

The Collected Writings of Warren Cowgill

Edited with an Introduction by
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with contributions by
other former colleagues and students



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Introduction

I. The oeuvre

Exactitude, methodological thoroughness, clarity of thought, complete command of the data, lucidity of style, common sense: these are words and phrases which come most easily to mind when one attempts to characterize the scholarly writings of Warren Cowgill. An Indo-Europeanist *par excellence*, he was one of only a few scholars since the beginning of the discipline who mastered in depth the historical grammars of all the branches of Indo-European—with the possible exception of Albanian—including in many instances the later developments of the 25 or so older languages and closely related dialects which provide the material for Indo-European comparative linguistics.

The breadth of Cowgill's knowledge is immediately apparent from the topics of his articles, which focus upon data from nine of the ten subgroups of Indo-European.¹ Particularly important within his work as a whole are his articles on Celtic, Germanic, and Greek, which together comprise 20 of his 33 published articles included in this collection.² Reading these studies in their totality, one is impressed by their strong Indo-European focus. That is, the immediate problem, whatever it may be, is placed within the widest possible context of comparative Indo-European grammar, and the solution is always explicable starting from what we know about Proto-Indo-European. This characteristic is already present in the first article Cowgill wrote (1957b), in which he showed that putative stems **tisor-* and **k^wetesor-* often reconstructed as feminines for the numerals '3' and '4' (beside masculines **treyes* and **k^wetwores*) in order to account for Old Irish *téoir* and *cethéoir*, Middle Welsh *teir*, *pedeir*, etc. are otiose. Rather, the Celtic forms can be explained starting from the same **tisres* (→ **tesres* after the second vowel of '4') and **k^wetesres* which underlie Skt. *tisrás* and *cátasras*, respectively. Similarly, in a paper which appeared only weeks after his death (1985b), Cowgill showed that Germanic and Celtic forms for '2' thought to presuppose a **duōy* elsewhere reflected only in Skt. *d(u)vāu* can be accounted for easily and with great plausibility on the basis of an uninflected **duyo* which must be reconstructed in any case to account

¹Also unrepresented, aside from Albanian, is the Slavic branch of Balto-Slavic, although significant attention is given to Slavic evidence in both the long and short versions of his article on the endings of thematic verbs (1985c, 2006b). Here as well his premature death has robbed us of at least one paper, on Slavic **imati* 'has' (cf. 1973:291, n. 37), which Cowgill considered to be an old aorist **ima* made into a present in a manner similar to substandard and child-English *gots* (notes from his class on Balto-Slavic linguistics 1971). That this paper had not been produced by 1985 should not necessarily be taken as evidence that it was no longer on Cowgill's agenda. He would sometimes let ideas percolate for many years before publishing them as articles. An example is his discussion of the outcome of **ǵʰ* in Celtic (1980), which had been at least rudimentarily formulated as early as 1959 (cf. Hamp's statement in *Evidence for Laryngeals*, p. 200, n. 1 = *EFL*², p. 224, n. 1) and delivered orally before the Harvard Linguistics Circle in December 1965 (1980:49, n. 1).

²Twenty-one, if one adds his article on Germanic pronouns, published here for the first time. Cf. Part II of this introduction, below.

for Greek *duo*, Gothic *twa*, and (in the form **duo*) the nominative dual pronouns of Germanic (Gothic, OE, OS *wit*, OE, OS *git*, etc.). As a result, evidence for an ending **-ōu* beside **-ō* in forms which are clearly *o*-stems is limited to Indic, where Vedic *-au* (*-āv*) may reflect a special Indic treatment of **-oH* in sandhi originally before vowels; and a similar mechanism (with apocope?) may underlie the otherwise refractory perfects of long-vowel roots (Skt. *paṣṛáu*, *tastháu*, *dad[h]áu*, etc.).

In his work Cowgill provides a coherent view of his conception of the proto-language. Conservative in disposition, he espoused a version of Indo-European in some ways very close to Brugmann's; yet he was independent enough in matters that belong essentially or entirely to the twentieth century to adopt a trilateralist position and to champion Indo-Hittite. He had a clear understanding of the difference between the results of the comparative method and internal reconstruction. Hence his oft-repeated contention that perfect and mediopassive, whatever their more remote origins, are separate morphological and semantic categories as far back into our language family as we are able to reconstruct. This, plus his skepticism regarding Benveniste's root theory and his eschewal of algebraic formulations of the sort often posited by Kuryłowicz, for example, place him within what might be termed the "German School" of Indo-European linguistics.

It was in fact his confidence in the essential correctness of the reconstructed proto-language as presented by Brugmann that led Cowgill to see problems where others did not and therefore to clear the way for either new solutions or a more general acceptance of older proposals. Thus, he rejected the prevailing view that the Old Irish distinction between absolute and conjunct verb forms is based on the Proto-Indo-European distinction between primary and secondary endings (1975a,b; 1983; 1985d). Such an explanation would require massive analogic extension, based on the position of a verb in its clause, of a feature which in Proto-Indo-European was virtually limited to the present system, where it marked tense and to some extent mood, but which would have possessed in Celtic no communicative function. Again, his clear conception of Indo-European grammar allowed him to see that "of the explanations devised for *iddja* and *ēode* in the last ninety years, I know of only one that derives either word from a form there is any reason to believe actually existed" (1960b:483) and to reject Streitberg's view that the Germanic *ō*-presents (weak class II) go back to an original amalgamation of athematic forms in **-ā-* (PGmc. **-ō-*) and thematic forms in **-āye-/-āyo-* (PGmc. **-ōji-/-ōja-*) (1959a). In each of the latter two instances he adopted a solution that 'makes sense' from an Indo-European perspective: "relatively banal" perfect **eoye/eynt* (\rightarrow **eiyn̥t*) and original paradigm in **-āye/o-*. In each case the avatars of these forms can be accounted for through normal sound change and analogy applied to expected pre-Germanic formations.

The tendency to look for solutions to problems within the various Indo-European dialects by starting from formations which we might expect to have existed on comparative grounds is seen time and time again in Cowgill's work. Witness, in addition to the cases just cited, his treatment of supposed Cypriote *duwānoi* and *dōkoi* (really *ēduwan oin nu* and *ēdōk' oin nu* with "completely ordinary" root aorist indicatives, 3rd pers. pl. and sg., respectively, to *dōdōmi* 'give' followed by the equivalent of Homeric *oūn + nu*) (1964); of Latin *stāre* (an old stative present, the equivalent of OCS *stoētī*) (1973) and *vīs* (originally **welsi*, whence **vell* remade as **vells*, **vels* with an

Reminiscences Offered at the Memorial Service for Warren Crawford Cowgill*

I. Insler

Warren Cowgill officially joined the Yale Faculty in 1957, the year in which he received his Ph.D., and remained on staff until his death in June 1985. Apart from two visiting appointments—the first at the University of Illinois in 1961 and the second at the University of London in 1966—he taught at Yale for 27 years, offering instruction in historical linguistics, chiefly in the area of the ancient Indo-European languages, to almost three decades of Yale students.

When Warren first began teaching, linguistics was a program organized in the then Department of Indic and Far Eastern Languages. In 1960, however, an independent Department of Linguistics was formed, and Warren was appointed one of its few full budgetary members. He was here thus at the inception of the Department, and as the Department grew, Warren helped to shape its future and its reputation by his dedication, by his loyalty and by his uncompromising standards in teaching and scholarship. Somehow the Department will never be the same without him.

Students stood in awe of Cowgill, as they listened to his learned lectures on the comparative grammar of Greek and Latin, on the Hittite verb, on Old Irish phonology. But they returned each semester to confront some new aspect of his knowledge, to fathom his new views on some time-worn subject. But most of all, they returned to witness Warren and his dogged determination to come as close as possible to the truth of matters.

Warren's scholarly production is not large, for he was, as he used to speak of himself, "not a man of many words." But his articles, which treat a variety of very different problems in almost all of the ancient Indo-European languages, are models of conciseness, of clarity of presentation and argumentation, and they offer results which have had and will continue to have enduring influence on the approaches to many problems. They are the work of an extraordinary craftsman, in full control of his art and science, and in fitting recognition of his unique contributions to historical linguistics, Warren was elected to membership in the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 1980.

Truth and loyalty were the two principles which motivated all aspects of his life, and these two forces were always at work in him in combination. For Warren was always true to his loyalties and loyal to his truths. He once told me that a great epiphany appeared to him when he realized that it was not immoral for someone to hold the wrong ideas or views about some linguistic problem. I wonder how forgiving he would be today.

*The memorial service was held September 28, 1985 at Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut. The eulogies are presented here in the order in which they were delivered at the service. Insler's contribution has been revised from the original, Nussbaum's has been reconstructed from notes, and Lehrman's eulogy has been rewritten as a reminiscence (pp. xliiff.).

Being wrong may have passed beyond the bounds of morality for him, but for Cowgill the defense against ignorance and foolishness remained an ethical force which pervaded his whole life. For this reason he spent hours tutoring students who wished to learn something beyond the framework of standard courses, hours in advising his dissertation students in how to properly think through a problem, hours in writing letters to colleagues who turned to him for his opinion on a subject in historical linguistics. If he could help someone else to come closer to the truth about anything, Warren was willing to sacrifice all ends. He often said, as a result of this, "Maybe when I retire, I can get around to doing what I want to do." But in all those hours spent, in all those days and months consumed in working for others, Warren really did what really meant the most to him: he set his students and his colleagues on that elusive path towards the truth.

Warren was also fiercely loyal. Loyal to his family and its needs, loyal to his university and his department, loyal to his profession. For more than a dozen years he served as director of graduate studies in the Department of Linguistics and for more than 20 years, he served in various positions in the Linguistic Society of America. He read all the proofs of *Language* for several years, acted on its editorial board for almost two decades, and last served on the Executive Committee of the Linguistic Society. He belonged to several other professional societies both here and abroad. His profession was an inextricable part of his life and it impinged upon it in many ways. He read Thucydides over the breakfast table in place of the *New York Times*. His visit to the ancient ruins of Anatolia was the most exciting event of his life, he said. His discovery of a Latin sound law took place while he was cooking one day. He even dreamed a Greek etymology one night.

But Warren's greatest demonstration of loyalty and his greatest act of courage took place the year he was dying. Despite the fact that he knew that he was gravely sick, he insisted on teaching his spring term courses and he continued to discharge his other academic commitments. He said that the only way for him to continue to live was to continue to work. And so, despite the increasing pain and weakness of his condition, Warren continued to teach his classes, he set and graded examinations for his students, completed his work on the introduction to the volume on phonology for the then new *Indogermanische Grammatik*, and saw his last student through the Ph.D. in May 1985. He did all this without complaint, he did this with dignity, stoically understanding the inevitable outcome of his condition. And when he had fulfilled all his responsibilities, he let go—he relaxed the grip of his will on his life and he faded quickly: from life, but not from our memories.

We shall always remember Warren, who sometimes shook his head in modest disapproval or quietly said, "True, true" in his inevitable way. But most of all we shall always remember him for his gentle warmth, his sturdy dignity, his clearheaded and purposeful intellect, his loyalty to those values he held in the highest esteem.

Stanley Insler,
Edward E. Salisbury Professor
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Cowgill on Cowgill: Autobiographical Letter to the LSA Archives

6 June 1984

Linguistic Society of America
3520 Prospect Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20007

I am responding to Vicki's letter of last November asking for info about myself for the LSA archives. Enclosed is a list of publications. I will try to get around to finding one or more pictures, one of these days. Herewith now an autobiographical essay.

I was born December 19, 1929, in a farmhouse near the town of Grangeville, Idaho. About 20 minutes later along came my twin, George Lewis Cowgill, my only sibling.

My father, George Dewey Cowgill (1898–1975), was a farmer, whose education had ended with a three-year short agricultural course at the University of Idaho in Moscow. He told me once that if he had had a choice, he might have gone into engineering; but his father was a domineering man, my father was the only son, and so he had to stay at home and help run the farm. My mother, Ruby Eugenia Smith Cowgill (1903–1979), was a farm housewife; she had quit school after one year at the University, and worked for several years in office jobs before getting married.

Incidentally, the name Cowgill is pronounced, in my dialect, [ˈkougɪ] or [ˈkougɪl]; the first syllable rimes with *know*, not with *how*.

My education began in a one-room schoolhouse in 1936; there were no kindergartens in that part of Idaho in those days. That year was one of the most unpleasant of my life, and after that first year my parents paid extra to be able to send my brother and me to the school in town, which was only about a mile away from our home.

I had begun learning something about foreign languages before I got out of the 8th grade—I remember trying to impress my second grade teacher by the fact that I knew that *ñ* in Spanish meant a sound like English *ny*.

But I didn't seriously start studying a foreign language until I entered High School (which meant going from the ground floor to the upper floor of the Grangeville School building). At that time (1944) our school taught no foreign languages at all. But I had a lot of spare time, and the school had some Latin textbooks sitting around from a time a few years previously when they *had* offered Latin. So I got permission to borrow one of those Latin texts, and started working through it. I can still remember some of the excitement, and a stage at which I had to stop and think to remember whether *amāmus* was 'we love' or 'you love'. I also began picking up a little French in High School, principally from my mother's old Fraser and Squair; I regret that I have never had a formal course in French, and have never aquired the ability to speak it.

I should not omit that my father's mother, Grace Warren Cowgill (1869–1952), who was born in the Willamette Valley and moved with her family in 1878 to the

Umatilla country, where she lived until her marriage in 1893, knew a little of the Chinook Jargon, including the Lord's Prayer; and of this I remember only the first two words, Nisaika Papa; swæ is sio lar oðfeallen!

I also failed to make use of whatever opportunities I may have had to learn spoken Nez Perce, although the country where I grew up was former Nez Perce land and was full of tales and reminiscences of the Nez Perce War of 1877, and Nez Perce were and are still living only 15 or 20 miles away from Grangeville. But I have never been interested in or felt much competence in spoken language, but have rather always been interested primarily in ancient, dead, exotic languages; better still, reconstructions of prehistoric speech forms of which we have no direct record at all.

My language studies began as a way of getting away from the "real" world; if my mother chided me for not recognizing a friend that she had known for years but who was to me mainly a name, I could get back at her by withdrawing to my book and learning a few more facts about Latin that she had known once when she was in high school, but long since forgotten. And it has continued to the present, that I am essentially a lone wolf in my studies, and can scarcely imagine what it would be like to be part of a research team.

It's probably also of interest that my brother and I had a private language that we used in stories that we would make up, in which each of us assumed the voices of different characters—from the age of maybe 6 on up to our early teens. This language was basically English, distorted to imitate the speech of the Katzenjammer Kids of the Sunday comics. It had a number of written forms, getting more sophisticated as we got older. One version was essentially a rough-and-ready phonemicization of the consonants and vowels of my native dialect, which is to all intents and purposes the same as that described by Carroll Reed in *Language* 37, 1961, 559–564.

In the spring of 1946 I had rheumatic fever, and to help me while away the time during my convalescence my parents gave me a linguaphone course in German; I never worked through it, but at least it did give me some practice in pronunciation, so that I do not feel so embarrassed when I try to speak German as when I try to speak French or some other language.

At Christmas 1946 I was given a copy of *The Loom of Language*, and in March 1947 I got a copy of Mario Pei's *Languages for War and Peace*. It is easy to criticize these books, but for a person like me they were tantalizing rivulets of knowledge in the midst of a great desert. I would assiduously pore over them, memorizing snippets of knowledge, and attempting to assemble paradigms as complete as possible from what was there.

In 1946 our church got a new preacher who had studied some Greek at seminary, and it was a great day for me when his books arrived and he loaned me two Greek textbooks—February 1947, I believe. These were an early edition—ca. 1871—of Goodwin's *Grammar*, one which still gave *-étōsan* as the "normal" form of the 3rd pl. imperative; and James Turney Allen's *First Year of Greek*—probably not an ideal book for Selbstunterricht.

Somewhere I remember reading that Edgar H. Sturtevant used to practice Sanskrit paradigms while milking; I practiced Greek on those occasions, not yet having access to Sanskrit.

I think it was in the summer of 1947, between my junior and senior years, that someone suggested I might formalize my Latin studies by taking Latin by correspondence from the University. Perhaps it was my high school history and English teacher, Grace Jordan, who was easily the most learned and sophisticated person in my environment then. At any rate, I did sign up to take Latin by correspondence, and by the end of the summer of 1948 had finished enough to qualify for the University's second-year Latin course.

Meanwhile I had begun learning several other languages. Russian I began in 1946, I think, with a Teach-Yourself book of the Hugo's Simplified series; I got an Italian grammar in November 1947; and I began inducing what I could of Gothic Grammar from a page or two reproduced in the *Encyclopædia Britannica* (1942 edition), *The Book of a Thousand Tongues*, and maybe another source which I have now forgotten.

Eugene Nida would perhaps be pleased to know that *The Book of a Thousand Tongues* was one of my early sources; I remember especially reading a passage in it in Esperanto, which was also one of my interests then.

If someone should ask when it was that I first knew I wanted to be a linguist, a philologist, I would not be able to answer exactly. Clearly first there was an interest in language and in languages, and only later a realization that that interest was strong enough that if no obstacles arose, I would want to make a career out of it. I recall at the age of 13 having to do a school exercise based on my intended career, and not being able to think of anything I felt more like being than a railroad engineer; not that I particularly wanted to be a railroad engineer, mind you, but that of all the possible occupations that I then knew of, this one somehow struck me as a reasonable combination of what I then thought my talents were and what I then thought my interests were. (I have never become a real railroad buff, but am still very much interested in big old-fashioned machinery, of which I suppose the steam locomotive is about the acme.)

But when I was a senior in High School, I remember being in the Westinghouse Science Talent search, one of the parts of which was writing an essay on some project that I had done myself. I considered writing about some linguistic topic (I forget now what it was), but decided not to, because I was not sure that Linguistics was "Science". (I still am not, at least the kind of linguistics I do.)

Yes—another important influence was Otto Jespersen's *Language*, which I was able to read on visits to Lewiston, Idaho, about 75 miles away from Grangeville. It was from this that I first learned the main outlines of the discovery of Indo-European and the main figures of the 19th century.

I cannot recall now ever seriously debating what college to go to when I got out of high school. My parents could afford to send my brother and me to college, and acted as if they valued a college education and expected us to continue our schooling; and I neither enjoyed farming nor considered myself competent at it, and as far as I could tell my father considered my brother and me about the two least satisfactory workers he had ever had, whom he would be glad to replace with better. So there was no question about whether to go to college; and I don't now recall that there was much question about what college to go to. All our friends were going to the University at Moscow; our classmates who weren't were going to smaller, less academically demanding places, or not going to college at all. I have since come across

some old letters or brochures that indicate that my brother and I were considering the University of Chicago, but I don't think we got as far as actually filling out an application.

My freshman year at the University of Idaho was one of the happiest of my life. It was a pleasure to be away from parental control, a pleasure to have access to a library that had more than one roomful of books, a pleasure to have access to "culture", such things as a concert by Helen Traubel, or getting to see the then-new movie *The Bicycle Thief*.

Here now comes one of the Myths of American Linguistics, which I will try now to dispel. At our recent excom meeting Terry Langendoen told me that he had it on good authority that I was from Iowa, and had once invoked Iowa state law so as to be allowed to take a course in Latin.

The myth that I come from Iowa I trust is already sufficiently dispelled. Iowa (or Ohio, as it is sometimes called) is sufficiently different from Idaho. The factual basis to the other part of the myth is this: when I came to the university, in the fall of 1948, I was the only student in the whole university prepared to take second-year Latin. But the University, being a state university, had a rule that a class could not be given unless there were at least three students. What to do? Here the Latin teacher hit on the following plan: I would enroll for continued correspondence instruction in Latin, which of course could be given on an individual basis. But then, since by a lucky chance I just happened to be within easy traveling distance of Moscow (my dorm room being about two blocks from her office), we would supplement our instruction by correspondence by my coming in to her office weekly. This fiction worked well enough for one year, and I think I learned a lot of good Latin from her; I especially remember with pleasure the second semester, when we were reading the Aeneid. Her name was Mabel Rentfro, she came from Yakima, and had studied at Radcliffe.

I also began formal study of German at Idaho. The library had a Gothic Grammar (by Balg) from which I was able to confirm and correct my previous hypotheses as to the language's grammar, and of course fill out the gaps. There was one Arabic grammar, I recall, in Latin, and I was pleased that I could read enough Latin to follow, although I did not then make much progress in Arabic, and have still not acquired more than a general knowledge of the main points of its grammar. There was also a grammar of Sanskrit, Stenzler's *Elementarbuch*, and I was pleased that my German was by the late spring of 1949 quite adequate for that.

But by then it was also clear to Miss Rentfro that I had no business at a place like Idaho, and she recommended that I go to a place with a real program in Classics. As I recall, I did not seriously consider going East then. She recommended Stanford (I forget whether she also mentioned UC Berkeley); I applied for transfer there, and was accepted, as was also my brother, who was then studying physics.

So in September 1949 my brother and I embarked on a new adventure, farther away from home than we had ever been before, to Stanford. I was not particularly happy there. I made few friends, and felt generally out of sympathy with what seemed to me the prevailing interests of the students of those days, i.e. partying and drinking. Intellectually, however, Stanford was a pleasure. The head of the Classics Department in those days was a man named Raymond Harriman, an enthusiastic cheerful person but fairly superficial; I took a quarter of Sanskrit with him, the sort of class in which

one reads the first four, transliterated, pages of Nala in Lanman's *Reader*. But the person who I soon learned was far and away the best mind in the department was Herman Fränkel, a refugee from Nazi Germany, and I think the most I learned at Stanford was what I learned from him. His attempts to get me to produce some literary insight in a course on Vergil's *Bucolics* especially represent the only time in my life that I have had the sensation of someone trying to stretch my mind, trying to get me to do something that if I would work with all my effort I could just barely do.

At Stanford I continued my Latin and German, began formal courses in Greek and Russian, and also did a term each of Gothic and Old Norse (I think the latter was audited, and perhaps also the former). I remember doing a seminar report in Gothic on Haxie Smith's article about Laryngeals and Germanic *Verschärfung*, and seeing nothing in particular wrong with it; on the contrary, my recollection is that I then thought 'How nice it is that this man has come along and explained everything so nicely.'

I thought some about taking Old Irish, which was taught at Stanford by a man in the English Department named Blenner-Hassett. But apparently I did not impress him as serious enough to justify letting an undergraduate into his course. I was disappointed at the time, but now that I am learning Old Irish for 29 years and not fluent yet, I don't suppose one quarter more would make much difference.

There was no Linguistics program at Stanford in those days. I remember taking a 'Language and Culture' course or the like from an anthropologist named Gerow, who did not impress me greatly. But at least he did assign readings in Sapir and Bloomfield and Bloch. (Whorf I heard about from Fränkel, who found his ideas interesting, and advised me to read them; Robert A. Hall, Jr., I heard about from Harriman, who advised me to leave *Leave Your Language Alone* alone, which I have done.)

Stanford also had no Indo-European program, which is what I would have wanted if it had been available. When I began asking my teachers about where to go to graduate school, Harvard and Yale were the places that were mentioned mostly. At Harvard I was told there was a crotchety old man named Joshua Whatmough, who was intelligent but nasty; my Stanford professor described him as trying to be like Houseman, but failing. Harvard didn't sound like just the place to go, but I applied anyhow. Yale was known then for Bloch, and for the people who had been there; and one of my Stanford teachers had once been an office mate of Ralph Ward, who was then Sturtevant's successor as the linguist of the Classics Department. I applied to both Harvard and Yale, was accepted by Yale but not by Harvard. Well, Harvard was only my back-up school, in case I didn't get accepted by Yale, but I was (as far as I can remember now) disappointed at not getting admitted to Harvard.

So I came to Yale in September 1952, full of ideas about all the languages I wanted to study. I found my first interview with Bernard Bloch rather overwhelming; he said, making conversation, I suppose, that it looked like rain, and I interpreted this as 'You sap; how come you don't have an umbrella and raincoat in weather like this?' I also learned quickly that like it or not I would have to take some linguistic theory courses in addition to the language courses that I really wanted. Linguistic theory in those days was of course pretty simple compared to what it is now, and I found it not too hard to follow Bloch's lectures and even found the subject matter rather interesting. But the person who immediately became my guru at Yale was Paul Tedesco.

I knew then that Franklin Edgerton had just retired, but I think I did not know then that this retirement had finally given Tedesco the opportunity to teach beginning Sanskrit, which he did like the old time Austrian Gymnasium teacher that he was. I will try to resist the temptation to digress from my own autobiography to a biography of Tedesco. Let it be enough to say that he was the most eccentric teacher I have ever had, probably also the narrowest, and the most rigid, but also probably the deepest within his limits.

That first year I began by taking Sanskrit with Tedesco, and when I learned at the department's beginning-of-semester cocktail party that he was also teaching Old Church Slavonic, I got in on that. Later I had more advanced Sanskrit, Middle Indic, and Old Iranian with Tedesco.

In the summer of 1953 a high school friend and I hitchhiked through Europe; we got as far as Ankara (traveling there by train). I wanted to see Boğazköy, but Bittel advised me that it was too difficult to get there by myself and there was no one there to show me around. So I settled for Gordion, where the Americans were then digging.

As soon as I began studying with Ralph Ward, which I think was the fall of 1953, I realized that Yale had made a blunder in hiring him; no originality, not really able to understand the tedious facts that he was trying to pass on to us. But I remember one day in his Greek Dialects course, there was a new issue of the *Journal of Hellenic Studies*, in which a couple of Englishmen, Ventris and Chadwick, had published what they claimed was a decipherment of Mycenaean Linear B texts, and which looked pretty damn plausible.

Meanwhile I was discovering that Bloch did not consider me a total fool, that instead he seemed to think I was a pretty good student. And so my attitude toward him changed, and instead of thinking of him as cold and supercilious, I became aware of him as a person with considerable human warmth, which I think he sometimes did try to encase in a hard outside layer. And I suppose that needing heroes to worship, I made him one of my heroes, and perhaps became relatively insensitive to his faults. It seemed to me at the time that he was doing just about all that could be done in the way of logically analyzing linguistic structure, and I suppose that since then I have not really moved much away from his views when it comes to linguistic structure. My eyes glaze over as soon as someone trots out a linguistic tree diagram or any of a hundred other concepts that are now the subject matter of the most elementary introduction to linguistics courses; my own researches have gone off in other directions.

Of my other teachers at Yale I would mention especially Floyd Lounsbury, Konstantin Reichardt, and Albrecht Goetze. Lounsbury taught a course in problems of comparative linguistics one semester, the followup to a semester on the theory of comparative linguistics with Isidore Dyen. Dyen's course was boring, and concentrated on mechanical details to the exclusion of anything involving real insight or the use of common sense; but I think I have learned some things from him, such things as the term meso-language or the use of simple counting to assess relative complexity of competing hypotheses. But Lounsbury's course was a chance to get some "hands on" experience trying to work out the sound laws of some clearly related languages where the answer wasn't already more or less known, as is the case with Indo-European. Despite Floyd's typical modesty about it, it has been my one real chance to get some supervised practice at this sort of thing.

Reichart and Goetze were also refugees from Germany, but much less quirky than Tedesco; less brilliant and original also, but both very decent philologists; I studied Gothic and Norse with Reichardt, who also introduced me to Old Irish; and Hittite and Akkadian with Goetze. (Sturtevant had died the summer before I came to Yale, having retired some years before.)

I did not have a course with Rulon Wells. I suppose that none of his courses were part of the required curriculum then, and none attracted me more powerfully than the Indo-European courses that were my real love. Louis Renou was at Yale my first year, but I was not advanced enough for the Sanskrit courses that he taught that year. Later, I had several courses with Paul Thieme, but did not learn anywhere near as much from him as from Tedesco.

In the summer of 1954 I attended the Linguistic Institute at the University of Chicago, taking Nahuatl with Norman McQuown, Tocharian with George Lane, and Hieroglyphic Hittite (as it was then known) with Jay Gelb. None were outstanding teachers, but Tocharian was greatly enlivened by the presence of Werner Winter, who often had interesting things to say based on his own research. Eric Hamp was teaching Albanian that summer, and I sometimes sat in on his course; I can't remember now why I stayed with all the courses I had originally signed up for, instead of dropping one and replacing it with Eric's. Michel Lejeune was also there, and I remember even less about why I didn't take his course—I am sure I could have profited immensely from it.

After 3 years of course work I was ready to begin on a dissertation in the summer of 1955, and Tedesco and I settled on a dissertation on preterit formations in Indo-European. I went home to Idaho that summer with a box of books and instructions from Tedesco to get busy reading to lay the groundwork for my dissertation, but instead found myself getting involved in farm work. My Calvinist forebears and upbringing would not let me sit around reading while my father and his hired man were out in the fields working, and by now my feelings about farm work were beginning to get ambivalent: instead of purely hating it, I found I was liking some parts a little, and also not so completely incompetent as I had been ten years before; and of course the knowledge that I would not have to do it all my life added a little romance. So I got very little done on my dissertation that summer.

When I returned to Yale, work on my dissertation went very badly. Tedesco, who had always been so approving in class, was now very critical of the chapter drafts that I turned in, and after each interview with him I would feel too depressed to get much work done for several weeks. And so I did not get the dissertation done in time for a 1956 degree. During the spring of 1956, Konstantin Reichardt asked me one day if I thought I could overcome my dislike of New Haven sufficiently to accept an instructorship at Yale. I was delighted at this turn of events, and readily accepted. So for 1956-57, I was finishing my dissertation and teaching one course (Gothic) with the title of Acting Instructor and a salary of, as I recall, \$5000, which in those days seemed quite adequate. Reichardt also stepped in as co-advisor to my thesis, and with his encouragement and Tedesco's criticism, I was able to get it done in time for a degree in June 1957.

That summer I went off to the Linguistic Institute at Ann Arbor, where I was able to attend courses of Kurylowicz; not a scholar of Tedesco's depth, but certainly one of the best Indo-Europeanists of his day.

I cannot easily remember the dates at which I was promoted from instructor to assistant professor and then associate and full professor at Yale. And they are probably not very important.

In the academic year 1958-59 I was on a Morse Fellowship at Yale, which gave me a year of leave to do some significant research, and tolling around not very successfully with an attempt to see if Hittite has umlaut, when I was invited to the Texas Laryngeal Conference of 1959, organized by Werner Winter and Winfred Lehmann. This was my first chance to take part in a real serious Indo-European Conference. It was a lot of fun, and I think that the report I did on laryngeals in Greek for it is a fairly solid piece of work.

In the summer of 1960 I again attended a Linguistic Institute as a PhD visitor, this time at the University of Texas, sitting in on the courses mainly of Winter and Hamp, also Malkiel.

The following summer I taught as a visitor in the summer session at Michigan (under the aegis of the Classics department, as I recall), and 1961-62 I spent as a visitor at the Classics Department at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Bob Lees was organizing a linguistics program there then, and one of the bright young people in it whom I got to know was Ken Hale.

In 1965 I got tenure at Yale, and felt sufficiently settled to buy a house. That year I got to know my first wife, Sheila Blau Levitsky, as she was known then, who was just getting divorced from her first husband; she was a student in the Yale Linguistics Department. In the summer of 1966 we were married, just before going off to London for a year, where I was visiting professor of Comparative Philology at University College, filling the gap left by Oswald Szemerényi, who had just accepted a call to Freiburg.

I see I have forgotten the Linguistic Institutes of 1962 and 1963, both at the University of Washington in Seattle. The first of these I attended only briefly (I remember once imposing on Margot Hamp to get up from a lively party and drive me to a bus depot); the second I taught at, while Oswald Szemerényi was Collitz professor, I being at least partly responsible for his choice. Szemerényi is indeed an outstanding Indo-Europeanist, but not totally free of weaknesses. During the winter of 1963-64 he learned to drive, and in August 1964 I joined him on an automobile tour of Spain which was one of the maddest months of my life. However we both survived.

I did not find London enjoyable enough to want to stay there rather than return to Yale; and London did not find me exciting enough to try to lure me away from Yale. At London I did get to know Bob Dixon, who was then the junior person in the Linguistics Program at University College; also Anna Morpurgo Davies, who used to come down from Oxford to attend the Mycenaean Seminars.

In June 1967 I returned to Yale, on one of the last trips of the *Queen Mary*. My daughter Karen Deirdre was born October 21 of that year. Her mother and I were separated in June 1969, and divorced in May 1970. Meanwhile I had met my present wife, Kathryn Louise Markus Cowgill, and we were married in October 1970.

About the time I got my PhD, I began helping Bloch by reading proofs for *Language*. He had a team of 4 or 5 who would read everything, and then he would make a master copy by comparing the proofs of all his readers, plus authors. Soon I began helping more by offering opinions on papers submitted on Indo-European topics. After Bill Bright began editing *Language*, I continued doing that for a while, but I grew more dilatory, and perhaps also my standards were too exacting; at any rate, I have not been doing that for some years now.

7.6.84

My main venture outside the narrow world of Indo-European studies was participating in Greenberg's conference on Universals in the spring of 1961. When I was invited to take part in this conference I had considerable misgivings, but decided to give it a try and see how I would like it and how well I would do. However, I did not try to do any serious original work for it, but rather wrote a paper applying to Indo-European a method which Greenberg had already worked out. The Conference itself I found extremely boring, enlivened mainly by the news that Joshua Whatmough was making such a mess of organizing the International Congress of Linguists scheduled for 1962 in Cambridge that he was going to have to be removed from his position and replaced by someone more diplomatic. But as far as I can see, my paper was also of little interest to Greenberg and the other participants, and I am not surprised that he has not asked me to participate in any of his subsequent projects. Meanwhile, I get a little wry amusement from the fact that the paper, which is the lowest quality of any that I have produced, is occasionally quoted as a serious piece of scholarship by linguists who I suspect would find my serious work incomprehensible and of no interest.

The Linguistic Institute of 1972 in Chapel Hill gave me a chance to spend a summer with Calvert Watkins of Harvard. Each of us was teaching a class about his idea of Indo-European, and sitting in on the other's class and offering comments. I am not sure what the students got out of it. I found it a great opportunity to talk about things with a colleague whom I greatly admire and emulate, and yet differ with on numerous details.

I have been spared a number of the problems that others have to deal with. This has made things easier for me in some ways, but perhaps also deprived me of some experiences that might have been useful.

I have never had to worry about money. My parents were prosperous enough to send me to college and graduate school without my ever having to work to earn money or be on a scholarship. (I did have a scholarship to the Linguistic Institute in 1954, for which I am grateful; but if I had not gotten it, I could almost certainly have gotten the money from my parents.) I was offered a job at Yale before I had begun looking for one; and although I was worried enough in 1965 as to whether I would get tenure at Yale that I made some inquiries then about job possibilities elsewhere, I did get tenure, and consequently have not had to worry since about a job. Although my published output had always been modest in bulk (I have still not produced a book), I flatter myself that it has not decreased since I got tenure, and if anything has increased.

I have never been in military service. The only war that I was of an age to have fought in was Korea, but I had an academic deferment at that time, and when I was called for a physical in 1954, had no trouble getting a 4F classification because of a mitral insufficiency resulting from two bouts of rheumatic fever, 1940 and 1946.

I have had very little service on committees. I think this is partly because I do not ask to get put on committees, and partly because the Yale administration does not perceive me as an effective committee member. I am willing to leave it at that. I envy colleagues who get mentioned and quoted, but I suspect that I would in fact not be good at that sort of work, and I enjoy the time that I have to do my own research.

A few other things about me that posterity may find interesting.

I have rather few interests outside my work. I am totally non-athletic, and have almost no interest in watching sports events. As a teenager I hated and feared physical education classes, and was glad to be able to take restricted PE as a result of my heart murmur. It was a great revelation to me on entering college that a gymnasium was a place where one might enjoy being, rather than just a lowgrade torture chamber. As an undergraduate I would go to about one football game a year; years when the **BIG GAME** was held in Berkeley gave me a chance to browse in the Berkeley bookstores, which were considerably better than those in Palo Alto. (Though I did buy my copies of Whitney and Lanman in Palo Alto. Vignette: me reading Whitney in December 1950, on my way home for Christmas vacation, on the train from Lewiston to Grangeville, as it wound its way up out of Lapwai Creek Canyon. This piece of track was later used for a grade C movie called *Breakheart Pass*.)

By the time we graduated from college in 1952, my brother had learned to swim using the sidestroke. During that summer, when we were both working as laborers for the River Basin Survey doing salvage archeology at Jamestown, North Dakota (my first real job), he taught me that great stroke. I have never learned the crawl, but do get some exercise swimming. I get some exercise also walking, and working in my yard.

I enjoy music, but scarcely produce any. As a school boy I participated in the school band. When in the 4th grade it came time to choose an instrument, I was taken by the picture of a mellophone in the instrument dealer's catalog, and said I'd like to try that. The mellophone is a sort of bastardized French horn, with valves like a trumpet, and tuned to E flat. The dealer didn't have a mellophone in stock, so what I got was an E flat upright alto horn, shaped like a baritone, but with the same tubage as a mellophone. I played that through high school and a bit beyond. Our band played mostly march music, Sousa and the like, and it was my job mainly to be doing the *pah* part of the *oom-pah's*. But I could never get my timing right, and was always coming in on the *oom's*.

During the summer our band would play for the rodeos, which was a three-day celebration culminating with the Fourth of July. (It took me some time to realize that the Fourth of July isn't a three-day celebration everywhere in the country.) This gave us a nice opportunity to sit together in the band stand, exchanging smart remarks, and speculating about whether our parents sitting in the grandstand on the other side of the arena could see the beer that we were surreptitiously drinking. But one summer, I think it was 1949, someone quietly took me aside and said, 'Warren, you have a marvelous sense of timing. Most of us can only be in time with one thing at a

time. But you are able to march in one rhythm and play in another, neither of which happens to be the rhythm at which the rest of the band is playing and marching.' So that pretty much put an end to my career as a producer of music. (Much earlier, before I started school, our parents had enrolled my brother and me in violin classes. I hated them fiercely, was delighted when they ended, and only slowly came to be able to perceive the violin as something that might produce enjoyable music.)

I did not much care for the popular music of my youth. It was not as bad as what they have now, but I still did not like it—the whole jazz and swing sort of thing. But I don't recall hearing any serious classical music until I was a teenager. Before that I suppose the music I liked best was what would now be called country and western (what was then known as cowboy and hillbilly songs) and church songs. (I was baptized a Presbyterian at about the age of 12, but slid back around the age of 20.)

Anyhow, once having heard classical music, I came to like it a lot, even with no understanding of its structure. I would say that I like about everything through the 18th century and a lot of the 19th, but as far as I am concerned, good music ends with Mahler, and maybe a little Bartok. (Bernard Bloch reported his father's opinion of Hindemith: *Hin damit!*, and I agree.)

I have found that scholarly meetings are interesting in inverse proportion to their size. The International Congress of Linguists which I attended in 1962 was a colossal bore. LSA meetings are not as much fun now as they used to be when the Society was smaller, and there were no concurrent sessions.

In recent years I have enjoyed the quinquennial *Fachtagungen* of the *Indogermanische Gesellschaft*, of which I have attended three: 1973 in Regensburg, 1978 in Vienna, 1983 in Berlin. Not that the Indo-Europeanists of Europe are all of high quality; but at least some are, and most of the good ones show up at these meetings, and I get a chance to talk and exchange ideas with them. Similar, but even better, because smaller, are the East Coast Indo-European Conferences of which we have had 3 now, starting in 1982, where about 15 specialists get together and report on something they've been doing recently.

The Nez Perce which I neglected in my youth I have made occasional attempts to study out of books, especially since the appearance of Aoki's grammar in 1970. But I have not reached the stage of having things of publishable quality to say about it, and little expectation that I will have time for it before I retire. It is of some interest to me that Asa B. Smith, who did the first serious linguistic work on Nez Perce, was a Yale Divinity School graduate.

In 1983 I succeeded in reaching Boğazköy, and was probably lucky to be there on a holiday when no guards were around, and I could roam about as I pleased. I was not disappointed; on the contrary, Boğazköy is a more impressive sight in reality than it is in photographs, both for the scenery and for the architectural remains. And standing in the ruins of the palace on Büyükkale, I could easily imagine how this was a place that men would perform murder in order to control.

I should add that besides classical music, I still like a great deal of folk and country music, the sort of stuff that is now played on the *Prairie Home Companion*.

Aside from my rheumatic fever, I have generally had good health, and am particularly vain about my teeth. I have relatively few fillings, have never had a tooth pulled, and still have all four wisdom teeth in place.

As a youth I liked to fish—for trout in the mountain lakes and streams of Idaho County; sometimes on day trips, sometimes camping for a few days, with my parents or with peers. I enjoyed it as much for the scenery as the fishing, and indeed did not like fish then (I've realized since that this was because my mother didn't know how to cook trout). But since I left Idaho, I have not felt like trying any other kind of fishing or fishing any other places. I never went deer hunting, but I did learn to shoot a gun. This is about as much as I think is likely to be at all interesting about me now.