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CHICAGO HISTORICAL SOCIETY

celebration of the Fiftieth Anniversary
of its incorporation

February 7, 1907

Addresses By

Ezra B. McCagg and Franklin H. Head

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CHICAGO HISTORICAL SOCIETY

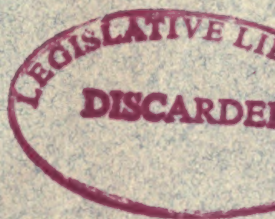
1857-1907

CELEBRATION OF THE FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY
OF ITS INCORPORATION
FEBRUARY 7, 1907

ADDRESSES BY

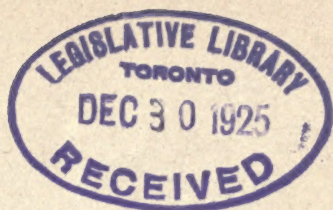
EZRA B. McCAGG
AND
FRANKLIN H. HEAD

ROLL OF OFFICERS AND MEMBERS

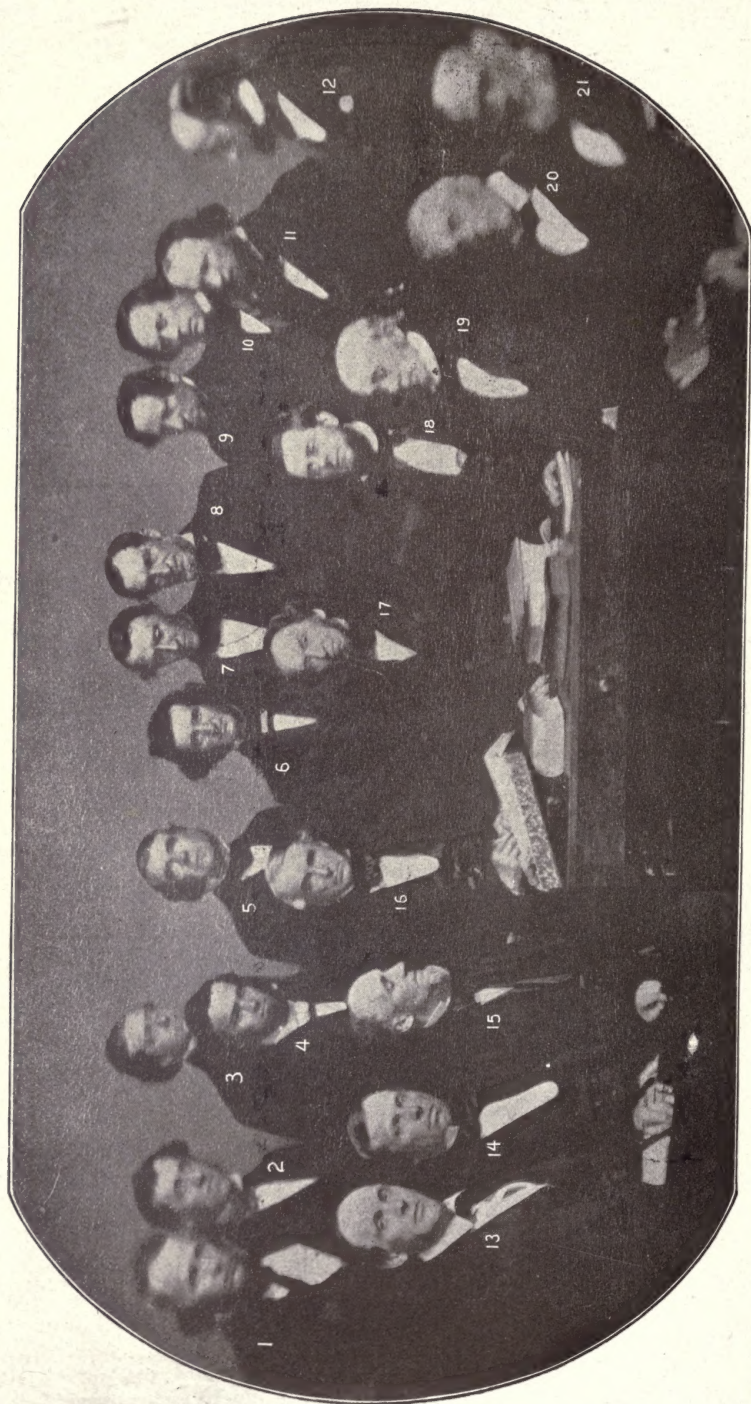


CHICAGO
PUBLISHED BY THE SOCIETY
1907

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GROUP OF CHICAGO HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBERS, 1858.



1. VAN H. HIGGINS. 2. BENJ. F. CARVER. 3. CYRUS BENTLEY. 4. ROBERT H. CLARKSON. 5. LUTHER HAVEN. 6. THOMAS HOYNE.
 7. HORATIO G. LOOMIS. 8. JOHN H. KINZIE. 9. GUSTAV UNONIUS. 10. GEORGE MANIERRE. 11. GEORGE F. RUMSEY.
 12. EDWARD I. TINKHAM. 13. SAMUEL D. WARD. 14. ISAAC H. BURCH. 15. WILLIAM BARRY. 16. WILLIAM H. BROWN.
 17. JOHN M. WILSON. 18. FRANKLIN SCAMMON. 19. JONATHAN BURR. 20. DR. JOHN H. FOSTER. 21. SAMUEL STONE.

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CHICAGO HISTORICAL SOCIETY

1857-1907

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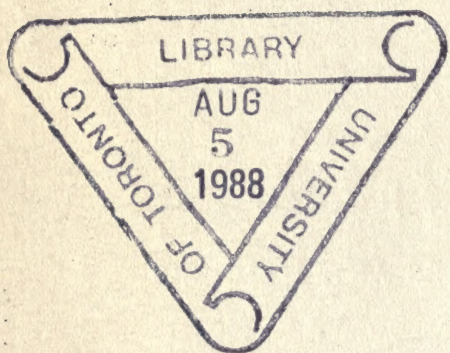
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EZRA B. McCAGG
AND
FRANKLIN H. HEAD

ROLL OF OFFICERS AND MEMBERS



CHICAGO
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1907



CHICAGO HISTORICAL SOCIETY

SEMI-CENTENNIAL ANNIVERSARY

FEBRUARY 7, 1907

THE fiftieth anniversary of the incorporation of the Chicago Historical Society was marked by a special meeting of the Society and a reception in its Building, on the evening of Thursday, February 7, 1907. Some two thousand invitations had been sent to its members, friends, and correspondents and more than four hundred persons were present at the exercises.

President Head had invited the following ladies to represent the Society as hostesses, and assist him in receiving the guests:

Mesdames Cyrus Bentley, Anita McC. Blaine, T. B. Blackstone, William Blair, Eliphalet W. Blatchford, Joseph T. Bowen, W. J. Calhoun, Kate S. Caruthers, Charles H. Conover, Frederick A. Delano, Thomas Dent, Jacob M. Dickinson, Marshall Field, Frederick M. Gilpin, John J. Glessner, Charles F. Gunther, Carter H. Harrison, Annie M. Hitchcock, Gurdon S. Hubbard, Charles L. Hutchinson, George S. Isham, Harry Pratt Judson, Chauncey Keep, Samuel H. Kerfoot, Bryan Lathrop, John Mason Loomis, Frank O. Lowden, Franklin MacVeagh, Ezra B. McCagg, Nettie F. McCormick, Cyrus H. McCormick, Edward G. Mason, George Merryweather, LaVerne W. Noyes, Honoré Palmer, Ferdinand W. Peck, Eugene S. Pike, George M. Pullman, John S. Runnells, Martin A. Ryerson, Otto L. Schmidt, Orson Smith, James M. Walker, Norman Williams, Mary J. Wilmarth, John P. Wilson; and Misses Katharine Arnold, Elizabeth Head, Mary L. Newberry, Elizabeth Skinner, Frederika Skinner, and Helen E. Snow.

The President and those of the above named ladies who were in attendance stood in the entrance from the Main Hall to the Gilpin Library and received the guests who were formally presented by members of the Executive Committee.

When the hour arrived for the exercises of the occasion, the audience assembled in the Lecture Hall in such numbers as to exhaust its seating capacity and many gentlemen stood through the entire programme.

On the stage beside the President were Messrs. Ezra B. McCagg, Elijah Kent Hubbard, and Edwin Doak Mead. President Head stated to the audience that Mr. McCagg was the sole surviving Charter Member and Incorporator of the Chicago Historical Society; that Mr. Edwin D. Mead of Boston was the Vice-President and a working member of the Massachusetts Historical Society; that Mr. Hubbard was one of the first white children born in Chicago. He also announced that the Executive Committee had some weeks since invited Governor Deneen to be present and deliver an address, appropriate to the occasion, and read a letter from the Governor expressing his regret that imperative official duties had at the last moment obliged him to remain in Springfield, and extending to the Society his congratulations on its semi-centennial anniversary and wishing it prosperity for the future. Mr. Head also read a congratulatory letter from Daniel C. Roberts, president of the New Hampshire Historical Society.

The formal exercises were then opened by President Head who spoke as follows:

Fifty years ago, a body of the early citizens of Chicago interested in collecting and preserving the records of the early exploration and settlement of the State, having procured from the authorities a proper charter for the Chicago Historical Society, met and perfected the organization of the Corporation. The fifty years which have passed since February 7, 1857, have been for the Society, periods of modest prosperity as well as of discouraging storm and stress. Twice have its buildings and collections been destroyed by fire, and many books and manuscripts of great value, irretrievably lost; yet to-day, at the beginning of its second half-century, the Society is in this beautiful fire-proof building, with more than one hundred thousand volumes, manuscripts, and memorials of the early days, and is entirely free from debt.

Of the early citizens who were the founders and incorporators

of the Society, but one survives, Mr. Ezra B. McCagg, a man who for more than fifty years has been held in high esteem and honor by the people of Chicago. He has consented to read to us, this evening, a paper containing various incidents connected with the early life of the Society, and prior to the great fire of 1871. No introduction to a Chicago audience is needed for Mr. McCagg.

Mr. McCagg's address was as follows:

In the gospel according to Saint Luke, it is recorded that our Saviour said to his disciples in one of his parables: "I say unto you, though he will not rise and give because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth." It was forcibly brought to my mind when your President did not permit me to say "No" after an expressed unwillingness to occupy some of your time this evening, the fiftieth anniversary of the foundation of this Society, with some account of its early history. If the repetition of a twice-told tale wearies you till the chairs seem hard, let his be the blame. I would have avoided it, for it is not altogether a pleasure. The result of what was so many years ago begun is before you; this fine building, its books and manuscripts, its portraits, these last perpetuate as far as may be done on canvas, the actors, their faces recall their respective doings, and the promise of what may yet be, yet these portraits are prints of foot-falls in the march of time; one actor the less, one more break in the ranks, till the place has some pain to the survivor who will not down.

The beginning, the very beginning, and it is to this I am to confine myself, was small. A few gentlemen, Mr. Mason writes, twelve in number, by whom requested, I do not recollect, probably by the Rev. William Barry, met at the office of Messrs. Scammon and McCagg in the building, then standing on the northeast corner of Lake and LaSalle streets, April 3, 1856, to consider the idea of forming a Historical Society in this city for the collection and preservation of historical material relating more particularly to Chicago, but also to the State, which was every day being made and lost, there not being anybody caring for its preservation. They were busy men, every one of them, as indeed was everybody in Chicago at that time. The burden

of material life was heavy, a city was building, sewage and water systems must be had, not here and there one, but many, streets were to be laid out, roadways and sidewalks made, school-houses and churches, warehouses and dwellings were to be built, more bridges were needed; the city itself was being raised from the mud; there was a whole system of municipal government to be substantially reorganized to keep pace with so rapid a growth all at once; and it must all the time be looked to that neither Milwaukee, nor St. Louis, nor Cincinnati, nor any other place, far or near, took away any one of the advantages which our location offered us. They were not men of wealth, as wealth was measured fifty years ago; there were few wealthy men here then, though some of them afterward became so; nor did they depend upon their daily work to live; but it was the day of small things, comparatively, and a return was acceptable. I do not recollect, certainly, who they were, but one can guess with almost absolute sureness as to many of them, as one name after another appears later in this account.

This meeting of April, before mentioned, was followed by another later in the same month, the 24th, and an organization was had, William H. Brown being the first president, and William Barry recording secretary and librarian. Mr. Brown was an old resident of the State. He came to Illinois in December, 1818, the population of the State at that time was not over 40,000, settled in Kaskaskia, then the seat of government, choosing Illinois because it had that summer adopted a free government, and purchased a one-half interest in the "Illinois Intelligencer," which paper dated back to 1815, and was the first newspaper published in the Territory. In 1823, he was at that time living in Vandalia, he did valiant work with pen and voice on the side of the Free-State party when an effort was made looking toward and intending the adoption of a new constitution permitting slavery. His activity in this direction did not increase his popularity in that region and an incipient effort was made to mob his paper. In 1835, he removed to Chicago. These facts are not, perhaps, quite germane here, yet they give some description of the man. The contest he had made was as close and

impassioned as it was momentous. Suppose that at the commencement of the civil war, Illinois had been a slave-state, supporting the secession column, the whole machinery of the state government in the hands of the South! Knowing him well, I linger about his name, because of the early stand he took which but foreshadowed in its regard for the right every action of his life.

These April meetings were the beginning. On February 7, 1857, a charter was had and the embryo attained legal existence. Listen to the somewhat grandiloquent terms of its Preamble:

“WHEREAS, it is conducive to the public good of a State to encourage such institutions as have for their object to collect and preserve the memorials of its founders and benefactors, as well as the historical evidences of its progress in settlement and population, and in the arts, improvements and institutions which distinguish a civilized community, and to transmit the same for the instruction and benefit of future generations;

Be it enacted,” etc.

I will name the incorporators in the order named in the act: William H. Brown, William B. Ogden, Mahlon D. Ogden, J. Young Scammon, Mason Brayman, Mark Skinner, George Manierre, John H. Kinzie, James V. Z. Blaney, Isaac N. Arnold, Edward I. Tinkham, J. D. Webster, W. A. Smallwood, Van H. Higgins, N. S. Davis, C. H. Ray, S. D. Ward, Franklin Scammon, William Barry, and Ezra B. McCagg.

Most of them, doubtless, were present at, and all of them in sympathy with the object of the two meetings in April. This is but a list of names offering little information to the generation of to-day. It would be a satisfaction to speak more in detail of at least such of them as I knew more intimately. The time is all too short. They were household names. Mr. Mahlon D. Ogden was a partner of Mr. Arnold and at one time Probate Judge. John H. Kinzie, and here I hesitate for a moment, loth to pass on without some words. If anything is said there should be much. James V. Z. Blaney, able physician, ever in the search for some later way of alleviating disease and suffering. J. D. Webster, a graduate of West Point, and afterward a gallant soldier who, at the bloody battle of Pittsburg Landing, when, toward the

close of the first day the confederate troops had driven our army nearly to the river, by parking our artillery along the bank checked their advance till night came; and the next morning, Buell and victory. Dear friend and neighbor, Edward I. Tinkham. Dr. N. S. Davis who afterward, a stranger from far-away Chicago, when he stood before an audience of world-assembled doctors in London captivated them. He has just gone, at a ripe old age, actively employed up to the very end, crowning a life-service to his fellow-men.

Of the twenty charter members, thirteen were residents of the North Side; then, perhaps, the most popular quarter of the city for the better class of dwellings. Mr. Arnold's pleasing house was on the spot where we now are, and the others, I think, almost all of them, lived within a stone's throw.

Mr. William B. Ogden, at the time of its organization and before its charter, permitted the Society the temporary use of a room on the southwest corner of Clark and Lake streets till some other arrangement should be made. Shortly after, Mr. Julian S. Rumsey gave it more comfortable quarters in a building erected by him on the west side of LaSalle street between Lake and Randolph, where it remained a couple of years, and from there it came to this side of the river to the northeast corner of North Wells and Kinzie streets, to rooms set apart for it by Mr. Walter L. Newberry. Collections in the beginning were slow. A few pine shelves were all that were needed for a time, and every gain was welcomed. Lieut.-Gov. William Bross, though this was later, gave it at one time Lord Kingsborough's "Mexico," a colored copy, some three or four folio volumes, a stately set indeed. They were spread on a table and Mr. Barry's bright eye gleamed as he displayed them, perhaps as proud of his new acquisition as either James Lenox or John Carter Brown would have been of a newly acquired illuminated missal, the probable work of Fra Angelico, or to come nearer home, a then just-discovered, hitherto-unknown volume of "Jesuit Missions" which had then lately passed into the latter's possession.

I must look back for a moment to more thoroughly emphasize some of these men. The project to build a railroad from

Chicago to Galena was not new but it was moribund. It was sought to revive it with Mr. Ogden as president, and build the road. This was the commencement of an era in the railroad history of this State, almost in the railroad history of the United States, for it was, perhaps, the first time a railroad was built in advance of population instead of waiting till a present population needed it.

I remark in passing that I have heard that at the time this road was chartered, the Galena members of the legislature refused to vote for it unless the name of Galena was given first place—Galena and Chicago Union, not Chicago and Galena Union. Galena was the more important place. To make a commencement, Mr. Ogden, with Mr. Scammon and perhaps others, gave a personal note for \$20,000. A banker here, though one of the directors, refused to loan to the road that or any amount. He would loan to them, individually, but not to the corporation. The amount is amusing in the light of to-day. It was on a trip to urge subscriptions for stock that Mr. Scammon used the figure, "The Iron Horse will yet slake his thirst in the Fox River." The Fox was less than forty miles away, and the western terminus of the road was on the open prairie, and so might one say was the eastern, for the common council had refused it entrance into the city. It seemed rather a vainglorious boast. The Chicago and Northwestern Railroad Company, of which the Galena was the progenitor and is now one of its divisions, operates to-day over seven thousand four hundred and fifty miles of road, has 36,699 employés, and its annual pay-roll exceeds twenty-three millions of dollars.

The late Judge H. W. Blodgett, and not anybody knew Chicago and its people better than he, in a public address styled Mr. Ogden "The man who made Chicago." I think this was not quite fair. Mr. Ogden was a man of extraordinary force, character, ability, and push; he saw and foresaw with great insight; he can scarcely be given too much praise, but many men in those days were helping to make Chicago; some of them I mention here. I recollect well Mr. Scammon riding, day and night, through rain and dust and storm and heat, appealing to,

urging the farmers along the line of the proposed road to subscribe for stock and pay the first instalment, \$2.50 a share, as did Mr. Isaac N. Arnold, and to a lesser degree John B. Turner and others. The road they traveled, figuratively speaking, was not a level one. Money was scarce, the population sparse, there was some indifference, some dissent, one innkeeper denouncing railroads as undemocratic institutions that would ride rough shod over the people and grind them to powder. All the people wanted, said he, were good, common roads upon which everybody could travel. Some of the subscriptions were paid at the end of a law suit. Mr. Brown was one of the directors and at one time president.

Chicago was not much more than a frontier town; there were not many houses north of Huron street on the North Side or south of Harrison street on the South Side, with a narrow line of buildings along the west bank of the river. The prairie with its carpet of flowers came almost to our doors.

All the gentlemen I have named were at the front and were charter members of the Society, as were Judges Skinner and Manierre. They were all mainsprings in our city, makers of Chicago, all busy men, very busy, more to be done an hundred fold, than there were men to do. I mention them by name and speak of their surroundings, as I should be glad to speak of others whom I have not named, incorporators and members of the Society, did time permit, because, then and for many years after, they gave to it, to its beginnings and its support, not of their leisure, but of their already overburdened time, without any idea of personal return; they believed it for the best interest of the community of which they formed part; and they should have foremost place in a meeting in this room on an occasion like this. Seen now in the distance, it looks like a small matter. It took time. The same men who helped to build the railroad with their energy and self-sacrifice were behind the Historical Society.

Chicago during these years was in a condition of ferment. An amusing anecdote is told, typical of affairs as they then were. A citizen of the land of Thoreau, of quiet Pawtucket or Nantucket, intending to move with his family to this city, called on a builder

here, this was about the middle of May, and said that he was intending to remove to Chicago, had bought a lot, and wished, if possible, a house, of which he had the plans with him, to be ready on his arrival which would be about the middle of October then next, and that he very much hoped that this was feasible. The builder, hesitating for a few moments, with his finger to his forehead, "The native hue of resolution sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought" as if considering possibilities said, "This is Thursday. I have an elevator to put up tomorrow, Friday; and have promised a Presbyterian church for Saturday. I will build your house on Monday." The travesty of facts to one who was then here and has a recollection of the times, makes this broad farce amusing. Absolutely there are some true lines in the caricature.

And foremost among them was Mr. Barry, the Rev. William Barry, a Unitarian clergyman in delicate health and because of it without a charge, an enthusiast, the very embodiment of a collector of historical matter. No pamphlet so small or so apparently valueless but it was worth preserving if it but contained, not what was then, but what would sometime be worth something, historically. No elderly man who knew personally some historical incident but he would have him commit it to paper or, if he would, to write the history of his times, and many apparently ephemeral publications proved sometimes valuable almost immediately. He once, not many years later, asked the Galena and Chicago Railroad Company, or its successor, for a bound set of its reports. It had already become a leaf in the history of western progress. The answer came, that with great regret the road had to admit that it had not a full set; two years or more, as I recollect, were lacking. He was able to supply them. He had cared for them, year by year, as they appeared. He did most of the active work for years, the earlier ones, gratuitously, later, but after some years, for a small, very small compensation till want of strength required him to stop. Writing to Mr. Mason, president of the Society, a few years ago in response to a request from him for some information about Mr. Barry, I replied, and I can but repeat it here, "he attended to the correspondence,

unpacked the boxes, was most earnest and untiring in soliciting exchanges, made up the packages to be sent in return, kept the records including the minutes of meetings, went day by day in summer and in winter, in sunshine and in storm to the post-office for the mail, and carried in his arms, or even if very bulky on his back, heavy bundles of papers and books to the Society rooms."

The removal to the Newberry Building had stimulated movement and the collection became varied and though fragmentary, interesting. At the Society's third annual meeting, its library numbered over 28,000, nearly 29,000 books, pamphlets, maps, and manuscripts, and this was despite of the panic of 1857. It was attracting attention and was receiving many gifts. Meetings were held at residences of members and the Society's affairs were discussed over a plate of ice-cream and a piece of sponge-cake for refreshments. Mr. Barry was indefatigable. He traveled widely throughout the State, and always with an eye single to his dominant purpose, expressed in the original constitution, that the object of the Association was to encourage historical inquiry, and spread historical information especially within the State of Illinois; to collect a library and manuscripts; to solve historical doubts. The mound builders and their work interested him and he had collected much information relating to them, he interviewed the State's pioneers and gathered facts from their personal history and preserved it, stimulating the writing of papers by the Society's members. I recollect his making an earnest effort to have some member write the history of Mason and Dixon's line.

The rate of increase became more rapid each succeeding year and the two rooms given it by Mr. Newberry soon became crowded; pamphlets jolted newspapers and they alike crowded the books. Larger quarters were a necessity; the library had grown over two thousand numbers in a year; but, though the panic of 1857 had somewhat expended its force, it was not a very propitious time for raising money for an organization which only indirectly appealed to the public. All the same, the effort must be made. A committee was appointed on January 9, 1864, a subscription for a lot and building was started and though it dragged somewhat, the committee in about a year reported

\$30,000 subscribed and the purchase of the lot where this building stands. A plan was adopted and a supposedly fire-proof building erected. Mr. Mason reports that, hard pressed for money, this committee set an example to others in similar positions by advancing \$15,000 from their own pockets. Shall I name them? George F. Rumsey, Edwin H. Sheldon, and for the third, well, as for the third I may recall the incident in "Ivanhoe" where Brian de Bois Gilbert is telling Cedric the Saxon of a tournament at St. John de Acre where King Richard with five of his knights held the field for a whole day against all comers, unhorsing even the doughty knight himself. Cedric calls for their names and the Palmer, standing near, who was Ivanhoe disguised, though his place was below the salt, named four and when he reached the fifth, after a pause in which he seemed trying to recollect said, "the fifth was a young knight of lesser renown and lower rank summoned into that honorable company, less to aid their enterprise than to make up their number; his name dwells not in my mind."

The building was a fine one, fully complete in itself, yet so placed as, without disturbing it, to be the wing of a larger when that should become necessary. It had a frontage of forty-two feet on Ontario street by a depth of eighty feet. Being built of brick trimmed with stone, and having the floor tiles on iron girders, and the roof of metal; it was thought to be fire-proof. The offices and storerooms were on the first floor; the whole of the second was given up to books and pamphlets and incidentally to a lecture and reading-room. It was formally dedicated November the 19, 1868; Mr. Scammon and Mr. Arnold making the addresses. The library, at this time, numbered over 15,000 bound volumes, 72,000 pamphlets, 1700 files of newspapers, and 4600 manuscripts. This was a change indeed from the pine shelves in Mr. Rumsey's room.

In his address delivered at the inauguration of the new building on November 19, 1868, Mr. Arnold said of the collection:

"Our library is believed to be nearly complete in the documents and publications of the United States Government in every department from its organization down to the present time.

This is also true of the territorial and state government of Illinois, including all laws, journals, and records of every department. We have large collections of the documents of the Northwestern States and Territories, and Mr. Barry has made especial efforts to collect the Session Laws and legislative records of all the colonies and of all the states and territories from their first organization down. We have those of Virginia for two hundred years, those of Massachusetts very nearly complete from the beginning, those of Pennsylvania and New Jersey for one hundred years and those of the Western States including Ohio nearly perfect."

The lawyer is evident in this enumeration. There were many manuscripts. I mention a few of them:

The original journal of the expedition by Major Livingstone and the younger Baron Castine from Port Royal to Quebec in 1710. It came to the Society from Gurdon S. Hubbard who had it from his relative Governor Saltonstall of Connecticut. John Kinzie senior's manuscript account of the Indians residing in Chicago in the early part of the century; the original memorial to Congress for the separation of Illinois from the Indiana Territory, which alleged that "Illinois has a population of 3000 and that its connection with Indiana is an unnatural and destructive alliance." George Flower's correspondence with Lafayette, Jefferson, Cobbett, and other distinguished men, the original Emancipation Proclamation of President Lincoln. It does not seem worth while to continue the enumeration.

The history from this time on till to-day, your President will tell you. The evening of October 8, 1871, saw building, books, maps, and manuscripts intact, the morning of the 9th a pile of brick, mortar, and ashes where they had been.

At the conclusion of Mr. McCagg's address, which was heard with many enthusiastic expressions of appreciation, President Head said:

As I was walking along State street this afternoon, I met an old-time and much esteemed friend, Mr. Edwin D. Mead. Mr. Mead is one of the high authorities on the early history and development of New England, and especially the State of Massa-

chusetts. His lectures and pamphlets issued through the "Old South Church" of Boston, are a mine of interesting and valuable information regarding the intellectual growth and development of New England. Mr. Mead has been for many years one of the active, working managers of the Massachusetts Historical Society, and has kindly consented to say a few words to us this evening.

Mr. Mead extended to the Chicago Historical Society the cordial congratulations of the Massachusetts Society and gave a most interesting summary of the historical relations between New England and Chicago in the Middle West, making special mention of several gentlemen who had been active in the development of Chicago and the work of its Historical Society.*

In the absence of Governor Deneen, the President stated that the Executive Committee had urged him to add some remarks suggested by the occasion and he spoke as follows:

Our honored member, Mr. McCagg, has given us an admirable synopsis of incidents in the early days of the Society, up to the time of the great fire, which entirely destroyed its accumulations. Books numbering about one hundred thousand volumes, rare manuscripts, and historical letters and data, much of which was unique and can never be replaced, were destroyed. Three years later, the accumulations of these three years were wiped out in the second fire. In 1874, with undaunted courage, the pioneers began for the third time the work of up-building the institution. For nearly twenty years, the meetings of the Society were, in a way, a movable feast, it having occupied several different quarters; but in 1892 the present building was commenced, and in 1896, it was formally dedicated to the use and work of the Society.

I am not an early member of the Historical Society, having joined in 1890, and my reminiscences are mostly measured by the terms in office of Mr. Edward G. Mason and Mr. John N. Jewett. I had occasionally, at an earlier date, attended the public meetings of the Society during the presidency of Mr. E. B.

*The Executive Committee regrets, exceedingly, that no record was made of Mr. Mead's very interesting impromptu address, and that it therefore can not be printed here in full.

Washburne, the predecessor of Mr. Mason. His life-work illustrates anew the fact that America is the land of opportunity. Mr. Washburne, whose home, for the greater part of his life, was at Galena, was for many years a member of Congress; later, Secretary of State in the cabinet of President Grant; then Minister to France. Returning to America, and taking up his abode in Chicago, he sprang almost at once from the comparatively obscure position of French Ambassador to the presidency of the Chicago Historical Society, which position he held until his death. He was a most affable and dignified presiding officer, much interested in the work of the Society, and contributed to its shelves many volumes and public documents of value. His work here was a fitting crown of a laborious and honorable life.

Mr. Edward G. Mason, after serving for several years as the efficient Vice-President of the Society, was chosen as its President in 1887, and was annually re-elected for eleven years thereafter. His special work was the erection of the building which shelters us to-night. This building cost \$190,000. Nearly one-half this cost was borne by the donation of Henry D. Gilpin. The next largest item was \$25,000 from John Crerar. After this were perhaps twenty others, subscribing amounts from \$250 to \$6000, such subscriptions being secured almost wholly by the efforts of Mr. Mason. The amount finally raised was said by the architect, Henry Ives Cobb, to be sufficient to complete the building, but when it was finished there was a deficiency of about \$20,000. This was ultimately paid, one half by the gift of Mr. George M. Pullman, and the other half by the generous bequest of Mrs. J. Y. Scammon. The Society thus now owns the building and contents, free from debt. The building is the permanent monument to Mr. Mason. He was its inspiring genius.

Mr. Mason was, in many ways, an ideal citizen of Chicago, the city of his pride and love. She never had a more loyal son. The growth of the city in material wealth, and especially in the cultivation and development of the arts, which are made possible by accumulated capital, was to him, a source of constant joy; and to the development of those arts, few contributed more than he.

For the purpose of securing manuscripts and other material

concerning the early history of Illinois, which were in danger of being lost, Mr. Mason spent many months, visiting all parts of Illinois and the neighboring states, and portions of Canada. Wherever he was, and however engaged, he always had an eye alert for adding anything of value to the splendid collection which now enriches this building. This collection is without parallel in the Nation, when we consider the brief time and limited means available for the work.

The studies of Mr. Mason in the period of the French occupation of Illinois, and about the quaint old towns of Cahokia and Kaskaskia, were most thorough and exhaustive. The lives and manners of these frontier people; their fondness for, and introduction here of the gaiety and lightness of French peasant life, so utterly in contrast with the sombre gravity of the Puritan founders of New England; the midnight dances in the forest,

"Where many a youth and many a maid
Were dancing in the chequered shade;"

the harvest-time frolics; their devotion to their religious faith and its priestly expositors; the quaint and frolicsome love-making of the youths and maidens; the arcadian and idyllic simplicity of their lives—all were pictured in our genial President's mind as if he had lived among them in those earlier days.

He had arranged with Houghton, Mifflin & Company, Boston, to write for their series of American Commonwealths the History of Illinois, and his passing away before the completion of this work was almost a national calamity. The work would have been especially full as to the hundred years of the French occupation. But on the shelves and in the archives of this Historical Society can still be found the greater part of the material he had proposed to use in the work, and some future student and writer will still find here the foundation for a picture of the French occupation of Illinois for a History of Illinois rivaling the fascinations of romance.

While Mr. Mason was not one of the heroic workers who organized this Society and carried it through its early struggles, yet his work was so great and valuable that he may properly be characterized as among its founders.

Hon. John N. Jewett was chosen President of the Society in 1899, a year after the death of Mr. Mason, and filled the position until his death in 1904. Mr. Jewett had been for many years one of the leading members of the Chicago bar, and a diligent student of American history, especially the history of the region now known as the Middle West. He was thus fitted for the work to which he was called, and performed the duties of the position with conscientious fidelity. He almost never missed a meeting of the Society or its officers, and his sound judgment was of constant value in the management of its affairs.

After his death, a Memorial Meeting was held in this hall, when the Chicago Bar Association, of which Mr. Jewett had been president, and the John Marshall Law School, of which he was dean, joined this Society in delivering addresses of eulogy. On the following day, the Executive Committee, at a special meeting, adopted and caused to be spread upon the Society's records, a Memorial, an engrossed and bound copy of which was sent to Mrs. Jewett, and from which I quote:

"The memory of John Nelson Jewett has been publicly and formally honored by oration and eulogy. The community in which for half a century he had been an eminent and an honorable citizen, has attested the height of esteem in which it held him. * * *

"It is now our privilege, as those who were perhaps closest to him in this work of his latest years, to pay the last and most intimate tribute of affection, and to spread upon our records the last expression of honor, until the pen of some gifted writer shall adequately chronicle the life and character of him who has passed from our daily sight.

"It is hard to speak of Mr. Jewett in the past tense. So impressive was his personality, and so vivid is his picture in our minds, that with difficulty we realize his absence is to be longer than for the day, and that the rich tones of his majestic voice must henceforth but echo through the infinite silence.

"When, after much urging, he with diffidence accepted the Society's presidency, his heart warmed to the work, and none of his predecessors was ever more devoted to its welfare, none

labored more zealously, in season and out of season, in its behalf. From his vast treasury of intellectual strength, of legal acumen, of profound learning, of sound judgment, of sterling integrity, he gave lavishly to the care and guidance of the Society's affairs. In the four years of his presidency, he called this Committee together for the Society's work sixty-four times. It had not been so often assembled in the preceding twenty-five years. What more eloquent testimony could there be to his unselfish devotion, his untiring energy, his grasp of detail, and his aggressive leadership in shaping, performing, and directing the duties devolved upon him and upon this Committee!

"He found the Society dormant, its finances disturbed, and its records in chaos; he left its work systematized and in active progress, its trust funds intact and productive. The disaster that threatened at the beginning of his presidency has yielded to his mastery, and solvency and prosperity have been established in its stead. While he was justly proud of these results, he disclaimed the credit for their accomplishment. The reward of his labors was the success he achieved. * * *

"The glove of velvet adorned, but did not mask, his hand of iron. Stately in bearing, courtly in manner, masterful in affairs, gracious in his simplicity, he won the respect, the admiration, and the affection of those who were privileged to know the Man.

"His presidency brought honor to our name among the historical societies of the world.

"Those who knew John N. Jewett best loved him most and have the chief right to mourn; and we who sat at his feet and held up his hands in this work * * * claim it our due to spread upon our records this too meager tribute to his memory."

The records of the Society make mention of many interesting incidents during the past fifty years. In 1880, the Society was troubled by the existence of a mortgage of \$12,000 upon its then new building, the holders of which were pressing for payment. At a meeting of the Executive Committee, where this matter had been discussed, Mr. L. Z. Leiter asked that he might be allowed to attend to that. A little memorandum book is now in the possession of the Society, showing the results of Mr. Leiter's

activity as a canvasser. It shows that Judge Mark Skinner, Edwin H. Sheldon, Henry J. Willing, and Mr. Leiter himself, each contributed \$2500, and Dr. D. K. Pearsons and Albert A. Munger each \$1000, whereby the mortgage was cancelled. Mr. Leiter was for many years a liberal giver for the work of the Society. He paid the expenses of publishing the first and second volumes of its collections.

The unique and valuable papers of President James Madison, filling eight large folio volumes, which contain some fourteen hundred letters written by Mr. Madison, with some few received by him, during his public life, were purchased by Mr. Marshall Field, and presented by him to the Society. He also paid the cost of publishing the third volume of its collections, being the official letters and documents of Ninian Edwards, territorial governor of Illinois.

We are often told from the pulpit that he who giveth is not thereby impoverished, and the truth of this maxim is seen in the fact that after the liberality of the two gentlemen, last named, Messrs. Leiter and Field, they have still left their families amply provided for.

The list of men and women who have been officers and members of the Historical Society is a notable one, and embraces a goodly proportion of the men who are credited with being the makers of Chicago. Among them we find the names of William B. Ogden, Isaac N. Arnold, Henry D. Gilpin, J. Y. Scammon, Walter L. Newberry, Edwin H. Sheldon, Cyrus H. McCormick, Henry J. Willing, T. B. Blackstone, N. K. Fairbank, George M. Pullman, Levi Z. Leiter, Mark Skinner, Marshall Field, William Blair, Charles B. Farwell, S. H. Kerfoot, Dr. R. N. Isham, Edwin C. Larned, Henry W. King, Edwin S. Isham, Wm. G. Hibbard, C. W. Fullerton, John H. Dunham, George Sturges, Chalkley J. Hambleton, Julian S. Rumsey, John B. Turner, Jonathan Burr, Dr. John H. Foster, William Bross, A. H. Burley, Hugh T. Dickey, H. G. Loomis, J. H. McVicker, F. H. Winston, John Wentworth, J. T. Ryerson, Thomas Hoyne, Ezra B. McCagg, Lambert Tree, D. K. Pearsons, Henry H. Porter, A. C. Bartlett, E. W. Blatchford, Byron L. Smith, Edward E. Ayer, Samuel M

Nickerson, Richard T. Crane, D. G. Hamilton, Charles L. Hutchinson, Martin A. Ryerson, John J. Glessner, Ezra J. Warner, and many more of the builders of our city. We feel therefore, when we invite the men and women of the present and the coming generation to join this notable band of honorable men and women, that we are asking them to marry into a good and worthy family.

The meeting of this evening is designed to be largely social, where the old and the newer members of the Society may meet and become acquainted. Nothing in the way of passing the plate is contemplated. But it may not be amiss to briefly advert to the financial side of the work of the Society. I have already stated that the institution owns its building and collections, and is free from debt. Its income is derived from the annual dues of the members, and the interest upon its permanent endowment. This endowment is regretfully small. It is carefully invested, but the income is greatly inadequate to the work before its managers. Rare and valuable material connected with the early history of our city and State, that will be of priceless value to the future historian and which may at any time, be lost or destroyed; is often available, but we have not the money to buy when it is purchasable.

Within the last few years, several sums of \$5000 and some of lesser amounts, have been bequeathed for the endowment fund, by Mrs. Edward Swan Stickney, Mrs. J. Y. Scammon, Mrs. Mahlon D. Ogden, Mrs. Lucian Tilton, Huntington W. Jackson, Henry J. Willing, E. T. Watkins, and T. Mauro Garrett.

I trust that these items indicate a growing habit among the members of the Society to remember it in their wills, and few methods can be named where the memory of the donors, attached to a special fund, will be more sure of permanent honor, or where the donations will be used more for the benefit of Chicago and its people, and its men and women of letters.

At the present time, when the current thought and conversation is so largely relative to contagion, I venture to hope that the making of bequests to this institution may become contagious, and remain so long after the present scarlet-fever excitement has passed away.

These bequests are sacredly guarded, the income alone is expended, and the names of the donors, attached to the special funds, will be passed to a grateful posterity, who will bless their generosity and be benefited thereby, long after Macaulay's historic New Zealander shall, "in the midst of a vast solitude where London was, take his stand on a broken arch of London Bridge, to sketch the ruins of St. Pauls."

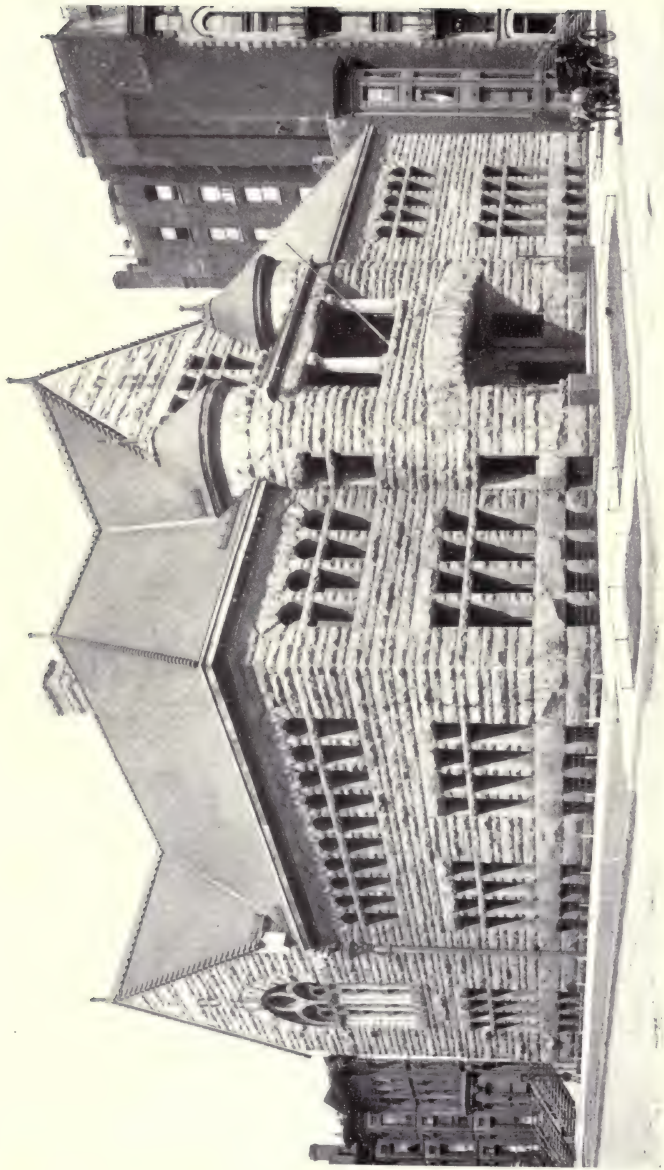
Even these prospective bequests, while pleasing, have their sad and mournful side, since in each case we must mourn the loss of a loved and honored member. Should anyone wish to guard against this sadness, and make the endowment a donation rather than a bequest, such person, by communicating with the Executive Committee or the Treasurer, can doubtless make an arrangement for a suitable commercial discount for cash.

Following the applause with which President Head's address was received, the audience left the Lecture Hall and found entertainment in the various departments of the Building. The Gilpin Library, the Stickney Library, the Manuscript Room, and the Museum, all were open and each attracted its quota of the guests. Refreshments were served on the large bronze tables in the Reading Room, where the decorations were American Beauty roses, and a special exhibit of photographs, manuscripts, and other monuments of the first days of the Society, arranged by the House Committee and the Librarian, bore eloquent testimony to the foresight of the founders.

A large number of the ladies and gentlemen present had been residents of Chicago for the whole fifty years of the Society's life, and this gathering gave to these people such an opportunity as had rarely been offered of meeting a goodly number of their friends and acquaintances of early days.

Upon no other occasion, except the dedication of the Building in 1896 and the reception in 1903, commemorative of the Centennial of the erection of Fort Dearborn, had so many persons attended a meeting as the guests of the Society, and the occasion was one of the most interesting in its history.





CHICAGO HISTORICAL SOCIETY BUILDING

DEARBORN AVENUE AND ONTARIO STREET

ROLL OF OFFICERS
AND MEMBERS

1856—1907



INCORPORATORS

WILLIAM BARRY, Founder
JAMES VAN ZANDT BLANEY
MASON BRAYMAN
WILLIAM HUBBARD BROWN
NATHAN SMITH DAVIS
VAN HOLLIS HIGGINS
JOHN HARRIS KINZIE
GEORGE MANIERRE
EZRA BUTLER McCAGG
MAHLON DICKERSON OGDEN
WILLIAM BUTLER OGDEN
CHARLES HENRY RAY
FRANKLIN SCAMMON
JONATHAN YOUNG SCAMMON
MARK SKINNER
WILLIAM A. SMALLWOOD
EDWARD ISLAY TINKHAM
SAMUEL DEXTER WARD
JOSEPH DANA WEBSTER



CHICAGO HISTORICAL SOCIETY

ORGANIZED, APRIL 24, 1856.

INCORPORATED, FEBRUARY 7, 1857.

BUILDING DEDICATED, NOVEMBER 19, 1868.

BUILDING AND COLLECTIONS DESTROYED BY THE CHICAGO FIRE,
OCTOBER 8-9, 1871.

COLLECTIONS DESTROYED BY SECOND FIRE, JULY 14, 1874.

TEMPORARY BUILDING OCCUPIED, OCTOBER 16, 1877.

COLLECTIONS STORED, AND BUILDING REMOVED, 1892.

CORNER-STONE OF NEW BUILDING LAID, NOVEMBER 12, 1892.

PRESENT FIRE-PROOF BUILDING, ERECTED BY PRIVATE

SUBSCRIPTION AT A COST OF \$190,000; DEDICATED
DECEMBER 15, 1896.

LOCATIONS

1856. MARINE BANK BUILDING, NORTHEAST CORNER
LAKE AND LA SALLE STREETS.
- 1856-1857. EXCHANGE BRNK BUILDING, SOUTHWEST CORNER
CLARK AND LAKE STREETS.
- 1857-1858. RUMSEY BUILDING, 44 AND 46 LA SALLE STREET.
- 1858-1868. NEWBERRY BUILDING, NORTHEAST CORNER
WELLS AND KINZIE STREETS.
- 1868-1871. SOCIETY'S BUILDING, NORTHWEST CORNER
DEARBORN AVENUE AND ONTARIO STREET.
- 1872-1874. SCAMMON BUILDING, 209 MICHIGAN AVENUE.
- 1877-1892. TEMPORARY BUILDING, 142 DEARBORN AVENUE.
- 1896- SOCIETY'S PERMANENT BUILDING, NORTHWEST CORNER
DEARBORN AVENUE AND ONTARIO STREET.



Benefactors

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LUCRETIA POND
GEORGE MORTIMER PULLMAN
MARIA SHELDON SCAMMON
ELIZABETH HAMMOND STICKNEY
LUCRETIA JANE TILTON
ELIAS TAYLOR WATKINS
HENRY JENKENS WILLING

Persons who bequeath money or property to the Society are enrolled as Benefactors.

Membership

Membership in the Society may be had only upon recommendation of the Executive Committee. There is no entrance fee. Life Membership, free from all dues, is five hundred dollars; Annual Membership, twenty-five dollars. These payments carry with them the right to hold office, to vote, and take part in the proceedings of the Society, to the use of the Library and Reading-room, to admission to all Lectures and Entertainments, and to a copy of the Society's current Publications.

Form of Bequest

*I Give and Bequeath to the Chicago Historical Society,
Incorporated by Special Act of the Legislature of the
State of Illinois, Approved February 7, 1857, the sum of
-----Dollars.*

TREASURERS

SAMUEL DEXTER WARD	- - - - -	1856—1858
EDWARD ISLAY TINKHAM	- - - - -	} 1859—1860
WILLIAM BLAIR	- - - - -	{ 1870—1873
		1861
FRANKLIN SCAMMON	- - - - -	1862
GEORGE FREDERICK RUMSEY	- - - - -	1863—1864
BELDEN FARRAND CULVER	- - - - -	1865—1866
THOMAS H. ARMSTRONG	- - - - -	1867—1868
ROBERT REID	- - - - -	1869
SOLOMON ALBERT SMITH	- - - - -	1874—1878
BYRON LAFLIN SMITH	- - - - -	1879
AUGUSTUS HARRIS BURLEY	- - - - -	1880
HENRY H. NASH	- - - - -	1881—1888
GILBERT B. SHAW	- - - - -	1889—1892
EDWARD GAY MASON (Acting)	- - - - -	1893—1898
ORSON SMITH	- - - - -	1899—

CORRESPONDING SECRETARIES

CHARLES HENRY RAY	- - - - -	1856—1857
EZRA BUTLER McCAGG	- - - - -	} 1858—1863
		{ 1869—1870

SECRETARIES AND LIBRARIANS

WILLIAM BARRY	- - - - -	1856—1866
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LEMUEL G. OLMSTEAD	- - - - -	1868—1869
WILLIAM CORKRAN	- - - - -	1869—1870
J. W. HOYT	- - - - -	1870—1871
BELDEN FARRAND CULVER	- - - - -	1874—1877
ALBERT DAVID HAGER	- - - - -	1877—1887
JOHN MOSES	- - - - -	1887—1893
EDWARD GAY MASON (Acting)	- - - - -	1893—1896
CHARLES EVANS	- - - - -	1896—1901
JAMES W. FERTIG, Secretary	- - - - -	1901—1907
CAROLINE M. McILVAINE, Librarian	- - - - -	1901—

ASSISTANTS

SAMUEL STONE	- - - - -	} 1857—1862
WILLIAM CORKRAN	- - - - -	{ 1865—1866
		1870—1871

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ISAAC NEWTON ARNOLD	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1871-1876
EDWARD EVERETT AYER	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1837-1906
ELIPHALET WICKES BLATCHFORD	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1874-1875
JOSEPH TILTON BOWEN	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1901-
BELDEN FARRAND CULVER	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1877-1880
WILLIAM ALDEN FULLER	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1903-
JOHN DEKOVEN	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1876-1877
JOHN HIGH DUNHAM	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1871-1873
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LYMAN JUDSON GAGE	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1831-1898
T. MAURO GARRETT	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1859-1903
DANIEL GOODWIN	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1895-1899
CHARLES FREDERICK GUNTHER	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1899-
CHALKLEY JAY HAMBLETON	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1839-1900
WILLIAM HICKLING	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1877-1881
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SAMUEL HUMES KERFOOT, Jr	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1897-
LEVI ZIEGLER LEITER	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1871-1904
EZRA BUTLER McCAGG	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1868-1870
EDWARD GAY MASON	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1883-1885
GEORGE MERRYWEATHER	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1900-
WALTER CASS NEWBERRY	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1904-
DANIEL KIMBALL PEARSONS	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1881-1900
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GEORGE FREDERICK RUMSEY	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1871-1878
JULIAN SIDNEY RUMSEY	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1880-1881
JONATHAN YOUNG SCAMMON	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1871-1875
OTTO LEOPOLD SCHMIDT	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1899-
EDWIN HOLMES SHELDON	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1876-1888
MARK SKINNER	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1870-1887
GEORGE WASHINGTON SMITH	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1837-1898
LUCIAN TILTON	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1871-1875
JOHN BICE TURNER	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1871-1871
ELIAS TAYLOR WATKINS	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1874-1879
JOHN WENTWORTH	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1882-1886
HENRY JENKENS WILLING	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1886-1898
JOHN P. WILSON	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1905-

TRUSTEES OF THE GILPIN FUND

AUGUSTUS HARRIS BURLEY	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1879—1903
CLARENCE AUGUSTUS BURLEY	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1904—
EUGENE HEALD FISHBURN	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1891—
WALTER LOWRIE FISHER	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1904—
WILLIAM BUTLER OGDEN	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1860—1877
ERSKINE M. PHELPS	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1904—
GEORGE FREDERICK RUMSEY	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1879—1881
EDWIN HOLMES SHELDON	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1879—1890
HENRY JENKENS WILLING	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1888—1903
PETER LYNCH YOE	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1838—1898
The PRESIDENT, and FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT, <i>ex-officio</i> .								

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✦ Deceased
 o Membership ceased.

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|------------------------------|----------------------------|
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| McCAGG, EZRA BUTLER | ✦SKINNER, MARK |
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| McCORMICK, NETTIE FOWLER | TREE, LAMBERT |
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| NICKERSON, SAMUEL MAYO | |

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OGDEN, WILLIAM BUTLER
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WARNER, EZRA JOSEPH
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- ✠WHEELER, CALVIN THATCHER
- ✠WINSTON, FREDERICK HAMPDEN
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 ARMOUR, GEORGE ALLISON
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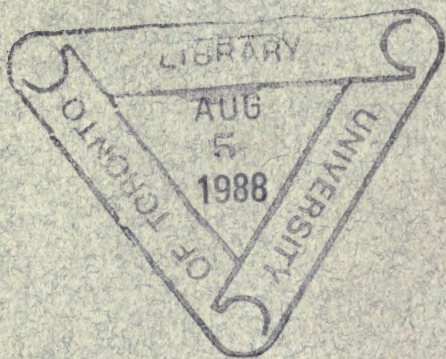
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