

Memoir of Edwin R. Roberts Antioch College, 1882-1899

Memoir of Edwin R Roberts,
Antioch College, 1882-99

At the commencement in June 1881 the Trustees felt compelled in view of the condition of the endowment and the small number of students to decree the suspension of the college. So the doors were locked, the students disbanded, the Professors called to other institutions, and silence held sway for a year over the deserted college and campus. But on the 16th of December 1881 the citizens of Yellow Springs and vicinity met and declared this should not be. Rev. Josiah Knight was made chairman of a committee which carried on a correspondence with the twenty trustees of the college regarding the reopening of Antioch under the control of the Christian denomination. Favorable answers having been made by the committee another meeting was held in Yellow Springs, March 28th 1882. At this meeting were present many prominent members of the Christian denomination, and friends of the college. From these were chosen twenty men who should constitute the Christian Educational Society. This society had control of the school for the past year, as previously agreed by the Board of Trustees, who further gave to the Society sixteen hundred dollars from the endowment income, six hundred for use in repairing buildings, the remainder for teachers salaries.

Then followed during the summer many a meeting of the executive committee, much hard work, many disappointments, many hindrances and vexations. The chief difficulty was in the selection of a faculty, few men having the courage or the inclination to leave good positions for an uncertain station in chaos. Among those whose accession was most confidently expected were Prof. DB Stone of Kansas, Prof. WA Bell of Indiana, and the Rev. Martyn Summerbell of Massachusetts. At length, after many troubles, the following faculty was secured: President, Rev. OJ Wait of New Hampshire; Professors, CB Palmer of Nebraska, Miss Evelyn Darling of Vermont, GR Hammond of New York, FH Tufts of Indiana, WS Hendrixson and JP Miller of Ohio. In the meantime Rev. MM Lohr the business agent of the college was in the field and traveling all over the state drumming up students for Antioch. The goodly company of students met in September, within the walls which had been swept and garnished, the dust and weeds of a year being cleared away and they had opening day once more which was on Wednesday September 13th, 1883. A large audience gathered in the college chapel to witness the reopening, almost the rebirth, of a stronger, fuller life for Antioch College.

The first graduating class after the rebirth consisted of but one, Amos R. Wells, and to use his words,

I was president, vice president, secretary and treasurer all in one, and I don't believe that we ever had a class wrangle either.

All know Amos R. Wells and the position he fills in the world but it would hardly be possible to pass on without repeating the beautiful tribute to Mr. Wells and Antioch which our own present

president, SD Fess made in introducing Mr. Wells to the commencement audience in 1912:

If Antioch had never graduated any other man but Amos R. Wells, she would have nobly fulfilled her mission.

In September 1883 Antioch called Mr. DA Long to fill the chair of president of the institution. Pres. Long was born at Graham NC 22nd day of May 1844. The father Jacob Long is of German descent. The paternal ancestors came from Germany before the Revolutionary War. They were noted for their good common sense, industrious habits, and an unblemished Christian character. Pres. Long was educated at the University of N. Carolina and Yale College and previous to his presidency of Antioch served for 10 yrs as president of Graham College, Graham NC.

Soon after Pres. Long took charge of Antioch College he determined to erect a monument in memory of its first president. Funds were soon raised and the granite was brought from Mass., President Mann's native state and under the loving direction of Mr. Geo. Dodds of Xenia who for several years was one of Mr. Mann's pupils, the shaft grew into beauty. At the suggestion of Pres. Long Horace Mann's closing words to his last graduating class were engraved upon the monument. No student is supposed to have even the slightest trace of the true Antiochian spirit unless he can repeat the words:

I beseech you to treasure up in your hearts these my parting words: Be ashamed to die until you have won some victory for humanity.

The monument stands on the spot where Horace Mann was first buried in August 1859, and where his body remained for about one year. His former grave was easily located by Mr. Edward Rice, who came from Mass. as the architect of the buildings and who made Yellow Springs his home until his death. Prof. JB Weston came at his own expense from New York for the purpose of delivering the lecture at the unveiling of the monument. Hon. John Kebler gave an address at the close of the exercise.

The monument was dedicated in the afternoon of Commencement Day, June 18th, 1884. The shaft is nineteen feet in height and though its foundation was laid in solid limestone, like the tower of Pisa it is slightly inclined to one side but it may stand for centuries, but the corroding hand of time will eventually level all monuments with mother earth. But the majestic character of the one it was intended to commemorate will abide for ever.

In 1884 military drill was inaugurated at Antioch. Through the influence of certain friends of the College, the services of Sgt. Sidney Collins GRS, USA as drill master were secured.

A company was formed having both a civil and military organization. The arms selected were the Springfield breech-loading rifles, which were obtained at a low price. A captain's sword was presented to Capt. Collins by the company. Before the close of the spring term Captain Collins, to the regret of all, was called to form a regiment in Washington Territory the command thereby devolving upon Lieut. Frank Southward, until later when JP Jensen of the US Army was secured. He had 10 yr. experience in the regular army. The shining bayonets of the Antioch Cadets could be seen any Saturday maneuvering over the campus. The drill generally lasted

about three hours. Also at this time calisthenics was introduced.

In reading over an old Antiochian of about this time we notice a poem a verse of which we quote:

they made us a road too deep and damp for a
sole

to carry us through; And we call it the Antioch Dismal Swamp, where saint and sinner, dude
and tramp must paddle his own canoe.

It is evident that hazing on the sly was in vogue at Antioch at this time. We interpret

Antioch Dismal Swamp

as the Lime Kiln.

One June 17th, 1885 the large marble tablet, which now stands in the hall, was erected by the
(Burkholder) GAR post # 115 of Yellow Springs Ohio. It is a magnificent monument to our fallen
heroes. Although we read of the daring deeds of Marion Ross in history (the engine stealing)
we are sure that all the other members would have distinguished themselves if they were given
the same opportunity. The following are the names engraved on the tablet:

We notice in reading an article in the November number of the Antiochian 1886, the following:

Last month several old friends and students sent Mrs. Horace Mann, on her eightieth birthday a
present of Macmillan's edition of Tennyson in seven volumes. Each volume contained the
following inscription:

To Mrs. Horace Mann with the love of Antioch College, past and present.

A brief clipping from her letter which she wrote upon receipt of the present:

I received yesterday the package you announced a few days since. I can not express how
much the gift touched me. I know there was a strong affection in the college for my husband
among those who had personally known him, but I was not prepared to learn that it extended in
any degree to myself

When I hear of a young man or woman who graduated at Antioch I always expect more of them
than any young people, because I know what they were fed upon.

In this same year

86 about December a new literary society was formed having a membership of about twenty.
The society's name was the Athenaeum and its paper was called the Symposium. Twice a term
the Athenaeum held an open meeting at which friends and outsiders could attend. They met in
the music room on the third floor. From a poem written by ME Cranston entitled

Athenaeum

we will quote several stanzas:

Men of Rome in by-gone ages,

Poets, lawyers, doctors, sages,

Came their lights of wit to lighten;

Came their talents more to brighten.

Came their sullied names of whiten

To their temple Athenaeum.

Each one sought, by deed or story,

To achieve some fame or glory.

Striving ever to excel;

Rivals, critics served them well

As a spur what

er befell

In their temple Athenaeum.

We find that the boarding club of yesterday was the same as that of today as they had for their motto: Omnia studio Edamame (Let us devour all things with zeal).

On Monday morning, February the 13th,

86, when the students assembled for chapel exercises, they found the desk? heavily draped in black. In the center of the drapery hung the picture of Mrs. Mann. She had died on Friday the 11th at her home in Jamaica Plain, Mass. but the students did not know of it until Monday when Pres. Long publicly read the telegram which he had received early Saturday. Much sorrow reigned throughout the College for she was one of Antioch's best friends.

We find that the seniors of

87 had a hard time to organize but after much effort and struggle managed to adopt a constitution'supposedly the following is the preamble:

We, the members of the class of

87 in order to secure for ourselves the blessings of class organization, namely, mutual improvement, recognition from the villagers in the form of invitations to dinners and teas, and in the future immortal fame, do ordain and establish this constitution.

This is the first class to graduate which has served four years under Pres. Long's administration since he came here just four years ago.

In 1889 the Ohio Legislature passed the Barrett bill, which prohibited the sale of intoxicating liquors and the keeping of houses of ill repute within two miles of either Antioch College or Wilberforce University. We are told that the adoption of this law was tried as far back as Pres. Mann's time.

In December 1889 the Editor in Chief of the Antiochian resigned the reason for which we have been unable to attain. The next Antiochian comes out in Jan 1890 with ES Sheldon Editor in Chief. This is the first time in the history of the paper that a woman has held the position of Editor in Chief but not only this is singular but the entire editorial staff is composed exclusively of women.

In October 1890 the time for chapel exercises was changed from 7.45 to 9.45. On Sunday afternoon Chapel was held at three o'clock but this was entirely optional. Later, however, the exact date we are unable to find, the Sunday chapel was discontinued. On November 22nd 1891 the funeral services of Prof. AE Duncan were conducted by Pres. Long in the Chapel.

The death of Professor AE Duncan MD has removed from Antioch one of its most devoted

friends and to express it in a plain simple manner as he would desire it, there was great grief at his death. He was for a long time a trustee of the College and of recent years as occupant of the Hoagland Professorship of Physiology. The students will remember their departed instructor as a friend, always frank and cheery, always interested in their welfare ever anxious to do all in his power to help them in their work.

The members of the faculty will remember their fellow laborer as a councilor weighty and wise; a rekindled, a man whose faith in the College never flagged, whose experience was of inestimable advantage in many times no doubt.

In January 1892 Antioch lost another valuable man in Amos R. Wells, and yet we rejoice that this vacancy was not caused by the hand of death. All missed him, and his excellent instructive talks which were given every Tuesday morning in Chapel.

In April 1892 Antioch endowment was increased. By the death of Mrs. Joy Mann Antioch fell heir to two separate funds, one amounting to 17,136.40 and the other to some 4652.00. The interest of the latter to be used in aiding those students who are not able to send themselves to college, the preference to be given to girls. Thus was the David Joy scholarship founded.

During the years

93-4 Antioch matriculated 200 students during the collegiate year. This make a high water mark in our number of students in the period

94-5 Antioch students commenced to take an interest in athletics. They had a foot ball and base ball team and already we hear cries for a gymnasium.

Nov,

95, delegates from Heidelberg, Otterbein, Miami University, Baldwin and Antioch met in Columbus and formed the

Ohio State Oratorical Association.

CC Huntington represented Antioch.

Wed, Dec 11/95 Pres. Long was married to Mrs. AB Beach, of Nashville, Tenn. The Friday following he with his bride returned to Antioch College where he was congratulated by his many friends, trustees, and students.

Freehand drawing was introduced this year, under the direction of Prof. HB Judy who received his training at the University of Illinois.

On May 4,

96 Antioch did honor to her 1st president and to the great educator Horace Mann. At ten o'clock the faculty students alumni citizens and friends gathered in the large chapel and listened to the excellent program given in honor of Mann's centennial. An extract from one of the speakers Dr. Ely, is;

Every graduate of Antioch who made a success of life was another inscription upon the monument erected to Horace Mann in the hearts of the people.

When the Spanish war broke out Pres. Long in a chapel talk said;

Students think well before you go. Don't cripple your future life by leaving school. If the country

needed you I would say go but as it is there are plenty of outsiders who will go.

The result was that no one left school.

Pres. Long when he resigned in 1899 left many friends behind him at Antioch and vicinity.

Antiochians, catalogues, letters and verbal history from old students and friends.

ERR

hQh|

h>?e'h9"w'h9"w'htd^

htd^

htd^

hfDM'h?v@

h'n7'h'n7'hN\$e'h9"w'h?v@

hfDM'h{nl'h{nl'h{nl'h\OK

Memoir of Edwin R Roberts,

Antioch

Normal

Antioch

Microsoft Office Word

Library

Memoir of Edwin R Roberts,