Page, Walter Edmond (1919–2015)

SABRINA RILEY

Sabrina Riley was born in Auburn, New York and raised in Dowagiac, Michigan. She received a B.A. in history from Andrews University and an M.A. in information and libraries studies from the University of Michigan. Riley was a member of Andrews University’s library staff from 1998 to 2003, library director and college archivist at Union College from 2003 to 2016, and is presently a freelance researcher, author, and information professional.

Walter Page, longtime Union College professor, was born to John Paul Page and Estella Amelia Brown (1888–1975;
1890–1955) on August 16, 1919, in Sioux City, Iowa. The Pages also had two daughters, Mildred Esther (married Tom Trimble) and Lenora Lucille (married Roble Nickols). Working as a fireman around the time of his son’s birth, John Page drove for a Sioux City taxi company in the late 1920s and later became a dairyman. Estella Page’s mother, Lenora Derrickson Brown, joined the Adventist Church about 1887. When other members of Walter Page’s family joined the church is unknown.

Education and Military Service

Page enrolled at Union College in 1939, where he participated in the Seventh-day Adventist Medical Cadet Corps, achieving the rank of captain. However, his college education was interrupted when he was drafted in 1942 and assigned to the 29th General Hospital. Trained as a laboratory technician at Fort Meade, Maryland, Page was later stationed in the South Pacific.

After the war Page returned to Union College, from which he graduated in May 1948. He earned an MS in physiology from the University of Nebraska at Lincoln in 1951 and a doctorate in zoology from Michigan State University in 1964.

Marriage and Family

On July 11, 1948, Page married a fellow Union College student, Margarette Janette Kemper (1923–2002), in Sioux City, Iowa. Known as Janette, she worked as a proofreader for the Union College Press and later was an assistant at the Union College Library. The Pages had two sons. Gale Jay, born in 1950, owned a concrete construction company for more than thirty years and later became a polygraph examiner. Kent Lee, born in 1952, was an employee of his brother’s construction company and later became a massage therapist.

Career

Walter Page’s teaching career began before he even finished his bachelor’s degree. As a junior college student who was already teaching in the embryology lab, he was also asked to teach the class. Following graduation from Union College in 1948, Page accepted a full-time teaching position at the college and he never worked anywhere else, although he took a leave of absence in 1959–1960 to begin doctoral studies. He was promoted to full professor in 1963 and served as chair of the Biology Department from January 1968 to December 1969.

Throughout his career Page was active in the life of the college and the College View church. For many years he sponsored the student biology club. He also frequently provided lectures for the College View Pathfinder Club. Along with Frank Marsh, Page established the Union College Biological Camp, a summer field biology program held in the Colorado Rockies each summer from 1948 to 1963. In August 1965 Page was a member of Geology Field Study team sponsored by the Geoscience Research Institute, then located at Andrews University, to study significant geological and paleontological sites in the western United States and Canada in the context of the biblical creation and flood.

Later Years

Page taught at Union College for 33 years before retiring in 1981. In retirement he continued to be involved with the college, primarily though his avocational interest in photography and photo processing. He started his own small business for developing black-and-white film, and acquired Union College’s exclusive business. He also continued to assist the college’s Division of Science and Mathematics with labs, field trips, and equipment repair. In 1993 Page and his wife moved to Denver, Colorado, where his sons had settled. He cared for his wife, who developed Parkinson’s disease, until her death in 2002. At the age of 96 he contracted pneumonia, from which he never fully recovered. Walter Page died on June 8, 2015, in Centennial, Colorado.

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5. Walter Edmond Page, “Effects of Pigeon Crop-Milk on Growth Rate of Young Turkeys and Chicks” (MS thesis, University of Nebraska, 1951).?


