

Governor, General . . .

Beaver Masterminds University's Growth

One of the most influential figures in the 100 year history of the University was Gen. James H. Beaver.

For almost 60 years Beaver, in the words of a resolution adopted by the Board of Trustees after his death in 1914 "helped to bear the burdens and shape the fortunes" of the institution.

"In all human probability," the resolution continued, "the Pennsylvania State College will never again owe so much or be so entirely dependent upon a single personality."

Beaver's work for the University began in 1856 when he entered the law office of Hugh N. McAllister at Bellefonte. He was 19 at the time, and had just received his bachelor of arts degree from Jefferson College.

The year before, the state legislature had passed an act chartering the Farmer's High School of Pennsylvania. McAllister was one of those interested in seeing the institution located in Centre County. Col. James Irvin of Bellefonte had pledged to donate 200 acres of land for the school and McAllister was one of three men who signed a pledge guaranteeing \$10,000 for it.

When Beaver arrived in Bellefonte, McAllister was busy in his campaign to raise the \$10,000.

"The collection of the amount devolved entirely upon Mr. McAllister and many of the details committed to me," Beaver wrote in 1908 in an article, "Some Early Friends of Penn State."

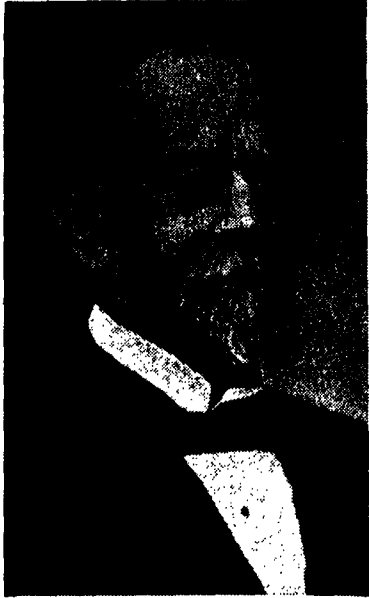
After his admission to the bar in 1859—the year the first class entered the University—Beaver became McAllister's law partner.

As McAllister's partner, Beaver continued to work in the interest of the school except during his service in the Union Army during the Civil War. He was honorably discharged in 1864 with the rank of brigadier general. During this time he was wounded four times and finally lost his right leg.

McAllister was named a member of the Board of Trustees of the University in the charter act of 1855 and he continued to serve until his death in 1873. Beaver was named to succeed him and he served continuously until his death. He was president of the board from 1874 to 1882 and again from 1897 to 1914. He was acting president of the University from 1906 to 1908 between the administrations of Dr. Francis Atherton and Dr. E. Erle Sparks.

Beaver was offered the vice presidency of the United States under Garfield, but declined the offer. He was elected governor of Pennsylvania in 1886 and was later one of the seven judges appointed to the new Superior Court of Pennsylvania.

Before Beaver was elected governor the University had received special state appropriations for the purpose of constructing the first building and for agricul-



Gen. James A. Beaver
University's Forefather

tural experiments. But it had never received state funds for general maintenance.

The first such appropriation came under Beaver's administration and set a precedent for recognizing the University as a state institution entitled to state funds.

The University library was also one of Beaver's interests. As early as 1888 Beaver suggested the establishment of a section of the library for a collection of works on the history of the state.

Beaver also helped to start the library's collection of papers dealing with the history of the University by turning over to it the papers and letters of McAllister.

Beaver died in 1914 at the age of 77, but his memory lives on at the University in such names as Beaver Field, the Beaver Collection in the Pattee library and the Beaver Loan Fund.

Rotten Egg Smell Ruins Singing School in County

One of the student pranks which went down in history was perpetrated by a group who went to Pine Grove Mills to attend a singing school and took along with them the ingredients for making hydrogen sulfide.

This gas started generating its rotten egg smell in the middle of the program. Needless to say, this broke up the meeting, and the men made the headlines of the newspapers, including the Police Gazette.

'The Town the University Built'

By MIKE MILLER

Few towns in the United States can claim the reason for their existence that State College can. State College owes its existence entirely to man's search for higher knowledge.

When the Farmers' High School, forerunner to the University, was founded in 1855 there was only a crossroads where the borough now stands. Today that crossroads is a model town.

State College is a town where 70 per cent of the people own their homes; a town where more than half the population is under 25 years of age; a town with 100 civic and social groups, one for every 11 full time residents.

And although the University was the main reason for the borough's founding, State College has since expanded until it has become essential for many other reasons.

The borough has become a vacation and resort center. It is the scene of numerous conventions and has become the permanent home of many retired alumni and faculty members who grew to love its quiet beauty during their years at the University. It also serves as a trade center for rural residents.

Only 'Near Boalsburg'

At the founding of the Farmers' High School the location of the institution could only be described as "near Boalsburg." But with the coming of the school a few farmers decided to settle closeby. The homes these farmers built formed the nucleus of the borough of State College.

Except for the school building and the farmers' homes there was nothing but field and forest in the early days. The people were well settled, however, and were fond of their location. In 1862 the school's name was changed to the Agricultural College following the Morrill Land Grant Act designating the school as such.

The Morrill Act touched off a furious battle in Pennsylvania among various colleges which felt the funds provided for by the legislation were rightfully theirs. The people of the little hamlet surrounding the school were in the thick of the fight led by faculty members to get the funds for the Agricultural College.

Their efforts were rewarded when in 1867 a government act made the Agricultural College of Pennsylvania the sole beneficiary of the proceeds from the sale of public lands.

1868 Enrollment: 45

By 1868 the College enrollment totaled 45 and the town's population was probably only a little more. But by 1880 the school had 152 students and the settlement surrounding it was beginning to take definite shape.

Between 1893 and 1904 the town acquired a water company and other utilities, a school board, newspaper, board of health, public library, fire company, high school and, above all, a name.

Name Selected in 1896

In 1896 a petition was presented to the Centre County to incorporate the settlement as State College. The petition was signed by 75 property holders, 69 of whom were residents. On August 29, 1896 the court convened and approved the charter of incorporation.

Vivian Doty Hench, in her History of State College, 1896-1946, describes the meetings which were held prior to the selection of a name for the settlement "as many and stormy." Miss Hench relates that many public meetings were held "to which everyone turned out" to discuss the taking out of a charter and the selection of name.

Controversy Then, Too

Thus it can be surmised that sentiment over the name of the borough ran high in 1896 as well as in 1954 when a new name was proposed for the borough to help eliminate confusion surrounding the status of the University.

The name State College has certainly become a dear one to today's residents, but whether or not the borough's founding fathers picked wisely is a subject of debate.

Campus Post Office

The problem concerning the University's name may be solved with the coming of the campus post office which has been dubbed University Park. The borough voters went on record last November as being opposed to a change of name as they resoundingly defeated the proposed name of Mt. Nittany by a vote of 2434 to 1475.

The issue caused one of the hottest controversies the borough has ever seen and occasioned one of the first real splits between the University and the borough.

'Would Hamper Relations'

The Committee of 50, which backed the new name, contended at that time that a campus post office would hamper relations between the borough and the University and would eliminate much of the publicity the borough now receives through its post office affiliation with the University.

Whether these fears will come true remains to be seen but it is almost a certainty that the borough and the University will continue growing in harmonious unity despite the issue.

Period of Growth

The early 1900's were a period of development for both the town and the University. Both had become firmly established but had not become fully organized by that time.

By 1915 most of the groundwork for the schools, churches, businesses, and government of State College had been laid and the town entered a period of growth and prosperity which continues today.

The mark of maturity was shown in State College when in 1926 the first streets were paved. Also in 1926, realizing that further growth was hampered by lack of an adequate water supply,

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