

WARREN PERRY

Mr. Warren Perry was librarian at the College of Puget Sound for many years. He received his Bachelor of Arts Degree from the University of Washington in 1923 and his Bachelor of Library Science in 1927. He received his Master of Arts from the University of Illinois in 1933. He was head of the Exchange Division at the University of Illinois from 1923 to 1926 and was reference librarian in the Seattle Public Library from 1926 to 1927. He came to the College of Puget Sound as librarian in 1927.

Mr. Perry was tall and thin and wore heavy glasses. He was genuinely dedicated to the College of Puget Sound and its development. The library situation was rather unique in that it was in the lower basement of Jones Hall and there were approximately 45,000 to 50,000 volumes in this area. It was small and constantly in use. Mr. Perry kept studying library methods and kept recommending for more expenditures for the library. I liked his spirit. He came in often and talked about the school. He talked a great deal about his higher education procedure. He was a very excellent grapevine to the entire situation at the college. ✓

I could see immediately that the library was so crowded that we did not have enough chairs for one-fifth of our students. It was necessary that we build a new library as quickly as possible. I had talked with the Collins people from time to time, including Mr. Everell S. Collins who told me that the college was in his will and that he had anticipated that the money probably would be used for a library. About this

time we started seriously considering the kind of building we would wish. We had anticipated that we would build it either at the north side of the campus or the south side so that there would be the music building on the west, Jones on the east, the library on the north, and the university auditorium on the south which is the girls' playing field. As we started to think in terms of the library building, I asked Mr. Perry to start jotting down ideas and formulating plans in his mind. We also got the Board of Trustees to give us permission to have preliminary plans drawn with the understanding that we would not pay the architect until the building was actually built. This was the procedure we had with Mr. Silas Nelson for many years and also with Mr. Mock and Morrison. I said they had to gamble with us with the understanding that someday the building would be built and when it was they would receive their fee.

About this time, Mr. Everell S. Collins died. He had put a considerable amount of money in his new will for the University of Puget Sound and we were in for a reasonable amount in the old will. However, one of his sons had made an unwise investment and he would not sign the new will until the son had recouped the investment which he never did. Hence the new will was never signed and it looked as though the major part of the money would not come to us. However, Mr. Truman Collins called me and said he would like to talk to me. I went to Portland and sat down in his office. He said, "We know that our father had intended for the University to receive a major amount of money, and for that reason, even though we will have

to pay tax on it in order to give it to you, we will be happy to do so because we want you to have that money." This was good news for us and made it possible for us to actively plan for the building of the library.

Mr. Perry was very excellent in organizing the plans for the library and for working out details as to the allocation of space. We wanted a rather large open library where our students could sit and study. We wanted a balcony where we could house an extra large number of books. We wanted a printing room, we wanted a typing room, we wanted lounges for the students and faculty. We also wanted a Trustee meeting room and other areas for basic book storage. All this was incorporated into the new building and Mr. Perry was the chairman of the Committee for the planning of the library.

When it finally was completed we declared a day of holiday from classes and asked the students to come and help move the books from the lower part of Jones Hall to the new library. I must say that Mr. Perry was excellent in strategic planning he made for this operation. He had a plan where you started taking books out of one side, took them on carts, and put them in the exact spot in the new library. We had Trustees and townspeople who came. We made a tent archway around the back door of Jones Hall to the front door of the new library so that in case it rained the books would not get wet. It was a good idea that this was done because it did rain but the books were protected. We had a special picnic type luncheon served that day to the students who helped and in one day we got the

entire - probably 50,000 to 60,000 books moved without any incident and they were well organized in their new area.

Mr. Perry had served faithfully and well in the service. He was in Europe. I do not know the details of his type of service although it had to do with registration and the keeping of records of individual soldiers. He was proud of the fact that he had served faithfully and well and was very much interested in veteran's affairs when he returned.

He often came to my office and would say, "Dr., what are you going to do with me when I am 65 and retire? What kind of work will you have for me here because I will need it and I must have some kind of extra work." I remember I used to say, "Well, Warren, none of us know exactly what is going to happen when we reach that age. You have to have faith that some way or other things will work out and I do not know, honestly if there will be work for you or if there is anything we can do to help you after you have reached 65. We will have to face it when we come to that time."

He would come in like that about once every six months - usually having to do with some crisis in the college administration, the lack of budget, or something which he felt was unfair on the part of the faculty colleagues. We talked long and often and there was a very fine rapport between us. I was somewhat shocked when about two years before his retirement he had a stroke and was unable to continue. He was in bed for a number of years. His son grew to maturity. His wife and he sold their house and

moved to a cabin which they had on the mud flats in Olympia. I saw him from time to time although he had difficulty in talking.

I was not surprised that at his death there was no funeral service because he had personally requested that there be none. This was more or less typical of his personal beliefs and his self-sufficiency and lack of any real committment to a religious cause.

Warren Perry was an outstanding person in the life of the College of Puget Sound. The students liked him. He had a sense of humor. He had a twinkle in his eye. He was very much interested in doing everything he possibly could to help the students and to help the college. It was a joy to work with him and I am sure there are many students in many places who remember him with real joy and a sense of appreciation.