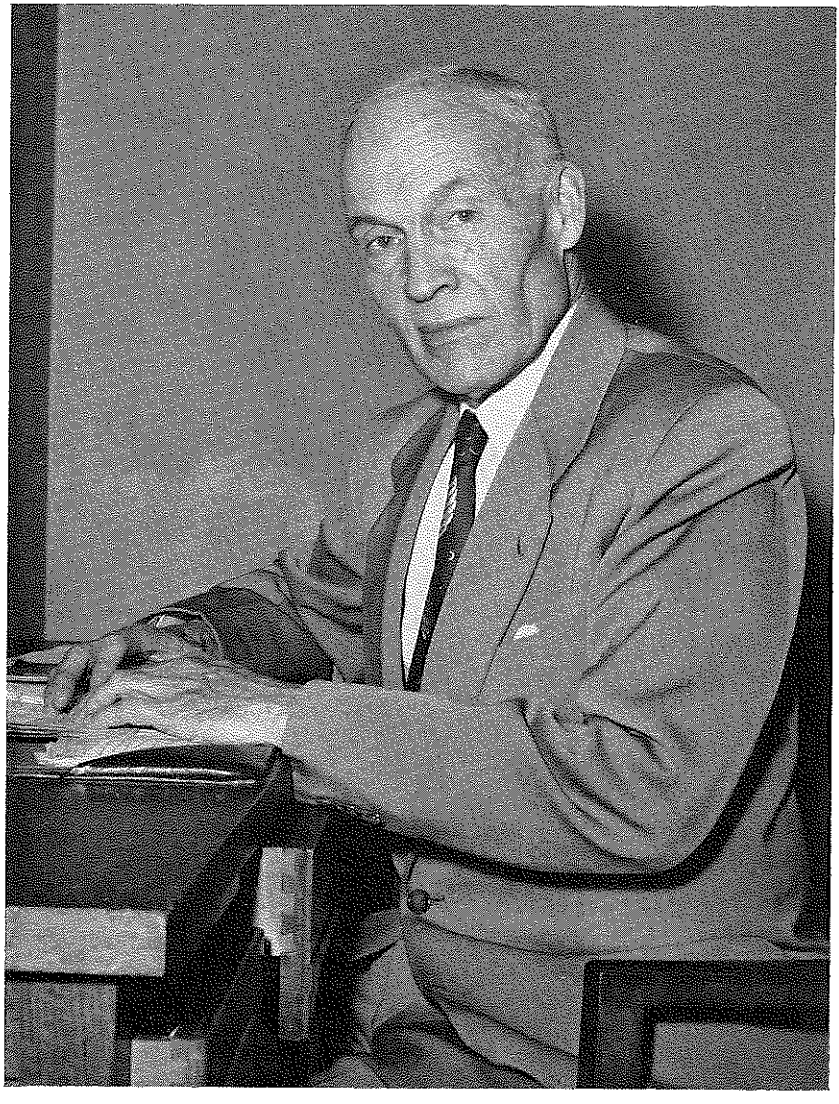
# *An Autobiographical Sketch*

of the

SCHOOL OF RELIGION

THE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA

*M. Willard Lampe*



# Foreword

Dr. M. Willard Lampe was director of the Iowa School of Religion from its beginnings in 1927 until he retired in 1953. Since then he has continued to be associated with the School as professor and director emeritus.

All of us who have come to know the School of Religion well have become impressed with the uncommon combination of qualities which must have characterized those who founded it and saw it safely on its way. Willard Lampe was by all standards "the right man" to assume the role of the first director, and over the years he gave extraordinary vision, unstinting devotion, and enormous energies in his leadership of the School.

Among Dr. Lampe's many contributions to the School of Religion is his THE STORY OF AN IDEA, a brief history of the School, first published in 1930 and revised and brought up to date many times since then. (The latest edition was printed in 1963 and is still available.) This short, penetrating, and accurate account has been of constant use to us as a reference source and for publicity purposes. While it is concerned centrally with developments within the School, the author—in all modesty—has given very little attention in it to items of an autobiographical nature. I have felt that an autobiographical account by Dr. Lampe would be an excellent companion to THE STORY OF AN IDEA and would add a dimension to the history which would be both instructive and interesting. I am very pleased that Dr. Lampe was willing to undertake the writing of such a statement, and I share with others a sense of gratitude to him for doing so.

Robert Michaelsen, *Director*
The Iowa School of Religion
July, 1965

Publication of this pamphlet was made possible through contributions received from the following:

James E. Stronks

First National Bank

R. H. Lind, Sr.

Iowa State Bank and Trust Company

George Nagle, Sr.

Division of Extension and University Services,
The University of Iowa

Old Gold Development Fund, The University of Iowa

# An Autobiographical Sketch of the School of Religion The University of Iowa

*M. Willard Lampe*

## INTRODUCTION

This statement is autobiographical in a true, but limited, sense. It deals with the backgrounds, the founding, and the development of the School of Religion from my personal viewpoint as one who had much to do with its beginnings and with its course for over a quarter of a century. It tells the School's story, not my own, but with no attempt to conceal—rather with every attempt to reveal—the workings of my mind and heart. Hence the account is impressionistic rather than objective, slanted rather than impartial, personal rather than impersonal. My source material is largely my memory, supplemented by some notes that I have made along the way (if they were not hard to find). Hence the reader should be on his guard against inaccuracies of fact, although I have checked my statements where I have been in doubt, and against my idiosyncracies of opinion from which I do not profess to be free.

Two historical accounts of the School have already been written. One, popular in style, entitled OF FAITH AND LEARNING, is a book by Marcus Bach, prepared for the twenty-fifth anniversary of the School. The other, entitled THE STORY OF AN IDEA, is a factual pamphlet by M. Willard Lampe which has been published by the Division of Extension and University Services in a series of triennial revisions, the latest being 1963. If the present SKETCH has any value in addition to these extant publications, it is because of its subjective, autobiographical character.

The following are relevant autobiographical data:

My father was a minister, a theological professor, and a prosecutor in the trial of Charles A. Briggs by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church.

I took a straight classical course in high school (Omaha) and in Knox College (1904).

I am a graduate of The Omaha Theological Seminary (1909), and an ordained Presbyterian minister (1914).

I hold a Ph.D. degree in Semitics, University of Pennsylvania (1912).

I was Bible Study secretary of the Christian Association, University of Pennsylvania (1912-1921); and Presbyterian University Pastor, University of Pennsylvania (1913-1921).

I was University Secretary, Presbyterian Board of Education (1921-1929).

I was a Member of American Association of Religion (1926 to its demise about 1932).

I was Director, School of Religion, State University of Iowa (1927-1953).

## BACKGROUNDS IN CHURCH AND UNIVERSITY

### *I. Church Backgrounds*

If I were to state in a single sentence the primary source of the School of Religion, so far as the twentieth century is concerned, I would unhesitatingly state that it was the missionary spirit of the churches, particularly of the Protestant churches. This is surely true so far as my relationship to the School is concerned. Apart from this I would not have become its first director, or have been in line for this position. I was cradled and reared in a family of strong missionary spirit. At the time of my life when vocational decisions were being made, one of the men whom I greatly admired as a speaker, thinker, and personality was Robert E. Speer, the secretary of a church board of foreign missions; a book that I treasured almost as much as the Bible was THE WILL OF GOD AND A MAN'S LIFEWORK, by Professor Henry B. Wright of Yale; and a phrase which I frequently read and heard captivated me—"State universities are the greatest missionary field in the world." One illustration will suffice. When I was a graduate student at the University of Pennsylvania, I did much of my work on the third floor of the library which overlooked a student thoroughfare. Frequently at noon I would leave my Hebrew Bible, piled-up lexicons, and other helps, and go over to the window to watch the crowds of students pass by. Then I would say to myself, "How can I use all of this lore to meet the needs of youth such as these?" This was really a prayer as much as a soliloquy, and, in looking back upon it, I do not think that it taxes the imagination too much to say that in a sense the School of Religion was born then and there. Anyhow, this experience was soon followed by an important decision. As the time for receiving the Ph.D. degree approached, I was offered two positions: the pastorate of the Presbyterian Church of Shenandoah, Iowa; and the Bible Study secretaryship of the Christian Association of the University of Pennsylvania. With the full approval of the wife whom I had just married, I chose the latter.

Of course it was the Church's educational arm that helped most in paving the way to the School of Religion, although this was really only a missionary arm in educational dress. The words "go, teach," often used of the Church's educational function, are the first words of the Great Commission, which is completely missionary in character. Yet there was, and is, a difference between missions and education, and of this difference I was made acutely aware early in my career. I spent a week at Penn State on a team of visiting "experts" to help Frank N. D. Buchman, the "Y" secretary there, in a "Religious Emphasis." It was Frank's idea to capture the whole college in a week, or at least to find out who were on which side. I was very glad when the week was over, though I prize the memory of Frank's zeal and ingenuity.

The Church's educational work in relation to universities came to flower in the University Pastor movement. This endeavored to combine faith and pastoral care with a devotion to knowledge and learning. The movement had already started when I took up my vocation, but I was the first university pastor at the University of Pennsylvania, appointed in 1913. There, the movement developed two features relevant to our theme: it was inter-Protestant in the sense that all university pastors were members of the staff of a corporate body, the Christian Association; and each university pastor was in charge of some general feature of the Association's work. Thus when I became a university pastor I continued to be Bible study secretary. Roman Catholics were not a part of this setup, but I became well acquainted with Father John Keough who was Catholic chaplain at the University of Pennsylvania and who became the organizer and first director of the Newman Clubs of America.

From the beginning I was strongly attracted to this increasing educational emphasis in the work of the churches. I spent one summer of my Seminary days as a "sky pilot" in a Montana gold mining camp. Towards its close a justice of the peace said to me, "I wish you wouldn't go back to school, for I've noticed that the more schooling a fellow has, the less religion." I did not share that fear at the time, and never have shared it. My father once asked me, "Willard, when are you going into the regular ministry?" My answer: Father, I prefer the irregular kind. (I meant the educational kind.)

*II. University Backgrounds*

Sharing with the churches as forces which produced the School of Religion were the universities themselves. I never knew a university president who was not sympathetic to the idea of teaching religion in his university if only it could be done in a proper way. Indeed I have known some university administrators whose personal religious interest and concern were as deep as any I have ever observed in anyone, layman or clergyman. Let me mention two of these out of the rather remote past. First was Edgar Fahs Smith, who was Provost of the University of Pennsylvania during nearly the whole decade of my work there. If ever he were absent from daily chapel, sitting in the front row, one would know he was out of the city. He was a humble Moravian (Bohemian Brethren), proud of his faith. He was a noted chemist, but his chief concern was the spiritual welfare of the university. I used to think that some of his Biblical interpretations were rather naive, but even a thought of him was, and remains, sufficient tonic to inspire me to my best. The second name I mention is Raymond M. Hughes, who was the president of the then-called Iowa State College at Ames during my early years at The University of Iowa. It was the custom of President Hughes to convene the faculty each fall for a friendly talk of counsel and

advice. (Some of these talks are in print.) I was told by a member of the Ames faculty that among many other pieces of advice, President Hughes "told us that we should become active members of some church." I came to know him very well and asked him one day when we were walking across the U of I campus, "Is it true, as I have been told, that you yourself lead in prayer at these meetings of the faculty?" "I certainly do," he replied, "and I know of no group where prayer is more needed." He was of course being humorous, but also very sincere.

But I have found this spirit not only in presidents, but also in members of the faculty. Let me cite one case, also from the dim past. A prominent U of I professor came to me one day, saying, "I'd like to go into the ministry." I saw at once that he was in earnest, and so I arranged for him to preach in a western university town where a church was seeking a pastor. On his return I asked him, "How did you get along?" "Fine," he said. "What did you preach about?" "I just talked about God." "How did the people like it?" "They had a meeting right after the service and gave me a call." "Well, are you going?" "No, my wife and I talked it over and we decided that I was too old to make such a radical change." (I do not give the name, for the widow is still living.)

During an early year of my stay at Iowa, I had an excellent opportunity to check the attitudes of the faculty toward religion. With the encouragement of my associates I made personal calls on the faculty, two or three per day. During the year I called on every professor, and all but ten or twelve associate and assistant professors, and these I missed only because I could not find them after repeated attempts. There was not a single rebuff or sign of resentment, although of course attitudes varied from cool to warm. Some of the calls I shall never forget—the one on Dr. Arthur Steindler, for example. My appointment was for one o'clock, and on being admitted promptly, I made my remarks quickly and rose to go, for the waiting room was full of patients. "Sit down, don't be in a hurry," said Dr. Steindler, "I want to tell you something. I want to say that in the measure in which you succeed, we succeed; but if you fail—we fail"—that from an internationally famed orthopedist.

I found here at U of I, as at many other universities which I had visited, that a very large percentage of the faculty not only attended church, but held official positions in church or Sunday School, or on "Y" boards and other religious agencies.

I found out also that here, as elsewhere, the University did not feel itself stopped, because of its support by the state, from conducting baccalaureate and other religiously tinged services, or—of special interest to our purpose —from conducting courses dealing with the subject of religion, such as The Bible as Literature in the English Department, and The Psychology of Religion in the Department of Psychology. Indeed, Dr. E. D. Starbuck, the

distinguished psychologist, conducted courses both in religion and in character education, and when he left the University it was considered proper to turn over to my supervision a notable library he had assembled in the latter field. The universities themselves, like the churches, were background forces in the development of the School of Religion.

## THE MERGING OF CHURCH AND UNIVERSITY FORCES IN PRODUCING THE SCHOOL OF RELIGION

### *I. The "Y"*

In the early part of the century the YMCA and the YWCA held a unique and strategic position on state university campuses. They were accepted and used by the universities as character-building agencies with a religious but non-sectarian coloring. They represented, theologically, the least common denominator of the Protestant churches, and no one questioned their right to belong where they were, especially when an outstanding leader like John R. Mott was at the head of the Y movement. For example, in the spring of 1923 I gave a series of addresses in an "Inspiration Week" at the University of Tennessee. The week was under the auspices of the Y, but I was made to feel like a guest of the university itself. The meetings were held in a university auditorium, the president of the university presided, and the attendance of students was facilitated by university regulations.

Except for a short time in World War I, I was never a Y secretary, although Dr. Mott once said in my presence, "We regard Dr. Lampe as a Y man." But this was true in only a loose sense. The organization at the University of Pennsylvania with which at that time I was connected was not a Y, but it was closely associated with the Y movement, and I myself had many close and semi-official associations with Y secretaries and activities. But, as time went on, especially after I had become the national director of the university pastor development in my Church, I noted a growing friction between university pastors and university Y secretaries, due largely to the resentment of the former over the special status and privileges held by the latter.

But in this matter of relationships, the quality of the personalities who were involved made a big difference. This was markedly true at The University of Iowa, where in the years immediately preceding and following the start of the School of Religion, an outstanding person was Y secretary —R. H. Fitzgerald, later Chancellor of the University of Pittsburgh. The record shows that "Fitz" became the catalyst which brought the background forces of the churches and the University together to form the School of Religion. He was identified with both groups and had the confidence of both.

### *II. A Two-Year Forerunner of the School, 1909-1911*

So strong were the background forces which ultimately produced the School of Religion that a close facsimile came into existence eighteen years before the School got under way. This brochure is autobiographical, and I am including an account of this forerunner not because I was aware of it at the time (I wasn't), but because I became aware of it much later, chiefly

through a long-time neighbor and colleague, Professor Forest C. Ensign, who had been a leading spirit in the project. I have good documentary evidence too, viz., two official bulletins of the State University of Iowa, one for 1909-1910, and one for 1910-1911, the first published in May, 1909, the second in June, 1910. Both of them are entitled bulletins of "RELIGIOUS EDUCATION." Both describe the plan as follows: "The Iowa City Committee on Religious Education—composed of delegates from all the leading churches of Iowa City and from student religious organizations, and of professors from the university—presented to the faculty of the College of Liberal Arts of SUI the following petition: 'We respectfully request that arrangements be made . . . by which a limited amount of credit may be given students for systematic and thorough work done in any such religious studies as are usually counted towards the degree of B.A. in American universities of the first rank, provided that such students . . . pass suitable examinations to be given by the State University.' The faculty of the College by a unanimous vote granted the petition and the president of the University appointed to have charge of such work in Religious Education the following: Professor Thomas M. Macbride, Professor Forest C. Ensign, Professor Carl E. Seashore." Among the rules laid down by this committee, provision was made for pastors of churches to teach and for students to receive credit up to four hours in one year, and up to eight in four years.

The first bulletin names the pastors of nine Iowa City churches, all of whom are designated "lecturers," describes eight "courses for credit" offered by them, names eight "Allied Courses" given in the University departments of Greek (Schneider), History (Plum), Philosophy and Psychology (Starbuck and Seashore), and Sociology (Gillin), then lists and describes the activities of five student religious organizations, and finally lists "Church Study Classes and Meetings of Special Interest to Students" along with a "Directory of Iowa City Churches." A map of the campus and a calendar for the school year complete the bulletin. The second bulletin, for 1910-1911, is only half the size of the first, and contains no new material, only a few changes of personnel and courses. The reduction in size of the bulletin corresponds with a declining support of the project. Its demise after two years was due chiefly, according to my informants, to small student enrollment.

The similarities and dissimilarities between this project and the School of Religion are of great interest to me. The striking similarity is that both are attempts to combine the natural interest of the churches with the equally natural interest of the state university in the teaching of religion. In this early project only Jews were not represented, so far as major American religious groups are concerned. Roman Catholics did not provide a teacher, but they were represented on the petitioning committee by a distinguished citizen, Hon. Martin J. Wade, and by a "delegate" from the Catholic student organizations which are listed in the bulletin. Indeed some groups,

viz., the Lutherans and the Unitarians, appear to have been very active in this early project, who later did not give full support to the organization of the School of Religion. Yet the forerunner was not all-inclusive as the School of Religion has attempted to be.

The great dissimilarity between this forerunner and the School of Religion is in the matter of organic unity with the University. This early program of "Religious Education" was only affiliated with the University in much the same way as any adjoinng college or school might be. Examples of such affiliation existed, and came to exist in larger numbers, in many university centers, as, for example, at Indiana, Michigan, Illinois, North Dakota, Montana, and Missouri. But the School of Religion at Iowa was from its inception an organic unit in the University. Its strength and going-power derive chiefly from this fact.

I take my hat off to these early adventurers. They did a magnificent job with few precedents to guide them. They were on a track which led over fifteen years later to the fulfillment of their dreams. I am happy that many of them lived to see and actively to participate in that fulfillment.

*III. January 11, 1922–March 14, 1927*

These dates are of significance to the School of Religion from two viewpoints.

1. Objectively and historically they are markers for a chain of events which led to the establishment of the School. On the first date Dr. O. D. Foster read a paper in Chicago at the annual conference of church workers in state universities on the subject SCHOOLS OF RELIGION IN STATE UNIVERSITIES. This sparked a sequence of events on the Iowa campus which led directly to the election on the second date of M. Willard Lampe as the first director of the School. This sequence has been described elsewhere (THE STORY OF AN IDEA, an Extension Bulletin of U of I) and will not be repeated here. It might be well, however, to emphasize one item which is merely mentioned in THE STORY OF AN IDEA, viz., the creation, in the latter part of this period, of The American Association on Religion. This was a national group of sixteen persons, most of them of considerable distinction–four Catholics, four Jews, four Protestants, and four "At Large," two of these being Dr. John H. Finley, editor of the *New York Times,* and President Walter A. Jessup of The University of Iowa. The American Association was one of the major creations of O. D. Foster. Of course he had the active collaboration of others, especially Bishop Charles H. Brent, who was the Chaplain-in-Chief under whom Foster had served in World War I. This interfaith-university organization, of which Bishop Brent was president, and Dr. Foster was secretary, did much to provide national backing for the Iowa School of Religion, which, indeed, was its first project, and also to publicize and strengthen the School after

it was under way. Under the auspices of the Association, for example, a conference was held in Old Capitol in January, 1928, the personnel and program of which meant much to the life and vitality of the new School.

2. Subjectively and autobiographically, these dates roughly coincide with a period of growing friendship and almost constant association with Dr. Foster. A few months prior to the first date I had moved to Chicago from Philadelphia to take up my work as Secretary for University Work of the Presbyterian Church. Foster had already become the University Secretary of the Council of Church Boards of Education. Our offices were on the thirteenth floor of the Chicago Temple Building. Our work and our liking for each other soon brought us together. We would see each other daily, unless one or both of us were out of the city, and frequently we would travel together and associate in conferences, where both of us had responsibilities. Indeed, for many years I was the chairman of the interdenominational University Work Committee under whose general supervision Dr. Foster functioned.

This close association between Foster and me had many consequences, direct and indirect, for the School of Religion. Hence I feel justified, since this is an autobiographical sketch of my relationships to the School, to append to this brochure an excerpt from an account of Foster and of his influence upon me, which I wrote for another purpose about ten years ago, but which I find, in rereading it, contains precisely what I think should be written and included here.

With this statement about my long-time associate, who at this writing is still living in retirement in Pilgrim Place, Claremont, California, I conclude what I desire to write about BACKGROUNDS OF THE SCHOOL, and turn to the consideration of some of the PROBLEMS I have dealt with along the way.

## PROBLEMS I HAVE MET ALONG THE WAY

### *I. In Connection with the Philosophy of the School of Religion*

#### A. My Personal Problem

Could I, a person with a religious commitment, honestly administer a School of Religion which included a variety of religious commitments, and in a university with no official religious commitments at all?

This question with its many implications may be stated in many ways, but I know of no way that is commensurate with the depth and breadth of the way in which I sensed it. I have often found myself in situations where I felt, but could not say, "What is a fellow like you doing here?" I knew a long time before I came to Iowa that I was not outstanding as either a scholar or a saint, but from my student days I have felt keenly the tension between faith and knowledge, and have increasingly thought that I could recognize both and distinguish between them.

How then did I resolve this problem sufficiently to accept the directorship of the School of Religion? I did it, so far as I can recall, in the light of such considerations as the following:

1. All of the religious groups with which I would deal have had first-class scholars.

2. All scholars have some kind of faith by whatever name they call it.

3. I had learned from experience that my creed was not rigidly static, and that I was capable of modifying elements of my viewpoints in religion in the light of growing knowledge and insight.

4. I was convinced that a high-grade teaching of religion properly belonged in a state university, as in a university of any kind.

5. I was encouraged by the friends who knew me best, and I was challenged by a great adventure, although at this point I must in all honesty record that there were counterbalancing friends and challenges, evidenced by the fact that for the first two years of my directorship I was on only three-fourths time. But after two years of experimentation, I cut all ties elsewhere, and really took the chance.

#### B. Problems of Churches

##### 1. The Unitarians

I mention this group first because it was the first which had a specific problem of which I became aware. To them, the School as it was set up did not adequately represent the liberal viewpoint. I recognized that there was justification for this attitude, but could only bide my time. A solution came more quickly than I had expected, although just how or why I have never known. Within a year after the beginning of the School, following a tennis game in which I was the winner, the pastor of the Unitarian

Church came to the net to congratulate me and to say, "Let me assure you that the Unitarians have given up all objections to the School of Religion and are for it." The only thing I ever learned from this is what I already knew; viz., tennis is an excellent game. Later and continuously up to the present, a Unitarian has been on the board of trustees.

2. The Roman Catholics

The early Catholic attitude toward the School was friendly and generous, especially as manifested in representatives like Msgr. W. P. Shannahan, but in actual participation it was something less than 100 per cent, as is shown by the fact that the first Catholic professor was only part time, and chiefly by the fact that for a number of years following 1930 there was no Catholic on the faculty at all. The reason for this, as given to me, was a very practical one, resting on the judgment that available personnel and funds could best be used in the support of Catholic schools. It was very easy for me to understand and appreciate this judgment since I was very familiar with the same viewpoint in my own circles, where the University Pastor movement had to struggle for support against those who contended that the educational funds of the church should not be sluiced away from its own institutions to help the "godless" state universities. Here again I bided my time, feeling that logic and numbers were on the side of increased church interest in state schools. Hence I was not greatly surprised that on Catholic initiative a Catholic teacher was again on the staff in 1936. It should be added that Catholics never withdrew from the School. On the contrary, during the interim 1930-1936 they were represented on the board successively by two of Iowa's most distinguished lawyers, Hon. Martin J. Wade and Frank O'Connor.

3. The Lutherans

This group not only put into focus, as others had done, but helped to solve a problem of which the School had been conscious from the beginning. This problem grew directly out of the School's philosophy that religion is best taught by its scholarly friends. But how can one Protestant teacher, however scholarly and friendly, adequately and fairly present the variety of Protestant faiths? I was aware of constant questioning about this, and in the course of time—in the late forties—the board of trustees adopted a plan by which under certain conditions the Protestant, as well as the Jewish or the Catholic, professorship could be broadened from a chair to a settee. The chief condition was as follows: "The way is open—provided" the additional teacher functions "however strictly or loosely as a Jew, a Catholic, or a Protestant, without any additional denominational label in staff relationships." The Lutherans were the first to act in accordance with this policy, and the National Lutheran Council supplied funds for the employment of a professor to supplement the Protestant staff, beginning in 1954. One of

the concluding activities of my directorship was to assist in this arrangement. I was happy to do so, although I have never regarded the plan as a final solution of the problem.

4. Other religious groups

In the religious spectrum of America, there are many bright bands of color other than the broad bands of Judaism, Catholicism, and Protestantism, or if these bright bands are part of the broader bands, they are too small to consider for professorships in a university school of religion. Yet they deserve fair and sympathetic treatment, which it was my purpose to provide in every reasonable way. One effective way was to invite leaders of these groups to present their faiths in a course entitled RELIGIOUS GROUPS IN AMERICA. This method was the more effective because the course was broadcast for many years over radio station WSUI, and because it was taught by Professor Marcus Bach, who made these groups a special field of study. Another method was to invite the leaders of these groups to speak at WSUI MORNING CHAPEL, of which I was the director for fifteen years. I gladly testify to the broadening and uplifting effects of these contacts upon me personally, and I could offer much additional testimony from a wide listening audience. Still another method of bringing these many religious groups within the compass of fair treatment by the School of Religion was through "guest professorships." One of these, for example, was held for two years by Dr. O. D. Foster, as sensitive and quickly responsive a man to the varieties of religious faith as I have ever known. The ideal of the School has always been to present all of the religions of the world, especially those found in America, fairly and without restriction. This is a difficult ideal to achieve, but I can honestly say that I have tried. One of the difficulties has been to separate the wheat from the chaff. I was reminded of this recently when I threw away a folder in my letter file, called "Nuts and Cranks."

C. Problems Posed by Institutions of the State

1. The University of Minnesota

Over the years I have been interviewed by many official and unofficial representatives of state universities, but I select for special mention an approach by the University of Minnesota because I remember it well. It came in the second year of the School of Religion, and it was more thorough than most of the others. A dean of the university, J. D. Johnston, by name, was commissioned by the president of his institution to study the School and make a report with recommendations. His visit was for three days, during which he visited classes in the School, conferred with its teachers, and had a number of interviews with me. On the last day he asked, "How can I get some student reactions to the School?" After considering alternatives we went to the offices of *The Daily Iowan*, located at

that time on the northwest corner of Iowa Avenue and Dubuque Street. As we entered the outer office, a young man, obviously a student, walked briskly across the floor to greet us and ask, "Can I be of any service?" Noting immediately that he did not recognize me, I said, "This is Dean Johnston of the University of Minnesota who would like to get student opinion about the School of Religion on this campus." Without a moment's hesitation he replied (I think I recall his exact words), "I can tell you all about that. One professor is Dr. Charles Hawley. He is a Protestant. There are also a Catholic and a Jewish professor on the faculty. The idea is to teach all the religions. *I* think it is a helluva good idea." (Years later imagine my surprise in having this man come up and laughingly introduce himself to me—Ralph Young, by name—after I had told the story at a church dinner out in the state.) Well, Dean Johnston made his departure and later sent me a copy of his report. His recommendation was negative—the School was too slanted in a sectarian sense, too "evangelical," to merit copying by any other university. I was not greatly surprised for somehow I had gotten the impression that he had undertaken his study with a preconception in that direction. Indeed, I was encouraged, by his visit, to reflect that the School of Religion was important enough to warrant a dean in a great university taking three days of his time to make an on-the-spot study of it. This counterbalance of encouragement was also supplied by another study of the School made not long afterwards by a representative of John D. Rockefeller, Jr., who, on the basis of this study, and at the conclusion of the experimental three-year period for which his first grant was made, made a second grant in larger amount for the succeeding five-year period.

2. The Supreme Court and its Decision in the McCollom Case

This decision declared it to be unconstitutional to maintain a system of "released-time" instruction such as existed in Champaign, Illinois. At the time some of the friends of the School of Religion were fearful that the decision might have unfavorable implications for the School. I did not share these fears for at least two reasons: First, the decision itself states that it applied only to the plan in operation in the public schools of Champaign; and second, I was told, of course unofficially and indirectly, but I thought reliably, that Justice Rutledge, a member of the Supreme Court who sustained the decision and who had been a member of the faculty of the Iowa Law College, had had the School of Religion in mind when the case was argued and was sure that the decision had no bearing on the School one way or the other.

All in all, my experience has been, despite the report of the Minnesota dean, that representatives of the state at any level are apt to receive an unfavorable impression of the School when they first hear of it or know of it only in theory, but that the impression becomes favorable as they come to understand the philosophy behind the theory, and especially when they

see how the theory works out in practice. And I really do not think that I am simply flattering the School or myself in making this generalization.

*II. In Connection with Relationships Within the University*

A. Relations with the Administration

Frankly, the only problem I can recall is one of continuing personal embarrassment. In the early days of the School I frequently got the report, "People say that Dr. Lampe is Dean Kay's pet." I think that the charge was correct. At least I feared that it had good foundation. But what could I do about it? Dean Kay was an ardent believer in the School, was a key factor in bringing it into existence, and I can still see his beaming features when he first received me in his office on the occasion of my coming to consider an informal offer of the directorship. I well knew that the School was indeed a "pet" of Dean Kay's.

Dean Kay's attitude was continuously reflected in the official and unofficial attitudes of the administration as a whole. Let me give two illustrations of differing character, chosen to show the range as well as the quality of this favor. 1. Within a month of the opening of the School, Walter A. Jessup, as a Methodist, not as President of the University, invited eight fellow Methodists to dinner and after the meal boldly induced every one of them to subscribe $50 toward the support of the Protestant teacher in the School, he himself heading the subscription list. I was present and felt that I profited not only from the subscriptions but from watching his technique! 2. Faculty members, in addition to carrying their own professional load, are commonly assigned extra responsibilities in the functioning of the University. One of these extras assigned to me for fifteen years was so attractive that I am sure many could wish the assignment for themselves. It was the chairmanship of Summer Session lectures. "Chairmanship" is hardly the right word, for I was both chairman and committee of an assignment which consisted of bringing to the campus outstanding speakers and other popular talent for convocations, usually one per week, during the Summer Session. This gave me the opportunity to come into contact with many of the world's most colorful persons, some of whom were entertained in my own home. This work, demanding as it was, was sheer pleasure. Of course it was conceived and carried on entirely apart from my duties as director of the School of Religion, but there were indirect and entirely unexpected advantages to the School. For example, the very first speaker I brought to the campus was Henry A. Wallace, at that time the Secretary of Agriculture. He said to me as I was walking with him, "I really became interested in this university when I first heard of the School of Religion." It seemed like only a complimentary and casual remark at the time, but since then he has given repeated evidence of his deep interest in the School.

As I reflect upon my term of office in the University, I am sure that these

two illustrations are not exceptional but typical. I have had no problem so far as administrative support of the School is concerned. I do not know how it could have been more friendly or complete.

B. Relations with the University Faculty

In the survey of individual members of the faculty, already referred to, I found that about one-third of the total number of 330 could be described as "religiously interested and vitally church-related," a third as "religiously interested but not vitally church-related or church-related at all," and a third as "religiously neutral or negative"—believers, skeptics, agnostics, but with no hard and fast lines of division. I found that the prevailing atmosphere was warm and friendly. But there was a problem: How to win generous *academic* acceptance? As a teacher of religion I often felt that in the opinion of colleagues I already had two strikes against me. Examples: 1. In going to class one day I walked along the corridor with a professor of history. He remarked, "Lampe, if I were asked to teach a class in religion, I wouldn't have the ghost of an idea of what to say." I replied, "Religion has had a long history. You could teach that." "But," he shot back, "that would be history, not religion." "Conceivably, it might be both," I retorted. But as I turned in my door I noted that a quizzical expression remained on his face. 2. In the final examination of a candidate for the Ph.D. degree, the candidate used the word "salvation" in a religious sense, whereupon a colleague in another department remarked, with what seemed to me to be a sly look in my direction, "When one uses the word 'salvation,' I haven't the least idea what is meant." The situation called for no response from me, and I gave none. But I wondered at the time—and on reflection I still wonder—was my silence evasive, or just plain smart? At least it points up the tension, often in the same individual, between preacher and teacher, between minister and professor, between faith and knowledge.

In dealing with this problem, I had an asset, I thought, in the surprising number of professors who had had professional training in religion, not a few in theological seminaries, and some had been ordained as ministers. One of these was Professor Herbert Martin, head of the Department of Philosophy, who once had been the pastor of a Disciples of Christ Church. I feel sure that this common interest and background were in part responsible for the development of a course entitled RELIGION AND ETHICS which Dr. Martin and I gave cooperatively for a number of years, and which was the forerunner of the finely developed core course in religion of later years.

But I think that if I made any contribution at all to the solution of the problem under consideration, it was along another and even more natural line, viz., that of my religious services to the University. I have been amazed at the extent to which these services have been sought by profes-

sors and their families, especially by those whose church relationships were tenuous. I have often been asked to officiate at weddings and funerals, and I have been embarrassed by expressions of appreciation of prayers I have offered and inspirational talks I have made, as at WSUI Morning Chapel, from those who, to say the least, have had no reputation for religious ardor. In other words, willy nilly, it has been along the lines of my work as a minister of religion that I seem to have contributed most to my function as a professor of religion in a state university. This idea, put down in cold print, startles me. At any rate I believe it to have been true for me, and this has led me to think that in a school of religion constituted as the one at Iowa, one effective solution of the problem of its academic respectability is for its teachers, and in particular those who are ordained, to make their religious services of the highest possible academic quality. Well or poorly as I may have done it, that is an ideal toward which I have striven.

C. Relations with the Faculty of the School of Religion

In thinking through the list of those who have been on the faculty of the School, I can honestly say that I respected the scholarship of all and had a strong personal liking for each. But this made "the pain of administration" all the more painful, especially in the few instances where I was compelled eventually to share the judgment that their services to the School should be terminated. Self-examination compels me to admit that one of my shortcomings as an administrator is an unwise patience. For example, although the School has been blessed with many excellent secretaries (the first one became my wife and we have "lived happily ever after"), one of them was continuously making errors, not all of which were as funny as the concluding sentence of a letter to a prospective speaker—"Don't bother to bring a gun; we shall have one for you." Yet I tolerated her far beyond the call of duty. More seriously, when professors were involved and when radical surgery was called for, I preferred to endure the pain, hoping that time would cure the trouble, rather than submit to an operation. And yet if I had my administrative life to re-live, I am sure that I would approve, if conditions were the same, the coming of every professor and resist the termination of any service.

*III. In Connection with Finance*

A. Theory

Before I became director, the theoretical problem had been resolved in this way: A contribution had been received from John D. Rockefeller, Jr., to provide for my salary and for the administration of the School; and it was agreed that the three professorships—Jewish, Catholic, Protestant—should be financed by these groups. Thus it was thought that the new ven-

ture would be kept free from any entanglement with the touchy question of the use of public funds for religious purposes.

B. Practice

For ten years all administrative expenses, including the salary of the director, were met out of Rockefeller funds, but when these ran out, the University agreed to supply funds for the administrative expense of the School, offering to do so on the ground that it was proper to provide for the administration of all of its integral parts.

The Catholic professorship was supported directly by the Bishop of Davenport who chose not to utilize the facilities of the School's treasurer, as the Jewish and Protestant groups did, but this was consistent with the spirit of the School and caused no problem of which I was aware.

The support of the Jewish professorship came largely from individual donors, some of whom were very generous, but the support was widely based. Rabbi Eugene Mannheimer was an indefatigable money-raiser for the cause, and I have heard many stories of his spirit and technique, which may be summarized by a vivid picture of him in my mind, in which he is facing an unwilling giver but, lighting his pipe, he calmly and firmly holds his ground until a gift is forthcoming!

The Protestant professorship was supported in part by churches and church agencies, largely supplemented by gifts from individuals. Much of my time in the early years was given to this personal solicitation, supplemented in later years by my colleague, Dr. Marcus Bach. This hard but necessary work was often rewarded by a ready response from my "prospects"; for example, a Cedar Rapids woman on whom I called, without introduction or appointment, one day after lunch, who gave me a check for $300 with a promise of more; or a Davenport businessman with whom I spoke over the counter for less than five minutes and who responded, "A school like that is worth fifty dollars of my money any day." As Dr. O. D. Foster would say, "I could go on the strength of such experiences 'forty days and forty nights.' "

C. Looking to the Future

Should the professorships in the School eventually be financed out of state funds, just as the administrative directorship came to be? A good argument can be made in favor of this along these lines: The School has proved its educational quality, but it looks as though it has not, if it continues to be financed in a different way from other educational units in the University. If, as we believe, religion is an essential part of education, and if it is taught rigorously according to educational norms, why should the School, or the University, or the state, belie this conception by special methods of finance?

Such considerations would have had no credence in the early days of the School, when the very word "religion" connoted something sectarian, and when it was taken for granted that state funds should not be used in a venture with which religious groups had anything to do.

I find myself sympathetic toward the idea of ultimate state support, but with a reservation or a proviso, viz., that the School should continue to insist upon a genuine religious commitment on the part of its teachers. Nothing could be a further departure from the founding ideals of the School than an attempt to teach religion unreligiously. It should be taught educationally *and* religiously, with no apology of either factor to the other. Whether this could be safeguarded in some other way than through the supervision of a board on which both churches and University are represented, I cannot predict. But one motivation of this School from the beginning has been religious. That was my chief motivation, and I would regret to see it otherwise.

## POSTSCRIPT

The satisfactions which came to me during my directorship of the School of Religion were many and of many kinds, but perhaps they may be summarized in two groups.

1. The satisfactions of university life, where knowledge and the meaning of knowledge are congruous terms, with every encouragement to seek the one and to ponder the other. My favorite symbol of this is the recollection of Professor George W. Stewart, head of the Department of Physics, who, putting books and all other work aside, spent a summer in a leisurely and uninterrupted consideration of the question, "*What have my learning and experience taught me about the meaning of life?*"

2. The satisfactions of a forerunner in what has come to be known as the ecumenical movement. This term has differing meanings to different groups, but the underlying meaning to all is a closer approach to "peace among men of goodwill." So far as I know, the School of Religion had no direct influence whatever in bringing about Vatican Council II, the World Council of Churches, or the National Conference of Christians and Jews, but it antedated all of these, and it was talking their ideas and sharing their ideals before they came into existence. Very deep satisfactions have been mine in seeing the School grow, and in being both a pioneer and on the frontier in a continuing movement toward better human relationships.

Both of these groups of satisfactions are expressed in a favorite poem.

"Let knowledge grow from more to more,
But more of reverence in us dwell,
That mind and heart according well
May make one music as before,
But vaster."

# Appendix

*The Influence of Dr. O. D. Foster upon the Author*

(Excerpts from a paper by the author on ORA DELMER FOSTER)

I want to state as honestly as I can what I think there is about Dr. Foster which has enabled him to influence me as much as, probably more than, any other individual since I became acquainted with him. At the time we met he was forty-three and I thirty-eight, but this slight seniority in years I am sure has not been a factor, and furthermore I do not believe that my character has changed much since I was thirty-eight. Yet the pattern of my thought and life has been considerably modified, due to our friendship. How do I account for this? I know I cannot do this adequately, but here is an attempt.

I think that the answer to my query may largely be found in three of Dr. Foster's luminous and vital qualities for which I had been prepared, at least in part, by my previous training, and which, when I became familiar with them as seen in him, stimulated me to a kind of self-fulfillment.

The first was his complete, undoubting acceptance of the results of the modern critical study of the Bible. He was so sure of these results, and had so adjusted his thinking to them, that the older views on which he had been brought up did not bother him any more than did the Ptolemaic theory of the universe. Now, when I met Foster, the Bible had also been my professional field of study. I knew as well as he the evidence for the newer views, and I had accepted them. But there was a difference. As he states in his memoirs, he had no "theological impediments" to overcome. Conservative as his parents were, they were completely unlearned in Biblical science. Hence, as he also states, he could start "from scratch." On the other hand, my father was a Biblical scholar. He had studied Hebrew under William Rainey Harper, had secured his Ph.D. degree in New York University, held a seminary professorship in Old Testament, and cherished the idea that I might succeed him in his chair—an idea that was in part responsible for my undertaking graduate work after my seminary training. My father was perfectly familiar with the data upon which modern scholars reject the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch and assert a documentary theory of the early books of the Bible, but he interpreted these data differently. Verbal inspiration, the inerrancy of Scripture, was basic in my father's understanding of the Bible. He was the chief and successful prosecutor of Charles A. Briggs for denying this tenet of the orthodox faith. This is enough to show that I did not "start from scratch." I came to the same conclusions as Foster, but not without struggle. Victory came by inches. For example, how well I remember the sudden solution of one part of my problem. My father had often expressed the view that many difficulties with the Bible would disappear if only we had the autographs. I can remember the exact occasion

when illumination came on this matter. I was walking downtown in Philadelphia from the University of Pennsylvania campus, and when I was about two-thirds of the way across the Schuylkill River on the north side of the Walnut Street Bridge, the thought flashed into my mind that if a verbally inerrant Bible was really a necessity for man's salvation, it would have been just as incumbent upon its divine author to *preserve* its inerrancy as to provide it in the first place—but I knew perfectly well from my studies that this inerrancy was not preserved in the available manuscripts. The idea was one of the most releasing I have ever had.

Well, in 1917 my father retired from his professorship, and I was called to be his successor. But I declined the call. He had passed to his reward before I met Foster. In the meantime, ever since securing my doctor's degree, I had been teaching the Bible in voluntary non-credit groups, to hundreds of university students, and in full accord with modern viewpoints. Even so, I never became fully emancipated until I met Foster. Under his influence I became emotionally what I had long been intellectually. He put the same high value upon the Bible which I did, and at the same time he accepted the results of the scientific study of the Scriptures with a freedom, an abandon, an assurance, and even a joy far in excess of mine, for my emotional bonds to the past were hard to break completely. Foster's influence upon me was like magic because he set me an example and a challenge in the very field to which I had given years of thought and practical activity. I should add that no one would be more surprised at the testimony I have been giving than Dr. Foster himself. We never discussed these matters in more than incidental ways. He must have assumed that he and I were completely at one in our essential viewpoints and understandings on questions of the Bible. And this assumption was correct. But his quiet, effective, unsuspecting service brought me to a self-fulfillment that I had not hitherto achieved in what has always been an exceedingly important segment of my thought and life.

Another quality of Foster which has impressed me greatly is his commitment to the ideals and practice of interfaith brotherhood. This probably is the feature of his life for which he will be longest remembered. In theory I had shared this commitment long before I met Foster. Indeed, "the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man" had increasingly become a guiding principle of my life. For many years I had done my work as a Presbyterian interdenominationally; it was organized on that basis. But in the field of interfaith, Foster raised my sights, both by the inclusion of Roman Catholics, Jews, and others in his professional projects, and by a corresponding humility in his own denominational relationships. For my part I have always had a degree of denominational pride which has persisted in spite of a growing knowledge of the spotty portions of my denominational history and practice. I would not imply that Foster did not glory to some extent

in his religious traditions, even though he characteristically referred to the group from which he sprang as "God's peculiar, chosen people," which was his sect's common designation of itself!

I distinctly recall a talk that Dr. Foster made to an early group of trustees of the School of Religion. In it he said that we should aim to have a fellowship in which each one would suffer with one another's defeats, and rejoice in one another's victories, as much as when the defeat or victory comes to one's own group. That is a high ideal which Foster came as close to realizing as anyone I have known.

I have been particularly intrigued by Foster's close relationships with Roman Catholic prelates. People have asked me, "Is Dr. Foster becoming a Catholic?" The answer is, "No." Theologically Foster's position is a long sea mile from Rome's. I would say that he is much closer to historical Unitarianism than to Roman Catholicism. But there are many aspects of Roman Catholicism which he learned to appreciate highly—its scholarship, features of its educational system, its social action, its efficiency. He was greatly impressed, for example, by seeing and examining in the Vatican Library a section given over to Protestant books and pamphlets bearing on Catholicism. (The curator of this section and he became warm friends and one year prepared a joint statement for the annual meeting of the School of Religion.) But Foster has not minced words when he has come into contact with repressive measures in Catholicism as in Spain, with whose cardinal he was completely at odds, although with some of the Spanish bishops and monks he became most friendly.

I could elaborate my point by referring to Jews, Negroes, and others who have been warmly included in the circle of Foster's wide brotherhood, but there is no need for this. I first met Foster when I was ready to take this wider leap of brotherhood, and, in this respect also, he furnished me with a vivid example and challenge. What wonder that his influence over me became so strong!

There is one other quality of O. D. Foster which helps to explain his appeal to me, although it is difficult for me to describe in a way that reveals its grip and strength. I may call it a high sensitivity to the idea that the universe as a whole, and that human life in particular, have wonderful meaning—mysterious to be sure, but real and profound nonetheless. I am sure that Dr. Foster cannot be explained apart from his peculiar brand of mysticism—an immediacy of religious experience entwined with his love for what he calls "the spirit and method of science." I did not become aware of this at first, partly because it is something that has grown in him from smaller to greater proportions over the years, until it has become the most prominent feature of his spiritual being.

The marvels of unfolding science have always appealed mightily to Foster, especially astronomy. Before I knew him, he had spent a night in the

Yerkes Observatory as a guest of Professor Edwin B. Frost, the director, who pointed out to him some of the wonders of the heavens, including a triple star, to which I have often heard him refer. In recent years, until he lost his sight, he has spent nights on Mount Palomar looking through its giant telescope under the direction of the scientists there, so that "light-years" and "galaxies" have become common words in his vocabulary. Then, increasingly over the years, he has gravitated toward scientists who themselves have the spiritual sense and see meaning in things. One of these was George Washington Carver, the Negro botanist who could "see God in a peanut," and with whom he spent two never-to-be-forgotten days in Carver's home and laboratory. Another was Robert Millikan. Their friendship dated back to pre-World War I days, when Millikan was a regular member of a Sunday Bible class taught by Foster. He is the one who introduced Foster to the astronomers on Mount Palomar. Another scientist whom Foster almost worshipped was Albert Einstein, although the closest he came to meeting him was in a railroad station when Einstein sat near him, and Foster, an expert penman, sketched his profile. I believe Foster has committed to memory Einstein's simple but impressive statements relative to the mysterious meaning of the universe.

Now all of this fascination with science and scientists should be seen in the context of Foster's own intuitions and growing mystical experience. Frequently, when he lived in Iowa City, the first thing he would say on my entering his room was, "M. W.,"—his common way of addressing me—"it happened again last night and I wouldn't exchange it for all the gold of Croesus." The "it" he never explained, but his ecstacy showed that it was very luminous. He was fully aware that some might explain it away as purely subjective, but to him it was as real as anything in the objective world. His diaries are full of references to these experiences, and in referring to them he has sometimes used the expression "Like Elijah, I could 'live on its strength forty days and forty nights.' "

Here again, let me say that when I first met Foster I was not unprepared for this impress which he has made upon me. I had long believed in "the practices of the presence of God"—to use the title of a religious classic. I also knew that there must be harmony between religion and science in any sane life or social order. I had never been inclined to believe that "Life is a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing." But Foster wonderfully illumined all of this, though I have never even approximated his particular type of mysticism. Again, as in the case of his other qualities, he set me an example and a challenge, and so did much to shape my career.