

*The St. Lawrence County Historical Association*  
**QUARTERLY**

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*Volume XLI - Number 2 - Spring, 1996*

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**Clarkson University  
Centennial  
1896-1996**

# The St. Lawrence County Historical Association at the Silas Wright Museum

The St. Lawrence County Historical Association is a private, not-for-profit, membership organization based at the Silas Wright Museum in Canton, New York. Founded in 1947, the Association is governed by a constitution, by-laws, and Board of Trustees. The Historical Association's membership meets annually to elect its officers and trustees.

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## Our Mission

The St. Lawrence County Historical Association is an educational resource center and museum that researches, collects, preserves, and interprets St. Lawrence County history through collections development, publication, exhibition, and programming; whose purpose is to help establish the intellectual and cultural connections that expand awareness and place St. Lawrence County in its state and national context, while revealing its unique identity. The Association examines different aspects of life in St. Lawrence County from multiple and diverse resources through community partnerships and collaboration. SLCHA values quality, integrity, and accessibility and operates within established museum standards befitting its American Association of Museums (AAM) accredited status.

## SLCHA Membership

Membership in the St. Lawrence County Historical Association is open to all interested parties. Annual membership dues are: Individual, \$25; Senior/Student, \$20; Family, \$35; Contributor, \$50; Supporter, \$100; Patron, \$250; Businesses, \$50 to \$1,000. Members receive the *SLCHA Quarterly*, the Historical Association's bi-monthly newsletter, and various discounts on publications, programs and events.



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*Historic view of Clarkson  
University's Old Main building.*

(Courtesy of Clarkson University)

# Clarkson's Century of Presidents

by Bradford B. Broughton

*The information in this article was taken from the author's A Clarkson Mosaic, the centennial history of Clarkson University, published in 1995 by the university, and from unpublished minutes of the Clarkson trustees in the Clarkson archives, and from Clarkson's student newspaper, the Integrator.*

**T**wo months after the death of prominent Potsdam businessman Thomas Streatfeild Clarkson on August 19, 1894, at the age of 57, his sisters, cousin and nieces, along with prominent Potsdam residents began considering ways to memorialize him. They remembered that long before his death, Thomas had considered founding a school to promote manual arts and technical education, industry, thrift, and good citizenship. For many years, he had been a leader in Potsdam's businesses; he had furnished employment for a large number of people and was particularly eager to advance the condition of workers in the village. He especially wanted to provide educational facilities for ambitious young men and young women who worked hard to better their station and condition in life, but his death prevented him from carrying out those dreams.

His loving sisters, however, sharing those same desires to help the young people, began investigating what was needed to establish a memorial school in Potsdam

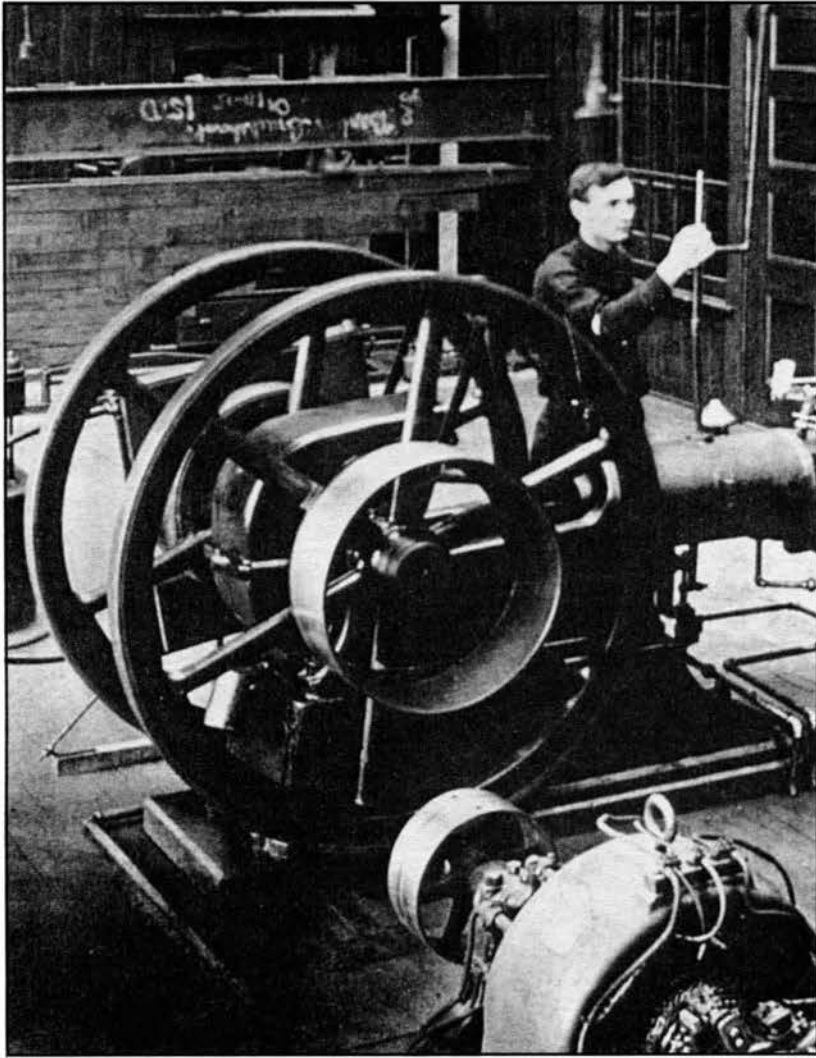
that would offer the best and most advanced opportunities for industrial and technical education in the area.

To that end, family and friends met at Holcroft, one of the Clarkson residences, to plan the memorial. Besides Mr. and Mrs. T. Streatfeild Clarkson, Misses Elizabeth, Frederica, and Annie Clarkson, the group also included John G. McIntyre, Charles O. Tappan, Abraham X. Parker, George H. Sweet, and Dr. Malcolm McVicar, the first principal of the Normal and Training School at Potsdam. At that meeting, the group agreed on the name Thomas S. Clarkson Memorial School of Technology. Shortly thereafter, a special committee of Miss Elizabeth, Miss Annie, McIntyre, and Sweet studied the map of Potsdam to decide what kind of school was best adapted to this locality, and the costs of establishing and maintaining it. They visited well-known engineering, trade, and technical schools, consulted educators, and gathered a wide range of information from the best available sources.

On December 18, after reporting on this trip to the group that had met earlier, Miss Annie proposed that their group organize themselves into an informal board of trustees and elect a president and secretary. Charles Tappan and Miss Annie were elected president and secretary, respectively, and John McIntyre was asked to investigate incorporation. The other gentlemen of the board were appointed a committee to choose an appropriate site for a school building. Acting on the committee recommendations the following January, the Misses Clarkson bought three plots along Main Street for \$8,000: the Ransom home for \$2,500; the Brown home for \$2,500; and the Hamblin home for \$3,000.

Ten months later, trustees of the local school district deeded to Clarkson School a piece of land in the rear of the Ransom lot, making a rectangular plot of ground along Main Street measuring 181.5 by 330 feet for the location of the memorial school building.

During these negotiations for land, Edgar A. Josslyn, promi-



SLCHA Collections

*In its early years, Clarkson provided for a wide variety of training and technological education. Testing of a gas engine, circa 1905, is pictured here, from what was then called Clarkson School of Technology.*

ment New York architect, was invited to Potsdam by the board to present rough plans for a building. His plans were adopted, and on June 10, 1895, ground was broken for the new building, now known as Old Main. Built of carefully selected Potsdam red sandstone, with roofs of Spanish tile, and with Hayes patent skylights on the wings, this 87 by 57 foot building and its two wings,

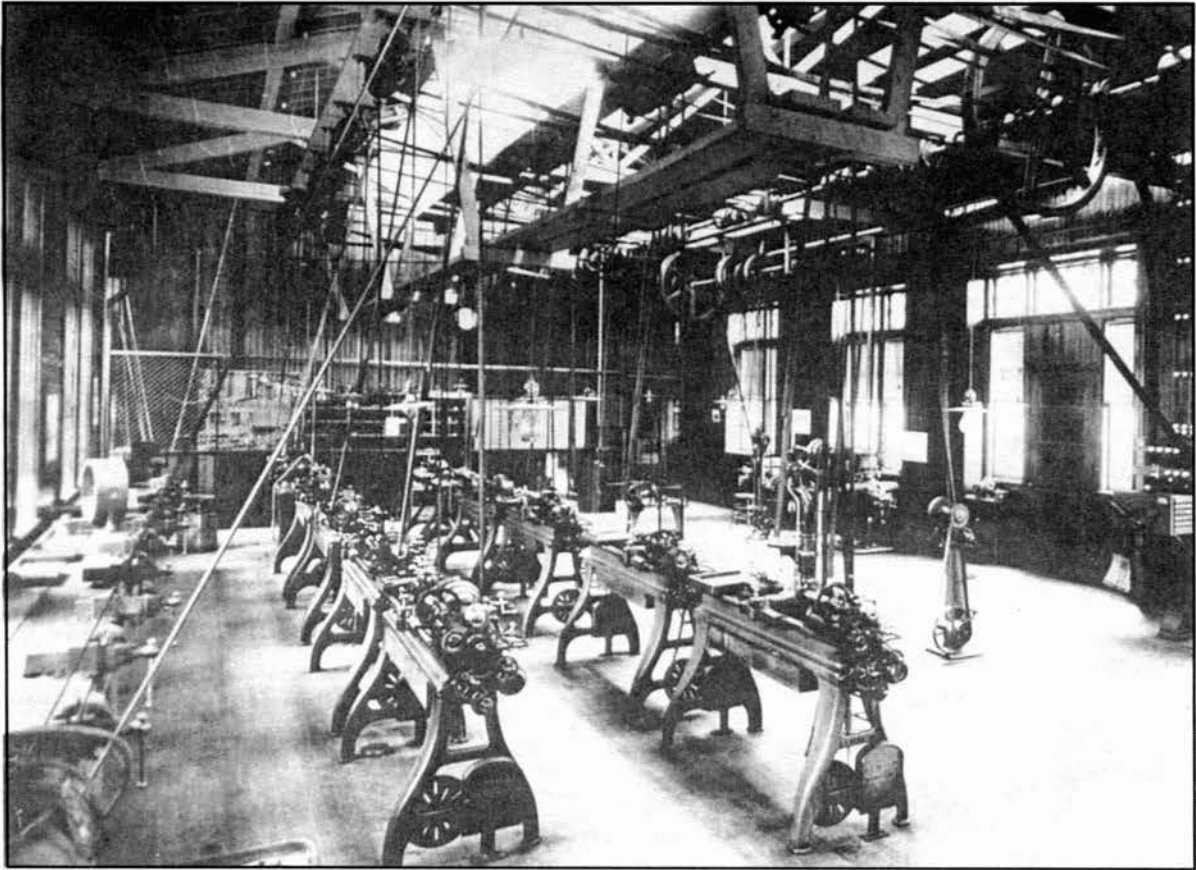
each 180 by 36 feet, were finished inside in quartered oak and hard pine. The maple floors in the wings were laid on cedar sleepers embedded in the concrete, except in the forge shop and the foundry. Substantial fire-proof construction consisted of iron girders with brick arches between them; the stairwell had iron stairs with slate treads and iron and concrete landings. As an extra fire precaution,

a water line was run to all portions of the building. The building was ventilated by fans, heated by both direct and indirect steam radiators, and lighted by electricity.

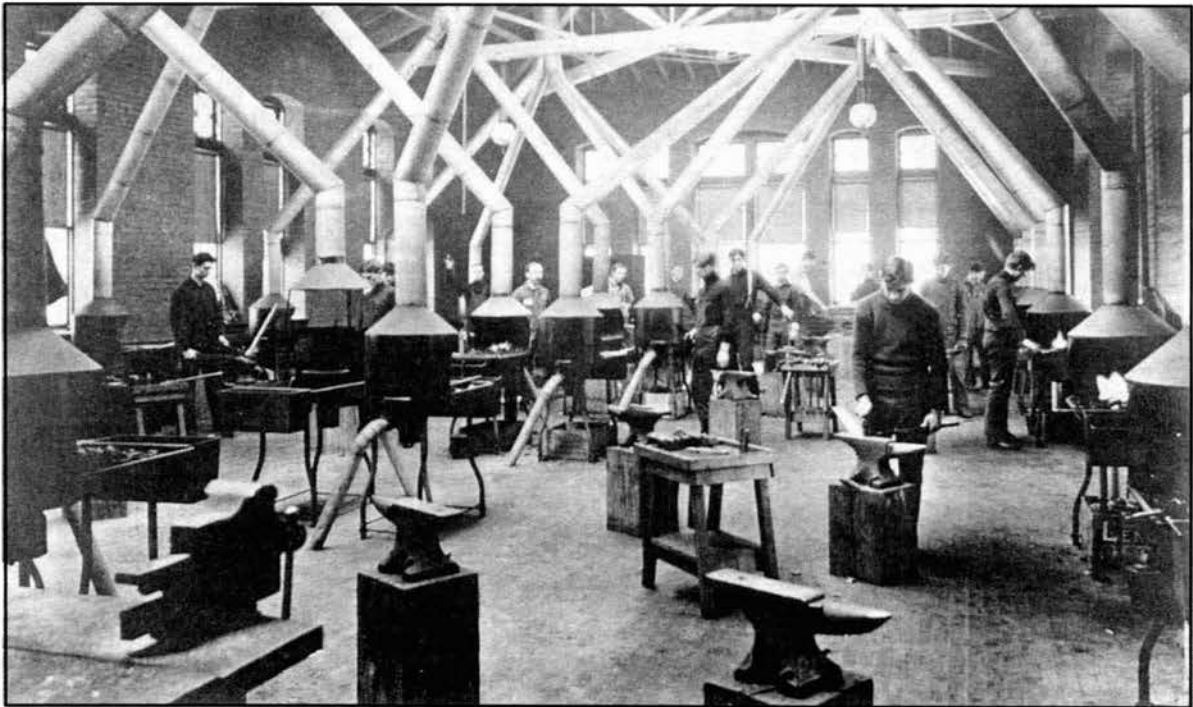
The main section of the building contained the director's office, library, recitation rooms, chemical and physical lecture rooms, physical and home science laboratory, drafting rooms, and the assembly hall with a seating capacity of 500. Room 125 housed the kitchen with the dining room just across the hall; millinery and dressmaking were on the second floor. The third floor was completely open and served as the chapel for devotions held every weekday morning and for many other kinds of meetings; it also was considered to be the best dance floor in Northern New York. In the basement were the boiler rooms, photometer room, photographic dark room, laundry, toilets, and lockers. The east wing housed the machine shop, the woodworking shop, and the steam-engine and dynamo rooms; the west wing housed the chemical, electrical, and mechanical engineering laboratories and the forge shop. An expert expressed his opinion in 1896 that:

All in all, the Clarkson Memorial School building and its equipment are justly pronounced by expert judges the most attractive, modern, and strictly up-to-date to be found in any technical college of the land.

As the building neared completion, the trustees realized that the



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*The machine shop (top) and forge shop (bottom) in the Old Main building were state-of-the-art facilities at the turn-of-the-century.*

school needed to be incorporated and to become affiliated with the University of the State of New York.\*

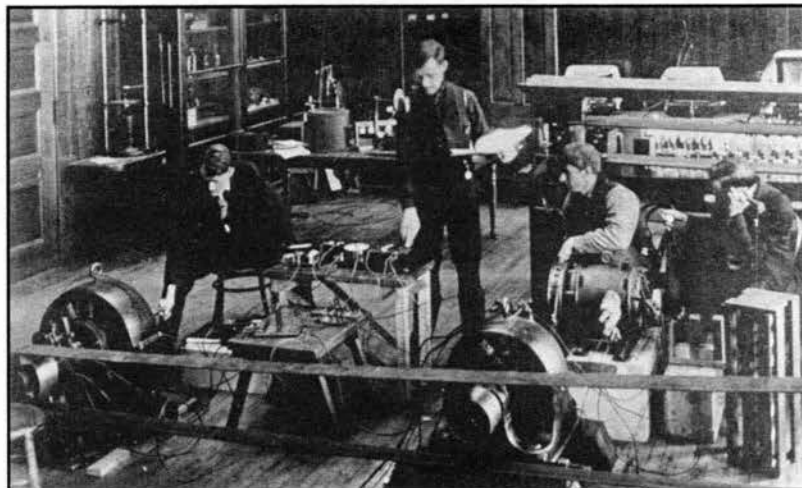
However, officials of the university continued their policy of refusing to bestow on local colleges and universities the power of conferring degrees and granting diplomas. Nonetheless, on March 11, 1896, after the location and the building had been inspected and approved by an inspector from the regents, the board of trustees made formal application to the State Board of Regents for a charter.

A week later, Anson Judd Upson, chancellor, and Melvil Dewey, secretary, approved the application and signed the charter of the Thomas S. Clarkson Memorial School of Technology. By this charter:

All graduates who shall have satisfactorily completed the course of study and the examinations required and shall have been recommended by the trustees for the degree of Bachelor of Science, shall receive from the University the

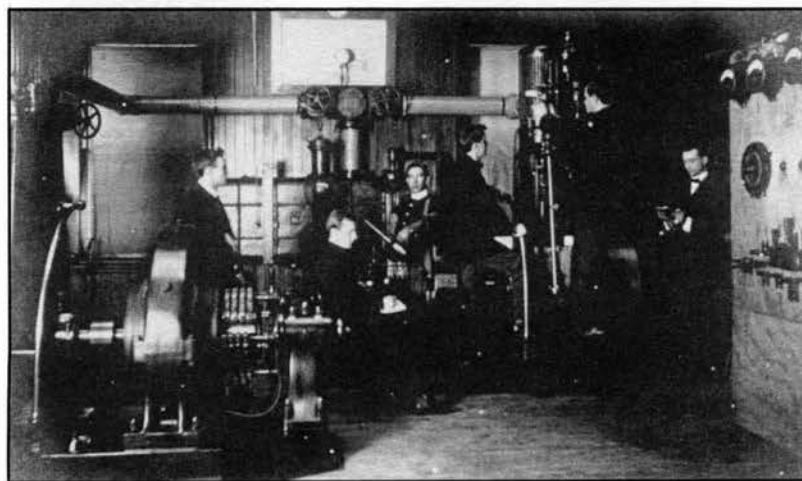
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*\*The University of the State of New York is not the same as the State University of New York. The latter was formed by the regents in 1948 to coordinate the state-supported institutions of higher education. The University of the State of New York was established in 1784 and is run by the regents whose administrative agency is the State Education Department. This "university" embraces all education in the state from kindergarten to professional schools both public and private, grants charters to museums and libraries, and supervises the practice of any profession in the state (law, medicine, engineering, architecture, optometry, etc.). Its regents are authorized to incorporate educational institutions, and they may confer degrees.*

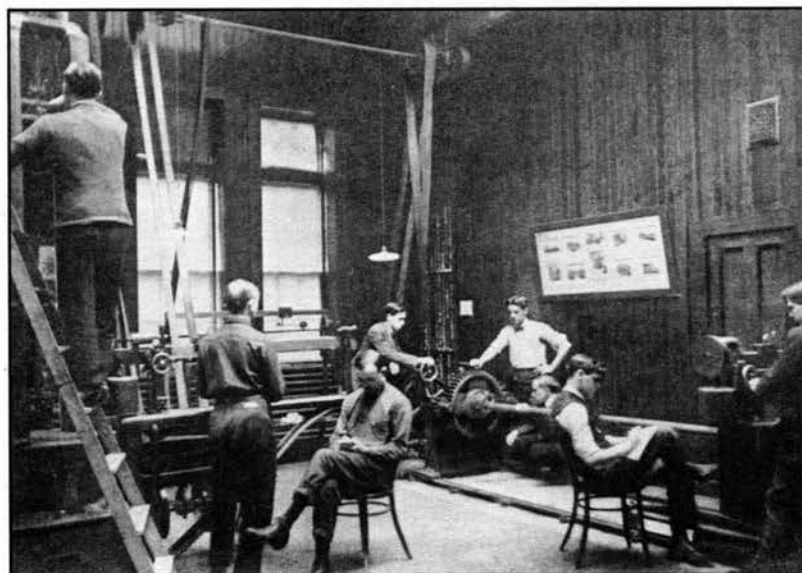


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*Scientific testing was a feature of the early technical training at Clarkson. This included the electrical testing (top), tests of steam engines (center), and materials testing (bottom).*



SLCHA Collections



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Courtesy of Clarkson University

*Charles Eaton,  
Clarkson's first director, 1895-1896.*

## **Charles Eaton (1895-1896)**

With the site of the school building secured and its plans approved, the trustees turned in 1895 to the choice of a director. The directorship was first offered to C.R. Richards, a professor at Pratt Institute in Brooklyn at a salary of \$2,500 per year; he turned down the offer. The board then turned to Charles Eaton of Pratt. Their first offer to Eaton on May 16 was at a salary of \$1,800 per year with a residence near the school or \$2,000 without the residence; he did not accept the position. On May 29, the board offered Eaton a new salary which he accepted: \$2,500 per year.

He accepted, with the condition that house rent also be provided; it was. He was to begin his duties on July 1, 1895, and to continue at the pleasure of both parties. His duties were to take charge of the erection of the school building and to provide for the equipment and organization of the school until it was fully opened. In February, Eaton presented to the trustees a document entitled *First Circular of Information, 1896-1897* which spelled out his vision for the school and its curricula.

1. Technical. Training the student for an engineering profession, and for special skill in the various branches of

degree of B.S. certified by a diploma bearing the seals and the official signatures both of the institution and the University of the State of New York.

Clarkson's trustees, however, were not satisfied with this wording, and successfully presented their arguments in Albany on October 15. Thus, the charter was modified by a compromise in

which both the college and the state university were properly recognized in the granting of degrees. Two weeks later, the trustees in Potsdam formally accepted the revised charter, and officially and legally organized themselves as the board of trustees of Clarkson Memorial School. John G. McIntyre was named president; Miss Annie Clarkson, secretary; and George Sweet, treasurer.



industrial and domestic arts and applied sciences, by giving instruction in such subjects as are found to develop the qualities of self-reliance, sound judgment, and logical reasoning; together with laboratory methods of learning, which have been acknowledged to be the best means of giving lasting results.

2. Normal. Giving the student a thorough preparation for the profession of a teacher or manual training subjects in the public school service.

3. Liberal. Believing that there should be added to the scientific and technical studies and exercises, which tend to make men resolute, exact and strong, at least a moderate amount of those culture studies which tend to make men broad and liberal, a certain amount of this work has been added to the other studies . . . .

Both sexes are admitted on equal footing to the privileges of the school.

His plan to aid young men and young women who showed a "desire to aid themselves" certainly was in keeping with the philosophy of Thomas S. Clarkson. Self reliance, sound judgment, and logical reasoning were to be taught through scientific and technical studies; and liberal ideas were to be stimulated through at least a moderate amount of cultural studies: a vision calling for high academic standards at the school. His plan was adopted, and the charter was approved on March 19, 1896.

In all probability the original founders would have been satis-

fied with a two-year trade school which would train artisans well for their chosen crafts. However, due to Eaton's foresight and his four-year plan, the Clarkson School began to educate engineers for their professions in the most modern types of technology. For this education, Director Eaton had purposely created severe requirements. Only students with ability were admitted to the six courses of instruction offered:

1. Mechanical Drawing and Machine Design
2. Electrical Engineering
3. Domestic Science and Art
4. Machine Work and Smithing
5. Woodwork and Pattern Making
6. Normal Manual Training

For admission to courses 1,3,4,5, students had to be at least 16, and to pass satisfactorily examinations in arithmetic, geography (political and commercial), and English composition. For admission to course 2 (electrical engineering), however, students had to pass examinations in algebra, plane geometry, arithmetic, French, United States history to the present time, and English.

For this English examination, the student was required to write, in one hour on a familiar subject, a short English composition correct in spelling, punctuation, grammar, idiom and natural in style. The candidate also had to be familiar with Shakespeare's *Midsummer Night's Dream*, Defoe's *History*

*of the Plague in London*, Irving's *Tales of a Traveller*, Scott's *Woodstock*, Macaulay's *Essays on Milton*, Longfellow's *Evangeline*, and George Eliot's *Silas Marner*.

In spite of the difficulty of these entrance examinations, when the college opened five young men appeared in the prep class, eight men in the freshman class, and four women in domestic science. At that time, only electrical engineering led to a four-year degree. Classes began in September with the following faculty:

- Charles W. Eaton, C. E.,  
*Director*
- Henry B. Dates, B. S.,  
*Electrical Engineering and Chemistry*
- Edward Robinson, B.S.,  
*Drawing and Machine Design*
- Henry R. Hedge, B.S.,  
*Mathematics and Modern Languages*
- Frank K. Rogers, B.S.,  
*Woodwork*
- C. A. McDonald, B.S.,  
*Machine Work and Forging*
- Sarah A. Nichols,  
*Domestic Science*

At the September 19 meeting of the board, Miss Annie "resolved that all bills and expenses for the running of the school must be incurred upon direction of the President and Secretary [of the board], and are to be audited and allowed by the board before being paid, and are to be paid by the treasurer upon order of the President and Secretary."

Then, in December, the Executive Committee of the now-

seven member board (Miss Elizabeth was named to the board), moved to

... select and employ teachers including a director, and shall fix the salaries and compensation and define the duties of all teachers, assistants and employees, and may discontinue and terminate their services.

And at the January 12, 1897 meeting, the board approved the following resolution:

Resolved that the services of Director Charles W. Eaton be and the same are hereby terminated with the close of the present term of the school, and he shall be paid at his convenience for his services for such period, and three hundred fifty dollars in addition thereto.

On January 25, they further resolved that Prof. Frank K. Rogers become Acting Director of the School on the following day until the close of the school

year at an annual salary of \$1,200.

The board was unable to obtain the services of Dr. C. Waldo of New Rochelle, and offered the directorship to Barton Cruikshank on July 31, 1897.

## **Barton Cruikshank (1897-1901)**

Cruikshank accepted the position of director at a salary of \$2,500 per year and house rent.

One week after being appointed, he presented to the board his descriptions of courses of study in mechanical engineering, domestic science, manual training, and the mechanical arts: mechanical drawing and machine design, machine work and smithing, and woodworking and pattern making.

A new ordinance had been enacted by the state board of regents in 1897:

No degree shall be conferred after January 1, 1900, for completion of a course of study or on examination, unless the candidate has as a preliminary general education at least a four-year high school course or its full equivalent as determined by the University rules.

After he learned about that ordinance, Cruikshank wrote to Melvil Dewey, secretary of the



Courtesy of Clarkson University

*Barton Cruikshank,  
Director of Clarkson, 1897-1901.*

board of regents in Albany, strongly endorsing it:

So strongly do we feel that an engineer should have the culture that comes from language and literature study that we require the same entrance preparation in English, language, etc., as the Association of Colleges and Preparatory Schools prescribes and then, give two years of English and one of the languages [French or German] offered for entrance and two years of the other.

During each of his four years at Clarkson, he proposed to the trustees, and they agreed, that because Potsdam State Normal School was allowing Clarkson students to use its gymnasium, 10 scholarships should be awarded to Normal graduates for the ensuing year in domestic science.

He also encouraged the formation of the Clarkson Athletic Association. This student-run group's project was "to promote the physical welfare and activities of the students by outdoor games and to encourage and maintain proper spirit in favor of hearty manly sports." This group supervised all athletic sports and contests, ruled on the eligibility of players, and arranged game schedules.

He stepped down as head of the school in June 1901. Later it was rumored that he faked his own suicide so that his wife could collect the insurance and live in peace, but no proof of that rumor has been found.

## William Sleeper Aldrich (1901-1911)

Cruikshank was succeeded as director of the school by William Sleeper Aldrich. The trustees offered him the position on August 22 at a salary of \$2,500. He accepted and bought the house on Main Street next to Old Main, that subsequently became the President's House. Aldrich had been a teacher at West Virginia University and came to Clarkson from that position.

Born in 1863, he graduated from Burlington High School, New Jersey, in 1878 at the age of 15. Commissioned from the Naval Academy with distinction in 1883, he graduated again a year later from Stevens Institute with a degree in mechanical engineering. He taught at Johns Hopkins University, and served as head of the Mechanical Arts Department at West Virginia State and at the University of Illinois before coming to Potsdam.

His daughter described him as modest and self-effacing, but so aware of the dignity of his position as director that he would wear a cutaway coat whenever he passed the collection plate at Trinity Church. Even though he gave talks frequently, he chose not to begin teaching right away at Clarkson, for he was self-conscious about his deafness. That disability resulted from the noise

he was exposed to while serving aboard the *USS Vulcan* during the Spanish-American War. His deafness was unique, according to his youngest daughter, Mary (Mrs. E.M. Jones, Liverpool, New York). He could not hear at all well in a quiet place, but when surrounded by noise, such as in a noisy engine room of a ship, he could hear quite well.

Among his other contributions to Clarkson was the adoption of a motto for the school. He and Miss Elizabeth and Miss Frederica chose the motto: "*A workman that needeth not to be ashamed*," which President Brooks, in 1913, placed in a circle around the family crest to form the new Clarkson seal. The two sisters chose that as a motto because they used Thomas's favorite Biblical phrase to refer to Thomas S. himself, for they felt that he, indeed, was "a workman who needeth not to be ashamed."

Aldrich rescheduled daily chapel to allow class periods to be lengthened to 55 minutes with five minute intervals. He convinced the trustees to raise tuition to \$100 per year. In 1904, he urged the faculty and students to accept an invitation to submit a display as part of the New York State educational exhibit at the Louisiana Purchase Exposition held in St. Louis, Missouri, in the summer of 1904. Its exhibit consisted of 600 sheets, ranging in size from 8 by 10 inches to 22 by 28 inches, illustrating the written and graphic work of students as regularly executed in several

courses of instruction. It included the subjects of chemistry and chemical engineering, physical and electrical laboratory work, courses in home science, elements of mechanisms, mechanical drawing, machine drawing and design, descriptive geometry, electrical charts and diagrams, and shop work exercises. Clarkson was awarded a bronze medal.

In 1904, also, Aldrich and the faculty created a new major in civil engineering. Distinct from courses in chemical, electrical, and mechanical engineering, this new course included railway, structural, municipal, mining, and geodetic engineering.

Railway engineering located a railway line, cross-sectioned it, and staked it out in detail with complete maps and profiles, computations of earthwork and costs. Structural engineering included courses in bridges and roofs, structural design, building construction, masonry, and foundations. Municipal engineering comprised water analysis, hydraulics, water works, sewer construction, sanitary science, road and street pavements, and city surveying. Mining engineering embraced geology, mineralogy, mining methods and surveys, and assaying. Geodetic engineering included hydrographic surveying and geodesy, fitting graduates to take positions in the United States Coast, Geodetic, and Lake Surveys.

Additionally in 1904, the Committee on Arrangements for the celebration on Founder's Day

1904 realized that the presence of alumni would make such a celebration more fitting. Prof. Frank M. Williams, chairman of that committee, wrote to every alumnus and alumna, urging all to return: only seven men returned representing only 21 percent of the graduates, and only three graduating classes, but it was enough to create an Alumni Association. At the initial Alumni Banquet, held the night of November 30 in the Albion House in Potsdam, General William Sooy Smith's address was so long that only at three o'clock in the morning could Prof. Williams call to order a meeting of the alumni to discuss the purpose, necessity, and benefit of forming an Alumni Association. In the election held immediately thereafter, George Stebbins '01, was elected president; William Fox '02, vice president; Charles Pohl '02, secretary; and Norman Rea '01, treasurer.

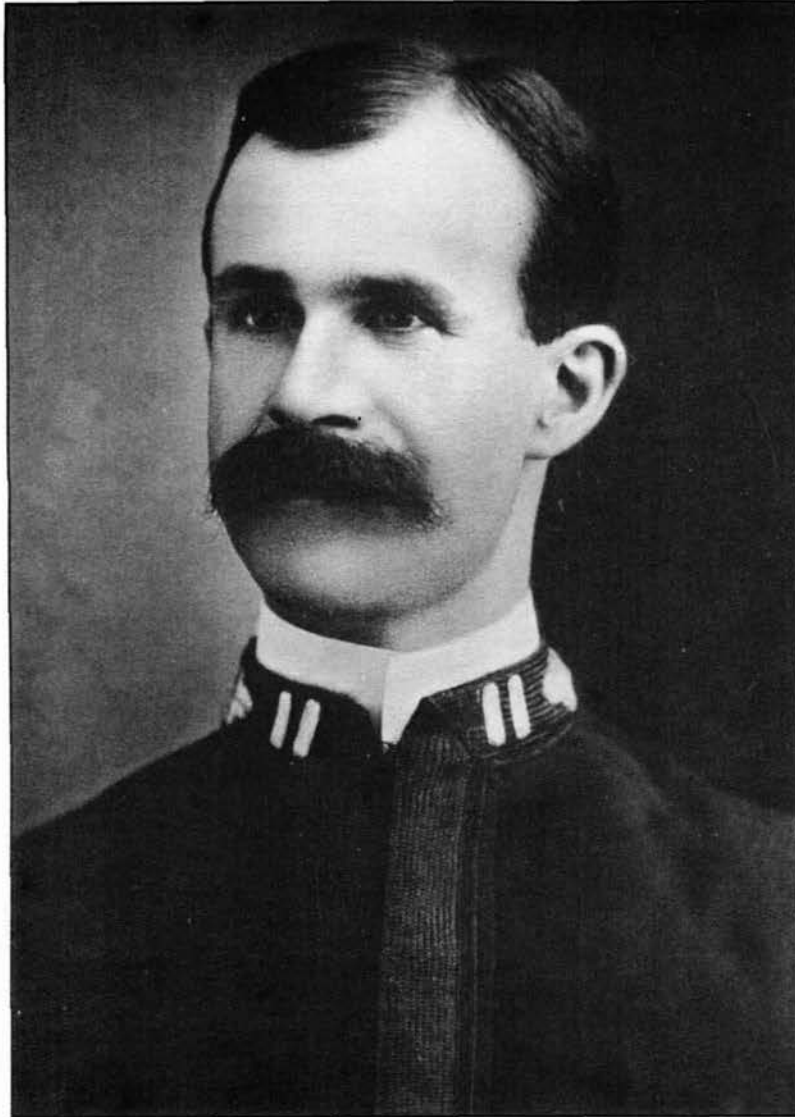
At nine o'clock the same morning, the alumni met again at the Tech Club to draft the constitution and by-laws. The Tech Club was a sandstone building erected on Fall Island by the Clarkson sisters as a meeting place for faculty and students. Adjacent to Evans and White Hardware Store and across Maple Street from Trinity Church, it still stands. At that meeting, the group also decided to incorporate a Co-operative Employment Bureau into the association. That bureau evolved into the current Career Development Center, the envy of

many American collegiate institutions.

On December 27, the second meeting of the alumni was held at the Woodruff House in Watertown when eleven graduates met to discuss the new constitution and other matters relating to the Alumni Association. They agreed to send a copy of the constitution to every graduate of Clarkson for their views on the association. A draft of the constitution including all the advisable changes suggested by the various graduates would be read at the next meeting. That plan was never carried out, however, because only a small percentage of graduates responded, and their suggestions were minor.

In 1906, Aldrich convinced the Clarkson sisters to create a scholarship memorializing their deceased brother, Levinus. Elizabeth and Frederica Clarkson, Thomas's surviving sisters, agreed to pay annually \$100, a full year's tuition at that time, "to be applied to the establishment of a Scholarship to be known as the 'Levinus Clarkson Scholarship,' and to be awarded to a candidate nominated by the Director." It was to be awarded to a student whose record was in every way above question, as based upon the work and deportment of previous years, and who had given the most promise of future professional success.

Also in 1906, Aldrich encouraged the trustees to build a gymnasium and to begin raising money



Courtesy of Clarkson University

*William Sleeper Aldrich,  
Director of Clarkson, 1901-1911.*

to finance it. In 1910, the trustees hired the same architect who had designed Old Main to draw up plans for the proposed gym. The following year, Miss Annie and Miss Emily (Thomas's nieces) realized that the structure was costing more than they had realized originally and that not enough outside money had been raised. Therefore, to save \$1,000, the sisters, with trustee approval, or-

dered the gym size to be reduced by 10 feet so that its overall dimensions were 59 by 84 feet.

During Aldrich's directorship, Clarkson ceased being co-educational. Since the fall semester 1901, a four-year course allowed women to earn a BS degree in domestic engineering. Women who completed only the two-year course received a certificate, not a diploma, and all

special students received only credit. By the 1906-07 school year, Clarkson employed two home economics teachers: Myra Brewster Clarke, AB, AM, professor; and Mildred Mae Parker, BS, assistant in home economics. In that same fall semester of 1906, only one freshman woman started the four-year baccalaureate course, while four freshmen women started, and six sophomore women continued in the two-year certificate course.

Therefore, in 1907, the domestic science and arts course was dropped from the curriculum after the five women in the first year of the certificate course and six women in the second year were graduated; the home economics course also was dropped. Presumably, these actions were taken because no women applied for admission. The board of trustees made that decision but gave no explanation:

It was moved and duly seconded that the Department of Home Economics be discontinued on and after June 14, 1907, as recommended by Miss Clark, professor of Home Economics, a committee, and the faculty.

At their March 25, 1911 meeting, Aldrich notified the trustees that he felt he had to retire from his position at the close of that year because a serious growing deafness was affecting both ears. In recognition of his contributions in helping the school grow, the trustees obtained a retirement pension for him from the

Carnegie Fund for Advancement of Teaching. Its president, Henry Smith Pritchett, president of Massachusetts Institute of Technology, had given the Decennial Day Address in 1906 and was familiar with Clarkson and Aldrich.

A month later, the trustees offered the position of director to John Pascal Brooks at a salary of \$2,500 and the use of the house adjoining Old Main.

At the close of graduation ceremonies on June 11, 1911, Professor George H. Sweet, President of the Board of Trustees, announced Aldrich's departure. With the exception of the ten students who graduated in 1900 and 1901, Aldrich had known all 106 engineering graduates (three had died in the ensuing 10 years). In recognition of his ten years of devoted service to the school, Aldrich was presented with a loving cup from the Clarkson sisters, Elizabeth and Lavinia. Engraved on one side of this solid silver cup was the monogram "W. S. A." and on the other side were the words:

To William Sleeper Aldrich, ME, Director of the Thomas S. Clarkson Memorial School of Technology, Potsdam, N.Y., in grateful recognition of his devotion and unwearied efforts during the 10 years of his Directorship, 1901-1911.

Director Aldrich left Clarkson to join the Shoshone Project for the United States Reclamation Service in Wyoming. He sent the following in-

teresting message in October 1912:

Before leaving Potsdam, I promised to send nothing for publication [in the *Clarkson Bulletin*]. As to the US Reclamation Service, all the forces are strictly enjoined against writing anything for publication, save through bureau officials, and with their approval and sanction.

He died in Milwaukee suddenly on February 2, 1942, and was buried in Manlius, New York, because he had been living in Manlius with one of his married daughters shortly before his death.

## **John Pascal Brooks (1911-1929; 1932-1933)**

In April 1911, the trustees offered the position of director to Professor John P. Brooks, the only candidate considered for the position, at a salary of \$2,500 and the use of the residence adjoining Old Main. In June they agreed to pay the house costs and electric bill of the director's house.

Born in 1862, in Kittery, Maine, Brooks graduated from Phillips Exeter in 1882 and from Dartmouth with a bachelor of science degree in 1885. While completing the requirements at Dartmouth, he played left half-

back on Dartmouth's first football team. He played every minute of every game. He was named by Walter Camp to be left halfback on the first All-American football team in 1884.

During the winter season of his college years, he taught in the public schools and continued his teaching career for a year after graduating. He then went to St. Paul, Minnesota, where he worked in a drafting room for the Burlington Railroad. While travelling for that railroad, Brooks and his fellow workers camped in tents in Iowa during the winter and slept on bags of hay a foot thick. He worked on railroad construction near Sioux City, Iowa, and helped build a short railroad near Streator, Illinois.

His engineering career began when he returned to the east and went to work for the J. Edwin Jones firm in Boston, from 1886 to 1890. He left Boston to teach as an instructor of civil engineering at Lehigh University from 1890-1897, returning to Dartmouth to get his master of science degree in 1894. He then became professor of civil engineering at State University of Kentucky, 1897-1906, and at the University of Illinois, Urbana, from 1906 to 1911. He was the author of a *Handbook of Surveying*, the *Handbook of Street Railway Location*, and a textbook on reinforced concrete. He was an associate member of the American Society of Civil Engineers and a member of the Society for the Promotion of Engineering



*John P. Brooks  
Director of Clarkson, 1911-1929 and 1932-1933.*

Education, of Sigma Xi, and Tau Beta Pi.

He insisted that he remembered clearly the day Lincoln was shot. He was at home when his father hurried home with the news. Later, while attending the Pan American Exposition in Buffalo, New York, Dr. Brooks was just entering the door of the Music Hall where a reception was being held for President William

McKinley, when he heard the shot that killed the president.

When Brooks joined the Clarkson staff in 1911, the school had only 57 students and a faculty requiring only nine men. When he left after 20 years, the student population had grown to over 400 and the faculty to 29.

In 1913, the New York legislature created regents scholarships to aid the state's students attend-

ing New York colleges. A new law stipulated that:

... the college selected by the person entitled to the scholarship must be within the state and incorporated as a college and authorized under the laws of the state.

Because it had been enacted in spring 1913, the trustees wanted to make sure that Clarkson students could avail themselves of its benefits by the beginning of the fall semester. Clarkson's tuition at the time was \$100, but other expenses (gym fee, deposit fee, books, stationery, instruments added to the room and board and laundry costs) brought the yearly cost of attending Clarkson to \$315.

Scholarship money for "college" students, but not "school" students, made Clarkson's students ineligible. Realizing the importance of this award, the board of trustees asked permission to amend the charter to change the school's name. Furthermore, in the minds of some people the word *school* implied inferior standards of scholarship when compared with a *college* or a *university*. For these reasons, representatives of Clarkson trustees, the state education department, and the board of regents met in conference during the summer of 1913. As a result, Clarkson's charter was changed.

This instrument witnesseth that the Regents of the University of the State of New York have amended the charter

granted March 19, 1896, to the Thomas S. Clarkson Memorial School of Technology in Potsdam, N.Y., by changing its corporate name to that of

*Thomas S. Clarkson  
Memorial College of  
Technology,*

and, further, by authorizing the College to confer appropriate collegiate degrees upon its graduates who duly earn the same, and also to confer such degrees upon those who duly earn them in post graduate work there done.

Thus, these scholarships would be of considerable help to incoming students. In fact, four of the freshmen entering in fall 1913 were recipients of regents scholarships.

Furthermore, the amended charter authorized Clarkson to grant collegiate degrees itself. Until this change, the bachelor of science degrees had been awarded by the University of the State of New York. Additionally, the amended charter authorized the awarding of graduate degrees. (The first two master of science degrees were awarded in 1916, and the first doctor of philosophy degree in 1964.) And finally, this change in school name also meant changing the title of its director to president.

In 1914, President Brooks received board approval to adopt David Clarkson's coat of arms as the college arms and to include the motto which Director Aldrich had chosen with the Clarkson sisters' permission: "A Workman who needeth not to be ashamed."

By the early 1920s, Clarkson needed money to increase its endowment. In 1921, George Stebbins, a graduate of 1901 and a trustee, agreed to become chairman of a national campaign to raise \$200,000.

The *Integrator* reported a meeting of the Potsdam Business Men's Association on March 1 that heard a proposal from Prof. Wilson to raise:

... sufficient funds to buy the Clarkson estate across the river, to transform it into a campus which would stand without equal; to erect new college buildings; and to enlarge the college sufficiently to accommodate a thousand students. A Clarkson on the hill has been the dream of every student that ever attended Tech.

He further proposed that to raise money to put the college on the hill, Clarkson should sell the town campus to State Normal. Rufus Sisson, Jr., was head of the Chamber of Commerce which was approached with the idea of bonding the village for \$250,000 for this move to the hill. These men wanted the Clarkson estate to go to the college and were hopeful of helping the school move across the river to a campus on that estate. Even though this plan did not succeed, it was instrumental in motivating the Clarkson family to donate all its holdings to the college.

People in Potsdam supported the proposal to the best of their

abilities. The local response to his call for help was an amazing \$140,000 from the community. Among the local pledges were promises of clerks and mill workers to give \$260 each over a five-year period. For example, this pledge meant contributing a dollar a week from their wages for five years, when that weekly salary averaged only \$12. This campaign was started in 1922, and by May 30, 1925, the drive had netted \$217,420 in pledges; two years later, the sum of \$261,039 had been raised.

Then, in 1927, Miss Annie Clarkson, a niece and heir of the Clarkson sisters, gave the Clarkson estate to the college. In reaction, the talk of "Clarkson on the hill" became a chorus, and the college trustees authorized a sign to be erected on the northeast corner of the hill estate bearing the hopeful announcement: "Future Home of Clarkson Memorial College." And between 1923 and 1927, students constructed the athletic field on land donated by Miss Annie. Two years later it appeared that the college's "future home" was assured when Miss Annie died in 1929, leaving the college as the ultimate inheritor of her estate in excess of \$1,100,000.

Because that seemed to be the signal for "Clarkson on the hill," the trustees allotted \$300,000 of Miss Annie's money for construction of the first educational building and hired architects to draw up plans for a collection of handsome



buildings on the hill site. Hardly had the brochure depicting this "greater Clarkson" campus been distributed in 1931, when all hopes for the realization of this dream were dashed by the long-term effects of the stock market crash of 1929. The value of Miss Annie's stock had dropped to less than \$600,000.

Brooks believed that everyone, including the president, should teach, so by 1917 all students in all curricula were required to participate in a one-hour seminar conducted by him. Each student had to prepare and read papers on assigned subjects and participate in the discussion of the papers of others. Each was criticized on its subject matter, language, and style by the instructor and the members of the class. The manner of oral presentation was to be the type suited to scientific societies and before small audiences rather than the flowery, ornate declamatory style found on the Chataqua Circuit.

During Brooks's tenure as president, Clarkson also saw the beginning of the hockey team and the construction of an athletic field by the students themselves over a four-year period. Further events during his 17-year term as president included the introduction of the Student Army Training Program during World War I which trained young men as carpenters, electricians, and auto mechanics for service in the army to help the war effort. He saw the creation of the business administration cur-

riculum; the adoption of courses on the "Code of Ethics" recently promulgated by the American Society of Mechanical Engineers; the formation of an honor society and an interfraternity council; the introduction of a ceremony entitled "Moving-Up Day" to recognize achievement among the student body; and the start of the student newspaper, *Integrator* in 1919. He helped lay out the Potsdam golf course and drew up plans for its clubhouse. He enjoyed playing the flute throughout his lifetime, and practiced cabinet-making after he retired.

In the fall of 1928, with the enrollment standing at 380, Dr. Brooks was appointed president emeritus as Joseph E. Rowe became president of Clarkson. After President Rowe resigned in June 1932, Brooks agreed to serve until a suitable replacement could be found, and did so for one year.

In 1959, "Doc" Powers in his *Memories of Clarkson* assessed Brooks's contributions to the college:

Dr. Brooks did more for Clarkson than any other one man. He made Clarkson more widely known by visiting high schools, he organized and stabilized the faculty, led the student body to be an organization loyal to the College, brought back the alumni interest, persuaded the community that the college was an integral part, and taught classes in applied mechanics and reinforced concrete.

## Joseph E. Rowe (1928-1932)

Joseph E. Rowe became president of Clarkson in 1928. Born in 1883, in Emmitsburg, Maryland, Rowe was graduated from the Pennsylvania College at Gettysburg in 1904 with first honors. He was a four-year varsity letter man in baseball and three years in basketball. In 1904, he began graduate work at the University of Virginia where he also played varsity baseball and represented the university in debate at which he won a gold medal. He earned his doctorate from the Johns Hopkins University in 1910 and was inducted into Phi Beta Kappa for the excellence of his scholarship.

After teaching at Goucher College and Haverford College for a year each, he took a position at Pennsylvania State College where in the next six years he rose from assistant professor to professor. He left to become an assistant physicist in mathematical engineering research at the National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics. From there he became chief ballisticians at the Aberdeen Proving Grounds in Maryland. While there, he gained first-hand experience which, when coupled with his mathematical ability, made him such an acknowledged authority on ballistics that the American



Courtesy of Clarkson University

Joseph E. Rowe,  
President of Clarkson, 1928-1932.

Mathematical Society sent him many books on the subject for review. From 1921 until 1928, he was head of the Department of Mathematics at the College of William and Mary. He was a member of Theta Chi national social fraternity, the American Mathematical Society, the Mathematical Association for the Ad-

vancement of Science, and the American Society of Mechanical Engineers.

Additionally, he was an inventor of no mean ability. One of his inventions, a plane trinometer, solved plane triangles by mechanical operation. It was comprised of calibrated bars with movable joints which had a circu-

lar scale of degrees on them. The known parts were set and the unknown ones read from the proper scales. This device was a boon to someone without knowledge of trigonometry by eliminating the use of the cumbersome cosine and tangent laws and the use of natural or logarithmic functions for solutions. It helped pilots to locate their exact position while in flight, and artillerymen to determine ranges.

Rowe was an idealist. On the front page of the first issue of the student newspaper, the *Integrator*, first published as a weekly instead of a monthly publication in the fall of 1930, Rowe described his ideal of a student newspaper:

... the *Integrator* should reveal in its pages all of those elements that go to make up college life in Clarkson College: our spirit of scholarship; our ideas of sportsmanship, the values we place upon such qualities as courage, manners, reverence and taste; our standards of virile manhood and our attitude toward noble womanhood; our pride in past achievement and our hope for the future.

Upon the editorial staff of the *Integrator* rests the responsibility of accurate portrayal of the College to others and an honest revelation of us to ourselves. Through its instrumentality we may be placed in a position to purge our College of anything objectionable, if such should be discovered, and to idealize all that is good, of which there is an abundance.

One of Rowe's first actions was to obtain trustee permission to hire faculty himself. Trustees had done all the hiring previously. Rowe employed William Harry Bair as chairman of the Physics Department thus adding to the faculty a professor from California with a doctorate. Then, after he encouraged the trustees to raise tuition to \$250, he urged them to petition the regents in Albany to allow Clarkson to confer honorary degrees. The regents approved the request, but only for honorary doctor of science degrees. In 1929, he made a major administrative change when he appointed Clarkson's first deans: Frederick Wilson as dean of engineering and John A. Ross, Jr., as dean of administration.

In that same year, after Miss Annie's estate of over \$1,100,000 was left to her sister, Mrs. Emilie Moore, who in turn conveyed it to the college, the board chairman, Bertrand Snell, authorized architects to develop comprehensive plans and drawings for a "Clarkson on the Hill." A letter from the chairman of the advisory committee to the board in June 1930 revealed that the board did not want a single structure, but rather a group of buildings with space preserved for the eventual construction of a chapel and auditorium, library and reading room, dormitories, a hockey rink, and reservations for fraternity, faculty and club houses to

be built. These facilities were to handle 600 students at first with the enrollment eventually increasing to 1500.

By November 1930, however, the trustees could not see their way clear "at this time," to think of any construction, for declining value of the securities in Miss Annie's estate made it inadvisable to go to the market for the sale of those securities, and so the idea of a hill campus was shelved. Ironically, a brochure depicting these plans was delayed at the publisher, and so it did not appear until 1931, after the concept had been postponed.

The only part of the hill campus that went forward was the construction of a hockey rink on the east side of the Clarkson estate. The trustees authorized \$3,200 to lay water lines to the area, install ten floodlights and a low fence enclosing it, and to erect a 16 by 48 foot shelter.

In March 1932, the board notified Rowe that his services would be terminated in June. In his immediate letter of resignation, he wrote that he expected to vacation in the mountains of Maryland and then to spend a year studying international relations at the Walter Hines Page School of International Relations at Johns Hopkins University. He died of a heart attack in Baltimore, Maryland, on October 2, 1939.

## **James Shelby Thomas (1933-1940)**

In November 1932, the board offered the presidency to Dr. James Shelby Thomas, who, as noted in their minutes,

... in their judgment is the best man qualified to fill the presidency, our idea being, as ever, Clarkson on the Hill as the ultimate goal.

His salary was to be \$7,500 per year and a residence,

... said salary to be subject to the following increases, namely: for each \$250,000 added to the resources of the College through the efforts of the said Thomas, he is to have an annual increase of \$1,000 until, if and when a maximum salary of \$18,000 may have been reached.

The following year, the College received a gift of the property at 71 Pierrepont Avenue from Archibald Matthews to be the home of Clarkson's president and to be called Hepburn House. Thus the former presidential home, Grant House, on Main Street adjacent to Old Main could be rented at \$45 per month to someone else.

Before Thomas arrived on campus, he was injured seriously in an automobile accident in Alabama. Although he told Acting-President Brooks that he expected

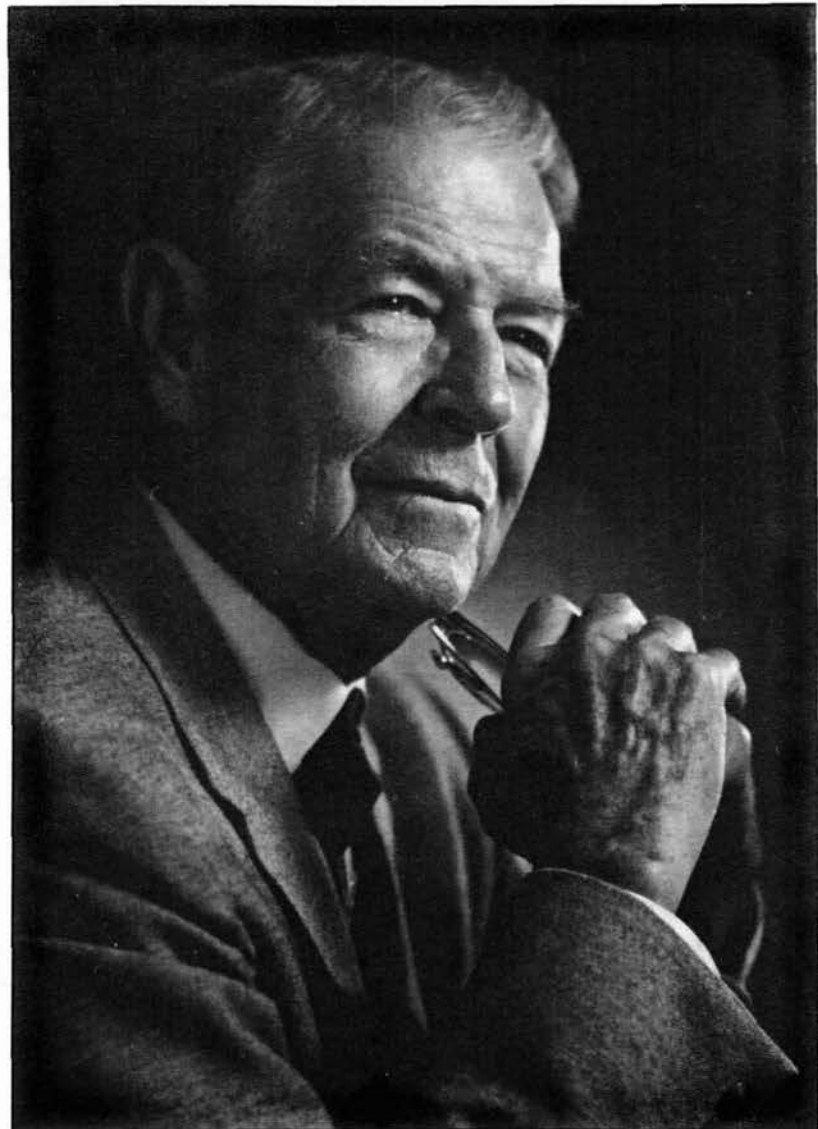
the cast to be off, his leg by mid-March, he did not arrive until May in time to deliver Clarkson's Commencement address.

One of his first successes was to receive regents approval for Clarkson to award honorary doctor of engineering degrees. In June 1934, he reported to the trustees that fraternities seemed to be having severe financial problems, which made the task of collecting tuition even more difficult than in the previous year.

To aid the Potsdam Rotary Club in raising money for its Crippled Children's Fund in 1935, President Thomas agreed to appear in its annual Revue and Minstrel Show cast as a slave, called End Man. Dr. Voelker and John Maxcy of Potsdam Normal appeared as *Bold Bad Pirates*, outfitted with cutlasses, dirks, belaying pins, and eye patches. Dr. Thomas's jokes and wisecracks were said to have been of the "ultra-modern order," while the Voelker/Maxcy rendition of *Sixteen Men on a Dead Man's Chest* was the hit of the show.

In September 1936, the United States Army established a Reserve Officer Training Corps program at Clarkson under the direction of Captain Timothy Mulligan. Fifty-nine students enrolled during the first year.

At its May 1936 meeting, the trustees approved Dr. Thomas's request to grant a bachelor of science degree in home economics to Katharine Signor, who received a certificate in home economics



Courtesy of Clarkson University

*James Shelby Thomas,  
the sixth president of Clarkson, 1933-1940.*

in 1907, making her the first woman to receive a bachelor's degree since 1907. Since leaving Clarkson in 1907, Miss Signor had taken enough additional course work at Pennsylvania State College and Columbia University to satisfy Clarkson's requirements.

During the 1930s, the idea of "Clarkson on the Hill" continued

to dominate the trustees' thinking. In 1936 they authorized a plan for the first step of that move to the hill at a cost not to exceed \$350,000 and to begin construction as soon as \$100,000 could be raised from outside sources. However, because fund-raising was difficult, especially during World War II, the plan was postponed year by year.

## **John A. Ross, Jr. (1940-1947)**

In 1937, a visit by the Engineering Council for Professional Development, the agency which accredits engineering schools across the country, reported that Clarkson's chemical engineering department had fallen below standard and needed reorganization. A parallel visit by the American Institute of Chemical Engineers affirmed that decision, and the department's flaws were corrected.

Through his many speaking engagements country-wide, Thomas gained wide recognition as an outstanding educator, possessing a keen mind and keen educational foresight. His speaking schedule in April 1938 is an example of his extensive travels. On the eleventh he spoke to a joint session of the Southern Hardware Jobber Association and the American Hardware Manufacturing Association in Memphis, Tennessee. Three days later, he spoke in Chicago to the National Purchasing Agents' Association. The next day, he was guest speaker for the Annual Convention of the Tractor Division of the American Society of Automotive Engineers. April 16 found him in Indiana talking to the New Castle Foreman Association. Four days later at the Astor Hotel, he addressed the Greater New York City Safety Council, presided over by Lowell Thomas, the famous news commentator. From there, he went to Windsor, Ontario, to address the Canadian Accident Prevention Association on the 21st, and the next day to Pittsburgh, Pennsyl-

vania, to address the Ohio Valley Conference on Adult Education. After a much needed six-day rest, he returned to Windsor to address the Canadian Branch of the American Society of Automotive Engineers; thence to Washington, D.C., for a speech to the American Trade Association, and a trip to Rochester, New York, to talk to the Rochester Advertising Club and to visit two Rochester high schools before returning to Potsdam. This was a typical itinerary for him, for he was back out on the road again early in May with speeches in Memphis, Columbus, Chicago, Evansville, Cleveland, and finally Syracuse before returning to Potsdam.

Concerned with attracting new students to Clarkson, Thomas decided to take either a quartet or an octet from the Glee Club along with him when he spoke at North Country high schools, in 1939, for he felt that nothing could help more in advertising the college. He invited the entire Glee Club to accompany him to Watertown when he spoke to several thousand high school students. Then he instructed Ted Ramsdell, the registrar, to visit 80 high schools personally, and to describe the college to potential students. The result: 107 applications were submitted. In 1937, the year before the high school visits, only 58 applications had been received.

Thomas resigned from the presidency effective June 15, 1940.

A native of Belfast, Maine, John A. Ross came to Clarkson in 1911 as head of the mechanical engineering department, a position he held until he became dean of administration in 1929. When he stepped into the college presidency from that position the two deanships of administration and engineering were discontinued.

Graduating from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1901, he later returned to his alma mater to teach a course in warship design, a postgraduate course for Annapolis men. He also taught at Case School of Applied Science, at Cornell University, and at Lafayette University before coming to Potsdam.

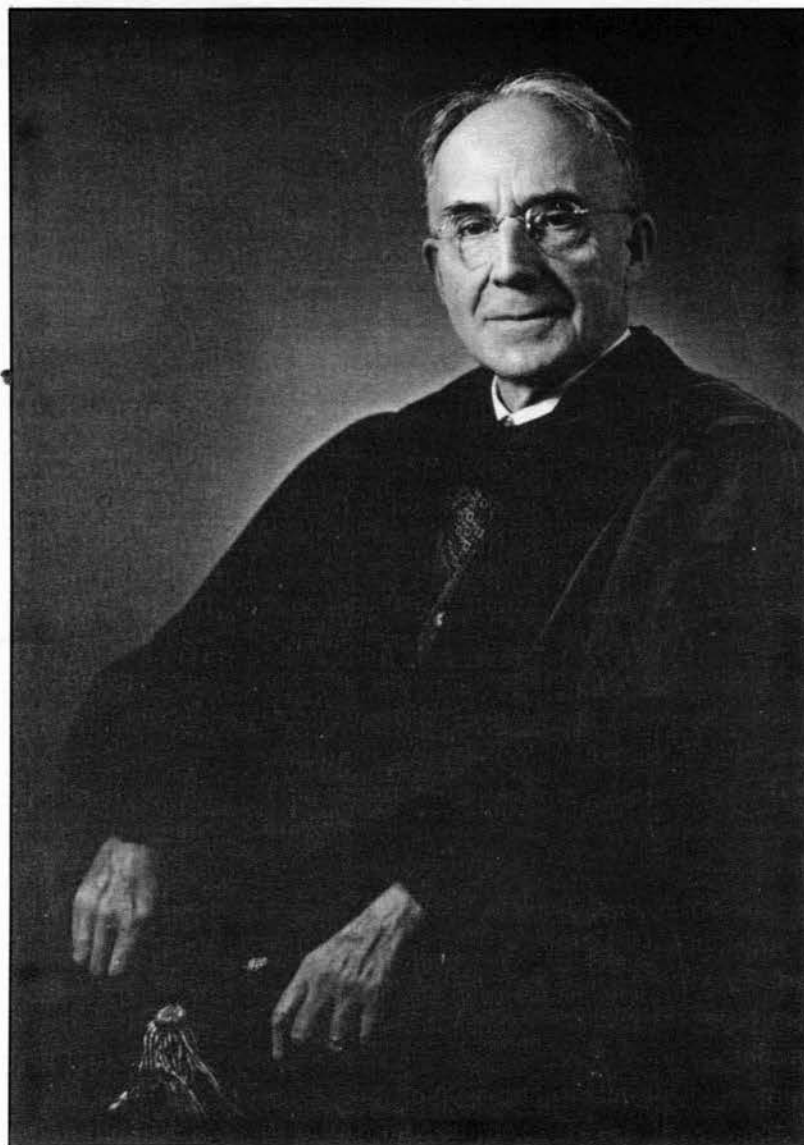
As a teacher and department head for 25 years, he was known affectionately by the students as "Gummy." The name referred to the "gum" (or rubber) shoes needed most of the year in Northern New York, and being a good Yankee, Ross carefully observed that need with "gum" shoes.

President Ross addressed the entire student body at a convocation four days after the attack on Pearl Harbor. He urged the men to continue their studies until such time as their presence on the front would be more valuable to the country than their potential value as future engineers. He said that

it would be rash for them to enlist when the country needed them far more in their trained capacities. He also explained that he had offered the services of the college to the Federal government, but had not yet received a response. Major F.X. Purcell, Clarkson's ROTC commander, had no information to offer about the war's impact on the ROTC program at Clarkson. He added, however, that the local store of rifles and supplies was being guarded to prevent any possible coup by a local "fifth column."

In 1942, a national conference of university and college presidents on higher education and the war adopted some resolutions on the uniformity of nationwide calendar changes and credits, acceleration of high school and college courses, shortening the college course, inclusion of certain courses to fit men for training as naval officers, and the suspension of voluntary enlistment of college undergraduates.

President Ross explained these new resolutions at a convocation. Some students could enlist as cadets in the naval reserve V-7 program which was created to fill the nation's need for 14,000 deck and engineering officers. Undergraduates would enlist immediately, take certain required courses, and, upon graduation, enter 30-day training as apprentice seamen. Then, upon completion of a rigorous three-month course as midshipmen, they would take a test to qualify for commissions as naval reserve



Courtesy of Clarkson University

*John A. Ross, Jr.,  
President of Clarkson, 1940-1947.*

ensigns. One of the strong points of this program was that students would be allowed to complete their schooling.

The fiftieth anniversary of Clarkson College was celebrated on October 9, 1945, just as World War II was ending. The festivities began with a large parade. Led by a military band from Kingston, Ontario, the academic

procession into the Civic Center Auditorium was studded with college presidents, trustees, deans, faculty, honored guests, the student body, alumni, and friends from all over. During the ceremonies, Dr. Ross honored five internationally known celebrities with Clarkson degrees: Joseph Davies, former ambassador to the Soviet Union, was awarded the

degree of doctor of science; Sir William Stanier, director of scientific research in the British Ministry of Production, was awarded a doctor of science degree; George J. Stanley '02, vice president of Aluminum Company of America, was honored with the doctor of engineering degree; Charles E. Wilson, president of General Motors Corporation, was awarded the doctor of engineering degree (in Mr. Wilson's absence, it was accepted by Owen D. Young, honorary chairman of the Board of Directors of the General Electric Company); and Herbert C. Hoover, former president of the United States, was awarded the degree of doctor of engineering.

The idea of "Clarkson on the hill" had continued to dominate the trustees' thinking. Because fund raising was difficult, especially during World War II, this plan was postponed year after year. Even as late as 1944, the board continued to adopt resolutions that "future building of any magnitude be done on the hill as part of a developed step-by-step program."

Six months later, however, a situation arose which postponed for more than 15 years any additional steps toward educational construction on the hill. In May 1945, the planned removal of the State Teachers' College to its new site on the edge of the village of Potsdam gave Clarkson the opportunity to purchase its building now known as Snell Hall for a financial consideration too advan-

tageous to be turned down. Through the efforts of Congressman Bertrand Snell, Clarkson made a firm offer to purchase for \$150,000 from the State of New York the Potsdam State Teachers' College property, except the Practice Training School (Congdon Hall) and its playground, with the sale to be completed "on or before two years from the close of the present war." On June 27, 1945, Congressman Snell made a gift of \$150,000 to the college for that purchase.

At the same time, the trustees reported that the citizens of Potsdam had pledged \$125,000 in a two-month campaign toward the construction of a new (Alumni) gymnasium on the hill. That report contained the following statement:

Potsdam per capita citizen has raised more dollars for Clarkson than ever has been raised in any other community in the state or nation.

A year later, as the onslaught of returning veterans was reaching its peak, the college rented the second floor of the Montgomery Ward store on Fall Island (now the Evans and White Hardware Store) as a dormitory for 60 men. At that time, Clarkson's enrollment stood at 785: 100 men living in fraternities, 185 in college dormitories, and the remaining 500 in private homes.

Between 1945 and 1961, Snell Hall, just across the street from Old Main, was purchased and renovated, three educational

buildings and a student union were constructed on the village campus, and it appeared for a time that no educational construction would take place on the hill.

In June 1947, Dr. Ross resigned, and in recognition of his service to the college, the board of trustees granted him a year's leave of absence.

In his 37 years on campus as faculty member and president, he had seen the institution grow from a school with 57 students and nine faculty to a college with over 1,500 students. He died in 1971 at age 92 in the Potsdam Hospital.

## **Jess Harrison Davis (1947-1951)**

Jess Harrison Davis was appointed acting president in 1947 and was inaugurated as Clarkson's eighth president the next year.

A native of Columbus, Ohio, Davis earned his bachelor of mechanical engineering degree in 1928 at Ohio State University before joining the Clarkson faculty as an instructor in the mechanical engineering department in 1929. While at Clarkson, he worked on his master's degree at Ohio State, receiving it in 1933; his thesis concerned specific heats of oils and other liquids. During the summers that followed, he devoted his energies to practical design and research



Courtesy of Clarkson University

*Jess Harrison Davis,  
President of Clarkson, 1947-1951.*

work for many industrial companies.

In May 1930, Professors Davis and Brundige led Clarkson seniors on their first field trip, an inspection of industrial operations to learn how engineers in the real world operated. Several years later, in 1940, Professors Davis and Frank Wingate formed a Placement Bureau which corresponded with numerous company personnel directors obtaining in-

formation on positions available and assisted Clarkson men to secure those positions. That was the college's first attempt to aid seniors in finding suitable positions; that role currently is played by the highly successful Career Development Center.

Davis left campus in 1944 to accept the position of head of the mechanical engineering department at the University of Louisville, Kentucky, but returned to

Clarkson as dean of administration two years later.

An early accomplishment in his presidency was trustee acceptance of the Institutional Retirement Plan for faculty and staff which Gordon C. Baker '27 had established with his company, Connecticut Mutual Insurance Company. The trustees also decided that the old gymnasium on Pierrepont Avenue was to be transformed into chemical laboratories after the completion of the Alumni Gymnasium on the hill. Davis did not agree with that recommendation.

A year later, at his urging, the trustees agreed to demolish three residences they earlier had purchased, the Ross House, Brown House, and Calipari House at 65, 67, and 69 Main Street, to make room for the new physics building, later named Damon Hall. They also purchased 49 Main Street and 6 Pierrepont Avenue for the construction of a student union, Lewis House.

Davis appointed Lowell Herron to be dean of the faculty and William Farrisee to be dean of the college in 1950. In that same year, he accepted from Robert L. Clarkson, Sr. a Gilbert Stuart original portrait of George Washington (the Aspinwall portrait) presented to the college by Clarkson in memory of his recently deceased son, Peter.

In April 1951, the State Department of Education amended Clarkson's charter to authorize the granting of the honorary degree of doctor of humane letters.



The first recipient was Albert Monroe Greenfield, a noted Philadelphia banker and philanthropist, at the June commencement which also awarded 379 undergraduate degrees and four master's degrees: two in chemical and two in mechanical engineering.

Davis resigned in June 1951 to become the fourth president of Stevens Institute of Technology in Hoboken, New Jersey. In his four years as president of Clarkson, Davis, who well might be called the "Father of Modern Clarkson," had transformed the college. When he returned in 1946, Davis found a Clarkson that consisted of two buildings: Old Main and the Pierrepont Avenue gymnasium. The Depression and World War II took a severe toll on the college because low enrollments and reduced revenue meant neglected maintenance: coat racks were merely orange shellacked boards nailed to the walls, halls were dusty and unswept, and offices were tucked into cubby holes wherever they could be found. Because teaching loads had to be enormous (30 hours was the extreme, but 25-hour loads were common) no time could be spared for professional development.

When he left, the college had witnessed skyrocketing enrollment with the influx of veterans, increased faculty, enlarged curriculum with the addition of liberal studies requirements, additional graduate work, and the construction of two new buildings (Peyton and Damon halls).

## **William Gardner Van Note (1951-1961)**

In November 1951, William Gardner Van Note became Clarkson's ninth president. He came to Clarkson from North Carolina State College at Raleigh

where he had been director of engineering research and professor of metallurgy. Born in 1909 in Atlantic Highlands, New Jersey, he graduated from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in 1929, and received his master's degree from the University of Vermont in 1933. He assumed a teaching position at North Carolina State in 1934, and in 1936 was soon promoted to assistant professor. After receiving his doctorate from



Courtesy of Clarkson University

*William Gardner Van Note,  
President of Clarkson, 1951-1961.*

Pennsylvania State College, he was promoted to associate professor, and then to full professor of metallurgy. Between 1944 and 1946 he was assistant director of North Carolina State's experimental station, and then was appointed as director of its Department of Engineering Research. By 1948-49 he had become chairman for research for the American Society for Engineering Education and also chairman of engineering research for the Association of Land Grant Colleges and Universities, Engineering Division. He was also a member of numerous professional societies.

While at Clarkson, he served as vice president of the Association of Colleges and Universities of the State of New York, a member of the Commission of Institutions of Higher Education of the Middle States Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools, and Governor Nelson Rockefeller's Advisory Council for the Advancement of Industrial Development and Research.

Mrs. Van Note's brother, the Reverend Clark V. Polling, was one of the four chaplains — a Catholic priest, two Protestant ministers, and a Jewish rabbi — who gave up their life preservers so that others might survive a sinking ship, the S.S. Dorchester during World War II.

Van Note's inauguration on November 4 was attended by two world-famous dignitaries: Joseph E. Davies, former am-

bassador to Moscow, and James H. Doolittle, a retired general in the Army Air Force, and the man who led the first air raid on Tokyo in 1942.

During his ten years as president, his accomplishments were impressive, beginning with his second year on campus. In 1952, with board support, he encouraged the faculty to reinstitute the bachelor of science degree in physics. In the same year, from the Federal Housing and Home Financing Agency the college obtained a loan for \$1,190,000 to construct a dormitory and a series of faculty apartments on the hill campus, and a student union on Main Street. He continued to make his mark during the next year by having the old school building known as "Number 8" (adjacent to Old Main) demolished and by convincing Union Carbide Corporation to begin a scholarship program in the fall of 1953. In that same semester, Clarkson began the first curriculum of its kind in the country, a program that combined engineering and business to train technical salesmen. Called Industrial Distribution, this program had strong support of industrial distributors all across the state. (Currently, it is called Interdisciplinary Engineering and Management.)

The next year, through the efforts of former Congressman Bertrand Snell, Clarkson began occupying Snell Hall as Potsdam State began enlarging its new campus on the edge of town. At the same time, through the benefi-

cence of an anonymous donor of \$50,000, the college began planning to convert the gymnasium on Pierrepont Avenue into a library once the new Alumni gym had been completed. By September 1955, Clarkson had constructed its second academic building, an engineering science building named Peyton Hall, and had completed the Alumni gymnasium and the first dormitory at the foot of the Clarkson hill. In the next two years, the library had been moved into its new quarters, a second dormitory had been completed, and plans had been drawn for a third dormitory to house 300 students.

In the remaining years of his presidency, Van Note not only saw the third and fourth dormitories constructed, but he reorganized the college's academic structure as well. Lowell Herron became dean of the college, Edward McHugh became dean of the faculty, Donald Stillman became dean of arts, sciences and business administration, Whit Reed became dean of engineering, and Herman Shulman became dean of the division of research. During the last year of his presidency in 1961, Van Note obtained state approval for Clarkson to offer two new bachelor of science degrees, one in liberal studies and one in mathematics, a master of science degree, and Clarkson's first doctor of philosophy program in chemistry and chemical engineering.

In 1962, Van Note resigned to become president of Monmouth

College, New Jersey, and Lowell Herron was appointed acting president. Dean since 1958, Herron previously served as dean of arts, science, and business administration and as creator and chairman of the industrial distribution program. He obtained his bachelor's degree from Kent State and his MBA from Iowa State and joined the Clarkson faculty in 1940. He served as president for six months.

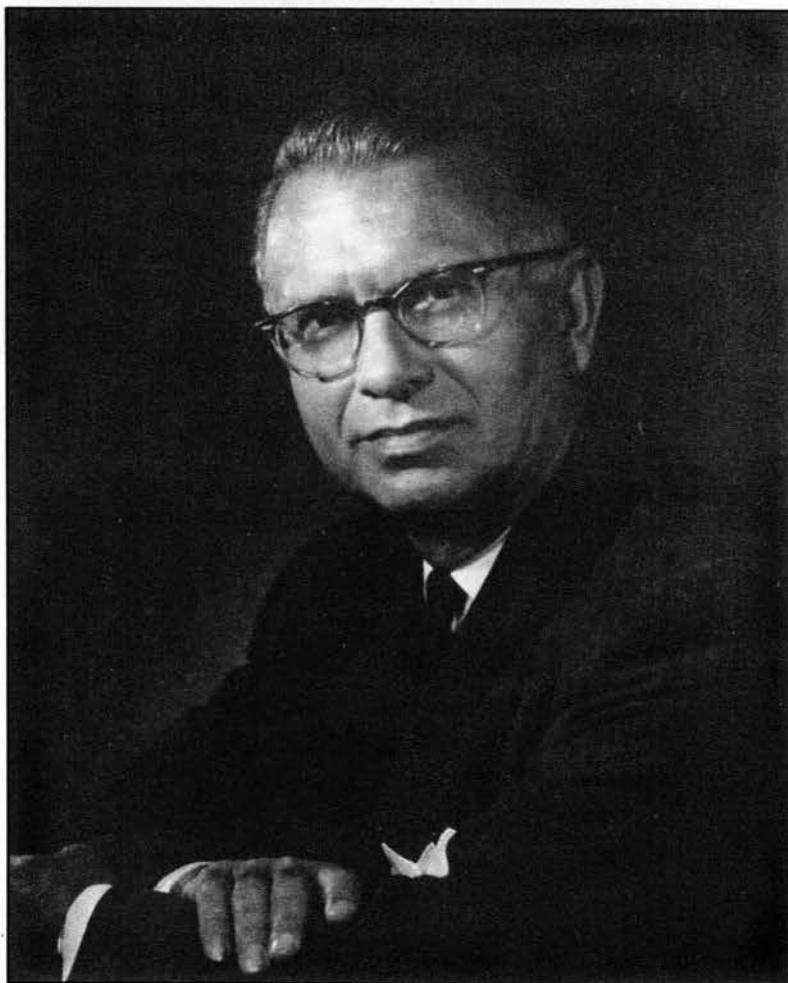
## **William Louis Whitson (1963-1966)**

In January 1963, the trustees appointed William Louis Whitson to be Clarkson's next president. Born in Denver, Colorado, in 1912, Whitson received his education at Union College, Nebraska, and the University of Nebraska, and earned his doctorate in nuclear physics at the University of Iowa. He was perhaps best known as the founder and later president of the American Astronautical Society and the Operations Research Society of America. Prior to coming to Clarkson, he served as vice president of the Martin-Marietta Corporation in Denver where he worked on the development of the Titan missile. He also assisted in the planning and programming of all space agencies prior to the formation of the Na-

tional Aeronautical and Space Administration (NASA).

On September 20, 1963, Whitson was inaugurated as Clarkson's tenth president in a ceremony of his own creation. Following two Canadian bagpipers playing a familiar Scottish song, the inaugural procession came down the hill from Holcroft and moved slowly across the lawn in front of Men's Residence [now Hamlin-Powers] to a long, open-sided tent. Over 100 representatives in full academic regalia from

colleges, universities, learned societies, and professional organizations followed the flag bearers and marshals. Next came ten representatives of Clarkson organizations: Phalanx, Student Council, IFC, Lewis House Board, and the class presidents. Then came the faculty, the alumni officers, the college marshal, and the charter and medallion bearers. At the end of the procession were the trustees and the inaugural party. Providing music for this solemn occasion was the Crane



Courtesy of Clarkson University

*William Louis Whitson,  
who served as Clarkson's tenth president, 1963-1966.*

Symphony led by Maurice Baritaud.

At this inauguration, Adger Johnson, chairman of the board of trustees, handed President Whitson the charter and then hung the Clarkson medallion from his shoulders, symbolizing the responsibilities and authorities delegated to him by the board of trustees. Being used for the first time, this medallion, designed by Whitson and created by Tiffany and Company, bears the Clarkson coat of arms on one side and the following quotation written by Matthew Clarkson in 1690 on the other:

*Your Petitioner  
humbly prays your sacred  
Majestie would in  
Your Bounty bestow on  
him wisdom  
in this office which hee shall  
indeavour to discharge  
with diligence.*

Every succeeding president has been invested with this medallion at his inauguration, and at the beginning of every commencement and other formal university occasion by the university marshal.

At a convocation held in the arena in October 1963, President Whitson made six promises to the students: to put Clarkson on the national educational map, to increase scholarship funds, to increase library facilities, to purchase more laboratory equipment, to encourage faculty development, and to reduce the dropout and attrition rates. He encouraged more ac-

tive participation in extracurricular activities and enlisted the aid of students as peer tutors to reduce attrition.

Then he went on to describe the future of Clarkson as he saw it. He foresaw by 1971 an overall enrollment of 3,000, new curricula in such areas as aerospace engineering and astrophysics, expanded liberal studies and humanities, and doctoral programs in at least eight departments. New buildings would include a library, laboratories, classrooms, a swimming pool, hockey arena, and a golf course along the river. He called the road to this glorious future "Operation '71." Unfortunately, before much could be done to realize this dream, he resigned as president in February 1966 to become effective on June 30.

Even though his short term as president halted "Operation '71," Whitson had instituted a significant number of major changes. For example, he urged and supported the faculty to form a Faculty Senate; he reorganized the Academic Council into the Administrative Council to separate it more distinctly from the Faculty Senate. He persuaded the board of trustees once more to authorize the college to admit women students. Under his leadership, more new dormitories were constructed, and the first academic building on the hill campus was begun — the Cora and Bayard Clarkson Science Center — as a major step in the move to the hill as detailed in his major

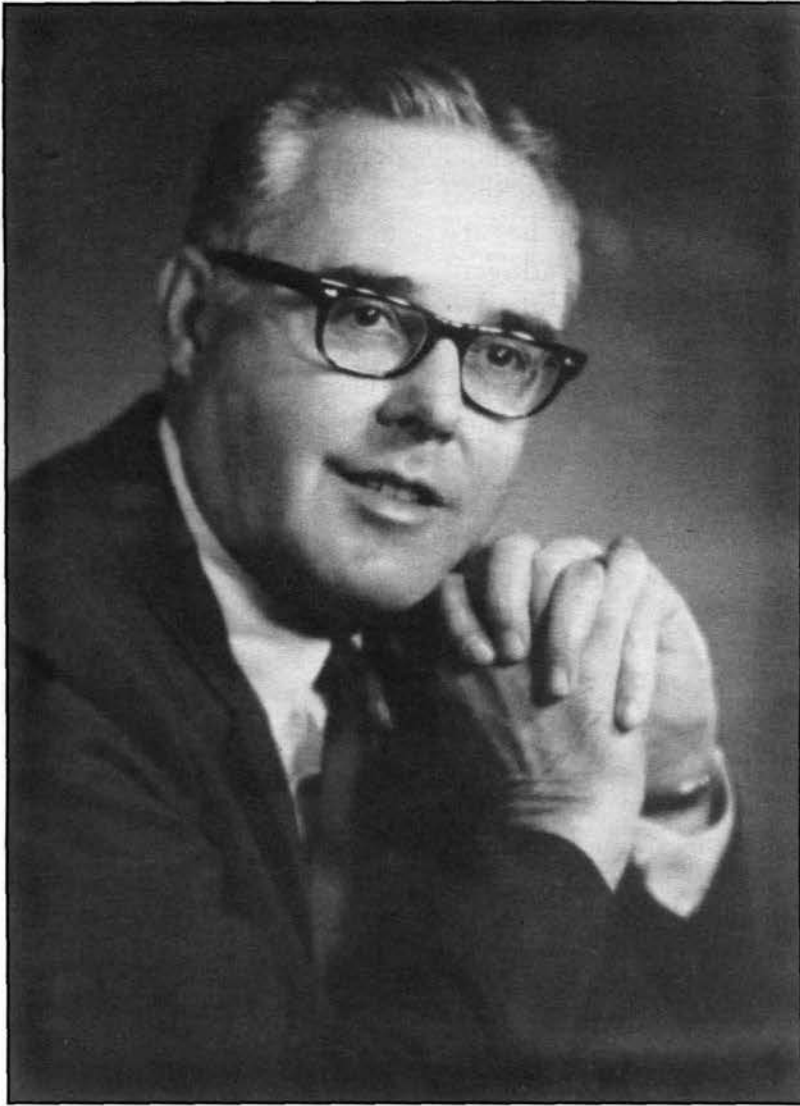
plan, "Operation '71." To ensure the safety of Clarkson students and other pedestrians, he even convinced the State of New York to install walkways outside the guard rails of the two bridges across the Raquette River, which Clarkson students had to walk across so many times daily.

For his outstanding contributions to the advancement of the astronomical sciences, President Whitson joined astronauts M. Scott Carpenter and Walter M. Schirra in being named fellows of the American Astronautical Society. Dr. Whitson had served as its president from 1962-63.

He died in 1980 after suffering a heart attack. He was president of CTE Systems, Inc., Washington, D.C., a firm specializing in management information systems at the time of his death.

## **John W. Graham, Jr. (1966-1974)**

The board of trustees appointed Dr. John W. Graham, Jr., dean of the College of Engineering and Applied Science at the University of Rochester, as Clarkson's eleventh president in the autumn of 1966. Before coming to Clarkson, Graham served as dean of engineering at Rochester following three years as vice president and professor of civil engineering at the Cooper Union in New York



Courtesy of Clarkson University

*John W. Graham, Jr.,  
President of Clarkson, 1966-1974.*

City. Born in 1915, in Dayton, Ohio, Graham received his bachelor of civil engineering degree at Ohio State University in 1939, his graduate degree in civil engineering from Princeton in 1940, and his doctor of science degree from Carnegie Institute of Technology in 1950. Following his graduation from Ohio State, he worked for the Bethlehem Steel Corporation. During World War II, he rose from second lieutenant

to major in the Corps of Engineers during four year's service, including 39 months in the European Theatre of Operations. He was awarded the Bronze Star and was named an honorary member of the Order of the British Empire.

In 1946, he was named instructor of civil engineering at Carnegie Tech, and later served as assistant professor. Between 1948 and 1955, he served as assistant dean of Carnegie's Col-

lege of Engineering and Science, and then as dean of students for a year before moving to Cooper Union. He had served as president of the Association of Engineering Colleges of New York State, a fellow of the American Society of Civil Engineers, a member of the board of the Engineering College Research Council, and a member of the American Society for Engineering Education.

One of his first actions after assuming the presidency was to reject former President Whitson's "Operation '71" as "not realistic," but he did not reject the idea of dormitory expansion on the hill, for he approved the construction of Dormitory #6 (later named Graham Hall), and strongly stressed the idea that "all future building be done on the hill."

Early in his term of office, a dispute erupted between the newly created Faculty Senate and the dean of science when the dean removed the math department chairman from office because of an impasse in budgeting and extensive disagreements over long-range goals in the mathematics program. The department faculty reacted strongly. After they were told by the dean and the executive vice president that the dean's action was irrevocable, all 23 members of the math faculty signed a petition to President Graham deploring the dismissal. In response to this furor, the Faculty Senate met in extraordinary sessions with President Graham, then with the

mathematics faculty on at least five separate occasions, before issuing a position statement that it acknowledged the dismissal of a chairman was an administrative prerogative, but that any future dismissals should be discussed thoroughly and carefully with the department faculty affected before being implemented by the administration. And later, in his inaugural address, Dr. Graham pledged to work to create better relations between the faculty and the administration.

In a February 1967 announcement, President Graham reiterated that all future building construction for Clarkson would be on the hill, and the first for academic purposes was to be a \$6 million Arts and Sciences Center erected on the crest of the hill southwest of Moore House. The initiative for this building came from a federal grant for \$1.5 million from the US Higher Education Facilities Fund Act. That grant, the largest in Clarkson history at the time, had been recommended to the federal government by the New York State Board of Regents.

Construction began in the summer of 1968, was completed the fall of the following year, and opened for occupancy for the fall semester of 1969. The building itself consists of three stories, a partial basement for equipment storage, 18 general classrooms, 36 instructional laboratories, 96 faculty offices, and \$90,000 worth of scientific equipment, and four

auditoria that seated a total of over 600.

On April 17, 1970, at the height of the Vietnam War, some Clarkson students decided to hold a "peace review" in front of Snell Hall on the Friday before Clarkson's ROTC contingent was to hold its President's Annual ROTC Review that preceded Moving-Up Day ceremonies. Their "review" was to discuss possible interactions with the ROTC corps' march from the review in the Alumni Gym to the Moving-Up Day ceremonies in the Arena. At that meeting, demonstrators replaced the college flag in front of Snell Hall with a "peace" flag; its leaders asked people to "bring a rock" to the parade the next day.

Interpreting those remarks as evidence that some active form of demonstration or confrontation was scheduled to occur, and to forestall any possible violence, the college administration restricted admission to the gym by admitting the public to the review through only one entrance. Anyone "equipped with any implement which might be used violently" was barred admittance. Rather than sit in the regular bleachers, these "demonstrators" sat on the floor in front of the stands as a way of showing their disapproval of the review, but they were not disorderly. Only two unusual events occurred during the ceremony: a young woman handed a flower to Col. Nicholas Lord, ROTC chairman,

and another student shook the hand of the cadet colonel near the end of the review. Unusual actions, certainly, but nonviolent.

At the conclusion of these ceremonies as the ROTC Cadet Group marched to the arena, however, several "happenings" disrupted the progress of the cadets. These included impeding the formation of the band and the color guard, blocking the path of the band and color guard so that the cadets had to march off the roadway to get past the dissidents, and intermingling with the marching cadets, yelling in their ears. Once past the intersection of the road to the dormitories and Clarkson Avenue, the cadets encountered no more interference on their way to the arena. These various confrontations between students resulted in the convening of a Hearing Committee on Disorders, whose findings were that although poor judgment was shown on both sides, no actual disorder occurred.

However, because both the student and faculty senates had refused to grant students equal representation with faculty and administration on the ad hoc ROTC Study Committee considering the future of the ROTC on campus, this group chose a sit-in as their next action. On April 27, a group of 35 students and three faculty led by the wife of the chairman of the mechanical engineering department and an assistant professor in the social sciences depart-

ment entered the anteroom of President Graham's office and began a sit-in. In its prepared statement, this group calling itself the Potsdam Academic Freedom Committee announced the takeover of President Graham's office in order to give the Committee "and other interested members of the student body" power by which they could effect changes in Clarkson's policies.

They made six specific demands:

- 1) a public apology from President Graham for denying student access to the ROTC Review on April 18 [which he already had done]
- 2) a statement of the college policy being enforced by that refusal
- 3) a revision of any such policy with assurances of all implications in any such revisions
- 4) resignation of Ernest M. Moore from his office as dean of student affairs
- 5) equal student representation on the ROTC Study Committee [a matter being considered by the Faculty Senate]
- 6) legal fees for those students arrested at the Spring Thing on April 25

Demands number 2 and 3 were already being considered by the Hearing Committee on Disorders at the time of the sit-in, and number 6 already had been denied by the Grievance Committee.

That afternoon, on the president's order, A. George Davis, assistant to the president, declared that such an action constituted a disorder and asked the group to vacate the anteroom. When they did not, he left to seek an injunction forcing them to leave or suffer the legal consequences, and the protesters departed ten minutes later, leaving behind a statement which ended with ominous words: "if appropriate action is not taken by yourselves, repercussions [sic] are inevitable." The only damage done (if it be called damage) was a \$15 long distance telephone call made on the president's telephone and never paid for by the unknown demonstrator. Ultimately, because the protesting group left the president's office without having damaged the premises, no penalties were levied against them by the college. In light of the extraordinary and severe damages inflicted by students on other campuses across America at this unsettled time, Clarkson's "disorder" was remarkable for its peaceful nature.

Among Graham's other accomplishments at Clarkson were board approval of the Faculty Senate; the Faculty-Dormitory Associates, a program to establish better student-faculty and student-administration relationships; deeding Potsdam's airport, Damon Field, to the village; alteration of the college calendar to end fall semester classes before Christmas vacation; the establish-

ment of a sabbatical leave policy; the reestablishment of the Distinguished Teaching Award; active involvement in the creation of the Associated Colleges of the St. Lawrence Valley, a consortium of the four colleges in Potsdam and Canton to develop cooperative programs and to improve the quality of education in each of the schools; the creation of the office of provost as chief operating officer of the college; the creation of the Student Development Center to provide personal counseling, group counseling, psychological and occupational testing; and the reduction of the credit hours required for graduation from 132 to 124.

At his request, the trustees in 1972 changed Graham's title from president to chancellor and chief executive officer and then began the search for a new president and chief operating officer. By this move, Clarkson adopted a practice followed by a number of other educational institutions. It allowed Graham to concern himself solely with long-range planning, public affairs, and fundraising. A new president was to act with and for the chancellor in providing the primary educational leadership to the administration, faculty, and students consistent with the mission and resources of the college. By this move the newly created position of provost was abolished.

The board appointed as president Robert A. Plane who requested a simple welcoming cer-

emony in the arena. A crowd of 300 or more faculty, students, fellow administrators, trustees, and interested friends of Clarkson gathered for the occasion on September 21, 1974. On the dais were just local dignitaries. All extended greetings, saving the last to be greetings from Chancellor Graham himself, whose presidential duties Plane had assumed on his arrival on campus late in the spring. The scene had all the earmarks of a Greek tragedy. Even the weather cooperated. Teeming rain fell all morning as the spectators gathered in the damp arena for the ceremony. Graham arose to introduce the president for an inaugural address and began his introduction with a simple request. He said that because his office was beside the board room in Snell Hall, he had asked Bob Plane not to hang his portrait there beside the portraits of Clarkson's previous presidents until he was dead. Then his introduction of Plane ended with a quotation from Dag Hammarskjöld's poem, *Thus it was*:

I am being driven forward  
Into an unknown land.  
The path grows steeper,  
The air colder and sharper.  
A wind from my unknown goal  
Stirs the strings  
Of expectation.  
Still the question;  
Shall I ever get there?

"Whether he gets there or not," Graham concluded, "of this I am sure, the pleasure of the pursuit will provide Bob Plane with much

happiness." At that point, as he stepped back from the podium, his heart failed, and he dropped to the floor of the arena stage, dead.

Dr. Hans Levi, 62-year-old college physician, rushed to the stage to provide aid, and he, *too*, dropped dead of a heart attack. At that, a student fainted, a faculty member fainted, a trustee fainted, and the audience gasped and sat in stunned silence as they realized what had happened. Members of the Potsdam Rescue Squad, already present, leaped into action to apply cardio-pulmonary resuscitation to the two men, but to no avail.

Board of Trustees Chairman Arthur Lewis arose and cancelled the remainder of the ceremonies, and asked the stunned audience to leave as quickly as possible. People scurried to the arena lobby. As they awaited the arrival of husbands and friends with cars at the front doors of the arena, they watched incredulously as the rescue squad members wheeled the two sheet-draped figures past them and into the waiting ambulances in the heavy rain outside.

Dr. Petr Zuman, Professor of Chemistry, remembered:

I grew up in Czechoslovakia and witnessed the German invasion and occupation of my country, and then the Russian invasion and occupation of my country, and I saw a lot of horrible events. Today, however, in this Arena, has been the most ghastly day of my life.

## Robert A. Plane (1974-1985)

Robert A. Plane was appointed as the twelfth president of Clarkson College in 1974. A native of Indiana, Plane received his bachelor of arts degree from Evansville College in 1948 and his doctorate from the University of Chicago in 1951. He was a research chemist at Oak Ridge National Laboratory for one year prior to receiving an appointment as instructor at Cornell University in 1952. Ten years later he was promoted to full professor. He was chairman of the Department of Chemistry and Provost from 1969 to 1973.

Dr. Plane's field of specialization was metal ions in solution and in enzymes. His publications included *Chemistry*, a general textbook co-authored with Michell J. Sienko, professor of chemistry at Cornell. First published in 1957, it became the most widely used college chemistry text in the world. He also co-authored four other books, wrote more than 70 research papers, and was co-editor of the Physical Inorganic Chemistry Series of Monographs.

He was appointed a special fellow to the National Institutes of Health at the Nobel Institute at Stockholm, Sweden, and at Oxford University in England. He was awarded an honorary doctor





Courtesy of Clarkson University

*Robert A. Plane,  
President of Clarkson, 1974-1985.*

of science degree at Evansville University in 1968.

When he first arrived on the Clarkson scene, he became so interested in broadening Clarkson students' viewpoints that he and Humanities Department Chairman Bradford Broughton sketched the outlines for a revised first-semester freshman course: The Forum. It was not to be the usual freshman composition course but rather an introduction to some of the great ideas of the world by reading great works of literature and philoso-

phy. President Plane was so interested that he taught one section of the course for several years and then later gave lectures to the entire freshmen class.

In 1975, Plane announced his goals for the college in "The Clarkson Plan." In his annual report he described the underlying theme of this plan as "professional excellence in a personal atmosphere."

Although achievement will be demanded from Clarkson students, they must never be made to feel they are being run

through a machine designed to turn out engineers, scientists, or businessmen. Professional excellence in a personal atmosphere focuses the many individual suggestions and so must serve as our primary goal in the years ahead. The plan for Clarkson's future incorporates the recommendations made to attain our goal. While reminding us of the college's basic strengths, this plan looks to the future and challenges all members of the Clarkson community to attain a new level of professional excellence. The Clarkson Plan calls on all of us to become personally involved with the college and to share its endeavors with pride and enthusiasm.

This plan, a three-year campaign to raise \$12.5 million in operating and capital funds, included the money to build the much-needed educational resources center, construct an indoor recreation center, provide scholarship and financial aid assistance, and ensure program and unrestricted operating income.

Based on a suggestion of Mrs. Mary Plane to create a "Bridging Year" between high school and college for gifted students, Clarkson introduced a new branch of education in 1977 when 22 young men and women enrolled in The Clarkson School. This "School" offered students (called "Schoolies" to distinguish them from regular freshmen) a self-contained community within the college where students who had completed their junior year in high school could fulfill their high school requirements while earn-

ing 30 semester hours of college credit.

Under the leadership of Clark Bailey, retired US Army colonel and former head of Clarkson's ROTC program, mathematics professor A. George Davis, and Gary Kelly from the Counselling Center, and relying on existing facilities and faculty, these "Schoolie" students attended regular Clarkson lectures in chemistry, physics, and mathematics. They were strong in mathematics and science but had special recitation groups and tutorial instruction. They also took a course designed especially for them, Development of American Culture.

Because Clarkson could not grant high school diplomas, students who wished to earn a diploma could pursue one of two avenues. One option required the student to work out a suitable plan with his or her home high school to satisfy graduation requirements and thereby receive a diploma. The other was to apply for a diploma from the New York State Education Department upon successful completion of 24 college credits at Clarkson. Following this year, students were able to continue as sophomores at Clarkson or seek admission with advanced standing at other colleges. In May, 20 of the original 22 graduates of this program were accepted as college sophomores at a variety of colleges including Cornell, Bucknell, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Pennsylvania State University,

and of course, Clarkson. The Clarkson School was described among the nation's "Notable Programs, Promising Approaches, and Other Improvement Efforts" in *A Nation at Risk*, a report issued by the National Commission on Excellence in Education in December 1983.

That same year, in response to a faculty consensus to encourage and reward student intellectual independence, Plane proposed that Clarkson adopt a program to challenge the students to show those qualities. In March, the Faculty Senate approved a program called "High Initiative and Independence" with the following guiding principles:

All courses at Clarkson encourage and call for individual initiative and independence. To this end, every course requires students to master some material not presented by the professor. Furthermore, a select number of courses in each department, plus exceptional non-academic credit activities, such as Entrepreneurship, are especially designed to develop independence and require from students the ability to define and solve problems. These particular "challenge" courses and activities calling for high initiative and independence will be approved as such and designated with the symbolic abbreviation, HII, in the appropriate college listings and publications. Every student is encouraged to participate broadly in these programs. Every student is required to successfully complete two, one

of which must be extracurricular. A student's extracurricular activity must be approved in advance by a college-wide committee and subsequently certified.

The principal objective of HII was to encourage students to take responsibility for their own education. Thus, the faculty was expected to foster both an attitude and an ability in students to contribute to their own instruction. To that end, faculty were expected to view HII as characteristic of an entire course, and not merely as a single aspect of a given course, nor only as a single requirement. Simply put, it meant encouraging students to think independently. It was to take effect in fall 1981. However, because it frequently became merely a requirement added into a course which ignored its fundamental overriding purpose, it became enormously unpopular both with students and faculty and was withdrawn three years after it began.

That same year, 1977, Plane restructured the Clarkson administration. Under the new plan, all administrative departments fell under either the vice president or provost. The deans of the three schools (engineering, science, and management) as well as the chairman of the Faculty Senate and the chairman of the Student Senate reported directly to President Plane. The office of the dean of campus life was eliminated,

and its duties were taken over by the dean of student life.

Robert Plane retired at the end of the academic 1984-1985 year, ending the second longest presidency in Clarkson's history. Clarkson grew during his presidency from 2,700, including 134 women, to 3,900 with 907 women. New buildings erected during his tenure included the Andrew S. Schuler Educational Resources Center (ERC), and the Schuler Recreational Building which contains a field house and an Olympic-sized swimming pool, the Townhouse apartment complex, and the Rowley Engineering Laboratory. Several buildings were renovated including Holcroft, Old Main, and Walker Arena. The university also obtained Clarkson Seven Springs, a skiing facility in Parishville.

At the end of his first year, Plane initiated a \$12 million capital campaign, The Clarkson Plan, which was brought to a successful conclusion four years later and provided funding for the ERC and the Recreational Building. In 1982, Plan II was begun and raised \$15 million. Alumni support increased from \$200,000 to over \$600,000 per year, and the endowment grew from \$5.5 million to over \$19 million. Research support increased from \$1.1 million in 1974 to \$4.5 million in 1983-84.

New academic programs begun during his presidency included technical communications, biology, industrial hy-

giene and environmental toxicology, computer science, computer-based management systems, industrial management, and marketing. The college also established the foundation curriculum which included the requirement that every student had to take at least one course in each of the college's three schools (engineering, management, and science) and had to pass a writing proficiency examination prior to graduation. Clarkson also became the first college in the United States to issue a personal computer to every incoming freshman.

Perhaps the one event for which he is most famous was his move to change Clarkson College of Technology to Clarkson University. The New York State Board of Regents voted to accord university status in 1984. As an institution that offered degrees in more than one professional field, offered doctoral programs in more than two fields, and taught the liberal arts and sciences (the definition held by the New York State Department of Higher Education) Clarkson was a university. From its initial offering of three subjects to 17 students in 1896, Clarkson had grown to offer accredited undergraduate programs in 20 areas, master's programs in 15 areas, and doctoral programs in five areas to approximately 4,000 students.

In making the announcement of the name change, President Plane said:

I am pleased that the trustees have taken this step [petitioning the NY Board of Regents to change the name] because I am convinced that this designation better describes Clarkson and that the name change will make Clarkson and its degrees more valuable and appreciated, both nationally and internationally.

Shortly before his retirement, Plane spoke at an alumni dinner. In reference to his ten years as president, he noted that Clarkson's research volume had increased fourfold. He went on to say:

This is especially important because a college or university is an institution of learning. It differs from a school where the primary emphasis is placed on teaching. A university is a learning institution where students learn and faculty learn. All are scholars, and the great institutions are the ones in which faculty learning or research reinforce and supplement but do not compete with student learning.

After his retirement, Dr. Plane went on to become acting president and then president of Wells College in Aurora, New York.

## Allan H. Clark (1985-1987)

Allan H. Clark became Clarkson's thirteenth president in September 1985. He earned his bachelor's degree in mathematics from Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1957 and his master's and doctorate in mathematics from Princeton in 1959 and 1961 respectively. During his last two years of graduate work, he held a Proctor Fellowship. After completing his doctorate, he accepted a position at Brown University, where he subsequently became a full professor in 1970. He then spent a year at the Aarhus University in Denmark. Upon his return to Brown he was appointed head of the mathematics department, a position he held until 1973. In 1975 he accepted the position of dean of the school of science at Purdue University, a position involving seven departments, 3,700 undergraduates, 925 graduate students, 300 faculty members, over 300 staff members, and having an annual budget of over \$42 million, including grants and contracts of more than \$18 million.

His research interests lay in the areas of algebraic topology. In 1971, he published *Elements of Abstract Algebra*. His memberships included the American Association for the Advance-

ment of Science, the American Association of University Professors, the American Association for Higher Education, the American Mathematical Association, and the American Council on Education.

Clark was inaugurated as Clarkson's president in a gala weekend on September 13-14, 1986. Activities ranged from an all-campus picnic with a soft-rock band to the solemnity of the ceremony itself. Other events during the weekend included a dance concert with the Count Basie Orchestra, a symposium on Technology and Human Values, a black-tie dinner for the trustees and other visitors, a concert of classical music by the Kalichstein-Laredo-Robinson Trio, and a luncheon following the inauguration.

The guest speaker at the inauguration ceremony was Dr. John Morris, chairman of the board of trustees for the New York State Commission on Independent Colleges and Universities and president of Union College in Schenectady, New York. Dr. Morris spoke about the importance of independent colleges, noting that Dr. Clark was

... being inaugurated as the President of one of a group of institutions in the State of New York that have provided significant service to the State and which belongs to a tradition of service which goes back to the earliest days of the State... the dignity of higher education, fed by the independence of many of our institutions in their

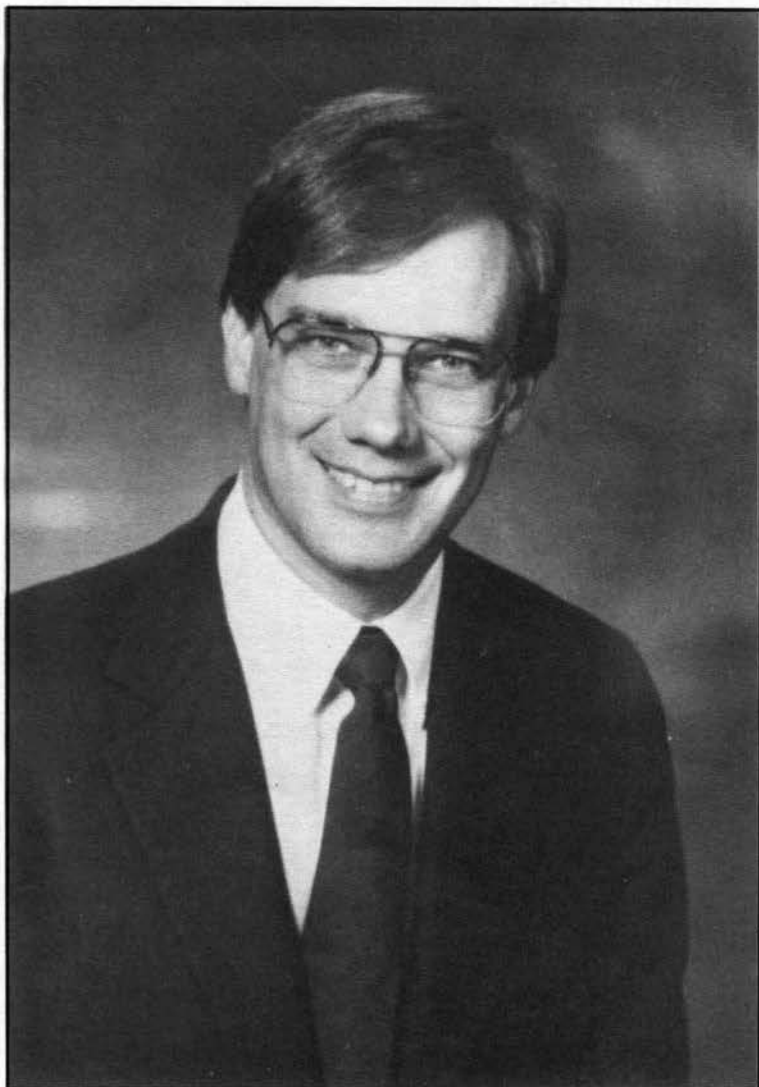
founding, is the very genius of American education . . . .

In his address to the inaugural participants and guests, Dr. Clark touched on some of the problems confronting higher education and said at one point that people used to believe in miracles, expecting them even from the Pope.

Few of us now await miracles from the Pope. Hardly anyone anticipates them from Congress. The law forbids those performed by E. F. Hutton. Yet we still expect miracles from our schools. We expect schools to compensate for poverty, crime, racial and gender discrimination, to inspire patriotism, to encourage literacy, to discourage drugs, to teach safe driving, to develop musical skills and provide athletic entertainment. And to do it, please, without raising tuition or taxes, and without upsetting anyone's political or religious beliefs. Talk about miracles!

Later, Clarkson's president wagered 100 bagels purchased from The Bagelry in Potsdam against St. Lawrence President Lawrence Gulick's bet of 100 chocolate chip cookies baked at St. Lawrence University on the outcome of a 1986 hockey game between their two schools in Appleton Arena. Clark presented the bagels to Gulick at the end of Clarkson's 6-5 overtime loss to the Saints.

Of major significance during Clark's brief administration was the creation of CAMP: the Center for Advanced Materials Process-



Courtesy of Clarkson University

*Allan H. Clark,  
President of Clarkson, 1985-1987.*

ing, a center for research being conducted in seven departments. Materials processing refers to the production of solid materials and processing them into useful forms. The goals of CAMP are to fabricate new materials, to develop and improve processing methods, and to clarify the relationships between materials' properties and how they are processed. Some research currently being pursued includes polymer extruding, the

growth of single crystals, and making particulates for ceramics. These experiments are led by Dr. William Wilcox, chairman of the chemical engineering department. He participated in experiments on crystal growth phenomena which were conducted aboard SKYLAB in 1974, and subsequent flights.

One of the initial projects at CAMP was the exploitation of one of the creations of Prof.

Egon Matijevic. He developed processes for making micro particles with great potential application to magnetic memories for computers and videos, substrates for electrical components, high technology ceramics for automobile engines, and phosphors for TV displays, to name just a few.

New York State appropriated \$23.5 million for the construction of a building to house this center, and \$1 million to Clarkson for the first year's operation. Additionally, the state's Science and Technology Foundation formally designated Clarkson as the Center for Advanced Technology in Advanced Materials Processing — Colloid and Surface Sciences. These two developments formed a technical partnership with the State of New York, the federal government, many major American multinational corporations, and a few highly promising, new-technology, small businesses which would advance university and state economic development, and NASA goals. Corporate membership in CAMP included Corning, Grumman, Kodak, IBM, DuPont, and Union Carbide.

Clarkson also was chosen as one of the four research institutions designated as a NASA Center for the Commercialization of Space with funding of \$1 million per year. Funding for this program continued for five years.

With financial support in excess of \$2 million a year from

NASA, industry, and the states of New York, Massachusetts, and Florida, in 1986 Clarkson formed the Center for the Development of Commercial Crystal Growth in Space. Its primary goal was to use space to grow crystals of higher perfection and larger size than is possible to grow on earth and to advance the technology of crystal growth on earth. This center was a consortium of eight universities, eleven corporations, and two national laboratories. Clarkson and the University of Florida concentrated on solidification of cadmium telluride and gallium arsenide for such uses as high-speed and radiation-hard integrated circuits, microwave devices, and infrared sensors.

While on vacation in East Germany in May 1987, President Clark's assistant telephoned and said that Bayard Clarkson, chairman of the board of trustees, had asked for his resignation as Clarkson's thirteenth president. He submitted his resignation to the board on June 4.

In an interview with the *Integrator* on September 4, Clark explained that a few days after commencement he had learned of a letter circulating among the science faculty calling for his resignation and that they never had given him the opportunity to say a word on his own behalf. He had learned this on the day he was leaving for his vacation in Europe, and so he could do nothing

about it until his return. After he returned, there was little he could do but submit his resignation.

President Clark's two-year service as president of Clarkson could well add credence to people's belief that thirteen is an unlucky number. During his two years as the thirteenth president, more seriously unfortunate events occurred than during the tenure of any previous Clarkson president:

- a student was raped and murdered behind the Walker Arena
- a department chairman was convicted of unlawfully restraining the director of research and threatening her with bodily harm
- a professor was arrested in Ontario for soliciting young Canadian women to make pornographic tapes and of using University equipment to do so
- a minor male administrator was arrested for making sexual advances toward a sixteen-year-old young man
- a disturbed sophomore in his suicide note accused a high administrator of sexual involvement with him and committed suicide before the truth could be ascertained

In 1987, upon Clark's resignation, R. Thomas Williamson, vice president for external affairs, was named as acting-president.

## **Richard H. Gallagher (1988-1995)**

Effective July 1, 1988, Richard H. Gallagher, provost and vice president for academic affairs at Worcester Polytechnic Institute, Worcester, Massachusetts, became Clarkson's fourteenth president.

His inauguration in mid-October featured an international economic symposium titled, *Trade and Technology: Economic Opportunities with Freer Trade*. This symposium marked the debut of its sponsor, the Center for Canadian-US Business Studies which sought to increase understanding of bi-national business relations through educational and research activities. At the inauguration ceremony, a musical prelude performed by the 10th Mountain Division Band was followed by the academic procession that included faculty, college delegates, deans, trustees, officers, and student representatives. Speakers included R. Thomas Williamson, executive vice president of the university; Potsdam mayor, Paul Claffee '43; Jon Strauss, president of Worcester Polytechnic Institute; Faculty Senate Chairman Bradford Broughton; Dr. Donald N. Zweip, former ASME president; and David J. Decker '72, president of the Clarkson Alumni Association.



Courtesy of Clarkson University

*Richard H. Gallagher,  
President of Clarkson, 1988-1995.*

In his inaugural address Dr. Gallagher named increasing minority participation at Clarkson as a critical issue. During the ensuing year, the university established a Minority Student Development Office and a Minority Advisory Committee, both created to assist the university in its efforts to achieve ethnic and cultural diversity.

In addition to these two efforts, a group of students worked

to improve sensitivity to minority issues through an organization called SPECTRUMM which stood for Students Proposing to Engineer Cultural and Thorough Relations Uniting the Minority and Majority. In its early months, it was highly active on campus. It placed second in the Phonathon, held a Hallowe'en party for the local Big Brothers and Big Sisters organization, had a membership at President Gallagher's in-

auguration, held a talent show at the Ogdensburg Correctional Facility, cooperated with the Associated Colleges, and sponsored a celebration of Black History Month. These activities added considerably to the efforts already in progress in the Minority Scholars Program, a corporation-funded scholarship program, and the work done with the Native American community.

In February 1991, the Golden Knight hockey team completed its regular season in Walker Arena undefeated by besting Princeton 11-1 in the last game ever to be played in that august old building. During one of the intermissions, President Gallagher gave a brief history of the arena for the crowd and then asked the brothers of Delta Sigma Phi to toll their hockey bell seven times in honor of all those associated with the arena's past.

In the spring of 1985, impressed by a student survey which revealed strong student interest in the construction of a new student center, the administration began to study the feasibility of a center. Two years later the students overwhelmingly approved a \$25 yearly increase in the student activity fee for the next 20 years which they would donate to the school to help finance such a center. Impressed when student leaders Joelle Mulich and Ted Ferreira reported that action at their New York City meeting, the trustees included the student center in the university's fund-raising campaign then being planned.

Construction of this 110,000 square foot building began early in June 1990 and was completed in time for the arrival of students at the beginning of the fall semester in August 1991. Contracted for by alumni-owned companies such as Murnane Associates, Shelly Electric, Atlantic Testing Laboratories, Armani Plumbing and Mechanical, and Cives Steel Company, the job of erecting this building was not delayed at any time by inclement weather or labor disputes.

Trustees, staff, faculty, and donors were on hand for the dedication of the Helen S. Cheel Campus Center. Following a special dinner, Gallagher spoke at the dedication ceremony. Calling this new addition to the campus "a place for contemplation and relaxation," he noted that this opening marked a milestone on a pilgrimage begun 70 years earlier: the goal of establishing a campus on the hill. Noting the outstanding contribution of Bertrand and Sara Merrick Snell's daughter, Helen Snell Cheel, the president unveiled a bronze plaque noting the Snell contributions to this structure.

Also in 1991, in a letter to parents explaining a six-percent increase in tuition for the 1992-1993 academic year, President Gallagher noted that to keep tuition costs down, the university had not awarded salary increases to any staff personnel for the following fiscal year, the non-teaching staff had been reduced gradually through attrition during the

previous three years, and operational budgets had remained roughly the same for the past five years.

On February 7, 1992, two NCAA Division I hockey powers, Clarkson and Cornell, competed at Cheel Arena in a game telecast by satellite to 29 locations around the country, from Boston to San Francisco. Through the efforts of the alumni associations of both universities, this game was sent live to thousands of alumni. For many Clarkson alumni, this provided a view of the new Cheel Center. This fourth annual telecast of Golden Knight hockey featured a walking tour of the Cheel Center, a welcome by President Gallagher during the pre-game show, and an interview with Ellsworth Vines '65, president of the Alumni Association. Clarkson defeated the Big Red of Cornell, 3-1.

The American Society for Engineering Education selected President Gallagher as the 1990 recipient of the prestigious Benjamin Garver Lamme Award, the highest honor given by the society. Presented at the ASEE's annual conference, it honored him for 40 years of accomplishments since receiving his bachelor's degree. He was cited for his contributions as a researcher, educator, and administrator in addition to his contributions to the early development of the finite element theory and its practical application.

In June 1993, that same society elected him into its Hall of Fame. Only 22 others had been

inducted. Gallagher was honored for "his lasting impact on engineering and engineering technology education." Additionally, he was selected to receive the ASEE Centennial Medallion which recognizes "individuals who have had a significant and lasting impact on engineering education or engineering technology education." In addition, he was selected as a Fellow Member of the ASEE in recognition of his outstanding services to the organization. He received all three honors at the ASEE 100th annual conference.

At the spring 1994 faculty meeting, President Gallagher announced his plan to retire on June 30, 1995. In his seven years as president, Gallagher led the school to the successful completion of the Design for the Future capital campaign which raised almost twice its announced goal of \$40 million. When it concluded, the campaign had amassed over \$58 million in pledges and gifts, and upon Andrew Schuler's death an additional \$20 million was added. This paid for the Cheel Campus Center. With Cheel, the CAMP Building, and extensive landscaping, the hill campus underwent dramatic changes.

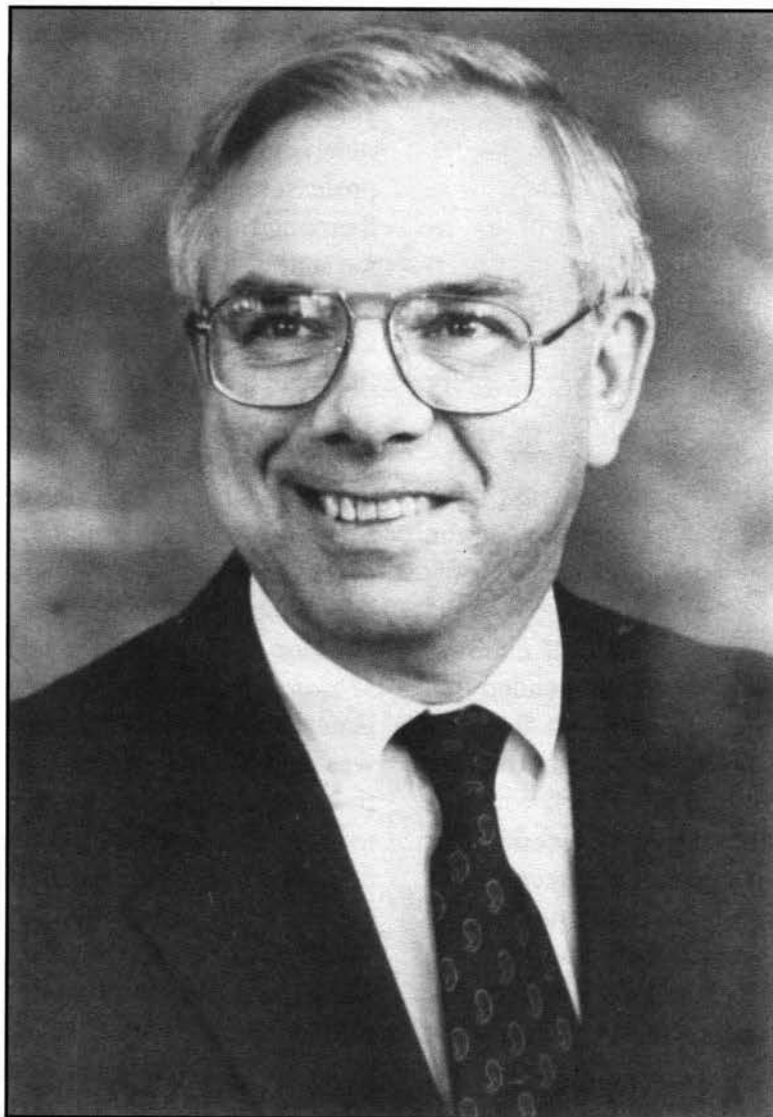
Also during his tenure as president, Gallagher saw Middle States accreditation of the university's academic programs reaffirmed; honor bestowed upon five inspirational high school teachers chosen by the seniors every year; the formation of a Gender Issues Committee to alert the entire campus



to the existence of sexual harassment, and to work assiduously on its prevention; the creation of the aeronautical engineering program under the aegis of the mechanical engineering department; the closure of three buildings on the downtown campus (Peyton, Damon, and Congdon halls); the creation of an Athletic Hall of Fame in the new Cheel Arena to honor Clarkson's outstanding athletes over the years; and the receipt of Clarkson's largest bequest of over \$20 million from the estate of Andrew Schuler, potato chip magnate.

## **Dennis G. Brown (1995- )**

Entering the office just as the university began a new century, Clarkson's fifteenth president, Dennis G. Brown, came to Potsdam from the position of provost and senior vice president for academic affairs at Drexel University in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. He also was professor of chemistry. Prior to his Drexel appointment, Brown served in various administrative positions at the University of Nevada-Reno, Montana State University, and the University of Idaho. His baccalaureate degree is from Whitman College, Washington, and his doctorate from the University of Illinois. He is a mem-



Courtesy of Clarkson University

*Dennis G. Brown,  
the fifteenth president of Clarkson University.*

ber of Phi Beta Kappa and Phi Kappa Phi.

Because of the importance to the university of its centennial celebration in 1996, Brown opted to delay his inauguration until the major centennial celebration in October, when it will become the focal point of the ceremonies.

However, even though he had not been inaugurated officially, Dr. Brown began facing campus

problems immediately. Of paramount importance were the financial crisis and deficit projected for the 1996-1997 budget. As a major first step, President Brown distributed a campus-wide memorandum detailing a one-time voluntary separation program for tenured and regular exempt and non-exempt staff as a means to help close that deficit. This program offered a signifi-

cant financial incentive for employees to separate from Clarkson, including payment for years of continuous service. An interesting provision gave employees whose dependent children were currently participating in the tuition exchange program a maximum of eight undergraduate semesters of coverage. By the deadline, 35 members of the faculty and staff had applied for and been accepted for this program.

Another money-saving move he instituted was networking the entire campus, including dormitories, rather than distribute personal computers to all entering students. He recommended this action for two reasons: first, because so many courses require the use of the network which is available only through a computer lab or a modem, and second, because so many students come to Clarkson with their own computers. Freshmen who entered the university without a computer were given the option of purchasing one from the school. This action was expected to save around \$1 million.

Clarkson was awarded a Department of Education grant of \$775,000 for 20 undergraduate students to conduct intensive research with the guidance of faculty members. Named for astronaut Ronald E. McNair, who was killed in the Challenger space shuttle explosion, the McNair Post-baccalaureate Achievement Program provides support to students chosen from under-represented groups and

first-generation college students from lower income families. During their junior and senior years, these McNair Scholars will receive assistance to work with professors whose interests match theirs, and hopefully lead to graduate school.

Dr. Brown joined actively in Clarkson's Centennial Celebration which began in January with a New Century's Eve Party in the Cheel Student Center with the theme "From the Victorian Era to Star Trek." A centennial history of the university was published in November in time for the celebration. Entitled, *A Clarkson Mosaic*, this work by Professor Emeritus Bradford Broughton was highlighted during the festivities, as were the first performance of "A Clarkson Overture" composed especially for the event by Professor Emeritus Robert Washburn of the Crane School of Music at Potsdam State, a 30-minute representation of a "return visit" by Thomas S. Clarkson, himself, by actor Scott Keely, and a wide variety of food samplings covering the past century.

This centennial continued with a variety of minor events scattered throughout the year, including the student-run ice carnival with a centennial theme, a school of business forum on Career Opportunities in the Global Marketplace, a celebration to honor the United States Army ROTC program's 60 years on campus, an international workshop on Materials Processing at High Gravity, the 70th Colloid and

Surface Science Symposium attended by 600 scientists from around the world, a homecoming/reunion of alumni, and a time capsule burial in November on Founder's Day to bring the centennial to a close. The highlight of the year occurs in October with the inauguration of Dr. Brown, recognition of five Centennial Professors, and an area-wide parade.

Brown's first year closed with trustee approval of funding for relocation of the downtown campus to the "hill." By September 1996, all four engineering departments will be housed on the hill campus, along with all the science departments. Subsequently, both the school of business and the faculty of liberal studies and the administration remaining downtown will move into new buildings on the hill.

Under Dennis Brown, the lifelong ambition of a century of Clarkson "Techers" will be realized: "*Clarkson on the hill.*"

### **About the Author**

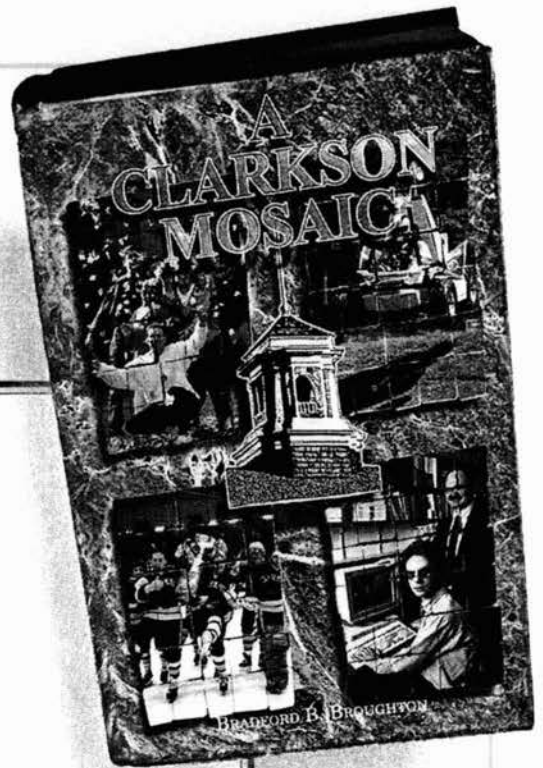
Bradford B. Broughton is professor emeritus of technical communications at Clarkson University. Dr. Broughton also serves as Clarkson Historian and is the author of the recently published *A Clarkson Mosaic*. Additionally, he has authored five other books, notably works on medieval literature and history. He and his wife, June Barnum, continue to reside in Potsdam.

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