

NUGGETS of HISTORY

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ROCKFORD HISTORICAL SOCIETY'S PRESIDENTS:

William H. Barrick, Second President

By Mrs. Harold B. Hyde

William H. Barrick (Bill), the second president of Rockford Historical Society, served in the years 1963-1965. William Barrick was present at the formation of the society, Sunday, March 4, 1962 in Erlander Home Museum. He was named to the committee to draw up the first constitution (since revised) and by-laws. He became the second vice president and the next year was elected president, serving with distinction. At a board meeting in the Barrick home, the structure was laid for many of the committees that are still active.

It was in 1963 that "Nuggets-Old and New", Volume I No. I, November-December, was initiated by W. Ashton Johnson, as a bi-monthly bulletin of the Rockford Historical Society. The name was changed in the January-February 1964 issue, to "Nuggets of History", the name it still retains. By the next issue the size and format were changed to the present dimension and "Ash" Johnson continued to edit and write articles for the publication throughout Bill Barrick's term of office.

Bill Barrick was born in Byron, Illinois, May 10, 1916. He attended the University of Illinois with a major in political science and minors in history and education, earning his A.B. in 1936. His legal education was secured at the University of Illinois Law School (L.L.B. in 1938 and J.D. 1968). In 1944-45 he gained additional education at the University of Michigan Judge Advocate School.

In 1941 Bill married Elizabeth J. Norton, who had graduated with A.B. degree from Rockford College in 1939. The son William Boyd Barrick II, graduated from Dartmouth College in 1968 and is presently (in 1972) at the University of Chicago Divinity School, pursuing a master and doctoral program in Bible history. The daughter, Nancy Elizabeth Barrick, is a student at Knox College, Galesburg, Illinois (Class of 1972) with a major in French and minors in anthropology and archeology. The family church affiliation is with First Presbyterian Church of Rockford.

William H. Barrick has given a full measure of service to his church, just as he has the art of doing in any organization that engages his attention. From 1946 to 1972 he has served as an Elder. He was Moderator, Freeport Presbytery, United Presbyterian Church, U.S.A. 1969-1970, during which time he visited 36 of the 44 churches of the Presbytery on Sunday mornings. He has served (1965 to date) as chairman, 50 Million Fund Campaign for Freeport Presbytery. In 1965 he was Lecturer in Lay-Minister Relations at Theological Seminary, University of Dubuque.

Bill is senior partner, Barrick, Jackson, Switzer & Long, Attorneys at Law, 1938 to present. He was admitted to Illinois Bar 1938, United States Supreme Court 1945, United States Tax Court, 1946, and Florida Bar, 1969.

Some of the other positions held have been: Justice of Peace, Ogle County, Illinois (1937); City Attorney of Rock-



ford (1941); Senior Secretary to Illinois Supreme Court Justice William J. Fulton (1942-1951); Assistant Executive in Office of Judge Advocate General of the Army, Washington D.C. (1945-46) and awarded Legion of Merit; Member of National Panel of Arbitrators, American Arbitration Association (1947-70); and Director and member of Executive Committee, Stillman Valley National Bank (1955-70). In spite of this list of accomplishments, Bill remains a friendly person with whom it is easy to converse or share a joke.

In social service work, Bill Barrick shows himself a dedicated community leader. To list these activities shows the breadth of his interests and abilities. He has been: Founder and President, Action of Washington Park, Inc. (1967-68), (this being a self help urban renewal program in depressed area); Co-Chairman with James W. Ethington, of Committee for Survey of Health, Welfare, and Recreation Services for Winnebago County, Illinois (1968-69); Vice-President, Downtown

Council, Rockford (1966); Vice-President in Charge of Governmental Affairs, Greater Rockford Area Chamber of Commerce (1968); Member, Executive Committee, Rockford Community Action Association, Inc. (1969-70); Vice-President in Charge of Community Relations, Greater Rockford Area Chamber of Commerce (1969-70); Initial Chairman and member, Human Relations Commission, Rockford (1968-69); Vice-President, Council for Community Services, Inc., Rockford, (1970); Attorney and advisor for American Supermarkets, Inc., Rockford (1968-70), this being a Black-owned Supermarket and Shopping Center; and Neighborhood Commissioner, Boy Scouts of America (1939-42).

Barrick was not sure whether readers of Nuggets would be interested in all of his professional memberships. The list is long and we decided to omit a few. Here are some of these groups: American Bar Association, Illinois Bar Association, Chicago Bar Association, Winnebago County Bar Association; Bar Association of the 7th Federal Circuit; and Defense Research Institute.

His participation was a long listing of service, too. Some of these: President, Winnebago County Bar Association (1966-67) and received American Bar Association Award of Merit; Member of Executive Committee, Probate and Trust Law Section, Illinois State Bar Association (1966-68); Lecturer in Appellate Practice, Illinois Bar Association (1948-51); Lecturer in Probate Law, Institute of Continuing Legal Education, Illinois State Bar Association (1970).

In educational activities we find Attorney Barrick deeply involved. To explore his interests, Bill stated, "While preparing for a legal career, also prepared for teaching career at University of Illinois, my mother having taught in elementary and high schools for more than thirty years, and both of her sisters having taught in elementary schools for more than thirty years." Bill has served as: Member of Board of Counsellors, Rockford College (1960-70); Chairman of Deferred Giving Committee, Rockford College (1965-70); Member of Board of Education, District No. 58, Marsh School, Rockford (1956-60); and served as attorney for various school districts in the Rockford area (1950-70).

Social organization memberships include these: Kiwanis Club, Elks Club (Exalted Ruler 1950); Illinois State Historical Society; Masonic Lodge, Consistory and Shrine; Mid-Day Club; Forest Hills Country Club, Rockford; Naples Yacht Club, Naples, Florida.

Bill has also had some successes in publications: Editor, "Synopsis of Illinois Laws"; Rand-McNally Bankers Directory (1947-70); Survey of Health, Welfare and Recreation Services for Winnebago County, Illinois (1968).

In all of this varied activity, Bill has found time to travel. He traveled extensively in Europe in 1929, 1961, 1962, 1966; and in Middle East, Egypt, Jordan, Holy Land, Israel, Greece in 1967; Japan, Hong Kong and environs in 1969, visiting Presbyterian missionaries in that vicinity and 50 Million Fund projects.

Bill has an interesting supply of good stories. He has found good use for them as a teen-age Sunday School teacher. As a speaker he has delivered several sermons in various Presbyterian churches in Illinois. He often finds a bit of humor

helps to get the attention of his listeners.

Rockford Historical Society has been fortunate to have the high quality of leadership provided by its second president, William H. Barrick, Attorney At Law

A PLEA FOR NATHANAEL GREENE PAPERS

The Rhode Island Historical Society, with the support of the National Historical Publications Commission and the co-sponsorship of the Clements Library at the University of Michigan, is engaged in collecting photocopies of all extant papers of the Revolutionary General, Nathanael Greene (1742-1786). The assembling of photocopies of original manuscripts is preliminary to a letterpress edition of selected papers to be published in several volumes during the next five years and an eventual microfilm edition of all manuscript material that will be excluded from the printed volumes.

It would be appreciated if anyone possessing letters to or from Greene or having knowledge of such letters in private hands (or in public repositories whose holdings are not listed in the National Union Catalog) would notify the Rhode Island Historical Society. Please address communications to: Richard K. Showman, Editor, Nathanael Greene Papers, 52 Power Street, Providence, Rhode Island, 02906.

PROCLAMATION OF ANNIVERSARY

By Dr. John A. Howard
President of Rockford College

1972 marks the 125th anniversary of the authorization by the state of Illinois for the establishment of Rockford College.

A group of Congregational and Presbyterian clergy and laymen petitioned the State legislature and received a handwritten charter for the Rockford Female Seminary, stating that it was to provide facilities "sufficiently extensive to afford instruction in the liberal arts and sciences adapted to the highest order of Female Education".

The funds to establish such an institution in a small community were not easy to come by and some of the trustees mortgaged their homes in order to establish this institution and make higher education available to the young women of the region.

Their devotion to this college has been matched by generations of Rockford area citizens who sustained the fledgling college through its first difficult years, and through its transition to a coeducational college and its transfer to a beautiful new 304-acre campus.

The names of many of the families who built the industry and the churches and nurtured the culture of our city are permanently recorded on the new buildings of the college, which also benefitted from their enlightened public spirit---Emerson, Barnes, Talcott, Lathrop, Colman, Burpee, Clark, Fisher, Olson, Johnson, Caster and Nelson.

OUR ROCKFORD COLLEGE

By W. Ashton Johnson

While the charter date of 1847 is considered the founding year of Rockford College, actual classes were not started until the autumn of 1849, when Miss Anna Sill became principal of her "Female Seminary".

The group of liberal church leaders who first broached plans for better educational halls for the young people of the upper Rock River valley met at Cleveland in 1844. Two months later, in August, a second meeting of Congregational and Presbyterian church leaders took place in Beloit. They were making a survey of sites for a men's college and a women's seminary. The Cleveland resolution that prompted the Beloit meeting read as follows: "The exigencies of Wisconsin and northern Illinois require that these sections should unite in establishing a college and a female seminary of the highest order - one in Wisconsin, near to Illinois, and the other in Illinois, near to Wisconsin".

Three subsequent sessions were held in Beloit, for the delegation from the first had favored the state line city ideal for a college. The fourth convention, at which practically all of the churches of the two denominations were represented, were unanimous in choosing Beloit, and reaffirmed the need of a seminary in or near Rockford. On the board of Beloit college trustees were the names of Rev. Aratus Kent, Rockford, and Hon. Wait Talcott of Rockton. The charter was issued by the Badger territory governor on February 2, 1846. Then began a rivalry between Rockton and Rockford for the site of the seminary. When Rockfordites learned of the Beloit decision of October, 1845, a mass meeting was held on Nov. 3rd in the Methodist Church. When it was explained that Beloit had raised \$3,000, local projectors of the seminary plan did likewise. Rockton had been rejected because it "was too close to the location of a men's school".

It was not until February 3, 1847, that a charter was issued by the state of Illinois to Messrs. Aratus Kent, D. Clary, S. Peet, F. Bascom, C. Waterbury, S. D. Stevens, A. L. Chapin, R. M. Pearson, G. W. Wilcox, A. Raymond, C. M. Goodsell, E. H. Potter, L.G. Fisher, Charles Hempstead, Wait Talcott, and Samuel Hinman. These were the same men who formed the first board of trustees of Beloit College.

Due to financial stringency, several of the pledges were uncompleted for more than a year, but a private "seminary" was being launched by Miss Anna Sill. Miss Sill came from the East at the request of several other townspeople early in 1849. She expected to develop her school into what was to be a church-sponsored school for girls. Quarters were provided in the court house for the first sessions of Rockford's own "Female Seminary". For two years the school was operated by these Rockford men with Miss Sill as principal. Rev. L. H. Loss, Jason Marsh, Anson H. Miller, S. M. Church, C. A. Huntington, Bela Shaw, Rev. J. C. Parks, Thomas D. Robertson, Dr. George Haskell, E. H. Potter, and Asa Crosby constituted the trustee's board.

During the spring of 1851, the Beloit college trustees



(who were also trustees named on the 1847 Rockford Seminary Charter) recognized Miss Sill's school and designated the local seminary as "a preparatory department of the original Rockford Female Seminary". Before September arrived, plans for expansion of the present curriculum and launching of a full college course were developed. Fifteen students were admitted as college freshmen, while the entering preparatory students were offered a broader choice of subjects.

Had it not have been for the generosity of three Rockford businessmen, the success of the Seminary might never have been realized. Messrs. Charles H. Spafford, Eleazer H. Potter, and Dr. Lucius Clark are reported to have mortgaged their homes in order to loan money for the Seminary St. campus and the launching of building operations in 1852.

In August of that year, corner-stone laying of the first building was observed on the newly acquired campus. This property, which has now been vacated as the East State street grounds have sprouted new halls of learning, was bounded by Seminary St. and Rock River. When the Chicago & Iowa railroad extended its road through Rockford, the river bank right-of-way was purchased from the seminary.

With construction begun on the campus, \$1,000 was raised by local donors for beautification of the grounds. At this time a provisional board of managers was chosen, separating the administration of Rockford Female Seminary from Beloit College. Miss Sill had been officially named as principal, and the courses open to entering college students were itemized thus: "Mental and Moral Philosophy, Mathematics and Natural Science, History and English Literature, and Ancient Languages (or Classical course)".

In 1854 the western wing of Linden Hall was under construction, as a result of subscriptions pledged by friends of our New England-born residents then residing in the east. Miss Sill launched a letter-writing campaign among her friends in Boston that brought a total of over \$3,000 in donations. The years 1858 and 1866 brought erection of Middle Hall Building and Chapel Hall. Of the 15 entering students of 1851, seven graduated in 1854 and eight followed the 4-year course, finishing a year later. Records show that a total of 82 graduates completed their studies in the first eight years the seminary offered collegiate-level courses.

Anna Sill's energy over a period of 35 active years was a major factor in maintaining the high standard Rockford College has always merited since its early days. When Miss Sill retired to the status of president emeritus in 1884, her seminary had been rated as a Class A college for women throughout the country. Her death occurred in 1889 in her apartment on Campus.

Famous Leaders who followed. Miss Martha Hillard, who

became Mrs. Andrew MacLeish, was president from 1884 until 1888. She resigned on the occasion of her marriage. During her tenure as president, the college assumed a more formal social atmosphere because of Miss Hillard's personal charm and her wide acquaintance throughout the area. The Martha Hillard lectures are an annual series at Rockford College, the result of a memorial fund set up by her son, a distinguished author.

Miss Anna Gelston was the third president and she served the school but two years, resigning because of frail health. From 1890 until June of 1896, Miss Sarah Anderson held the principalship. During her incumbency, changes in the courses of study and the erection of two new study halls made it easier for students to earn degrees of bachelor of arts or science.

When the trustees met in annual session in 1891, members voted to discontinue the seminary courses and streamline the curriculum with regular college courses. Early in 1892 this same board adopted a change of name from Rockford Seminary to Rockford College. During commencement week of 1895 the last certificates were issued to seminary students. From that time on, a graduate earned a bachelor degree from the oldest womens college in the midwest.

Growth at Turn of Century. Miss Phoebe Temperance Sutliff (1896-1901) succeeded Miss Anderson and during her five years in office became famous for her lectures in the class room and her appearances at alumni meetings and fund raising benefits. Records show that the school enjoyed its highest scholastic rating of its history during this period.

Emily Knox Reynolds served as president but a few months of the 1901-02 school year. Illness caused her to leave her post and Rockford, seeking a return to health. She inaugurated a self-government association among the student body, which was retained for several years.

(Continued in next issue)

A BACKWARD LOOK

By Mrs. Harold B. Bye

(Continued from last issue)

These letters have such warmth, it is cheering to look over the shoulder of young Belle to read them. From Paris, May 17, 1885, the father wrote:

"Four beautiful roses hang their heads under the mirror in our Drawing Room. They are beautiful and their fragrance fills the room. The fragrance of the love that found it a joy to paint them for the eyes of those show loved..."

Back in Rockford, November 22, 1885, he wrote:

"How do you get on with your picture? Does it continue to lift itself from the canvas?..."

When the Emerson family lost the son Ralph, there was a letter that gave a glimpse into the deeper reaches of Belle's character. Her father wrote, September 6, 1889:

"You and he were so near the same age, and were so much alike in modes of thought and sympathy that the heart of your father goes out to you, my dear daughter, realizing how much more this loss must be to you than to me."

"And yet, I know you, Belle, I know you have eyes to see what your brain can not comprehend..."

Ralph Emerson had a much greater than usual share in the upbringing of his children. The mother's absences from the home for reasons of health left the responsibility for family morale, social and moral training, as well as care for health on Ralph Emerson's shoulders. Not only did he carry this load with all his business, but he wrote his wife long letters every Sunday morning and frequent notes, giving her such particulars of life in the household as a mother would long for, and including direct quotations of the children's conversation at table...

For fifteen months when the youngest was five, Mrs. Emerson, attended by Harriet, was in California. At sixteen and twelve, Adaline and Mary kept house with the aid of a kitchen girl and took care of the younger children, preferring this to having a housekeeper or governess...

Of Harriett Emerson Hinchliff, Dr. John Gordon of Second Congregational Church, said, "Mrs. Hinchliff lived her entire life in Rockford. She maintained the buoyance of youth through life. She had a wonderful capacity for enthusiasm.. She traveled extensively, read widely and was interested in every good cause. You cannot name a worthwhile organization in our city that did not find in her a loyal supporter. She was interested in Rockford Woman's Club and with the members of her family contributed largely with success. The hospital and Rockford College were constantly on her mind and she gave largely of her means and interest..."

"Mrs. Hinchliff was especially interested in her church. She was the oldest member from the standpoint of membership ...Years ago I came here (said Dr. Gordon) to supply the pulpit not knowing they were looking for a minister. After the service, she took me to the home of her parents and talked to me about assuming the pastorate, and the 33 years of happy life that Mrs. Gordon and I have enjoyed was the result of her interest in us." Dr. Gordon was delivering a tribute to Harriett Emerson Hinchliff, Sunday, October 21, 1945.

Jeremy Ingalls, of Rockford College, whose poetry is treasured by many, wrote of Mary Emerson Lathrop:

"Hers were such fathers and mothers. They cherished skill,
Brought arts and words from out the old world's past
To residence upon this midland plains.
Hers was such foresight and such valiant will
As shores the heritage to hold it fast.
Therewith she serves the great house which gains
For younger hearts old futures to fulfil
Toward present grace which her wise love sustains."

(Continued in next issue)

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