

Some
LEGENDS
& LORE
of
Princeton University

Historical sketches



By Margaret Smagorinsky

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In May 1746 Lewis Morris, the royal governor of New Jersey, died. Almost all his life he had been deeply involved in New Jersey's political, economic, and religious affairs and had been a dedicated supporter of the efforts of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel to convert dissenters (that is, non-Anglican Protestants) in New Jersey to the Church of England. The year before his death he had been petitioned to grant a **charter** empowering four highly respected clergymen and three laymen, all Presbyterians, as trustees to establish a college to be called the College of New Jersey. Apparently feeling that the many New



 Jersey Quakers were indifferent to the “proposal” and that the Anglicans regarded it with suspicion, he refused to grant the charter for a dissenters’ college. He did so despite the fact that the founding seven, whose primary concern was education of pious youths who would enter the Presbyterian ministry, expressed in their proposed charter “their earnest Desire that those **of every Religious Denomination** may have free and Equal Liberty and Advantage of Education in the Said College notwithstanding any different Sentiment in Religion”

Upon the death of Governor Morris, John Hamilton, the president of the Council of the Province, became the acting governor. The seven petitioners soon renewed their request. Hamilton, encouraged by a group of advisers, many of them friends of the proposed college, signed the charter on **October 22, 1746**. (The original document was lost in the official colonial archives; no copy had been kept in the college records, and for almost 200 years it was believed that no complete version of the charter had been preserved anywhere. Then a transcript was discovered in London in the library of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, the Anglican missionary society close

to the heart of Governor Morris. Thomas J. Weertenbaker included copies of two charters in the appendix to his *Princeton 1746-1896*. Today, the 1748 charter is preserved in the University archives).

August 1747 saw the arrival in Perth Amboy of New Jersey's new royal governor, Jonathan Belcher, a Congregationalist and Harvard College graduate who had been the chairman of Harvard's board of trustees when he was governor of Massachusetts. On his way to his new residence in Burlington, he visited the president of the new college, Jonathan Dickinson, from whose home in Elizabethtown the College had been functioning since the previous May. There Governor Belcher learned that the Anglican colonists had been raising questions regarding the validity of the charter under which the College had been operating. he was also apprised of the necessity of choosing **a permanent site for the building.**

From the first the governor was an ardent advocate of the College, and he put the necessity of revising the disputed charter high on his agenda. Within a month he started lobbying for the selection of **Prince Town** as the location for the college as "being nearest the Centre of the Province."

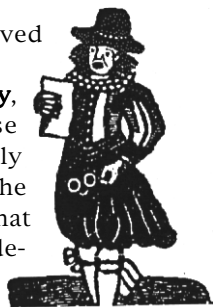
But the trustees of the College were not yet ready to decide on a site. They were busy nurturing their infant college, using Harvard as a model, as had Yale. (Most of the Harvard founders were sons of Cambridge University. Therefore much of the academic structure of these three colonial colleges was a modest reflection of their English prototype.) Following the death of President Dickinson in November, they selected Aaron Burr, Sr., as the new president, and the students move to his home in Newark.



Under Governor Belcher's supervision, and after much consultation, a new charter was eventually produced, containing much that had been part of the original document plus elements designed to ensure its legality, with the governor designated as chairman of the

board of trustees. The new charter was approved by the Provincial Council on September 13, 1748.

The College's **first degree-awarding ceremony**, which was held in the Newark Meeting House of which President Burr was pastor, was originally scheduled for May 1748. It was postponed at the governor's request until November 4, 1748, so that he could attend and be awarded an honorary degree (A.M.). As At Cambridge, Harvard, and Yale, much of the long academic program at that first Commencement (and for many years thereafter was conducted in Latin, with the highest distinction being the **salutatorian's** oration. The honor of delivering this address, to this day declaimed in Latin at Princeton commencement ceremonies, was awarded until recently the highest-ranking member of the graduating class. Today, the student's special qualifications are taken into account along with his or her scholastic standing. Since 1914, in order to lend an illusion of authenticity to the program, fellow graduates have been mercifully provided with the Latin text, complete with cues indicating appropriate responses. *Hic plaudite!* In 1786 a second Latin salutatory, was awarded. The next year this was changed to a Greek salutatory, becoming in the following year the English salutatory and recognized as the second honor until it was discontinued in 1897.



It was not until 1760 that the **valedictory** was awarded as a graduation honor to a high-ranking student with oratorical talent. Prior to 1760 the valedictory was delivered by a candidate for the A.M. or by a member of the faculty.

Another element of the Cambridge connection is the practice of calling the graduation ceremony **Commencement**. At Oxford this solemnity was called "an Act," but at Cambridge they used the French word *commensement*, which usually pertained to the awarding of graduate degrees.

The trustees held a business meeting in the evening of that historic first Commencement day. They voted that the annual Commencement for the future take place on the last day Wednesday of September.

The date was probably selected because the Harvard commencement took place annually on the second Wednesday of September, and Yale's occurred on the third of September Wednesday. After the College moved to Princeton, Commencement was held in the Prayer Hall at Nassau Hall until 1764, when the ceremony was moved to the large new First Presbyterian Church on the main street, then called the King's Highway. Over the years, this solemn event had to compete with increasingly rowdy celebrations in the street outside the church. In September 1843, the trustees voted to avoid this indignity by moving the annual Commencement to the last Wednesday in June. At their June 1889 meeting, the trustees voted to restructure the academic year, dividing it into two terms (rather than three) and starting one week later than had been the case, placing Commencement one week later. This then, is how Commencement shifted to the second Tuesday in June.

In the evening of that first Commencement day, the trustees voted to approve the design of **the college seal** prepared by William P. Smith, one of the original founding trustees. The design of the seals of Harvard and Cambridge and many Old World institutions of higher learning consisted of one or more open books with an inscribed motto. The seal of the College of New Jersey featured not only the inscribed open book, but also a table with books on top of it plus a rolled up diploma and a banner bearing the college motto. When the College was named Princeton University at its sesquicentennial in 1896, the design of the seal was simplified to include a shield with appropriate iconography set within a circular border along with the new University motto, **DEI SUB NUMINE VIGET**. Under God's power she flourishes. This full seal is strictly reserved for the trustees' official use. The shield, with the motto in a ribbon beneath it, is the official



insignia of the University and may be used for any appropriate decorative purposes by anyone or any organization with official University affiliation. Since September 1, 1987, the insignia has been a federally registered trademark and may be used commercially with University approval upon the payment of certain fees.

Back in the 1750s, operating under the new charter and buoyed by the governor's enthusiastic support, the trustees sponsored various successful fund-raising activities, giving them enough financial confidence to enable them to settle on a permanent location for the college building. Newark and Elizabethtown were suggested but had very little support from the trustees, and Governor Belcher favored a more central location. Both Princeton (Governor Belcher's preference) and New Brunswick were under serious consideration.

Anticipating that the presence of the College would lend prestige to a town and have a positive impact on trade and property values, the trustees required certain guarantees of financial support from the rival locations. Princeton was selected when its enterprising citizens assumed the specified obligations. Nathaniel FitzRandolph gave four and half acres of prime, cleared land on the King's Highway -the area that is now the front campus.



In the summer of 1754 ground was broken for the new building designed by Philadelphian Robert Smith. In gratitude for all of the governor's generosity to the College, the trustees decided to name the building Belcher Hall. The governor modestly declined the honor (a decision appreciated by generations of Princetonians). He suggested the building be called **Nassau Hall**, to commemorate William III, Prince of Orange-Nassau and King of England from 1689 to 1702. During his reign he gained passage of the Toleration Act, which extended liberty of private worship to Dissenters, an issue of great importance to all non-Anglican Protestants. He also secured the Act of Settlement that designated George II's grandmother, Princess Sophia of Hanover, as William and Mary's successor and thus was responsible for George II's presence on the English throne.

Nassau Hall was substantially completed when the students moved down from Newark in November 1756 (The date was officiall commemorated in 1956 when the U.S. Postal Service issued a three-cent



stamp marking the 200th anniversary of Nassau Hall -the orange and black stamp reproduced the Henry Dawkins engraving of the 1756 building.)

The prospects for the College were improving, but the health of its patron was deteriorating. President Burr had the unhappy duty of preaching the funeral sermon upon the death of his friend, Governor Belcher, in August 1757. (Ultimately the College received from his estate 474 volumes for their library, his portrait, and 10 portraits of the queens and kings of England.) The following month President Burr, who had worked so untiringly for the establishment of the College, fell ill and died four days before the first commencement exercises were held at Nassau Hall. He was the first Princeton's 11 Presidents buried in the President's Lot in Princeton Cemetery.

The first recorded **Baccalaureate Address**, one of Princeton's oldest traditions, was delivered in 1760 by President Samuel Davies on the Sunday preceding Commencement, as it is today. In his address "Religion and Publick Spirit", he advised the graduates to "Serve your generation . . . Live not for yourself but the Publick." Since then, the graduate's responsibility as a citizen has been the recurring theme of nearly every valedictory oration.

Between 1747 and 1766, Princeton had five presidents, all of whom died in office. The healthy and energetic John Witherspoon arrived from Scotland to become president in 1768. Almost from the day of his arrival in this country, he was surrounded by ardent patriots and soon became a leader in the revolutionary moment. Tradition claims that the **two sycamores** in front of President's house (now Maclean House) had been planted in 1765 by order of the trustees to commemorate the colonial resistance to the Stamp Act. In 1774, when news of the Boston Tea Party reached Princeton, the students staged their own tea party, confiscating all





the tea from the College steward's stores and the students' rooms and burning it in front yard as the College bell tolled.

President Witherspoon was a member of the loosely knit Provincial Congress that took over the colony's government in 1775; the following year, as a delegate of Continental Congress, he signed the **Declaration of Independence**, the only ordained minister among the signers. Immediately thereafter, the Provincial congress, meeting Nassau Hall, elected the state's first governor, appointed the first chief of justice, and agreed upon the design of the great seal of the state. It was to be made of silver, the arms to be three plows in an escutcheon, the supporters Liberty and Ceres, and the crest a horse's head, an appropriate emblem for the state that would be called the Garden State. (The seal is carved on two campus arches: the Rothschild Memorial Arch and the arch connecting the Class of 1905-Walter L. Foulke Memorial Dormitory and the Class of 1904-Howard Henry Memorial Dormitory.)

By now **the war** was heading toward Princeton. In November 1776, General George Washington led his battered army on a forced retreat across New Jersey, through New Brunswick and Princeton and then on into Pennsylvania. President Witherspoon attempted to keep the College functioning, but the imminent approach of the British troops in pursuit of the Colonial army obliged him to abandon the buildings on November 29. A week later when the British marched through Princeton, a detachment was left in the town and Nassau Hall was commandeered for the use of a regiment. Their horses were stabled in the basement, which had been the students' refectory. The rough soldiers vandalized the students' rooms where they were quartered and plundered the library. But the British guards stationed



outside the room containing the college's scientific instruments, most notably the Rittenhouse Orrery (which contained a mechanical model of the solar system), prevented any damage to the equipment.

On the morning of January 3, 1777, the regiment was hastily summoned to the relief of the main body of their forces who had suffered **defeat at Trento** and were being routed at the Princeton Battlefield, less than two miles down the road from the campus.

A retreating British contingent took refuge in fortress-like Nassau Hall, whose thick stone walls offered maximum protection from rifle attack. Unhappily for them, the pursuing American detachment rolled up a cannon and fired on the building, forcing its surrender. A round struck the solid south wall of the west wing between the first and second windows from the projecting Prayer Hall (today's Faculty Room) on the second floor above ground. The scar of his shot has been preserved in all the various repairs and repointings during the ensuing 200-plus years and can be seen today.

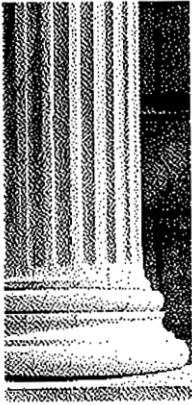
According to tradition, a **cannonball** crashed through a window of the Prayer Hall and shot off the head of George II's portrait that Governor Belcher had given to the College although there are no eyewitness accounts of this remarkable happenstance.

In June 1783 when the Continental Congress left Philadelphia to escape the heckling of mutinous Pennsylvania soldiers, the Congress adjourned to Princeton, thus temporarily making Princeton the nation's capital. During this session news arrived in July of the signing of the Treaty of Paris. With the Revolutionary War formally ended, diplomatic relations were opened later that month, with Sweden becoming the first nation to recognize the United States. Toward the end of the session in October the Dutch ambassador was received with as much pomp as could be mustered in a small, overcrowded rural village..

The Congress, which had invited **General Washington** to come to Princeton to be officially thanked for his wartime leadership, was still session at the time of the College's Commencement. The College trustees, taking advantage of General Washington's presence appointed a committee to "wait upon His Excellency to request him to sit for his picture, to be taken by Mr. Charles Wilson Peale of Philadelphia. His portrait, when finished, was to be placed in the Hall of the College in the room of the picture of the late King of Great Britain (George II), which was torn away by a ball from the American artillery in the Battle of Princeton." (no mention is made of the putative decapitation.) John Maclean, Jr., Class of 1816, in his "History of the College of New Jersey," comments: "It is known that the building was struck in different places by cannonballs during the affair at Princeton; and one may have entered the chapel, where the portrait of his Majesty was hanging, and destroyed it. But be this as it may, the portrait was destroyed, and the frame, regilded, now contains a full-length portrait of General Washington."



The decapitation legend was improved upon around the end of the 19th century when writers started to place **Alexander Hamilton** at the scene commanding the artillery battery that fired the historic shot. Further legend suggests that Hamilton had a grudge against Princeton because the trustees had turned down his application to matriculate there on his own special terms: He wished to be permitted to advance from class to class with as much rapidity as his exertions would enable him to do. No one present at the event supports this version of the action. The only contemporary document suggesting Hamilton's possible presence at Trenton is incidental reference in his pay book -perhaps he was present at the campus encounter, maybe his company fired on Nassau Hall, or possible George II's



portrait was decapitated. In any event, this is an authentic legend.

At that time, the Latin word **campus** was not generally used to denote the grounds surrounding a college building. They were usually referred to as the college yard. Shortly after President Witherspoon's arrival, "yard" started to give way to "campus" at Princeton. An etymologist has suggested that President Witherspoon, who had come from an urban Scottish university, may have introduced the term. He may have been struck by the resemblance of Nassau Hall's flat, treeless surroundings to a Roman campus. For several years

yard and campus were both in use at Princeton, but toward the end of the 18th century, yard gradually gave way to campus. Most college throughout the country adopted campus, excepting, among others, the University of Virginia, which boasts "the Grounds." and Fair Harvard, which still clings to the homely "Yard".

The war left **Nassau Hall in ruinous condition**. On the day of the cannonading, after the British were driven out, the Americans occupied the premises for a few hours at most, leaving afterward to join the rest of Washington's army that was pushing on to Morristown. Later that day, Cornwallis's men returned, staying only briefly. An American force moved in, using the building for a barracks, and stayed for over five months, doing a thorough job of wrecking the place. They used the benches and the doors for firewood, ripped up the floors, ruined the organ and all the scientific instruments, stripped the plaster from the walls, and littered the floors with an accumulation of filth. Then doctors arrived, who had to convert this unbelievably dismal place into a military hospital. When the College took possession of the building after two years of military occupation, it was nothing but a gutted shell.

Classes remained suspended until after the armies left New Jersey. The first few returning scholars studied at the President's home until funds were obtained to repair Nassau Hall. It had not

been fully restored when the Continental Congress met there in 1783. The refurbished building had a very short life. **Fire broke out** on a windy Saturday in March 1802, and in two hours only the walls were left standing. Immediately the fund-raisers were busy again, and Benjamin Latrobe (later the architect for the U.S. Capitol) was hired for the reconstruction. With only the walls to constrain him, he was able to introduce modifications such as raising the roof and improving the look of the exterior of the structure. The interior changes were minor. The 175-foot-long east-west corridor remained.

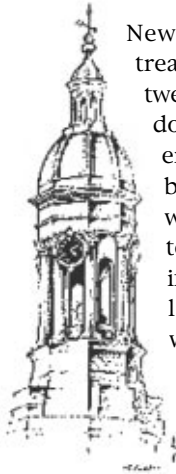


John Simpson, Class of 1794, was a Princeton resident at the time of the fire. While the building was still in flames, he started a subscription list headed by his own contribution of \$500, and before the flames were extinguished local residents had pledged \$5,000. Their generosity may have been influenced by a desire to convince the trustees that they should rebuild in Princeton, where caring citizenry appreciated the economic benefits accorded them by the presence of the College.

But beware the winds of March - a windy Saturday in March 1855 gave the fund-raisers another chance at honing their skills when **a second disastrous fire** left little other than the walls standing. John Notman was chosen to design a fire proof building. He was an admirer of the Italianate style, which he employed in 1849 in the design of Prospect, the gracious building that later became the residence of Princeton's presidents and is now the University dining facility for faculty and staff members. The Florentine flourishes he applied to

Nassau Hall included the addition of square towers rising full story above the roof line at both ends of the building. The towers provided entrance to the ground floor, and enclosed winding stairways cut from dressed redstone quarried in





Newark -and still in daily use today with well-worn treads- making every ascent and descent an adventure. Between the east and west sections of the long central corridor, partitions were erected, thus preventing students the enjoyment of their traditional sport of rolling cannonballs down the corridor's brick-tiled length at night, which would bring out the resident tutor who would try to capture the ball and stop the noise. It is not known if the shortening of the hall encouraged students to emulate their Harvard counterparts, who found it highly rewarding to roll a cannonball downstairs, which generated a marvelous din. Both towers were leveled off at the roofline in 1905, leaving the silhouette we see today. It is important to note that in 1961 Nassau Hall was designated a **National Historic Landmark**.

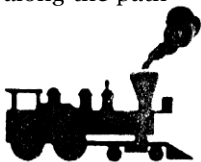
After the glory years of the 18th century, the reputation of the College started to go downhill. The College performed like a dysfunctional family, with the administration unable to cope with the rebelliousness of the students, who in turn thought the faculty was unjust and tyrannical. The total number of students increased, but the number of divinity students dwindled. The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church thought that the atmosphere at the College had grown too secular and pressed for the establishment of a **separate divinity school** uncontaminated by the College.. The College trustees had little enthusiasm for the project, but eventually they entered into an agreement with the general Assembly in June 1811, establishing in Princeton the country's first Presbyterian theological seminary. Still in effect is one of the articles of agreement granting "the professors and pupils of the Theological Seminary the free use of the College library." In 1990 the seminary, the largest of the 10 seminaries supported by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), had two and a half times more students enrolled in their master of divinity programs than the next largest Presbyterian seminary.

From its earliest days, the graduates of the College have expressed a lasting love for their alma mater, expressed not only in generous

gifts but in constructive advice. In 1826 Professor John Maclean, Jr., Class of 1816, organized a movement for the establishment of closer relations between the College and its graduates, resulting in the creation of the Alumni Association of Nassau Hall. Its constitution was framed by George Mifflin Dallas, Class of 1810 (after whom Dallas, Texas was named); the venerable patriot **James Madison**, Class of 1771, was elected the first president, and John Maclean, Jr., was made secretary -a post he held for the next 50 years.

An alumni forum was provided with the April 1900 publication of the *Princeton Alumni Weekly*, usually referred to as *PAW*. Its first issue advise that “the *Weekly* can be that common ground. . . to keep alive connection between the two [the College and its sons] for their mutual enlightenment, benefits and satisfaction.” The *Weekly’s* campaign to obtain alumni representation on the governing board of trustees resulted in the election of the first alumni trustees in June of the following year. *PAW*, now published 17 times a year in September through July, remains an important link between alumni and the University.

All travelers to Princeton depended on horses, either riding on horseback or using the public stagecoach, **before the railroad** came to Princeton in 1839. The depot for the single-track system running along the canal from Trenton to the north was about a mile from town and was located at the foot of Canal Street (today’s Alexander Street). The service was satisfactory until the Civil War broke out and the heavy military demands placed upon this main north-south artery rendered it inadequate. to meet the needs for better facilities, the route north from Trenton was straightened and a double-track line was laid along the path followed today by Amtrak. When the Princeton depot was closed, the local citizenry protested so vigorously that the railroad company built a spur line connection the town with the main line. It probably helped that Commodore Robert Field Stockton, a Class of 1813 dropout and a



major stockholder in the railroad company, was a prominent resident of Princeton. **The spur train**, which was put into service in May 1865, took about 20 minutes for the 3-mile trip. A drawbridge had been built over the canal, and since **canal traffic** had the right-of-way, the trains were often delayed by the need to open and close the bridge. Additionally, it was required that the brakeman walk over the bridge ahead of the train. The train's small locomotive is aptly described by the definition of a dinky : a small locomotive . (Although the line has been electrified since 1936, the train is still called the "**Dinky.**")

The original station was located directly behind the University Store site. Sometime in the 1890s the station was moved just south of the Blair Hall steps, showering the dormitory rooms with soot when the locomotive started up. In 1918 the present station was built, leaving behind a triangular-shaped milestone between Laughlin and Stafford Little Halls, with "0" on the south side, indicating zero miles to Princeton - and "3" on the north side- indicating 3 miles to Princeton Junction. PJ & B (Princeton Junction and back) was for many years the operating names of a local company of amateur and professional singers who gave an annual musical performance.

From time to time the railroad company threatens to shut down the spur line. Today, the once charming station is shabby, and other transportation facilities are available: There are buses to New York City, vans to Newark Airport, helicopters from Princeton Airport, private cars, and limousines. But despite complaints about the service, large numbers of Princetonians remain loyal the Dinky.



Until the building of new dormitories in the 1830s, Nassau Hall was the College -it was the dormitory, the classroom, the commons, and the chapel. Since the small, rural village of Princeton offered **few recreational opportunities**,the students relied on their own ability to organize entertainment. Their efforts were sometimes ingenious, frequently rowdy, and oftentimes disrespectful. On one occasion a wagon was carried piece by piece to the top of the floor of Nassau Hall, where it

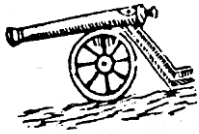
was resembled and then sent from one end of the long hallway to the other, creating a deafening clatter. The outhouse was the focus of periodic assault, as it was either blown up, burned down, or even sometimes carted away. Before a chapel was built in 1847, the present Faculty Room (later enlarged) served as a prayer room for daily worship. A student's journal reports that one time at Evening Prayers the head of a stuffed raccoon, wearing a sign that read "The New Tutor," was observed peering over the edge of the pulpit. Legend has it, too, that a **live calf occupied the pulpit** on yet another occasion. And in the spirit of good, clean fun, the students swam in the canal, which it, should be noted, was forbidden.



Class day, a last hurrah for undergraduate life, was first celebrated by the Class of 1856. It was customary at that time for students to keep a supply of **clay pipes**, called churchwardens, on hand for visitors' to enjoy. On Class Day, celebrated on Cannon Green, at the end of the program of speeches and awards, a student would hurl his churchwarden against the revered cannon, symbolizing the breaking of ties with undergraduate life. Until recently, every Class Day participant was furnished with a clay pipe and a small sack of tobacco to light up at the finale. But as the days of pipe smoking have receded into the past, the symbolism has been lost, and a few years ago, in order to save the cost of clay pipes, tobacco, and cleanup, the custom was abandoned. Today's Class Day is still a day of joy and sadness, celebrate with award ceremonies -but not with churchwardens.



The cannon used as a target for the clay pipes, the so-called "big-cannon," was a Revolutionary War relic that had been taken from Princeton to New Brunswick to defend the city during the War of 1812. It was returned to the town of Princeton in 1836 and buried muzzle down in the center of **Cannon Green** (behind Nassau Hall)



four years later. The smaller piece, now embedded below ground in a ton of concrete close to Whig Hall, with its protruding cascabel painted red, precipitated the **Cannon War** between Rutgers and Princeton in 1875. The Rutgers students, mistakenly believing that the cannon had been taken from New Brunswick at an earlier date, came to Princeton and made off with it. Princeton students then went to Rutgers, and unable to locate the cannon, broke into a museum and carried off some old muskets. The dispute was finally resolved by a joint Rutgers-Princeton faculty committee, with the small cannon being returned to Princeton. Many interesting stories are related detailing the use of these **two cannons** in the Battle of Princeton. Not so, according to Jac Weller, who was honorary curator of Civil War ordnance at West Point and knew more than a thing or two, about military hardware, “Unfortunately for legends that have grown up, neither of these pieces is of a type that would have seen service in the Battle of Princeton. They were not used in this campaign. They are, however, authentic trophies of the Revolution that were brought on the campus while the war was still going on.” (Alas, colorful as it might have been, they were not fired during the Battle of Princeton).

In 1859 a freshman named Harlan Page Peck won first prize in a song contest run by the *Nassau Literary Magazine*. The winning song, which was printed in the March 1859 issue and was to be sung to the tune of “Auld Lang Syne,” was “**Old Nassau.**” But the tune didn’t work so Karl A. Langlotz, a teacher of German at the College of New Jersey who had studied music under Liszt, was persuaded to compose a more singable melody. He composed the music for it a few weeks later. There have been but few changes to the lyrics since its first rendition. The original lyrics were: Tune every harp and every voice/ Bid every care withdraw/ Let all with one accord rejoice/ In praise of Old Nassau. In Praise of Old Nassau/ my boys/ Hurrah, Hurrah, Hurrah! -Her sons will give/ while they shall live/ Three cheers for Old Nassau.



In early 1890s *harp* was changed to heart. In 1897, nearly 18 years after Princeton's first female students matriculated, the chorus was amended to include them in the alma mater. *My boys* became *we sing*, and *her sons* was replaced by *our hearts*, requiring that the following *they* be changed to *we*.

What was in the drinking water in the second week of March 1864? On Wednesday evening, the indignant townspeople were awakened by the sound of martial music being played by a student blowing on a tin horn and leading a riotous procession of students who were marching in formation through the streets shouting, breaking windows, and destroying fences and gates, finally concluding the rampage with a giant bonfire. All of this pointless destruction occurred while many of their classmates were marching for their principles in the armies of the Confederacy and the Union. Two nights later a student earned his 15 minutes of fame by climbing up to the cupola on Nassau Hall and stealing the **bell clapper**, thus naively hoping to disrupt the college schedule. Despite the inconvenience to the janitor, who had to strike the bell with a hammer until the clapper was replaced, the college schedule was maintained. For some inexplicable reason, this rather juvenile exploit was adopted as a rite of passage by succeeding freshman classes; and despite waning enthusiasm, it has been routinely reenacted over the years.

In the same era, a more communal form of recreation had its devotees. In the mid 1860s, the members of the senior class began the custom of singing on the steps of Nassau Hall in the early summer evenings, their audience of students and friends lounging under the elms. **Step singing** was enjoyed for many years, but as classes grew larger and more recreational opportunities presented themselves, step singing as an ongoing pastime died out. But the custom has been preserved as a feature of the senior's farewell to undergraduate life. In the late evening of Bacca-laureate Sunday, seniors meet to sign on the steps leading to Blair Arch, as in days gone by. The arch of the Class of 1879 Hall provides a sentimental setting for student singing groups after football games.



Regardless of the weather, an appreciative audience assembles there to hear their favorite songs. Today, in addition to the ad hoc groups that come and go, 10 vocal groups are listed at the music department, with the Princeton University Glee Club, whose director is on the University staff, being the only group with official University status. The annual joint concert with the Yale or Harvard glee club on the eve of the home football game regularly fills Richardson Auditorium. The other nine groups reflect the eclectic musical tastes of the student singers. The distinctive five-part music of the Nassoons has been a source of listening pleasure for over half a century. The Tiger Tones, a male a cappella group founded in 1946; the Tigerlilies, a female a cappella group; the Footnotes, a male a cappella group; the katzenjammers, a male and female group; and the Gospel Ensemble have all been harmonizing since 1970s. The Roaring Twenties, Tigression, and the Wild Cats, all organized since 1980, are becoming a permanent part of the vocalizing community.

During the 1860s, the **well-dressed** man's cane was an important sartorial accessory. To add a little spice to campus life, a creative sophomore suggested that first-year men should not be permitted to carry a stick. The idea generated a lot of support from his classmate. Thereafter, if a freshman was seen twirling his cane too ostentatiously, a sophomore felt obligated to try to wrest it from him. After a few years of random encounters, the sophomores issued a formal proclamation in the fall of 1869 forbidding the class of 1873 to carry canes. The freshmen accepted the challenge individually and in groups. The many ensuing struggles created so much commotion that, by 1875, rules of the fray were formulated, with duelist matched according to size and presumed ability, the series contests lasting three or four noisy hours on the first moonlit night in late September or early October. The next day, the canes were counted, and if the freshmen



kept more canes than they had surrendered, they were permitted to carry them thereafter. Later, the event was narrowed to a stated number of matches in each of three divisions: heavyweight, middleweight, and lightweight. Compared to the wild free-for-all of the early **cane sprees**, today's officially sponsored cane spree (held each fall) is a relatively tame event pitting freshmen against sophomores, with cane wrestling but one sport out of 24 scheduled events, concluding with a tug-of-war. Class T-shirts supplied by the intramural program must be voluntarily surrendered by the losing team in each event. The T-shirts are counted at the end of the day to determine the winning class.



At a class meeting on April 5, 1886, George K. Ward recommended that the College follow the lead of other colleges and adopt a distinctive color of its own. He suggested **orange** as a natural connection with Nassau Hall and William III having been Prince of Orange. It took some time for the proposition to gain general acceptance, but it was then helped along by the favorable reaction to the distribution of unofficial orange badges at the Yale baseball game. The faculty resolved on October 12, 1868, to permit students “to adopt and wear as the College Badge and orange colored Ribbon bearing upon

it the word ‘Princeton’” (for by then, the College of New Jersey was generally referred to as “Princeton” in all but official transactions). The use of orange with black printing inevitably led to the adoption of orange and black in ribbons and on athletic uniforms. In 1896 when the College became Princeton University, the trustees adopted orange and black as the official colors for academic gowns, despite the protestations of Professor Allan Marquand, Class of 1874, that the colors of the House of Nassau were orange and **blue**. Orange and **black** were to firmly imprint in Princetonian’s hearts to be replaced for the sake of mere historical consistency.

The early College faculty placed a great emphasis on the study of

the Greek and Latin classics, but they ignored Juvenal's advice when he said, "You should pray to have a sound mind in a sound body" and made no provision for a physical fitness program. In fact, in 1787 when some of the smaller boys among the students joined the grammar scholars (younger boys attending classes to prepare them for admission in a field behind the College to play a game "with balls and sticks," the faculty banned the game. It was "low and unbecoming [of] gentlemen...and attended with great damage to the health by sudden and alternate heads and colds...and it's lent by accident to disfiguring and maiming."



Many decades later more liberal administration permitted students to engage in impromptu games. In the autumn, intramural teams played a ball kicking game much like today's soccer. A similar game was played at Rutgers, and in due time the two colleges agreed to a match. With 25 players on each side who were dressed in street clothes, the game bore little resemblance today's football. But the historic game played on

November 6, 1869, has been recognized by the NCAA as the first intercollegiate football game, and its 100th anniversary was celebrated nationally with the usual attendant publicity. The anniversary was celebrated locally by a Rutgers versus Princeton **football game** that was played at Rutgers. Late in the night of the Wednesday preceding the game, a group of Rutgers students invaded the Princeton campus and slathered the "big" cannon on Cannon Green with red paint. They were chased away by a contingent of Princeton students who arrived at the scene for their own purposes. They dug a deep hole next to the "little" cannon near Whig Hall (the cannon that had been the prize in the famous "**cannon war**" with Rutgers) and heaped the dirt from the excavation over the cannon itself. Then, they crossed the green and undid Rutgers' dirty trick by repainting the "big" cannon black. The next day, the campus was buzzing with rumors of another Rutgers cannon left, but before retaliatory measures could be designed, the Princeton students who had masterminded the event provided the Daily Princetonian with details of their night's work,

and an avenging march against Rutgers was averted. The Princetonians had perpetrated the escapade to stir up interest in Saturday's centennial game. It is not known how many students were sufficiently aroused to travel to New Brunswick to attend the game. A century ago no such artificial simulation would have been deemed necessary. Football even then was a national craze, although it was considered an elite sports that was played by privileged young men at socially exclusive colleges. In 1895, William Randolph Hearst paid the famous reporter Richard Harding Davis the unheard-of sum of \$500 to report on the Thanksgiving Day Football game between Yale and Princeton. In *A Princeton Companion*, written by Alexander Leitch '24, the longest entry -nine full pages- is devoted to the game, which is indicative of its importance to Mr. Leitch's generation. It is important to note that Princeton's team no longer plays Rutgers, limiting his schedule to include other Ivy Group teams from colleges of like size and with similar scholarship criteria.

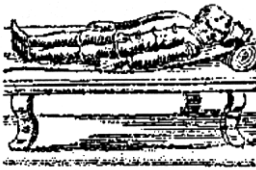
Back in 1876 representatives of Columbia, Yale, Harvard, and Princeton met and formed the Intercollegiate Football Association in order to adopt rules for playing the game. It is generally accepted that ***Ivy League*** was coined by New York sportswriter Stanley Woodward in the early 1930s after he heard a colleague refer to the ivy *colleges*. In 1945, the presidents of the eight universities that comprise the present Ivy League entered into an agreement that formalized the rules of eligibility, the length of the playing season, etc., for their athletic teams.

Lately, another version of the origin of the term Ivy League has been circulating. According to undocumented reports, the four colleges in the Intercollegiate Football Association called themselves the IV League. Sometimes Columbia is replaced by Penn in the telling. This is interesting, if true, but why did it take over 100 years to enter into Princeton's history?

Princeton may gradually fail to qualify as an ivy college as the ancient ivy that has been planted by graduating seniors for over a centuries dies away. Of late, the senior class has been encouraged to bequeath a gift that is less destructive to Nassau Hall's mortar.

IV

To win the Ivy League Championship is the goal of every athletic team, and to go undefeated within the league is nirvana. Regardless of league standing, to win matches against both Yale and Harvard can salvage a season. When the football team achieves this goal, known as the “Big Three Championship,” it is celebrated with a giant **bonfire** on Cannon Green, and members of the Princeton Fire Department stand by with equipment in the event that they have to confine to blaze. Princeton has suffered too many serious fires of unknown origin to risk losing yet another building.



The two Nassau Hall fires 1802 and 1855 must have been the most painful for the administration to watch, considering the fragile financial condition of the College at that time. Others were not less disastrous. A crude frame structure that was built by the students in 1859 as a gym was torched by townspeople in the summer of 1865 when it was suspected that a vagrant with yellow fever had been sleeping there. In 1920, when the original Dickinson Hall caught fire, the interior of the lovely Marquand Chapel was ignited by sparks that blew through ventilating louvers in the slate roof. Both buildings were left in ruins. In 1924 the Triangle Club’s “casino” went up in flames. In 1928 it took about four hours to put out a fire that reduced the John C. Green School of Science to just a smoldering mass.

What may have been the most **terrifying conflagration** occurred in the early morning hours of May 24, 1944. Much of the campus was then the scene of military training programs. Locker space for small arms and ammunition had been provided in the basement of the University gymnasium. While eight fire companies fought to bring the fire that erupted in the basement under control, the battlelike sound of exploding ammunition added to the noise and confusion. Providentially, the fire was kept from spreading to Nearby Patton and Stafford dormitories.

The sports library of some 2,500 volumes and all of the University’s athletic trophies and sports memorabilia were lost to the flames.



The molten metal was later recovered from the ruins and fashioned by Joe Brown into athletic sculptures that are now on display in Jadwin Gym. In the autumn of 1968, an extensive section of Stafford Little, which was across from the new Dillon Gym, was itself ravaged by fire. A year later Whig Hall became a victim. The eastern marble exterior wall and 80 percent of the wooden interior were destroyed. All of these buildings were restored or replaced, and, fortunately, no lives were lost as a consequence of this series of destructive events.

When the Continental Congress met at Princeton in 1783, the first three sessions were held at “**Prospect** near Princeton,” the large, comfortable stone farmhouse belonging to Colonel George Morgan. It was situated on acreage adjoining the Princeton campus, about a fifth of a mile from Nassau Hall. John Potter bought the property from the Morgan heirs in 1824, and later it was acquired by John’s son, Thomas, who had the old stone house torn down and replaced in 1849 by the John Notman-designed Italianate villa now called “Prospect.” John Potter has a Charles Steadman-designed house built on the corner of Bayard lane and Nassau Street as a wedding gift for his daughter when she married Lieutenant (later Commodore) Stockton, U.S.N. This beautifully preserved house came into possession of Edgar Palmer, who, bequeathed it to the University. It is now the University guest house for visiting dignitaries. “Prospect” was bought in 1878 by Alexander and Robert Stuart, wealthy Scottish-American Presbyterians, who gave the mansion to the University for the use of its president, the Scotsman James McCosh. He referred to the gardens of his new residence as Eden. But thoughtless students on their way to their eating clubs started taking short cuts through the beautiful grounds. When a noisy crowd returning from a football game tramped through the gardens, the next President, Woodrow Wilson, Class of 1879, took action. The following summer, in 1904, an iron



fence was built around some five acres of the campus, enclosing Prospect and its gardens.

In the 1960s, the tranquillity of the campus began to diminish, so it was probably with little regret that President Robert Goheen '40 moved to the new official president's residence, the Walter Lowrie House on Stockton Street. This house, also designed by John Notman in his flavored Florentine style, had been a gift from Commodore Stockton to one of his sons. It was later bought by Paul Tulane, an eccentric multimillionaire who had been born at Cedar Grove, the neighborhood just to the north of Princeton where Tenacre, the Christian Science residence community, is now situated. He made a great fortune as a manufacture in new Orleans. Legend has it that in the early 1880s he offered the trustees of the College of New Jersey a gift to real estate and securities worth at least \$1 million if they would rename the College of New Jersey Tulane College. The trustees turned down the proposition. He then offered the same deal to the University of Louisiana. They accepted. When Paul Tulane died, he was buried in Princeton Cemetery. His grave is distinguished by the almost life-size statue atop a pedestal. The figure faces to the north. Some say Tulane meant to turn his back toward the University to retaliate for their having snubbed him by turning down his generous offer. Or it may merely be that he is looking toward his boyhood home. There is a similar legend circulating, only with a different cast of characters. The alternate version stars James Duke, the



tobacco tycoon who owned a large estate in nearby Somerville. When Princeton spurned his offer of a huge money if its name were changed to Duke University, little Trinity College in Durham, North Carolina, gladly accepted the offer and emulated Princeton's collegiate Gothic architectural style when more buildings were added to the campus.

The year 1879 saw the establishment of Princeton's first **eating club**. Until the mid 1800s, the two literary societies, Whig,

founded in 1769, and Clio, in 1765, had served as the College's social centers. With an increased enrollment in the second half of the century, smaller groups started to spring up that were ripe for recruitment into the Greek letter fraternities when their representatives came to the campus. When President Maclean realized what was happening, he attempted to force the disbanding of Princeton chapters. He persuaded the faculty that the purposes of the fraternities were inimical to the aims of the literary societies. He was convinced that the Greeks tended to promote the formation of Cliques, operating to enhance their member's chances for honors, regardless of merit, and to shield their members in cases of infraction of college rules, thus undermining discipline. In 1855, persuaded by these arguments, the trustees required every student to take a solemn pledge that he would not join any secret society, and thereafter, every entering student was required to sign the same pledge, the pledge surviving as late as 1939-40. Despite the pledge, some students retained their illegal affiliations for many years. Gradually the Greek letter societies disappeared from campus and were replaced by eating clubs for upperclassmen, the first of which was called "Ivy," established in 1879.

It's hard to see why the objections to the fraternities did not apply to the eating clubs. They flourished despite the social inequities inherent in "bicker," the process used to select new members. When women came to Princeton, some of the clubs remained determinedly all-male, but lawsuits challenging their discriminatory policies were successful, and bicker was replaced at most eating clubs with a non selective admission policy.

At about the same time the eating clubs came on the Princeton scene, the **tiger** emerged as the college emblem. One of the Princeton cheers was adapted from the Rocket Cheer of New York's Civil War 7th Regiment, ending with a rousing "Tiger, sis, boom, ah." The football players' uniforms (orange and black jerseys stockings) plus the rooters' cheers gave birth to the tiger emblem quite naturally, despite several pleas from the faculty for adopting the lion from the coat of arms of the House of Nassau.



In 1882 the appearance of a new college comic publication, *Tiger Magazine*, crystallized the idea.

Some 20 years later when the university adopted the collegiate Gothic style of architecture, tigers that were carved in stone appeared on campus in ever-increasing numbers. But it was a long time before the tiger climbed down from its pedestal and began cavorting around the stadium at football games. The late Freddie Fox '39 was probably the first student to clown around the field costumed as a tiger (in this case wearing a real honest-to-goodness tiger skin from Bengal). Today's Tiger and Tigress, she wearing an orange bow on her tail, are freewheeling members of the cheerleading squad.

In addition to their academic responsibilities, Princeton's presidents have always been expected to keep an eye on the bottom line of the financial statement and help secure substantial gifts from phi-



lanthropists. It is no surprise, then, that when Andrew Carnegie visited Princeton and was met at the train station by President McCosh and his wife, Isabella. In response to his pleasant "Dr. McCosh, for a long time I've been interested in Princeton," **Mrs. McCosh** responded, "Indeed, Mr. Carnegie, thus far we have seen no financial evidence of it."

Carnegie's resources remained untapped until after the turn of the century when Howard Russell Butler, Class of 1876, an artist who had rowed at Princeton as an undergraduate, painted Carnegie's portrait. When Carnegie boasted of having built four lakes, Baker mentioned a scheme he had had since his college days: a lake at Princeton large enough to intercollegiate rowing competitions. Mr. Carnegie thought it would also be a good place for students to compete in curling. (Curling is a game originating in Scotland in which two teams slide heavy stones along a length of ice -it has few devotees in the United States.) He agreed to finance the project, which required the purchase of large tracts of land on both sides of the Millstone River and the construction of a dam at the confluence of Stony Brook and the Millstone River in Kingston. While the lake proposal

was in its very early stages, President Wilson, unaware of the plan afoot, visited Carnegie at his home seeking a contribution for the preceptorial system. There he learned that Princeton was to be given a lake. Shortly after, at an alumni dinner, President Wilson remarked "We went to Andrew Carnegie to ask for bread and he gave us a cake." In other versions he asked for bread and got water. Either way, the gift was delivered on December 5, 1906.

From 1887 to 1897 a glimpse of things to come existed in Princeton in the presence of small **Evelyn College of Women**, located in a large house that still stands today at the end of a cul-de-sac called Evelyn Place, on the north side of Nassau Street, just west of Harrison Street. In 1891 the newly formed

Colonial Club alertly rented the house next door, expecting to enjoy a competitive edge over the older eating clubs. Evelyn's panic-stricken

president appealed to the University trustees, asking that Colonial club be required to give up its lease. The club had spent a fairly large sum of money readying the house for the anticipated



busy social season. The trustees proposed that if Evelyn College reimbursed the Club for its expenditures, the club would be directed to move out. Since Evelyn College could not come up with the required sum, Colonial Club remained for the year. Then, unhappily for Colonial Club (and probably Evelyn's students), the University required that the lease not be renewed.

The next hint of **coeducation** at Princeton was to be found in the headline of the April 1, 1927 edition of *Daily Princetonian*: "Princeton gets \$20,000,000 to become coeducational." The details of the disposition of the legacy's funds were reasonable and convincing, but alas -it was just a hoax. However, the fantasy became a reality in April 1969 when the trustees, following Yale's lead, voted to admit women. Despite the lateness of the decision, applications were submitted by an unusually able group of young women. From this pool of candidates, 171 women were admitted, 101 of whom became

members of Class of 1973, with much attendant publicity from the local press and wire services.

But an even more newsworthy event was in the offing. On November 19, 1969, Pete Conrad '53 landed on **the moon** with two Princeton flags, and the one he planted remains on the lunar surface. Upon his return, he presented Princeton with the second flag, which lamentably, went up in smoke when the shop it had taken to for framing was destroyed by fire.

The Triangle Club celebrated its centenary in 1991. The club began as Princeton College Dramatic Association in 1883, but in 1891 its members decided to eschew formal drama and concentrate on musical comedy instead, changing its name to Triangle Club two years later. The name, while aptly referring to a musical instrument, was inspired by a favorite walk taken by the students while singing Henry Van Dyke 1874's *Triangle Song* - "Well the old triangle knew the music of our tread..." as they strode along. The triangle started at the end of University Place, the route of the little triangle being from Stockton to Lover's lane and then back again to Mercer; or the big triangle, going all the way to Quaker Road.

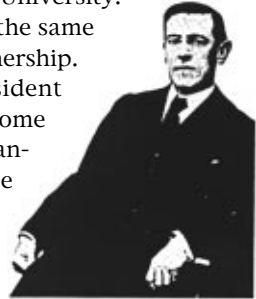


Revues, written and rehearsed by students and performed at the McCarter Theatre in the spring, are always received with enthusiasm when reprised at reunions and on Triangle's annual Christmas trip to several cities in the East. But they no longer travel in their private railroad car; and since the casts are now coed, alumni parents no longer schedule receptions and balls where their daughters may meet eligible Princeton men.

Triangle Club accumulated a sizable bank account from box office receipts over the years. Coupled with a generous contribution from Thomas McCarter and other gifts, they were able to finance the construction of **McCarter Theatre**, which after its completion in February 1930, played host not only to Triangle offerings but to pre-Broadway tryouts of new plays and post-Broadway tours of hit shows. After World War II profitability declined into indebtedness,

and in 1950 Princeton University took over the theatre, giving Triangle use of it for productions and auxiliary activities. Today, the facility operates as the McCarter Center for Performing Arts, a not-for-profit organization, and receives support from many individuals and institutions, including Princeton University. The theatre continues to accord Triangle Club the same privileges it enjoyed during the University's ownership.

President McCosh was succeeded by President Patton, in whose tenure from 1888 to 1902 some people saw a gradual relaxation of academic standards. Serious scholars were shocked by the increasing number of idle and irresponsible students now at the University. When **Woodrow Wilson**, Class of 1879, joined the faculty in 1890, his wife, in her hospitable Southern way, entertained students, especially Southern students trying to survive in the Yankees' culture. Two Southern upperclassmen told Mrs. Wilson of the widespread cheating that occurred during exams proctored by faculty members. Aware of the success of the **honor system** practiced at the College of William and Mary since 1779 and at the University of Virginia as well as at other Southern colleges, she urged the young men to work for the establishment of such a system at Princeton. The January 3, 1893 edition of the *Daily Princetonian* embraced the concept, calling for the establishment of an honor system prescribing that a student take full responsibility for his conduct in written exams: "The system conducting examinations if placed on a higher plane would in turn elevate standard. It is not impossible that a college sentiment upon this subject may be quite as strong as the sentiment which demands fair play in athletics; it is in both cases the same spirit which discredits dishonorable methods." When the subject was brought up at the faculty meeting, Woodrow Wilson's ardent support of the proposal contributed largely to favorable vote. Since then it has been established that each entering student must state a personal letter to the Honor Committee his or her willingness to abide by the Honor System and to report any violation



observed. At a meeting of all entering freshmen at the beginning of the year, members of the Honor Committee and an outstanding alumnus or alumna entrust the Honor System to new students.

Professor **Andrew Fleming West**, Class of 1874, was the organizing genius behind the highly successful celebration of Princeton's sesquicentennial on October 20, 21 and 22 in 1896, "the largest and best organized academic festival ever held in America," according to *A Princeton Companion*. Lectures were delivered by distinguished scholars from all over the United States and from abroad. President Wilson delivered his eloquent, oft-quoted oration "Princeton in the Nation's Service," and President Cleveland assured national interest by giving the principal address. In the evening of the second day there was a torch-lit procession more than a mile long that included 800 Princeton undergraduates and 2,000 alumni, many in costume. They marched through town, ending in front of Nassau Hall and pausing to cheer President and Mrs. Cleveland. The trustees announced that henceforth the College would be called "Princeton University," orange and black were adopted as the official colors for academic gowns, the newly design seal was accepted. President Cleveland was so pleased



with the warmth of his reception that, after the expiration of his term of office the following year, he came to live in Princeton. His friendship with West blossomed- he even named his house on Hodge Road "Westland." Eventually he became a University trustee, and he served as the graduate School Committee's first chairman. When the trustees established the **Graduate School** on December 13, 1900, they appointed West, a leading proponent of the

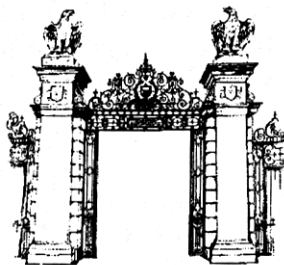
need for such a facility, as the first dean. At that point, no decision had been made as to a site for student accommodations. West thought that in order to ensure a high quality of work in stimulating



environment, the students should live in a separate residential college away from the distractions of undergraduate life. Woodrow Wilson, who had become president of the University in 1902, believed that the undergraduates and the graduate students would both profit from having close proximity. But West's friendship with many generous alumni whom he met while organizing the sesquicentennial celebration gave him much financial leverage. When the trustees resolved the ensuing bitter controversy in West's favor, Wilson, who had been urged to run as the Democratic candidate for Governor of New Jersey, decided to accept the nomination. Construction of the Graduate College began in 1911, and the building was dedicated in October 1913. By this time Wilson was President of the United States.

President Cleveland died in 1908 and was buried in Princeton Cemetery (as was his widow and his daughter, Ruth, for whom the Baby Ruth candy bar was named). **Cleveland Tower** at the Graduate College, paid for by public subscription, commemorates his association with Princeton University.

FitzRandolph Gate, the main Nassau Street entrance to the college grounds was embellished in 1905 by a grand ornamental stone and iron structure designed by the eminent architectural firm McKim, Mead and White. For a brief time, the portal was called the Van Wickle Gate. Money for this handsome addition had been be-



queathed in the previous year (which happened to be the sesquicentennial of the laying of the cornerstone for Nassau Hall) by Augustus Van Wickle, a descendant of Nathaniel FitzRandolph, the donor of the land on which Nassau Hall stands. The College's original holdings had been gradually extended by the purchase of adjoining properties that had been part of FitzRandolph's acreage, including the land on which Holder Hall was built. When workers were excavating for Holder, they uncovered 32 graves whose markers had long since disappeared. Since the land had belonged to FitzRandolph,

it is believed that the remains are probably those of the FitzRandolph family. The relics were reinterred under the arch of Holder Hall, and a memorial plaque that was installed reminds passersby: "Here rests in our ground and yet his own."

After the gate's dedication, it was opened only for special occasions -for each 25th reunion class to walk in, for a rare solemn procession honoring a visiting dignitary, and for each graduating class to walk out at the conclusion of Commencement exercises. Although free pedestrian access to the campus had always been available, the inherent symbolism of the closed gate was anathema to the student activists of 1960s. During the spring demonstrations in 1970, **someone opened the gate.** At graduation, the class of 1970 chose not to plant the traditional ivy at the base of Nassau Hall, requesting instead that the University keep the Gate open permanently, signifying that the University is part of the world beyond of the campus. Carved at eye level on the eastern pier is the legend "Together for Community" and 1970, with the 70 included as part of the peace symbol.

Later classes, perhaps nostalgic for the former Commencement Day ritual, invented a new tradition. Now, students are supposed to enter through the gate on the first day of their freshman year, and then not walk through it again until graduation. Failure to observe the custom is said to put graduation in jeopardy. Pity the Class of '81. It rained on their Commencement Day, and the exercises were held in Jadwin Gym. There is no record of the number of students who came back to campus to walk out the gate.

An older Princeton tradition center around the seniors' wearing of "**beer jackets.**" The fashion was started by members of the class 1912 who wore blue denim overalls and jackets when quaffing beer at the Nassau Inn and has been continued, with variations, except for the years during the World War I and in the late 1970s. At that time, white replaced blue denim; designs were at first stenciled, then silk-screened on the back; and the overalls



were eliminated, leaving the “beer jacket,’ which was usually white with a distinctive logo and the class numerals, to be worn by seniors around the campus in the spring and to Reunions. Today, the garment is called the “senior jacket.”

In 1917 many carefree seniors were soon exchanging their beer jackets for military uniforms in the World War, a war in which more than 6,000 Princetonians, including faculty members, alumni, and graduate and undergraduate students, served in some branch of the armed forces. In 1919 Nassau Hall’s foyer was remodeled as a war memorial. The names of the 151 Princetonians who died in World War I were inscribed in the marble walls along with Princeton’s dead in all wars up until that date.

Since then, the fallen from World War II and the Asian wars have been added. One hundred thirty-one young soldiers who died in World War I had occupied campus rooms in 16 different dormitories that were still standing in 1920. They are remembered with engraved **bronze stars** that have been installed on the windowsills of their former rooms and were put there by the Society of the Claw, who are alumni of the Class of 1894. Affixed to the walls in several of the heroes’ rooms are bronze tablets that were given by their relatives and friends.



Two great Gothic buildings have been built on campus since the end of World War I - the **Princeton University Chapel**, completed in 1928, and the Harvey S. Firestone Memorial Library, completed in 1948. The flags and the banners in the chapel’s transepts are tangible reminders of Princeton history. The flags in the Marquand Transept (the northern one) reflect Princeton in the nation’s service. The first flag flew over the Capitol in Washington D.C., during the first two years of Woodrow Wilson’s administration; the second flew on the U.S.S. Princeton V, which was launched in July 1945 and decommissioned in 1970; the third is the World War service flag. In September 1942, after formal Opening Exercises in the University Chapel, the service flag was unfurled in front of Nassau Hall, indicating the number of Princeton servicemen who were serving in the

armed forces, and, one gold star, the number of Princetonians who had died up until that date. The flag flew over the steps of the main entrance until the war's end, with numbers brought up to date from time to time. The fourth flag flew on the U.S.S. Princeton IV, a light aircraft carrier that was christened in October 1942 by Mrs. Margaret Dodds, the wife of President Harold Dodds GS'14. This ship was torpedoed and sunk in the battle of Leyte Gulf.

Hanging in the Braman transept, on the opposite side of the nave, are reminders of educational institutions associated with the careers of Princeton's Scottish presidents. The banner is from Glasgow University, where James McCosh studied as an undergraduate. The first flag is from Queen's College, Belfast, where McCosh held the chair of logic when he was invited to come to Princeton, the middle flag is a Princeton ceremonial flag, and the flag with the thistle on it is from Edinburgh University, where both John Witherspoon and James McCosh studied at the school of divinity.

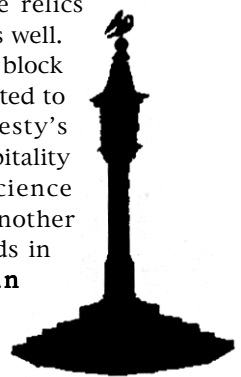
In addition to the great institutions of learning represented inside, the chapel's; exterior recognizes a great American university. The chapel's architect, Ralph Adams Cram, had a reputation for delegating most of the detailing. A Yale mole in his employ used the Yale bulldog as a decorative element on a prominent downspout at the southeast end of the chapel. Cram was probably unaware of the significance of the decoration, having bypassed college. He learned his profession by working in architect's office from the age of 17. Cram's stern countenance keeps watch over the coming and goings at his masterpiece from a discreet vantage point on the south side of the chapel's portal. An equally vigilant associate, Clifford Mac Kinnon, peers from the opposite side of the doorway.

Harvard also may be represented, but indirectly. According to some student guides, the **black squirrels** frolicking across the greens are descendants of squirrels brought to Princeton from Cambridge many years ago. A more interesting legend (but one equally unlikely) gives



credit to an unidentified Princeton president whose wife supposedly kept a backyard menagerie from which the original squirrels escaped. A monograph by Professor Henry Horn suggests more prosaically that the first black squirrel on campus may very well have been an immigrant from a natural population. An early list of wild animals of New Amsterdam compiled by a Dutch naturalist included “squirrels -black as pitch and gray.”

Firestone Library, designed by O’Connor and Kilham, reflects the last gasp of collegiate Gothic design on campus. An elaborately carved stone block set into the eastern wall of the library’s portico is one of several British souvenirs on campus, one other being the cannonball scar on Nassau Hall. There are some relics embedded in the Wyman House garden walls as well. But the climate has improved since 1777 -the block is a “stone from the house of Parliament presented to Princeton University by his Britannic Majesty’s Government in grateful recognition of the hospitality shown by the University to the British Science Mission in the United States of America. “Another expression of British-American friendship stands in the court of McCosh Hall- it’s the **Mather Sun Dial**, a slightly scaled-down replica of the Turnbull Sun Dial erected in 1551 at Corpus Christi College in Oxford. It was given by Sir William Mather to “symbolize the connection between Oxford and Princeton (and) Great Britain and America.” Before World War II, it was customary that only seniors be allowed to sit on the steps of the monument.



Just prior to the conclusion of the University’s academic year at Commencement, Princeton’s alumni celebrate their association with the University at Reunions, a three day festival replete with intellectual stimulation, entertainment, and partying with old friends. The event climaxes with the **P-rade**, which is a parade consisting of a long procession of alumni dressed in class costumes -the more bizarre the better- and accompanied by spouses, children, and pets along

with balloons, jugglers, union class. Starting 25th marches up Univer-Nassau Street, entering FitzRandolph Gate. As campus, all of the other classes who have been assembled along the P-rade route, fall in behind them, the oldest classes going first. The graduation seniors lined up near the end of the P-rade route salute the alumni as they march by, as they will be saluted the next year, rejoicing in:



and all manner of innova- and led by the 25th re- from Joline Arch, the sity Place and then along the campus through they march through the all of the other classes who have been assembled along the P-rade route, fall in behind them, the oldest classes going first. The graduation seniors lined up near the end of the P-rade route salute the alumni as they march by, as they will be saluted the next year, rejoicing in:

Goin' back, goin' back
Goin' back to Nassau Hall.
Goin' back, goin' back
To the best damn place of all.
Goin' back, goin' back
From all this earthly ball.
We'll clear the track as we go back,
Goin' back to Nassau Hall.

