

**The Liberal Arts  
at  
“The Wheaton of the West” 1940-1946**

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## PREFACE

What has Westmont College desired for its students' liberal arts education, in class and out, over these past seven decades? How have these aims been pursued? What has a Westmont education actually been like for students? My sabbatical of 2006-2007 has been devoted to these questions, with respect to the Emerson years—the founding period of liberal arts at the college, 1940-46.

What follows, then, is “chapter 1” of a work in progress, intended some day to trace the story to the present. But I need help. Keenly aware of touching at every point on significant concerns that are more familiar to others on our campus than to me, I wonder what facts and considerations my colleagues and others could contribute, to enhance the accuracy, perspective, depth, proportion, inclusiveness, etc., of my report. So any constructive critique is most welcome—anything that could make the story of Westmont's first ventures more helpful to the ventures that occupy us today.

This project owes a large debt to the encouragement of provosts Shirley Mullen and Warren Rogers, and Westmont's Professional Development Committee. The registrar Bob Kuntz has been generously forthcoming with his time and records, and Christina Rogers has supplied what I needed on inter-library loan. Faculty and alumni of the early days have provided much helpful information: Eleanor Courtney, Ruth McCreery, Mildreth Neuenschwander, Colette Poore, Ed Potts, Howard Stevenson, Ed and Eleanor Tuggy, Margaret Voskuyl, and Paton Yoder. My wife Anna not only has listened to me at length, but often has enriched my thinking with her insights. To interviewers Roger and Margaret Voskuyl, Lyle Hillegas, and Thelma Bain Kramar I'm grateful for invaluable oral history—and especially to Paul Wilt for his dozens of interviews recorded over decades past. Much of the human interest in the story is derived from his work, as my notes so frequently attest. The same is true of the compendious archival materials belonging to the Thelma Bain Kramar Project—Thelma having persuaded a host of alums from Westmont's first decade to describe college memories and to report on their subsequent life.

Almost all of my unpublished sources are in Westmont's archives (except as indicated). I'm most deeply thankful to our archivist Corey Thomas: for her gracious cooperation, encyclopedic memory, excellent ideas, and unfailing good nature.

John W. Sider  
Westmont College  
August 10, 2007



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## PROLOGUE

*The genesis of the liberal arts at Westmont College is a singular story, because the founders of “proto-Westmont” had in mind something quite different. In 1937 “a large number of young people” in Los Angeles were urging Leland B. Entrekin, pastor of the First Fundamental Church (soon to become Westlake Calvary Church), to establish a Bible institute that they could afford to attend.<sup>1</sup> “Bible institutes were requiring a one hundred and fifty dollar deposit from all incoming students” (as much as a month’s salary for most of Westmont’s first professors); “during the NRA days. . . most of them didn’t have it.”<sup>2</sup> (The National Recovery Administration was created to fight the Great Depression—far from over in 1937.) That September, the Bible-Missionary Institute, “founded by Dr. Elbert McCreery . . . , Dr. John Page, Mrs. Anna Dennis [three Bible professors who had just resigned from Biola] and Mrs. Alexander Kerr,”<sup>3</sup> opened its doors with Leland Entrekin as president. It was committed to education in “the Whole Word of God Free from Fanciful Interpretations,”<sup>4</sup> to fit young Christians for missionary service. Students paid nothing for tuition—just the cost of room and board, and \$10 for a semester’s registration. The first Bible institutes, Nyack in New York City, then Moody in Chicago, had begun with a single purpose, “to reach all classes in all countries” with the gospel by equipping an army of quickly-trained laypersons to second the work of clergy; but during the fundamentalist-modernist conflict they became templates for newly founded schools of orthodox congregations and denominations.<sup>5</sup> The very name of the Bible-Missionary Institute reflected, in its hyphenated elements, these two purposes of orthodoxy and evangelism.*

*As a missionary from 1906 to 1913, Elbert McCreery had devised alphabets for two Sudanese languages, and for one of these he wrote a grammar and translated the gospel of John. His scholarship amply justified an honorary doctorate from his alma mater, Monmouth College. He taught at Moody Bible Institute (1922-27), and he pastored in the United Presbyterian Church in Colorado before coming to Biola in 1929, where (except for one brief interlude) he was dean and professor till 1937. His work in the mid-30s with Camp Wycliffe, forerunner of the Summer Institute of Linguistics, deeply influenced one of his students, Kenneth Pike, who became an eminent force in missionary linguistics.<sup>6</sup> A man of “very impressive stature, physically, mentally, and spiritually,”<sup>7</sup> respected at Westmont as “a model Christian instructor,”<sup>8</sup> he would exert powerful influences for good—many students finding “their directions for their life and work under his teaching.”<sup>9</sup> “He was very dignified and all, but he could really take his hair down.”<sup>10</sup> He was BMI’s dean (later also acting president), and for fifteen months before his retirement in 1947 he served Westmont as acting president.<sup>11</sup>*

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<sup>1</sup> “Prospectus Announcing The Bible-Missionary Institute” [c. 1937], p. 2.

<sup>2</sup> Ruth K. Kerr, interview with Lyle C. Hillegas, July 15, 1963, ed. William Kerr, May 1997, p. 7.

<sup>3</sup> Westmont College *Bulletin*, 1.2 (August 1940), pp. 6-7. In Ruth Kerr’s “History of Westmont College and Academy,” 1941 (unattributed, in that first state of several), she wrote that “The founders were Dr. E. L. McCreery, Rev. L. B. Entrekin, and Mrs. A. H. Kerr.”

<sup>4</sup> “Prospectus,” title page. The information in the next sentence is from p. 5.

<sup>5</sup> William C. Ringenberg, *The Christian College: A History of Protestant Higher Education in America* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1984), p. 158.

<sup>6</sup> Paul C. Wilt, “Elbert L. McCreery (1877-1955),” *passim*.

<sup>7</sup> Kenneth M. Monroe, interviews with Paul C. Wilt, June and October 1981, p. 18.

<sup>8</sup> Charles Courtney, letter to Thelma Bain Kramar, August 25, 1993, Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

<sup>9</sup> Ruth McCreery, interview with Paul C. Wilt, January 27, 1990, p. 6.

<sup>10</sup> Margaret Anderson, interview with Paul C. Wilt, July 14, 1988, p. 6.

<sup>11</sup> Paul C. Wilt, “Elbert L. McCreery (1877-1955),” p. 13.

Anna Dennis had graduated from UCLA, had taught in Los Angeles city schools and in Shanghai,<sup>12</sup> and had been the only woman on Biola's faculty. "The quintessence of Christian kindness and grace,"<sup>13</sup> she was among the best-loved of Westmont's first faculty.<sup>14</sup> "She had such a regal way about her. She would always hold [her] head up and she would say, 'Don't grovel. Don't let people walk on you. Hold up your head! You're a daughter of the King!'"<sup>15</sup> She regularly taught a course in the life of Christ, and in her courses on Leviticus, Hebrews, and other scriptures she fascinated students with Old Testament typology, especially of the Israelites' tabernacle.<sup>16</sup> And "it was a very deep, spiritual experience to study the Psalms under her."<sup>17</sup> Already elderly when BMI opened, she would teach only part-time at Westmont; yet her influence was deep and diverse. For example, she "could never talk about the lost world without a tear in her eye."<sup>18</sup> She retired in 1945, rather moving with the college from Los Angeles to Santa Barbara. Although there were many women among the college's early faculty, until 1991 no other woman taught religious studies at Westmont.

At Westmont's founding John Page was seventy, but he taught through the whole first decade. He had spent fourteen years as a Congregational pastor, fifteen more at Moody Bible Institute teaching homiletics and Bible doctrine and interpretation, and five at Biola, to which he was called in 1929 to replace G. Campbell Morgan. At that juncture Wheaton College honored him with the D.D. degree. After three more years back at Moody he came to BMI.<sup>19</sup> When the new school became Western Bible College in 1939, in the first issue of the student newspaper, *The Western Horizon*, he began a regular column of biblically-based counsel, "Student Querier," devoted to answering readers' questions.<sup>20</sup> "A great man, great influence, great teacher,"<sup>21</sup> he endeared himself to students with his "genuine love for the Bible and . . . for Christ,"<sup>22</sup> his chapel talks,<sup>23</sup> and his "strange sense of humor"<sup>24</sup>—keeping them "spellbound" in his survey of the whole Bible.<sup>25</sup> As a popular conference speaker he was "always an excellent representative of the college"<sup>26</sup>; and in that capacity, despite his advanced years, he traveled by bus with the choir to the Pacific northwest.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> *Bulletin* 1.1 (May 1940), p. 25.

<sup>13</sup> Charles Courtney, letter to Thelma Bain Kramar, August 25, 1993, Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

<sup>14</sup> "Meet the Faculty," *Horizon* 3.5 (February 11, 1944), p. 3.

<sup>15</sup> Margaret Anderson, interview with Paul C. Wilt, July 14, 1988, p. 6.

<sup>16</sup> Florence Wallace, unaddressed note, n.d., Thelma Bain Kramar Project; Lois Brunmeier Henderson, letter to Thelma Bain Kramar, January 26, 1993, Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

<sup>17</sup> Eleanor Tuggy, interview with Paul C. Wilt, January 22, 1988, p. 7.

<sup>18</sup> Donald R. Dilworth, "A brief narrative of my life's connection with the Bible Missionary Institute," p. 1, Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

<sup>19</sup> Alisa Joy Von Schimmelmann, "John C. Page (1870-1962)," pp. 1-2.

<sup>20</sup> E.g., *The Western Horizon* 1.2 (February 13, 1940), p. 3: "Is it possible for a nominal Christian and another Christian who earnestly desires to do God's will, to find happiness together?"

<sup>21</sup> Marilyn Danielson Stevenson, interview with Paul C. Wilt, December 10, 2003, p. 5.

<sup>22</sup> Robert Campbell, interview with Paul C. Wilt, February 7, 1996, p. 5.

<sup>23</sup> Louise Olson Burks, interview with Paul C. Wilt, August 21, 1991, p. 2.

<sup>24</sup> Margaret Anderson, interview with Paul C. Wilt, July 14, 1988, p. 6.

<sup>25</sup> Robert Ross, interview with Paul C. Wilt, January 30, 1988, p. 2.

<sup>26</sup> Wallace L. Emerson, Report to the trustees, December 2, 1943, p. 8.

<sup>27</sup> Helen Catherwood Strandberg, interview with Roger J. Voskuyl, February 21, 1992, p. 1; Louella Lofgren, letter to Thelma Bain Kramar, January 21, 1991, Thelma Bain Kramar Project.



Seed money of \$4000 had come for BMI from Ruth Kalbus Kerr,<sup>28</sup> a member of Leland Entrekin's congregation and director of the glass manufacturing business left to her (along with six children) at her husband's death in 1925.<sup>29</sup> For most of Westmont's first three decades she served as secretary of the trustees' board. Her gifts met diverse needs: from salaries, scholarships,<sup>30</sup> and choir uniforms,<sup>31</sup> to buildings<sup>32</sup> and their improvement.<sup>33</sup> Her attention ranged everywhere, from changing a light bulb<sup>34</sup> to replacing an inadequate kitchen range.<sup>35</sup> True, "her giving didn't always coincide with the date of the salary checks"; and to faculty and administrators, in her methods she sometimes resembled a corporate CEO—once informing Paton Yoder, then academic dean: "I'm going to start a nursing program."<sup>36</sup> (These were, of course, days when trustee approval was required for everything from a new catalog to an increase in the budget of the student newspaper.)<sup>37</sup> But without her devotion Westmont could hardly have survived its first years.

To sustain BMI's free tuition the founders hoped to attract gifts from a sympathetic constituency,<sup>38</sup> and to hire self-sacrificing faculty possessed of enough idealistic vision to work very hard for very little.<sup>39</sup> But because three of the five original BMI faculty (as well as its superintendent of women) had just resigned from the Bible Institute of Los Angeles, some potential donors regarded the new school as a "spite work" or a redundancy.<sup>40</sup> By the end of 1938 gifts had proved scanty, expenses excessive, and the situation critical. (The faculty waived four months' back pay.)<sup>41</sup> At a special meeting of board and faculty on December 30, Ruth Kerr, now chair of the board, explained why: "The Bible-Missionary Institute . . . has not been conducted along the lines originally intended." President Entrekin (who had resigned the previous summer) was instructed at the outset not to count on more from her than the original \$4000; yet without her knowledge he had given Dean McCreery a free hand "to employ as large a faculty as necessary with no restrictions as to salaries."<sup>42</sup> Moreover, after BMI's first year of operation, Ruth Kerr had begun "hearing from the mission field that they wanted students who had a more complete training than just the ordinary Bible courses that the Bible Institute of Los Angeles (Biola) would offer."<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Minutes of a "Special Meeting of the Board of Directors and Faculty of the Bible Missionary Institute," December 30, 1938.

<sup>29</sup> "Memoir," *In Memoriam: Alexander Kerr*, c. 1925.

<sup>30</sup> John Lundberg, interview with Paul C. Wilt, August 24, 1984, p. 16.

<sup>31</sup> Helen Catherwood Strandberg, interview with Roger J. Voskuyl, February 21, 1992, p. 6.

<sup>32</sup> E.g., Wallace Emerson, letter to Paton Yoder, March 19, 1940; Margaret Voskuyl, interview with Paul C. Wilt, January 2, 1985, p. 7.

<sup>33</sup> Wallace L. Emerson, Agenda for the trustees' meeting of June 16, 1944.

<sup>34</sup> Louella Lofgren, letter to Thelma Bain Kramar, January 21, 1991, Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

<sup>35</sup> Ruth K. Kerr, letter to Wallace L. Emerson, October 2, 1945.

<sup>36</sup> Paton Yoder, interview with Paul C. Wilt, June 14, 1984, pp. 3, 12.

<sup>37</sup> President's Agenda for the trustees' meeting of June 16, 1944; WCSA Minutes, March 6, 1946.

<sup>38</sup> James E. Herron (BMI's business manager), "Bible Institute Life and Program," pp. 2, 4-6.

<sup>39</sup> Minutes of a "Special Meeting of the Board of Directors and Faculty of the Bible Missionary Institute," December 30, 1938.

<sup>40</sup> Minutes of a "Special Meeting of the Board of Directors, Manager and Superintendents of the Bible Missionary Institute," October 10, 1938.

<sup>41</sup> Waiver letters of Elbert McCreery and six others, to the BMI Board of Directors, December 30, 1938.

<sup>42</sup> Minutes of a "Special Meeting of the Board of Directors and Faculty of the Bible Missionary Institute," December 30, 1938.

<sup>43</sup> Ruth K. Kerr, interview with Lyle C. Hillegas, July 15, 1963, ed. William Kerr, May 1997, p. 9.

Accordingly she now abandoned the idea of a Bible institute per se, and strongly endorsed a recourse first proposed by Mabel M. Culter, the school's Superintendent of Women<sup>44</sup>—combining a junior college program with the Bible curriculum. Faculty and board considered other options: modifying the existing curriculum, or merging with Biola, or moving to San Diego or the San Francisco area, or even shutting down for good after the spring semester of 1939.<sup>45</sup> Very quickly, however, they adopted Ruth Kerr's proposal. "This will be virtually a Junior Wheaton College," she announced to students, expressing the hope that eventually it would be "a large Wheaton of the West." No longer would "students desiring both Bible and College [have] to sacrifice either." For Bible courses there would still be no tuition fee. Thus was born Western Bible College, billed in its sole bulletin as "the only school of its kind west of the Rocky Mountains" (p. 1). An epigraph from Isaiah 43:19 read: "Behold, I will do a new thing; . . . shall ye not know it?" (p. 4). A month later, with the new semester, junior college courses were in place.

What if the Bible-Missionary Institute had successfully realized its original conception? It might well have occupied that niche indefinitely. There might never have been a Westmont College. Or at a later time something like Westmont might have grown out of BMI, just as the Bible Institute of Los Angeles eventually became a college of the liberal arts. Instead, for this initial step toward the liberal arts, financial exigency inspired a plan which at first was mainly a fall-back alternative to a Bible institute. Yet other rationales for junior college courses materialized quickly. Chief among these was students' opportunity, unique then on the Pacific Coast, to pursue liberal arts and Bible school programs at once. And just one academic year would pass before the school, reorganized a second time and renamed Westmont College, set out to become "a liberal arts college with a strong Bible department"<sup>46</sup> which eventually, its first president hoped, would become "one of the strongest . . . in the United States."<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Minutes of a "Special Meeting of the Board of Directors, Manager and Superintendents of the Bible Missionary Institute," October 10, 1938.

<sup>45</sup> Ruth K. Kerr, address to BMI students, January 3, 1939, p. 1. The quotations following are from p. 3.

<sup>46</sup> Paton Yoder, email to John W. Sider, November 10, 2006.

<sup>47</sup> "Westmont Plans Outlined," *Western Horizon* 1.6 (May 13, 1940), p. 1.

## THE FOUNDING OF WESTMONT COLLEGE

A school that was thoroughly scholarly, thoroughly evangelical . . .  
Wallace Emerson<sup>48</sup>

During that whole year and long after, “Wheaton of the West” was a much-repeated phrase. In searching for Westmont’s first president (WBC had none), it was natural that the board should look to Wheaton, the country’s most influential Christian college of the liberal arts. In May 1939 Ruth Kerr sounded out Dr. Wallace Leroy Emerson (A.B., Huron College, Huron, SD; A.M., Stanford; Ph.D., USC), dean of students and professor of education and psychology at Wheaton, who had arrived there in 1932 with more than twenty years’ experience as public school administrator, college professor, and dean.<sup>49</sup>

For his calling as founding president he was richly and diversely endowed. First, he had the charisma to attract and energize good faculty and students. Though “soft-spoken,”<sup>50</sup> he “inspired . . . tremendous loyalty,”<sup>51</sup> called forth people’s unacknowledged potentials,<sup>52</sup> and articulated “deep convictions” both “forcefully and clearly.”<sup>53</sup> What he told one class of new students “made a lasting impression” on Colette Poore: “He said that so many students paid out a lot of money to go to college and then spent an inordinate amount of time trying to see how much work they could get out of doing. He encouraged us to make the most of our opportunity and to learn all we could.”<sup>54</sup> (Westmont’s name was his suggestion too: “the college is in the West among the mountains”<sup>55</sup>—though forty years later he did not remember “who came up with that.”)<sup>56</sup> Second, he had intelligence, vision, and formidable breadth of knowledge to give admirable shape to a liberal arts program. “A superb teacher,”<sup>57</sup> he displayed “an insatiable desire to know everything about everything,” along with a ready facility of synthesis.<sup>58</sup> He had played cello in a string quartet, and he pleased John Hubbard with his grasp of issues in the music department.<sup>59</sup> As a student Robert Campbell was struck both by the range of his personal library (“scholarly volumes” alongside “John R. Rice’s *Bobbed Hair, Bossy Wives, and Women Preachers*”) and by his versatility in the classroom: “Emerson substituted for [Cora Reno] in biology; he did very well. . . . Paton Yoder was sick for a few days; I felt that substitute professor Emerson was only staying ahead of us about thirty pages in the book, but he taught ancient history very effectively. He was really a Renaissance man.”<sup>60</sup> Third, the president had the humility, spiritual devotion, and selflessly caring spirit to make the most of what resources there were, while

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<sup>48</sup> Wallace L. Emerson, interview with Lyle C. Hillegas, 1963, pp. 4-5.

<sup>49</sup> Lauren Wallace, “Wallace Leroy Emerson (1886-1987),” pp. 1-2.

<sup>50</sup> Paton Yoder, e-mail to Paul C. Wilt, May 30, 2006.

<sup>51</sup> Paton Yoder, interview with Paul C. Wilt, June 14, 1984, p. 6.

<sup>52</sup> Margaret Voskuyl, in Roger J. Voskuyl’s interview with Joel and Helen Catherwood Strandberg, February 21, 1992, p. 5.

<sup>53</sup> John Hubbard, interview with Paul C. Wilt, October 7, 1981, p. 6.

<sup>54</sup> Colette Poore, untitled essay, April 4, 1994, Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

<sup>55</sup> “‘Westmont’ is New Name,” *Western Horizon* 1.6 (May 13, 1940), p. 1.

<sup>56</sup> Wallace L. Emerson, interview with Paul C. Wilt and Roger J. Voskuyl, January 5, 1984, p. 6.

<sup>57</sup> H. Earl Kuester, letter to Thelma Bain Kramar, January 12, 1993, Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

<sup>58</sup> Margaret Voskuyl, interview with Paul C. Wilt, January 2, 1985, p. 4.

<sup>59</sup> John Hubbard, interview with Paul C. Wilt, October 7, 1981, p. 3.

<sup>60</sup> Robert Campbell, interview with Paul C. Wilt, February 7, 1996, p. 5.

fostering an atmosphere of warmth. “He gave it his all against problems and harassments that would have made a person with lesser motivation and vision give up.”<sup>61</sup> His sense of humor and self-irony were admirable; “when . . . asked what his title was he would say he was something like the chief custodian.”<sup>62</sup> In 1940 he spent a large portion of his savings to furnish the auditorium with chairs,<sup>63</sup> and he once bought the college a bass viol (trying, unsuccessfully, to get either Peggy McCreery or Mildreth Tinkham to take it up).<sup>64</sup> The trustees had to press him to accept a reasonable travel allowance.<sup>65</sup> He “would just do anything if he found that one of the faculty members or one of the students was in need.”<sup>66</sup> John Hubbard called him “one of the most supportive superiors I ever worked for, and I use the word ‘superior’ advisedly.”<sup>67</sup> The president’s office door “was always open to the students”;<sup>68</sup> in his regular column in the student newspaper *The Horizon*, he was pictured smiling and saying “Won’t you come in?”<sup>69</sup> Though Lotus Graham was never able to take a course with him she regarded him as another parent.<sup>70</sup> Eleanor Lewer could never forget his “warm acceptance of this shy, barely-turned-seventeen refugee from China.”<sup>71</sup> *The Citadel* of 1954 records his return for a Westmont chapel, and his remark: “We used to pray . . . not that Westmont would be famous or even accredited, but that it would be loved.”<sup>72</sup> Of course he had shortcomings. One that affected the college generally was financial ineptitude (no kinder word will serve)—already an acute frustration to Ruth Kerr during the first year.<sup>73</sup> So enthusiastic was he, that often he would incur, for most worthy ends, significant costs with no funds in sight. Paton Yoder, who “almost idolized him,”<sup>74</sup> characterized his style of hiring this way: “Here’s a person I’d like to have, whether we need him particularly, or whether we can possibly finance the thing.”<sup>75</sup> Another weakness contributed to his ill health and consequent resignation—a tendency to micro-management, even to “details of purchasing a carpet.”<sup>76</sup> This fault, of course, displayed another way his spontaneously caring spirit, a key element of his charisma. One reflection of his humble obedience and trust in our Lord’s purposes was his confession, decades later: “What I was here for, I’ve never been quite able to figure out.”<sup>77</sup>

Ruth Kerr’s overture interested him enough that he spent much of the summer of 1939 in Los Angeles exploring the prospects; and, back at Wheaton during the next academic year, he agreed to accept the presidency, provided that the appointment and

<sup>61</sup> H. Earl Kuester, letter to Thelma Bain Kramar, January 12, 1993, Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

<sup>62</sup> Thelma Bain Kramar, interview with Paul C. Wilt, August 21/22, 1991, p. 3.

<sup>63</sup> Wallace L. Emerson, interview with Roger J. Voskuyl and Paul C. Wilt, January 5, 1984, pp. 8-9.

<sup>64</sup> Peggy McCreery Thompson, interview with Roger J. and Margaret Voskuyl, July 26, 1990, p. 5; Mildreth Tinkham, autobiographical sketch, c. 1994, Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

<sup>65</sup> Trustee Minutes, November 8, 1945.

<sup>66</sup> Ruth McCreery, interview with Paul C. Wilt, January 27, 1990, p. 5; so too Dilwyn Studebaker, interview with Paul C. Wilt, August 21/22, 1991, p. 2.

<sup>67</sup> John Hubbard, letter to Thelma Bain Kramar, May 27, 1994, Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

<sup>68</sup> Dilwyn Studebaker, letter to Thelma Bain Kramar, April 21, 1994, Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

<sup>69</sup> E.g., *Horizon* 3.1 (October 29, 1943), p. 2.

<sup>70</sup> Lotus Graham Campbell, interview with Paul C. Wilt February 7, 1996, p. 3.

<sup>71</sup> Eleanor Lewer Courtney, letter to Thelma Bain Kramar, April 29, 1994, Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

<sup>72</sup> *Citadel* 1954, p. 71.

<sup>73</sup> Ruth K. Kerr, letter to William R. Litzenberg, August 15, 1941.

<sup>74</sup> Paton Yoder, letter to Thelma Bain Kramar, May 16, 1994, Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

<sup>75</sup> Paton Yoder, interview with Paul C. Wilt, June 14, 1984, p. 7.

<sup>76</sup> John Hubbard, interview with Paul C. Wilt, October 7, 1981, p. 6.

<sup>77</sup> Wallace L. Emerson, interview with Lyle C. Hillegas, March 1963, p. 7.

dismissal of faculty would be his prerogative alone<sup>78</sup>—and also that the transformation of Western Bible College into a college of the liberal arts would be entire. He was thinking of claims such as Biola's, that "the young person who takes four years of study at Biola with the Bible as his chief textbook, will receive cultural advantages equal to those acquired in a similar period of study of the arts and sciences."<sup>79</sup> He disagreed vigorously: "Unfortunately many fundamentalists and conservatives have had the feeling somehow that the Bible Institute could furnish a leadership comparable to that furnished by modernistic colleges. This is not so, and is almost too obvious to need discussion." He noted, for instance, that the Latin American Mission would accept "only college and seminary graduates."<sup>80</sup> Moreover he consistently resisted pressures to add purely practical courses for the prospective missionary, such as those characteristic of Bible institutes. "I felt," he recalled, "that the most good that could be done to the young people of our clientele was the liberal arts concept with plenty of Bible, plenty of supporting material to the Bible and then very, very good basic work in math and science and languages and things of that kind. . . . These young people are going to have to go out and fight the devil on a number of fronts, all of which requires an intelligent understanding of their own position."<sup>81</sup> In thus rejecting the anti-intellectual tendencies of some evangelicals he was echoing a celebrated address of J. Gresham Machen, the champion of theological conservatives at Princeton Seminary:

Instead of destroying the arts and sciences or being indifferent to them, let us cultivate them with all the enthusiasm of the veriest humanist, but at the same time consecrate them to the service of our God. . . . Instead of making our theological seminaries merely centres of religious emotion, we shall make them battle-grounds of the faith, where, . . . in the hard school of intellectual struggle [students] learn to substitute for the unthinking faith of childhood the profound convictions of full-grown men.<sup>82</sup>

While the Bible could shed light on other sources of learning, the reverse was just as true. "There is a type of Christian student," he wrote later, "who, if a psychological or philosophical fact be not immediately referred to a verse in Scripture, . . . refers it to the 'limbo' of . . . unimportant facts. . . . The late R. A. Torrey . . . said that 'he who understands only the Bible does not understand the Bible.'"<sup>83</sup> This emphasis, which Harold Heie argues has been neglected among evangelicals in more recent times,<sup>84</sup> was to Emerson in 1940 an essential.

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<sup>78</sup> Wallace L. Emerson, interview with Lyle C. Hillegas, March 1963, p. 2.

<sup>79</sup> Anon., "Give Us More Bible," *The King's Business: The Bible Family Magazine* 27.6 (June 1936), p. 219.

<sup>80</sup> Wallace L. Emerson, Report to the trustees, December 2, 1943, p. 3. The college had entered upon its fourth year before the president found leisure to make this first of his major reports to the trustees. It spelled out his vision in manifesto fashion.

<sup>81</sup> Wallace L. Emerson, interview with Roger J. Voskuyl and Paul C. Wilt, January 5, 1984, p. 7.

<sup>82</sup> J. Gresham Machen, "The Scientific Preparation of the Minister," address at the opening of Princeton Theological Seminary's 101<sup>st</sup> session, September 20, 1912; published in *The Princeton Theological Review* 11.1 (1913), p. 13.

<sup>83</sup> Wallace L. Emerson, *Outline of Psychology: A Basic Psychology with Christian Implications* (Wheaton: Van Kampen, 1953), p. 3. Reuben A. Torrey, an evangelist associated with Dwight L. Moody, later served as president of Biola.

<sup>84</sup> Harold Heie, "What Can the Evangelical/Interdenominational Tradition Contribute to Christian Higher Education?" pp. 245-60 in *Models for Christian Higher Education: Strategies for Survival and Success in the Twenty-First Century*, ed. Richard T. Hughes and William B. Adrian (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), p. 250.

Thus “President Emerson, with his charisma, became the Moses of this endeavor.”<sup>85</sup> Keith Rees, fresh from his doctorate, and offered a position in German, “was immediately captivated” by the man and his vision.<sup>86</sup> With special attention to “top-ranking students”<sup>87</sup> and alumni, Emerson persuaded a troop of Wheatonites to join him: Margaret Bailey (English), Elinor Berg (library), Helen Catherwood (music), John Gehr and Mildred Seymour (physical education), Fred Leach (philosophy), Jane McNally (Greek), Cora Reno and Elroy Robinson (biology), Clarence Stauffer and Margaret Yoder (Christian education). One of the continuing faculty from Western Bible College, Ruth McCreery, had two Wheaton degrees in Christian education, and several other faculty were graduates of other colleges of the liberal arts.<sup>88</sup>

While still at Wheaton the new president wrote: “I am hoping that all of our departmental heads will have their doctorates, with the possible exception of art and Bible.”<sup>89</sup> (In art, as he knew, the terminal degree is often not the doctorate; and Elbert McCreery, possessed of formidable credentials but no earned doctorate, would head the Bible department as at WBC.) This optimism, like the hope for early accreditation, would not be borne out; yet of the twenty-nine faculty who taught during the first year (including part-timers), six held earned doctorates and twelve others had master’s degrees.<sup>90</sup> His enlistment of that first faculty was the more significant because the time for starting up was so brief. Until Ruth Kerr gave assurance in March 1940 that the venture would be underwritten, financial uncertainty delayed the formation of the faculty and the curriculum alike, and the first catalog was not published till early May.<sup>91</sup> Liberal arts would require an expanded library; accordingly in the spring and summer Elinor Berg was seeking faculty advice about acquisitions to support fall courses.<sup>92</sup> But in mid-June it was still not altogether clear what those courses would be.<sup>93</sup>

It may be hard nowadays to appreciate fully what a feat Westmont’s founding was. In the prior two decades conservative evangelicals had been able to start up “only a handful of liberal arts colleges and seminaries,”<sup>94</sup> though in the 30s Bible institutes proliferated dramatically.<sup>95</sup> Financial sacrifice, risk-taking, and sheer grit were essential to the launching of the enterprise, but dedication to the founders’ high principles, because it drove those other forces, was most important of all.

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<sup>85</sup> Paton Yoder, e-mail to Shirley A. Mullen, April 14, 2005; response to his citation at a faculty forum in the Founders’ Room, April 7, 2005.

<sup>86</sup> Keith Rees, interview with Paul C. Wilt, December 30, 1989, p. 1.

<sup>87</sup> Cora A. Reno, interview with Roger J. Voskuyl, November 12, 1985, p. 2.

<sup>88</sup> *Bulletin* 1.1 (May 1940), pp. 24-29.

<sup>89</sup> Wallace L. Emerson, letter to Paton Yoder, February 5, 1940.

<sup>90</sup> *Bulletin* 1.1 (May 1940-41), pp. 24-29.

<sup>91</sup> Wallace L. Emerson, letters to Paton Yoder, March 19 and April 29, 1940.

<sup>92</sup> Elinor Berg, letters to Paton Yoder, April 22, May 14, and July 18, 1940.

<sup>93</sup> Wallace L. Emerson, letter to Paton Yoder, June 18, 1940.

<sup>94</sup> Virginia Lieson Brerton, “The Bible Schools and Conservative Evangelical Higher Education, 1880-1940,” pp. 110-136 in *Making Higher Education Christian: The History and Mission of Evangelical Colleges in America*, ed. Joel A. Carpenter and Kenneth W. Shipps (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), p. 113.

<sup>95</sup> George Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture: The Shaping of Twentieth-Century Evangelicalism: 1870-1925* (New York and Oxford: Oxford UP, 1980), p. 194.

## PURPOSES

Liberal arts college faculties seldom state clearly what they mean by liberal or general education. Perhaps they do not know.

Director of a Progressive Education Association study, 1942<sup>96</sup>

As to what “the liberal arts” meant, the first catalog had only this terse statement of purpose:

In every step which has led up to the present organization of Westmont College, the goal has been careful scholarship, sound doctrine, and consistent Christian living. Westmont College is interdenominational and evangelical, . . . that sound Christian doctrine is thoroughly congruous with sound scholarship—in fact, that it is the only way of thinking which gives ultimate and eternal meaning to all knowledge.<sup>97</sup>

Wheaton proved a sufficient model to begin with, especially as represented in the president’s personal vision and pervasive influence.<sup>98</sup> Despite pressing practical matters of starting up, the faculty found time to “talk a great deal” about what they “wanted Westmont to be as a college,” i.e., “to combine faith and learning” for that generation.<sup>99</sup> That fall they heard “a panel discussion entitled ‘A Survey of the Total Program of the Christian Liberal Arts College,’ with its aims and objectives, . . . conducted by the officers of the administration.”<sup>100</sup>

A more expansive “Statement of Purpose” was introduced in the catalog for 1942-43<sup>101</sup> and reprinted annually during Emerson’s years. It made the college’s evangelical Christian stance the first priority, quoting in this epigraph, “. . . THAT IN ALL THINGS HE MIGHT HAVE THE PREEMINENCE,” Pauline language that underlies Westmont’s Latin motto, “Christus Primatum Tenens.” The statement declared that “there is one pre-eminent Ruler who commands the supreme allegiance of mankind: the Lord Jesus Christ.” A summary declaration of purpose echoed Jesus’ Christ’s compassion for sheep without a shepherd:

. . . to prepare young people whose hearts have been stirred within them by the contemplation of a Christless world to go out as courageous and intelligent leaders, in distant mission fields or in home churches, in schools and homes, in business and industry, in every profession and walk of life, as God may lead them.

So concerned was the president about preparing students “to go back into the various churches as more efficient and more zealous workers” that he welcomed a proposal, never acted upon, that students’ denominations should “upon demand have a course in their own particular church polity.”<sup>102</sup> Moreover he urged that education for Christian life meant diverse nurture of students’ varied talents and temperaments: “Somebody used to say that you could always tell a Harvard man, but you couldn’t tell him much.

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<sup>96</sup> Quoted by Bruce A. Kimball, *Orators and Philosophers: A History of the Idea of Liberal Education* (New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1986), p. 196.

<sup>97</sup> *Bulletin* 1.1 (May 1940), p. 9.

<sup>98</sup> Margaret Voskuyl, interview with John W. Sider, February 12, 2007, pp. 1, 12.

<sup>99</sup> Margaret Voskuyl, interview with Paul C. Wilt, January 2, 1985, pp. 9, 11.

<sup>100</sup> Westmont Faculty Minutes, October 22, 1940.

<sup>101</sup> *Bulletin*, 3.2 (May 1942), p. 3.

<sup>102</sup> Wallace L. Emerson, Agenda for the trustees’ meeting of June 16, 1944.

Well, we didn't want people to be able to tell a Westmont man. . . . I've had some expression since then of gratitude on the part of students that . . . no attempt at all was made to push them into a mold."<sup>103</sup>

With a view to ensuring that "graduation will mark only the beginning of intellectual and spiritual growth," the Statement of Purpose articulated six particular aims: of biblical understanding, social awareness, bodily well-being, and that durable triad of goodness, truth, and beauty.

First, as to *biblical understanding*:

Westmont College seeks first of all to teach its students to study the Word of God in a scholarly and reverent way and to find in it the source spring of all spiritual power, the revealing light on every moral and ethical problem, the sword of God unsheathed against all sin and error.

To the trustees the president stressed the urgency of the college's spiritual mission.<sup>104</sup> Why did America need new colleges "to re-emphasize the evangelical viewpoint"? The first American colleges' orthodoxy had given way to secularization in the French and Indian Wars, and the agnostic effects of the alliance with France after 1776, and the Unitarian movement. What would it take to restore the nation's spiritual health? Not Christian higher education by itself (which "without periodical spiritual awakenings is likely to run off into Phariseeism") and not revival alone (which "most frequently runs off into fanaticism"). Rather, the two must work in concert, as in Charles G. Finney's preaching and his leadership of Oberlin. Unfortunately, he wrote, "we have allowed the enemy to furnish all the material for thinking . . . even the theological seminaries." Still worse, "those antagonistic to evangelical Christianity . . . not only control the means of education but . . . the means by which the Christian church can be prevented from rebuilding its educational structure, except at a tremendous disadvantage." The ideal recourse would be an evangelical equivalent of the Catholic University of America. (In this he belied, for his time at Westmont, the indictment half a century later that "for too long the Wheatons, Calvins, Asburys, Westmonts, and Gordons have compared themselves only with each other . . . instead of with Oberlin, Swarthmore, Georgetown, and Notre Dame," despite the urgent reality that "we ought to know more about the requirements of an institution of quality in the modern world.")<sup>105</sup> An evangelical university, however, seemed a highly unlikely prospect. "We have to . . . make of Westmont the very strongest possible influence on the West Coast" in facilities, faculty, and divinely-directed policy—even though this would mean, for the foreseeable future, aiming to accomplish a great deal with very limited resources. For example, although "the modern college professor . . . is expected to keep up to the level of university and college professors . . . whose salaries are usually more adequate," he acknowledged that "usually there is no leisure . . . [for] research and scholarly writing . . . in the work of a young institution."<sup>106</sup>

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<sup>103</sup> Wallace L. Emerson, interview with Lyle C. Hillegas, March 1963, p. 5.

<sup>104</sup> Wallace L. Emerson, Report to the trustees, December 2, 1943, pp. 2-5.

<sup>105</sup> Nathan O. Hatch "Evangelical Colleges and the Challenge of Christian Thinking," pp. 155-171 in *Making Higher Education Christian: The History and Mission of Evangelical Colleges in America*, ed. Joel A. Carpenter and Kenneth W. Shipps (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), pp. 159-60.

<sup>106</sup> Wallace L. Emerson, Report to the trustees, December 2, 1943, p. 32.



Second, as to *truth*, the statement of purpose embraced learning both inherited and innovative:

Westmont College seeks to introduce its students to the liberal arts and sciences in such a way that they will always be able and eager to learn from the experience of the past, adding in their turn to the treasures of knowledge and wisdom.

The general education requirements, as we will see, attest the college's commitment to the learning of the past. As to new discoveries, however, the president observed that genuinely evangelical colleges were not yet notably scholarly. Only a handful, he wrote, "rate at all" with accrediting agencies, while conservative Christian scholarship is a rare article. He saw Wheaton and Calvin as academically "somewhat above average," but there was "no Christian institution . . . [with] as many as half a dozen first class departments, or one is almost to say, that has as many as half a dozen first class scholars."<sup>107</sup> He hoped rather quickly to attract eminent scholar-teachers who would raise the standard of Christian higher education: "I shall not be happy until two-thirds of our teaching force have doctorates, with no one on the faculty who does not have at least a master's degree." Then students could receive the best encouragement to augment "in their turn . . . the treasures of knowledge."

Third, as to *goodness*:

Westmont college seeks to inculcate in its students the ability to think and to discriminate between truth and falsehood, nobility and baseness; and, above all, unshaken by personal advantage or disadvantage, ever to have the courage of their convictions.

The grave crisis of World War II dramatized for the president the fact that "while we have been talking peace, we have forgotten that 'there is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked.'" Christian leaders must rise up to counteract the common belief among the young that war is the supreme evil "because there is no hereafter and because there are no moral sanctions worth mentioning." Thus many young people conclude: "If I could be assured of any state of society where food and drink, a fair amount of leisure, bodily and mental enjoyment . . . may be obtained, what do I care about country, or differences of ideology?"<sup>108</sup> Characteristic of his concern for ethical matters closer to home was his wish for more music education than was customary in liberal arts colleges, partly to promote high-principled service to churches: "Church music sometimes has been a stumbling block"—choirs in particular being "notorious for their bickerings, carnality, and purely professional viewpoint."<sup>109</sup>

Fourth, as to *beauty*:

Westmont College seeks to make its students sensitive to beauty in every form, that they may have an abiding delight in literature, music, art, and nature.

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<sup>107</sup> Wallace L. Emerson, Report to the trustees, December 2, 1943, pp. 3, 5. The quotation following is from p. 22.

<sup>108</sup> Wallace L. Emerson, "The Emergency in American Education," *Bulletin* 1.3 (November 1940), pp. 2-3.

<sup>109</sup> Wallace L. Emerson, Report to the trustees, December 2, 1943, p. 25.

In those first years the music department had as large a faculty as any other, and the president envisioned the day when the library would house “a comprehensive collection of . . . Christian hymns.” He also recommended “that as soon as the right individual can be secured, an art department be added”,<sup>110</sup> and by 1945 he was proposing that the English department might initiate graduate work.<sup>111</sup>

Fifth, as to *social awareness*:

Westmont College seeks to foster in its students the capacity to enjoy human companionship to the full, with hearts constantly sensitive to human suffering and human need in both the physical and the spiritual realms.

With respect to human need, Wallace Emerson’s textbook in psychology criticized behaviorists and Freudians for making the individual “the victim rather than the aggressor” in human conflicts—with the evil effects of this belief on social and political awareness:

The state of mind engendered by these two psychological viewpoints has not only conditioned our thinking with respect to our own local and national legal procedures but has so conditioned us morally that we respond but feebly to such external criminal monstrosities as the polit-bureau and to the bloodthirstiness and savagery of Communist leadership of China. Most of us can still remember the lack of any moral indignation against the Japanese massacres of helpless civilians (the Nanking massacre of 20,000) until such time as it began to affect our own families after Pearl Harbor.<sup>112</sup>

The president hoped also to initiate graduate work in Christian education and missions—the latter so that Westmont could educate missionaries “on a higher level than has been attempted before.”<sup>113</sup> And at a time when many students were looking forward to careers in Christian ministry, the faculty held out a vision of broader scope. For example, while Elbert McCreery was still at Biola he had challenged Bill Lewis and others in a summer linguistics course to think beyond their occupations:

The good Dr. . . . put in a little parenthetical remark to the effect that we young fellows no doubt had hopes of doing some great work for the Lord on the foreign field. I was planning South America, the other three to Africa. He paused to say that likely the greatest thing we would accomplish would be to get married and live out our lives as a demonstration before the people where we served of what God intended a Christian home and the people in it to be like.<sup>114</sup>

Sixth, as to *bodily well-being*:

Westmont College seeks to have its students honor God in their bodies by clean living and healthful exercise, acquiring habits and skills which will enable them always to live fully for God.

Sports activities were intended not for body-building but for “vigorous and sound health”; not to promote personal or institutional reputation, but “so to train the

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<sup>110</sup> Wallace L. Emerson, Report to the trustees, December 2, 1943, pp. 26, 23.

<sup>111</sup> Faculty minutes, March 15, 1945.

<sup>112</sup> Wallace L. Emerson, *Outline of Psychology: A Basic Psychology with Christian Implications* (Wheaton: Van Kampen, 1953), p. 209.

<sup>113</sup> Wallace L. Emerson, Report to the trustees, December 2, 1943, p. 23.

<sup>114</sup> Bill Lewis, “Lewis Letter: 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary April 19, 20 1941-1991,” Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

individual in sound habits of exercise, diet, and relaxation that . . . the proper purposes and values of life be not thwarted through ill health, or lack of drive."<sup>115</sup>

Although admission to Westmont was limited to students who showed no "moral laxness or antagonism to Christian standards of life or doctrine," at the outset the college did not "insist that every student received shall be a professing Christian."<sup>116</sup> Nevertheless in 1943 the president noted: "All of our students are professing Christians. We have in the neighborhood of a dozen that do not seem to know what it's all about, but we are hoping that these may come to a clearer knowledge of the Lord."<sup>117</sup>

In accord with the founders' orthodox Christian faith, what underlay their six stated purposes was conservative Christian doctrine, expressed formally in the "Standards of Faith" (Appendix 1). As the president recalled, this statement was much indebted to those of Wheaton and Biola—John Page and Elbert McCreery having determined the exact wording.<sup>118</sup> An exchange with one of the trustees impressed Margaret Voskuyl with its importance:

Dr. John Bunyan Smith . . . grabbed my hand and he held it tight, and he said to me, "Young lady, do you subscribe to the doctrinal statement of Westmont College?" It made me realize how deeply some of those people felt in terms of what it was they were founding. ( I did so subscribe.) . . . Our article on inerrancy was absolutely primary in its importance to Dr. Emerson and I think to a number of others too. . . . Everything else would flow from that—not the worship of the scripture, but the recognition that what the scripture said could be depended on.<sup>119</sup>

Whereas American educators after the Revolution "grounded their thinking in the Enlightenment and worked to give special revelation a place within that framework"<sup>120</sup> Westmont's founders, like Wheaton's, emulated the first American educators—Puritans who "grounded their thinking in special revelation" and "worked to turn special revelation into a framework for all learning." Their vision closely resembled "the Reformation and Puritan ideal" as Leland Ryken has described it:

Its goal was the education of the whole person, morally and spiritually as well as intellectually. Both the curriculum and the campus climate were governed by a religious purpose aimed at the glory of God and the Christian nurture of the student, by a tone of moral earnestness, and by an antiseccular bias that refused to separate education from religious concerns.<sup>121</sup>

The president was deliberate about reclaiming this Puritan heritage, urging upon the trustees the Church's need of "rebuilding its educational structure."<sup>122</sup> Thus all the founders' hopes for the college depended on not repeating the history of American

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<sup>115</sup> "Athletics," *Bulletin* 1.1 (May 1940), p. 17.

<sup>116</sup> *Bulletin* 1.1 (May 1940), p. 19.

<sup>117</sup> Wallace L. Emerson, Report to the trustees, December 2, 1943, p. 20.

<sup>118</sup> Wallace L. Emerson, interview with Lyle C. Hillegas, March 1963, p. 9.

<sup>119</sup> Margaret Voskuyl, interview with Paul C. Wilt, January 2, 1985, pp. 1, 9.

<sup>120</sup> Mark A. Noll, "The Revolution, the Enlightenment, and Christian Higher Education in the Early Republic," pp. 59-64 in *Making Higher Education Christian: The History and Mission of Evangelical Colleges in America*, ed. Joel A. Carpenter and Kenneth W. Shipps (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), p. 64.

<sup>121</sup> Leland Ryken, "Reformation and Puritan Ideals of Education," pp. 38-51 in *Making Higher Education Christian: The History and Mission of Evangelical Colleges in America*, ed. Joel A. Carpenter and Kenneth W. Shipps, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), p. 43.

<sup>122</sup> Wallace L. Emerson, Report to the trustees, December 2, 1943, p. 3.

colleges that abandoned their original Christian commitments. No wonder, then, that there was concern about biblical authority. Hence, for example, Elbert McCreery's critique of the Revised Standard Version of the New Testament: although he was concerned mainly with technical and stylistic matters of translation, he raised some doubts about the translators' commitment to the divinity of Jesus Christ and the inerrancy and finality of biblical inspiration.<sup>123</sup> From the 1942 "Statement of Purpose," however, it is obvious that this commitment to the scriptures was mostly positive in both substance and tone. Thus Biblical insights pervaded an essay of the president's about what Christian education can accomplish:

The world needs . . . those who are willing to endure hardness; who are willing to lose their lives that they may find them. . . . It wants those who will live the righteous life, not talk about the good life. It needs those who will see a brother's need, who will not see opportunity for private advantage when put in position of responsibility. . . . The world needs those whose eyes are fixed on Him who is invisible, but whose right it is to reign and who ultimately will reign. . . . It needs those who are willing to give up the smaller pearls of life for the pearl of great price. . . . It needs those whose eyes are lighted by the lamps of God's Word. . . .<sup>124</sup>

The Statement of Faith began with the article on the holy scriptures because everything else did, indeed, flow from that. Like all of the doctrinal "fundamentals" of the fundamentalists, the doctrine of the Bible's divine inspiration required belief in the reality of God's supernatural intervention in the physical world. Naturalists and some liberal Christians readily denied both together; but evangelicals argued reasonably that such an *a priori* rejection of the supernatural was prejudicial and unscientific.<sup>125</sup>

This was the ground of Westmont's opposition to the theory of organic evolution: biology professor Cora Reno opposed it in print (Appendix 2); students were grateful for their professors' reasoned objections to it;<sup>126</sup> when inquiring in 1940 as to Paton Yoder's "religious and spiritual background and belief," Wallace Emerson had singled out just one topic for particular mention—his "attitude toward the doctrine of organic evolution."<sup>127</sup> For naturalist learning could not avoid being seriously incomplete, as the president would argue in his textbook on psychology, which contrasted two philosophies in their unequal competition to unify all knowledge:

The philosophy of evolution [is] a philosophical attempt to . . . furnish a rationale for not only the so-called exact sciences [chemistry and physics] and for the biological sciences, but for all philosophy, and for religion as well. The other philosophical viewpoint is that offered by the Word of God, "creationism." This offers an even larger basis and larger framework for fact, for meaning and interpretation, and for teleology.<sup>128</sup>

His approach would (in the language of a later epoch) enable "social scientific thinking and theological thinking to openly cross-fertilize each other, rather than

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<sup>123</sup> Elbert L. McCreery, *An Evaluation of the Revised Standard Version of the New Testament* (1947), pp. 9-11.

<sup>124</sup> Wallace L. Emerson, "The World Needs," *Bulletin* 4.3 (August 1943), pp. 3-4.

<sup>125</sup> George Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture: The Shaping of Twentieth-Century Evangelicalism: 1870-1925* (New York and Oxford: Oxford UP, 1980), p. 121.

<sup>126</sup> E.g., *Evolution: Fact or Fiction?* (Moody, 1953); Earl Kuester, interview with Paul C. Wilt, August 21, 1991, pp. 2-3.

<sup>127</sup> Wallace L. Emerson, letter to Paton Yoder, February 5, 1940.

<sup>128</sup> Wallace L. Emerson, *Outline of Psychology: A Basic Psychology with Christian Implications* (Wheaton: Van Kampen, 1953), p. 2.

leaving the connection ephemeral and unarticulated yet still powerfully influential, as the naturalist or materialist social scientist does."<sup>129</sup> (Thomas Henry Huxley, for example, claimed to suspend judgment about the supernatural and coined the term *agnostic* to denote his position, but he actually did commit himself, inadvertently as it seems: "It is very certain . . . that nature is the expression of a definite order *with which nothing interferes*"—emphasis added.)<sup>130</sup> On behalf of the Scriptures the president would argue that knowledge of psychology rests on another foundation besides those of introspection, experimentation, longitudinal observation, and case histories—namely, authority, "since it is impossible for any individual in one lifetime to accumulate the facts that have been brought together through experiments and research of a host of psychologists." He objected to the neglect in his field of "another authoritative source of psychological data, the Bible: "What, for example, is the book of Proverbs, but a commentary on human nature; in the main, a commentary on the natural man[?]" His remarks on the human conscience exemplify what he meant by other types of authority; "on this subject art, literature, business, and religion unite in demanding, for practical purposes, a human trait . . . which psychology refuses to discuss, certainly without which human nature cannot be understood."<sup>131</sup> The scriptures teach us discernment about human nature: "When someone complains that this is from a theological viewpoint (that is, from God's viewpoint) we ask, 'Who would be in a position to give so truthful an account?' and give fervent thanks that the reality of the human spirit is portrayed in such a way as to leave no doubt and introduce no error." Here was reflected evangelicals' contention that the inerrant scriptures, representing reality by supernatural means, would supply historical facts much more reliably than speculative hypotheses based on empirical observation alone. Anna Dennis wrote: "We believe that God has given us two books, the one the counterpart of the other: the book of nature—His work, and the book of revelation—his Word."<sup>132</sup> But William Jennings Bryan had said: "It is no light matter to impeach the veracity of the Scriptures in order to accept, not a truth—not even a theory—but a mere hypothesis."<sup>133</sup> And the president observed that in Paul's "Now we see through a glass darkly" his words "describe exactly man's present knowledge of science, philosophy, and psychology."<sup>134</sup> Thus Keith Rees told students that the evolutionary model was "too great a weight hung on too small a peg."<sup>135</sup>

Evangelicals also blamed evolutionary biology for the rise of social Darwinism, as embodied in aggressors such as Kaiser Wilhelm II and Adolf Hitler—and also in communism. "Evolution is Bolshevism in the long run. . . . It eliminates the idea of a personal God, and with that goes all authority in government, all law and order"—thus

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<sup>129</sup> Mary Stewart Van Leeuwen, "Bringing Christian Criteria to Bear on Academic Work," pp. 187-200 in *Making Higher Education Christian: The History and Mission of Evangelical Colleges in America*, ed. Joel A. Carpenter and Kenneth W. Shipps, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), p. 189.

<sup>130</sup> Thomas Henry Huxley, "Science and Culture" (1880), in *Science and Education*, The Science Classics Library (New York: Philosophical Library, 1964), p. 133.

<sup>131</sup> Wallace L. Emerson, *Outline of Psychology: A Basic Psychology with Christian Implications* (Wheaton: Van Kampen, 1953), pp. 2, 7-11, 429. The quotation following is from p. 427.

<sup>132</sup> Anna Dennis, "A Day for Action," *Bulletin* 6.1 (February 1946), p. 9.

<sup>133</sup> William Jennings Bryan, "The Origin of Man," chapter 4, *In His Image* (New York and London: Revell, 1922), [www.scopestrial.org/inhisimage.htm](http://www.scopestrial.org/inhisimage.htm)

<sup>134</sup> Wallace L. Emerson, "What of the Other Fourteen?" *Bulletin* 5.3 (August 1944), p. 4.

<sup>135</sup> Earl Kuester, interview with Paul C. Wilt, August 21, 1991, p. 2.

an editorial in *Moody Monthly*.<sup>136</sup> Little wonder that “increasingly, modernism, evolutionism, and Bolshevism were lumped together as part of the same basic threat to Bible belief.” To evangelicals evolutionary doctrine was the dominant epitome of naturalism’s opposition to supernaturalism, with its picture of humanity without God in the world. Though I have not found that anyone at Westmont connected evolution and communism explicitly, we have seen that they appear together in Wallace Emerson’s catalog of enemies of the gospel.

The prominence of evolution among the concerns of Westmont’s founders needs to be understood in light of evangelicals’ sense of national spiritual crisis (below)—and especially in light of all that they saw to be at stake. As far back as 1873 M. B. Anderson, president of the University of Rochester, observed that *evolution* might mean not pointless happenstance, but something amenable to Christian thinking: a divine means of creating and sustaining the world;<sup>137</sup> but in all the intervening years it seems that on both sides of the controversy few, if any, were listening. At Westmont, as everywhere else in the 40s, evolution and supernaturalism simply could not mix. It would be decades beyond the Emerson years before Westmont science professors would be inclining toward theistic evolution. Among evangelicals, of course, the debate goes on.

## METHODS, MEANS, AND INFLUENCES

How did the founders define “liberal arts”? Although a formal definition seems elusive, their stated purposes and educational practice indicate quite clearly that “the liberal arts” meant comprehensive *education for life* by every legitimate and effectual means. A statement in a recent Westmont catalog would have been equally appropriate in 1940: “We seek to educate the whole person through an integrated program of curricular instruction, co-curricular opportunities, and thoughtfully designed residential environment.”<sup>138</sup> In keeping with the aim of “education for life,” the curriculum omitted courses that were principally practical and vocational, except for ministries served particularly by the departments of music, Christian education, and Bible. Then as now, the curricular center at Westmont was the general requirements for graduation.

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<sup>136</sup> “Will Christian Taxpayers Stand for This?” *Moody Monthly* 23 (May, 1923), p. 409; quoted by George Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture: The Shaping of Twentieth-Century Evangelicalism: 1870-1925* (New York and Oxford: Oxford UP, 1980), p. 209. The quotation following is from the same page.

<sup>137</sup> M. B. Anderson, “Discussion on Darwinism and the Doctrine of Development,” appendix to *History, Essays, Orations, and Other Documents of the Sixth General Conference of the Evangelical Alliance, Held in New York, October 2-12, 1873*, pp. 317-23. Cited by George Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture: The Shaping of Twentieth-Century Evangelicalism: 1870-1925* (New York and Oxford: Oxford UP, 1980), p. 19.

<sup>138</sup> *Westmont College Academic Catalog 2007-2008*, p. 13.

## *The Curriculum of General Education*

*Biblical knowledge*, the first catalog declared, is “absolutely necessary to the well educated man”; for “man’s spiritual nature is his most important characteristic,” and “the Word of God is more important than the word of man.”<sup>139</sup> The second issue of the *Bulletin* added: “In a Christian college, the Bible Department should . . . be the strongest as well as the most significant.”<sup>140</sup> Yet the Bible requirement for graduation, the same as Wheaton’s,<sup>141</sup> was just eight semester units, including two each in Old and New Testament according to the grade reports, though the catalog specifies three. (Compare Westmont’s present twelve-unit requirement; for many years it was sixteen.) It became the quarter-unit equivalent for 1942-43,<sup>142</sup> when many colleges adopted a year-round quarter system to accelerate students’ wartime progress. (In 1944, after finding no such advantage in two years of quarters, Westmont reverted to semesters.)<sup>143</sup> From 1943 to 1946 just nine quarter units or six semester units were deemed sufficient. That piece of the pie only just matched those allowed to English composition, English literature, social science, philosophy, and psychology. Laboratory science and foreign language actually got more than Bible—a notably peculiar arrangement at a time when “a number of evangelical Christian colleges” required in Bible “as much as a full ‘second major,’ or at least a ‘minor.’”<sup>144</sup>

At the outset the *natural sciences* received more attention than the 1942 Statement of Purpose seems to suggest. One early notice promised that “work in science at Westmont will always be stressed in order to combat the idea that Christianity exists through ignorance of scientific fact.”<sup>145</sup> Requiring eight units of laboratory science in addition to six in math, statistics, or non-laboratory science (just as at Wheaton), the first catalog specifically addressed liberal arts concerns, recommending Survey of Physical Sciences “as a minimal background for an intelligent understanding of some of the contributions of physical science to present day living.” The physics department’s first-stated objective was “to furnish a background of scientific knowledge as an aid to understanding the scientific basis of modern civilization.” Likewise biology was meant to give students “greater familiarity with the world of life” for a better appreciation of their place in it. For mathematics there was hope of converting those many students who had been “seriously conditioned against the subject” and thought themselves “unable to think mathematically.” Moreover “the inductive method in science has made mathematics and statistical procedure a necessary tool for the discovery and

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<sup>139</sup> *Bulletin* 1.1 (May 1940), p. 30.

<sup>140</sup> *Bulletin* 1.2 (August 1940), p. 13.

<sup>141</sup> All information about graduation requirements at Wheaton in 1940 is taken from the *Bulletin of Wheaton College* 17.4 (April 1940), p. 34.

<sup>142</sup> Except as otherwise indicated, all information about graduation requirements is taken from the pertinent annual catalogs, which until 1946 were the May issues of Westmont’s *Bulletin*: pp. 23 (1940 and 1941), 29 (1942), 31 (1943), 23 (1944), 26 (1945). In 1946 the August *Bulletin* (7.3) was the annual catalog; the graduation requirements for 1946-47 appear on pp. 19-20.

<sup>143</sup> Faculty Minutes, April 13, 1944.

<sup>144</sup> Harold Heie, “What Can the Evangelical/Interdenominational Tradition Contribute to Christian Higher Education?” pp. 245-60 in *Models for Christian Higher Education: Strategies for Survival and Success in the Twenty-First Century*, ed. Richard T. Hughes and William B. Adrian (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), p. 248, n. 6.

<sup>145</sup> *Bulletin*, 1.2 (August 1940), p. 20.

understanding of scientific truth."<sup>146</sup> (The 1942-43 catalog added that "the practical side of the subject is especially stressed in all courses.")<sup>147</sup> Yet students could avoid mathematics altogether, and for 1941-42 the six units of non-laboratory science (or math) disappeared from Westmont's requirements, as from Wheaton's. Since the catalog's list for 1941-42 identifies other requirements simply by name and units (e.g., "Bible 8 hours"), there may be a plaintive touch to the notation: "Laboratory science at least 8 hours." It could have been worse. There was talk of replacing laboratory science with a classroom survey of the natural sciences.<sup>148</sup> During the college's first year, students could take a laboratory sequence in botany, zoology, or chemistry, but not in physics, though the catalog announced one. Starting with 1941-42 all students except biology majors had to take the Biological Science Survey sequence.

The *social sciences'* original requirement of six units in history and social science matched Wheaton's, but Wheaton had no counterpart to Westmont's additional two-unit requirement in the U.S. Constitution. (Till 1946 a course called Government of the United States, which covered the Constitution, was required.) The history/social sciences component was reduced to three units for 1941-42, but restored to six semester- or nine quarter-units from 1942 to 1946. The original objectives for history sounded a liberal-arts note: "(1) To know the past in order that we may understand the present; (2) To discover the various permutations of the social, political, economic, religious, and spiritual factors in the life of the race." The 1942 catalog's objectives for all social sciences began in a similar spirit: "To provide an understanding of society in the modern world and to stimulate the formation of proper social attitudes from a thoroughly Christian viewpoint; to encourage the scientific attitude and to develop creative thought in the controversial fields where man himself is studied."<sup>149</sup> Thus, to the venerable aim of preserving past knowledge is added a modern-world emphasis on new learning—with acknowledgment, by implication, of the potential for conflicts with the faith. At first, apparently, any two history courses would fulfill the social science/history requirement, but starting in 1941 all students took the Survey of Civilization sequence, which was pure education for life: "An introduction to the civilizations of the world, with major emphasis on western civilization. Culture, religious and philosophical thought, and social and economic institutions are given major attention." The 1942 description added that "the Christian interpretation of history is made the focal point."<sup>150</sup> Retitled as Introduction to the Social Sciences in 1944, the sequence included "topical study [of] the various problems of contemporary society."<sup>151</sup> Not until 1945 did Wheaton introduce a comparable sequence, titled History of Civilization; it was open to all students, but required only of majors in the Social Science Division.<sup>152</sup>

For the sole requirement in *behavioral science*—six units of psychology (compare Wheaton's three), the objectives were framed entirely as education for life: "To render the individual self-conscious as to his own mental processes, drives, and motives; to aid

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<sup>146</sup> *Bulletin* 1.1 (May 1940), pp. 38, 34, 58.

<sup>147</sup> *Bulletin* 3.2 (May 1942), p. 43.

<sup>148</sup> Faculty Minutes, March 25 and April 15, 1941.

<sup>149</sup> *Bulletin* 1.1 (May 1940), p. 54-55; 3.2 (May 1942), pp. 54-55.

<sup>150</sup> *Bulletin* 2.2 (May 1941), p. 47; 3.2 (May 1942), p. 55.

<sup>151</sup> *Bulletin* 5.2 (May 1944), p. 47.

<sup>152</sup> *Bulletin of Wheaton College* (April 1945), p. 79.



in the solution of mental, moral, and spiritual problems; to give the individual a sound basis for personal self-evaluation and for social adjustment."<sup>153</sup> For 1940-41 three units of Introduction to General Psychology, taught by the president himself, constituted the obvious starting point; and students so wishing could choose just three more units in Educational Psychology, Abnormal Psychology, or Social Psychology. The requirement was reduced to three units for 1941-42, raised for 1942-44 to six quarter units of Introduction (the equivalent of four semester-units), and restored to six semester units from 1944 onward.

Among the *humanities*, the division of English and speech promoted "effective ways of written and oral communication," "enjoyment of good literature and good speech," and "knowledge of literature and its social and intellectual backgrounds."<sup>154</sup> First-year students in 1940-41 had to take six units of Freshman Writing in two semesters unless they tested out of them—and, as it seems, out of any obligation to writing courses, since the only other offering was remedial. (Wheaton students could test out of the first-semester requirement of three units, but not the second.) Testing out was abolished for 1941-42; henceforth the writing sequence was required of all first-year students. In 1944 the remedial course dwindled to a fourth unit in the first semester of the writing sequence, renamed English Composition; this was the status quo till 1946. The size of the literature requirement (matching Wheaton's at six units) was constant in the Emerson years, but the content underwent a series of annual mutations unique among the graduation requirements, reflecting the interests of successive professors and ranging from English Survey to non-fiction Great Books to Comparative Literature to World Literature—the latter from an all-Western anthology of the sort that was standard at the time.

In the founding years students at Westmont, as at Wheaton, could avoid studying speech altogether. That first fall eleven students began the two-semester Speech sequence anyway; but Advanced Speech, the only other offering, failed to materialize. Seven of the eleven stayed on for the spring, while just one person enrolled for (and withdrew from) Verse Choir, the other scheduled course. In 1941-42, however, a half-unit Verse Speaking Choir course attracted nine students in the fall and eight in the spring (all in robes in their yearbook picture); meanwhile the Speech sequence attracted just thirteen students all year, and Advanced Speech only one. The department limped forward not without hope, regularly scheduling more courses than were actually floated, till 1944 when Beginning Speech (including "analysis of individual needs by private consultation and recording")<sup>155</sup> secured a two-unit niche among the requirements. Through the mid-40s this course flourished, but only one other speech course, out of the considerable number scheduled, attracted enough students to make a class. If the faculty judged that two units of speech would suffice "to establish correct and pleasing speech habits, stressing good voice and diction,"<sup>156</sup> who were the students to insist on more?

The original fourteen-unit requirement in foreign language (eight units elementary) had an ambitiously scholarly goal. True, concerns about education for life

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<sup>153</sup> *Bulletin* 1.1 (May 1940), p. 44.

<sup>154</sup> *Bulletin* 1.1 (May 1940), p. 46.

<sup>155</sup> *Bulletin* 5.2 (May 1944), p. 33

<sup>156</sup> *Bulletin* 6.2 (May 1945), p. 37.

lay behind one of the objectives for French: “extensive acquaintance with French culture in general (customs, institutions, geography)”; and for all foreign languages the 1941-42 catalog added this aim: “To introduce to [the student] the culture and salient characteristics of the nation whose language is studied.” Yet in the first catalog “the main practical objective” for French was acquiring “a tool with which to find valuable and possibly otherwise unattainable material concerning the major field of interest.”<sup>157</sup> And a general manifesto on foreign languages recommended even more than fourteen units :

Access to foreign language sources is the only way the modern man may be completely and opportunely informed. Westmont College students will be expected to take foreign languages until there is evidence of adaptation. . . . Normally, 14 hours of college language, followed by a tutorial in the field of major interest, will be found desirable.<sup>158</sup>

Why two whole years’ worth, and then some? The manifesto explained: “The amount of language usually required . . . absolutely precludes any of [the usual academic] goals being approximated, and it would seem that too frequently colleges tacitly admit this by making no effort to use any foreign language as a tool in upper division levels.” Already in the spring of 1940 Elinor Berg had requested from Paton Yoder his recommendations for library acquisitions “in German, French, and Spanish in which . . . students could do collateral reading” for history courses.<sup>159</sup> (Compare Harvey Branscomb’s 1940 survey of college libraries, which showed faculty “making only a very limited use of the library in their teaching work.”)<sup>160</sup> The catalogs from 1943 to 1946 announced Scientific German (never taught), which science majors could have used as their latter intermediate course, including “class reading in the basic sciences” as well as readings in each student’s particular discipline.<sup>161</sup> Nevertheless in 1940 only two departments specified the language(s) required of their majors: Greek for Bible, and French or German for chemistry. Further, from 1941 to 1946 students could test out entirely<sup>162</sup> by passing the required examination of their competence in a foreign language “as a tool in their field of specialization.”<sup>163</sup> Yet from 1940 to 1946, besides the substantial offerings in Greek there was demand to sustain courses in elementary and intermediate French, German, and Spanish—and, for 1943-46, in elementary Latin. Meanwhile Wheaton was demanding three years of college language for the A.B.<sup>164</sup>

Naturally the objectives for *philosophy* spoke to faith and learning: “To acquaint the student with the history and progress of philosophic thought; and to enable him to criticize and evaluate the various systems of thought in the light of the distinctive philosophy of Christian Theism.” After taking the three-unit Introduction to Philosophy

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<sup>157</sup> *Bulletin* 1.1 (May 1940), p. 49.

<sup>158</sup> *Bulletin* 1.1 (May 1940), p. 48.

<sup>159</sup> Elinor Berg, letter to Paton Yoder, April 22, 1940.

<sup>160</sup> Cited by Ernest L. Boyer, *College: The Undergraduate Experience in America* (New York: Harper & Row, 1987), p. 161.

<sup>161</sup> *Bulletin* 4.2 (May 1943), p. 47.

<sup>162</sup> Faculty Minutes, September 16, 1940.

<sup>163</sup> *Bulletin* 2.2 (May 1941), p. 42. Harvard’s requirement was the same: “reading knowledge of a single foreign language, determined by passing either an examination or an intermediate language course”; thus *General Education in a Free Society: Report of the Harvard Commission* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1946), p. 186.

<sup>164</sup> E.g., *Wheaton College Catalog*, 1940, p. 34.

a student of 1940-41 could complete the minimum six units with a lower-division semester on Logic, or the first third of the History of Philosophy.<sup>165</sup> (Wheaton students needed no general philosophy; their six units were divided between Ethics and Theism, or—for students equipped with twelve units of Bible Survey and Bible Doctrine—devoted instead to Systematic Theology.) Westmont's requirement, and the shape of the introductory course(s) fulfilling it, changed yearly for a time: to three units (1941-42), then four quarter units (1942-43), and six (1943-44) and, at last, six semester units again from 1944 to 1946. In these latter years students took two three-unit courses: a topical introduction and a brief history of philosophy.

Of the four objectives for *physical education*, three addressed education for life: "(1) To provide facilities and leadership whereby the individual and the group may develop physically, mentally, socially, and spiritually; (2) To develop interest and skill in individual and team sports; (3) To develop leadership and sportsmanship." Wheaton required just two units but Westmont specified eight, half of them one-unit "elective and corrective courses for men and women according to the medical and physical examinations given at the beginning of each school year."<sup>166</sup> For the other half there were just four lower-division courses of one unit: Introduction to Physical Education, First Aid, and two semesters of Handcraft: "The fundamentals of method and materials for use in the summer playground, summer camp, church school, and adult recreation." From 1941-42 onward just a half-unit activity course was required for each semester of residence.<sup>167</sup> Except for Modified Activities (corrective, perhaps?), and Life Saving, each of these combined two or more sports—mostly contrasting: Archery and Deck Tennis, Basketball and Field Hockey, Touch Football and Basketball, Badminton and Volleyball, Softball and Shuffleboard, Soccer and Table Tennis, Swimming, Handball, and Paddle Tennis, Tennis and Tumbling, Wrestling and Weight Lifting (this last, and touch football, were limited to men).

The college's second year saw also a new two-unit requirement in Hygiene: "A study of general and specific health principles and their application to continued health of the body."<sup>168</sup> But already by the spring semester the war brought an urgent reason to modify the course. Within days of the attack on Pearl Harbor both coasts would, as a title in *Life* magazine put it, begin to "Prepare for Attacks from Air"; and the army insisted that enemy aircraft had flown over San Francisco on December 15. The next day "interceptors whirred up to meet the enemy" reported to be approaching New York City.<sup>169</sup> Lacking hindsight the authorities could not rule out air raids, or even invasion; and when a Japanese submarine shelled an oil field at Ellwood, California, on February 23, 1942, *Life* depicted shell fragments, craters, and damage, and called the prospect of invasion "the stark fact." Two nights later anti-aircraft guns fired 1430 rounds at supposed enemy planes over west Los Angeles.<sup>170</sup> (One battery was camouflaged across

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<sup>165</sup> *Bulletin* 1.1 (May 1940), p. 64.

<sup>166</sup> *Bulletin* 1.1 (May 1940), p. 66. "Corrective" perhaps because of the debilitating effects of the Great Depression. Fully 40 percent of the draftees called up in 1940 were rejected on physical grounds, according to William Manchester, *The Glory and the Dream: A Narrative History of America 1932-1972* (New York: Bantam, 1975), p. 22.

<sup>167</sup> *Bulletin* 2.2 (May 1941), p. 58; Faculty Minutes, November 26, 1940.

<sup>168</sup> *Bulletin* 2.2 (May 1941), p. 59.

<sup>169</sup> "America Goes to War," *Life* 11.25 (December 22, 1941), p. 20.

<sup>170</sup> "Japanese Carry War to California Coast," *Life* 12.10 (March 9, 1942), pp. 19-21.

the street from Westmont's campus, farther to the east.) The city was subject to air raid warnings and blackouts, as Cora Reno remembered:

You very seldom would go out in the evening in a street car, . . . because if they called an air raid . . . [by] siren, then you had to stay on the street car . . . , unless the neighbors nearby would open their houses and invite people in and maybe give them a hot drink. And you might stay there until three or four in the morning.<sup>171</sup>

David Gunn, already employed as part-time campus night watchman, suddenly became a block air raid warden: "Ruth McCreery [the dean of women] would pad down the sidewalk to the Crows' Nest to awaken me whenever there was an alert in the night. No one there has forgotten the 'big L.A. air raid' and how we watched all that anti-aircraft firing and searchlight display over the west L.A. and Santa Monica area."<sup>172</sup> With air attacks or invasion would come civilian casualties in fearful numbers—hence the faculty's decision "that through the present period of national emergency, our requirement of a course in Hygiene be changed to a course in First Aid which would also include some work in Hygiene" for three units' credit—and the Standard Red Cross First Aid certificate.<sup>173</sup> This arrangement lasted just a year; by 1943 the apparent threat to the mainland had vanished.

From 1942 the faculty required a one-unit *orientation* for first-year students, partly anticipating today's Introduction to the Christian Liberal Arts. Besides good habits of study, time management, and the like, this course briefly addressed "the history and traditions of the college,"<sup>174</sup> at that point a relatively compact topic. During the Emerson years there was no further curricular provision for presenting to students the principles of Christian liberal arts education.

Although in the 40s the *fine arts* found no place in Westmont's graduation requirements (or Wheaton's), many students sang or played music, for credit or pleasure or the college's public relations—somewhat more than half the full-time student body in 1941-42, for example. As already noted, the president wanted an art department; but in 1949 President Forrester was repeating the recommendation to no avail.<sup>175</sup> There was little official thought—and that very cautious—of establishing courses in theater arts; in fact before the very first semester was over the faculty found themselves disagreeing about allowing any dramatics. Part of the opposition was resistance to singling out individuals for special attention; even a student's interpretive reading, in someone's opinion, "actually exalts one person above others." (A similar concern about elitism, also voiced then with regard to athletics,<sup>176</sup> has resurfaced in recent faculty discussions of what Westmont's pursuit of "excellence" means.) Moreover, some believed that "drama is not Christ-centered" and feared that students would be encouraged to make it their occupation, or that damage would result to the student's personality or to the college's standing with its constituency. Others, however, regarded drama as essential to education in the arts, or at least useful in the cultivation of poise. Some also pointed to the precedent of drama in scripture; some to churches

<sup>171</sup> Cora A. Reno, interview with Roger J. Voskuyl, November 12, 1985, p. 7.

<sup>172</sup> David Gunn, autobiographical sketch, n.d., p. 1, Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

<sup>173</sup> Faculty Minutes, May 12, 1942. *Bulletin* 3.2 (May 1942), p. 52.

<sup>174</sup> *Bulletin* 4.2 (May 1943), p. 41.

<sup>175</sup> Presidents' reports of December 2, 1943, p. 23; and January 7, 1949.

<sup>176</sup> "Athletics," *Bulletin* 1.1 (May 1940), p. 17.

that were sympathetic toward both drama and Westmont's aims.<sup>177</sup> The immediate outcomes of this discussion are obscure; but suspicion of drama, allied to the college's prohibition of the cinema, persisted through the 50s.<sup>178</sup>

The original general education requirements—totaling seventy-six units to Wheaton's sixty-nine—had to be published in May 1940 while President Emerson was still hiring his faculty. As early as March he “got in touch with prospective faculty members and organized a curriculum.”<sup>179</sup> But well into the summer “vacancies in the faculty needed yet to be filled,” so that for some professors the provisions must have been an accomplished fact. In any case the faculty was dissatisfied; a week before classes ever began they met to revise the requirements for 1941-42.<sup>180</sup> Mainly on that occasion, and in part later, they approved substantial alterations to every requirement except for Bible and English Composition. (Retitling “Literature” as “English Literature” abolished an option that apparently was available at first—of counting upper-division courses in a foreign language, as permitted at Wheaton.

Most important, the faculty reduced the total from seventy-six units to fifty-nine, probably to make room for electives (faculty minutes of May 5, 1942, still express this concern) rather than for double majors, which were virtually unknown in the Emerson years. Electives were made difficult or impossible in 1940-41 by the extensive cognates that many departments required for their majors. Thus for a chemistry major who needed elementary foreign language, the general and major requirements, even with allowance for overlap, took 100 units of the 124 needed for graduation. For similarly placed students in biology the total was 102, in French 105 (even without cognates recommended but not required), in Christian education or music 108, in the pre-med program 120, and in physics the entire 124. In the end students of 1940-41 were allowed to graduate in 1944 without having fully met those original requirements.<sup>181</sup> We can only guess how the faculty decided which ones to reduce, for in keeping with *Robert's Rules of Order* the minutes recorded only motions, not discussion. Clearly the original inflexibility was an unintended consequence of the founders' brave and broadly conceived ambition to educate their students for life.

In combination the general education courses assured that all Westmont graduates would share a substantial body of common knowledge—at a time when the Harvard Committee was calling Harvard College's requirements “weak indeed” in this respect.<sup>182</sup> As at Harvard, however, courses designed specifically for non-majors' general education, were very scarce. Only three were announced in the Emerson years; of those, the two-semester physics survey was never taught, and the one in mathematics only in 1940-41, to a mere handful of students. The third alone was offered regularly from 1941 to 1946: the Biological Science Survey, “required of all students except those

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<sup>177</sup> A summary of this discussion is attached to the Faculty Minutes of December 10, 1940.

<sup>178</sup> Eldad C. Vanderlip, interview with Paul C. Wilt, September 29, 1998, p. 14.

<sup>179</sup> Peggy McCreery, “A New College is Born in Los Angeles,” *The Fountain* 1.1 (October 1940), p. 1. The quotation following is from the same place.

<sup>180</sup> Faculty Minutes, September 16, 1940.

<sup>181</sup> Except as otherwise indicated, all information about students' transcripts, course enrollments, courses scheduled, and courses taught is from registrar's records.

<sup>182</sup> *General Education in a Free Society: Report of the Harvard Committee*, with an introduction by James Bryant Conant (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1946), pp. 191-192. The information about Harvard in the sentence following is from pp. 190-191.

majoring in biology.”<sup>183</sup> Thus most general education courses, though serving most non-majors as their last in a discipline, were first steps toward one doctorate or another, and only secondarily building blocks of their education for life.

### *The Curriculum of Majors*

Yet Westmont’s original major programs did possess what Ernest L. Boyer has recommended: the “capacity to enlarge, rather than narrow, the vision of the student.”<sup>184</sup> Various departments’ statements of purpose for majors identified their diverse contributions to a liberal education: spiritual growth (Bible), physical and mental maturation (psychology, physical education), articulate thinking and expression (English, speech, philosophy), social and political skills (history, social science, physical education), cross-cultural understanding (foreign languages, history, social science), integrating faith and learning (natural and social sciences, philosophy), skills and experience of new discovery (mathematics, natural and social sciences). And the first stated objective for music majors was quite explicit: “an understanding and appreciation of music, as a part of a liberal education.”<sup>185</sup>

Elsewhere we find other evidences. First, in keeping with what the 1942 Statement of Purpose said about absorbing *the learning and experience of the past*, several major programs included the history of their subject matter. By 1944 there were courses in the history of education, Christian education, music, philosophy, British literature (as well as American, French, and Spanish), and the Church. There were no offerings in the history of the physical, behavioral, or social sciences, and none in historical theology. Yet virtually any course in a discipline could include its own history; thus Emerson’s own chapter, “Schools of Psychology,” begins with a historical sketch.<sup>186</sup> And Grace Hamilton King found in a literature class opportunity to trace the thought and experience of believers in past centuries:

The cloud of witnesses to the life of faith enumerated by the writer to the Hebrews could be augmented by those who have walked with God since the close of the New Testament canon. . . . While the notes of the spiritual experiences of many of God’s people have fallen mute to the ground, others have voiced their worship and appreciation of the Savior, their struggles and assurances of faith in words that have found an echo in the hearts of Christians through the ages.<sup>187</sup>

Second, professors encouraged students’ *critical thinking*. For General Anthropology the catalog announced that “theories to be tested include the biological and cultural evolution of man, racial superiority, and the theories of the origin of society and religion.”<sup>188</sup> Ed Potts found “a very deep thinker” in Grace

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<sup>183</sup> *Bulletin* 2.2 (May 1941), p. 30. For lack of a professor even that sequence was omitted for 1942-43.

<sup>184</sup> Ernest L. Boyer, *College: The Undergraduate Experience in America* (New York: Harper & Row, 1987), p. 109.

<sup>185</sup> *Bulletin* 2.2 (May 1941), p. 51.

<sup>186</sup> Wallace L. Emerson, *Outline of Psychology: A Basic Psychology with Christian Implications* (Wheaton: Van Kampen, 1953), pp. 23-25.

<sup>187</sup> Grace Hamilton King, “Preface,” *An Anthology of Christian Literature* (Santa Barbara: Westmont College (1947), 232 pp., n.p.

<sup>188</sup> *Bulletin* 6.2 (May 1945), p. 37.

Hamilton King: “She didn’t have . . . all conclusions to every problem, She thought through the questions, and asked lots of questions. And the accepted answers weren’t necessarily the right answers.”<sup>189</sup> Edna Adams concurred: “She challenged us to think critically.”<sup>190</sup>

Third, there was strong interest in *interdisciplinary awareness*, even in the absence of interdisciplinary courses—and even with only one instance, in six years, of a double major. Except for music, every major offered in 1940 required cognates in at least two other disciplines. Most majors specified three, and a few—Bible, English, history, and physical education—required four. For some majors the number of mandatory cognate units exceeded forty, and certain departments recommended additional options. Here was a strong message encouraging students to synthesis. How well did they and their professors manage that? In Grace Hamilton King’s course on Christian Literature she made specific, systematic connections not only with biblical and historical theology and church history, but also with politics, philosophy, and Renaissance culture.<sup>191</sup> Wallace Emerson looked to great literature to help make up the limitations of psychological measurement, noting that many of the most important human characteristics, and some as apparently simple as charm, cannot be measured because they cannot be defined; further, “we have in Robert Louis Stevenson’s *The Master of Ballantrae*, the gradual disintegration of a human character due to a wrong spirit, and in Victor Hugo’s *Les Misérables*, the skillful delineation of the rebirth of a spirit and a life.”<sup>192</sup> In 1942 there was talk (only) of instituting “combination majors, such as Philosophy-Religion-Psychology, Physical Science, Biology-Chemistry-Physics, Humanities, Social Science.”<sup>193</sup> By 1946, on the other hand, cognate requirements on average had fallen off by half; only the history major saw an increase, to five for 1945-46. A few major programs did provide means to develop students’ synthesizing faculties another way, with the inauguration of summative senior seminars: Christian education and English in 1940 and philosophy in 1942.

Fourth, while students’ *cross-cultural awareness* might gain little from a proficiency exam in a foreign language, through the mid-40s several departments encouraged foreign-language readings in the student’s major field, by recommending or requiring German for French majors and prospective seminarians, and French or German for majors in biology, Spanish, and philosophy. In principle the Bible department’s courses in Missions and Comparative Religions offered other signal opportunities, but during the Emerson years only seventeen students took the former, and only five the latter (as retitled Non-Christian Religions) in 1945-46. Two courses in Ethnology and Primitive Religions, introduced for that year, enrolled just eight students between them. By diverse means, however, in class and out, students could learn how “to meet people of different feelings and different ideas.”<sup>194</sup> Eleanor Kellogg, later a missionary to Venezuela, learned something about culture openness from a missionary

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<sup>189</sup> Edwin J. Potts, interview with John W. Sider, July 6, 2007, p. 3.

<sup>190</sup> Edna Marie Adams Norbie, letter to Thelma Bain Kramar, July 9, 1991, Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

<sup>191</sup> Colette Poore, notes in her copy of Grace Hamilton King’s *An Anthology of Christian Literature* (Santa Barbara: Westmont College, 1947).

<sup>192</sup> Wallace L. Emerson, *Outline of Psychology: A Basic Psychology with Christian Implications* (Wheaton: Van Kampen, 1953), p. 427.

<sup>193</sup> Faculty Minutes, April 7, 1942.

<sup>194</sup> Mildred Heinrichs Studebaker, interview with Paul C. Wilt, August 21/22, 1991, p. 6.

to China: "When I got to the field and saw people doing things differently, I could remember . . . this person who . . . told me about that: 'Just take the attitude, "Not wrong—just different."'"<sup>195</sup> Robert Campbell, who went on to a doctorate in religious studies, praised John Page for breadth of vision. Although his teaching was "largely devotional and dispensational," and Robert "broke with dispensationalism about one or two years after leaving college," he found that "John Page was a great spirit, and gave some insights that were well beyond his own dispensational pattern."<sup>196</sup>

Only a small handful of students of color came to Westmont in the Emerson years (including at least two black men,<sup>197</sup> one Navajo woman,<sup>198</sup> and several students of Asian descent); and by religious tradition the student body was quite homogeneous and provincial—"naïve students who thought everyone believed the same thing" and "didn't even know, hardly, that there were any other points of view."<sup>199</sup> Yet in another respect their backgrounds were culturally diverse. The 77 students who first enrolled in 1944-45 make a good sample. While only 15 came to campus from homes outside California (12 of those from Washington and Oregon),<sup>200</sup> the transcripts of 42 indicate that they were born in 19 other states: Rhode Island, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Arkansas, Florida, Texas, Ohio, Michigan, Illinois, Iowa, Missouri, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma, Idaho, Colorado, and New Mexico. Other states, such as Virginia and Arizona, were the birthplaces of students in the classes immediately preceding and following this one. (Dustbowl emigrants of the 30s cannot alone account for this convergence on California—most of them, probably, being too poor to think of college; the nationwide distribution requires other explanations, such as the flow of Americans into California to support its war industries.) Thus in and out of class, Westmont students might absorb the cultural influence of peers from any region of the contiguous forty-eight. Also in the mix of early students were the children of missionaries and others living overseas; Julia Chung, for example, came from Hawaii, Miriam Sickel from South America, and Eleanor Courtney, Byrd Brunmeier, and Mary Jo Reid from China.

Fifth, a few departments encouraged or required *independent research* of their majors. Such a course was an option in biology from 1940 onward, and in psychology from 1945. From 1944 the senior seminar required of social science and history majors began with "a brief study of the principles and methods of research" and continued to independent research, the results to be presented by "an oral report and a written thesis."<sup>201</sup> The year following, social science majors could choose between that course and the new Methods of Research in the Social Sciences.

Sixth, the *practicum* made a first appearance at Westmont during the Emerson years, when the Christian Education department began requiring a course in supervised classroom work for seniors in 1942, and added one for juniors in 1944.

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<sup>195</sup> Eleanor Kellogg Tuggy, interview with Paul C. Wilt, January 22, 1988, p. 12.

<sup>196</sup> Robert Campbell, interview with Paul C. Wilt, February 7, 1996, p. 5.

<sup>197</sup> Wallace L. Emerson, interview with Roger J. Voskuyl and Paul C. Wilt, January 5, 1984, p. 24; Keith Rees, interview with Paul C. Wilt, December 30, 1989, pp. 12-13.

<sup>198</sup> "Viola Dixon," *Horizon* 5.8 (March 29, 1946), pp. 2, 4.

<sup>199</sup> Edwin J. Potts, interview with John W. Sider, July 6, 2007, p. 7.

<sup>200</sup> *Bulletins*, annual rosters of students' names and home towns.

<sup>201</sup> *Bulletin* 5.2 (May 1944), p. 47.



For lack of students some major programs existed mostly on paper in the first years. As one might expect in the transition from BMI/WBC, nine of the ten graduates in the first two years were majors in Bible (one doubling in Greek) or Christian education; the tenth, Walter Quisenberry, M.D. ('42) majored in biology. History and English majors began graduating in 1943 and majors in social science and Spanish in 1944, with graduates in education and music in 1945 and one in psychology in 1946. As of that year no one had graduated in chemistry or philosophy, two majors offered from the beginning. I have found no indication of major for two of the eighty-three graduates to 1946;<sup>202</sup> but among the rest, twenty-six students completed the Christian education major, many of them planning on a teaching credential elsewhere, since Westmont offered none till later. There were fifteen majors apiece in Bible and in Greek, seven in English, five apiece in biology and history, three in social science, two in music, and one apiece in education, psychology, and Spanish.

### *The Curriculum of Professional Programs*

Apart from drastic revision of graduation requirements, the greatest curricular departure in the catalog for 1941-42 was the inauguration of a professional degree program. The first catalog had included a thirty-two-unit major in music leading to the A.B. degree, as it was then designated; the second added "a four year course leading to a Bachelor of Music degree for music majors who plan to become professional performers or teachers of music." It demanded forty-eight units of theory, composition, history, orchestral instruments, and orchestration, as well as "applied or ensemble music each year of residence" and "a thorough practical knowledge of the pianoforte."<sup>203</sup> (Its reduced requirements in general education diverged significantly from the liberal arts norm, though with a Wheaton precedent.)<sup>204</sup> Here was another instance, however, of too-lofty hopes. In the next year's catalog the program simply disappeared, though the possibility was raised again in 1943.<sup>205</sup> Probably the obstacle was not some principled opposition to professional programs; the Christian Education major was "designed to help qualify students for fields of service such as director of Christian Education, director of age groups, church secretary, pastor's assistant, teaching, the ministry, and missions."<sup>206</sup> It seems more likely that the professional program in music simply fell casualty to the acute scarcity of resources college-wide.

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<sup>202</sup> The sources are yearbooks, penciled notations in commencement programs now in the college archives, and Westmont's on-line directory of alumni.

<sup>203</sup> *Bulletin* 2.1 (May 1941), pp. 51, 52.

<sup>204</sup> *Wheaton College Catalog*, 1940, p. 96.

<sup>205</sup> Faculty Minutes, May 4, 1943.

<sup>206</sup> *Bulletin* 2.1 (May 1941), p. 34.

In light of Westmont's devotion to Christian ministry it might seem harder to explain the lack of professional courses in the Bible department. Christian Education, clearly a professional discipline (and not a component of general education), included Worship, Evangelism, and Administering the Educational Work of the Church; but there were no analogous courses for prospective pastors in homiletics and hermeneutics. For prospective missionaries there were just two elective units apiece in Missions and Comparative Religions which, as noted above, very students elected. From 1941 through the 40s the catalog announced The Minister's Leadership in Christian Education, but it was never taught; and in these years there was no course in general pastoral administration generally, though from the start Christian Education had regularly taught Administering the Educational Work of the Church. Probably such pastoral matters were deemed the province of graduate schools (substantial numbers of prospective pastors did go on to seminary); witness the president's dream of a graduate program in missions, which antedated the announcement of the original Fuller School of Missions in 1945:<sup>207</sup> "Such a department," he wrote, "would have to include . . . theology, tropical hygiene . . . tropical preventative medicine, the culture and history and psychology of various peoples, together with other courses suggested by Dr. Strachan."<sup>208</sup> For his own region of the world Harry Strachan, director of the Latin American Mission, had offered President Emerson these recommendations:

Latin American History and the history of the Spanish Reformation. A course in Roman Catholicism should include not merely a summary of their doctrinal teachings but even more a thorough study of the religious history, both Roman Catholic and Protestant of the continent would also be worthwhile. . . . A specialized course in the problems of missionary methods and strategy cannot be too strongly emphasized. The superficial knowledge<sup>209</sup> of most new missionaries as regards the problems of methods and strategy is simply amazing.<sup>209</sup>

### *Faith and Learning*

Westmont's founders did not just take for granted the harmony of revealed Christian doctrines with genuine truth from natural sources. Fashioning his vision for Westmont after the first American colleges, the president believed that while human life gives the whole physical world meaning, "the moment you bring God into the situation, human nature itself has meaning that it didn't have before." All truth is God's truth:

God's book and God's universe have no quarrel if you have sense enough to understand what each is saying. . . . I tell my classes in psychology . . . when psychology says something about human nature that the Bible contradicts . . . I'll just wait a little while. . . . I've seen it happen time and again; they've had to take back what they've said."<sup>210</sup>

In his sixty-page course outline for Introductory Psychology at Wheaton, the "questions to guide reading" frequently pressed the student to consider "the

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<sup>207</sup> Ruth Kerr, letters to Wallace L. Emerson, January 11, 1946, and to Charles E. Fuller, January 22, 1946.

<sup>208</sup> Wallace L. Emerson, Report to the trustees, December 2, 1943, p. 23.

<sup>209</sup> Harry Strachan, letter to Wallace L. Emerson, October 21, 1943.

<sup>210</sup> Wallace L. Emerson, interview with Lyle C. Hillegas, March 1963, p. 22.

Christian viewpoint”;<sup>211</sup> and his published textbook, we have seen, laid out a thoughtful synthesis of secular and biblical psychology.

His example of integrating faith and learning, through first-order theological questions about methods and assumptions, epitomized the faculty’s commitments. At the outset Paton Yoder realized that one “fundamental function” of the faculty was “to make our own adaptations [of] the courses which we had taken in secular universities”;<sup>212</sup> and a *Bulletin* introduction to the Christian education department highlighted the necessity of integration:

Even in the early Christian centuries the Church of Christ found itself in the business of secular education, since it discovered that what the world educated, the world claimed. If it did not claim the soul, at least it claimed the mind. The church discovered that it was an uphill task for a young Christian to go through the process of renewing his mind in Christ, if he were constantly at the mercy of an educational process which was anti-Christian.<sup>213</sup>

At the end of every Christian Education class Clarence Stauffer “showed how the goals could only be reached as Christ was all and in all.”<sup>214</sup> English professor Christian Richard reminded the faculty that “liberal education . . . does not actually exist unless it is Christian,” because “the very makeup of the individual is not complete until it includes Christ over the sense, reason, and will.”<sup>215</sup> Ed Tuggy got “biblical psychology . . . based on Scripture” from Willard Harley’s coursework; and his 110-page “syllabus” for Personality and Mental Hygiene included the topic “What Is a Christian Education?”<sup>216</sup> (This was an epoch when the president could tell the trustees that not a half dozen current textbooks, except biblical, were “published . . . by Christian scholars for college teaching.”)<sup>217</sup> Likewise, for her course in Christian Literature, Grace Hamilton King compiled an anthology of “writings which are in accord with the beliefs of historic Christianity and at the same time recognized as literature.”<sup>218</sup> Under her influence Edna Adams “developed a Christian philosophy of life—slowly!”: “She challenged us to think . . . biblically.”<sup>219</sup> Such synthesis was not universal; although Colette Poore kept meticulous notes from Keith Rees’s course in ancient philosophy, the closest they come to integrating faith and learning is his invitation to compare Jesus Christ’s methods of teaching with those of Greek philosophers,<sup>220</sup> notwithstanding the contemporary catalogs’ objective for philosophy, of enabling “critical evaluation” of the history of philosophy “in the light of the distinctive philosophy of Christian theism.”<sup>221</sup> By contrast, Colette’s notes from Grace Hamilton King’s course, Philosophy of Christian

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<sup>211</sup> Wallace L. Emerson, “Syllabus for Introductory Psychology: Psychology 220,” rev. ed., (bound mimeograph, Wheaton College, 1935), pp. 3, 7, 48, 62, etc.

<sup>212</sup> Paton Yoder, email to JWS, December 8, 2006.

<sup>213</sup> *Bulletin* 1.2 (August 1940), p. 12.

<sup>214</sup> Mildreth Tinkham, autobiographical sketch, c. 1994, Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

<sup>215</sup> “Newsettes,” *Horizon* 3.8 (May 19, 1944), p. 3.

<sup>216</sup> Edward Tuggy, interview with Paul C. Wilt, January 22, 1988, p. 5; “Syllabus by Prof. Harley Proves Popular,” *Courier* 1.5 (December 1948), p. 3.

<sup>217</sup> Wallace L. Emerson, Report to the trustees, December 2, 1943, p. 3.

<sup>218</sup> Grace Hamilton King, “Preface,” *An Anthology of Christian Literature* (Santa Barbara: Westmont College, 1947), n.p.

<sup>219</sup> Edna Marie Adams Norbie, letter to Thelma Bain Kramar, July 9, 1991, Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

<sup>220</sup> Colette Poore, (loaned) class notes for Philosophy 301, fall 1947, first p. 2, verso.

<sup>221</sup> E.g., *Bulletin* 8.2 (May 1947), p. 50.

Education, include (for example) just such an critique of John Dewey's pragmatism (pp. 11-12).

Westmont was following the Bible institutes in their inclination toward a unified understanding of all learning, on Christian foundations—unlike the Wheaton of that era, with its “uncritical assumption that contemporary collegiate forms ought to be normal”:

Some Wheaton professors kept religion out of their teaching. Both Orrin Tiffany, a Phi Beta Kappa historian with a Ph.D. from the University of Michigan, and James B. Mack, a zoologist with an Ohio State Ph.D., deliberately limited the amount of religion in their coursework so students would be better prepared for graduate school.<sup>222</sup>

The culture of Wheaton would be dramatically altered, of course, with the coming of professors like Arthur Holmes, whose *Idea of a Christian College* has exerted extensive and sustained influence on behalf of integrating faith and learning.<sup>223</sup>

How did Westmont's early professors prepare students for a world generally hostile to evangelical faith? Between 1945 and 1950 an apologetics course appeared in the catalogs but was taught only once, to just four students. Clearly it seemed unimportant even to the numerous Bible majors—and to the faculty, who waited till the 70s to make it a graduation requirement. Because of the college's spiritually defensive posture (“National Ethos” below), one might expect students to absorb apologetics incidentally, in their courses and in campus life. Yet Ed Potts says:

I don't think anybody really dealt with the basic questions. . . . I don't ever remember inerrancy ever being discussed, or even literalism as a way to read the scripture. Those were the days when you accepted inerrancy, and probably a fairly rigid literalism; and the two together would lead towards answers—solid answers that couldn't be questioned.<sup>224</sup>

Given the diversities of students' professors, courses, and outside experiences, some felt better prepared than others for what they found in graduate school and elsewhere. As to evolutionary biology, Earl Kuester was grateful for professors aplenty “who had fought their way through [that] philosophy—not science, but philosophy—and who had won the battle.”<sup>225</sup> Grace Hamilton King required students in American Literature to read an excerpt from William James's *The Will to Believe*, on the nature of religious faith.<sup>226</sup> On the other hand, Ed Potts felt that the absence of a course in the modern novel represented a lack in the program of his English major: “We weren't facing issues that were current. . . . We were pretty much living in the past.” He did especially appreciate classes in which students learned to understand and respect strange or hostile ideas:

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<sup>222</sup>Michael S. Hamilton and James A. Mathiesen. “Faith and Learning at Wheaton College,” pp. 261-83 in *Models for Christian Higher Education: Strategies for Survival and Success in the Twenty-First Century*, ed. Richard T. Hughes and William B. Adrian (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), p. 272.

<sup>223</sup> Arthur Holmes, *The Idea of a Christian College*, rev. ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975).

<sup>224</sup> Edwin J. Potts, interview with John W. Sider, July 6, 2007, p. 11.

<sup>225</sup> Earl Kuester, interview with Paul C. Wilt, August 21, 1991, p. 3.

<sup>226</sup> In *The American Mind: Selections from the Literature of the United States*, ed. Harry R. Warfel, Ralph H. Gabriel, and Stanley T. Williams (New York: American Book Company, 1937, 1947), pp. 1081-85—marked as assigned reading in the “Contents” (p. xvii) of Colette Poore's (loaned) copy.

Marchant King [of the Bible department] with his fight with liberalism, helped us broaden our thinking . . . , to see that there were other points of view, and that many of them were very strong. . . . Trying to determine what is true and what is not true, or what is gray, is something that happened in classes. . . . We discovered that there weren't answers to everything.<sup>227</sup>

Ed Tuggy greatly appreciated Professor King's defense of orthodoxy by philosophical arguments (e.g., for theism) as well as theological.<sup>228</sup> And with respect to the history of biblical criticism, Ed found some years later that he was able to meet a theologically liberal Air Force chaplain on his own ground. In response to expressed disbelief about Jesus Christ's divine identity, he pointed to the implications of our Lord's own words in passages such as Matthew 7:22: "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord. . . ." and 24:35: "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." When a young Christian who heard this exchange asked later why he hadn't cited John's gospel, with its more explicit claims. Ed said that John would have been dismissed as a second-century pseudepigraphic text. And with respect to miracles: in one of Ed's classes Grace Hamilton King told of a Westmont alumna's response when a grad school professor, apropos of Jesus' walking on the water, began with "All myths have some element of truth"; he gave it up when she stage-whispered: "All right: bring on your sand bar." (As Ed noted, the Sea of Galilee has none.) Other students showed themselves responsibly even-handed in dealing with ideas contrary to Christian faith, as in Colette Poore's Senior Seminar paper of some eighty pages (still in her possession) on funerary poems by Milton, Shelley, Tennyson, and Arnold, titled "We Have Been Friends Together: A Study in Four Threnodies." While writing from a steadfastly Christian perspective, in a chapter about "Conclusions Reached on Death and Immortality" (pp. 55-70) she manifests a sympathetic understanding of Shelley, who aggressively challenged Christian doctrine, and also of Tennyson and Arnold as two "hoppers" in an age of philosophical materialism, seeking some ground for transcendent faith to satisfy them more than Christian orthodoxy.

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<sup>227</sup> Edwin J. Potts, interview with John W. Sider, July 6, 2007, pp 10, 7.

<sup>228</sup> Edward Tuggy, telephone interview with John W. Sider, July 16, 2007. This is the source also of the references to Ed that follow here.

## *Campus Ethos*

When I think of . . . the stars we had in our eyes at the establishment of that school and how involved in it we were and how committed to it—what a vision we shared! Those were wonderful days.

Margaret Voskuyl<sup>229</sup>

While the curriculum and the professor's classroom influence are central to the enterprise of the liberal arts, we are well aware that residential college life offers a great deal besides. In Westmont's first years students' education for life was indelibly marked by the grace of their intimate common cause with faculty in and out of the classroom, as founding partners in a grand venture of faith. What gave Keith Rees particular pleasure at the beginning was "the association with the students, and the feeling that we were working together on a great project, and that it was going to be important for the Lord's work."<sup>230</sup> The president drew confidence from the fact that "every student seems to have the feeling that he or she is in an important sense a co-founder of the college."<sup>231</sup> La Vose Wallin "counted it all joy to have a part in helping to establish a Christian college that we were sure was going to be a great tool in God's service."<sup>232</sup> Many enrolling students were committed beforehand to careers of service for the Kingdom—after graduation, as they supposed; but in Westmont's founding they encountered an unusual available immediately. The recollections of faculty and alumni echo their enthusiasm many different ways: "Faculty personalities . . . contributed to the genial atmosphere of Westmont in those days",<sup>233</sup> "all of the students had such a loving warmth for each other",<sup>234</sup> "each person wanted to glorify God in the tasks set before him resulting in a beautiful time of fellowship, caring, and learning."<sup>235</sup>

These reminiscences, unlike those of some old-timers, should not be suspected of exaggeration or false romanticizing. What makes them more credible, and more remarkable, is how strenuous life was, and how far the professors' self-sacrificing devotion prompted students to imitate them—even though, as multiple witnesses attest, the faculty's hardships were cheerfully borne and generally concealed. "That group had . . . lived through the Depression, and they were rather used to the idea that you made do with whatever you had, and . . . just curbed your desires."<sup>236</sup> With no guarantee of salary Westmont was, in the phrase of the time, "a faith work." Aware that only three percent of American colleges were "evangelical in tone [and] doctrinally sound in teaching," Wallace Emerson challenged himself and others to build greatly out of very slender resources. That tall order, he felt, would actually be a signal advantage. The college "should be staffed by people who have something of a missionary viewpoint."<sup>237</sup> For in the day that Westmont achieved a flourishing condition as to

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<sup>229</sup> Margaret Voskuyl, interview with Paul C. Wilt, January 2, 1985.

<sup>230</sup> Keith Rees, interview with Paul C. Wilt, December 30, 1989, p. 10.

<sup>231</sup> "Presenting Dr. Emerson: The Message," ??? [sic] 1.2 (November 1940), p. 1. ("Editorial," p. 2: "A permanent name has not yet been selected for our paper.")

<sup>232</sup> La Vose Wallin Newton, letter to Thelma Bain Kramar, January 29, 1994, Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

<sup>233</sup> Charles Courtney, letter to Thelma Bain Kramar, August 25, 1993, Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

<sup>234</sup> Mavis Philpotts Hill, interview with Paul C. Wilt, August 21, 1991, p. 2.

<sup>235</sup> Mildreth Tinkham, autobiographical sketch, c. 1994, Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

<sup>236</sup> Keith Rees, interview with Paul C. Wilt, December 30, 1989, p. 10.

<sup>237</sup> Wallace L. Emerson, Report to the trustees, December 2, 1943, p. 18. The quotation following is from the same place.

reputation and salaries, it could attract prospective faculty with objectionably mixed motives. He hoped “that at least the solid core of teachers shall be committed to this work while it is yet struggling and unknown, and while the living conditions are not yet desirable.” Accordingly, he would recall, most of the first faculty were at Westmont “not because of what they were getting out of it, but because of the ideal they had for the same kind of school that I wanted.”<sup>238</sup> Thus new students entered an atmosphere charged with spiritual earnestness and dedication. This was fruit of a challenge that the president had given his education classes at Wheaton—of visionary young professors helping some struggling Christian college grow and flourish enough to pay its way by attracting a large student body through their competence and solid credentials, without demanding answerable salaries: “Say: ‘If you use us for ten years, give us a place to stay, and something to eat, and enough to buy some clothes with, we won’t worry about the salary situation. We’ll try to make this school what it ought to be.’” So when Cora Reno volunteered to teach biology and he asked “What would you have to have?” she replied: “A way of getting out there . . . a place to stay, and maybe a meal or two a day.”

At times life would be just about that austere. Despite the president’s optimism that salaries, though not guaranteed, would be forthcoming,<sup>239</sup> he had to tell the faculty that their first paycheck would be late; and to Paton Yoder he seemed “shocked and dismayed.”<sup>240</sup> Ruth Kerr had assented that “all tuition and fees shall be used for teachers’ salaries,”<sup>241</sup> but this income was far too little. The college started up with about ninety students, some twenty of them part-time, whereas the president had been counting on three hundred (a goal first reached just after he resigned),<sup>242</sup> which he thought “a conservative . . . estimate.”<sup>243</sup> (Other income was markedly irregular.)<sup>244</sup> Tuition income kept slipping away all through the Emerson years because getting students to stay to graduate was so difficult. The *Bulletin’s* annual student rosters show that year-to-year retention from 1941 to 1946 averaged little more than half. And among the first-year students who entered Westmont from 1940 to 1945, just over one fifth graduated within six years (or seven, in the case of a few returning veterans). Many drafted students never returned; many others lacked money to finish. Some dropped out because of family responsibilities.<sup>245</sup> Others transferred so as to graduate from an accredited college.<sup>246</sup> Some imponderable numbers were dissatisfied with the quality of

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<sup>238</sup> Wallace L. Emerson, interview with Lyle Hillegas, March 1963, p. 17. The quotation following is from p. 20.

<sup>239</sup> Letter to Paton Yoder, March 25, 1940.

<sup>240</sup> Paton Yoder, interview with Paul Wilt, June 14, 1984, p. 3; and letter to Wallace L. Emerson, February 2, 1985, p. 3.

<sup>241</sup> Wallace L. Emerson, letter to Paton Yoder, March 19, 1940.

<sup>242</sup> *Bulletin* 2.2 (May 1941), pp. 60-61; Margaret Voskuyl, interview with John W. Sider, February 12, 2007, p. 10.

<sup>243</sup> Wallace L. Emerson, letter to Paton Yoder, March 25, 1940. In this response to concerns that “the salary depends altogether on the enrollment” and that “there is no real definite lower limit to the salary” (Yoder’s letter to Emerson, March 22, 1940), the president wrote: “I cannot really imagine any contingency that would make your salary any less than the amount offered. . . . I do not think that you are taking any large chance.”

<sup>244</sup> Cora A. Reno, interview with Roger J. Voskuyl, November 12, 1985, p. 5.

<sup>245</sup> E.g., Mildreth Tinkham Neuenschwander, autobiographical sketch, c. 1994, Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

<sup>246</sup> Wallace Emerson, interview with Lyle C. Hillegas, 1963, p. 24.

the faculty's teaching, which was unavoidably mixed. "Some of the professors who I think were good scholars had very boring classes," Ed Potts recalled; about one who taught during the Emerson years he said: "I could just hardly stand it in his classes."<sup>247</sup> One student at least (who would wish not to be named), after spending a term at Wheaton, would have transferred for good but for lack of funds. (Mildreth Tinkham, however, says she found Westmont courses in the first year "academically . . . like work I'd been doing at Wheaton.")<sup>248</sup>

Retention of the 77 students who entered in 1944-45 was most discouraging. Close to two thirds did not return for a second year—almost double the previous year's rate. Their transcripts suggest one more enemy of retention: insufficient preparation or aptitude. Fully two thirds had not entirely met the catalog's standards for high school credits, even though the college had just reduced the requirements in science and social science.<sup>249</sup> Only one student was short in English credits, with four lacking in social science and six in natural science; but in math thirty-six were deficient, and in foreign language forty-one—these being admitted, apparently, because Westmont supplied catch-up courses. Of those who entered with deficiencies, somewhat more than half fared ill. Seven withdrew during their first semester (two of them men, who may have been drafted) and one more in his second, after earning a .18 GPA (C was 1.0, and students lost a grade point for every unit graded F). Six flunked out after one semester and fifteen others after two or more. The 1943-44 catalog warned of dismissal for anyone who received less than C in "at least two thirds of the work taken in any term";<sup>250</sup> but this provision was omitted from the catalogs of 1943 to 1946, and six of those fifteen reregistered without meeting that standard. Evidently the standards of admission were relaxed because the war was diverting too many students. (Things were tough all over. All that kept alive Notre Dame's all-male student body was the infusion of hundreds of officer candidates from the U.S. Naval Academy.)<sup>251</sup> At best the college's finances would have been tight; the war made a difficult situation critical.

One way, then, Westmont was far too much a Wheaton of the West. For several decades after Wheaton's founding in 1860 the professors' income was unreliable. Most of them raised and sold produce to survive; some ran a business or preached on the side.<sup>252</sup> Likewise Westmont faculty endured months at a time with no pay, and for several years they would settle voluntarily for a lot less than their very modest contracts promised. For Helen Catherwood "there was a constant requirement of faith to keep on keeping on."<sup>253</sup> As late as 1946, when a carpenter accustomed to union-scale wages wrote in his job application that "with a house furnished . . . around 275.00 monthly would be about right," Ruth Kerr had to tell him: "Westmont College is a faith work.

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<sup>247</sup> Edwin J. Potts, interview with John W. Sider, July 6, 2007, p. 4.

<sup>248</sup> Mildreth Tinkham Neuenschwander, interview with John Sider, July 31, 2007, p. 3.

<sup>249</sup> *Bulletin* 4.2 (May 1943), p. 27; 5.2 (May 1944), p. 19.

<sup>250</sup> *Bulletin* 3.2 (May 1942), p. 28.

<sup>251</sup> "Notre Dame-Navy: More than Football Tradition," *The Observer* (Notre Dame; St. Mary's College, November 11, 2005) online.

<http://media.www.ndsmcobserver.com/media/storage/paper660/news2005/11/11Viewpoint/Notre.DameNavy.More.Than.Football.Tradition-1054142.shtml>

<sup>252</sup> W. Wyeth Willard, *Fire on the Prairie: The Story of Wheaton College* (Wheaton: Van Kampen Press, 1950), pp. 50, 158.

<sup>253</sup> Helen Catherwood Strandberg, interview with Roger J. Voskuyl, February 21, 1992, p. 2.



The highest salary received by our college professors having Ph.D. degrees is \$200 per month. . . . In fact, we are paying . . . less than \$200 per month, but we are furnishing in some cases living quarters.<sup>254</sup> Almost all of the professors with young children resorted to moonlighting to survive.<sup>255</sup> Only one of those, Paton Yoder, lasted beyond the first year: "My wife cared for a foster child to help," he remembered. "I worked in a food plant for a while, and an ice plant one summer, and several other places; and we managed to pay our way, and even pay off a few graduate school debts—but that's because of our [Mennonite] background."<sup>256</sup> For the first year only, Winifred Hockman was speech teacher and secretary to the student deans. A widow with a young daughter (her husband died attempting to defuse an Italian bomb in Ethiopia), she had to live off campus; receiving "scarcely any salary," she "did speaking outside to make ends meet."<sup>257</sup> Donors indeed sacrificed to keep the college alive, but "the heroics of those many faculty members who did not desert what, after the first year . . . must have seemed to many to be a sinking ship, [are] equally significant."<sup>258</sup> As Margaret Voskuyl remembered: "Those of us who were young could live from hand to mouth in a way that people with families could not. Those who were older and had raised their families could do the same thing." Nevertheless "we had this wonderful sense of vision. . . . It was a joy."<sup>259</sup> (To Cora Reno and other faculty in their twenties, "a few like Dr. McCreery and Dr. Page . . . were twice as old as we were, and that seemed old!"<sup>260</sup> Actually, in 1940 Elbert McCreery was sixty-three and John Page seventy.)

They were all overworked. Even in 1947 Kenneth Monroe, trained in biblical studies, history, and archaeology, had also to teach ethics: "The question was not, 'Have you had advanced work in a certain subject?' but was, 'The need is here and you are to be the answer.' That, of course, is the way Westmont was launched. We all dreamed and talked of the day when each faculty member could be working only in one field."<sup>261</sup> (Yet, as George Marsden observes, "the generalist who is a great teacher" still represents "the heart and soul of every liberal arts college.")<sup>262</sup> The president, who doubled as academic dean, taught twenty-five units' worth of courses during the first two years, including Introduction to General Psychology, Abnormal Psychology, Psychology of Religious Experience, Social Psychology, Introduction to Education, and Philosophy of Education. In 1943 he reminded the faculty that "no committee actions should be taken that the president does not know about"; and at each semester's registration every student had to "secure Dr. Emerson's approval of study load."<sup>263</sup> Near the beginning he wished heartily to employ Thelma Bain as his secretary, "but there were no funds for anything like that." Still, Thelma said, "We were never aware

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<sup>254</sup> Charles Green, letter to Ruth K. Kerr, December 15, 1945; Ruth K. Kerr, letter to Charles Green, January 10, 1946.

<sup>255</sup> Ruth McCreery, interview with Paul Wilt, January 27, 1990, p. 2.

<sup>256</sup> Paton Yoder, interview with Paul Wilt, June 14, 1984, pp. 3-4.

<sup>257</sup> Winifred Hockman, letters to Thelma Bain Kramar, March 17, 1992 and April 18, 1994, Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

<sup>258</sup> Paton Yoder, letter "To whom this may concern" at Westmont, August 11, 1998.

<sup>259</sup> Margaret Voskuyl, interview with Paul Wilt, January 2, 1985, pp. 2, 1.

<sup>260</sup> Cora Reno, interview with Roger J. Voskuyl, November 12, 1985, p. 14.

<sup>261</sup> Kenneth M. Monroe, interviews with Paul C. Wilt, June and October 1981, p. 3.

<sup>262</sup> George Marsden, "The Rise and Decline of the Modern Liberal Arts Ideal in the U.S.A.," pp. 3-8, in *A Conversation on the Liberal Arts* (Santa Barbara: Gaede Institute for the Liberal Arts, Westmont College, 2001), p. 6.

<sup>263</sup> Faculty Minutes, September 22, 1943; "Class Schedule, Spring Quarter, 1942-43," p. 2.

these people were being paid so little, were giving up anything, because they were just so generous with their whole spirit."<sup>264</sup> To some students, however, like Mildreth Tinkham, the faculty's straitened condition was well known;<sup>265</sup> and Mary Graham came to "realize what sacrifices they made to serve there"; perhaps it was through her parents' long-standing relationship with the president that she "happened to be aware of several occasions when Dr. Emerson actually was in need of money to pay his own bills."<sup>266</sup>

And the fall of 1943 brought one public, broadly influential, still-celebrated example of self-denial: President Emerson sold his car to pay overdue faculty salaries. He would ride street cars to appointments around Los Angeles, and he relied on the McCreerys for his daily commute from Eagle Rock to mid-town Los Angeles: "He would stand on the corner below our house and wait for us." When Peggy McCreery "apologized for being late one day" his reply was: "Never mind. I'm memorizing scripture. I never memorized it as a child. I never had time."<sup>267</sup> In retrospect Robert Campbell exclaimed: "Can you imagine a college president functioning that way?!"<sup>268</sup> While students began raising money to do something about it, Peggy solicited donations from faculty, trustees, and friends of the college. Ruth Kerr promised matching funds. "After much prayer and consideration"<sup>269</sup> Peggy, Bob Kevorkian, and WCSA president Earl Kuester were commissioned to buy a car. Two years into wartime new autos were unheard of, but they bought a maroon 1941 Oldsmobile wholesale from a sympathetic dealer in Long Beach. "We remember how we kept that secret," Earl said, right up until the conclusion of the chapel appointed for the presentation:

I went forward, . . . usurped the authority . . . , and informed Dr. Emerson that there was a situation that needed remedying. We had noted that he had been riding the streetcars, wasting time that was very valuable to the college and to the Lord's work. . . . So Westmonters had gathered together and had taken this offering, and we had purchased a piece of equipment, . . . and I pointed out the glass doors on the side of the chapel . . . and said "These keys go with it." He seemed confused, so I helped him along. . . . He didn't say a word. He got in it, started it, drove off, and we all thought he was going around the block. . . . All kinds of people [were] outside . . . waiting for him to come back and say something. . . . We had to go to class before he came back. Years later I had him come to my church, Calvary Baptist Church of Gardena. . . . I had always wanted to ask him, "Why didn't you come back and say something?" He said "I couldn't; I absolutely could not speak." . . . The fact that he could sacrifice himself . . . so much, I think, made a deep impression upon all of us.<sup>270</sup>

This was when Peggy McCreery "saw Dr. Emerson cry." Eleanor Kellogg snapped "a picture of him going out and opening the door for the first time. After that he would refer to it as his 'little red wagon.'"<sup>271</sup> The extra cash from donations contributed to his much-needed Christmas vacation.<sup>272</sup> Earl concluded: "We all felt responsible for the success of Westmont. . . . When . . . a lot of outside guests were coming and they

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<sup>264</sup> Thelma Bain Kramar, interview with Paul C. Wilt, August 21/22, 1991, p. 2.

<sup>265</sup> Mildreth Tinkham Neuenschwander, interview with John W. Sider, July 31, 2007, p. 16.

<sup>266</sup> Mary Graham Reid, "Memories of Westmont—1940-43," 1992, p. 3, Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

<sup>267</sup> Peggy McCreery Thompson, interview with Roger J. and Margaret Voskuyl, July 26, 1990, pp. 3-4.

<sup>268</sup> Robert Campbell, interview with Paul C. Wilt, February 7, 1996, p. 10.

<sup>269</sup> "Prexy Gets Auto," *Horizon* 3.3 (December 1, 1943), p. 1.

<sup>270</sup> Earl Kuester, interview with Paul C. Wilt, August 21, 1991, pp. 3-4.

<sup>271</sup> Eleanor Kellogg Tuggy, interview with Paul C. Wilt, January 22, 1988, p. 4.

<sup>272</sup> "Prexy Gets Auto," *Horizon* 3.3 (December 1, 1943), p. 1.

couldn't afford a gardener, I remember . . . trimming the hedge in front—and doing that sort of thing because we wanted to present Westmont in the best possible light."<sup>273</sup>

Students' willing responsibility for Westmont's success found other expressions. By enrolling at an unaccredited college they "risked more than the faculty did," in Keith Rees's judgment, "because their whole future depended upon . . . whether the work they did at Westmont would be recognized."<sup>274</sup> Earl Kuester "hazarded coming into an institution that was not tried and proven" because he was convinced that "it had a real future and was definitely committed to a faithful witness for Christ."<sup>275</sup> Many early students passed up opportunities to enroll in well-established colleges, as Wallace Emerson observed:

Every student who came to Westmont really had to adventure. . . . I used to tell them . . . "The Lord says, 'He that honoreth me, I will honor.' Now does He mean it, or doesn't He? Why don't you try, and find out? . . . If you feel that you want to graduate from another school because of the certainty that . . . your credits will be good, that's fine. . . . But I think, if you stay with it, that the Lord will honor your faith. Now that's just my thinking. There's no guarantee." . . . There has to be that sense of adventure, that sense of stepping out on faith; and you'll get the best student and you'll get the best work on that basis.<sup>276</sup>

In the fall of 1945 Dolores Farrell was part of a pointed initiative: "We seniors met in Dr. Emerson's office and laid out a list of basic things we wanted to see . . . always included in the management of the College."<sup>277</sup> The students made the most of the limited physical resources too, and many parents liked it that way. In the hectic haste of moving the college to Santa Barbara in 1945, for example, when it was August before the new campus was so much as identified,<sup>278</sup> the women of the student body had to live at first in what they dubbed "Jefferson Barracks," a public school building on the Riviera that most recently had housed U.S. Marines.<sup>279</sup> Sixteen of the women shared a basement room with bare concrete walls that they called "The Dungeon."<sup>280</sup> As dean of women, Ruth McCreery was worried:

We had to put them in classrooms in which there were about forty beds. The beds and dressers were packed in so close together that I thought we would have bedlam and panic and everything else, as parents brought their young girls into this situation. But to my amazement everyone, with no exception, said: "This is good for these young people."<sup>281</sup>

Students agreed: "No one would trade the valuable experience and training learned in 'Jefferson Barracks.'"<sup>282</sup> And Louella Lofgren admired how Westmont's cooks, on a slim budget, "raised Spam to a gourmet level by baking it with a slice of pineapple."<sup>283</sup>

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<sup>273</sup> Earl Kuester, interview with Paul C. Wilt August 21, 1991, pp. 4-5.

<sup>274</sup> Keith Rees, interview with Paul C. Wilt, December 30, 1989, p. 2.

<sup>275</sup> H. Earl Kuester, interview with Paul C. Wilt, August 21, 1991, p. 1.

<sup>276</sup> Wallace L. Emerson, interview with Lyle C. Hillegas, March 1963, pp. 24, 26.

<sup>277</sup> Dolores Farrell Peterson, letter to Thelma Bain Kramar, c. 1991-94, Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

<sup>278</sup> Paton Yoder, "Memories of Paton and Hazel Smucker Yoder," 1994 (134 pp.), p. 71.

<sup>279</sup> Eleanor Tuggy, interview with Paul C. Wilt, January 22, 1988, p. 14.

<sup>280</sup> Nancy Tyler Salverda, "Memories of Westmont," n.d., Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

<sup>281</sup> Ruth McCreery, interview with Paul C. Wilt, pp. 3-4.

<sup>282</sup> *Citadel* 1946, p. 106.

<sup>283</sup> Louella Lofgren, letter to Thelma Bain Kramar, January 21, 1991, Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

Students' education for life profited by the frankness and faith of president and faculty about institutional finance. "The leadership did not hesitate to call the school to prayer. . . . On very many occasions, we as a student body and as a school set aside special times of prayer . . . , and we saw answer[s] to prayer."<sup>284</sup> "Some times there wasn't money when there had to be money, so they just prayed it down."<sup>285</sup> Lotus Graham realized: "I wasn't the only one that was having trouble getting through college financially."<sup>286</sup> Yet Louise Olson didn't "remember hearing people complain about anything. We were all having a wonderful time."<sup>287</sup> Paton Yoder would "always remember those prayer meetings (daily, I believe, before school opened that first fall of 1940), our chapels, and especially our spiritual 'theme song,' 'Great Is Thy Faithfulness.'"<sup>288</sup> Faculty "were always on [their] knees before the Lord . . . Dr. Emerson, Dr. Page, Mrs. Dennis, Ruth McCreery, Cora Reno, Keith Rees, Doris Swanson and others."<sup>289</sup> Nancy Tyler wondered "how we could possibly spend a whole day" in prayer, but found "the inspiration and fellowship . . . beyond description."<sup>290</sup> For one such day, with classes cancelled: "No eloquent speaker was invited; . . . no attempt was made to arouse an emotional experience" (whereas for a century past this had been a salient feature of campus spiritual awakenings).<sup>291</sup> The intent was rather that "individuals might quietly and sincerely make their own decisions or covenants with the Lord." From 8 to 10 a.m. "Dr. Page conducted a service of singing, testimony, short meditation, and prayer," and till noon faculty and students met separately to pray. In the early afternoon students were alone with their individual "verses of meditation," and "the final session was expressive, given wholly to testimony in men's and women's meetings."<sup>292</sup>

In various ways the status of women in the college reflected the limitations imposed by the general culture. Intercollegiate sports for men developed gradually, but women had only intramurals after the first year. A home economics department, projected in 1946 but never launched, was conceived as "a training center for women missionaries."<sup>293</sup> At a little later juncture, amid a series of trustees' chapel talks on "Walking with God in My Business," one trustee's wife, Margaret Bailey Jacobsen, would speak on "Walking with God as a Housewife" (President's Annual Report, June 24, 1949, p. 3);<sup>294</sup> and a "Professional Studies" announcement, new to the 1951-52 catalog, would advertise a pre-nursing program "for the discriminating young lady."<sup>295</sup> *He, his, and him* were normal usage to denote the typical person, man or woman.

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<sup>284</sup> Robert Ross, interview with Paul C. Wilt, January 30, 1988, p. 7.

<sup>285</sup> Mildreth Tinkham Neuenschwander, interview with John W. Sider, July 31, 2007, p. 16.

<sup>286</sup> Lotus Graham Campbell, interview with Paul C. Wilt, February 7, 1996, p. 10.

<sup>287</sup> Louise Olson Burks, interview with Paul C. Wilt, August 21, 1991, p. 3.

<sup>288</sup> Paton Yoder, letter to Wallace L. Emerson, February 2, 1985.

<sup>289</sup> Jessie Rogers, interview with Thelma Bain Kramar, February 25, 1994, p. 1.

<sup>290</sup> Nancy Tyler Salverda, "Memories of Westmont," n.d., Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

<sup>291</sup> William C. Ringenberg, "The Old-Time College," in *Making Higher Education Christian: The History and Mission of Evangelical Colleges in America*, ed. Joel A. Carpenter and Kenneth Shipp (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), p. 84.

<sup>292</sup> "Day Set Aside for Prayer," *Horizon* 3.5 (February 11, 1944), p. 1.

<sup>293</sup> Ruth Kerr, letter to Charles E. Fuller, January 22, 1946.

<sup>294</sup> James Forrester, Annual Report, June 24, 1949, p. 3.

<sup>295</sup> *Westmont College Catalog*, 1951-52, p. 50.

On the other hand, although Ruth Kerr's longstanding role as secretary of the trustees' board might appear stereotypical, her minutes make it clear that she relished the job's prerogatives and opportunities; and for a time she was "president" (chair) of the board. Everyone knew about her successful direction, as a widowed mother of six, of a sizable manufacturing business. Grace Hamilton King, many students' favorite for teaching, intellect, and character, demonstrated that one could function as wife and mother while flourishing in a public career. The marriage of Marchant and Grace King modeled equal opportunity; she was the one with a doctorate. Student women could find many faculty models; women constituted about half the faculty from 1940 to 1942, and never less than 35% during the Emerson years. The president urged the trustees to allow paid maternity leave.<sup>296</sup> Women could look forward to equal opportunities for work in missions and education, and (in some places) pastoral ministry. Clarence Stauffer, the first dean of men, called Bill Lewis aside: "He . . . let me know, to help me, that my wife was superior to me in some areas intellectually, and I was superior to her in some areas."<sup>297</sup> At times the rationale for upholding women's dignity was grounded expressly in theology; Anna Dennis, we have seen, would say: "Hold up your head! You're a daughter of the King!"<sup>298</sup> This was a small and close-knit community, pervasively interdependent and habitually gracious in care and deference; one result was an atmosphere encouraging mutual regard and respect between men and women.

Small classes contributed to the atmosphere of family intimacy. For fall 1940 the average enrollment was 6.5. Eight classes had two students, and eleven just one. (Ralph Colburn, one of the four seniors in the first year, was Wallace Emerson's only student in Abnormal Psychology, and Elbert McCreery's in Greek Exegesis.) The largest class, the only one for men's physical activity, enrolled thirty-one. Conspiring circumstances had made the faculty-student ratio extremely low; but classes still averaged just over ten in 1943.<sup>299</sup> For fall 1945 almost half the classes enrolled fewer than ten, with just one, two, or three students in half of those. Florence Wallace recalls: "I was the only student in Dr. Parker's trigonometry class, so he had time to teach me lots more than math. What an example he was in praying for and writing to our students in the service! His undaunt[ed] faith that God would bring every one of those students home safely was a great challenge to me."<sup>300</sup> Clarence Stauffer "left a lasting impression" on Mildreth Tinkham: "As I was the only student who needed Christian Education of Youth he taught the course as he would have presented it to a full class."<sup>301</sup>

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<sup>296</sup> Wallace L. Emerson, Agenda for the trustees' meeting of June 16, 1944.

<sup>297</sup> William Lewis, interview with Paul C. Wilt, August 21, 1991, p. 1.

<sup>298</sup> Margaret Anderson, interview with Paul C. Wilt, July 14, 1988, p. 6.

<sup>299</sup> Wallace L. Emerson, Report to the trustees, December 2, 1943, p. 22.

<sup>300</sup> Florence Wallace, unaddressed note, c. 1991-94, Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

<sup>301</sup> Mildreth Tinkham Neuenschwander, autobiographical sketch, c. 1994, Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

Students must have been influenced deeply by the college-wise sense of spiritual crisis on the national scene. An early *Bulletin* quoted an unnamed Christian leader as saying that “evangelical Christianity has lost every battle for the past half century.”<sup>302</sup> Clearly Wallace Emerson regarded defense of true faith for his times as one chapter in the historic warfare between God and Satan. He warned that “every agency opposed to evangelical Christianity,” including Catholicism, communism, and liberal Protestantism, “is more active today than ever before.” Hostility between Catholics and Protestants, mutual and often bitter, dated of course from the Protestant Reformation; and atheistic communism was quite properly recognized as a mortal foe. Furthermore, starting in 1917 theological modernists aggressively attacked evangelical premillennialists, who fought back vigorously.<sup>303</sup> Now, the president declared:

Most protestant leaders know that modernism has girded up its loins, reorganizing the Federal Council [later the National Council of Churches] and its subsidiaries and unless means be taken to protect evangelical Christianity from its encroachment, not only will the radio be closed to evangelical propaganda, but the complete domination of all education and propaganda agencies, as well as all accrediting agencies will in less than a generation wipe out all vestiges of the evangelical viewpoint.

“Many people seeing this,” he added, “wring their hands and moan about it being the Lord’s will. I don’t believe it. It is the will or the lack of will of a Laodicean Church that is neither hot or cold, but lukewarm.” Christian colleges must take leadership in stemming the tide, with confidence in God’s provision for Westmont: “I think we may trust the Lord to take care of all opposition, especially if He will give us grace enough to accept it as one of the normal things and help us avoid bitterness and foolish retaliation.”<sup>304</sup> From the twenties onward, when theological conservatives had given up hope of banishing modernism from America’s mainline denominations, one of their recourses was to expand conservative higher education: “Wheaton College was for several years during the 1930s the fastest growing liberal arts college in the nation.”<sup>305</sup>

The president’s hopes for Westmont’s influence were defined largely by an early twentieth-century “evangelical vision of a converted world and a harmonious and Christian America,”<sup>306</sup> understood as a return to Christian origins. His first *Bulletin* essay addressed the question: “What must American education do to aid in the moral and spiritual regeneration of America?”<sup>307</sup> When the U.S. entered World War II the *Bulletin* declared: “In our prosperity we thought we did not need God. In our time of trouble we do not know where to find Him. Our need—before ships, armies, arms or

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<sup>302</sup> *Bulletin* 3.4 (November 1942), p. 3.

<sup>303</sup> George Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture: The Shaping of Twentieth-Century Evangelicalism: 1870-1925* (New York and Oxford: Oxford UP, 1980), pp. 145-49.

<sup>304</sup> Wallace L. Emerson, Report to the trustees, December 2, 1943, pp. 6-7.

<sup>305</sup> George Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture: The Shaping of Twentieth-Century Evangelicalism: 1870-1925* (New York and Oxford: Oxford UP, 1980), p. 194.

<sup>306</sup> Virginia Lieson Brerton, “The Bible Schools and Conservative Evangelical Higher Education, 1880-1940,” pp. 110-136 in *Making Higher Education Christian: The History and Mission of Evangelical Colleges in America*, ed. Joel A. Carpenter and Kenneth W. Shipps (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), p. 114.

<sup>307</sup> “The Emergency in American Education,” *Bulletin* 1.3 (November 1940), p. 3.

planes—is that we shall again be one people and that we shall again find our God.”<sup>308</sup> Similar sentiments recur: “Do we want Christian leadership and the character and morality elements in our national life without which liberty perishes? This is tantamount to asking, do we want a Christian college?”<sup>309</sup> “Westmont . . . calls to those who believe in the America that could be”;<sup>310</sup> “if . . . all chemists should become Christians, then we might hope to destroy at its source the most dreaded weapon of modern warfare.”<sup>311</sup> (Such hopes for a Christian America still characterized Wheaton in 1950: “It is difficult to discern at present what kind of America the general public wants for the years that lie ahead, should the Lord tarry. Do they want a Christian America? Or, are they content to have a citizenry of educated pagans?”)<sup>312</sup> Thus for Westmont’s president the premillennial expectation of Christ’s return, as expressed in Article 6 of the Statement of Faith (Appendix), did not entail the common premillennialist conviction that nothing short of our Lord’s return could improve the human condition much, or for long. He did, however, reflect a belief common (though not universal) among evangelicals that renewal must come not by political action but by evangelism:

[The world] needs those who are wise enough to realize that no schemes of peace can succeed without the Prince of Peace; that no new scheme will produce it without Him. . . . It needs those who instead of believing in widespread mass reforms, which never do take place, believe that human beings have to be dealt with one by one and that each needs personal redemption, rather than reformation.<sup>313</sup>

Likewise the 1944 *Citadel* (trustees’ page) declared: “The program of God to solve the ills of society does not repose in quick panaceas or involved schemes of government. It is committed to faithful and courageous men and women who pray to see the will of God, and having seen it, do it.”

The theme of crisis pervaded the 40s at Westmont. When in 1945 the college purchased a former golf course at Altadena for a larger campus, the prospect “did not appeal to many of the citizens,” and the college lost two appeals to the zoning commission and one to the county board of supervisors:

This clubhouse had served as a rendezvous where drunkenness and wild parties prevailed. (The thought of a Christian college in their midst was unthinkable to the patrons of the club.) To the Christian people and many churches in Altadena it had been a stench in their nostrils. . . . We are reminded of Deuteronomy 20: 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> verses: “Hear O Israel, yet approach this day unto battle against your enemies; let not your hearts faint, fear not and do not tremble, neither be ye terrified of them.”<sup>314</sup>

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<sup>308</sup> “Editorial,” *Bulletin* 3.1 (February 1942), p. 2.

<sup>309</sup> “The Financial Problem,” *Bulletin* 3.3 (August 1942), p. 4.

<sup>310</sup> “Westmont Challenges,” *Bulletin* 4.3 (August 1943), p. 5.

<sup>311</sup> “Why Science,” *Bulletin* 4.4 (November 1943), p. 3.

<sup>312</sup> W. Wyeth Willard, *Fire on the Prairie: The Story of Wheaton College* (Wheaton: Van Kampen Press, 1950), pp. 193-94.

<sup>313</sup> Wallace L. Emerson, “The World Needs,” *Bulletin* 4.3 (August 1943), p. 4.

<sup>314</sup> Ruth K. Kerr, “History of Westmont College and Academy,” unpublished essay, 1957, pp. 5, 10.

*The Horizon* noted in 1947 that “the Christian . . . must live in a world which is predominantly and often aggressively anti-Christian.”<sup>315</sup> And in 1949 President Forrester observed to Westmont’s trustees that “the liberal churches are entirely hostile to the institution.”<sup>316</sup> Later he told them: “We are building a wall of Christian character against the insurgence of modern secular philosophy and resultant careless morality.”<sup>317</sup> Back in the college’s first year “Dr. Emerson’s office . . . overlooked the lot that is now Third and Vermont. That lot was sold [for] . . . a large entertainment center. . . . It was to have a bar and a dance hall.” But at prayer meetings in his office, Margaret Voskuyl recalled,

Miss Whipple [a teacher at Culter Academy] . . . would pray, concerning that lot, “Lord, confound their evil schemes.” Well, I had never in my life heard anybody pray like that, and I can still remember how our hair almost stood on end the first time. . . . But as she continued to pray, the earthmoving equipment stopped digging and after a while it was moved away.<sup>318</sup>

Already in 1940, when the United States was astir with the imminent prospect of total war on two fronts, Westmont’s president described the convergence of the physical and spiritual spheres of conflict:

America is not morally and spiritually prepared for a life-and-death struggle. . . . We may well be afraid of the preparations that are going on both to the East and to the West for the subjugation and looting of America. . . .

Happy would America be, if . . . it could be certain . . . that [its] way of life was also in accordance with God’s will . . . ; that in opposing the monstrous thing that has grown up in Europe, the stars in their course were fighting with us. Germany has a sense of destiny, but it is a terrifically evil destiny. How shall America recapture its sense of destiny which began with the Pilgrim Fathers and is echoed in the Battle Hymn of the Republic?

American education has something to do if America is to be made ready for the crises facing her, and she cannot do her work if she arrogantly claims that all authority is given unto her to ride down the religion of the Lord Jesus Christ. . . . If the Church is not all that it should be, . . . education is responsible for some of the apostasy that is found there.<sup>319</sup>

Likewise the Statement of Purpose spoke of the nation’s “bitter harvest of an era of selfish purposes, shallow thinking, and the pursuit of pleasure at any cost,” whereas Westmont “stands forth, consecrated to the conviction that has impelled men through all the ages to lay down the comfortable and easy way of life and take up the cross.”<sup>320</sup>

At the very start there were students who understood the situation as Ed Nash described it: “The Christian life is no joke, and in this day of appalling sin and apostasy, we who know Him must . . . ‘be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might.’”<sup>321</sup> Accordingly in 1941 Westmont’s yearbook was named *The Citadel*, its foreword infused with the military and spiritual crises alike—and with the Christian’s hope:

Headlines scream out the startling news of the war, landmarks thought to be impregnable sink into ruin, nations are conquered in a day. The civilization in which we have put our trust is

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<sup>315</sup> “The Aims of a Christian College,” *Horizon* 7.5 (November 21, 1947), p. 2. “A summary of discussions carried on by the Educational Policies Committee last year.”

<sup>316</sup> James Forrester, Report to the trustees, January 7, 1949.

<sup>317</sup> James Forrester, Report to the trustees, November 4, 1949, p. 2.

<sup>318</sup> Margaret Voskuyl, interview with Paul C. Wilt, January 2, 1985, p. 5.

<sup>319</sup> Wallace L. Emerson, “The Emergency in American Education,” *Bulletin* 1.3 (November 1940), pp. 2-3.

<sup>320</sup> *Bulletin* 3.2 (May 1942), p. 3.

<sup>321</sup> Ed Nash, “Christian Warfare,” *The Fountain* 1.1 (October 1940), p. 2.



crumbling. The future is fraught with uncertainty. In the stress and turmoil . . . we, as young people, have learned to put our faith in the Rock, Christ Jesus. The following pages of the first edition of the "CITADEL" reveal the spirit of Westmont, in the face of the times.

The accompanying photograph replicated the fortress metaphor, depicting "Westmont Tower," the battlemented overhanging bartizan that was a minor and untypically warlike detail of the main building. An epigraph reads: "A mighty fortress is our God, / A bulwark never failing." The "tower" figured similarly in the second and third *Citadels*, and frequently in college publications until the move from Los Angeles in 1945.

All this might suggest "fortress mentality." But that phrase, denoting irrational fear, is not relevant to these times. Recalling Pearl Harbor, and President Roosevelt's date-which-will-live-in-infamy speech, James Arnold reported its radio broadcast: "We all gathered in assembly and heard our president. You could feel the tension . . . , the tightening of facial expressions of the young men."<sup>322</sup> Gatherings for prayer brought Lotus Graham and other students closer together: "From then on we felt like we were a school carrying on when the world was . . . being torn apart."<sup>323</sup> College records reveal diverse and manifold effects of spiritual warfare as well. Though seldom mentioned in alumni reminiscences, the resulting sense of double crisis exerted a galvanizing effect on students: some supporting themselves in war industries, many called into military service, and the great majority involved as undergraduates in a variety of Christian ministries. Here was an education for life not replicable any time since at Westmont. Potently the war deepened mutual sympathies, among students and with professors.

### *Ministries*

A spirit of defensiveness in a hostile world outlasted the 40s, but it never inspired the "reductionist . . . approach to learning" often associated with "defender-of-the-faith" colleges,<sup>324</sup> nor moved students to withdraw into an isolated community of believers. In the spring of 1940 John Page had written in WBC's student newspaper:

The fact that some known as modernists are in a Christian organization does not make it entirely modernistic. Stay with them and strengthen their hands in maintaining a witness to the truth. If that witness is opposed and the Gospel denied, then your withdrawal would be in order. . . . In this connection read Phil. 1:18.<sup>325</sup>

From Westmont's earliest days, moreover, some extra-curricular aspects of students' education for life were not just a preparation to serve the needs of the world, but an immersion in them. Wallace Emerson's founding hope was amply rewarded: "to make this place acceptable to the right kind of student and unacceptable to the wrong kind," so as "to have sound consecrated material to work with."<sup>326</sup> Required service

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<sup>322</sup> James Arnold, interview with Paul C. Wilt, August 21/22, 1991, p. 4.

<sup>323</sup> Lotus Graham Campbell, interview with Paul C. Wilt, February 7, 1996, p. 7.

<sup>324</sup> M. M. Patillo and D. M. MacKenzie, *Church-Sponsored Higher Education in the United States*, Report of the Danforth Commission, 1966, cited by Thomas A. Askew, "The Shaping of Evangelical Higher Education," pp. 137-152 in *Making Higher Education Christian: The History and Mission of Evangelical Colleges in America*, ed. Joel A. Carpenter and Kenneth W. Shipps (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), p. 145.

<sup>325</sup> "Student Querier" (unsigned), *Western Horizon* 1.3 (March 4, 1940), p. 3.

<sup>326</sup> Wallace L. Emerson, Report to the trustees, December 2, 1943, p. 6.

assignments were only a memory of BMI and WBC,<sup>327</sup> but most students volunteered for Christian service projects.<sup>328</sup>

In the first year they organized Tuesday evening prayer meetings, the Witness Club (“to maintain zeal for and efficiency in personal evangelism”), and the Foreign Missionary Fellowship, “active in its . . . promotion of missionary spirit around the campus.”<sup>329</sup> In 1945 the FMF was allotted “one chapel period a month . . . to ‘Awaken Students to the Call of God.’”<sup>330</sup> Many students enrolled with a prior sense of this vocation: fired by missionary biographies, by missionaries on furlough, and by missionary martyrs like John and Betty Stam, murdered by Chinese communists.<sup>331</sup> Thus Dilwyn Studebaker, at age five: “We had a missionary doctor visit our home. . . . He turned to me and said, ‘Why don’t you become a missionary?’ I said, ‘Yes, I will.’ From that time on being a missionary was the goal of my life.”<sup>332</sup> Missionary affinity led him to court Mildred Heinrichs, a transfer student, at the start of his senior year; both were committed to South America: “Romance blossomed and in June 1944 we were married.” Andrew and Thelma Lambert Steele and John and Mary Graham Reid had similar stories.<sup>333</sup> Many students, such as Ruth Charlton, felt called to a particular region: “I met my husband-to-be Paul Uhlinger in 1940 at Biola. . . . Before we met . . . , both of us had known we’d be serving in Africa.”<sup>334</sup> Thelma Lambert was so certain God was leading her to China that she needed a month to reply (“in the affirmative”) to Andrew’s letter with its “proposal of marriage and Ethiopia.”<sup>335</sup> Others, however, like Eleanor Kellogg, who eventually had years of fruitful ministry in Venezuela with her husband Ed Tuggy, at first needed to catch the missionary spirit:

When I was first at Westmont . . . one girl . . . was rather tall, prim, and did her hair up in a bun, and always carried her Bible very primly. I thought: “Oh-oh—a missionary type! I don’t want to be a missionary.” . . . [Yet] I began to realize that these were just human beings doing a job out there. This little lady from the Belgian Congo . . . actually showed us a picture of herself standing by her pen of red hens. I thought: “Oh, my! isn’t that interesting! Missionaries can have hens. Maybe I could be a missionary.”<sup>336</sup>

There was additional education for life in other Christian endeavors. From very early times some students, guided by the Salvation Army, conducted Sunday afternoon jail ministry with hymns, a brief message, and personal testimonies.<sup>337</sup> During 1945-46 Westmont students were at work in twenty-two churches of the Santa Barbara area, serving as pastor, assistant pastor, choir singer, or pianist, leading Sunday school

<sup>327</sup> Ruth McCreery, interview with Paul C. Wilt, January 27, 1990, p. 3.

<sup>328</sup> Dilwyn Studebaker, interview with Paul C. Wilt, August 21-22, 1991, p. 3.

<sup>329</sup> “Religious Life,” *Bulletin* 2.2 (May 1941), p. 19.

<sup>330</sup> WCSA Minutes, November 20, 1945.

<sup>331</sup> Mary Guinness Taylor, *The Triumph of John and Betty Stam* (Philadelphia: China Inland Mission, 1935).

<sup>332</sup> Dilwyn Studebaker, on Thelma Bain Kramar’s form, “Westmont Class of ‘45: 50<sup>th</sup> Reunion Scrapbook (includes ‘38-’48),” Thelma Bain Kramar Project. The quotation of his that follows is from the same source.

<sup>333</sup> Thelma Lambert Steele, “Education Plus,” c. 1994, Thelma Bain Kramar Project; Mary Graham Reid, “Memories of Westmont—1940-43,” 1992, p. 1, Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

<sup>334</sup> Ruth Charlton Uhlinger, letter to “Dear Fellow Graduates of the Westmont College Class of 1944,” n.d., Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

<sup>335</sup> Thelma Lambert Steele, “Education Plus,” c. 1994, Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

<sup>336</sup> Eleanor Kellogg Tuggy, interview with Paul C. Wilt, January 22, 1988, pp. 10-11.

<sup>337</sup> Jeanette Kistler Krause, letter to Thelma Bain Kramar, May 28, 1994; “Westmont Students Go to Jail,” *Horizon* 3.2 (November 19, 1943), p. 1.

classes, youth groups, junior church, and a junior choir, or broadcasting in Spanish for the Mexican Baptist Church.<sup>338</sup> By 1946, through the American Sunday School Union students were engaged in missionary work, organizing and conducting Sunday schools in communities as far as a hundred miles distant: Casmalia, Punta, Sisquoc, and Garden City Acres<sup>339</sup> (the latter near San Luis Obispo).<sup>340</sup> Soon after in Guadalupe, a town of 1300 then without a Protestant church, a Sunday school founded by emigrants from Oklahoma and Arkansas became a church under the leadership of Robert Ross:

We were assigned to that Sunday school. . . . The people said, "Would you give us a little devotional after the Sunday school hour?" So I said "Sure." . . . Then they began to talk about the possibility of organizing a church. . . . They were constituted as the Guadalupe Community Church. I'm considered to be the founding pastor because . . . we would conduct a full worship service, and I would be bringing the sermon. . . . The church is still there [1988].<sup>341</sup>

Now affiliated with the American Missionary Fellowship, this congregation has its own missionaries serving in France, and with Missionary Aviation Fellowship in Congo.<sup>342</sup> Early in 1946 when war veterans were about to increase Westmont's enrollment by fifty-five, their chapter of the national Christian War Veterans began planning Christian witness in a forestry camp, in Sunday school, and in jail visitation. This "McIntosh-Bogue Chapter" was named in memory of two Christian fliers killed in action. Its members were committed "to carry on the Lord's work in the tradition of these men, that in those who remain, Christ may be glorified whether in life or in death."<sup>343</sup>

Occasionally ministry involved some practical social service. At the war's end students contributed to an Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship program "to collect clothing to send to some of the millions of cold and starving children of Europe," where "the next six months . . . may decide the fate of millions." Eight boxes were donated, along with \$76 from students and faculty.<sup>344</sup> Yet student ministries were focused very largely on prayer, evangelism, and service to churches, just as at Wheaton in 1946, for example, when students founded Sunday schools for inner-city black children and funded their stay at a Christian camp—evidently without addressing the slum conditions of their life at home.<sup>345</sup> Probably this relative neglectfulness of charitable works mirrored evangelicals' reaction to modernism's Social Gospel, which for decades had been shifting from evangelism social and political concerns for evangelism:

The SVM [Student Volunteer Movement], like its parent organization [the YMCA], reached its peak between the 1890s and the First World War, and then began to decline during the 1920s. After the war, both the SVM and the Christian associations began to concentrate less on evangelism and more upon social concerns such as international peace and goodwill between

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<sup>338</sup> "Westmonters Active in Local Churches," *Horizon* 5.10 (May 10, 1946), p. 1.

<sup>339</sup> "Students Conduct Sunday Schools," *Horizon* 5.10 (May 10, 1946), p. 3.

<sup>340</sup> Alan Neuenschwander, interview with John W. Sider, July 31, 2007, p. 14.

<sup>341</sup> Robert Ross, interview with Paul C. Wilt, January 30, 1988, pp. 9-10.

<sup>342</sup> [www.guadalupecommunitychurch.org](http://www.guadalupecommunitychurch.org)

<sup>343</sup> "Veterans Organize," *Horizon* 5.5 (February 8, 1946), p. 1; "New Veterans Swell C. W. V.," *Horizon* 5.7 (March 15, 1946), p. 1; "Veteran Chapter Given Name," *Horizon* 5.8 (March 29, 1946), p. 7.

<sup>344</sup> "IVCF Sponsors Clothing Drive," *Horizon* 5.4 (December 21, 1945), p. 1; "I.V.C.F. Clothing Drive Successful," *Horizon* 5.5 (February 8, 1946), p. 1.

<sup>345</sup> W. Wyeth Willard, *Fire on the Prairie: The Story of Wheaton College* (Wheaton: Van Kampen Press, 1950, pp. 183-84.

nations, race relations, international student relief and other forms of economic development, and ecumenicity in church organizations.

. . . The number of enrolled missionary volunteers declined from nearly 2,800 in 1920 to 34 in 1937 and 25 in 1938; the number of volunteers who sailed abroad decreased from 637 in 1921 to 38 in 1934.<sup>346</sup>

Evangelicals' urgency was heightened by the expectation that our Lord's return might (or, for some, must) occur very soon. As for issues of social justice, domestic or global, if the college had evinced in the 40s all the concerns that Westmont faculty and students do today, it would have been far ahead of American culture in general. Faculty did address some such concerns; the president, we have seen, tied psychological theories of the will (or of its nonexistence) to Americans' apathy about mass murders abroad.

If some students were too keen about the call to ministry and impatient about taking time for their studies, others found Christian service a too-welcome diversion from academics. Dorothy Davies was convinced in 1943 of a "lack of seriousness of purpose"; and when she summarized for the faculty a typical week's extracurricular activities—not all in ministries, to be sure—"there followed a long discussion of complaints from every department that studies were being neglected because students have not the time to spend on studying." The faculty recommended that the Personnel Committee (for *personnel*, read "student life") should "define extra-curricular activities," submit to the registrar a roll of attendance at club meetings, and re-examine students' hours of outside work. They were informed a little later that "Sunday study was a general practice." The problem surfaced again two years later when Ruth Walter, then dean of women, tried to account for the depressed state of the college-wide g.p.a.<sup>347</sup>

Christian ministry and academic endeavors could, however, be complementary, as in the travels of musical ensembles. The choir had "a great impact as an outreach and evangelistic ministry," Earl Kuester observed; at Camp Pendleton he prayed with a young marine who turned to Christ.<sup>348</sup> The impact on the students themselves, like Mavis Philpotts, was equally great: "Helen [Catherwood] would have us down on our knees before every concert. We spent at least one hour in prayer . . . as well as the musical preparation."<sup>349</sup> They had to pray for funding to tour.<sup>350</sup> Other groups included a male quartet, a women's glee club, women's quartet and trios, mixed quartet, the Little Symphony and smaller ensembles, and soloists vocal and instrumental. Besides experiences of ministry, and of hospitality on the road, challenges of working with a group were an education. Bill Lewis played in a trumpet trio: "We took turns being the speaker. . . . They asked one of us to be on a panel, and it was on a subject I just loved; and before I could get my mouth open to volunteer Ed Nash volunteered. . . . It was a spiritual battle for me. So, in my next devotional reading I read that we should prefer one another. . . . I prayed for Ed and he did a beautiful job."<sup>351</sup>

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<sup>346</sup> William C. Ringenberg, *The Christian College: A History of Protestant Higher Education in America* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1984) pp. 152-53.

<sup>347</sup> Faculty Minutes, October 28, 1943, November 11, 1943, February 15, 1945.

<sup>348</sup> H. Earl Kuester, interview with Paul C. Wilt, August 21, 1991, p. 5.

<sup>349</sup> Mavis Philpotts Hill, interview with Paul C. Wilt, August 21, 1991, p. 1.

<sup>350</sup> Peggy McCreery Thompson, interview with Roger J. and Margaret Voskuyl, July 26, 1990, p. 2.

<sup>351</sup> William Lewis, interview with Paul C. Wilt, August 21, 1991, p. 3.

## Chapel

Some of the daily chapel programs were entrusted to student leaders, and to organizations such as Kappa Sigma Omega, the first literary society.<sup>352</sup> Late-spring “senior chapels” became a tradition, the senior class inspiring the rest by defining their own calling, collective and personal.<sup>353</sup> All this yielded valuable returns in spiritual growth and administrative experience. Perhaps in part because of students’ involvement in the choice of speakers, alumni are eloquent about their relish of chapels: “I enjoyed chapel a lot”;<sup>354</sup> “I always looked forward to chapel time”;<sup>355</sup> “We had wonderful chapels. It was a pleasure to come”;<sup>356</sup> “We weren’t interested in cutting—at least I wasn’t. I was interested in being at chapel”;<sup>357</sup> “I always loved chapel and the speakers”;<sup>358</sup> “I recall excellent chapel services and speakers”;<sup>359</sup> “To hear outstanding speakers regularly and to have opportunities to participate in worship made life rich indeed.”<sup>360</sup> “It seemed the Lord just had very special people . . . that would inspire us, and keep us close to the Lord.”<sup>361</sup> “Dr. Page especially was very good.”<sup>362</sup> Elbert McCreery’s notes for two chapel sermons are in Westmont’s archives: one on “The Bible—The Greatest Book in the World” (undated), and one from 1 Cor. 12:12-31 on “Knowing God’s Will for My Life” (May 28, 1943).

Many of the diverse speakers were eminent in the evangelical world. Virginia Sackett was impressed by Robert Munger, the influential pastor of South Hollywood Presbyterian Church, and “his intent . . . for us to have a deeper spiritual walk with Christ.”<sup>363</sup> In a two-part series Dr. Samuel Zwemer, professor emeritus of the history of religion and Christian missions at Princeton Seminary, and veteran of twenty-one years’ work in Arabia and sixteen in Egypt, told students that today’s “duty of evangelism” is “applying modern inventions of travel and communication” to convey the “same saving gospel of Jesus Christ.”<sup>364</sup> Chapel speakers in 1945-46 included biographer Richard E. Day, Raymond Lowry of the European Christian Mission, and Percy Crawford, founder of the Young Peoples Church of the Air. In 1946 the faculty received a recommendation from the Personnel Committee for three or more chapel periods “to clarify Westmont policy” on good use of the Lord’s Day, on “the need for soul winning,” and on church attendance as providing “food for the soul” in addition to opportunities for service.<sup>365</sup>

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<sup>352</sup> *Citadel* 1941, p. 48; WCSA Minutes, October 10, 1944; “K.S.O. Student Chapel,” *Horizon* 1.3 (October 24, 1941), p. 3.

<sup>353</sup> E.g., “The Seniors Have a Week of Chapels,” *Horizon* 3.9 (June 6, 1944), pp. 1-2.

<sup>354</sup> Virginia Sackett, interview with Paul C. Wilt, August 21/22, 1991, p. 3.

<sup>355</sup> Mavis Philpotts Hill, interview with Paul C. Wilt, August 21, 1991, p. 4.

<sup>356</sup> Nancy Tyler Salverda, interview with Paul C. Wilt, August 21, 1991, p. 10.

<sup>357</sup> Eleanor Kellogg Tuggy, interview with Paul C. Wilt, January 22, 1988, p. 11.

<sup>358</sup> Mary Graham Reid, letter to Thelma Bain Kramar, January 17, 1992, Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

<sup>359</sup> Joseph Stevens (“a.k.a. Joseph Simonhoff”), letter to Thelma Bain Kramar, July 30, 1991, Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

<sup>360</sup> Nancy Tyler Salverda, “Memories of Westmont,” n.d., Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

<sup>361</sup> Mavis Philpotts Hill, interview with Paul C. Wilt, August 21, 1991, p. 4.

<sup>362</sup> Louise Olson Burks, interview with Paul C. Wilt, August 21, 1991, p. 2.

<sup>363</sup> Virginia Sackett, interview with Paul C. Wilt, August 21/22, 1991, p. 3.

<sup>364</sup> “Bible Conference Speaker to Arrive Early,” *Horizon* 3.9 (June 9, 1944), p. 1; “Dr. Samuel Zwemer Speaks in Chapel,” *Horizon* 5.6 (February 22, 1946), p. 2.

<sup>365</sup> Faculty Meeting Agenda, January 24, 1946.

## *The Student Life Department*

Westmont has long since handed over to student life experts numerous shepherding functions for which the first faculty took some responsibility. (The “faculty,” in a sense, handled the whole administration, not just “Personnel,” as the student life department was known; it was presidential principle that each administrator with faculty rank “should teach at least some courses”.)<sup>366</sup> In return for reduced rent Paton Yoder (“Daddy,” at age 29, to his charges) was house parent for a year in an “improvised boys’ dormitory.”<sup>367</sup> When evenings in the library got too unruly, faculty members volunteered to act as monitors.<sup>368</sup> Faculty administered all four tests required of entering students during fall 1945 Freshman Days.<sup>369</sup> They approved (or denied) permission for students to marry during the academic year.<sup>370</sup> And for Emerson’s last semester at Westmont the department of sociology and economics introduced a three-unit course of a sort now conducted by Student Life, called Leadership (“among children, . . . in Christian work, and . . . in a democracy”), which enrolled six students, and fourteen the following year.<sup>371</sup> Emerson noted late in 1943 that “we have not had a Dean of Men more often than we have had one,”<sup>372</sup> so that at times, probably, faculty assumed still other duties of the student deans.

Those tasks must have seriously burdened life for any dean who was also a professor. Ruth McCreery, dean of women, taught twelve quarter-units in 1943-44, a year when the deans were responsible—over men and women separately—for students’ discipline, counseling (personal, educational, and vocational), dormitories and proctors, social life, employment, extra-curricular activities, loans and scholarships, and health services. James Forrester, dean of men (until he was drafted), also supervised men’s athletics, and “student promotion” for both men and women; and Ruth McCreery, the social calendar, the dining room, orientation, and entrance tests.<sup>373</sup> The small size of the student body could only partly offset the burden of so many functions’ fixed demands.

Yet Bill Lewis, as we have seen, was impressed about how actively involved and personable Clarence Stauffer was. To La Vose Wallin, Ruth McCreery was “an exceptional dorm mother (more like a sister).”<sup>374</sup> “She was only 23” [actually 24] in Iola Norberg’s year at WBC, “younger than I was. . . . She handled us . . . with wisdom far beyond her years.”<sup>375</sup> There she lured her charges into a snipe hunt; and at BMI “one night, after hours, someone decided they wanted to go the ocean and we quietly went down the fire escape and went wading in the ocean—yes, Ruth went with us.”<sup>376</sup> The

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<sup>366</sup> Wallace L. Emerson, Report to trustees, December 2, 1943, p. 22.

<sup>367</sup> Paton Yoder, notes to “Letters from Orange City and California,” p. 89; “Men’s Dormitories,” *Citadel*, 1942, n.p.

<sup>368</sup> Faculty Minutes, February 15, 1945.

<sup>369</sup> “The Weekend Schedule of Events,” *Horizon* mimeographed insert of 4 pp. (bound in the archival volume before 5.1, November 9, 1945), p. 3,

<sup>370</sup> E.g., Faculty Minutes, September 24, 1947; November 14, 1950.

<sup>371</sup> Faculty Minutes, January 9, 1946; *Bulletin* 7.3 (August 1946), p. 62.

<sup>372</sup> Wallace L. Emerson, Report to the trustees, December 2, 1943, p. 18.

<sup>373</sup> Page accompanying the Faculty Minutes, January 6, 1944.

<sup>374</sup> La Vose Wallin Newton, letter to Thelma Bain Kramar, January 29, 1994, Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

<sup>375</sup> Iola M. Norberg, letter to Thelma Bain Kramar, July 30, 1992, Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

<sup>376</sup> Virginia Sackett, interview with Paul C. Wilt, August 21/22, 1991, p. 4; Beth Haines Bassett, letter to Thelma Bain Kramar, July 1991, Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

epigraph with her portrait photo in the 1942 *Citadel* is a Shakespearean line about nocturnal frolics: “We have heard the chimes at midnight.”<sup>377</sup> Supervising the move to Santa Barbara, she did much to bring students both pleasure and profit. For one thing: “From the Altadena building they brought a lot of . . . very good furniture, but it really needed to be reupholstered. So Miss McCreery went down to a very good upholstery shop in Santa Barbara, and . . . one of their men . . . taught seven of us how to upholster furniture.”<sup>378</sup>

The deans handled discipline themselves, or in concert with the faculty Student Affairs Committee.<sup>379</sup> Certainly Westmont’s devotion to students’ healthy personal development is unchanged over all the intervening years; yet the evolution of culture, may make some old behavioral concerns seem quaint or even incomprehensible, without our sympathetic attempts at understanding—even if from the present vantage, as Margaret Voskuyl has observed, “all of us would feel [the rules] ought to have loosened up a bit.”<sup>380</sup> Through the Emerson years they remained substantially the same:

Upon entering Westmont College, the student will be requested to sign an agreement guaranteeing that during the period of his registration at this school, his conduct will give evidence of high standards of honest, morality, courtesy, and kindness. He will also agree to refrain from drinking of intoxicants, smoking, gambling, dancing, card playing, and attendance at theatres (including motion picture theatres), which practices Westmont College considers detrimental to the highest intellectual and physical development of its students.

The student should understand that if he violates his agreement with Westmont College, he may be invited to withdraw from the school.<sup>381</sup>

A lesser penalty—much more common, of course—was being “campused,” i.e., grounded. Mavis Philpotts claimed to be the first student disciplined thus at Westmont, for missing her 11 p.m. curfew after Chinese dinner with Donald Bell:

I remember standing there debating, ‘Do I put down the exact time?’ and the good Lord just laid it upon my heart: ‘Yes, you sinner, put down the time!’ . . . You couldn’t take part in any of the social activities for a period of time. . . . Don, being such a wonderful gentleman, campused himself, even though he was not on campus.”<sup>382</sup>

Men had no curfew, but after 11 p.m., according to Robert Ross, “we men had nothing to keep us up, so bed it was.”<sup>383</sup> Jean Dryden and friends were caught sneaking out at night to Chinatown: “Those of us in the choir were denied singing for a couple of concerts. Actually all three of us who gave the pitch were among the campused group, so it made it difficult for the choir as well!”<sup>384</sup> For James Arnold mercy once prevailed over strict justice:

I went to see a movie called *Fantasia* . . . and a great guilt came over me. . . . And so I went in—I almost felt like it was a confessional—to Dr. Emerson and said, “Dr. Emerson, I want you to know that I saw a movie.” And he said, “What did you see?” I told him I went with a

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<sup>377</sup> *Citadel* 1942, p. 17.

<sup>378</sup> Colette Poore, interview with Paul C. Wilt, May 1997, p. 3.

<sup>379</sup> “Organization of the College,” *Bulletin* 1.1 (May 1941), p. 11.

<sup>380</sup> Margaret Voskuyl, interview with John W. Sider, February 12, 2007, p. 5.

<sup>381</sup> *Bulletin* 1.1 (May 1940), p. 13.

<sup>382</sup> Mavis Philpotts Hill, interview with Paul C. Wilt, August 21, 1991, p. 3.

<sup>383</sup> Robert Ross, response to a questionnaire from Thelma Bain Kramar, n.d., Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

<sup>384</sup> Jean Dryden Camper, letter to Nancy Tyler Salverda, August 1, 1991, Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

Presbyterian minister, trying to get all the fortification I could. And he said, "Was there anything in the movie that you objected to?" Well, the only thing I remembered was this little cupid. The shot ended with the cupid's behind. He said, "Well, let's just not do it again." And I thanked him and walked out very relieved."<sup>385</sup>

The standards of conduct, both written and unwritten, owed much to Wheaton's; but whereas Wheaton allowed roller skating and forbade bowling, at first it was the reverse at Westmont "because bowling was outside . . . [in] a clean atmosphere, and you didn't run into the drinking and the language, where[as] roller skating was . . . taboo."<sup>386</sup> Here also Westmont fostered the attitude of early American educators: "The rule at Harvard was . . . : 'None shall under any pretence whatsoever frequent the company and society of such men as live an unfit, and dissolute life.'"<sup>387</sup> Before the college's first semester was quite finished the faculty unanimously approved a way to honor that principle while permitting roller skating, with these provisions: "(1) That the rinks be approved, in that they have a favorable reputation, with no floor shows. (2) That we have exclusive use of the rink, and the music is controlled."<sup>388</sup> The president viewed the standards as "a very excellent sieve by which to keep out undesirable students, though it is probably true that some who would become desirable do not come on this account."<sup>389</sup> During his last semester at Westmont the faculty passed, with one dissenting vote, a recommendation to allow mixed bathing on two conditions: "(1) Proper chaperonage, (2) Bathing suits shall meet the published standard of the Physical Education Department (a) Women: single piece with skirt; (b) Men: swimming trunks and shirt."<sup>390</sup> Less than a year later a new dean of men, Howard McKee (class of '45), conceded something to the times by announcing that "men will no longer have to wear top shirts when at the beach, . . . in keeping with styles prevalent on west coast beaches." Nevertheless, the *Horizon* report continued, "this new ruling does not permit the display of 'Atlas' physiques around the campus."<sup>391</sup> Students of that era, Mildreth Tinkham Neuenschwander says, "had no difficulty at all" with the rules: "They came because they wanted to be under that code. . . . Westmont, we thought, was perfect."<sup>392</sup>

Did the deans have their hands full anyway? Confidentiality has veiled their disciplinary work, and alumni reminiscences tend strongly to remembering the good and forgetting or suppressing the bad. But unless Westmont's earliest students were quite unlike those of 1948, a *Horizon* article of that year shows them very human. This one good-humored interview with librarian Laura Lewis, garnished with her "sage observations" and "pungent witticisms," reveals more of this humanity—in rather trivial forms—than all the alums' accounts put together: of students dropping books on a table to reserve a place "an hour or three" in advance, "checking out" reserved books without the due formalities and then simply abandoning them, "harumph[ing] loudly when the library doors are opened to admit fresh air," infecting others with cold germs,

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<sup>385</sup> James Arnold, interview with Paul C. Wilt, August 21/22, 1991, pp. 1-2.

<sup>386</sup> Cora A. Reno, interview with Roger J. Voskuyl, November 12, 1985, p. 9.

<sup>387</sup> Leland Ryken, "Reformation and Puritan Ideals of Education," pp. 38-55 in *Making Higher Education Christian: The History and Mission of Evangelical Colleges in America*, ed. Joel A. Carpenter and Kenneth W. Shipps, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), p. 43.

<sup>388</sup> Faculty Minutes, January 28, 1941.

<sup>389</sup> Wallace L. Emerson, Report to the trustees, December 2, 1943, p. 21.

<sup>390</sup> Faculty Minutes, April 4, 1946.

<sup>391</sup> "Topless Trunks Approved by Dean," *Horizon* 6.7 (March 7, 1947), p. 4.

<sup>392</sup> Mildreth Tinkham Neuenschwander, interview with John W. Sider, July 31, 2007, p. 15.



“discussing world politics” aloud, “borrowing” down to nothing the library’s supplies of scotch tape, thumbtacks, crayons, and paper clips, using the card catalogue stands as catch-alls—and the effigies of Dante and Shakespeare as hat racks.<sup>393</sup> Already in Westmont’s second year Ruth McCreery wished for a course in “social culture and etiquette.”<sup>394</sup> In that post Ruth Walters gave “a delightful discussion on etiquette” in which “she challenged the group from the Scripture: “Giving no offence in any thing that the ministry be not blamed.” There followed “a good deal of conscious effort to do things just right, such as the gentlemen seating the lady to their right, passing the food first to the hostess, all waiting until everyone is served, etc.” The *Horizon* reporter added: “As our President has often said, this is our last overhauling job for life; and our manners need it as well!”<sup>395</sup> A year later there were chapel talks on manners, while “at the dinner table . . . Miss Walter’s evil eye and finger of scorn still seek out . . . occasional mistakes, but on the whole those who eat in the dining room are rapidly attaining that ‘pinky-extended’ culture.”<sup>396</sup>

### *Social Life*

Eleanor Johnson got “the polish of wearing white gloves to tea.”<sup>397</sup> Formal occasions were formal indeed, but genial too: “The Trustee-Faculty Reception . . . always set the tone and created a family spirit.”<sup>398</sup> Social life was vital to spiritual growth for Anna Ens, who would return to Westmont as assistant dean of women and instructor in Christian education:<sup>399</sup> “At Westmont . . . I began to learn of the joy of freedom in the Lord as described in Galatians 5:1. I came as a very shy person, so acceptance by faculty and students meant much to me.”<sup>400</sup> Homecoming, Valentine, and Junior-Senior banquets became annual events—elegant affairs where the women wore long dresses and the men were “encouraged to wear a tux if possible,” as Bill Lewis recalled, in one more example of cheerfulness about making do. He and Phil Uhlinger, discouraged at the cost of rentals, bought tuxes off the rack at a Salvation Army store for five dollars. “We didn’t dare let anyone know.”<sup>401</sup>

Among informal times with professors, alumni recall with special pleasure the all-school picnics,<sup>402</sup> where even their most august elders could get a little loose. From BMI days James Merlin remembered “the astonishment of seeing Mabel Culter smack the baseball at our picnic in Griffith Park.”<sup>403</sup> Beth Brunemeier’s scrapbook has a snapshot of Miss Culter—the otherwise elegant lady who was founder of Culter Academy for girls, BMI’s Superintendent of Women, and an original Westmont

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<sup>393</sup> “Librarian Airs Woes,” *Horizon* 8.1 (October 1, 1948), p. 4.

<sup>394</sup> Faculty Minutes, April 7, 1942.

<sup>395</sup> “Manners for Moderns,” *Horizon* 3.3 (December 10, 1943), p. 2.

<sup>396</sup> “Comments,” *Horizon* 4.1 (October 20, 1944), p. 3.

<sup>397</sup> Eleanor Johnson Strawsberg, letter to Thelma Bain Kramar, April 24, 1991, Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

<sup>398</sup> Nancy Tyler Salverda, “Memories of Westmont,” n.d., Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

<sup>399</sup> “Miss Anna Ens Resumes Duties,” *Horizon* 8.10 (October 1, 1948), p. 1.

<sup>400</sup> Anna Ens, “Some Special Memories of Westmont,” response to an invitation from Thelma Bain Kramar, c. 1991-94, Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

<sup>401</sup> Bill Lewis, “Westmont College Memories of Bill Lewis . . . 1940-44,” n.d., Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

<sup>402</sup> E.g., WCSA Minutes, April 17, 1945.

<sup>403</sup> “James E. Merlin Bio,” Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

trustee—in mid-swing. On a beach in Oregon during a choir tour, when Louella Lofgren and John Page “went down in the sand” in a collision over a fly ball, “he got up laughing” and she “loved him even more.”<sup>404</sup> All-school work days had a like effect. So did the faculty’s home hospitality, for Louise Olson and others: “Mrs. Dennis . . . would always open her home, and I remember many evenings—for awhile it was probably once a week; this was not a date *per se*, but Elmer Neff and I would walk to her home—and she would teach us just as if it were a class in her home. This meant a great deal to me.”<sup>405</sup> Likewise Florence Wallace: “How I cherish the memories of the times that Mrs. Dennis drove me home to spend the nights with her!”<sup>406</sup> Kenneth Monroe invited Robert and Betty Ross home for supper with his wife Peggy: “We were quite surprised at that; and the reason he did was to talk to me about the possibility of becoming a graduate student. I thought they were out of their minds.” But he went to graduate school.

Valentine banquets were a highlight, but romance might grow anywhere—in the kitchen, for Dilwyn Studebaker: “That is where I courted Mildred. . . . They accused us of washing hands together in the dish water. . . . Her roommate was a good cook. They were both from the Mennonite background, so I figured if one of them was a good cook the other one would be too, and it proved correct.”<sup>407</sup> Florine McClellan first got serious about George Sanchez while they were actually performing for a formal banquet: “Eric Boucher asked me to be his date before George did. Then George and I were asked to sing a duet, and we sang ‘Just Because You’re You.’ Very romantic, and all that. Eric gave me the first orchid I’d ever had. That was the last date I had with Eric, but the introduction to marriage with George.”<sup>408</sup> One could enjoy a banquet without a date. Once C. B. (Clifford Belle) Kingery picked her own corsage from the garden; but “before the evening was over the flowers had fallen asleep; they were four-o’clocks”—blooms opening only for the late afternoon.<sup>409</sup> This episode may be unparalleled at Westmont, but from a 1944 *Horizon* editorial it appears that some things are constants: “A young gentleman never takes out a young lady more than once without running the risk of being considered engaged. . . . If [a young lady] should sit two or three times at the same table with any gentleman, there would sure to be . . . ready lips to pronounce the verdict: ‘She’s just out to get that man.’”<sup>410</sup>

Some married students had less time for socializing, but as permitted Bill Lewis and his wife Barbara “participated in all the social events.” They lived in “the basement of a nice big home” about five miles from campus, and Bill bicycled to school when he wasn’t driving their ’29 Chevrolet: “I got stopped by a traffic cop because one of my headlights was hanging low, and we had it stuck on there with Scotch tape.”<sup>411</sup> Married life brought its own social opportunities. Joe Copeland’s wife Gene enjoyed the PHTS Club (Putting Hubby Through School) with other students’ wives: “We lived . . . in the

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<sup>404</sup> Louella Lofgren, letter to Thelma Bain Kramar, January 21, 1991, Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

<sup>405</sup> Louise Olson Burks, interview with Paul C. Wilt, p. 1.

<sup>406</sup> Florence Wallace, unaddressed note, n.d., Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

<sup>407</sup> Dilwyn Studebaker, interview with Paul C. Wilt, August 21/22, 1991, p. 4.

<sup>408</sup> Florine McClellan Sanchez, letter to Thelma Bain Kramar, June 14, 1992, Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

<sup>409</sup> Iola M. Norberg, letter to Thelma Bain Kramar, July 30, 1992, Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

<sup>410</sup> “Gossip,” *Horizon* 3.6 (March 10, 1944), p. 2.

<sup>411</sup> William Lewis, interview with Paul C. Wilt, August 21, 1991, p. 4.

house in which my wife was born. We had the joy of sharing our guest room with Professor Dr. Richard Beal, and later with various students from the college."<sup>412</sup>

One special social event was Senior Sneak. Whenever the seniors were about to leave campus for their annual retreat, the juniors made it a point of honor to detect their departure, and to interfere in some good-natured way—as wedding guests used to dog a bride and groom's departure on their honeymoon. Seniors felt just as honor-bound to make a clean getaway, and in the fall of 1943 they did so: "Directly under the window of our unsuspecting sleeping beauty, Dorothy Hays, the entire class loaded its belongings into the truck," traveled by a full moon's light to Singer's Camp, and took "an unorganized moonlight hike" before bedtime at 3 a.m. There followed two days of recreation "among the rocks, mountains, evergreens, and swift-running streams."<sup>413</sup> Secrecy almost cost La Vose Wallin the friendship of her roommate Jeanne Odell: "She couldn't believe I would keep such an important secret from her, but she finally forgave me."<sup>414</sup> Detecting the departure of the 1946 seniors, juniors triumphed tactically—and morally, one might argue, by choosing not to impede them. This class spent two days in the San Bernardino Mountains, well fed in body by Edna Adams (one of their own) and in soul by Grace Hamilton King. The *Horizon* reported a fireside evening with singing, and testimonies about "how the Lord had led in the lives of the senior class"; and also noted cryptically: "On the afternoon hike a 'mystery' temple was discovered, and it is reported that the two Daves were inquiring into the initiation rites."<sup>415</sup>

### *Dorm Life*

The Los Angeles dorms included part of the administration building, and houses rented or acquired in the neighborhood, all with faculty or staff supervision. To the men in one of these it was "The Crow's Nest"; the women assigned to another called it "The Jewel Box," where "the elderly house mother, Mrs. McCausland, snored loudly." When that signal came "it was safe (!) to ignore Lights Out."<sup>416</sup> (There were room inspections too.)<sup>417</sup> For 1943-44 men lived in part of the building that housed the library, "which someone early on named Lilac Hall."<sup>418</sup> Four less fortunate men lived in a garage that James Arnold dubbed "Fungi Flat."<sup>419</sup>

Moving to Santa Barbara was as good for morale as the founding had been, if we may judge by the 1946 *Citadel's* fourteen-page pictorial essay titled "The Inheritance," with its panoramas of the mountains and the sea, close-ups of flowers in the gardens, lush landscape scenes, and views of the immaculate estate house, now Kerrwood Hall. An epigraph quoted Joshua 1:2: "Now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them." The estate house on the new Santa

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<sup>412</sup> Joseph Copeland, on Thelma Bain's form for "Westmont Class of '45: 50<sup>th</sup> Reunion (includes '38-'48)," Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

<sup>413</sup> "Seniors Sneak Out and In," *Horizon* 3.2 (November 19, 1943), p. 1

<sup>414</sup> La Vose Wallin Newton, letter to Thelma Bain Kramar, January 29, 1994, Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

<sup>415</sup> "Seniors Sneak," *Horizon* 5.5 (February 8, 1946), pp. 3-4.

<sup>416</sup> Edna Marie Adams Norbie, letter to Thelma Bain Kramar, July 9, 1991, Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

<sup>417</sup> Nancy Tyler Salverda, "Memories of Westmont," n.d., Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

<sup>418</sup> Charles Courtney, letter to Thelma Bain Kramar, August 25, 1993, Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

<sup>419</sup> James Arnold, interview with Paul C. Wilt, August 21/22, 1991, p. 3.

Barbara campus was taken over in mint condition, with golden swan faucets in the bathrooms, “the wonderful big lounge, and the big dining room, and . . . several kitchens”;<sup>420</sup> but it couldn’t house students. A station wagon shuttled the women to campus for the first few months, while the women were living in “Jefferson Barracks,” and again after they moved to the newly named Emerson Hall, former home of the Devereux School at a beautiful estate on Ashley Road. Some men lived on the former Curzon estate, their steel bunks set up in sumptuous quarters of the main house (burned in the Coyote Canyon Fire of 1964) where the president’s home now stands; others moved into a secondary building, now Bauder Hall. As Colette Poore recalled it, the trustees intended to name the estate house after one of their own most eminent members, Dr. William W. Catherwood:

Uncle Willy [as the young folks knew him] was a very, very humble, very self-effacing person, and I know that he just put the kibosh on that entirely. But then somebody . . . came up with a bright idea: . . . “How about we call it Norman Catherwood Hall?” . . . This was his son who had died. . . . He couldn’t very well say no when they wanted to name it for his son.<sup>421</sup>

In 1945-46 Westmont was short enough of quarters for men that Robert Ross slept for a semester, gladly, “on the open veranda of Catherwood that overlooked this whole valley,” close to an oversized guest closet containing his dresser and belongings. For 1946-47, however, with veterans enrolling by dozens, many men were assigned to “Q-Ville,” a.k.a. “Tinville”—or, to some, “McKee’s Folly” because it was supposedly Howard McKee’s idea.<sup>422</sup> In the prior summer Quonset huts at the Seabee base in Port Hueneme were going for a song, and the college hired flat-bed trucks to move several to campus. Robert and others were excused from their biology class, as necessary, to ride with the loads; so high they were that “we had to be there with wooden poles to lift the lines” that crossed the route.<sup>423</sup> Where Van Kampen Hall stands today, twenty or more students spent two weeks putting the huts back together.<sup>424</sup> Five huts housed eight men apiece; for bathrooms and showers they were obliged to visit the sixth, also equipped with a barber’s chair.<sup>425</sup> To reach the rest of the campus they had to cross the creek on something less than a bridge and clamber up the steep slope.<sup>426</sup> To one *Horizon* reporter Q-Ville was not exactly an inviting sight:

The six huts, forming two rows, face the road. . . . A ravine practically undermines the back row thus discouraging those who like to walk in their sleep. Surrounding the huts, in the order of occurrence, are dust, mud, and brush and trees intermingled by poison oak. . . . (Pardon me while I scratch.) The dust . . . is not only around the huts but also in them, covering floor, beds, clothes, and people. A beautiful shoeshine lasts only until one steps outside!<sup>427</sup>

From 1946 until the late 60s another Quonset hut served as the public rest room on campus, and two are still in use just above the library.

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<sup>420</sup> Dickalon Denham Davison, interview with Paul C. Wilt, May 1997, p. 2.

<sup>421</sup> Colette Poore, interview with Paul C. Wilt, May 1997, p. 7.

<sup>422</sup> Edward Tuggy, interview with Paul C. Wilt, January 22, 1988, p. 8.

<sup>423</sup> Robert Ross, interview with Paul C. Wilt, January 30, 1988, p. 4.

<sup>424</sup> Howard Stevenson, interview with Paul C. Wilt, December 10, 2003, p. 3.

<sup>425</sup> Archival photo.

<sup>426</sup> William Beasley, interview with Paul C. Wilt, July 7, 1998, p. 5.

<sup>427</sup> “Tinville,” *Horizon*, September 24, 1946, mimeographed insert bound in the archival volume before 6.1, October 11, 1946.

Some pranks besides snipe hunting were perennially popular: short-sheeting beds, piling everyone's shoes together, "stacking" someone's room by filling it with crumpled paper, smearing limburger cheese on railings, rolling bottles and cans down the stairs at midnight.<sup>428</sup> (Peggy McCreery once got dunked for stacking.)<sup>429</sup> But one prank in "Lilac Hall" was so especially resourceful and productive that it keeps turning up in alumni reminiscences. David Beasley, notorious for his punctiliously ordered life, had his alarm clock marked with "time to arise" (6:50 a.m.), "pray" (7:00), "prepare for breakfast" (7:05), "leave for breakfast (7:25), as well as the time to pray and go to bed (10:00 p.m.).

It was an outrageous thing. . . . Vern Hodges . . . connected a power mower down below and we got some of this very thin telephone wire, and spread it out under Dave's sheets. . . . Dave prayed on schedule, and at ten o'clock he got into bed. . . . We gave the signal to Vern. He cranked the mower, and Dave just lifted up and levitated off the bed. Up and down, up and down! He looks around and George [Hansen, his roommate] is covering his mouth. . . . Dave tried to go back to sleep. Vern thought it wasn't enough, so he really cranked it up this time. Dave screamed, "George, I'm cracking up! Too much stress! I've been working too hard!" . . . There were blue sparks shooting up through the sheets.<sup>430</sup>

In May 1945 another more spontaneous and public prank, equally memorable in outcome, graced the banquet that juniors hosted annually to honor seniors. Two of the sophomores serving tables entered the dining room early and hid under the low-hanging tablecloth on a small central table; but as the meal progressed everyone caught on. The dean of women left her place, peeked under the cloth, smiled, and sat down again. But the other sophomores still had a problem: "how to get them out without exposing them to the wrath of the junior class."

Miss Jessie Rogers was a guest that night, and her station wagon carried a stretcher. Some of the sophomore waiters quietly asked her permission to borrow that stretcher. . . . They got another table cloth, took the stretcher out to the table, shoved it underneath, and in a stage whisper said, "Get on!" The two gatecrashers did so and covered themselves with the tablecloth. The four waiters then hurriedly carried the stretcher out to the kitchen, much to the amusement of all the seniors and faculty who were present.<sup>431</sup>

Nobody in the know ever gave them away.

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<sup>428</sup> Florine McClellan Sanchez, letter to Thelma Bain Kramar, June 14, 1994; Gladys Kevorkian Klinepeter, letter to Thelma Bain Kramar, c. 1991-94; Nancy Tyler Salverda, on Thelma Bain Kramar's questionnaire for the class of '46 reunion in 1991: all from the Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

<sup>429</sup> *Citadel* 1941, p. 62.

<sup>430</sup> Robert Campbell, interview with Paul C. Wilt, February 7, 1996, p. 8.

<sup>431</sup> Colette Poore, "Westmont School Year 1944-1945," n.d., pp. 3-4.

## *Student Clubs, Athletics, and Employment*

During Westmont's initial year Mildreth Tinkham helped start the college's first literary society, Kappa Sigma Omega: "The musical numbers, readings, and devotion allowed for a full range of expression."<sup>432</sup> According to the first catalog, "The old-fashioned literary society has disappeared in the average collegiate institution, . . . [yet] the Oxford Union and other forensic and literary organizations are still exhibiting signs of vitality. . . . There is need for extra-curricular expression in the field of oratory, debate, and the more strictly literary forms."<sup>433</sup> For some reason Greek letter clubs had to be proposed again in the fall of 1945, designed "to provide a medium whereby the social life of the College may be bettered";<sup>434</sup> and four were inaugurated the following January, with inductions in March.<sup>435</sup> For a decade and more they promoted a wide variety of cultural activities and special events. Students also formed an art club in 1945. With Ruth McCreery and Dorothy Davies as faculty advisors, president Virginia Sackett told the student government that their purpose was "the development of talents and the instruction in practical areas of art, such as poster making, which will better fit the student members for Christian service." Further, "it is hoped that out of the prayers and efforts and interests of this club will soon grow an art department for Westmont College. . . . Where can a Christian artist go for training in art . . . to be used in Christian service?"<sup>436</sup> In the winter of 1946 the Student Music Council initiated a "vesper" series of half-hour concerts on alternate Wednesday evenings before the regular prayer meeting, "to give the beginning and intermediate music students opportunities for public appearances not otherwise available, since the concerts given at the end of the year are . . . for advanced students only." Two new groups debuted in this series: one was the Ambassadors' Male Quartet (David Gunn, John Southwell, Eugene Lafferty, and Mervin Barons) and the other a group that performed piano trios (Mary Akin, violin, Helen Kuester, cello, and Harriet Russell, piano).<sup>437</sup>

The college's first catalog promised a wide variety of intramural sports for men and women, and most of them materialized that year or soon after.<sup>438</sup> Yet at the end of 1943 the president believed some male prospects were passing up Westmont not just because of the strict standards of conduct and the lack of accreditation, but also because "most red blooded young fellows are interested in more of an athletic program than we have been able to offer."<sup>439</sup> Probably he had in mind varsity sports, which consisted of just four events for men in the first year: a swimming meet and three games with Biola (one of six-man touch football, two of basketball)—and for women one game of baseball and three events in tennis. Men's basketball continued through the Emerson years, and varsity football (soon expanded to nine-man) came to include a homecoming game with Biola; but there were no more varsity sports for women. Intramurals could make for memorable times: "The boys who lived in the dorm at school formed a six man touch

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<sup>432</sup> Mildreth Tinkham, Neuenschwander, autobiographical sketch, c. 1994, Thelma Bain Kramar Project; *Bulletin* 2.2 (May 1941), p. 18.

<sup>433</sup> *Bulletin* 1.1 (May 1941), p. 18.

<sup>434</sup> WCSA Minutes, November 8 and December 3, 1945.

<sup>435</sup> "New Greek Clubs Hold Open House," *Horizon* 5.5 (February 8, 1946), p. 1; "Society Notes," p. 4.

<sup>436</sup> Virginia Sackett, letter to Student Council, April 18, 1945.

<sup>437</sup> "Vesper Services Attract Students," *Horizon* 5.5 (February 8, 1946), p. 2.

<sup>438</sup> *Bulletin* 1.1 (May 1940), p. 68; *Citadel*, 1941, pp. 68-77; *Citadels* 1942-1946, n.p.

<sup>439</sup> Wallace L. Emerson, Report to the trustees, December 2, 1943, p. 21.

football team and challenged the outside students to a game of two-hand touch”—won in the last seconds by the latter, “mostly old married men.”<sup>440</sup>

Many single students had to support themselves, some having to work too much to graduate in four years (these could receive up to one year’s free tuition).<sup>441</sup> Mary Graham truly did lack adequate time to study: “I shall always regret this. . . . Though my years at Westmont were not easy years, and, as an M.K. [missionaries’ kid] I had very little money, and needed to work hard, yet I’m thankful for that experience. It stood me in good stead for some of the difficulties I was later to face on the mission field.<sup>442</sup> Serving the faculty table in the dining room, Charles Courtney “felt privileged to have this extraordinary contact with faculty.”<sup>443</sup> Other campus jobs included maintaining the boiler for heat and hot water,<sup>444</sup> cooking or cleaning up in the kitchen,<sup>445</sup> making malts in the student store,<sup>446</sup> working in the library, tutoring returning veterans,<sup>447</sup> driving a shuttle, cleaning rooms, and washing windows.<sup>448</sup> Off campus, students cooked and cared for children in private homes (sometimes for room and board),<sup>449</sup> waited on tables,<sup>450</sup> stuffed envelopes,<sup>451</sup> worked for Gospel Light Press,<sup>452</sup> handled accounts payable for Douglas Aircraft,<sup>453</sup> and helped assemble aircraft for Lockheed on the graveyard shift.<sup>454</sup> When Bill Lewis worked for Mannings Coffee he was fully persuaded that it excelled the Farmers Coffee served in the college dining room, and invited Keith Rees, a coffee hound, to judge a taste test: “Peggy McCreery agreed to help me prepare the coffee. . . . I asked him if he didn’t like the Mannings Coffee the best and he said he thought he did. Then to my great embarrassment, Peggy revealed that she had switched the coffee on me. . . . What Mr. [Rees] said he liked the best was after all FARMERS COFFEE!”<sup>455</sup>

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<sup>440</sup> William Lewis, “Westmont College Memories of Bill Lewis . . . 1940-44,” n.d., Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

<sup>441</sup> *Bulletin* 6.2 (May 1945), p. 20.

<sup>442</sup> Mary Graham Reid, “Memories of Westmont—1940-43,” January 17, 1992, Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

<sup>443</sup> Charles Courtney, letter to Thelma Bain Kramar, August 25, 1993, Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

<sup>444</sup> Ralph Wetmore, letter to Thelma Bain Kramar, January 11, 1992, Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

<sup>445</sup> Louise Olson Burks, interview with Paul C. Wilt, August 8, 1991, p. 2; Dilwyn and Mildred Heinrichs Studebaker, interview with Paul C. Wilt, August 21/22, 1991, p. 4.

<sup>446</sup> Almeda Graham Boone, note to Thelma Bain Kramar, n.d., Thelma Bain Kramar Project

<sup>447</sup> Roberta Weber Parker, letter to Thelma Bain Kramar, January 23, 1992, Thelma Bain Kramar Project; Colette Poore, untitled essay, April 4, 1994, Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

<sup>448</sup> Edward and Eleanor Tuggy, interview with Paul C. Wilt, January 22, 1988, p. 12.

<sup>449</sup> Joyce Dunlap, letter to Thelma Bain Kramar, August 25, 1993; Thelma Lambert Steele, “Education Plus,” n.d.; Iola Norberg, letter to Thelma Bain Kramar, July 30, 1992: all in the Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

<sup>450</sup> Eleanor Lewer Courtney, interview with John W. Sider, April 23, 2007, p. 8.

<sup>451</sup> Jeannete Kistler Krause, letter to Thelma Bain Kramar, May 28, 1994, Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

<sup>452</sup> James Arnold, interview with Paul C. Wilt, August 21/22, 1991, p. 4.

<sup>453</sup> Colette Poore, untitled essay, April 4, 1994, Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

<sup>454</sup> Otto John Bylsma, on Thelma Bain Kramar’s form for “Westmont Class of ’45: 50<sup>th</sup> Reunion Scrapbook (includes ’38-’48), Thelma Bain Kramar Project; Gladys Kevorkian Klinepeter, letter to Thelma Bain Kramar, c. 1991, Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

<sup>455</sup> Bill Lewis, “Westmont College Memories of Bill Lewis . . . 1940-44, n.d., Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

## World War

Four years of total war were a unique education for life. Milton Thompson, already drafted in the summer of 1941, “was greatly perturbed at having to give up school and did not see how he could spare even one year to the army. He was to find out during the rest of four years.”<sup>456</sup> According to David Gunn “as the end of the school year approached [1941-42], there was a strange undercurrent. Many of us men knew we would not be back in the fall.”<sup>457</sup> Many were not. By mid-1943 several faculty had been drafted too: Arnold Edman and John Gehr (physical education), Elwyn Odell (social science), Keith Rees (modern languages)—and James Forrester, who had just joined the college for public relations and student life work as well as teaching English (he became Westmont’s second president). By 1945 the student body, small to start with, contributed to the services at least fifty-six men and five women.<sup>458</sup> Some left Westmont to support the war effort in other functions. Walter Quisenberry, M.D., (chemistry) became a U.S. Public Health Service officer.<sup>459</sup> Jessie Rogers (physical education) took a one-year leave from physical education to join the Pacific work of the American Red Cross in New Caledonia.<sup>460</sup>

Late in 1942 Jessie Hollingsworth began making the college’s service flag. It bore silver stars arranged in a victory V, each embroidered with the name of one of Westmont’s soldiers and sailors. The next year Nancy Tyler’s mother added more stars, Katherine Gunn and Willetta Hansen completing the work a few weeks into the fall semester of 1945—without the need for even one gold star to mark a death.<sup>461</sup> A second flag would honor students who entered Westmont only after serving in the war.<sup>462</sup>

But for the draft, many other men doubtless would have entered Westmont during those lean years, or, as in Sigmund Schade’s case, would have entered sooner.<sup>463</sup> Men made up a third or less of the student body in a *Citadel* photo of chapel in 1945. Another, of the 1944 Valentine banquet, depicted whole tables of women with no men. “Former student body presidents were referred to as ‘The Graybeards,’ but there was one lady Graybeard during the war, Betty Langeloh. . . . The girls jokingly referred to Westmont as ‘Dr. Emerson’s Female Seminary.’”<sup>464</sup> “We [girls] . . . poor dears . . . had a collection of 4Fs [men physically disqualified for service] and 4Ds [deferred as ministerial students], and they were all sure that we were all after them. . . . [After the war] it was the other way around. There were a lot of veterans and not as many girls; so that was real exciting, too.”<sup>465</sup> For the first time outnumbered women. A *Horizon* extra declared “Patriarchy Restored,” its lead article entitled “Men Gain Supremacy.”<sup>466</sup>

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<sup>456</sup> “GI Joe Returns to Westmont,” *Horizon* 5.1 (November 9, 1945), p. 3.

<sup>457</sup> David Gunn, autobiographical sketch, n.d., p. 2, Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

<sup>458</sup> *Bulletin* 3.3 (August 1942), p. 2; 4.3 (August 1943), pp. 10-11; *Citadels* 1943, 1944, 1945, n.p.

<sup>459</sup> “Alumni Capers,” *Horizon* 2.3 (December 3, 1942), p. 6.

<sup>460</sup> “Westmont Represented in the Southwest Pacific,” *Horizon* 4.3 (December 8, 1944), p. 5.

<sup>461</sup> “Salute to the Men of the Services,” *Horizon* 5.4 (December 21, 1945), p. 3.

<sup>462</sup> Anonymous handwritten notation, published notices on veterans, p. 1, Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

<sup>463</sup> Sigmund Schade, “Personal Resume,” Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

<sup>464</sup> *Citadels* 1944 1945, n.p.; Colette Poore, untitled essay, 1992, Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

<sup>465</sup> Eleanor Kellogg Tuggy, interview with Paul C. Wilt, January 22, 1988, p. 16. She married one of them.

<sup>466</sup> *Horizon* mimeographed insert, September 24, 1946, bound in the archival volume before 6.1 (October 11, 1946), p. 1.



The supply of men dwindled so far that for 1943-44 the mixed choir became the women's glee club. As Faith Danielson recalled: "We were allowed to tour only if we included military installations in our schedule. (No one in the women's choir objected to that!)" The year following, with men in the choir once more: "I'll never forget the day we drove onto the Hamilton Air Force Base and were met . . . by one of the base chaplains with the news that then-President Roosevelt had just died. Both 'Battle Hymn of the Republic' and 'God is Marching On' were on our program, and those two numbers really came to life for us that memorable afternoon."<sup>467</sup> To go on tour they "had to get special permission, because rubber was not available often to the public, gasoline was rationed, and you just didn't go places . . . because you wanted to."<sup>468</sup>

The timing of the war's end, however, was an indispensable asset in the move to Santa Barbara. Culter Academy was moving onto the Los Angeles campus, and Westmont had nowhere else to go as July came and went.<sup>469</sup> But because colleges across the country were delaying their fall terms to accommodate newly discharged veterans, Westmont had breathing space through October to prepare for reopening:

Oh, the glorious summer of 1945! We had V-E Day in May, and finally in August came V-J Day, and the war was over. The biggest event of all, however, was that Westmont College was moving from Los Angeles to Santa Barbara. There was smog even in those days, eye-stinging, visual smog that looked like smoke as the sun shone through it and through the windows of the library in the morning. There was nylon, too, but up until then, all of it had been going to make parachutes for the air force. Now it would be used for stockings, and there would be no more of those miserable rayon ones.

The guys were coming home, and coming back to school. I will always remember the first time I met the famous Elmer Neff, for whom we had all been praying for so long. ("Now when I was in Stalag 2B. . .")<sup>470</sup>

Elmer had volunteered for the Rangers. Soon after the Anzio landings he was wounded the second time, captured, and believed killed in action, till his imprisonment became known at home. A few weeks before Germany capitulated he escaped to the British from Stalag 11B and was shipped home and discharged in time for Westmont's late-starting fall semester.<sup>471</sup> (In one of the nine prison camps where he lived for fourteen months, he met a cousin of his history professor Paton Yoder.)<sup>472</sup>

One of the good things that emerged providentially from the evils of the war was the influence of the veterans on eighteen-year-olds like Howie Stevenson, who found that all but about five of his male classmates were returning servicemen:<sup>473</sup>

I had nowhere near the adventures that most of the men had had, but friendships were easily formed in my opening weeks on campus. . . . One thing that might have assisted in this mix of ages and experiences was . . . [their] high tone of spiritual interest. . . . They had a strong impression of the needs of the world and of foreign countries—many of them where they had

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<sup>467</sup> Faith Danielson Finlay, letter to Thelma Bain Kramar, August 29, 1994, Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

<sup>468</sup> H. Earl Kuester, interview with Paul C. Wilt, August 21, 1991, p. 5.

<sup>469</sup> Paton Yoder, "Memories of Paton and Hazel Smucker Yoder," 1994 (134 pp.), p. 71.

<sup>470</sup> Colette Poore, untitled essay, 1992, Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

<sup>471</sup> "GI Joe Returns to Westmont," *Horizon* 5.1 (November 9, 1945), p. 3.

<sup>472</sup> Paton Yoder, "Cousin William Yoder Meets Student Elmer Neff," in "Incidental Reminiscences," 2 pp. enclosed with a letter to Paul C. Wilt, March 17, 2004.

<sup>473</sup> Howard Stevenson, interview with Paul C. Wilt, December 10, 2003, p. 1.

already served. . . . More than a few of the veterans had become Christian believers during their military careers, and found their way to Westmont College along with the buddy or friend who had led them to Christ. And in several instances, the original believer had been a student at Westmont.<sup>474</sup>

Milton Thompson returned to America on June 6, 1945 and married Peggy McCreery on the 23rd. Bob Carpenter had served as a medic. Noel Hancock was wounded in the Battle of the Bulge. Donald Norbie sailed both Atlantic and Pacific, and saw “considerable action.”<sup>475</sup> Bob Siemens was a chaplain’s assistant in England and France,<sup>476</sup> so, in Italy, was Eddie Giron, where he realized his “great need for more Christian education.” Bill Scott, as “unofficial chaplain” to his battalion of U.S. Marines, “had the pleasure of winning many men to the Lord Jesus Christ.” Though experienced as a drill instructor “he retained the rank of Pfc. all the way through so that he could be used in a more full way by the Lord.”<sup>477</sup> Acting chaplain Robert Peabody preached on Sundays to troops in Morocco and led a Bible class during the week. In the same role Herman Matt found his “greatest job” during the four-day delay of his outfit’s landing on the Normandy beaches: “There were 200 men aboard the English ship heading for the thick of it. . . . Never . . . will I find more receptive hearts than of those men facing reality and God.”<sup>478</sup> The war took Ralph Wetmore to the South Pacific with the navy. “Being with six to eight men day and night in all kinds of experiences” seemed in retrospect to be God’s preparation for his four decades with the American Sunday School Union/American Missionary Fellowship. Partly because his chaplain was “a godless man,” he got to conduct Sunday services for his company. When he was leaving for home after three years the men took up a thank-you collection.<sup>479</sup>

Katherine Weber and David Gunn, both Westmont students, were married after he had been drafted. She lived with her parents while he flew thirty-two missions in the South Pacific with the Green Dragon Squadron, “from New Guinea and Borneo to [the] Philippines and Formosa [Taiwan].”<sup>480</sup> While piloting a B-25 out of Morotai he crashed and was marooned on a deserted island just fifteen miles from a Japanese island-airbase; but he and his crew evaded the patrols that searched for them. They were rescued on New Year’s Day, 1945, and David received a Purple Heart for his injuries<sup>481</sup>—landing back in San Francisco in late April:

By evening, I was on a train for Los Angeles. In the middle of the night I was on a bus for San Diego. At Oceanside I . . . hitched a ride to Escondido and out to Kay’s home. I snuck up the hill and around the house, keeping to the orchard. Sure enough, I found Kay out wandering around enjoying the early morning sunshine. I stepped out from behind a tree, called her name, and snapped a picture when she turned to see me. *WHAT A DAY!*<sup>482</sup>

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<sup>474</sup> Howard Stevenson, e-mails to John W. Sider, March 23, 2007.

<sup>475</sup> “GI Joe Returns to Westmont,” *Horizon* 5.1 (November 9, 1945), p. 3.

<sup>476</sup> “For Christ and Country,” *Horizon* 4.4 (January 19, 1945), p. 2.

<sup>477</sup> “Seven Vets State Service History,” *Horizon* 5.2 (November 23, 1945), pp. 2-4.

<sup>478</sup> “24 Returned Servicemen at Westmont,” *Horizon* 5.3 (December 7, 1945), pp. 2, 4.

<sup>479</sup> Ralph Wetmore, letter to “Dear Friends,” n.d., Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

<sup>480</sup> “GI Joe Returns to Westmont,” *Horizon* 5.1 (November 9, 1945), p. 3.

<sup>481</sup> “Ex-Horizon Editor is Safe: Lieutenant David Gunn Crashes in Borneo,” *Horizon* 4.5 (February 1945), p. 1.

<sup>482</sup> David Gunn, autobiographical sketch, n.d., pp. 5, 6, Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

David returned to Westmont that fall: "To sit under Dr. Monroe . . . was in itself almost worth all the delay in reaching my senior year."

Faculty veterans also, and faculty war workers, brought back the gifts of their personal experiences. Serving as a chaplain James Forrester was wounded on Iwo Jima.<sup>483</sup> Keith Rees survived "one very close call" in the bombing of London; there and in Europe he worked at cryptology and interrogation.<sup>484</sup> At a replacement depot Jessie Rogers and another woman "were the only girls in the place. . . . Life was just about letter-perfect. . . . We had our choice of where to eat—and we chose the colonel's mess."<sup>485</sup> Walter Quisenberry was made a Diplomat of the National Board of Medical Examiners while overseeing the medical department of the Marine Hospital in Savannah, Georgia; wartime duty took him on to Hot Springs, Arkansas, and Washington, D.C., and to "public health work for [the] Camp Pickett area" in southern Virginia.<sup>486</sup> Ernest Young, while teaching anthropology and archaeology by day, worked the swing shift in a piston ring factory "converted to turn out hydraulic fittings for the big planes." For a while his wife worked in the inspection department: "We'd work our way there on foot together in the blackouts. . . . Being a very conscientious person, Donna rejected too many fittings for the management's taste. . . . Finally she was fired."<sup>487</sup>

Back at Westmont, in a different kind of battle, thirty-three veterans over the age of twenty-five petitioned the faculty to be exempted from physical education, appealing to California practice for students of that age, and alleging that "on most campuses veterans of any age are exempt." But the faculty voted to deny the request, and as usual the minutes leave us in the dark about the reason why.<sup>488</sup> There is transcript evidence, however, that veterans received credit for prior military service.

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<sup>483</sup> Frank L. Hieronymus, interview with Paul C. Wilt, November 10, 1981 and February 1982, pp. 4-5; Earl Kuester, interview with Paul C. Wilt, August 21, 1991, p. 8.

<sup>484</sup> Doris Rees, "Keith Rees," n.d., Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

<sup>485</sup> "Westmont Represented in the Southwest Pacific," *Horizon* 4.3 (December 8, 1944), p. 5.

<sup>486</sup> "Alumni Capers," *Horizon* 2.3 (December 3, 1942), p. 6.

<sup>487</sup> Ernest Young, "War Related Anecdote," November 23, 1993, Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

<sup>488</sup> Faculty Minutes, September 30, 1946 and April 3, 1947.

## LIFE AFTER COLLEGE

Summer and winter and springtime and harvest,  
Sun, moon, and stars in their courses above  
Join with all nature in manifold witness  
To Thy great faithfulness, mercy, and love.

Thomas O. Chisholm

### *Legacies*

How do alumni of those early years view their Westmont days in light of later life? For one thing, “Westmont students have done well in graduate and professional schools because they know how to study. You can’t ‘fake it’ in small classes.”<sup>489</sup> (Ernest L. Boyer reports that “the greatest reason for Ph.D. productivity in the most selective liberal arts colleges in the nation is the quality of student-faculty interaction.”)<sup>490</sup> Near the time when the last students of the Emerson years were graduating from Westmont, President Forrester wrote: “Recently a graduate now doing advanced work in one of our graduate schools said to me, ‘I came feeling that the men from Harvard, Yale, and other big name schools would have superior preparation. It is not so. I have received from Westmont all that they have plus a spiritual grounding for which no words or money can ever express my gratitude.’”<sup>491</sup> Earl Kuester said: “We proved that we had what others had academically.”<sup>492</sup>

But how to get accepted in the first place? Bill Lawrence ('42) claimed the distinction of being “the first grad to do graduate work”:

“Felt led of God” to go to Eastern Baptist Seminary, Philadelphia, got on a train and presented myself there before the committee had time to reject me for coming from a non-[ac]credited Westmont. They said, “You’re here, so we’ll not approve you, but make you stand probation for a year.” Somehow I made good, so that the door was wide open for Earl Kuester, Bob Campbell, Glenn Camper, and many others to enroll with approval.<sup>493</sup>

Of the seventeen graduates in Robert Campbell’s class of '44, eight went to Eastern, including his wife Lotus Graham Campbell and Paul and Ruth Uhlinger, and some entered the University of Pennsylvania; “Bill Parker [‘43] . . . entered U Cal Berkeley in mathematics . . . and went on and got a Ph.D.” and “Warren Simon . . . went into USC med school in 1943.”<sup>494</sup> Joseph Stevens graduated from Princeton Seminary in 1949.<sup>495</sup> After Robert Ross passed an entrance examination at Claremont “no Westmont student ever had to take that exam.”<sup>496</sup> On her way to a teaching credential at the University of Stockton, Jean Munroe “had to pass an oral exam with all the directors and leaders in

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<sup>489</sup> Robert Ross, on Thelma Bain Kramar’s reunion questionnaire, 1994, Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

<sup>490</sup> Ernest L. Boyer, *College: The Undergraduate Experience in America* (New York: Harper & Row, 1987), p. 273.

<sup>491</sup> James Forrester, “Talking Things Over with Westmont’s President,” *Courier* 2.6 (January 1950), p. 1.

<sup>492</sup> H. Earl Kuester, interview with Paul C. Wilt, August 28, 1991, p. 2.

<sup>493</sup> William Lawrence, letter to Thelma Bain Kramar, April 24, 1994, Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

<sup>494</sup> Robert Campbell, interview with Paul C. Wilt, February 7, 1996, pp. 9, 10.

<sup>495</sup> Joseph Stevens, letter to Thelma Bain Kramar, July 30, 1991, Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

<sup>496</sup> Robert Ross, interview with Paul C. Wilt, January 30, 1988, p. 17.

the Education Department. Then they accepted all [twenty-four] of my Westmont credits."<sup>497</sup>

For the work world, and for life in general, many early alumni have expressed gratitude about their preparation at Westmont. At seminary Nancy Tyler Salverda's Christian education professors "got to the point they'd say: 'Well, Nancy, you already know that, because you had such a good education at Westmont.'" She taught for several years and spent eighteen more as principal of a Christian school: "I was always going back to the foundations that I had at Westmont."<sup>498</sup> Faculty provided some students with professional models: Elbert McCreery, for Richard Bohrer's long career of college teaching; and Christian Richard, for Charles and Eleanor Lewer Courtney's.<sup>499</sup> John Page touched Robert Ross's career very specifically:

Dr. Page . . . had retired and continued to teach on a year-to-year basis. He walked into the classroom with two or three Bibles and a great big stack of manila folders under his arm and never opened a one of them. He just kept us spellbound. . . . In all of the years in my own teaching career, which now is starting its 39th year, John Page's memory lingers with me about as much as any single person in my Westmont career. I made a decision that when I retired, I would like to find a small college that needed help and volunteer to teach for nothing or for a pittance and ask to teach freshmen.<sup>500</sup>

Professors became models for their students' personal lives too. Thus Helen Catherwood Strandberg, "the heart and soul of the choir," deeply influenced Nancy Tyler's life through "her expertise and spiritual leadership."<sup>501</sup> For Earl Kuester, next to "the outreach, the witness of the school" she was the most important influence on his life at Westmont: "A marvelous Christian."<sup>502</sup> Louella Lofgren loved John Page "as a Christian gentleman."<sup>503</sup> Richard Bohrer sensed the strong convictions of Marchant and Grace Hamilton King: "Their stand for truth and righteousness made a deep, a lasting impression on many of us. . . . If anyone had said they had collaborated with some guy named 'James' to produce the 'King-James Bible,' we would have believed it."<sup>504</sup> Students remember how their professors promoted their spiritual growth—Cora Reno, by taking a little time in biology class for students to memorize Hebrews 1-2, one of "her favorite passages."<sup>505</sup> In Cora's copy of the 1941 *Citadel* Almeda Graham wrote (p. 38): "Your moment by moment walk with the Lord has strengthened me many a time." Students often heard excellent advice in class, of imponderable subsequent value. Anna Ens heard John Page say: "When God closes the door, don't jump out of the window," and she reported: "I used that with my classes as a missionary teacher in Ethiopia and a couple of years ago I learned that it is still being quoted by one of my students!"<sup>506</sup> Virginia Sackett found her personal life deepened by "precious things that we heard from people like Mrs. Dennis, Dr. Page . . . [and] Ruth McCreery"; this was "the turning

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<sup>497</sup> Jean Munroe Lanman, interview with Ruth McCreery, March 20, 1994, Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

<sup>498</sup> Nancy Tyler Salverda, interview with Paul C. Wilt, August 21, 1991, p. 10.

<sup>499</sup> Charles Courtney, letter to Thelma Bain Kramar, August 25, 1993, Thelma Bain Kramar Project; Eleanor Courtney, interview with John W. Sider, April 23, 2007, p. 7.

<sup>500</sup> Robert Ross, interview with Paul C. Wilt, January 20, 1988, p. 2.

<sup>501</sup> Nancy Tyler Salverda, "Memories of Westmont" n.d., Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

<sup>502</sup> H. Earl Kuester, interview with Paul C. Wilt, August 21, 1991, p. 5.

<sup>503</sup> Louella Lofgren, letter to Thelma Bain Kramar, January 21, 1991, Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

<sup>504</sup> Richard Bohrer, "In Memoriam: Grace Hamilton King," n.d. Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

<sup>505</sup> Dilwyn Studebaker, interview with Paul C. Wilt, August 21/22, 1991, p. 2.

<sup>506</sup> Anna Ens, "Some Special Memories of Westmont," c. 1991-94, Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

point spiritually in my life."<sup>507</sup> From Anna Dennis's teaching Laura Lewis carried through life "a great wonder at the perfect righteousness of the Lord God whom we worship. I remember her saying to us: 'Don't speak of our Savior as just "Jesus"—that was the name of his humiliation—speak of Him as the Lord Jesus Christ,' recognizing Him as the anointed of God restored to the glory He voluntarily put aside to be our sacrifice."<sup>508</sup>

Other influences besides the faculty's encouraged students' spiritual growth. To Joyce Dunlap, for whom "Christian living and serving were quite new," chapel speakers were thrilling, especially on subjects of ministry: "I was sure that God wanted me to be a missionary."<sup>509</sup> Florence Wallace was glad to be prodded to memorize scripture by her dorm mother: "Mom Evans gathered us around each evening to teach us from Romans 8."<sup>510</sup> All in all, as Thelma Bain discovered, "the campus reflected the precepts and principles and spirit of the scriptures; and [I] really appreciated that this was not a negativistic approach to Christianity, but . . . a wholesome, growing, outreach experience that I might have if I participated in it."<sup>511</sup> More than four decades after college Jeanette Kistler Krause wrote:

From my heart still rise songs and themes that strengthen and comfort and guide: "Loved with Everlasting Love," "In All Things that He Might Have Preeminence," "Great Is Thy Faithfulness," "All the Way My Savior Leads Me." Also times of special days of prayer and fasting. Retreats with time alone for careful thought have continued to be a part of my life.<sup>512</sup>

Academics gave faculty manifold opportunities to extend students' performance beyond their own expectations. Sometimes, as for Robert Campbell, it was an unpleasant exercise:

In my first term I got my lowest grade in college from Elbert McCreery. . . . I said, "Well, I guess I should get out of Greek." "No," he said, "you have great potential. I've graded you harshly because I think you need waking up. . . . Frankly, you're lazy." He was right. He continued: "We need expository preachers who take the Bible seriously, and you have all the potential. I would like you to stay with it." Well, I got an A the next term, and it just kept going from there. I went into New Testament studies, ultimately getting my doctorate in this field, and then classics at the University of Pennsylvania.<sup>513</sup>

James Arnold recalled a similar experience with Cora Reno: her firm grading, he said, "jerked me into the realism of what I had to do. I thank her for it."<sup>514</sup> Sometimes, however, being stretched brought gain with little or no pain. Mavis Philpotts would never forget that "Dr. Page . . . insisted that we read the Bible through; and we would spend every waking moment that we weren't doing other things reading the Bible."<sup>515</sup> After the first day of Grace Hamilton King's psychology class Buford Karraker, who

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<sup>507</sup> Virginia Sackett, interview with Paul C. Wilt, August 21/22, 1991, p. 3.

<sup>508</sup> Laura Lewis, "Memories of Bible/Missionary Institute and Western Bible College," 1994, Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

<sup>509</sup> Joyce Dunlap, letter to Thelma Bain Kramar, September 18, 1994, Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

<sup>510</sup> Florence Wallace, unaddressed note, c. 1991-94, Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

<sup>511</sup> Thelma Bain Kramar, interview with Paul C. Wilt, August 21/22, 1991, p. 8.

<sup>512</sup> Jeanette Kistler Krause, letter to Thelma Bain Kramar, May 29, 1994, Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

<sup>513</sup> Robert Campbell, interview with Paul C. Wilt, February 7, 1996, p. 5.

<sup>514</sup> James Arnold, interview with Paul C. Wilt, August 21/22, 1991, p. 2.

<sup>515</sup> Mavis Philpotts Hill, interview with Paul C. Wilt, August 21, 1991, p. 2.

“had a gift for understatement,” exclaimed: “She thinks we came here to *work!*”<sup>516</sup> Nancy Tyler felt that she “saw potential in me, and made me really want to achieve for the Lord’s sake.”<sup>517</sup> In Helen Catherwood Strandberg’s choirs students’ discoveries of their actual capacities must have been exhilarating. Years before John Lundberg joined the faculty his first attraction to Westmont was “being so impressed with that choir,”<sup>518</sup> though its achievements seemed like “a miracle” to Mavis Philpotts: “Coming from a very highly skilled *a cappella* choir, I was quite critical. . . . It seemed that some of the men could not even hold a tune. . . . [Yet] at the end of the year, after we had sung many concerts, . . . worldly musical critics in Pasadena . . . said, ‘This choir is musically perfect.’”<sup>519</sup> Dilwyn Studebaker has confessed that he “couldn’t carry a note in a bushel basket” but “George Hansen stood next to me and he could sing, so I . . . followed along with him.”<sup>520</sup> Bob Kevorkian, “a wonderful singer,” was stationed between two others like Dilwyn: “They’d go out and sing with Occidental and . . . other colleges and come off with the honors.”<sup>521</sup> Their director knew well that for the most part she “didn’t have great singers,”<sup>522</sup> but “She inspired you to do your very, very best, and the choir tours were just like heaven.”<sup>523</sup>

A further legacy, characteristic of a residential campus, was lifelong friendships, for which many alumni have expressed appreciation. Four decades after her graduation Eleanor Kellogg Tuggy was still corresponding with all her former roommates. For one of them, Jeanette Kistler Krause, friendships still had “a fragrance of joy and wisdom” after fifty years; “at a time of great loss” she found that Eleanor Tompkins Paul, who had shared her science major, “was a staunch friend with seemingly unlimited ideas on how to wrestle successfully with the vicissitudes of life.”<sup>524</sup> Such friendships became another aspect of the lifelong learning to which Westmont inspired many students, alongside programs and habits and formal or informal study. Thus for Jeanette “the emphasis on scholastic excellence” is a light that “has never dimmed. . . . The unlimited possibilities of learning continue to draw me in many directions.” For Mavis Philpotts Hill the direction was protracted formal education: “The ideals and motivation . . . really pushed me into continued study. . . . I now have every . . . educational credential that the state offers from kindergarten to adult to college to administrator.”<sup>525</sup>

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<sup>516</sup> Richard Bohrer, “In Memoriam: Grace Hamilton King,” n.d., Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

<sup>517</sup> Nancy Tyler Salverda, interview with Paul C. Wilt, August 21, 1991, pp. 8-9.

<sup>518</sup> John Lundberg, interview with Paul C. Wilt, August 24, 1984, p. 1; Helen Catherwood Strandberg, interview with Roger J. Voskuyl, February 21, 1992, p. 2.

<sup>519</sup> Mavis Philpotts Hill, interview with Paul C. Wilt, August 21, 1991, p. 1.

<sup>520</sup> Dilwyn Studebaker, interview with Paul C. Wilt, August 21/22, 1991, p. 3.

<sup>521</sup> Mildreth Tinkham Neuenschwander, interview with John W. Sider, July 31, 2007, p. 16.

<sup>522</sup> Helen Catherwood Strandberg, interview with Roger J. Voskuyl, February 21, 1992, p. 2.

<sup>523</sup> Nancy Tyler Salverda, interview with Paul C. Wilt, August 21, 1991, pp. 7-8.

<sup>524</sup> Jeanne Kistler Krause, letter to Thelma Bain Kramar, May 28, 1994, Thelma Bain Kramar Project. The quotation following is from the same source.

<sup>525</sup> Mavis Philpotts Hill, interview with Paul C. Wilt, August 21, 1991, p. 3.

## Callings

When Elbert McCreery told candidates for foreign missions that probably their greatest achievement would be marrying and demonstrating “what God intended a Christian home and the people in it to be,”<sup>526</sup> he was repudiating a distinction which may still threaten to mislead us: that a vocation of full-time Christian service—or any position of wide public influence—ranks higher in the Kingdom than callings more obscure or private. In their homes, churches, employments, and communities, alumni of the Emerson years have served our Lord faithfully, whether known in the public sphere or not. For one season of her life Ione McQuown Bramlet was “very content to be ‘just’ a mother, wife, and citizen.”<sup>527</sup> Many who have retired from a career have gone on making themselves useful—Beth Brunemeier, a graduate of WBC, “teaching women and ghetto children” in Las Vegas: “Ex-alcoholics (three), druggies and ex-hookers among [her] best friends—all so totally transformed by the power of Christ.”<sup>528</sup> Retired missionaries have found themselves well equipped and inclined to entertain students from abroad. And the wisdom of Elbert McCreery’s advice about family life is evident manifold ways in what alumni report of God’s grace multiplied in the lives of their children and grandchildren.

Naturally a large proportion of early graduates answered a call to some full-time Christian ministry—40% already by 1949, of those students from Emerson’s years who participated in Lotus Graham Campbell’s survey (of 156 graduates, 145 responded).<sup>529</sup> Eventually others would greatly increase that proportion. For missionary callings alone, information in the archival Thelma Bain Kramar Project, while necessarily incomplete, adds to Lotus’s list of twenty-eight missionaries in service, or under appointment, another twenty-eight who became missionaries later—this category of service by itself amounting to more than one third of the whole 156.

Just as predictably the early graduates’ careers were highly diverse. There was Eleanor Tate (’48) whose forty-one-year career in teaching English took her to Seattle Christian School, Seattle Pacific College, the Chinese University of Hong Kong, the Hong Kong Baptist College, and Fujian Teachers’ University on China’s southeast coast.<sup>530</sup> There was Fred Roberts, who began his career in photography with IVCF projects and the 1945 *Citadel*, transferred to USC to major in cinema, and went on to work for the Moody Institute of Science, the U.S. Army’s motion picture division, and thirteen mission boards worldwide, switching during the 80s to videos for “many different secular and Christian organizations” with “weddings on the side.”<sup>531</sup> There was Mavis Philpotts (’44), part-time director of Child Evangelism Fellowship for seven years and kindergarten teacher for ten; she started the first bilingual program in California, writing materials for six languages and teaching English language in adult night-school—while singing for recordings, radio, and television with the Gospel Belles

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<sup>526</sup> Bill Lewis, “Lewis Letter: 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary April 19, 20, 1941-1991,” Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

<sup>527</sup> Ione McQuown Bramlet, letter to Thelma Bain Kramar, January 24, 1991, Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

<sup>528</sup> Beth Brunemeier, letter to Thelma Bain Kramar, April 15, 1994, Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

<sup>529</sup> Lotus Graham Campbell, “The Status of Alumni of Westmont College,” unpublished master’s thesis, Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1949, pp. 5, 8, 69, 70.

<sup>530</sup> Eleanor Tate, autobiographical sketch, n.d., Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

<sup>531</sup> Fred A. Roberts, letter to Thelma Bain Kramar on “Fred Roberts Productions” letterhead, May 31, 1994, Thelma Bain Kramar Project.



trio, and, with her husband Jim Hill, raising two sons. After their boys had grown up, in one period of sixteen months they adopted three young children, traveling to Korea for one of them; and for a decade and more she worked in five northern California counties as Administrator and Resource Specialist for Migrant Education, training teachers' aides and developing new programs for children and adults—"retiring" in 1985, but still teaching Christian school kindergarten in 1991.<sup>532</sup> There was Robert Peabody ('48), who came to Westmont from two years and more of Army Air Corps service in French Morocco. Though aware at first hand of missionaries' difficulties in that Muslim region, with his wife Edithmae he returned for nineteen years with the Gospel Missionary Union. Forced to leave when Morocco became an Islamic state, they worked another fifteen years in Spain.<sup>533</sup> There was Robert Campbell ('44), who went on from Westmont to his doctorate at Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary (and a later M.A. from USC), joined Westmont's board of trustees as alumni representative while he was dean and professor of New Testament at the American Baptist Seminary in Covina, served fifteen years as general secretary (CEO) of the American Baptist Churches/USA, and finally returned to Eastern Baptist as its president. Five honorary doctorates have acknowledged his distinguished service.<sup>534</sup> There was Anna Goertzen ('47), missionary to Congo when it was Zaire, who was confronted by five tribal elders' demand that several older girls, now believers, should leave her school and marry pagan men. Four of the elders eventually agreed to allow them to "further their education and marry Christian husbands," but the fifth turned away in anger. At midnight she awakened from sleep, alongside the girls: "I saw a dark form (no doubt thrown on us in our hut by their witchcraft), but committed myself anew to Jesus my Savior and Lord and turned over (after a time of prayer and heart-searching . . .) to sleep." To villagers who were surprised to find them alive in the morning she said: "God sent His angel to protect me"; and many, including the chief, became Christians and established a church.<sup>535</sup>

Then there was Harry Atkins ('47). Because most of Ethiopia's educated elite perished during the Italian occupation (1936-41), after World War II Emperor Haile Selassie appealed for teachers from abroad to educate new leaders. Among those responding was Harry, who from 1948 to 1951 taught history and geography in the Menelik School in Addis Ababa, writing his own textbooks. He became acquainted with Haile Selassie, and some of his secondary students went on to careers as "members of the Emperor's cabinet, ambassadors, governors, officers in the armed forces, etc."<sup>536</sup> Of the fifteen books that he wrote in Ethiopia the most distinguished was *Ethiopia: Land of Enchantment*, still a respected historical source. During a 1953 furlough he took an M.A. in history at the University of Oregon, became a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society (F.R.G.S.), and with his wife Blanche joined SIM—then the Sudan Interior Mission, now the Society of International Missions. Expecting to resume his teaching, he was shocked but acquiescent when SIM assigned them instead to "pioneer Moslem work," which proved to be three of their hardest missionary years, "preaching the Gospel by befriending people and doing first-aid-type medical work" in Nakfa, Eritrea. From 1959 to 1969 he directed the mission school at Wando in southern Ethiopia,

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<sup>532</sup> Mavis Philpotts Hill, letter to Thelma Bain Kramar, May 1, 1991, Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

<sup>533</sup> "A brief overview of Robert Peabody's life after Westmont," n.d., Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

<sup>534</sup> Robert C. Campbell, letter to Thelma Bain Kramar, September 20, 1994, Thelma Bain Kramar Project; interview with Paul C. Wilt, February 7, 1996, p. 12.

<sup>535</sup> Anna Goertzen, letter to Thelma Bain Kramar, June 7, 1994.

established and led a teacher training school, and helped found district schools for the church—which had grown marvelously from 50 to 15,000 souls during the persecutions of the Italian occupation, a period for which all missionaries were expelled. From 1969, in Addis Ababa, he was Education Secretary of Ethiopia’s largest private school system, developed jointly by the SIM and the Word of Life Church, together constituting “one-tenth of the total education work in the country.”

Meanwhile Harry and Blanche had been raising four children. Early on at Nakfa they were the only Americans in an isolated place two hundred miles from Asmara, the SIM headquarters. When their eighteen-month-old son Andrew suddenly had trouble breathing, they set out for help in a jeep that broke down before they could make their rendezvous with an SIM Land Rover—which carried them nevertheless from low-lying desert to a U.S. Army hospital at Asmara (elevation 7,800 feet). Edwin Larson, the hospital’s sergeant major, related their arrival:

Shortly after 3:00 o’clock in the afternoon, the disheveled and distraught parents with their barely breathing infant arrived. . . . The two young doctors discussed with the parents the possibility of brain damage due to lack of oxygen. In the operating room as the surgeon made the incision for an emergency tracheotomy, he discovered a mucous plug, apparently from an unknown small foreign object that had been swallowed by the infant. After the plug was removed and the tube inserted, the breathing and recovery were dramatic.<sup>537</sup>

The little one had to spend a week in the hospital at \$45 a day (50s buying power), but troops on the base donated enough to Larson’s impromptu fund that the family incurred no charge, and went back to Nakfa with a surplus to support their work.

For their last four years in Addis Ababa they lived with guerilla warfare:

To terrorize the people the communists left mutilated bodies in the streets which we sometimes had to pass on our way to work. All mission stations outside Addis Ababa were seized and the Ethiopian Protestants persecuted. By 1978 we were among the last missionaries to be put out, leaving only a few in Addis Ababa for famine relief work.

But on a return visit in January, 1993, Harry received “a tumultuous welcome,” the Word of Life Church by then numbering two million: “The growth of that church during two periods of persecution—Italian (1936-1941) and Communist (1974-1991)—is one of the greatest stories of modern missions.”

To Harry and Blanche their ministry in Africa was “the highlight of [their] lives,” but back in California they served the Kingdom another way, operating the Monterey Bible Book Store. One day a man came in to ask Harry: “Are you by any chance the Atkins who was a missionary in Eritrea?” It was Edwin Larson. When Harry introduced him to Andrew, he just asked to see his scar. “He looked startled, but then he opened the collar of his shirt to expose a small scar on the front of his neck.” Andrew is now the director of Emmanuel International of Canada, a global program of evangelism, community development, and disaster relief and rehabilitation.<sup>538</sup>

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<sup>536</sup> Harry Atkins, autobiographical sketch, January 1994, Thelma Bain Kramar Project. This source supplies all the information about Harry that follows, except for Edwin Larson’s story.

<sup>537</sup> Edwin C. Larson, [www.kagnewstation.com/index>Stories>“Show Me Your Scar”](http://www.kagnewstation.com/index>Stories>“Show Me Your Scar”)

<sup>538</sup> [www.e-i.org/ministries.html](http://www.e-i.org/ministries.html)

And there was Laura “Larry” Hilma Lewis (’43). Looking back over her life she wrote: “I wouldn’t take all the money in the world for the places I have been and the people I have met.”<sup>539</sup> She had studied one semester at Biola, three years apiece at BMI/WBC and Westmont (where she majored in Greek), and one in library school at the University of Denver, before returning to Westmont as librarian. After a year of literature at Claremont Graduate School, in May 1950 she sailed off to Okinawa to take a post with the U.S. Air Force as a librarian. A month later war broke out in Korea, and for two years her duties included “volunteering to serve coffee and donuts . . . to the crews loading bombs at night on the flight line.” She learned to expect that some of her notices about overdue library books would be returned with a squadron commander’s note: “The man who had that book was a crew-man on an aircraft shot down over Korea. Since the book was not found among his effects, it was assumed that he had taken it with him on his last run.” In this fashion, on Okinawa she “learned about life.” From there she moved on to a succession of far-flung Air Force posts: two in Florida, then Vandenberg in California, Plattsburg in upstate New York, and Morón de la Frontera in Spain; then back to Grand Forks, North Dakota, and on to Thailand, South Korea, and San Antonio, Texas. While in Spain she visited “much of Europe, North Africa, and the Middle East,” finding the Holy Land especially moving; and during six years in Korea she traveled to Japan, Malaysia, Singapore, Taiwan, and mainland China. “Long ago at 231 So. Westmoreland Julia Chung Meyers named me ‘Gypsy.’ Perhaps she knew me better than myself.”

The people she met worldwide must have been blessed by her presence. Westmont students and faculty certainly were, as evidenced by their messages written in her 1942 *Citadel*. Jean Johnston admired how she took “such an interest and active part in all school doings.” Mary Vasey, assistant professor of music, praised her “capacity for getting things done.” (She co-edited the student newspaper in 1941, worked on the *Citadel*, and served as recording secretary for, Kappa Sigma Omega.)<sup>540</sup> Laura was president of the Women’s Athletic Association<sup>541</sup>—a satisfaction for Mildred Seymour, instructor in physical education: “I’ve never enjoyed working and scheming with anyone quite as much, and it has been a testimony to me to see you grow—last year and this; . . . I know He will bring you into a ‘broad place.’” She worked in the library for Elinor Berg, who wrote: “You’re a peach! . . . Whatever emergency happened, I could always depend on you.” Students would not forget her “admonishing shushes” and “evil eye” in the library, but they knew also that she was a “mischievous scamp” (Ruth McCreery’s words) with a “vicious sense of humor”—and “a real sport . . . the first to offer to handle that magnesium ‘bomb.’” Elmer Neff wrote: “I could think of lots of things you wouldn’t want in this book.” Her English professor Evelyn Starr Lesslie quoted Proverbs 17:22: “A merry heart doeth good like medicine.” Staff members and a host of students were eloquent about her friendship: “Wish I could have known you better;” “I really have found it a privilege to know such a grand girl as you. Have enjoyed talking in the library, so as to get your attention;” “Just about the best part of the awful proposition of having to be here this summer, is the fact that *you* are going to be here;” “You’ve meant a lot to me and I pray now that God might continue to make you a blessing in other girls’ lives;” “I have enjoyed your tasty

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<sup>539</sup> Laura Lewis, letter to “One and All,” January 24, 1992, Thelma Bain Kramar Project. The quotations and information in the rest of the paragraph are from this source.

<sup>540</sup> *Citadel* 1941, p. 57; *Citadel* 1942 (*Citadel* pages); *Citadel* 1943 n.p.

<sup>541</sup> *Citadel* 1942 (WAA page).

cooking, your caustic comments, your acid looks, your quiet dignity (?), and your unquestioned rule of the 'Nunnery'.<sup>542</sup> Send me some cookies when I get in the army."

For the epigraph to Laura's photo in the *Citadel*, the editors chose Alexander Pope's words: "mistress of herself."<sup>543</sup> Doubtless—but the Lord was her Master: "I have on many occasions been made aware of God's love and care for this often undeserving child of His. I can only stand in awe and reverence for the omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent Lord of the universe as I call Him 'My Father in Heaven.'"<sup>544</sup>

## AFTERWORD

*We may feel tempted to envy some precious qualities of Westmont's first years that we cannot recapture. Scale, of course, was crucial to the intimate and energizing family atmosphere. The first student body was no larger than two of today's Europe Semester groups. More important was the founding community's triple bonding: of their shared devotion to our Lord, of inspiration for their new and hope-filled common enterprise, and of the prolonged wartime crisis that united the whole country as never before or since. Though we now have no such unanimity of national purpose and sentiment, our bonding in a common faith still combines with the bonding of our shared enterprise, which in some very obvious ways is as new and venturesome as the founding was.*

*The founders' aims and methods for the liberal arts, while not altogether identical with ours, match closely enough to offer us reassurance, inspiration, and guidance. The life for which we educate students is markedly different in certain respects, such as practical expressions of Christian faith, the exploding scope of learning and technology, and (perhaps especially) the nature of social and political concerns and involvements. But we do have the same necessities of personal spiritual formation, and the same gospel for the same needy world. We also face analogous challenges in grasping and responding to knowledge old and new. For this the experience of the Emerson years—and its outcomes in the lives of early alumni—should be reassuring. As we maintain the founders' goals for the liberal arts, while adjusting and refining their means and methods, we are sustaining a noble and godly enterprise. Unquestionably the dedicated spirit of Westmont's first years should inspire us to emulation. In that past we may also find guidance for our own challenges and choices—not least, those arising from the gap between our aspirations and our resources. One could quickly make a long list of present assets and benefits that were lacking at the beginning; Wallace Emerson's very early hopes for accreditation were denied for various good reasons, such as the lack of adequate facilities, and library books, and financial security, and faculty doctorates. But with respect to the results of students' education, the college might as well have been accredited much earlier than 1958. From the start Westmont was doing what its leaders today occasionally remark with continued admiration—achieving extraordinary things with the means at hand.*

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<sup>542</sup> Apparently the second-floor part of the main building that served as a women's dorm.

<sup>543</sup> *Citadel*, 1942, n.p. [p. 37].

<sup>544</sup> Laura Lewis, "Memories of Bible/Missionary Institute and Western Bible College, "1994, Thelma Bain Kramar Project.

## APPENDIX 1

### **Standards of Faith**

The following is the doctrinal statement epitomizing the viewpoint expressed in Westmont College.

#### **Article I. The Scriptures**

We believe the Bible, composed of the Old and New Testaments, is the Word of God, a divine, supernatural revelation. We believe in the plenary, verbal inspiration of the original writings of the Scriptures, and that as thus given they were wholly without error of any kind.

#### **Article II. The Godhead**

We believe in one Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. We believe that they are co-equal in power and glory, identical in their essential nature, attributes and perfections and that they are co-eternal. In His essential nature God is Spirit as opposed to material; as to His essential disposition, God is Love; as to His essential character, God is Light. He is absolutely holy, embracing the sum of all moral perfections.

#### **Article III. The Nature, Person and Work of Christ**

We believe that Jesus Christ, "being the eternal Son of God, became man," and that He "continueth to be God and man, in two distinct natures, and one person, FOREVER."

We believe that He died upon the cross a vicarious, substitutionary death, thereby making atonement for the sins of the world. We believe that He is the ONLY REDEEMER, and this His atonement is SUFFICIENT for the sins of all the world and EFFICIENT for all who believe.

We believe that He bodily arose from the dead; that He ascended into heaven; that there in His state of glorification He is now the interceding High Priest, Intercessor and Advocate for all believers.

We believe that as in His first advent He came to earth, personally, bodily, visibly in an earthly tabernacle of flesh, the body of His humiliation; even so in His second advent He will return personally, bodily, visibly but in the body of His glorification to set up His kingdom and to judge the world in righteousness.

#### **Article IV. Man, the Fall and Salvation**

We believe that man, created in the image of God, fell into sin through the sin of the first Adam and in that sense is lost and separated from God. In order to secure salvation and restoration, man must be born again. Salvation is by grace through faith in Christ who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree. The punishment of the wicked and unbelieving, and the reward of the righteous are everlasting; and as the reward is conscious, so is the punishment.

### Article V. **The Holy Spirit**

We believe that the Holy spirit, the third Person of the Godhead, indwells all believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, baptizes them into the body of Christ, and seals them unto the day of redemption. The Holy Spirit convicts and convicts of sin, righteousness, and judgment.

### Article VI. **The Church**

We believe that the Church is the body and bride of Christ, a spiritual organism composed of all born-again persons in this age. Its mission is to witness concerning its Head, Jesus Christ, and to preach the gospel among all nations. It will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air prior to His appearing to set up his kingdom.<sup>545</sup>

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<sup>545</sup> *Bulletin* 1.1 (May 1940), pp. 9-10.

## APPENDIX 2

Cora Reno, *Students! Evolution, Fact or Theory?* Introduction by Paul Hutchens. Moody Colportage Library. Chicago: Moody Press, 1953, 127 pp.

Written by Westmont's first biology professor, and addressed to high-school and college students, this book is a fair representation of orthodox biology at the college in the 40s. It classifies and characterizes the evolutionary ideas of eleven contemporary high school textbooks, systematically quoting and rebutting arguments against special creation—among them various inferences from geology as well as from the evolution of the horse, vestigial structures, geographic distribution, and embryology.

From the geological record and the fossil evidence the author infers a very old earth with biological change by mutation, natural selection, etc., at the level of family, genus, and species. Denying like changes in phyla, classes, and orders, however, she points to missing links as “a fact which gives us every reason to believe they must have been special creations” (p. 60). Likewise the human species is a product of special creation (p. 82); yet “in the ranks of orthodox Christians it is easy to find sincere people who hold very different views” about when creation happened and how long it took (p. 93). Apart from divine activity there is no good way to explain how life or matter originated (pp. 85, 91).

After a brief endorsement of the argument from design (p. 109) theistic evolution is rejected: humanity could not both have been created in God's image and have developed gradually from simpler forms of life. The elaboration of this position (p. 115) represents in summary the college's theological interpretation of classic evolutionary theory:

Accepting the Genesis account of creation means that one must also accept the record of the fall of man and his need for redemption. The theory of evolution . . . rules out the supernatural. . . . There are even those in high religious circles who would seek to take away the very essentials of our Christian faith. . . . Their eyes are blinded and their hearts are darkened. Around us we see the natural result—a neglect of God's Word and the failure to follow His teachings. . . . Creation is based on the unchanging, inspired Word of God, while evolution is based on speculation and assumption. It causes man to exalt himself and brings Christ down to the level of an ordinary human being.

In the spirit of the Moody Colportage Library the book concludes with a challenge to young seekers of truth: standing on the absolute authority of the scriptures and urging the undecided reader to faith in Jesus Christ as Savior.