

## Note from the Editors\*

Father William F. Rigge, S.J., was near completion of his *Memoirs* when he passed away on March 31, 1927, at the age of 69. One could argue that the title *Memoirs* is inaccurate since the pages are less a personal history than an institutional history of Creighton University's first 50 years. Fr. Rigge was uniquely qualified to chronicle Creighton's first half century, having been one of the three Jesuit scholastics who helped Fr. Roman A. Shaffel, S.J., Creighton's first president, start Creighton College in 1878. Even after leaving Omaha in 1881, Fr. Rigge kept close ties to Creighton, often visiting his brother, Fr. Joseph Rigge (who taught science at Creighton from 1885 to 1895). In 1895, William returned to Creighton as a physics teacher and director of the Creighton Observatory. Over the next three decades, his scholarship earned him an international reputation.

The astute observational skills and rigorous attention to detail that characterized Fr. Rigge's research are also evident in his *Memoirs*. His work should not be taken as an exhaustive history of the university, but the areas that drew his focus are usually described thoroughly. He carefully reviewed and revised drafts of his manuscript in an attempt to be as accurate as possible.

Although Fr. Rigge did not live to complete his *Memoirs*, multiple drafts at various stages still exist. One version, used in the past by researchers who desired access to Rigge's unedited words, is available on microfilm at the Rare Book Room of Reinert-Alumni Memorial Library on the Creighton University campus. A second, typed version was kept in the university president's files until 2003, at which time it was transferred to the Creighton University Archives, but it appears to have been written earlier than the microfilmed manuscript. The most widely read version was published 10 years after Rigge's death in serial form in the *Creighton Alumnus* magazine from December 1937 to June 1939; and this has been reproduced digitally and made available on the Creighton website at various times in recent years.

We have concluded that the version that most accurately reflects Fr. Rigge's latest revisions, though, is one housed with other Rigge materials in the Creighton University Archives. It is a typed draft with handwritten corrections made in ink and other corrections in pencil. The handwriting of the ink revisions matches other samples of Fr. Rigge's handwriting in the Archives, as well as handwritten notes on other drafts. The pencil-made changes do not match Rigge's handwriting, which suggests they were made by some other individual whose identity is not known.<sup>1</sup>

We chose to use the Archives manuscript, along with the pen-made revisions but not those made in pencil, for our transcription because that appears to be closest to Fr. Rigge's own final efforts.

- Since the handwritten notes from the versions on microfilm and from the president's files have been incorporated into the main body of the Archives version (i.e., they were typed as part of the text), the Archives version clearly is a later draft than either of those.
- The nature of some comments in pencil indicates that they were made by an editor readying the manuscript for publication. Indeed most, if not all, are reflected in the 1937 to 1939 magazine

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\* We would like to thank several individuals who directly or indirectly made it possible for us to do this project. Denver Applehans, a graduate student from University of Nebraska-Omaha, worked with Rigge materials while researching his thesis and helped us discover the Archives manuscript. Elizabeth Davies, the webmaster for Creighton University, provided access to the files of the online version, which made our comparisons easier. Jeanette Hilton, from the Technical Services Department of Reinert-Alumni Memorial Library, let us use the published and microfilmed versions for our work. Deb Ham, also of Technical Services, forced uncooperative microfilm readers to behave. We also have been helped immeasurably by the efforts and support of Deb Sturges, Gerry Chase and Tom Hassing from Reinert's Access Services and Archives Department.

<sup>1</sup> One cannot rule out the possibility that these revisions were made under Rigge's supervision as his health deteriorated, but there is no evidence in support of this possibility.

series of articles. It should be noted that the penciled notations appear in some but not all sections of the Archives manuscript, while those in ink are made throughout the manuscript. It appears, therefore, that the editors likely had access to at least part of Rigge's latest manuscript but chose to present it somewhat altered.

- Some of Fr. Rigge's notations, substantive in nature, are not included in the published/online *Memoirs*. In at least one instance, the word "not" is added by hand in the typed version but is not found in the appropriate spot in the magazine or online.
- Portions of the typed and handwritten text, crossed out in pencil, are not found published/online.
- Illustrations mentioned in the text are reproduced in the typed drafts but not in the published/online *Memoirs*.
- The published/online *Memoirs* include subtitles that are not found in any typed (or microfilmed) draft.
- The published/online *Memoirs* have altered Rigge's organizational structure, which had twelve chapters, to create fourteen chapters.

While we do not know if the editorial changes were made for substantive, stylistic or space reasons, they almost certainly were not made with Fr. Rigge's knowledge or approval. As you will see in the pages that follow, Fr. Rigge expressed frustration with editors and writers who changed his words.

Therefore, the manuscript from the Archives is the version reproduced here. Please note that Fr. Rigge's revisions are incorporated into our text, with a footnote identifying precisely the nature of the change. However, any comments made by an unknown source (i.e., made in pencil) have not been included. We have tried to remain true to the manuscript, which includes leaving typos, misspellings, punctuation, formats of titles, etc., as they appear on paper. In a few instances where we felt clarity required it, we used a footnote to state what a word or phrase should have been. It is worth noting that Rigge himself was often inconsistent with spellings and grammar, and those inconsistencies remain. As for internal divisions, Rigge sometimes used a new page when starting a new section, while at other times he continued other new sections on the same page as the preceding text.

We have strayed from the original by combining all of the sections, or chapters, into one document. Originally, each section was its own unit, with its own pagination (i.e., each chapter starts with page 1) and table of contents. We have instituted sequential pagination throughout, so the tables of contents (which are still included in the text) are no longer accurate.<sup>2</sup>

The other area where we can not claim to have remained faithful to the typed manuscript is in Chapter 12. The original draft contains a note card with the words "p64 missing noted Nov 28, 1977" to alert the reader that a page has been lost. We relied on the microfilmed *Memoirs* to fill in the missing section; a footnote identifies where that has been done.

Finally, we discovered a separate section, typed and printed in a folder separate from the other manuscript. According to the title and subtitle, the work was intended as part of the *Memoirs*. However, given the lack of attention to correcting mistakes (misspellings, typos, etc.), one could reasonably conclude that Fr. Rigge either chose to exclude the section or could not figure out where to insert it. This "sequel" is provided as a separate PDF file.

*A note about the editors: David E. Crawford is the University Archivist for Creighton University in Omaha, Nebraska. Stefanie Lierz worked in the Creighton University Archives from May 2007 to May 2008 while a graduate student at Creighton University in both International Relations and the Werner Institute for Negotiation and Dispute Resolution.*

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<sup>2</sup> It should be noted that the tables of contents would not have remained accurate, even if page numbers restarted for each section, as a result of revisions, font changes and consistently applied margins.