.<sup>8</sup>

To Mount-minded women, Scherer's reference to "loosed chains" could not help but also refer to the constraints of gender. While Scherer's cohort was the first unable to recall life before ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment, it could nonetheless revel in the novelty of what most Americans still considered a triple paradox: a Catholic women's institution of higher learning. The founding of the Mount in 1920 was part of an accelerating trend of giving informed voice to newly enfranchised women, even though the ruling patriarchy—secular and Catholic alike—clung to the notion that a college education was quite probably detrimental to women whose destiny was to be home and family.<sup>9</sup> Educated women might be encouraged to pursue professional careers which, in turn, could deter them from marriage and—Catholics especially feared—having children.<sup>10</sup> The Mount's mission, then, to empower women to take their place in the social and business as well as the religious world, was a provocative one.

Yet it was thoroughly consistent with the calling of the Sisters of Charity and their foundress, Elizabeth Seton. A widowed mother of five

before converting to Catholicism, Seton desired educational fulfillment for her daughters as well as sons, along with their spiritual and physical wellbeing. These priorities, grounded in the charism of healing advanced by Saint Vincent de Paul, came to define the Sisters of Charity, which Seton founded in Maryland in 1809 as the first community of women religious formed by and for Americans.<sup>11</sup> As sisters—not “nuns,” which refers to cloistered women religious—they lived active lives of teaching, nursing, and serving the poor and so were able to carve out deeper intellectual and educational identities for themselves.<sup>12</sup> This made sisters, as some scholars have observed, “the most liberated women in nineteenth century America.”<sup>13</sup> The Sisters of Charity of Cincinnati extended these ministries into the Ohio frontier in 1829 with the establishment of an orphanage and free school in Cincinnati, and by the end of the century, they had assumed responsibility for dozens of elementary and secondary schools.<sup>14</sup> The College of Mount St. Joseph on-the-Ohio opened two decades later with 20 students and 11 faculty, and when World War II began, the Mount was enjoying the highest enrollment in its history: 327 students taught by a faculty of 41.<sup>15</sup>

For Scherer and her classmates on the blossoming Mount St. Joseph campus, then, education was as much a liberator of speech as was fire-power. Specifically, it was a liberal arts education that would “shout the truth” and triumph over “addlepate.” Students were required to complete 128 semester hours that included extensive instruction in English; Latin or Greek plus a modern foreign language; philosophy; mathematics; and history in addition to the natural and behavioral sciences and the major requirements leading to a Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Science, or Bachelor of Music degree. Liberal arts training would prepare female citizen soldiers for women’s traditional callings of homemaking, teaching, and health care, but also could adjust to meet the contingencies of war and, ultimately, women’s changing lives in the decades to come. Beginning with the 1942–1943 catalog, the first published following the country’s entry into the war, the earlier emphasis on a woman’s isolated “sphere of action” was subordinated in favor of preparing her to serve “successfully in a modern world as a modern woman.”<sup>16</sup> Realizing that “the world of tomorrow is the problem of the world of today,” the next year’s catalog added, “the curriculum is planned so as to assist the student to meet that world cooperatively and intelligently.”<sup>17</sup> One curricular change jettisoned the major in “secretarial practice,” with its emphasis in shorthand and typing, in favor of a robust accounting major and its

“specialized knowledge of the fundamentals of business.”<sup>18</sup> The new Clio Club was established the same year in the history department to promote heightened interest in foreign affairs.<sup>19</sup>

Liberal arts education gave the Freedom of Speech its soul at the Mount, but its voice came full throat from the *Seton Journal*, which carried Scherer’s verse and remains the most complete single chronicle of the Mount at war. Its large impact belied the Mount’s small size. Begun in 1923 and published and printed biweekly by an all-student staff housed in the journalism department, the broadsheet format *Journal* shared news and disseminated views among students, faculty, staff, and into the wider community. Thankfully, while paper and ink rationing cut the frequency of the *Journal* in half from Pearl Harbor to V-J Day—to one four-page edition every month—the paper lost none of its relevance. In early 1945, an Associated Press day-wire teletype was installed that brought the campus first-story accounts of each day’s news that often made their way quickly into print.<sup>20</sup> Thanks to the AP wire, the Mount was one of the first places in Cincinnati to learn of Germany’s surrender on May 7, allowing the *Journal* to print its special V-E Day edition and scoop all of the city’s daily papers, the *Cincinnati Enquirer*, *Cincinnati Post*, and *Cincinnati Times-Star*.<sup>21</sup>

Nor did the reduction in frequency temper the *Journal*’s editorial vigor (Fig. 4.1). By 1938, it already had begun to mirror the passionate national debates over peace, war, and neutrality during the years prior to the Pearl Harbor attack. Barely a week after Adolf Hitler, truculent but still unprepared for war, and British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain, already primed to appease the Fuhrer over Czechoslovakia, met late that September to discuss surrender of that country’s Sudetenland to the Nazis, the *Journal* reported the then-conventional belief that “Hitler’s days are numbered.” The editorial presciently predicted that the objective truth “will be learned only with the passage of time” and called for “more statesmen willing to sacrifice national dignity and personal position to the general good.”<sup>22</sup> “We CAN Stay Out” insisted the headline a year later just after the invasion of Poland. For Catholic collegians, the editors insisted, it was prayer, not American military involvement, that was the “all-powerful weapon” capable of ending the conflict. “[D]uty to church and to state is your ‘call to peace’ in this crisis,” they maintained. “The menace of Germany’s submarines, England’s navy, Russia’s air corps, France’s land reserves, and Italy’s diplomatic relations, can be eliminated by a rosary.”<sup>23</sup> However,



**Fig. 4.1** The wartime staff of the *Seton Journal* reads its next edition. The Associated Press teletype machinery can be seen in the background, beneath the window (Courtesy of Mount St. Joseph University Archives)

the same edition called for moral resolve to accompany prayer. “We submerge our moral values to our fear of Hitler. Our very ‘neutrality’ will be our undoing,” opined student Violet Macy. “A war which doesn’t concern us in this age is impossible.”<sup>24</sup> Still, Mount women were typical of Catholic students nationwide in opposing American entry in 1939. While 89% believed that the country ultimately would be drawn in, 63% “denounce[ed] the entrance of the United States as an armed force.”<sup>25</sup> In December, the Mount hosted the annual

conference of the Ohio Valley Student Peace Federation, where delegates from Ohio, Kentucky, and Indiana met to hear from Catholic leaders, laity, and students about proposals for mediation between the belligerents, boycotts of the aggressor nations, and other possible resistance to the conflict.<sup>26</sup>

By early 1941, in the wake of Roosevelt's Lend-Lease/Four Freedoms speech and as national public opinion increasingly favored aid to the democracies fighting Germany, even at the risk of war (notably, the still-isolationist Midwest around Cincinnati was a staunch exception), the *Journal* was speaking of the necessity of directly supporting England.<sup>27</sup> Monica Angier, a freshman and one of thousands of British young people evacuated when war began, took to the pages of the *Journal* to write of her broken but resolute homeland. London lay in ashes, she admitted, but "all of England is fighting for its life and liberty." Peace, she predicted, would win out, but "only at a great price" and by "those who sacrificed their youth" in its defense. "Were the situation reversed," wondered the *Journal's* editors, "and were our country suddenly thrown into the horrors of war, what would we think and wonder? Probably our thoughts would harmonize with those of Monica Angier."<sup>28</sup> Ten months later, with Pearl Harbor in ashes and the United States thrown into the conflict, the thoughts of Mount students harmonized with those of the nation, and the fight for Mary Agnes Scherer's "brave new world" was joined.

### FREEDOM OF WORSHIP

Florence Gibb, Class of '46, described another vindicated freedom in the *Journal's* V-E Day edition:

O brave new world! Glad world where men are free  
 To worship, each his own way without dread.  
 Come, small trustful one, here to my knee;  
 Hushed now the furor, cold the ashes, fled  
 The fear of marching feet. Now we may speak  
 Of heartfelt things: the faith thy fathers knew  
 And swore to keep alive; the hymns their meek,  
 Yet fervent voices raised to God. (You, too,  
 Small one, will sing them now.) You have not known  
 This priceless pearl, this freedom without peer.  
 The Sunday morning peace, the sweet bells' tone.



To us who fought, how fair the prize; how dear,  
 New-sealed in yet warm blood. God grant it will  
 Be thine, thy children's, and their children's still.<sup>29</sup>

World War II was American Catholics' to fight. During the 1930s, the Nazis had arrested thousands of Catholic priests, nuns, and lay leaders and dissolved the Catholic Youth League.<sup>30</sup> Persecution became more systematic after the Nazi invasion of Catholic Poland in 1939 and as Hitler took deliberate measures to de-Christianize Germany. As they viewed these developments abroad with horror, American Catholics recognized in them the often virulent discrimination they had faced for generations in their own country. Catholic worship was illegal in most regions of Revolutionary America and Catholics were routinely banned from civic activities such as voting, serving on juries, even holding hands.<sup>31</sup> Extreme nativism, embodied most infamously in the American or "Know-Nothing" Party, had greeted the millions of Irish and German Catholics who immigrated in the mid-nineteenth century, and Catholics were prominent alongside African Americans as targets of the resurgent Ku Klux Klan at the beginning of the twentieth. While most legal proscriptions against Catholicism had disappeared by the early 1900s, Americans were still far from ready to elect Catholic Al Smith to the presidency in 1928, eight years after the Mount was founded and women secured the vote. Suspicion persisted of Catholics as members of an "alien faith" antithetical to American democracy because of their allegiance to the Pope.<sup>32</sup>

With the United States' declaration of war on Japan on December 8, 1941 and on Germany three days later, the debate over involvement became moot and the country's 21 million Catholics joined their fellow citizens in demonstrating their loyalty and defending democracy on all fronts (activist Dorothy Day's Catholic Worker Movement and the Association of Catholic Conscientious Objectors were notable exceptions). Detroit's Archbishop Edward Mooney wrote Roosevelt promising that "with a patriotism that is guided and sustained by the Christian virtues of faith, hope, and charity," he would commit Catholic leaders to marshalling "the spiritual forces at our command to render secure our God-given blessings of freedom."<sup>33</sup> It is estimated that Catholics comprised 25–35% of American armed forces.<sup>34</sup>

At the College of Mount St. Joseph on-the-Ohio, the prohibition against women serving in combat did not temper its own commitment

to the fight. Barely two months after the Pearl Harbor attacks, the Mount became one of the first women's colleges in the country to join the national trend toward a year-round wartime schedule. The trimester curriculum gave students the option of completing their studies in three years in order to enter the wartime work or armed forces sooner, although as Mother Mary Regina, the Mount's president, stressed "this program of acceleration will not mean any lowering of standards. Our students will spend just as much time in class but vacations will be drastically shortened."<sup>35</sup> The move signaled not only the value of a Mount liberal arts education to the war effort, but also that of a Catholic education that stressed spiritual as well as intellectual activism. Rev. Sylvester Huser, the Mount's assistant chaplain, weaved zealous militaristic metaphor into his suggestion that students form "battalions of study clubs. In this way, they can become more thoroughly drilled in their religion. They can even have target practice by quizzing one another." Then, he continued, boarding students "can return to their home parishes fully equipped to direct the attack. Cincinnati students can go over the top immediately by putting their knowledge into action."<sup>36</sup> The editors of *Mountings*, the alumnae newsletter, echoed this holdover reference to the trench warfare of World War I. "We cannot man a gun but we can go 'over the top' with spiritual offerings for the cause of peace," they wrote, urging readers to pray, attend Mass, and receive communion more frequently. "Under the banner of [Jesus's] Bleeding Heart, let us...perform 'heroic action above and beyond the call of duty' so that discord might end and love might reign among men."<sup>37</sup> Clearly, this was no time to hide one's faith under a bushel.

Such expressions illustrated the importance of Catholics proclaiming their faith in the cause of victory. They also exemplified the potency of "fervent voices raised to God" of which Florence Gibb wrote and to which the American people as a whole assigned increased importance during the war, in words if not in deeds. The toleration of religion and its open expression were exalted as hallmark American traits, characteristic of the many contrasts between the United States and the enemy Axis Powers.<sup>38</sup> "The right to worship God," maintained the Office of War Information in 1942, "is part of our soil and of the sky above this continent.... The miracle which democracy has achieved is that while practicing many kinds of worship, we nevertheless achieve social unity and peace."<sup>39</sup> Such high-flying assertions were contradicted by persistent—if now more muted—prejudice against Catholics, suspicion of the Mennonites, Society of Friends (Quakers), and

Church of the Brethren for their pacifism and, most blatantly, anti-Semitic attacks. Longstanding American racism and xenophobia directed against Jews was heightened in the 1930s with charges that Jewish immigrants were stealing jobs and that Roosevelt's New Deal programs—some derisively referred to it as the "Jew Deal"—were controlled by Jews and unfairly advantaged them. Though rejected by most mainstream Catholics, including the Archdiocese of Cincinnati, Father Charles E. Coughlin's anti-Semitic nationwide radio tirades further enflamed the sentiment.<sup>40</sup> In May 1939, with Nazi persecution of Jews already well known, the passenger ship *St. Louis*, with hundreds of Jewish refugees aboard fleeing the Third Reich from Hamburg, was denied entry, first in Cuba, then the United States. It was forced to return to Europe, where many perished during the Holocaust. The U.S. State Department had confirmation of the Nazis' systematic extermination of Jews and other "undesirables" as early as 1942, yet it squelched the reports and the United States did nothing until the Roosevelt administration belatedly established the War Refugee Board in 1944.<sup>41</sup>

At least one Mount student, Violet Macy, did as Father Huser urged and put her "knowledge into action" by defending the Freedom of Worship, though in ways he perhaps did not envision. She used her regular *Journal* column "Inklings" to attack the hypocrisy in 1939:

From American pulpits, classrooms, and soap boxes comes the cry of protest against the persecutions of the peasantry in Russia and the Jew in Germany. But it was in America that a Jewish lad was branded by his schoolmates....

Jewish persecution is being excused [here] because "Communists" and "Jews" are becoming synonymous terms. Other rationalizations are made as reasons for persecution of the Jews....

Occasionally Catholics do not champion the Jew because he is not a Christian. The Church has been explicit on advocating tolerance. The wisdom of her attitude is manifest in Germany. The expulsion of the Jew has not served to stimulate Christianity.

The Church which is named after Jesus, the Christ of the House of David cannot do otherwise than exclaim, "Peace upon Israel."<sup>42</sup>

Violet Macy called to account her fellow Mountees, her fellow Catholics, and her fellow Americans in the earliest days of the war in defense of

both a people far from her campus and a faith that to many, seemed just as foreign. In doing so, she was taking up arms in the fight for what Florence Gibb described six years later: a “world where men are free to worship, each his own way without dread.”<sup>43</sup>

### FREEDOM FROM WANT

From their hilltop campus, Mount students such as Mary Weigand, Class of '45, could look out over the Ohio River, which by her graduation was a pulsing commercial artery for a fighting nation fully mobilized. Some barges of the Ohio River Company carried coal for powering factories while others rode low with fuel oil for propelling war ships and freighters. Parallel to the river ran rail lines for transporting all manner of goods as well as the most vital resource, people. Because nearby Cincinnati joined train routes toward both coasts, the Great Lakes, and the Gulf of Mexico, it was a vital link in the national transportation network. Passenger trains carried thousands of troops, government personnel, and prisoners of war to and through the city, and during the war years, an average of 110,000 freight cars passed through Cincinnati monthly, almost double the prewar number.<sup>44</sup> The pervasive scarcity of the Great Depression just a few years before was replaced by a teeming bounty of materiel and energy mobilized against the nation's enemies, including want itself.

Perhaps Weigand was taking in the view of the river valley and its bustling activity from the campus's rooftop terrace when she composed her contribution to the *Seton Journal's* V-E Day edition. The privations seared by the Depression into the lives of her contemporaries worldwide, and perhaps her own, likely also account for the grimness of her imagery:

O brave new world! For me none of your ways.  
 I once ruled man, to let him gasp and faint,  
 Impaled by hunger, thirst, for days on days  
 Until of life there was but slightest taint.  
 I sought him then in bleak and bitter cold  
 And stripped from him whate'er would ward off death.  
 In gory footsteps cruel and swift and bold  
 I strode through homes and left not shelter's breath.  
 Triumphant WANT! I gloating reigned supreme  
 And doubted not my power man's spirit to maim;  
 Freedom's stifled torch I did not deem

Would burst again into immortal flame.  
 A tyrant swings and dies on Liberty's tree;  
 I leave the brave new world all free of me.<sup>45</sup>

The Mount reflected the nation's urgent efforts to reignite "Freedom's stifled torch" by meeting profound needs with intense productivity and alleviating the self-sacrifice that accompanied that productivity with equal measures of national patriotism and Christian duty. The school's resource was knowledge, its product an educated woman equipped, as urged by Father Huser and modeled by Violet Macy, to put knowledge into action. Such activism was motivated by the call to defend democracy and the Four Freedoms, to be sure, but it also was a natural extension of the mission that had motivated Elizabeth Seton and distinguished the Sisters of Charity since their founding. The community's motto, "The charity of Christ urges us," inspired Mountees even more powerfully than citizenship toward service to confront the needs of their time, whether want was manifested at home or around the globe. Just as Cincinnati became a hub for the production and transport of instruments of war, the Mount minted educated women whose skills and compassion were readied for export to local as well as far flung destinations.

When the Mount's accelerated trimester program began in June 1942, the 137 students who arrived for the summer term were assured not only that there would be no lowering of standards because of the quickened pace, but also that the liberal arts would continue to constitute the central corpus of the curriculum, despite the louder call for specialized workers in war-related industries and health care.<sup>46</sup> While outside pressure mounted to stress "practical" courses in pursuit of "an apparently utilitarian ideal," the *Seton Journal* editorialized that women must be prepared to fill "openings in all the walks of life. At this institution, minds are molded to think well and guide others to correct thinking in a virulent world." Some, it went on, "would become nurses in order to join the armed forces," while others might serve "at home in the sociology field," but musicians would be likewise needed to "build up morale; and so on and on. The student aims to make this world a better world and not a bitter world—on all fronts."<sup>47</sup> Thus a Mount education could meet the special contingencies of the day and still "conform to the Catholic ideal of education."<sup>48</sup> In the very act of completing their courses, in fact, students already were doing their part. "Education itself is a defense of democracy," maintained an editorial in the fall of

1941, with war increasingly inevitable. Studying was a patriotic act: “the intellectual, moral, and spiritual outlook of a people [is] the measure of a country’s greatness” and by preparing culturally and socially, as well as intellectually, the student “militates against ignorance.”<sup>49</sup> American democracy wanted for broadly educated citizens and the Mount determined to contribute meaningfully.

The country also wanted for funds to pay the costs of the war, and Mount students augmented their curriculum by organizing war bond drives that mirrored the fundraising efforts nationwide. While nearly half of the \$304 billion cost of World War II was paid for by direct taxation, the balance had to be borrowed, and \$50 billion of that sum came from individual citizens buying small denomination Series E bonds that could be redeemed after war’s end.<sup>50</sup> In four separate drives conducted from 1943 to 1945, Mountees raised slightly more than \$207,000, including one effort that netted \$35,000, enough, the War Department assured, to pay for two trainer aircraft.<sup>51</sup> The annual prom was cancelled in favor of a “Victory Ball” that raised another \$30,000. Scrap metal and junk jewelry drives complemented the bond efforts, and in 1942, alumna Jayne Read won a \$50 war bond and first place in a city-wide contest sponsored by the *Cincinnati Post* for her war song, “Because We’ve a Cause,” which was chosen from among 13,000 entries.<sup>52</sup> In order to increase the supply and decrease the cost of vegetables needed to feed the troops, victory gardens became a common sight, with the Mount’s occupying a well-tended half-acre plot adjacent to campus.<sup>53</sup>

Current and past students volunteered in myriad ways to fill needs large and small. Alumnae worked on behalf of civil defense as drivers in the American Women’s Voluntary Services, and served with the American Red Cross and the Salvation Army Canteen.<sup>54</sup> Among the many standing commitments, Mountees reported to the United Services Organization (USO) for eight hours every Thursday to bake cookies and perform a variety of other tasks, among them the sewing of religious kits containing rosaries, prayer cards, and Sacred Heart badges.<sup>55</sup> Thousands of such kits were sent to Catholic soldiers and sailors in the European and Pacific theatres.<sup>56</sup> These efforts earned the Mount a certificate of meritorious service from the USO in 1943 and at war’s end “the sincere gratitude of all the boys passing through Cincinnati [Union Terminal] and those on hospital and troop trains.”<sup>57</sup>

Meeting the needs of the war in Europe and the Pacific meant doing without at home in Ohio, just as it did in Illinois, New York, or Texas,

and the sacrifices were generally met with good-natured resignation. Social events such as the yearly prom, the alumnae association's annual Thanksgiving dance, and other festivities were considered ill-befitting the seriousness of the moment and a waste of both precious time and scant consumables.<sup>58</sup> The annual "Baby Day," a springtime tradition for alumnae to return to campus to celebrate their newborns, also was canceled, but with the hope from Sister Maria Corona, the Mount's dean, that they could return the following year "with bigger and better babies."<sup>59</sup> Gasoline, rubber, metal, sugar, and all manner of other food items beyond store-bought vegetables were just a few of the items subjected to strict rationing or not available at all. The scarcity of nylon—needed for parachutes and rope—was particularly felt among nursing students who were forced to replace their customary nylon hose with white hose made of heavier natural materials. One recalled when her mother "stood in line downtown and got me a pair of nylon hose. I was the happiest person alive, they were so sheer and nice. Sister came up behind me on the steps and grabbed my leg because she thought I'd painted my legs. We used to paint our legs in those days, and she didn't believe they were nylons."<sup>60</sup> Paper and ink, too, were in short supply, and while this necessitated that the *Seton Journal* reduce its frequency for the duration, it did not prevent the paper from printing a pen-in-cheek report on April Fools' Day, 1942 from the Office of Civilian Defense that students would be excused from all written assignments until "six months after the cessation of hostilities."<sup>61</sup>

Once the patriotic act of studying was complete, the most somber calling, of course, was to meet the needs of the war effort by pursuing a career in a support field or serving in the armed forces directly, and members of the Mount community—faculty and staff as well as graduates—were well represented in these ranks. Two faculty served in the Marine Corps: Capt. Daniel McGarry was stationed in the Solomon Islands in the South Pacific before being assigned to intelligence work stateside; and language professor Sgt. Ernest Willner became an interpreter at a German prisoner-of-war camp in Florida.<sup>62</sup> Bus driver Gordan Guilfoyle, a favorite of the legions of students he transported daily around the Cincinnati region, interrupted his 15 years at the Mount to join the U.S. Army, leaving, according to the *Journal*, "his girl-laden bus for the man's armored tanks."<sup>63</sup> *Mountings*, the alumnae newsletter, reported that Rev. James Hoban, a philosophy professor and chaplain of the college, was assigned to the War Relief Services of the National Catholic Welfare

Conference in France, where he worked with the Sisters of Charity after liberation “distributing food and provisions to war-sufferers.”<sup>64</sup> Shortly after graduation, former *Journal* editor Mary Cavanaugh ’41 headed to Washington, DC to work as a reporter for well-known war correspondent Esther Van Wagoner Tufty and her Tufty News Service, and by 1943 she was working for NBC in its Washington newsroom.<sup>65</sup> Another member of the *Journal* staff, Margaret Conway ’43 (one of three from the Conway family to attend the Mount during the war years), was among several who joined women’s reserve units of the military such as the Women’s Army Corps (WACs) and the Coast Guard’s Women’s Reserve (SPARS), authorized by the U.S. Congress to fill clerical and professional positions on the home front in order to free men for battle. Spec. 3/C Conway was a member of the WAVES, the Women’s Reserve of the U.S. Navy, and was stationed in Columbus, Detroit, and New York City managing recreational and physical education programming. “A lot of folks didn’t think that nice girls with college degrees should enlist in the military,” she later recalled, “no matter how spiffy the uniform.” She went on to add that she didn’t much care what others thought when she was doing something she believed in.<sup>66</sup> By late 1943, 21 alumnae were serving in the military, a respectable number given the all-female college’s small yearly enrollment—never above 335 in the first 25 years since its founding—as well as the newness of the idea of women serving, the public’s reticence at them doing so, and the pervasive inequalities they experienced after enlisting, which were just as pronounced as those they endured day-to-day in civilian life.<sup>67</sup>

“It is a fearless man who will confront a woman with an assertion of the general masculine superiority,” wrote *Journal* reporter Rosanne Boyle in 1938, yet Dr. Henry Rohs was just such a “doctor-courageous” when he maintained that “[w]omen will never be as successful in the practice of medicine as will men.”<sup>68</sup> Arguably, Rohs and his fellows could better afford to indulge their smug ignorance in the years before the war, but they could ill afford it once the country’s one million casualties began to mount. Most alumnae who served in the military did so as junior officers in the Army or Navy nurse corps, filling the nation’s desperate want for top-quality medical care but also the even clearer call of their Sisters of Charity heritage. A professor of biology at the college as well as a physician, Rohs further demonstrated his ignorance by being unaware of or unmoved by the Sisters’ long history of applying their motto, “the charity of Christ urges us” to the medical needs



of the sick and dying. They had done so with precision, efficiency, and skill for more than a century when physicians were often scarce, inventing the American nursing profession in the process. During the Civil War, dozens of Sisters of Charity tended to Confederate as well as Union casualties in camps and on battlefields from Cincinnati to Shiloh to Gettysburg, earning them and other women religious special distinction as U.S. Army Nurses as well as the amazed admiration of Abraham Lincoln.<sup>69</sup> “Of all the forms of charity and benevolence seen in the crowded wards of the hospitals,” he wrote, “those of Catholic sisters were among the most efficient.”<sup>70</sup> In 1852, the Sisters of Charity established the first Catholic hospital in Cincinnati—now Good Samaritan Hospital—and 44 years later the Good Samaritan Hospital School of Nursing.<sup>71</sup> These two core Sisters of Charity ministries—health care and education—were further entwined in 1926 when the still-new College of Mount St. Joseph-on-the-Ohio affiliated with the Good Samaritan School to create a five-year integrated program in nursing training that led to a Bachelor of Science degree.<sup>72</sup> Qualified students could join the U.S. Nurse Cadet Corps in their senior year for specialized training before earning their commissions. From there, newly minted Army nurses often proceeded down the Ohio River Valley to Kentucky’s Fort Knox to await overseas duty.<sup>73</sup>

In boarding their Cincinnati trains, the graduates from the Mount were accompanying tank turrets from the Mosler Safe Company, braised pork processed by the Kroger Company, and aircraft engines manufactured by the Wright Aeronautical Corporation in the vast supply lines stretching toward the victory that all hoped and most prayed would be achieved soon.<sup>74</sup> All found their way to where want was most pressing. As for the nurses from the Mount, they served across the United States and around the world “ward[ing] off death,” as Mary Weigand put it, and tending to the needs of broken bodies and souls alike.<sup>75</sup>

### FREEDOM FROM FEAR

Patriotic fervor was not unanimous at the Mount any more than it was elsewhere in the country; nor was optimism in the future once the war ended. In early 1941, in the wake of Franklin Roosevelt’s Four Freedoms speech and with the Depression still a potent concern, one student—recently engaged to be married—bitterly criticized the president for “instituting [the draft], ‘whose only purpose is to make the nation

war-conscious and to give more power to a certain few of the government officials.... We were going to be married in a few months, and then his number had to be called second. Heaven knows when we'll be married now; he probably won't even have a job when he comes back."<sup>76</sup> In 1946, with another "cold" war already beginning to chill, an alumna posed openly the questions many were pondering: "Has [pursuing a Mount education] been worthwhile? ...Have I been wasting my time preparing for a life that an atomic bomb might snuff out in ten years, more or less?"<sup>77</sup>

The editors of the *Seton Journal* and the alumna newsletter *Mountings* rejected both viewpoints as fruitless concessions to fear. "The trouble," opined *Journal* columnist Virginia Beck in responding to the draft criticism, "is that young people are afraid of unemployment. They're afraid of being left stranded...of being without a job.... Conscription may take away your best boyfriend's job, but it will shake him out of his fearful complacency and awaken him to...opportunity elsewhere."<sup>78</sup> As for the fear of nuclear obliteration, it was rebuffed with the same forward-looking confidence in the value of the college's mission. Yes, according to *Mountings*, "[i]n spite of atomic bombs and super atomic bombs, it has been worthwhile.... The ideals [of the Mount]—the faith, the courage, the hopes and the dreams are just what the world needs.... They become, through her graduates, the Mount's gift to the world.... There is no need for fear."<sup>79</sup>

Years of war had not in any way depleted faith in the future and the Mount's place in it; they had invigorated it. In May 1945, consensus affirmed a final vision of the "brave new world" as offered by Mary Ann Foy, Class of '46, in the *Journal's* V-E Day edition:

O brave new world! What cause is there for fear?  
 The gentle tide of peace is in again,  
 And licks the alien shores, and hastens near  
 To embrace America's own weary men.  
 Pride and Lust for power are in the pit  
 Where Anger prowls—custodian of the throng.  
 Pale calm pervades tonight; heaven's lamps are lit;  
 The amber landscape slumbers, safe from wrong.  
 O world! The Resurrection Day is come!  
 Oppression grim and brutish slavery  
 Have heretofore the minds of men made numb  
 With fear. But now a cause for bravery:  
 Words of men alone will be forgot—  
 Never the assuring ones of Christ: Fear not.<sup>80</sup>

In fact, Christian faith in Resurrection Day could not prevent mourning, nor did the "tide of peace" rise gently as Foy described, but only after life had been wrenched from some 60 million people worldwide and only after the worst fears of many were realized. As British student Monica Angier had predicted in 1941, peace had won out, but "only at a great price" and by "those who sacrificed their youth" in its defense.<sup>81</sup> While no Mount alumnae or staff died in combat, the columns of its publications listed the names of many bereaved daughters, sisters, and young widows whose men had been killed in action, whether "over Germany," "on Okinawa," or "somewhere in France."<sup>82</sup>

In the main, however, the end of war brought relief and the sort of fearlessness grounded in faith that Foy envisioned. Many happy reunions were played out as alumnae found their way back to campus and those in war zones returned to the United States. Sister David Marie and Sister Joseph Marie, two Sisters of the Maryknoll Order and members of the Class of '27, were stationed at schools in the Philippines and Hong Kong before the war and returned safely after being interned by the Japanese, Sister David Marie having been freed by attacking paratroopers.<sup>83</sup> Gordan Guilfoyle came back from the Army to drive the Mount bus for another 10 years, and after a two-year absence, Sgt. Ernest Willner returned to the Mount's language department in the fall of 1945 as Prof. Willner.<sup>84</sup>

More important, the demands of war—its urgent challenges coupled with immense opportunities—accelerated realization of the Mount's mission in much the same way as the trimester system accelerated students' progress toward graduation. The Mount empowered women, as the mission stated, to take their rightful places "in the social, the business, and the religious world" in unexpectedly diverse ways, and it proved nimble enough to adapt as notions of that "rightful place" also began to evolve rapidly during the war and postwar years. Like the many students and fellow alumnae included here, Rosemary Jacobs, Class of '34, saw the future and described it audaciously in 1942 when, working in the War Production Board offices in Washington, DC, she observed that women were "entering key positions on the federal, state and municipal levels, and I feel they will have acquired a status there that will not be usurped easily after 'the duration'!"<sup>85</sup> And so they have in the private as well as the public sector during subsequent decades, despite a halting and painfully slow rate of progress. The Mount continued to adjust its curricular and extracurricular programs accordingly, balancing the need

to combat attempts to “usurp” that evolving status by the still-dominant patriarchy with both the later feminist theologies that began to emerge in the 1960s and the conservative principles of Catholic domestic ideology, which still stressed the centrality of a woman’s roles as wife and mother.<sup>86</sup>

The Mount accomplished this in large part by remaining fearless in its commitment to the liberal arts. Despite continued pressure to emphasize technical and scientific subjects after the war, it discontinued the accelerated trimester system and reaffirmed the need for a full-length, broad-based course of study, recognizing that the “post-war program will need college students who have had...four years to develop qualities of leadership, essential in the economic, political, and cultural struggles.”<sup>87</sup> It was feared that neglecting the humanities and social sciences would foster a generation able to meet the technical demands of the future, perhaps, but “lacking vision and ability to promote the kind of social order” that World War II had been fought to promote.<sup>88</sup>

The most enduring effect of World War II on the institution known today as Mount St. Joseph University has been the perpetuation of the charitable and democratic spirit of the Four Freedoms. Continuing the zeal of the war bond drives, Mount students mobilized to collect 1000 canned food items in a single week and 14,000 articles of clothing in the fall of 1945 as part of the Catholic Church’s efforts through its War Relief Services to ease the desperate want of millions of European refugees.<sup>89</sup> That spirit continues today in the Mount’s rich culture of integrating global service and classroom learning. The emphasis on religious freedom has continued to be guided by the inclusive charisma of the Sisters of Charity, the same spirit modeled by Violet Macy in her 1939 *Journal* column attacking anti-Semitism. In the postwar years the Mount began accepting students of all faiths and those of no professed faith—its enrollment expanding to more than 2000 in the process—stressing ecumenicity, diversity, and solidarity in preparing twentieth and twenty-first century students to be of utmost service in an increasingly interconnected world. Similarly, democratizing higher education remains the foundation of the Mount’s defense of free speech, just as it was in 1920 when Mount women were first empowered to speak through a liberal arts education and the vote that came with emancipation. The private college has never excluded students because of race (the 1939 student body included Hispanics from Cuba and Puerto Rico), and it admitted its first African American student in 1951 at the dawn of the modern

civil rights movement, three years before the U.S. Supreme Court's *Brown v. Board of Education* decision prohibiting racial segregation in public schools.<sup>90</sup> It began admitting male students to individual programs in 1969 and became fully co-educational in 1986.<sup>91</sup>

Through its mission and throughout its history, the Mount has worked to advance these freedoms in the conviction that their proliferation can and must prevent future conflicts and negate war's enlarging capacity to destroy humankind. It has done this work boldly, having learned through the sacrifices of World War II and struggles since what an anonymous student observed in 1943: "Peace is won by the sword, but...it is sustained only by justice and charity."<sup>92</sup>

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## Service, Faith, and Race: North Park College During World War II

*John J. Laukaitis*

Less than two months after Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor, the *North Park College News* published a "Special Defense Issue." The pronouncement, "Today, February 4, 1942, marks the beginning of North Park's all-out defense effort," communicated that the college prepared to serve the country.<sup>1</sup> Dr. Algoth Ohlson, president of North Park, wrote, "Our Country is at war...Our country's danger is our danger and we resolutely rise to face this challenge...."<sup>2</sup> The following three and a half years served as testimony to North Park College's commitment to U.S. victory. This commitment, however, came at great effort and cost. Over 100 alumni, students, and faculty entered military service before the end of the first year of the war, and emergency plans and adjustments became commonplace on campus.<sup>3</sup> The tide of those called to the theatres of war left a heavy imprint. Everyday life on the college campus receded as the realities facing the nation ensued. Before the faculty of the 1942–1943 academic year, North Park vice-president J. Fredrick Burgh, shared, "No generation of youth has been confronted with so much uncertainty and doubt as fills the hearts...of the young men and women who will be on our campus this coming week."<sup>4</sup> With the draft age lowered to 18 at the

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end of 1942, the college's enrollment decreased.<sup>5</sup> The weight of the war made the familiar faces of those who entered the armed services seem distant, and the 550 blue and gold stars adorning the three service flags in the chapel served as a penetrating reminder of the absence and sacrifice of so many.<sup>6</sup> By the war's end, 45 alumni and students gave their lives serving their country.<sup>7</sup>

American colleges and universities immediately sought to support the nation during the war. The hard lessons of World War I reminded leaders in higher education that college and universities needed to advocate for their role in a national emergency. Their call was heard. Under the direction of President Franklin D. Roosevelt, the charge given to higher education moved colleges and universities to take action in providing education, research, facilities, and manpower.<sup>8</sup> Across college campuses, the fervent debates on American interventionism grew silent after Pearl Harbor, and colleges and universities unified in support of the nation in time of war.<sup>9</sup> Nearly every aspect of higher education directed itself toward victory. Curricula, enrollment, resources, campus activities, and athletics all underwent transformations to meet new demands placed on academic institutions. Additionally, patriotism pervaded the social dynamics of student life. From the selling of war bonds and stamps to salvage drives and new organizations, students desired to work on behalf of their country's campaign. They also expressed deep gratitude for those in uniform. Services, banquets, and parades honored the men and women called to duty both home and abroad. The import of expressing national feelings of pride affected the entire mood of university and college campuses.<sup>10</sup>

While World War II affected every collegiate institution, the history of higher education centers most of its attention on the large-scale research that led to the atom bomb and other technological advancements in areas such as radar, aeronautics, and medicine. If not on research, the history of higher education examines universities of such size to sponsor massive training programs for the U.S. Army and Navy. Often ignored remains the history of colleges that served the nation, albeit on a much smaller scale, during World War II. Liberal arts colleges scattered across America's landscape, indeed, contributed to the nation's defense and America's overall war effort. Their history during World War II, however, remains limited. Outside of a collection of separate institutional histories—often sweeping in nature—the identities, contributions, and environments of these colleges during the war still exist unexamined.

A fuller history of higher education during the war exceeds that of research universities. Small, private, and often denominational liberal arts colleges underwent great hardships during the war and proportionately made significant contributions.

Positioning North Park College during World War II to the center of this study, I examine three principal areas of focus: service, faith, and race. Intertwined but nonetheless distinct, these areas emerged as a strong pattern in my examination of primary sources and, thereby, structure the organization of my analysis. Service, faith, and race provide a means to narrow the extensive history of North Park during World War II to what essentially came to define the institution's characteristic spirit and mission during the national crisis. I put forward that North Park College placed a significant responsibility on itself to contribute to America's victory and a sustained postwar peace. As a college under the authority of the Evangelical Mission Covenant Church, North Park, I also argue, situated its response to the war within the realm of Christian faith. This response was influenced by the Covenant Church's then current theological frameworks regarding war and the larger discourse on and acceptance of Christian realism within Protestant denominations. Finally, I examine how in an era of racial segregation and racial injustice North Park expressed a devout commitment to racial equality and racial understanding during the war. Using the rhetoric of America's war involvement and expressing its Christian mission toward others, North Park called attention to the realities of racial prejudices in the United States. At the time, such positions on race did not reflect popular opinion and ultimately demonstrated North Park's steadfast convictions and actions supporting racial minorities and confronting racial prejudices.

## SERVICE

Of medium build with wire-rim spectacles, Harald W. Jacobson earned his doctorate at the University of Chicago before accepting a position as instructor of social science at North Park College in 1939. He taught an assortment of courses including sociology, history, economics, and American government and sponsored *Politico*, a club focusing on national and international issues of the day.<sup>11</sup> Two years into his career, Jacobson learned that he received an initial deferment from the draft. He, however, chose to enlist in the Navy in February 1942. When asked why he made such a choice, he replied, "I could hardly

teach Government and then step out on the Government myself, could I?"<sup>12</sup> Men such as Jacobson, educated and adept, held great value for the county upon its entrance into the war. They possessed specializations, in particular, and qualities for leadership, in general.<sup>13</sup> Jacobson entered intelligence work and studied Japanese and Chinese, attaining the rank of lieutenant and serving as Assistant Naval Attaché in Chongqing, China. At the close of the war, the Navy named Lieutenant Commander Jacobson the Chief Analyst of Asiatic Affairs.<sup>14</sup> The path put before Jacobson never led him back to teaching at North Park. Instead, he joined the U.S. State Department, ultimately becoming the director of the Office of Asian Communist Affairs.<sup>15</sup>

Service during World War II took many forms at North Park. For many faculty and students, it meant entering military service, such as it did for Harald Jacobson. For others, it reached across a wide continuum of efforts. Participating in the College Defense Committee, restructuring curricula, sponsoring war bond and stamp drives, volunteering for the Red Cross, conserving resources, singing at Navy Pier, honoring servicemen, and organizing postwar conferences, for instance, established ways for those not directly fighting the war to contribute to the overall cause. Service to country infused every part of campus life, and the North Park community saw its hand as a vital force of support.

The military represented the highest form of service for North Park. The Selective Training and Service Act of 1940 informed the nation that the possibility of war appeared almost inevitable. With the ages for the draft set at 21–36, most young men at North Park did not register with local draft boards.<sup>16</sup> The two-year liberal arts college mainly enrolled students under the age of 21. Furthermore, college men, even if drafted, could complete the 1940–1941 academic year until July 1.<sup>17</sup> Given these facts, the draft remained in the background of collegiate life during the 1940–1941 academic year. The *North Park College News* of October 2, 1940 reported the announcement of college deferment as uplifting news and indicated that the chances of “being called in the first draft are one in twenty-six.”<sup>18</sup> Concern with the draft began, however, as the 1941–1942 academic year approached. That a number of faculties received their draft classifications made the somewhat removed reality of war seem an actuality in hearts and minds of students and faculty.<sup>19</sup> Witnessing the departure of a number of faculties left the campus community with a growing sense of uncertainty. One year into his career as instructor of English and Norwegian, Hedin Bronner received his draft

notice and reported to the U.S. Army before the 1941–1942 academic year.<sup>20</sup> While the draft affected few at North Park in 1941, the declarations of war on Japan, Germany, and Italy in December of that year meant a significant shift in the numbers of North Park faculty and students serving in the armed services.

North Park watched as its first faculty member enlisted with the announcement of war. Mr. Edgar Borup, instructor of violin, joined the U.S. Navy in January 1942. Leaving the School of Music for the Great Lakes Naval Training Center and ultimately the South Pacific, Borup gathered with students and colleagues who honored him with farewell receptions.<sup>21</sup> The U.S. Navy also found Harald W. Jacobson, Vernoy Reihmer, and George Olson joining its ranks from February through March.<sup>22</sup> Also, in March 1942, Clifford Erickson and Anders Bengston entered the U.S. Army. Both men pursued meteorology, an in demand area for the U.S. Army Air Corps.<sup>23</sup> The subject areas of those who joined the armed services covered the disciplinary spectrum: music, the social sciences, botany, physical education, geology, and mathematics.<sup>24</sup> A sense of pride came through when the *North Park College News* ran a photograph of the “Fighting Faculty” to pay tribute to these men serving the country in time of war.<sup>25</sup> With the scope of their presence and influence on the campus, their departure could not have gone unnoticed by students. The mass departure certainly presented many challenges to the college.

President Algoth Ohlson knew that the departure of faculty for military service added a burden to the administration, but he humbly expressed more of a concern for the professors who showed kindness and generosity during the tumultuous time. The *esprit de corps*, as Ohlson described it, demonstrated itself across the campus. He expressed his gratitude that collegiality remained high despite the challenges.<sup>26</sup> The loss of faculty meant many makeshift adjustments throughout the semester. Vacancies arose, and professors added overloads to fill positions.<sup>27</sup> Attempts to obtain deferment consideration for professors in high-need subject areas such as mathematics and physics proved difficult.<sup>28</sup> The armed services needed learned men. A total of 11 faculty left North Park for military service by summer 1942. While new faculty came to North Park for the 1942–1943 academic year, the United States continued to call more to serve.<sup>29</sup>

Across the country, colleges and universities faced difficult circumstances as faculty left for duty. Common approaches to vacancies included

increasing class sizes and teaching loads of current faculty. In a national emergency, few complaints expressed themselves in this regard, as the patriotic fervor would make such expressions a sign of disloyalty. The hiring of women in heretofore male-dominated fields, employing retirees, allowing faculty to teach in their minor subject areas, and withholding sabbaticals all functioned to alleviate the consequences of teacher shortages.<sup>30</sup> Some colleges and universities encouraged faculty to teach in subject areas relatively unknown to them. Knox College in Galesburg, Illinois, for instance, staffed physics courses with faculty who met routinely to learn the subject themselves.<sup>31</sup> Draft and enlistment caused hardships across campuses, as faculty entered the military. The hardships of losing students, however, only just began. Student enrollment remained steady at the beginning of the war, and liberal arts colleges did not experience dramatic drops in enrollment in 1942. Initial decreases stayed in line with normal fluctuations that occurred year to year.<sup>32</sup> The lowering of the draft age to 18 in November 1942 marked the beginning of many colleges and universities seeing large numbers of students leave for the armed services.

North Park foresaw the possibility of the U.S. lowering the draft age to 18 immediately upon the declaration of war. For a small, tuition-driven college, the potential for a dire financial crisis because of a decrease in enrollment left a degree of insecurity. For North Park, its high school academy provided stable revenue, and the choice to increase its enrollment to offset the potential losses to its junior college's enrollment fulfilled part the institution's strategy.<sup>33</sup> In January 1943, President Ohlson wrote, "We are not sure what the draft will do to North Park College during the next semester. Thus far we have had an unusually good year with the largest enrollment in the history of the school."<sup>34</sup> Spring 1943, however, enrolled about 85 fewer students than the previous semester. The number of students entering the armed services in the fall reached approximately 30. In addition to increasing the high school academy enrollment, North Park also sought to recruit more young women from the Evangelical Covenant Church. From the 1941–1942 academic year to the 1942–1943 academic year, the junior college enrollment decreased from 1142 to 1125 while the high school academy enrollment increased from 595 to 646. North Park's combined enrollment increased 2%.<sup>35</sup> During the years 1940–1943, liberal arts colleges did not fare well losing 21% of their student body.<sup>36</sup> The high school academy and denominational recruitment enabled North Park to avert the types of crises other liberal arts colleges faced.

Even prior to change in the draft age, North Park prepared its young men for the armed services. In February 1942, President Ohlson presented the option of hosting the new Navy V-1 training program.<sup>37</sup> Under the V-1 program, freshmen and sophomores ages 17–19 could enlist in the Naval Reserves, pursue their college education, and ultimately qualify for the V-5 aviation cadets program, V-7 midshipmen program, or V-12 specialized officers program. Students needed to enlist and finance their own education, but the V-1 program allowed them to transfer after three semesters to colleges or universities with V-5, V-7, or V-12 programs and eventually earn commissions.<sup>38</sup> North Park’s administrative council and board of directors approved the plans for the V-1 program in March 1942.<sup>39</sup> The division of science and mathematics put forward curricula for the V-1 program, and the U.S. Navy approved it prior to the end of the academic term.<sup>40</sup> Five courses of study received sanction: pre-engineering, pre-commerce, pre-journalism, pre-law, and general liberal arts. Each course in this offering required one year of mathematics and one year of physics.<sup>41</sup> These two required areas, according to President Algoth Ohlson, represented the most important part of the academic program for the U.S. Navy.<sup>42</sup>

The V-1 program attracted many young men, and North Park took a great deal of pride in its new recruits. Approximately 50 students enlisted in the 1942–1943 academic year.<sup>43</sup> Led by physical education professor Wilbur “Bibbs” Anderson, the V-1 program quickly transitioned the North Park gymnasium and empty pool to training grounds. Camaraderie and a strong sense of purpose characterized the group as they prepared for military service.<sup>44</sup> The V-1 class achieved revered status on the campus. Prominent pages of the North Park newspaper and yearbook celebrated the fact that the institution contributed to the preparation of servicemen. The headings “The Navy V-1 Boys Show Fight,” “North Park Plays Vital Role in War Program,” and “North Park Sends Stalwart Sons to Nation’s Service” expressed a deep dignity for those so personally willing to sacrifice during time of war.<sup>45</sup> For a campus, these expressions communicated an overall feeling of service. North Park stood distant from the fronts of war, but its own young men volunteered to go to them.

By summer 1943, many of those enlisted in the V-1 program reported for active duty at Northwestern University and Central Michigan College for further training. Among them, Paul M. Lund, former editor of the *North Park College News* and son of Nils W. Lund, dean of the



seminary, joined a V-12 unit at Central Michigan College. “Fighting for one’s country becomes more than a duty,” he wrote, “It is an honor.”<sup>46</sup> Lund served as Gunnery Officer on the minesweeper *USS Strength* in the South Pacific during the war.<sup>47</sup> Zenos Hawkinson, another student in the V-1 program, left North Park for Central Michigan College in 1943 and for Plattsburg, New York in 1944.<sup>48</sup> Son of Professor Eric Hawkinson of the seminary, Zenos served as lieutenant aboard the attack transport *USS Darke*, a ship that carried soldiers to some of the most notorious battles in the history of the war including Iwo Jima and Okinawa.<sup>49</sup> That the *USS Darke* carried men not only to the shores of battle but also transitioned into an emergency hospital and transporter of the dead speaks to the horrors of war that men like Zenos Hawkinson witnessed.<sup>50</sup>

Similar in design to the Naval Reserve V-1 program, the U.S. Army Enlisted Reserve Corps (ERC) attracted young men at North Park who sought to serve their country after graduation. Students enlisting in the ERC numbered 49 by the close of the 1942–1943 academic year.<sup>51</sup> Where the core of the V-1 curriculum concentrated on mathematics and physics, the ERC’s curriculum was less restrictive. Students, for instance, without a penchant for mathematics or science could progress successfully through the ERC curriculum. The lure of the ERC rested on initially deferring active service and eventually becoming a noncommissioned officer.<sup>52</sup> Reservists, however, could be called to active duty at any time and as the war escalated the U.S. Army did exactly that. In March and April 1943, the Army ordered a considerable number of enlistees to military training camps across the country.<sup>53</sup> On March 27, 1943, 40 of the 47 young men in the ERC at North Park reported to Fort Custer, Michigan for active duty.<sup>54</sup> Their sudden departure caused a wide range of emotions. The campus felt unsettled as pride mixed with sadness.<sup>55</sup>

The 1943 North Park yearbook, *Cupola*, honored the ERC men who left for service. “These men,” the *Cupola* staff wrote, “have raised their hands in an oath to defend that which they love, with their very lives... for this allegiance, and for their devotion to high ideals and freedom of man, we who yet remain at home are indebted.”<sup>56</sup> North Park already felt proud of the men whose courage and service brought back news from the theatres of war. North Park’s first war hero, Captain Arthur Wermuth received the moniker the “one-man army of Bataan” for his 116 confirmed kills fighting the Japanese in the Philippines.<sup>57</sup> His service earned him a celebrity status around the world and particularly

at North Park. A 1934 graduate and the captain of the football team, Wermuth signified North Park's contributions to the war abroad and "the spirit present in every true North Parker, civilian or service man."<sup>58</sup> The campus followed the status of the soldier with the Silver Star, Distinguished Service Cross, and Purple Heart with intensity after his capture in 1942.<sup>59</sup> A major celebration of his eventual return to North Park reached across campus on November 8, 1945. There, students circled the flagpole and cheered for Captain Wermuth when he arrived and applauded him throughout his talk in the gymnasium.<sup>60</sup>

The North Park heroes of World War II included more than Wermuth. The campus hosted an assembly on July 26, 1943 for Major George W. Sutcliffe, class of 1938, who shot down a German Messerschmitt 109 over Tunisia and served in other successful mission throughout Europe.<sup>61</sup> The Purple Heart, Distinguished Flying Cross, and Air Medal recipient received a warm and deserved welcome at North Park while on leave in 1944.<sup>62</sup> Also part of this distinguished group, Captain John Alfons, class of 1932 and football team captain, flew evacuation planes for the South Pacific Combat Air Transport Command and Captain Irving Colburn, class of 1937, flew a U.S. Army bomber and sank an enemy submarine near France.<sup>63</sup>

The courageous accounts of North Park students fighting in the war brought with them a sense of confidence that the college made great sacrifices for a U.S. victory. When the *North Park College News* wished the ERC men well as they reported for duty, it shared, "Just a few days ago, forty more students left North Park to enter active duty at Fort Custer... We're also confident that they will not only uphold, but add to the meritorious [*sic*] tradition built by men like Wermuth, Sutcliffe, Colburn, and Alfons."<sup>64</sup> Like Captain Alfons and Captain Colburn who later died in service, a number of the North Park ERC men never returned home.<sup>65</sup> Army Private Walter McGaw, class of 1943 and star basketball player, lost his life in Germany on November 19, 1944, and Army Technician Fifth Grade Rolland Gustafson, lost his life in France on December 9, 1944.<sup>66</sup> News of North Park servicemen losing their lives evoked grief but also intensified support for the country's aims and reverence for those serving.<sup>67</sup> President Ohlson, in his letters to Gold Star families, conveyed that the sacrifices made were not made in vain.<sup>68</sup>

In addition to the emotions associated with North Park students leaving for active duty, the administering of a college in a time of service presented significant challenges. Between fall 1942 and summer

1943, over 100 North Park students left for active duty.<sup>69</sup> In fall 1943, President Ohlson wrote, “These are difficult days for North Park College. The enrollment on the college level dropped 153 this fall in comparison with last year. This means a loss of approximately \$24,000 for the year in tuition income.”<sup>70</sup> The registrar reported a 28.6% loss in college enrollment compared to the previous year with an 11% increase in the high school academy.<sup>71</sup> Furthering this loss of income, North Park refunded tuition to students who enlisted and could not complete a given semester.<sup>72</sup> This represented a \$3000 loss because of the number of ERC students who left in spring 1943.<sup>73</sup> The net enrollment for day, evening, and summer sessions for the junior college decreased from 1125 to 892 from the 1942–1943 academic year to the 1943–1944 academic year. The saving force came by way of enrollment in the high school academy. Between the 1942–1943 academic year to the 1943–1944 academic year, the enrollment of the academy increased from 646 to 864.<sup>74</sup> The strategic plan to increase revenue from academy enrollment proved a pragmatic way to maintain financial stability.

Young men leaving North Park for service created another issue, namely, a gender imbalance on campus. This imbalance became even more striking with North Park’s efforts to recruit Covenant women. President Ohlson wrote, “But from now on we are looking for a decrease in enrollment because of the fact that all the men on the college level will be in the armed forces. So North Park from now on for the duration will be very much of a girls’ college.”<sup>75</sup> Young women from the Covenant, most of whom came from outside Chicago, led to a housing crisis. The traditional women’s dorm, Caroline Hall, did not have space for 25 women for the 1942–1943 academic year.<sup>76</sup> By the 1943–1944 academic year, the administration transitioned three-fourths of the men’s dormitories to women’s.<sup>77</sup> North Park cancelled football for fall 1943 and only put together a team of 17 for one game in fall 1944. Along with football, the chapel choir disbanded because of the lack of men, and the women’s glee club took its place.<sup>78</sup> “Women, women everywhere, and scarcely a man in sight,” the North Park year-book declared.<sup>79</sup> Around the United States, the gender shift in colleges and universities showed a similar trend. Blackburn College in Carlinville, Illinois, for instance, enrolled approximately 170 young men in 1940. By 1944, the number dropped to 17.<sup>80</sup> At coeducational institutions, the enrollment of women saved colleges and universities from closing their doors.

Along with the exodus of young men for service, North Park lost a key administrator and more faculty as the war progressed. In May 1943, Walter J. Moberg, dean of the junior college and registrar, left for the U.S. Navy.<sup>81</sup> President Ohlson wrote a successful deferment request in 1942 explaining the hardship the loss would mean to the college. His second deferment request failed to achieve the same results. Moberg's absence came as a serious difficulty, especially since he oversaw military enlistment programs.<sup>82</sup> Professor of music Oscar E. Olson received the appointment as acting registrar. Moberg's responsibilities as dean of the junior college went to the president's office, and Dr. Peter Person, dean of students, took on the work of military programs.<sup>83</sup> By summer 1943, nine faculty left North Park with the majority of them leaving for the armed services.<sup>84</sup> In explaining the conditions to the Evangelical Mission Covenant Church, President Ohlson wrote, "The matter of maintaining an efficient faculty, an adequate enrollment, sufficient income, all become much more difficult to achieve when the nation is at war."<sup>85</sup> Indeed, the war, only halfway through its duration, created overwhelming challenges for the college.

Two years after the bombing of Pearl Harbor, Dr. Peter Pearson delivered a message to the North Park students. "The peaceful campus of North Park," he wrote, "has not escaped the ravages of war...The ever increasing number of stars on the school's service flag bears a silent testimony to the effects of war." During World War II, the final 14 months were the deadliest for the United States.<sup>86</sup> By the 1943–1944 academic year, North Park reported 12 deaths of alumni and students. At the end of the war in August 1945, the number totaled 45. The *North Park College News* increasingly informed the campus of alumni and students missing in action or killed. On September 29, 1943, the newspaper's first issue of the year notified readers that 19-year-old former student named Judson Richter died in a plane crash.<sup>87</sup> In November, the U.S. Navy reported Robert Horn, class of 1942, missing.<sup>88</sup> "We remember there's a war on," the *North Park College News* read, "Those three star-filled service flags in the chapel are constant reminders..."<sup>89</sup> More news of North Park alumni and students imprisoned, missing, and killed in service continued to come.<sup>90</sup> The heartfelt sorrow enveloped the campus. On learning of the death of Navy Air Cadet Donald Lindquist, the *North Park College News* reported, "Don leaves, besides his parents, his North Park sweetheart...North Park is stunned by the news of the tragedy."<sup>91</sup> Most months in the 1944–1945 academic year and to the conclusion of

the war saw two to three North Park alumni and students killed in service. As young as 18, they died fighting aboard ships such as the *USS Indianapolis* and on battlefields such as Iwo Jima.<sup>92</sup>

Throughout the war, the men of North Park valiantly served the nation's military efforts abroad. The United States, however, also relied on those at home to ensure victory. Service assumed a comprehensive spirit for the men and women at North Park, and their service contributed to the overall war effort. Historians who sometimes refer to World War II as "the good war" do so not because, in actuality, the war seemed removed from the sickening horrors of battle but rather because the war seemed to unify a country pursuing a common goal. While problems, indeed, exist with emphasizing the unity of a country with racial segregation and the internment of Japanese Americans, the then current mood of home front largely supported U.S. intervention and wanted a U.S. victory after the bombing of Pearl Harbor. Once the deployment of servicemen and women began, patriotism, beneficence, and self-sacrifice represented the mindset of the time. Moving from the national level to North Park College, the spirit of service that characterized a country also characterized a campus.

After the opening prayer of the first general faculty meeting since the bombing of Pearl Harbor, President Ohlson spoke on the importance of loyalty and morale during war. He then informed the faculty gathered of the appointment of a College Defense Committee.<sup>93</sup> By the end of the spring semester, the committee sponsored the sale of defense stamps and war bonds, developed first aid courses, organized a community parade, and prepared for civil defense.<sup>94</sup> Two primary areas framed the purpose of the committee headed by Albin Erickson, professor of chemistry, in the 1942–1943 academic year: civil defense and morale building. To the first, the committee administered air raid procedures and secured the necessary fire equipment. To the second, the committee promoted defense stamps and war bond sales and planned assemblies and speakers.<sup>95</sup> Concern over Chicago's safety in the event of an air attack lasted until mid-1943. Prior to that, however, the threat seemed plausible for a nation at war.<sup>96</sup> Students joked about the air raid drills and the *North Park College News* ran spoofs of what to do in the event.<sup>97</sup> The committee, however, took this work seriously. School engineer Carl Wistrom trained to become an air raid warden. Instructions to all faculty provided rules and procedures for every building on campus, and the community practiced drills.<sup>98</sup> Discussions on the possibility of the enemy pilots spotting the lights of the Cupola even took place.<sup>99</sup>

Defense stamps and war bonds enabled students to help finance the war, and advertisements throughout the *North Park College News* informed students that buying defense stamps and war bonds saved American lives. The College Defense Committee facilitated sales. By spring semester 1943, North Park sold \$2400 in defense stamps and \$6000 in war bonds.<sup>100</sup> At a time when North Park's tuition and board for one year totaled \$511, the raising of these sums expressed a sincere effort.<sup>101</sup> North Park encouraged young men to buy defense stamps for their dates instead of flowers. Each school day, students could purchase defense stamps in Old Main. As soon as \$18.75 in stamps accrued, a student could exchange them for a war bond.<sup>102</sup> Listing the number of stamps equivalent to a parachute, clip of bullets, and aviation first aid kit, for example, connected the purchase to war-related supplies.<sup>103</sup> The student-led College Victory Council sold stamps and bonds at gatherings and assemblies.<sup>104</sup> The image of the service flag, symbolizing those in the armed forces and those who paid the ultimate price, became another approach for stamp and bond sales.<sup>105</sup> One student shared, "Buying bonds is something we can do."<sup>106</sup> Though not fighting in the war directly, students could fight indirectly through stamps and bonds; it provided students with a sense of empowerment and service.

As part of the College Defense Committee, North Park's morale warden oversaw the college's Victory Speakers Corps. Professor of speech, Dr. P. Merville Larson invited speakers to campus to garner support for the war and deliver victory messages. He also sponsored North Park students to participate in the national Victory Speakers Contest with the head of the speech department, Professor Margaret Peterson.<sup>107</sup> The charge of morale wardens across the country included shaping public opinion on the war and reporting information on rumor and propaganda that could limit support.<sup>108</sup> Whether sponsored by the College Defense Committee or by other college organizations, North Park brought an impressive number of speakers to campus to address students, faculty, and the community on the war situation, humanitarian causes, and world peace. While by no means an exhaustive list, some of the speakers included "The Angel of Siberia" Elsa Brändström, Dr. Wilhelm Solzbacher, Sherwood Eddy, Lieutenant General Sir William Dobbie, and Dr. T.Z. Koo.<sup>109</sup> The Victory Speakers Corps also did its part with freshman Robert Lemon taking third place in the National Victory Speakers contest with his speech "Living Democracy."<sup>110</sup> Invigorating the morale of audiences and articulating

paths to a just world, the speakers nourished a campus community with American ideals and visions of a better future.

At the end of the 1942–1943 academic year, a proposal for a major conference on campus indicated that the institution viewed its role in promoting a durable peace as critical to its function as a Christian liberal arts college. Service meant more than sending young men to war, selling defense stamps and war bonds, and hosting speakers; it also meant engaging the entire campus in recognizing its part in improving a world after war. At the same time the College Defense Committee distributed air raid procedures, the Division of Social Sciences discussed the potential benefit of the all-school conference.<sup>111</sup> The three-page plan for the “North Park All-School Conference on America’s Role in the Post-War World” circulated to faculty on September 22, 1943. Approval for the initial plans set it in motion, and the steering committee consisting of administrators, faculty and students put the plans to action.<sup>112</sup> The *North Park College News* announced, “Classes to Be Suspended for Two Days as School Turns to Problems of a Lasting Post-War Peace.” From Thursday evening, November 11 to Saturday afternoon, November 13, 1943, invited speakers addressed the campus followed by group discussions. Norman Thomas, a Presbyterian minister and Socialist leader, opened the conference with a talk titled “After the War, What?” Other speakers included William D. Clark of the British Information Services, Carleton Smith of the Defense Supplies Corporation, and Donald Frisk of the Princeton Covenant Church of Illinois.<sup>113</sup>

Led by President Algoth Ohlson, Professor C. Dewitt Norton, and student chairman Burton Nelson, the conference brought positive reviews. Over 50 North Park faculty and students worked together on ensuring the conference met its aims, and their service proved valuable. Of perhaps of greatest importance in the outcomes of the conference, the final plenary session produced seven resolutions based on the conference discussions, and these resolutions helped frame North Park’s goals for a postwar world. Concisely summarized here, the conference resolved that (1) a post-war world requires an intergovernmental organization; (2) defeated nations deserve support; (3) world harmony requires racial equality; (4) international justice requires enforcement; (5) freedom applies to all races; (6) peace requires universal education; and (7) peace requires the work of the Church.<sup>114</sup> Postwar conferences and student forums on postwar planning continued throughout the duration of the national crisis. Republican congressman and former missionary,

Dr. Walter H. Judd presented a talk titled “Religion for Modern Youth” at the 1944 postwar conference.<sup>115</sup> The college community believed that justice and peace needed advocates and a blueprint in time of war. That the endeavor of envisioning a post-war world relied heavily on student participation illustrated North Park’s conviction that the next generation, informed by Christian principles and the liberal arts, could help lay the groundwork for a sustained peace.

North Park showed that service during time of war reached far and wide. Faculty developed and taught war-related courses on topographical surveying, map interpretation, meteorology, and international relations.<sup>116</sup> Singing for Sunday services at Navy Pier and Fort Sheridan, the North Park choir and glee club brought their voices to the armed services in worship.<sup>117</sup> Students rationed and conserved food, clothes, and supplies.<sup>118</sup> A Red Cross unit formed on campus and served at the Great Lakes Naval Hospital.<sup>119</sup> From 1941 to 1945 wartime called all at North Park to serve the nation through time, talent, and treasure at home. Its participation exemplified a wholehearted effort to ensure a U.S. victory, increase morale, and plan for a lasting peace. Five years after the bombing of Pearl Harbor and the declaration of war, President Ohlson and Vice President Burgh chose the campus war memorial site for the fallen alumni and students who never returned. The graduating class of 1947 funded a bronze plaque cast with each serviceman’s name and the words “Dedicated to the Memory of Alumni and Students of North Park Who Gave Their Lives in the Service of Their Country During World War II.” After a Sunday chapel service on homecoming weekend 1947, North Park dedicated the war memorial honoring the sacrifice that 45 men made.<sup>120</sup>

## FAITH

At the age of 25, Karl A. Olsson taught his first class at North Park College in 1938. An alumnus of both North Park’s junior college and seminary, class of 1933 and 1936, respectively, Olsson continued his education at the University of Chicago, earning his master’s degree in literature, before returning to his alma mater as an English instructor.<sup>121</sup> On his acceptance of the position, Olsson wrote to President Algoth Ohlson, “A teaching career at the school has always seemed to me an unprecedented opportunity for service within our denomination.”<sup>122</sup> In addition to teaching English in the junior college, Olsson also taught



homiletics and served as assistant dean of religious activities.<sup>123</sup> President Ohlson referred to him as “an exceptionally gifted individual” and “one of very best teachers.”<sup>124</sup> Four years into his academic career, Olsson enlisted in the U.S. Army as a chaplain. Faculty and friends gathered on September 23, 1942 to wish him farewell. Olsson headed for Harvard University for training to serve during the war.<sup>125</sup>

Like many of Christian faith, Olsson faced reconciling the war with his own religious beliefs. The work of theologian Dr. Reinhold Niebuhr influenced Olsson’s own views before he enlisted. In his correspondence with Niebuhr in 1940, he wrote, “To my friends and students I am an avowed Niebuhr disciple. I wish it were possible for you to sense how helpful your interpretations have been to me personally and to many of my colleagues.”<sup>126</sup> Niebuhr’s theology embodied a Christian realism, a Christian pragmatism, wrestling with the tensions between love and justice.<sup>127</sup> The equilibrium (or compromise) that Niebuhr established through his theology fell between pacifism and just-war thinking. For a nation at war with both tyrannical and imperial powers, pacifism failed to recognize that love, in a sinful world, is, in Niebuhr’s words, an “impossible possibility.” For a nation influenced by the Christian message, just-war thinking failed as well, for it failed to recognize the command of love. The dialectic between love and justice characterized Niebuhr’s position that supported war in the pursuit of peace and peace that recognized the inevitability of fighting injustice.<sup>128</sup> For Niebuhr, who witnessed Hitler’s effects on Europe directly, the threat to humanity necessitated American intervention.<sup>129</sup>

In correspondence with Niebuhr during the war, Olsson agreed that Christian pacifists did not realize the ultimate threat America faced. He shared Niebuhr’s opposition to Rev. Charles Clayton Morrison’s pacifism that filled *The Christian Century* magazine. Of particular offense to Olsson was Morrison’s reply to Niebuhr’s critique of *The Christian and the War* in the December 30, 1942 issue of *The Christian Century*. In it, Morrison argued the absolute immorality of the war devoid of any semblance of justice.<sup>130</sup> To Niebuhr, Olsson wrote, “And when our ‘boys’ come to the chapels, it is not enough to tell them that they are unclean and that they live among people of unclean lips or that what they are doing is necessary but amoral. We must in some way convey to them that we are doing ‘the right as God gives us to see the right.’”<sup>131</sup> Using Niebuhr’s own quoting of President Lincoln’s second inaugural address, “the right as God gives us to see the right,” from *Christianity and Crisis*,

Olsson made it clear that for him—like Niebuhr—a moral dimension to the war, indeed, existed.<sup>132</sup>

This moral dimension rested upon the dialectic tension between love and justice and the informing power of each ideal upon the other. Christian realism argued that the absolute ideal of love is not fully realizable in a sinful world and that justice, informed by the ideal of love, can substantiate worldly acts of conflict in critical moments. “The chaplain has to believe,” Olsson wrote in *Christianity and Crisis*, “that he, as well as his men are engaged in a necessary and just struggle; that there are no honorable alternatives left for the nation; that although war is never holy and good in an ultimate sense, it does represent in historical crisis, such as the present one, the closest approximation of the good of peoples.”<sup>133</sup> In forming his position on the chaplain’s role during war, Olsson articulated one of the general frameworks supporting the Christian response to the national crisis.

Olsson, himself, served courageously during the war. Along the Siegfried Line in Germany, he saved the lives of soldiers in the 11th Armored Division by leading a rescue team on two trips through a minefield to carry back wounded. The young chaplain received both the Bronze Star Medal for heroic achievement and the Silver Star Medal for gallantry in action.<sup>134</sup> He returned from the war in 1945, completed his Ph.D. at the University of Chicago in literature in 1948, and joined the faculty of North Park teaching English and homiletics in the same year. With the start of the Korean War, Olsson resumed his position as chaplain in U.S. Army from 1950 to 1952. Once again, he returned to North Park teaching for seven years before his inauguration as president of the college, a post he held until his resignation in 1970.<sup>135</sup>

As a young instructor and U.S. Army chaplain, Olsson did not directly influence North Park’s position on faith and war. His own framing of the moral imperative of the war through the influence of Christian realism, however, sheds light on North Park’s overall response. Christian realism provides a theological lens to understand how a Christian college could find a middle position between pacifism on one end of the continuum and just war thinking on the other, how participation in the war effort could simultaneously occur with a desire of peace, how the will for victory could coexist with compassion for the enemy, and how pride in soldiers and sailors could exist at the same time with an understanding of conscientious objectors. The underpinnings of these disparate positions give testimony to the distinct Christian character and community at North Park during the war.

For the Evangelical Mission Covenant Church of America, the world at war made its way into the consciousness of the denomination much earlier than the attack on Pearl Harbor brought the war to American soil. In 1936, Covenant missionaries in China who had already experienced political unrest now observed the rise of Japanese aggression throughout the country.<sup>136</sup> Grave concerns about those serving the church in China only escalated with the Second Sino-Japanese War in 1937, and the missionaries found themselves in ever-threatening conditions.<sup>137</sup> An onslaught of Japanese bombings forced missionaries from their churches and stations, with nowhere to return after the devastation.<sup>138</sup> President of the Covenant, Theodore W. Anderson, wrote in 1939, "In China the ravages of war have reached our field with disastrous results as far as our stations are concerned."<sup>139</sup> By 1940, the Japanese occupied some missionary districts and properties.<sup>140</sup> Besides China, the Covenant Church also recognized the mounting threat to missionaries serving in Africa where limits on transportation and supplies occurred as the war spread.<sup>141</sup> For a church existent on continents across the world, the Covenant called for peace in a swelling tide of war.

An official position against war in the mid-1930s did not occur without some debate. The resolution put forward in 1936 never made it to a vote, but the Covenant Church did approve a resolution in 1937 stating it did not "bless, support, or sanction war" as a denomination except to "resist invasion or quell civil disturbances."<sup>142</sup> The attack on Pearl Harbor moved the Covenant to understand the war as a resistance to invasion. In 1942, a resolution stated "Whereas, our beloved nation has...been treacherously and savagely attacked and is now engaged in a great struggle for maintaining freedom and the freedoms of other people now subjugated by a totalitarian tyranny...[be it, therefore, resolved] that the Evangelical Mission Covenant Church of America uphold in prayer our President and his advisors that they may be Divinely led in their efforts to bring the present conflict to a victory that shall make for enduring peace."<sup>143</sup> Decided about the America's justification to enter the war, the Covenant, however, abhorred what President Theodore Anderson called "the appalling darkness that engulfs mankind."<sup>144</sup>

Pages of the denomination's newspaper, *The Covenant Weekly*, further backed the U.S. declaration of war. Five days after the attack on Pearl Harbor, an article asserted, "Our people, our freedom, our democratic mode of living are threatened, and our nation has risen in

self-defense...It seems to us that our nation can say with Luther: Here we are; we cannot do otherwise, so help us God. The unwarranted attack on our nation has forced us into this situation.”<sup>145</sup> Along the same lines, an article titled “Christian Realism” in the January 16, 1942 issue of *The Covenant Weekly*, stated, “We are not forgetting our hatred of war... But with Theodore Roosevelt we declare: ‘I believe in peace at any price, even at the price of war’...There is only one way to stop them—an imperfect way, but the only way by which they can be stopped.”<sup>146</sup> For the denomination, war stood as a necessary act confronting aggression in a sinful world. The spiritual discernment amidst the world at war balanced the tensions between love and justice and mirrored the larger discourse of Christian realism.

The dynamic tension between love and justice came across in several ways in the Evangelical Covenant Church. At the denomination’s annual conference of June 1942, Theodore W. Anderson spoke of the import of supporting the nearly 1000 U.S. soldiers from Covenant churches who left their homes to fight in the war. In like manner, he also spoke of the import of understanding the six conscientious objectors from Covenant churches who left their homes for Civil Public Service camps.<sup>147</sup> A respect for soldiers serving acknowledged their participation as an act of justice, and the respect for conscientious objectors serving acknowledged their nonparticipation in violence as an act following Christ’s commandment of love. In a similar way, Donald Frisk, then pastor of the Covenant Church in Princeton, Illinois, stated in 1942 that Christians face two enemies: totalitarianism and the effects of war. To the former, Frisk knew that the Axis powers opposed “peace according to God’s will” and compelled resistance for the sake of justice. To the latter, Frisk warned of the consequences of hatred that “obscures that vision of the kingdom of God.”<sup>148</sup> These positions, namely, the defense of liberty against totalitarianism and the resistance of hatred in pursuit of peace revealed the larger framework of the denomination’s response to the war. The middle position, if summarized, emerged as supporting participation in the war without hate for the sake of peace.

The seemingly paradoxical support of both soldier and conscientious objector set the denomination apart from others that too simply justified war and others that too simply justified pacifism as an ultimate solution to the worldly threat. The denomination loathed war but understood its necessity in light of the world crisis. To this, Pastor A. Eldon Palmquist wrote in *The Covenant Quarterly*,

The burden of guilt for this war rests upon the axis powers, and it becomes our terrible necessity to meet their treachery with the only weapon which can defeat them: the weapon of force. We have no alternative and we must use it. If it is true that the axis powers stand against all that we call holy—and we will agree to that—then it must be done within the will of God that these powers be defeated. But does this mean that God places his unreserved approval upon the war? Certainly not. Even our best efforts are tainted with sinfulness. War is our best means of meeting this situation, because it is our only means, yet it falls short of the goodness of God. This war should be to us a powerful reminder that we can but “press on to the work of our high calling in Christ”; we can never completely attain it.<sup>149</sup>

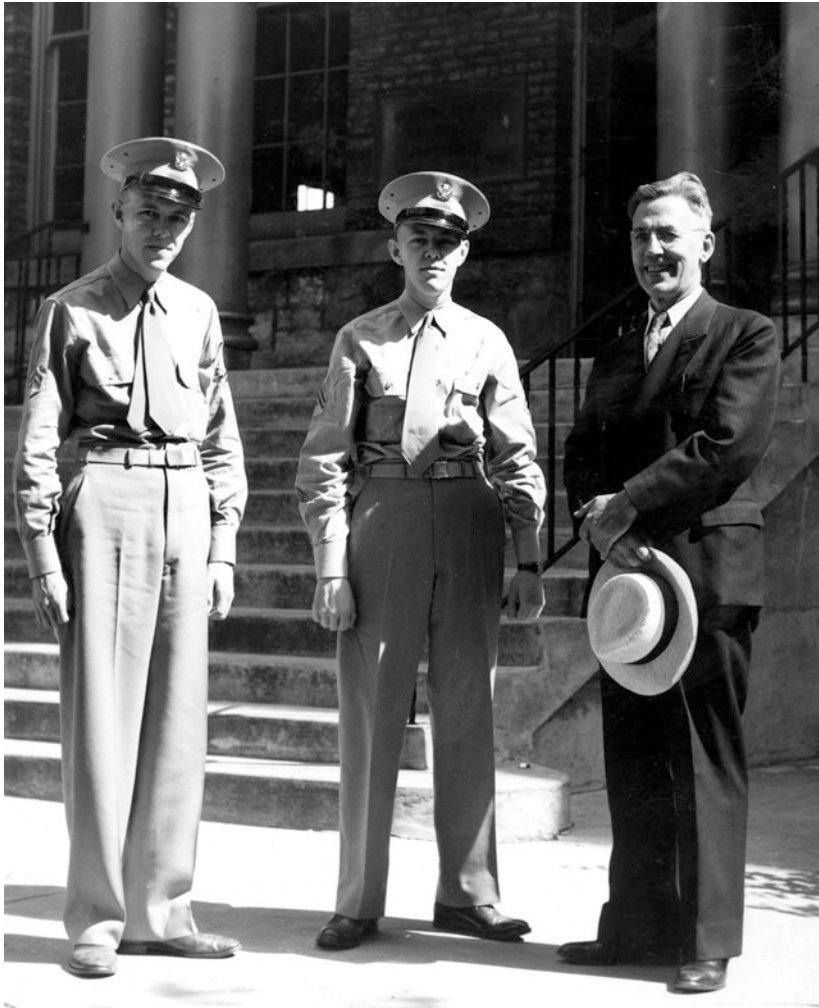
For the Covenant Church, the soldier responded to the threat of God’s will on earth in the only conceivable way, through the worldly justice of war; the conscientious objector responded to Christ’s command to love and answered a heavenly call to serve by not serving through violence or force. This “irresoluble tension between love and justice,” a dualism that embodied Christian realism theology, outlined the response of the Covenant Church throughout the war and influenced North Park College’s response.

The Evangelical Covenant Church influenced North Park’s response to the war, but it did not wholly direct it. In the 1941–1942 *Catalog of North Park College*, a description of the relationship between the two institutions stated, “North Park College is owned and controlled by the Evangelical Mission Covenant Church of America and aims primarily to serve the interests of the denomination and uphold its principles.”<sup>150</sup> A nonsectarian Christian philosophy, however, pervaded the campus, and North Park—with the exception of the theological seminary—approached Christianity in a broad manner.<sup>151</sup> In assessing the religious character of the college to the faculty, Dean of Students Peter D. Person shared, “Different denominations are represented on our faculty. The majority of us are members of the Covenant but we must remember that North Park is first a Christian college and secondly a denominational school.” He further described the diversity of religious backgrounds of students including Catholics, Jews, and Protestants—both liberal and conservative—as well as agnostics and atheists. What made North Park a notable Christian college, according to Person, was a steady Christian influence that practiced religious tolerance.<sup>152</sup> Within this particular Christian environment, a single or defined response to the war did not exist. Rather, perspectives that, on one hand, reflected

the denomination's values and, on the other hand, represented the religious diversity of the college shaped responses. A pattern of perspectives, however, did emerge and, similar to the denominational responses and the larger discourse on Christian realism, supported America's right to defend itself and fight against tyranny with an advocacy of Christian compassion and peace.

December 7, 1941 stood as a turning point for North Park's overall position on interventionism. Early in 1941, North Park president Algoth Ohlson wrote to Senator C. Wayland Brooks and Senator Scott W. Lucas expressing his hope that the United States would avoid participation in the European war.<sup>153</sup> His position reflected that of the denomination's 1937 resolution against war, except to resist invasion or quell civil disturbances. With the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor constituting an invasion and Germany's declaration of war representing an existential threat against the United States, Ohlson sought to promote North Park's loyalties toward American victory.<sup>154</sup> In the *North Park College News*, his message titled "In Defense of Our Country" expressed the need to support the war. "It is therefore a case of all out defense of all that is implied in the beautiful term *Our Country*," he wrote, "This defense on our part should bring forth our very best efforts...We need to be calm and steadfast in our purpose and consider the welfare of our country ahead of our own."<sup>155</sup> In the midst of the world crisis, Ohlson did not solely promote a U.S. victory but also that "the living God channel His power to the building of a world order that will reflect His wisdom and His love" (Fig. 5.1).<sup>156</sup> The purpose of the war, for Ohlson, stood for the pursuit of an ultimate and everlasting peace. Avoiding any semblance of glorification, the "hideous war," in Ohlson's words, was a necessary means for the "assurance for the peace that is to follow."<sup>157</sup>

If the *North Park College News* functioned as one means to communicate student sentiment during the war, it conveyed the principles of justice and love. On the principle of justice, articles supporting the war filled the newspaper from 1941 to 1945. Ten days after Pearl Harbor, freshman Paul M. Lund, editor-in-chief of the newspaper, wrote, "The die was cast and overnight we found a nation unified—one in thought and purpose. We all became *Americans*; not interventionists or non-interventionists, but just plain Americans."<sup>158</sup> Uniting for a just cause echoed the general tenor of the nation and, to the students of North Park, the threats against the United States elicited the rightful response of war. As positioned historically, World War II signified a battle between



**Fig. 5.1** President Algoth Ohlson stands in front of Old Main with GIs (Courtesy of the Covenant Archives and Historical Library)

the ideals of democracy and freedom and the threat of totalitarianism.<sup>159</sup> “The American people,” according to freshman Robert Lemon, “did not want this war nor do we wish to continue it now. We are willing to make this sacrifice of our best material and human resources because in so

doing we feel that we are protecting and perpetuating our national existence along with certain ideals of freedom and equality.”<sup>160</sup> Overall, the attitude that justice, in this particular world crisis, warranted the actions taken against the Axis powers prevailed as a common belief.

The principle of love depended on divorcing justice from hatred. In referring to the national swell of hostility, Paul M. Lund wrote, “Gladly enough we have not gone beserk [*sic*] with a fervid hatred for the Japanese people.”<sup>161</sup> Distinguishing the ideologies of the Axis powers from the people comprising the nation states sustained a necessary tension against the principle of justice. Positions such as “Hitler, Not Germany” shifted the focus to an ideological figure, removed from the people of Germany and Japan.<sup>162</sup> Affirmations in messages such as “Also, we know that we are fighting to block Hitler’s plans for a world order and Hirohito’s bid for supremacy” put the weight of responsibility on the figureheads, a narrow focal point.<sup>163</sup> As a Christian college, North Park kept mindful of the impulse to hate during war. Freshman Nicholas C. Wolf, in emphasizing this point, wrote, “We call ourselves Christians—and what a grand thing it is to say: I am Christian! But does Christianity condone hate and intolerance? Rather, it exalts love and understanding!”<sup>164</sup> In North Park College’s yearbook of 1945, a drawing depicted a dove with an olive branch, a reference to Genesis 8:11, atop a guidepost. Below the directional arrows, a tank and a bomber showed the current state of the world.<sup>165</sup> While a U.S. victory was certainly in the hopes of North Park students, the victory sought by them—and represented in the drawing—pursued peace, love exalted over the burden of a rightful war.

Love further influenced North Park’s understanding of conscientious objectors. The Evangelical Covenant Church did not identify as a historic peace church. Other denominations, namely, the Church of the Brethren, Mennonite, and Friends refused to participate in the war, and their affiliated institutions of higher education adopted pacifist positions and did not sponsor military training programs.<sup>166</sup> Just over 16 million Americans served in the armed services during the war. The status of the conscientious objector, then, represented a small fraction of men with approximately 37,000 receiving the status during the war. For the majority, noncombatant military positions allowed them to serve in an alternative manner. Driving ambulances, transporting supplies, and disposing bombs, for instance, provided necessary wartime service without participation in violence. For those who objected to any type of noncombatant



military role, some 6000 men served prison terms and nearly 12,000 served in Civilian Public Service camps.<sup>167</sup>

Conscientious objectors effected negative responses from American society, especially for those who did not serve in noncombatant military roles. While attitudes compared to those during World War I were more favorable, Americans still largely viewed conscientious objectors as avoiding a necessary duty for the country, and, overall, conscientious objectors met harsh public opinion during the war.<sup>168</sup> In the public's eye, conscientious objection to the war meant cowardice.<sup>169</sup> The public, however, did not recognize that many conscientious objectors, though against taking a life, often put their own in jeopardy for alternative forms of service. During the war, conscientious objectors volunteered for life-threatening experiments, hence proving that their nonviolent position, often based on faith, did not prevent them from serving their country with courage. One such study, now known as the Minnesota Starvation Experiment, took conscientious objector volunteers to better understand the effects of malnutrition in war-torn countries.<sup>170</sup> Those conscientious objectors in the Civilian Public Service camps took on important national work fighting fires, building roads, and protecting natural resources.<sup>171</sup>

The understanding illustrated toward conscientious objectors at North Park reflected the larger understanding within the Evangelical Covenant Church. On the nine conscientious objectors within the church in 1945, President Theodore W. Anderson, wrote, "Four of these are at base camps and five on special projects. The latter include scientific starvation and experimental exposure to serious diseases."<sup>172</sup> His emphasis on their service and hardships contested the public view that conscientious objectors failed to serve their country in time of war. Six months into the war, the *North Park College News* published an article examining the arguments for and against the decision of conscientious objectors. "Nevertheless," one student wrote, "one can admire the courage of the conscientious objector without deserting his country's cause."<sup>173</sup> The use of the word courage to describe the conscientious objector contrasted with the public perception of cowardice, ultimately acknowledging not only their stand during an ethical dilemma but also their answer to serve in alternative, and oftentimes, dangerous ways.

Several of North Park's own professors served the country and world relief efforts as conscientious objectors. Philip E. Liljengren, professor of English, was stationed at a Civilian Public Service camp in Wellston,

Michigan, for three years where he worked with reforestation. Liljengren also volunteered for the Minnesota Starvation Study in 1944.<sup>174</sup> J. William Fredrickson, professor of social science, received his draft status during his first year at the college and prior to U.S. entry into the war. With Fredrickson's classification, North Park president Algoth Ohlson believed that Fredrickson's deferment would last throughout the war based on the draft board's notification.<sup>175</sup> Fredrickson dedicated himself fully to the pursuit of peace while teaching at North Park during the war. He formed the International Relations club, partly funded by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace; led the postwar planning conferences; lectured on peace; and invited speakers to campus.<sup>176</sup> Before the war's end, Fredrickson entered the American Friends Service Committee for rehabilitation work in Europe. Stationed in northern Finland for two years, Fredrickson directed humanitarian relief efforts.<sup>177</sup>

The *North Park College News* reported the work of Liljengren and Fredrickson as essential acts of service. In very similar language used to describe those who entered the armed service, the college's newspaper emphasized their answering the call to serve and how their work did not oppose America's objectives in the war. The article "Mr. Liljengren Leaves Campus" of January 20, 1943, for example, reported, "It should be remembered that Civilian Public Service Camps are not organized to oppose the war. The men attending these camps are in perfect accord with the cause of the United Nations, but do not believe in using force of arms as a means of accomplishing their ends. Civilian work of national importance of non-military nature, is carried on."<sup>178</sup> Articles on Fredrickson centered on his humanitarian cause, the feeding of school children in Finland, and the arctic conditions he encountered. After the conclusion of the war, additional articles reported on how North Park students could aid Fredrickson's relief work.<sup>179</sup> Ultimately, the attitudes toward those who chose to serve in nonviolent ways embodied a respect for their moral decisions against the current of public opinion.

Faith, indeed, influenced North Park's response to the war. The dialectic relationship between justice and love expressed itself through a constant tension between believing the war was a rightful response to the tyrannical threat against the United States and understanding that war revealed the sins of a world distant from Christ's great command, as given in Matthew 22:39, to "Love your neighbor as yourself." The tension ultimately shaped a response that sought justice while restricting hate. "Stand like a wall of steel," Algoth Ohlson wrote in 1944, "against

the destructive passions of hatred, race prejudice and vengeance in this war-torn world. Accept the challenge to build a world order, where the Spirit of the Living God may quicken in you the flow of good will and co-operation even to the most underserving.”<sup>180</sup> Through these words written during the war, Ohlson eloquently voiced the character of a North Park College, one where its understanding of justice pursued peace in the world and its understanding of love removed the transgression of hate.

## RACE

A letter from Ms. Toshiko Kamatsu reached the desk of Algoth Ohlson in November 1942. Interned at the Poston War Relocation Center in Arizona, the young woman asked if North Park College accepted Japanese students. “Your letter is at hand,” Ohlson replied, “and I am glad to say that we are not only willing but glad to accept Japanese students here at North Park College.”<sup>181</sup> Ohlson’s welcoming message spoke to the college’s progressive views on race during the height of racial prejudice against Japanese Americans. In addition to discrimination against Japanese Americans, North Park also defied the cultural norms that restricted speaking adversely of the country in time of war when it came to race relations. After the lynching of two African American teenagers in Clarke County, Mississippi, in 1942, the *North Park College News* editor, sophomore Roy W. Nelson, wrote, “Two negroes had been taken from the hands of the law by a mob and lynched. In the midst of another great war to free the oppressed people of other lands, we allow two American citizens to be hanged from a tree until dead. Then we turn our back to it, when in reality we should be hiding our faces.”<sup>182</sup> The claim of America fighting a war for freedom and democracy contrasted with such heinous acts, and this contrast—the claimed principles against the bitter realities—functioned as means to address the racism prevalent throughout the country. Throughout the war, North Park both modeled racial acceptance and addressed racial prejudices at a time when common views sanctioned non-whites as inferior, home and abroad.

The general mindset in America regarded the Japanese as subhuman, a despised race. Dehumanization of the enemy—a not so uncommon natural consequence of war—ran much deeper in perceptions of the Japanese. For one, the racial hatred directed at the Japanese did

not parallel that towards the Germans and Italians in type or scope. On another level, the denial of citizenship to the issei, Japanese born abroad, and the forced removal and internment of the issei and nisei, American-born children of the issei and citizens of the United States, epitomized America's thought that Japanese Americans represented a racial group not deserving of the same rights given to other immigrants and a racial group incapable of country loyalty.<sup>183</sup> Within this milieu, North Park's hospitable acceptance of Japanese-American students along with its confrontation of racial prejudices directed at Japanese Americans testified to a high level of compassion for others and the pursuit of equality for all, both central to its Christian ideals.

On June 8, 1942, North Park's administrative council met. Algot Ohlson, president of the college, J. Frederick Burgh, vice president of the college, Nils W. Lund, dean of the theological seminary, Walter J. Moberg, dean of the junior college, Peter P. Person, dean of students, and E. Clifford Toren, dean of the School of Music, discussed the matter of admitting Japanese-American students at length. Less than one month from the War Relocation Authority's decision to release Japanese-American students from internment camps, this administrative council meeting affirmed that these students were, indeed, welcome at North Park.<sup>184</sup> Throughout the country, public and private colleges and universities often refused to admit Japanese-American students, including notable institutions such as Princeton and MIT. Others, too, retracted their initial decision after considerable community pressure to do so.<sup>185</sup> The intensity of hatred directed at Japanese Americans left many institutions from wanting to face the repercussions. North Park, however, embraced these students.

Two formerly interned Japanese-Americans enrolled at North Park in fall 1943. Wilson Kumataka and Tadashi Naruse left internment camps in Arizona and Colorado, respectively, having both been originally relocated from California.<sup>186</sup> The first nisei students to arrive at the college from internment camps, they received a warm reception. In one of its feature articles, the *North Park College News* introduced them to the larger campus community. Titled "Boys from the West Coast Like North Park Campus Life," the write-up gave each young man's history and described their initial two months on campus. The lines, "Wilson likes North Park and thinks the people are some of the finest he's ever met, especially the boys at the dorm," "Tad and Wilson...have added many people to their list of good friends and in turn they have been

included on the lists of many North Parkers,” and “They are two more young men of whom North Park can be proud,” really functioned in two ways.<sup>187</sup> First, the lines told of the hospitality of many who already accepted them as friends. Second, they also informed, in an indirect way, that the campus already considered them as essential members of the community. The line, “They are two more young men of whom North Park can be proud,” whether intended or unintended in its function, perhaps invited others to view them from the perspective of those who already knew them, thereby, preventing discrimination.

By spring semester 1944, three additional Japanese-American students, Arnold Watanabe, Rhea Yamanishi, and Asako Mizoue, left internment camps in California and Arizona for North Park. Similar to the reception received by Kumataka and Naruse, the campus community welcomed them. The *North Park College News* ran the title “Japanese American Students Find Friends at North Park” and described their semester at North Park. Details from the newspaper pointed to a seamless transition. Arnold Watanabe, for instance, joined the baseball team and received accolades for his achievements on the field.<sup>188</sup> “These Japanese-Americans,” the article ended, “have been completely accepted by their fellow students without discrimination or prejudice of any kind.”<sup>189</sup>

More than the *North Park College News* indicated that North Park welcomed Japanese-American students. Wilson Kumataka enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1944, completed his basic training at Fort McClellan in Alabama, and headed to Fort Snelling in Minnesota to begin training as an interpreter with the Military Intelligence Corps.<sup>190</sup> In basic training, Kumataka wrote to Oscar Olson, acting registrar, on June 16, 1944. In his letter, he put into words the type of environment he found at North Park. “I really missed my friends there at North Park the first few weeks and still do even though I have made many new friends,” Kumataka wrote, “I guess I’ll never find people as friendly and nice as I did at North Park.”<sup>191</sup> For Kumataka, having a North Park first-year student, Gordon A. Newlin, invite him to his home in Michigan remained one of his most cherished memories. In describing the visit to Olson, Kumataka wrote, “I spent a few days in Michigan at his home. They really made me feel at home there and Mrs. Newlin treated me like her own son.”<sup>192</sup> The memories of North Park and the friends he made left a strong impression on Kumataka. “Since coming to North Park,” Kumataka wrote, “I am convinced more than ever that this country is worth

fighting for.”<sup>193</sup> When leave opportunities arose, Kumataka returned to North Park during fall semester 1944 and spring semester 1945 to visit the campus that welcomed him.<sup>194</sup>

Like Kumataka, Watanabe left North Park prior to graduation. He enlisted in the U.S. Army in hopes of entering the Military Intelligence Corps in 1945.<sup>195</sup> While at North Park, Watanabe played on the basketball and baseball teams and belonged to the engineers club and international club.<sup>196</sup> The 1944 baseball season opener saw Watanabe on the mound. His fiery pitching and numerous wins, including one shutout, throughout the season made him a well-known name on campus.<sup>197</sup> After Watanabe left North Park for the U.S. Army, he wrote a letter to all faculty and students. “I am very grateful that I was able to attend such a fine institution as North Park,” Watanabe wrote, “In no other school that I have attended have I experienced the true friendliness that North Park offered me during my stay there. I had as many ‘breaks’ any other student would get, if not more, and I didn’t feel any discrimination whatsoever. I’m sure this was made possible by the Christian influence which prevails.”<sup>198</sup> Ending the letter, he wrote, “I’ll never forget North Park and I’ll always regard it as my home.”<sup>199</sup>

Japanese-American students remembered the hospitality that characterized North Park. In a country at war and suspicious of anyone of Japanese ancestry, the college provided a home, with all of its customary associations and feelings. The historical records show a pattern of a college community fully aware of the racial tensions existent throughout the country and fully aware of its role as a Christian institution to model neighborly love. For those defined as less than equal in broader society, North Park treated them as brothers and sisters in Christ. This ethos came from all parts of the college community. From the administration who first decided to admit Japanese Americans when many numerous other institutions refused them to individual students who accepted them immediately upon their arrival, the entire community that embraced these Japanese-American students obviously left its spirit of warmth, an imprint upon their lives.

Racial hysteria suffused into the American conscience during the war. Prejudices against Japanese Americans poured out to other minorities, grouped together and undifferentiated in the American psyche. Anyone of Asian descent or anyone mistaken for Asian descent stood subject to racial animosity in a dominantly white society. Whether Chinese or Filipino, Korean or Hawaiian, the prejudices against the Japanese,

largely based on broad generalizations about race, made many subject to discrimination.<sup>200</sup> In a similar way to how it publicized the arrival of Japanese-American students, the *North Park College News* made an obvious effort to inform the campus of nonwhite students through biographic exposés. The article “Harry Tong Only Chinese on Campus,” for instance, emphasized the fact that he was born in Chicago and his parents arrived in the United States in 1916.<sup>201</sup> In a like manner, the arrival of Kenneth Muraoka from Hawaii in 1945 also led to a full article in the newspaper, giving focus to his service in the U.S. Army. “Hawaii’s gift to North Park,” the newspaper reported, “is twenty-one year old Kenneth Muraoka.”<sup>202</sup> Articles on individual current students did not represent regular features in the *North Park College News* during the war. When they did appear, they predominately focused on nonwhite students and highlighted how the particular students added to the quality of the college community.

Oppression of African Americans also led North Park College to address issues of race during the war. In March 1942, the Politico club brought NAACP speaker Joseph Guinn to campus on the issue of sharecropping.<sup>203</sup> The systematic and institutionalized forms of subjection, such as sharecropping, confronted the principles of which America claimed it held and fought to preserve. The contrast between the freedom and democracy and the actual realities of the homeland provided a means to confront racist practices and injustices. The *North Park College News* put forward, “For a long time it has been supposed that war is an excuse for declaring a moratorium on social progress. It is difficult to detect the relationship here when one remembers that the war is being fought to enable less fortunate peoples to acquire those same rights that Americans enjoy, but notwithstanding the obvious need of concentrating our energies toward winning the war, if the United States is to be the apostle of justice and freedom, it must not be blind to the problems within its borders.”<sup>204</sup> Indeed, the need to concentrate energy toward equality in the United States challenged the norm that war mandated a noncritical viewpoint of one’s own country. Throughout the war, North Park addressed issues of race often considered verboten.

Inviting speakers, such as Joseph Guinn, to address African-American discrimination functioned as one means to bring attention to the issues that limited equality in the United States, especially those issues that affected African Americans. Throughout the war, North Park’s focus on racial issues led to many guests arriving on campus to share their

knowledge and understanding of racial injustices and their plans for an America that met the principles it professed. In May 1942, Ulysses S. Keys, legal representative for the NAACP, spoke at North Park on discrimination in Chicago. From lack of employment opportunities to abuses of Constitutional rights, Keys addressed the issue of internal prejudices as a threat to the democratic principles of the United States.<sup>205</sup> John Russell Butler's talk titled "Jim Crow and the War" emphasized the types of employment and voter discrimination prevalent in the country.<sup>206</sup> Dr. Sherwood Eddy called attention to the limits of a country's ideals when it proclaims, "Liberty and justice for all, except!"<sup>207</sup> Rosa Page Welch, an accomplished mezzo-soprano, led a chapel service in several spirituals and also spoke on the topic of racial discrimination.<sup>208</sup> A serious effort by North Park to bring light to the issues of racial discrimination formed a definite pattern during the war. In addition to invited speakers, the conferences organized to envision a postwar world placed an emphasis on issues of race.

The November 1943 postwar conference at North Park College ended with seven resolutions. Of these, two were centered on race: "That 'white supremacy' and world harmony are incompatible" and "That the Four Freedoms apply to the Negro and to all races."<sup>209</sup> After discussing the ideas most common among the three days of conference events, those attending the plenary session determined that more than a quarter of the conference concentrated on race. Doubtless, the concern over Hitler's particular vision of white supremacy and America's own racial inequalities occupied the minds of many students during the war. Just prior to the November 1943 postwar conference, a poll on vital concerns reached the student body. The questions ranged from whether or not to institute an international police force to whether or not the Axis powers deserved a right to participate in a peace settlement. "The greatest number of affirmative votes on any given question," the *North Park College News* reported, "was cast for less discrimination against the Negro."<sup>210</sup> The war obviously cast light on the inherent forms of discrimination African Americans faced. Discrimination in the armed forces by way of segregated units, subordinate positions, and forbidden ranks combined with discrimination in war-industry hiring practices and assignment to non-skilled industry positions proved that Jim Crow spread through the very fabric of American society.<sup>211</sup> For North Park students during the war, the systematic discrimination against African Americans proved a major concern.



As a denominational college, North Park reflected the values of the Evangelical Covenant Church, which viewed racial unity as an essential tenet of the Christian faith. President Theodore Anderson wrote, “No race is inherently inferior. God’s purpose includes them all,” in his 1943 report to the denomination.<sup>212</sup> The following year, the Covenant Church adopted the following resolution: “We believe that all men are of one blood, and that all discrimination, based upon race, creed or nationality, is not in keeping with the Christian profession and life, and further, that it fosters conflict and war.”<sup>213</sup> These beliefs influenced North Park students. Graduates of the North Park, for instance, fought against racial injustice. One of the most prominent among them during the war, Rev. Douglas Cedarleaf, junior college class of 1939, organized a demonstration for an African-American family that moved into a largely Polish-Italian section of Chicago and faced violent resistance.<sup>214</sup> North Park not only reported on the 1945 demonstration but also invited Cedarleaf to deliver its 1945 summer commencement address. He modeled Christian action for the sake of racial equality and, as in Ohlson’s line, what it meant to stand like “a wall of steel” against racial prejudice.

An additional way in which the denominational college sought to promote racial understanding came through its Good Will Scholarship. Initiated in the 1944–1945 academic year, the award went to a student “whose presence on the campus, in the opinion of the donor, will contribute in at least a small measure to promote good will and understanding between people of different racial, national, and cultural backgrounds.”<sup>215</sup> Walter N. McDuffy, an African-American student from DuSable High School on Chicago’s South Side, received the Good Will Scholarship. In an interview with the *North Park College News*, he responded to how he liked being at North Park. “I feel very much at home here,” McDuffy said, “It is a friendly school and since the fact is recognized that the needs of all men are basically the same, a spirit of equality prevails.”<sup>216</sup> With a focus on chemistry, McDuffy participated in a number of clubs ranging from Demenudi that focused on science to Brothers Under the Skin that focused on race relations.<sup>217</sup> Drafted in 1945, he returned to North Park after his service in the Army Air Corps and graduated in 1948.<sup>218</sup>

At a point in American history when explicit and implicit racism held an almost ubiquitous acceptance throughout the country, North Park College chose to ignore the norm that a country during war go without critique in the name of loyalty. Rather, the principles expressed by

a nation during the war allowed North Park to address how these exact principles contrasted with treatment of minorities within the United States. On one level, the college modeled, in many ways, the principles it charged the nation to uphold. On another level, it voiced and invited voices to speak to the current conditions of the oppressed and visions for a better society. The then present circumstances allowed for ignoring racial discrimination. Japanese-American students turned away, color lines held, criticism of discrimination silenced all marked the easier path to take during war. That North Park, however, chose not this path but a more difficult one demonstrated its commitment to the true principles of the country and the Christian faith.

### CONCLUSION

The announcement that Lt. Bruce J. Birk, class of 1939, died on the field of battle reached the campus in October 1944. Honoring his sacrifice and memorializing the loss, the Birk family donated chimes to play traditional hymns at noon and six o'clock in the evening. From the cupola of Old Main, the melodies of the Birk Memorial Chimes reached the ears of all on campus.<sup>219</sup> Just before their dedication, the *North Park College News* shared, "The message of the chimes is a living, moving one...North Parkers, then, should listen even more thoughtfully to the chimes in the cupola and let them ring forever in their memories as a never-dying challenge to a better, higher Christian life."<sup>220</sup> To the North Park community, the sounds of the Birk Memorial Chimes symbolized a Christian charge to live lives that improved the world in the name of God.

Distinguishing the areas of service, faith, and race illustrates how North Park responded to World War II. This framing, however, separates an institutional spirit that, in many ways, depended on what unified the three distinct areas: the pursuit of what is right in the eyes of God. With this said, distinguishing the areas of service, faith, and race does reveal in fuller detail the historical importance of how one particular Christian liberal arts college faced the challenges of a world at war. The 45 names inscribed in bronze paid tribute to those men who made the ultimate sacrifice, serving their country with honor, for a right cause (Fig. 5.2). With them, the hundreds of stars on the North Park service flags testified to the service of those who bravely answered the call of a nation facing an existential threat against humanity. Faith encircled the overall



Fig. 5.2 North Park College World War II Memorial Plaque (Courtesy of author)

approach to the war. Tension between justice and love led the North Park community to support the war as a just cause for a lasting peace while being mindful that ultimately hatred embodied an incongruity with God's message to love. The message to love, in addition to providing a necessary tension against justice, also shaped how North Park College approached race. In a country that fought a war in the name of freedom and democracy, the racial injustice that imbued its very own soil was anathema to its true principles. For North Park, addressing racial injustice became part of the overall purpose of fighting the war.

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## “Bulwark of Democracy”: Optimism and Identity at Sterling College in the War Years

*Daniel T. Julich*

In February 1943, the beloved Mrs. J.B. Smith, the cafeteria manager at Sterling College, held a banquet in honor of young men who expected to be called up soon from the reserves. Sterling’s homecoming queen presided and another young woman sang Vaughn Monroe’s single that would hit the number three spot on the Billboard charts the next day: “Then we’ll have time for things like wedding rings and free hearts will sing/When the lights go on again.”<sup>1</sup> The President of the college, Dr. Hugh A. Kelsey, a deeply revered septuagenarian, intoned remarks that signaled his understanding of the significance of the moment: “We are just now at the peak of human events in world history. Untold possibilities hang in the balance.”<sup>2</sup> And while it is clear that Kelsey was

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talking of the world stage, his remarks and the feelings surrounding the event seem to capture the ethos of the school throughout the wartime years. Having begun to emerge from a decade of financial crisis, the college faced a very real possibility that the lights of “Old Cooper” would be extinguished forever. Kelsey’s words reflect the crisis, but they also express the mood of hope nurtured during that time. As the war progressed and the student population shrank, the institution’s leadership and the leadership of the Presbyterian Synod and General Assembly sought to forge a clear identity and purpose. They viewed both the task of securing Christian liberal arts education and the sending of the college’s young men to battle as preserving fundamental values and creating the possibility of a better tomorrow.

For Sterling College, situated nearly in the geographic center of the United States, World War II helped provide impetus for a reinforced identity and purpose. It began as the school had begun to regain its bearings after a desperate struggle to survive. In the end, the war forced the college to articulate its *raison d’être* and provided the opportunity for it to display its most cherished values of down-to-earth practicality and deep-rooted idealism. As with much of the rest of the country, the end of the war brought a renewed optimism, but it was an optimism that was not merely a sigh of relief from the stress and austerity of conflict. It was a crowning moment after years of vision-seeking.

### THE ROOTS OF STERLING’S WAR-TIME IDENTITY

As with many other schools, Sterling College had fallen on hard times during the period after the stock market crash of 1929. The 1930s had seen a steady slumping of income as yields from the college’s endowment fell and fewer students attended colleges across the board. In the meantime, the college had bonds that it was paying off at a higher rate of interest than it could readily afford. As a result, the college faculty’s salary scale during the early 1930s was progressively cut and responses from the administration were deemed unsatisfactory. These difficulties ultimately led Dr. Ross T. Campbell, president of the college since 1910, to tender his resignation (which was accepted) in late 1932.<sup>3</sup>

In spring 1933, the Board of Trustees of Sterling extended an invitation to Dr. Hugh A. Kelsey to lead the college. Kelsey, at 60 years old, was a long-time minister in the Presbyterian Church of North America, having previously served in both Pennsylvania and Ohio. He also had



experience as a faculty member and administrator at Muskingum College (Ohio), another of the denomination's schools. Kelsey would later write in his autobiography that he came to Sterling "in the darkest hour of her existence."<sup>4</sup> The financial struggles and preexisting tensions between faculty, administration, and the Presbyterian Church forced Kelsey to draw on years of experience as a pastor and administrator. Using these skills, he managed to steer the college through these tempests and the scourge of the Dust Bowl. And while faculty salaries did not rise above 85% of the stated faculty salary scale until the 1942–1943 school year, Kelsey seems to have recovered a sense of purpose and confidence in the mission of the school, among faculty, students, and the Kansas Synod. For faculty, his and the Board's careful approach to eliminating debt while prioritizing faculty salaries boosted confidence in the future of the institution and students trusted his sincere concern for their well-being.

Kelsey's approach during the first eight years of his tenure at Sterling set the stage for his response to the exigencies of World War II. Throughout the war, Kelsey communicated an optimism about the future of the college. As he did so, he reiterated the need to maintain both the small liberal arts college model and his desire for a robust "Christian social program."

The struggles of liberal arts colleges during World War II have been well-documented. Indeed, colleges throughout the country were put in the position of attempting to justify what they did. The focus on the sciences and "practical" education was high, as was simply the notion that all young men should enlist immediately. The role of national organizations, such as the American Council on Education, was significant and had an influence on the trajectory of the Defense Programs.<sup>5</sup> And throughout the wartime years, friends of liberal arts colleges and especially Christian liberal arts colleges railed against the specter of eliminating what they saw as one of the foundations of a truly democratic society—the society so imperiled by the fascism that necessitated the bloody struggle.

As president of Sterling, Hugh Kelsey had two key concerns. The first was the financial health of the institution. The second, and by far the more pressing, was the spiritual life of the campus. Kelsey's pastoral commitment and disposition prompted a profound concern that students have encouragement for a "consistent, earnest Christian life."<sup>6</sup> During the 1930s the institution sought to clearly establish Sterling as a place where the truth of Christianity was nurtured, and Kelsey was seen

as just the type of guiding hand that was needed for this. As he began his presidency in 1933, the Synod communicated the importance of “[p]lacing emphasis on the spiritual values, for these only will endure.”<sup>7</sup> This central element of the college’s identity responded to a sense of threat that was palpable in the churches of the Plains. Government-funded state institutions were clearly direct competitors with the small denominational schools; furthermore, they were dangerous. Stories of professors at public schools ridiculing the Bible bolstered the idea of a “systematic and concerted effort on the part of man to destroy our young people’s faith in God.”<sup>8</sup> Sterling College’s identity as a “safe place” for parents to send their children must be established and this involved both proper teaching on a foundation of the Bible and a sense of personal shepherding and modeling of Christian character. Students need those “who know God through a personal experience, and who daily sit at the Master’s feet” in order to “direct and enrich the lives of developing youth.”<sup>9</sup>

This was Hugh Kelsey’s vision for the college. He believed that “safe and skilled leadership” was in the hands of the church-related college. “A college can be for Christ or against Him, but it cannot be both.”<sup>10</sup> The Christian college was fulfilling the goal of the broad liberal arts program precisely in being fully dedicated to Christian principles. Only such a college could create the “skilled minds and throbbing hearts” to unravel the “knotted skein of world life.”<sup>11</sup> The “social program” of the college under his leadership was determined by this vision. Kelsey sought to limit clubs and social functions while encouraging spiritual organizations like the Life Service Group, which came to encompass a significant portion of the student population.<sup>12</sup> He also held a hard line on certain social practices such as drinking, having a long history of involvement in anti-liquor politics.<sup>13</sup> Holding his ground on these issues, he reported to the Synod that this did not elicit any negative responses, but many letters of affirmation “congratulating Sterling” for maintaining such a purpose.<sup>14</sup>

The distinctively Christian identity of Sterling also resonated with political suspicion of big government, described by Robert Wuthnow as “[t]he motif that most characterized the region.”<sup>15</sup> This was especially true in the wake of declining satisfaction with the depression-era interventions of the New Deal.<sup>16</sup> The church-related school had a distinctive role to play as an alternative to the cheap but “Christless” government-funded college.<sup>17</sup> In fact, as the specter of fascism in Europe grew, leaders in the Kansas Synod argued that a place like Sterling was

a "bulwark of democracy," whose unfettered freedom of expression stood in opposition to such figures as Hitler and Mussolini.<sup>18</sup> As such, when faced with the possibility of gaining funding through the government the Presbyterian Church colleges "with one voice repudiated the bill" as providing inroads for the government to be able to control the content in church college classrooms.<sup>19</sup> It was a "heroic action" that signaled that these schools could be counted among the leaders of a world that desperately needed spiritual and moral leadership rather than technical prowess.<sup>20</sup> That Sterling should be recognized by the church in such terms was crucial. A school that was not funded by the government could not possibly survive if it were not adequately supported through donations to the college and the sending of young people to its halls.

The efforts at bolstering Sterling's reputation for excellence in the liberal arts and its identity as solidly Christian institution were arguably quite successful, with growing enrollments as one indicator of this and the growing support of the Synod another. This success was threatened, though, by the loss of recognition by the North Central Association of Colleges. In large part this was due to the relatively weak financial situation of the college, which Kelsey was actively seeking to bolster. Under Kelsey, debts in faculty salary were paid and the salary scale began to rise, first to roughly 60% of the pay scale, then to 85%.<sup>21</sup> College debts were targeted as well, but it was not enough to fend off the criticisms of the financial health of Sterling in the eyes of the North Central reviewers.

The withdrawal of recognition by the accrediting body was a blow to Sterling, but it was also used by the college and by the denomination to reinforce aspects of the burgeoning identity of the college as a place of Christian ideals in the face of a misunderstanding world. Not only was it not fair for Sterling to be judged by the same standards as larger institutions, North Central simply did not understand the mission and heartbeat of Sterling College. It evaluated based on "external, objective, material standards that furnish an easy makeshift way of judging an institution."<sup>22</sup> In other words, it did not truly grasp the ideals of a liberal arts college. This bureaucratic body also exemplified the way that worldly authorities simply could not comprehend the unique position of a church-related college and its employees. These standardizing bodies, "not always in closest sympathy with the Church controlled college" placed an onerous burden on those who were sacrificing to make such an education possible.<sup>23</sup> While recognizing the importance of fair salaries, a denomination report added: "it is hoped that the time may not come

in our church colleges that there will be no room for Christian sacrifice, for such a spirit gives a touch to the work of the teacher that no salary can give.”<sup>24</sup>

In the end, Kelsey and Sterling experienced significant success during the early 1940s in meeting some of the challenges that had led to a loss of recognition by North Central. Debt was gradually whittled away (Kelsey declared the college “debt-free” in early 1946), faculty pay-scale continued to increase (reaching the full salary scale in 1944),<sup>25</sup> and Sterling College increasingly gained the confidence of the denomination, which saw Kelsey as fiscally restrained, spiritually dependable, and a strong leader. A mood of optimism remained, even during the war years. As Sterling progressed through those challenging years, it did so with a sense of purpose rooted in the crises of the previous decade and with confidence gained through the meeting of those challenges under the leadership of a trusted administrative and pastoral figure. Thus, while Sterling saw itself as supporting the war effort, students, administrators, and alumni looked beyond the crisis of the war to the promise of a hopeful future. The same ideals that informed the college’s efforts to survive grounded its support for the war. It was a struggle to safeguard the ideals of a nation and a democratic way of life, for which colleges like Sterling provided the spiritual and moral lifeblood.

Sterling’s institutional self-presentation during the war years reflected its prewar fight for survival. Its staff and students were portrayed as practical and self-reliant. Alongside, this practicality was a strong sense of idealism and a critique of short-sighted pragmatism and focus on technical skills. These characteristics were reflections of the previous decade’s forging of identity in an unbeknownst preparation for another world conflict. Sterling never saw its young men or its role in this war as merely instrumental—they were an expression of its “throbbing heart.”

### “A PRACTICAL PEOPLE”: FROM ISOLATIONISM TO A “NEW AMERICAN DEVOTION”

Sterling drew some of its sense of identity from the down-to-earth characteristics of the region in which it was situated. “We enjoy thinking of ourselves as a practical people,” wrote one student editorialist in the student newspaper, *Ye Sterling Stir*.<sup>26</sup> Sterling’s students were, as the alumni newsletter would later express it, of “the self-reliant progressive people of the Plains country.”<sup>27</sup> Pragmatism, no doubt also a trait that would have

been championed by many Americans not in the plains region, helped to fuel isolationist tendencies in the years prior to the war, especially after the tragic events of World War I in Europe. Being practical meant focusing on what was close to home. The earthy wisdom of normal people elicited a decided pessimism about the leaders of the world and their inability to find ways to pursue peace. Hugh Kelsey, in his autobiography, expressed some scorn for the intellectual idealism of Woodrow Wilson, who failed in his attempt to bring about a lasting solution to the world situation in the wake of the Great War.<sup>28</sup> At Sterling, the prevailing wisdom was that the world's problems were spiritual ones and that a true and lasting peace could only come through Christ. As such, it would be best, in the words of the Kansas Synod's Committee on Reform in 1937, if the United States could remain separate from "the disputes of other peoples."<sup>29</sup>

Nevertheless, once the bombing of Pearl Harbor occurred, the response at Sterling, as at most other schools, was overwhelmingly supportive. The alumni magazine, in October 1942, printed an article entitled "Sterling College Loyal to Defense Program." The article accepted some fault for a mistaken isolationism, claiming that this posture had been because "we did not know all the facts."<sup>30</sup> The war was a reality. Blame could still be placed on leaders for not handling world affairs in a wise and appropriate way in the past, but the solutions of idealists, the article suggests, were misguided. "[W]ar is what we've got and what we need to do is bring it to a successful conclusion."<sup>31</sup> This was the general sentiment on Sterling's campus. It was a pragmatic response that recognized that it was "impossible to stand by and wish for the ideal."<sup>32</sup> But idealism was not entirely shunned. The unique contributions of Sterling's focus on the liberal arts and the perspective of Christianity on true peace called mere practicality into question throughout the conflict. The war, therefore, prompted both the practical response of support and the reiteration of an identity articulated during the 1930s and early 1940s.

The most obvious way in which Sterling supported the war effort was through its response to the enlistment of students in the armed forces. By the fall of 1944 roughly 200 former students and alumni had been listed on the Student Service Roll displayed in the chapel or on the Alumni Service Roll in the auditorium.<sup>33</sup> Yearbooks during the war years likewise included multipage spreads of service lists honoring Sterling's boys, and the 1943 yearbook included a dedication to those

who were “safeguarding our freedom.”<sup>34</sup> The list of alumni and students who served included numerous officers: three colonels, two lieutenant colonels, three majors, one lieutenant commander, twelve captains, and fifty-three lieutenants.<sup>35</sup> These students were upheld as a testament that “Sterling has accepted her responsibility and has contributed her full share of life and talent to the armed forces in the war.”<sup>36</sup> The sending of young men for the war effort was not merely the throwing of young lives to the machine of war. Students were encouraged to have proper perspective, providing context to this great sacrifice. In his speech to students at Mrs. Smith’s banquet, President Kelsey congratulated the young men on the role they would play in these momentous events, insisting that “[w]e dare not lose this struggle against the vicious totalitarian policies which, if they can, will plunge the world into darkness and cruelty and despair.”<sup>37</sup>

Praise, therefore, was offered freely and enthusiastically to those who were called up into military service, and efforts were also made to raise funds for the war effort through the buying of war stamps and war bonds. In spring 1943, the college’s students organized a fund drive in which students who contributed could vote someone for the crowning of “Uncle Sam” and “Miss Liberty”—one vote per each cent spent.<sup>38</sup> The drive rose over \$10,000 in bonds and stamps sold, which was equivalent to the cost of about twelve jeeps.<sup>39</sup>

Support for the war was clearly demonstrated in the praise for students’ service and funds raised for the military, but there was no assumption that all students should immediately enlist. In fact, there was consistent encouragement for male students to remain in school. The alarm about young men forsaking higher education was undoubtedly partially driven by the financial implications of a loss of tuition dollars, but it was couched in terms that suggested that the importance of a liberal arts education was not understood. Sterling, therefore, sought to advocate for its pre-war philosophy of education for the duration of the war.

Concerns were articulated perhaps most acutely prior to U.S. entry into the war as the government began to institute what Kelsey denoted a “very disturbing” defense program and President Roosevelt stated that colleges should “render a more efficient service,” calling into question the value of their educational programs.<sup>40</sup> For Kelsey, the government had no “comprehensive viewpoint of the real value of our educational efforts, certainly not in the military phases of it.”<sup>41</sup> This resonated with

the pushback against Roosevelt's policies that characterized a "very unsettled and government-dominated period of American life."<sup>42</sup> In those months prior to Pearl Harbor, the loss of 25–30 students was felt acutely by the college.<sup>43</sup> In the years that followed, as has been noted, the war effort was embraced and Kelsey affirmed that "we are Christian Americans at Sterling, and if some interruptions and unheard-of difficulties must be met, we can meet them."<sup>44</sup> The war brought about a soul-searching, a "deeper seriousness of purpose, a more intense desire to be better fitted for the task which confronts every loyal American."<sup>45</sup> As it explored that purpose, the college continued to advocate for the crucial role of a liberal arts education, both for future servicemen and for the time of post-war peace.

Once the draft was instituted in September 1940, it certainly became tempting to forego the normal path of college, since it was likely to be interrupted. In response to this, the college's administration and publications sounded off on the continued importance of advanced education. The arguments recognized the significance of the crisis at hand while remaining optimistic about the distant future. In a practical sense, for young men who would be called up, even a small amount of post-secondary schooling would be valuable: "There is every indication that this is a college man's war, and a good education is very helpful when it comes to military promotion."<sup>46</sup> The point was reinforced in a September 1942 editorial in the student newspaper, which argued that one who gained some education would show himself as "a man who can be depended upon."<sup>47</sup> High school graduates, if entering college immediately, could gain great advantage by obtaining college education prior to being drafted, as this would "give them a great push in the direction of officer's training and a commission, or toward some specialized training."<sup>48</sup>

Early articles indicated a hope that the young men who were upper-classmen would have the opportunity to earn their degree, as "we sincerely believe that these enlisted men will be able to render a more efficient service if they are permitted to complete their education."<sup>49</sup> These men, characterized as "young, clean stalwarts," would be those who, if allowed to gain their education now, would "make their contribution to the world in establishing justice and peace," which was ostensibly the ultimate goal of the current military conflict.<sup>50</sup>

The appeal to education had to be made to students, potential students, and to those, such as pastors of churches and alumni, who played

a role in guiding others to the college. The August 1943 alumni newsletter *The Sterlington*, discussed the reasons to pursue schooling, even though there were useful, well-paying jobs to be had immediately. The article emphasized the long-term perspective, as “the war would not last always.”<sup>51</sup> When it was over, what would be needed would be those “with trained minds and strong character.”<sup>52</sup> Likewise, *Ye Sterling Stir* included articles that periodically revisited the importance of gaining an education in spite of the distractions of the war for both young men and young women and defended students against “cracks” that Sterling was a “conscientious objectors college.”<sup>53</sup> Rather, those who stayed in school were celebrated as individuals “far-sighted enough and courageous enough not to be swayed from their purpose by current conditions of unease.”<sup>54</sup> Those who resisted the pull of high-paying commercial jobs were congratulated by their college president for the “far look” of their wisdom and assured of its positive returns.<sup>55</sup>

Sterling’s message, then, was that higher education must not be neglected because of the crisis of the war. Here, the struggle for the liberal arts articulated during the 1930s was initiated once again and the alumni magazine sought to help former students understand the importance of maintaining this approach by devoting much of its March 1943 issue to the value of a liberal arts education.<sup>56</sup> The idea that education was already in the process of becoming “to a greater and greater degree mere training for a vocation,” the paper argued, was “accentuated to an alarming degree by the war crisis.”<sup>57</sup> In fact, the possibility loomed that “education will be shoved out of the way as a mere luxury” and not as essential.<sup>58</sup> Yet, the value of the liberal arts education was just then at its peak, a point that was argued in a speech by Washburn College president Alfred M. Landon and reprinted for alumni.<sup>59</sup> The fact that much of the young male population was in the military meant that there was a danger of society moving toward a primary mode of obedience to orders. “If we are to avoid the destructive effects of the unquestioning military mind,” Landon argued, “of the cynicism which was the aftermath of the last war—of massed brutality and materialism sweeping much of the world—we must preserve the standards of liberal arts colleges in our entire educational system.”<sup>60</sup>

Likewise, Sterling championed its specifically Christian approach during the war years, highlighting the role of the Christian tradition for rebuilding a broken world. The disaster of two world wars provided what *The Sterlington* called an “Open Door” for the role of the church-related



college. "Men are saying, 'there needs to be a spiritual revival,' 'the world needs God,' 'the underlying principle of democracy is religious in character.'"<sup>61</sup> It was, therefore, also highly important that future ministers remain in school and be allowed to pursue seminary degrees, a point recognized by the government with the establishment of the IV-B draft classification for ministers and divinity students. These students, the paper argued, must be defended against charges of attempting to avoid the draft, for "If our armed forces succeed in winning the victory for which they strive, the country will need all the moral and spiritual leadership available to maintain the Christian program which they have saved for America."<sup>62</sup> The arguments for ministerial students remaining in school were a specific case of the role that all students trained at a Christian school might play in a post-war world desperate for the real sources of peace: "There never was a time when the world so much needed the wholesome, remedial influences which emanate from the staunch and idealistic Christian College."<sup>63</sup>

In all, then, Sterling's Christian liberal arts program embodied a "new American devotion," which recognized that true democracy was not safeguarded merely by military power or by scientific advancement but by "a vision which comprehends the significance of such freedom, not only for our beloved America, but for the world."<sup>64</sup> In other words, the ideals of the American way of life were best understood in the context of a broad education like the one that Sterling offered—an education that saw the significance of America's role in history for fostering democracy and human flourishing.

### STERLING'S WAR EFFORT

Remaining in school as long as possible, then, was a way of supporting the future of the country. Yet it was clearly communicated that "Sterling College is loyal to our Government's defense program and heartily supporting it."<sup>65</sup> Administratively this meant embracing particular changes to the college's schedule and establishing new pathways to the completion of degrees. A new accelerated program allowed students to complete a degree in three years. During the 1942–1943 school year, 33 individuals were expected to follow this trajectory.<sup>66</sup> Summer school became increasingly important for these accelerated students and could also be used to obtain an emergency teaching certificate, as grade schools in Kansas faced a serious shortage of teachers.<sup>67</sup> For the college, this

required summer staffing and costs of keeping the college open for business, but it also drew additional revenue.<sup>68</sup> Students following an accelerated program often graduated mid-year; thus, in addition to the typical May ceremony, Sterling offered its first ever January commencement (with six graduates) in 1943.<sup>69</sup>

The administrative changes during the war years were small in comparison to the efforts made around campus to provide encouragement and support for those former students and alumni who had entered the service. The president's office maintained a list of servicemen and their addresses for those who might want them.<sup>70</sup> President Kelsey, with his pastoral bent and with the experience he had gained as a pastor seeing men off to the Great War, sought to maintain contact with Sterling's soldiers with the help of his assistant.<sup>71</sup> Copies of *The Sterlingtonian* and *Ye Sterling Stir* ("The Stir") made their way around the world, from the US and England to the islands of the Pacific, informing soldiers of life at the college and prompting memories of days gone by.<sup>72</sup> The newspapers also helped to connect Sterling's former students, such as Bob Stinson and Scotty Knox, who found out from *The Stir* that they were on the same island.<sup>73</sup> The girls of the Campbell Hall dormitory made candy for boxes to send to the soldiers around the world at Christmastime 1943 and gifts like these went to far-flung locations like Papua New Guinea, as Lieutenant K. R. Timkin noted with thanks in March 1944.<sup>74</sup> Students corresponding with those in the service through letters received encouragement to do so, but also reminders to maintain an optimistic and encouraging tone, omitting mention of any hardships or personal difficulties.<sup>75</sup>

*Ye Sterling Stir* became a clearinghouse for information by and about those in the service, reporting promotions, news, and interesting stories, providing a voice back home for former students and alumni. Enlistment and promotion notes were routinely included. Such notes were not limited to "the boys." One article featured Nettie Smith, a Sterling student in 1942–1943, who enlisted in the Women's Air Corps (WAC) and then received an assignment at the outpatient clinic at Camp Chaffee, Arkansas.<sup>76</sup> *The Sterlingtonian*, with a focus on alumni news, likewise reported on the impending promotion of Marine corporal Mary Esther Ramsay to first sergeant.<sup>77</sup>

Students and alumni were eager for captivating stories from soldiers, and regular correspondence from the troops did not disappoint. Ensign George H. Brooks, grateful recipient of a copy of *The Stir* in November 1942, reciprocated with news from the South Pacific. "It is no picnic,"

he wrote, but "[l]iving here is not so bad." He told of the tropical fruits that surrounded his hut and of how the indigenous people brought them fresh pineapples, "which outclass Dole's tinned ones a hundred to one."<sup>78</sup> Kenneth Hilton reported on the completion of a set of missions over Germany and Occupied Europe in 1944, noting with regret that he was not able to contribute to the invasion in June 1944: "The Air Force wouldn't even let me transfer to the infantry for the big event."<sup>79</sup> Earle Brehmer recounted how he and other soldiers saved their candy rations to hold a Christmas party for the children where they were stationed in England.<sup>80</sup> Vernon Tunnell offered tidbits of culture with his recounting of a New Guinean celebration that ended in the messy butchering of a pig.<sup>81</sup> Soldiers regaled the readers of the recurring "With the Boys" section of the paper with morsels of information about a soldier's life. Sergeant Richard Ross told of being quartered in an old manor house in the beautiful countryside of Ireland.<sup>82</sup> Miles Gilkey described his visiting of the pyramids and sphinx while in Cairo and his climbing of Mt. Vesuvius in Italy, though he made clear that with these amazing sights had also come "plenty of hard work, sleepless nights, sorrow, and heartache."<sup>83</sup> Captain Frank William Montgomery's wife told of her husband in France and his new jeep that had been christened "Helen Jane" in her honor and Howard "Press" Wilson named his P-38 Mustang "Tuck" for fellow student Margaret Tucker.<sup>84</sup> More significant namings became common near the end of the conflict, as soldiers and their wives announced the birth of new additions to their families.<sup>85</sup>

The *Stir* and *The Sterlingian* particularly lauded the accomplishments of Sterling's soldiers, such as Conrad Rowland, student in 1940–1941, pilot of troop carrier planes in the South Pacific. He flew 321 combat missions in the space of 22 months and returned to Sterling on furlough in September 1944 decorated with the Presidential Citation Medal and the Distinguished Flying Cross with three oak-leaf clusters.<sup>86</sup> Soldiers on leave often visited campus and gave interviews for the paper, sometimes while visiting family and others while en route to their next assignment.<sup>87</sup> Artie Sanderson came back to Sterling for a few days after being on active duty for seventeen months as a radio operator on the C-47 transport "Scarlett O'Hara" and gave a detailed account of his time for *The Stir*. Recipient of the Air Medal and participant in three invasions—North Africa, Sicily, and Italy—he dispelled any thoughts of the "glory of war." "We weren't exactly fond of it," he said, "but it was something that had to be done, and we wanted to get it done as quickly as possible."<sup>88</sup>

News of war, such as the stories of Artie Sanderson, came studied with nuggets of wisdom and statements of gratitude for the value of a Sterling education. Of his time at the college, Sanderson said: "It was a real help to me."<sup>89</sup> Bob Stinson, who spent only the first semester of his freshman year at Sterling, wrote that "it left its mark. I will never regret it."<sup>90</sup> Some comments were more mundane in nature, such as those written by Sergeant Leonard H. Woodruff. Woodruff was "glad he read much history and studied French, for he is using his French to good advantage now."<sup>91</sup> Others focused their attention on the resources the school had provided them for their time in the service. Lieutenant Donald Curry spoke highly of the academic training that he received at Sterling, testifying that it gave him the necessary tools to keep up with the college graduates in his camp.<sup>92</sup> Louis Tedford wrote, "I have thought of Sterling College many times and her fine standards," surely referring to the emphasis on Christian character at the college.<sup>93</sup> Private Donald Minner was even more effusive in his praise for the "fine Christian foundation" that he received: "Army life is not based on Christian principles, and it is easy to see how fellows so soon acquire the characteristics of a profane and careless life." He expressed a deep gratitude to his preparation, through which he could profess that "I find no attraction in the things this world has to offer."<sup>94</sup> Nearly all of the letters noted a desire to return to the college after the war and a sense of optimism for the future. E. W. Lintecum wrote, "If everyone advertises Sterling as much as I have, she will certainly have a big enrollment after the war."<sup>95</sup> The witness of the boys in service, then, served to reinforce the contours of Sterling's identity as a Christian college with a liberal arts focus.

Sterling's focus on training Christian leaders, especially for the church, meant that one of its key contributions to the military was the sizeable contingent of chaplains among its alumni. By December 1942, five alumni were chaplains in the service, including Alfred Kelsey, son of the college president.<sup>96</sup> Chaplains had often spent significant times as pastors already. Captain Fred S. Zeller (Sterling class of 1942), chaplain with the Air Corps, was a pastor at the United Presbyterian Church in Morning Side, Ohio, before he was commissioned in 1942. By the end of the 1944, he had been overseas for more than a year and served at a hospital in Italy, ministering to casualties from Anzio, Cassino, and Southern France.<sup>97</sup> As chaplain, Zeller drew on his own experiences during the Great War. As part of the American Expeditionary Force in 1918–1919,

he received the Victory Medal and was a part of the Army of Occupation in 1919.<sup>98</sup> Sterling alumni serving as chaplains rose in the ranks, including Myndert M. Van Patten (class of 1912). By 1944, Van Patten had achieved the rank of colonel and was serving as the chaplain of the eastern defense command and was featured in an article in *Ye Sterling Stir*.<sup>99</sup> As a school that specifically trained young men to be pastors in the Presbyterian churches, then, Sterling's spiritual resources met specific war-time needs in the service.

Many Sterling students and alumni who became soldiers primarily offered their physical presence, leadership, strength, and vitality to the war effort and some gave their lives for the cause. Throughout the war, the school publications sought to remember Sterling casualties, both as a way to update those who might know them and to reinforce the nobility of their service. During the war, at least six alumni and former students lost their lives, including Dale Crippen, Rolland Ausherman, Robert Pinkerton, Robert Wilson, Gerald Johannsen, and Harold Santee. Crippen and Pinkerton both died in airplane accidents in the States, while Santee was killed in a vehicle accident in Rome.<sup>100</sup> Wilson and Johannsen died on the western front, the latter "in a daring attempt to protect his comrades."<sup>101</sup> As word of casualties arrived at Sterling, the school arranged for memorial services that were personalized with eulogies by friends and family. In reporting on a special service for Wilson, Johannsen, and Santee, the paper articulated the sentiments of staff and students: "The College feels the loss of all of these fine men keenly and extends its sincerest sympathy to their loved ones."<sup>102</sup> Other former students were undoubtedly among the casualties of war, in part because those included on the "Service Roll" had to have completed at least one semester of credit at Sterling. One student not mentioned among later memorials is Sergeant Allard R. Kennedy, who attended Sterling in 1936–1937. Kennedy was killed in New Guinea on December 14, 1942, apparently during the Battle of Buna-Gona. He received the Purple Heart posthumously for his service and was described by his commanding officer as a "big brother" to the soldiers under his leadership.<sup>103</sup> The loss of these individuals certainly provided ample evidence of the contribution of Sterling blood in the struggle against fascism and totalitarianism.

Most of the stories of Sterling's contributions to the war effort focused on students and alumni, but faculty also provided a model for seeking ways to serve, though sometimes unsuccessfully.

History Professor Charles Dykstra, known for his resounding call “Now is the time to study!” and his difficult tests, came to Sterling in 1939. In February 1943, *Ye Sterling Stir* reported that Dykstra was headed to Fort Leavenworth, where he had already previously passed two physical examinations.<sup>104</sup> The next issue of *The Stir*, though, featured another article on Dykstra, this time with the title “Dykstra Returns from Wars with the U.S. Army.” The article describes with some humor the long, tiring train ride to Leavenworth and the ordeal of being processed by the army, which finally led to Dykstra’s rejection for service for unknown reasons.<sup>105</sup> Dykstra had passed his first physical examination alongside Professor Leo Lawless, of the music department. Like Dykstra, Lawless was excused from military service. In his case, he was given a IV-H designation, as he would be beyond draft age by the time his number came up.<sup>106</sup> Inis Springer, a faculty member in the art department, was more successful in her attempts to enlist in the war effort. In 1945, she joined the WAC, where she would be attached to a medical unit and have a chance for officer’s training as an occupational therapist.<sup>107</sup> Music professor Leon Akin, also a Sterling alumnus (class of 1936), became the star of the faculty enlistees. He entered service with the Army in 1942, vacating his position at the college to do so and was overseas by October 1944.<sup>108</sup> In January 1945, *Ye Sterling Stir* reported Akin as missing in action and the March 12 issue confirmed him as a prisoner of war in Germany.<sup>109</sup> By the summer of 1945, he was back in the states and had made a visit to Sterling, as reported in the alumni newsletter.<sup>110</sup> Akin returned to the faculty for a long career at the college. Other faculty members departed to participate in non-military aspects of the war effort. Lou Odle, for example, coach and member of the physical education department, left to be “employed in National Defense work in Hutchinson, Kansas.”<sup>111</sup> Replacement professors were sometimes difficult to find especially in the sciences, as Kelsey explained to the Kansas Synod in 1941, noting that “many men in that field had been called into the defense service.”<sup>112</sup>

### STERLING’S RESPONSE TO THE CHALLENGES OF WAR

Dealing with the logistics of filling vacant positions among the faculty during wartime was one of the challenges Kelsey faced during the war-time years. Yet this paled in comparison to the financial hardship that came with declining enrollment. The enrollment impact was certainly

felt as early as 1940 with the institution of the draft. Numbers had been a difficulty during the early 1930s, but with steady increases through 1939, which saw one of the largest freshman classes ever: 109 students.<sup>113</sup> Throughout the war, numbers of students declined, especially among the men.<sup>114</sup> While by 1942, numbers had declined from the high of 250 in 1939 to 199, a large freshman class continued to dominate and the war took its toll throughout the year.<sup>115</sup> By September 1943, the total number of students at Sterling was 135, compared with 186 students from the spring semester of 1943.<sup>116</sup> The freshman class of 1943 was the largest, with 39 students, but of these only eleven were men.<sup>117</sup> Total enrollment in fall 1944 was the same and there was actually an increase in the freshman class (to 46), fifteen being men.<sup>118</sup> All in all, Kelsey and the administration could be pleased that Sterling's enrollment had not fallen as much as other United Presbyterian schools.<sup>119</sup> Coupled, however, with the difficult decade of the 1930s, this slide had the potential to be disastrous for church-related schools.

To deal with the financial stress on the United Presbyterian colleges, the General Assembly appointed a committee to try to carry on a six-month campaign to raise funds from the churches to support the colleges. Hugh Kelsey's aptitude for marshalling support for higher education was well-noted. He had already managed to lead the Kansas Synod to see the college as "most worthy of their financial support, their prayers, and their patronage," and to ask for a fifty-cent-per member average from congregations to uphold the school financially.<sup>120</sup> When it came time to choose someone to head the drive to secure the future of the denomination's colleges, Kelsey was the top choice.<sup>121</sup> The headquarters of the U.P. Emergency Fund for the colleges was set up in Pittsburgh. Together with the travel necessary to win support among the churches, this meant that President Kelsey was absent from Sterling for almost all of the fall 1943 semester and about half of the spring, with only brief visits to campus.<sup>122</sup> Kelsey moved the headquarters to Sterling in mid-spring, though he continued working on the campaign throughout the rest of the year.<sup>123</sup> Kelsey argued strongly in support of the colleges before the congregations, citing for instance that 75% of the denomination's ministers were trained in church colleges.<sup>124</sup>

The Emergency Campaign's goal was one dollar per member from each of the denomination's congregations.<sup>125</sup> This was quite a lofty aim and Kelsey foresaw the magnitude of the task.<sup>126</sup> In comparison, the previous synod-wide goal of 50 cents per member was difficult enough to

manage and all of those funds went to Sterling College. But he tackled it with his usual optimism. Kelsey arranged for the sending out of leaflets and envelopes for collections and pinpointed two major dates for targeted giving—one in November and one in February.<sup>127</sup> The campaign essentially marketed the value of a Christian liberal arts education to the denomination. It was portrayed as such by Wilbur Patterson, an assistant editor for the *Stir*: “Our president is even now engaged directly in the fight to preserve the liberal arts tradition as well as the small college.”<sup>128</sup> The future was in view—a future in which returning servicemen would be looking for a college: “We must keep our colleges fit for the great service they must give the boys returning home.”<sup>129</sup> And as an article from the following year would make clear, soldiers will not want “to substitute makeshift training for real culture.”<sup>130</sup> Instead, they would be primed for the kind of education Sterling provides: “they will have learned so much about life that they will be in a better position than ever to take advantage of a liberal arts college as a citadel of personality.”<sup>131</sup>

The denomination responded with generosity. Though it failed to meet the stated goal of \$191,000, it still managed \$107,000, and Kelsey was particularly impressed by the generosity of the churches in the Kansas Synod. Of particular note was the Arkansas Valley Presbytery, which included Sterling. The presbytery reached 118% of the goal and all but one of the congregations had responded as of March 21, 1944. The small Stafford congregation of Arkansas Valley set a record of an impressive 1000% of the goal.<sup>132</sup> In addition to the money raised by the congregations, the denomination granted the colleges its budget surplus of \$53,000, resulting in a net total of over \$30,000 for each of the colleges, a sum which helped to clear Sterling of all of its pressing debts and thus find itself “altogether solvent.”<sup>133</sup> This victory for the college was significant and raised Hugh Kelsey even higher in esteem among those in the Synod and in the denomination. The Synod celebrated this success in 1944, including a period of prayer and the viewing of a colored moving picture of the college.<sup>134</sup> The campaign’s victory represented the justification of Sterling’s educational approach and not only raised money but “gained friends,” which promised an increasing enrollment in the future.<sup>135</sup>

The war brought dollars-and-cents limitations for the college because of loss of enrollment, but other material difficulties caused significant changes as well. Gas and rubber rationing severely curtailed the normal schedule of the Men’s and Women’s Gospel teams, groups that



previously had traveled extensively to perform services at congregations. So even though the Men's Gospel Team owned a Plymouth car, activities for the year slowed down.<sup>136</sup> President Kelsey, remaining optimistic about possibilities for the teams, challenged the 1943–1944 groups to "find openings for service close at hand."<sup>137</sup> The teams went about the task enthusiastically, performing services for nearby congregations. They found such opportunities even more numerous than expected, as the war contributed to a high number of vacant pulpits in the vicinity.<sup>138</sup> The team even ventured further afield to carry out a previously planned trip to Oklahoma over Easter. Despite being discouraged about the possibility of extra gas coupons, proof came that "the Lord still works miracles through the mountain-moving power of prayer" with the local authorities unexpectedly granting the extra gasoline that was needed.<sup>139</sup> The Women's Gospel Team also sought out new avenues for service. In addition to leading worship services, the group began a children's club at the grade school in Sterling.<sup>140</sup> Later that year, the men's team started a club for fifth and sixth grade boys at the boys' request, for "Bible study, hand-crafts, and hikes."<sup>141</sup> The gospel teams provided both an avenue for practical experience in Christian service and created lasting connections with the congregations and the local children.<sup>142</sup>

Both the loss of male student population and rationing signaled significant changes to athletics on campus. For most colleges in the country, intercollegiate athletics was severely curtailed due to shortages of rubber and gasoline. At Sterling, fall 1942 saw the coach attempting to pull together a football squad, which consisted mostly of freshmen and included some who had not played football in high school.<sup>143</sup> The squad squared off against nine different opponents that season, including junior colleges and other small schools. Sterling did not manage a touchdown until the homecoming game against York, though it lost that match 26-6 and ended the season with a record of 0-9.<sup>144</sup> Losses to the military came even mid-season, as "freshman football star" Frank Yelich left school at the beginning of November with plans to enter the Marine Corps.<sup>145</sup> The basketball team did not fare much better, losing many men to the government over the course of the season and ending with a record of five wins and ten losses.<sup>146</sup>

The final issue of *Ye Sterling Stir* in 1942–1943 announced the cancellation of intercollegiate athletics "for the duration."<sup>147</sup> This was not actually to be the case. Basketball once again managed to bring a squad on the court for thirteen matchups the next year, ending in a record of

6-7, including two drubbings by Ft. Hays (82-28 and 79-22).<sup>148</sup> The performance of the team was hampered by the departure of players during the season, including Jim Adair, who left in December for the Air Corps.<sup>149</sup> The 1944–1945 season was less successful—the team did not manage to win a single game.<sup>150</sup> The school also managed to field a football team for three games in 1943, including two against Sterling High School in September (one loss and one win) and a win against the Kansas State Guard in October.<sup>151</sup>

The decline in intercollegiate sports opened the door to other forms of athletic competition. Perhaps the most noteworthy was the homecoming football game in 1943. Two squads of women—the Pillow Slippers (named for their coach, Verna Pillow) and the Wefts (Women’s Emergency Football Team)—played to a scoreless tie, but with great energy, with the men “yelling for their favorite team (or girl).”<sup>152</sup> The subtitle of the article that reported on the game “No Deaths Reported; Plenty of Injuries” indicated the lighthearted, campus-uniting nature of the event as did articles such as one entitled “Inside Revelation of the Mind of a Femme Football Flashie.”<sup>153</sup> In a more regular, organized manner, the college also continued and expanded its intramural sports program, which had run successfully in previous years. Spring 1943 had seen a “battle for the badminton championship,” a six-man football matchup between “The Reds” and “The Whites,” and basketball games between teams with names such as “The Scholars” and “The Hometown Hobos.”<sup>154</sup>

For 1943–1944, students had options such as ping-pong, basketball, volleyball, bowling, shuffleboard, bowling, softball, horseshoes, and tennis.<sup>155</sup> Softball was particularly popular and faculty joined in the men’s league. Professor Dykstra, turned down for the Army, “was a fine catcher and slugger as well.”<sup>156</sup> In addition to all-male softball leagues, there were also teams for both men and women. In 1942–1943, the mixed softball intramural season was dubbed the “Grapefruit League” and included the Borgman Bombers, McCowan Mudhens, Morris Murders, and the Patterson Pansies.<sup>157</sup> Part of the fun seems to have been in the naming of the teams but this varied by year. While the 1943–1944 basketball teams were simply named for the student-coaches or for the boarding houses the teams represented, the following year saw a flourishing of creative monikers: the Dill Pickles (named for Raymond Dill), the Hill-Billies (Ollie Hill), the Puffin’ Preachers, the Smellers, and the Stinkers.<sup>158</sup>

The intramural sports activities offered students physical activity as well as "fun, frolic, and excitement."<sup>159</sup> But it also represented the expression of the goals that athletics was meant to fulfill in the process of educating young people. It fulfilled an aim of uplifting the whole person through a positive recreational experience.<sup>160</sup> Furthermore, It was a way in which Sterling reflected the strengths of the American system, in which "our athletic programs have developed mental alertness, agility, initiative, and a sporting instinct possibly superior to our enemies."<sup>161</sup> In other words, it was but one way in which Sterling College supported democracy.

### VOICES OF STERLING'S IDENTITY

Throughout the war, Sterling continued to view itself as being a safeguard to democracy, as the Kansas Synod had argued in 1938.<sup>162</sup> In its activities and its statements on what education at Sterling was and what Sterling rejected, the college nurtured a sense of its "calling." The college aimed to help shape a proper culture of democracy in the United States—a democracy that contrasted with the regimentation, materialism, and restrictions on freedom that characterized the fascist states that were the enemy during World War II.

The approach to the war was shaped by clubs, speakers, and events on campus. The International Relations Club, one of a number of such clubs around the country founded by a Carnegie grant, held regular meetings that highlighted key issues related to the international situation. These issues were not always directly war-related (e.g., discussions on the Indian National Congress or current communist economic and political planning), but promoted an awareness of the world that provided context for a discussion of the ongoing struggle and the concerns that would face the post-war world.<sup>163</sup> But the International Relations Club also directly addressed underlying issues that brought on the war and would affect its conclusion and aftermath. In February 1944, the I.R.C. took over the chapel time and Ray Patterson presented a talk about the "causes and reasons for our world conflict."<sup>164</sup> The club helped to bring Martin Hall to campus to speak. Hall, a refugee from Germany who had resisted Hitler and thus been forced to flee, addressed the question of what it would take for Germany to rebuild after the war.<sup>165</sup> Other clubs also addressed issues related to the war. The Y.W.C.A. held a meeting in fall 1943 that addressed "A Christian's

Attitude Toward War” while Dick Johnson spoke at a Y.M.C.A. meeting about the fate of the church in Germany.<sup>166</sup> Numerous other talks and discussions occurred that both shaped and reflected the campus’s perspective on the war. In the early phases of the war, faculty prepared a series that addressed questions about the war both for the community and for the college.<sup>167</sup>

Speakers sometimes suggested the importance the vision of education that Sterling represented. Dr. No-Young Park, a Chinese author, spoke predictably about the need to fight with the Chinese against the Japanese, describing the Japanese as “attacking bandits.” But he also pinpointed the “artificial education system” in Japan as largely to blame for the insolubility of the crisis in the Pacific region.<sup>168</sup> In special chapel talks in 1944 given on the occasion of World Students’ Day, which commemorated the deaths of students in Prague five years previously, students stressed the importance of maintaining “freedom of education and opportunity,” and of “keeping education from becoming a tool of the favored few.”<sup>169</sup>

The student newspaper was a vital part of the conversation concerning the war, the role of education, and questions surrounding the remaking of the post-war world. A running column entitled “The World Around Us” provided updates in the war situation, but also commentary that reinforced the importance of the kind of education Sterling provided: “the liberal arts college can be a real power if it will train its students for life in the local and world community as well as teaching the practical making-a-living subjects.”<sup>170</sup> News about other colleges peppered the newspaper as well as quotes about education gleaned from outside sources. In April 1943, *The Stir* included a quotation from Robert Maynard Hutchins of the University of Chicago, who stated that “[l]iberal education is essential to citizens of a democracy... . Technical training which is not based on liberal education will produce only robots.”<sup>171</sup> Thus, the newspaper was an outlet for reinforcing the significance of Sterling’s education in the midst of the worldwide conflict.

The newspaper’s student editors, however, also embraced the democratic nature of the press. At the college level, editorials dealt with administrative logistics about the determination of Christmas break.<sup>172</sup> The paper also questioned national policies, claiming for example that U.S. policies toward Europe were “creating a vast reservoir of ill-will.”<sup>173</sup> As the potential for peace appeared on the horizon, writers questioned the nature of that peace: “Have we not learned the danger of putting all

the blame on one side? Now that we are strong, have we forgotten to be humble?"<sup>174</sup> In fall 1943, the new staff of *Ye Sterling Stir* launched a new column inspired by a biblical command and entitled "Be Ye Doers." Written by multiple authors, the column sought to grapple with Christianity's contribution to the post-war peace, especially "specific social problems and how they are to be solved."<sup>175</sup> The column critiqued U.S. society and its claims to be thoroughly democratic. Pointing to "race riots, political discrimination, and concentration camps," the author argued that "we have had revealed to us internal weaknesses that stand in the way of future developments."<sup>176</sup> Other columns showed a decided suspicion of capitalism and suggested that a new approach was needed, moving "away from the making of profit and ... to the giving of service."<sup>177</sup>

The conversation about issues of equality and opportunity were undoubtedly more sophisticated because of the presence of several students who understood these questions from first-hand experience. Henry Kissman's Jewish family experienced persecution after the Nazi takeover. While his parents found a home in England, Henry moved to the U.S. He eventually came to Sterling on a foreign student scholarship and began his studies to be a chemist.<sup>178</sup> Kissman became involved in writing for the student newspaper, contributed to the school newspaper, was elected senior vice president, and graduate cum laude in 1944.<sup>179</sup> His sometimes ambivalent attitudes toward the approaching post-war period are reflected in his authoring of the initial "Be Ye Doers" column and in his response when asked about the war: "he just smiled and said, 'I don't wish to commit myself.'"<sup>180</sup>

Fellow Austrian Vera "Vicky" Rudin, likewise had plans to be a chemist.<sup>181</sup> Her progressive views were made clear when she reported that she was the only woman among peers at summer study at Barnard College and Columbia University who wanted to work after marriage.<sup>182</sup> Rudin, who scored the highest of any Sterling student in a national standardized test of "general culture," contributed to the campus conversation with a discussion in the student newspaper regarding the importance of European economic collaboration and a review of a book by Sumner Welles about the errors made in the creation of the peace after World War I.<sup>183</sup>

Another important voice in the conversation about democracy was Shizuko ("Suzie") Hayashi. Hayashi came to Sterling as a part of a program that allowed young Japanese-Americans to depart from internment

camps to receive education at colleges in the central part of the country. Hayashi's family was detained at Heart Mountain in Cody, Wyoming and her coming to Kansas, as she recalled in a later interview, was marked by seeing a sign with racist sentiments posted on the outskirts of town.<sup>184</sup> While this placed her on edge, she was impressed by several professors and by the kindness of the people.<sup>185</sup> As a student, she gave voice to concerns about the conditions in the internment camps at a Y.W.C.A. meeting, stating that "the church should quit talking about whether or not the evacuation [internment] should have been done and concentrate on improving conditions in the camps and relocating people into society again."<sup>186</sup> The newspaper recorded several meetings at which Hayashi spoke, including another Y.W.C.A. meeting with the theme "What Can We Believe About Eternal Life?" and at chapel on World Students' Day.<sup>187</sup> She also participated significantly with the International Relations Club, being elected its president in May 1944.<sup>188</sup> Her involvement as a voice in campus news is reflected in her selection as an assistant editor of *Ye Sterling Stir*.<sup>189</sup>

Kissman, Rudin, and Hayashi, therefore, shaped the conversation at Sterling College about the war in significant ways, despite the low number of international students on campus. The fact that these students gained significant positions on campus (senior class president, assistant editor, president of I.R.C.) suggests that they were well-received by students. Kelsey, for his part, believed that the students were exemplary in their treatment of those outside of the typical demographic on campus. In his autobiography, he wrote that the students demonstrated "the finest democratic attitudes I have ever known" and that "race prejudice found no encouragement among our students."<sup>190</sup>

Kelsey himself set the tone for life at the college during the war. Kelsey embraced the role of pastor of the students. As already mentioned, he carried on regular correspondence with soldiers and wrote articles for *Ye Sterling Stir* and *The Sterlingtonian*.<sup>191</sup> In one of these articles, he articulated his goal for the spiritual program of the school: "to have the whole life of the College include a definite Christian attitude."<sup>192</sup> At the heart of this focus was the Bible—"the basis of Christian faith."<sup>193</sup> In addition to daily chapel services, one of the highlights of the week was the Sunday night vespers service in Campbell Hall: "No one can forget the inspiration gained from Dr. Kelsey's quiet thoughts at Vespers each Sabbath evening."<sup>194</sup> The fondness and respect of the students for Kelsey was palpably expressed by one alumnus in the 1945 homecoming

issue of *The Sterlingtonian*: "Remember Chapel ... the 'Shepherd' and his quiet talks ... the sharp end to chatter when he arose."<sup>195</sup> The investment (together with the efforts in the Emergency Campaign for the denomination) was not without a cost for Kelsey, as he turned 70 during the war years.<sup>196</sup> At the 1944 meeting of the Kansas Synod, he reminded the body and the Board of Trustees that his resignation letter had been placed on file when he accepted the position and that it "may be accepted at any time the members of the Board may think best for the welfare of Sterling."<sup>197</sup> Both groups recognized that Kelsey's leadership was far too valuable to relinquish just yet.

There were numerous other stalwarts of the college in addition to Kelsey who continued to serve faithfully throughout the war. D. Ruth Thompson, chemistry professor, was an alumnus of the college (class of 1918) and had taught at Sterling since 1920.<sup>198</sup> The most long-standing solid pillar of Sterling's faculty, however, was mathematics professor Talmon Bell. In 1945, Bell, an alumnus from the class of 1895, celebrated 50 years of service at Sterling College. The October 1944 issue of *The Sterlingtonian* celebrated Talmon and his wife, Pearl as the "Golden Bells." His work at Sterling "paralleled the whole history of Sterling College," including the difficult times of the college, during which he "labored with great faithfulness." He was a symbol of the perseverance of the college, for he had seen her through to the present moment: "Brighter days have come. The outlook is full of promise and the college takes pleasure in according honor to one who has aided greatly its success."<sup>199</sup> The long service of these faculty members thus provided a sense of continuity with the past that helped to bolster confidence in the future.

### "GOOD TIMES AHEAD" AND THE CHANGING OF THE GUARD

As the war neared its end, optimism flourished. Soldiers like E.W. Lintecum wrote encouragingly of the college and what was to come: "Yes, there are lots of good times ahead at Sterling."<sup>200</sup> The establishment of the GI Bill brought great anticipation of increasing enrollment as soldiers returned to the States eager for the next chapter of their lives: "Our college doors are wide open to welcome returning servicemen to receive an education under ideal conditions."<sup>201</sup> The school's growth would be enhanced by the lack of competition from other church-related schools to the west for almost 500 miles and high expectations for the

booming industrial economy of Kansas promised a large pool of prospective students. The alumni newsletter offered soaring hopes: “Sterling College sits at the very center of this great area into which new tides of life are pouring.”<sup>202</sup> The key strength of Sterling was the confluence of liberal arts and its strong Christian character that had been so faithfully promoted by Kelsey. It was celebrated as a place of “true knowledge, culture, refinement, moral principles, spiritual understanding, and personal consecration to the Lord Jesus Christ.”<sup>203</sup>

If the school was to fulfill this lofty destiny, physical growth was needed. At the top of the list was the addition of a new library, a plan that had been in view since at least 1939, with the organization of a group called the “Friends of the Library” to collect funds for this project.<sup>204</sup> The war sidetracked the project, both through financial challenges and through the lack of building materials available.<sup>205</sup> As the war wound down, the library once again began to be a top priority. History professor Merlyn G. Cox argue for the importance of the library as at the center of the life of a liberal arts college like Sterling, championing as it did “unfettered Christian thinking, synonymous with education in a free world.”<sup>206</sup> The library was the cornerstone of this “bulwark of democracy.”

Gifts for the library increased as 1944 came to an end. “The first thousand-dollar gift for the Building Fund came in unsolicited last week,” *The Sterlingtonian* reported in its December 1944 issue, and increases in annual gifts from the churches of the denomination were encouraging.<sup>207</sup> Even more significantly, the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church launched a campaign called the “World-Wide Christian Advance,” which it called “our part in a great Christian Crusade of the post-war years.”<sup>208</sup> The goal of the campaign was to raise two million dollars, primarily for non-recurring costs. Sterling’s library would be one of the projects that benefited from this campaign. There was good reason for Sterling’s hopes to peak.

The optimism of Sterling and its supporters was not disappointed. Sterling did indeed experience significant growth after the war. Enrollment grew, intercollegiate football and a regular basketball schedule were reinstated, there was cash on hand, and funds for the library rolled in.<sup>209</sup> The 1946 school year saw the enrollment of 94 ex-servicemen and a total of 291 students.<sup>210</sup>

It was a new chapter in the life of the college. The page was turned from a period of scraping by to one in which “the existence of the college is well assured.”<sup>211</sup> It was also a moment of transition in leadership. The end of



the 1945–1946 school year signaled the long-expected retirement of Hugh Kelsey after thirteen years as the president of the college. He had been a source of strength during the war. *The Sterlingian* labeled him “An Ideal President” and faculty remarked that his “faith in the unfailing providence of God has been a constant source of inspiration to all who have been privileged to work with him.”<sup>212</sup> The long-tenured Talmon Bell was also taking his leave, though asked to stay on in a part-time role until the college could find a suitable replacement.<sup>213</sup> The yearbook captured well the end of an era. The final photograph in the 1945 *Round-Up* pictured Talmon Bell and his wife, shadowed by the setting sun.<sup>214</sup>

Kelsey’s successor as president reflected the changing times and the optimistic, forward-looking approach that so characterized the post-war years. Whereas Kelsey had been a long-time pastor and took office as an older man, William McCreery was just 34 years old when he took the reins of the school. He had been a pastor in Wyoming for only eight years but had built a particular reputation for building up the young people of the church.<sup>215</sup> His was the future of Sterling College, and for the next 27 years he would be its representative, though Kelsey’s legacy would live on with the naming of the new library in his honor.<sup>216</sup>

The stage was thus set for a fresh chapter in Sterling’s history. A story from the first year in peacetime provides a telling reflection of this shift. One night early in the fall term of 1946, a truck full of “big, red, juicy-meat watermelons” pulled onto the athletic fields at Sterling College. A feast had been prepared for the college community and the call of “Help yourselves!” signaled the availability of an overflowing bounty ready and waiting for those present for this celebratory event marking the beginning of the year.<sup>217</sup> It was a moment that captured well the ethos of the nascent post-war period. The world and Sterling College had survived a harrowing conflict and the way was open for a time of playful delight, abundance, and hope.

## NOTES

1. “Mrs. Smith Gives Farewell Dinner,” *Ye Sterling Stir* 54, no. 7 (January 19, 1943): 1, [http://hitsofalldecades.com/chart\\_hits/index2.php?option=com\\_content&do\\_pdf=1&id=1428](http://hitsofalldecades.com/chart_hits/index2.php?option=com_content&do_pdf=1&id=1428) (Billboard charts).
2. “Honoring Our Service Men,” *The Sterlingian* (February 1943), 1.
3. Minutes of the Board of Trustees of Sterling College, November 10, 1932, Sterling College Archives; Minutes of the Board of Trustees, December 6, 1932.

4. Hugh Alexander Kelsey, *The Life Story of a Garden Variety Preacher* (Sterling, KS: Sterling College, 2007), 51. Indeed, the Synod's Committee on Sterling College, on Kelsey's assumption of the presidency, referred to his job as a "herculean task," "Report of Committee on Sterling College, *Minutes of the Synod of Kansas*, 1933, 22.
5. The role of the ACE, including conferences held for college presidents and select military officers, is described in V.R. Cardozier, *Colleges and Universities in World War II* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1993).
6. Kelsey, Baccalaureate Sermon, 20 May 1945, 8.
7. "Report on Education," *Minutes of the Synod of Kansas*, 33, 17.
8. "Report of Committee on Sterling College," *Minutes of the Synod of Kansas*, 1933, 23; a story of the attack of a public university professor in Oklahoma on the Bible and Christianity is recounted in "Report on Education," *Minutes of the Synod of Kansas*, 1934, 14.
9. "Report of Committee on Sterling College," *Minutes of the Synod of Kansas*, 1933, 23.
10. Hugh Kelsey, "The Christian College as a Spiritual Force," *Christian Education* 20, no. 5 (June 1937): 341.
11. Kelsey, "The Christian College as a Spiritual Force," *Christian Education* 20, no. 5 (June 1937): 339.
12. The catalog from 1940–1941, describes the Life Service Group as "an organization composed of those students in college who purpose to enter some form of definite Christian service as a life's vocation," *Sterling College Catalog*, 1940, 18. Over time, the requirement for Christian service as a vocation was dropped in favor of allowing membership for all "who dedicate themselves to follow His will in choosing their life work and to serve Him wherever He may lead them," "History of Life Service," *The Sterlingtonian* (January 1943), 2. Other religious organizations at the college included the Young Men's and Young Women's Christian Associations (Y.M.C.A. and Y.W.C.A.), which focused on "the maintenance of individual Christian character, and ... the establishment of a real Christian social order on the campus," *Sterling College Catalog*, 1940, 18.
13. In his 1945 baccalaureate address, Kelsey explained the restrictions of Sterling's social program, arguing the ideal behind it was absorbed by students "[n]ot because we say that Sterling students must not do certain things, but because it soon becomes obvious to the thoughtful young person that the things we omit are injurious to the growth and strength of an upright character and do not find a proper place in his conduct," Hugh Kelsey, "It is Time to Make a Stand," Baccalaureate Sermon (May 20, 1945), Sterling College Archives, 4–5. Kelsey's autobiography includes significant sections that detail his work on behalf of

- "dry laws" while he was pastor, including his campaign against saloons while he was pastor of the church in East Liverpool, Pennsylvania, Kelsey, *Life Story*, 37. Kelsey's hard line against alcohol is demonstrated by his unwillingness to allow a representative from a distillery to visit campus to solicit students for employment, even though their production had transitioned to the production of industrial alcohol to support the war effort, "College President Speaks His Mind," *The United Presbyterian* (June 7, 1943), 17.
14. "Report of the President of Sterling College," *Minutes of the Synod of Kansas*, 1934, 27.
  15. Wuthnow, *Red State Religion: Faith and Politics in America's Heartland* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 2012), 364.
  16. Kelsey was very critical of the measures taken by FDR during the Depression, Kelsey, *Life Story*, 51. Wuthnow describes the growing dissatisfaction with Roosevelt's policies during his second term in office, Wuthnow, 171–173.
  17. "The path of a 'cheaper education' has been insidiously offered the public and the youth of the land has been drifting into institutions that do splendid work, but from the standpoint that we are now discussing, they are Christless!" "Report on Education," *Minutes of the Synod of Kansas*, 1939, 12.
  18. B.M. Dobbin, "Report on Education," *Minutes of the Synod of Kansas*, 1938.
  19. "Report on Education," *Minutes of the Synod of Kansas*, 1939, 12.
  20. "Industrial leaders like Henry Ford, Roger Babson, psychologists like Dr. Henry Link, statesmen like Secretary of State Cordell Hull, are of one voice in declaring that the preeminent leadership in saving America and in saving the world must be a spiritual leadership," "Report on Education," *Minutes of the Synod of Kansas*, 1939, 12.
  21. "Report of Sterling College," *Minutes of the Synod of Kansas*, 1935, 11; "Report of Sterling College," *Minutes of the Synod of Kansas*, 1937, 14.
  22. Arthur W. Calhoun, "Sterling Factors Determining the Future Success Of," *The Sterlingian* (November 1938), 3.
  23. "Report on Education," *Minutes of the Synod of Kansas*, 1939, 11.
  24. J.H. Hutchman, "Report on Board of Education," *Minutes of the Synod of Kansas*, 1939, 11–12.
  25. Kelsey, "General Outlook," *The Sterlingian* (January 1946), 1; 85% of the faculty scale was paid in 1941–1942, "Report of the President," *MSK*, 1941, 22; 93% was paid in 1942–1943, "The President's Report," *MSK*, 1943, 11; and "The President's Report," *MSK*, 1944, 9.
  26. Dorothy Williams, "Speaking of Sacrifice," *Ye Sterling Stir* (March 3, 1942), 2.

27. "Student Self Help," *The Sterlington* (November 1944), 1.
28. Kelsey, *Life Story*, 37.
29. William Johnson, "Committee on Reform," *Minutes of the Synod of Kansas*, 1937, 26.
30. "Sterling College Loyal to Defense Program," *The Sterlington* (October 1942), 2.
31. "Sterling College Loyal to Defense Program," *The Sterlington* (October 1942), 2. In a similar vein, Hugh Kelsey stated the following in an address to students awaiting the call: "Of course, none of us believe that war is the best method of bringing about human progress, but for the moment men have decreed that it is the method they will follow," "Honoring Our Service Men," *The Sterlington* (February 1943), 1.
32. "Sterling College Loyal to Defense Program," *The Sterlington* (October 1942), 2.
33. There were 142 names on the Student Service Roll and 105 on Alumni Service roll, with some duplications, for a total of 210 distinct individuals, "Alma Mater," *The Sterlington* (October 1944), 1.
34. *The Round-Up*, 1943, 77-80; The 1944 *Round-Up* includes an "In Memoriam" section for three student deaths as well as a "Service Roll" section, 68-72; likewise, the 1945 *Round-Up* had a similar structure to the 1944 yearbook, 70-74, and included a photograph of the chapel Service Roll, 72. The full text of the 1943 dedication was: "To the men who have left us, who have interrupted their careers, who have placed their country's security before their own, who have pledged themselves to safeguarding our freedom, we gratefully dedicate this 1943 Round-Up," 3.
35. "Alma Mater," *The Sterlington* (October 1944), 1-2.
36. "Alma Mater," *The Sterlington* (October 1944), 1.
37. "Honoring Our Service Men," *The Sterlington* (February 1943), 1.
38. "Uncle Sam and Miss Liberty to Be Crowned," *Ye Sterling Stir* (March 16, 1943), 1.
39. "Hazlett and White Crowned Miss Liberty and Uncle Sam," *Ye Sterling Stir* (May 11, 1943), 1.
40. "Report of the President," *Minute of the Synod of Kansas*, 1941, 19.
41. "Report of the President," *Minutes of the Synod of Kansas*, 1941, 19.
42. "Report of the President," *Minutes of the Synod of Kansas*, 1941, 19. Here Kelsey is certainly referring to Roosevelt's economic policies in the wake of the New Deal, which he roundly criticizes in his autobiography (see above). The governmental intervention in the economy is noted as having particularly hurt endowment yields, so that "all endowed philanthropic and educational institutions were given a solar plexus blow," "The President's Report," *Minutes of the Synod of Kansas*, 17.

43. "Report of the President," *Minutes of the Synod of Kansas*, 1941, 22.
44. "The President's Report," *Minutes of the Synod of Kansas*, 1943, 10.
45. *The Sterlingan* (September 1942), 1.
46. "Sterling Goes Military," *The Sterlingan* (October 1942), 1. Williams, Dorothy L., "School Boys," *Ye Sterling Stir* (September 29, 1942), 2.
47. Williams, Dorothy L., "School Boys," *Ye Sterling Stir* (September 29, 1942), 2.
48. "The Second Semester," *The Sterlingan* (December 1943), 4.
49. "Sterling Goes Military," *The Sterlingan* (October 1942), 1.
50. "Sterling Goes Military," *The Sterlingan* (October 1942), 1.
51. "Why Go to College Now?" *The Sterlingan* (August 1943), 1.
52. "Why Go to College Now?" *The Sterlingan* (August 1943), 1.
53. "Williams, Dorothy L., "Sixty to Nothing," *Ye Sterling Stir* (October 13, 1942), 2.
54. Williams, Dorothy L., "Students Face Uncertainly as Second Semester Begins," *Ye Sterling Stir* (January 19, 1943), 2.
55. "A Message from Our President," *Ye Sterling Stir* (October 2, 1944), 2.
56. The denominational periodical also regularly presented articles defending the Christian liberal arts tradition: "Our Colleges—Liberal Arts Being Ignored," *United Presbyterian* (February 15, 1943), 5; Gregg Singer, "The Future of Education," *United Presbyterian* (February 22, 1943), 11.
57. "Why a Liberal Arts Education?" *The Sterlingan* (March 1943), 1.
58. "Why a Liberal Arts Education?" *The Sterlingan* (March 1943), 1.
59. "Landon on Liberal Arts," *The Sterlingan* (March 1943), 1.
60. "Landon on Liberal Arts," *The Sterlingan* (March 1943), 1.
61. "An Open Door," *The Sterlingan* (June 1943), 3.
62. "Mid Year Class at Work," *The Sterlingan* (February 1943), 4.
63. "Whence the Funds Come," *The Sterlingan* (January 1945), 3.
64. "Sterling College Loyal to Defense Program," *The Sterlingan* (October 1942), 2.
65. "Sterling College Loyal to Defense Program," *The Sterlingan* (October 1942), 2.
66. "The President's Report," *Minutes of the Synod of Kansas*, 1942, 19.
67. *The Sterlingan* (February 1943), 2–3.
68. Sterling's attractions during the summer were advertised in the February 1943 edition of *The Sterlingan*, with an article about recreation at Sterling Lake, "Sterling Lake," *The Sterlingan* (February 1943), 3.
69. "Six Seniors Take Degree at Mid-Term," *Ye Sterling Stir* (January 19, 1943), 1.
70. "In Uniform," *Ye Sterling Stir* (September 28, 1943), 2.
71. In his autobiography, Kelsey viewed his time as pastor in Oxford, Ohio, as providing him valuable experience in seeing men off to war.

In that role, Kelsey “made a very real effort to keep in touch them as they were scattered over the world,” Kelsey, *Life Story*, 34. As an example of Kelsey’s correspondence with Sterling men, Bob Stinson mentions that “there is an occasional letter from Dr. Kelsey. That itself is a good morale-builder,” “With the Boys,” *Ye Sterling Stir* (January 15, 1945), 3. Lois Scritchfield (“Scritchie”), Dr. Kelsey’s secretary: “She corresponds regularly with one hundred and twenty-five service men. (Of course Dr. Kelsey tells her what to sway, but Scritchie does write it down,” “Lois Scritchfield Just ‘Adores’ Olives,” *Ye Sterling Stir* (April 18, 1944), 2.

72. Earle E. Brehmer mentioned, for instance, receiving “The Stir” in England, which prompted “remembering the four years he spent here in college,” “With the Boys,” *Ye Sterling Stir* (February 8, 1944), 3.
73. “With the Boys,” *Ye Sterling Stir* (January 15, 1945), 3.
74. “Campbell Girls Send Boxes to Boys,” *Ye Sterling Stir* (December 14, 1943), 1. “With the Boys,” *Ye Sterling Stir* (March 7, 1944), 2.
75. “What to Write to Service Men,” *The Sterlington* (November 1943), 3.
76. “N. Smith Joins Wacs,” *Ye Sterling Stir* (February 8, 1944), 1; “With the Boys,” *Ye Sterling Stir* (April 18, 1944), 3.
77. “News Flashes,” *The Sterlington* (December 1943), 4.
78. “Dear Faculty and Students,” *Ye Sterling Stir* (February 16, 1943), 1.
79. “With the Boys,” *Ye Sterling Stir* (October 30, 1944), 3.
80. “With the Boys,” *Ye Sterling Stir* (February 8, 1944), 3.
81. “Tunnell Describes Native Dance,” *Ye Sterling Stir* (February 22, 1944), 4.
82. “With the Boys,” *Ye Sterling Stir* (February 8, 1944), 3. The “With the Boys” section replaced “The Standard Bearer,” which had been the section devoted to soldiers in the 1942–1943 *Ye Sterling Stir*.
83. “With the Boys,” *Ye Sterling Stir* (November 13, 1944), 3.
84. “With the Boys,” *Ye Sterling Stir* (October 30, 1944), 3.
85. Five birth announcements to servicemen and their wives were announced in “With the Boys,” *Ye Sterling Stir* (May 7, 1945), 3.
86. “Well Decorated Con Rowland Returns from South Pacific,” *Ye Sterling Stir* (October 21, 1944), 2.
87. In one 1944 issue, Captain Harvey Luce, Cadet Nurse Lucile Gordon, Pfc. Dean McElroy, and Private A.J. Kimple were all reported as having visited campus within the past week. Cadet Nurse Gordon sported a “beautiful sparkler” of an engagement ring from Pfc. Orval Hamm, “With the Boys,” *Ye Sterling Stir* (May 22, 1944), 3.
88. “Arthur Sanderson Returns Home After Flying in Three Invasions; Awarded Air Medal,” *Ye Sterling Stir* (February 8, 1944), 1–2.
89. “Arthur Sanderson Returns Home,” *Ye Sterling Stir* (February 8, 1944), 2.
90. “With the Boys,” *Ye Sterling Stir* (January 15, 1945), 3.

91. "With the Boys," *Ye Sterling Stir* (March 12, 1945), 3.
92. "The Boys at the Front," *The Sterlingan* (March 1943), 1.
93. "Boys Writing Home," *The Sterlingan* (November 1944), 3.
94. "The Boys at the Front," *The Sterlingan* (March 1943), 1.
95. "With the Boys," *Ye Sterling Stir* (November 13, 1944), 3.
96. "Alumni and College News," *The Sterlingan* (December 1942), 4.
97. "Capt. Zeller in Hospital Unit," *Ye Sterling Stir* (November 28, 1944), 3.
98. "Capt. Zeller in Hospital Unit," *Ye Sterling Stir* (November 28, 1944), 3.
99. "Sterling Alumnus Head Chaplain," *Ye Sterling Stir* (February 22, 1944), 1.
100. Dale Crippen's death was reported in "Sterling Goes Military," *The Sterlingan* (October 1942), 1. The details of Robert Pinkerton's death were given in "In Memoriam," *Ye Sterling Stir* (September 28, 1943), 2. Harold Santee's accident is mentioned in "College Holds Memorial Service," *Ye Sterling Stir* (May 21, 1945), 2.
101. "College Holds Memorial Service," *Ye Sterling Stir* (May 21, 1945), 2.
102. "College Holds Memorial Service," *Ye Sterling Stir* (May 21, 1945), 2.
103. "Former Student Killed in War," *Ye Sterling Stir* (May 24, 1943), 3.
104. "Prof. Dykstra Leaves for Army," *Ye Sterling Stir* (February 2, 1943), 1.
105. "Dykstra Returns from Wars with the U.S. Army," *Ye Sterling Stir* (February 16, 1943), 1–2. The following year, Dykstra departed Sterling for Johns Hopkins University, having received a fellowship for further post-graduate work, "The President's Report," *Minutes of the Synod of Kansas*, 1943, 10.
106. "Lawless is Exempted from Selective Service," *Ye Sterling Stir* (January 19, 1943), 1.
107. "Inis Springer Enters WAC," *Ye Sterling Stir* (January 15, 1945), 1.
108. "New Faculty Members Fill Vacant Posts," *Ye Sterling Stir* (September 29, 1942), 3; "Uncle Sam's Nephews," *Ye Sterling Stir* (October 2, 1944), 4.
109. "Lieut. Leon Akin is Prisoner of War," *Ye Sterling Stir* (March 12, 1945), 1.
110. "Alumni and College News," *The Sterlingan* (August 1945), 4.
111. "New Faculty Members Fill Vacant Posts," *Ye Sterling Stir* (September 29, 1942), 1.
112. "Report of the President," *Minutes of the Synod of Kansas*, 1941, 20.
113. The 1931 Kansas Synod minutes particularly note the concern about low enrollment, "Report of Permanent Committee on Sterling College," *Minutes of the Synod of Kansas*, 1931, 29–31. Under Kelsey's leadership, enrollment had increased. In 1936, an increase of 10% was indicated at the meeting of the Kansas Synod, "Sterling College—President's Report," *Minutes of the Synod of Kansas*, 1936, 16. Total enrollment in

- the fall of 1939 was 250, an increase of 25% from the previous year, "President's Report," *Minutes of the Synod of Kansas*, 1939, 17.
114. Fall 1940 enrollment was 259 students, "President's Report," *Minutes of the Synod of Kansas*, 1940, 14; by Fall 1941, attendance was down to 217, "Report of the President," *Minutes of the Synod of Kansas*, 1941, 22 and declined to 180 by the opening of the second semester, "Second Semester Opens with Loss of Thirty Students," *Ye Sterling Stir* (February 17, 1942).
  115. "Freshman Days Usher in New Year of School," *Ye Sterling Stir* (September 29, 1942), 1; "Registration Totals Almost Two Hundred," *Ye Sterling Stir* (September 29, 1942), 1.
  116. "College Sees Fifty-second Registration," *Ye Sterling Stir* (September 28, 1943), 1.
  117. "College Sees Fifty-second Registration," *Ye Sterling Stir* (September 28, 1943), 1.
  118. "Fifteen Men in Freshman Class," *Ye Sterling Stir* (October 2, 1944), 1.
  119. "Kelsey Attends U. P. Conference," *Ye Sterling Stir* (November 6, 1942), 3.
  120. "Committee on Sterling College," *Minutes of the Synod of Kansas*, 1940, 13.
  121. *The Sterlington* (August 1943), 4.
  122. That Kelsey was largely absent is indicated by "Dr. Kelsey Returns for a Short Visit," *Ye Sterling Stir* (October 16, 1943), 1.
  123. "Kelsey Returns to Campus After Five Months' Absence," *Ye Sterling Stir* (March 7, 1944), 1; a description of the campaign's organization, leadership, and goal are in "The Campaign," *The Sterlington* (September 1943), 3.
  124. "The College and Church Life," *The Sterlington* (December 1943), 1.
  125. "The President's Report," *Minutes of the Synod of Kansas*, 1943, 12.
  126. "I have been in the Pittsburgh office only two weeks, and am realizing something of the size of the task; but I have hopes that the effort will be quite successful," "The President's Report," *Minutes of the Synod of Kansas*, 1943, 12.
  127. There was some pushback on the November date, as it was perceived as having the potential to interfere with annual offerings taken around the holiday season, "The Plan," *The Sterlington* (December 1943).
  128. Wilbur Patterson, "The World Around Us," *Ye Sterling Stir* (September 28, 1943), 3.
  129. "Help with War Bonds," *The Sterlington* (December 1943), 3.
  130. "Returning Servicemen," *The Sterlington* (December 1944), 3.
  131. "Returning Servicemen," *The Sterlington* (December 1944), 3.
  132. "Still Short of Goal in College Campaign," *Ye Sterling Stir* (March 21, 1944), 1.
  133. "The President's Report," *Minutes of the Synod of Kansas*, 1944, 9.



134. *Minutes of the Synod of Kansas, 1944, 27.*
135. "Still Short of Goal in College Campaign," *Ye Sterling Stir* (March 21, 1944), 1. In 1944, the Committee on Sterling College recommended that "Each pastor and congregation endeavor to have all students of our homes attend Sterling, as well as encouraging others to attend," *Minutes of the Synod of Kansas, 1944, 26.*
136. "Men's Gospel Team," *The Sterlingan* (January 1943), 3.
137. "Dr. Kelsey Challenges Both Gospel Teams," *Ye Sterling Stir* (September 28, 1943), 1.
138. "Men's Gospel Team Sees Opportunities," *Ye Sterling Stir* (October 16, 1943), 3. During 1943–1944, the Men's Gospel Team conducted services in Saxman, Wellington Lutheran, and Eureka, "Men's Gospel Team Conducts Services," *Ye Sterling Stir* (March 7, 1944).
139. "Gospel Team Makes Extended Easter Trip," *Ye Sterling Stir* (April 18, 1944), 1.
140. "Women's Gospel Team Forms Children's Club," *Ye Sterling Stir* (October 26, 1943), 3.
141. "Men's Gospel Team to Begin Boys' Clubs," *Ye Sterling Stir* (November 23, 1943), 4.
142. Another way in which such connections were fostered with the children from the town was the creation of a "Knothole Club." Members of the club, grade school students between third and eighth grade, received a membership card that granted them admission to all Sterling College home basketball games, "College Forms Knothole Club," *Ye Sterling Stir* (November 232, 1943), 4.
143. "Warriors Play Here Friday," *Ye Sterling Stir* (September 29, 1942), 4.
144. "Warriors Lose at Homecoming," *Ye Sterling Stir* (November 24, 1942), 4. "Another Sports Season Ends," *Ye Sterling Stir* (May 24, 1943), 5.
145. "Yelich, Frederick Join Armed Forces," *Ye Sterling Stir* (November 24, 1942), 1.
146. "Another Sport Season Ends," *Ye Sterling Stir* (May 24, 1943), 5.
147. "End Inter-collegiate Activity for Duration," *Ye Sterling Stir* (May 24, 1943), 5.
148. Ray Patterson, "Review of Season," *Ye Sterling Stir* (March 7, 1944), 4.
149. Duane Wilson, "Sport Squibs," *Ye Sterling Stir* (December 14, 1943), 4.
150. Bob Clark, "The Sportlight," *Ye Sterling Stir* (February 26, 1945), 4.
151. Duane Wilson, "Sport Squibs," *Ye Sterling Stir* (September 28, 1943), 4; "Warriors Down High School With Full Team," *Ye Sterling Stir* (October 16, 1943), 4. In the first loss to the high school, the college had to be spotted four high school team members in order to take the field. The Kansas State Guard game was initially slated to be played with

- a six-man squad, though the roster in the box score demonstrates that eleven men were on the field, "Warriors Battle Guards Tonight," *Ye Sterling Stir* (October 26, 1943), 4; "Warriors Down Local Guards," *Ye Sterling Stir* (November 9, 1943), 4.
152. "Pillow Slippers Outplay Wefts," *Ye Sterling Stir* (October 26, 1943), 4; Duane Wilson, "Sport Squibs," *Ye Sterling Stir* (October 26, 1943), 4.
  153. *Ye Sterling Stir* (October 26, 1943), 4.
  154. "Adair is King of Intramurals," *Ye Sterling Stir* (March 16, 1943), 4; "Reds Defeat Whites in Six-man Game," *Ye Sterling Stir* (April 13, 1943), 4; "Scholars Edge Out Victory Over Hobos," *Ye Sterling Stir* (February 2, 1943), 4.
  155. "Intramural Program Outlined for Year," *Ye Sterling Stir* (October 26, 1944), 4.
  156. Duane Wilson, "With the Warriors," *Ye Sterling Stir* (April 27, 1943), 4.
  157. "Sutton, Larsen Lead in Batting Average," *Ye Sterling Stir* (May 11, 1943), 4.
  158. "Hill-Billies Lose to Puffin's Preachers," *Ye Sterling Stir* (March 12, 1945), 4; "Dill Pickles Defeat Puffin' Preachers," *Ye Sterling Stir* (March 12, 1945), 4; and "Smelling is Worse than Stinking," *Ye Sterling Stir* (March 26, 1945), 4.
  159. Duane Wilson, "Sport Squibs," *Ye Sterling Stir* (October 26, 1943), 4.
  160. "Character Building at Sterling," *The Sterlingtonian* (February 1945), 2.
  161. "Physical Manhood," *The Sterlingtonian* (October 1942), 3.
  162. B.M. Dobbin, "Report on Education," *Minutes of the Synod of Kansas*, 1938.
  163. "Miss Campbell to Speak for I.R.C. Banquet," *Ye Sterling Stir* (October 13, 1942), 1; "Existing Communism Presented at I.R.C.," *Ye Sterling Stir* (November 23, 1943), 1.
  164. "Chapels," *Ye Sterling Stir* (February 8, 1944), 1.
  165. "Germany Must Purify Self," *Ye Sterling Stir* (October 2, 1944), 1.
  166. "Y. W. Girls Present Attitudes Toward War," *Ye Sterling Stir* (December 14, 1943), 4; "Dick Johnson Leads Y.M.C.A. Meeting," *Ye Sterling Stir* (March 7, 1944), 1.
  167. "Sterling Instigates New Curriculum in Line with Emergency," *Ye Sterling Stir* (January 20, 1942), 1; "Western Community Ends World-After-War Studies," *The United Presbyterian* (March 26, 1942), 19.
  168. "Chinese Author Lectures Here," *Ye Sterling Stir* (April 27, 1943), 3.
  169. "Observe World Students' Day," *Ye Sterling Stir* (November 28, 1944), 1.
  170. Wilbur Patterson, "The World Around Us," *Ye Sterling Stir* (September 28, 1943), 3.
  171. "Quotable Quotes," *Ye Sterling Stir* (April 27, 1943), 2.
  172. "Problem Arises Over Christmas Vacation," *Ye Sterling Stir* (November 9, 1943), 1.

173. Wilbur Patterson, "The World Around Us," *Ye Sterling Stir* (November 9, 1943), 3.
174. Wilbur Patterson, "The World Around Us," *Ye Sterling Stir* (December 14, 1943), 3.
175. Henry Kissman, "Be Ye Doers," *Ye Sterling Stir* (November 23, 1943), 3.
176. Wilbur Patterson, "Be Ye Doers," *Ye Sterling Stir* (February 8, 1944), 3.
177. Henry Kissman, "Be Ye Doers," *Ye Sterling Stir* (March 7, 1944), 3.
178. "Kissman, Rudin, Austrian Students, Like America and Intend to Remain," *Ye Sterling Stir* (October 27, 1942), 1, 3. See also Henry Kissman, *Views from the Road I Traveled: Segments of an Autobiography* (Xilibris, 2008).
179. "Classes Elect Officers Friday," *Ye Sterling Stir* (September 28, 1943), 4; "Three Seniors Win Honors," *Ye Sterling Stir* (May 22, 1944), 1.
180. "Introducing ...," *Ye Sterling Stir* (February 8, 1944), 2.
181. "Kissman, Rudin, Austrian Students, Like America and Intend to Remain," *Ye Sterling Stir* (October 27, 1942), 1, 3.
182. "Widely Traveled Vicky Rudin Finds that People are Funny," *Ye Sterling Stir* (November 13, 1944), 2.
183. "Sophs Rank High in General Culture Test," *Ye Sterling Stir* (May 22, 1944), 1; "Widely Traveled Vicky Rudin Finds that People are Funny," *Ye Sterling Stir* (November 13, 1944), 2; Vera Rudin, "Time for Decision," *Ye Sterling Stir* (November 13, 1944), 4. Rudin also spoke of her experiences to the Methodist "Who Do" Sunday School class, "Student is Guest," *Ye Sterling Stir* (February 16, 1943), 4.
184. "Shizuko (Suzie) Sakai Interview Segment 08," Interviewed by Dane Fujimoto, Oregon Endowment Collection, accessed December 31 2017. <https://archive.org/details/ddr-one-7-4-8>.
185. Her praise in her later years was guarded, however. She explained difficulties with her roommate who was "trying to convert me," which finally resulted in her requesting and being granted a change of roommates, "Shizuko (Suzie) Sakai Interview Segment 08," Interviewed by Dane Fujimoto, Oregon Endowment Collection, accessed December 31, 2017. <https://archive.org/details/ddr-one-7-4-8>.
186. "Y.W. Theme Was Brotherhood," *Ye Sterling Stir* (April 18, 1944), 4.
187. "Y.W. Heart Sister Week Ends," *Ye Sterling Stir* (February 22, 1944), 1; "Observe World Students' Day," *Ye Sterling Stir* (November 28, 1944), 1.
188. "Boyle Outlines Scene in China," *Ye Sterling Stir* (May 22, 1944), 3.
189. "Jean McCowan is President for Next Year," *Ye Sterling Stir* (May 2, 1944), 1. Hayashi's involvement in service on campus is also evidenced through her winning of the Smith Prize, for those who were of most help to Mrs. Smith in the cafeteria, "Six Receive Awards at Commencement," *Ye Sterling Stir* (May 22, 1944), 1.
190. Kelsey, *Life Story*, 59.

191. Hugh Kelsey, "A Message from Our President," *Ye Sterling Stir* (October 2, 1944), 2; Kelsey, "I Congratulate," *The Sterlingan* (February 1944), 1.
192. Kelsey, "Does Our Christian Program Function?" *The Sterlingan* (February 1945), 2.
193. "The Bible, The Basis of Christian Faith," *The Sterlingan* (February 1945), 3.
194. "Stirrings by the Stirrer," *Ye Sterling Stir* (May 22, 1944), 2.
195. "Old College Days," *The Sterlingan* (October 1945), 2.
196. Kelsey had experienced serious health issues during the 1938–1939 school year which had necessitated a lessening of his duties for a time, "Report on Sterling College," *Minutes of the Synod of Kansas*, 1939, 14–15.
197. "The President's Report," *Minutes of the Synod of Kansas*, 1944, 11.
198. *Sterling College Catalog*, 1941, 5.
199. "The Bells of Sterling College," *The Sterlingan* (October 1944), 2.
200. "With the Boys," *Ye Sterling Stir* (November 13, 1944), 3.
201. "Education for Servicemen," *The Sterlingan* (November 1944), 1.
202. "Enlargement Needed," *The Sterlingan* (January 1945), 2.
203. "Enlargement Needed," *The Sterlingan* (January 1945), 2. It is evident that the Presbyterian church as a whole could clearly see the way that Sterling's Christian identity had been cultivated. In view of the progress of Sterling, the Nebraska Synod voted in 1946 to support Sterling financially: "We have all noted with satisfaction the growth and development of Sterling College in the past few years and the promise of sound financial, educational, and spiritual advancement in the years to come," "Report of Special Committee on Synod's Alignment with Colleges," *Minutes of the Synod of Kansas*, 1946, 18.
204. *The Sterlingan* (November 1939), 3. This project was seen as necessary "to help build the College Library up to a point equal to libraries of other schools." Without this, there was no hope of being readmitted to the North Central Association of Colleges.
205. "Library Corner," *The Sterlingan* (November 1941), 3.
206. Merlyn G. Cox, "Why a New Library Building?" *The Sterlingan* (April 1944), 3.
207. "News Flashes," *The Sterlingan* (December 1944), 2.
208. "Why Advance Now?" *The Sterlingan* (September 1945), 3.
209. "President's Report," *Minutes of the Synod of Kansas*, 1945, 14–17. In addition, the college received gifts of farmland, \$20,000 for scholarships, and twenty-six lots adjacent to campus from the city of Sterling, "The Course of Events," *The Sterlingan* (June 1946), 1.

210. "Report of the President of Sterling College," *Minutes of the Synod of Kansas*, 1946, 16.
211. "Report of the President of Sterling College," *Minutes of the Synod of Kansas*, 1946, 16.
212. *The Sterlington* (June 1946), 1, 4.
213. "Report of the President of Sterling College," *Minutes of the Synod of Kansas*, 1946, 16.
214. *Round-Up*, 1945, 84.
215. "Pres. McCreery Begins Work Among Students," *Ye Sterling Stir* (September 24, 1946), 1; "The New President," *The Sterlington* (August 1946), 1.
216. "The Kelsey Library," *The Sterlington* (November 1945), 4.
217. "Opening Events," *The Sterlington* (September 1946), 3.



## Noncombatancy and Patriotism: Walla Walla College in World War II

*Terrie Aamodt*

It was a perfect spring evening in 1941. Walla Walla College students sauntered out of the cafeteria to enjoy a recreation period before returning to the dormitories to study. Baseball enthusiasts played catch on the lawn in front of the administration building while indoor diehards shot a few baskets in the gymnasium. Couples hovered around the pond in front of the cafeteria, pretending to count the goldfish. Then a bugle pierced the happy scene as a line of uniformed young men filed into position around the flagpole in the center of the campus. The games were silenced as the flag descended to the accompaniment of the national anthem. The uniformed men saluted smartly, the players faced the flag and held their baseball caps over their hearts, and the young men and women near the pond stood at attention, facing the flag. Another weekly Retreat exercise conducted by the Medical Cadet Corps was complete.<sup>1</sup>

“We as Seventh-day Adventists should be particularly careful to render all courtesies due the flag of the United States,” Orason Brinker, the college’s MCC leader and physical education teacher, told the student body. “This is one way in which we can demonstrate our patriotism and love for our country.”<sup>2</sup>

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In early 1941, demonstrating patriotism and love for country included preparing for war, at a time when some voices in the United States were still calling for non-involvement. The college president, Dr. George Bowers, noted events in war-torn Europe and observed that the United States would no doubt be drawn into the conflict: "Great events have happened. The world is in turmoil. Age old governments have been overpowered and conquered. The maps of the world are changing daily. Nothing seems stable. Our own beloved America is shaking off its cloak of security and isolation and is becoming alert to present-day conditions and dangers."<sup>3</sup> After the war began, Bowers pointed out that "Seventh-day Adventists have always been ready and willing to cooperate with our government in any way not conflicting with conscience."<sup>4</sup> World War II would shape an entire era at Walla Walla College and other Seventh-day Adventist institutions. It would be the source of hardship, anxiety, and tragedy for college students. It would also mold the exuberant school spirit of an enormous postwar generation.

The college had been preparing for wartime for several years, addressing preparation for a possible war at its February 1938 board meeting. Near the close of World War I, the trustees had voted to establish medical training for college men, which would enable them to prepare for noncombatant military service, and in February 1938, they once again decided that such steps should be taken if the nation went to war.<sup>5</sup>

Seventh-day Adventists recommend noncombatancy for its members during wartime, a stance they have maintained since the denomination was organized in 1863, during the Civil War.<sup>6</sup> How do noncombatants demonstrate their cooperativeness and patriotism during wartime? During the Civil War and World War I, the church had made arrangements with the U.S. government for its members to serve in the military without bearing arms (the movement had not yet spread into the South in significant numbers). Difficulties increased, however, during World War I. The unwillingness of many Adventists to use weapons in combat, coupled with their refusal to do routine work on their seventh-day Sabbath, resulted in a number of courts-martial and prison sentences. Some Adventist prisoners were forced to wear yellow streaks on the backs of their uniforms to symbolize their alleged cowardice. In the 1930s, Adventists were anxious to avoid this spectacle in the event of another war. They realized that a future war might involve an earlier entry by the United States than had occurred in World War I, with a much larger military draft including a sizable contingent of Seventh-day Adventists among the conscripts.<sup>7</sup>

An effective way of educating church members about how to relate to the military in wartime emerged in a new organization, the Medical Cadet Corps, developed by Everett Dick, a history professor at Union College, a Seventh-day Adventist school in Lincoln, Nebraska. A Marine Corps veteran of World War I, Professor Dick created the Medical Corps on his campus in 1933, and he proceeded to carry out basic training for military medics.

The primary objective of the Medical Corps was to train good soldiers. Corpsmen were taught military drill, military courtesy, military first aid, and proper procedures for requesting Sabbath privileges. They were also informed of their various draft status options, and although they were told that their church favored the I-A-O noncombatant status, they chose their status individually. Professor Dick taught group after group of corpsmen at Union College in the 1930s as war clouds gathered over Europe. In September 1939, Hitler invaded Poland. The following month, the Seventh-day Adventist church held its annual Autumn Council in Lincoln. European attendees predicted a world war.

How would Adventists relate to that war? For two days, a debate raged in the Cornhusker Hotel in Lincoln. Elder F.M. Wilcox, the editor of the church paper, had evolved to the point of insisting that Adventists should be conscientious objectors and stay out of warfare entirely. Others argued for full combat participation. On a Sunday morning that October, the delegates visited the Union College campus for a Medical Corps demonstration. Impressed by what they saw, they were convinced that its context and recommendations would best prepare Adventist young men for war. Soon, a nearly unanimous vote emerged from the Autumn Council, requiring all senior Adventist colleges to offer Medical Corps training.

Before the United States entered World War II, the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists activated the War Service Commission, headed by Carlyle B. Haynes, to provide training and advice to Adventist young men who were subject to the draft. Church officials were very careful to point out that the denomination would fully support the war effort. "Seventh-day Adventists ought to be foremost in offering their services in every form of activity which they are able to perform, while keeping within the circle of God's law," Haynes told church members in 1942. "They have special light, special information, some of them special training, in many things which will bless their fellow men just now."<sup>8</sup>



Haynes' organization recommended that church members in the United States who were subject to the draft should adopt the 1-A-O draft classification, which meant that the individual was conscientiously opposed to combatant service because it violated the "thou shalt not kill" commandment. It also meant that the individual was willing to serve in the military in a noncombatant capacity, often as a medic. Occasionally, individual church members chose to be classified 1-0, as conscientious objectors who performed alternate civilian service rather than serving in the military, but this was based on a personal decision, not a church recommendation. A personal decision was also the basis for those church members who enlisted in the military as combatants. The church warned its members that if they volunteered for the armed forces, they would not be able to request relief from routine work on their seventh-day Sabbath. On the other hand, if they were drafted in the 1-A-O category, they could request to be assigned routine weekend duties on Sunday instead of Saturday.

Soon Everett Dick's Medical Corps was renamed the Medical Cadet Corps and took shape under the guidance of the U.S. Surgeon General. The Corps became the basis for classes taught on Adventist college and secondary school campuses for physical education credit. Medical Cadet Corps training was offered periodically at Walla Walla College from 1939 to 1958 and at some other Adventist schools until the Vietnam War era.<sup>9</sup> When the denomination voted in Lincoln to require medical cadet training at all Seventh-day Adventist colleges, the Walla Walla College trustees had already decided to start a program and to hire Orason Brinker, who had worked in the cadet training program at Union College, to organize it.<sup>10</sup> Brinker joined the physical education department during the 1939–1940 school year and enrolled 60 students in the Medical Cadet Corps, which provided physical education credit as well as military training.

The 1940–1941 school year saw a much larger Medical Cadet Corps, and in November 1940, it participated for the first time in the Armistice Day parade, joining the Walla Walla High School ROTC, selective service registrants, and several veterans groups. Two hundred Walla Walla College men strode out in crisp white uniforms, led by the college band and forming a mass of marchers nearly a block long (Fig. 7.1).<sup>11</sup> By late 1942, women also began training in first aid and military drill in a unit was called the Medical Cadette Corps. Their training was designed to alleviate a shortage of nurses, but the cadettes wore military uniforms and were trained in close order drill and military discipline.<sup>12</sup>



**Fig. 7.1** Medical Cadets Corps, Walla Walla College (Courtesy of Walla Walla Archives at Walla Walla University)

Even though the campus was preparing for war, no one was ready for the reality of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. That day, Sunday, December 7, 1941, was “a day of pandemonium” on the campus, recalled Percy Christian, a professor of history at the time. “We couldn’t believe our ears. [People were saying] ‘Pearl Harbor is bombed! Maybe San Francisco has already been attacked! They’re going after San Diego Naval Base!’” Professor Christian seized the opportunity to raise the consciousness of the college students about geography and history. He set up a “command post” in Columbia Auditorium with a radio and maps. Some students did not know where Pearl Harbor was, or where the Hawaiian Islands were, and they wanted to know where Wake and Midway were, how close Alaska was, and how far it was from Seattle to San Francisco. “We were getting bulletins just every few minutes,” Professor Christian related. Many students visited Christian’s command post, and some stayed most of the day as they tried to sort out what would happen next.<sup>13</sup>

Soon, the campus began to feel the pinch of wartime. Many commodities were rationed, from gasoline to tires to food items. Students

brought their sugar ration coupons to college and handed them over to the matron so that the cafeteria could use them.<sup>14</sup> The new library remained under construction for several years because wartime shortages forced long halts in building operations. Gas rationing and the inability to replace worn tires reduced travel to and away from the campus. Students came to depend on buses or the Northern Pacific and Union Pacific rail lines for travel between home and campus. Grave difficulties lay ahead, warned Elder Haynes at the General Conference; taxes would rise sharply, rationing would increase, and the draft would intensify. "Most Americans are not yet really conscious of the fact that a decision has been made to create a mass army of from nine million to ten million men," he warned as the fall quarter got underway in 1942.<sup>15</sup>

Civilians were caught up in the war effort as well. Loyalty, patriotism, and cooperation with the government were the order of the day. As early as the summer of 1940, the college board of trustees vowed allegiance to the government and stated "our determination to keep out of our school any subversive activity on the part of any member of the school, be he teacher, student, or employee."<sup>16</sup> The college began to conduct civil defense drills. These were not just a routine, because Walla Walla was the site of a large military airfield where flight crews for heavy bombers did their training. For example, the 91st Bomb Group, which included the "Memphis Belle," flew B-17s (Flying Fortresses) in and out of the Walla Walla airport in 1941 and 1942. The vicinity was designated a Defense Area and considered a target for enemy bombs.<sup>17</sup> After the U.S. entered the war, the School of Theology dean, Vernon Hendershot, urged students to learn about air raid techniques, poison gas, and the use of respirators.<sup>18</sup>

The college lost some key faculty members to the war effort. The board of trustees was reluctant to release physics professor George Kretschmar to do secret radar research for the military in New Jersey, but by the time Vernon Hendershot moved to San Francisco to become the government's chief expert in the preparation of Malay propaganda, the college was proud to show how it had contributed some of its staff members to the nation's defense.<sup>19</sup>

The government's need for typists created large sections of typing classes that met morning, afternoon, and evening to bring roomfuls of men and women typists up to 60 words per minute in a month or less.<sup>20</sup> Other vocational training essential to the war effort became important, and vocational classes were filled to overflowing.<sup>21</sup> It was possible for

young men to complete their college education before being drafted if they attended in the summers, so “accelerated education” became the watchword.<sup>22</sup> Students could begin accelerating in secondary school, come to college by spring quarter of their high school senior year, attend college year around, and graduate in three years.

The immediate effect of these changes was that the number of male students increased dramatically. By the fall of 1940, men were a 30% majority on campus. This increase was short-lived, however, because soon after the attack on Pearl Harbor, the draft began to claim large numbers of college men. Within a few months, college administrators around the country worried that American higher education would shut down because of the war. One college president noted that 50 colleges had already closed their doors in the fall of 1942, and the draft threatened to close down even more before the school year ended.<sup>23</sup> Overall enrollment was lower during the war both because of military service and because war industries needed full-time employees.<sup>24</sup>

By the fall of 1942, there were 204 women and 135 men living on campus, and dormitory spaces had to be adjusted accordingly.<sup>25</sup> The 1944–1945 school year saw a fall enrollment of only 493. There were 265 students in the women’s dorms and only 116 in the men’s. Women took over both dormitory wings in the administration building, North and South Halls, and the men were spread out in various annexes. The chronic shortage of men affected the social scene during the war years. During the 1944–1945 school year, an Aleph Gimel Ain ladies-invite-men banquet was set up so that two or three women escorted one man.<sup>26</sup>

In addition to sharing campus men on dates, college women were asked to do other things that were new to them. During the war, women students were asked to work at jobs that had always been done by men. In 1943, English professor Kenneth Aplington noted that when male janitors were replaced by women, “old students could scarce suppress the gasp of astonishment at the appearance of trim women janitors going about the job as if they knew their business.” “Of course,” he conceded, “living at home with Mother ought to introduce one to the fundamentals of sweeping, dusting, and all that goes into making a good janitor,” but women were also appearing on the paint crew and even in “man’s legitimate province,” the college farm. Aplington also reflected concerns that were common to American society in general during the war: “The men who are on the fighting front need have no fears about their jobs at home—they are being well done,” he said. But women were not intended

to remain in their new positions forever: "We are sure, however, that the girls will quickly revert to type when the boys come home."<sup>27</sup>

College women were also prepared for traditionally male jobs in war industries. They were encouraged to enter machine shop classes to learn to operate metal lathes, drill presses, and milling machines.<sup>28</sup> The Civil Service Commission recruited women undergraduates to work as junior engineers at \$2600 annually, which was more than Walla Walla College faculty members were paid.<sup>29</sup>

As the male enrollment declined, more emphasis was placed on recruiting female students. For the first time, college recruitment literature encouraged women in particular to prepare for careers: "We ... urge all our young women to plan on a college education," wrote George Bowers, whose presidential duties included serving as the college's chief recruiter. "The work of God needs you more than ever now when so many young men are in the armed forces." The denominational labor shortage was the primary reason for this new emphasis: "We are finding it extremely difficult to staff our academies, our church schools, our conference offices, and our sanitariums."<sup>30</sup> As the war continued, administrators worried that even this source of students would dwindle, as discussion of a draft for women increased.<sup>31</sup>

Since the college's theology majors were exempt from the draft (due to U.S. government policy throughout both world wars), President Bowers wrote hundreds of letters to draft boards attesting to the legitimacy of individual theology students. The loophole of the 4-D classification for theology majors inevitably attracted some individuals who were more interested in avoiding military service than in becoming ministers, so the government's regulation of this exemption became more and more strict.<sup>32</sup> While the Allies prepared for the D-Day invasion on the beaches of Normandy, the Selective Service System ruled that a 4-D classification would be given only to those students who were taking accelerated training and who had been designated by their denomination to serve as ministers.<sup>33</sup> The status of theology majors changed the proportions of degrees granted at graduation; at the 1944 commencement, there were 22 Bachelor of Theology, 19 Bachelor of Arts, and 8 Bachelor of Science degrees conferred.<sup>34</sup>

The war created a level of support for the college's absent soldier-students that had once been reserved for foreign missionaries. A large map of the world was placed in the men's dormitory, North Hall, with pins to show the location of each Walla Walla College student serving in

the military. Campus leaders were eager to join other colleges in a drive to collect 100,000 tons of scrap metal and rubber. This was a very direct contribution to the war effort because half of every tank, gun, ship and submarine was made from scrap material.<sup>35</sup>

Except for the rumble of training bombers overhead and the inconveniences of rationing and wartime restrictions, College Place was a long way from the realities of warfare. Those realities were brought directly into the lives of students and faculty, though, by letters from servicemen and newspaper accounts of former students. Frank Hutchins, a pharmacist's mate in the Marine Corps, was involved in the battle for Tarawa, the site of the fiercest Marine fighting in the war. He wrote home: "Do you remember ending one of your letters with the quotation: 'The Eternal God is thy Refuge, and underneath are the Everlasting arms?'" At a certain hour in the early morning darkness of the 21st, 22nd, and 23rd, those words came to my mind over and over. I think I shall always associate the 'Everlasting Arms' with the coral sand bottom of a non-too-deep fox-hole, with the tide just beginning to seep in."<sup>36</sup>

A haunting story came home from Maj. J. Lawrence Whitaker, a physician graduate of the Seventh-day Adventist medical school, the College of Medical Evangelists (now Loma Linda University), who had entered military service. On one Pacific island taken by the Americans, he entered a Japanese military hospital. All of the patients and their physician were dead. The doctor was Paul Tatsuguchi, a CME classmate. In the hospital, Whitaker found an old book given to the Japanese doctor by another CME classmate, Ed Lee, who had been a premed student at Walla Walla College.<sup>37</sup>

One Adventist student from Walla Walla achieved national recognition. In November 1944, 19-year-old Duane Kinman, a former Walla Walla College Academy student, found himself in the 5th Infantry Division of Patton's Third Army as it pushed into Germany following the Normandy invasion. As they approached some German villages near Metz, the unit was caught by a volley of 120 mm German mortar fire.

"Medic! Medic!" someone yelled, directing Kinman to a soldier who was thrashing in the mud, suffocating. A mortar fragment had cut through his throat, blocking his windpipe. Kinman grabbed his dull pocketknife and cut a 1 1/2-inch vertical slit in the windpipe.

"Then I stuck my fingers in there to hold it open," Kinman said, "and I looked for a piece of wood or probe to hold it so he could be on his own. I spied a fountain pen in his jacket pocket—his wife had sent it to

him the day before—and I stuck it in his windpipe.” Then Kinman got a better idea. “I took the fountain pen apart and cut off the top end, so it became a tube.”<sup>38</sup>

The infantryman, his life saved by the emergency tracheotomy, held the makeshift tube with one hand and walked to a tank that evacuated him to an aid station. The battalion surgeon, Capt. Benjamin Seltzer, said he could do nothing to improve the emergency tracheotomy and sent the man to a hospital by ambulance. The only modification the doctors made was to take out the pen and replace it with a standard metal tracheotomy tube.<sup>39</sup> Kinman was praised for his “timely, resourceful, daring, and intelligent” action and his “early and expert performance” of his duties.<sup>40</sup> The story of the “Foxhole Surgeon” hit all the major wire services, dozens of newspapers, and the nation’s news magazines. Two medical schools gave him full scholarships to study medicine, and Walla Walla College granted him a three-year premedical scholarship.

The war affected the way the college celebrated its 50th anniversary. Although E.A. Sutherland, the college’s first administrator when it opened in 1892 and still a college president in Madison, Tennessee, was able to attend and give the commencement address in June of 1942, several other invited guests had to cancel their visits because of gas rationing. The college history that Percy Christian had been working on for several years went unpublished, and only the 1943 yearbook, the *Mountain Ash*, provided campus history. The war was never very far away. Monday, December 7, 1942, was the 50th anniversary of the beginning of Walla Walla College, but it was also the first anniversary of Pearl Harbor. The college’s chapel service on that day commemorated both events. Percy Christian urged his audience to stop and consider the school’s history in spite of the national emergency: “We are an unhistorical people, but it is high time that we awake from our lethargy in this respect. We should remember on this anniversary day the way the Lord has led this college for fifty years. How can we recall His leadership if we never hear of it? Surely a college that is fifty years old has a history.” By the time the college was able to publish its first history, at the 60th anniversary in 1952, Christian was at Emmanuel Missionary College in Maryland and was unable to complete his project interrupted by the war.<sup>41</sup>

As the war wound down, there were indications that the dwindling enrollment patterns were about to reverse. It must have been encouraging in the fall of 1944 to see 213 freshmen, even though there were only 62 seniors. Enrollment increased during the school year as veterans

completed their terms of service in the military. The rapid return of veterans to the classroom was aided by government legislation that provided funding for their college education. In 1944, Walla Walla College was approved by the government as a site for veteran education. The Service Man's Readjustment Act of 1944 (public Law 264, 78th Congress) provided for tuition, fees, and a living allowance for veterans for a minimum of one year.<sup>42</sup> Later, Public Law 346, the GI Bill of Rights, spelled out the benefits in more detail.

After part of a student generation missed their turn at college during the war, the school was inundated by two generations at once—those who were just finishing high school at the end of the war, and those who had deferred their education during the war because of military service or civilian work. The campus swarmed with students. “After leaving Yakima Valley Academy (a small Adventist secondary school), it was awesome,” recalled one student.<sup>43</sup> The demographic bulge began to show during the spring quarter of the 1945–1946 school year, when large numbers of servicemen were completing their military service. Enrollment, which had reached 581 during the fall quarter, moved up to 709 in the spring, when 29 of 38 new students were veterans. And this was just the beginning.

Familiar faces were reappearing on the faculty as well. George Kretschmar returned from his top-secret radar research in New Jersey, and Vernon Hendershot came back in 1946 after spending the war broadcasting American propaganda in Malay, Dutch, and English.

After the war he had worked for the State Department for several months, where he was placed in charge of Indonesian affairs.<sup>44</sup> A new face on campus was Siegfried Horn, a German national who had been held by the Dutch in an Indonesian prison camp for 6 1/2 years. While there he had translated Greek and Hebrew testaments into German in longhand. At Walla Walla College, he completed his theology degree and taught Greek II.<sup>45</sup>

Surging enrollment was a pleasant problem to have, but President Bowers and his faculty had to provide classrooms, living quarters, administrative support, and teachers for the enlarged student body. For the first time, large numbers of married students were attending college, and the school had to locate low-cost apartment housing for students and their families. Dormitory men were scattered across the campus in several locations. Six of them, including a future Walla Walla College board of trustees chair, Bruce Johnston, and a future president of Walla Walla College,



H.J. Bergman, would live for several months in the hydrotherapy rooms under the stage of Columbia Auditorium, the multipurpose gymnasium.

The flood of students swelled in the fall of 1946. “There was a student and talent explosion,” recalled one collegian. “Growing pains for the school had hit.”<sup>46</sup> Only two years before, the entire fall quarter enrollment had been 493. Now enrollment topped 1000 students for the first time, and there were 411 freshmen. Sixty-eight percent of the students were men. The new men’s dormitory, Sittner Hall, was still under construction, and neither it nor the hastily erected GI barracks buildings had running water, so 306 men used the restrooms in West Hall (the nearby women’s dormitory) each morning.<sup>47</sup>

The summer of 1947 saw the biggest construction program in the school’s history. Entirely new buildings were built, but the school also did some remodeling and added several not-too-temporary surplus buildings acquired from the military. The biology department was moved to a building that combined two units acquired from McCaw Military Hospital in Walla Walla. North Hall in the administration building finally ended its days as a dormitory and became instead six teachers’ offices, five classrooms, and the academy library. The building for the new engineering department was made from more McCaw Hospital units spliced together, and a similar arrangement formed the industrial arts building. Another McCaw building became the student health center. In all, 11 buildings from the McCaw Hospital metamorphosed into academic structures.<sup>48</sup> Also, by the fall of 1949, the college was also able to advertise 62 one- and two-bedroom apartments for married veterans. Carried away by the success of American technology in ending the war, the administration named a new three-building apartment cluster the Atomic Apartments: Proton, Neutron, and Electron.

The large number of veterans who enrolled in the college helped to change the character of the school. Up until 1945, the student body had been young—most of the students had come to college immediately after secondary school, and most of them had lived on campus in dormitories. Now a significant part of the student body was made up of battle-hardened, worldly-wise war veterans who were older, more motivated, and less likely to tolerate being treated like teenagers. Students who had not entered the military saw their carefree, fun-loving high school classmates return a few years later as veterans of heavy combat. Some had lines in their faces and prematurely gray hair, and all of them had grown up more quickly than had their friends who stayed home.<sup>49</sup>

Many were married and had family responsibilities. Many expected to have opportunities to let off steam in vigorous physical education classes and competitive sports; Veterans-Civvies basketball games could be deadly serious conflicts. And veterans did not shrink from speaking their minds when they learned that the school expected them to sit on one side of the chapel with the other men while their wives sat on the opposite side. When college store prices were deemed too high, veterans opened their own commissary.

The veterans formed the largest non-dormitory club on campus and took an active part in campus and community life. One veterans club project was to help develop the monument at the Whitman Mission west of the campus, which noted the centennial of the Whitman massacre in November 1947. The veterans' involvement led to a major commemoration of the event on campus. The enthusiasm that led to the Whitman centennial project was evident everywhere in the college. The rapid growth of the school, coupled with the relief and excitement of the war's end, developed a strong school spirit and sense of loyalty. It was a good time to be a patriot, a Christian, and a student at Walla Walla College.

On a perfect spring evening in 1949, just eight years after the events described in the opening paragraph of this chapter, more numerous groups of students would once again stroll the campus after the evening meal. Instead of playing catch informally on the front campus, military veterans would be carrying on spirited baseball game in a field adjacent to campus. Instead of a crisply drilled Medical Cadet Corps ending the day by lowering the flag, students clustered around an informal performance by the campus pep band, which saved its signature piece, "Anchors Aweigh," for the end, highlighted by the hard-driving solo of its drummer, Ed Anderson. The upbeat patriotic music was unsettling to certain music faculty and school administrators, accustomed to more decorous public musical performances, but who could argue with a patriotic song? The students, military and civilian veterans of the war alike, clapped and stomped, reveling in the spirited music and begging for more.

Soon the grim realities of the Korean War, which President Harry Truman believed would turn into World War III, and the ongoing tensions of the Cold War created a drastic change from the euphoric years of the late 1940s, when students eagerly sought to put the world's largest conventional war behind them. Throughout a demographic dip created by the Korean War and the subsequent wave of Baby Boomers, the

World War II and immediate postwar years remained a high-water mark of school spirit and individual purpose. During those years, most students found a way to navigate the typically delicate balance of faith and patriotism, and, in many ways, the college came of age.

## NOTES

1. This chapter is based in part on research conducted for the Walla Walla College centennial history project, which resulted in the publication of *Bold Venture: A History of Walla Walla College* (College Place, WA: Walla Walla College, 1992). Walla Walla College became Walla Walla University in 2007.
2. Orason L. Brinker, "Render Unto Caesar," *Collegian* (Walla Walla College student newspaper), April 24, 1941, 2.
3. George Bowers, President's Message, 1941 *Mountain Ash* (Walla Walla College yearbook).
4. "Walla Walla College," *Gleaner* (publication of the North Pacific Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists), October 20, 1942, 1.
5. Board of Trustees Minutes February 2, 1938.
6. Adventist historians differ on the characterization of early denominational attitudes toward wartime service. F.M. Wilcox has noted that the first declaration of noncombatancy was made by the executive committee of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists on August 2, 1864, filing this statement with the United States Provost Marshall on August 30. The entire church ratified this decision during the General Conference third annual session, May 17, 1865. The decision was reaffirmed by the church's North American Division April 26, 1917, shortly before Congress enacted the Selective Service Law May 18, 1917. *Seventh-day Adventists in Time of War* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1936), 83–84, 125. On the other hand, Douglas Morgan has argued that the original stance of the church resembled that of a peace church rather than a noncombatant one, and this status remained until "the middle decades of the twentieth century." "The Beginnings of a Peace Church: Eschatology, Ethics, and Expedience in Seventh-day Adventist Responses to the Civil War," *Andrews University Seminary Studies*, 45, no. 1, 2007, 35.
7. This history of the Medical Cadet Corps and its genesis in the aftermath of World War II were obtained in an interview with Orason Brinker, May 28, 1991 (Walla Walla University Archives). F.M. Wilcox has noted (150) that individual abuses of soldiers were rectified by the War Department, which had approved noncombatancy and Sabbath provisions for loyal

Adventists. However, actual treatment varied among military units. Wilcox, who was drafted to serve in World War I at the age of 29, refused to work on his Sabbath and was subjected by fellow soldiers to an ice water bath and forced to wear a sign saying, "I'm yellow and won't work," but that treatment was halted by the unit's sergeant (170). Wilcox also notes that at that end of World War I, 35 Seventh-day Adventist soldiers were imprisoned at Ft. Leavenworth with sentences ranging from five to twenty years for refusing to do certain types of labor on their seventh-day Sabbath; however, they were released within two weeks of the end of the war (151).

8. "Adventists and Civilian Defense," *Gleaner* January 6, 1942, 1.
9. During the Vietnam era, the U.S. preferred for its medics to carry weapons, given the unconventional nature of the war. Even before that conflict began, some Adventists drafted into military service sought options other than service as medics; one was to sign up for a germ warfare research study called Project Whitecoat. See Krista Thompson Smith, "Adventists and Biological Warfare," *Spectrum: Journal of the Association of Adventist Forums* 25, no. 3, March 1996, 35–50.
10. Board Minutes September 22, 1939.
11. *Walla Walla Union-Bulletin* November 11, November 1 and 12, 1940.
12. *Collegian* March 11, 1943.
13. Percy Christian, Interview by Lorne Glaim, July 31, 1978 (WWU Archives).
14. G.W. Bowers to Mrs. Glenn Bellew December 29, 1942 (WWU Archives).
15. Carlyle B. Haynes, "Grave Difficulties Ahead," *Gleaner* September 15, 1942, 1.
16. Board Minutes July 25, 1940.
17. This fact prompted the board to buy full insurance on all campus buildings and equipment. Board Minutes August 30, 1942.
18. *Collegian* December 11, 1941.
19. Kretschmar was given a leave of absence by the board on July 24, 1942. He insisted that it was his patriotic duty to do this work for the government. In October 1942, the Office of War Information asked for the release of Dr. Vernon Hendershot for the duration of the war. He was to head the Malayan department.
20. Providing this training also protected the college from having its typewriters requisitioned by the government (*Collegian* February 18, 1943, 1).
21. Four vocational departments provided accelerated training to help in the war effort: secretarial, biology laboratory, machine shop for men and women, and medical cadet and first aid for men and women. The War Manpower Commission approved WWC for possible use by the army for basic training, pre-medical training, and language training (*Collegian* March 4, 1943, 1).

22. *Collegian* February 26, 1942, 1.
23. Harry Gidconse, President, Brooklyn College, telegram to George Bowers, November 8, 1942.
24. Sometimes, women were needed to work in family businesses when their fathers or brothers became involved in the war. J. Walter Gunnerson noted this in a *Collegian* article entitled "Amazons at Work": "... Women war workers are tossing their pink organdy with ruffles aside; they're climbing into denim work togs; they're rolling up their sleeves; they're doing men's jobs, and they're LIKING it! There is plenty of evidence right on our campus that the 'weaker sex' isn't as weak as we thought." He described how Dorothy and Ruth Storey choked logs and drove caterpillar tractors and logging trucks in their father's Idaho logging business (*Collegian* October 29, 1942, 1).
25. The board of trustees reactivated an old building, West Hall, to serve as an overflow women's dormitory during these years. Board Minutes September 22, 1942.
26. One AGA member recalled how she and her friend picked up their date at the men's dorm and presented him with a corsage of carrots and onions. Verona Montanye Schnibbe manuscript, April 1990 (WWU Archives).
27. "Coed to the Rescue," *Gleaner* November 2, 1943, 3.
28. "Specialized Training for Coeds," *Gleaner* March 23, 1943, 2.
29. *Collegian* February 25, 1943, 1.
30. G.W. Bowers, "Students Register December 27-28," *Gleaner* December 14, 1943, 1.
31. In 1943, U.S. Representative Emmanuel Celler of New York introduced a bill to draft single, unemployed women between 20 and 35. In 1944, some denominational officials worried that nurses would be subject to a draft. See *Gleaner* July 11, 1943, May 2 and 3, 1944, 1.
32. Both the administration and student body were eager to show that they disapproved of theological draft-dodgers. A *Collegian* editorial (September 24, 1942, 2) warned: "'Be sure your sins will find you out' is the warning to persons enrolling for the Theology course this year who have no desire to become ministers other than in using it as a lever to avoid the draft. Last year there were a few who did not display the true Christian graces, and this year there will probably be more... Persons without the proper Christian attitude and talents will be asked to swing their endeavors to other lines of work as they progress along their course." By 1944, the government was requiring that students must have a formal call to the ministry from their conference or union in order to be exempt from the draft (see Board Minutes April 20, 1944).
33. Carlyle B. Haynes, "New Directive Regarding Theological Students," *Gleaner* June 6, 1944, 1.

34. *Collegian* June 1, 1944, 1.
35. *Collegian* February 11, 1943.
36. *Collegian* January 27, 1944.
37. *Collegian* October 21, 1943.
38. Duane Kinman, Interview by Terrie Aamodt, Loma Linda, CA, October 3, 1990 (WWU Archives).
39. "Army Wounded Get Chance at Life Thanks to Medical Aids," *Newsweek* December 11, 1944, 80. See also Stephen Ambrose, "I Lean a Lot from the Veterans," *American Heritage* 49, no. 6, October 1998, accessed at <https://www.americanheritage.com/content/%E2%80%99Clearn-lot-veterans%E2%80%9D>.
40. *Collegian* December 14, 1944.
41. The 60-year history of Walla Walla College, *60 Years of Progress*, was written by Claude Thurston, professor of chemistry.
42. *Collegian* October 12, 1944, 1.
43. Eldon Stratton manuscript, September 1990 (WWU Archives).
44. *Collegian* February 21, 1946.
45. *Collegian* November 7, 1946.
46. Joseph M. Stone manuscript, April 1990 (WWU Archives).
47. *Collegian* October 11, 1946, 1.
48. *Collegian* July 17, 1947, 1.
49. Matthew Dopp, Interview by Terrie Aamodt, December 5, 1990 (WWU Archives).



## CHAPTER 8

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# Huntington College, Liberal Education, and the Struggle for “Christian Democracy” in the World War II Era

*Jeffrey B. Webb*

Throughout the 1920s and 1930s, Huntington College in Huntington, Indiana struggled to gain its institutional footing within a small Protestant denomination, the Church of the United Brethren in Christ.<sup>1</sup> With the growing international crises of the 1930s and the onset of World War II, the college grew toward fuller integration with its supporting denomination while also embracing a vision of educating students for participation in a broader global community. As world events grew to occupy a greater and greater amount of institutional attention, members of the Huntington College community experienced heightened global awareness and deepening critical engagement with the world's problems, especially in the areas of international relations, regional geopolitics, peace and peacemaking, and the human catastrophes occasioned by war and violence. When the nation mobilized for war, college leaders encouraged accommodation, as with many other institutions of higher learning, and students and faculty responded by promoting a “home front” atmosphere on campus throughout the war's duration.

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These experiences sparked a period of institutional self-reflection and change which left the college with a renewed commitment to its Christian liberal arts identity and mission, as well as a new aspiration for inclusion in the mainstream of American higher education.

For a century or more, the Church of the United Brethren in Christ tried to organize and support academies, colleges, and seminaries, as many as thirty-seven in all, but without much lasting success. By the 1930s, Huntington College was one the few remaining institutions of higher learning, and the only one that would retain its affiliation with the Church of the United Brethren in Christ to the present day.<sup>2</sup> At the time of its founding in 1897 as Central College, denomination leaders hoped that the school would provide a solid post-secondary education to men and women who would eventually devote themselves to a lifetime of Christian service. The college was coeducational from the beginning, and brought students from the local community together with students from as far away as Sierra Leone and Japan. Many of the earliest students pursued a program in ministry through courses in theology, homiletics, Hebrew, Greek, church history, and so on, but the college also taught courses in the sciences, agriculture, business, and the arts.<sup>3</sup> In 1917, the institution renamed itself Huntington College and received accreditation from the Indiana state government for a teacher training program, which soon became an important source of student enrollment. Even so, the college's centennial history notes that at the end of World War I, "only a handful of HC's 237 students were enrolled in four-year liberal arts programs. Most sought either a high school education through the Academy or various two-year degrees."<sup>4</sup> In the 1920s, the college embarked on a campaign to upgrade its curriculum. It phased out many of its two-year programs and eventually developed into a traditional four-year liberal arts college with bachelor's degrees in the arts, sciences, and education.

In spite of these efforts to enrich its academic offerings, Huntington College barely survived the 1920s and 30s, which ensured that at the outset of World War II, the institution would be in a fragile state of existence. Administration officials found themselves unable to meet payroll in the mid-1920s, which occasioned a lawsuit in the spring semester of 1925 by a group of faculty members. This suit was withdrawn after satisfactory arrangements had been made to meet these financial obligations.<sup>5</sup> By the fall of 1930, with great economic uncertainty spreading throughout the country, enrollment dwindled to a mere fifty students.<sup>6</sup>



Due to severe financial problems, the denomination's Board of Education voted in the spring of 1932 to suspend operations for a year, but then a few months later reversed its decision and opened in the fall of 1932 with a new president, Dr. Harold C. Mason.<sup>7</sup> In some ways, the Depression only accentuated long-developing trends within the Church of the United Brethren in Christ. The college's supporting denomination struggled after a schism in 1889 pulled away a majority of its churches, followed by an acrimonious dispute over finances around the turn of the century. Some statistics bear out this trend of crisis and retrenchment. In 1898, the denomination included 839 churches and 27,515 members, but by 1912, these figures dropped to 531 churches and 20,021 members. In 1928, these totals stood at 358 and 17,129, respectively.<sup>8</sup> Church historian Harold R. Cherry links this attrition to general trends in the major denominations after World War I, all of which had difficulty persuading returning veterans to become church members.<sup>9</sup> Since the college was dependent on the supporting denomination for a large portion of its students, declines in church membership impacted levels of student enrollment in the college.

In another sense, Huntington College and its parent denomination moved through the 1930s in a defensive posture, reacting against what it perceived to be disturbing trends in American society and culture. The United Brethren in Christ publicly aligned itself with Prohibition in the 1920s and 30s and continued to support it even as a majority of Americans soured on the grand experiment.<sup>10</sup> The annual General Conference met July 20–27, 1933 against a backdrop of repeal of the Eighteenth Amendment, with fifteen states (including Indiana on June 26) already having ratified the Twenty-first Amendment, proposed by Congress on February 20 of that year. The repeal amendment would be officially adopted in December. Even so, the General Conference took on the subject of Prohibition and enacted resolutions affirming their historic commitment. On another subject of contention in this era, the Conference passed judgment on the “dangers of modernism” and advanced a report on education that read, “As far as is humanly possible no text books which teach modernism as either true or desirable, shall be used, and reference books shall be carefully selected and used to further orthodoxy.”<sup>11</sup> This appears to be responsive to ongoing efforts by Fundamentalists to obtain laws at the state level to censor teaching of evolution in public schools, despite the growing feeling, after the Scopes Monkey Trial in 1925, that such laws were a dead letter.<sup>12</sup>

Denominational leaders recognized the challenges to Christian higher education growing out of secularizing trends in the wider culture and the economic catastrophe of the Great Depression. Amid continuing financial straits, President Mason appealed for help to United Brethren in Christ ministers and lay leaders, stressing conservative Protestant themes he believed would resonate with the church and its concerns about the world in the late-interwar period. Mason touted the confession of faith that all faculty must subscribe to, which led with a statement about the Bible as the “word of God” and the “only true way to our salvation,” along with an assertion that “without faith in Jesus Christ, true repentance, forgiveness of sins and following after Christ, no one can be a true Christian.”<sup>13</sup> His appeal went on to note that enrollment was increasing after years of decline and stagnation, and that “the use of tobacco, profanity, card playing, dancing, etc. are forbidden upon the campus or in the rooms of students and every effort is made to keep the college true to the best ideals of the church morally and religiously.”<sup>14</sup> In a set of talking points he developed for meetings with individual conferences and congregations, Mason highlighted the connection between college and church: “Huntington College is the child of the church. It looks to its mother for help.” Furthermore, “Huntington College is your college. It does not belong to the Board nor to the faculty nor to the president. They are your servants.”<sup>15</sup> Other talking points stressed the evangelical Christian character of the institution as a bulwark against moral decline and unbelief: “Huntington College is loyal to the Bible and to the evangelical Christian position”; “Huntington College does not believe in atheism or communism”; “At Huntington College there are at least two revival meetings held each year”; “It is the policy at Huntington College that Christ shall be first.”<sup>16</sup> The final talking point, last in a long list of fifty, linked the college’s religious identity to the broader concern over the nation’s moral condition: “‘Righteousness exalteth a nation but sin is a reproach to any people.’ This applies to colleges as well as nations.”<sup>17</sup> Mason’s objective, throughout this appeal, was to dramatize the college’s role in producing morally committed citizens for the different professions as well as for a nation in a state of spiritual and moral confusion.

Mason’s late-interwar appeal to the churches had a desirable effect in the minds of denominational leaders. In the summer of 1941, representatives from the various conferences gathered in Chambersburg, Pennsylvania for the denomination’s quadrennial General Conference. The Board of Bishops reported on the status of the college in a

statement that characterized its mission and functions as threatened by intellectual change and growing secularization. The Bishops' report read, "We are also deeply conscious of the life and death struggle, which church college are compelled to wage for their very existence in these days. Every year the conditions under which they operate becomes more and more difficult."<sup>18</sup> They cited an article by Thomas S. Kepler, professor of religion at Lawrence College, which expressed great pessimism about the future of denominational higher education: "Unless a miracle happens, within the next decade the doors of many church colleges will be closed." In continental Europe, they noted, the church was "driven out of the field of education," which produced disastrous results in the 1920s and 1930s: "All Europe and the world, is now reaping the bloody harvest, produced by the sowing of a godless culture among the youth of Germany, Russia and France."<sup>19</sup> In their minds, the weakening of Christian higher education left the nations vulnerable to moral decay, toxic political ideologies, and ultimately totalitarianism. They continued: "Let us not deceive ourselves into thinking that it can't happen here; because we assure you that it is already happening here." In their view, Huntington College was doing its part in preserving the nation's moral character, but also maintaining basic democratic institutions: "The death of the church-controlled college here means just what it meant to the nations of Europe, the death of our Democracy."<sup>20</sup>

Clearly, the growing international crisis was starting to weigh on minds of Americans through the 1930s, and these concerns began to appear not only among members of the United Brethren in Christ denomination but also in the student body at Huntington College. Toward the end of the academic year 1934–1935, the college went about its usual spring term routines, with classes in session, baseball and tennis teams finishing their scheduled games, and planning underway for commencement. The college invited Clarence True Wilson, General Secretary of the Board of Temperance, Prohibition, and Public Morals of the Methodist Episcopal Church to give the commencement address, reflecting institutional concern over the recent repeal of Prohibition in 1933. *The Huntingtonian* observed, "The coming of a man of such national importance and noble character to our campus, promises to be one of the high-lights of the coming commencement at Huntington College."<sup>21</sup> The campus newspaper reported on subjects like a "Ban on Heart Balm 'Racket'" and "Artificial Living," while covering the upcoming 1300-mile choir tour, the YMCA's "Clean-Up Day," an

ongoing revival at College Park Church, and the work of a group called the Gospel Volunteers. Hidden in the back, in the “Wise Crax” column of verbal barbs and satire, was a swipe at the new dictator in Germany: “Herr Hitler had better be careful about stirring another war. A cannon-ball might nip off that cute little mustache, and then where would he be.”<sup>22</sup> These hints of an international crisis in the making arrived on campus at a time when the college was particularly vulnerable. President Mason resigned on short notice in August prior to the 1939–1940 academic year, citing the desire to complete his Ph.D. program at Indiana University.<sup>23</sup> His resignation left Dean Oscar R. Stilson (professor of philosophy and Bible) to call for a “sacrificial effort” on the part of the college’s supporters and the students themselves to surmount the “hills of difficulty” arrayed in front of them.<sup>24</sup> At this particular moment, a report later noted, “the critical financial problems of the school ... called for prayer and consecrated effort to save the institution from a financial collapse.”<sup>25</sup>

The financial crisis would persist for the next several years; however, the spread of war throughout East and Southeast Asia and Nazi Germany’s invasions of Czechoslovakia and Poland in 1939 elevated international affairs to a higher position in the college’s educational agenda. In *The Huntingtonian* issue published after the fall of Poland in September, 1939, the typical run of campus-themed articles covered page one, but toward the back of the issue, the Philo Club reported in the “Social Activities” column that its literary meetings consisted of talks on “The European Situation,” and “The Chino-Japanese War,” and “Politics,” in addition to discussions of “Browning” and “Tenneyson.”<sup>26</sup> More substantively, a newly revived debate program took on the issue: “Resolved: That the United States Should Abandon It’s [sic] Armament Program.” Arguing the *pro* position, student Melvin Burkholder said that government weapons programs should be abandoned because they “destroy the very purpose for which they are created—peace.”<sup>27</sup> He went on and argued that an arms build-up, instead of promoting peace, does the opposite; it sparks fear, insecurity, and ultimately political instability along the nation’s borders. Furthermore, the debater asserted, “there seems to be a natural pride among military leaders to try out their machine whenever opportunity affords.”<sup>28</sup> The case for military disarmament then moved to the domestic costs of weapons programs, invoking the great number of colleges, churches, hospitals, and libraries that might have been built with the expenditures lost to armaments in

World War I while deeming arms development and procurement “a social and economic menace” to the American people.<sup>29</sup>

Arguing the other side, student Dale Fleming contended that events in Europe and the Far East—and the U.S. policy of neutrality—presented a clear threat to democratic institutions and to America’s sovereignty. His central assertion, that “on all sides of us we find dictatorship in the form of Fascism, Nationalism, Communism, and Japanism and the life of their dictatorship is based on aggression,” grew out of fears that Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan viewed the United States as their next object of conquest.<sup>30</sup> He observed, “these nations are meager in both resources and area, and it is their ideal to expand both politically and nationally,” which raised the question, “Are these nations looking with a greedy eye at the U.S.?”<sup>31</sup> Fleming then pointed out that communists and Nazi sympathizers were caught organizing and spying in the U.S., and the states that sponsored them constituted a real and present danger. Certainly, Fleming concluded, an armaments program was a reasonable response to these gathering forces that imperiled American ideals and American freedoms. The paper did not provide any follow-up to note which side prevailed in the debate. The nation itself was divided, but the voices of isolationism were very loud in the winter of 1939–40. Fleming might have been slightly out of step with students on American campuses who demanded neutrality, not intervention, when the war in Europe finally broke out. These “shrimps,” as FDR liked to call them, believed America could remain secure behind its oceans and followed their parents’ convictions that European and Asian affairs were none of the nation’s concern.<sup>32</sup>

FDR’s slight against student isolationists like Huntington’s Melvin Burkholder prejudices a point of view that had wide support in December 1939, a perspective on an issue that was not as clear-cut at the time as it now looks in hindsight. There is perhaps a slight tone of isolationism in Wayne Shepherdson’s editorial from *The Huntingtonian* on December 5, 1939, two full years before the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor prompted full-scale U.S. intervention:

Thanksgiving is past, Christmas will soon be upon us. In this season of the year when we are giving thanks for our many blessings and are looking forward to when we will commemorate the birth of our Savior we are indeed thankful that we as a nation, are not engaged in war. After thousands of years of human culture, man apparently has not as yet learned the futility

of war. Twenty years ago the Great War was to have been a war to end wars, but was not. And that war was an expensive one. European nations still owe the United States fourteen and a half billion dollars, enough money to build 29,000 schools at a cost of \$500,000 apiece. Now Russia is attacking Finland, claiming that the Finns have a defective government unfriendly to Russia. However, this country is the only one which is regularly paying interest upon the United States war debt. What is the reason for this turmoil in the world today? The answer is hatred and jealousy in the hearts of men. Remove these and substitute love and there will be "peace on earth, goodwill toward men."<sup>33</sup>

Evidence suggests that the denomination was ambivalent about U.S. neutrality and intervention as well. The official Discipline of the church—a list of doctrinal positions—contained this item in its 1937 edition: "We positively record our disapproval of engaging in voluntary, national, aggressive warfare; yet we recognize the rightful authority of the civil government, and hold it responsible for the preservation and defense of our national compact against treason or invasion by any belligerent force; and we believe it to be entirely with the spirit of Christianity to bear arms when called upon to do so by the properly constituted authorities of the government for its preservation and defense."<sup>34</sup> However, against the backdrop of European war in 1939–1941 prior to Pearl Harbor, the denomination updated this position by leaving out the last clause about bearing arms when called to do so by government.<sup>35</sup> Deleting this language of Christian justification for waging war had the effect of accentuating the second part of the discipline regarding armed violence, which remained unchanged from the earlier, 1937 version: "We wish to go on record as a church as being much in favor of national, international, and universal peace; and it is the perpetual aim of this church to do all we can to hasten the much desired universal peace, when Christ shall be recognized by the whole world as the Prince of Peace and the whole world shall reverently bow to Him as King of Kings and Lord of Lords."<sup>36</sup> This gave the impression that the United Brethren in Christ denomination, and Christianity as a whole, was committed to working for peace regardless of what direction the government might steer national policy.

In many ways, Pearl Harbor changed all of that. After December 1941, the Church of the United Brethren in Christ had no difficulty embracing American national identity and supporting the war effort. Plenty of evidence attests to U.B. wartime patriotism within the

denomination's churches and among denominational officials. When Pastor Clyde Meadows of King Street UB Church (Chambersburg, Pennsylvania) heard news of the attacks of December 7, he tried to resign his position as chair of the local draft board and join the armed forces as a military chaplain. His friend and fellow community leader Watson Davidson, a local judge, reminded him of his "patriotic duty" as a father, minister, and an experienced draft board chairman, and Meadows remained in his job for the entirety of the war. He eventually supervised the entry of over 2500 Chambersburg men into military service in World War II.<sup>37</sup> Meadows graduated from Huntington College and received an honorary doctorate in 1940 from his alma mater; in 1959, he was named alumnus of the year. Meadows would eventually serve as the bishop of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ during the 1960s, the nationwide denomination's highest office. Meadows offers an illustration of the degree to which patriotism was stitched into the Church of the United Brethren in Christ, as well as the church membership's willingness to sacrifice time, energy, and even blood in the service of the nation in wartime.

The first issue of *The Huntingtonian* in the academic year 1942–43 quoted liberally from a speech delivered by Vice President Henry A. Wallace on May 8, 1942, depicting the Allied cause in pseudo-religious terms.<sup>38</sup> The editorial is significant because it reflects a little movement away from the college's traditional prophetic stance toward American culture and society. Huntington College's student editors, with the help of Vice President Wallace, claimed in the column "H.C. Fits In" that the idea of freedom originated in the Bible and "its extraordinary emphasis on the dignity of the individual," which led them to conclude that "Democracy is the only true expression of Christianity."<sup>39</sup> The column then went on to say that the Old Testament prophets taught principles of social justice that were not given "complete and powerful political expression until our nation was formed as a federal union a century and a half ago." In the present crisis, the editors continued, Satan was using the "Nazi Revolution" to "lead common man of the whole world back into slavery and darkness" by spreading the idea that the Aryan race is hereditarily superior to all other races. The task at hand was to take up the struggle in any way possible, even on the home front. The editors followed Wallace in naming these duties: (1) produce to the limit, (2) transport material support to the place of need, (3) to "fight with all that is within us," and (4) build a "charitable and enduring peace."<sup>40</sup>

The failures of World War I provide the necessary instruction for the present, as the leaders of the 1920s and 1930s did not prevent Germany from rearming, did not build a peace on the individuality and liberty of the common man, and did not go far enough to protect ordinary people from economic privation. Wallace encouraged the editors to believe that this elusive kind of peace could be obtained at the end of World War II. They believed that the central cause for which the United States was fighting in 1942 was to build “a world which is economically, politically, and spiritually sound.”<sup>41</sup>

Wallace’s original speech ended with a religious flourish that would have doubtless been greeted with approval by *The Huntingtonian* editorial staff. Wallace concluded, “No compromise with Satan is possible. We shall not rest until the victims under the Nazi and Japanese yoke are freed. We shall fight for a complete peace as well as a complete victory. The people’s revolution is on the march, and the devil and all his angels can not prevail against it. They can not prevail, for on the side of the people is the Lord. ‘He giveth power to the faint; [and] to them that have no might He increaseth strength ... they that wait upon the Lord ... shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; [and] they shall walk, and not be faint.’ Strong in the strength of the Lord, we who fight in the people’s cause will never stop until that cause is won.”<sup>42</sup> Perhaps the college was beginning to accommodate itself to the nation, but it was made easier by the use of this kind of spiritual language by the nation’s leaders to express the nature of the war the U.S. found itself waging. It is unlikely that members of the campus community had ever embraced so completely this fusion of American national policy with notions of God’s divine purpose on earth. The struggle among nations came to be understood as a collision of spiritual forces that set the people of God against Satan’s Nazi and Japanese horde.

Although nothing was really normal at the college in the years between 1941 and 1945, student leaders and administrators enjoined members of the college community to press on with Huntington’s educational mission. Students needed to be recruited and enrolled, classes had to be projected and taught, faculty positions needed to be filled, and buildings and grounds maintained. The student editors of *The Huntingtonian* ended the fall semester, 1942 with an appeal to the student body to recommit itself to achieving its academic objectives. “Just now, the cause of higher education is being threatened by the problems of war,” the editorial began. “The calling of young men at the age of



eighteen is a blow to student enrollment at all colleges,” and so it was necessary to convince ministers, parents, and youth themselves that higher education was an essential ingredient to victory in the war.<sup>43</sup> The editorial moved on to argue that “It is generally conceded that a well rounded college education is a combination of material, social, and spiritual training. To develop the three-fold nature of young people, these three phases must be developed in proper balances. It was for the purpose of accomplishing such an end that Huntington College was founded and is maintained.” The piece ended on a hopeful, if ominous note: “May the colors of our beloved Alma Mater never cease to fly, even though war clouds hover over us.”<sup>44</sup> In a similar vein, the new semester in 1943 opened with a *Huntingtonian* editorial that noted, “We are engaged in total war that reaches into every phase of a nation’s life.” The writer contended that “the job of the schools in this war is to educate the nation’s manpower, for the war and also for the peace that follows. Education is the backbone of the army. This was never more true than it is today.”<sup>45</sup> The author noted that Huntington College’s academic program must be flexible to respond to changing conditions, but hastened to add that faculty and staff were “striving to keep our school under the basic essential program that schools used during peace time.”<sup>46</sup>

Evidence suggests that this flexibility within the “basic essential program” of Huntington College is a fairly accurate description of what transpired at the campus during the years of the war. Certainly, faculty and staff were keenly interested in responding to the national call for mobilization, both within and outside the parameters of academic programming. At the first faculty meeting after Pearl Harbor, Dr. Wendell V. Clipp (professor of physical sciences) “brought up the question of what contribution the faculty and college can make in the present national emergency.” The faculty minutes noted that “Several suggestions were offered and discussed.”<sup>47</sup> Faculty meetings addressed mundane subjects like changing teacher certification requirements, minor catalog changes, results of the sophomore I.Q. tests, student petitions to drop courses, and ongoing enrollment problems. However, in the first meeting of 1942–1943, the new president Dr. Elmer Becker (president from 1941 to 1965) “spoke concerning the effect of present war conditions on Huntington as a Christian college. He discussed the question from the standpoints of curriculum, staff, enrollment, and financial program.”<sup>48</sup> One issue discussed among faculty and staff in the summer and fall of 1942 was the “rumors that the army was taking over

Huntington College,” to which Baker responded that “no official word had been received.”<sup>49</sup> The college soon organized a Committee for National Defense composed of Dr. Stilson, Dr. Clipp, and Dr. Fred A. Loew (professor of biology), which began investigating the issue of how Huntington College might have to adjust to greater involvement with the military. Nevertheless, beyond adding mathematics and meteorology courses, it seems little about the array of course offerings actually changed in the 1941–1945 period.

What did seem new in this period was a growing self-consciousness among the faculty and staff regarding Huntington College’s identity and mission as a distinctively Christian liberal arts college and a renewed commitment to leaning hard into that mission. Two strands of evidence for this surface in the minutes of the wartime faculty meetings. Firstly, the faculty were asked to make presentations to one another regarding their respective fields, and in nearly every case, the presenter made the effort to convince her or his colleagues of the importance of their academic subject, especially in the time of national crisis. Foreign languages, theology, history, sociology, and mathematics were argued in turn. Prof. Minnie M. Harms (professor of modern languages) noted that foreign language was of critical importance, since “The people of America are going to take a great part in the reconstruction work of the other countries and it will be quite necessary for them to know some language.” Dr. Stilson noted that theology is critical because the government needed ministers and “recognized the minister as a morale builder” among the troops and on the home front. Even stenography was a crucial subject to maintain, as Prof. Mayretha Plasterer (professor of commerce) contended: “The stenographer is playing an important part in the conduct of the war.”<sup>50</sup> Perhaps some of this can be dismissed as so much turf-defending amid concerns over low enrollment and program cuts. Even so, the faculty sustained an ongoing effort to assert the importance of the liberal arts character of the program at a time when the nation gave itself over to technical “training” and other practicalities, which suggests a robust conviction that liberal arts education had a crucial role to play in this effort and should not be compromised.

A second, and perhaps more important strand of evidence of self-consciousness about identity and mission was a focused program of self-study of the “function of the division in the program of liberal arts education,” which began in the fall of 1943. This effort tasked the various departments with “relating itself to the divisional function and to

the general aims of the Institution.”<sup>51</sup> Faculty from ten different academic departments took turns explaining how their programs of study supported the liberal arts character of the institution, and each fed into an overarching “unified philosophy of Liberal Arts Education” endorsed by the faculty and administration. The final presentation, noted in the minutes as “Summary: Our Philosophy,” was delivered by Dr. Wilford P. Musgrave (professor of foreign languages) and is worth quoting in length:

“Freedom of thought is the basis of liberty”, Dr. Musgrave said, “and in liberal education people must be taught to think, to realize that personal liberty means social responsibility, self-education and self-discipline.” In the post-war period, liberal education must be free of dictation from outside sources such as government and industry, and must be prepared to meet the needs of returning veterans, and women who have been in industry or war work as well as those coming directly from the secondary schools.

“The final test of any pattern of education is the kind of men and women it produces,” and Huntington College aims to have her graduates ready to make worthwhile contributions to society. “Huntington College subscribes to the open view of education with the Christian outlook.”<sup>52</sup>

Musgrave stressed critical thinking, independence of mind, and freedom of inquiry as hallmarks of a liberal arts education. The tension in “open view of education with the Christian outlook” is plainly evident, and yet, Musgrave’s choice of words signifies a real commitment to substantive liberal education in the traditional, classical sense. The war had given him occasion to clarify and assert this view of the college’s essential purpose and function. His weighty role in this discussion is important, as a Huntington College alumnus (1936), active scholar of the French language (Ph.D., Penn State University and L’Institute d’Education Francaise), and eventually the academic dean of the college (1946–1956). The fact that he was also the son of a bishop and son-in-law of a minister in the United Brethren in Christ organization is also significant, since his summary thoughts could be said to bring the denominational voice to bear on the year-long program of self-reflection.<sup>53</sup>

By no means was Dr. Musgrave alone in articulating this sense of the college’s identity and mission. A similar vision could be found in a promotional pamphlet mailed to prospective students, authored in part by

President Becker. In “The President Answers Your Queries Concerning Huntington College,” Becker told potential enrollees that Huntington “stands ready to serve the National cause for a Christian democracy” and that many current and former students had enlisted in the armed forces. Importantly, their broad, non-technical, liberal arts education was not a detriment to their success. On the contrary, they were “enabled because of their educational preparation to take places of rank and leadership.” Becker asserted that “Huntington College is designed to help young people obtain a liberal education under Christian influences and instruction,” which would help graduates to become leaders in the postwar period of reconstruction to come, and that “this opportunity is not limited to any particular denominational faith, but is extended to all worthy young people regardless of race, nationality, or creed.”<sup>54</sup> This emphasis on liberal arts education and the benefits of a broad exposure to the traditional academic disciplines trickled down from the faculty and administration to the student population as well. On several occasions during the war, *The Huntingtonian* devoted editorial space to stressing the importance of getting a college education not only to serve the nation’s immediate need for educated commissioned officers, but also to prepare for the end of the war and the social, economic, and political challenges that lay ahead. “On Small Colleges” expressed concern that military enlistments and the wages offered in wartime industries were drawing off so many prospective students that the very survival of Huntington College was in doubt. The author believed that young men and women headed to the factories “fail to look ahead, to realize that after the war a college education will be more valuable than knowing how to make bullets, or how to paint airplanes, or how to make tires.”<sup>55</sup> By degrees, students were drawn to view their education in progressively broader terms, and to understand their place in the world as neither local nor national, but global in nature.

These matters of identity and mission naturally surfaced as the college became more subject to the conditions of total war. In the late fall of 1942, the campus anxiously followed news of Allied campaigns in North Africa and the Solomon Islands and began to feel the effects of the war on the home front. In February, FDR signed Executive Order 9066, which authorized the internment of Japanese-Americans, and over the winter months instituted rationing policies for items such as rubber and petroleum products. In June, the federal government established the Office of War Information to coordinate media efforts in support of the

war, including Frank Capra's first propaganda film, *Why We Fight*, which appeared in theaters over the course of the summer and fall. A wide variety of national organizations and local clubs conducted drives to gather scrap iron, aluminum cans, and rubber for recycling into armaments. *The Huntingtonian* stepped into do its part, educating students on the effort that would be required to support U.S. forces overseas. In November, an issue ran "The Hoosier Home Front," an article that opened with "The world-shaking events taking place along the southern shores of the Mediterranean call for greater sacrifices at home."<sup>56</sup> The article called Hoosiers to salvage metal, buy war bonds, and save gasoline: "all efforts must be directed toward providing our fighting men in Africa and elsewhere with whatever they need to defeat the enemy." The article moved on to help students understand the scale and importance of industrial armaments production, using terms that would be familiar to them: the brass in 1000 radio tubes makes 105.30 caliber cartridges; an ordnance plant located a day's travel from its supplies requires 2000 railroad cars to keep it in operation.

These efforts to raise awareness and increase patriotic commitment dovetailed with information given to students about naval officer training. The U.S. Navy invited Huntington students to consider enlisting in the V-7 program, which invited college juniors, seniors, and recent graduates to complete a four-month midshipmen school and eventually receive commissions as ensigns. Students also read news that the Army Air Force invited high school graduates and college freshman and sophomores to a training program that led to commissions as meteorological officers.<sup>57</sup> The results of these campaigns on the Huntington campus are unknown, but eventually, more than 150 men and women who were at one time students at Huntington College served in the armed forces during World War II.<sup>58</sup> One of the women students who started in 1942 remembered that fall as a "rough" time and in the spring "large numbers of our male members were called into the service and by the end of the year we knew our Soph year would find our ranks greatly depleted, which is exactly what happened. Nearly all the men were gone into the service and some of the women decided married life was preferable to school."<sup>59</sup> The enrollment problem was paramount. On September 2, 1942 the registrar reported to the faculty that fall enrollment was 83, of whom only 28 were men.<sup>60</sup>

The changing gender dynamics of the college in 1942–1945 manifested itself in a number of different ways. Several male faculty

members departed to work for the military: Dr. Samuel A. Small to Penn State University to teach in its Army Training Program and Dr. Clipp to Purdue University to conduct research on “Government War Projects.”<sup>61</sup> The students perceived the college as an “exclusive girl’s school” after the winter of 1943, with the student paper noting that “it’s a pretty desperate time for the females” (Fig. 8.1).<sup>62</sup> The regular gossip column Kookie Krums expressed these dynamics in ways that reinforced conventional gender roles. The columnist depicted female students frantically grasping for boyfriends and future spouses among the rapidly diminishing pool of available men. Every announcement that another male student was “Lost to Uncle Sam!!!” created the possibility of another disappointment in the search for a good marriage partner. However, even as every male enlistment was



**Fig. 8.1** Wartime classes at Huntington College—such as this business class in 1945—were dominated by women, since many of their male classmates had enlisted for military service. One of the few men left at Huntington College, Clarence Kopp (front row, left side) went on after graduation to serve as a pastor and bishop in the Church of the United Brethren in Christ denomination (Courtesy of the United Brethren Historical Center)

celebrated as an act of selfless patriotism, women's enlistments began to attract attention as well. On page one of the paper for February 15, 1943, the editors ran a story with the headline, "In the WAVES—Soon!" which reported news of Floris Towne's successful passing of the physical and aptitude exams for the United States Naval Reserve.<sup>63</sup> In regular columns "Service Notes" (1942–1943), "H C'ers in the Service" (1943–1944), and "In the Know with G. I. Joe" (1944–1945) editors made the effort to highlight women's participation in the armed forces, which counterbalanced the more common way of depicting women within the college's student culture—as potential girlfriends and wives. Campus leadership positions increasingly went to women as club leaders, class presidents, and editors of the newspaper. In January 1944, the new women students were welcomed to campus and informed that "The hand that rocks the cradle rules the world." They were coached to prepare for a "leading role" in "building up a determination for peace in the hearts of men and nations." In short, women should step up to a new kind of responsibility, since "the peace of our country is in their hands."<sup>64</sup>

None of these developments signaled a dramatic shift toward a feminist view of women and women's roles, and yet, the articles represented an important affirmation of women's intellectual capacities and leadership potential in society and in the church, which had ordained women since 1889.<sup>65</sup> In other ways, the college found itself retrenching while adapting to the new rhythms engendered by the onset of total war. Students managed to sustain the activities of their social clubs and other organizations, although the men's basketball team could not find enough players to field an intercollegiate squad in the 1943–1944 academic year. Students sponsored a Forward With Books campaign in 1942 and a World Student Service Fund drive in 1943–1944. The latter effort was designed to help buy books for American prisoners in German POW camps and to give financial assistance to Chinese and Japanese students in the United States who were cut off from their base of support due to the war in the Pacific. The students endeavored to sustain the religious character of the institution as well. In 1942 the Christian Endeavor club on campus wrote to their congressmen in Washington demanding "War-time Prohibition," since the war demanded "higher standard of morality" and the "boys in the army need it." With drunkenness, they feared, the nation "will sink to the depths of moral despair."<sup>66</sup> In the next academic year, students heard

a chapel program featuring representatives from the Strategic Million Committee, a program of the Chicago Evangelistic Institute to try to convert a million college students, who would then go out and spread the Gospel throughout the world.<sup>67</sup> Students reminded themselves not to lose sight of the moral and spiritual amid the clamor of war, as this unsigned poem from *The Huntingtonian* of June of 1943 seems to indicate:

Not a fear of foreign invasion  
Should keep us troubled and tense,  
But the decay of Godly living,  
Our first line of defense;  
The Church deserves allegiance,  
And worship must not lag,  
No nation will face disaster  
If the Cross precedes the flag.

Later that fall, President Becker told campus of a recent trip to Washington, DC where he saw some unfinished paintings in the Capitol Rotunda. This allowed him to make an association between the unfinished work of U.S. armed forces fighting in Europe and the Pacific, and the ongoing evangelical mission that the Master Painter and great Designer set before His people: “We must find our hearts beating in unison with Jesus our Master, who said, ‘My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work (John 4:34).’”<sup>68</sup>

These reassertions of Christian moral purpose mingled with encomiums to those who served and sacrificed “to secure the peace and insure the rights and privileges of a Christian democracy,” to use the words of President Becker in one of his wartime addresses.<sup>69</sup> As was happening at similar colleges, students and faculty waited anxiously for word of the fate of those students who enlisted, and shared widely the good news of men and women arriving safely at training stations or in a few cases, pulling through in the hospital after receiving wounds in battle. To give an example, students shared letters from Jack Roush, a pre-law student who seemed to be in every campus club and organization and served as freshman class president in 1940–1941. Roush enlisted as a junior and at the end of the spring semester in 1943, went to basic training at Fort Wolters, Texas. He entered the service in time to join military operations in Normandy and saw action in France in the month



after D-Day. A letter from Roush the previous year was published in *The Huntingtonian*, in which he thanked the editors for sending him copies of the paper: "It does a guy good to have so many happy memories covering the past three years brought to his mind." A subsequent letter, meant to congratulate the class of '44 on their commencement, commented with a note of regret: "If it were not my duty to be serving my country, I would be walking off that platform with my degree, along with the rest of my classmates." Sadly, students returning to campus that fall learned of his death in combat near Saint-Lô, France on July 15, 1944 through an obituary in the same campus newspaper. These experiences left a sizable impression on students in the college, most of whom knew everyone on campus, and were not accustomed to the premature deaths of young men they knew personally. This is evident in the dedication section of the 1945 yearbook, *Mnemosyne*, which contained a poem in honor of Roush, Paul Dee Bouman, and Paul Landrigan, all killed in action: "They could not know—; (They who crushed his young life out); That his spirit could not die; But would live forever; In the memories of friends."<sup>70</sup>

During the period between 1939 and 1945, denominational leaders and college officials pushed through a handful of changes in the college's governance and its academic program, changes that might be best understood within a wider context of institutional growth and the college's aspirations for regional accreditation. The financial crisis of the college in the early to mid-1930s, coupled with the uncertainties of the war years, brought the denomination to somewhat modify its Department of Education by redesigning the Board of Education with updated duties and powers and mandating its General Secretary to "supervise the work of higher education."<sup>71</sup> The Board, composed of the Board of Bishops, the General Secretary, and nine denominational members elected by the General Conference, had responsibility to raise funds for the college from the denomination and to manage the college's endowment. The 1945 constitution of the Board also provided for an Executive Council to transact business between annual meetings of the full Board of Education, and at the same time constituted the Board as the Board of Trustees for Huntington College to exercise managerial control over the institution. In some ways, this measure answered the need for greater denominational commitment to the financial well-being of the college, while also bringing its institutional governance in line with standard practices in American higher education.

In the same way, the experience of wartime enrollment declines alarmed the administration, who sought ways to make the institution more appealing to United Brethren in Christ youth as well as potential students outside the denomination. President Becker directed the institution to seek additional accreditation for teacher certification at the elementary school level by the State Board of Education of Indiana. This was necessary to keep pace with competitor colleges in the region. More importantly, Becker sought to have Huntington College accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, which had been accrediting colleges in Indiana since 1895.<sup>72</sup> In a later report to the General Conference, Becker made it clear that accreditation was a matter of institutional survival in a very competitive market for higher education: “The early accomplishment of regional accreditation resulting from united efforts has become obligatory for the future welfare of the institution in its service to young people desiring an education at Huntington College. Such stress is being placed upon this requirement in the public school these days that we have no other course open to us, either from a viewpoint of enrollment or service.”<sup>73</sup> The process of seeking North Central accreditation, which Becker began in the dark days of World War II, would eventually come to fruition years later in 1961, but not before wholesale changes were made to conform to North Central’s standards. The Association required institutions to articulate their objectives and maintain a curriculum designed to meet these objectives. It asked colleges to administer its academic program consistently and in a way that was clear to students seeking to complete degree requirements. These standards were relatively easy for Huntington College to meet, since they were largely being met already or could be adopted at little to no cost. Partly for these reasons, the college made changes in the 1940s, reducing the distribution hours required across various academic divisions, eliminating a requirement to have a minor subject, adopting and clarifying the nomenclature of “core subject and field of concentration,” and realigning its divisional structure by moving from four to five academic divisions.<sup>74</sup>

More challenging were the accreditation standards associated with faculty compensation, library facilities, and financial resources. North Central required “effective service and working conditions” for faculty including a favorable faculty–student ratio, salary scale, tenure, appropriate teaching loads, aids to faculty growth, and generous benefit packages. The faculty always maintained standards of education and

training consistent with the best colleges in the region, but the working condition standards required additional financial resources that the college could not yet manage. The library standards were another financial burden, and would not be met until Becker completed a campaign that began with appeals for donations for a new facility in the early 1940s and culminated in the Loew-Alumni Library, which opened in 1953.<sup>75</sup> Perhaps most challenging to the institution was the financial resources component of the North Central accreditation program. The college had to secure half of its financial resources from sources other than payments by students, which could come from “the governing and supporting body” but only “if there is sufficient evidence of its permanence and consistency.”<sup>76</sup> It is tempting to see the wartime changes to institutional governance and attempts to strengthen the relationship between the college and denomination as energized, at least in part, by an aspiration to regional accreditation.

While Becker and denominational leaders worked together to move Huntington College toward compliance with North Central Association accreditation requirements, it is important to note that he and other constituents—faculty, alumni, donors, conference leaders, and so on—possessed a shared conviction that joining the ranks of accredited colleges and universities in the region and accepting secular accrediting standards did not require any sacrifice of the institution’s conservative Protestant identity and mission. In his president’s report for 1944, Becker asked the denomination to approve the college’s affiliation with the National Association of Evangelicals “as a definite testimony to Evangelical Christianity in a time when many other nominally Christian colleges are turning to liberalism in both doctrine and practice.”<sup>77</sup> This sentiment appeared to be continuous throughout the war years, as evidenced by Dr. Stilson’s presentation to the faculty in 1941 on the subject of the “divine elements” in the Bible and its uniqueness as the “revelation of God to man.” Later that same academic year, Prof. Ralph B. Wood (associate professor of biological and social sciences) spoke on the subject of “Darwinism v. Mendelism,” specifically his belief that Mendel had disproved Darwin’s theories and that “the Bible account of creation still most completely answers the questions of the source and development of life.”<sup>78</sup> Regardless of the pressures brought to bear by wartime constraints, financial reversals, enrollment declines, and even institutional aspirations for accreditation, Becker and his associates appeared determined to assimilate to the mainstream of postwar

American higher education on terms partly of their own making. They also signaled their determination to support the fight for democracy overseas, while also fighting to shape a distinctively “Christian” democratic order at home.

The end of the war found denominational and college leaders bullish on the future prospects of Huntington College. After tanking in the fall of 1942, enrollment trends were moving in the right direction, and President Becker observed in the spring of 1945 that “the proposal of the government to provide educational opportunities for ex-servicemen gives promise that many of these men will seek an education.”<sup>79</sup> This optimism was borne out in the fall of 1946 when the college welcomed the highest enrollment in its history, some 269 students, of which 122 were veterans.<sup>80</sup> These G.I. Bill veterans traveled to new places and experienced new things, and brought these experiences to a campus that had already been awakened to the problems facing the global community. With a new dormitory for women just opened and another building proposed in 1945 as a “college home for our returning service men,” the campus seemed to have a new kind of energy and purpose.<sup>81</sup> Becker and his faculty colleagues had taken measures during the war years to ensure that this energy and purpose would be directed toward fulfilling Huntington College’s mission as a Christian liberal arts institution. The tide of financial distress seemed to be ebbing as well, and Becker could report to the denomination that at the end of the war, “the financial situation of our college is the strongest in the history of the institution and a larger number of persons are becoming aware of the financial stability of the organization.”<sup>82</sup> This was due to the tireless work of the college administration, trustees, and denominational leaders in developing a stronger donor–beneficiary relationship with alumni and with member congregations in the United Brethren in Christ organization. The local newspaper in town, the *Huntington Herald Press*, remarked in a 1943 article that “many small colleges are not slated to survive the war,” and despite these prospects the college deserved recognition for “its undaunted efforts to maintain a high standard of education despite the hardships placed upon it by the war.” Although it would require a few more years of toil and struggle, the college would soon merit the newspaper’s judgment that “H. C.’s future looks very promising.”<sup>83</sup>

## NOTES

1. In 2005, the institution changed its name from Huntington College to Huntington University.
2. In the 1930s, The Church of the United Brethren in Christ was divided between adherents to the Old Constitution and those who supported the New Constitution. Huntington College was the only institution sponsored by the U.B. Old Constitution. The New Constitution group sponsored several other colleges, but later merged with another denomination to form the Evangelical United Brethren Church (1946), which then merged with the Methodist Church to form the United Methodist Church (1968).
3. Paul R. Fetters, ed., *Trials and Triumphs: History of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ* (Huntington, IN: Church of the United Brethren in Christ Department of Church Services, 1984), 339.
4. "Centennial Alumni Directory," 16, in the United Brethren Historical Center (Huntington, IN), University Archives.
5. Fetters, 339.
6. *Ibid.*, 392.
7. *The Christian Conservator*, May 4, 1932, 13; *The Christian Conservator*, June 22, 1932, 14.
8. Fetters, 359–360.
9. *Ibid.*, 360.
10. Representatives from the Church of the United Brethren in Christ are listed among participants at the first National Inter-Church Temperance Council in 1907, which drew from a broad spectrum of American Protestant denominations. The Council pledged to "compel the civil authorities to perform their whole duty concerning the traffic; to enlist pulpit, platform, and printing press in behalf of better temperance laws; to preserve the church from entangling political alliances, and finally to make clear the duty and ability of the Church to prohibit and overthrow the legalized liquor traffic whenever she so wills." See Charles R. Jones, Alonzo E. Wilson, and Fred D.L. Squires, eds., *American Prohibition Year Book for 1910* (Chicago: National Prohibition Press, 1910), 133.
11. Fetters, 371.
12. George Webb, *The Evolution Controversy in America* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1994), 100. In the 1920s, 37 states considered laws restricting textbooks or teaching evolution. Indiana didn't ban teaching evolution at the state level, but several school boards refused to hire teachers willing to teach evolution and some communities purged books on evolution from their public libraries.

13. President H.C. Mason, "Our College" (n.d.) in the United Brethren Historical Center, Record Group 1: Historical Information, Series 3: Huntington College, Folder "Publicity, 1932–1939." It is worth noting that the college's statement of faith and Mason's descriptions of the faculty's commitment to the Bible are not consistent with the language of infallibility and inerrancy of Scripture characteristic of Reformed churches under the influence of Fundamentalism. See George Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture: The Shaping of Twentieth-Century Evangelicalism* (London: Oxford University Press, 1980).
14. Ibid.
15. President H.C. Mason, "50 Cryptic Statements" (n.d.) in the United Brethren Historical Center, Record Group 1: Historical Information, Series 3: Huntington College, Folder "Publicity, 1932–1939."
16. Ibid.
17. Ibid.
18. "Quadrennial Address of the Board of Bishops," in *General Conference of the United Brethren in Christ (Old Constitution): Thirty-third Quadrennial Session, Also the One-hundredth Anniversary Held at the Rhodes Grove Camp Ground South of Chambersburg, Pennsylvania*, June 19–25, 1941 (Huntington, IN: U.B. Publishing Establishment, 1941), 191.
19. Ibid., 192.
20. Ibid.
21. "Dr. Clarence True Wilson to Give Commencement Address," *The Huntingtonian*, vol. 20, no. 9, 17 April 1935, 1, in the United Brethren Historical Center, University Archives, Record Group 12, Publications, Series 10.
22. Ibid., 4.
23. Minutes of July 28, 1939, in Minutes of the Executive Committee of the Board of Education and of the Board of Trustees of Huntington College, 101. It came out later that Mason had begun to work with the Free Methodist denomination and was drawn to "Wesleyan doctrine" and his decision to turn down a bishop position and leave his post as president of Huntington College was partly due to his shift in denominational preferences and his desire to work in a Free Methodist academic environment. See Robert E. Mason, "Midwesterner in Search for Perfection," 5–6, in Huntington University Record Group 3: Presidents, Series 9: Harold C. Mason (1932–1939), Folder "FIA Biography—File Compiled by Mary Lou Funk for Bishop Series."
24. *The Huntingtonian*, vol. 25, no. 1, 13 November 1939, 1.
25. "Quadrennial Report of the General Secretary of Education," in *General Conference of the United Brethren in Christ (Old Constitution)*:

*Thirty-third Quadrennial Session, Also the One-hundredth Anniversary Held at the Rhodes Grove Camp Ground South of Chambersburg, Pennsylvania*, June 19–25, 1941 (Huntington, IN: U.B. Publishing Establishment, 1941), 302.

26. *The Huntingtonian*, vol. 25, no. 3, 5 December 1939, 3.
27. *Ibid.*, 4.
28. *Ibid.*
29. *Ibid.* This argument is probably responsive to Maj. Gen. Smedley Butler's *War is a Racket* (1935) and the report of the Nye Committee in 1936, which alleged war profiteering among the nation's banks and defense industries during World War I.
30. *Ibid.*
31. *Ibid.*
32. Franklin D. Roosevelt to Roger Merriman, May 20, 1940, as quoted in Susan Dunn, *1940: FDR, Willkie, Lindbergh, Hitler—The Election Amid the Storm* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013). The text of the letter is as follows: "Dear Frisky: Ever so many thanks for your note. I appreciate it. I like your word 'shrimps.' There are too many of them in all the Colleges and Universities—male and female. I think the best thing for the moment is to call them shrimps publicly and privately. Most of them will eventually get in line if things should become worse. As ever yours."
33. *The Huntingtonian*, vol. 25, no. 3, 5 December 1939, 2.
34. John G. Connor, ed., *Origin, Doctrine, Constitution, and Discipline of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ, 1941–1945* (Huntington, IN: U.B. Publishing Establishment, 1937), 126–127.
35. W.C. South and Dr. Elmer Becker, eds., *Origin, Doctrine, Constitution, and Discipline of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ, 1941–1945* (Huntington, IN: U.B. Publishing Establishment, 1941), 130–131.
36. *Ibid.*
37. "On This Day in UB History: Clyde W. Meadows and the Draft Board," December 7, 2017 at UBCentral website, <http://ubcentral.org/2017/12/07/on-this-day-in-ub-history-december-7-clyde-meadows-and-the-draftDraft-board/>.
38. The speech in question was Henry Wallace's "The Century of the Common Man," delivered at the Commodore Hotel in New York at a meeting of the Free World Association. See John C. Culver and John Hyde, *American Dreamer: The Life and Times of Henry A. Wallace* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2001), 276.
39. *The Huntingtonian*, vol. 28, no. 1, 28 September 1942, 2.
40. *Ibid.*
41. *Ibid.*

42. Henry A. Wallace, "An Address Before the Free World Association, New York City, May 8th, 1942," issued by the U.S. Office of Facts and Figures (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1942). The Bible verse quoted in the speech is Isaiah 40: 29–31.
43. *The Huntingtonian*, vol. 28, no. 6, 21 December 1942, 1.
44. *Ibid.*, 1, 4.
45. *The Huntingtonian*, vol. 28, no. 7, 18 January 1943, 2.
46. *Ibid.*
47. Faculty Meeting Minutes, January 13, 1942, in the United Brethren Historical Center, University Archives, Huntington University, HU 9.4.1.1, Faculty Minutes 1897–1944, Box 1, Folder "Faculty Meeting Minutes 1941–42."
48. Faculty Meeting Minutes, October 22, 1942, in the United Brethren Historical Center, University Archives, Huntington University, HU 9.4.1.1, Faculty Minutes 1897–1944, Box 1, Folder "Faculty Minutes 1942–43."
49. Faculty Meeting Minutes, January 19, 1943, in the United Brethren Historical Center, University Archives, Huntington University, HU 9.4.1.1, Faculty Minutes 1897–1944, Box 1, Folder "Faculty Minutes 1942–43." President Becker wrote in *The Huntingtonian* in March of that year that "Huntington College has received no definite word with reference to the possibilities of active participation in the Specialized Training Program of the Army and Navy. A complete report of Huntington College facilities has been submitted to Government authorities. Each week new announcements are being made by the Committee for the selection of Colleges for this purpose. Huntington stands in line to await consideration of the possibilities of its facilities for the war training program. Our College stands ready to cooperate in a united effort against the great foes of Christian democracy. But along with this effort the institution purposes to maintain its educational service in the preparation of leaders to promote the cause of peace time normalcy. Elmer Becker." This appears to be the last word on the subject in the records of the college. President Elmer Becker, "War Time Emphasis at Huntington College," *The Huntingtonian*, vol. 28, no. 11, 15 March 1943, 23.
50. Faculty Meeting Minutes, February 2, April 6, and March 9, 1943, in the United Brethren Historical Center, University Archives, Huntington University, HU 9.4.1.1, Faculty Minutes 1897–1944, Box 1, Folder "Faculty Minutes 1942–43."
51. Faculty Meeting Minutes, October 6, 1943, in the United Brethren Historical Center, University Archives, Huntington University, HU 9.4.1.1, Faculty Minutes 1897–1944, Box 1, Folder "Faculty Minutes 1943–44."



52. Faculty Meeting Minutes, April 25, 1944 in the United Brethren Historical Center, University Archives, Huntington University, HU 9.4.1.1, Faculty Minutes 1897–1944, Box 1, Folder “Faculty Minutes 1943–44.”
53. *The Indianapolis Star* (Friday, September 4, 1936): 5.
54. “The President Answers Your Queries Concerning Huntington College.” (n.d.) in the United Brethren Historical Center, University Archives, Huntington University, Record Group 3: Presidents, Series 10: Elmer Becker, Folder 7: “Promotional Letters.”
55. *The Huntingtonian*, vol. 29, no. 7, 28 January 1944, 2.
56. *The Huntingtonian*, vol. 28, no. 4, n.d. November 1942, 1.
57. *The Huntingtonian*, vol. 28, no. 6, 21 December 1942, 1.
58. “Centennial,” 24.
59. *Ibid.*
60. Faculty Meeting Minutes, September 2, 1942, in the United Brethren Historical Center, University Archives, Huntington University, HU 9.4.1.1, Faculty Minutes 1897–1944, Box 1, Folder “Faculty Minutes 1942–43.”
61. Annual Report of the President, April 25, 1944, in the United Brethren Historical Center, University Archives, Huntington University, Record Group 5: Administrative Divisions, Series 1: Office of the President, Subseries 1: President’s Reports, Folder “1944.”
62. *The Huntingtonian*, vol. 28, no. 10, 1 March 1943, 2.
63. *The Huntingtonian*, vol. 28, no. 9, 15 February 1943, 1.
64. *The Huntingtonian*, vol. 29, no. 7, 28 January 1944, 2.
65. Mark Chaves, *Ordaining Women: Culture and Conflict in Religious Organizations* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997), 23, 69; Barbara B. Troxell, “Ordination of Women in the United Methodist Tradition,” *Methodist History*, vol. 37, no. 2, January 1999, 119–130.
66. *The Huntingtonian*, “Special Missions Edition,” vol. 28, 1942, 2.
67. *The Huntingtonian*, vol. 28, no. 13, 22 April 1943, 2.
68. *The Huntingtonian*, vol. 29, no. 3, 1 November 1943, 1.
69. *The Huntingtonian*, vol. 28, no. 11, 15 March 1943, 3.
70. *The Huntingtonian*, vol. 29, no. 4, 15 November 1943, 3; *The Huntingtonian*, vol. 30, no. 1, 20 September 1944, 3; and *Mnemosyne* (1945), 2.
71. “Supplement to the Discipline of 1941–45, Church of the United Brethren in Christ (Constitution of 1841), Prepared by the Editing Committee by Order of 34th Quadrennial Session of the General Conference,” in the United Brethren Historical Center collection. It should be noted that Becker told the General Conference in 1949 that “the present plan of the same personnel for both the Board of Education and the Board of Trustees of Huntington College creates

- a measure of confusion in administration,” and recommended some changes. See “Quadrennial Report of the General Secretary of Education, 1945–1949,” in *General Conference of the United Brethren in Christ, Constitution of 1841, Thirty-fifth Quadrennial Session Held at Huntington College, Huntington Indiana*, June 7–13, 1949 (Huntington, IN: U.B. Publishing Establishment, 1949), 344.
72. Mark Newman, *Agency of Change: One Hundred Years of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools* (Kirksville, MO: Thomas Jefferson University Press, 1996).
  73. “Quadrennial Report of the General Secretary of Education and President of Huntington College, 1949 to 1953,” in *General Conference of the United Brethren in Christ, Constitution of 1841, Thirty-sixth General Conference Held at Huntington College, Huntington, Indiana*, June 9–15, 1953 (Huntington, IN: U.B. Publishing Establishment, 1953), 499–500.
  74. *Huntington College Bulletin: Supplement to Catalogue, 1948–1949*, in the United Brethren Historical Center, University Archives, Huntington University.
  75. “Centennial Alumni Directory,” 28.
  76. “North Central Association Requirements” (c. 1940), in the United Brethren Historical Center, University Archives, Huntington University, Record Group 5: Administrative Divisions, Series 1: Office of the President, Subseries 1: President’s Reports, Folder “1940–41.”
  77. Annual Report of the President, April 25, 1944, in the United Brethren Historical Center, University Archives, Huntington University, Record Group 5: Administrative Divisions, Series 1: Office of the President, Subseries 1: President’s Reports, Folder “1944.”
  78. Faculty Meeting Minutes, November 25, 1941 and April 7, 1942 in the United Brethren Historical Center, University Archives, Huntington University, HU 9.4.1.1, Faculty Minutes 1897–1944, Box 1, Folder “Faculty Meeting Minutes 1941–42.”
  79. “Quadrennial Report of the General Secretary of Education, 1941–1945,” in *General Conference of the United Brethren in Christ (Old Constitution), Thirty-fourth Quadrennial Session Held at the Rothfuss Assembly Park, Hillsdale, Michigan*, June 7–13, 1945 (Huntington, IN: U.B. Publishing Establishment, 1945), 333.
  80. *The Huntingtonian*, vol. 32, no. 2, 4 October 1946, 1.
  81. *Mnemosyne* (1945), 52.
  82. “Quadrennial Report of the General Secretary of Education, 1941–1945,” 333.
  83. “Press Gives Recognition,” *The Huntingtonian*, vol. 29, no. 3, 1 November 1943, 1.



## CHAPTER 9

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# More Than One Kind of *Blitzkrieg* to Resist: Houghton College's Response to World War II

*Andrew D. Mullen*

“The challenge of the new day for American colleges is very great,” said the message from President Roosevelt. “All our energies at the present must be devoted to winning the war.” Congratulating Colgate University on the inauguration of its ninth president on 24 September 1942, Roosevelt was implicitly speaking as well to the larger community of higher education. Not even those ensconced in ivory towers were to be exempt, evidently, from contributing in some way to the national—and international—war effort. At the same time, Roosevelt’s message noted that “winning the war will be futile if we do not throughout the period of its winning keep our people prepared to make a lasting and worthy peace.” By implication then again, the President seemed to offer legitimacy to those who, amid the conflagration, were continuing their academic pursuits. In a few sentences thus, the President suggested something of the dilemma facing the nation at large. How much to continue with ordinary living—how much, that is, to “keep calm and

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carry on”—and how much to sacrifice everything immediately in the cause of military victory.<sup>1</sup>

It was a dilemma felt especially acutely by students, professors, and administrators at the college level, individually and institutionally. To the extent that colleges took the long view and continued their work of preparing for a still distant peace, what adjustments and accommodations might have to be made in the meantime? And, even now, several months into the war effort, how were colleges, as institutions, supposed to demonstrate to the public at large their commitment to the war effort? Individual enlistees aside, what particular “energies” or other forms of institutional support did national leaders hope to secure from the higher education community? On this occasion, at least, the president’s “Message to Colleges” did not specify.<sup>2</sup>

By any reckoning the President, or anyone else in national leadership, could scarcely have expected much from an obscure religious college in upstate New York, 184 miles to Colgate’s west. Affiliated with the Wesleyan Methodist Church, Houghton College in the hamlet of Houghton at the northern tip of Appalachia seemed in no way positioned to make a substantial contribution to Allied victory. Houghton had opened its doors as an educational institution in 1883, but had received its charter from the Regents of the state of New York to offer baccalaureate degrees as recently as 1923. For the academic year 1940–1941, its peak enrollment until after the war, the student body numbered less than 500. Perhaps even more limiting, in terms of its obvious potential war contribution, were the curriculum, associated expertise, and credentials of the current faculty. Course offerings skewed heavily towards religious education and the humanities, including six modern and ancient languages. “Houghton has three molds [for students],” noted Warren Woolsey, a current student and future professor at the college, in the campus newspaper in the fall of 1942: “public school teaching, theology, and public school music, and almost every student who comes here is forced into one of these molds.”<sup>3</sup> The college’s location was a further potential handicap. As a student writer a few years earlier had delicately noted, Houghton was “somewhat isolated from business centers,” and the student had gone on to lament the “60-70 miles we must travel to get to Buffalo or Rochester,” the nearest centers of population or potential war production.<sup>4</sup>

Explaining the college’s financial position mid-war, an administrator noted that “some schools are receiving income from the military

students whom the government has assigned to them for training, but Houghton's facilities are not extensive enough to attract such an arrangement." In this same context, the writer went on to suggest that, in fact, the school had *no* other resources than "God and the people to whom God can speak." "From its beginnings Houghton has been a homespun sort of school where man's sacrificial little has been touched by God's miraculous multiplying power." In fact, "one could still see [on campus] where the clay [had been] dug to make the bricks for the earliest buildings."<sup>5</sup> Whatever resources the tiny college had to offer, they seemed unlikely to make much difference in the larger campaign for military victory.

These potentially daunting limitations notwithstanding, students from this "homespun sort of school" were quick to respond to the long anticipated news that America had joined the Allied war effort. One third-year divinity student, publicly identified as a Conscientious Objector heretofore, enlisted shortly after Pearl Harbor.<sup>6</sup> Another student missing from campus the Monday after was rumored to have done the same. According to an article in the student newspaper published five days after the American Declaration of War, "Houghton responded to the...war news like any other community in the country...The student attitude as a whole seemed to be one of resignation to the story...[but] to do our part towards forwarding the victory."<sup>7</sup> A few weeks later, a student editorial fleshed out what "our part" might consist of, including among other predictable possibilities, taking "Red Cross nursing courses; we will train for Home Defense; we will be blackout wardens; we will write the boys; we will, indirectly, bear the [war's] financial burden."<sup>8</sup>

In measurable terms, and at the level of the individual, the most obvious response of the Houghton community was to enlist in the armed forces, either through the draft or by volunteering. The expected exodus of students did not happen all at once. As the college president later reported to the board, "Houghton was recognized by the army, navy, and marine corps as a collegiate center for the reserve corps of the respective branches of the service, thus a considerable number of our students were able, by enlisting in one of these reserve corps, to pursue for a while longer their college work, fitting in such technical courses as would be likely to benefit them in subsequent military service... But then the reservists started to get called up."<sup>9</sup> Three years into American involvement in the war an issue of the *Houghton Alumnus* identified 310 graduates or former students officially serving, or who

had recently served in the American military<sup>10</sup>—a figure later raised to 371.<sup>11</sup> Following the war, in April 1949, the student government organized a service and tree-planting ceremony to commemorate the ten of these students who did not return from the war—three killed in training accidents, others who died in military action from Italy to Germany, the Philippines to North Africa.<sup>12</sup> Not surprisingly at a time when campus discourse routinely referred to “the boys,” all ten of those who died were men, and the vast majority of the enlisted total overall were likewise indeed male. But 15 “servicewomen” were identified in the 1944 listing, including at least 5 assigned to the Army or Navy Nursing Corps.<sup>13</sup> Other women—as well as an unclear number of men—who did not enlist contributed directly to the war effort through employment at defense plants. In addition to students, J. Whitney Shea, a sociology professor and older brother of gospel singer George Beverly Shea, enlisted as an intelligence officer in the US Army as part of Cryptographic Security.

Apart from these known individuals leaving their studies to enroll, voluntarily and otherwise, the college administration was equally struck by the *hypothetical* students whom the war kept from enrolling in the first place. For the college’s youthful and still relatively new president Stephen Paine, 33 years of age and confronted with both Depression-era straitened finances and a relatively critical accreditation review from Middle States, student enrollment was arguably the single overshadowing issue of the war years. Student enrollment numbers were certainly the focus of Paine’s war-years reports to the college’s Board of Trustees—a preoccupation Paine himself would confess to a short time later. “During the war years when students were scarce, we felt that if we could once get through the war, all of our problems would be at end.”<sup>14</sup> Here and elsewhere enrollment numbers need to be treated with care, given some inconsistency in reporting associated with the still-emerging relationship of the college proper and its “preparatory division”—later a legally separate institution for high school students, Houghton Academy. Nonetheless, it is clear that college enrollment had grown throughout the 1930s, and even for much of the two-year period of American neutrality following the British declaration of war. But from a high of 482 enrolled in the college proper for Fall Semester of the 1940–1941 school year, by September of 1943 enrollment had dropped to 292.<sup>15</sup>

For a season, then, with declining tuition income and few other financial resources, Houghton College was itself a potential *institutional* casualty of the war. Exactly how fragile and just how close to dissolution

the college ever came is debatable. What becomes clear from available evidence, however, is that the *perception* of teetering on the brink was a reality in students' minds. "Each month [after Pearl Harbor] a number of our men were called into their country's service. As we saw them go...as we heard rumors of other small liberal arts colleges being forced to close, we wondered. We wondered if Houghton would be able to maintain her standards; if the college of which we had become so much a part must cease to function."<sup>16</sup>

Prior to the war, the enrollment of men and women was roughly equal, men on campus actually outnumbering women as recently as 1938–1939. The men who volunteered or who were drafted into the armed services drastically altered that balance. The writer's neighbor who recently characterized the war years as the time "Houghton essentially became a women's college" was engaging in hyperbole.<sup>17</sup> According to published enrollment figures, the percentage of men never dipped below 30%. The remark was nonetheless not without some justification. During the required all-student chapels, at least up until 1942, men and women had been seated on separate sides of a central aisle. As of February 1942, the student government proposed—and evidently effected—a plan that "fellows and girls should be arranged alphabetically by classes [during] chapel, dispensing with the practice of segregation."<sup>18</sup> Less formally, at least for one of the war years, the rules for the college's annual Sadie Hawkins Day were changed, such that a male date could be claimed by up to three women.<sup>19</sup> More seriously for the college, its chief touring publicity arm, an *a cappella* choir of steadily growing reputation, was now doubly handicapped. Not only was President Paine unsuccessful in arguing for an additional allocation of gasoline for the choir's annual bus tour. The choir—eventually sent out by train—became for at least a semester an ensemble constituted exclusively of women.<sup>20</sup>

Apart from a handful of pre-medical students and those deemed physically unfit for service, the men left on campus were predominantly in the Division of Theology [AKA: Division of Religious Education], as presumed future clergymen, chaplains, or missionaries. Enrollment in this (largely male) division actually increased during the war years, in absolute as well as relative terms. As administrators had hoped, Houghton was able "to retain a large proportion of our students preparing for full-time Christian service, inasmuch as the Selective Service headquarters [had] formally recognized Houghton as an approved theological school."<sup>21</sup> At the same time, some voices on campus, including President Paine,

wondered if the chief attraction of the division for some young men was not so much an inner call or even the reduced tuition students in this division paid, but simply the opportunity to avoid the draft. “We are conscious of a growing tendency for students to register in the Division of Religious Education for whom there seems to be small prospect and often small intention of going into full-time Christian service.”<sup>22</sup> Warren Woolsey, the student quoted above and who would shortly take up a commission flying bombing raids over Italy, reproved his fellow students, even if completely sincere in their public declaration of a call to the ministry, if they pursued this calling to the exclusion of enlisting in the military. When the war was over, he argued, they would have a credibility issue when responding to troubled parishioners or their families who approached them with questions: “When one of them comes to you [with a problem, you would need to say] you couldn’t understand; you weren’t in it; there won’t be a thing you can say.”<sup>23</sup>

Partially in response to declining numbers, but granting legitimacy as well to the reasoning actually stated, the Houghton student government presented in December 1942 to the faculty a resolution “that all clubs and some organizations be abolished for the duration of the war... in order that the students might have more time to devote to the war courses and activities.” This particular proposal fell flat, the faculty resolving that individual students and individual clubs were in a better position to make the decisions about the relative investment of their personal energy.<sup>24</sup> If campus organizations—with the possible exception of *Der Rheinverein*, the German club—continued to go about their usual business, there is ample evidence to suggest that in other ways the war was not left unnoticed.

Whether students heeded the exhortation or not—evidence on this point is mixed—the campus newspaper regularly reminded students in this time of crisis to take even greater advantage of the educational opportunities provided them. Writing in response to Roosevelt’s “Challenge to the Colleges,” for instance, printed and prominently flagged in the same issue, the paper’s editor reminded students of the moral gravity of their situation:

We who have been fortunate enough to return to Houghton for another year and those of us who have just entered...are faced with the imperative of definite, purposeful living day by day. These are not times for loafing or shirking of responsibility. Enough of our numbers, it would seem, have



been called into active military service for us to realize that we are morally bound to employ our ‘exposure’ to educational opportunities to greatest advantage. Many of us fellows could easily be in an army camp or at the front this very moment. This school year must be so lived that at its close we shall be able to acknowledge, first in our own hearts, and then to others, that that has been a justification for our one year reprieve from action in some branch of the armed forces.<sup>25</sup>

More tangibly, students and/or administrators carried out all the promises made on their behalf at the war’s outset—and then some. The student council established an all-campus War Council, bringing together the three members of the faculty’s War Committee with three students in order to better “coordinate all campus war activity.”<sup>26</sup> Coordinated or otherwise, students and faculty engaged in many of the standard activities undertaken on other college campuses and other venues around the nation: Red Cross drives, blood-bank donations, and the sale of war bonds and stamps. An artistic arrangement of the latter items wrapped in cellophane became a campus fashion, christened “warsages,” for use on Valentine’s Day, or to be given by a gentleman to his date in lieu of the traditional corsage.<sup>27</sup> Students committed to writing letters, and the student newspaper regularly devoted substantial column inches to publishing letters in return, some directed to individuals and others to the community at large. Returning servicemen were profusely welcomed back to campus. Whether implemented or not, the conversion of the central campus quad to Victory Gardens—as had been done in the previous war—was publicly considered.<sup>28</sup> Likewise proposed, if not carried out, was a program of “physical hardening for women.”<sup>29</sup> For what specific purposes it was not made clear, but a year into the war, there was a call for fingerprinting of the entire student body. On campus and/or its surroundings, air-raid drills were conducted.<sup>30</sup> To conserve paper and student labor, the size of the campus newspaper was reduced.

As elsewhere, college administrators tried within the limits of existing institutional capacity to augment the curriculum with subject matter more obviously relevant to the war effort. Formal or informal classes on drafting, electricity, and radio were offered, both to regular students and to members of the local community. Whether ever offered or not, additional courses in mathematics, physics, and navigation were also considered as potential supplements to the curriculum.<sup>31</sup>

As an intentional faith community, faculty and staff offered regular public prayer for those at the front. “In the morning church services we have prayed silently and sung reverently ‘Our Fathers’ God to Thee’ for our men in the armed forces. We have seen the numbers in the service flag in chapel increase to above 300. Already some of the blue stars have given place to gold” (Fig. 9.1).<sup>32</sup> At several junctures during the war years, students organized “refugee dinners,” both to identify with civilians directly impacted by the war, and to raise money to help the same. The dinners consisted of “lots of rice,” remembered one participant, with the difference in aggregate cost from a regular all-campus meal (\$111.00, in one case) being sent to the Red Cross.<sup>33</sup>

While most of these war-related activities exist today only on paper or in the memories of the last living representatives of college-student life during the war,<sup>34</sup> the war arguably left more enduring marks on the Houghton campus and community.<sup>35</sup> The most visible imprint of the war years was the college’s new administration building, architecturally the prototype for all subsequent campus construction. With or without the war, the building might have been eventually completed. But its ultimate form emerged serendipitously—some would say providentially—out of the circumstances of the war. Groundbreaking for Luckey Memorial, named for the alumnus and Harvard-educated former president James Luckey whose leadership had secured the college full accreditation, had long been postponed due to inadequate funding. The war, of course, actually exacerbated the financial situation. Its coming served as a catalyst and precipitant, however, and indirectly changed for long-term good the intended design. “In the winter of 1940-41, when war clouds were gathering...[we anticipated] war time price inflation” both for materials and the cost of labor.<sup>36</sup> Since funding on hand was insufficient to implement the original plan for a building faced with brick, a local builder proposed using stone from one or more local creek beds. Along with student labor and locally sawn oak, hemlock, and “knotty pine from our own woods,” it became possible to build the administration building for less than \$40,000 rather than the original nearly double estimate.<sup>37</sup> The creek-stone facing in particular became one of Houghton’s hallmarks, and the completed building itself a monument to institutional resilience, local pride, and creative problem-solving. When by 1944 rising numbers of female students necessitated the construction of a new dormitory and dining facility, local creek-stone was used once again—the first of at least ten buildings in that style standing on the campus today.



**Fig. 9.1** Female student looking at service banner, 1945 (Courtesy of Houghton College Archives)

It has been stated in other contexts that the war dramatically extended Houghton's horizons and opened the campus up to a wider world. Clearly that was true for particular individuals. From the beginning, however, Houghton as a college and community had sent out missionaries to multiple continents and maintained, for an out-of-the-way village, a strikingly cosmopolitan frame of reference. The college and community had sent missionaries to Sierra Leone, for example, as early as the 1890s. In any case, a new style of building and the possible strengthening of a global perspective aside, at least four additional and somewhat intangible effects of the war on the college may be identified, beginning with the institution's response to its war-ravaged finances. The college's founders and leaders had from the beginning engaged in fundraising. The desperate budgetary state the college reached during the war seems to have been a turning-point, nonetheless, in the attention given to regular, sustained and systematic solicitation and public relations, and the assertiveness of the same. As President Paine acknowledged in the fall of 1943 in his generic appeal to "Friends of Houghton," college literature to date had "not been loaded with repeated appeals for financial aid." "However," Paine continued, "the College now faces a situation where it needs your help. This issue of the Bulletin gives the details."<sup>38</sup> Not surprisingly, the college has never since then ceased systematically to canvas its constituents for financial support.

Two, the war clearly impacted relations between the sexes and may explain in part the relative institutional empowerment of women that has characterized Houghton, relative to some sister institutions, for so much of its history. Speaking some years later, alumna and long esteemed professor of history Katherine (Walberger) Lindley explained that the absence of men gave women new roles. On campus, "women students filled position of leadership in student government, clubs, and publications, positions formerly given to male students."<sup>39</sup> Lindley was not only a living example of one of Houghton's most empowered women. She herself in turn provided an attractive model of intellectual and spiritual achievement for female—and male—students decades after the war's ending. One way or another, the war years allowed several prominent female junior faculty to earn doctorates. This was, in part, a belated response to stipulations laid down in the most recent Middle States accreditation report. It seems to have been a deliberate strategy as well, however, to economize on faculty salaries, even before the college's most financially precarious moment. In any event, at least three women were

given leaves of absence in 1941 to complete doctoral studies at Cornell University, including Josephine Rickard (English), Frieda Gillette (history), and Crystal Rork (biology).<sup>40</sup>

Hypothetically, at least, a further impact of the war was a winnowing or refining of the faculty. In preparation for an article marking the half-century of Pearl Harbor, an unnamed source later identified as a faculty member's child explained that "Because enrollment went down, the number of teachers had to go down, and I remember hearing a little aside quite a few years later that World War II allowed us to get rid of the poorest professors. It was not done maliciously, but [ultimately it became] a way to upgrade the quality of the institution here."<sup>41</sup> There is no doubt that, in the face of war-related circumstances, individuals and positions were cut. What may have been of equally enduring impact, vis-a-vis the overall quality and camaraderie of the faculty, was the internal test of commitment and loyalty to the institution each individual experienced as salaries were progressively cut and workloads progressively increased. Those who did survive the war years on campus could be considered battle-hardened veterans in their own right, and seemed to have perpetuated accordingly an unusual sense of solidarity and institutional loyalty among the faculty that lasted long after the war.

Finally as with the faculty, the war left its mark on a number on a particular cohort of students who would eventually return to the college equipped with graduate degrees and offer their lives in a different sense than the wounded and fallen servicemen with whom they had once shared the campus. A strikingly disproportionate share of the students who experienced the war years at Houghton, relative to any decade before or after, returned to their alma mater as faculty and administrators. The number from the graduating class of 1943 alone is remarkable. "With the war, the spirit which has always distinguished Houghton has become even stronger in order to keep alive, not only the school itself, but also the activities and the ideas of the institution," reported the student yearbook in 1944. "When we returned this fall, we found a Houghton, which, though changed, still preserved her standards, her principles, her faith."<sup>42</sup> It is hard to prove, either individually or in the aggregate, that the atmosphere of the war years at Houghton, was a major factor in these graduates returning to serve the college. It is impressive, nonetheless, the degree to which the names of student leaders and student journalists from the war years correspond to those who eventually returned and provided leadership in the college for decades

after—extending to future Houghtonians otherwise-unaffected by the war, something of the tight collegial and community bond this particular cohort had experienced as students. Among others, Katherine (Walberger) Lindley, Warren and Ella (Phelps) Woolsey, Wesley Nussey, Ruth (Fancher) Hutton, Robert and Ruth (Brooks) Luckey, Herschel and “Sammie” (Samuels) Ries, Alton Shea and his siblings, Bert Hall, and Arnold Cook, not to mention a number of alumni missionaries from the period who would return to the college as staff members and/or return to the Houghton community for retirement.

Not surprisingly, one cannot peruse an issue of Houghton’s student newspaper, the *Star*, from the fall of 1941 to the end of the spring term in 1945, without finding one or more references to the war. In hindsight, however, what may be much *more* remarkable is the extent to which academic and social life proceeded apace. With the possible exception of the institutional crisis of low enrollment—especially in 1942–1943, and especially the dip in male enrollment—the story of the war years can be seen as one of continuity as much as, or even more than, one of disruption. For those of us today whose minds are saturated with war-era images from such historical films as say, *Dunkirk*—to offer but one recent example—it may be hard to imagine just how great a portion of many contemporaries’ lives at Houghton consisted of the routine and status quo. A testimony such as the following cuts both ways, and contrariwise, may demonstrate the centrality of the war in the consciousness of certain individuals. Together with others’ corroborating evidence, however, it raises at the very least significant questions. “Even in these dark days of brutal treachery, we in Houghton complacently continue our traditional pattern of isolation. Wrapping ourselves in our campus paradise, screened by the verdure of a peaceful valley, we bathe in the blessings of freedom backed by bloody beaches on Guadalcanal.”<sup>43</sup> In parallel fashion, a contemporary yearbook noted that:

All the world is at work in the year 1942...building, expanding, destroying...the factories, the mills, and [the field] are working three shifts. Man’s energies are applied to the immediate task of defending his ‘way of life.’ With machines oiled in blood, he strives to subdue his opponents... Yet somewhere in this hectic world there is a nucleus of peace and quiet, of sanity and stability...on the campuses of a thousand colleges, a hundred universities scattered o’er all the earth we find that civilization still advances in the souls of sage professors quietly preoccupied with the ageless and the universal. So it has been on our campus at Houghton.<sup>44</sup>

To what degree these characterizations apply to “the campuses of a thousand colleges, a hundred universities,” others must determine. At Houghton College, in any case, the relative *lack* of disruption in the course of ordinary life—the degree to which reported activities and characteristic ethos are similar to the years before and after—may constitute the major narrative thread. What happened in the classroom is less well documented, but co-curricular activity and social events reported in campus media seem in retrospect to be much in line with life on campus before and after the war. Distinguished professional musicians visited the campus to perform, and aspiring student musicians offered the community—with or without faculty support—their own home-grown recitals. Organized intra-campus athletic events (the college would not begin to participate in *inter*-collegiate competition for over 20 years) varied with the season, just as in the past. For at least part of the war, the debate team continued to travel and to bring home honors. Oratorical and Bible-reading contest winners were announced. Practice teachers were assigned to classrooms and upon completion of those assignments duly congratulated on receiving job offers in local schools. The student government at one point mid-war sponsored a “special chapel on etiquette.” and successfully petitioned the faculty for the “right of the students to study in the library evenings even if not using reserve books.”<sup>45</sup> Student government minute books included the minutiae of discussion over the purchase of an annual gift for the college president. The election and announcement of officers for various student organizations was momentarily reported on schedule.

As before and after the war, organized religious life permeated the campus and community. Sermons in the local Wesleyan Methodist church—Sunday morning and Sunday evening both—and chapel talks were summarized and recorded for posterity. A wide variety of visiting evangelists unleashed—or at times apparently failed to unleash—spiritual revival. Tuesday evening prayer meetings were held on schedule, and the Foreign Missions Fellowship groups and Wesleyan Young Peoples Society continued to meet. Gas rationing notwithstanding, “extension work”—the practice of sending teams of students out to organize “Gospel services” in nearby communities—continued on course. Missionaries from around the globe wrote home, visited the campus, temporarily located themselves in the community during furloughs, and returned to the field.

Some of this sense of normality may be attributed to the isolation of the campus, in addition to the limitations of contemporary technology. A missionary-alumna and sister of one of the ten men killed in the war, interviewed many years later, explained that she and fellow students were “not as caught up in war as people today because we didn’t have visual images.”<sup>46</sup> And of course some might suggest cynically that some sort of ‘fiddling while Rome burns’ is a more or less permanent state of life on college campuses. That any alleged sense of being removed from the war is just to be expected, given the creaky norms and fusty traditions of academic culture.

Although there may be truth in each of these theories, an even more convincing explanation may be found in the distinctive set of values to which members of the Houghton community remained faithful throughout the war. In tangible form such values are suggested in what was evidently the most widely supported war-related activity on campus. In October 1942, it was reported that “over 95% of the students had contributed financially to the “testament drive” in partnership with the Gideons organization to buy every serviceman or servicewomen a portable copy of the New Testament.”<sup>47</sup> It is a set of values expressed similarly in the ongoing work of “the Torchbearers, a student organization of born-again Christians organized for the purpose of personal soul-winning.” Among other activities sponsored by the Torchbearers was “spreading the gospel [through] the distribution of ‘Gospel Bombs,’” brightly colored cellophane-wrapped tracts evidently scattered to the wind by those traveling outside of Houghton.<sup>48</sup>

Indisputably, the Houghton College community contributed its due share to the war effort—and then some. In no way does discussion below detract from or dishonor that sacrificial response. It is equally indisputable, however, that at the rhetorical level, for better or worse, the war was never allowed to take first place in the community’s allegiances. Consistently throughout the years of American involvement, references to participating in the war effort were characterized by caveats, nuances, and disclaimers. “Amidst preparing for war,” the campus was cautioned to not “forget our faith.” Students were reminded, amid physical preparation for the military enemy, of the “spiritual blackout” which characterizes so much of humanity in its “sullen earthbound materialism, eyes anchored to production.”<sup>49</sup>

A certain caution about the war might be expected in campus discourse during the years of American neutrality. Any such caution about



the war at this time, hypothetical or otherwise, would by no means be distinctive to Houghton. The consistent emphasis at Houghton on saving one's primary energy, and primary institutional energy, for a different—and more eternally consequential—sort of conflict is striking nonetheless. This call to arms in the battle for every individual's salvation, during war and peace alike, is fairly consistent from the years of American neutrality on. Toward the end of the 1939–1940 school year, for instance, a student editorial opposing American involvement declared that "...a more sound policy would be for our leaders and our people to return to a knowledge of God and of His law, that we may think clearly with love and not hatred and vengeance in our hearts. Let's keep America out of war by helping our country to return to a closer walk with God!"<sup>50</sup> In January 1940, an art professor spoke to the college community about a personal relationship with Jesus as the only real "cure for a sin-sick world."<sup>51</sup> In June of the same year, an editorial written by President Paine in partial reference to a departed colleague—but almost certainly in indirect reference as well to the war—reminded readers that "Only Christ's empire is forever," and concluded with a traditional Evangelical maxim, "Only one life, 'twill soon be past; only what's done for Christ will last."<sup>52</sup> As American participation in the war became seemingly more inevitable, a student reminded the campus that "When the world is ablaze it is a tragedy to neglect the spiritual resources that alone can give new life and hope to a hopeless seething mass of humanity. Every thinking person must realize that only Christ, who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, can point our world to a better day."<sup>53</sup>

Even after Pearl Harbor, however, student leaders warned against turning the war into an idol and expressed fear lest students' patriotism get out of hand. "God is our first line of defense," the student editor proclaimed. "We hear it called a war for freedom—this chaos in which we find ourselves. Christ said: If the son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed. Our freedom can never be [won] on the battlefield—it must come from the One who alone can give real, lasting freedom."<sup>54</sup> In what may seem a chronologically premature discussion of peace treaties to come, an editorial in the final campus newspaper for 1941 argued that

Peace is not found in the construction of machines to murder more men. Neither is peace found by the careful planning of visionary leaders who hope to the future to establish a new order. On the contrary, peace comes

to man when he looks back to the old Gospel and its Christ. To a chosen few this season will be [in fact] a merry one, not because of anything they have done, but because of the personal acceptance of Him Who is the very *Prince of Peace*.<sup>55</sup>

If the temporal, outer war was not the Houghton community's highest priority, it did provide opportunities for individuals to participate in the greater spiritual conflict. "As a Christian college, Houghton's greatest responsibility in the struggle for freedom [is later said to be] producing 'Key Men,'" described in the form of two anecdotes about sailors in the war who had shared their faith and helped other to "receive Christ as personal Savior." The editorial went on to quote an unbelieving sailor: "The government has given us plenty of clothing, good food, and means of entertainment, but it has never told us how to die. We want to know how to die." In conclusion, the writer asks rhetorically, "What greater contribution can Houghton make in this struggle for freedom than producing saved, Spirit-led, Spirit-empowered, and Spirit-filled 'Key Men'?"<sup>56</sup>

These core messages about an ongoing and even greater spiritual battle advanced by editorialists and reporters in the student newspaper were echoed in other campus publications. The 1943 *Boulder* describing the Student Ministerial organization's contribution to campus called attention to "Darkness binding the heathen world...the groping for spiritual satisfaction, for soul security and peace...the story of Christ being brought by the missionary...the joyful acceptance...this was the theme of the chapel program."<sup>57</sup> A few months after the Declaration of War, the Houghton College *Bulletin* (June 1942) was devoted exclusively to the description of a major spiritual revival among the students and townspeople. One can read for pages without sensing any awareness of a world at war—in the traditional sense of that phrase. It is the spiritual war that counted, and in *this* war, even more, the college and community's resources were evidently devoted unreservedly.<sup>58</sup> At the height of the war, college promotional literature was willing to make a rhetorical nod to patriotism and being a "loyal American." But even here, such loyalty was placed in proper perspective. "Our freedom, our so-called 'American way', would never have been and cannot continue apart from the gospel, of which Houghton is an exponent."<sup>59</sup>

Houghton's war-era faculty have left a much more limited publicly available paper-trail than their students. Extant evidence of professors' beliefs aligns closely with sentiments expressed by students

during the war, specifically the privileging of spiritual victory and personal expressions of faith over mere military victory. Biology professor George Moreland wrote in 1941 in the student newspaper about the need for “Christian character and Christ-centered living” and characterized these as the greatest gifts Houghton could offer in time of war or time of peace.<sup>60</sup> The one enlisted professor, in personal correspondence with President Paine, discussed his official involvement with the war not only in terms of the opportunity to return to Houghton a more effective instructor, but in terms of personal evangelism and providing to fellow servicemen an example of personal morality. “The men have been good—I have not met any who have openly said anything regarding my Christian way of living. They generally look apologetically when they have to tell a smutty story in front of me. I trust my life is telling for God.”<sup>61</sup> In the same context, but a few months later, enlisted Professor Shea criticized the emerging optimism among American intellectuals about the post-war world and associated thinking about the possibility of a new supra-national governance structure for all of humanity. Evidently Shea’s post permitted considerable opportunity to keep up on the latest political writing. “Wilkie’s *One World* has quite a circulation. Also Lippman’s and [indecipherable] books. All vague in their approach. If men could meet the Christ, things would be different.”<sup>62</sup>

Professor Shea’s letters to his erstwhile (and future) academic superior betray an unspoken but unmistakable confidence that Paine, his reader, shares Shea’s beliefs about what—from an eternal perspective—really counted. Relatively little of the college president’s discussion of the war has been recorded for posterity directly. In a 240-page biography of his life, for instance, World War II is consigned to Chapter 19: “War and Memorial,” consisting of three pages in total—most of it related to the construction in 1941–1942 of the new administration building described above.<sup>63</sup> More attention, tellingly, is devoted to Paine’s work during the war years to help establish the National Association of Evangelicals as an alternative for Protestant churches no longer wishing to be affiliated with the National Council of Churches. It seems incontrovertible, however, that in regard to the war—as with so many other topics—President Paine was the tone-setter for Houghton’s response to the military conflict. And it was Paine likewise who set the example, rhetorically at least, of privileging the eternal spiritual battle over the merely temporal.

Throughout his public life, Houghton’s president addressed a wide variety of audiences in person, and despite gasoline rationing and

pressing commitments on campus, the war interfered surprisingly little with this outreach. On 31 July 1941, addressing a ‘young people’s conference’ in Homer, New York, President Paine spoke of “Satan’s blitzkrieg,” the “Tommy Gun of sin,” the “tank of worry and care,” and the “Modernist gas bombs of doubt.”<sup>64</sup> His appropriation of military language in this case to describe spiritual warfare was not particularly pioneering. He himself had spoken in the Houghton chapel, for instance, on “God’s Parachute Troops.” Scripture and the history of the church are similarly replete with rhetorical parallels, most famously perhaps the passage in Ephesians 6 beginning with verse 11: “Put on the full armor of God.” Paine’s sermon notes are revealing, nonetheless. While religious institutions in general and the Christian church throughout history have often been enlisted in pursuit of nationalistic aims, in this case it is the reverse. The anticipated war of nation-states and concomitant language is being co-opted in the cause of spiritual—and distinctively Christian—battle. From the perspective of President Paine and to a large degree the college community he led, that spiritual battle had to remain uppermost in Houghton’s orientation to the cosmos.

In January 1941, Paine spoke in chapel on maintaining the “perspective of eternity.”<sup>65</sup> By maintaining that perspective, “we can find peace in a world of turmoil and be sure of our eternal peace security.” Similarly, in an Armistice Day talk in chapel just prior to Pearl Harbor, Paine noted that with or without a new war, peace could be achieved through [individuals’ relationships] with Christ Alone.<sup>66</sup>

President Paine’s framework for helping the college to think about the war is demonstrated even more notably in his handwritten, somewhat fragmentary notes for a talk on “Worldliness” given in November 1944. In war, as in peace, he reminds listeners that we “can’t be friends of Christ unless we hate the world.” “The prevailing desires of the world system [are] characteristically selfish (and if selfish, then antigod).” Most revealing, however, is his list toward the end, seeming to equate for present purposes the two sides in the war: “individuals, capital, labor, axis, allies.” Both the Axis powers and Allied powers could be in competition for man’s loyalty, both could be fallen, and neither was to be identified with God’s Kingdom on earth.<sup>67</sup>

One of Paine’s favorite talks, versions of which he recorded giving 32 times between June 1938 and June 1966, is a thematically overlapping talk on Utopia.<sup>68</sup> These addresses were given in sacred and secular venues alike. Of the 32 recorded occasions, 21 were at high school

commencements. No version of his notes forms a complete script, but the consistent theme is clear. It was a mistake to think a change in system would help. He juxtaposes Roosevelt's New Deal and Hitler and his New Order-through-force, leading up to his emphasis on the "real issue." The "trouble is human selfishness, not the world, but the people, whether in Germany, Russia, Plato [or] Brook Farm." What is noteworthy here is that to all appearances, the war did not alter the giving of this talk in the first place. Moreover, Paine did not see the war as altering the more enduring conflict for humanity. Whether anticipating a second world war, speaking of it in the present tense, or seeing it in retrospect, the basic human predicament was the same. Paine's own mission, then, and the mission of Houghton College, was to focus on that eternal predicament. Paine lamented at this time that so many other formerly Christian colleges "no longer spoke of the need for a personal relationship with Christ."<sup>69</sup> Houghton under Paine's leadership, however, would remain faithful in fighting the ongoing spiritual battle, allowing for resistance to Hitler, but preparing the campus community even more directly to withstand an even greater foe.

Across the Atlantic Ocean, on a university campus physically far closer to military or anticipated military action than Houghton, and infinitely better known, a veteran of the Great War preached a sermon on 22 October 1939 to a community confronting now the reality of a second major conflict.<sup>70</sup> Speaking to a packed house at the university's epicenter, the Church of St. Mary the Virgin, C.S. Lewis sought to put an already-emotionally-omnipresent conflict into broader human and theological perspective. It is not clear how many in Houghton or the larger American Evangelical community were even aware of this still relatively young don, let alone this particular sermon. But in his own way, Lewis gave voice on this occasion to tensions similar to those expressed by President Roosevelt in his "Message to Colleges" and similar to those experienced and/or expressed by members of the Houghton College war-era community. Much as the Houghton student quoted above had wondered how he and his contemporaries could be complacent while ("bath[ing] in the blessings of freedom backed by bloody beaches on Guadalcanal")<sup>71</sup> so also Lewis a few years previous. "Why should we—indeed how can we—continue to take an interest in these placid occupations when the lives of our friends and the liberties of Europe are the balance? Is it not like fiddling while Rome burns?" Absolutely not, Lewis tells his listeners, responding to his own rhetorical question:

I think it important to try to see the present calamity in a true perspective. The war creates no absolutely new situation; it simply aggravates the permanent human situation so that we can no longer ignore it. Human life has always been lived on the edge of a precipice... Every Christian who comes to a university must at all times face a question compared with which the questions raised by the war are relatively unimportant. He must ask himself how it is right, or even psychologically possible, for creatures who are every moment advancing either to Heaven or to hell to spend any fraction of the little time allowed them in this world on such comparative trivialities as literature or art, math, or biology....<sup>72</sup>

Many in Christian colleges today, perhaps the majority, would distance themselves from what may seem to be an excessively individualistic piety and overly insistent separation from the world in the discourse of President Paine and war-time Houghton College in general. Moreover Lewis, in the particular context above, is making in part a somewhat different argument about the value, even in wartime, of the academic enterprise. On the whole, though, Lewis's words suggest that the intellectual frame of reference for Houghton College's collective thinking throughout the war was in line with larger streams of the Christian tradition. Without shirking in their perceived responsibility to contribute to Allied victory, members of the Houghton community reserved their highest zeal for an even greater battle, resisting a different kind of blitzkrieg. Along with Lewis, wartime Houghtonians might have said, from the first news of Pearl Harbor to news of Japan's surrender in September 1945:

The war will fail to absorb our whole attention because it is a finite object and, therefore, intrinsically unfitted to support the whole attention of a human soul... I believe our cause to be, as human causes go, very righteous, and I therefore believe it to be a duty to participate in this war. He who surrenders himself without reservation to the temporal claims of a nation...is rendering to Caesar that which, of all things, most emphatically belongs to God: himself. God's claim is infinite and inexorable.<sup>73</sup>

However willing they were to support a temporary and military conflict, most of those associated with Houghton College whose voices have been preserved came down on Lewis's side, honoring foremost, throughout the war, their citizenship in the Kingdom of Heaven.

## NOTES

1. "The President's Message to American Colleges," *Houghton College Star*, vol. 35, no. 3, 1 October 1942, 3; "President Warns Colleges of Task," *New York Times*, September 25, 1942, Section L, 18. In this case, students' *perception*, as represented in the campus newspaper at Houghton and hypothetically elsewhere, that the nation's President seemed to care about the potential contribution of colleges and universities to the war effort may be as historically significant as the somewhat anodyne sentiments expressed in the message itself.
2. Neither the version of Roosevelt's message printed in the *Houghton Star*, nor those located elsewhere presume to be exhaustive. Later in the war, the *Star* published a regular column from the Associated Campus Press's Washington Correspondent, "Capital to Campus," which was much somewhat more specific in terms of how colleges and universities could contribute to the war effort.
3. Warren M. Woolsey, "Vocational Guidance," *Houghton College Star*, vol. 35, no. 8, 19 November 1942, 2. A Presidential Report to the Board of Trustees from January 1940 reports in similar fashion that 63% of the existing student body was interested in teaching. The Stephen W. Paine Presidential Papers, Houghton College Archives.
4. Unsigned editorial, "Is Houghton in the Sticks?" *Houghton College Star*, vol. 32, no. 5, 26 October 1939, 2.
5. Unsigned, but presumably written by President Stephen W. Paine or Willard Smith, "How You Fit into Houghton's Future," *Houghton College Bulletin*, vol. 18, no. 9, 24 October 1943, no page number.
6. "Jap Attack Changes Mind of Conscientious Objector," unidentified newspaper clipping pasted into contemporary Houghton College student Eleanor Covert's scrapbook, Houghton College Archives. See also, *Houghton College Star*, vol. 34, no. 10, 11 December 1941, 2; Dean Liddick, "Remembering the Good War," *Houghton College Milieu*, vol. 66, no. 4, October 1991, 3.
7. "Students Receive War News Calmly," *Houghton College Star*, vol. 34, no. 10, 11 December 1941, 2.
8. Unsigned editorial, "Modern Design—In Attributes," *Houghton College Star*, vol. 34, no. 12, 15 January 1942, 2.
9. "Quadrennial Report for June 1939 to June 1943," Stephen W. Paine Presidential Papers, Houghton College Archives.
10. Houghton had a good number of Canadian students, but to the writer's knowledge, no Houghton students have been publicly identified as serving in the Canadian or British forces. On a related note, the fact that a Canadian student was editor of the student newspaper for almost half of

the period of American neutrality may have helped keep Houghton students more aware of the conflict in Europe than they might have been otherwise. Also of interest, the one faculty member referred to below was a Canadian citizen at the time of his enlistment in the US military, and in fact his acceptance was delayed on that basis.

11. "Graduates and Former Students in the Service of Our Country," *Houghton College Bulletin*, vol. 19, no. 2, 16 February 1944; Dean Liddick, "Gold Stars, Common Cause and Broadened Horizons," *Houghton College Milieu*, vol. 66, no. 4, October 1991, 2. At least part of the discrepancy between the two figures may be explained by the inclusion in the latter figure of veterans who enrolled at Houghton only after the war.
12. *Ibid.*, 4.
13. The number of Houghton women enlisted in World War II has been variously reported, but at no point tops twenty.
14. "President's Report," 8 January 1946, Stephen W. Paine Presidential Papers, Houghton College Archives. Paine wryly concludes this section by noting, "We regret to report that it has not worked exactly this way."
15. Richard L. Wing, *A Vine of God's Own Planting: A History of Houghton College from Its Beginnings Through 1972* (Indianapolis: Wesleyan Publishing House, 2004), 136.
16. *Houghton College Boulder*, vol. 20, 1944, 4–5.
17. Personal conversation with Dean Liddick, Houghton, NY, July 2017.
18. *Houghton College Star*, vol. 35, no. 17, 18 February 1943, 1.
19. Katherine [Walberger] Lindley, Houghton Heritage chapel talk, 14 February 1996, as reproduced in its entirety in Wing, *Vine of God's Own Planting*, 138–141.
20. "A Cappella Choir of Ladies," *Houghton College Star*, vol. 36, no. 17, 13 January 1944, 4. See also, *Boulder*, 1944, 70.
21. "Quadrennial Report," June 1939–June 1943. Stephen W. Paine Presidential Papers, Houghton College Archives.
22. "Presidential Report," 9 January 1944. Stephen W. Paine Presidential Papers, Houghton College Archives.
23. "Warren Woolsey's Letter to the Editor," *Houghton College Star*, vol. 35, no. 15, 4 February 1943, 2.
24. "Clubs in Wartime," *Houghton College Star*, vol. 35, no. 10, 3 December 1942, 2. See also "Faculty Unable to Decide on Abolition of Activities," *Houghton College Star*, vol. 35, no. 8, 19 November 1942, 1.
25. Robert J. Oehrig, "Our Responsibility," *Houghton College Star*, vol. 35, no. 3, 1 October 1942, 2.
26. "War Council Begins Activities Monday," *Houghton College Star*, vol. 35, no. 12, 18 December 1942, 1.



27. Katherine [Walberger] Lindley, Houghton Heritage chapel talk, 14 February 1996, as reproduced in its entirety in Wing, *Vine of God's Own Planting*, 138–141.
28. “War May Be Houghton’s Opportunity,” *Houghton College Star*, vol. 35, no. 20, 18 March 1943, 2.
29. “Physical Hardening—For Women,” *Houghton College Star*, vol. 35, no. 16, 11 February 1943, 2.
30. Houghton was located between New York City and major armament works in Buffalo, so conducting air-raid drills was not quite as strange as it might seem otherwise. See especially, Walberger Lindley reminiscences and historical explanation in Wing, *Vine of God's Own Planting*, 138–141.
31. “College to Offer New Courses in Radio, Math,” *Houghton College Star*, vol. 34, no. 13, 29 January 1942, 1; Houghton College, *Boulder*, vol. 20, 1943, 51.
32. “Given place to gold.” That is, evidently, a gold star replaced the blue when a serviceman’s death was announced. Houghton College, *Boulder*, vol. 21, 1944.
33. As reported in multiple issues of the *Houghton College Star*, including 27 January 1942 and 5 February 1942.
34. In this context, it is worthy of mention that Warren Woolsey, quoted on several occasions in this chapter, died on December 24, 2017, as this chapter was being written.
35. Here and in other contexts throughout the chapter, for those unfamiliar with Houghton College, it may be helpful to note the distinctively intertwined relationships and greatly overlapping constituencies of the Houghton College faculty and staff, Houghton Wesleyan Church, and the residents of the village of Houghton itself.
36. “Quadrennial Report,” Stephen W. Paine Presidential Papers, Houghton College Archives; “Doctor Paine Appeals for New Dorm,” *Houghton College Star*, vol. 37, no. 27, 26 April 1945, 3.
37. Kenneth L. Wilson, ed., *Consider the Years: Houghton College 1883–1983*. Revised edition. (Houghton: Houghton College Press, 1983), no page number.
38. Stephen W. Paine, “How You Fit into Houghton’s Future,” *Houghton College Bulletin*, vol. 18, no. 9, 24 October 1943, no page number.
39. As published in Wing, *A Vine of God's Own Planting*, 138–141.
40. Paine’s notes in this context include references to the “uncertainties of the coming year” but do not prove a direct relationship between the war and the opportunities granted these women.
41. Dean Liddick’s handwritten notes in preparation for *Milieu* issue marking the fiftieth anniversary of Pearl Harbor, Houghton College Archives.

42. This quotation is from the Houghton College *Boulder* of 1944 (volume 21), 4–5, but applies equally if not more strongly to the previous, even more financially precarious academic year.
43. Unsigned quasi-editorial, “It’s Time for Action,” *Houghton College Star*, vol. 35, no. 10, 3 December 1942, 1, 4.
44. Houghton College *Boulder*, vol. 19, 1942, 10. Ellipses in the original.
45. Houghton College *Boulder*, vol. 20, 1943, 19.
46. Sammie Ries, as recorded in Dean Liddick’s handwritten and unpublished notes for the special commemorative issue of the Houghton *Milieu*. Houghton College Archives. At least not “visual images” in the sense of news broadcast over television.
47. “Over 95% Give to Testament Drive,” *Houghton College Star*, vol. 35, no. 4, 15 October 1942, 1.
48. “Spiritual Rearmament First Line of Defense,” *Houghton College Star*, vol. 35, no. 3, 8 October 1942, 3; “Distribution of ‘Gospel Bombs’ Brings Results,” *Houghton College Star*, vol. 34, no. 15, 12 February 1942, 4.
49. Katherine Walberger [Lindley], “Stop and Think,” *Houghton College Star*, vol. 33, no. 23, 24 April 1941, 2.
50. C.S.R., “Keep America Out of War,” *Houghton College Star*, vol. 32, no. 27, 16 May 1940, 2.
51. Henry Ortlip, “The Cure for a Sinsick World,” as reported in the *Houghton College Star*, vol. 32, no. 13, 11 January 1940, 3.
52. Stephen W. Paine, “The Cost of Empire,” *Houghton College Star*, vol. 32, no. 30, 1 June 1940, 2.
53. Allen Bowman, “When the World Is Ablaze,” *Houghton College Star*, vol. 34, no. 6, 23 October 1941, 2.
54. R.H., “Freedom—Today and Yesterday...,” *Houghton College Star*, vol. 34, no. 22, 9 April 1942, 2.
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## CHAPTER 10

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# World War II Comes to Whitworth College

*Dale E. Soden*

World War II, for many in the Whitworth community, first hit home with the news on the front page of the *Spokane Chronicle*, on 30 August 1940, that two former students from the early 1930s had been killed by an Italian bombing attack in the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan a week earlier. Robert Grieve, a medical missionary, and his wife Claire (McClenney) Grieve, a teacher, attempted to protect themselves by running outside of their hospital and holding up a large American flag with hope that Italian air pilots would avoid them. But tragically they were both killed in the attack.<sup>1</sup> During the next school year, Whitworth students followed wartime events in Europe and in the Far East with increasing interest. However, none were prepared for the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on 7 December 1941. On the following day, Whitworth students gathered in the chapel; they sang hymns and heard remarks from the president of the college, Frank Warren. And then, as one student later described, “Every face was turned toward the radio,” As President Roosevelt addressed the nation, “Everyone was silent. Throughout all the chapel, every face was sober. There shone not one smile anywhere.... A few sat, still stunned with the tremendous news of twenty-four hours

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previous. A few looked abashed, too, as if they felt ashamed. But all were dreading and knowing, too, that the United States would soon be at war."<sup>2</sup>

On the following day, 9 December, Frank Warren, Whitworth's president, who must still have been in some shock, spoke to the faculty:

We have been pushed into this war. As far as I am concerned, I have had to come to this conclusion that in this world as long as there is hate and selfishness, we shall have war, and we may as well face it.... I do feel that as an American with boys on our campus that our attitude must be definitely one of 100% cooperation. Let us keep criticism of our country out of our classrooms, and in our attitude toward our students. I plead for a new sense of responsibility toward the men on our campus. Let us remind you that during the white heat of patriotism let us have a new interest in the spiritual life of each student on our campus.... More than ever before we must feel ...personal responsibility for the guidance of these young men. We have not done our task until that is done.... God only knows what is ahead for us.<sup>3</sup>

Frank Warren's response was likely typical of many presidents of small Christian colleges across the country. His sober realism, framed by a sense of purpose and calling, reflected what historian Jerry Sittser found to be a kind of "cautious patriotism" common among Christians leaders nationally. According to Sittser, "church leaders were devoted to the nation but not without ambivalence and reservations. Church leaders in particular did not want to let the war undermine their greater loyalty to God, justice, humanitarianism, and peace."<sup>4</sup> As the war progressed, Warren would take an ever-increasing role in attempting to mold the response of students and faculty to the war. In particular, he felt a strong responsibility to help nurture the spiritual life and improve overall morale on the campus. But frequently his approach to the war could be described as a "cautious patriotism."

In hindsight, the four years of war and its immediate aftermath helped shape the trajectory of the college in profound ways. Some of those ways include an ethos of relative tolerance and a legacy of commitment to diversity that still influences the university to this day. In the most direct sense, this legacy was reflected in the fact that the war brought to Whitworth more than twenty Japanese-American students who had been incarcerated in internment camps throughout the West. The war also provided an opportunity for the college to participate, as 1 of only

11 schools across the country, in government training of Army pilots. And as was the case for most colleges and universities across the country, the war led directly to increased enrollment because of the G-I Bill. The war helped stimulate the need for additional buildings and resources. Also, perhaps more subtly, the war provided an opportunity for the president and board of trustees to accentuate the Christian identity of the institution by strengthening the requirements for all faculty to be professing Christians. Through it all, students continued to take courses, play sports, sing in musical groups, play pranks, and live in many respects a fairly normal college life. Yet it is clear that the war brought students face to face with their own mortality as scores of men and a few women went off to fight. Most survived, but some did not. As a consequence, this small Christian college, tucked away in a remote part of the Pacific Northwest, reveals a story that in many ways reflects a larger story that took place across the country during the period of the Second World War.

Whitworth's location in Spokane, Washington played an important role in the way in which the campus experienced the war. In fact Spokane was the third site for the Presbyterian college which had been founded in 1890, only one year after Washington had achieved statehood. Whitworth College had been named after Presbyterian minister George Whitworth, who had come west on the Oregon Trail in 1853. The cleric had played a significant role in the early history of Washington Territory; he established as many as 20 churches, mostly around the Puget Sound region, served as superintendent of public schools in Thurston County, near present-day Olympia, and functioned as chief clerk of the Indian Department in the territory. Most notably, George Whitworth was appointed to be one of the earliest presidents of the University of Washington. In 1884, Whitworth, along with several supporters, established a Presbyterian academy in the small town of Sumner, Washington. Set in the shadow of Mount Rainier on the west side of the state some 20 miles northeast of Tacoma, the academy was incorporated as Whitworth College in 1890. Only nine years later, however, the college was forced to move to Tacoma because of financial challenges. Now set on top of a bluff, the college provided students with spectacular views of Puget Sound, the Olympic and Cascade Mountains as well as Mount Rainier. Promising signs emerged in those years in Tacoma; Whitworth produced its first Rhodes Scholar and defeated the University of Oregon in football. However, continuing to secure enough funds to operate the college remained a problem. Trustees sought other

opportunities to enhance viability, including moving locations once again. By 1914 the Spokane Presbytery and local entrepreneurs offered enough financial incentives to entice the college to move 280 miles to the east and reestablish the campus in Spokane. Still, survival remained in doubt for the next two decades. World War I occasioned the departure of most of its meagre male enrollment, and in fact the college shut down for a year to become an auto-tractor school for the 1918–1919 academic year. Once reopened, the college struggled during the 1920s; enrollment was weak and a major fire decimated one of the two substantial buildings. Nevertheless, Whitworth survived the 20s as well as the Great Depression of the following decade.<sup>5</sup>

Frank Warren was hired to be Whitworth's twelfth president in 1940. He would serve the college for the next 23 years, the longest stint for any president in Whitworth's history. Born in Gilead, Michigan in 1899, Warren grew up in the Free Methodist tradition, eventually making his way west to matriculate at a Free Methodist institution—Seattle Pacific College. He took subsequent degrees at New York Biblical Seminary and Drew University. Warren served for a brief time as a minister in a Presbyterian church in New Jersey between 1924 and 1925; however, his interest was in the mission field. He was called to be a missionary in Osaka, Japan and taught at the Osaka Biblical Seminary until 1928 where he established as many as ten churches. Warren, and his wife Lucile, returned to the United States and between 1933 and 1940, he led the Bible Department at his alma mater, Seattle Pacific. Once in Seattle he became friends with the pastor of the First Presbyterian Church, Mark Matthews. At one time, First Presbyterian had been the largest church in the denomination with close to 10,000 members. Matthews, the best known minister in the city, indicated that he would like Warren to succeed him after he left the pulpit. Matthews was also a long-time trustee of Whitworth. When Matthews died in February 1940, Warren was courted by both First Presbyterian and Whitworth College, where he eventually landed.<sup>6</sup>

When Warren addressed the Whitworth faculty in December 1941, the college was comprised of approximately 25 faculty and a little over 220 students. Two principal buildings largely served the campus along with a barely serviceable wooden gymnasium. The college was remote, even from Spokane, as it was set among a stand of pine trees seven miles north of the city's center. When the attack on Pearl Harbor suddenly thrust the United States into war, Whitworth was nearing the end of

its fall semester. As were most residents of the West Coast (even those residing east of the Cascade Mountains), students, staff, and faculty were comparatively more anxious than in other parts of the country. Fears of another Japanese invasion or possible air attacks on military installations were common in the first few weeks after the war began.

In the immediate aftermath of Pearl Harbor, some students, expressed shock but also a kind of moral resolve. “The majority of us stand behind President Roosevelt,” according to one student. “We believe that Japan has violated international law and Christian ethics by suddenly and deliberately attacking the United States possessions while at the same time professing to want peace .... We are fighting against those forces of treachery which are opposed to the Christian way of life and to Christ’s teaching of love and respect for all men, whatever their race may be.”<sup>7</sup> Another student, John Hendrickson was quoted as saying, “Our duty is plain – save others for Christ. As ambassadors of God, it is our firm duty to represent His country on earth. Our fight is against the armies of Satan .... He also gave his life for Hitler and the Japanese.”<sup>8</sup> How pervasive this overt Christian perspective on the war among Whitworth students is difficult to say for certain, but these comments do seem to reflect the strong impulse to interpret the events of the war within a larger context of belief in God.

Almost immediately following Pearl Harbor, the student newspaper made the Whitworth community aware of the several alumni who had been called to active duty or were serving in some capacity in the Pacific. These included Ralph Goodsell, who in the previous year was a member of the Whitworth chorus, but now worked as a civilian in defense work on the island of Midway in the Pacific. Frank Tiffany, a graduate from 1929, was serving as an army chaplain in the Philippines, and Clem Yeakel, one of the first volunteers from Spokane to go into the Army, was serving in American Samoa.<sup>9</sup> However, only two weeks after Pearl Harbor and President Warren’s speech to the faculty the fall semester ended. Students departed for home to anxious families for Christmas break, returning to resume studies in early January 1942.

When students returned, the mood on campus reflected much of what was reported across the rest of the country. Students asked questions and expressed anxieties but found new resolve. Students and faculty asked what they could do to help and what sacrifices they could make. Most men immediately asked whether they would be needed to serve in the military. There was a strong feeling that everyone on campus should do



something to help the war effort. Within the first week back after the break, the faculty, at the president's request, established a "War Council" to consider changes in the curriculum and strategies for building morale among the student body. Led by Dr. Merton Munn, dean of the faculty, the war council consisted of a handful of faculty who attempted to deal with everything from the development of new courses to class scheduling. Feeling the need for more specialized training, the council recommended and the faculty approved the addition of new courses in aeronautics, pre-engineering, and medicine. On the more practical side, the administration decided to speed up the school year in order to complete coursework by 1 June (two weeks earlier than normal). They did away with spring break and added three minutes to each class hour. This would allow students to report earlier to their military training.<sup>10</sup>

Perhaps some of the anxiety was mitigated by the growing sense that the Great Depression of the 1930s would finally end and more jobs would be available. A notice appeared in the student newspaper indicating that the United States government anticipated a need for more students (presumably women) to serve the country by studying home economics, a program Whitworth offered, as well as others: "Vacancies exist in such government departments as the bureau of home economics, rural electrification administration and surplus marketing administration in the department of agriculture and the office of education and office of defense, health, and welfare service in the federal security agency. Positions will be filled for work in nutrition, clothing, household equipment, family or rural economics."<sup>11</sup>

For whatever confidence students might have had that at least economically things were improving, Whitworth administrators and faculty frequently expressed concern about student morale. President Warren had emphasized the importance of morale in his address to the faculty just after Pearl Harbor. The dean, Merton Munn, frequently wrote columns in the student newspaper with hopes of influencing attitudes and behaviors. For example, Dean Munn encouraged students not to give up their aspirations. "Do not let the chaos of this world trick you into giving up your ideals, your hopes and aspirations for the future," Munn stated firmly. He added, "Constantly you are being reminded that America is involved in an 'all-out' war and constantly you are urged in an 'all-out' effort to help Uncle Sam win the fight for freedom. In this constant stirring of emotions we are apt to forget that the normal, everyday things of life must go on. All things must end—so too, will this war.

Then will great fields for trained young people be opened.”<sup>12</sup> Munn’s letter to the paper reminds one of how much uncertainty existed in those early days of the war regarding how students would react.

On another occasion, Dean Munn published a statement in the student newspaper in February 1942, in which he urged students to “not let this war time philosophy of grasping at the moment whatever life presents for fear there will not be another, warp your own sound way of thinking.”<sup>13</sup> At still another point, Dean Munn expressed concern about how Whitworth women should show good judgment regarding the dating of servicemen for fear that war-time “emotions” might lead to bad decisions.<sup>14</sup>

If the dean expressed concern about some student attitudes and behaviors, he certainly was pleased with the overall support for the war. One of the universal responses across the country was support for buying government-issued bonds to help fund American war efforts. The *Whitworthian*, the student newspaper, ran a number of advertisements reminding everyone to buy war bonds, and the student government used students’ funds to purchase a \$750 bond. College publications proclaimed that since its beginning Whitworth had stood as “a bulwark for Western Democracy.”<sup>15</sup> Meanwhile, students rarely could escape the reality of war. During the first year of U.S. engagement, as one would expect, student interest in the military operations was intense. The student newspaper, for example, featured a map of the North Atlantic that depicted the ongoing naval war in the North Sea.<sup>16</sup>

The most significant institutional response to the war was the establishment of a flight school for male students, 1 of only 11 such programs across the country. It is unclear how this was initiated, but the college took great pride in its establishment. The school was located at the Calkins airfield less than two miles north and a mile east of Whitworth. Essentially, this was a ground school for men participating in basic aviation. The curriculum consisted of 240 hours of classroom training in 8 weeks, with courses in math and physics given special emphasis. During 1943, 211 Whitworth students received training. Under contract with the U.S. Army to provide board and room, the college apparently owned a barracks which housed 58 men near the site of the air field.<sup>17</sup>

As the reality of war set in during the spring and fall of 1942, there was a concerted effort to try to balance awareness and support for the war effort as much as possible with a normal college experience. Classroom instruction, sports, drama, musical groups and religious

activities continued to comprise life for students at Whitworth. Because of its Christian identity, a major emphasis was given to religious or spiritual activities on campus. President Warren made it a high priority to emphasize the Christian identity and character of the school during his entire presidency, but it was particularly important during his first few years after his appointment in 1940 during wartime. Students actively participated in Christian Endeavor groups and the Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship Conference. Whitworth sponsored periodic all-city Christian youth rallies beginning in 1942. Warren helped initiate what became known as “Spiritual Emphasis Week” which focused attention on religious concerns by bringing well-known evangelists to campus. The Whitworth community came together for chapel services three times a week. “Gipsy” Smith, famed British evangelist, evangelist Jessie H. Baird, and W.L. Young, president of Park College, among others, came to Whitworth during the war years.<sup>18</sup>

In hindsight, the war indirectly provided an opportunity for Warren to make more central Whitworth’s Christian identity and mission. Across the country, political leaders as well as religious leaders invoked the country’s religious roots and broadly speaking, its Christian identity to bolster the morale of the nation. In a much told moment in August 1941, Winston Churchill and Franklin Roosevelt participated in a church service onboard the battleship HMS Prince of Wales to sign the Atlantic Charter, and at some point sang the hymn “Onward Christian Soldiers.” Churchill later explained the singing of the hymn in these words:

We sang “Onward, Christian Soldiers” indeed, and I felt that this was no vain presumption, but that we had the right to feel that we were serving a cause for the sake of which a trumpet has sounded from on high. When I looked upon that densely packed congregation of fighting men of the same language, of the same faith, of the same fundamental laws, of the same ideals ... it swept across me that here was the only hope, but also the sure hope, of saving the world from measureless degradation.<sup>19</sup>

While there is no direct evidence that Warren’s efforts to make Whitworth more explicitly Christian were tied to the larger mood of the country, it seems reasonable to suggest the larger climate helped both trustees and Warren feel that the time was right to strengthen the Christian identity of the college. What Frank Warren did, with trustee approval, was to require that faculty be professing Christians and

active members in an evangelical church. Warren approved a statement in the 1941 school catalog that “The administration is frank to admit that only those teachers are appointed who give clear evidence that they possess a genuine Christian faith and are actively related to some evangelical church.” This was the first time mention of such a specific hiring requirement regarding a “genuine” faith and active involvement in an evangelical church.<sup>20</sup> For Warren, the time was right to emphasize Whitworth’s Christian mission more explicitly, and in doing so, he helped establish a trajectory that would continue to influence the institution to this day.

If Warren’s commitment to a stronger Christian identity for the college made more sense in the context of World War II, his experience as a missionary in Japan in the 1920s made his response to the war more complex. Warren expressed great sympathy for the Japanese people. These sentiments were never more evident than in an address he delivered over the radio in Spokane in May 1942, just six months after the war began. Warren used the occasion to articulate more fully his view of the war and what he hoped Whitworth students as well as the larger Spokane community might consider regarding a larger perspective on the war. Now removed from the immediate shock and aftermath of the bombing at Pearl Harbor, Warren, in an address entitled, “Tragedy in the Pacific,” provided his audience with a condensed history of Japan and factors leading to the attack against the United States. And while Warren stated confidently that the United States would prevail, he turned his attention to what he believed was excessive villification of the Japanese people and Japanese Americans:

The gospel of hate is spreading through our nation and until that is gone, we are not ready for peace. I plead this morning for sanity and tolerance as we wage this awful war. Against a far-flung endeavor to engender hate of our enemies, I must take my stand this morning.... For the day is coming, and may it dawn soon, when we shall have to live at peace in a world where Germany and Italy and Japan will still exist. That can never be if always we must look upon them with hate and suspicion. We are not fighting the people, the culture, the civilization of these nations. We are fighting to a bitter finish, rank, selfish, sinful militarism which could lead a nation of 70 million people and a world into war. That must be exterminated from the earth. In the place of it, the Christian concept of life, the Christian philosophy of life, and above all else, the international Christ must be so planted in the life of America, of England, of Germany, of Japan, that never again shall selfishness rule the world, for selfishness breeds war and war must cease. Then shall there be peace in the Pacific!<sup>21</sup>

Warren's address, remarkable for its humility and prescience about the future, revealed some of his own struggle with how to think about the war and underscored what historian Jerry Sittser described as "cautious patriotism." He believed strongly in supporting the American effort, but he was not blind to the tension between patriotic demands and the biblical call to love one's neighbor and even one's enemy. From his years living in Japan, he developed great affection for the Japanese people, and thus from beginning to the end of the war he tried to separate the acts of Japan's military and political leaders from what he believed was the genuine goodness of the Japanese people. In this way he worked against the stereotyping and the racism that often accompanied patriotic appeals throughout the war itself.

Six months later, in the fall of 1942, Warren, moved by the tremendous cost and sacrifice he was observing, delivered another speech. Now a full year into the war, Warren felt the need in a Chapel Hour radio address to try to shape a narrative of the war for students and faculty entitled, "Lest We Forget." He spoke directly regarding his sense of not only how the war was going, but what it revealed about American society and culture. Warren forcefully stated, "We should not forget that our enemies hoped that under the sudden impact of war America would break, but in an unprecedented way our American nation has arisen to the challenge of the hour. We are not a conquered nation, but our strength is increasing—our nation is working; from a human standpoint the road ahead, though still uncertain, looks brighter." He further reminded his audience that tremendous sacrifice had already been paid. "Oh, men and women, for God's sake let us not take this awful sacrifice of life lightly!" exhorted Warren. "When I think of the thousands of young men who one year ago were living and today are dead, and of the millions now in training as soldiers and sailors, the joy fades out of my heart and the music dies away into discordant chords. 'Lord God of hosts, be with us yet, lest we forget, lest we forget.'"<sup>22</sup>

Again, Warren did not shy away from offering a critique of Americans and American culture. He chastised Americans in general: "I am not proud of the fact this solemn morning that in our deifying of liberty we have sunk into spiritual bankruptcy. War today is partially the result of our godless, humanistic system of education. As surely as you hear my voice this morning, if we empty our churches, crowd our places of ungodly amusement, and teach our boys and girls that faith is but superstition and morals a survival of ancient taboos, we shall have wars and

uprisings, death and destruction. Someone has rightly said ‘America can no longer straddle a Christian heritage and a pagan outlook.’” He went on to suggest two paths: either return to “marvelous, Christian heritage ...or admit that we are a pagan country.”<sup>23</sup>

Interestingly, Warren criticized the United States for its policies that he believed led Japan to go to war: “Again I repeat this morning that beyond the shadow of a doubt, we as a nation knew that the scrap-iron we were selling to our enemy Number One was being used in an undeclared war against China. Yet we kept on to the bitter end because it was bringing more money to America. Shed a tear for the brave lads who died at Bataan, Guadalcanal, and Midway, but for the sake of decency, shed some tears of sorrow for the selfishness and sordidness of our own wilful (sic) ways.”<sup>24</sup>

By spring 1943, Warren seemed more buoyed by events overseas although perhaps this buoyancy simply reflected his natural instinct to offer students a hopeful message as the academic year drew to a close. In the 1943 yearbook, Warren inscribed what he called, “The President’s Message to Marching Youth.” Warren urged students to face “long months of rigorous training, bitter hardship and personal sacrifice ... that there may come back again a world of peace and kindness, brotherhood and love.”<sup>25</sup> He spoke directly to Whitworth students as “youth who are called now as in times past to leave the quiet and warmth and protection of home and opportunities and friendships of the campus to go into a world of strife, bloodshed, and possible death. Some of us who lived through the world of another day hoped and prayed that this hour would never come again to American youth, but we failed to build a world safe and secure because it was basically good.”<sup>26</sup> Warren urged students to remember that they were “made in the image of God and made that he might live—marching out to battle. Youth who should be studying this coming year on the campus of Whitworth, facing long months of rigorous training, bitter hardship, and personal sacrifice. Marching, however, not without dreams and aspirations—marching that there may come back again a world of peace and kindness, brotherhood and love.”<sup>27</sup>

Toward the end of his message he urged students not to “lose your vision; do not lose your way. Follow that great light which shone upon your pathway here—Light that came into the world to lighten every man. Never forget His vision calls ... [you to] keep near to this man Christ, some day—in His day—your footsteps may again turn homeward

and you will find yourself back living among your friends, and preparing for that greater life God has for you—a life of service and of leadership. Together we shall build out of the ruins of this day a new and better world.”<sup>28</sup>

Warren loved preaching and by all accounts was very good at it; students remembered him for being an inspirational speaker. But he also had a college to run. One of his earliest priorities was finding a replacement for the old gymnasium which was so small that it could hold only a handful of people. He oversaw construction of a new building that could seat significantly more people, host chapel services during the week, and provide a basement to be used as a commons area for students. Named after Jay P. Graves, the individual who had donated much of the land for Whitworth’s campus in Spokane, the gymnasium proved difficult to build. Because of the war, many materials were in short supply. Not to be denied, Warren did all he could personally to secure nails, sometimes a handful at a time. He reserved a carload of concrete just before the government issued a freeze order, and the project began. Once construction had begun, funds were still in short supply. Warren convinced students that they could help by raising money among local businesses. Students decided on what they called a “Brickskrieg Campaign,” an obvious reference to the German “Blitzkrieg” style of warfare. Students organized the city into 30 districts and on 5 and 6 May 1942, they were let out of class to canvass the city and sell paper facsimiles of bricks for 50 cents apiece. \$3100 was raised and the project generated a remarkable level of student participation.<sup>29</sup>

The construction proceeded, but not without incident; perhaps the most elaborate prank in college history was carried out primarily by a student named Sydney Eaton. Eaton decided that it would be fun to place a rock in the excavation site with a message that he and other students had chiseled into the stone that read: “10 day sence Vige John has feaver 1703.” After construction workers unearthed the rock, word of the discovery spread quickly as Whitworth Professor Al Culverwell, from the department of Sociology, alerted local newspapers. Professors from Eastern Washington Normal School came out to the Whitworth campus as well officials from the Eastern Washington State Historical Society. Someone suggested that the rock might have come from the eastern coast of North America through an Indian trade network and may have been placed in or around a grave of a Native American. When it became evident that people were taking it much too seriously, Eaton

confessed. Fortunately for Mr. Eaton, enrollment pressures were such that after admitting it was a hoax and apologizing, he was able to remain in school.<sup>30</sup> Once the controversy was settled, construction resumed and while the building was not completely finished, commencement was held in the new gymnasium in June 1942 to much celebration.<sup>31</sup>

Graves gym provided an important boost to student morale and an important escape from the stress of the war. The commons area in the basement was well received, and the first intercollegiate basketball game in Graves gymnasium occurred on 4 December 1942 between Whitworth and cross-town rival Gonzaga College. Sadly that first game ended in a loss by a score of 42-41. During that basketball season, Whitworth played its most varied schedule in school history. Pretty much any group that could muster a team played Whitworth, and so the college competed with schools including Lewiston (later known as Lewis-Clark State College), Cheney Junior Varsity (Eastern Washington Normal School), and Yakima Junior College. Whitworth played a team from the Navy, a team from the Army headquarters at Fort Wright, a team from the 2nd Air Force Bombers, and a team from Geiger Field. Graves gym was a center for college activity out of class as chapel, drama productions and occasional assemblies were all held in the new facility.<sup>32</sup>

If basketball provided a kind of temporary escape from the stress of war, the reality of young Whitworth men enlisting and being drafted was almost always present in the minds of students and faculty. Warren and his key administrators were constantly worried about enrollment and the war reducing the student-age population, and the war did in fact take a toll on enrollment at colleges across the country. One strategy designed to mitigate falling student numbers even before the United States entered the war was a merger with another institution, Spokane Junior College. In 1941, during Warren's second year, he convinced the president of Spokane Junior College, which was struggling with its enrollment, to hold classes on the Whitworth campus. By the following fall, the junior college had dissolved, and its students had been absorbed into the Whitworth student body. The president of the junior college, Gus Schlauch, took a position on the Whitworth faculty in the Sociology Department and became one of the most beloved professors at Whitworth in the decades to come.<sup>33</sup>

One of the most significant individuals to join the student body, in terms of his impact on campus, came at the end of May 1942, when it was announced that Sei Yamada, a Japanese-American student, was



transferring from Pacific Lutheran College in Tacoma. Whitworth previously had enrolled a handful of Japanese American students in its history, but because of the war, Yamada's matriculation proved crucial to the future acceptance of students of Japanese descent. Apparently Yamada indicated that he intended to play football, run track, and play baseball. The exact circumstances under which Yamada chose to come to Whitworth are not known other than it was necessary for all persons of Japanese descent to leave the West Coast or face being interned. It is unclear whether Frank Warren played a proactive role in recruiting Yamada.<sup>34</sup>

The larger context surrounding the forced evacuation of those citizens and non-citizens of Japanese descent has become well-known. After a short period following Pearl Harbor, the federal government encouraged people of Japanese descent voluntarily to leave their homes and businesses and relocate outside of the war zone, defined as west of the Cascade Mountains. Unsuccessful in removing sufficient numbers of Japanese descendants, this policy was abandoned when Franklin Roosevelt issued Executive Order 9066 in March 1942. This presidential order required between 110,000 and 120,000 individuals of whom approximately 70,000 were citizens to evacuate first to relocation camps and then to be incarcerated in internment camps. Included in this order were approximately 5500 students attending West Coast colleges and universities.<sup>35</sup>

Yamada, like others, saw the handwriting on the wall since Pacific Lutheran College was located in the war zone, and he made the decision to transfer to Whitworth. By December 1942, the War Department had cleared some 344 colleges and apparently Whitworth was one of these. As has been indicated in Frank Warren's speeches, he was unusually empathetic to the plight of the Japanese because of his tenure as a missionary in the 1920s. While records do not reveal any proactive efforts on his part, it is highly likely that Whitworth's president made every effort to identify his college as a suitable institution for Japanese-American students.

This stance required no small measure of courage on Warren's part. Trustee minutes do not reveal any specific conversation regarding the decision, and perhaps he did not present it for discussion. But Spokane was hardly a hospitable place for the relocation of Japanese from the coast. While those Japanese already living in the city were not forced to relocate, the city, perhaps mandated by the federal government, imposed

a nightly curfew. The FBI investigated every Japanese person living within the city. The local chapter of the American Legion vigorously opposed the relocation of persons of Japanese descent to the Spokane area.<sup>36</sup>

Nevertheless, students began coming to Whitworth during the 1942–1943 school year. By 1944 there were approximately 20, roughly 10% of a total student body of 200. Several Japanese–American students became influential and well known during their time at Whitworth. As indicated earlier, Seichi (Sei) Yamada stood out for his outgoing personality and many talents. He played football at Pacific Lutheran and was active on a judo team. Years later Yamada shared the story that the United States government sponsored a judo team trip to Japan in the fall of 1941 shortly before the attack on Pearl Harbor. Yamada and others from the judo team were instructed to remember everything they could—in essence to conduct some low-level spying while in Japan. It is unclear whether he was able to pass any useful information along to the American government. But eventually, Yamada ended up at Whitworth.<sup>37</sup>

Another student with an interesting story was Heidi Horikawa. She had been on the debate team at the University of Washington when she was forced to leave school. Heidi was placed with a Quaker woman, probably with the American Friends Service Committee, and then found herself at Whitworth. She remembered the irony of going to a college that many members of the military were attending: “We would stand in the hallway and wait till they marched in or out.” She remembered attending Youth for Christ rallies in downtown Spokane; that is when she accepted Christ as her savior. She became popular enough to have her wedding plans with Tom Kitayama featured in the student newspaper.<sup>38</sup>

Still another Japanese–American student who made an impact on the Whitworth campus was Sadao (better known as Corky) Kuroiwa. He had spent his first two years at Gonzaga and then transferred to Whitworth where he played basketball (Fig. 10.1). The *Whitworthian* featured his photograph and described him as “one of the most popular and one of the better players on this year’s squad.” He won the Pierette Inspiration Award for 1944–1945 and he left school for the Army and likely served in the all Japanese–American 442nd regimental battalion.<sup>39</sup>

Perhaps the Whitworth student who best epitomized the tragedy of the Japanese–American experience on the West Coast was Tom Haji. The youngest of three children, Haji was born in 1925 in Bluestem, Washington, a small town 25 miles west of Spokane. His parents were



**Fig. 10.1** One half of Whitworth College's 1944 basketball team was comprised of Japanese-Americans (Courtesy of Whitworth University Archives and Special Collections)

Japanese immigrants, and his father worked for the Great Northern Railroad. In 1933, the Hajis moved first to Skykomish, Washington and then to Monroe where Tom and his sisters went to elementary school and then to high school. Tom and his sisters were well known in Monroe, and Tom became a noted basketball player. After Pearl Harbor, Tom's father was accused anonymously of sabotaging the railroad, without proof. The Hajis were forcibly evacuated to Tule Lake internment camp in northern California. By June 1943, the Haji family convinced the government that they were good citizens; they left camp and moved to Spokane. It was then that Tom enrolled at Whitworth during the fall of 1943. He joined the basketball team which at that time consisted of ten players—five of whom were Japanese-American. In addition to Haji, George Yamamoto, Tomi Terao, Bert Kimura and Sadao "Corkey" Kuroiwa all played for Whitworth.<sup>40</sup>

Haji majored in pre-engineering and worked on the student newspaper. But later in 1944, he either was drafted or volunteered to fight in the all Japanese–American 442nd regiment which became the most decorated single regiment in the American Army. Known for the phrase “Go-For-Broke” the regiment was often involved in some of the most dangerous operations on the European front. Sadly, Tom Haji was killed a month before the end of the war in April 1945 in Italy.<sup>41</sup>

Tom Haji was one of many Whitworth students and alumni who served their country. The experience of watching so many fellow classmates go off to war and learning of their deaths was unique in Whitworth’s history. Several students had served in World War I and one was killed in action, but World War II was different. Whereas it was essentially one school year that saw the departure of students in the First World War, students saw their classmates leave intermittently over a period of three years during the Second World War. As indicated earlier, only days after the attack on Pearl Harbor, Whitworth students learned in the student newspaper of several students who were already stationed or serving in the Pacific.

Beginning in the spring of 1942, Whitworth students began enlisting in the reserves for the U.S. Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marines. The federal government made clear that students should stay in school for as long as possible until they were called up. By the end of spring term in May 1942, a service flag was hung in the library featuring a star for every student who was serving in the military.<sup>42</sup>

From the outset of the war, students who were serving wrote back to the newspaper providing reflections in a column entitled “This Man’s Army.” Students took something of a light-hearted attitude by talking about how early reveille forced them to get up, or how good or bad the food was, or some of the funny incidents that occurred in boot camp. But it was also evident that serving in the American Army exposed them to the most diverse group of people, at least geographically and culturally, that they had ever known. They also seemed moved by the common purpose and camaraderie that the war created.<sup>43</sup>

As the war unfolded, Whitworth students observed more and more of their fellow classmates being called to serve. What is striking is the sense that many of these young men were student leaders at the time. For example in April 1943, 2 months before the end of the school term, 11 men received orders for active duty. These included the editor of the *Whitworthian*, the president of the senior class, the president

of the junior class, a star on the basketball team, and a well-known student accompanist.<sup>44</sup> Another article reported “teary good-byes” in December 1943.<sup>45</sup>

The 1944 yearbook identified forty students who were serving in the military including Louise Holder, a graduate of 1943 who was serving in the Marine Corps. One additional student deserves mention and that was an African American, Jack Holsclaw, a Spokane native, who attended Whitworth as a freshman during the 1935–1936 school year but was now serving as one of the all-black Tuskegee Airmen. Highly decorated for his service, Holsclaw earned the Distinguished Flying Cross for shooting down two German Messerschmitt planes.<sup>46</sup>

On the occasion of Thanksgiving on 23 November 1944, President Warren sent a letter to all Whitworth students who were serving in the armed forces; it was republished in the 1 December 1944 issue of the *Whitworthian*. He began by acknowledging that there are “Whitworth women, too who serve and so we bring greetings to all.” For as many times as Warren had addressed the specifics of World War II he chose this time to offer a word of encouragement of the developments taking place at Whitworth. He said that “unlike scores of small colleges throughout the land, Whitworth will not be closed when you return. If a kind heavenly Father leads your footsteps back to Spokane, you will quickly discover that your college is more alive, more progressive, and more in the thinking of the people of Spokane than ever before in its 54 years.” He spoke of the new dining hall and other campus improvements but he ended with this: “As you breathe your prayer of thanksgiving, do not forget to lift a note of praise for your college and with it the prayer that she may ever be loyal to her avowed purpose of Christian education.... We join hearts and hands that Thanksgiving, 1945, will find a world at peace and you, as God may direct, back again among the pines.”<sup>47</sup>

However, the perils of war began to hit students directly when they read about the narrow escape of Leonard Richardson, a popular student and athlete from the class of 1939, who was the sole survivor a bomber crash in Australia in October 1943. In fact all four other crew members perished. Richardson, surviving the crash, crawled down a mountain, found a trail, and was discovered by natives who were able to care for him and get him to a hospital.<sup>48</sup> In that same month two Whitworth Army Air flyers in training, William Ryan and Thane Spahr, crashed head on in mid-air over Calkins field.<sup>49</sup> By April 1945, Whitworth had hung

five gold stars on the Army service flag for students or graduates who had been killed; that number would reach nine by the end of the war.<sup>50</sup>

As the war drew to a close, President Warren continued to give occasional sermons and speeches regarding the war and its likely aftermath. In November 1944, he declared that “slowly the net is tightening around mighty Japan.” He cited the verse from Matthew 5:9 that “Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God,” but still advocated unconditional surrender from the Japanese government. He spoke at length regarding how the United States’ policy of isolation had failed the country, and now the country must be prepared for “Joint prosecution of the war,” “Joint establishment of temporary administrations in areas we have won back from the Axis,” “Joint Administration of relief and rehabilitation in all territories needing aid,” “Establishment of Machinery for Peaceful Settlement of Disputes and Disagreements between nations,” and finally “Joint policing of the world henceforth.”<sup>51</sup>

On 12 April 1945, it was announced that Franklin Roosevelt had died. Like most Americans, Whitworth students, even though the majority identified as Republicans, seemed emotionally unprepared for the loss of the only president that most of them had known in any meaningful way.<sup>52</sup> Student editorialists wrote, “The death of President Franklin Roosevelt a week ago has a taste of the fantastic. That the man who led the nation through twelve turbulent years, the dramatic leader whose indomitable temper forged reforms in political and business life and led a nation almost through the third longest war in its history, should die seemed incredible.” He added, “But what about Whitworth? Aside from the regret that a president has died, there needs to be increased emphasis on a Christ-dominated peace. And the path to that peace may prove measurably harder now that President Roosevelt has passed away.”<sup>53</sup>

Less than a month later, the war in Europe ended. On 8 May 1945, the day victory was declared over Germany, Whitworth students gathered in the chapel and the student newspaper described the scene:

An atmosphere of prayer rather than exaltation pervaded the chapel service .... The sober attitude was the same as in that chapel of December 8, 1941. But the spirit was different! On that gloomy, eventful day the students heard only of war. Tuesday their thoughts were turned largely toward peace. Part of the victory was achieved. Yet there was no celebration. Perhaps the students felt that they could not celebrate as their friends and loved ones still fought, maybe died in the Pacific theater. Perhaps they were mindful of their pledges to stay on the job.<sup>54</sup>

When students returned for the fall semester in September 1945, the war had ended with the dropping of the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The mood on campus seemed upbeat, as one would expect. Enrollment was at an all-time high and therefore the most pressing problem was the shortage of classroom space. Warren addressed the immediate shortage by making an agreement with the United States government to buy surplus buildings where available through the Mead Act, and in the next two years, he acquired ten buildings from Baxter General Hospital in Spokane and six from Port Orchard. While it was an inexpensive way to meet the sudden need for space, the buildings did nothing to improve the appearance of the campus although many of these buildings served the college for the next 50 years. In fact a few still remain on the Whitworth campus. The post-war student influx also created an immediate need for married student housing. Twenty-two apartments were built from government surplus buildings. The dusty road past these quarters acquired the name "Ball and Chain Lane." Another government building provided two faculty apartments, although it contained design limitations since the buildings had served as a military stockade during the war.<sup>55</sup>

The war did not easily disappear from the consciousness of Whitworth students. In 1947, Tiffany Memorial Chapel was completed and named after Army Chaplain Frank Tiffany, from the class of 1929. After graduation, Tiffany went to seminary at Princeton and joined the ROTC. After serving churches in North Dakota and Sandpoint, Idaho, he was sent to the Philippines to serve as chaplain. He ended up serving at Camp O'Donnell, an internment camp that was the final stop for American and Filipino prisoners of war who survived the Bataan Death March in 1942 where between 500 and 600 American prisoners of war died. Once at Camp O'Donnell, another estimated 20,000 Filipinos and 1500 Americans died there of starvation, neglect, brutality and disease. As chaplain, Tiffany served in these most horrible of circumstances; he worked covertly to secure food and medicine for hundreds of suffering prisoners. Eventually his underground work was discovered; he was imprisoned and probably tortured. Tragically, Chaplain Tiffany lost his life aboard a torpedoed Japanese prisoner of war ship in 1944. His widow joined Whitworth's education faculty in 1949.<sup>56</sup>

For Whitworth students, staff, and faculty the Second World War was a searing experience. Between the death of missionaries Robert and Claire Grieve at the hands of the Italian Air Force and the recognition of the sacrifice of Chaplain Frank Tiffany, the Whitworth community

grappled with a remarkable number of emotional highs and lows. Students' lives were uprooted; friendships formed and friendships lost in ways that were not easily predictable. While students could escape in the many activities and social events of college life, they never could avoid the reality of wartime service and sacrifice. The impact of having Japanese–American students in significant numbers established a commitment to diversity that is in some ways reflected to this day. The challenge of integrating one's faith perspective and pondering what it means to live by Christian principles in time of war continued to persist in decades to follow.

Like students across the country, a strong desire to return to “normalcy” existed. Campus traditions flourished, school rivalries in athletics resumed, the naming of student kings and queens in events like homecoming and the “Snow Frolic” marked campus life. But there also was a seriousness and maturity about student life. The student election of 1948 symbolized some of that seriousness when the two candidates running for office were both veterans: Willis Case, who had served four years in the Navy and had survived the sinking of two ships and the eventual winner Len Watson, a veteran of the Coast Guard, who was married and father of two children.<sup>57</sup> Yet, the post-war period provided little relief from a world engaged in a struggle for power and ideas between the United States and its allies versus the Soviet Union. The emerging Cold War demanded one's attention; Whitworth faculty and students continued to maintain a close eye on the affairs of the world. Major speakers came to campus including Jesse Owens the great African American Olympic track star and national political figure Harold Stassen.<sup>58</sup>

Through it all, President Frank Warren continued to lead the institution. He would end up presiding until his death in 1963. Warren modeled for the Whitworth community what it looked like to engage politics and world affairs through a Christian lens. He served as pastor, as teacher, and as a leader in an era when students and faculty did look to the president for guidance. In a sermon shortly after the end of the war entitled “The Remaining Battle,” Warren asked:

Will there ever be another war? There is a war being fought now and upon its outcome rests the answer. The greatest war of all time is still being fought. Satan is strong and his followers are legion. Wherever you have a man, a woman who knowingly sins, who has surrendered to the mad call of selfishness and who lives a sordid life of hate, there you have a soldier



of His Satanic Majesty. On the other hand wherever you have a man, a woman who believes Jesus Christ and who lives with Him in the heart, there you have a good soldier, one who fights not with sword or bomb but who armed with sword of the spirit and wearing the godly armament of God, whose loins are girt about with truth, who has on the breastplate of righteousness and whose feet are shot with the preparation of the gospel of peace, there you have the living answer to the greatest question of all time, which shall win, truth or error, Jesus Christ [or] Satan.... Jesus did not come to be like Hitler, a conqueror today and a forgotten fool tomorrow. Nor like Hirohito, to build a mighty empire now and then tomorrow to be but a puppet ruler. He came to rule and he [*sic*] shall never be satisfied until his [*sic*] enemies sit at His feet. In this hour of world peace I call you to world war, a war against sin, against darkness, against the night which has settled upon us. Let us fight on to the finish. Let us keep our armament bright and our eyes upon Captian [*sic*] Christ who yet, will lead the world to victory. He calls, will you follow?<sup>59</sup>

Warren helped strengthen Whitworth's Christian mission and identity during the war but at the same time it was not an identity that allowed it to shrink from the world around it. It was not an identity that prevented faculty from challenging students to think in complex ways about the world. It was not an identity that shrunk from the liberal arts core of the institution. And that legacy is still evident today.

## NOTES

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## Spiritual Values of a New Civilization: World War II and the Transformation of Mississippi College

*Patrick L. Connelly*

In November 1942, Mississippi College President Dotson McGinnis Nelson addressed the Mississippi Baptist Convention. It was nearly a year after American entry into World War II, a global conflict that clarified for Nelson the stakes for the college. “General education of the present day is too materialistic,” Nelson declared, “and the civilization which it built is crashing at our feet.” Mississippi College and other religious schools must supply “the spiritual values” required to build a “new civilization.” The stated mission was ambitious, though assumptions about the specific nature of this new civilization would become contested territory in the postwar era. Before anything could be accomplished, however, Nelson believed that the scale of the challenge and the burdens of war must be faced. “Young people have to bear the brunt of wars,” Nelson reminded the Convention, and many at the college would be called to serve. “The night for them and Mississippi College may become dark,” he warned, “but the morning also will come.” The vision Nelson set forth that day

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was to secure the college's future for the sake of cultivating graduates who serve society "for the good of humankind and the glory of God."<sup>1</sup>

The wartime years transformed Mississippi College, creating a foundation to enact that vision in the decades that followed. It was a period that saw the clarification of institutional identity, curricular reform, new and renovated facilities, and expanded endowment. These changes were made possible in part due to the infusion of students from the union with the all-women's Hillman College and the establishment of a Navy V-12 program at Mississippi College. The war would also bring long-term change to Mississippi College in ways not foreseen in the 1940s. A committed segregationist like D.M. Nelson would not have imagined, when addressing the Mississippi Baptist Convention in 1942, that a "new civilization" would include the integration of African-Americans at Mississippi College, in the state of Mississippi, and across the South. World War II energized a civil rights movement that would not exempt a historic Baptist institution in Clinton, Mississippi from its legacy.

The origins of Mississippi College date back to 1826, when Hampstead Academy was established in the west central Mississippi town of what shortly thereafter was called Clinton. Renamed Mississippi Academy in 1827 and finally Mississippi College in 1830, the school was the first institution of higher education in the state. It offered a liberal arts education to both male and female divisions of students and in 1831 became the first coeducational college in the United States to offer degrees to women graduates. The female division of the school ceased operation in 1850, though the Central Female Institute—later renamed Hillman College—was established in 1853. Hillman College would remain independent though interconnected with Mississippi College until its incorporation into the college in 1942. The early decades of the institution also brought economic challenges that inspired its leadership to pursue affiliation first with the Presbyterian church in 1842 and then with the Mississippi Baptist Convention in 1850. The Baptist identity of the institution would be a vital feature of the college's history from the fall of 1850 to the present day.

Mississippi College's history prior to World War II brought seasons of adversity related to national and regional events such as the Panic of 1837, the Civil War, Reconstruction, the yellow fever epidemic of the late 1890s, World War I, and the Great Depression. The school's small enrollment and limited resources meant that survival and stability were always at stake when responding to external challenges, trends in

higher education, and the politics of the Mississippi Baptist Convention. Enrollment did not surpass 300 until 1902. Though presidents such as William T. Lowrey and John William Provine steered the college through challenging times and oversaw growth in terms of curriculum, accreditation, athletics, and facilities, the college appeared vulnerable once again with the onset of the Great Depression.<sup>2</sup>

The Great Depression hit the town of Clinton and Mississippi College hard. Leon C. Standifer, a World War II veteran who grew up in Clinton during the 1930s and early 1940s, reflected in his memoir how both the town and college got through the Depression. Standifer noted that while Clinton was a relatively “isolated community,” it had a clear cultural and religious identity as the anchor of the state’s leading Baptist educational institution. Mississippi College attracted “students from influential families” who often would go on “to medical or law school.” It was also where one could “make political associations with people who would become influential in the state.” Standifer surmised that it was even a better school than “Ole Miss” due to its strict discipline and accountability. The college survived the depression years thanks not only to the support of the Mississippi Baptist Convention but from alumni support drawn from the ranks of “lawyers, doctors, and lumbermen.” Standifer suggested that in exchange for their support, they wanted to see Mississippi College “run in a businesslike manner.”<sup>3</sup> The result was the appointment of a new President, D.M. Nelson, in 1932.

Nelson’s long tenure as President of Mississippi College (1932–1957) is significant for understanding the impact of World War II on Mississippi College. Nelson, an alumnus and one-time physics professor at the college, focused on financial stability, debt payment, facilities expansion, faculty recruitment, and enrollment growth. Nelson also sought to link the school’s academic programs with its faith tradition. “Our supreme purpose,” Nelson told the Mississippi Baptist Convention in his first report as President in 1932, “shall be to link mental culture with spiritual culture.”<sup>4</sup> But Nelson also paid careful attention to the trends of professionalization and specialization that shaped modern higher education. He initiated a “self-study” of the “Aims and Objectives” of Mississippi College in 1939 to expound upon this institutional identity.<sup>5</sup> Subsequent academic catalogs throughout the World War II era included a summation and application of the results.

The Aims and Objectives attempted to clarify traditional institutional priorities such as the holistic development, religious instruction,

and liberal arts education of students. They also reflected the college's growing emphasis on specialized preparation for graduate and professional schools. "The primary aim of Mississippi College," stated the 1941–1942 catalog, "is to offer the opportunity for a well-rounded higher education to a limited group of young people in a definitely Christian environment." The fulfillment of that aim required paying attention to the "physical, mental, social, aesthetic, moral and spiritual" components of the student experience. The Aims and Objectives made clear that curriculum would be one of the key institutional "agencies" utilized to accomplish its mission. Students would receive "an education equal in quality with the best institutions of higher learning in the country" but with a distinct "emphasis on spiritual values" that would be transmitted by faculty who were "deeply consecrated and active Christian leaders." The general education core was understood as a critical driver for accomplishing this mission in the curricular space, but the Aims and Objectives made clear that specialization had its role. "The beginnings of specialization" would be a dominant feature of the latter part of the students' curricular experience. Students were to be prepared to enter "the leading graduate and professional schools of the nation" after graduation.<sup>6</sup>

Leon Standifer's memoir provides an interesting glimpse into the faculty of Mississippi College during the transitions occurring in late 1930s and early 1940s. It was not "a very restrictive place" when it came to what faculty could teach. Standifer gave the example of Charles Deevers, a University of Chicago trained botanist who was free to teach "all aspects of botany, pretty much as the spirit moved him." Deevers was allowed to teach on evolution so long as he "avoided the human aspect of it" and refrained from expressing theological opinions.<sup>7</sup> Standifer also took chemistry, biology, math, English, and history classes after beginning his studies at Mississippi College in the summer of 1942, prior to being drafted into service. He recalled that his history professors assigned readings on American foreign policy from different perspectives. "I was shocked to learn that history is subject to personal interpretation," Standifer noted, "and that some people believed Roosevelt was a warmonger."<sup>8</sup>

Nelson successfully steered Mississippi College through the Great Depression and was in the process of clarifying institutional identity and pursuing curricular reform when the outbreak of World War II presented new challenges. The biggest threat to the college was extinction, simply due to the numbers of students enlisting in the military. More than once



in 1941 and 1942 did Nelson remind the Board of Trustees of the global uncertainties surrounding the college: “No one can see the future. The whole world is in chaos about us.”<sup>9</sup> Indeed, enrollment numbers looked bleak in 1942, slipping under 300 students due to students volunteering or being drafted into the Armed Forces. Two major developments addressed the immediate enrollment need and facilitated other transformation of Mississippi College: the acquisition of Hillman College in 1942 and the establishment of the Navy V-12 program in 1943.

The geographic proximity, historical ties, and shared community between Hillman College and Mississippi College not only fostered a close relationship over many decades but made institutional alignment plausible. But it was World War II that made it official. The Board of Trustees officially approved the acquisition in February of 1942, a decision made easier by the fact that there had already been a growing number of women, 50 in total, already taking classes at Mississippi College. The Board of Trustees concluded that it was time to “acknowledge the obvious” and declare the college “a co-educational institution.”<sup>10</sup> The impact was immediate. President Nelson reported to the Mississippi Baptist Convention in 1942 that while the war was extracting “a heavy toll” on the male student population, numbers remained stable thanks to the decision to absorb Hillman College. One hundred and twenty-one female students joined 244 male counterparts to stabilize the enrollment of Mississippi College by the fall of 1942. The financial challenges facing Hillman College made a union sensible for both parties, but Nelson provided a further rationale to the Convention that reflected his era’s gendered expectations of domesticity. Rather than celebrating the academic caliber or professional potential of Hillman students, Nelson focused on how they inspired young men through their “deportment and bearing” to consider “what a life companion ought to be.” Mississippi College was not simply absorbing Hillman College out of mutual financial necessity, but to avoid “the irreparable loss of the wholesome influence” of these women.<sup>11</sup>

Once the acquisition was complete, the administration was vigilant in protecting that wholesomeness. Female students living on the Hillman campus of Mississippi College were expected to adhere to regulations addressed specifically to them in the college catalog and enforced by a Dean of Women. They were expected to refrain from smoking, to attend church, and to avoid patronizing the local drug store on a Sunday. Riding in cars without a chaperone was prohibited, as was traveling to Jackson during any time except during the day on Saturday.

Visits off campus were closely monitored.<sup>12</sup> President Nelson assured the Mississippi Baptist Convention that the arrangement of having women stay on the Hillman campus allowed the college to experience “all of the advantages of co-education and none of the disadvantages.” He wanted the Convention to know that women were getting acquainted with the future ministers and denominational leaders of Mississippi, while men were “exposed to the refining influences of the young ladies.” The “separate campuses” of the college meant that male and female students were “not together enough to retard mutual respect.” Nelson added, in case there was any doubt to what he was referring, “The tendency to become over-enamored is always discouraged.”<sup>13</sup> That concern drove some critics of the decision, including the former evangelist Chester Swor, who also had been an English professor at the college. Swor philosophically disagreed with co-education but also reported stories of rule-breaking and moral failures by female students. Despite his protestations to Nelson and to the Mississippi Baptist Convention, the decision to embrace co-education was upheld.<sup>14</sup>

The acquisition of Hillman College changed the culture of Mississippi College while providing a much-needed addition of students. Those numbers grew even more with the second major development at the college during the war, the establishment of a Navy V-12 program in July of 1943. The Navy V-12 program enrolled over 125,000 students at 131 colleges and universities from 1 July 1943 to 30 June 1946.<sup>15</sup> The program, designed to educate and train naval officers, was a prominent example of numerous ways in which American colleges and universities contributed to the war effort. The benefits of the program were mutual, as Secretary of the Navy Henry Knox assured smaller colleges that priority would not only be given to “large state universities and privately endowed institutions.” Those with resources “so meager that their existence may be threatened by the war,” Knox promised, would be given “special consideration.”<sup>16</sup> The Navy came through on Knox’s promise and selected a wide array of institutions, including Mississippi College, for the V-12 program. One contemporary observer, D. Luther Evans, celebrated the fact that “public and private, religious and secular, rural and municipal, technical and cultural” institutions were chosen. Evans also noted the dynamic and transformational effect of these programs on participating institutions. The Navy V-12 program infused “a sense of momentous responsibility” and “a spirit of urgent purposiveness” into the culture of colleges and universities.<sup>17</sup>

Even prior to the arrival of the Navy V-12 program, Mississippi College saw keeping their doors open as an act of national service. President Nelson argued in 1942 that “the greatest need now in the war effort is leadership material.” Colleges could not only meet that need but prepare students “to reconstruct and rebuild a broken world” in the postwar period. Christian colleges were best equipped to teach students about the “roots” and “fruit” of democracy, Nelson concluded, because “the Source-Book of democracy, the Bible, is freely taught.”<sup>18</sup> The arrival of the Navy V-12 program expanded the college leadership’s sense of responsibility to contribute to the war effort. It was more than just an opportunity to fulfill a patriotic duty during wartime, however. It also brought a crucial infusion of students to Mississippi College. Male students were needed due to the impact on their student body of the government’s decision to lower the draft age to eighteen. D.M. Nelson reported to the Mississippi Baptist Convention that by the fall of 1943,



**Fig. 11.1** Navy V-12 servicemen and female students in the library (Courtesy of Mississippi College Archives)

350 V-12 participants joined 194 civilians for a total of 544 students at Mississippi College (Fig. 11.1). He praised the program's officers and servicemen for being of high character and impressive academic pedigree. He highlighted that students from all over the country were in the program, though a plurality of participants were from Mississippi while Texas, Alabama, and Tennessee were also well represented. Nelson also pointed out the "twelve religious faiths" of these students, listing the following examples: "Baptist, Methodist, Catholic, Presbyterian, Lutheran, Christian, Church of Christ, Episcopal, Jewish, Christian Science, Seventh Day Adventist, and Congregational."<sup>19</sup>

Nelson celebrated not only the caliber and diversity of students brought by the Navy V-12 program, but how it contributed to a surge in enrollment and improvement in facilities. Enrollment during the program peaked in 1944, with 875 students comprised of 603 Navy V-12 students, 142 female civilians, and 130 male civilians. The requirements of the Navy, Nelson enthused, "have enabled us to put buildings in better condition than they have been since they were first built."<sup>20</sup> The 1945 *Tribesman* yearbook credited Navy V-12 students with supplying "students for the school, finances that helped place the school out of debt, spirit that made for an unusual wartime college atmosphere, and personalities that have been uplifting to the community."<sup>21</sup> These contributions transpired within the context of a new academic calendar. Following the guidelines of the Navy V-12 program, servicemen and civilians alike took classes in three 16-week terms starting on 1 July, 1 November, and 1 March. The curriculum for the Navy V-12 program was standard, with a heavy emphasis on the sciences, mathematics, engineering, and classes with specific naval topics such as Navigation and Nautical Astronomy. There were also classes in Psychology, English, and the "Historical Background" of World War I and II.<sup>22</sup> Both military and Mississippi College civilian instructors taught classes.

Despite these successes, there were some initial concerns as to how the Navy V-12 Unit would integrate into the life of the college and the town of Clinton. The *Clarion-Ledger* newspaper in Jackson hoped that "the wonderful Christian environment of Clinton" would have "a telling influence on these sailor boys." Likewise, it added, civilian students could learn lessons from their Naval counterparts "in promptness, neatness, obedience, regularity, and strict attention to duty."<sup>23</sup> One alumni news bulletin noted that some in the community feared their potential "unwholesome influence on the morals of other students" but concluded

these concerns were unwarranted. The trainees were not yet “hardened sailors” and many had not yet even been to sea. They were instead highly accomplished students “from the best high schools” who would contribute positively to the culture of the college.<sup>24</sup> The V-12 Unit maintained a unique identity while also integrating into the larger life of the college. They were featured in the college yearbooks, for example, but also printed at their own expense a smaller, spiral yearbook called *Pelorus*. It contained pictures of each program participant as well as providing a glimpse into the training, drills, academic life, and intramural sports of the servicemen.<sup>25</sup>

The Navy V-12 Unit also maintained its own student publication, a regularly published newsletter called *The Watch*, during their time at Mississippi College. *The Watch* blended wartime news, advice about the military, academic exhortations, updates on intramural sports, entertainment, and humor. It incorporated gossip and vignettes about life at Mississippi College, in Clinton, and in the South. One regularly reoccurring section titled “Hillman Campus” was written by a student named Katherine Krigler. It was a witty and lighthearted look at student life for the women of Mississippi College that included humorous updates on any budding romantic relationships with members of the Navy V-12 Unit. An “Eds. Views and Comments” feature offered commentary on campus life, interactions in the town of Clinton, and experiences in Jackson and beyond. *The Watch* wondered how Clinton would receive the unit and more specifically whether the small town would offer adequate entertainment options. One student wondered if Clinton would fulfill its obligation to give the Unit “the forms of entertainment that we want” given the sacrifices they were making by being in the military during wartime. But specific suggestions were not made.<sup>26</sup> If dancing was what the writer had in mind, program enrollees had the option of attending dances in Jackson (and occasionally in Clinton). The August 1943 edition of *The Watch* advertised a dance at the Heidelberg Hotel in Jackson, with music by a Navy orchestra made up of both Millsaps College and Mississippi College students. Navy V-12 participants were told to bring a date, but if not able to secure one in advance, “there will be 100 girls from Millsaps College” in attendance.<sup>27</sup> Commanding officer Arthur K. Burt reminisced that it took a while for his unit to figure out social options in Mississippi. He joked that “an expeditionary force” launched an invasion of Jackson, “made a few female acquaintances,” and “established a beachhead from which to conduct future operations.”<sup>28</sup>

The unit was reminded, however, to remember the purpose of their presence at Mississippi College. One editorial warned that they were not “here to enjoy liberty” or “to keep that girlfriend in a good frame of mind” but “to study and to make good naval officers.”<sup>29</sup> Their surroundings offered not only entertainment, but opportunities related to their service. In October of 1943 the Mississippi State Fairgrounds in Jackson hosted Navy Day, an event that Navy V-12 participants got to attend. Vice-Admiral John McCain, Sr.—Deputy Chief of Naval Operations of Air, Mississippi native, and the grandfather of the future Arizona senator by the same name—spoke at the luncheon at Jackson’s Walthall Hotel. McCain gave high praise to the preparation those in the Navy were receiving and predicted a quicker victory than many anticipated. Guests of honor included numerous naval officers, Mississippi Governor Dennis Murphree, and Jackson Mayor Walter A. Scott. Lieutenant Burt hoped the experience showed his men that they belonged to “a great organization” and expressed pride that an “Army town” like Jackson was turned into a “Navy town” for a day.<sup>30</sup>

The college community paid tribute to the Navy V-12 program once their departure was announced shortly after the surrender of Japan. Wishing them “God-speed and smooth sailing” in future endeavors, the alumni news bulletin expressed pride in helping out “in this time of our country’s emergency.”<sup>31</sup> Even as the program drew to a close, President Nelson reported that many who had begun their college education at Mississippi College through the Navy V-12 program were writing to communicate their intent to finish their degree there once Naval service was completed.<sup>32</sup> The GI Bill would ensure that whether Navy V-12 participants or not, an influx of veterans would come to Mississippi College in the years following the war. Nelson noted in 1946 that as the Navy V-12 program drew to a close, “a steady stream of veterans” home from the war were taking their place in the classrooms of Mississippi College.<sup>33</sup>

One interesting side note to the story of the Navy V-12 Unit at Mississippi College was the surprising presence of other soldiers in the town of Clinton. Less than two miles away from the traditional campus of Mississippi College, Camp Clinton was established in 1943 as a prisoner of war camp for German officers and troops who had fought in North Africa. There is no clear evidence of a connection with the college or the servicemen enrolled there. The German ranking officer, General Jürgen von Arnim, did request “books, documentary films, and, if possible, visits from American professors who would lecture on American

history.”<sup>34</sup> Despite the proximity of the college, these requests appeared to go unheeded by camp officers. The only tangible link between Camp Clinton and Mississippi College came after the war, when the camp was closed, and its land sold to the college. As historian Arnold Krammer observed, current Mississippi College students “stroll and study unaware of the history which took place so very nearby.”<sup>35</sup>

The Navy V-12 Unit was just one of many expressions of the profound effect of World War II on Mississippi College. The war understandably cast a dark shadow over proceedings. The 1943 *Tribesman* yearbook remarked that the past year was “deeply etched against a background of world conflict and resulting psychological unrest on the college campus.”<sup>36</sup> Students and faculty left to fight in the war. Charles Deevers, physics professor Henry A. Carlock, mathematics professor Emmett S. Ashcraft, and English professor Charles W. Horner were among the faculty called into service. Student organizations and activities were intentional in responding to world events and cultivating the ideals and institutions of democracy. Two student-led literary societies were a case in point. The Hermenian Literary Society noted that it organized activities and events in response to “the present world crisis” with the stated goal of preserving “the principles and ideals of a free people.” The Philomathean Literary Society stated that “international chaos and student unrest” inspired discussions of “the basis of peace for the world of tomorrow.” Society members “sanely thrashed out problems in an insane world.”<sup>37</sup> Another option for students was an International Relations Club, whose stated purpose in 1944 was transcending “the swirling currents of confused thinking, narrow nationalism, absurd prejudices, and jumbled perspective in order to work out a sane, tolerant and unselfish view of the world.”<sup>38</sup> The Student Government Association explained their contribution to the war effort in terms of modeling democracy, but it also encouraged the purchase of war bonds and organized blood drives for the Red Cross.<sup>39</sup>

Alumni newsletters kept track of Mississippi College graduates, students, Navy V-12 participants, faculty, and staff serving abroad. Stories of bravery, heroism, and sacrifice across every theater of the war were recounted. Alumni feats that were celebrated included liberating concentration camps, escaping from German imprisonment, dropping bombs on Japanese targets, and courageous fighting in the Pacific, the Atlantic, and the Mediterranean. One alumni news bulletin from August 1945 estimated the number of alumni who lost their lives in the war

as between 30 and 40.<sup>40</sup> The sizable number of alumni who served as chaplains was also highlighted. Eighty chaplains served in the war, with 61 in the Army and 19 in the Navy. One chaplain, Percy E. Haley Jr. lost his life when his ship was sunk on the way to North Africa in 1943. Haley reportedly “freed himself from the confines of the ship” before fatefully reentering it and attempting to save the lives of others.<sup>41</sup> Another notable case was Nathaniel Saucier, a chaplain praised for directing the rescue of the body of Ernie Pyle after the famed reporter was killed during the Battle of Okinawa. Saucier also conducted Pyle’s funeral service.<sup>42</sup> A regular feature of these newsletters was a “Gold Star Honor Roll” that recounted the fate of those who gave their lives or were wounded, imprisoned, or missing in action. One of numerous examples that hit the college community hard was the death of Sergeant James Hughes Hitt, the son of longtime mathematics professor J.R. Hitt. The younger Hitt, whose four siblings also attended the college, was a 1937 graduate and popular athlete during his undergraduate years. He was killed in action in Germany on 30 November 1944 while serving in the 407th Infantry Regiment.<sup>43</sup>

The Mississippi College community was engaged in and supportive of the Allied efforts to defeat the Axis powers. By November of 1943, the Board of Trustees appeared pleased with the state of the college despite global adversity. “Considering the present times,” their minutes reported, “we have much to give assurance and encouragement in the present life and work of Mississippi College.” They pointed to increased attendance, the caliber of personnel, and financial stability.<sup>44</sup> They continued, however, to look to the future while managing the volatile circumstances of war. The college sought the help of the Mississippi Baptist Convention in launching “an intensive program of propaganda” about the virtues of Christian higher education in order to grow the endowment.<sup>45</sup> Other needs frequently cited by college leadership during the war included a new Administration Building (which was completed in 1948 and named Nelson Hall) and the establishment of regular giving from the Mississippi Baptist Convention and alumni.

The Board of Trustees and President Nelson were not immune from criticism during the war, however. A March 1945 Board meeting listed some of the big decisions that had provoked displeasure in some quarters. One involved two WPA projects: the paving of streets on campus and an addition to the athletic field stands. Other issues that were scrutinized included the suspension of the football program during the war



and the aforementioned accomplishments touted by the administration: the procurement of Hillman College, the corresponding declaration that Mississippi College was a co-educational institution, and the establishment of a Navy V-12 program. The response of college leadership was to strongly defend its record. "This administration covers the period of a world-wide depression, and a world war," they stated, and yet irrefutable progress had been made. A deficit-free budget, improved buildings and grounds, an expansion of the number of faculty, a revised curriculum, approval from the Association of American Universities, a record number of ministerial students, debts paid off, and a growing endowment were signs that leadership had served the college well and laid the groundwork for future success.<sup>46</sup>

A lengthy document, authored by Nelson himself and approved by the Board, was prepared to dispel criticism and to mark the successes of Nelson's tenure. "A Brief Review of the Operation of Mississippi College During the Present Administration" was not particularly brief, but it did provide a thorough explanation with supporting documents to better understand the decisions and outcomes of the Nelson presidency.<sup>47</sup> The report explained the development of athletic facilities and the financial considerations of the project. It spoke of the necessity of uniting with Hillman College, whom Nelson praised for "the stream of glorious and cultured womanhood" that had emerged from its campus over the years. It highlighted the "Enlargement Program," a campaign for the building of new facilities and the renovation of current facilities. Nelson addressed concerns over the temporary suspension of football, celebrated the successes of the Navy V-12 program, and pointed to gains in employee salaries, the establishment of retirement benefits, accreditation, and tuition costs. The report concluded with an affirmation of Mississippi College's Baptist ties and commitment to remain a Christian institution at a time when other colleges had "yielded to the pressure and sold their birthright."<sup>48</sup>

Reflections on accomplishments during the war years corresponded with celebrations that the fighting had ended. The first Mississippi College yearbook after the war's conclusion called its readers to pause and thank God "that we still have a country; that the cities, houses, churches, and hospitals of our country are still standing, and not in shambles; that we still get enough to eat; that we can come to a school like MC."<sup>49</sup> The end of World War II and the opportunity represented by the GI Bill meant that Mississippi College veterans came home

and resumed their educational pursuits. College publications emphasized enthusiastic returns and poignant reunions. One example was the story of Peter Green and Sam Cochran, both members of the Ninth Air Force. Green had watched Cochran being shot down over France in July of 1944. Cochran had recovered from his injuries, married, and was resuming his studies. The encounter with Green, filled with “joyous laughter and loud exclamations of greeting” while onlookers enjoyed the scene, was the first time they had seen each other since the war.<sup>50</sup> The Mississippi College Registrar’s Office reported that 225 servicemen and women, 88 of whom were married were already enrolled by April of 1946. Forty-nine veterans were studying in preparation for ministry, 30 were planning to go into medicine, and 16 were studying to go into dentistry. The remainder were pursuing law or other professions.<sup>51</sup> By 1947 the number of veteran students would more than double to 547, demonstrating how the war continued to play a pivotal role in the student body growth and facility expansion of the postwar years.<sup>52</sup> While their wartime experiences were “many and varied,” the college alumni news bulletin reported, these veterans were “anxious now to put these behind them” and to prepare for “their several peace-time callings and professions.”<sup>53</sup>

Pete Daniel argues that for Southerners, World War II “challenged their provincialism, offered new employment, and reshaped their society.”<sup>54</sup> The war fundamentally reshaped Mississippi College in both obvious and unforeseen ways. D.M. Nelson declared in 1946 that “Mississippi College has laid aside her swaddling clothes and will never be a small college again.”<sup>55</sup> Enrollment had surged during the war and showed few signs of abating due to the Navy V-12 program, the GI Bill, and the integration of women into the student body. Academic programs were being shaped by the concerns of postwar society while facilities were being improved and expanded to accommodate them. Global events, wartime growth, and attention to the academic marketplace led to another curriculum revision after the war, one that sharpened the distinction between the general education core and specialization tracks.<sup>56</sup> Challenges remained, such as having the financial resources to fulfill the mission of the college, but “what are dollars compared to thousands of trained Christian leaders to serve in leavening a materialistic age!” Nelson exhorted the Mississippi Baptist Convention to consider the words of Shakespeare: “There is a tide in the affairs of men, which taken at the flood, leads on to fortune, omitted, all the voyage of their life is

bound in shallows and in miseries.” The college was now “at the flood time of its history” and needed to demonstrate that it was “equal to the opportunity.”<sup>57</sup>

Despite these ambitions, the Board of Trustees felt the need to defend Nelson further in 1947, as hard feelings persisted over his leadership style and the changes that had occurred at the college. A detailed report listed the accomplishments of his tenure and testified to his personal piety. But the Board went even further in explaining what they believed was the underlying issue. “The real cause for whatever difference exists,” the report asserted, “has its foundation in the clashing of ideals, in the interpretation of the meaning and mission of Mississippi College.” For Nelson, that meant responding to institutional challenges and adapting to societal needs while also maintaining a Christian identity. This administration, the report argued, prioritized “the fostering of Christian culture and the forming of Christian character and the training for Christian service” even with the accompanying expansion of programs and professional tracks. World War II and the entry into the atomic age gave even more urgency to the cause. The “divine mission” of Mississippi College was an antidote to the “deadening materialism and spirit depressing secularism” of the age. If the college remained “wholly consecrated” to that mission, the report concluded, it could “change the currents of civilization and save an atomic age from threatened self-destruction.”<sup>58</sup>

In the years following the war, one looming question was how that “divine mission” would inform issues of race and civil rights. In 1946, D. Luther Evans expressed hope that the democratic legacy of the Navy V-12 program would make education “available to all, irrespective of race, color, class, or wealth.” Evans’s comment is a reminder that wartime ideals and experiences fueled civil rights activism in ways that would bring long-term transformation at Mississippi College.<sup>59</sup> During and shortly after the war, the issue of race was rarely discussed in campus literature due to the culture of entrenched segregation and the focus on other wartime issues. There were occasional glimpses, however, into the racial dynamics of the region. A December 1943 issue of *The Watch* reported on a group of V-12 students who traveled to Memphis. At one point, the bus driver stopped the bus, walked to the back where a student was sitting in a section designated for black passengers, and told them, “You’ll either have to sit with the white folks or get off the bus.” *The Watch* noted that the student whom the bus driver addressed “was a Yankee.”<sup>60</sup>

The student newspaper, *The Mississippi Collegian*, published a 1946 editorial that reflected both the increasing attention given to race after World War II and the segregationist assumptions still prevalent. The occasion was a speech hosted by the college's Philomathean and Hermenian Literary Societies. A student spoke on race relations and the state of African-American education in Mississippi and the South. The editorial pointedly praised event organizers for facilitating a speech "in such a prejudiced section of the country." But the editorial also affirmed racial segregation, promoted racial stereotypes, and projected racial anxieties. "Leaving out all moral aspects of the subjection of an entire race of people," it argued, there were still "political, sociological and economical problems" to consider. The political problem to address was the prevalence of white dominance, though the editorial made clear that racial equality should not involve "race mingling." The sociological problem was defined as "the fast rate of reproduction of the Negro," which could lead to "race wars" in the future. The economic problem referred to low wages for black workers due to the educational crisis, as recently demonstrated by the number of African-Americans rejected from wartime service on the grounds of illiteracy. Concluding with an appeal to the Christian convictions of Mississippi College, the editorial stated, "There is no place in a Christian college for racial prejudice." But the editorial's concluding words still defined the dispelling of prejudice in terms of racial separation, not integration: "Racial intermingling? No! Racial education? Yes!"<sup>61</sup> The separate but equal principle, therefore, persisted.

Allowing racial integration on the Mississippi College campus was an implausible scenario in the immediate postwar years. During the presidency of D.M. Nelson, the college was, in the words of Randy Sparks, a "segregationist citadel."<sup>62</sup> Nelson himself became very involved in defending segregation at the college and in the broader community. In 1956, a year before his retirement, Nelson told the Board of Trustees that among "the pressing problems to be solved" was making sure that the college remained "true to our southern way of life as well as to the cause of Christ."<sup>63</sup> A 1955 pamphlet published by the Association of Citizens' Councils in Mississippi included his exchange of letters with an "unnamed alumnus" from the Mississippi College Class of 1917 on the topic of segregation. The alumnus, who signed his letters "Tom," stated his belief in the equality of the races and argued that he saw "no reason why negroes are not admitted to Mississippi College on the same condition as any other race." The alumnus appealed to the Christian

heritage of Mississippi College as the reason the college “should take a lead” on racial matters and not lag behind public opinion and action. “If Mississippi College would open her doors to negroes,” he continued, “she would reach a high level of Christian education.”<sup>64</sup>

Nelson responded by expressing surprise that someone “born, reared, and educated in Mississippi should wander so far away” from that state’s “traditions and ideals.” He then launched into a dubious historical explanation that placed slavery’s origins in New England, argued that slaves adjusted well to the South’s climate and “way of life,” and celebrated the “happy, cordial, and tender” relationship between masters and slaves. It was not moral objections but the disparity in profit that triggered the anti-slavery movement, he argued. Constitutional protections of slavery were ignored, “the War Between the States” was provoked, and “the pauperizing of the once prosperous South” was accomplished. Nelson lamented the post-Civil War humiliation of the South as evidenced by the arrival of “carpetbaggers,” the passing of the 14th and 15th Amendments, and a new “system of economic slavery.” Now, Nelson argued, integrationists had a more sinister goal in mind: “to mongrelize the two dominant races of the South.” Putting white and black children in the same classroom “would ultimately lead to intermarriage” and constitute “a racial disaster.”<sup>65</sup> When it came to Mississippi College, Nelson drew his line in the sand:

No, Tom. Mississippi College will not throw open its doors to negro students as long as the present president is permitted to direct its affairs. It shall be our purpose to protect the fair sons and daughters of the purest strain of the Caucasian race and save them the humiliation of close social contact with a race so different in origin, tradition, ideals and aspirations and in every other conceivable way.<sup>66</sup>

Nelson warned that decisions like Supreme Court’s *Brown v. Board of Education* had perilous consequences. The Court was attempting to usurp representative government and, if successful, representative government would be “gone with the wind.” It was at this point that Nelson concluded by invoking World War II: “There are some things dearer than life itself. Otherwise our soldiers and sailors and airmen in our generation have died in vain.”<sup>67</sup>

Nelson was not as vocal during the war, when segregationist assumptions were deeply ingrained and unchallenged at the college. But his

closing reference to World War II is an ironic reminder of the war's role in dramatically changing the civil rights landscape shortly after its conclusion. The freedom for which soldiers and sailors and airmen sacrificed was not to protect states' rights or resistance to the 14th and 15th Amendments. African-American World War II veterans like Mississippi's own Medgar Evers sought to translate the ideals fought for abroad to their own states and country. They brought new energy and urgency to the cause of civil rights and ensured that places like Mississippi College would see change, too. Gains in enrollment, facilities, endowment, and co-education were the clear immediate results of Nelson's wartime leadership. But he did not foresee the long-term consequences of the war for the college. World War II would spur a civil rights movement that brought long overdue integration and the application of spiritual values to people of all races on the campus of Mississippi College.

## NOTES

1. D.M. Nelson, "Annual Report of Mississippi College to the Mississippi Baptist Convention," *Proceedings of the One Hundred and Sixth Session of the Mississippi Baptist Convention, Held in Jackson, Miss. Nov. 17-19, 1942*, 115. Dr. Edward L. McMillan University Archives, Leland Speed Library, Mississippi College, Clinton, Mississippi. Special thanks to Heather Moore, Special Collections Librarian for the Mississippi Baptist Historical Commission and the Mississippi College Archives, for all of her assistance in pointing me to sources.
2. Three institutional histories provide a broad overview of the history of Mississippi College: (1) Richard Aubrey McLemore and Nannie Pitts McLemore, *The History of Mississippi College* (Jackson: Hederman Brothers, 1976); (2) Charles E. Martin, *Mississippi College with Pride: A History of Mississippi College 1826-2004* (Clinton, MS: Mississippi College, 2007); and (3) Walter Howell, *Town and Gown: The Saga of Clinton and Mississippi College* (Saline, MI: McNaughton & Gunn, 2014).
3. Leon C. Standifer, *Not in Vain: A Rifleman Remembers World War II* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1992), 14, 15.
4. Nelson quoted in McLemore and McLemore, 186.
5. For a description of how the self-study was conducted, see *ibid.*, 191.
6. *Bulletin of Mississippi College, Clinton Miss.* 27:2, May 1941, 11-13. University Publications, Dr. Edward L. McMillan University Archives, Leland Speed Library, Mississippi College, Clinton, Mississippi.
7. Standifer, 15.

8. Standifer, 29. Standifer also noted that a mathematics professor at Mississippi College had taught him surveying, a skill he put to use in basic training at Camp Shelby. He was able to switch jobs from clearing brush to surveying after demonstrating his knowledge to an officer. *Ibid.*, 33.
9. For example, see "President's Annual Report to the Board of Trustees of Mississippi College, June 2, 1941," *Board of Trustees Minutes*, 71. Dr. Edward L. McMillan University Archives, Leland Speed Library, Mississippi College, Clinton, MS.
10. "Proceedings of the Call Meeting of the Board of Trustees of Mississippi College, at Clinton, MS. February 21, 1942," *Board of Trustees Minutes*, 81. Dr. Edward L. McMillan University Archives, Leland Speed Library, Mississippi College, Clinton, MS.
11. D.M. Nelson, "Annual Report of Mississippi College to the Mississippi Baptist Convention," *Proceedings of the One Hundred and Sixth Session (Historically Correct) of the Mississippi Baptist Convention, Held in Jackson, Miss. Nov. 17-19, 1942*, 111, 112. Dr. Edward L. McMillan University Archives, Leland Speed Library, Mississippi College, Clinton, MS.
12. *Bulletin of Mississippi College, Clinton, Miss.* 29:3, July 1943, 16, 17. University Publications, Dr. Edward L. McMillan University Archives, Leland Speed Library, Mississippi College, Clinton, MS.
13. T.M. Hederman, J.H. Street, and D.M. Nelson, "Annual Report of Mississippi College to the Mississippi Baptist Convention," *Proceedings of the One Hundred and Ninth Session (Historically Correct) of the Mississippi Baptist Convention, Held in Jackson, Miss. Nov. 14-16, 1944*, 101. Dr. Edward L. McMillan University Archives, Leland Speed Library, Mississippi College, Clinton, MS.
14. This recounting of the Swor-Nelson controversy relies on Howell, *Town and Gown*, 256-257.
15. James G. Schneider, *The Navy V-12 Program: Leadership for a Lifetime* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1987), xi. Schneider, a Navy V-12 participant at Milligan College in Tennessee, provides a thorough overview of the structure, culture, and impact of the program.
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## Struggling for Survival: Louisiana College in World War II

*Scott D. Pickard*

On January 19, 1943, Dr. Edgar Godbold, president of Louisiana College, presented the school's proposed budget to college's Board of Trustees. He included within this document a section that described the challenges the school faced because of World War II:

Beginning with the second semester our prospects are not so good. We shall have very few boys in our student body. Next Friday, the twenty-second, will close the college career of a large group of our finest men due to the fact that they are being called into service of our nation in a few days after that date. We shall have several new girls to enroll as students. It is almost impossible, if we maintain our standing with the Southern Association of Colleges, to reduce our teaching force any further.<sup>1</sup>

Among the many difficulties confronting the school, Godbold expressed a particular concern about the diminished number of students and faculty at the school because of the war. The decrease in enrollment brought an accompanying decline in revenue. Furthermore, the school also had to deal with the loss of valuable faculty and staff and the

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accompanying problem of trying to find replacements for them at this difficult period.

Louisiana College certainly was not alone in the trials it faced during World War II. Colleges and universities across the country struggled to adapt to the changes and hardships that accompanied the conflict. These institutions of higher learning rallied around the war cause after Japan bombed Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. Most campuses participated in activities such as war bond drives and promoting defense stamps to support the war effort. The departure of promising students, beloved faculty, and valued staff leaving these academic institutions for war-related service regularly played out on campuses across the country and served as another common theme they shared during the conflict. While their exodus was often bittersweet, even this paled in comparison to the tragic news that one of its members had died serving their country, an event all too many schools became familiar with over the course of the war.

While these colleges and universities shared a number of challenges related to the war, the impact and degree of these hardships often varied considerably. As the various chapters in this work illustrate, the unique heritage of these denominational liberal arts colleges significantly influenced how they responded to the war effort, as well as how it affected them. Louisiana College, for example, actively participated in the nation's war cause. Like most colleges, it struggled to adjust to the demanding circumstances that accompanied the war. Although the loss of students, faculty and staff created problems for most schools, Louisiana College's tenuous financial position at the onset of hostilities left it particularly ill-prepared to face the economic difficulties it encountered during the conflict. The school's battle for survival became the defining event of its World War II experience. Louisiana College's extensive participation in military service during this war caused the school's fiscal health to decline so greatly that it placed the college's future existence in serious jeopardy. Baptist groups in Louisiana came to the aid of the Baptist college after learning of the school's economic distress. The financial aid they provided helped the college survive the war-related deprivations and significantly deepened the relationship between them over the course of the war.

The Louisiana Baptist Convention (LBC)<sup>2</sup> established Louisiana College in the town of Pineville in 1906.<sup>3</sup> They founded the school to provide students with a liberal arts education infused with Christian

principles. An early catalog stated the purpose of the school was “to qualify ministers to defend the faith and to equip scholars whose sanctified learning will be used for the glory of God.” While one of the school’s objectives was to help prepare those seeking to be pastors, it was also intended to train its other students for a variety of different careers.<sup>4</sup>

Two patterns emerged in the college’s early years that figured prominently in the school’s affairs during World War II: Reoccurring financial struggles and a fervent commitment to military service during wartime. LBC leaders stressed the importance of education at the school’s founding and emphasized the vital role that the new college would play in promoting this objective among its churches. Baptist leaders in Louisiana viewed the founding of the school as one of its greatest achievements.<sup>5</sup> However, organizational commitments to other projects and the region’s difficult economic circumstances (1906–1941) limited the support they could provide the school. Consequently, the college often lacked the funds for needed building projects or capital improvements during its first thirty-five years. The school even borrowed money on occasions to meet operating expenses.<sup>6</sup> Consequently, the school had little opportunity to put away money that could be used in difficult economic periods.

The Louisiana College community also exhibited an ardent commitment to military service during times of war. For instance, they demonstrated considerable patriotic zeal when the United States entered World War I. Among the males in its junior and senior classes all but one entered the armed forces by December 1917. A number of its faculty members also served in the conflict. Furthermore, the school backed the war effort by offering its facilities to the government for use in military training.<sup>7</sup>

The young school went through a period of considerable financial duress during the Great Depression. Not surprisingly, the college experienced a dramatic decline in enrollment at this time. Furthermore, they also dealt with the loss of financial support from the LBC, which removed the college from its budget in 1932 because of its own fiscal woes. One consequence of the school’s financial difficulties was that the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools placed the school on probation in 1936. The organization based this action on the school’s mounting debt and the amount of back pay owed to the faculty.<sup>8</sup> The college found it necessary to turn to churches, residents, and businesses in the local community for assistance. While these other sources helped the school survive this time of economic hardship, it also

lessened the ties between the college and the LBC. The building of a new women's dormitory in 1941 illustrated the change in its relationship. In a report to the LBC from Louisiana College's Board of Trustees, they stated, "that the new building was given by the people of Pineville and Alexandria (the neighboring city) and that the Board planned to raise the rest of the money to cover any expenses without incurring any financial obligation on the LBC."<sup>9</sup> In the 1941 *Annual Report*, leaders of the LBC Education Committee expressed concern about the treatment given to the college and reproved their organization for the lack of support given to the school. They write, "The Committee is convinced that Louisiana Baptists have hurtfully limited these possibilities by our meager and sometimes inadequate financial support and our half-hearted moral support of the College." They encouraged associations within the state to find ways to provide funds for the college.<sup>10</sup>

The college benefitted from the nation's economic recovery at the end of the 1930s. Its financial status had improved and its enrollment numbers increased by 15% in both 1938 and 1939.<sup>11</sup> Moreover, the LBC reaffirmed their commitment to Louisiana College. Their fiscal situation also improved and they restored the school to their budget in 1938.<sup>12</sup> Convention leaders stressed the centrality the educational institution would play in its future endeavors. In the 1941 annual report they wrote, "Adequately supported and equipped by Louisiana Baptists, the college will take its rightful place not only in the hearts of our program of Christian Education but as well in the total cultural, social and spiritual life of the state."<sup>13</sup> They emphasized that the graduates of the school would make a valuable contribution to their future evangelistic efforts and their missions' work, two causes the LBC highly esteemed. Louisiana College appeared to be poised for a period of significant growth in the 1940s. However, this encouraging state of affairs would be short-lived. The storm clouds of war loomed on the horizon and a major source of stability and steady leadership for the institution left right at this important crossroads.

On March 17, 1941, Claybrook Cottingham surprised many by his announcement that he was resigning as Louisiana College's president to take the same office at Louisiana Polytechnic Institute in Ruston, Louisiana. He had served in this position since 1910 and had been closely connected with Louisiana College since its founding. For thirty-one years he piloted the school through a myriad of challenges, most notably the Great Depression.<sup>14</sup> He developed considerable influence

within the state and established close contacts with the churches in the region. His departure was understandably quite unsettling to many with close ties to the institution. An editorial in the *The Wildcat*, the school's newspaper, expressed the sense of loss many felt: "To most schools, the resignation of a president might be taken lightly as just a passing item of news, but to Louisiana College it is different, very different. It is different because Dr. Claybrook Cottingham is no ordinary man and his relationship to Louisiana College cannot be compared to other schools."<sup>15</sup> The school's dean, H.M. Weathersby, became the acting president until they found a permanent replacement. Consequently, the interim president served at the institution's helm as the nation moved incrementally to war.

College campuses kept a wary eye on America's foreign affairs at the beginning of the 1940s. There was a common awareness that a significant number of its population would likely participate in military duty if the nation went to war. While the press gave most of its attention to the conflict in Europe, the Louisiana College community maintained considerable interest in the events coming out of Asia. Louisiana Baptists financially supported a number of missionaries serving in China and Korea. There was a great deal of concern among these Baptist churches after Japan invaded these nations. The *Baptist Message* provided frequent accounts of the hardships that Chinese and Korean people faced because of these military incursions. These stories often detailed the physical suffering that the invading army brought on these lands as well as the restrictions increasingly placed on the Christian Churches in those regions. While most of the articles on the foreign conflict focused on finding a peaceful resolution, editorials that promoted the need to strengthen the national defense and prepare for the possibility of war began to appear with greater frequency in 1941.<sup>16</sup>

Louisiana College actively participated in the nation's military buildup even before the attack on Pearl Harbor. The Selective Training and Service Act of 1940 played a prominent role in the national government's preparation for war. The policy reinstated the draft for those between the ages of 21–36. However, the measure did offer a provision that allowed college students to defer their induction temporarily. Louisiana College exhibited the same kind of nationalistic ardor that it demonstrated almost a quarter of a century earlier. A number of the college's population did not utilize the deferment option but enlisted as volunteers in the armed forces during this pre-war period.



The school's Athletic Director Henry Walden led the way. He took a leave of absence with the school in November 1940 to serve in the army, where he eventually reached the rank of major. The school newspaper *The Wildcat* began to provide regular accounts of former students who were now serving their country in National Guard camps. The frequency of its members leaving the school to serve in the military increased in 1941 as America's tensions with the Axis nations worsened.<sup>17</sup>

The college initiated a ministry to the soldiers during their pre-war training. The U.S. military made Rapides Parish a center of operations for its Louisiana Maneuvers and established a number of new bases in the area as part of its preparation.<sup>18</sup> Baptist leaders around the state expressed great excitement at the evangelistic opportunities this plan presented and encouraged their members to find ways to "bring Christ to the Camps."<sup>19</sup> Groups from Louisiana College began to visit these installations and established religious programs as a way to minister the soldiers. The *Alexandria Town Talk* provided an account of the school's interactions with the troops. They reported that the college's Baptist Student Union had initiated a "missionary program" at Camp Claiborne and conducted worship services for the soldiers twice a month. The paper commended Louisiana College students for "launching another branch of missionary endeavor" reaching out to the soldiers.<sup>20</sup> The school continued this ministry to the neighboring camps throughout the pre-war period.

There was another reason why these Baptist leaders placed so much emphasis on its members ministering to the troops, however. The military maintained an insufficient number of chaplains to adequately meet the religious needs of so many soldiers. The shortage of these officials was so severe that Army Chief of Staff George C. Marshall made an appeal to the various religious denominations to help remedy this problem. LBC leaders publicized this need to its churches and implored its clergy to recognize this unique ministry opportunity and consider enlisting.<sup>21</sup>

The college provided formal support to the military during its pre-war preparations. They allowed the local National Guard to use its gym for training its members as well as serving as an armory. The school also partnered with the government to create a Civilian Pilot Training program in 1940. This plan provided valuable training for its students, many of who would serve in the Army or Navy's aerial combat units during the war. The school later developed a V-1 training program for the

Navy in the fall of 1942 and a comparable type of plan for the Army Aviation Reserves. One of the noted benefits of these programs was that it allowed students in the military reserve to continue their education and potentially gain a commission with whichever branch they were affiliated with.<sup>22</sup>

The enrollment figures for 1941 provided one of the first signs of the impending struggles Louisiana College would face during World War II. The significant growth they experienced in the previous two years came to a sudden halt. The Board of Trustees addressed this decline in their meeting that May. They reported that while the semester began with increased enrollment, they finished the term with fewer students than the previous year because of those joining the military. They noted that while some of these students were inducted by the draft, “quite a few enlisted in the various branches of service.”<sup>23</sup>

With the attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941, the number of students leaving the school for military service increased substantially. When the Board of Trustees met in Pineville in January 1942, Acting-President Weathersby stressed the necessity of responding effectively to the changes that the war would bring to the school. He laid out three objectives that he believed would help the college withstand the coming challenges. First, they needed to increase their efforts at recruitment to compensate for the continued loss of students to the military. Second, they should ask the Convention to increase the allotment that it provided to the school and to be prepared to increase it annually if necessary. Finally, he recommended that the school needed to adopt “the most rigid economy in all phases of our work consistent with upholding the highest educational standards.”<sup>24</sup> The president brought up another significant matter before the Board at that meeting. He proposed “the discontinuance of the intercollegiate football.” Citing the cost and the likelihood that “one-half of the present squad will be in service next fall,” he believed that the present circumstances made it the appropriate time to give up the sport and replace it with a physical education program for all students.<sup>25</sup> The board passed all of these proposals, but these officials also knew of an impending announcement that would have a far greater impact on the future direction of the school. New leadership was coming to the college.

Later that January, the college announced the selection of Edgar Godbold as the institution’s new president. He was a familiar name to both the school and Baptists of that state. He at one time taught biology

at Louisiana College and later worked as the Corresponding Secretary of the Louisiana Baptist Convention's Executive Board. Godbold had also previously conducted a very successful financial campaign on Louisiana College's behalf and served as the president of Howard Payne University in Brownwood, Texas. His past experiences and qualifications clearly resonated with Louisiana College's Board of Trustees, which voted unanimously to bring him in as its new president.<sup>26</sup>

It became apparent early in his tenure that two of Godbold's primary objectives were to cultivate closer relations with the LBC and to remedy the school's financial problems. He communicated these aims in an article that he wrote to the *Baptist Messenger* shortly after his formal inauguration in April of 1942:

Obviously the college should expect from the denomination not only a hand of strict control but an ever-increasing support as the demands of an institution become larger. Each of us can call to mind numbers of educational institutions which have been lost to the churches that claimed to control them because they were not given sufficient financial support to enable them to meet the demands made on them...We are compelled under present circumstances to live too close to the borderline of our budget because we do not have a margin of safety. We never expect to be financially independent because we shall always be wholly dependent on Louisiana Baptists, but the denomination ought to take care of our nerves by giving us a safe margin in our budget.<sup>27</sup>

While Godbold stressed the integral role that the LBC maintained in the life of Louisiana College, his allusions to the other institutions served as a warning of the perilous financial situation that the school presently faced. He believed that the Convention had allowed its school to undergo financial uncertainty for too long. The college's repeated economic difficulties during its pre-war years had lessened its involvement and reliance with the LBC. It was time for the Convention to take greater responsibility in providing for its school, particularly when the school faced so many war-related challenges.

Godbold continued to stress the college's financial concerns when he met with its Board of Trustees at their semi-annual meeting in May of 1942. He presented a letter to its members that provided a list of the institution's pressing needs. He was anything but subtle with his opening remarks in this document: "We need more money. I am going to keep on saying this until we get it from some source." Godbold emphasized

to his Board that problems such as the low salaries and inadequate level of staffing could not be ignored any longer. He maintained that the school would not be able to hold on to its personnel nor expect them to carry out their normal duties effectively if things remained unchanged. Moreover, he stressed the need to find new sources of revenue because he believed that the difficult circumstances confronting the school were likely to worsen.<sup>28</sup>

The president's concerns about the challenges facing the school were proven correct. The war's impact on the college became more serious as 1942 progressed. The fall enrollment for men dropped by 25% from the previous year. Even worse, it was understood that many of the young men attending that semester would be with the military before the semester's end. The accompanying loss of their tuition dollars would further exacerbate their financial difficulties.<sup>29</sup> The college hoped to offset this deficit by intensifying its recruitment of women. While these efforts produced a slight increase in numbers, they did not provide the results hoped for. An improved job market figured prominently in the disappointing outcome. The school found itself not only vying against a recent influx of war-related enterprises to the area but the competition for personnel also prompted local businesses to raise the wages for its workers.<sup>30</sup>

The loss of personnel to the war effort provided another significant hurdle for the college to deal with. The low salaries and numerous responsibilities that accompanied these positions made it particularly difficult to find qualified replacements. President Godbold experienced this problem during his first month in office. Otto Sellers, the school's Bursar, announced his impending departure for the armed forces. Godbold felt a sense of urgency about finding someone to fill this financial position and stressed to his Board of Trustees that "His place must be filled soon."<sup>31</sup> Near the end of 1942, for example, the college reported they lost four teachers during the fall semester. With only twenty full and part-time faculty members remaining to teach the classes, this number was a considerable loss to face in just one term.<sup>32</sup>

The increased responsibilities placed on the remaining faculty during the war could be quite arduous. Even before the war, there was concern that they were inadequately staffed to handle existing classes. Losing a colleague to the war effort made teaching duties even more taxing. Overload schedules became the norm for full-time faculty members. In the spring of 1943 over a third of these teachers were responsible for at

least six classes that semester.<sup>33</sup> While President Godbold felt a strong need to keep expenses down, he worried they had “overloaded our faculty members to a dangerous degree.”<sup>34</sup> He also knew that until the school could increase its revenue, there was little they could do to remedy the problem. There was another component to the faculty shortages that weighed on the president. He feared the official sanctions they might incur because of its dearth of instructors. He believed “it would be almost impossible to maintain our standing with the Southern Association of Colleges if we reduce our teaching force any further.”<sup>35</sup> The possibility of facing these penalties and the negative publicity that would accompany it was certainly the last thing they needed at that time.

There was another reason why the loss of faculty had such an adverse impact on the institution. Being that some departments had only one member, the sudden departure of an instructor sometimes made it necessary to have someone from another field take on the teaching and administrative responsibilities. For instance, when physical education professor M.A. Phillips left the school to serve in the Navy, Dr. Hal Weathersby, a biology professor, had to add these duties to his other tasks.<sup>36</sup> The college did occasionally find substitutes to temporarily fill a vacancy. They brought Dr. Alfred Marsh in from New York City to take over the classes of a teacher who suddenly left just prior to the fall semester. However, the financially strapped college had to pay Marsh the equivalency of a full professor’s salary because of the abrupt nature of the situation.<sup>37</sup> The school utilized some of its students to handle the responsibilities of staff members who left the school. For example, the school hired John Rosser, a senior at the school, to be in charge of publicity in 1943 after Traxel Stevens was drafted.<sup>38</sup>

Not all of its personnel losses were a direct result of military service. Two of the four faculty members who left in the fall of 1942 accepted positions at other locations. C.R. McLellan, the school’s Professor of Chemistry, left to work as a chemist at the Government Arsenal in Pine Bluff, Arkansas. J. Frank Davis accepted a more lucrative position teaching Spanish at Louisiana Polytechnic after the previous teacher enlisted. Other faculty left the school to be with family. H.H. Rush resigned as Secretary to the President in 1943 to accompany her husband as he prepared to join the military. Mrs. W. Lackey, the college’s speech teacher, returned to her home in Oklahoma after her husband was discharged from the navy in 1945.<sup>39</sup> However, the longevity of the faculty worked to the school’s advantage during the war. Most had been there for a

number of years and did not desire to leave. Consequently, they willingly took on these extra responsibilities to help the college and to perform their patriotic duty during this time of national upheaval.<sup>40</sup> School officials persuaded faculty that reached retirement age to continue serving at the school.<sup>41</sup> Members from the community also came to its aid. In the spring of 1943, Dr. Herschel Hobbs, a pastor of a nearby church, helped the college's Bible Department by teaching one of its classes. In their public commendation of his work, the Board of Trustees noted that he not only taught the class for free, but he also refused to accept any reimbursement for his travel expenses.<sup>42</sup>

The exodus of students reached its greatest level in the fall of 1943. Only 115 men enrolled in the college that semester and many of them departed before the term's end. By comparison, the school had 283 men in 1940. In three short years, the school had lost almost 60% of its male population and its overall enrollment plunged 33%.<sup>43</sup> Congress' decision in November of 1942 to lower the draft age to eighteen certainly contributed to this sudden loss.<sup>44</sup> Ministerial students in the Bible Department also factored into this large decline. As previously mentioned, Baptist leaders urged their members to consider becoming military chaplains because of the insufficient number filling this office. A significant number of Louisiana College students left the ministry program to become military chaplains or chaplain assistants during 1942–1943.<sup>45</sup> School officials held mixed emotions about the loss of so many ministry students. On the one hand, they expressed their pride in the decision of these young men to minister to those fighting for their country. On the other hand, the sudden loss of these students further aggravated its economic difficulties.<sup>46</sup> With such a precipitous decline in enrollment, it placed even greater importance on its recruitment. However, their attempts to attract new students encountered numerous roadblocks.

The rationing policy implemented by the government during the war substantially impeded the college's recruitment efforts.<sup>47</sup> Even before taking office, Godbold developed plans for an extensive campaign to bring in a large freshmen class for the fall semester. An individual donated a bus to the college the previous year and Godbold desired for recruiters to travel around Louisiana in this vehicle promoting the school. He became quite concerned about the impact that the restrictions recently placed on rubber at the beginning of 1942 might have on this new recruitment plan. He feared "the inability to get tires for

their cars” would impede their efforts to make contact with prospective students and prevent them from reaching their enrollment goals.<sup>48</sup> The regulations placed on gas later that year further restricted the use of the bus to local destinations only. The rationing policy was not the only issue to negatively impact the school’s recruiting efforts. The college’s mounting financial woes also limited its ability to publicize the school. Consequently, they had to discontinue some of their advertising around the state because they could no longer afford the rates.<sup>49</sup>

The college’s fiscal statements from 1940–1943 illustrated the grave impact that the war effort had on its financial status. In 1940, the school had finally surmounted the challenges of the Great Depression and had recently settled its outstanding debts. Its income for the year exceeded its expenses by 5% and its economic health appeared to be on the rise. School officials were brimming with optimism and considering future building projects.<sup>50</sup> The Board displayed a slight change in tenor by the following November after the military buildup began. Not only had total receipts unexpectedly decreased by 3% from the following year but they warned that the deficit was likely to increase as the student exodus grew larger. By May of 1942, the college was in debt again and had to take out a loan to pay its teachers’ salaries.<sup>51</sup> The school’s monetary difficulties reached its nadir in early 1943. The financial reports indicate that the college’s liabilities had doubled since May of the previous year and the debt alone was up to 33% of the anticipated tuition for the 1942–1943 school year. In light of these terrible conditions it is certainly understandable why Godbold would declare to his Board of Trustees in January of 1943 that the school’s prospects were not good.<sup>52</sup>

Louisiana College’s reliance on arrangements with the military increased as its financial problems worsened. The tuition paid by the government for the educational plans such as the Civilian Pilot Training Program, the V-1 Program, and the Army Air Force Reserve Program helped offset some of the losses caused by its declining enrollment. School officials hoped to increase their collaboration with the military by offering greater use of their campus in the fall of 1942. They believed that this proposal would help the preparation of the nation’s troops and provide needed revenue for the school. The college would also offer its empty dormitory rooms to both the Army and Navy in January of 1943. With so many of its own students gone, college officials proposed that Army or Navy could use these rooms for its personnel or to relieve the severe housing shortage caused by the military buildup in the region.<sup>53</sup>

However, the government not only eventually declined the offer of expanding their collaboration with the college, but they also decided to discontinue their present arrangement with the school because they required a bigger campus.<sup>54</sup>

The government's decision was a significant setback to the school. President Godbold sought to calm the fears some expressed that the college would be forced to close if the military did not select their institution. He responded that the school needed to move past this disappointment and direct its energies toward recruiting and "put forth special efforts to fill our dormitories and classrooms with high-school graduates."<sup>55</sup> As the exigencies of war confronted the college in so many avenues, it was only a matter of time before it significantly impacted the school's day-to-day activities.

Campus life at Louisiana College progressively reflected the challenges brought on by the war. During the pre-war build up and in the early stages of the conflict, the school did not need to make many changes to its programs and policies. As the fighting progressed and the college began to feel the economic pinch more keenly, they adapted accordingly. The college's interaction with the military provided one of its most notable wartime changes. As previously mentioned, members of Louisiana College went to the local camps to minister to the soldiers by the spring of 1941. While their ability to travel to the camps lessened after the rationing of tires and gas went into effect in 1942, students continued this work with the soldiers throughout the war. They also compensated for the diminished frequency of their trips by planning out special activities and events for the soldiers during their visits.<sup>56</sup>

The Civil Pilot Training Program formalized the relationship between the Louisiana College and the military. This government plan not only initiated greater ties with the school, but this educational program and its successors also brought a considerable number of individuals in the armed forces to the campus in 1941–1942.<sup>57</sup> The presence of military members on the campus and the close proximity of the bases raised some concerns about the influence they might have on the students. At the beginning of 1942, Acting President Weathersby addressed this issue and calmed any fears by providing a positive report about the soldiers' behavior and interactions at the campus. He referred to the many contributions and services that the "fine young men from the army camps" had brought to the campus, such as free concerts by groups from Camp Polk and Camp Livingston at the school auditorium.<sup>58</sup>



While Louisiana College officials may have extolled the behavior of these young men, having such a large contingent of soldiers stationed near the campus prompted the school to eventually establish regulations regarding soldiers dating the women living in its dormitories. In his explanation of the policy, President Godbold stressed that while the vast majority of the 100,000 soldiers stationed nearby came from good homes and exhibited upstanding personalities, there were still some whose conduct was less than desirable. Thus, the college required that before the woman could go on a date “she had to have permission from home.” The soldier also had to meet with one of the college’s deans and “provide a reference to his character and dependability.”<sup>59</sup>

The faculty redesigned the curriculum so that the courses would better meet the needs of its students who would be called into military or government service as well as the soldiers at the neighboring camps taking classes at the school. They introduced courses in mathematics that focused on problems related to navigation and artillery, chemistry courses that focused on principles of explosives, and language courses to train students as translators.<sup>60</sup> They also implemented accelerated programs of study to increase the likelihood that a student earned his or her degree before being called into active duty.<sup>61</sup> While most of the changes in academic policy focused on the men preparing for the war, the college implemented a policy for women, which significantly impacted the school long after the war ended. Louisiana College collaborated with the Baptist Hospital in Alexandria and began to offer courses in nursing in 1945. The Board of Trustees promoted this educational plan to prepare nursing student for government service during the war. However, the school decided to expand this program after the war and established the “Collegiate School of Nursing,” which is still in existence at the present time.<sup>62</sup>

The gender ratio at the college shifted considerably during the war. With so many of its men leaving for military service, its women eventually outnumbered them. The college increased its focus on recruiting females shortly after the war began but its initial efforts met with only moderate success because of the favorable job climate in the area. Even though its male numbers declined, they still comprised about 61% of the campus population in the 1941–1942 academic year, which was the same proportion as the previous year.<sup>63</sup> A transition in the gender balance became evident in the 1942–1943 school year. While the male population decreased by 25%, female membership increased by 10% and they

now comprised 48% of the population. President Godbold commented on the disparity between males and females with the new freshmen class. He wrote, "It seems there are three times as many girls as boys here for their freshmen work."<sup>64</sup> A significant increase in scholarships and financial aid provided to the women played a significant role in drawing them to the campus.<sup>65</sup> The shift became even more pronounced the following year. While the school saw the male membership plummet, it increased its enrollment of females by 22% and they comprised 63% of the student population. The proportion of women to men remained almost identical in the following academic year (1944–1945) before so many of the enlisted men came home.<sup>66</sup> The gender disparity was one of the first things that Ann Vance noticed when she enrolled at Louisiana College in 1944. She noted whimsically that the "the lack of males at the college at the time really lessened dating prospects, especially since most of the men who were there were 4F."<sup>67</sup>

Female students took on more leadership roles at the college during the war years. They frequently assumed responsibility for carrying out student activities, such as efforts to support the war cause. The *Alexandria Town Talk*, for example, reported on Louisiana College sponsoring a war bond drive. In their account of the event, the paper referred to the leaders of the drive, all of whom were women.<sup>68</sup> Yet, while the student body was rallying behind these patriotic causes, the exigencies of the conflict made it necessary for the college to make significant changes to its traditional programs.

The travel restrictions placed on the college combined with its declining enrollment and revenues forced school officials to cut or substantially alter some of its popular extracurricular activities. They cancelled the basketball program, like the football program, in 1942. The cessation of these two sports caused a "considerable disturbance among the town as well as among the student body."<sup>69</sup> By the fall of 1942, all of its intercollegiate sports were gone.<sup>70</sup>

The college did, however, implement a program to promote physical fitness among the student body in 1942. Apparently, the Army and Navy expressed concern to colleges and universities about the conditioning of its new recruits.<sup>71</sup> Louisiana College made physical education classes a required part of the student's course load each semester and the school strongly encouraged its student body to get an hour of exercise every day.<sup>72</sup> The college developed an active intramural sports program to soften the blow of cancelling its intercollegiate sports. Its students

organized teams and occasionally competed against teams from other local colleges or military bases in football, basketball, and baseball. By the end of the war, the school also had informal teams in tennis, volleyball, and softball, which also competed against other teams in the region.<sup>73</sup>

Although the war was never far from the minds of its students, college officials were intentional about the amount of news reported on the conflict. President Godbold expressed concern about “the unrest in the minds of all our young people due to present-day conditions.” He noted that anxiety over the “welfare of these boys has caused a very evident unrest among girls.”<sup>74</sup> With such a high percentage of its students participating in the military conflict, Louisiana College officials hoped to keep the students from ruminating on the conflict by rarely elaborating on the subject. Ann Vance recalled how Louisiana College officials tried to protect the students as much as possible from the news. She remarked, “It seemed like school leaders wanted to insulate us from the harshness of war. They wanted to make us feel more secure.” She continued, “Outside of praying for our soldiers they rarely addressed the war.”<sup>75</sup>

However, the college occasionally sponsored special activities or services directly related to the conflict. College officials, for example, formally recognized in chapel programs its students preparing to leave for active duty.<sup>76</sup> They also set up a program where its students periodically wrote to one of the men or women who had left the school to serve the country.<sup>77</sup> The college held special services to commemorate its members who died in the conflict. The *Town Talk* reported on one such service held at the school auditorium on November 19, 1943. Students, faculty, and staff all had participating roles in this event that honored the students known to have “died in the line of duty on the battlefield.” Certificates were also prepared for the parents of the eight recognized at the service.<sup>78</sup> In March 1945, the school included a special memorial issue in its *Louisiana College Bulletin* of all who died in action. The commemorative section provided a brief biography, a photo of them in their military uniform, and a description of how each perished. Each of their names was also placed in the college’s memorial chapel.<sup>79</sup> Louisiana College students also found ways to honor its fallen classmates. The Class of 1944, for example, raised funds for a concrete plaque that became a campus tribute to its war dead. They held a community memorial service in May 1945 to dedicate the plaque, which was placed and remains at the entrance of the college (Fig. 12.1).<sup>80</sup>



**Fig. 12.1** Louisiana College World War II Memorial (Courtesy of Timothy Roper)

The Board of Trustees also formed a special committee in the latter part of 1944 “to secure scholarships for returned war veterans” to recognize their service to the country. Although they disbanded this group after the creation of the G.I. Bill, which made the scholarship proposal unnecessary, the Board’s plan provided evidence of the school’s improved economic status.<sup>81</sup>

The college’s financial health began to improve in 1943 after Baptist groups started to financially support the institution on a more regular basis. The Louisiana economy had not fully recovered from the Great Depression when the United States first entered the war. Baptist organizations generally lacked the economic wherewithal to provide for the school at this time. Consequently, Louisiana College had to rely on the gifts of individual donors to supplement its budget during this period. This operating mode worked adequately when times were stable but

this approach also made the school quite vulnerable in periods of fiscal difficulty. Thus, the occasional donations the institution received did not cover the substantial decline in tuition revenue caused by the war. While the government's payments for courses helped alleviate some of the school's deficit, even these became insufficient to match the losses from the growing numbers leaving the institution to aid the war effort. Louisiana College needed to find a more consistent source to sustain them through difficult phases.

President Edgar Godbold figured prominently in alleviating Louisiana College's economic crisis. After assuming office in 1942, he effectively utilized his connections with Baptists around Louisiana to publicize the school's plight. He took advantage of every opportunity to describe the challenging circumstances confronting the school, whether it be with Baptist leaders at its annual meeting or speaking with a single congregation. Godbold made the *Baptist Messenger* his primary medium to communicate the school's needs. The weekly publication traditionally provided a column for presidents of Louisiana College to describe the activities and affairs of the institution. Godbold frequently referred to the college's economic difficulties caused by so many of its students serving the war effort.<sup>82</sup>

The college's role in training church leaders served as another common topic in his columns. He often stressed the school's efforts to prepare the chaplains serving the troops during the war, but sometimes emphasized the college's role in shaping society after the war: "Louisiana College is not only in the business of education for this war but also for the peace that follows....It is especially needful that in the work of education we take the long-range view."<sup>83</sup> Godbold sometimes challenged his readers about the inadequate support he believed Baptists provided to the college. He did not hide his frustrations in his columns: "It is difficult to refrain from being impatient with our situation at Louisiana College. Prices of commodities necessary to life are skyrocketing, wages are being increased everywhere one turns, but our teachers are receiving less salary than they got at the first part of the depression." He continues, "Do not the readers of these lines feel that we had better not fool ourselves about the support we are giving our Baptist college."<sup>84</sup>

Godbold felt very strongly about increasing the college's endowment after seeing the school almost close down during the Great Depression and early in his tenure as a president. He stressed that Baptists needed to build this fund as a buffer during economic hard times: "Louisiana College will

continue to be an experiment as an institution unless we secure enough endowment to stabilize the school.... Another serious depression will close or practically close the institution.”<sup>85</sup> While Godbold’s writings often challenged his readers to provide greater support, he also regularly expressed appreciation when someone offered support to the school: “Mr. Fred Savage of Shreveport has made two or three splendid gifts. The list goes on and on if all the gifts should be listed.”<sup>86</sup>

Six District Associations in Louisiana became the first group to respond to Godbold’s challenge to increase their support to the college. In the spring of 1943, they all agreed to offer scholarships to the school. The Baptist Women’s Missionary Union of Louisiana (W.M.U.) followed suit shortly after that. Their Executive Committee adopted a plan in that same year to offer eight scholarships, one for each regional district, for the 1943–1944 school year.<sup>87</sup> President Godbold occasionally used the W.M.U.’s support for the college to prod districts in the state to follow its example. In September 1943, he wrote, “When other associations become as interested in their scholarships as the W.M.U. is in theirs, we’ll have a student body representing every section of Louisiana.”<sup>88</sup> The college’s Board of Trustees also commended the W.M.U. after the group created a program in 1944 to educate all of its Baptist churches in the state about Louisiana College and the scholarships they provided.<sup>89</sup>

Louisiana College also benefitted from the valuable support of the LBC’s Executive-Secretary Treasurer W.H. Knight. A graduate of the college, his election to the office in 1941 provided the school with an influential ally. Knight possessed both keen financial acumen and considerable powers of persuasion and turned the LBC’s \$200,000 debt into a treasury surplus within two years after taking office. He also capitalized on the wartime prosperity to encourage greater participation from its churches. A dramatic increase in contributions to the LBC occurred under Knight’s supervision. When he assumed the position in 1941, 11% of its member churches contributed to the LBC. By 1945, that number had grown to 70%. Furthermore, the total receipts in offerings increased by over 350%.<sup>90</sup>

Knight worked closely with Godbold and the college’s Board of Trustees to strengthen the school’s financial status. The LBC substantially increased its provision to Louisiana College during the last two years of the war. The most notable incident occurred in February 1945 when Knight presented the school a check for \$54,935.<sup>91</sup> President Godbold referred to the new level of support provided by the LBC at

the Board of Trustees meeting in May 1945: “We have already received in special donations through our State Board office approximately \$85,000 this year, something that has never occurred before in the history of Louisiana College.”<sup>92</sup> After seeing the school on the brink of financial disaster and working so hard to gain funding for the school, Godbold likely felt particular satisfaction to see Baptist groups such as the LBC provide so generously to the school in this time of need.

On May 21, 1946, Louisiana College reported that its enrollment had increased by 45% from the previous year and its male population had doubled. The Board of Trustees announced plans to hire more faculty and enlarge one of its dormitories because of this growth in numbers.<sup>93</sup> Indeed, a dramatic change in affairs had occurred from three years earlier when the school’s survival was in doubt because of mounting debt, declining enrollment and possible sanctions due to its inadequate level of staffing.

The emphasis Louisiana College placed on serving God and country figured prominently in its financial struggles during World War II. Even before the United States declared war on Japan, members of the Louisiana College community volunteered to both serve in the military and minister to the troops. Its ongoing support of these two causes inadvertently placed the school’s future in jeopardy. Operating on a hand to mouth fiscal basis left it unprepared to handle the revenue decline it experienced during the country’s military buildup and ensuing war. However, the school’s plight also served as the issue that stirred Baptists in the state to provide the monetary support that college officials had long sought after. Moreover, it rejuvenated the relationship between Louisiana College and the LBC. The near loss of its educational institution motivated the LBC to prioritize the college’s economic health. By the latter stages of the conflict, they began to earmark the funds the school needed to expand its operations or to survive a financial setback in the future. Consequently, the Louisiana College entered the post-war period possessing a greater level of confidence in its financial security and its connection with the LBC than it ever experienced before.

While the school’s economic prospects appeared much brighter, the many hardships brought on by the war often left deep scars on the psyche of those attending college during the war years. Jewel Ware, editor-in-chief of Louisiana College’s yearbook provided this poignant reflection toward the war in the spring of 1945:

Many boys who would have finished this year will never attend college; others will be several years behind in their studies. It seems only fitting that we should look back over the last four years and see if we can't learn our lessons from what has happened. We hear talk of another in the next century and generation. Isn't it we of today who will bear the brunt of another war? If we, as students of Louisiana College will accept our responsibility to make the world a better place to live in, then we may postpone another war, and will have won the peace our boys died for.<sup>94</sup>

The loss of classmates and all the pain and suffering connected with the war profoundly impacted the writer. Ware entered the post-war era uncertain about the future and the outbreak of more world conflict. Yet, if another war should come, she knew that the Louisiana College community would be there to participate in the nation's military effort. However, Ware also believed a far better alternative would be for the school's population to direct its energies to prevent a conflict like World War II from ever occurring again. In this approach, Ware exemplified the school's ongoing commitment to God and country.

## NOTES

1. "Louisiana College Board of Trustees Minutes," January 19, 1943, 2 (Hereafter, Board of Trustees).
2. The Louisiana Baptist Convention (LBC hereafter) is affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention.
3. The first class contained nineteen students and three faculty members. It would become a coeducational school in 1909. Pineville was a part of Rapides Parish, which was located in the central part of the state.
4. Louisiana College, *Louisiana College, Second Annual Catalogue and Announcements for the Session 1908-1909*, 75.
5. George Lewis Higgins, Jr. "The Louisiana Baptist Convention and Christian Education, 1893-1956" (Ph.D. diss., Oklahoma State University, 1971), 73-74; Glen Lee Greene, *House Upon a Rock: About Southern Baptists in Louisiana* (Alexandria, LA: Executive Board of the Louisiana Baptist Convention), 258.
6. Higgins, 74.
7. *Baptist Chronicle*, February 7, 1918, 8. The college would make a similar offer to the government nearly twenty-five years later during World War II.
8. Louisiana Baptist Convention, *Annual of the Louisiana Baptist Convention*, 1935, 73-74 (Hereafter listed as *LBC Annual*); and LBC 1936, 74-75.



9. Higgins, 157–159. The dormitory was the College’s first major construction since 1922. Oscar Hoffmeyer Jr., *Louisiana College 75 Years: A Pictorial History* (Pineville: Louisiana College, 1981), 50.
10. *LBC Annual*, 1941, 30.
11. *Ibid.*, 1938, 73; and 1939, 59–60.
12. *LBC Annual*, 29. However, the Convention fell short of meeting the amount pledged in the years leading up to World War II.
13. *LBC Annual*, 1941, 30.
14. Charles L. Salley, “An Historical Survey of the Curriculum of Louisiana College, 1906–1983” (Ph.D. diss., Vanderbilt University, 1985), 115. Controversies surrounding the building of a new dormitory may have figured in Cottingham’s decision to leave. He was deeply upset about the conflict and accusations that developed over this project. For further information on the matter, see Higgins, 183–184. However, Cottingham left the college on amicable terms. The Board of Trustees later asked him to write a history of the institution and the school would assign his name to the dormitory that had been the source of controversy in 1942. Board of Trustees, May 25, 1943.
15. Hoffmeyer, 69.
16. *Baptist Message*, January 2, 1941; January 9, 1941, 1, 7; March 6, 1941, 6; and August 28, 1941, 1. The *Baptist Message* was published by Louisiana Baptists.
17. Board of Trustees, May 27, 1941; and Hoffmeyer, 70.
18. The Louisiana Maneuvers occurred in August and September, 1941. They involved around 500,000 soldiers in simulated combat. It was the largest military exercise ever conducted in the US. Fort Polk, Camp Livingstone, Camp Claiborne and Camp Beauregard were bases used by the military during the Louisiana Maneuvers and World War II, which were all located in Rapides parish. For more information on the Louisiana Maneuvers, see Christopher R. Gabel, *The U.S. Army GHQ Maneuvers of 1941*, Washington, DC: Center for Military History, 1991.
19. *Baptist Message*, July 17, 1941, 1; July 24, 1941, 1; and August 14, 1941, 1.
20. *Alexandria Town Talk*, November 13, 1941, 10.
21. *Baptist Message*, August 14, 1941, 1; *LBC Annual*, 1941, 52–53.
22. *Alexandria Town Talk*, July 12, 1940, 9; *Baptist Message*, April 30, 1942; and Board of Trustees, November 19, 1942, 56; and *LBC Annual*, 1943, 54–55.
23. Board of Trustees, May 27, 1941.
24. Board of Trustees, January 13, 1942. Godbold began his tenure on February 24, 1942.
25. *Ibid.* When the motion was made to discontinue intercollegiate football, the Board added the statement “for the present time.” Weathersby’s comments to the Board about the subject seem to indicate he would have preferred to make it permanent.

26. *Baptist Message*, January 22, 1942, 5; Greene, 262; and Higgins, 190.
27. *Baptist Message*, April 30, 1942, 7.
28. Board of Trustees, May 26, 1942.
29. *Ibid.*
30. *Ibid.*, January 19, 1943.
31. *Ibid.*, May 26, 1942.
32. *LBC Annual*, 1942, 57. The College even lost one of its Board of Trustees to the army. Board of Trustees, January 23, 1945.
33. Board of Trustees, May 25, 1943.
34. *Ibid.*, May 23, 1944.
35. *Ibid.*, January 19, 1943.
36. *Baptist Message*, October 29, 1942, 8; and Board of Trustees, January 19, 1943.
37. Board of Trustees, January 19, 1943.
38. *Ibid.*, May 25, 1943. Stevens had just been hired by the school to replace another teacher that had also been drafted.
39. *Ibid.*, May 22, 1945.
40. *LBC Annual*, 1942, 57.
41. *Ibid.*, 192, 57; and Board of Trustees, July 7, 1944.
42. *LBC Annual*, 1943, 55.
43. Board of Trustees, January 23, 1944.
44. *Alexandria Town Talk*, January 5, 1943, 3.
45. The government allowed for some flexibility in its standards for becoming a chaplain during World War II. While its regulations stipulated that seminary training was required to assume this post, there were exceptions made with certain religious traditions. Baptists in that era, for example, did not require seminary training to be ordained. If someone from that religious tradition had pastoral experience and recommendations from a recognized school or organizational body, such as the LBC, they could become a chaplain. For further information, see Roy G. Honeywell, *Chaplains of the United States Army* (Washington, DC: Department of the Army, 1958), 214–224.
46. *Baptist Message*, October 15, 1942; and *LBC Annual*, 1943, 59.
47. *Baptist Message*, March 19, 1942, 8; *Ibid.*, April 22, 1943, 1; and *LBC Annual*, 1944, 56.
48. *Baptist Message*, March 19, 1942, 8; and *LBC Annual* 1944, 56.
49. *LBC Annual* 1944, 56.
50. *Ibid.*, 1940, 68–72.
51. Board of Trustees, May 26, 1942; and *LBC Annual*, 1942, 56–58.
52. Board of Trustees, January 19, 1943
53. *Baptist Message*, January 14, 1943, 6.
54. *LBC Annual*, 1943, 55; and Board of Trustees, January 24, 1944.

55. *Baptist Message*, January 7, 1943, 1; and Board of Trustees, November 16, 1943.
56. *LBC Annual*, 1943, 56.
57. *Town Talk*, April 9, 1942, 12; July 2, 1942, 7; and *Baptist Message*, April 30, 1942, 6.
58. *Baptist Message*, January 1, 1942, 6.
59. *Ibid.*, May 28, 1942, 8.
60. *Ibid.*, April 2, 1942, 1.
61. *Ibid.*, August 6, 1942, 8.
62. *LBC Annual*, 1945, 40; Board of Trustees, May 21, 1946; and Salley, 120.
63. Board of Trustees, May 22, 1945. The enrollment for both men and women decreased in the 1941–1942 academic year.
64. *Baptist Message*, September 24, 1942, 1.
65. The increase in financial support will be covered in greater detail later in the chapter.
66. Board of Trustees, May 22, 1945. Women comprised 62% of the student population in 1944–1945.
67. Anne Vance, November 7, 2017, interview by author. 4F was a U.S. Selective Service classification that identified an individual as unfit for military duty.
68. *Alexandria Town Talk*, March 11, 1943, 2; and April 22, 1943, 2.
69. *Baptist Message*, October 15, 1942, 1.
70. *LBC Annual*, 1942, 59.
71. *Baptist Message*, June 4, 1942, 6.
72. Salley, 118.
73. Louisiana College *Pine Knot*, 1943, 97.
74. Board of Trustees, January 19, 1943.
75. Anne Vance interview, November 7, 2017.
76. *Alexandria Town Talk*, April 24, 1943, 3.
77. *Ibid.*, June 23, 1943, 7.
78. *Ibid.*, November 20, 1943, 5.
79. *Louisiana College Bulletin*, March, 1945, 4–5. Sixteen Louisiana College students died in military service during World War II.
80. *Alexandria Town Talk*, May 19, 1945, 3.
81. Board of Trustees, December 18, 1944. President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed the G.I Bill into law on June 22, 1944.
82. *Baptist Message*, August 6, 1942, 8; and October 29, 1942, 1.
83. *Ibid.*, September 30, 1943, 1; and November 4, 1943, 6.
84. *Ibid.*, November 25, 1943, 6.
85. *LBC Annual*, 1945, 41; and *Baptist Message*, January 6, 1944, 5.
86. *Baptist Message*, October 29, 1942, 8.

87. Board of Trustees, May 25, 1943, *LBC Annual*, 1943, 56. The W.M.U. reapportioned the districts the following year to add another scholarship for the school. Board of Trustees, May 23, 1944. Some W.M.U. districts provided their own scholarships as well. *Ibid.*, January 23, 1944; and *Ibid.*, May 22, 1945.
88. *Baptist Message*, September 23, 1943, 6. There were thirty-nine districts in the state in 1943.
89. Board of Trustees, May 22, 1945.
90. Higgins, 192–193; *LBC Annual*, 1941, 68; *LBC Annual*, 1945, 57; and Greene, 300.
91. *Baptist Message*, February 1, 1945, 8.
92. Board of Trustees, May 22, 1945.
93. *Ibid.*, May 21, 1946.
94. Louisiana College *Pine Knot*, 1945, 3.



## The World at Our Gate: Wartime Sanctuary and Foreign Detention at Montreat College

*Benjamin Brandenburg*

The global war between the Allies and the Axis powers was not supposed to reach the quiet college community in Montreat, North Carolina. Montreat, a portmanteau of the words “Mountain” and “Retreat,” was designed in the 1890s to be a Presbyterian place of rest, reflection, and education. Montreat lay nestled around Lake Susan in the Black Mountains just west of Asheville in Western North Carolina. The community, with its mountain cottage homes, conference center, summer camps, and women’s normal school and college were situated nearly as far away from the ravages of conflict as any American town could well have expected. To punctuate this exclusionary character, a formidable m-shaped stone gate guarded the single road toward the mountain cove.

Life in the cove was administered by the commanding personality of Dr. Robert C. Anderson (1864–1955). The Southern Presbyterian minister held dual roles as the president of the Montreat Retreat Association, Montreat Normal School, and Montreat College, an undergraduate women’s college during the war years.<sup>1</sup> When war broke out in 1941,

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Anderson had served in these roles for nearly three decades and his name was synonymous with what many in the Carolinas cheekily referred to as the “Presbyterian Vatican.” The cove was a place where Southern Presbyterian ministers retired, overseas missionaries held cottages while serving abroad, young families—including Ruth Bell and Billy Graham—married and settled, and all sorts of elders and deacons and their like sent their children to camp, school, or college.

During World War II, President Anderson embodied what historian David Sitter labeled a “cautious patriotism.”<sup>2</sup> The southern Democrat was a vocal leader among the Southern Presbyterians.<sup>3</sup> As an influential churchman, Anderson vacillated between calls for patriotic interventionism and concerned critiques of the government’s war efforts. In January 1941, he lobbied North Carolina Senator Josiah Bailey to send more aid to Britain: “Surely it is clear to all thinking people of America that liberal assistance to Britain now is the best possible protection for America.”<sup>4</sup> In 1942, he encouraged Senator Harry Bird to continue the “fight against waste of money and men by the Government.”<sup>5</sup> While his political lobbying had little significance, his wartime vision for the Montreat Community had a lasting legacy.

Rather than mold Montreat College into a recruiting station, President Anderson sought to form the institution as a wartime sanctuary. He privately lobbied for influence makers in Presbyterian churches to send their daughters to Montreat Normal School and Montreat College to “learn Christian womanhood safe from the peering eyes of sailors and enlisted men.”<sup>6</sup> The women’s college was almost exclusively staffed by female faculty. Its purpose on the eve of war was to “give the best Christian education to young women who desire an education, who are capable of taking an education, and whose character and purpose assure a good use of it.”<sup>7</sup> While several faculty chose to serve as support staff in the Armed Services and a few faculty and student graduates served in the Red Cross, the college witnessed very little turnover during the war years and no serious casualties were suffered.<sup>8</sup> Anderson’s community would be cautious and virtuous while still doing its part for the war effort.

Parents sent their daughters to Montreat precisely because it served as a cultural and physical sanctuary during the war years. *The Dialectte*, the college newspaper, expressed this uncertainty: “bloodshed, destruction, chaos; these are the stark realities we will face. Old Father Time, you haven’t been too good to this modern generation.”<sup>9</sup> As the war years

progressed, students, like their counterparts across the country, participated in scrap drives, rationing, war bond campaigns, patriotic May Day festivals, and dinners with cadets. But they also focused their attention just as much on normal college activities such as the Nightingale Club, intramural sports, the French league, the Charm Club, the drama team, and so on.

Some of the students felt guilty about their peaceful college life. During the Battle of the Bulge, sophomore Taylor Tanner confided in *The Dialectic*: “we were so busy thinking about our own pleasures, and so confident that we ‘had the war in the bag’ that many of us underestimated the ability of the German army to make a counter-attack and we forgot to pray.” Reminding her classmates that prayer was not just for ministers, she urged her classmates to pray daily for the troops.<sup>10</sup> By all accounts, President Anderson had forged a quiet, conservative religious community safe from the perceived threats of urbanization and secularization and of course the very real threat of global war. As other small colleges struggled with enrollment, Montreat College achieved a record student enrollment of 450 by 1945.<sup>11</sup>

As a small religious educational institution, Montreat was not primed to play a large role in the Roosevelt Administration’s call for higher education to heed to the nation’s interested in providing education, manpower, and research.<sup>12</sup> But like all American institutions, it had to engage with the changes the war brought. The conflict brought an influx of individuals that few other college communities dealt with: overseas missionaries and, for a brief period, nearly three hundred noncombatant German and Japanese detainees. In the midst of these war-induced challenges, Montreat’s college administration, faculty, and students were tasked with negotiating the demands and limits of Christian hospitality. This chapter will explore the dynamic of the world coming to Montreat despite its best attempts to remain isolated. The first section will examine the impact of Japanese and German diplomats and suspect persons and their families on the Montreat Community. The second section will illuminate the arrival and influence of expelled missionaries like Ruth Bell Graham and her fellow missionary travelers in forging a global vision for post-war Christians. Ultimately, there would be no retreat from the war’s demands on even the most remote communities. Encounters with foreign detainees and expelled missionaries forced the Montreat Community to ask and answer questions about the meaning hospitality and refuge.

## FOREIGN DETENTION IN MONTREAT

President Franklin Roosevelt's declaration of war on the Axis Powers would eventually bring noncombatant Japanese and German businessmen and diplomats to Montreat. Due to the surprise nature of the Pearl Harbor attack, diplomats from across the Atlantic were suddenly residents in enemy countries. The belligerent countries simply did not have time to expatriate their people before hostilities commenced. The State Department's Special War Problems Division (SWPD) was formed to handle the problem of Axis diplomats and consular staff and suspicious German and Japanese businessmen in the Americas. The SWPD program was different from enemy prisoners of war who were sent to rural prison camps across the nation. It was also different from the War Department's controversial Japanese and Japanese-American internment camps in the American West and South. The SWPD handled diplomats and suspect business persons exclusively. These personnel were also useful in prisoner and civilian exchanges. Between 1941 and 1944, most diplomats were exchanged in neutral ports after crossing the Atlantic on Swedish and Spanish mercy ships.<sup>13</sup>

Many of the Montreat detainees were part of a second wave of round-ups. Beginning in 1942, German and Japanese nationals in Hawaii and Central and South America were arrested. Their property and belongings were expropriated and, in some cases, they were expelled from the countries of their residence. This group of detainees was given semi-diplomatic status and placed with other diplomats. This move was viewed as precautionary by the United States. There was concern that some Japanese and German nationals might attempt a takeover of the Panama Canal or cause havoc on strategic ports and other military targets. In retrospect this also served a strategic purpose. The Germans and Japanese simply had more American diplomats, business persons, and missionaries in detention than the Americans. The State Department wanted to pad their numbers for future prisoner exchanges.

The Geneva Convention demanded above average treatment of diplomats and their dependents. To house Axis detainees, the SWPD chooses a variety of prestigious resorts in the Smoky Mountains including the Homestead Hotel in Hot Springs, Virginia, the Greenbrier Hotel in West Virginia, and the Grove Park Inn, in Asheville, North Carolina. Detainees were sometimes allowed to take supervised visits to nearby towns where they were routinely met with a cold reception, if not



outright hostility. Among the detainee perks were high-quality meals, free range on resort property including resort golf courses, and the privilege to play golf. In an era of energy and food rations, the locals in these resort communities were not pleased. Stories of bawdry and risqué parties spread like wildfire, while local boys were off fighting the war.<sup>14</sup>

Montreat was chosen as a detainee site only after higher end resorts were deemed problematic. As the war dragged on, the SWPD considered the luxury hotels to be too expensive. Furthermore, the foreign detainees' posh treatment received continual complaints from the local population and media. The SWPD decided for a policy change. A quieter location was required. The Lake Lure resort area in North Carolina was proposed but the decision was made that it was too costly to guard.<sup>15</sup> On February 20, 1942, a local businessman tipped off President Anderson about the SWPDs search for a new location: "I hope the Montreat Assembly Inn can be consecrated to this effort as it has been consecrated to every other good effort in the Christian civilization of America and the world since it was built."<sup>16</sup> President Anderson notified the State Department of the availability of the Assembly Inn. The Assembly Inn housed faculty, held college classes, and served as the summertime conference center. In October, a deal was reached between Anderson and the State Department. The detainees' luxurious detention was coming to an end. At Montreat, there would be no maid service. The cafeteria food would be "substantial but not elaborate." The detainees "were too limit their communication with each other." Montreat would inaugurate an era of detainee austerity.<sup>17</sup>

Anderson did not ask for approval from the Southern Presbyterians. He announced the program in a brief piece in the Presbyterian weekly *Christian Observer*. In "The Necessity of Christian Hospitality," Anderson proclaimed that each of the Assembly Inn rooms would include German and Japanese New Testaments, church programming would be offered, and special attention to the spiritual lives of the detainees would be attended to.<sup>18</sup> Pushback was immediate. A local pastor responded, "I doubt the church will be very enthusiastic about having those Japs and German in our church property, when our own citizens who are being detained in Japan are finding it difficult to get along." Another churchman objected to the damage that will be done to the Assembly Inn property after "the heathen move on."<sup>19</sup> It was clear that Anderson had not waited for buy-in from the Presbyterian community on the matter. In his memoir, he suggested that he had no choice in

the matter, exclaiming that it was his “duty to serve the nation at war.”<sup>20</sup> Cautious patriotism played a role, but Anderson also viewed this as an opportunity to put the college on firmer financial footing. There was a little profit to be made. Dr. Anderson and the SWPD agreed on a rate of \$2.80 per detainee per day and \$3.80 for State Department representatives and guards.<sup>21</sup> This was half the cost of the Grove Park Inn and other resort hotels.

The experience of hosting Nazi German and Imperial Japanese individuals tested the community’s calling for Christian hospitality. In October, 1942 approximately 130 Japanese women and children from Latin American and Hawaii and the same number of German men, women, and children from Latin America boarded six busses and passed through the Montreat Gate on their way to their new temporary lodgings. They were placed at the Assembly Inn in Montreat during the fall semester. The Inn was located on Lake Susan. Most of the campus was merely 100 yards away on the other side of the small lake. Classes in the Assembly Inn were briskly moved to other buildings. Students were strictly forbidden communication with their new guests. College faculty living in the Assembly Inn were given alternative accommodations. L. Nelson Bell, a missionary statesman and father-in-law to Billy Graham, served as the doctor on call.

College secretary Elizabeth Barr served as the interim detainee clerk and social hostess. In a recorded interview in 2006, she recalled the experience as peaceful and exciting. The only worrisome moment for Ms. Barr occurred when she realized that some SWPD guards were secretly listening to her private telephone conversations at the front desk.<sup>22</sup> The Germans were placed on the second floor of the Assembly Inn. The Japanese were placed on the third floor. Germans received their meals first, followed by the Japanese. This hierarchy matched the American’s larger racial understanding of their Axis enemies, although it is unclear if the room assignments were organized by the college or by the SWPD.<sup>23</sup> Contrary to diplomatic records, Barr recalls the detainees enjoying the meals. At least the Germans and Japanese had the good sense to keep their complaints to international authorities. Security remained tight. Identification cards were worn by all guards, internees, employees, and even truck drivers that distributed food to the Inn.

Students across the lake speculated about their curious neighbors, no doubt with tidbits of information from a few professors who were coaxed by President Anderson to assist in serving the detainees’ dinner

in the evenings. Students complained about the quality of food being better than their own. They discussed alleged political rivalry between internees. Sophomore Faith Swanston reported that there were “pro-Nazi and anti-Nazi Germans at the Inn,” a fascinating reminder that few suspicious foreigners received due process in 1942. Betsy Miller wished that she could teach the detainee children. Others marveled at the rare occasions of communal carol singing across the pond.<sup>24</sup> When theology students complained that they could not organize worship services or conduct Bible studies with internees, President Anderson deflected by suggesting that students can show Christianity to the Germans and Japanese through holding an “appropriate attitude.”<sup>25</sup>

Despite the clear agreements about the services provided between Montreat and the State Department, the project did not get off to a smooth start. Anderson was a penny pincher and he procured faculty and staff who had lived in the Assembly Inn during the semester to assist in the serving of meals. The SWPD cast doubt on the arrangement. State Department Special Agent M.E. Briggs was the lead person on site at Montreat. He expressed his dismay in no uncertain terms: “It is very hard to do business with our hosts. They are out to get every dime they can. Instead of hiring extra help to serve the food, they bring over several teachers from the college to do the job. I have been complaining ever since I arrived.” Briggs continued: “there was absolutely no heat in my room, every room was filthy, the food we were served was exactly the same as that served the aliens...the dishes...were not washed properly, our waiter was a bus boy who also tended the furnace during meals and served us with very sooty hands. Maid service of the Americans consisted of having one’s bed made up and nothing more.”<sup>26</sup>

The SWPD staff and President Anderson were forced to iron out the differences between a luxurious hotel and a college inn. The detainees noticed their change in fortunes as well. After a neutral Swiss diplomatic legation visited the facility, they told the State Department that the detainees should be granted larger portions of food, more vegetables, cleaner lobbies and halls, new washing tubs, and a larger hotel ice box. During the Swiss delegation visit, two dozen Germans and some of the Swiss delegation became sick with dysentery. SWPD guards, however, reported that the official visit began with scotch highballs, continued with a great quantity of beer, and concluded with a rum concoction.<sup>27</sup> Despite the beautiful surroundings, the detainees began seeking alternate

forms of entertainment. By 1943, with U.S. troops slogging through Italian campaign, charity was clearly starting to recede.

A different issue revolved around the German delegation requesting beer. Montreat was a dry town and a dry campus. The Southern Presbyterians had championed prohibition. While they grudgingly accepted the repeal of prohibition, they remained determined to thwart the evils of liquor. During the war, the dry denomination wanted to protect servicemen from the “flood of liquor” available to GIs.<sup>28</sup> President Anderson was sympathetic to these efforts. Special Agent Briggs, however, insisted that accommodations be made to the German detainees lest he be struck with further complaints from the neutral embassies. Anderson was having none of it. He referred Briggs to the municipal charter which forever prohibited upon any real estate “intoxicating liquors, including ale, beer, wine and cider” and that any guilty persons “shall be guilty of a misdemeanor, and upon conviction thereof shall be fined and imprisoned.”<sup>29</sup> Despite the lack of alcohol, the daily lives of the noncombatant prisoners went on. There would be no more liquor for the detainees.

Unlike the previous confinement centers, Montreat had a specific Christian mission. Independent religious programming was not allowed by the State Department, but Anderson requested that everyone in Montreat display to the detainees the “the working of a Christian life.”<sup>30</sup> Christian liturgy and practice loomed large in the detention programming. The Richmond branch of the American Bible Society furnished the rooms with German Bibles and Japanese New Testaments. The lobby was filled with hymnbooks and religious devotional literature. A SWPD chaplain arranged for chapel services. Not everyone was on board. A guard expressed disdain for the religious programming notifying the SWPD that “these tricky snakes may be able to get more than religious inspiration out of these books.”<sup>31</sup> Anderson saw it differently. He was particularly pleased that one Japanese mother asked Anderson if she could bring the Bible with her at the end of detention. Two daughters of a Buddhist priest convinced their father to do the same. The detainees, in need of entertainment if not salvation, participated in the Presbyterian way of doing things. Hymn singing was encouraged. The German group organized a number of evening concerts.

Other hospitality concerns seemed to be more pressing. Many of the Japanese were from Hawaii and had little clothing for the Appalachian winter. Complaints about the threadbare clothing were passed on to

the YWCA. Montreat pressured the SWPD to assist in the potentially embarrassing scenario.<sup>32</sup> The SWPD responded to the small controversy by spending over \$1000 on winter jackets and the like. The college in turn answered with a student-led fundraising operation for Christmas presents. Faith Swanstrom urged her classmates to heed the call that “Christian kindness should not stop in the middle of war.”<sup>33</sup> Students sent letters to their home church communities asking for support. Anderson approved the measure. The Sunday School of the First Presbyterian Church Spartanburg responded with toy donations for the German and Japanese detainee children.

The events of December 1942 created the signature moment of lore in the Montreat Community. During the Christmas season, carols were sung by Japanese and Germans around the Assembly Inn’s grand piano. Christmas trees were provided, and the donated presents were placed under the trees. In Anderson’s memory, the Germans were hesitant about this show of hospitality. A leader of the German detainees told Anderson, “Thanks but you know we are enemies.” Anderson responded that Christians love their enemies.<sup>34</sup>

On Christmas Eve, 1942, festive celebrations took place. Separate services were planned for the Japanese and the Germans on their respective floors. While the Germans were singing their carols in the lower lobby and the Japanese were singing carols in the upper parlor, anywhere from a handful to two dozen locals, including several local Montreat students, assembled on the Lake Susan bridge and started singing in unison with the prisoners. Together, free and detainees expressed a moment of unity as they sang “Joy to the World” and “Silent Night.” The aftermath of the Christmas caroling loomed large in local memory. Anderson told the German delegation, “This is the only thing that will bring the world and all nations together.” The story spread to local churches. Southern Presbyterian leaflets were produced, telling the “thrilling story” of Japanese, German, and American voices “praising the Savior in unison.”<sup>35</sup> When the students returned in January, *The Dialette*, exuberantly exclaimed, “not since the popular Christmas Truce [of 1914] has there been such a jubilant moment of unity in Christ.”<sup>36</sup> The local Asheville press did not report the events, but, at least in local memory, the Christmas caroling provided a famous moment of hospitality and momentary equality between the free and unfree.

In the spring of 1943, the detainees’ days were filled with idle chatter, bridge, crafts, singing, and outside play on a section of Lake Susan

temporarily restricted from the students. Women knitted and crocheted, while the men carved wood figurines. A woodworking shop was set up for the children where a shuffleboard porch previously held court.<sup>37</sup> A library was assembled in the hotel lobby and Germans and Japanese held classes for the children.<sup>38</sup> College secretary Elizabeth Barr recalls the children, all 150 of them, being “very friendly, well dressed, attractive, and polite.” They were allowed to play and sing as often as they wished and were many times joined by the staff, government officials, and parents. The children would throng around President Anderson when he arrived. Eight-year-old detainee Mary Mantel recalled exploring the hotel, finding money in one of the couches, roller skating, and playing with toy sail boats.<sup>39</sup>

Despite the seemingly tranquil nature of the detainees in Montreat, the lived reality of the prisoners was disruptive and jarring. In 2012, Montreat detainee Maria Mantel told her story to the German American Internee Coalition. Her father, a German engineer from Hamburg, migrated to Columbia in the 1920s. He operated a riverboat and worked his way up to managing the German Club in Puerto Columbia. He married a Clara, a German-Columbian, and had children. In May of 1942, Colombian officials arrested Maria’s father. The United States was pressuring Latin American countries to arrest business personnel, especially those in shipping industries, who could threaten the Panama Canal. Countries like Columbia readily agreed, and in the process they removed unwanted foreigners from their cities. The Mantel family was sent to the United States aboard the *S.S. Acadia*, arriving in New Orleans. From New Orleans, the detained family was moved via train to the Greenbrier Hotel in West Virginia. In July, they were moved to the Grove Park Inn in Asheville, and after that they were transported to the Assembly Inn in Montreat.

On April 30, 1943, the detention program in Montreat closed. Military busses arrived and the diplomatic and nondiplomatic families were separated. Special Agent Briggs coordinated the transfer of all diplomats, businessmen, wives, and children. Some diplomats were transferred on neutral mercy ships to their home countries, while others, like Maria Mantel’s family, were transferred to Internment Camps. The Mountain Retreat Association and the college collected around \$100,000 for their part. Anderson was particularly pleased that “not a single glass in the hotel was broken during six months, nor did I see any evidence anywhere of willful damage done to the furnishings.”<sup>40</sup>

The Mantels and many South American business class families were brought to a more primitive Internment Camp in Crystal City, Texas. Priests gave their family their first communion mass since leaving Colombia. One suspects the chapel services in Montreat abstained from the practice (even if Montreat had practiced “communion,” it would not have been the sacrament of the Eucharist as understood by the presumably Catholic Mantels, and thus, unless Montreat had brought in Catholic priests, TX would still have been their first communion mass since leaving Columbia). In February 1944, the family was sent to Ellis Island for repatriation to Germany. After voyaging to Portugal in a neutral Swedish ship, the family boarded trains to Bavaria where they lived on rations, and in terror of the impact of the Allied bombing campaign. The family survived the war intact and moved back to Columbia in 1948. Maria Mantel married an American university student and she settled in Houston.<sup>41</sup> Her story, while harrowing, was certainly better than most of the unfortunate individuals who underwent forced migration during the war.

### WARTIME SANCTUARY

Across the world, a similarly disruptive and jarring experience was occurring for Montreat missionaries in Asia. The outbreak of hostilities in 1937 between Imperial Japan and the temporarily combined forces of Chiang Kai-shek’s Nationalist Party and the Chinese Communist Party forced the American missionaries in East Asia to make difficult choices. Many came home. We now know that some American missionaries in East Asia served in the Foreign Service and OSS, sharing expertise on the Nationalist government led by Chiang Kai-shek and Mao Zedong’s rival Communist Party.<sup>42</sup> For those who stayed in the service of mission work, they risked being detained in Japanese detention camps. Among a dozen returning missionaries to Montreat were Dr. Nettie Grier and her daughter Lucy, who settled in as the college physician and resident nurse.<sup>43</sup> Chiang’s government was a close military ally of the United States during the ultimately doomed War of Resistance. That relationship was forged through generations of missionary networks.<sup>44</sup>

Montreat was intimately tied to the overseas missionary project. Cora Stone, a missionary to Kobe, Japan who returned to help found Montreat the 1890s, was one of a number of local Presbyterian missionaries with careers in East Asia. Her book collection became the

foundation for the college library in later years.<sup>45</sup> Retired and furloughed missionaries bought up lots in the mountain cove due to its affordable land and its distinctive importance for the world mission enterprise. The Montreaters' imaginations were filled with missionary testimonies and personal friendships with non-Western Christian sisters and brothers. Some missionary converts even made the pilgrimage to Montreat. Presbyterian Chinese nationals Qing-ling and Mei-ling Soong summered in Montreat in 1907. The sisters married well. Qing-ling wed Sun Yat-Sen, the founder of the Republic of China. Mei-ling married Sun Yat-Sen's political successor, the Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek. By the time the Women's college opened in 1916, retired missionaries and missionary children made up a substantial portion of the Normal School and Montreat College population. Beginning in 1909, a formidable Southern Presbyterian missions conference was held annually. A year before the detainees arrived, Presbyterian churchmen and women ambitiously discussed "Foundations for World Order" at the Assembly Inn.<sup>46</sup> Missions and Montreat went hand in hand.

Hostilities between the Empire of Japan and the Republic of China were heated before the outbreak of war in 1937. Western missionaries had made crucial inroads in China. Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek was baptized a Christian in 1931. At the onset of a devastating global depression, the Republic of China was reeling from a resilient Communist insurgency and a threatening Empire of Japan. In that conflict, Montreat served as a crucial wartime sanctuary for Presbyterian missionaries. Among the missionary families finding sanctuary in the Presbyterian mountain community was the family of L. Nelson Bell. Nelson Bell and Virginia Leftwich Bell were medical missionaries sent by the Southern Presbyterians. Together, Nelson Bell, who was a surgeon, and Virginia Bell, who was a nurse, ran the Love and Mercy Hospital in Huaian, China. By the 1930s, the Love and Mercy Hospital had grown to become the largest Presbyterian Hospital in the world, with 380 beds.<sup>47</sup> Amid rising tensions the family furloughed in Montreat in 1935 so their oldest daughter Rosa could recover from tuberculosis and their youngest daughter Ruth could attend the Montreat Normal School.<sup>48</sup>

By all accounts, Ruth thrived in this new environment on the other side of the world. Ruth arrived at Montreat College's Normal School in 1936 as a third culture child, but she quickly made a home for herself on the cozy mountain cove campus. The Montreat College yearbook named Ruth the class poet. Dubbed "the happiest," the *Sun Dial*



opined, “She is gentle, she is shy, but there’s mischief in her eye.”<sup>49</sup> Ruth dreamed of becoming a missionary stateswoman in Tibet. Her Montreat classmates prophesied that she would win the Pulitzer Prize upon the publication of her diary. In that regard, the yearbook was not far off, as Ruth would eventually author and co-author fourteen books and win the Congressional Gold Medal in 1996 for her contributions to morality, family, and religion.<sup>50</sup> But at the time, those accomplishments were a world away from the adventures around Montreat’s Lake Susan. After Ruth graduated from the Normal School, the family returned to China.

When hostilities reached all out conflict in the summer of 1937, Dr. Nelson Bell painted “American Hospital” in characters easily recognizable by Japanese and Chinese airmen and “U.S.A.” in English.<sup>51</sup> On August 14, 1937 more than two hundred Europeans and several American missionaries were killed when a Chinese plane accidentally bombed an expat settlement in Shanghai. With tensions rising the Bell family decided to stay. That summer, the invading Japanese forces began to bomb Huaian. Chinese refugees began to shelter around the hospital. Soon there was a makeshift tent city around the hospital and other missionary buildings. Ruth recalled, “every time we leave the compound they think we’re evacuating.”<sup>52</sup> In September, the State Department evacuated missionaries to safer environs, but the Bells soon returned to the now-occupied territory. Speaking for many, Bell wrote in November: “If missionaries stay out now they will miss the grandest chance God ever gave them for winning the confidence and love of the people.”<sup>53</sup> In occupied Huaian, Bell persuaded Japanese forces to allow the missionaries to continue their work.

The family remained there until May of 1941 when they returned to Montreat. In Montreat, Dr. Bell worked in the local hospital and assisted with the detainees. His daughter Ruth had fallen for a Charlotte boy named Billy Graham whom she met at Wheaton College. They wed in Montreat College’s Gaither Chapel a few months after the detainees were moved and made their family home in Montreat next to the Bell family home. Billy Graham married into a family with a vision of global engagement. With his home base in Montreat, Billy Graham joined *Youth for Christ* as a traveling evangelist during the war. He spoke mainly to GIs stationed in the United States and its post-war military outposts in Europe and East Asia.<sup>54</sup> The cove came to serve as a sanctuary during the post-war years for the evangelist as his fame increased. Montreat turned into a place of rest and mountaintop peace after Billy

Graham's evangelistic crusades blossomed in a cultural phenomenon when newspaper tycoon William Randolph Hearst instructed reporters to "Puff Graham" during a 1949 Los Angeles Crusade. While Graham and his team would travel the world in the next half century, he would recharge in Montreat with Ruth and the Bell family at his side.<sup>55</sup>

Other Montreat families were not as fortunate as the Bells. Presbyterian Missionaries William and Nettie Junkin and their son William Jr. and his wife Jessie were serving in a Presbyterian Mission Compound in Suqian in the Grand Canal Region when the Sino-Japanese War began. In the course of their ministry, the family frequently furloughed in Montreat where they were buoyed by the sense of duty that the grand summer missionary conferences championed. The Junkin family was held in high esteem in the region. When Suqian was being shelled by a warlord in the 1920s, William Junkin and a group of Christians left the besieged city on a last ditch diplomatic mission. With ransom money in hand, they made their way towards the enemy position and pleaded for Suqian's salvation.<sup>56</sup> The warlord called off the shelling.

Serving in China since 1896, William Junkin and his family brought up the question of returning to the United States as tensions between communists, nationalists, and the threat of Japanese conquest loomed. Historian Stephen Craft has argued that most western missionaries in China believed that pulling out of China at this moment of crisis in China's history "would seriously damage the missionaries' relationship with the Chinese Christians, if not the entire Christian enterprise."<sup>57</sup> The Junkin family decided to stay. Reporting back to his Presbyterian Church in the United States superiors, William Junkin Sr. described the deteriorating situation. The economic condition was "very bad." The city was "half destroyed—bombed and burned in 1938." In such conditions, Junkin believed this was the "perfect opportunity for missionaries to feed the Chinese physically, mentally, and spiritually."<sup>58</sup>

Life in Japanese-occupied China proved difficult for the Montreat missionary family. The Junkin home was looted repeatedly. The Japanese did not permit missionaries and limited the travel of missionaries off premises except under military police guard.<sup>59</sup> On site, the Junkin's were not allowed "to converse with Chinese friends or servants." The Japanese were keeping a close watch on the American missionaries. Junkin's Chinese parishioners were forced to adhere to the new Japanese regime. One prisoner became a "Chinese puppet Magistrate" in order to save his property. A Southern Presbyterian station report offered

cogent analysis on the missionaries dwindling freedoms. Japanese were freezing American assets in response to the creation of the Japanese Internment Program in the United States. Missionaries' finances were frozen. And while missionaries were initially allowed to travel around the country under surveillance, they were not allowed to return to the United States.<sup>60</sup>

The Montreat missionaries were completely unaware of the attack on Pearl Harbor, but felt the full effects of it on December 8, 1941. Nettie Junkin was detained on December 8, 1941 in Yehsien. That same day the Presbyterian hospitals and mission compounds were overrun by military guards who suddenly appeared at the gates.<sup>61</sup> The missionaries were expelled and the mission and hospital compounds were drafted into the Japanese-controlled government. Nettie Junkin was allowed under armed escort to go to the classrooms and announce to the children that the school had closed. She was not allowed to tell the students that war had broken out between the United States and Japan.<sup>62</sup> The Junkin family was ordered to sign over the property of the mission, but they managed an agreement stating that the compound would only be occupied by the Japanese for the duration of the war. Overnight the curriculum changed: "Japanese language took the place of English; bible was dropped; propaganda meetings took the place of chapel."<sup>63</sup> Christian and non-Christian students were separated. The non-Christians were required to attend a service dedicated toward the Japanese reading of Confucian order and hierarchy.

After the formalities of transferring the compound were concluded, Nettie and William Junkin were kept under house arrest. Their son William and his pregnant wife Jessie were sent in April 1942 to Baguio Internment Camp in the Philippines. They joined 500 western detainees in a building designed to house 60 soldiers. The site lacked clean water, outside latrines, screen doors, and suffered from poor sanitation. Intestinal diseases soon developed. Dysentery became so prevalent among the children, and adults as well, that a small dispensary was set up in the barracks. Jessie Junkin gave birth to a baby boy, Billy, six weeks after they were interned in the civilian camp. Billy Junkin's first bath was from a Chase and Sanborn coffee tin and the cotton used by the nurse was put in the oven and re-sterilized so it could be used again. Jessie called the baby's survival "a miracle." For the first year, all the men were kept separated from the women and children by two fences six feet apart. For three years, acute hunger plagued the family. When William

Junkin served as a dishwasher, he would carefully scrape the plates to collect the garbage which he stored for his wife and baby. For months, no form of group activity was permitted. Eventually, church services and Sunday Schools were permitted. Jessie made her child a teddy bear out of a brown canvas suitcase cover and William carved for it a wooden head. In December 1944, all in the camp were moved to the Bilibid prison in Manila just a week before the Americans landed at Lingayen Gulf. Freedom and food came on February 4, 1945, when the camp was liberated.<sup>64</sup>

The Junkin family reunited in Montreat in 1945, where the parents swiftly retired after forty years of service. William Jr. told the *Presbyterian Outlook*: “We thought we had learned all about suffering and hunger the first six months, but after three years and six weeks, we feel we have had better training and understanding in so many of the problems of China. And we have absolute proof that God is a source strength and power when our physical selves are weak and feeble.”<sup>65</sup>

#### ELEANOR ROOSEVELT IN MONTREAT

On March 14, 1945, Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt arrived in Montreat. Roosevelt’s trip to the Black Mountains was hosted by the Council for Southern Mountain Workers. A robust schedule saw the First Lady attend many meetings, visit the U.S. Army’s redistribution station in Asheville, and attend to injured soldiers at the Moore General Hospital. She stayed in the newly refurbished Assembly Inn,<sup>66</sup> the very same Inn that held the detainees two years prior. The next day she arrived at Gaither Chapel for a brief convocation address. She was greeted by President Anderson, Dean Margaret Spencer, and 400 adoring women undergraduates (Fig. 13.1). Her chapel address was spoken off the cuff and was not transcribed, but *The Dialectte* covered the special convocation. In fifteen brief minutes, Mrs. Roosevelt addressed the “beautiful country” describing the “charming lake in the springtime.” Getting to the heart of the matter, she described Montreat as a “mountain sanctuary,” a safe space for future women leaders to focus on their studies in “a time of global crisis.” She closed by thanking the community for housing the families of some of the “German and Japanese diplomats before they returned to their native lands.”<sup>67</sup> In this short talk, she encapsulated the role of Montreat during the war as place of sanctuary and security.



**Fig. 13.1** Eleanor Roosevelt speaks at Montreat College, 1945 (Courtesy of Montreat College Library Archives)

Not all guests came to Montreat on their own free will, but they all were greeted with a sense of Christian hospitality. Speaking in June 1945, Dean of Students Margaret Spencer advised the student body: “God made the world for a purpose, and God made Montreat for a purpose.” She continued with rhetoric that matched Eleanor Roosevelt stride for stride: “We must use the knowledge we learn in this cove to make the world sweeter, and a better place in which to live because we know, understand, and serve our fellowman.”<sup>68</sup> Students were equally delighted at the prospect of war’s end. The boys were coming home. The rations would end. And the stark realities of war were replaced with “hope for tomorrow.”<sup>69</sup>

The war years witnessed humanity’s largest movement of peoples. Most of that movement was filled with horror and tragedy. That tragic movement of peoples also touched quiet mountain communities like Montreat. Like their fellow Americans, they attempted to do

their part, and to do it with humble Christian dignity. In the post-war years, Montreat retained its role as a sanctuary of sorts. In 1949, further missionaries joined the Junkin family and returned to the homes around Lake Susan as the Chinese Communists expelled the last western missionaries. At home on Piney Ridge, Ruth and Billy Graham built a fledgling ministry into a global evangelical phenomenon surrounded by aspiring students and seasoned missionaries. The Montreat Gate continues to guard the cove and serve as a place of hospitality and sanctuary.

## NOTES

1. I will use the phrase “Montreat Community” at times to speak for the interlinked Mountain Retreat Association, Montreat Normal School, and Montreat College. Special thanks to Elizabeth Pearson, Ron Vincent, Lisa Harold, Miriam Brown, Katlyn Powell, and Adam Caress for their archival assistance.
2. See Gerald Sitter, *A Cautious Patriotism: The American Churches and the Second World War* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press). For a nationwide survey of Presbyterians during World War II, see Bradley Longfield, *Presbyterian and America Culture* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Know Press, 2013), 149–174.
3. During the war Montreat College and the Mountain Retreat Association were members of the Presbyterian Church in the United States (PCUS). In the postwar period, this denomination witnessed conservatives branching off in the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA), while some moderate evangelicals formed the Evangelical Presbyterian Church (EPC). Those institutions remaining in the PCUS, including the MRA, merged in 1983 with the mainline Presbyterian Church (USA). Montreat College became an “independent, Christ-centered institution” without denominational affiliation.
4. Anderson to Senator Josiah Bailey, January 7, 1941, R.C. Anderson Papers, Personal Correspondence, 1941–1943, Box 36, Presbyterian Heritage Center Archives (hereinafter PHCA).
5. Anderson to Senator Harry Bird, November 17, 1942, R.C. Anderson Papers, Personal Correspondence, 1941–1943, Box 36, PHCA.
6. Anderson to Rev. Michael James, December 1942, R.C. Anderson Papers, Personal Correspondence, 1941–1943, Box 36, PHCA.
7. Montreat College Brochure, 1941. L. Nelson Bell Library Archives and Special Collections, Montreat College (hereafter cited as Montreat College Library Archives).

8. "Professors Laura Mae Brown and Margaret Smith Join the Red Cross," September 22, 1943, *The Dialectte*, Montreat College Library Archives.
9. "The Christian Youth of America," February 1942, *The Dialectte*, Montreat College Library Archives.
10. "Patriotic May Day festival," April 1942, *The Dialectte*; "Scrap Drive," October 1942, *The Dialectte*; "No Rationing of Honesty," March 1943, *The Dialectte*; and "Pray for the Boys," January 1945, *The Dialectte*, Montreat College Library Archives.
11. Montreat College Brochure, 1946. L. Nelson Bell Library Archives and Special Collections, Montreat College (hereafter cited as Montreat College Library Archives).
12. On the impact of World War II and higher education, see Will Rudy, *Total War and Twentieth Century Learning in World* (Cranbury, NJ: Associated University Presses, 1991); V.R. Cardozier, *Colleges and Universities in World War II* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1993); and Roger Geiger, *The History of American Higher Education: Learning and Culture from the Founding to World War II* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2016), 514–532.
13. On the history of non-combatant personal exchanges, see P. Scott Corbett, *Quiet Passages: The Exchange of Civilians between the United States and Japan during the Second World War* (Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 1987) and David Miller, *Mercy Ships: The Untold Story of Prisoner of War Exchanges in World War II* (New York: Bloomsbury Press, 2008).
14. See Landon A. Dunn and Timothy J. Ryan, *Axis Diplomats in American Custody: The Housing of Enemy Representatives and Their Exchange for American Counterparts, 1941–1945* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, 2016).
15. *Ibid.*, 110.
16. Johnson to Anderson, October 20, 1942, R.C. Anderson Jr. Papers, Montreat Retreat Association Collection, PHCA.
17. Anderson to Secretary of State, October 22, 1942, R.C. Anderson Jr. Papers, Montreat Retreat Association Collection, PHCA.
18. Robert Anderson, "The Necessity of Christian Hospitality," October 30, 1942, *Christian Observer*.
19. Rev. McMillian to Anderson, "November 6, 1942, R.C. Anderson Jr. Papers, Montreat Retreat Association Collection, PHCA. Clarence Tildon, Letter to the Editor, December 5, 1942, *Christian Observer*.
20. Robert C. Anderson, *The Story of Montreat from Its Beginning* (Kingsport, TN: Kingsport Press, 1949), 116.
21. Anderson to Secretary of State, October 22, 1942, R.C. Anderson Jr. Papers, Montreat Retreat Association Collection, PHCA.

22. Elizabeth Barr Recorded Interview, 2006. Mountain Retreat Association Collection, PHCA.
23. On American's racial framework of their Axis enemies, see John Dower, *War Without Mercy: Race and Power in the Pacific War* (New York: Pantheon, 1987).
24. Faith Swanstrom, "The Jap and German (Prisoners) are here!" November 18, 1942, *Dialette*, Montreat College Library Archive.
25. Ibid.
26. Letter to Fish from Briggs, November 3, 1942. Department of State: Bureau of Security and Consular Affairs, Office of Protective Services, 1952–1953. Record Group 59: General Records of the Department of State, National Archives at College Park. Cited in Dunn and Ryan, *Axis Diplomats in American Custody*, 110–111.
27. Letter to Chief form Miles, December 14, 1942. Department of State: Bureau of Security and Consular Affairs, Office of Protective Services, 1952–1953. Record Group 59: General Records of the Department of State, National Archives at College Park. Ibid., 112.
28. Sitter, *A Cautious Patriotism*, 199.
29. November 18, 1942, Anderson to M.E. Briggs. Mountain Retreat Association Collection, PHCA.
30. Robert C. Anderson, *The Story of Montreat from Its Beginning* (Kingsport, TN: Kingsport Press, 1949), 118.
31. Letter to Keeley from Fitch, September 9, 1942. Department of State: Bureau of Security and Consular Affairs, Office of Protective Services, 1952–1953. Record Group 59: General Records of the Department of State, National Archives at College Park. Ibid., 111.
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34. Anderson, *The Story of Montreat*, 117.
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38. Barr Interview.
39. Hildegard Maria Mantel Gordon, "The Mantel Family Story," October 2012, *German American Internee Coalition*, <http://gaic.info/mantel-family>.
40. Anderson, 119.



41. Ibid.
42. See Dong Wang, *The United States and China* (New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2013). On the “China Hands,” see David Hollinger, *Protestants Abroad: How Missionaries Tried to Change the World but Changed America* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press), 163–187.
43. Elizabeth Maxwell, *A Flowering Stream: An Informal History of Montreat* (Alexander, NC: WorldComm, 1991), 97–98.
44. See Thompson Brown, *Earthen Vessels and Transcendent Power: American Presbyterians in China, 1837–1952* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books).
45. Charles A. Risher, *Celebrating 75 Years of Montreat-Anderson College* (Black Mountain Press, 1991), 9; See also “From the Beginning: Missionaries & Montreat,” 2009, *Presbyterian Heritage Center*, <http://www.phcmontreat.org/montreathistory-StoneHolbrookGulick.htm>.
46. G. Thompson Brown, “Window to the World: Montreat and Missions,” *American Presbyterians*, vol. 74, no. 2, Summer 1996, 109.
47. John Pollock, *A Foreign Devil in China: The Story of Dr. L. Nelson Bell* (New York: Zondervan, 1971), 161.
48. Patricia Cornwell, *A Time for Remembering: The Ruth Bell Graham Story* (New York: Harper & Row, 1983), 37.
49. 1936 *Sun Dial Yearbook*, 1936, 37, Montreat College Library Archives.
50. Ruth Bel Graham served the college in the postwar era hosting women’s Bible studies with students and serving on the Montreat College Board. The L. Nelson Bell Library is named in honor of her father.
51. Pollock, *A Foreign Devil in China*, 234.
52. Cornwell, 52.
53. John Pollock, *A Foreign Devil in China*, 243.
54. See Joel Carpenter, *Revive Us Again: The Reawakening of American Fundamentalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 165–167.
55. On the global imagination of Billy Graham, see William Martin, “God’s Ambassador to the World” in *Billy Graham: American Pilgrim*, ed. Andrew Finstuen and Grand Wacker (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017).
56. Thompson Brown, *Earthen Vessels and Transcendent Power: American Presbyterians in China, 1837–1952* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books), 11.
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59. Ibid., 2.
60. Yehsein China Station Report, 1941–1942, 2, Junkin Family Papers, PHCA.

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65. Jessie Junkin, “Out of the Lion’s Den,” 1945, *Presbyterian Outlook*, 18 June 1945.
66. Eleanor Roosevelt, “My Day, March 14, 1945,” *The Eleanor Roosevelt Papers Digital Edition* (2017), [https://www2.gwu.edu/~erpapers/myday/displaydoc.cfm?\\_y=1945&\\_f=md057049](https://www2.gwu.edu/~erpapers/myday/displaydoc.cfm?_y=1945&_f=md057049).
67. “Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt Speaks at Gaither Chapel,” April 1945, *The Dialette*, Montreat College Library Archives.
68. Margaret Spelling, “Spring Address,” June 1945, *Montreat College Alumnae Magazine*, Montreat College Library Archives.
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