The Palimpsest

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THE PURPOSE OF THIS MAGAZINE

THE PALIMPSEST, issued monthly by the State Historical Society of Iowa, is devoted to the dissemination of Iowa History. Supplementing the other publications of this Society, it aims to present the materials of Iowa History in a form that is attractive and a style that is popular in the best sense—to the end that the story of our Commonwealth may be more widely read and cherished.

BENJ. F. SHAMBAUGH

THE MEANING OF PALIMPSEST

In early times a palimpsest was a parchment or other material from which one or more writings had been erased to give room for later records. But the erasures were not always complete; and so it became the fascinating task of scholars not only to translate the later records but also to reconstruct the original writings by deciphering the dim fragments of letters partly erased and partly covered by subsequent texts.

The history of Iowa may be likened to a palimpsest which holds the records of successive generations. To decipher these records of the past, reconstruct them, and tell the stories which they contain is the task of those who write history.

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THE PALIMPSEST

EDITED BY RUTH A. GALLAHER

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Birth and Adolescence

On the first of September, 1859, two young men raced up a hill to the campus of the Bowen Collegiate Institute in Hopkinton, Iowa, eager for the honor of being the first students of the new institution. Little did it matter to them that the baseboards were not on in the classrooms, that there was no stove, and that the mortar boxes remained in the rooms where the plasterers had barely finished their work. Poorly equipped though it was, the building was considered a great accomplishment in that pioneer village of a few score settlers; it had required the efforts of many and real sacrifice from a few.

Among those who were vitally interested in that opening day of the Bowen Institute were Henry A. Carter, Leroy Jackson, and James Kilpatrick. Leroy Jackson, a Kentuckian, had moved to Delaware County in 1840, purchasing a cabin and "all you can see" from the widow of Thomas Nicholson who had died a year previously. This

was the first cabin erected on the present site of Hopkinton.

In 1841, Jackson persuaded Henry Carter to join him in occupying the beautiful ridge overlooking the Maquoketa River. Carter, of sturdy New England stock, was from Massachusetts. James Kilpatrick, the third man in the educational triumvirate, was a Scotchman and a member of the Church of the Covenanters.

It appears to have been Carter who, in the early 1850's, first gave voice to the desire for a college in Hopkinton. An elementary school had been established in 1849 and by 1855 it was housed in the first brick school building in Delaware County. The Presbyterian and Covenanter churches were taking shape; it was time to think about a college.

So, following a call from Carter, the citizens of Hopkinton "met in conformity to a public notice to take into consideration the propriety of establishing a Collegiate Institute at Hopkinton, Delaware County, Iowa." The exact date of this meeting was not recorded, but an adjourned meeting was held on September 6, 1855, and an organization committee was appointed. The following spring a committee was chosen to draft a plan for a building and to contract for one hundred thousand bricks.

Soon after this meeting Chauncey T. Bowen

from Chicago came to visit his brother, Asa C. Bowen, in Hopkinton. Half in jest, he said he would contribute $500 to the new college if he could name it. That amount of money was no joke to the promoters and his offer was promptly accepted. On June 22, 1856, he paid the money and on August 22nd a constitution was adopted naming the future institution "Bowen Collegiate Institute".

The organization was completed in September, 1856, with the election of the first board of trustees. Articles of incorporation, filed on October 3, 1856, authorized the existence of the corporation for twenty years with a capital of $100,000.

Even as the institute was being incorporated and the stock was offered for sale, James Kilpatrick was burning the brick for the building in his kiln south of Hopkinton, and other supplies were being hauled by wagon from Dubuque, some forty miles distant. The walls and roof of the building were constructed in 1857, but this depleted the treasury to such an extent that Jackson, Carter, and Kilpatrick signed a note for $900, which they eventually had to make good.

The skeleton building stood untouched throughout the winter of 1857, for there were no funds in the treasury and little market for the stock. The project was branded a failure by many of the

early enthusiasts, but Carter, Jackson, and Kilpatrick were not wheat planted on stony ground; they refused to wither away or admit defeat. Both Carter and Jackson had established sawmills in 1844 and both had plenty of seasoned lumber. This they donated. Carter, who once had owned much of the town site, still possessed many lots, some of which he traded to workmen for their labor.

The building was a two-story brick structure, 40 x 60 feet in size, with four rooms on the first floor and a chapel, two recitation rooms, and a music room on the second floor. The *Dubuque Weekly Times* for January 13, 1859, had this account of the building: "A large brick edifice is enclosed, and will be finished and ready for use early in the spring. It is located on an eminence, and has a very commanding appearance in this young country. It will cost about ten thousand dollars. It is one of the best buildings of its kind in the interior of the State." Money, however, was still needed and a festival was held some time in the spring of 1859, netting $70 for the purchase of glass and nails. On the Fourth of July, 1859, a ball, which drew "young people from all directions", added $150.

Dr. W. L. Roberts, pastor of the Covenanter Church, was selected as the first president and

about sixty students enrolled for the first classes when the Bowen Collegiate Institute opened on September 1, 1859. The staff included the Reverend Jerome Allen, A. M., late of Dubuque, who taught "Classical Literature and Natural Science", Orman E. Taylor, "Professor of Mathematics", Miss Lucy A. Cooley, the "Preceptress", and Justus C. Houser, who taught German. The *Dubuque Weekly Times* had this comment on the local setting: "Hopkinton is a lovely, healthy and quiet place — just such a sylvan retreat as students would be likely to seek."

As was customary for secondary schools and colleges, the school year was divided into three terms of three months each. During the first term, in the autumn of 1859, a total of sixty-four students enrolled. This was increased to ninety-seven during the winter term. When the weather turned cold the teachers and students joined their resources to provide stoves and fuel. The second term opened on December 12, 1859. About this time Dr. Roberts resigned from the presidency of the infant school and the Reverend Jerome Allen was elected by the trustees to fill the position.

In 1860, the officers of the college, through President Allen, asked the Old School Presbyterian Synod of Iowa to appoint a committee to confer with them concerning the possibility that

the Synod would take the oversight and control of the institution. In 1861, the Synod accepted the offer and expressed its willingness to undertake the supervision of the institution, but it coupled with this acceptance a warning that no financial assistance could be promised.

About this time there was a serious division of opinion among the supporters of the college. Some contended that President Allen was running a sectarian school, backed by the prestige of the Bowen Collegiate Institute. There were also personal charges against President Allen and other points of dispute. The matter came to a crisis in the election of trustees in 1862. When Henry A. Carter, president of the board and a supporter of President Allen, found that he and his followers were outnumbered by those who sought to oust Allen, he and his supporters, along with Leroy Jackson, the treasurer, left the meeting, taking the records with them.

The opposition then went ahead with the election of trustees. They included Jackson and Carter on the list, but they proceeded to hire replacements for President Allen and for Orman E. Taylor. When the new treasurer-elect asked Leroy Jackson for the account books, that hardy frontiersman refused to surrender them, saying he had bought them with his own money and he did

not intend to give them up. Shortly after the disputed election, according to an early record, Carter "brought suit against the college corporation on his liens, to which Jackson, in behalf of that body, confessed judgment, without mentioning the matter to the other trustees, thus placing the ownership of the property in Mr. Carter's hand. This rendered nugatory the result of the election."

Legal action was threatened but the dispute did not reach the courts and the 1862 fall term opened with President Allen and Mr. Taylor at their usual places and by September 12th, a committee was able to report to the Synod that the college had prospered in spite of some enemies, and that the Synod's proposal to supervise the school had been accepted by the stockholders. It was also reported that at the next meeting of the Synod "a deed of the property freed of encumbrance would be offered, provided that body would assume control, and would also constitute Messrs. Carter, Jackson, and Kilpatrick trustees for life." This deed, signed on February 9, 1864, by Henry A. and Mary Carter, transferred the property to the Synod. Later it was agreed that if the college ever ceased to operate, the property would revert to the town of Hopkinton for educational purposes.

As evidence of the expanding interests of the students at the Bowen Collegiate Institute five young men met in the northwest recitation room on October 24, 1862, and signed a document which began, "We, the undersigned, students of Bowen Collegiate Institute, in order to promote friendship and to improve ourselves in literature, do make and ordain the following constitution." Thus was born the Athenian Literary Society.

Four months after the organization of the Athenians, the following statement is found in the minutes: "On motion, S. Calvin was admitted into this society by paying 25 cts. with the understanding that he may hereafter become a full member by paying the remaining 25 cts." The S. Calvin referred to was Dr. Samuel Calvin, later a professor at the Bowen Institute and for many years a professor at the State University of Iowa and one of Iowa's greatest scientists.

Reverend Allen resigned in March, 1862, and the fall term brought a new president to the Bowen Institute, the Reverend James McKean, a young Presbyterian minister.

While Bowen Collegiate Institute was co-educational, there were, it appears, limits beyond which a girl did not go. She was not supposed to participate in the forensic training. During the year 1861-1862 a co-ed named Mary E. Walker

conspired with the boys to join the debating society. She was suspended and all but two of the young men left with her. Later they surrendered and returned, but Mary remained outside the circle of learning.

The Civil War did not leave the school untouched. As early as 1861 the *Dubuque Times* reported that some forty students had gone to war from the Bowen Institute. Finally, in May, 1864, a recruiting officer came to the college chapel and made a stirring appeal for men to join in the "hundred days" enlistment. When he had finished, all but one or two of the men signified their willingness to volunteer and President McKean put his name at the top of the muster roll as their captain. Little did they know that gallant President McKean was destined not to live even the "hundred days" but would fall a victim to fever before drawing his sword. In all, nearly one hundred students of the college served in the Union army and twenty-seven lost their lives.

During the summer of 1864, steps were taken by the trustees to fill the vacancies which resulted from the enlistments. The Reverend James D. Mason, one of the first members of the board of trustees chosen by the Synod, was elected president, his pay to be "receipts from tuition". He was active only until the end of the fall term, al-

though his resignation was not received until October, 1865. In the meantime, the Reverend Jerome Allen again took charge of the administration of the school. The attendance for the year 1864-1865 was exceedingly good, despite the war and the change of administrations. Some 207 students were enrolled during the year. This ranks as one of the largest attendances in the school's history.

In the fall of 1864, the Presbyterian Synod, wishing to recognize a gift of $1,000 from James Lenox of New York, and seemingly disregarding the earlier bargain with Bowen for $500, changed the name of the institution from the Bowen Collegiate Institute to Lenox Collegiate Institute.

When the Civil War ended in April, 1865, the citizens resolved to commemorate those who had given their lives in the struggle and on November 17th, with many soldiers not yet home, Hopkinton and Lenox were ready to dedicate one of the earliest monuments to Civil War heroes. The day of dedication was a grand one for the Lenox Collegiate Institute, Hopkinton, and the community, although touched with the sadness of missing brothers and sons.

The *Dubuque Times* said of the occasion: "The monument is a handsome marble shaft, resting on a very solid foundation of limestone, and

capped by a beautiful 'capital', representing the flag and arms of our country . . . A bountiful dinner was provided in the college building, and great pains taken to welcome and render comfortable the considerable number of persons present from distant towns". Major General William Vandever of Dubuque was the chief speaker. This celebration is the basis for Hopkinton's claim to be the first community to celebrate Memorial Day, which was nationally established in 1868.

In 1865, Reverend Samuel Hodge came to the Lenox Collegiate Institute as professor of languages. He was a man of excellent training and experience both for the ministry and for the classroom. The following year he was elected president of Lenox and began a very successful administration of seventeen years. It was under his guiding hand that Lenox was to grow strong, and find its place of service as a small Christian college.

WILLIAM R. FERGUSON

Golden Years

By 1870 Lenox Collegiate Institute had developed college ambitions but it was not until 1873 that the charter was amended to provide for college work "the grade of which is to be at least high enough to prepare the men for the sophomore class in the best colleges of the United States, and the ladies for the second year in the best ladies' seminary in the country. But the school may be raised to any higher grade whatever."

The next four decades from 1875 to 1915 were the golden years at Lenox, for it was during this period that the school realized its greatest usefulness, produced many of its most distinguished graduates, and reached high peaks of achievement along both academic and non-academic lines.

One of the members of the faculty in the seventies was Thomas H. McBride (later written Macbride), a Lenox student of the 1860's who in 1871 was called back to serve as professor of mathematics and modern languages and for two years was assistant to the president. The *Delhi Monitor* of July 11, 1878, carried this Hopkinton news item: "Prof. McBride has been called to Iowa

City. The University offered, it is said, $1,800 a year. We hope this call is not loud enough for him to hearken to it. Our town would protest against it if that would hinder his going. We wish they would study the command and 'not covet' our best men. We wish, too, we were rich enough to outbid Iowa City or any other school that shall try to get our professors away from us."

The call, however, was loud enough for Professor Macbride to hear and that same year he started his eminently successful career as professor and scientist at the State University of Iowa, culminating in his elevation to the school's presidency in 1914. In 1892 Dr. Macbride donated some 2,000 specimens of minerals and fossils to Lenox College.

The Y.M.C.A. and the Y.W.C.A. early became part of Lenox. The Young Men's Christian Association was organized in 1876 and the Women's Association a year later under the leadership of Miss Mary George. So far as it is known, this was the first college Y.W.C.A. to be started west of the Mississippi, the first student group having organized only four years previously at Normal University in Normal, Illinois. The Christian associations, the Christian teaching, and the example of the instructors were powerful influences in Lenox life. This was evidenced by the large num-

ber of ministers and missionaries among the graduates.

In 1882, when President Hodge resigned, he could look back with satisfaction on the achievements of his administration. The physical plant had been enlarged by the addition of a wing to the original building. Lenox was the oldest Presbyterian college in Iowa and her alumni list was sprinkled with names of influential ministers, physicians, lawyers, and educators. Two of her early graduates, Reverend H. C. Velte, 1879, and Dr. James McKean, 1880, were active in Christian work in India and Siam.

Some idea of the operation of the school in the 1880's may be gained from the financial statement submitted to the Synod for the year ending on September 1, 1883. This showed $2,491.00 from tuition; $341.25 from donations and various fees, and $922.64 from interest on the endowment and rent of a farm. Expenditures included the following payments: J. H. Ritchey, president, $1,100.-00; W. A. Crusinberry, professor, $600.00; Sarah E. Buckley, preceptress, $500.00; Mary C. Lord, teacher, $270.00; Wm. Flude, financial manager, $450.00; janitor, $83.90; publishing catalogues, $42.15; advertising and printing, $83.82; interest on last year's balance, $36.00; fuel, repairs, and contingent expenses, $376.04; Hodge prizes,

$40.00; and sixty diplomas, $59.15, making a total of $4,097.14 and leaving a deficit on September 1, 1883, of $341.75. The Institute had the following property: college buildings, grounds, libraries, furniture, and apparatus, estimated worth, $15,000; interest bearing and installment notes (worthless ones deducted), $11,000; and 160 acres of improved land in Buchanan County, $4,000, a total of $30,000.

In the fall of 1882 the first non-clergy president came to Lenox. He was J. H. Ritchey, "an experienced educator . . . well informed in all the progressive and modern systems of practical and scientific education." The following year the Presbyterian Synod authorized an amendment in the articles of incorporation, changing the name from Lenox Collegiate Institute to Lenox College. This change took effect in 1884.

One of the innovations of the new president was an organized attempt to secure endowment. In 1885 the Presbyterian Synod approved a plan to allow a donor certain privileges, depending on the amount of the donation. A gift of $25,000 would endow a professor's chair and would allow the donor to select the chair and to name its occupant during the life of the donor.

A gift of $5,000 would endow a complete scholarship for one student, including tuition, board,

and room, but it was stipulated that students attending on such a scholarship "shall wear a uniform if designated by the Board." It should be added, however, to the credit of the board, that such action was never taken; possibly there was no $5,000 gift to test this provision of the plan. A gift of $500 would provide free tuition for one student "in perpetuity", transferable as other property. These scholarships did not, apparently, bring in much money, for in 1887 the Synod's visiting committee reported that "Lenox feels in every department the paralyzing want of sufficient means."

The decade known as the "gay nineties" is remembered as the proudest and most fruitful period in the Lenox story. It was a period of growth, expansion of interests, great teachers, great students, great victories on the football field and on the podium. The physical growth started with the construction of a girls' dormitory which was named Clarke Hall. It was ready for occupancy in the fall of 1890 and was completely filled the first year with the exception of one room. A boarding club in the basement of the building accommodated about thirty-five students. Board for 1890-1891 cost the students an average of $2.07 per week. A building to house the science and athletic departments was completed in 1901

and was named Doolittle Hall, in honor of F. W. Doolittle, one of the donors.

Many students of the 1890's were destined in later life to make outstanding records in educational, religious, and professional fields. Among these were three members of the Merriam family. Charles E. Merriam, Sr., was a merchant in Hopkinton and a strong supporter of Lenox College. An older son, John C. Merriam, who graduated in 1886, was for years a distinguished scientist and Professor of Paleontology at the University of California. Charles E. Merriam, Jr., of the class of 1893, became one of the outstanding authorities on political science in the United States. He was professor at the University of Chicago for many years and was active in promoting municipal reforms for the city of Chicago. He was, at one time, a candidate for mayor of Chicago on a reform ticket. Frank F. Merriam, a cousin of Charles and John, and a graduate in the class of 1888, was an editor and became interested in politics. He was State Auditor of Iowa, 1899–1903, and Governor of California from 1935 to 1939.

W. B. Guthrie, a classmate of Charles E. Merriam, was for years Professor of Education at City College in New York and the author of numerous books in the field of education and his-

tory. Miss Franc Earhart (1899) rendered outstanding service at Lenox during her many years of teaching mathematics there. In a recent poll of Lenox alumni, she received by far the largest number of votes for the "Lenox Hall of Fame". E. T. Eaton (1897) became one of the leading educators of the west. For many years he was connected with the schools in Montana and served as president of Billings Polytechnic Institute.

Many graduates in the 1890's turned to the field of religion for their life work and made remarkable records. Daniel Russell was for years pastor of Rutgers Presbyterian Church in New York City, F. C. McKean served as pastor of the Hollywood Presbyterian Church, and Dr. Alexander Wilson was a medical missionary to India.

Such was the caliber of the Lenox men and women of the 1890's. The achievements of the alumni of this period are especially remarkable, when it is remembered that the graduating classes of that period averaged less than nine each year. The largest number of graduates was eighteen — nine men and nine women — in 1885. The enrollment that year reached 173, with 75 doing college work.

While some form of athletics was popular at Lenox from early days, it was in 1893, partly at the insistence of Charles E. Merriam, Jr., student

editor of the college paper, *The Nutshell,* that organized sports became a part of the Lenox program. In that year, the first Lenox-Coe track meet at Cedar Rapids ended with Coe on the long end of a 65–52 count. According to *The Nutshell* (and true to the type of sports reporting fashionable in the 90's), "The Lenox boys were kept busy watching the Cedar Rapids referee lest he would steal our points; . . . The Lenox Boys showed wondrous mettle, standing the efforts nobly. A little practice was all that was wanting to have made the score in our favor."

Football was organized at Lenox in 1893. Upper Iowa was the first opponent, winning 14–4. Although there were no victories for Lenox in that first year, the team was experienced enough in 1894 to win three out of four games. In 1896, Lenox claimed victories over Iowa State Normal School, Coe, Cornell, and U. I. U. Football reached its highest point at Lenox in 1898, when the team was undefeated and claimed the State championship. One of the games long remembered was a 12–0 victory over Rush Medical Institute of Chicago.

Athletics was not, however, the only activity of Lenox students in the 1890's. In 1894, Frank Chalmers McKean won the State oratorical contest with an oration on "Typical American Citi-

zenship". Two years later A. M. Cloud won the State contest for Lenox and, representing Iowa, was declared the winner in an interstate contest, with an oration on "The Policy of Metternich".

That rigid discipline was the order of the day at Lenox is shown from the following pledge which was required of all students in the 1890's: "Impressed with the great importance of improving my time and opportunities while in connection with Lenox college, I solemnly promise, in reliance upon divine help, that I will faithfully and diligently devote myself to the studies that I undertake; that I will conscientiously observe all the rules and regulations that relate to the conduct and deportment of the students; and that I will readily yield to the wholesome admonitions of the Professors or Teachers of the college so long as I shall continue a student of the same."

The Lenox program of studies in 1893 included six courses or departments — Classical, Scientific, Normal, Commercial, Preparatory, and Musical. Some idea of the content of a college course of the day may be obtained from the following comments taken from the 1893 catalog:

"The Classical course embraces the philosophical and literary courses of American colleges . . . It is symmetrical throughout, providing a full course in the classics.

"The Scientific course is of equal length with the Classical . . . while giving special prominence to the sciences it does not lack the other elements of a rounded education . . .

"The Commercial course includes plain and ornamental penmanship, bookkeeping and business forms. The student can avail himself of an extra course in typewriting . . .

"The Preparatory course (two years before entering college) is designed to fit the student for a college course, and a sufficient amount of Mathematics, History, Latin, Greek, and German is provided for that purpose."

Some of the texts used in 1893 were Swinton's *English Grammar,* Barnes' *History of the United States,* and McCord's *Psychology.* The courses offered the freshman students in the classical course in 1893 included Geometry, Rhetoric, Virgil, Cicero's Orations, Horace's Odes, Greek, Bible study, Old Testament History, and Botany.

In 1900 the fortieth anniversary celebration was held on the Lenox campus and one of the accomplishments at this celebration was the subscription of enough money to permit the finishing of the "science and athletic" building.

In 1906, Dr. E. E. Reed, former president of Buena Vista College, was chosen to head Lenox. He was a man of great energy and an experienced

and accomplished educator and administrator. One of his first jobs in Hopkinton was to push forward an endowment campaign. A bequest of $25,000 had been obtained from Carnegie funds, subject to the provision that $75,000 be raised from other sources. This was a large undertaking for Lenox, but under the direction of President Reed a final figure of $107,000 was reached.

With the 1907 commencement, Lenox celebrated another milestone — her fiftieth anniversary. It appears that the discrepancy in dates — a 40th anniversary in 1900 and a 50th in 1907 — may have caused the mathematicians on the faculty some difficulty, but the explanation lies in the fact that the Bowen Collegiate Institute was incorporated in 1856 and building began in 1857, but classes did not start until 1859. The year 1907, therefore, marked the end of the 50th year since its incorporation. Incidentally, Lenox is not the only college in the State guilty of this type of historical mathematics!

The fiftieth anniversary celebration was long remembered. High dignitaries of the educational and political world attended. One of the memorable days of this week-long celebration was the inaugural address of President Reed. He stressed the importance of agriculture in Iowa and the Middle West and advocated a strong school

of agriculture in colleges such as Lenox. This suggestion bore fruit in 1909, when a course in agriculture was established at Lenox with the help of the Extension Department at Ames.

The school for teachers also received attention. The 1910 catalog stated: "The principle that a teacher must have attended a more advanced school than she proposes to teach is now thoroughly established. Only prepared people will in the future be licensed to teach, . . . Scholarship is what is required. Teachers must know more subjects and know all of them more thoroughly."

Nor was the religious side of life neglected at Lenox, for in 1910 it was reported that for the fourth consecutive year, nearly every student was "a professing Christian". Gospel teams were active, and during the Christmas holidays of 1912, the Y.M.C.A. conducted evangelistic meetings at Stanley, reporting thirty-nine conversions.

A new endowment campaign was launched by President Reed. A $30,000 legacy for the school of agriculture was received from Archibald Livingstone provided another $25,000 be raised for that department. This legacy was included in a campaign for $105,000 which was carried to a whirlwind conclusion just a few hours before the deadline. This gave Lenox a total well in excess

of $200,000 raised in about five years. Of this total it was planned to use about $35,000 in building and current expenses, leaving nearly $170,000 as endowment. And so in 1912 all seemed bright for Lenox and plans for additional endowments and a new building were being discussed.

During the heat of the campaign, however, many persons pledged amounts which in later months they were either unable or unwilling to pay, and much of this pledged $200,000 failed to materialize. Some paid the interest on their notes for a few years and then forgot the obligation. The amount which was paid failed to have the stimulating effect and steadying influence which Lenox officials sought. The finger of fate pointed down.

WILLIAM R. FERGUSON

A Pioneer Grows Old

In 1915, the board of trustees of Lenox College accepted with regret the resignation of President Reed, who had been chosen president of Westminster College at Fulton, Missouri. This precipitated a crisis in Hopkinton, as all but two members of the faculty also left the campus. The reason for this exodus was simple. There was doubt that Lenox would be able to continue and the teachers secured positions elsewhere.

The board called on Professor E. V. Laughlin to act as dean and to organize a faculty. This he did, and with success. A. St. Claire Mackenzie was named as president but he had resigned by August 1, 1917, and Dean Laughlin was in charge of Lenox much of the time for the next twenty-four years, although Dr. J. F. Hinkhouse served as president during 1919–1923, and W. W. Carlton followed President Hinkhouse.

In 1916, Lenox felt strong enough to launch another building program, this time for a new athletic building and auditorium. It had been evident for some time that the building for athletics erected at the turn of the century was inadequate for both players and spectators and Dean Laugh-

lin took charge of the erection of a bigger and better "gym". He designed the structure himself and constructed a 116 by 50-foot building using mainly student labor. The project was completed the same year and housed a large basketball court, dressing rooms, a large stage, and storage space.

College officials were not long in putting the gymnasium to use. In the spring of 1917 they invited neighboring high schools to enter their basketball teams in a tournament to be held in Hopkinton. Fourteen schools sent teams and the tourney was played on Thursday and Friday, March 1-2, 1917. Monticello, by defeating Maquoketa 34–9 in the final round, became the first tournament champion. The other teams entered in that first meet were Earlville, Greeley, Cascade, Wyoming, Coggon, Delhi, Strawberry Point, Dysart, Edgewood, Waucoma, Colesburg, and Hopkinton.

Thus originated one of the finest of Lenox athletic traditions — The Lenox Invitational Basketball Tournament. From 1917 until the organization of the Iowa High School Athletic Association with its comprehensive system of elimination meets, the Lenox tournament was one of the best meets in the State. Winning the Lenox "cup" was the goal of high school teams for miles around.

The present system of elimination is more systematic and produces its share of thrills, but many are the fans in northeastern Iowa who remember with a twinge of regret the excitement of tournament week at Lenox. Buying season tickets — taking lunches to the gym — housing visiting players in Hopkinton homes — keeping a record of the score — the excitement of the finals — these were some of the things that made the tournament a gala affair for Hopkinton people.

High scoring games were not unknown thirty years ago, according to the tournament records. In the first meet in 1917, Monticello walloped Cascade 82–3, and two years later, Monticello defeated Strawberry Point 101–7. This interest in high school basketball was carried over to the Lenox team, and basketball soon came to be a major college sport. In 1920, Lenox had one of her best teams, going undefeated in a thirteen-game schedule and defeating such opponents as St. Ambrose College, Iowa State Teachers College, and Buena Vista College.

Financially, the years of the first World War were, as usual, hard for Lenox. Her endowment was rapidly disappearing, or falling into the classification of bad debts. She received only slight financial backing from the Presbyterian Church and stronger colleges nearby were offer-

ing competition which reduced her enrollment. A merger with the Dubuque College and Seminary (the University of Dubuque) was proposed but did not work out. In 1922, the academy was dropped and its work was turned over to the local high school. The college course was cut to two years — temporarily, it was hoped.

At first there was much opposition to the junior college idea among the alumni and people of Hopkinton, but as the years passed, it was admitted that in the modern educational picture Lenox was best suited to carry on as a two-year institution, acting as a feeder for nearby four-year colleges. Indeed, an arrangement was attempted with Coe, also a Presbyterian college, by which Lenox would concentrate on the freshman and sophomore years, and would then channel her graduates to Coe for the final two years.

In 1924, a deferred tuition-payment plan was introduced and a revolving loan fund, backed by thirty businessmen, was set up to aid worthy students. After five years of operation, it was reported that $10,000 worth of credit had been extended and that $7,000 had already been repaid, indicating successful operation of the plan.

In spite of all efforts and programs, however, the financial resources of Lenox were seldom adequate to meet the needs. Year after year a "small

deficit" was reported, and gradually a large debt was built up. When the Hopkinton banks failed during the depression, it was necessary for the college to turn over much real estate to settle its debts. The endowment virtually disappeared.

In the early 1930's, however, Lenox enjoyed something of a revival in enrollment. When the depression reached Iowa, many young people found they could receive two years of accredited college work at Lenox at a figure far under the usual cost in larger institutions. In 1931 a bus route was started and continued for several years, bringing students from surrounding communities and students commuted from Monticello, Delhi, Delaware, Buck Creek, and Manchester. By 1936, however, the enrollment was again dropping off and each year the struggle for survival became more difficult. In 1937, sixty were enrolled and the next year only forty-eight.

For many years Dean E. V. Laughlin had been in active charge of Lenox. It was his lot to administer affairs during many difficult years and many were his worries and his troubles. But he was unusually resourceful and each problem was met with some "little scheme", which, if it was not a complete solution, at least postponed the end.

One of Dean Laughlin's greatest contributions to Lenox was his building genius. The gymna-

sium was largely his creation. That it remains one of the best athletic buildings in its section is a tribute to both the planning and the workmanship of Dean Laughlin. Much repair work and many improvements were made on the physical plant because the dean knew how to do things and could get them done with a minimum of expense.

But in November, 1938, Hopkinton was shocked to learn that Dean Laughlin had slept away in the night. After the first shock of sorrow, came the burning question of the future of Lenox. Dean Laughlin had been administrator, business manager, teacher, and field representative. But, as in former times, Hopkinton people rallied to the support of their college and with the assistance of the local ministers and the loyal work of Miss Franc Earhart and Miss Mabel Briney, the college year was completed.

During the summer of 1939, friends of Lenox were encouraged when the board of trustees secured as dean Orville Eckberg, a graduate of Wheaton College and the University of Illinois. Mr. Eckberg was an energetic young educator and with the coöperation of the other members of the faculty and the backing of the townspeople, he attacked the problems of Lenox with vigor.

His plans were scarcely bearing fruit when World War II caused a cancellation of many

hopes and plans. Dean Eckberg joined the armed forces, along with many enrolled and potential students. Once again Lenox was cast upon troubled waters, but, again, through the efforts of Miss Earhart, Miss Briney, and a few alumni, the college remained open until the spring of 1944 when classes were finally suspended.

Two years later, in 1946, when the Federal government began to underwrite the largest experiment in mass higher education the country has ever seen, and with colleges all over the nation bulging with students, the time seemed appropriate for the reopening of Lenox and Dr. Don Hawkins, formerly connected with Upper Iowa University, was elected president. A campaign for funds was started and favorable press releases immediately began to appear. Friends from afar were encouraged, but those on the scene began to have doubts regarding the future of Lenox and, after a trip east, Dr. Hawkins sent his resignation to the board in May, 1946, ending the short-lived hope that the college could be restored.

Even after this abortive resurrection, one further attempt was made. The board made a more complete survey of the situation and a Mr. Mitchell was elected to head the school. His administration was scarcely a month old when it was decided that the problems were too great and on

June 7, 1946, the board issued a long statement in which it announced the closing of Lenox. There was some talk of a boys' school at Lenox, but this did not materialize, and in August, 1946, after some legal maneuvering, the Hopkinton Independent School District paid the Lenox trustees $4,000 for various equipment, and the buildings and grounds were turned over to the Hopkinton public schools. Lenox College was dead.

As is always the case when a loved one dies, there were many regrets. If only this thing, or that, had been done in time Lenox might have continued. It is always depressing to see a pioneer lose youthful vigor and strength. Lenox withered away, but her influence is not dead. There is scarcely a county or large school in Iowa that has not had Lenox men or women as teachers. Lenox sons and daughters occupy many important positions in the religious and educational world. And each of those personalities carries with him a part of the little Christian college at Hopkinton.

WILLIAM R. FERGUSON

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