



WHEATON COLLEGE HISTORY PROF
RETIRES AFTER THIRTY-FOUR YEARS

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WHEATON, Illinois - Dr. S. Richey Kamm, professor of history and social science at Wheaton college, retires in June after 34 years with the college. Dr. Kamm served as chairman of the department of history and political science for ten years and since 1952 has been social science division chairman.

A native of Wisconsin and son of a minister, Dr. Kamm attended a high school of about 150 students. "I enjoyed history and literature," he said smiling, "but I much preferred hunting and fishing. I guess I decided I wanted to go to college because my principal always used to call me 'Dr. Kamm.'"

After working for a year as a hardware store clerk, he attended Greenville college (Ill.) where he received his B.A. degree in 1925. While doing graduate study which led to his Ph.D. degree from University of Pennsylvania in 1939, he also held teaching and administrative positions at Wessington Springs college (S. Dak.), Seattle Pacific college (Wash.), Monmouth Junior college (N.J.), and Haddon Heights High school (N.J.).

In 1940 Dr. Kamm was invited to come to Wheaton to fill the vacancy left in the history department when Dr. V. Raymond Edman became acting president of the College.

Among the highlights of his career at Wheaton, he includes serving with five others on the 1944-45 Academic Planning committee which was responsible for shaping many of the College's post-war policies, directions, and goals. His activity as chairman of the historical section of the Centennial Celebration in 1958-59 was the initial impetus for what has become the Wheaton History Project, the collection of historical material for research and the eventual writing of a definitive history of the College.

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In 1956 and 1963-4, Dr. Kamm received research grants from the Alumni association to study constitutional and totalitarian systems of government as part of the Association's research project, "Christianity, the Free Society, and the Communist Challenge."

His study resulted in a series of summer teacher-training seminars (1963-65) in constitutional democracy and totalitarianism.

"The spread of Communism with its stress on materialistic culture founded upon atheistic presuppositions and expressed in totalitarian, political, and economic institutions has placed the institutions of a free society in serious jeopardy," he explained. "We wanted to give teachers a more adequate basis for evaluating both Communism and the values of American government so that they would be better equipped to teach these subjects."

In 1959, Dr. Kamm was given a leave of absence from Wheaton to spend a year in Bangladesh (then East Pakistan) as Fulbright lecturer in American history at Dacca university.

"They told me that East Pakistan was a very dangerous place and that overseas diplomats considered it a severe hardship post," he said laughing. "But they reassured me that with my white hair I would be a great success."

While at Dacca, he organized the university's first graduate-level course in American history. "The students were quite surprised to discover that the United States had often faced some of the problems then confronting Pakistan, and they expressed their appreciation of my attempt to show the relatedness of American experience to Pakistani problems."

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Since coming to the College, Dr. Kamm has been active in community affairs at both the local and state level. In Wheaton he served on the Community Chest governing board and was a member of the High School Board of Education, District 95, for six years, acting as chairman from 1954 to 1958.

In 1969 he organized a seminar on human relations and community planning to investigate problems such as economically and racially integrated housing. Paul Simon, then lieutenant governor, was the featured speaker for the gathering of seventy-five municipal, county, and federal administrators, school officials, legislators, college professors, business representatives, and members of civic organizations.

Dr. Kamm was chairman of the social science section of the Illinois Academy of Science (1956-57) and served on the task force of the Illinois Allerton House Conference on Education in Social Science (1957-59). For ten years he was also a member of the social action commission of the National Association of Evangelicals.

Named Senior Teacher of the Year in 1967, Dr. Kamm has had two yearbooks dedicated to him and is a member of the Wheaton College Scholastic Honor society. He is listed in the 1973 edition of International Scholars Directory.

The Kamm's will remain in Wheaton, and the professor's retirement plans include editing a collection of the annual Tiffany history lectures of the past 25 years as a research tool for students and faculty. He has also already been asked to give an address during Founders' Day celebrations next year.