

# Pacific Lutheran College Bulletin

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—1930

## NILS JOSEPH HONG

*Beloved Teacher. Leader. Translator. Poet. Friend*  
Born February 7, 1866 — Died September 11, 1939  
Teacher, Pacific Lutheran Academy, 1897-1918  
Principal, Pacific Lutheran Academy, 1898-1918  
Principal of High School Division,  
Pacific Lutheran College, 1928-1938  
Emeritus, Pacific Lutheran College, 1938-1939  
First President of the Pacific Historical Society  
of the Baltic Peoples, 1936-1939

*Blessed be his memory!*

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*And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.*

—Rev. 14:13

## NILS JOSEPH HONG. AN APPRECIATION

### *N. J. Hong was a teacher*

Hong's life vocation was teaching. He early accepted Grundtvig's estimate of true education: As is sunshine to fertile soil, so is true education to man; of more worth than gold it is to know one's self and one's God. Under the sunshine of Hong's personal interest his students grew, not only in knowledge, but in Christian wisdom and character. He never lost his deep interest in the human mind and in the fruits of the human spirit. Of him it could truly be said: "Nihil humanum a me alienum puto"; for he taught, at one time or another, subjects as widely varied as English language and literature, Norwegian, German, Latin, Greek, history, mathematics, physics, psychology, Christianity, catechetics, parliamentary law, economics, penmanship, gymnastics, as well as the common branches. He gained his teaching experience in public and parochial schools in Minnesota, at Willmar (Minn.) Seminary and at Lincoln High School (Tacoma, 1919-1928), as well as at Pacific Lutheran Academy and Pacific Lutheran College. In consequence, he lives in the thousands of lives he helped to mold.

### *N. J. Hong was a leader*

Holy Scripture says, "But whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister: and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant" (Matt. 20:26-27). This fits N. J. Hong. He was a ready minister to community and individual needs: he was a willing servant, at once humble and fearless, buoyed up by strong Christian convictions. His quick sense of strict justice became more and more infused with the mellowness and tenderness of advancing years, but always he gave himself in the service of others. And so he became a leader. Beneficiaries of his leadership were not only the schools he served, but his Church, his home community, the educational fraternity, the Minnesota Total Abstinence Society, the Parkland Light and Water Company, the Pacific Historical Society of the Baltic Peoples, the Gold Run Mining Company, and numerous other interests and causes. He would give to him that asked of him, and from him that would borrow of him he turned not away; in this, too, he was the Lord's disciple. (Matt. 5:42.)

### *N. J. Hong was a translator*

Like all recipients of a truly liberal education, N. J. Hong was in a very real sense an heir of all the ages. The cultural heritage of the founders and makers of Western civilization was in notable measure his, and he sensed more clearly than most the responsibility for the transmission of the heritage. As a loyal son of his Church, he viewed with regret the growing neglect of the languages of the fathers, and he determined to do what he could to save for a monolingual generation some vital part of the ancestral heritage. Hence the renown he won in his later years as gifted translator of hymns and other literary and spiritual treasures.

### *N. J. Hong was a poet*

To be the translator he was, Hong also had to be a poet. "one having the gift of poetic thought, imagination, and creation, together with eloquence of expression." It was no accident that English literature became his specialty in the classroom. He developed a rare sense for the meaning of words and felicity of expression. With age came increased versatility, ranging from dignified epic to playful sonnet. Withal he was a Christian philosopher, and as such at his best on occasions of Christian joy, as, for example, the celebration of the fortieth anniversary of the dedication of the school he loved and served, or the golden wedding anniversary of his long-time friends, Pastor and Mrs. L. C. Foss. His hymns and his choice of translations reveal the deep seriousness of the Norseman.

### *N. J. Hong was a friend*

A friend is a person who will tell you the truth in kindness when you need to be told the truth. A friend is a person to whom you may turn in time of need. A friend is a person whose concern for your welfare rises above self-interest. By all these tests N. J. Hong was a friend indeed. At his funeral the spokesman of Pacific Lutheran College accordingly brought testimony approximately as follows: "Professor Hong desired no praise: but because of the many bereaved we must bear testimony. His life was ours: his memory is ours to cherish. He saw a vision. He did not depart from it. He loved his Lord and in Him loved all men. His personal loyalty never failed. Staunch was his friendship, his courage outstanding, his cheerfulness ever with him. The secret was the peace in his own heart, and he died with malice toward no one and with the humble soul's prayer for forgiveness in Jesus' name. As a leader he was fearless; as a teacher he was a power; above all he was a true friend and a sincere Christian. His memory remains a blessing."

# HONG'S AVAILABLE MANUSCRIPT LIST

## I. TRANSLATIONS

### A. Religious Poem

1. The Angel of Death (J. O. Wallin)
1. Lord, Thy Word, That Precious Dower (N. Ludv. Von Zinzendorf)
2. Like Countless Stars God's Angels Sang (N. F. S. Grundtvig)
3. Throughout This Blessed Christmas-Time (H. A. Brorson)
4. To Us a Savior's Born Today (Birgitte C. Boye)
5. One Thing's Needful (J. H. Schroeder)
6. Far as the Sun His Light Is Casting (Caspar Boye)
7. Master, Whither Shall We Go? (N. F. S. Grundtvig)
8. O Where Shall We Go? (Anders Hovden)
9. Thine to Be, O Jesus, Ever (Theo. Oldenburg)
10. A Sigh Is Heard Through Every Land (Theo. Oldenburg)
11. Sorrow and Happiness Journey Together (Thomas Kingo)
12. There Many Shall Come from the East and the West (M. B. Landstad)
13. Eternity, Thou Thunder-Word (Joh. Rist)
14. In Heaven's Book My Name Is Entered (Sal. Franck)
15. Sin and Grief, Akin by Birth (Elias Blix)
16. Come, Holy Ghost, Drive Death Away (Elias Blix)
17. O God of Lights, Thy Gift I Prize (J. O. Wallin)
18. Lord, When Thou a Reckoning Cravest (M. B. Landstad)
19. Again We Cast the Fish-Net (M. B. Landstad)
20. O Christian Soul, Look Up Anew (M. B. Landstad)
21. Jesus' Seven Words on the Cross (Thomas Kingo)
22. What Are They 'Mong So Many (M. B. Landstad)
23. The Friendly Thought (W. A. Wexels)
24. The Great White Host (H. A. Brorson)
25. The Heavenly Anthem Has Harmonies Fuller (From *Frydetoner*)
26. God's Peace o'er the Dwelling Where Love Has Its Hold (A. Reitan)
27. Fair Spring Has Quickened Nature (J. O. Wallin)
28. Awake, Awake! All Things Create! (H. A. Brorson)
29. Here Meet All Human Pathways (N. F. S. Grundtvig)
30. While Thou Art Young, Remember God (Elias Blix)
31. In the Silent Morning Hours (Elias Blix)
32. Now the Day Is Closing (H. Hoffman)
33. Our Meal Is Ready, Decked Our Board (Thomas Kingo)
34. O Bless to Us Thy Gifts, O Lord (*Evang. Luth. Gesangbuch*)
35. Lord, to Us in Grace Thou Hast (J. O. Wallin)
36. Commit unto God's Keeping (J. O. Wallin)

### C. Miscellaneous

1. Farmer Paavo (Johan Ludvig Runeberg)
2. Truls and Inger (Jorgen Moe)
3. Landstad's Swan Song
4. A Graceful Birch Has Been Growing (Jorgen Moe)
5. Still Once More Do the Winter I See (A. O. Vinje)
6. My Mother (Zakarias Topelius)
7. Father (Author unknown)
8. Amazing Stories We Sometimes Hear (Ivar Aasen)
9. They Say That the World Is Unspeakably Bad (Ivar Aasen)

## II. ORIGINAL VERSE

### A. Hymns

1. O Happy He Who Feels the Lord (Psalm 128) (Written in honor of Rev. and Mrs. J. P. Pflueger's silver wedding)
2. Bethlehem, O Bethlehem
3. O'er the Grave Breaks a Light
4. Triune God, All Things Possessing
5. God Bless the Vow These Twain Have Made
6. God Bless the Twain Who Knelt Before Thee

### B. On Various Occasions

1. On the Fortieth Anniversary of the Dedication of Pacific Lutheran College, October 14, 1934
2. Sowing for Forty Years



Here is pictured the first student body at Pacific Lutheran College after Professor N. J. H. are seated in the second row from the bottom, beginning with the seventh person from the left: John U. Xavier, Lydia E. Stixrud, **Nils Joseph Hong**, Mrs. Lora B. Kreidler, Oscar A. Tingelst Edwards, Victor A. Elvestrom, Philip E. Hauge. The next person in the line is Irene Dahl (n

3. On the Occasion of the Golden Wedding of Rev. L. C. Foss and Wife, May 1, 1935.

#### C. Sonnets

1. On the First Milling at the Kimberley Gold Mines
2. On Learning of My Granddaughter's High Intelligence Quotient (August, 1937)
3. On Being Retired from Pacific Lutheran College, August 12, 1938
4. To Live (Written in honor of Dr. H. A. Stub's thirty-fifth anniversary as a pastor, June 30, 1938)
5. To My Granddaughter, Barbara Sherley, on Her Sixth Birthday, June 30, 1938

## RECAPTURING OUR LEGACY

*By Ludvig Larson*

We are living in a troubled world. Greed is expressing itself in action. Strife and turmoil, bewilderment and fear are everywhere manifest.

In time of trouble men have always turned to God, so it is not surprising that even the worldly press proclaims that only a greater degree of Christianity can restore order in the world and perpetuate peace in our own land. We are reminded that our forefathers came to this continent in search of religious liberty, and that their concern about religious liberty gave us the political liberty and personal freedom that we enjoy today.

The faith of our fathers built the churches and Christian schools that have, in a large measure, given us our moral standards and the type of civilization in which we live, but which seems to be declining.

Pacific Lutheran College is an institution designed to recapture for this generation the legacy which we seem about to lose and enable us to pass on to posterity some of the blessings that are ours because of the faith of our fathers.

Your membership in the Pacific Lutheran College Development Association makes you an active participant in this important undertaking.

## INTERSYNODICAL COMMITTEE URGES SELF-HELP

In view of the recognized necessity of adding fourth-year work in the teacher training department the Inter-synodical Committee would encourage the college administration to make every effort to increase the income of the college to meet the added cost of operation. The committee has in mind especially a renewed, greater emphasis on the Development Association.—(Adopted at Chicago, Illinois, November 29, 1939.)



Hong's return to the school in 1928 after a ten-year interval. Mr. Hong and his faculty colleagues left, as follows: Hans J. Hoff, Clara M. Myhre (now Mrs. Norman F. Tvete), Ole J. Stuenkel, Anders W. Ramstad, Mrs. Louise S. Taylor, William J. Freed, Ludvig Larson, Joseph O. and Mrs. Olaf Hageness), present alumni secretary at Pacific Lutheran College.

## PACIFIC LUTHERAN COLLEGE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

### *Alumni Office*

For the first time since its organization in 1920, the Pacific Lutheran College Alumni Association has active headquarters at the College. This fall the College board of trustees appointed a part-time alumni secretary to work in the office of President Tingelstad, and in connection with the P. L. C. Development Association to direct the mobilization of alumni for mutual help and for College support.

Alumni have long felt the need of a central office at the College, but have been unable financially to maintain one. Establishment of the office in connection with the Development Association will assist both the Alumni and Development Associations, and it is hoped that through this part-time beginning, the alumni may be better organized until they can maintain their own office.

### *Memorial to Mr. Hong*

When the alumni board met in October, its chief concern was to suggest some way in which to honor the memory of the late Prof. N. J. Hong. With a part-time secretary at their command in connection with the Development Association, the board resolved to "urge all alumni to become members of the P. L. C. Development Association, and that money so collected in an amount not to exceed \$400.00 be used to complete the room set aside for the Pacific Historical Society on the first floor of the P. L. C. Library, in memory of Prof. N. J. Hong, and that an appropriate plaque be placed in that room upon its completion; this action to be subject to the approval of the P. L. C. board of trustees." (This was reported to and favorably received by the board at its meeting December 5.)

### *Join the P. L. C. Development Association*

The first objective, therefore, of the newly established alumni office is to invite every P. L. C. alumnus to become an active member of the P. L. C. Development Association by the payment of "at least a dollar at least once a year." Until the completion of the memorial to Mr. Hong, contributions from alumni will go toward this memorial. After that, unless a new project is designated, contributions will go toward the general fund of the Development Association "for the purpose of maintaining and developing Pacific Lutheran College."

### *Alumni Reunion*

The twentieth annual P. L. C. Alumni Reunion will be held February 9, 10, and 11, 1940. All former students and faculty members of Columbia Lutheran College, Pacific Lutheran Academy, or Pacific Lutheran College are invited to attend.

IRENE DAHL HAGENESS,

*Alumni Secretary.*



*Professor N. J. Hong (the bearded person near the right end of the third row from the top) came to Pacific Lutheran University in 1897. This picture was taken that school year. Mr. Hong became principal the next year, and the name of the school was changed to Pacific Lutheran Academy. The elementary school was transferred to the local congregation in 1902.*

## SELECTIONS FROM HONG'S WORKS

### *While Thou Art Young, Remember God*

(Elias Blix's hymn, translated from the Norwegian by N. J. Hong, and set to music by Gunnar J. Malmin, and dedicated to the P. L. C. Class of 1938)

While thou art young, remember God!  
Good seed in spring must pierce the clod  
To come to full fruition.  
So, yield thy heart to God in youth;  
From youth to age confess His truth.  
And glory in thy mission.

While thou art young, remember God,  
While radiant hope doth smiling nod,  
With each new morn returning;  
While hidden heart-life, fresh and fair,  
Doth ope, like buds, to light and air,  
And deep for love is yearning.

While thou art young, remember God,  
Ere thou the evil ways have trod,  
That lead to grief and travail.  
Soon comes an evening, dark and stern,  
When hard it is to God to turn  
And to depart from evil.

And so, while young, believe in God,  
Ere thou shalt old and weary plod  
And rueful tell thy story;  
For faith makes fairest youth more fair,  
Sheds honor o'er the graying hair,  
And crowns the white with glory.

God, let there flourish in our land  
A youth that firm in faith shall stand  
And yield to Christ submission;  
And let the old who walk Thy ways  
Receive their crown, that gift of grace,  
Beheld by faith's far vision!

*Farmer Paavo*

(Johan Ludvig Runeberg's poem, translated from the Swedish by N. J. Hong.)

Farmer Paavo, 'mong the Sarijarvi highlands,  
Lived upon a high and frosty homestead.  
There he tilled with busy hands his acres,  
But from God expected all the increase.  
There he lived, content, with wife and children,  
Ate with them in sweat his scanty portion,  
Dug his ditches, plowed his fields, and sèded.

Spring arrived, and thawed away the snow-drifts:  
But the waters ruined half his planting.  
Summer came, and with it came the hail-storm,  
Which did half the ears beat down and shatter.  
Autumn came, and night-frost killed the remnant.

Paavo's helpmate tore her hair, lamenting,  
"Paavo, Paavo, born to meet misfortune!  
Take the beggar's staff, for God has left us.  
Hard it is to beg, but harder starving!"  
Paavo took his helpmate's hand, replying,  
"God but tries us: He does not reject us.  
Mix thou half of bark-meal with the bread dough.  
I'll be digging twice as many ditches,  
But from God expect I all the increase."

So his wife made half the dough of bark-meal,  
And the man dug twice as many ditches.  
Sold the sheep, and bought the rye, and sèded.  
Spring arrived, and thawed away the snow-drifts,  
But the flood took nothing of the planting.  
Summer came, and with it came the hail-storm,  
Which did half the ears beat down and shatter.  
Autumn came, and night-frost killed the remnant.  
Paavo's helpmate beat her breast, lamenting,  
"Paavo, Paavo, born to meet misfortune!  
Let us die, for God hath us rejected!  
Hard it is to die, but harder living!"  
Paavo took his helpmate's hand, replying,  
"God but tries us: He does not reject us.  
In the bread put twice as much of bark-meal.  
Henceforth, dig I twice as many ditches,  
But from God expect I all the increase!"

So his wife used twice as much of bark-meal:  
And her husband doubled all his ditches.  
Sold the cows, and bought the rye, and sèded.  
Spring arrived, and thawed away the snow-drifts,  
But the flood took nothing of the planting.  
Summer came, and with it came the hail-storm,  
But it passed, and left unharmed the rye-field.  
Autumn came, and, far away, the night-frosts  
Let it stand like gold to wait the reapers.

Then upon his knees fell Paavo, saying,  
"God but tried us: He did not reject us."  
Then upon her knees his wife fell, saying,  
"God but tried us: He did not reject us."  
Then with joy she said unto her husband,  
"Paavo, Paavo, take with cheer the sickle.  
Now 'tis time our life were gay and happy.  
Now 'tis time to cast away the bark-meal,  
And of rye-meal only make the bread-dough."

Paavo took his helpmate's hand, replying,  
"Woman, he alone can stand this trial  
Who does not forsake a needy neighbor.  
Mix thou still with half of bark the bread-dough.  
For by frost our neighbor's field is ruined!"

To My Granddaughter, Barbara Sherley, on Her Sixth Birthday, June 30, 1938  
(This delightful sonnet by N. J. Hong reveals a deep and loving appreciation of the spirit of childhood.)

Do you remember the ants  
With the red coats and pants.  
Who, with wonderful skill,  
Were making a hill  
By the side of the road  
For their winter abode,  
Where their children they keep,  
Where they work, eat, and sleep?

Well, I saw them today.  
They were working away.  
Each one at his chore,  
As hard as before,  
All doing their best,  
Never stopping to rest:  
For ants never shirk,  
But faithfully work  
From earliest dawn  
Till daylight is gone,  
Or till chores all are done,  
For work is *their* fun.

But one little ant,  
Looking at me aslant,  
Stands still at his task  
A question to ask:

"Where," he says, "is the girl  
With her hair out of curl  
Who came with you here  
In the spring of the year  
To watch our "ant"ics  
With grasses and sticks?"

Then after a while  
He says with a smile  
And a voice like a crack,  
"You must *sure* bring her back.  
You say she is six  
And up to her tricks?  
O let her come down  
To our quaint little town,  
Where our queer little clown  
Is still doing tricks  
For girls that are six."

Then he carefully picks  
Six curious sticks  
And sends them to you  
As a gift that will do  
From the King of the Ants  
With the Red Coats and Pants.

#### To Live

(Written by N. J. Hong in honor of Dr. H. A. Stub's thirty-fifth anniversary as a pastor, June 30, 1938)

To live is to love the best we have known;  
To live is to cherish the friends that we own;  
To live is to find the pearl of great price;  
To live is to know God's love in disguise;  
To live is to soften dissension and strife;  
To live is to mirror heaven in our life;  
To live is to wield the Spirit's own sword;  
To live is to die with faith in the Lord.

#### Now the Day Is Closing

(H. Hoffman's hymn, translated by N. J. Hong, and harmonized for women's voices by Solveig Dorrum Preus, youngest daughter of I. Dorrum. PLA '02)

Now the day is closing;  
Stilled is every breeze;  
Nature is reposing,  
Rapt in holy peace.

But the brooklet only  
Breaks the deep repose,  
As through woodlands lonely  
On it purls and flows

For no night is bringing  
To its toil surcease,  
And no bell is ringing  
It to rest and peace.

So the hours I number,  
Longing for release,  
Till at last I slumber  
In eternal peace.