

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Born in Tulca, Romania, on August 18, 1920, Earl A. Pope immigrated to the United States with his parents, Moses and Lena Pope, in 1923 (they celebrated Earl's third birthday aboard the trans-Atlantic ship). After growing up in Akron, Ohio, where he graduated from Garfield High School in 1939, he attended Wheaton College, Wheaton, Illinois, earning an A.B. in Religion and an M.A. in Theology. He enrolled in Yale University Divinity School, where he was awarded a M.Div. degree in the History of Christianity. In 1948, while at Yale, he met Miriam (Mim) Nilsen, in Cromwell, Connecticut; they were married on September 9, 1950.

For the next decade, The Rev. Earl A. Pope, ordained in the Evangelical Covenant Church of America, was the minister of churches in Floral Park, NY (1950-53), Cranston, RI (1954-57), and Rumford, RI (1957-60). While serving at the Rumford church, he also served for two years as a teaching fellow at Brown University, where he earned a Ph.D. in Religious Studies and American History.

In 1960, Pope joined the Faculty of Lafayette College, where he taught in the Department of Religion for the next 30 years. While rising through the ranks of assistant, associate, and full professor and eventually being named (in 1988) the Helen H. P. Manson Professor of Bible, he also served in several administrative positions, including Head of the Religion Department (1977-85) and Dean of Studies (1970-72).

Popular and effective as a teacher, Pope taught courses in scripture, world religions, religious history, ecumenism, and interfaith relations. In 1970, he was honored with Lafayette's Thomas Roy and Lura Forrest Jones Faculty award for superior teaching, and in 1980 he received the Christian R. and Mary F. Lindback award for distinguished teaching and contributions to the campus community. In 1980, Pope coordinated a conference on Romanian studies at Lafayette. In 1989, he was faculty co-director of a student exchange with the University of Kishinev in Soviet Moldavia.

Pope's scholarly interests ranged from church history and dogma to biblical studies and ecumenical issues of partnership, understanding, and justice. Pope began as a specialist in American religious history; his book, *New England Calvinism and the Disruption of the Presbyterian Church*, the subject of his dissertation, was published by Garland in 1987; it was followed by numerous essays in academic and church publications. Beginning in the early 1970s, his scholarly attention was increasingly drawn to religious life in Communist-dominated countries of Eastern Europe, and he came to be widely recognized as a ground-breaking authority on that subject as well as a leader within national and international organizations dedicated to the culture and politics of Romania. In 1977-78, his travel to Eastern Europe was supported by an International and Research Exchanges Board Award and a Fulbright-Hays Faculty Research Award in Romania. He received the Romanian Patriarchal Cross of Honor for his ecumenical contributions.

As a Senior Fulbright Professor at the University of Bucharest in 1992-94, Pope participated in numerous religious and educational organizations and events and organized a seminar entitled

“Encounter of Religions in the Black Sea Area” at the Black Sea University, Mangalia, Romania. The seminars, which continued for a number of years, promoted interreligious cooperation and tolerance in a region traditionally beset by religious tensions and conflicts. The program drew participants representing various Christian churches and denominations, as well as Jews and Muslims, from twelve different nations: Albania, Belarus, Bosnia, Bulgaria, Croatia, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Romania, Russia, Ukraine, and Yugoslavia. In acknowledgment of his efforts, he was appointed a trustee of the Black Sea University.

In 1989, Pope was elected to the executive committee of Christians Associated for Relations with Eastern Europe, and, from 1987 to 1989, he served as president of the Society of Romanian Studies. He was a consultant to the International Academy on Religious Freedom, which conducted its first conference in Romania; a member of the editorial board of *Occasional Papers on Religion in Eastern Europe*; a member of the Fulbright Selection Committee; an international observer at Romania’s 1992 presidential and parliamentary elections; and a trustee of the Albert Schweitzer Award for Humanitarians, established in 1986 by Dr. Alfred Toepfer of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation to advance humanitarianism in the U.S. through recognition of extraordinary achievement. Pope presented papers at many national and international conferences and conducted a seminar at the Foreign Service Institute of the Department of State. An entry on Pope appears in *Who’s Who in the World*.

Pope was a member of the Presbytery of Lehigh of the Presbyterian Church USA and served on its church and society committee as well as on the Presbyterian Church USA's “Getting to Know the Soviets” committee. He was also a member of the Europe/USSR committee of the National Council of Churches and represented the council and the Presbyterian Church on delegations to the German Democratic Republic of Czechoslovakia. In 1985, in response to President Reagan’s visit to Bitburg, Germany, he represented the Presbyterian Church at ceremonies sponsored by the American Jewish Congress at the site of the Dachau concentration camp.

Although reluctant to retire from Lafayette after 30 years’ service, Pope yielded to a federal law, in effect for a short time, that required faculty of a certain age to do so. He retired in 1990.

Pope died on October 18, 2011, in Kindred Hospital, Fort Lauderdale, FL, at the age of 91. He was survived by his wife, Mim, of sixty-one years; two brothers, Dr. John Pope of Kirkland, WA, and Bruce Pope, of Paducah, KY; two daughters, Marilyn Griffin of Stuart, FL (Lafayette ’74), and Laurel Daly of Alexandria, VA; and two grandsons, Danny and Patrick Daly, ages 21 and 18, respectively. A memorial service was held at 10:30 a.m. Saturday, November 12, at Covenant Village Chapel, Plantation, FL. The family asked that donations be made the newly-established Earl A. Pope Memorial Guest Lectureship Fund, which annually hosts the Earl A. Pope Annual Guest Lecture in World Christianity, hosting its first speaker in February 2013. Condolences were sent to Mim Pope at Covenant Village of Florida – C326, 9201 W. Broward Blvd., Plantation, FL 33324.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

Earl Pope's papers (2 boxes; 2 cubic feet) document his years on the Faculty at Lafayette College (1960-90) and his research pertaining to George Junkin, the first President of Lafayette College (1832-41; 44-48). Box 1 contains a folder of his 1989 and 1999 CVs, 8 folders of correspondence and miscellaneous arranged chronologically (1960-2001), 7 folders of Lafayette and professional files, a folder of book reviews, and 2 folders of Pope's published essays. Box 2 contains Pope's research project on George Junkin. 19th century historic materials relating to Junkin are primarily photocopies. At the back of Box 2 are 10 microfilm strips relating to the Junkin project. The product of Pope's research was a paper entitled "President George Junkin and His Eschatological Vision," which he presented at Lafayette in 1970 as a Jones Lecture. Also of note in Box 2 is a copy of Junkin's 1843 essay on slavery entitled "The Integrity of our National Union vs. Abolitionism" and collected responses dating 1843-45.

NOTE ON PROVENANCE

The Pope papers were donated to the College archives in 2004. Pope donated much of his library to Princeton University.

INVENTORY

Box 1—CVs, Correspondence and Miscellaneous, Lafayette Files, Professional Files, Book Reviews, Published Essays

Folders

- 1 Pope's CV 1989, 1999
- 2 Correspondence and Miscellaneous, 1970-75
- 3 Correspondence and Miscellaneous, 1976-79, including Fulbright grant in Romania
- 4 Correspondence and Miscellaneous, 1980-84
- 5 Correspondence and Miscellaneous, 1985-89
- 6 Correspondence and Miscellaneous, 1990-94, including second Fulbright grant in Romania and Black Sea University conference
- 7 Correspondence and Miscellaneous, 1995-96
- 8 Correspondence and Miscellaneous, 1997-2001
- 9 Correspondence and Miscellaneous, undated
- 10 Theological Confrontations programs, 1967-72
- 11 Jewish Studies at Lafayette, 1982-86
- 12 Kishinev Exchange / Russia, 1984-96
- 13 Albert Schweitzer Prize, 1986-2003
- 14 Helen H. P. Manson Professor of Bible Chair, 1988-90
- 15 Retirement, 1980-87—Folder 1 of 2
- 16 Retirement, 1988-90—Folder 2 of 2
- 17 Appeal of Conscience Foundation, 1997-2000
- 18 Pope's book reviews
- 19 Pope's published scholarship, 1962-99

20 Pope's published scholarship, undated

Box 2—Research on George Junkin, First President of Lafayette College

Folders

- 1 "President Geoge Junkin and his Eschatological Vision," 1970, by Earl Pope
- 2 "Junkin and Barnes in Conflict," by Earl Pope
- 3 "100 Years Ago at Lafayette," by Miriam Pope, 1997
- 4 Pope's research materials and notes
- 5 Pope's Correspondence re Junkin, June-July 1964
- 6 Pope's Correspondence re Junkin, August 1964
- 7 Pope's Correspondence re Junkin, September-December 1964
- 8 Pope's Correspondence re Junkin, 1965-89
- 9 Junkin at Lafayette College [1832-41]
- 10 Junkin at Miami University [1841-48]
- 11 Junkin at Washington College [1848-61]
- 12 Essays by Junkin, 1830-64 (see also 2.13)
- 13 "The Integrity of our National Union vs. Abolitionism," 1843, by Junkin,
plus responses, 1843-45
- 14 "National Joy and Sorrow Comingled," 1865, by Junkin
- 15 *The Religious Forum*, journal edited by Junkin, 1828-29
- 16 Correspondence with and about Junkin, including Junkin's relatives and friends,
1807-1973
- 17 Biographical, including death
- 18 Presbyterian Church, Northampton County, PA
- 19 Miscellaneous essays on Presbyterian Church, 1830-63
- 20 Miscellaneous essays on Presbyterian Church, 1864-2001
- 21 Miscellaneous essays on religious subjects, 1853-1953

Microfilm re: George Junkin Research Project

Reels and strips of microfilm obtained by Earl Pope from:
Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia, PA
Yale University Library, New Haven, CT
Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina Library, Chapel Hill, NC
University Microfilms, Ann Arbor, MI
Recordak Corporation, New York, NY
Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA
Plus labeled and unlabeled items from Margaret Junkin

The 3 boxes of microfilms from the Presbyterian Historical Society include writings by and about Junkin plus correspondence between James McKeen Cattell and Junkin dated 1873.