

## NUGGETS of HISTORY

Volume 10

January-February, 1973

Number 1

OUR ROCKFORD COLLEGE  
By W. Ashton Johnson  
(Concluded from last issue)

In the same years, a fellow classmate of Jane Addams was Emmy Carlson Evald, who chose organization of the Lutheran Church missionary movement as her lifework. While a student at Rockford Seminary, Miss Carlson introduced her idea of a foreign missionary society at sessions of the Augustana Synod of the Lutheran Churches in America. In 1892, following her marriage to the Rev. Carl Evald, "Miss Emmy", as she was known, officially launched one adult and two junior missionary societies in the Lutheran synod. By 1917 there were 14,000 members of the missionary groups. At the time of Mrs. Evald's death in 1946, the untiring Rockford College alumna had been honored by several colleges including her own. In 1927 Catherine Waugh McCulloch and Mrs. Evald were recipients of honorary degrees at a special convocation during a Synodical conference here.

Mrs. McCulloch, another 1882 graduate, was the third member of her class to gain national renown in the volume, "Who's Who in American Womanhood". She was the first woman lawyer to be elected justice of the peace. She also was one of the first twenty woman lawyers of her home state and a member of the Chicago legal firm of McCulloch & McCulloch for more than 35 years. Three sons followed their parents in practice of law.

Jennie Ada Walker, B.A., 1902, followed a scientific research career after graduation. Her field has been chemistry and her research has been rewarded by valuable analyses of drugs and cosmetics. Her name is listed in "American 'Men' of Science."

Miss Jessie Binford, who followed the footsteps of Jane Addams in a long service at Hull House, has carried on the

Emerson Hall,  
formerly lo-  
cated at 607  
Seminary St.





JOHN HALL  
SHERRATT  
LIBRARY,  
ROCKFORD,  
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work of her mentor as a resident in the Chicago social service center, and has also served in executive capacity in the Chicago Juvenile Protective association and the Child Welfare society. Her class was 1900.

Dr. Mildred Mitchell, a graduate in the 1902 class, served her country as a lieutenant in the WAVES during World War 2. She held the post of consulting psychologist at the U.S. Naval Hospital, Bethesda, Maryland. An author of several treatises on psychology and a teacher, Miss Mitchell has brought honor and fame to her alma mater.

School Misses Lorena Church. Scores of women in science, history, creative arts, speech re-education and teaching acquired their fundamentals in special fields at Rockford college. One of these, Miss Lorena Church, daughter of the late historian, Charles A. Church, served her college for fifty years in several administrative capacities. As bursar for many years, she was without doubt the best known alumna to three generations of students. That she did not find time to chronicle anecdotes of history on paper is a great loss to alumni and the citizenry of Rockford, her home town. As one veteran department head expressed it - "So many responsibilities were imposed on her that when she retired we did not have a sharp 50-year-memory on which to grasp."

The Howard Background. Although the current head of the college is the youngest to ever lead the distinguished school, his academic achievements have extended from preparatory school graduation in 1939 to 1962.

He is a native of Winnetka, Illinois, a son of Hubert and Edith Sackett Howard. The elder Howard, a Chicagoan, served as a World War I army officer at Camp Grant before divisional assignment elsewhere. His mother, a daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Sackett, is a graduate of Rockford High school and a native of this city.

Following graduation from North Shore Country Day School, Howard attended Princeton University for three years before enlisting in the armed forces in 1942. After service with



Anna Peck Sill,  
president of Rock-  
ford College  
1852-1884

the 745th Tank Battalion, in which he earned battle field commission and command of the unit, he resumed his collegiate study. Northwestern University awarded him a B. S. degree "with distinction" in 1947. A master's degree in counseling followed at the Evanston school (1949). Further study at The University of California (1950), University of Omaha (1951) for a business management course, and Northwestern graduate study of Romance Languages followed. In 1962 he achieved a doctorate at Northwestern.

The president's teaching experience includes; Palos Verdes College (California) instructor, dean of students and finally president, (1951-1955); executive vice chairman of President's Committee on Government Contracts, Washington, D.C., (1956-1957); president Rockford College, 1960. Honors and organization: Military - Silver Star (2), Purple Heart (2), Battlefield Commission, 1944; Member of Kappa Sigma College fraternity; San Pedro (California) Rotary club and Y.M.C.A. board; Young Presidents Organization (1962) Rockford Rotary club (1962).

Dr. Howard and his wife, the former Janette Nobis of Davenport, Iowa, were married in 1951 and have four children: Marie, Steven, Martha and Katherine Louise.

Distinguished Faculty Heads. Dr. Curtiss Moore, dean of Evening School and summer session courses is responsible in a major degree for swelling enrollment to a record point. Department chairmen in the expanded curriculum developed during President Howard's administration are: Dr. Richard Baker, Political Science; Dr. John Bennett, English; Dr. Mary Braginton, Foreign Languages; Dr. Victor Crawford, Chemistry; Mr. Phillip Dedrick, Art; Mr. Knox Fowler, Drama; Dr. J. Reid Patterson, Physics; Dr. Russell Planck, History; Dr. Spaulding Rogers, Psychology; Dr. John Schumaker, Mathematics; Dr. George Stabler, Sociology; Dr. Dorothy Stewart, Biology; Mr. Robert Goss, Music; Dr. Donald Walhout, Philosophy and Religion; Dr. George Wattles, Economics and Business; and Dr. Mary Wollner, Education and Child Development.

#### FOUR STREETS NAMED FOR MEMBERS OF THE WELTY FAMILY

Interview with Mr. Taylor Decker, January 8, 1972  
By Mrs. Harold B. Hyde

Jacob Welty (1781-1857), born in Switzerland, north of Basel, married Barbara Platz (1789-1856), also a native of Switzerland. He came to United States and settled in Perry County, Pennsylvania, in 1817. In 1845 this couple was in Du Page County, Illinois. They moved to a farm, section 36, Cherry Valley Township, Winnebago County, in 1850. Their children were: Daniel born 1817 in Perry County, Pennsylvania; J. J. also born Perry County, Pennsylvania, in 1841 and this son never married; John who died in 1882 in this area; and possibly others. Jacob Welty's farm as shown in an 1871 atlas was the second farm east of Kishwaukee River near the county line. This is the area of Winnebago County where it corners with Boone, Dekalb, and Ogle Counties. The area known as the Flora Settlement embraces the land in these several counties served by the old Flora Church. County lines had not been surveyed and established when people first settled there.

The Ernest family lived down the road from Jacob Welty and the son Daniel (1817-1882) married Dianna Ernest (1825-1881). Their children were: Levi Franklin, William Henry, Samuel Albert, George Washington, Charles De Witte, Jeremiah (1851-1878) who went to California in the Gold Rush and died while a young man, Loretta who never married, Alice who died in infancy, and Emma.

John Welty (1810-1882), the son of Jacob, married Elizabeth Linehard, born in Switzerland, who came to the United States in 1817. Their children were: Calvin (about whom more later); Mary; Elizabeth; Timothy (died aged 10 years); Jefferson who served in the Civil War; Erastus whose tombstone in Rosland Cemetery, Ogle County, states he was deceased at the age of 3 years although Church gave information that he lived to the age of 24 years; Sarah; and Alcetta. This family had a remarkable ancestry in that for three generations it was full blooded Swiss.

Elizabeth Linehard Welty, the mother of Calvin Welty, recalled that she left Switzerland at the age of 10, with her parents in the month of June. They drove with a horse and wagon to Basel. After spending the night there, they crossed the mountains into France, driving 600 miles to Havre de Grace. From that port they booked passage on a sailing vessel to New York. They encountered severe storms and spent many weeks on the ocean. Their supply of provisions was exhausted and they nearly starved. The boat drifted to Theresa Island where they secured bread and stayed three days. They finally arrived in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, the first day of November. Elizabeth Linehard learned dressmaking and tailoring when she was seventeen. As an expert seamstress she earned seventy-five cents a week. She married John Welty in Pennsylvania.

John and Elizabeth Welty drove a wagon to Illinois in 1849. The trip was made in five weeks. They joined Barbara

Platz and Jacob Welty, the parents of John, at Naperville, Illinois. In 1850 both families moved to Cherry Valley Township. John paid two hundred dollars for 197 acres of land. In 1872 John Welty sold his farm and retired to Rockford. He lived in Rockford until his death in 1882 at the age of 72 years.

Calvin Welty (1836-1912) married on October 17, 1867 Trocelia (sometimes called Trovella) M. Dawson. She was born in Belvidere to Robert and Cornelia (DeWitte) Dawson who were natives respectively of Toronto, Canada and Herkimer County, New York. Her Grandparents, Francis & Tomisina (Tait) Dawson, were natives of Yorkshire, England and Willard and Elizabeth (Mosier) De Witte were natives of New York state. None of these grandparents came to Illinois. The parents of Trocelia were married May 2, 1843, and came to Belvidere in 1843. They walked a part of the way and the remainder of the distance rode in the wagons of other emigrants. Mr. Dawson entered 195 acres from the government. In time he improved the land and paid for it. Robert Dawson once drove a Fountain reaper which was put to a test against a John P. Manny reaper, and Mr. Dawson won the test. Mr. Dawson died in an accident, August 2, 1856. His widow died in 1902, aged eighty-two years.

Calvin belonged to Nevius Post 1 G.A.R. and was for a time a school director. April 3, 1912, Calvin died on his farm at the east edge of Rockford.

The children of Calvin and Trocelia were: Grace D. Married Clyde Sedgwick and had no children; Genevieve L. never married; John Robert died in 1911 aged 39 years; and Bert James who married Nettie Osborn. A strange habit of the family was not using the given names in the sequence they used them in signatures. For example, John Robert was known as Robert.

It is fascinating to ride along the streets in east part of Rockford and see the street signs associated with this family. Welty used the family name. Calvin Park Boulevard was named for Calvin Welty. John Robert gave his name to Robert Avenue. Bert James was not called Bert and his name is carried by James Avenue. Apparently streets were not named for the girls of the family.

The Welty farm lay on the east side of Rockford. Bert James Welty resided with his parents on their farm until his marriage. He worked for his mother for a few years before starting his own milk business on North Main. After the death of Calvin Welty, April 3, 1912, his widow, Trocelia Welty, continued to live on the farm. In November 1913, Mrs. Welty caused twenty-one acres of the homestead adjoining the city to be platted as Welty's First Long View Addition.

Bert James Welty was born January 13, 1875, in Ogle County, Illinois, to Calvin and Trocelia. On November 17, 1898, he married Nettie May Osborn. She was born in Winnebago County to Vinal D. and Ellen E. (Folsom) Osborn, natives of this county. Nettie May's grandparents, Daniels and Mary E. (White) Osborn and Silas and Anna (Warner) Folsom were New Englanders. Vinal D. Osborn came to Rockford about 1835 when there were only two log cabins built on the banks of Rock

River. He owned the land on which the village of Winnebago stands and was the first depot agent there. After their marriage Vinal D. and Ellen Osborn settled on a farm. He was agent for Emerson binders in addition to working on his farm. After his death his widow lived in Rockford. Mrs. Nettie Welty was interested in antiques.

The children of Bert James and Nettie Welty were: J. Raymond born 1900; Birdena born 1903 m Raymond Rietz, who is the only living member of that family and is living (1972) in Madison, Wisconsin; Robert D. born 1905, died age 6 years; Dorothy May born 1910; William Henry born 1912; and John Calvin b 1914.

Daniel and Dianna Welty's son Levi Franklin Welty, who had lived in Sycamore, made his home with a daughter for eighteen years after his wife died. The daughter, Olive Welty Benson, was a widow with a five year old child named Lois. Her father gave the young child all of the attention of a father. Olive Benson had a busy life, first being associated with Gilbert Keith Furniture Company. I knew her when she was in charge of the Landstrom Furniture Company's show room. She had responsibility for market pieces and the upholstering. I had met her at Rockford Chapter DAR and we attended the same church. This position with Landstrom had helped to put Lois through college. She still lives in Rockford and told me that "furniture gets into your blood". She loved working with furniture and Landstrom had a beautiful line of furniture. (See Nuggets July-Aug, 1970 Vol VIII No 1 "Of Design and Designers of Furniture"). After Landstrom Furniture Factory was sold she worked in Chicago three years for Baker line of Furniture of Grand Rapids in connection with their showroom, a position that was similar to the Landstrom showroom work. Later she was associated with Guy Williams selling real estate. It was a time when only five or six women were selling real estate. Janet Wattles was one of these early real estate women of Rockford. Olive Benson had membership in the Real Estate Board. She took a broker's license and went into business for herself. She remarried and lived in Denver for three years but Mr. Nims died and she came back to Rockford. Having kept up her broker's license, she was soon engaged in selling real estate again.

Levi Franklin's other daughter, Zulu Eastman, lived in Rockford and had no children.

Daniel Welty's son William Henry's children were: Gertrude and Ida who had a millinery shop in Rockford; Guy; and Albert.

George Washington Welty's children were: Floyd of Esmond, Illinois; Delos, now living at Wesley Willows; Viron; Marjorie of Sycamore; and Franklin. A son of Delos, Everett Welty, still lived in Rockford.

Charles De Witte Welty married Miss Prichard first and had a son and daughter. He married Miss Hammel second and had a daughter Grace last known to be living in Iowa.

Samuel Albert's children were Morris and Merle.

Mrs. Olive Benson Nims attends the annual Daniel Welty Family Reunion. It is held the last Saturday in June. They formerly had officers and about sixty people attended. Now

it is the third generation and only about thirty people attend. The Welty Reunion has been held in Rockford with a dinner at the Pump Handle; once at Wesley Willows; at Sycamore; and at Rochelle. The last meeting (1971) was in DeKalb with dinner in the University dining room. Three Welty brothers living in Esmond courted and married three Kuter sisters living in Hinkley. Samuel Albert Welty married Rose Kuter; George Washington Welty married Sophia Kuter; and Levi Franklin Welty, Olive's father, married Mary A. Kuter. There were daughters of J.K. and Rebecca (Eberley) Kuter. General Lawrence Kuter's grandfather and Olive Welty's grandfather Kuter were brothers. Her Uncle Simon Kuter, who managed a grocery store, was Lawrence Kuter's father. (See Nuggets: May-June 1970 Vol VII No 3 and July-Aug 1970 Vol VII No 4 "Over a Century for Living" for other information on the Kuter family)

Mr. Taylor Decker obtained his information by correspondence and interviews with old settlers. Some of the data varies slightly from that given in Church's History of Winnebago County. Mrs. Olive Nims chatted with me, January 9, 1972, and we discussed the information Mr. Decker had collected.

Editor's Note: The Old Family Committee of the Rockford Historical Society welcomes information about early Rockford and Winnebago County families. Chairmen Are: Mrs. Ruth Lunde and Mrs. Louise Carlin. That committee is currently trying to trace the families whose names appeared in the first Rockford City Directory.

#### TO SERVE THEIR NEED

By Hazel M. Hyde

A. Tryphena Pettis Wilcox, Civil War Army nurse, from Rockford, was born near Rome, in Oneida County, New York, November 30, 1836. Tryphena is also claimed by Winnebago, Illinois, her picture appearing in their Centennial book 1954 as a pioneer. She was a school teacher from 1861 to 1864 in Winnebago County. In that year she responded to an urgent call from Nashville, Tennessee, through Chicago, and being accepted by the United States Government, she began her duties in April, 1864. This handsome young woman was filled with great sympathy for the suffering soldiers and a spirit of self sacrifice to serve their needs as they lay wounded or weakened by disease, particularly small pox.

May 17, 1911, Dr. G. R. Vanhorne, wrote of the army nurse, A. Tryphena Pettis, who became the wife of George W. Wilcox, then residing in Winnebago township. He said, "Miss Pettis was a school teacher and a good one at that. She was much beloved by her entire school...As she continued reading of the sufferings of the soldiers in the hospitals for lack of careful nursing, her patriotic spirit had no rest, and she felt as if she must go and offer her service as a nurse." Tryphena Pettis had experienced smallpox and was assigned

first to a smallpox hospital at Nashville.

Only one other woman beside Tryphena served in the smallpox hospital at Nashville. In 1918, Mrs. W. B. Hough, of Rockford, in an article about Mrs. Wilcox, described the hospital thus, "There were ten wards and twenty soldiers in each ward. She often visited each soldier in the entire hospital, during a half day and did what was possible for them, many of whom were in a dying condition."

The hospital of the Civil War was a place of deplorable sanitary conditions. The importance of antiseptics in preventing infection was not known. Considerable order and cleanliness were achieved under Miss Dorthea Dix, who served as superintendent of women nurses. Beside the Christian Commission, with which Miss Pettis served, there was an organization called the United States Sanitary Commission which set up hospitals for the sick and wounded.

Dorothea Linde Dix, the superintendent of nurses, was "to select and assign women nurses to general and permanent military hospitals, they not to be employed in such hospitals without her sanction and approval, except in case of urgent need." She took care of distribution of supplies as well as her administrative work.

Louisa May Alcott who served as a nurse in the Civil War wrote in her journal for Monday, January 4, 1863:

"Up at six, dress by gaslight, run through my ward and throw up windows, though the men grumble and shiver. But the air is enough to breed a pestilence...Poke up the fire, add blankets, Joke, Coax and command...for a more perfect pestilence box than this house I never saw---cold, damp, dirty, full of vile odors from wounds, kitchens, washrooms and stables. Till noon I trot, trot, trot, giving out rations, cutting up food for helpless 'boys', washing faces, teaching my attendants how beds are made or floors are swept, dressing wounds, dusting tables, sewing bandages...At twelve comes dinner for the patients and afterward there is letter-writing for them or reading aloud..."

Here is an excerpt from a recruiting circular of the period:

"No woman under thirty years need apply to serve in government hospitals. All nurses are required to be very plain-looking women. Their dresses must be brown or black, with no curls or jewelry, and no hoop-skirts."

Approximately six thousand women performed hospital work of one kind or another during the course of the four-year struggle between the states. They saw duty in general and corps hospitals and floating hospitals on the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers.

Six official documents told the story of Tryphena Pettis' army nurse career. The first was acceptance by the U.S. Christian Commission and it set forth her duties. Only six days later she was put in charge of a diet kitchen. And three months later she was accepted as a nurse.

The old document No 1428 dated Chicago, April 12, 1864, bound Tryphena to serve without pay and listed her duties. She agreed to serve not less than six weeks.

The second of the old documents that have been preserved

appointed her manager of a diet kitchen and was dated April 18, 1864. It was signed by George H. Stuart, chairman of U. S. Christian Commission and Annie Wittenmeyer, General Superintendent. Some of the instructions to managers of Special diet kitchens read as follows:

1st. Your work in the kitchen is to assist the surgeon in giving comfort and restoration to languishing men, who are in need of carefully prepared nutritious food.

2nd. The order of the surgeon in charge, is the law of the kitchens, as it is of all other hospital arrangements.

3rd. Under the direction of the surgeon in charge it will be your duty to prepare such articles of diet, and only such, as are ordered or approved by the surgeons in charge of the sick.

4th. You will keep open to the inspection of the surgeon in charge, an account of all the stores received from any source outside the hospital, and at the end of each month, forward a copy of this account to the superintendent.

There are ten such points, the final one reading:

10th. Your work has its foundation in Christian self sacrifice. The only possible sufficient motive for you, is a desire to serve the Master, and do good to the suffering. For this you will be willing to forego, in a large degree, home comforts, and especially that of social intercourse, in order to give yourself, with a single aim, and with all your might, to the work you have undertaken. This was signed by Annie Wittenmyer (spelling varies even in her own handwriting) and dated at Louisville, Ky. this 18th day of April 1864.

Tryphena gives evidence of her earnest purpose and abilities, and by July 1st she was accepted as a "nurse". This we see in the third document:

Office of Western Sanitary Commission  
St. Louis, July 1st, 1864

Miss Thena Pettis having furnished satisfactory evidence of her qualifications for the position of "nurse" in the employment of the Medical Department U.S.A. is approved.

James E. Gestman  
Agent for Miss L. L. Dix.  
Superintendent

Assigned to duty at Hospital 11 General Hospital, Nashville, Tenn, July 1st 1864, upon application of surgeon in charge..

A black book with the title in gold "U.S. Christian Commission" had eighteen pages of printed instructions and 110 pages for writing. Miss Pettis inscribed her name and the date March 14, 1865. She had used the book as an autograph book. It was by no means filled. Names probably were people with whom she worked or soldiers who wanted to be remembered. To quote a few: "Albert L. Norris, M.D., Act. Asst. Surgeon U.S.A., Point of Rocks Hospital, Va., In charge Ward 8 Div 3. P.O. Boston, Mass." Another wrote: "Peace I leave with you. My peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you." and it was signed Eunice Hasdenbrook, Wyandott City, Kansas, May 21, 1865, Point of Rocks, Va.

In this black book was also a longer note: "Point of

Rocks Hospital, Va., April 6, 1865.

"Dear Miss Pettis

"Your labors for the good old army here has been peculiarly trying and perplexing, but with perservance and an energetic desire to do good you have conquered difficulties which many would have shrank from.

"The neatness order and punctuality with which your work has been done is equaled only by the devotion and self denial required to perform it; and it must be a sweet reward to know that your kindness will always be remembered by a grateful soldiery. For myself I must thank you for the kind and enobling influences and assure you I shall always petition a kind Providence for your welfare and happiness.

I am with sincere respect

Your friend

A. B. Maynard U.S.A.

Chief Steward"

Two small envelopes contained letters of appreciation and listed the sums of money taken up by some of her patients as a gift. They said in part: "I must say that there were but very few of the soldiers received their pay or we would have received a larger sum for you..."

The second of the time yellowed envelopes had in beautiful faded penmanship the words "Miss Triphena Pettis. Present." These letters are messages from the past of the thanks the patients wanted to express.

The letters, official papers, medals, silver pin of Christian Commission, clippings, and little black book portray three highly dramatic periods in the life of this energetic army nurse. Devotion to duty as a nurse and supervisor of the diet kitchen filled those days with a drama and purpose she appeared never to have forgotten. Securing her own pension of \$12 a month was separated by some years from her later activities to secure a bill authorizing army nurses to secure a sum equal to the pensions given to widows. The bundles of letters from Lewis F. Lake, Clerk of Circuit Court in Rockford, a letter from John Waling of the National Tribune of Washington, D. C., many of the letters from National Headquarters of the Army Nurses of the Civil War and eleven "Dear Comrade Letters" from Gen. George Loud tell of her spirited fight for her fellow army nurses now old and frail of health. It was a determination to serve their need similar to the zeal that first sent her off to that smallpox hospital of the Civil War, kept her at City Point and Point of Rocks Hospitals, that now motivated her to write countless letters to have an Army Nurses Bill passed which would give them \$25 a month, a sum equal to a widow's pension. The third zestful undertaking was her contributions of energy and skill for soldiers of World War I. As an aged lady of 82 she knitted eight sweaters, four scarfs, three pairs of socks beside working for Belgium relief. She must have envisioned the need of the soldiers from her experiences in the Civil War as she worked later for the Red Cross.

There are preserved, too, the three affidavits in 1896 of Annie Wittenmeyer. These are very similar and were offered to help Tryphena get a nurse's pension under the 1892 act.

She spoke of Miss Pettis' work in the Hospital at Point of Rocks both as a nurse and as heading a diet kitchen.

Mrs. Annie Wittenmeyer was the originator of the Diet Kitchens. She is credited with receiving and distributing \$136,000 worth of goods and sanitary stores for the benefit of wounded and sick soldiers. It was in the winter of 1863-4 that she put the Diet Kitchen plan into effect. She became connected with the Christian Commission and the supervisor of the work. The Christian Commission published a work called "Christ in the Army" from which this quotation is taken: "The sick and wounded suffer greatly from the imperfect cooking of the soldier nurses. To remedy this evil, a number of ladies have offered themselves as delegates of the Christian Commission, and arrangements have been made with the medical authorities to establish Diet Kitchens, where suitable food may be prepared by ladies' hands for our sick soldiers, -- The Government furnishing the staple articles, and the Christian Commission providing the ladies and the delicacies and cordials."

Several congressmen, including Honorable R. R. Hitt, helped Tryphena Pettis Wilcox obtain her pension at twelve dollars a month. She was then living at 902 Montague Street, in Rockford, May 22, 1896.

A long campaign of letter writing was begun by Tryphena around 1917. She saw that many of the army nurses were in want, that their ranks were thinning, and that a pension increase equal to that of a war widow was needed. Among the neat bundles of letters we find one from the Department of The Interior, Bureau of Pensions, Washington, D. C., dated November 22, 1917.

She also corresponded with Emily Alder, Secretary, Association of Army Nurses, hoping to get assistance in pushing the nurses' claims. This persistent woman wrote to other officers in the Association of Army Nurses, including Salome M. Stewart, treasurer.

Rockford's Tryphena Pettis Wilcox cannot claim she waged a single-handed fight, but the determination, fire and spirit of the woman are clearly revealed in the earnest work she did on behalf of the increase in pensions for army nurses. Alice Cary Risley, Jefferson City, Missouri, President of the Association of Army Nurses of the Civil War answered a letter, "My dear Mrs. Wilcox,

...I have been writing and working to have the Nurses placed on equality with the widows as soon as Congress convenes; I have the support of Champ Clark (Speaker), of Gen. Sherwood, chairman of Invalid pensions, two congressmen from Mo. and one from California. I don't think the bill will effect over 150, if that, and they are passing out rapidly. Many are crippled, some blind, and nearly all have passed 75, many are in their 80's.

...I wrote 20 letters yesterday. My hand almost refuses to work..."

A copy of the printed H.R. 6538 and a short letter from Lewis F. Lake, Clerk of Circuit Court, Rockford, Illinois, were addressed Mrs. Wilcox at 1235 South Main Street. The

Bill: 656th Congress, 2n Session R H 6538

In the House of Representatives, December 3, 1917, Mr. Fuller introduced the following bill: which was referred to the Committee on Pensions and ordered to be printed

A Bill

To increase pensions of Army Nurses

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress Assembled, That the rate of pension to be hereafter paid to all Army nurses now drawing pension, or entitled thereto, under existing law, shall be \$25.00 per month: Provided that no pension shall be reduced by this Act.

Another letter:

City, Dec. 18, 1917

"Dear Mrs. Wilcox,

It seems that Judge Fuller is "Johnny on the Spot" as usual. We received this copy of the Pension bill for Army Nurses' at the Grand Army meeting last night. So tho't I would send you a copy.

Wishing you success in the matter, and A Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year,

Sincerely yours,  
Lewis F. Lake"

The Post Commander of Rockford's Nevius Post, Robert Oliver, had sent a letter, also preserved, November 19, 1917, urging the passage of the bill to increase Civil War Nurses pensions. But the end was not yet achieved and the matter was pursued further.

(To be concluded in next issue)



Northeast corner of Longwood and Charles Streets as it appeared in October, 1945. The Ideal Grocery was owned by Mr. and Mrs. Dominick Martinetti. Picture courtesy of Mr. Geno Rinaldi.

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