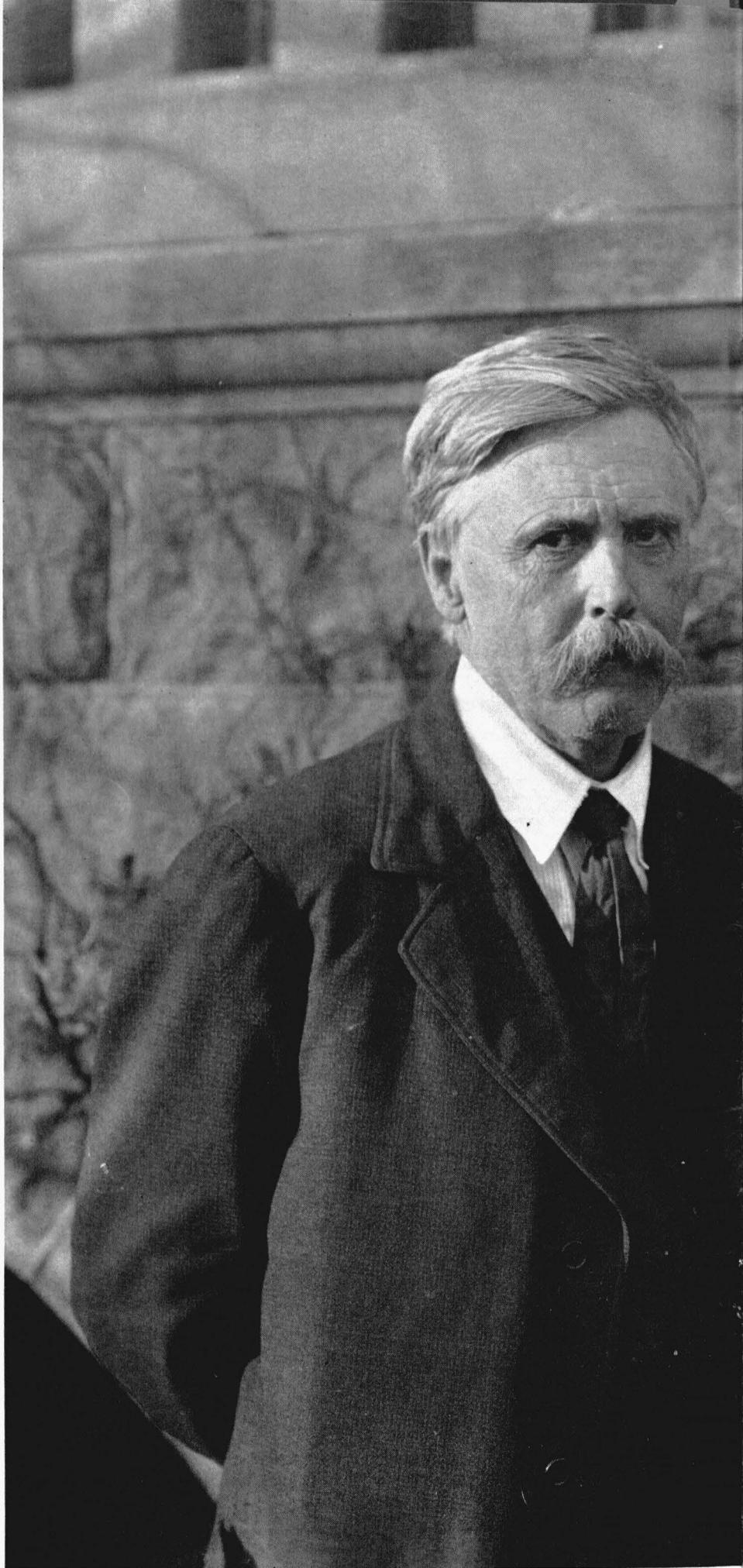


A STRIDE
TOWARD
GREATNESS





HIS SHAGGY MUSTACHE and a heavy, twisted walking stick cause some to remember him as the "Mr. Chipps" of his day. Others, recalling the way his brown eyes twinkled, are more reminded of Mark Twain. But everyone who knew Professor Luther Marion Defoe thinks of him as one of the best friends a student ever had. Thousands of young men and women on the Columbia campus during his 41-year University teaching career referred to him affectionately as "Daddy" Defoe.

Daddy and Cora Alice Defoe never had children of their own, and he died in 1933. The Defoe name, however, has taken on new vitality for the University and its students through the Luther Marion Defoe Distinguished Professorship in the Science of Mathematics.

Bequeathing her entire estate of \$62,792.38 to the University, Mrs. Defoe directed that the amount be held in a trust fund and that the income from it be used for the professorship. The Board of Curators accepted the gift in January.

Dean W. Francis English of the College of Arts and Science, pointed out that the gift enables the college to establish its first endowed chair. He said the endowment's income will make it possible for the Department of Mathematics "to take another long stride toward excellence."

Chancellor John W. Schwada said that, with expected contributions from other sources to the Luther Marion Defoe endowment, a substantial annual stipend will be available to supplement the regular University salary of the distinguished professor. Until the principal reaches

A Stride Toward Greatness

the necessary total, he said, it is likely that other available funds can be used in order to assure filling the chair with a teacher of "truly outstanding ability." Although the effective date of the professorship is Sept. 1, 1968, Dr. Schwada indicated that the arrangement could go into effect this year if the services of a suitable teacher can be obtained.

Terms of the will became effective after the death last September of Mrs. Defoe's last surviving sister. Mrs. Defoe died in 1940, the year Defoe Hall, the first of the University's modern dormitories for men was dedicated in her husband's honor.

Today, a third of a century after Daddy Defoe's death and more than 85 years after he first arrived at Columbia, it is difficult to get a clear picture of the man. There are few persons left who knew him well.

One of these is Dr. Harry Rubey, 82-year-old pro-

fessor emeritus of civil engineering and an interesting story in his own right. Dr. Rubey and Defoe taught together in the Engineering School from 1924 until 1933.

"Specific memories about Daddy Defoe now have merged into a general picture," Dr. Rubey said. "He was chairman of the student disciplinary committee before we had a dean of students, and yet he was known as the students' friend rather than a disciplinarian. He used both his time and money to help them."

Floyd C. Shoemaker, retired director of the State Historical Society of Missouri, remembers Dr. Defoe as being unusual in that he had both a "judicious mind and a heart filled with mercy. He was phenomenally adapted to heading the disciplinary committee. Somehow he could see the students' points of view as well as their violations.

"You wouldn't think he was such a paragon to

CHANCELLOR SCHWADA TALKS ABOUT ENDOWED CHAIRS

When the Board of Curators formally established the Luther Marion Defoe Distinguished Professorship in the Science of Mathematics our staff found especially gratifying the fact that the professorship— to be filled in a period when the University is reaching toward greatness— was provided by a family intimately connected with the University when it was emerging.

I couldn't agree more.

It will be the first named professorship in the college. The Columbia campus has seven others: The Frank Miller Professorship in Agricultural Economics, the R. B. Price Distinguished Professorship in Law, the Fred V. Heinkel Professorship in Agriculture, the Robert E. Lee Hill Chair of Banking in Business and Public Administration, the W. Alton Jones Professorship in Surgery, the Missouri Press Association Professorship in Journalism and the D'Arcy Advertising Company Professorship in Journalism. The last two named are provided for by gifts, the others by endowments.

Every college and university in the country reserves named chairs and professorships for particularly outstanding faculty, and scholars universally aspire to them. Endowed support helps a university compete for truly outstanding teachers by providing both financial inducement and academic stature.

While state universities have become strong with support from the state and federal government, no great university can rely solely on public funds to achieve excellence.

I can think of no finer way for alumni and friends of the University to contribute to its distinction than by endowing or helping to endow distinguished chairs and professorships.

look at him, though. He liked a good joke, chuckled often. And he was able to get along with people hard to get along with."

Rowland Smith, now in charge of the University's news bureau, remembers him from the student's point of view.

"He was rational in his approach to any problem," said Smith, "and very influential with students, faculty and townspeople alike. In fact, he served on the city council for a number of years."

Dr. Defoe was an excellent teacher as well. "Again," said Dr. Rubey, "it was his personality and not tough discipline that made the difference. He tested very little during a term, but his finals might last 12 or 14 hours. He always felt that engineering students didn't mind work, and they worked for him."

A newspaper account of 1922 had this to say about his teaching ability. "It is more than plain dry facts about the mechanics of engineering that the students learn when they listen to the lectures of Daddy Defoe, for he gives them bits of wisdom and sound advice concerning many subjects. His course in mechanics is also a course in common sense and amounts practically to a general education."

Although the only academic degree he ever received was a bachelor of arts from Harvard in 1893, Defoe also was a fine scholar and owned one of the finest collections of rare books in the Midwest. He was proudest of his volumes by Sir Isaac Newton, *Optics*, published in 1721 and *Chronology of Ancient Kingdoms*, in 1728.

But all agree that it was in the field of student relations that Daddy Defoe had his greatest successes.

On the occasion of his "retirement" in 1932 at the age of 72 the *Missouri Alumnus* featured Daddy Defoe.

"How did you like your work as chairman of the discipline committee?" he was asked.

"I didn't like it," he said, "I worried over it too much. I was afraid the boy who came to me might not get a square deal. It was my rule to give him every chance, and the benefit of every doubt. None of them whom I trusted ever failed me. In turn, they trusted me, because as far as I was concerned, they knew that what passed between me and them was strictly confidential."

Engineer-lawyer frays used to be common on the campus. During one particular tussle, Defoe went to the scene to be met by excited persons inquiring what was to be done about it.

"Let them fight—they'll soon get tired and quit." And they did, just as soon as they saw Daddy Defoe.

If Defoe was a great friend of students, he entered the University at a time when the students sorely needed a friend. Born and reared only 40 miles from Columbia, Defoe entered the University in 1881 at the age of 21 and with several years of teaching behind him. He stayed six years, going to school a term and then teaching the next in order to meet expenses. The University's president was the controversial Samuel Spahr Laws, who, according to historian Jonas Viles, handled student discipline in a "puzzling and inconsistent" manner. "He plainly had very little confidence in the veracity or honor of the student who tried to defend himself or denied his guilt."

Finally forced to resign, "Laws was unfortunate," Viles wrote, "that the dissatisfied student element had unusually able leadership . . . in Thomas Jefferson Jackson See . . . and Luther M. Defoe."

Defoe joined the University faculty in 1891 and became a legend in his own time.

The 1918 *Savitar* was dedicated to him as follows: "There is in the University of Missouri a scholar, a gentleman, and a patriot; one whose modesty in his works, whose disregard for the rewards of service may tend to take from him the credit he deserves. To this teacher, friend of men, to Professor L. M. (Daddy) Defoe, whose friends are numbered by the hundreds and whose name is respected by Columbians and Missourians everywhere; to the 'grand old man' of the faculty, the 1918 *Savitar* is dedicated."

On the occasion of Mr. and Mrs. Defoe's 30th wedding anniversary in 1922, "the engineering students of the University, led by the University's band, marched to Daddy's home. They presented them a silver platter."

In 1926, another student organization, the Q.E.B.H., raised \$2500 to present the University oil portraits of Defoe and Dr. John Carleton Jones for their work in obtaining the Memorial Tower and Memorial Stadium.

After he died April 1, 1933, all the students in the College of Engineering attended the funeral services together.

In her will, Mrs. Defoe suggests to the Curators that the income from the endowment be used to obtain "a man of outstanding ability who shall be not only a great teacher but who shall attract students and be in sympathy with them."

The kind of man, obviously, her husband was. □