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On February 22, 1967, Hope College honored the life and work of A. J. Muste, a pacifist and alumnus of the class of 1905. Muste had died eleven days earlier on Saturday, February 11. At the school's tribute service, the college's president, Calvin A. VanderWerf, delivered a short memorial address and proudly declared that Muste "was this nation's most articulate and most effective pacifist," who, "labored full time and full energy—with all his material, intellectual, and spiritual resources,

From the Director



In this issue of the we introduce you to the life of Abraham Muste, a 1905 Hope College graduate, through the writing of Madalyn Northuis, a junior at Hope College and one of our four student assistants. After processing the Muste Lecture Series archival collection, a recent donation from retired professor of biology Dr. Donald Cronkite, I asked Madalyn to write about Muste's interesting life. I know you will be as pleased as I was with her talent for historical writing.

One of our former student assistants, Anne Jamieson, a 2012 Hope College graduate, has decided to pursue a graduate degree in archives at Dominican University. She is currently interning at the McGreal Center at Dominican. My suspicion is that her interest in becoming a professional archivist came from working in the archives on the family papers of Dr. Donald Luidens. We wish her luck with her degree.

Geoffrey D. Reynolds

The Life and Legacy of A. J. Muste

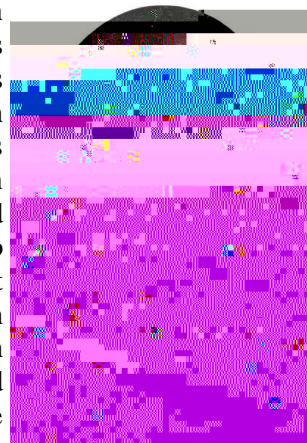
After becoming a member of the Church, Muste applied and was admitted into Hope Preparatory School as a ministry student. When he completed preparatory school, Muste enrolled in Hope College. During the eight years Muste spent at Hope, he excelled in the classroom and was involved in numerous extra-curricular activities. He served as the school's first athletic director, while playing football and baseball, and captained the basketball team as well. Muste wrote for the , won the Hope College oratorical contest as a sophomore, and placed second in the interstate oratorical competition. In addition to excelling in school, Muste also held several jobs. He led Bible studies, Sunday school classes, and sold Bibles, a job he strongly disliked. He also worked at the Hope College library, wrapped presents during the holidays, worked at the Quimby Furniture Factory, and served as an assistant to Holland's coroner.

Muste graduated from Hope in 1905 at the age of twenty. He was valedictorian of his class. Prior to graduating, he had applied and was accepted into New Brunswick Theological Seminary (NBTS), which is located in New Jersey. However, instead of continuing on with his schooling, Muste decided to defer his enrollment for one year so he could enter seminary with a friend from Hope who was one year behind Muste in school. He also

wished to put off moving to New Brunswick so he could continue to court his college sweetheart, Anna Huizenga. Anna's family was from Iowa and she was to return to there after graduation. In order to remain close to Anna, Muste accepted a teaching job at the Northwestern Classical Academy in Orange City, Iowa. During the school week he taught English and Greek, and when the final bell rang on Fridays, Muste would frequently board a train bound for Anna's hometown.

In 1906, Muste left his teaching position and Anna in Iowa in order to move to New Jersey for seminary. As part of his training at NBTS, Muste served as supply preacher at Middle Collegiate Church in the East Side of Manhattan in the summer of 1908. This church was located in the slums of New York City, and it was the first time Muste had ever witnessed such shocking living conditions. In his autobiography, Muste wrote that his experience at Middle Collegiate Church heightened his awareness of the worker and union strikes that were occurring throughout New York City. While he was not directly involved in these strikes, the conflicts intrigued the eternal scholar. In order to gain a better understanding of these struggles, Muste read radical literature. Eventually, he came to support the workers and their struggles.

His newfound interest in socialism and union activities did not appear to impact his religious beliefs, standing in the community, or his relationship with Anna. In June 1909, Muste graduated from NBTS and was asked to serve as the pastor of Fort Washington Collegiate Church in New York City. That month he also married Anna, and together the couple would have three children.



Within three years of taking the job at Fort Washington Collegiate Church, however, Muste shifted his political alliances. He went from being a member of the Republican Party to one of the Socialist Party. In support of his new political affiliation, Muste cast his vote for the Socialist Party's candidate, Eugene V. Debs, in the 1912 Presidential election.

When he was not preaching or reading radical literature, Muste found time to take classes at Union Theological Seminary (UTS), which was near his church. By 1913, the classes he had managed to fit into his busy schedule allowed Muste to receive a Bachelor of Divinity from

UTS. The young pastor and scholar graduated

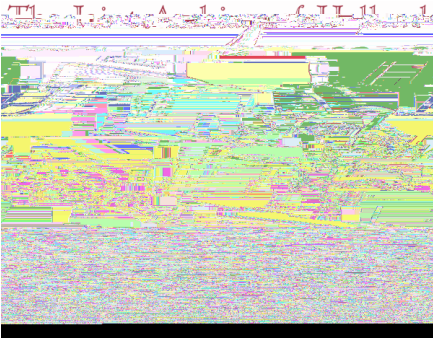
In his autobiography, Muste claimed that the professors at UTS introduced him to a new way of

other members of “The Comradeship,” Muste convinced the strikers to adhere to a pact of non-violence. For sixteen weeks, he joined the textile workers on the picket line daily. They were beaten, verbally abused, threatened by machine guns, and arrested. In spite of the daily brutality they were forced to endure, the textile workers and their leaders remained calm. The laborers’ refusal to violently lash back for sixteen weeks had exhausted both the workers and their embittered employers. As a result, both sides were willing to meet and reach an agreement. In the end, the agreement was in favor of the laborers, who received a shortened workweek and a twelve percent increase in their salary.

Following the victory at Lawrence, Muste accepted the position of general secretary of the Amalgamated Textile Workers of America. He held this post until 1921, when he moved to northern New York in order to become a teacher at the newly established Brookwood Labor College. Brookwood offered a two-year program for labor leaders who wished to receive a general education and formal training in how to appropriately handle labor struggles. Muste taught at Brookwood for twelve years, leaving the institution in 1933 at age forty-eight.

By the time he left the labor school, Muste no longer considered himself a Christian or a pacifist. His participation in churches and Quaker meetings had significantly declined. Moreover, he believed he had become a “caricature of a Christian pacifist and only a half-baked revolutionary.”⁵ He could no longer be a

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