

A EYE-WITNESS SURVEY OF OUR EARLY FACULTY

Doubts have from time to time been expressed with regard to the qualifications of that early Ambassador College Faculty, its Graduates and especially its Degrees; afterall, it wasn't "accredited", and that supposedly proves

Ambassador was approved by the State of Calif., it was approved to grant Bachelors, Masters and Doctors Degrees; it was approved for attendance by foreign students, and its conscientious objection to warfare standard was recognized by the FBI in weighing exemption from military training for its students. The practice of not "raising one's right hand and swearing" was accepted by the Bureau granting Passports. And the University of Southern Calif was not "accredited" either at this time.

Suppose I were to give a first-hand eyewitness account of our Faculty and explain some of the reasons why Accreditation has been delayed this long.

Plans had been made for a 4-year Liberal Arts College with emphasis on True Values as revealed by the Bible. Accreditation was to be but a matter of time. Yet there had been only 4 students (Dick Armstrong, Betty Bates, Raymond Cole and Herman Hoeh) for those 8 faculty members of that first year.

The second year finances brought that early Ambassador to the brink of disaster, and on Sabbath, December 25, 1948 we were faced with the closing of the College on Monday if the former property owner was successful in his course of action.

That second year of the College had begun with 5 fulltime students (Ken Herrmann arrived on time, and there was a single part-time student with interests only in French who remained for only a few weeks), Raymond and Marion McNair arrived at Feast time; the student body then numbered seven for the fall semester of 1948. (Dick, Betty, Raymond, Herman; Ken, Raymond and Marion.)

There was a "spirit of brotherhood" in those early years and the following expressions were genuine: Mr. A., Mr. D., Dr. T., Brother Herbert, Herbert, Brother Armstrong, Sister Armstrong, Loma, Dick, Betty, Raymond, Herman, Ken, Raymond and Marion. And Brother Bill, Sister Winkie, etc. Formal names became standard around the fifth year when a number of our Graduates were added to the Faculty and/or ordained.

First a brief introduction to the 1948 fall semester Faculty. Note the variety of states, the ethnic background, and that to this day I do not know their religious preference, religion was a personal matter. Not also their qualifications, but most of all their accomplishments in the building of Ambassador College:

1. **Walter Dillon** -- President of the College, an educator from Oregon, brother-in-law of Mr. H.W. Armstrong. Mr. Dillon taught Basic Speech, a one semester 2 unit course.

2. **Dr. Hawley Otis Taylor** -- Prof. Emeritus of the Dept. of Physics of Wheaton College in Illinois. Dr. Taylor was Dean and Registrar in 1948 till his death in 1953, taught Astronomy, took students to Griffith Planetarium. He had taught Survey of Physical Science the previous year but turned the class over to Herman L. Hoeh in the fall of 1948.

3. **Lucy Martin** -- from Tennessee, taught Freshman Comp., Literature, Music Apprec., Music lessons, and was Librarian.

4. **Prof. Emile Mauler-Hiennecy** -- from Louisiana, 8 years of elementary education in Paris under the Jesuits, returned to the U.S. and began a lifetime of teaching French. Because of his energy and daring as a student in Paris the other boys referred to him as "l'americain savage", (He would run in front of a horse-drawn vehicle, jump up on the neckyoke at the end of the pole for a free ride much to the dismay of the driver.) Also taught Spanish. Usually walked to the campus from his home half a mile away on Los Robles. A good sense of humor and a real inspiration to those early students.

5. **Herbert W. Armstrong** -- from Iowa, Founder, and Acting President in 1953 due to Mr. Dillon's absence from the Faculty. Former salesman, boundless energy. "Get all the facts, then decide!" "Recapture True Values!" "The pathway of Science is strewn with the wreckage of many a cherished hypothesis." "Don't believe me, believe the Bible!" And first we were instructed to determine whether the Bible was indeed God's Word. And that a student would never be penalized for an honest disagreement with either the text or the Instructor. "Coming in on a 'shirttail chute'" was a favorite expression in referring to his manner of accomplishing things. And in a humorous mood suggested that the following should be on his tombstone, "The late Mr. Armstrong but he always arrived."

The above five were thus the remainder of that early Faculty and were actively involved in the College in the fall of 1948 when I began as a Freshman. Four additional faculty members left after the first year; Dr. Hoeh and Betty Bates Michel could give a proper evaluation of their qualifications.

By 1953 additional members had been added:

6. **Herman L. Hoeh** -- from Calif., began his teaching career while in elementary school when the teacher needed assistance in teaching a 1st grader to read. Herman's mother had taught him to read the newspaper before allowing him to begin 1st grade. In Mrs. Martin's Freshman Composition he turned in a 20,000 word Term Paper on Termites. His abilities were recognized early and he was assigned in the fall of 1948 the responsibility of Physical Science Survey under the wing of Dr. Taylor. There were three or four students. He became Acting Dean after the death of Dr. Taylor.
7. **Betty Bates Michel** -- from Oklahoma, taught Personality and Poise in the 1952-53 College year; a very effectively taught class and one that added much to the culture of Ambassador.
8. **Richard D. Armstrong** -- eldest son of Mr. H.W. Armstrong, grew up in Oregon, taught the French courses after Prof. Mauler-Hiennecy retired, and under whom he had received years of personal tutoring. Accepted in France as a "native Frenchman" by the natives who were then bewildered to note that his parents were obviously "native Americans". In charge of the Radio Studio and production of recording of high quality. Travels to Europe with parents and later with Herman Hoeh.
9. **Dr. Ralph E. Merrill, M.D.** -- Special Lecturer in his own field as an M.D. Emphasis was on Foods, Nutrition, Health and the avoidance of Disease. A practicing Physician in California.
10. **Walter Westbrook** -- Parttime Instructor in Physical Education, his field was Tennis. Gave remarkable assemblies quoting poetry tirelessly and endlessly.
11. **Theodore Walker** -- Active in many fields; Journalism, Speech, Radio Production, and Psychology, but probably most important in our education was his sponsorship of many field trips in the Los Angeles area which he knew so well. Pioneered The Portfolio and The Envoy.
12. **Jack R. Elliott** -- from Texas, Math Instructor, Physical Education Director which led to many outings to the mountains and beaches, Director of Buildings and Grounds.
13. **Leon Ettinger** -- taught Voice and Singing, and as a surprise to Mr. Armstrong (and the rest of us) put on a program by the newly organized the Ambassador Chorale.
14. **Kenneth C. Herrmann** -- from Wisconsin, student instructor in Geology, first Editor of The Portfolio, Editor of the 1953 Envoy, Acting Registrar after the death of Dr. Taylor. Taught the 2nd semester of 2nd year Bible searching for solutions to the disputes between Theologians and Scientists.

Not to be forgotten are House Mother "Annie Mann"; Superintendent of Buildings and Grounds "Bill" Homberger, who sold his Watermelon patch in Texas and contributed all to the survival of Ambassador College in its hour of need. Nor Mrs. Lisman, "If you can't say something good about someone, don't say anything at all!", a saying she attributed to her mother.

The above mentioned Pioneers brought variety, talent, ideas, energy and a willingness to sacrifice. Their combined qualifications provided a Faculty and Administration competent and willing to build a new College based on True Values.

Today with education in this nation at its lowest ebb, we again seek Accreditation. Yes, this should have been achieved decades ago to give our current Graduates (and any who attended over the years) full value for their time and efforts. Today with an amoral "values" in the social, political, legal, and even religious fields, do we approach other institutions confidently with our request to be "approved"? And are we really aware of the talents and accomplishments of our early Faculty?

There is certainly a "communications gap" and several "generation gaps" between those early Pioneers and the ones called today to build additional "stories" on Ambassador College.

What of our early Graduates? And their Degrees? And Degrees earned in the Ambassador Graduate School of Theology? Are they to be in any way disparaged? Ignored?

If a tree is recognized by its fruit, then consider these: The World Tomorrow Radio and Television Programs, The Plain Truth, The Good News, Tomorrow's World, The Portfolio, The Envoy, God's Sacred Calendar, a great number of booklets and articles written by our Graduates, the three Campuses of Ambassador College, and the expected time when we would be adding a new Campus every year! The staffing of hundreds of local congregations around the world; there were only two (Pasadena and Portland) in 1948.