

DR. ARTHUR WESLEY MARTIN

Dr. Martin was a small man with gray hair and a very great twinkle in his eye. My first acquaintance with him was when an outstanding business man came into my office with his son the first day I was president of the college. He said that his son had applied for Naval Officer's Training but because he had flunked mathematics he would have to be drafted in the Army as a private. In our discussion he said that Dr. Martin had flunked his son and he was hoping that he could have another chance to see whether or not his son could qualify for Naval training. I shall never forget. I looked at the son and said, "Did you feally flunk?" He said, "Yes, I didn't understand it. I did my best but it wasn't very good." I sat there thinking what to do. I certainly couldn't change a grade. I never did or never would. At the same time I was hoping we could do something about this young man's career. I told them that I would talk to Dr. Martin and see if there was any compromise. I got in the car, went out to Dr. Martin's home. This was the first time I ever remember seeing him. Here he was on a ladder painting his back porch. He had a painter's cap on, paint all over his overalls. He came down the ladder and we sat on the back porch. I told him the situation and he said, "Well, the boy really flunked. He didn't know what it was all about." I said, "Well, I certainly don't want you to change the grade but this is a most unusual situation. Could we work out a compromise?" He said, "What do you suggest?" I said, "I suggest the boy hire a tutor - one of your best students and demand that the young man spend at least

a week or ten days, eight hours a day working on mathematics and then you give him a very fine test to see whether or not he passes it. If he passes it, we might be able to work out the compromise. If he doesn't pass, his failure holds." Dr. Martin said, "That's all right. I will go along with that." The boy worked harder than ever. He got more mathematics in that week or ten days than he had all semester and fortunately he passed the test. He went into the Navy and today he is one of the outstanding business men in Tacoma. Every once in awhile when we meet he will say, "Do you remember my mathematics session?" I say, "How can I ever forget it?"

Dr. Martin had been a Methodist minister. He graduated in 1899 from Hamline which was a sister school to the University of Puget Sound. He went to the University of Minnesota where he got his Master's Degree in 1901 and his Ph.D. from the University of Chicago in 1914. He took summers at Stanford University, the University of Washington, and he taught at Simpson College in Iowa which was also a sister school in the Methodist tradition.

Inasmuch as he was a Methodist minister, the Board of Missions sent out a call for missionaries to go to China and he went. He became head of the Chemistry Department in Nanking University from 1905 to 1917. Then he became superintendent and director of educational activities in the Methodist Episcopal Church in South Anhwei District in China from 1917 to 1925. He returned in 1925 and became an associate professor of mathematics

at the College of Puget Sound. In 1927 he was made full professor. He laughingly told me that Dr. Todd hired him because he had a Ph.D. and Dr. Todd needed Ph.D.s very much on his faculty. I asked Dr. Todd if this was true and with a twinkle in his eye he said, "Well, we just needed a good man and he was a good man and a utility professor. He could teach either Chemistry or Mathematics." He was head of the Mathematics Department for many years.

Dr. Martin was much beloved by his students. He was also very much beloved by the people of the Methodist Church and was a long time member of the Mason Methodist Church. He was a good man in mathematics. He was also very outstanding in Chemistry. The students liked him. He had a small coterie of very strong students who had a great appreciation for mathematics and who followed his teachings. He was regarded as a very excellent teacher of mathematics particularly as it related to the solid foundation for physics, chemistry, and other of the mathematic/science related courses.

His son, Martin, Jr. graduated from the University of Puget Sound and has been a very loyal alumnus through the years. His daughter, Frances, is a poet and her material has been published in the local papers for many years. She married Franklin Johnson, an alumnus, and he was for many years treasurer of a corporation before he died tragically of a tumor of the brain.

Dr. Martin's influence has been excellent through the years and he contributed much to the life of the College of Puget Sound.