THE BELLS OF KALAMAZOO COLLEGE

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Eight Sermons for Eight Bells
Stetson Chapel, Winter 1984
The eight sermons in this booklet were delivered in services in Stetson Chapel during the winter quarter, 1984. The Chapel series was built around the anticipated arrival, raising, and ringing of the Bells of Kalamazoo College. The booklet has been made available as a momento of the dedication of the bells on June 2, 1984, by funds from the Homer J. Armstrong Endowment in Religion.

The following remarks were made at the opening service of the series:

These eight services will be services of worship in the tradition of Friday Chapel, but with a special focus on the bells and the founders for whom they are named.

In worship, we seek the Spirit and discover that the Spirit seeks us. The bells give a new voice to the presence of the Spirit in our midst.

To worship each week we bring our separate selves and discover that we are one, a community. The bells are a metaphor of the community which we both experience and seek, as Jeff Smith so eloquently said yesterday.

We came to worship out of our changing days and lives, often harassed, frequently uncertain and bewildered by chaotic times. We discover in the changes rung by the bells the affirmation of an order that transcends and yet participates in the flux of our lives.

We come to worship out of an often unfeeling, uncaring world. The bells call us to remember a grace which we can share with others, a grace we discern at work in the broken world, creating and sustaining and redeeming that world.

The bells prompt us to remember and rejoice that that grace abounds, much more than sin; that light shines in the darkness and the darkness cannot overwhelm it.

We wish the world could be with us here in this small college, the larger world, all scholars, athletes, actors, scientists, musicians, soldiers, politicians, atheists, agnostics, Catholics, Protestants, Jews. Perhaps the world is here -- for in worship we touch down on the unity of all things. It comes clear to us that we are part of all. The world is in us and we are in the world. We know that we are free to go into the world and live out the faith we have discovered. Not with a false sense of superiority or any notion that we possess the truth, but to share willingly and joyfully what we have received. We know that the Kalamazoo Bells will ring, as John Donne said, not alone for us, but for all.

Robert D. Dewey
Dean of the Chapel

Friday, January 6, 1984
Contributors:

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Acknowledgements

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"In these morning exercises, the wall separating sacred and secular things seemed, without any design on my part, to have been broken down, or to have sunken of itself out of sight. Here in the chapel exercise, an opportunity offered itself, I expressed what I so deeply felt -- that LIFE was the finest of the fine arts; that it was full of days and duties which it was in our power to make sacred and joyous; that every hour might be a sacrament, and every day a true Sabbath."

Good morning.

Today, at the beginning of a new quarter and a new year, we launch a series of eight chapel hours devoted to heralding what many of us are coming to call simply, "The Bells", or, more intimately, "Jeff's Bells", in honor of the one among us whose passion more than any other force has made them possible. I am honored, if I may borrow a metaphor from last week's gridiron rituals, to kick off this series, as I was thrilled to hear that the smallest soprano bell would bear the name of Lucinda Hinsdale Stone. Contrary to what Bob Dewey will tell you, I am not inveterately opposed to nicknaming the bell. I would simply urge that "Old Lucy" give way to "Old Lucinda". Those of you who REALLY know American history will know that Lucy Stone was another person altogether, though the two were friends, and Lucy Stone belongs to Oberlin College.

For two reasons I think it highly appropriate to christen Bell Number One after Lucinda Stone. First, she is certainly the greatest "star" our institutional history can boast. One hundred years ago her name claimed national and international recognition as that of an educator, feminist, writer, Mother of Women's Clubs, the person most responsible for coeducation at the University of Michigan. And second, long before Stetson Chapel, Mrs. Stone and her husband, James, this college's first president, made the morning chapel hour the heart of the college life. Years afterward they and their students spoke of Chapel with aching nostalgia. And, as I hope Kathy Reish's reading made evident, the Stones gave to chapel a character it has generally sustained for these hundred and more years. They made it not so much a religious service as a quiet communion, a renewal of the community life. "The wall separating sacred and secular things seemed ... to have broken down", she wrote; and the divine and mundane greeted each other as we do around the coffee pot in the narthex. Jeff Smith has said that if this college has a heart, it is surely Stetson.
Chapel, and I know Lucinda Stone would concur. For her to be remembered so close to that heart would delight her, and has already delighted those descendants of hers whom I've informed about the bells.

The verse from Proverbs to be inscribed on her bell is very apt. She did indeed open her mouth with wisdom, and according to her students, the law of kindness was ever present in her tongue. The next line, however — "she looketh well to the ways of her household" — would raise laughter from her contemporaries, who knew her as a notoriously bad housekeeper. Certainly she never ate in the family's dinner, and was virtuous; she was traditional and conservative, thereby starting a long Kalamazoo College tradition. But the next line, serendipitously enough, happens to be the one that occurs with striking frequency in reminiscences of Lucinda Stone, "Her children arise up and call her blessed." As one of her self-appointed children, I shall arise up and do just that for the next few minutes. And blessed she was, by nearly all who knew her, including the great Susan B. Anthony herself. Yet Lucinda Stone's favorite term for herself was "heretic." Hence my paradoxical title today. I think the paradox is central to the woman. Like so many 19th Century feminists, she was radical for the most conservative of reasons, moving conservatively toward the most radical goals. She was at once nurturer and troublemaker, half nice Victorian lady and half holy terror. People generally say of her that she was extraordinary, ahead of her time; in truth she was in another sense quite ordinary, very much of her time. As one eulogist put it at her death in 1900, "She was the best of the Nineteenth Century".

This College that she loved is, it strikes me, a hybrid beast like her: traditional and conservative on the one hand, wildly innovative and daring on the other. That is not the only link I see between the two — though after enough research about a subject you start seeing links everywhere between everything. Nonetheless, people like her and colleges like this shared something of the pioneering, evangelistic spirit of the 1830's and 1840's in America. But when she came west from Vermont in 1843, the mother of one young son, pregnant with another, her mission was quite simple and ever so traditional: She intended to help her husband, who had been called to lead both the local Baptist Church and its obscure little Literary Institute. "I did not intend to teach," she said, "but circumstances forced me to take the place of the principal of the ladies' department." Ah, Circumstance — the mother of countless small revolutions. To us, that "ladies' department" sounds hopelessly quaint, but believe me, it was, and Lucinda Stone knew it was, a powerful wedge to be driven slowly and with ladylike relentlessness into the male bastion called Academe.

But I am rushing ahead of myself. What I want most to speak about today is what Lucinda Stone brought with her in 1843 to the western Michigan wilderness from New England. Her family heritage and her personal experience both reveal that volatile paradox of stanch old stock and rebellious iconclasm that gave her character its drive and resiliency. Through both parents she was linked to the sweeping reform spirit of the first quarter of the last century. One of her father's cousins was the pacifist and abolitionist Elihu Burritt; another was Emma Willard, whose Female Seminary at Troy, New York, was the first endowed institution in the world for the education of women. Her mother was descended from Harvard men and was connected with the American Academy of Arts and Idleness; she was virtual heretical blood. Her mother's cousin was the astronomer Maria Mitchell, professor at Vassar, discoverer of a comet, first woman admitted to the American Academy of Sciences, and the Association for the Advancement of Science. Thus the ruling passions of her life, in particular educational advancement for women, were hers almost by inheritance.

Her own early life, while in some ways privileged, was nonetheless colored by two great deprivations which, more than anything, marked her future course. I have often tried to articulate to myself and to others what it is in her that moves and captivates me, and perhaps most of all it is her ability to turn weakness to power, to use injustice and loss to fuel her mind and heart and will toward change. She was the youngest of twelve children whose father died before she was three. Her widowed mother, left in charge of this enormous household and a woolen mill in Hinesburg, Vermont, had very little left for her youngest child. Lucinda wrote, "My mother had a world to do; my sisters were all paired off with each other, and I think I was not a very welcome child. I do not wonder at it because my mother already had eleven children, and my older sisters did not want the care of another child. I felt when I was very young that I was in the way, and that it was a trouble to take care of me. I used sometimes to wish that I might die, because I thought nobody loved me; but this drove me to my books, and I lived with my books as far back as I can remember". Indeed, all those older sisters quickly deemed her hopelessly incompetent at domestic tasks, thereby conveniently freeing her from the traditional female role and allowing her voracious mind and imagination their full scope. But the lasting impact of this childhood marked Lucinda Stone as the right age of the very young girl into her mother's plight. Instead of bitterness, she seems to have felt only a deep pity for a woman who apparently had a hungry mind of her own and was being devoured by domesticity, depleted by childbearing. This image was never absent from her daughter's memory, and at the center of Lucinda's subsequent involvement with the women's club movement, which she viewed as a phase of the higher education of older women who had been denied, stands the figure of her own mother, a living symbol of possibilities, strangled by the constraining circumstances of a woman's life. If the mother could not give her daughter the constant mother love children come to expect, she gave her something perhaps more important: an almost religious belief in the power of education. This is quintessentially American in one sense, New England in another; but it is also a classic case of a parent bent upon seeing her
children have what she was denied, especially in the girls. Lucinda recalled her mother often saying, "If God was good and just, as she believed he was, a better time would come for women. Before she might not live to see it. The time was not yet, however. When Lucinda Hinsdale was attending the Hinesburg Academy, there was still no institution of higher education for women in the country. The prevailing notions, contradictory and irrational though they seem, were that women had brains far too shallow and entirely different from those of men to be capable of real intellectual effort, and that if women did succeed in a college course of education, they would be hopelessly damaged in the process, mentally traumatized and physiologically deranged, useless as childbearers. At Hinesburg, as almost everywhere else, the curricula for young men and women were quite distinct, though some crossover was sometimes possible, and Lucinda of course did all the crossing over she could do into the college preparatory male curriculum.

Her particular heresy at this point in her life was her passion for Greek. One of the choice bits of unreason on which the 19th century educational system rested was that while it was perfectly acceptable for women to study French -- French being a living modern language of cultured social discourse -- it was unthinkable for them to study Greek, which was the key to a classical education -- that is, a male education -- and thus the "dog" to the heavily guarded "soul house" of knowledge. Lucinda Hinsdale became something of the village madwoman, the local monstrosity. Driven by derisive remarks about "girls who want to become men", she reached out covertly, actually shading her window at night so that neighbors would not see her light. The ridicule and outrage occasioned by her casually expressed wish that she might go to college left lifelong scars. "But", she quickly adds, "this remembrance was strong incentive in working to make Kalamazoo College coeducational and in seeking to pry open the doors of the University of Michigan to women students.

Such were the paradoxical and potent lessons of girlhood: her mother had suffered for leading a traditional woman's life; she was suffering for departing from the script. Education was holy, priceless, the heart's blood of the democracy; but for her, for a girl, it was at least ludicrous, at the most heresy. Suddenly, as she was later to write, the story of the Garden of Eden took on new meaning as the story of a woman's soul, dreadfully punished for the offense of wanting to know. For Lucinda Hinsdale, to cleave to her belief in the power of the mind and the wonder of ideas was to find herself, like her forebear Ane Hutchinson, anathematized, outlawed, burned at the stake of bigotry in the flames of calumny. Add to this her three years in Natchez, Mississippi, as a governess, witnessing first-hand the effects of slavery and you have a woman whose strong character was burning at its own full pitch when she and her husband arrived in Kalamazoo. You have also that most dangerous of creatures, a born educator who believes to the bottom of her soul that education is no icing on the cake of gentlemanness nor window dressing for young ladies on the marriage market, no secure bastion for the powerful and entitled, but rather a torrential force for change.

The Stones came to represent that force in the lives of their students, as legendary teachers. It was certainly they who generated this college's reputation as a teaching institution. I wish to stress that title: "TEACHING institution". Not mere, but within, teaching, that is, a place where the emphasis is upon not merely the accurate transmission of subject matter, nor even the quality of student performance on examinations, nor the quality of faculty scholarship -- but on PEDAGOGY, the act of teaching, the process of engaging minds, the arts and attitudes which make the process work. For one of the Stones, to whom education had not come by right of birth but rather by dint of doggedness and loneliness, it was all the more precious, and the teacher a nearly godlike being. But she brought to that role much that a male counterpart, even her remarkable husband, would have been without. For one thing, she brought that residue of anger and hurt, transmuted into energy and determination. That is, she probably had a more personal stake in what she was doing. Though I cannot prove it, I believe that in every student, especially every young woman, she coached and inspired, she avenged her mother and herself. And she brought a distinctly female persona to the classroom. "Alma Mater", her students called her. And she, said, "the motherheart must be at the center of all true teaching". In the late 1840's on the second floor of the old frame building on what is now Bronson Park, she used to sit at the front of a roomful of her "girls", hearing their recitations, by most of my colleagues. First of all, there is that "motherheart", nonsense. All that touchy-feely stuff. The kid, the dog. "Your great motherlove", wrote one student, "large enough to take in all of us girls, with all our faults and failings, in our eyes surrounds your face with a circle of light". A halo, even! My stars. Even the dullest of us did not hesitate to bring our thoughts to you, sure of as careful consideration as though WE had been your EQUALS". (Students were a little different then, too.) "We remember how tenderly you led us, making us know our ignorance not so much by anything you said, as by our own quickened sense of comparison. Somehow you had the power of divining the best there was in us, and the
tact to bring it out". Another student corroborates this utopia with "indirectness" in Mrs. Stone's lectures: "It was one of the secrets of her influence that with all her strong characteristics, strongly developed, she never was didactic -- she suggested things rather than asserted them, she inspired rather than taught her ideas". That is, she rejected the professorial persona, not because it was unfeminine but because it got in the way of good teaching, the molding of the minds and hearts of students described in the following: "It appeared like a lot of girls having a friendly talk with their mother, yet never was teaching more effective".

And then there is Lucinda's intellectual heterodoxy as a teacher. We always applaud nonconformity so long as it is in the past and has subsequently been proven correct -- that is, in agreement with what we ourselves now believe. We are less indulgent of contemporary heresies, especially in classrooms. Lucinda Stone was an intellectual heretic in two senses. First, she had little respect for established truth -- and what woman would, after listening for five minutes to what it had to say about women? She said, "It takes more courage to face a new thought than it does to face a cannon's mouth. Knowledge is a ruthless iconclast. She shatters the idols of our youth". This sounds very grand, but how congenial are modern faculties and students to idol-shattering? Her second intellectual heresy lies in what her first biographer called her "attitude of intellectual hospitality" -- her refusal to play the ever-popular academic game of separating wheat from chaff according to a hierarchy of Important versus Unimportant subjects. The world was her textbook, or, as a student put it, "She took all learning for her province." Nothing was too abstruse for her comprehension, nothing too insignificant to convey some meaning. Sojourner Truth was as welcome in her home as Ralph Waldo Emerson. (What would the Commencement Committee say to that? How would the faculty vote?) She taught the ancients, but she also taught Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Charlotte Bronte, Lord Byron. A similar embracing relativism shaded her religious ideas: "To her", said a friend, "all truth was religion; she came to look upon wildly diverse systems of belief as only different phases of the same essential truth".

You can imagine how popular that approach was in her day. One former student marvelled: "She was absolutely free from bigotry. When I look back to that time, and remember what the old Baptist doctrines used to be, as preached by the minister, I wonder how Doctor and Mrs. Stone could have remained so long within that fold as they did. Their influence was always for the widest interpretation and the broadest charity for all mankind".

But the trait of the Stone pedagogy that would probably meet with the most mistrust in my colleagues today is that it never even pretended to be value free, divorced from belief, morality, commitment. The Stone's philosophies, notably their abolitionism and feminism, were prominent features of their campus presence as attested by the mind-boggling list of visitors, including Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Frederick Douglass. And it was thus clear to their students that more than their brains was at stake in their educations. Mrs. Stone wrote, "Educators must aim to make a good man as well as a great lawyer", and "a man who will fail utterly". Said the Kalamazoo Gazette when she died: "The acquisition of knowledge was her prime end, but a means to this end; namely, the development of character, independence of thought, and 'fineness of nature'. Nor was this all; the final end to be sought in all educational processes was to fit the individual to do service for others". (Remember when Career Development was Career Service?)

The students seem not to have minded much this professorial mucking about in their lives. One of them said of the Stones, "They were in fact as well as law, our teachers in loco parentis, for they not only taught but trained the students; ever impressing on their minds ... that it was the morals that gave the highest value to scholarship". Teaching in this context was surely tricky business -- or, in Lucinda's words, "not only one of the fine arts, but one as sacred as temple or cathedral building". She truly saw her students as works in progress, and they responded in kind. Hear this testimony: "The figure is in the stone and the sculptor only finds it. The figure here was the character, and it was the educational work of our teachers to develop that in its fullest perfection".

Like the students, the teacher committed their whole beings to the enterprise -- which brings me to the final heresy of the Stones' method: the fact that it depended so much upon them. It was charismatic teaching at its best and perhaps most dangerous. The students said, "Instruction was made valuable to us not so much by direct teaching, or what we were brought to know, as from what we were brought to feel by the unconscious influence of the life and character of our teachers". Detachment, objectivity, expertise, fairness, authority -- these highly admirable traits aren't mentioned nearly as often in alumnae reminiscences as passion, investment, gentleness, wisdom, inspiration, caring, and above all the sense of two human beings who made ideas live. The words of a student again are the final evidence: "Their great knowledge of life, their large circle of friends, their wide acquaintance with wit and wisdom, made association with them a liberal education". One of their star graduates was Alice Boise, who unofficially audited courses at the University of Michigan even before the gates were opened to women in the form of one Madelon Stockwell, of whom you will hear more in several weeks. Alice went from Kalamazoo to attain an exceptional education for a woman of her day, yet one early example remained, for her, definitive. To Mrs. Stone she wrote: "No instructor -- and I came under many both in Michigan and Chicago Universities -- ever so deeply impressed upon me the necessity, and also the possibility of progressive accomplishment, of constant enlargement, as you taught it to me. And you taught that lesson by the best of all methods -- an ever present example". For Alice and her peers in the ladies' department, such an example in female form was invaluable. "He
must thank our Alma Mater," one of them wrote, "our dear Mrs. Stone -- for the impulse toward the good, the true, and the beautiful she gave us; with the firm principle she aimed and fixed in our youthful minds; that life was earnest, and women had a place to fill, a work to do, as well as men ... We are all Mrs. Stone's 'girls'; and to the end, we and our children shall 'rise up and call her blessed'.”

Somehow, I have wandered from "heretic" around to "blessed" again. Perhaps none of this sounds very heretical to you. Maybe you had to be there. But I assure you, it was all deemed so dangerous, so threatening, that in 1863 Lucinda and James Stone were driven away from their college in a still almost incredible nightmare of scandal and conspiracy that for me is surely this college's darkest hour. Some three-fourths of the students withdrew in a protest -- surely one of the student body's brightest hours! I hasten to add that most returned to campus the following term. Lucinda Stone took her life's work, the education of women, to other spheres. Today I have chosen to emphasize what she did here, as our in-house radical, our blessed heretic. In planning this talk I thought it important that you get to know her a bit, so that she is not simply a name on a bell, but someone who lived and worked here -- well, actually, down the hill a piece, near Schwarz's -- and who brought to Kalamazoo College a brave and powerful brand of teaching. If I have leaned heavily upon the "heretic" part, it is because I fear Lucinda Stone may dry up in the attic of our collective memory until she is a delicate Victorian doll, an admirable old lady. I don't want her cast in bronze. I want her remembered as a brilliant, passionate woman who was oppressed, hurt, maligned, feared; inexorable in her commitment to the revolution that would come with the liberation of women's minds.

When this prodigy was forced out of Kalamazoo College and the Baptist Church, the institution was in dire straits. The budget wouldn't balance; a fund drive had failed; enrollments were way down, partially as a result of the Civil War. Perhaps it is time for change, even change in leadership to a degree. But the tragedy, to me, is that in an hour of great trouble, those who wished to lead the institution responded by cutting out its heart. People and institutions must surely take severe measures in severe times, but it seems important also that they remember where their hearts are, and listen. If Jeff is right about this building, we will be listening, come spring, as we have never listened before. I can hear that soprano bell now, Old Lucinda, singing, "Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all".

Ah, the Bells. It is good to be a part of the Bells.

But, I have more to say than just to name a bell; I am here to preach as well, as he for whom the bell is named would have done. But before I go on I would like to thank those who have given me my first road maps into the College's history: Dean Dewey, Eleanor Dewey, Joan Hinz, and especially our great cartographer, Gail Griffin.

It is fitting to remember the first President of the College. As the bells are raised, he will stand alongside his wife and partner, Lucinda Himdale Stone. Together, they will lead each change, she leading, he following, and all the rest of the founding mothers and fathers joining in. It is fitting that these two, James and Lucinda, should lead, for, perhaps more than any others, they created this place, this frontier outpost of thought, still.

It is fitting to remember James Stone here, in Chapel, as well, for though he will be remembered more as an administrator and teacher, Stone was very much a Baptist preacher, and the morning Chapel hours were his natural element. One of his students remembered those hours this way:

"As we wait each in place at the morning hour, I hear the quick step of the alert, trim Doctor, as he hurries up the middle aisle and mounts the platform. Instantly, as by a sort of intuition, he flings open the big Bible to the desired passage, and rapidly utters the texts of the day in crisp, sharp tones. Perhaps he is feeling a momentary irritation at the sight of one or more habitual incorrigibles; if so, they must be hardened indeed not to wince under the biting directness, not without gesture of the eyes and, in more obdurate cases, of the finger, with which he reads from the Proverbs of Israel's wise King, "a whip for the horse, a bridle for the ass, and a rod for the fool's back."

Now, such language and such gestures have been lifted out of the Chapel and transported to the Dean of Student's Office; we don't do a great deal of finger-wagging from this pulpit, as such as we sometimes might want to.

President Stone's was a different time. It is doubtful that President Breneman could be charged with pasturing his cow overnight on the College grounds, as President Stone was; but, in some ways things were much the same, as a passage from one of Stone's sermons on recruiting Ministry students shows:
How strange that men engage so reluctantly in this highest and most honorable calling. What readiness is manifested in entering upon all other professions. What community is obliged to advertise for lawyers and physicians? When have we seen clients in tears, because they could not find a lawyer to retain? When the Medical College in our University was opened a few days since, how did the multitude flock thither, like doves to their windows. It is well to care for the body, but the souls of men are afflicted with more alarming diseases; and their danger is more imminent.

Some of us still wonder what the graduates of this institution could do to cure souls.

But, it is not a proper history I propose to give to you today -- others have done this and will do this better than I. I am no historian, and lack a historian's long familiarity with my subject. No, today is a day for legends. History is not the stuff of colleges and bells, history is not what we enshrine in bronze, no, we name living metal for living examples and stories, for spirit passed on from mouth to mouth and eye to eye.

James Andrus Bliss Stone is out of reach of history, or, at least, out of easy reach. Few of his words remain, and few of his deeds. No, history remembers better his wife, whose legacy is in a nation of educated and free women, and the College, whose legacy is us.

If Kalamazoo College has legends, one might well be J.A.B. Stone. A legend tells of a human crisis, perhaps in time, perhaps out of time, which discloses some small part of the human story to a more distant generation, and therefore beyond emotional involvement, but as a thing present and demanding our hearts, as well as our minds. To those of you who expected history, I beg your indulgence. Good history draws us into critical judgements on who we are as people in time. Since I lack the data for that, I give you a legend, which might draw you as well to wonder.

On a winter's night not unlike those we now pass through, in the January of 1864, in the midst of the great war between the states, Dr. Stone was at home. If you were walking down Main Street towards town, you might have seen the light lit in the study on the second story of the house which stood about where the tennis stadium is today. Dr. Stone might well have sat in his study that night, and reflected on his life and vocation. For you see, what he and his wife had built on the edge of the wilderness over those twenty years seemed to be crumbling. The College they had nurtured with their blood and all their work and all their money from the tiny Branch of the University to the now independent and chartered College, Female Department and Theological Seminary, had turned on them. Two months earlier, he and his wife had resigned under pressure from the Trustees and others in town who disapproved of their methods. Now, strange rumors were circulating in the town that he was about to be accused of "grossly immoral acts" with some of his female students. This January night was a night for reflection, for doubt, and, perhaps, for bitterness.

Bitterness and doubt are not the stuff of College forefathers, we all know, but as he paced his study that January night, pausing to gaze out the window at the corner of Michigan and Main, the College building his wife would later say was built with their blood and tears, he was bitter, and doubted. In the window, he could see reflected the rough features, the large, clear eyes of his own face. The features now rougher and cracked with age and worry. How different he looked now from how he looked twenty years ago.

He looked at that face in the window and thought of failure. For all their efforts, the College was either to die or be taken away from them. Already, forces they could not understand or predict were at work in the College and the town to undermine their work.

James Stone was a Christian minister of an age very different from our own, and thoughts of bitterness and failure were different for him than for us. Education and ministry were not jobs to be given up, they were God-given vocations which could only be lost through some spiritual weakness or moral handicap. Failure was not something thrust upon him by circumstances or jealous men -- though these were all he could see -- failure was the reward of those who had lost favor with God, who strayed too far from the flock. For James Stone was a child of the Second Great Awakening, and of Andover Seminary in Massachusetts; the great bastion of the orthodox Puritan Congregationalists. For ministers of this age, failure could not be written off to "helping-professional burn-out"; there was no understanding church superior to lead him to another, more congenial congregation. For ministers of this age, faith was morality, and that morality was often legalistic.

Stone gazed at that face in the window, staring blankly back at him, and wondered why he had wandered so far. He had always been a bit of an iconoclast. He had left the Congregational Church while in seminary to join the Baptist Church; he found the Baptists more Biblically sound, but this reasoning meant little to his family and friends; to them he was either headstrong or too weak to stand the rigor of Puritanism. Wouldn't it have been easier to forego the truth this once and be practical. Then he had married one of his students from the Hinesburg Academy, an act not in itself rebellion, but the woman he loved was herself a bit of a heretic; a woman bent on education and on leading other women to it. He had indeed wandered far from his orthodox roots. From the safe and small truths of the church and revivalism, he
and his wife had reached into liberalism. Tempering the church's belief in the total depravity of men and women (perhaps women more than men), they had seen a hope for human progress, not only for women and slaves, but for all those they taught. It was a different truth he knew now, from that he had known before, it was broad and inclusive truth, that welcomed men and women without proof of regeneration or of creedal or confessional vows. He had become a liberal, and liberalism was lonely.

The loneliness hung in the room. His wife was asleep in the next room, and she was his only true companion. He stepped away from the face in the window which grew more puzzled and frightened the longer he looked at it. He sat at his old oak desk and fingered the big, black Bible there, and asked Pilate's question to Jesus: What is truth? His search for truth had led him here -- to lonely despair.

He had preached the Gospel long and hard, he might have thought. He was orthodox in his belief that all unconverted souls were damned and that morals were a sign of the Holy Spirit. But these once so solid beliefs had melted before him. It was so hard to say what was conversion and what were morals anymore. In teaching, he knew that morality was not a lesson, not words, but action and example. Jesus did, he did not only preach that others should. Students would later say of the Stones, that they too...not only taught, but trained their students..."ill it became ingrained in their nature, that it was morals that gave the highest value to scholarship." He and Lucinda taught by example, by action, by loving the students into things they could never accept intellectually.

Orthodoxy was now carried on by others -- by the Rev. Haskell of the Baptist Church, and Rev. Curtiss, and others, who cared not for compassion, or example, but only for law. Teaching was only be the strictest and coldest moral speeches for these men. The safety of the pulpit moralist left many hearts unwarmed, but it ran no risk of any being overwarmed. And these men accused him of immorality, with rumors, and forged letters, and the testimony of dead witnesses. If this was morality -- using any and all means to destroy a person one disagree with -- then he would indeed choose immorality. And in this might well be failure.

But had he failed God? The Biblical texts rang in his ears -- for Stone was a man of the Bible, and had studied with the greatest Biblical scholars of his time at Andover. Did the Psalm not say: "The blessed are like trees planted by streams of water, that yield their fruit in due season. In all that they do, they prosper." The blessed prosper, and he was not prospering. He turned the pages of his old Bible to these accusing words. He imagined future generations saying: "Yes, Stone failed; the College enrollment collapsed. There was no money, because he was a weak and immoral man."

Aimlessly, he turned the well-worn pages of the Word of God, the Word which had always given comfort and courage before, but which now accused. To the words of Micah:

"What shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before God on high? Shall I give my first born for my transgression...?

...this was what they asked of him, to give up his first born, the College for his sacrilege. But he read on:

God had showed you,... what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?

Stone looked down at the page, puzzled. He had done the first two, he thought. He and his wife had done justice, when they could, and loved kindness, as a generation of students would testify, but had he walked humbly with his God? There perhaps he had failed. Building a College, for men and women, and a theological seminary in the bur oak woods on the edge of the civilized world, was not a humble undertaking. And he always insisted on doing it his way, which he knew to be right. But being right is not always being prudent. Was walking humbly with God to be passive? Did not God call him to use his talents? Had not Micah and the other prophets been humble even when they were paid enough to criticize kings?

No, humility was not one of Stone's virtues. He had attempted the impossible and now begrudged the world its failure. But he would never say he had not walked with God in this -- as best he knew.

But prudence and humility in God's work were the marks of the Pharisees, he thought, and flung the Bible open again, to First Corinthians.

"Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For, though the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom,
it pleased God through the folly of what we preach to save those who believe.
...God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong,
...God chose what is low and despised in the world,
...So that no human being might boast in the presence of God."

God had indeed chosen the weak in choosing him, and he felt that weakness not, and let it fill him. The Pharisees had won, and the strong would not be shamed. James and Lucinda Stone were low and despised now, but still their tormenters not only boasted of, but claimed ownership of the presence of God. Who was God in all this? Was not God the God of the winners, the God of the righteous, the God of the shrewd?
But the words of Paul would not stop hounding James Stone: "God is the source of your life in Jesus Christ."

The Bible did not mince words with him. God is your life, James Stone. No College, no position, no house, no Presidency is life. That which is right is right forever, though it be folly and perfidy to the whole world. Sect, and bigotry, and pious prayers could sting, but never kill. He would not recant.

He turned back a few pages in his Bible, to where he knew it was, and began reading aloud; not so loud as to wake his wife, though he hoped she might somehow hear:

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.
Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.
Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.
Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.
Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.
Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God.
Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account.

James Stone did not fight. He and his wife did their best to defend themselves in a church trial, but Stone was expelled from the Church, and therefore, from much of society. He won a libel suit against one of the conspirators as well, but he did not try to regain the College. He gave that to faith and to God and to us.

James Stone failed. But perhaps that is the essence of ministry or teaching, or living. Someone once wrote this:

"Ministry is the weak effort of one human being to encompass all human compassion and concern in his or her confused self, and ministry is its failure. Ministry is the pleading attempt of one doubter to be a conduit for God’s grace, and ministry is its failure. Ministry is the enterprise of serving before an uninterested culture the silk and tatters of an ancient, foreign and shameful tradition, and ministry is its failure. Ministry is inevitably failure, for all its tasks are superhuman, and have become more and more superhuman with the passing of the centuries.

One might call the true minister a faithful failure. The Call is to give all, to love all, to heal all, to compel all, to judge all. But even more, the Call is to do all these things without despair, or perhaps even more, with the full hope of success. The minister must embody the absurdity of his or her task, and do it with the joy of a new convert. The minister knows all the dirt and blood that has accumulated in the basements and back rooms of the tradition, and yet carries on as though newly regenerate.

The minister is he or she who freely chooses a vocation of self-torture not believing, but knowing, that it serves an ultimate purpose.

Only one short motto will be read on James Stone’s bell: "The light shines in the darkness..." but when you think of him, remember the next phrase of the Gospel, "...and the darkness has not overcome it." May we face that darkness, in ourselves, in our institution, and in our world, and not be overcome.

Prayer: January 27, 1984

Ring out indeed.
To place faith in objects such as bells may be wrong,
but to place faith in history,
in symbol, and in hope,
is our task.

A College: its faith, its hope, its truth,
cannot be assumed,
but are recreated each day;
they are excited into life
by the Spirits of those unafraid
to learn, to love, to hope.

Ring in such hope, such love, such learning,
you metal monsters,
Remind us why we came.
DREAMS, INTERRUPTIONS, REALITIES
Madelon Stockwell

Delivered by Judith Dodge Breneman, February 3, 1984

Why in the world am I in this place? How in the world did it come to be that I should find myself in February, a damp February, at a small liberal arts college in Western Michigan giving a chapel address, as a part of a celebration for a bell, named for a lady I had never even heard of until about six months ago? I'm a musician. I'm a woman who had a great career going a year ago in a city on the Potomac River. I was busy and happy making music and worship happen for assorted bureaucrats, lawyers, teachers, statepersons, a Vice President, a Queen, and the resident hoi polloi, when my husband and family up and moved to Michigan. Actually, it all didn't happen that abruptly; there was much planning, investigating, and concurring, but there are times when I have been asked by friends, and have asked myself, what kind of a crazy thing have I done. I asked myself that very thing again about ten minutes ago.

However, being an adapting creature as humans are, especially the female of the species, and having had experiences with such changes before in my life, and have them always, yes always be for the better, I long ago ascribed to the philosophy of serendipity wherein fortunate occurrences often happen quite by accident. It has been change or a new direction that brings about fortuitous events. The decision is not yet in about this most recent change and won't be for some time as my life has to learn to shape itself to the new container, but what I am learning about Kalamazoo College and the community of Kalamazoo while I am reshaping is remarkable, exciting, and most interesting. And perhaps the most interesting thing to me has been to learn about and try to understand the people of this place, especially the women -- those of the present and those of the past -- because so many of them, like myself, came to this community not because they planned it, but because they were brought here by someone else.

One thing I do know: the place has quite an effect on these women. Is it the water? the threats of periodic tornados? the learning environment? the stimulation of other people? What ever it is, I am readily inspired by the way so many take advantage of their situation to make interrupted dreams become realities. I could talk about many women, a large number of whom are active and vibrant in today's Kalamazoo, imparting wisdom, making important decisions, creating a nifty place to live. But we don't have enough bells to go around. So I am limited to one, as Dr. Griffin has already spoken about the other. Let me tell you about Madelon Stockwell.
Madelon Stockwell. Spelled M-a-d-e-l-o-n. Not Madeline, a name many of you may remember from the delightful children’s book about the French schoolgirl who fell in the river Seine and was saved by a dog. But Michigan’s Madelon. Maddy. Let me tell you something about her life, what she did, why she was elected into the Michigan Women’s Hall of Fame in 1983, and why Kalamazoo should memorialize a large bell, one of a peel of eight bells, to her. First a story.

When my husband and I were graduate students in Berkeley, California, we also took on the new role of parents, our first child being born there in 1965. Taking after her father, she was very talkative at a very early age. One day, as we were driving back home from some event, she was feeling particularly inquisitive, as children are want, and was asking her Father question after question after question. At first he answered every one with great thoroughness, but as each answer led to still another question, he began to lose patience, and finally, in an exasperated tone asked, “Erica, why do you ask so many questions?” Without hesitation, and with a boldness and earnestness that belied her three years, she said, “Because I need to know!” BECAUSE I NEED TO KNOW. Our daughter, at the tender age of three, as did Eve in the garden, lost her innocence that day.

Madelon Stockwell was motivated by need to know, and it was that motivation that led her to become the first woman ever admitted to the University of Michigan, the achievement for which she is best remembered. This was in 1872.

Madelon was born in Albion, Michigan, in 1845, the only child of Louisa Peabody Stockwell, whose grandfather, Tenny Peabody, was Albion’s first white settler, and the Reverend Charles Franklin Stockwell, the first principal of Albion’s Wesleyan Seminary, later to become (in 1861) Albion College. Despite his success as principal and the success of the school, The Reverend Stockwell became discouraged over financial matters. That, combined with a great dislike of the Michigan climate, made his decide to join a group of men from Albion seeking their fortunes in California during the Gold Rush. The quest proved fatal, and he died at sea before arriving on the shores of the California coast. Two years later, Madelon’s mother remarried, a Dr. William Johnson, an Albion physician and druggist, also with a daughter of his own. Both girls were educated by Madelon’s mother and at the age of twelve, entered Wesleyan Seminary, from which Madelon graduated in 1862. Soon thereafter, Dr. Johnson moved his family to Kalamazoo where he continued in the medical profession. He purchased a lot at 211 Woodward Avenue and built his grand villa there in 1864. It is still standing. Dr. Johnson’s step-daughter, Madelon, at the age of eighteen years, entered the women’s division of Kalamazoo College, then a surviving vestige of the Michigan branch university system. Her teacher and mentor at Kalamazoo College was Lucinda Hinsdale Stone, who was to figure so prominently in her later admission the the University of Michigan.

Today, almost 114 years to the very day that Madelon Stockell walked through the doors of the University as its first woman student, it is difficult for us to image that co-education is any big deal. After all, this is an age of women students and workers, women lawyers and justices, corporation executives and stock brokers, priests, welders, and body builders. I won’t attempt to give you a history lesson on higher education for women in the mid-West as a very thorough and excellent job of that has already been done in the book, Emancipated Spirits, Portraits of Kalamazoo College Women, published last May (and available at your local bookstore). But I will say, that for centuries, strong willed women, who needed to know, generally had some access to higher learning. In the Middle Ages, although women were excluded from the universities, single women could enter convents and follow a lifetime of higher learning. During the Renaissance, girls as well as boys studied the classics, philosophy, mathematics, and science. In Italy, women studied and taught at the Universities. One, Laura Bassi, having earned a doctorate at age 21 at the University of Bologna in 1732 was appointed to a professorship, lectured on Newton’s Optics, wrote treaties on physics, bore twelve children whom she chose to educate herself. Today we would call her a superwoman! Why did educational opportunities for women become fewer and access to higher learning become more difficult in the new world where equality of opportunity was propounded? Dorothy Gies McGuigan, in her book, A Dangerous Experiment, 100 Years of Women at the University of Michigan, suggests that the changes stem from the Reformation period. The feminine element vanished from religion with the dethroning of Mary; convents were closed which ended an important avenue of education for most women. With the development of Protestantism, the old authoritarian and patriarchal concept of the family hardened. Marriage became the only suitable occupation for women and the only suitable education was one which fit them for their predetermined place as wife and mother. It was argued that education would unsex women and make them unfit for their vocation. These attitudes were brought to this country by the early settlers and established the attitudes towards women in higher education from the earliest days in the colonies. (A conscious religious exception in the colonies was the Society of Friends, with its great emphasis on the value of the individual human being.) But as folks moved westward, many old ideas stayed behind and new attitudes grew. Co-education developed as a just and reasonable system, and bold private institutions opened their doors to both men and women equally: Oberlin, in 1833, became the first co-educational collegiate institution in the country.

During this period of great western expansion, women were becoming very active in the anti-slavery cause, and had begun to enter the public arena, actively pressing for women’s rights as well. Elizabeth Cady Stanton was one of these activists who went on, with Lucretia Mott, to call a meeting in 1848 in Seneca, New York, to discuss the social, civil, and religious rights of women.
In Michigan, during the 1850's, against the background of women active in the momentum of the anti-slavery movement to admit women to the University of Michigan began in earnest. Indeed, other schools, albeit radical and in the classroom, were practicing the dangerous experiment of co-education, why not the University, an institution of enormous prestige and importance among public universities. Families began to wonder why, if they paid taxes, their daughters could not go on to the publically supported University as did their sons. After all the original statutes of the University establishing it in 1837 declared that, "the University shall be open to all persons who possess the requisite literary and moral qualifications." It wasn't until June of 1858, that the regents of the University reluctantly admitted that women were indeed persons, but decided they deny admission to persons, "whose presence would detract from the character of the institution or prevent it from attaining to the proper rank of University." Women fell in that category. The next year, 1859, a petition was presented to the Regents pleading that women be admitted. Denied. The next year the Civil War broke out and the whole question was laid aside.

For nearly twenty years the question of higher education for women, side-by-side with men, was argued in Michigan -- in the press, legislature, in classroom and from pulpits and in the kitchens and parlors of the populace. The debate, according to Ms. McGuigan, revolved around three main questions:

1. Whether the intellect of women was capable of advanced learning.
2. Whether women's physical constitution could stand the rigors of higher education.
3. Whether it was a mistake and waste to educate women for anything except their proper sphere.

When a woman actually presented herself to the University in an application for admission, the response was negative, with most of the faculties being vehemently opposed. Let me quote to you from the book, Michigan, the Story of the University, by Kent Sagendorph, which illustrates that vehemence:

"No," roared the clergy. "Co-educational classes are unthinkable! University studies will produce shocking situations when men and women use the same classrooms!" "No!" roared the Medical Department.

"Can you imagine what will happen here if we attempt to teach the facts of anatomy to a woman in the presence of a classroom full of men?" "No!" said the Literary Department. "It's not proper."

Dr. and Mrs. Stone of Kalamazoo College were among the very earliest participants in this debate, strongly advocating co-education in higher learning. Indeed, it is said that their belief in higher education for women and in giving young women equal opportunities with young men was such that the women's department of Kalamazoo College was maintained at their own expense for a number of years. One of the key people strongly influenced by the Stones was University Regent, George Hillard, director of St. Lukes Episcopal Church in Kalamazoo, and professor of Latin at Kalamazoo College.

The arguments and debates, pressuring, lobbying, quiet discussions with people of influence and sheer determination began to show results. In the spring of 1867, the State legislature adopted a resolution declaring,

The high objects for which the University of Michigan was organized will never be fully attained until women are admitted to all its rights and privileges.

In 1869, the head of the Latin Department at the University, Dr. Henry Frieze, an old stooped modest man, was appointed acting president when Dr. Haven, a major impediment to women's admission, accepted the Presidency of Northwestern. Dr. Frieze personally felt that if a woman was qualified, then she should be admitted and recommended that the University welcome "any person" able to pass the usual entrance examination. But it wasn't until January of 1870, that the subject was brought officially before the board by Regent Hillard of Kalamazoo.

Resolved: That the Board of Regents recognize the right of every resident of Michigan to the enjoyment of the privileges afforded by the University, and that no rule exists in any of the University statutes for the exclusion of any person from the University who possesses the requisite literary and moral qualifications.

The resolution passed, and the University, the largest in the country and with the greatest prestige of any west of New England, was, at last, open to women.

Lucinda Stone happened to be in Ann Arbor that day so learned of the resolution immediately. Although she and Dr. Stone were no longer at Kalamazoo College, she was deeply involved in promoting the cause of co-education. She went immediately to Kalamazoo to see her former pupil, Madelon Stockwell, and advised her to make immediate application for admission to the University. She had only to pass the examination admitting her in the classical course of study. To Madelon's pleasure and surprise, she was admitted as a sophomore and became a student on February 2, 1870, at the age of twenty-five, less than one month after the passage of the resolution by the board of Regents. The demand for higher education for women by the people had become too great, and in the end, it was really the economics of the whole thing that forced the decision. It was simply cheaper to educate women along with men rather than provide separate institutions. Miss Stockwell graduated from the University of Michigan with an A.B. degree in 1872, taking the highest honors of her class. The
was the only woman until the fall of 1870 when thirty-two more were admitted. Most of them were past the average age of students upon entering; several had been teachers, and many were the sole support of themselves.

Incidently, the University of Michigan was far more liberal and progressive in its attitude toward higher education for black males than for women. In 1868, two years before the battle for co-education was won, the first black students, John Summerfield Davidson and Gabriel Franklin Hargo, had enrolled at the University of Michigan without incident, stirring so little attention, according to Ms. McGuigan, that no mention can be found either in college records or in the student press.

What of Madelon's experiences? She wrote of some of them to Lucinda Stone:

My examinations in the various classic authors with whom an acquaintance was required were longer and more severe than those given the young men. Whether this was because the professor wished to escape the charge of partiality, and so leaned too far the other way, or whether it was from curiosity to see what I knew, I cannot tell. Among the passages in *Livy* I had the celebrated crossing of the Alps and the destruction of the Titans, and the soliloquy beginning, "O divine ether," in *Prometheus Bound*, which is itself a senior study, but I had read it before. The professors were kind enough, but they were severe.

As an instance of the irony of fate, the very first recitation I ever made in the University was to give this translation from the Antigone of Sophocles:

But it behooves us in the first place to consider this, that we are by nature women, so not able to contend with men; and in the next place, since we are governed by those stronger than we, it behooves us to submit to these things, and things still more grievous than these.

It is interesting that she was given a portion of the same drama to read for her graduation examination. This time it was the speech in which Antigone remarks, "It is a shame of us, being men, to be beaten by women."

Madelon told of a number of unpleasant experiences during that first term, which must have been a most difficult and terribly lonely time for her.

But friendships inevitably developed. Jean Fennimore, writing the *Albion Alumni Journal* writes of an amusing anecdote concerning a young gentleman student who was,

warned by his Greek professor that the newly enrolled young woman would be seated alphabetically next to him. When the professor advised the young man to "behave like a gentleman," he replied: "I'll try to be a gentleman, but I'll not sit by any girl." A few weeks later the professor said to his wife, "Do you remember what young Turner said about sitting beside a girl? Well he is sitting beside her, and it looks as if he'd sit beside her the rest of this life."

Madelon Stockwell and Charles Turner were married in April of 1873, about the time she graduated and soon after he received his law degree. They returned to live in Kalamazoo in the Johnson home where he died not too many years later of tuberculosis.

As happens to so many young women achievers when they get married, the biographers lose interest, so I found it somewhat difficult to follow the thread of Madelon's life once she returned to Kalamazoo after her marriage and following her husband's death. Yet, when Madelon herself died in 1924, childless, in Kalamazoo at the age of seventy-nine, she left an estate of over §300,000! I was puzzled that the histories had brushed over the events of her adult life, a rather important time when she had amassed quite a large fortune. I did learn that she was active in the cultural and social life of the city and read with some interest a rather abbreviated summary of her active middle age:

Miss Stockwell went to the University more especially because of the advantages it would give her for her favorite study, Greek, and she remains, twenty years after she entered, the most modest and shy of women, though daring to do anything that she can do well and seems called to do, whether it be reading Greek for her pleasure, which she has never given up or fallen back in; managing a farm, which she does well and profitably; writing a splendid essay when called for by the women's club; exchanging lessons in English for lessons in German with the Jewish Rabbi; painting china, for which she has taken several prizes; embroidering the most elegant drapery for her parlor; tiling her floor most artistically; and keeping house with exquisite taste and neatness. Going to college did not spoil her for getting married either; she has made a good wife, taking the most tender care of her husband through a long illness -- faithful even unto death. She is a faithful and devoted daughter, as everybody well knows; and surely she furnishes one notable example of a girl's going to college and not being spoiled for everything else.

Imagine my great surprise when I discovered that those words were penned by Lucinda Stone, herself! Always the supreme politician, Mrs. Stone seems to be writing what she thinks people would want to hear, and she certainly did not help my quest!
Now painting china and reading Greek do not build a fortune, but a slight hint was given about Madelon's business acumen, a point I wanted to pursue. Out of a great curiosity about all that Lucinda did not say, and on a tip from Eleanor Pinkham, I called Dr. Keith Fennimore, retired professor of English at Albion College who is currently working on a history of Albion. I asked him about the missing information, how Madelon built such a large fortune. He explained that Madelon Stockwell Turner had indeed inherited a small amount from her husband, and later a larger estate from her widowed mother. But it was Madelon herself who had wisely and shrewdly turned that inheritance into a sizeable fortune. She had evidently read and studied law with her husband while he was still alive. This was a great asset in her later business and financial ventures which she herself managed. She bought and sold real estate, invested in mortgages, and loaned money, especially to churches and students. She became a knowledgeable and successful businesswoman, taking risks, investing in the community, and helping others. Her will, which was a surprise to everyone upon her death, left a large bequest to the University of Michigan to honor her husband, and memorial funds to Albion College which built the library in honor of her mother and father, the Stockwells. Sadly, she left nothing to Kalamazoo College. She had become quite a recluse in her old age, but she maintained her study of language, history, and current events. She still needed to know.

What was it that motivated Madelon in those early years when the culture provided so many obstacles in the way of her efforts to learn? What is it that moves such men and women to fulfill dreams, many of which seem out of the question? What spirit pushes some individuals to keep moving against all odds, to make choices, plan their futures, fail over and over again, but ultimately achieve? Julie Anthony, a clinical psychologist at the Aspen sports Medical Institute, suggests that such people are imbued with a high self esteem coupled with a need for achievement. They set their goals which illuminate any further actions. The critical factors are then to learn two things which determine whether that goal is achieved: how to handle competition, and how to handle failure.

Madelon Stockwell had a vision. She was a goal setter. She could handle competition and failure. She did not let interruptions or changes detract from her goals. She is symbolic of the vigorous young men and women, needing to know, for which a College provides a facility and environment to make dreams a reality. When a student says, "I need to know," she or he has illuminated a vision for what is possible, and this institution is here to provide, for men and women, the tools, the teachers, the spaces, and the experiences to make that knowing worthwhile and within each individual's grasp.

Madelon Stockwell, alumnus of Kalamazoo College, was a pioneer in co-education, a scholar, a linguist, an artist, a businesswoman, a wife. She achieved her dreams and she lived a gracious life. To close, I should like to read the closing lines of a letter she wrote to her former University classmates, written in September of 1919:

The years! Those brightly beckoning years, in 1872! How much they meant! The Dream of Life, -- realized? Some dreams come true. And how sweet they were! Each one must live the Dream in his own way. I seem to have lived mine mostly over books. At any rate, I have found the burden of life greatly lightened by a load of books, and by adopting the magical motto of Colot: "I sing and paint. I sing and paint..." But any pursuit whatever, that is really worthwhile, and that takes hold of the eternal verities, adds to the sum of personal knowledge and enjoyment. -- though gradually, as the dew gather, drop by drop, in the heart of a rose. "Get wisdom," said Plato, "and virtue, for the reward if noble, the hope great." May Each find his Dream, A reality.

Madelon L. Stockwell Turner
A GENTLEMAN AND A SCHOLAR
Arthur Gaylord Slocum

Delivered by Dean Robert D. Dewey, February 10, 1984

If Arthur Gaylord Slocum knows he is to be honored in a bell -- and for all we know, he knows; if that causes him to remember his arrival at Kalamazoo College in 1892; and if he is privy to the inscription beneath his name -- "How lovely is thy dwelling place" -- he is probably smiling.

By any reckoning the College was far from lovely in 1892. Having barely survived what college historians call "the darkest thirty years" in its history, and still mourning the untimely death of its first alumni President, Theodore Nelson, who had served less than a year, what Gaylord Slocum inherited was an institution with one dormitory at the top of the hill where Hoben stands today, sadly in need of repair, two other quaint structures, a worthless library, antique science equipment, an annual operating budget less than the salary of an instructor today, a minuscule endowment, a faculty of eleven, a student body of forty from which exactly two would graduate that year from a college hardly known beyond its Michigan Baptist constituency. True, there was a preparatory school with over 100 boys and girls, but it was an awkward tail that wagged the smaller college dog and competition from the growing public schools would soon end its existence.

Baptist minister that he was, Slocum still may have had misgivings and intoned the next words of psalm with genuine feeling: "My soul longs, yea faints for the courts of the Lord." Perhaps, under his breath he added his own petition -- "Any other assignment but this one, Lord. But, if it be this, please do come to mine immediate aid."

Slocum stayed. One wonders what he said to the people who cared about the college gathered at his inauguration:

An uneasiness has been present throughout most of higher education. On every front we are told that our schools and colleges face a variety of crises, both qualitative and economic. A decade or more of declining enrollments and apparently unrelieved budgetary pressure appears to stretch mercilessly ahead...Is it an exaggeration to say that higher education faces multiple crises? Liberal arts colleges such as Kalamazoo may face greater than average difficulty in making the necessary changes, but most will be able to weather the storm. A few may even emerge from this decade stronger than when they entered it. I fully intend Kalamazoo College to be one of those favored institutions.

Those are not, as you detect, Slocum in 1892, but David Breneman.
...in 1982. He stayed and there seems to have been sufficient aid from the Lord or from others or from both to provide for singular achievements in the twenty years he gave to Kalamazoo. When he resigned in 1912, worn down by heavy labor and division left from civil war which had split Baptists north and south; jolted by Darwinism and other scientific theories; bewildered by massive immigration and feverish industrialization with the social problems which followed in its wake, orthodoxy had been tempered. But stimulated by liberalism and the Social Gospel, they saw the new science and inventiveness as blessings and looked forward to inevitable progress. Poverty and privilege meant responsibility; social problems offered an opportunity to "redeem the time"; the fields were white unto harvest and there was work to be done. Education was the handmaiden of religion; both were servants of the divinely ordained destiny of the nation. The cognitive side of the denominations, their colleges, were in the vanguard of the glorious effort to send into the world young people with trained minds and Christian faith. For Gaylord Slocum, a man of his times, Kalamazoo College was surely a place to serve th Lord, the Presidency a call from God.

Living with Slocum the past few weeks, I have the feeling in Slocum's bell we are honoring qualities that are less exciting than those we have found in J.A.B. and Lucinda Hinsdale Stone or Madelon Stockwell. What has emerged from my research is the picture of a man who worked hard, was remarkably persistent with an abiding faith in education of over half a million dollars, a strong and progressive faculty and a student body of almost 200; a college with a growing reputation for excellence which his successors Herbert Lee Stetson and Allen Hoben would parlay into a prestige liberal arts college resembling the "lovely dwelling place" of which the psalm speaks and, by reasons of history, we have inherited and hold in trust today.

The psalm, of course, is not speaking about a college but about God's dwelling place, a spiritual rather than a physical location. After considerable research in the rather slim pickings of the archives, at least where Gaylord Slocum is concerned, my sense of his is of a 19th century gentleman and scholar who did, indeed, draw his strength from "the courts of the Lord" and the Lord himself, as he understood Him. There is not a great deal of documentation for that impression. I draw upon a general understanding of the extent to which a late 19th century Baptist minister-educator must have felt himself called to to share in building a Christian civilization.

Reflecting on developments in the late 19th century -- economic, political, social -- it is difficult to understand how Christians could have been so optimistic, but they did. Evangelicals had not given up their vision. They sought, as one of their hymns put it, to bring Christ to the world and the world to Christ, starting with what they firmly believed was this favored, blessed and chosen nation. Battered by the division left from civil war which had split Baptists north and south; jolted by Darwinism and other scientific theories; bewildered by massive immigration and feverish industrialization with the social problems which followed in its wake, orthodoxy had been tempered. But stimulated by liberalism and the Social Gospel, they saw the new science and inventiveness as blessings and looked forward to inevitable progress. Poverty and privilege meant responsibility; social problems offered an opportunity to "redeem the time"; the fields were white unto harvest and there was work to be done. Education was the handmaiden of religion; both were servants of the divinely ordained destiny of the nation. The cognitive side of the denominations, their colleges, were in the vanguard of the glorious effort to send into the world young people with trained minds and Christian faith. For Gaylord Slocum, a man of his times, Kalamazoo College was surely a place to serve th Lord, the Presidency a call from God.

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splendid educational facility" complete with offices for faculty and president, classrooms, science facilities, a rejuvenated library, and ample rooms to house the new and bustling YM and YWCA.

He was a man who didn't give up. Sometimes that left him standing virtually alone against his faculty. The hot item was commencement! Apparently by long tradition, commencement included senior orations, not one, but many. The faculty wanted a speaker from abroad, a person of distinction. In a meeting in 1909, they appealed for a limit to the number of senior orations to eight. They lost. The President's vote, since he was a member of the faculty, carried the day. Another issue which rankled the faculty had to do with degrees. The college granted three, a BA earned through what was known as the Classical program (Latin, Greek, Bible, science and history, all required); a PhB through the Latin Scientific program (Latin and Science required, with Bible and History optional); and a BS through the straight Scientific course (requiring Math and Science with the rest electives). Over the years Slocum had created departments and liberalized the curriculum, but he would not countenance the abandonment of the three degrees. Finally, the faculty voted unanimously to eliminate the PhB and BS and retain only the BA; President Slocum was beaten, but not silent -- he requested that his lone negative vote be recorded for posterity.

But he was not entirely an unyielding man -- especially where students were concerned. He seems to have won their hearts and enjoyed happier relations with them than with some faculty and trustees. One year, a group of upper class students kidnapped the President of the Freshman Class. That led to the suspension of forty-three students -- a rather large group in a college of 150 altogether. A petition to re-instate the errant forty-three, although he was urged to maintain a firm position in the matter, was duly considered by the President and the students were re-instated.

Slocum's persistence over twenty years led to action on several fronts: the college, for a time, was affiliated with the University of Chicago, as a "feeder school" with special privileges for double degrees and admission to the graduate school at the University of Chicago for many students; Slocum managed to separate the preparatory school form the college -- even, at times, to close its door; intercollegiate athletic competition began in 1894 and Kalamazoo joined the MIAA in 1896; orange and black were adopted as the college colors, largely through the influence of "Toughie" Williams, a graduate of Princeton; student organizations flourished, though with rather different names than those of today -- the Oratorical Society, the Mission Band, the Mandolin Club, the Men's Glee Club and the Gaynor Club, a women's glee club, Deutscher Verein, a French Club, and larger than all the others, the YM and YWCA. And Slocum held the line on tuition for 20 years; it grew from $3.62 for men and $4.20 for women in 1892 to $4.36 for men and $4.94 for women in 1911, a percentage so low that Roger Pecher can not even figure -- why the difference between men and women I leave to the research ability of WIG.

Slocum's faith in education -- though strange, perhaps, to our ears -- is apparent in his "Greeting to College Students" in 1910:

At this season of the year many young men and women are considering the matter of a college education and asking the question whether or not it will pay to spend four years of valuable time and several hundred dollars in securing a liberal education. Many young people without means are wondering whether or not it is worthwhile to make the sacrifice necessary to secure college training, knowing that it will mean long hours, much self-denial and persistent effort for four years.

The answer to this question will depend much on the ideal before you.

What is your purpose in life, serious or trivial? Do you wish to make your influence felt strongly for good, or are you content to drift with the current? Real success costs effort -- long continued, persistent effort.

By 1910, Slocum's health was failing and he found himself increasingly in disagreement with the progressive faculty he himself had gathered at the College, people of unusual ability and devotion, some of whose names many in this community remember: "Toughie Williams", Justin Bacon, Herbert Lee Stetson, William Praeger. He resigned and under the title "The Best of Friends Must Part", the Index said ... a student voice is speaking, I surmise ...

We first made his acquaintance some three years ago on a memorable Monday morning. We entered his office doubtfully and it must be confessed with some hesitation, feeling that we were only poor, weak mortals after all. He greeted us pleasantly and taking the papers we had so thoughtfully and carefully brought with us, laid them aside and inquired after some friend. Surprised that he should know the person, we soon found ourselves talking as with an old acquaintance. In fifteen minutes we felt that we had met and made a new friend and as days and weeks went past, when discouragements came, we realized more fully that this was so. Such was our first impression of Dr. Slocum; and as the years passed and we came to know him better we found that under his calm, and at times stern appearance, was the heart of one who held the welfare of the college first and his own interests last.
Someone said of Gaylord Slocum, "He bore the burden of a small college in his heart." Indeed, he seems to have done so. And if he were to walk onto the campus today, see what it has become, and wander to this room to find us here, discovering that we meant to honor him in a bell with the inscription "How lovely is thy dwelling place", I think Arthur Gaylord Slocum might weep, but for joy!

ENDLESS BEGINNINGS
Jeremiah Hall
Delivered by Albert E. Lacy, February 17, 1984

Jeremiah Hall could be called a man of endless beginnings, in an age of endless beginnings, living in a land of endless beginnings, contributing to the early growth of an institution of endless beginnings.

First, consider the age. The cultural historian, Peter Gay, notes that all times are times of transition. But, the 19th Century was special because in that century change itself underwent change. The acceleration was such that it became rapid and irresistible. The pace of change was dramatized by the frequent use of the word 'new'. "Everybody wants to be new, but nothing else," wrote Jacob Bruchardt in 1843.

Gay contends that the dominant myth of the age was the myth of mobility. Descriptions ceased being static and became dynamic. People no longer talked of estates, or orders, but spoke of classes, parties, interest groups. They did not speak so much of schools because of the connotation of a master/servant relationship of sects because of their life-long loyalties -- but, they spoke of movements. It was an age of movement, and of movements.

Those words of Marx which we frequently quote -- to the effect that the purpose of the philosopher is not so much to contemplate the world but change it -- were simply a commonplace conviction, for change filled the air of the 19th Century, which Gladstone described as an "age of agitation and excitement."

Kalamazoo reflected the spirit of the age. It is significant that this little frontier settlement was enthusiastic in anticipation of the coming of the railroad. Kalamazoo underwent a rhythm of excitement and disappointment during the 1830s as one proposal after another -- which offered promise to bring the railroad through Kalamazoo -- came into being and failed. The Detroit-St. Joseph Railroad, The Erie-Kalamazoo Railroad, The Kalamazoo and Lake Michigan Railroad Companies, which were chartered in 1832, 1833, and 1836, respectively, never materialized.

Finally in 1837 the Legislature of Michigan decided it would embark upon a massive canal and railroad building program, one of which was to run from Detroit to St. Joseph. The villagers of Kalamazoo were delighted when the surveyors determined it would run through Kalamazoo.

The agitated and expected character of this little settlement did not delight everyone. The founder of Kalamazoo, Titus Bronson, was disturbed by its hustle and bustle, and a minister who had just come here from Vermont -- though very
satisfied to be here -- was quite concerned about the rage for speculation and wealth which prevailed even among professing Christians.

The tempo of change is indicated by an observation of a visitor to Bronson in 1831. He said, "Suppose New York were without towns and villages tomorrow... that all were sunk by earthquakes. The wants of the people would soon build them up, and with rapidity. Such, on a smaller scale, is the process in town manufacture now going on in Michigan."

So much for the age. The same was true for the country. This country, like a train, hurtling through the night at rapid speed -- was rapidly racing through time and space. From the founding of this country, until the time of Jeremiah Hall's presence in Kalamazoo, a little over 50 years, this country had moved from a colonial culture, through a revolutionary experience, through a Confederation under the Articles of Confederation, to become a Federal Republic, a nation dominated by Federalists, then by the threshold of the Jacksonian period.

It moved through space with equal rapidity, beginning at the very water's edge of the Atlantic, and now moving out to the point that Kalamazoo was a clearing in the wilderness.

Just nine years previous to the time when Jeremiah Hall makes his appearance, both Thomas Jefferson and John Adams had died, on July 4, 1826, the fiftieth anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, and the coincidence of these deaths filled the land with a revolutionary mystique.

Four years before his appearance in Kalamazoo, deTocqueville had visited this country and had recorded both its promise, and also its perils, as he saw them. At the time of Hall's appearing, utopian communities were spreading across this country because it was considered to be virgin soil in which people could actualize possibilities that they could not elsewhere.

Arthur Bestor, in his book Backwords Utopia, records that between 1825 and 1839, nineteen utopian communities sprang up, and that between 1840 and 1860, twenty-eight more were founded.

Jeremiah Hall reflected the spirit of his culture, and his age. He was a man of endless beginnings. In June, 1835, he came to Kalamazoo from Vermont. He began preaching in the home of his father-in-law, Ezekiel Ransom, and in a schoolhouse located approximately at the intersection of Burdick and South Streets. In 1836 The First Baptist Church was founded. He was pastor of that church from 1836 to 1843. We know little of him after that, until 1851. From 1851 to 1853 he was a pastor in Granville, Ohio. From 1853 to 1863 he was a student at Lane University. Shortly after that he again resided in Kalamazoo. May 30, 1881, he died in Port Huron, Michigan.

Perhaps Frederick Jackson Turner would see him as the embodiment of the frontier spirit. Perhaps Perry Miller would see him as the carrier of -- and carried by -- the New England spirit; a man from Vermont on an errand in the wilderness.

There are strong indications that he did have a sense of mission. In a letter of September 17, 1835, he writes, "I do not regret having left my delightful situation in the East, to come into this country." An implication of these words is that his current situation is less delightful, and in a letter of December 9, 1835, we learn why. He informs us that he had to "hire money" in order to travel to Michigan. Furthermore, his goods came to Michigan by way of Detroit, and it was six months before he was able to secure them because he did not have the money to pay the expenses.

He speaks of the cost of living, which he finds to be very expensive. The cost of a bushel of wheat, $1.25 -- corn, $.75 -- potatoes, $.50 -- butter, 37.5 cents a pound, and pork, 67.00 per hundred. Housing, he says, is as high as in New York City, and he described his living quarters, including parlor, kitchen and study without chamber -- as only 12 x 14 feet. Yet he says, "I do not regret having left my delightful situation."

These are the words of a person with a sense of mission. He was a New England man who had an errand in the wilderness, but this time it was an errand in the wilderness of a post-Awakening, post-Federalist, post-Jeffersonian, Baptist, New England man.

The words from Scripture which have been chosen for the bell honoring Jeremiah Hall are, "Praise ye the Lord," from the 106th Psalm, a Psalm which acknowledges the goodness, kindness and justice of God, manifested in history, in judgement and in mercy.

What does his faith and life mean to us today? To learn from the past does not mean to conform to the faith of our mothers and fathers, but rather to find inspiration in the mothers and fathers of our faith. Our task, then, is not to let our spirits be molded, but rather challenged by the spirit of Jeremiah Hall.

Paul Tillich once made a dedicatory address in New Harmony, Indiana, the site of one of the utopian communities to which I referred. Originally founded in 1816 by the Rappites, a millennial sect from Germany, it was called Harmony. It was purchased in 1825, and renamed New Harmony, by Robert Owen of New Lanark, Scotland, a man who was an industrialist with a socialist vision. When they dedicated the Roofless Church in New Harmony, Tillich took the names of Harmony and New Harmony as his theme, pointing out that as we move through history, we attempt to establish harmony, but those harmonies we bring to being are finally eroded, and therefore, others have to come along and establish new harmonies.
This illustrates our relationship to our founding past. To stand in their tradition is not to imitate them, but to do in and to, and for our generation what they did for theirs, namely, to attempt to establish new harmonies.

How does his life and faith challenge us? To me his lifestyle suggests to us that, however we do it, if we are to fulfill our human destiny, it is necessary that we both develop the mind through critical inquiry and engage in serious service in, and to, the human community. One must not be divorced from the other. Each should be actualized through the other. Separate the one from the other, and we are left with a headless heart, or a heartless head, and both spell disaster from humanity.

Turning to his faith stance, there is little doubt that when we consider the century in which he lived, with its buoyant expectation, he was a man of unquestioning affirmation. "Praise ye the Lord" would describe him well. We live in a different age. We certainly live in an age in which we desperately need and yearn for affirmation. But, living in the latter quarter of the 20th Century, if we are to be authentic in our faith pilgrimage, I would suggest that our faith, in responding to the ultimate, must be both an affirmation and a question.

As an affirmation, I would offer a Spencerian interpretation of "Praise ye the Lord" -- referring to John, not Herbert. "Praise ye the Lord", in the context of an academic community, would mean rejoicing in that ultimate reality which graciously undergirds the life of our world and our life, and gives unity, meaning, purpose and value to us, assuring us that the quest for truth is neither falsity nor vanity.

But, with the affirmation, there must be the question. Living in a post-holocaust world, living in a time when the media daily reminds us of the brutality that occurs throughout the world, living in a time in which the clouds are overcast by the threat of thermonuclear destruction, we cannot but be a questioning people.

Scott Gordon, in his book Welfare, Justice and Freedom, asks if it is not true that the recipient of a promise has a moral right to expect fulfillment of the expectations generated by the promise. One of the difficulties of the faith venture in the latter part of the 20th Century, in which we are both heirs and pioneers of a two thousand year old tradition, is attempting to inter-relate the ancient promises with the contemporary realities of brutality.

From this pulpit in the recent past, Johann Metz said, "We can pray for Auschwitz because they prayed in Auschwitz." Powerful words! But, if we are to understand them we must recognize that the prayers to which he referred were not always pious prayers of simple surrender, but the prayers of intense wrestling with God, the kind of prayer I heard a Jewish friend express when he suggested in a theological discussion, that today an appropriate prayer would be, "O God, give us the grace to forgive you."

We live in a time in which faith has to be tinctured by skepticism. I agree with the person who said, "Skepticism without religion is impossible. Religion without skepticism is intolerable."

So far there has been a serious omission. We have said little about this institution, which is our reason for honoring Jeremiah Hall. To focus upon this institution, let us return to the wilderness which is the setting of our story. When Jeremiah Hall came to this location in 1835, Kalamazoo was a clearing in the wilderness.

Is that not what the academic adventure is? It is always the task of making clearings in the wilderness. At least this seems to be the conviction of Morris Kline, a mathematician, who in his book Mathematics: The Loss of Certainty, published in 1981, offered the analogy of the mathematician as a homesteader who is making a clearing in the wilderness. He soon notes that just beyond the clearing there are wild beasts. So he makes a larger clearing, and a larger one. Soon he discovers that regardless how large the clearing, the beasts are always there and life is always threatened.

He says the mathematician is one who, through logic, makes a clearing in a thicket of ignorance. Yet, no matter how successful he is, sooner or later inadequacies crop up. So the task begins ever anew.

The academic venture is one that has only partial and temporary triumphs, but also only partial and temporary defeats. It is a frustrating and yet exciting and rewarding adventure, because that is the perennial nature of our task, ever clearing the wilderness, only to be frustrated because there is growth that springs before us and we have to clear again.

As we celebrate the past, and face the future through the installation of these bells, let us be one with the spirit of Jeremiah Hall. In his letter of September 17, 1835, he remarked, "Though I frequently travel twelve to fifteen miles through the woods to preach in a little log house, yet I always find it filled with attentive hearers and say, 'it is good for me to be here'."

As trustees, faculty, administrators, students, alumni, it is a moment for us to acknowledge that it is our good fortune to be here, in this particular place, at this particular time.

Therefore, may these bells ring out with sounds that bare the soul of this historic institution.
Ring out with an authority that says that we have something to say to the world, and deserve to be heard. Ideas, like sounds, fill the air and affect us though we do not see them.

Let there be silent spaces between their ringing which says that we not only want to be heard, but we desperately want to hear. At the heart of this city we want to listen to this city’s heart.

In a world of distortion and dishonesty may they ring out the news that here, on this hill, we are engaged in a restless and ceaseless quest for truth, and all are invited to participate, knowing that in our seeking we shall not find, but we shall find ourselves in our seeking.

Ring out with resonant excitement that reminds us that here we are not cloistered from the rich stream of experience, but rather our experience is enriched through the encounter of mind with world, and past with present.

Ring out to announce that there is a clearing in the wilderness. Ring out to summons us to clear the wildernesses that remain.

Ring out! Ring out! Ring out in appreciation of a meaningful past. Ring out in celebration of a fulfilling present. Ring out in anticipation of an exciting future.

Ring out! Ring out! Ring out! Ring out repeatedly to call us to resume our pilgrimage, for we are on a journey of endless beginnings.

YOU ARE THE DARDEST MAN I EVER SAH!
Titus Bronson
Delivered by Prof. Waldemar Schmichel, February 24, 1984

The individual life is a microcosm that will always constitute the principal remaining frontier for human knowledge. We may travel widely in the universe, we may come to understand the mysteries of our planet, and we may manage to have letters arrive on time, but the question of the individual, of that single entity that is embraced by the personal pronouns "I", "you", "he", and "she", will continue to confound us and run through and around our defining categories. Oh we are querulous creatures! Little less than all things can suffice to make us happy; and little more than nothing is enough to discontent us," observed Samuel Coleridge. "Hah! Thou pendulum betwixt a smile and tear," is Lord Byron's wistful refusal of a definition. In the context of a cosmic vision of life the poet of Psalm 8 stands in awe, "...what is man that thou art mindful of him and the descendant of humans that thou dost care for her?" Little less than God, in charge of all creation, a "bundle of possibilities" (H.E. Fosdick). I believe Ralph Waldo Emerson has grasped the center of this fascination with ourselves, "The universal does not attract us until housed in an individual."

Seven score and fifteen years ago (June 21, 1829) a solitary man followed an old Indian trail from Ann Arbor and chanced upon one of this areas eight prairies. According to one tradition, he spent the night by the Indian Hound in this city's central park. In the brightness of the next morning he was overcome by the beauty of the region and decided to make it his home. He built a crude hut of tamerack poles and covered it with grass. According to some sources, he was assisted in this project by local Indians. In the tradition of the times he had established squatter's rights to the surrounding property. He spent the summer of 1829 in the area, wintered with the more established settlers of the largest prairie (Prairie Ronde) under the leadership of Bazil Harrison, whose uncle (Benjamin) had signed the Declaration of Independence, whose cousin (William Henry) of Tippecanoe (1811) fame would become President in 1840 and the latter's grandson (Benjamin) would follow him in that some office in 1888. When spring came in 1830, Titus Bronson went to Ohio to bring his wife, daughter and brother-in-law to his prairie in Potawatomi Indian territory. Early in the spring of 1831 he returned in a covered wagon drawn by three teams of oxen and began to build his log house, the only of its kind in this area. He was forty-two years old.

Who was Titus Bronson and what were the factors, personal and social, that compelled his vision and motivated his action? Fifty years after he had left this region and thirty-three after his death the Kalamazoo Gazette (March 12, 1886) could run this sensational headline, "Col. Smith says Titus Bronson Stupendous Old Fraud!" It continued in a byline, "A sainted old settler,
now canonized in man's memory, was nothing but a fraud and cheat." A contrasting picture is provided by Cyrus Lovell, a contemporary lawyer, "He was just and liberal and ready always to do his share in every good work. He was public spirited and patriotic...Titus Bronson was an honest, good, and useful man."

The most frequent adjective used of Bronson is "eccentric." "His oddities," Jesse Turner, another contemporary remarks, "made others treat him with undue familiarity, which he very much disliked." He was a shrewd and deliberate city planner who could identify a superior location, move the political structure of the territory to locate in it the county seat, and persuade westward travellers to invest scarce money in what he had begun. So another set of facts can be marshalled. And yet he almost gave away his squatter's rights to a passing man for one hundred dollars and a rifle! His wife's strenuous objections, "Aunt Sally" as she would be known, squelched this foolish deed.

He was a man of pioneering vision who left secure Connecticut and his life as a seventh generation American to tame the wilderness and to subject it to the cultured impress of the human spirit. A contrasting picture, however, sees him as an egocentric fugitive burdened by his family's longevity in the populous East to make a name for himself where he would not have to compete with other names. The city he founded bore his name; when that name changed in 1836, Bronson left never to return. "Well, well, I don't know what I am about," Bronson replied to his lawyer on a specific occasion, "this matter perplexes me so." Cyrus Lovell would hardly argue with that stringent self-assessment, for shortly after it Bronson exasperated him so fully that he was heard swearing at him "like all possessed."

How does one encompass the life of such a bewildering man and brillet his various dimensions on a common denominator? How do we conclude: Here is the center of the man form whose vantage point his various activities, attitudes and expressions receive their coherence and interpretation? Or do we have before us a man of parts, of unresolved contradictions, of irreconcilable tensions which help explain the fact of his social and economic frustrations?

Let me offer three perspectives on Titus Bronson, the man and his work, and a fourth one that wishes to pull this life together toward some tentative unity. They are: the city planner, the moralist, the individualist and the beginner of things.

Bronson left Connecticut for Ohio with some members of his family as part of a general westward movement of the time. For the next ten years he moved regularly between parts of Ohio and Michigan, once returning to Middlebury, Connecticut, to get married (New Year's Day, 1827). His major accomplishment during this decade was the acquisition of a high yielding strain of potatoes which he would plant for a season or two, sell and then move on. Had he ever decided to remain in a particular location and devote his energies to the growth and marketing of his potatoes, he could have acquired considerable wealth. Instead, he acquired a name. He was known as "Potatose Bronson."

He do not know what caused him to be itinerant during these years. A restless nature has always to be considered as does perhaps the suitability of a particular location. But when he came to Kalamazoo, two developments had preceded him. First, the desirable lands to the south of Michigan had for the most part been claimed and settlers and land speculators were prepared to consider the mosquito infested tracts in Michigan. Second, a geographical survey of this area was just being completed making the sale and purchase of land a recordable act.

It is not likely that the beauty of this region by itself would enthrall Bronson to give up his wandering ways. But it is likely that a wife and child and forty years of living demanded steadiness. He chose the location of his settlement with considerable foresight. Several Indian trails converged here, fur traders for some time had crossed the river at this point, the river itself was large enough to be a means of transport and a source for power. With his brother-in-law he bought 160 acres of what is now downtown Kalamazoo at one dollar an acre. For unknown reasons he entered his share of the property in his wife's name. What is now Rose Street was the dividing line between the two properties, with the Bronsons owning the east side of the tract. He plotted his land and went about cajoling and entreating travellers to settle in his town, Bronson. He was quite successful. By the end of 1831, fifteen families had become settlers which included a doctor, a lawyer, a store and tavern owner.

Of particular significance for this new enterprise was the appointment of Bronson as county seat (May 12, 1831) which was sold more land than any other office anywhere in the country for public use. He has been lavishly praised for this act as well as vilely denounced. It is true that most of this public land came from the tract owned by his brother-in-law! When long-held perceptions that Bronson's personal generosity had made this land available came to clash with the facts, he was blamed for what people thought he had done and for the loss of an attributed virtue.

In 1834, in recognition of population shifts the Federal land office moved from White Pigeon, close to the Indiana border, to Bronson (May 2, 1834) and a year later followed its newspaper which changed its name to the Kalamazoo Gazette in 1837. An indication of Titus' good judgment and/or luck are the statistics from the land office from 1836 which in that year sold more land than any other office anywhere in the country.

The throngs of people to buy land provided an economic boost to settlers, Indians and land speculators alike. Titus was appointed a judge, became a member of the community's first board of education, and the first court session was held in a
own a log stable owned by Titus. "It took one day to clean out the court house and a week to try the case. It was about a horse trade."

It appears that Titus Bronson should have been regarded a pillar of the community to whom respectful citizens tip their hats, a beloved founding father who occupied an honored spot in the collective heart of this area. But there is another side to all of that.

A second perspective on our founder discloses him as a severe moralist who opposed many of the practices of the frontier Hollywood has loved. He was "a man bitter in his denunciation of those who drank liquor or used tobacco," lawyer Lovell informs us again. Judge E.L. Brown recalls that Titus was a man "of strong prejudices and perhaps bigotry." An Ann Arbor resident reluctantly concludes, "Somehow he was not esteemed; he was not popular." When eating pickles he obviously was relishing, he inquired how they had been prepared. When he was told that one of the ingredients had been a certain amount of whiskey, he leaped to his feet, ran out of the house, exclaiming, "Woman! Woman! I have been eating a horrible poison!"

When a still was built up the river, Bronson denounced and ridiculed that action. The owner retaliated by building a boat for trading along the river and painted across its stern "Titus Bronson." But for once providence intervened on behalf of the crusader, and the boat mysteriously disappeared.

But Bronson's passion for what he perceived to be wrong was broader. He detested politicians and their sharp practices and told them so. He opposed the dishonesty and exploitative business of land speculators and told them so. He was often in court and almost always lost. He told the judges that they were wrong, and he appealed, and he lost again.

The general conduct and demeanor of Titus left him vulnerable to ridicule. He was a very thin man, very dark and had a perpetual grin on his face. "He had a quick abrupt way of talking, often repeating a word or phrase two or three times..." (E.L. Brown). His manner of dress even by pioneer standards was "slovenly." "Although he pretended to shave," a former neighbor remembers, "his face usually showed stubble at harvest time...He walked by fits and starts, would sometimes stop suddenly, take off his coat and start on a run, and ere he had gone far would stop and put on his coat again" (H. Little).

But despite all of this most observers are emphatic that there was an honest man whose word could be trusted and whose house was always open to the traveller. He had a good relationship with the neighboring Indians as well as the trappers. His daughter recalled that as a young girl she spent a whole day with the family of a local Indian chief. When she was brought home at night, she was festively dressed like a young Indian. Lawyer Lovell remembered that during the Indian uprising led by chief Black Hawk in 1832, Titus acted decisively and selflessly. Rumors had spread that Fort Dearborn (now Chicago) had fallen and that hostile Indian tribes were headed into this area to continue their objection to white expansionism. "He furnished me his horse, saddle, and bridle, and powder-horn, ball-pouch, balls and a rifle, and directed me to go and see what the matter was with Black Hawk..." Lovell said of Bronson.

Indifferent appearance and careless actions can easily invite the conclusion that Titus was a kind of Pecos Bill of television's Gunsmoke, a man of untutored habits whose earthy intelligence is frequently at variance with the ways of cultured thought and practice. Neighbor Little offers an immediate corrective. "He read many books and was possessed of an excellent memory," Little observed, "and he knew a great deal about many things." Thus whatever stereotype Titus Bronson may invite, it will have to be tempered by an awareness that he was not ignorant of the human wisdom of others.

In a third perspective I would like to look at Bronson as an individualist, as someone who emphatically acts as though he cannot be wrong and to whom others will look for the necessary initiative. Strikingly the following examples derive from the court room. Two years after he had founded the city and named it after himself, Bronson was accused of having stolen a tree, a cherry tree! Someone else had cut it down and Bronson apparently knowing that fact took its wood for himself. A jury of six found him guilty, fined him $4.62 for the cost of the tree and $10.25 court expenses. Two years later, in his capacity as justice of the peace, he forcibly seized two cattle for an unpaid court judgment he had imposed. He was sued for trespassing, lost the case, was fined restitution and court costs.

Twice when he was expected to be a witness in a case, he left the court room and could nowhere be located. An oft repeated incident has Bronson become so disgruntled with certain court proceedings that he began whittling on a cane, then absent-mindedly on a book, and finally on a window sash. It is then that lawyer Lovell exploded, "Bronson, you are the darnest man I ever saw!"

On another occasion he was asked to present his court docket, a list of cases he had tried, to a presiding judge. When the latter expressed amazement at the nature of this docket, Bronson took it out of his hand, opened the stove and threw it into the flames. "Well, well," said he, "if I can't keep a docket, I can raise potatoes."

In all of this it became increasingly apparent that the community he had founded had outgrown him and at least among its leading citizens was beginning to develop an aversion to this eccentric man. Secretly the Legislative Council of the
Territory was petitioned and agreed to apply the Indian name "Kalamazoo" to the township and the city as well, a name that the county had carried already (March 31, 1836). We may readily surmise that Bronson was hurt by this action. A sensitive acquaintance (J. Earle of Galesburg) asked him how he was. "Pretty well, pretty well," he responded, "but it's getting too thickly settled here for me. Too thick, too thick -- too many men around." Taking off his coat he continued, "I can't stand it. I shall have to go farther west where there is more room."

That he did just a few months after the name change and five years after he had founded the village. He first went to northwestern Illinois, then to Davenport, Iowa, where he is counted among the founders of that city. Apparently there he owned a large farm but somehow he was swindled out of its title. Shortly thereafter his wife died and he went back to Illinois to live with one of his two daughters. With money borrowed from that daughter he went back to Connecticut and died there on January 6, 1853. He was sixty-four. A simple tombstone reads, "A Western Pioneer Returned to Sleep With His Fathers."

Let me offer this concluding perspective on Titus Bronson. To call him eccentric, a frontiersman, an individualist would, of course, capture significant elements of his personality and life. What impresses me as a consistent pattern for him, however, is the fact that Titus was good at beginnings, but he seems never to have learned to stay with something and to see it through to maturity. Historians agree that if he had stayed with his potato business, or in this community or in Davenport, he would have realized considerable wealth and a secure standing in a given region's history. But Bronson aborted his own success or failed to provide for its continuity in a series of actions that cry out for interpretation. It seems that Bronson heard a warning that the task to which he had given himself was beginning to outgrow him. For to be able to go beyond beginnings one realizes how that which one has begun changes and needs to change. And with this changing task, I myself become a changing and changed person. The growth of the town he had founded challenged him to grow with it. Titus, however, refused that challenge and instead took "the town" to court again and again about issues of maturity. He lost the first time and again by appeal, and he discovered that the two Bronsons, the man and the town, were refusing each other. The first Bronson chose to remain a man of beginnings, the frontiersman of infancy settlements. The town Bronson chose to become Kalamazoo and with it an identity away from the simplicity and romanticism of the beginning to the involved interaction of social life.

But then consider the consequences for us had that separation not taken place. We would now be living in Bronson, and you would be attending Bronson College and navigating your way around the "B" Plan. Perhaps no one would then have considered it necessary to insist, "Yes, there really is a Bronson!" I surmise, however, that Titus would have liked this ubiquity of his name and especially to have it inscribed on a bell. He may, however, have considered it a slight that his bell is only the third largest in the company of eight.
HE HATH DONE MARVELOUS THINGS
Thomas W. Merrill

Delivered by Thomas Koshy, March 2, 1984

Good morning.

Sometimes in the near future we hope to hear upon our fair arcadian hill a chorus of bronze ringing their messages. I speak of course of the bells. Among the bells is a cast bearing the name of Thomas Merrill.

The reverend Thomas Merrill was born, raised, and educated in post-Revolutionary War New England. His father was a soldier in that war and the Rev. Merrill seems to have acquired some of the stereotypic characteristics of the revolutionary pioneer; diligence, strength, fortitude, and a tendency to not take "no" for an answer. It appears that early in his adulthood he discovered and embraced the tenants of the Baptist faith and, having been denied a request to preach overseas, turned to the uncivilized wilderness. Thomas Merrill arrived in the Michigan Territory in 1829 with the intentions of preaching God’s Word and starting an educational institution based on his recently discovered Baptist principles. His first attempt was made in the Village of Ann Arbor where the first Michigan and Huron Institute was opened and closed shortly thereafter for various and sundry political reasons. As I mentioned, the revolutionary spirit would not let Merrill be stopped by only one obstacle. He instead turned west to find a more acceptable location for his school. On his journeys he both met and passed by the eccentric Titus Bronson having decided that the town of Bronson was not yet well enough developed for his purposes. Fortunately the Rev. Merrill later met Caleb Eldred and with his help chartered, in the now acceptable town of Bronson, the second and final Michigan and Huron Institute which has since evolved and grown into Kalamazoo College. Thus he acquired the honor of being one of the co-founders of ‘K’ and gained the privilege of having his name cast in a bell 150 years later.

While it is right and good to honor this man as we have done, I prefer to conduct a celebration of this bell by commenting on the words inscribed on it. I unfortunately find it difficult to relate to the personality and motivations of a man who lived in a world so radically different from ours and who founded an institution that bore little resemblance to our Kalamazoo. Fortunately, I find it marvelously easy to relate to the words found below the name of Thomas Merrill. Those words read “He hath done marvelous things.”

Your presence in Chapel today hopefully makes some statement about your beliefs in a spirituality and in some deity greater than ourselves. My presence in Chapel today is to ask a question and hopefully provide a forum for each of you to answer that question.
My question is simply "Why? Why are you here?" Now I am not asking the philosophical "Why am I here? Why do I exist?" I'm asking you: Why are you here...in Stetson Chapel...today. Why are you in these four walls right here and now? Are you here to alleviate some personal guilt for some religious indiscretion? Simply because you always go to Chapel? Perhaps to hear the views and opinions of a possibly perceptive, intelligent and provocative person? However, as I said before, your presence here demonstrates some belief in a god. Since such is the case I modify my question to a rather risque' approach and ask "Why do you believe in a god?"

I ask this because I want each and every one of you to carefully analyze and answer that question for yourselves. Until you have truly convinced yourselves that a deity of sorts exists you are not truly drawing all that these celebrations at Chapel have to offer.

Perhaps my boldness in asking "Why do you believe in a god" is evidence of my having spent too much time in academia. We as students, educators, and professionals find ourselves in a very inquiring atmosphere. In such an environment, in higher education, we are taught to scrutinize, analyze, publicize, verbalize, rationalize and pick to little bitty pieces an idea or concept until we are convinced of its validity. However when religion falls under such examination, it has a tendency to lose its credibility. Religion rarely holds up under intense interrogation. But it doesn't have to.

For example: the stereotype of a scientist is quite often that of an atheistic, or at least agnostic, super analytical entity that will believe in nothing unless provable. I consider myself a budding scientist. I have met several scientists, and I can safely say that the stereotype is in error. The scientists I have met are among the most spiritual of individuals that I know. They may not be overtly religious but are certainly spiritual. The reason? Simply because they have chosen a system and studied it to the limits of human ability. They have reached a point where they simply have to take a step back and in utter awe say "Oh my God". I have a personal fixation with living systems, the opposable thumb, gene expression, things of the sort. Yet here is where my ministry could fail for it would mean nothing to you if I started raving about the pyruvate dehydrogenase complex with its molecular weight of six million, its seventy-two subunits, and its swinging arms with which it catalyzes the conversion of pyruvate to carbon dioxide and acetyl Co-A as it cruises through every living cell in our bodies.

Instead I take a step backwards and say to you that I have found things in my life that convince me of my belief in a god. Now go find yours.

I repeat. Religion more often that not loses its potency once exposed to analytical critique. But it doesn't have to. Religion or one's convictions concerning religion can become strengthened by such scrutiny; not by the answers we find, but by the answers we can't find.

So, I encourage you to be analytical concerning your god. Succumb to the tendencies to scrutinize. Ask "Why?" We all know of the child who continually asks "why? why? why?" and ultimately the only answer that will shut up the persistent kid is an exasperated "Because!" Well, he both the questioner and answerer for a while. Find something which fascinates you and keep at until you're at a loss. And then you are left with only one answer...God. Perhaps you can find God in that which marvels you.

There is a second reason besides residing in academia to need to confirm the existence of a god. That reason is that we are human beings; and with that element of humanity comes a goodly share of skepticism and doubt. Perhaps what I am doing is outlining a forum by which such doubts can be allayed. I am not trying to prove that God exists. That is for you to do on a personal level. I am trying to provoke you into spending some time on constructing or reconstructing that proof for yourselves. I want you to approach these services in Stetson with a conscious acknowledgement that something greater than us exists.

I makes little difference to me what your conception of this deity is. It concerns me not. Your god can be Allah or Jehovah or Zeus or Kali or the Great Pumpkin for all I care. Just find God. Conciously find God for you. Once you find God for you then you can find God in this building; at which point faith takes over and a Chapel service can be a more fulfilling experience of spirituality.

Yes, I said faith and spirituality. That may seem odd after I've spent this time talking about proofs and analysis. But what purpose does Friday Chapel serve other than as a forum for the expression of our faith and spirituality? Without faith, God cannot exist. What I've hoped to do is to get you to remind yourself why your faith and spirituality exists. I want you to find the point where human capabilities and answers fail. Find the point where they just don't work. Find that point and you have found the beginnings of your faith and spirituality. Recognize those beginnings and you are far better prepared to walk away from chapel with your spirituality enhanced or stirred by self-proclaimed pundit who feels that he has something to say.

Find your god. Find some inexplicable element of your life and follow it to God. Remind yourself why your believe in a god. Answer my question. Why do you believe in a god.
With my fixation for living things the answer to that question for myself lies inscribed on the Thomas Merrill bell. "He hath done marvelous things" and maybe some of you can find your answers in the same Psalm.

I may have committed a grave error and perhaps disappointed some people in speaking on the Psalm and not the Reverend Merrill. However, let us not forget the purposes of these bronze testaments to our College’s past. They pay tribute to the Founders, this is true, but they are also to serve to call the members of our local society to special events and celebrations; among them Friday Chapel.

For myself one of these bells is going to ring out the special message that will remind me of why I come to Chapel and why my belief in God exists. It will ring out "He has done marvelous things."

Thank you.

GOD IS OUR REFUGE AND OUR STRENGTH
Caleb Eldred
Delivered by President David W. Breneman, March 5, 1984

I think that one of the tremendous surprises and delights of this winter term has been the many unexpected benefits that have accrued to this campus from the Kalamazoo Bell project. First, I think it is clear that this project has captured the imagination of people on campus and throughout the community. As someone remarked, this is just a quirky enough project that it seems to have something in it for everyone. We’ve also discovered, to our delight, that the project appears to be newsworthy. What else can you say when a simple unloading of a group of bells winds up as front page news in the Kalamazoo Gazette? And when we doffed the veil on the Titus Bronson Bell at the library a few weeks ago, we had television coverage of that event. So obviously it is a newsworthy and interesting item. Looking ahead to the festival on June 2nd I think we also have a tremendous celebration and party to offer to this community, again very much with the Bells at the center of it.

But perhaps at least to me the most fortuitous decision involving this Bell project that was made was the decision to name each bell after an important figure in the College’s history, which gave rise to the Chapel series that we’ve been going through this winter term. And in a way I’m very sad to see those end, although I’m equally glad to see my time on this podium come and go. But in a way that I’m not sure any of us foresaw at the time the bells were named, the naming of these eight bells has given us yet another opportunity as a community to explore our past together and to continue the investigation and the look at our roots that was begun during the Sesquicentennial celebration last year.

My figure, my bell, is the Caleb Eldred Bell, the tenor bell. Caleb Eldred and Thomas Merrill are known as the founders of this College. As I began to think about this talk I asked myself what manner of men were these, Caleb Eldred and Thomas Merrill? What sort of men founded this College? What motivated them? What were the circumstances in which they worked, and perhaps most importantly, what lessons can we draw from a look at their lives?

A little investigation made it clear that the moving force -- the driving force -- behind this College, the idea for it really came from Thomas Merrill. He was clearly the visionary. He was a Baptist minister, serving in this territory on assignment from the American Baptist Home Mission Society and was appointed to this territory in 1830 and he began immediately to seek a charter for a college that he named, or would have named, the Michigan and Huron Institute. His first effort was in 1830 and the effort failed -- he was not able to convince the legislative council in the territory to enact the charter. He
made several other efforts and all of them failed. He simply had not been able to get this institution launched. At that point, enter in Judge Caleb Eldred.

The Centennial History of the College notes as following:

Having returned to western Michigan the following summer or fall, Merrill fell in with the man who deserves to be called the co-founder of Kalamazoo College, Judge Caleb Eldred of Climax. It was indeed a fortunate meeting. "The practical wisdom, the generous liberality, and the intelligent Christian citizenship of Caleb Eldred," wrote Samuel Haskell, "stood waiting to ally themselves with the high aims and the unconquerable tenacity of Thomas W. Merrill."

I'll speak in a moment about the events leading up to the founding of the College, but we should note at this point that Eldred then went on to serve as first president of the board of trustees of the College for a period in excess of thirty years; he was our first board chairman, and as such began a long tradition of service to the College as a trustee. I have come to see the theme of my talk to be a reflection on his life as a tribute to faithful trusteeship which seems to me to be a very fitting theme for this final presentation.

Let me give you a quick outline of the central events in Eldred's life. The sources I've had, by the way, are a book compiled by a descendant of Eldred's, Stephen Clude Eldred, on Judge Caleb Eldred and his descendants that we have in our library (it is undated, alas, or at least I could not find the date when the book was compiled, but it appears to be fairly recent), and a number of news clippings we have in the library's archives about Caleb Eldred. I also relied on the Centennial History which I've had an opportunity to go back and read.

In a nutshell, Eldred was born in Vermont in 1781 of parents of English ancestry. He was educated in the local school in Vermont but was largely self-taught beyond the early grades. Apparently he did a good enough job of it to acquire as his first job in Vermont service as a schoolteacher in his late teens and early twenties. In 1802 he married and moved from Vermont to Otsego County, New York where he dropped his teaching and became a farmer, serving as a Justice of the Peace and also as a state legislator. In an active life in the New York area, he was among other things influential in securing the election of Martin Van Buren to the United States Senate and was apparently a significant and successful advocate for the construction of the Erie Canal.

Finally, in the 1820's ill health forced him to quit farming. He became a cattle buyer, and the histories say that he apparently drove the first herd of cattle from New York City to Philadelphia. Somehow I have a hard time envisioning this action, having ridden the Metroliner between those cities many times, but apparently that was the first trail drive between those two cities. It may not have been successful. That may have prompted him to turn his attention to Michigan, which he visited for the first time in the summer of 1830.

Next occurs what I think is the most remarkable event in the man's life. In 1831, at age fifty, he packed up his family and moved to Michigan, initially to Comstock and then about three years later to Climax where he died in 1876, at the age of ninety-five. I've pondered a lot about what it must have meant to uproot oneself and one's family at age fifty from New York where he'd had a lengthy stay -- nearly thirty years -- to pack up and to come out here to what was clearly at that time simply uninvestigated, undiscovered, and unexplored territory, Michigan territory. But that is what he did and I don't know how many of us at age fifty would have an equal degree of either courage, wisdom or folly to undertake such a move, but I think that is a significant event.

Once here he became an active public figure, serving as the first postmaster of both Comstock and Climax. He was elected to the territorial legislature in 1835-36, and then was appointed a side judge, and as an aside, if anybody can tell me what a side judge is, I'd be happy to learn about it; everything refers to him in that way and I was not able to find out precisely what it means. But he was appointed a side judge soon after arriving in Michigan and served in that capacity throughout his career. He became, as the land and the area developed in the latter part of the 19th century, a wealthy landowner, of whom it was said, "He was never at a loss for a field of usefulness in which to expand his energy. He seemed to find them ready to his hand wherever he might be, cooperating with friends and neighbors to improve his environment and his society in all of its industrial, moral, educational and religious enterprises." He was also a member of the Baptist Church for fifty-five years and helped to bring about the first Baptist church to Kalamazoo County, and was a constant and faithful attendant. Such are the main outlines of his life.

A few words now about his role in founding this College. As I mentioned earlier, Thomas Merrill had failed in several attempts to secure a charter for his Michigan and Huron Institute. Finally in late 1832 or early 1833, Merrill joined forces with Caleb Eldred and got Eldred involved in the case. Early in January of 1833, Eldred rode on horseback from Kalamazoo to Detroit, and I hope the weather was better than it was this January for that 140 mile ride. He rode there to secure passage of the charter which was passed by the council in January of 1833. The Governor of the time, George B. Porter, delayed signing of the charter for three months, but finally did so on April 22, 1833, which is the date we honor as Founder's Day.
It is clear from the writings and description of this event that Eldred was a very important figure in this achievement, and it is unclear whether, if this connection had been made with San Bernardino, California, noting that we had overlooked yet another group of Eldreda who had attended the College. So it is clearly a family whose fortune is inexorably intertwined with this institution, and thus his impact lives to today.

What are the lessons that we may now draw from this life of Caleb Eldred? It seems to me first that one has to note his courage in striking out into new and virtually unexplored territory in 1830 at the age of fifty. That is in my view of the man the most striking event of his ninety-five years. Secondly, we should note his dedication to public service, including higher education, and his foresight in starting a college in a territory that in 1830 had fewer than 32,000 inhabitants, in a village that in 1833 numbered only one hundred residents. Some of us worry about development problems and the growth of the institution today, but it boggles the mind to think of the chutzpah and courage it must have taken to launch an institution of higher education in a prairie outpost with such a small, small population. We should also note his many years of service as a trustee of the College, and the material support that he provided during those early years. One also has to note or assume a tremendous faith that he obviously had in higher education in an era when its utility was questioned by many.

Even today we have those who question the utility of a liberal arts education. It strikes me that questions of that sort would have been raised with even greater poignancy in 1833 in this part of the country. This is an evidence of faith in higher education that I think we've seen manifest in one way or another in almost all of the Bell figures that we've discussed this term. I conclude that we find in the life of Caleb Eldred a model of the unselfish and dedicated service that we've come to expect from trustees without remuneration on behalf of all of us, students, faculty and staff, and who are centrally concerned with the College.

Let me say a few words about contemporary trusteeship in this light. I don't know how many students really even think much about our College trustees; they are perhaps distant figures that students have little contact with and I suspect the function of trustees may be something that is either unclear or in doubt in the minds of many students, and even possibly in the minds of many faculty and others of you in the room. I think its worth noting that first, trusteeship involves volunteer service -- trustees are very busy people who make time to serve without compensation an institution that they care about deeply. They provide financial support directly and indirectly through their work on capital campaigns and on their service to development committees and the development effort generally.
They provide policy direction to the institution and they appoint the president, arguably the most important personnel decision that faces any campus. They represent the College furthermore in the many communities of which we are a part.

So in numerous ways trustees have an important role, a vital role to the College, but they are also human and hence not perfect. On occasion they may irritate faculty, staff or students, but it seems to me the lesson of Caleb Eldred's life is that this College would not have even come into existence had he not been a part of the process, just as I think we could not exist now without our trustees and the support they give us. It is a vital role, and I take the central message of Caleb's life to be a highlighting of that role.

Caleb Eldred's life was not flashy or dramatic. I could not find humorous events, such as Wally Schmeichel was able to find in the life of Titus Bronson. He was not flashy, his life was not of epic-making proportions, but he clearly served this College and his fellow men and women well. Without the Caleb Eldreds the world would be a far poorer place, and it is altogether fitting and proper that we honor him and in his name, all of our trustees, past and present, who are so essential to the vitality and well-being of this fine institution.