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## Article Title: Professor Fred Fling: His Career and Conflicts at Nebraska University

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Article Summary: Fling, a historian who taught at Nebraska University from 1890 to 1934, stressed the social and cultural aspects of history in his teaching and writings. His strenuous objections to the official American policy of neutrality in World War I led him to accuse colleagues of unpatriotic conduct.

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Photographs / Images: Author Robert E Carlson in Professor Fling's study, 1933; Fred M Fling, 1932; Social Science Hall, where Fling taught during the late 1920s

# Professor Fred Fling: His Career and Conflicts at Nebraska University

BY ROBERT E. CARLSON

My first contact with Dr. Fred Morrow Fling occurred in the fall of 1927 when, following the suggestion of a high school teacher, I enrolled in European History 3A at Nebraska University. I quickly found it was not an easy course, but fascination with Fling's lectures more than compensated for extensive outside class study. I found the historical facts presented in outline form, but equally important to him were philosophic and spiritual observations presented by the professor from his own wide cultural knowledge.

My occasional brief discussions with him in his university office brought about a closer acquaintance. One afternoon Dr. and Mrs. Fling came to our apartment to hear a phonographic recording of Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony*. Later they extended to Mrs. Carlson and me a luncheon invitation to their home, where a beautiful table setting fine food was enjoyed with stimulating conversation.

An added opportunity for appraising Professor Fling's interests and lifestyle came during the summer of 1933, when my wife and I were invited to live in the Fling home at 1930 South 22nd Street while Dr. Fling, his wife, and son spent three months in Poland and France on a historical-research mission. Mrs. Carlson, during this interval, cataloged the shelves of books that lined the four walls of a library the professor had built onto the back of his home. She found it a tremendous task. Many of the shelves were "two-deep" with books.

I sometimes met people who expressed fear of Dr. Fling, characterizing him as uncompromising and unapproachable. I never had this experience. To me he always showed kindness and consideration. But there was no doubt about the forceful

personality of Dr. Fling, who became impatient with what did not meet his standards of perfection.

In 1932 Dr. W. G. Langworthy Taylor, a life-long friend and colleague of the professor, wrote a detailed account of Fling's academic career in the *Nebraska Alumnus*.<sup>1</sup> Fling was still teaching at the time of publication, and Dr. Langworthy found it prudent not to reveal Fling's serious problems with the regents and the World War I Nebraska Council of Defense.<sup>2</sup>

Willa Cather, in her novel, *One of Ours*, describes a University of Nebraska history course that was attended by the book's hero in the early 1890s.<sup>3</sup> Of his experience she wrote: "The class was very large, and the professor spoke without notes—he talked rapidly, as if he were addressing his equals. His lectures were condensed like a legal brief, but there was a kind of dry fervor in his voice, and when he occasionally interrupted his exposition with purely personal comment, it seemed valuable and important."<sup>4</sup> The professor she so vividly depicts could easily have been Dr. Fred Morrow Fling, a down-Easter from Maine who was very much a part of the University of Nebraska between 1891 and 1934.<sup>5</sup> The author, who was a class member in the late 1920s, regards Miss Cather's brief paragraph as an accurate description of Fling's method of teaching.

After receiving his doctorate at the University of Leipzig, Germany, in 1890, Fling was hired by Nebraska University Chancellor James Canfield as professor of European history. Born in Portland, Maine, November 4, 1860, he had been granted a BA degree from Bowdoin College, in Maine, in 1883. Financing for his German scholastic work had come from money saved during five years of teaching, history, mathematics, and Greek at the Biddeford (Maine) High School and from editing a daily paper at Old Orchard Beach, Maine, during summers.<sup>6</sup>

Fling was 28 when he arrived at the University of Leipzig. His original intention was to remain a year to earn an MA degree. A Harvard professor convinced him it was important to extend his stay and work for the more prestigious PhD. The famous institution was to give him much more than a doctor's degree—a perspective on history and an interest in other subjects to which he was to devote a lifetime of research and study.

Such knowledge could not be acquired without a thorough understanding of the country's language. Fling spent the summer of 1888 concentrating on attaining a speaking and



*Author Robert E. Carlson, 1933, in NU Professor Fred M. Fling's study, 1530 South 22nd, Lincoln.*



*Fred M. Fling, 1932.*

reading proficiency in German. He later gained a mastery of French and Italian and a reading knowledge of Portuguese, Spanish, Dutch, Russian, and Norwegian.

Friendships with other American students came about easily in Europe. Three students, whom Fling met at Leipzig lectures or socially—J. E. LeRossignol, W. G. Taylor, and H. J. Davenport—were later to become colleagues at Nebraska University. Fling became prominent in the American Club during his stay at Leipzig.<sup>6</sup>

Fling quickly became impressed by the German university's method of proving the authenticity of historical sources. Called the "scientific approach," it was the application of logical reasoning in classifying, localizing and analyzing material used in historical events.<sup>7</sup>

Fling's study for a PhD was under Professor Wilhelm Maurenbrecher, Leipzig's brilliant historian. With France preparing to commemorate the centennial of the Revolution of the 1790s, it seemed appropriate for Fling to choose Honore Mirabeau, one of its principal figures, for a dissertation subject.<sup>8</sup> Fling, who liked dramatic personalities, became fascinated with this colorful revolutionary, to whom he was to devote a life of historical research that brought him recognition as an outstanding scholar. He felt that Mirabeau's attempt to guide the French Revolution into moderate, democratic channels had never been given adequate expression in English. After receiving his doctorate degree he began a project to remedy this historical omission in an ambitious series of works, the first of which was *The Youth of Mirabeau*, published in 1908. In this and in the subsequent three volumes, which remain unpublished, Fling found evidence that Mirabeau differed from other politicians by being an opponent of arbitrary revolutionary government and of worthless kings as well. Mirabeau offered a middle-of-the-road solution to the Revolution's upheaval by advocating a government based upon law.<sup>9</sup>

Through the study of Mirabeau, Fling also came to understand the Revolution that changed the world, thus making him an authority on both. For over 40 years this knowledge was imparted to his classes, while his library of books and source material on Mirabeau was regarded by historians the best private collection in the world.

Research for Fling's life-time study of this era took him to

Paris, London, Madrid, Naples, the Vatican, Venice, Switzerland, Berlin, and the Hague. Periodic trips to Europe were made during summer vacations and on years of sabbatical leave—one trip being 18 months in duration.

His research was not limited to the French Revolution. In addition to his lengthy *Youth of Mirabeau*, other publications came from his pen: *Source Problems of the French Revolution*, *Outline of Historical Method*, *Studies in Greek Civilization*, *A Source Book of Greek History*, and *The Writing of History*. He also wrote numerous articles for American and European publications on historical subjects.<sup>10</sup>

Three volumes on *Mirabeau and the French Revolution* and a monumental *History of Civilization* remain unpublished. Of the *History*, Fling said in a lecture he was attempting to express his concept of a world society based on justice and reason. Twenty years were devoted to the subject, in which publishers had expressed great interest. Unfortunately it was unfinished at the time of his death.<sup>11</sup>

Fling characterized his own work as “unique” due to the stress he placed on the social and cultural aspects of history. Most professionals, he thought, went too heavily into political and military events, such as the periods of the American Revolution and the Civil War, without covering parallel movements. The author was impressed by the importance Fling’s lectures gave to religion, the arts, and the sciences. Such figures as Rembrandt, Beethoven, Dostoyevsky, and Einstein were valued as much as Peter the Great, Napoleon, and Grant. In many ways his concept was similar to the one followed by Will and Ariel Durant a few decades later in their *Story of Civilization*.

Fling constantly termed history in his class lectures as being “unique, complex and ever changing, whose understanding gives historical consciousness.” Without understanding it, he added, we could not build upon the past because we would have no internal resources to use as building blocks. To be relevant it must encompass as much as possible the entire experience of mankind. “Man,” he said, “is forced at all times to rest upon his entire past to bring his weight to bear upon the future.”<sup>12</sup>

As with many other students, I found Professor Fling had a way of making his receptive scholars feel it was the most vital subject they could study. A part of his ability of bringing the past to dramatic life was due to clarifying his subject by being a compelling speaker with a brilliant assertive mind.<sup>13</sup>

In retrospect, I feel Fling's prose, in common with that of many academic people, lacked the lively narrative style that brought popular acceptance. But, while the readers who ventured into perusing his writing did not find the eloquence that went into his lectures, they were not given chaff or sawdust.<sup>14</sup> If the text tended to be dry in style, it was always authoritative and precise in content and backed by a thorough research that gave Fling international recognition among scholars.<sup>15</sup>

The professor was never reluctant to use his zeal for finding and teaching the value of historical truth. His lectures on its importance ranged from those given to his own university classes to such groups as high school, "among whom he worked diligently to introduce the source method of history teaching."<sup>16</sup> In 1907 Fling founded the Nebraska History Teachers Association. He was already a member of the American Historical Association and *La Societe de la Revolution*. He was also one of the 100 electors to the American Hall of Fame.<sup>17</sup>

One unexpected opportunity for prestigious recognition came to Fling through an invitation to talk to the advanced Army Officer School at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. Here his *Outline of Method* was used as a text when he taught future generals how to analyze sources they used for studying Civil War campaigns.<sup>18</sup>

In explaining his method he charged that "few people have the slightest conception of what proof means in history." Their first error, he added, was confounding the affirmation of a single witness as being the truth, whereas a historical fact can only be established by the agreement of several witnesses.

A unique demonstration of how to establish historical truth was made in Fling's European History course, where one hour a week for two semesters was devoted to the writing of a paper based upon a collection of sources dealing with one day of the French Revolution. Since some of the source material was false, the student's problem was to separate the factual from the fraudulent evidence through critical analysis. This involved making a careful investigation of the agreement, character, and reliability of witnesses. It was a difficult course. One participant said it bordered on graduate work and was not for the indolent student.<sup>19</sup>

Bernice Slote says Willa Cather knew Fling and could have used him as the main character in *The Professor's House*. From personal contact I can easily verify Cather's description of Fling

when she writes: "There was no evading the searching eyes that in a flash could pick out a friend or an unusual stranger in a throng. His head was bald, his moustache was neat; designated by purpose or chance to harmonize with his conservative dark striped suit, which he wore with elegance. The white handkerchief that peeped out of his suit pocket gave a touch of old-world elegance. The Doctor could have passed as a Count or very easily for what he was: a scholar by both training and inclination."<sup>20</sup>

Langworthy Taylor, his friend and colleague since Leipzig days essentially duplicated Willa Cather's vivid description. In 1932 when Fling was 72, Taylor wrote: "While no one grows old without showing it, especially in face and muscles, I declare that I can discover no relaxation in the energy of Fred Morrow Fling since the first meeting. His eye is as bright, his voice as positive, his fondness for discussion as acute, and his step as quick."<sup>21</sup>

But men of character, do not always give the same impression to all individuals. Fling was no exception. An insurance executive wrote in a letter: "When a student on the campus in the late 1920's, I thought of the professor as an unapproachable loner whose immaculate dress caused him to look like a successful banker." The writer added: "The only time I saw him excitable was when he gave a tongue lashing to a recently hired English-history instructor for smoking in the Arts and Science Building. The young man listened respectfully but continued smoking."<sup>22</sup>

A student who came to the university specifically to study history under Fling changed to philosophy when he found the professor to be "the perfect autocrat who would not be disputed."<sup>23</sup>

Helen Stauffer wrote in the spring-summer 1981 issue of the *Prairie Schooner* magazine that Mari Sandoz thought Fling was the "henniest," fussiest man imaginable, but "his approach to historical fact was impeccable." Miss Stauffer adds it was under Fling's tutelage that Mari learned how to evaluate facts and set up an elaborate filing system for use in her later writing.<sup>24</sup>

Another student who was to have a long career as a judge in Lancaster County said he avoided Fling's courses from fear of their difficulty. He added that the well-dressed professor always gave the impression of being "engaged in awesome problems."<sup>25</sup> The late Harry Simon, when proprietor of a Lincoln clothing store, took a different view. After taking his history course, he came to regard Fling as being both the most interesting and most

erudite professor on the campus.”<sup>26</sup> Willis Hecht, a well-known Lincoln attorney for many years, perhaps stated it better when he recalled that “no professor on the campus created a greater awareness of his presence than Dr. Fling.” The attorney added: “This was due to a quickly expressed impatience with any form of mediocrity. Colleagues whose abilities failed to meet his scholarship standards became quick targets for criticism. Some, whose feathers the doctor had ruffled, said he regarded those who disagreed with him as being fools.” The attorney, with a laugh, added: “The professor was usually not too far wrong.”<sup>27</sup>

Professor John D. Hicks, who was to establish a national reputation as a Western America historian, wrote before coming to the university faculty in the 1920s that he had been warned of Fling’s inflexibility. “So you’re going out to Nebraska to have your Fling,” quipped one of Hick’s friends when told of his new appointment.

Hicks in his autobiography, *My Life with History*, said: “When the learned professor [Fling] and his wife called on us, our baby daughter occupied the entire time untying his shoestrings, a circumstance that kept the conversation on a pleasantly low level. When we returned the call, however, it was different. The master took me into his library, showed me his books (a truly remarkable collection) then asked me to sit at a table opposite him and began to quiz me. He was a past master at the art—my oral PhD examination at Wisconsin was nothing in comparison. After an hour or more he seemed satisfied, and we rejoined the ladies in the living room. My relations with him from that time on were friendly, if often difficult.”<sup>28</sup>

Naturally a campus personality as conspicuous as Dr. Fling was not without critics, some of them in high places. Professor John Andrew Rice, who came to Nebraska in 1919, reveals in his autobiography, *I Came Out of the Eighteenth Century*, that Fling once came under the scornful eye of Chancellor Samuel Avery.

Avery, who was regarded by Rice as a pussyfoot with a tendency to do stupid, unnecessary things, carried out such projects as synchronizing university clocks and comparing student grade averages. Special attention was given to one of Fling’s 200-student classes that had an average grade of over 95. Fling, who was not without humor, although not a humorous man, snorted to the implied criticism that it was a “pud” course: “That only shows that I am a better teacher than the rest of you,” he said.<sup>29</sup>

Fling was something of a vagabond with his early residential locations. Between 1891 and 1901 the *Lincoln City Directory* lists him as having moved seven times in ten years.<sup>30</sup> The reasons are speculative. One possibility was problems with neighbors—such as noise. I suspect more likely was the need for larger quarters after his July 26, 1893, marriage in Minneapolis to Helene A. Dresser, who was the daughter of a Brunswick, Maine, merchant.<sup>31</sup> Additional space was also required for his rapidly growing library. Permanency did not come until the tenth move in 1914 to 1530 South 22nd Street, where a commodious library was added to the back of the house.

The content of its numerous volumes reflected the wide cultural and philosophic interests of its owner. The books lined from floor to ceiling were arranged by such subjects as religion, philosophy, music, art, and literature, and industrial technology. They varied from Tolstoy and Marcel Proust to Plato and the Greek dramatists. Some were in their original languages. Many had been bound in colored leather by European craftsmen. One volume read by the author in Fling's library in 1933 had been banned from the United States until that year.<sup>32</sup> It was James Joyce's controversial *Ulysses*. The possession of this controversial work gave an indication of both the owner's wide taste and intellectual curiosity.

Everything Fling did was oriented toward gaining additional hours for reading, research, and study. He confided in a lecture that even the time lost in a suit purchase was eliminated by phoning his measurements to his clothier when old suits showed wear. Fling added that he never attended a play or concert—both of which he was very fond—without carrying a book for perusal during intermissions. The same idea was carried out during noon lunch in the university cafeteria, where the author recalls often seeing him reading a book while eating his meal.

Fling's dominant trait was, I think, a curiosity that equaled a cat's. He wished to know about everything going on in the world, and when possible he offered a solution. Sometimes this created problems of his own making.<sup>33</sup>

His great passion while a faculty member was a dedication to the Allied cause in World War I. So intense was his zeal that he got into trouble with university authorities when he strenuously objected in September, 1914, to President Woodrow Wilson's 1914 policy of neutrality. Fling insisted that American citizens

were unpatriotic if they found excuses for the "Hun." A mild rebuke of Fling by the Board of Regents did not end his crusade against pacifists and those who believed that "Germany should be given her day in court."<sup>34</sup>

Another early advocate of war was a Mrs. Minnie England, assistant professor of economics. In an April 12, 1917, letter to a Lincoln newspaper, she wrote that the university "was not a quiet retreat for pacifists, mollycoddles and German sympathizers but a true center for intelligent and active patriotism."<sup>35</sup>

In April, 1917, when the United States entered the war on the side of the Allies, Governor Keith Neville established a Nebraska Council of Defense modeled after the National Council in Washington, DC. One of its functions was to monitor the actions and speech of persons suspected of disloyalty.<sup>36</sup> Accusations against alleged German sympathizers were reported to the 12-member committee by Fling and others. Most charges proved to be false, some maliciously so. On April 19, 1918, the council felt that the evidence it had gained, augmented by letters from informers and bolstered by newspaper accounts, comprised sufficient evidence for requesting University administrators to bring "disloyal professors before the bar of justice."

The Board of Regents acquiesced by scheduling a public hearing in the Law College building. On the opening day attorneys from the State Defense Council accused 12 faculty members of unpatriotic dissidence.<sup>37</sup>

The hearing progressed swiftly with front page newspaper coverage. By the trial's conclusion most of the evidence against the accused had been discredited. But three professors were dismissed: C. E. Persinger, professor of American history; G. W. A. Luckey, professor of education; and Erwin P. Hopt, professor of agronomy. Professor Luckey was dramatically fired in the middle of teaching a class. Later the premature deaths of two professors were loosely attributed to the public humiliation of having to defend their records during the public hearings.<sup>38</sup> The *Nebraska State Journal* (Lincoln) from the first had been critical of the trial. It asked editorially how such a very small number of pro-war professors could become so powerful, when most of the faculty had not spoken.

Two groups were now angry with Fling: The regents felt he had threatened the usefulness of the university as a public institution by spreading "unfounded suspicions against innocent faculty

members." The State Council blamed its failure to gain dismissals of all the professors on Fling's unfulfilled promise to furnish crucial evidence at the hearings and then leaving for Washington.<sup>39</sup> These were harsh words about an internationally known historical scholar whose specialty was in analyzing the reliability of sources.

Fling was more severely scourged in June when the regents informed him that he would be dismissed from the faculty unless he could adequately document his accusations of unpatriotic conduct against staff members and explain his failure to give the Council of Defense promised evidence against the professors.<sup>40</sup>

Acting Chancellor W. G. Haitings was requested by the Board of Regents at their June 18, 1918, session to communicate to Dr. Fling the following resolution:

"It is also disclosed in the investigation that the public and the prosecution have been misled by activities arising from dissension and personal difference among members of the University staff. It appears that the University has been criticized and has suffered in its standing throughout the state by reason of charges arising from such factional differences and by the spreading of unfounded suspicions against the present attitude of members of the staff who are zealously doing their full duty at the present time. The Board cannot hold blameless persons who have contributed to this state of affairs. It is impelled especially in this connection to name Dr. F. M. Fling and Mrs. Minnie T. England as apparently in a considerable degree responsible for these conditions and to conclude that their connection with the University should terminate unless they can adequately explain the circumstances before the Board. An early opportunity to do so will be given them."<sup>41</sup>

From Washington, Fling, apparently in a state of shock over the implication of the charges, replied he was "astonished and mystified." In his June 24, 1918, letter to Acting Chancellor W. G. Hastings he denied having promised concrete evidence to the council but admitted having reported rumors and opinions to it.<sup>42</sup>

In August, Fling was in good graces again when the regents concluded that while he "had not always guarded the University's reputation," it had been done "erroneously" and not "purposely or knowingly." He was thus absolved of intentioned wrongdoing.<sup>43</sup>

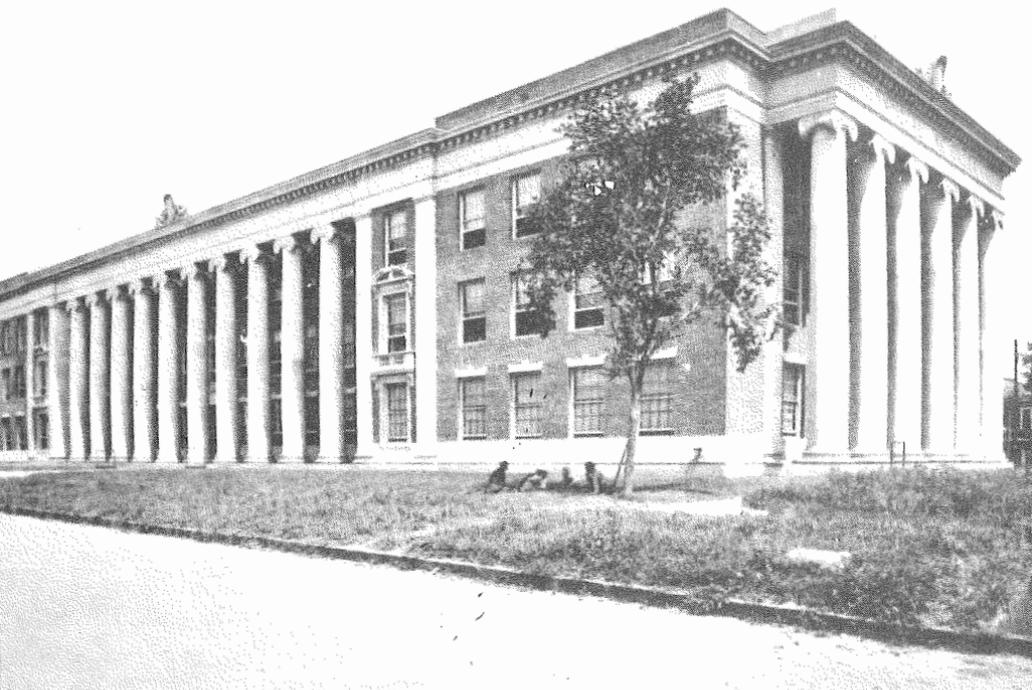
Fling's presence in Washington during the Board of Regents hearings was not for the purposes of evasion but at the request of the War Department. Lectures he had occasionally given at US Army Advanced Officers' School at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, had given him a reputation as a brilliant historical scholar. It was natural that the cultured professor, who had been a strong supporter of the war effort, be given first consideration in March, 1918, when the historical branch of the general staff felt the need for a research historian. The job was to compile source material for writing the official account of World War I.<sup>44</sup>

Fling's delight in accepting the assignment—which included being commissioned a major in the Reserve Corps—was expressed August 27, 1918, in a letter to the University of Nebraska chancellor: "I am enjoying my work at the War College exceedingly. My colleagues, the location of the College on the banks of the Potomac and the task that has fallen to me—the diplomatic history of the War—are all that could be asked."<sup>45</sup>

Major Fling, as chief of his section worked diligently in Washington through the summer of 1918. In December an unexpected dramatic move by the War Department placed him in the center of historical development when it sent him to Paris to gather material on the American Commission to Negotiate Peace.

Rarely had the professor been so pleased. He termed it "an extra-ordinary experience I shall never forget." The *George Washington*, which he boarded at New York for the voyage to Europe, included peace delegation members and President Woodrow Wilson.

In a letter dated April 21, 1919, from Paris to Chancellor Samuel Avery he wrote: "I have had an extraordinary experience, one I shall never forget. I shall take back with me a mass of material for the history of the conference, both in my files and *in my head!* I never realized fully before how impossible it is to get the atmosphere and color of great events from the written or printed records. I have followed the course of the conference in its international setting, reading some twenty odd French, English, Italian and German papers each day, as part of my work. It has been the hardest five months I ever lived through, and I knew what work meant before I came here. Seven days in the week, from six in the morning until midnight, has been the pace and I shall not feel unhappy when it is over."<sup>46</sup>



*During the late 1920s author Carlson attended NU classes taught by Professor Fling in Social Science Hall, 12th and Q, Lincoln.*

By July, 1919, Fling had returned to the War Department in Washington to collect material for the last chapter of his book to be called *An American at the Congress of Paris*. It was a busy time for the 59-year-old professor. In a letter dated July 16, 1919, to Chancellor Avery, he wrote: "In this last chapter I shall deal with the fate of the Treaty in this country. I attended the meeting of the President and newspaper correspondents at the White House, heard Wilson's address to the Senate and am listening each afternoon to the Senate debates."<sup>47</sup>

In his letter to the chancellor, Fling added that he would assume his regular teaching activities at the university in September. It would be after a leave-of-absence of nearly 18 months. He also emphasized his strong feeling for the need of Wilson's League of Nations. He wrote: "The question of whether we shall or shall not form a part of the League is the greatest one this country has ever faced. . . . The future of the world hangs on our decision, as without it the League would be a failure."<sup>48</sup>

Long before Wilson had formulated the idea of establishing an international deliberative body, Professor Fling had espoused the creation of a world state whose laws were based upon justice and equality. That some critics regarded this idea as impractical did not deter him from striving for it. He felt a League of Nations

and the World Court might be the nucleus of such an organization. He added that failure to create them would only lead to another war. In his lectures Fling said the United States, having emerged out of World War I as a major power, should set an example helping to maintain "law and order" in international affairs. There was no hesitation in agitating for military action if necessary to achieve such goals. The author recalls hearing Fling tell in a history class lecture that should a marine lose his life in such police action "it might be the greatest offering he could give his country."

Fling's quick reaction to volatile international crises had been evident in February, 1898. When the Battleship *Maine* was blown up in Havana harbor during the Cuban struggle for independence from Spain and 254 lives were lost, Fling, in a stern address to a university convocation, said the United States "was called upon in the name of humanity to interfere."<sup>49</sup>

Fling's religious views were both simple and unorthodox. During lectures on world religions, the author often heard him stress his personal belief that life after death was a continuation of the manner in which an individual had developed his character, intelligence, and personality on earth. If it had been of a high quality, its eternal continuation would be the same. He said it was his belief that a Socrates, a Mozart, or even an ordinary honest, intelligent man would continue growing in stature in a future life. It was a concept that harmonized with his wide cultural and philosophic interests.

Professor Fling died of pneumonia, aged 74, on June 8, 1934, following an operation. He was survived by his wife, Helene Dresser Fling (who died in 1956), and a son, Wentworth D. Fling.<sup>50</sup>

His legacy to his university, which he served until the time of his death, and to international scholarship came in a variety of forms.<sup>51</sup> One was his writing, to which he devoted years of meticulous study and research. On a pupil-to-professor plane he had trained numerous students, including the author, to make better use of their critical facilities; he also instilled in them a curiosity about both contemporary and past historical events. Many fellow classmates, including Marie Cripe and Harry Simon, long afterward agreed with me that Professor Fling's philosophic and humanistic lectures were the most rewarding of any they remembered at the university. They found that he had given learning an added value and history a new meaning.

## NOTES

1. A major detailed source of Professor Fling's long academic activity entitled "A Life of Historical Research" was published by W. G. Langworthy Taylor in *Nebraska Alumnus*, December, 1932. See pages 4-6.

2. This sensitive and dramatic episode in Fling's personal and professional life in 1917-1918 is narrated in Robert N. Manley's *Centennial History of the University of Nebraska: Volume I, "Frontier University, 1869-1919."* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1969), 213. Fling accused a number of university professors with unpatriotic behavior. Public hearings followed and some professors lost their jobs.

3. Willa Cather, *One of Ours* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1960), 37.

4. *Ibid.*

5. UNL English Professor Bernice Slote, editor of the *Prairie Schooner*, 1963-1980, and internationally known Cather authority, feels that Professor Fling was definitely depicted in the novel. Telephone conversation with Dr. Slote, August 14, 1981.

6. Manley, *Centennial History*, 131-132.

7. Taylor, *Nebraska Alumnus*, December, 1932, 4-6.

8. Fred Morrow Fling, *Mirabeau and the French Revolution: The Youth of Mirabeau* (New York: G. P. Putnam and Sons, 1908), preface.

9. Taylor, *Nebraska Alumnus*, December, 1932, 4-6.

10. *Lincoln State Journal*, June 9, 1934.

11. Taylor, *Nebraska Alumnus*, December, 1932, 6.

12. Marie Hermanek Cripe, lecture notes, Fling Collection, Archives, Nebraska University.

13. Both the author and Marie Hermanek Cripe, a 1926-1927 student of Fling's, share identical viewpoints.

14. The author has a strong personal opinion that Fling's exciting lectures made more of an impression on his students than did his formal writing.

15. *Lincoln Journal*, June 9, 1934.

16. Manley, *Centennial History*, 131, 170.

17. *Lincoln Journal*, June 9, 1934; *National Cyclopedia of American Biography XVIII* (New York: J. T. White & Co., 1940), 204.

18. Taylor, *Nebraska Alumnus*, 4.

19. Marie Hermanek Cripe, lecture notes, Fling Collection, Archives, Nebraska University.

20. The author, who saw Fling both in and out of the classroom, is completely in agreement with Miss Cather's description.

21. Taylor, *Nebraska Alumnus*, December, 1932, 5-6.

22. Letter from the late Edward F. Stepp to author, June 6, 1976.

23. Professor Charles Patterson, retired Nebraska University philosophy professor, telephone interview, October, 1980.

24. Helen Stauffer, "Mari Sandoz and the University," *Prairie Schooner* (Spring-Summer, 1981), 256.

25. Interview with Judge Herbert A. Ronin, Lincoln, October, 1980.

26. Interview with the late Harry Simon, Lincoln, winter, 1980.

27. Interview with Attorney Willis Hecht, Lincoln, February, 1978.

28. John D. Hicks, *My Life with History*, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska

Press, 1968), 132-133; chapter VIII, "My Nine Years at the University of Nebraska," was also published in *Nebraska History* (March, 1965), XLXI, 1-27.

29. John A. Rice, *I Came Out of the Eighteenth Century* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1942), 284.

30. Lincoln City Directories, 1890-1934.

31. *Lincoln Star*, June 9, 1934.

32. Anne L. Haight, *Banned Books* (R. R. Bowker: New York, 1978), p. 66.

33. The author's conclusion is confirmed in Taylor, *Nebraska Alumnus*, December, 1932, which refers to Fling's "youthful curiosity."

34. Manley, *Centennial History*, 213.

35. *Ibid.*, 214.

36. *Ibid.*

37. *Ibid.*, 220.

38. *Ibid.*, 224-225.

39. Letter, Regents to Fling, July 3, 1918, Fling Collection, Archives, Nebraska University.

40. Manley, *Centennial History*, 225.

41. Letter, Acting Chancellor W. G. Hastings to Fling, June 20, 1918, Fling Collection, Archives, Nebraska University.

42. Manley, *Centennial History*, 224.

43. Letter, Regents to Fling, June 24, 1918, Fling Collection, Archives, Nebraska University.

44. Letter, Lieutenant Colonel C. W. Weeks to Fling, March 7, 1918, Fling Collection, Archives, Nebraska University.

45. Letter, Fling to Acting Chancellor W. H. Hastings, August 27, 1918, Fling Collection, Archives, Nebraska University.

46. Letter, Fling to Chancellor Samuel Avery, April 21, 1919, Fling Collection, Archives, Nebraska University.

47. *Ibid.*, July 16, 1919.

48. *Ibid.*

49. Manley, *Centennial History*, 253.

50. *Lincoln Journal*, July 9, 1934.

51. *National Cyclopedia of American Biography*, XXVIII (New York: James T. White and Co., 1940), 203-204.