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AN INTERVIEW ABOUT ONE-ROOM SCHOOLS:

EVELYN ROBINSON ATEN (MRS. RAYMOND) RECOUNTED HER EARLY SCHOOL DAYS to Mrs. Harold S. Hyde (20 November, 1989)

A whole new world opened for Evelyn Robinson, age six, when she entered Dickerman School. The site is now the area of the Rockford Airport, but was then on land that had been owned by the Dickerman family. The building had been erected prior to 1906. There was no well for running water, Mrs. Aten recalls, and pupils were sent with a bucket to a farmhouse for drinking water. Some pupils considered it a privilege to be chosen as water carriers. The teacher did not approve of a common dipper for drinking. Each pupil brought his or her aluminum cup, and Evelyn's mother had carefully scratched her name on her drinking cup that first morning. Each pupil hung his cup on a special nail. There was a nice, new school dress, too. Then there was a pencil box with a pencil that her father had sharpened with his pocket knife.

The stove drew this new scholar's attention. As the winter months came, the teacher had each pupil bring a potato to bake. On top of the stove there was a lid and a kind of grate under it where the potatoes were placed for baking. "So," said Evelyn Robinson Aten with a laugh, "hot lunches for schools started a long time ago."

Looking around the one-room school, anyone would notice the slate blackboards. Individual slates of an earlier day had been replaced by tablets. The teacher pointed out a desk and seat where Evelyn would sit. It was some time later before the first grade pupils began to use the copybooks, one of which now resides in Mrs. Aten's attic.

It was a great mystery, at first, to watch the pupils from two grades come to the front for recitations together for a subject like geography. The teacher had also combined the history classes. This method gave more time for discussing a lesson, as there were fewer recitations. The teacher's desk at the front of the room had a kind of notebook with time notations that she glanced at before calling a group to the front of the room. Whispering was great fun, but it caused the teacher to frown and look straight at you.

Before many weeks had passed a great event called "a box supper" was planned. Parents were busy planning what to put in the box and even what to wear. The pupils had to practice saying what they called "pieces" and some adults called "recitations". The parents were probably raising money for the school. The boxes were auctioned off on the great night, and even first graders were allowed to miss their usual bedtime. There were other events, too, since the schoolhouse served as a community center.

One social event was the Literary Society. Mrs. Aten found a notebook containing minutes of some of the meetings. It appeared that presidents were elected a term of two or three weeks. The programs were listed, too, and it was not all serious. There was a time for the reading of jokes. She also had a record book that contained a picture of her. She had won a prize for growing the tallest castor beans in Winnebago County. Also, this book had a picture of the Dickerman School interior with a mention that during the preceding year they had painted the school room and bought two new desks.

Winter brought the snow, and sometimes it was very deep. Evelyn walked to school with two friends, a girl and her brother. They would walk across the snowy fields and over fences. When the snow was unusu-

ally deep and crusted, they walked over the tops of the fences. Sometimes they would stop and lie down to make "snow angels".

The Robinsons lived on Corlett Road not far from the New Milford train station. The railroad cut through their farm.

Wintertime brought cold weather, and mother helped you into long underwear when you were very young. Then when you were fully dressed, there were leggings with "all those buttons" to keep your legs warm. And it is hard to remember, but you wore overshoes, especially when it was rainy and muddy. They fastened with buckles. Most girls remember, too, the long, black stockings and shoes that had buttons that were fastened with a buttonhook.

At least one teacher, a man, lived in the district. Another year the teacher drove from town with a horse and buggy. Another teacher did not have a horse and buggy, so her boy-friend brought her. Later she married the young man. When eventually there was a child, she honored Evelyn and a girl from a different school by naming her daughter after them, giving one girl's name as the first name and using the other name as a middle name.

It was much later when Evelyn realized they were following a state course of study and that eighth grade pupils were required to take an examination.

She remembered the opening exercises and greatly enjoyed the teacher's practice of reading a chapter a day from a book. For some reason she remembered Southworth's Arithmetic that was used.

Recess was a time for playing games. In winter "Fox and Geese" was popular. "Red Light" was another game, as was "Pom, Pom, Pull Away". We exchanged remarks about the games, but she didn't recall "Needle's Eye," with its rhyme:

"Needle's Eye, that doth supply
The thread that runs so truly.
Many a beau have I let go
Because I wanted you-ly."

This was a favorite for girls in my school. We thought of the most wonderful thing we could think. . . a diamond ring, or a trip to the circus. Then the two leaders raised their arms high, and the other players made a line and went under the arms as they sang the little song. On the word, "you-ly," the arms dropped, catching a player. We asked them, "Which would you rather have?" and named the great, wonderful things. They made a choice and lined up behind the leader who had thought of this wonderful thing. When all were captured, there was a tug-of-war.

After 1912 the Dickeman School became a part of a consolidated school and was located near New Milford.

The one-room school performed a real service to the nation. Many people who received their foundation in the field of learning became leaders in the political world or the business community. The pupils were closer to the life of the area in which they lived, and to a great degree parents were involved in the activities and needs of their neighborhood schools.

At Rockford Museum Center and Midway Village the pupils who wish to enroll can participate for a summer in a one-room school. It is an experience that many parents and their young people think is worthwhile.

(Editor's Note: This interview was submitted in a state-wide contest as one of several entries by Rockford Chapter NSDAR.)

THE CITY'S HEALTH GUARDED

by W. Ashton Johnson

It was almost 140 years ago that Rockford's city fathers enacted an ordinance by which a city health department was inaugurated. For more than thirty years laymen held office as health officers, but in 1888 physicians were appointed to the part-time post. The pay ranged between \$100 and \$450 a year as the town grew into a city and time marched along toward the Twentieth Century.

The first board of health was appointed by the city council in 1854. Dr. Newton Crawford was its chairman or executive officer. T. B. Potter, who succeeded him, was followed in 1856 by his brother, E. H. Potter. Dr. Robert P. Lane, E. C. Roberts, M. T. Upright, A. J. Pennock, A. Halsted (grandfather of Herbert and Wallace Halsted), J. Fisher, R. H. Paddock, Thomas Sully, G. H. Platter, and P. A. Coonradt were the health chairmen during the "lay period", Sully serving three separate terms. These men advocated and secured passage of a sanitary measure (1860); barber shop sanitation (1861); plumbing restrictions (1875); cutting of weeds and grass in streets (1877); city inspection of slaughter houses (1878); sewage disposal and enforcing law on physicians "reporting contagious diseases" (1880).

In 1881, three years before the medical profession took over the direction of public health in Rockford, the city was threatened with several epidemic incidents. Scarlet fever and small pox cases numbered 53 in 1881, with a recurrence the next year that sent 23 patients to bed and three residents to their graves.

These health measures resulted in expenditure of \$593.65 for health work in 1882, an unheard-of sum up to this time. Building of a \$2000 "pest house" on the edge of the city also followed, as well as construction of Rockford General Hospital. Placarding of homes where scarlet fever existed was inaugurated that year.

The years 1884-85 brought about more reorganization of the board of health. This board was clothed with much more authority than at any other previous period. The health officer "could forcibly hospitalize any person found sick in the city with any pestilential or infectious disease." Compulsory vaccination of school children, as prescribed by the State Board of Health, was now mandatory, and keeping of vital statistics was ordered by ordinance.

Medical practitioners who served Rockford from 1885 brought to Rockford the title of "healthiest city in the state". During 1908-09, a serious typhoid epidemic struck down hundreds of our citizenry. Fortunately, few died from the polluted river water that seeped into city mains from inadequate protection in the water power. It was Dr. Crawford's vigilance and foresight that prompted a state survey of water conditions to be made here. Measures instituted at the time caused a furor among industrialists, but the health officer was adamant in his demands, and corrective measures resulted. Since 1910 there has never been a typhoid epidemic or even a mild scare.

With the exception of four years, Dr. N. O. Gunderson, who came here fresh out of medical college from Stoughton, Wisconsin, in 1921, served as health commissioner until his retirement in 1959. He inaugurated the full time position, although he was on part-time pay, a few months after assuming the post as Mayor J. H. Hallstrom's first ratified appointment. In the years that passed, he instituted a bacteriological laboratory; inaugurated dairy, food, and plumbing inspections; and developed a bureau of vital statistics which, until 1917, had been kept by

the county clerk.

From a makeshift desk and chair and a budget of one hundred dollars, Rockford's Health Department increased to a staff of fifteen professional and trained personnel by 1964.

Rockford City Hospital, now Rockford Memorial, was opened to the first patients on October 1, 1885, through the energy of six physicians. These men - Drs. S. A. Austin, F. H. Kimball, D. S. Clark, A. E. Goodwin, Frank E. Hill, Lemuel Tebbits and Thomas G. Vincent - sought and secured incorporation papers from Springfield in 1883. In August of 1885, an offer of a residence and lot 125 by 156 feet on S. Court Street was tendered by Dr. W. H. Fitch. The incorporators took possession on August 1 of that year and two months later opened for business. Previous to 1885 a small frame building on Green Street had been used as a temporary hospital by county medical men.

Miss Martha Jane Smith was named matron when Rockford Hospital opened its doors, and in September of 1887 the first student nurses entered the training school. In late summer of 1889 the two graduates of the nurses training school received diplomas and pins at commencement exercises. The Misses Melaine Caillat and Sophia Carlson were the recipients of No. 1 and No. 2 pins issued by the hospital board.

World War I saw many of the graduates serving in the Army Nurse Corps, two of whom headed nursing units in France. Before World War I the course of study was extended from two to three years. The study of contagious diseases was done at Cook County, Chicago, and later affiliations with Milwaukee Children's Hospital and Jacksonville State Hospital gave experience in these fields of nursing.

In 1952 a fund drive for construction of a 5½ million dollar hospital facility brought fruition of the proposed plan. Two years later, the four-story brick units were ready for occupancy. In 1959 a 150-bed Nurses' Dormitory, built in 1956, was expanded. The hospital association erected the Rockford Medical Office Building to the north of the hospital area in 1958, housing about 35 staff members on four floors.

In December of 1964 the trustee board authorized architects to rush plans for a six million dollar remodeling and expansion project to completion. Letting of contracts for erection of a new four-story East Wing section and extensive remodeling of existing main floor facilities was scheduled for early spring, 1965.

The North Rockton Avenue hospital and medical center then represented an investment of nearly \$20,000,000.

Need for an east side hospital was manifest in the last decade of the 19th century, and the movement was crystallized in 1899. Several physicians and a group of Catholic laymen headed by William Crotty invited Sisters of the Third Order of St. Francis, Peoria, Illinois, to consider Rockford as a hospital site. The delegation of Sisters chose an East State street mansion of 1856 vintage as suitable for a new hospital. Built by Seely Perry and known as "Perry's Castle", the 16-room 3-story residence was purchased for \$12,000 from the Leonard Schmauss estate, and remodeled for hospital purposes. Half of that sum was provided by staff physicians and laymen, while the St. Francis order supplied the remaining \$6,000.

From the opening date in August of 1899 until 1902, St. Anthony operated at near capacity. In May of 1902 construction began on a \$60,000 addition on an adjacent lot. Less than a year later, March 15, 1903, the first modern facility was open for receiving patients in the 38-bed wing. A second addition was added in 1914, which brought the bed capacity to 125. Further expansion made St. Anthony Hospital the largest in the city in the 1940s, when a spacious nurses' dormitory was



St. Anthony Hospital shortly before it was razed in 1967

also built.

In 1959 and 1960 a city-wide canvass for funds resulted in building a five-and-a-half million dollar modern St. Anthony on East State Street east of Alpine Road. Occupancy of the new facility was in the fall of 1962.

Sisters of St. Francis launched a nurses' training school at St. Anthony in 1915, graduating the first class in 1918, during World War I. Several of the graduates enlisted in the Red Cross and the Army Nursing Corps. From 1918 through 1964 about 1,370 graduate nurses earned diplomas at St. Anthony. The great majority passed state board examinations and went into private or institutional duty or public health nursing. In the early '60s, fund-raising for an addition to the hospital was already being planned, and by the end of 1964 a volunteer fund-raising team reported that more than \$150,000 of a goal of one million had been raised. The new facility was scheduled for completion in 1966.

The third modern hospital in Rockford, Swedish-American, in its ultra stylish 10-story facility, was formally dedicated by Prince Bertil of Sweden in March of 1964. In 1916 a group of local industrialists and businessmen of Scandinavian ancestry had purchased three lots on the north side of Charles Street near Second Avenue. Two years later a 75-bed four-story building was ready for admission of patients. In 1927 the first addition to the hospital increased the facilities to a 125-bed unit. Following the Second World War, more than \$800,000 was expended for a second addition.

To keep apace with the growing city, the board of trustees, the Jenny Lind Society, and volunteers raised a fund of over \$5,000,000 for expansion in 1959-1961. The ten-story addition contains a chapel, several laboratories, a coffee shop, and a Jenny Lind Society gift shop, and brought the total capacity to about 330 beds.

Swedish-American Hospital's first board of trustees was headed by Victor M. Johnson, furniture manufacturer and at one time president of Kiwanis International. He was a son of S. A. Johnson, an early Swedish



Swedish American Hospital in the 1950s

businessman in Rockford. Others on that first board were Gust Anderson, A. E. Freburg, Will A. Peterson, W. A. Brolin, Alfred Turnstrom, Nels Swenson, the Rev. J. W. Johnson, and the Rev. August Erickson.

When preliminary plans were drawn for the skyscraper-type addition in 1959, J. Herman Hallstrom, former mayor of Rockford, headed the trustee board. His death occurred before the new structure was under roof, and he was succeeded by Swan Hillman, president of Rockford Screw Products. Through the untiring efforts of the board and President Hillman's generosity in time and financial aid, the addition was finished, and the dedication exercises were broadcast in their entirety on Television Station WREX. From 1924 through 1965, over 900 young women graduated from the Swedish-American Hospital School of Nursing.

Purchase of a tract of land in excess of 100 acres was announced in 1962 by Governor Otto M. Kerner and the Illinois Board of Health and Education as the site of a mental hospital. According to an announcement from Springfield, contracts were let for the multiple unit state institution on North Main Road late in 1964. Excavating and pouring of foundation supports were completed before winter weather halted construction until spring. The schedule of contractors called for completion in 1967. It was estimated that the building costs, furnishings and landscaping would represent an expenditure of over eight million dollars.

The Rockford Visiting Nurses Association was founded in 1910-11 by Mrs. Walter Forbes and William R. Fringer "to care for the sick poor in their homes". The association soon branched out to care for, on a fee basis, anyone ill in their home and recommended by their doctor for nursing care.

The Winnebago County Anti-Tuberculosis Association was founded in 1912 for the purpose of detecting and controlling tuberculosis. It was instrumental, with others, in furthering a building for the treatment and care of tuberculosis patients. The Municipal Sanitarium was

completed in 1916. In 1927 the name was changed to Winnebago County Tuberculosis Association. It derived its support from the sale of Christmas Seals, and for many years Christmas pins were also sold.

The Rockford Association for the Crippled (Easter Seal) was founded in 1948 with Attorney Stanley H. Guyer as its first president. In 1965 the name was changed to the Rockford Handicapped Treatment Center Inc. and its program expanded to include physical, occupational, and speech therapy, and recreational and educational needs of children and adults.

Early in the 1940s a group, which became the Mental Health Clinic, was formed and elected Dr. Charles Parker Connolly as president. Its purpose was to disseminate information to the public on mental health.

In 1949, the organization received money from the State of Illinois to operate a clinic to care for the veterans discharged from area mental hospitals. Richard Boaz was president, and through his energies the outlines of services, which have been developed, were formulated.

The third period, 1958, was marked by the introduction of a research project dealing with the families of the clinic patients. A volunteer workers program also was started from which many occupational interests developed.

(EDITOR'S NOTE: This is another chapter written by W. Ashton "Ash" Johnson, for a book he had intended to publish. "Ash" was the founder and first editor of Nuggets of History.)

ELLSWORTH'S ZOUAVES
from
ROCKFORD, ILLINOIS
Compiled by
Workers of the Writer's Program
of the
Work Projects Administration
(1941)

By the late 1850s Rockford had become not only nationally but internationally minded. It greeted with jubilation the completion of the laying of the Atlantic cable on August 17, 1858. This celebration had barely subsided when another event of historic importance occurred. The second, and by far the most important of the Lincoln-Douglas debates, was held at Freeport, Illinois, on August 27, 1858. Eight coachloads of Rockford residents went to the debate, and others traveled in wagons, on horseback, and afoot. Long after the meeting Illinoisians talked of Lincoln's cleverness in maneuvering Douglas into declaring himself for or against the Dred Scott decision. Douglas' reply, the so-called "Freeport Doctrine", offended proslavery forces in the South and failed to placate antislavery adherents in the North. Consequently, the "Little Giant" two years later was predestined to meet with defeat for the presidency.

Lincoln owed his rapid advance in politics to the debates with Douglas, for although they cost him the Illinois senatorship, they made him president of the United States. His election in 1860 crystallized the slave issue which had been gathering deadly momentum for more than forty years. Long before the flaming passages of Harriet Beecher Stowe's novel, Uncle Tom's Cabin, began to fan the smoldering flames of hatred against slavery into a fearful conflagration, abolitionist societies were being organized throughout the North. Early Rockford



A LINCOLN-DOUGLAS DEBATE

From an old print

The crowd has gathered from all the country round. Each side has its banners and bands. One banner reads "Abe the Giant Killer"; another, "The Little Giant chawing up Old Abe."

newspapers carried notices of the meetings of these groups, and editors published many columns on slavery.

Perhaps it was the militant spirit of the times that was responsible for the formation in 1856 of the Rockford City Grays, a cadet corps that became distinguished as the first in the United States to be trained in the spectacular Zouave System of close order drill introduced to this country by Colonel Elmer Ephraim Ellsworth. The Grays, primarily a social organization, was one of many similar corps that flourished in Illinois in the fifties. When the Civil War broke out, these groups enabled the state to provide the Union with many



Elmer Ephraim Ellsworth



Carrie Spafford



Charles H. Spafford
Carrie's father

well-trained soldiers.

Colonel Ellsworth, a handsome young military leader, was the first commissioned officer to be killed in the war. The dashing young officer was just twenty years old when he came to Rockford in December, 1857, with a group of Illinois militia officers to attend a banquet given by the Grays at the Holland House. In recognition of the knowledge of military drill which he had exhibited while instructor of a gymnasium class in Chicago, Ellsworth had recently been appointed major on the staff of Brigadier General R. K. Swift.

In keeping with cadet corps tradition, the leader of the Grays tendered the command of his company to any of the guest officers at the banquet. The various officers eligible for the honor declined in favor of Ellsworth. The youthful major directed the company to skilfully that he was urged to return to Rockford and train the corps intensively. Thus, during the following summer and autumn, Ellsworth drilled the Grays in the Zouave system. A short time later the popularity of this method of drilling swept the country. Zouave corps were organized in most of the large cities, and Ellsworth became a heroic figure to millions of persons.

During his first summer in Rockford, Ellsworth fell in love with

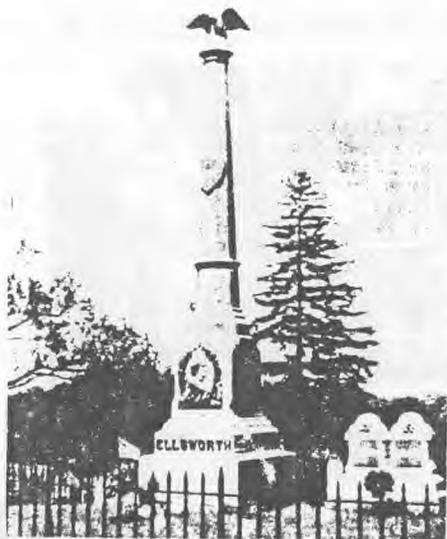


Home of the Charles H. Spafford family
220 South Madison Street

Miss Carrie Spafford. Carrie's father, Charles H. Spafford, Rockford's leading banker at the time, also served at various times as postmaster, circuit clerk, county recorder, and president of the Kenosha-Rockford Railroad Company. Although he approved of Ellsworth's manly character and high ideals, he insisted that the man who married his daughter must be equipped for a more substantial career than the training of cadet corps appeared to offer. Spafford recommended the profession of law. Ellsworth returned to Chicago and attempted to study law, but he was soon lured from his books to organize the spectacular United States Zouaves of Chicago, with whom he toured the nation. At Springfield he attracted the attention of Abraham Lincoln. He became a clerk in the Lincoln and Herndon Law office and a confidant of Lincoln, who afterward said of him: "In size, in years, and in youthful appearance a boy only, his power to command men was surpassingly great. This power, combined with a fine intellect and indomitable energy, and a taste altogether military, constituted in him it seems to me the best natural

talent in that department, I ever knew."

Colonel Ellsworth stumped Illinois for Lincoln and in March, 1861, accompanied the president-elect to Washington, D.C., where he remained as a White House favorite. He was to have been appointed director of a new governmental bureau for the coordination of the states' militias, but war interrupted this plan a few weeks after Lincoln's inauguration. Ellsworth hurried to New York and in a few days recruited his famous regiment of Fire Zouaves, which he took to Washington to help guard the capitol. On May 24, 1861, the Fire Zouaves were ordered to occupy Alexandria, Virginia. Upon arriving at Alexandria, Colonel Ellsworth noticed a Confederate flag flying above the Marshall House. He entered the inn with several of his men, climbed to the roof, and personally removed the flag. As he was returning down the stairway the young commander was shot and killed by the proprietor of the hotel, who in turn was slain by Ellsworth's corporal, Francis E. Brownell.



Ellsworth's Monument at Mechanicsville, New York. (Photo provided by the late Stuart K. Golding.)

Ellsworth's funeral was held in the East Room of the White House with President Lincoln and his family, the cabinet and many other dignitaries in attendance. On June 2, memorial services were held for Ellsworth at Rockford, Chicago, and other cities. To his many Rockford friends, Ellsworth's death was a personal loss and to Carrie Spafford, his betrothed, the tragic end of a happy romance. Her only consolation was the scores of letters she had received from Ellsworth in the preceding four years. These letters, preserved by the Spafford family, are considered the most important data upon the life and brief career of this remarkable young man.

Ellsworth's death shocked the nation and aroused northern youths to a frenzy of bitterness against the Secessionists. Photographs of the colonel bearing the words "Remember Ellsworth" were circulated in great



Brett family plot in Cedar Bluff Cemetery. Carrie Spafford married Frederic E. Brett in 1866. The headstone at the left marks the grave of their son, Charles S. Brett. Next to it is the headstone of Mr. Brett. Carrie's grave has no headstone; only an oak tree.

numbers and are credited with influencing thousands of young men to enlist in the Union Army.

In January, 1861, the Rockford Zouaves were organized under the command of Capt. Garrett L. Nevius. The corps included cadets of the Rockford Grays and members of the Wide-Awake Marching Club, which had been formed in 1860 to support Lincoln's presidential campaign. In less than four months after the formation of the Zouaves, Fort Sumter was bombarded and President Lincoln called for 75,000 volunteers to put down the rebellion. The Rockford Zouaves responded instantly and on April 16, 1861, they were ordered to report at Springfield.

Patriotic fervor burned high at Rockford. Popular subscription totalled about \$1,200 to accouter the Zouaves properly, and the women of the city set up sewing machines in a public hall to manufacture uniforms. When it became necessary to sew on Sunday to complete the garments on time, patriotism overcame religious scruples. On April 24, 1861, to the cheers of thousands gathered at the railway station, the Zouaves entrained for the state capital.

Camp Fuller, one of several temporary rendezvous established by Adjutant-General Fuller, was built north of Rockford in the summer of 1862. The camp site occupied the area now bounded by Guard and North Main Streets, Post Avenue, Auburn Street, and the Rock River. The general headquarters were at the foot of Guard Street and National Avenue. Four regiments - the Seventy-fourth, Ninety-second, Ninety-fifth, and Ninety-sixth - were given brief training at Camp Fuller before leaving for the front. These units comprised volunteers from Lake, McHenry, Boone, Ogle, Carroll, Joe Daviess, and Winnebago counties. The last regiment left Rockford on November 4, 1862. The camp then was closed and the barracks were sold at auction on January 31, 1863. Guard Street and Post, Camp, and National Avenues, named for cantonment thoroughfares, and Ellsworth, Sheridan, Sherman, and Logan Streets, located in the old camp area, are the sole vestiges of Camp Fuller in present-day Rockford, save a many-gabled residence at 1260

North Main Street, said to have been used as a hospital.

Six volunteer companies were organized. The exact number of Rockford men who served in the Union Armies cannot be determined, however, owing to incomplete records. At least 3,187 soldiers, 25 more than the quota, volunteered from Winnebago County. On September 15, 1864, the Board of Supervisors, supporting Lincoln's call for 500,000 more men, offered a bounty of \$300 to volunteers. By October 1 more than 300 men had answered the call in Winnebago County, and conscription was unnecessary. Winnebago County contributed \$434,038, and Rockford raised an additional \$65,964 to defray the local expenses of the war.

On June 1, 1866, a Rockford post of the Grand Army of the Republic was organized in the office of William Lathrop, an attorney. A charter was received four months later. Although the names on the charter are at variance with post records, the first members generally are conceded to have been W. D. E. Andrus, Frank Peats, Evans Blake, J. G. Manlove, Jr., and John F. Squier. The post was named in honor of Garrett L. Nevius, colonel of the Eleventh Illinois and formerly captain of the Rockford Zouaves. The original number of the post was 124, but in 1877 it was officially designated Post No. 1, since all previously organized posts had been abandoned.

For many years the G. A. R. was a potent force in local and national politics. In 1868, when Memorial Day was adopted by the North on the order of Gen. John A. Logan, then commander-in-chief of the G. A. R., the veterans of '61 assumed a new importance that grew with the years. During the active period of the organization Rockford was host to the state encampment four times. In 1894 Col. Thomas G. Lawler, who had served thirty-nine terms as commander of the G. L. Nevius Post No. 1 of Rockford, was elected national commander of the G. A. R.



COL. G. L. NEVIUS.



COL. THOMAS G. LAWLER.

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