

# **The Franklin Institute**

*Illinois' First Medical School*

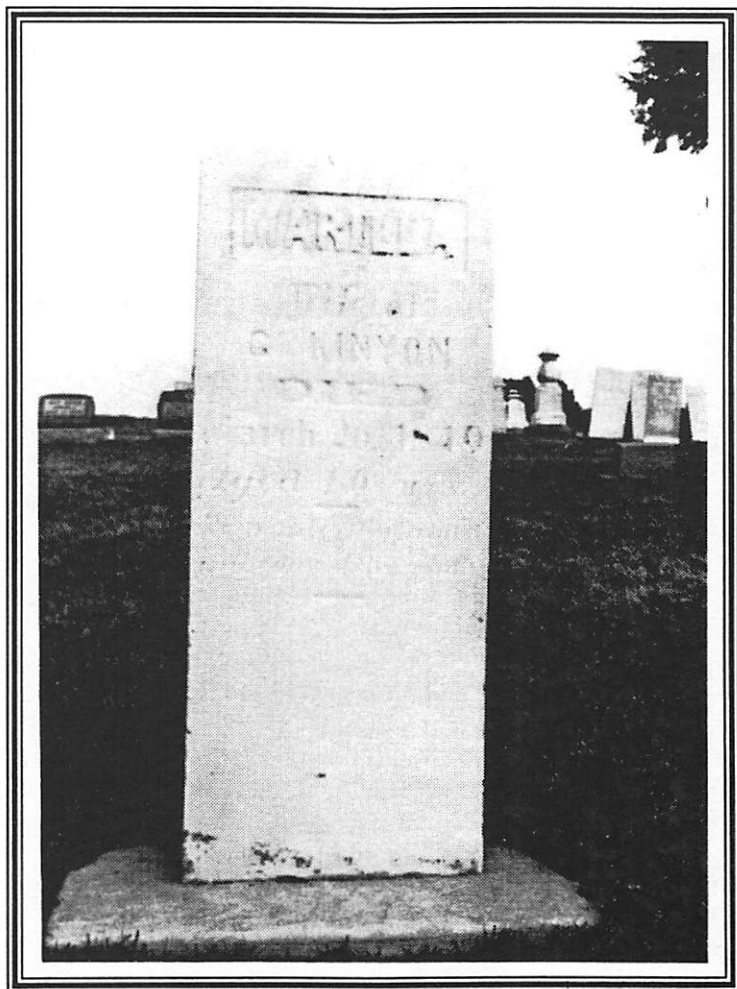


photo by the author

**Marilla Kinyon's Tombstone**  
**The Ohio Grove Cemetery**

*"Remember Thy Creator in the Days of Thy Youth"*

# The Franklin Institute

*Illinois' First Medical School*

*being also*

**A History of Resurrection and a Primer on the  
Art of Grave Robbing**

Rodney B. Nelson, III, M.D., F.A.C.P.

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## *Preface*

Growing up on Army Trail Road<sup>1</sup> in Kane County, Northern Illinois, I searched for heroes. Small boys have unlimited imagination, but a narrow field of vision—my search began close to home. Of course, I knew only fragments of the history of the old road I lived on. Local legend had it that one of my purported distant ancestors, General Winfield Scott, created the “Army Trail” with the wheels of his munitions wagons. He had led a host of U.S. Army Regulars west to subdue the ferocious Black Hawk in 1832. Every August 4th, the anniversary of their passage in front of my house, I watched for their ghosts tramping by, and I almost thought I heard the creak of their caissons on occasion.

After my callow years, I learned that Winfield Scott had only brought misery and death to Northern Illinois in the form of cholera. Scott had not even accompanied the poor wretches who had straggled past my front door. He had gone to the front via an indirect but more comfortable route. I rode my bicycle down Army Trail a few miles east to where an isolated stand of tall pines were planted on the graves of soldiers who had died of cholera in route.

As I grew older and more sophisticated (I thought), I still looked for my heroes in the region of my birth. Abraham Lincoln also fought Black Hawk, and what Illinois boy does not revere Abe? Then I discovered U.S. Grant. Though my school texts belittled his ability, and unfavorably contrasted his rude heritage with that of the aristocratic Lee, I prize Grant in no small part because he was an ordinary citizen living in obscurity in a Northern Illinois town (Galena) when he answered his call to greatness.

When I went to medical school in Chicago I might have adopted a doctor hero from Boston or Philadelphia, like one of the Warrens or Benjamin Rush. Or one of Chicago's own could have served me well, such as Billings, Hektoen, Herrick, Senn, or Foley. Worthy as these men are, how could a Midwestern neophyte Aescalopian not settle on William Beaumont?<sup>2</sup> True, he was born in Connecticut, but Beaumont won his fame through brilliant investigations performed in total

scientific isolation at Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin, during the year preceding the Black Hawk War.

After I had practiced medicine in the Fox Valley of Illinois for almost twenty years, I began to wonder about my local professional predecessors. Surely there had been good people right here in this now still rural valley who struggled mightily with the problems of their times, but who, unlike Grant or Beaumont, never had an opportunity to achieve immortality. For example, who could not admire the noble army nurse, Reverend Augustus Conant of Geneva, who died at the Battle of Stone's River in 1863?<sup>3</sup>

I did not have to look very long to discover two additional extraordinary Fox Valley medical men: Doctors George Washington Richards and Nichols Hard. They both died young and heroically in the line of their duty. Of the two, Nichols Hard was perhaps the more gifted innovator, but he succumbed to cholera at the age of 33. Dr. Richards died at 53 from lingering effects of a gunshot wound received in the course of an armed skirmish precipitated by the grave robbing, or "resurrection" of young Marilla Kinyon.

Some aspects of this so called "Richards' Riot" of 1849 are locally known today. The riot itself, while singular in local history, was one of several of its genre in American medical history. The sesquicentennial (1992) of the establishment of The Franklin Medical Institute, Illinois' first medical school, is upon us. Dr. Richards, the school's founder, deserves to be elevated to a higher historical standing than he now enjoys. If Richards is not remembered on the same lofty plane with Beaumont, Drake, McDowell, and Nathan Smith Davis among the medical immortals of the pioneer west, it is only because of the unlucky bullet that struck him on his front porch in St. Charles, Illinois, on April 19th, 1849.

Dr. Richards' image is tarnished by his association with body snatching. Yet all his contemporaries should be tarred with the same sordid brush. Grave robbing was the necessary evil that permitted men like Ephraim McDowell to gain his knowledge of anatomy that, in turn, permitted the first ovariectomy,<sup>4</sup> and then allowed him to demonstrate his pioneering technic to the next generation of physicians. Working without anesthesia, McDowell, Nichols Hard, and other frontier surgeons had no time to fumble. Life itself hung upon a quick, sure incision and instant localization of key structures.<sup>5</sup> Even Nathan Smith Davis, founder of the AMA in 1849, admitted that his anatomic materials had been acquired "...with my own hands."<sup>6</sup> Grave robbing was a basic clinical skill in 1849.

Examine briefly the case of Dr. Thomas Sewall. Dr. Sewall was indicted for body snatching the remains on one Sally Andrews (among others) of Ipswich Massachusetts. (The details of this affair are given as *The Ipswich Incident* later in this book.) Although defended by none other than Daniel Webster, Dr. Sewall

was convicted and fined over \$800.<sup>7</sup>

Lucky to have been only fined and not shot, Sewall left Massachusetts for Washington, D.C., at the invitation of Webster. There Sewall founded the Columbian Medical College in 1825, and served as its dean for 19 years. Sewall was the first to demonstrate the appearance of the gastric mucosa in alcoholics,<sup>8</sup> and through this interest was instrumental in granting an honorary M.D. degree to William Beaumont. Plus, Sewall was physician to three Presidents of the United States. There, but for misfortune, might have gone Dr. George Washington Richards.

This little book is presented with the aspiration of resurrecting the image and memory of Dr. Richards, Dr. Hard, and their co-workers. By understanding the role of grave robbing in 19th century medical progress, the modern reader will forgive the darker side of some of Richards' activities, and view him instead as the committed and courageous pioneer that he was. I have included verbatim extracts from several primary and secondary sources (fragmentary as these are), because these sources are not widely available.

Anyone with an interest in medical history in Northern Illinois owes a leviathan debt to Dr. George H. Weaver. His *Beginnings of Medical Education in and Near Chicago* is a wonderful compendium of historical and biographical material.<sup>9</sup> Weaver painstakingly uncovered and published many letters, including the only known surviving ones of Dr. G.W. Richards. Otto Juettner's book, *Daniel Drake and His Followers*, contains an illuminating chapter on "resurrection" that is reproduced here almost in total.<sup>10</sup> Frederick Waite wrote voluminously on the subject of grave robbing, the early New England country medical schools, and their faculties.<sup>11</sup> Northern Illinois county histories and contemporary newspaper files were consulted. Special mention should be made of the vivid accounts by Henry Boies and by S.W. Durant (reproduced here as appendices), as these form the basis of almost all subsequent derivative descriptions of the "Richards' Riot".

I searched the county court houses of both Kane and DeKalb Counties. In DeKalb I was treated courteously and was helped to the discovery of the record of Dr. Richards' and Dr. Hard's suit against a Dr. Flynn for tuition owed. I have been unable to learn more about the shadowy Flynn. The record of the "true bill" indicting Dr. Richards for the theft of Marilla Kinyon's remains was located.

Many aspects of this project have frustrated. Where are Rood and Richards buried? This is a particularly ironic enigma. These two men, martyrs to the cause of medical science, do not deserve to sleep in unhallowed ground, though many may believe it just. Where, exactly, was the Franklin Institute? The testimony seems divided. Did Dr. Richards know John Daggett, Illinois' other famous grave robber? Circumstantial evidence suggests he did. These are but a few of the unanswered questions.

*A Tour to the Sites*

I urge any disciple of Aesculapius, professional or amateur, who visits the central Fox River Valley of Illinois to view the scenes of events of 150 years ago. The maps on pages 40 and 41 will help. From Chicago, come west on Army Trail Road through historic Wayne, and on to Route 25 south, which becomes Fifth Avenue in St. Charles. (The tour can be done by bicycle, starting at the point where Army Trail hits the Fox River, but only with very strong legs.) Drive past the home of Dr. Richards on Illinois Street just east of Fifth Avenue, and then past the limestone outcropping three and half blocks south on the east side of Fifth Avenue, where Marilla was hidden. Then take Main Street (Route 64) west, noting Dr. Dewolf's house on the southwest corner of Fifth Avenue and Main (now, of all things, a funeral home!). Notice Judge Barry's office and the old concert hall (now an office supply store) at Third and Main. Stop at First Avenue and Main to view the old limestone building on the northeast corner that was once (quite possibly) the Franklin Institute. Proceed across the Fox River to Third Street, and then two blocks south to where the Howard House still stands, and where the invading rioters bivouacked.

Now head west on the old plank road (= Main Street = Route #64) to the fork where Campton Hills Road intersects, and bear left. Proceed west on Campton Hills (once a part of the original St. Charles-Sycamore Road) to Garfield Road. Turn left and proceed a few hundred yards to visit the Garfield Tavern, also where Marilla was briefly hidden in a hay stack. The cemetery across the road was probably not unknown to Dr. Richards. After visiting the Garfield Tavern (now an extraordinary 1850's museum open to the public), again continue west on Campton Hills Road. You will come to Anderson Road, where Campton Hills Road now (and always) comes to a dead end. Turn right and proceed north to Route #64. Modern Route #64 henceforth west roughly approximates the old State Road that ran to Sycamore. Proceed west on 64 past County Line Road.

Now you are in DeKalb County. Along here the old State Road still exists just north of the old railroad (now the Great Western Bike Trail, open between St. Charles and Sycamore). You must make the first right (Larson Road) past County Line Road and proceed north on the gravel road about a quarter mile to old State Road. Heading west again on the Old State Road, you will once again be on the actual route of the body snatchers.

After a mile or so you will come to Lovell's Tavern (now a private residence), where the theft of Marilla was indirectly discovered. Note the architectural similarity to Garfield's Tavern. Though the body snatchers were detected on a raid to Sycamore itself, they probably used the same route as far as Lovell's Tavern

during the theft of Marilla a few days earlier. Roads skirted groves and did not traverse them until late in the 19th century. Proceed west to Lovell Road and turn south, crossing Route 64. Continue south (where all the land to your left once was owned by James Lovell) to the first road heading west. (Lovell Road ended here in 1849, as this was the northern edge of Ohio Grove.) Turn right here onto Quigley Road, and a half mile or so down the road, bear left at the fork on Bethany Road. Soon you will cross over Kishwaukee Creek. Proceed to Airport Road and turn left to head south.

As you come over the hill, look to the southwest and you will see on the rise the Ohio Grove Cemetery. On your left note the fine old brick house that was once the Gandy homestead. At Barber Green Road, turn right and proceed up the rise to the cemetery. When the author first visited the cemetery a few years ago, Marilla's limestone marker, located next to her father's (David Churchill) in the western section of the cemetery about half way to the back, was teetering precariously forward. It has since been securely cemented in a vertical position.

Note as you survey the cemetery that many of the characters in the story you are about to read rest here. Churchill, Lovell, Kinyon, and Joslyn are a few of the names. Note, too, that Marilla's name is spelled *Kinyon* on her marker, not *Kenyon* or *Runyon*, as she has been named by so many sources. Finally, ponder as you experience the remoteness of the old burying ground, how many of the graves you trod upon might be empty. Surely, Marilla's remains were not the only ones that were clandestinely appropriated to the cause of medical science!

Geneva, Illinois

July, 1991

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  - 2) Nelson, R.B.: *Beaumont: America's First Physiologist*. Grant House Press, Geneva, Il., 1990.
  - 3) Nelson, R.B., ed.: *Augustus Conant: Geneva's Pioneer Abolitionist Preacher*. Grant House Press, Geneva, Il., 1990. [An annotated reprint of Robert Collyer's 1904 biography of Conant.]
  - 4) Kelly, H.A., and Burrage, W.: *Dictionary of American Medical Biography*, Appleton, New York, 1928. p. 782.
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  - 9) Weaver, G.H.: Beginning of Medical Education in and Near Chicago. *Bull. Soc. Med. Hist. of Chicago.* 3: 339-470, 1925.
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### **Introduction: Lore of Northern Illinois**

Although September was already two weeks past, the warm sun in the still October air kindled a fleeting thought of Indian summer. Then a gray cloud eclipsed the sun's warming rays, and the dry corn stalks burst into that unique cacophony only they can produce when a wintry wind disturbs their quiet repose. In fact, just as the modern trespasser in the rustic burying ground knelt to read the weather worn inscription on the forward teetering limestone marker (that the years had made seem almost as frail as the ephemeral life it commemorated), all hope of Indian summer vanished. Almost as if in the swirling wake of one of Ontac's mounted Potawatomie war parties, the dry corn leaves gyrated twenty feet skyward in the crisp, clear vortex of a sudden prairie whirlwind.

In a sense the interloper in the burial ground was trespassing there on doubly hallowed ground. The sudden chill breeze carried a eerie warning, perhaps because fellow disciples of Aescalapius had desecrated the site at least once before, 140 years earlier. The mute testimony of that cold and timeworn stone marker understated the compound tragedy of the single premature pioneer death it hallowed.

That old Ohio Grove Cemetery was almost directly astride the site of Ontac's Potawatomie village.<sup>1</sup> Under the prairie bluestem sod near the banks of the meandering Kishwaukee Creek on the western edge of the oak grove that the first white settlers named for their native state, rested the twice buried young bride, Marilla Kinyon. Many others of the sickly pioneers succumbed during that awful cholera year of 1849, but those others were reverently laid to eternal rest by the grieving gaunt and sallow survivors. But not poor Marilla.

Only sixteen years earlier Marilla had been born to Maria and David Churchill in Ohio. In that same summer of 1833, the famous French half breed Louis Wilmette had guided a young New England adventurer across the boundless northern Illinois prairie, where no permanent white settler had yet

matched his oxen and wrought iron moldboard plow against the rich, sinewy bluestem. In the year prior to Marilla's birth General Winfield Scott's U.S. Army regulars had arduously hauled their supply trains westward under a searing August sun, passing a few miles north of Ohio Grove.<sup>2</sup> The ruts caused by the heavy wagons would become known as the Army Trail. ("Old Fuss and Feathers" himself took the more comfortable, but longer, southern road through Dixon's Ferry across the Rock River to Galena).<sup>3</sup> The troops were part of the sordid campaign to exterminate the aging but still pugnacious Sac war chief, Black Sparrow Hawk, and his desperate British Band.

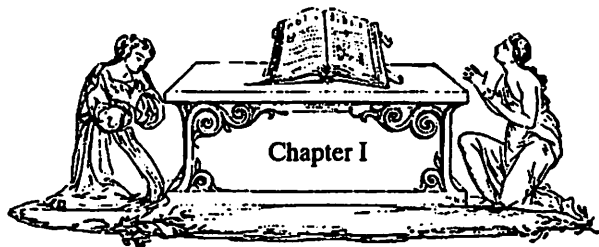
Every locality has its hoary lore. Northern Illinois history is not voluminous, at least in terms of the white man's annals. Yet its terse record contains chapters that can still stir the imagination. Three episodes dominate the lore of Northern Illinois before 1850: The Black Hawk War of 1832, the activities of the Rock River Regulators in 1842, and the Richards Riot of 1849. A thread of continuity links these legends.

The end of the Black Hawk War marked the opening of the fertile prairies of Northern Illinois to settlement, primarily by Yankees like the Kinyons, who came via the Erie Canal and the Great Lakes. The soldiers of the Black Hawk War brought to Northern Illinois mixed blessings. They permanently extinguished the threat of the Red Man, even as exaggerated as that threat had been in fact. In their van General Scott's men also brought a devastating scourge: the germ *Vibrio cholera*. The scattered pioneer settlements of Northern Illinois were better prepared to defend against the tomahawk and scalping knife than against an incomprehensible epidemic disease that could strike dead a healthy man in a few hours. The War furnished more white man's Northern Illinois lore in a few months than had the previous millennium. Abraham Lincoln, Jefferson Davis, Zachary Taylor, Albert Sydney Johnson, and Robert Anderson were a few of the later to be famous participants. Every old man who had come within a hundred miles of the front seemed later to recall a pithy incident during that summer of 1832 involving himself and a famous man.

In addition to disease, the influx of settlers visited upon the prairie another of the white man's curses: crime. The "Banditti" were seemingly protean.<sup>4</sup> They terrorized the pioneers from Rockford to Rock Island, and certain remote settlements, such as Bliss Grove and Lafayette Grove became their sanctuaries. Counterfeit bills, stolen horses, and terror were their stock and trade. Law abiding citizens had little recourse. The courts were embryonic, and law enforcement officers were often themselves members of the banditti. Jails mysteriously burned, and their inmates could not be made secure from escape.

Not until a posse of regulators organized themselves to take the law into their own hands was there any hope for an honest man to prosper. Only when, on one memorable afternoon in 1842, the regulators tried, convicted, and shot to death two members of the banditti Driscoll family in Washington Grove, did law and order gain the ascendancy (though to accomplish this the true legal authorities were forced to look the other way).

The third of the legends of Northern Illinois is the saga of the Richards' Riot of 1849. Disease and the primordial nature of frontier law enforcement were dominant forces on this occasion also. For while the Regulators were instituting law and order in their highly unorthodox manner in 1842, Dr. George Washington Richards was inaugurating in that same year the first Illinois institution to train soldiers for the war on disease: The Franklin Medical College (also known as the Franklin Medical Institute). Like the regulators, Richards had to take the law into his own hands to accomplish his mission. A medical school could not exist without materials with which to teach human anatomy. No legal method of procuring this material existed. This dilemma ultimately resulted in the Richards Riot: another episode of lawlessness begetting lawlessness.



### **Education, Medicine and Disease on the Illinois Frontier in the 1840's**

With them General Winfield Scott's U.S. Army Regulars bore the seeds of more white destruction than the fierce Black Hawk ever dreamed of inflicting. For the regulars, who had arrived at Fort Dearborn too late to participate in the anti-climactic Massacre of the Bad Axe, were dying of cholera as they marched. To the unsuspecting, huddled, and panic stricken settlers of the over crowded stockades of the mining district of southwest Wisconsin and northwest



Illinois was thus delivered an epidemic that made the endemic valley ague (malaria) seem like a mere flea bite. In those hastily thrown up log forts the absence of sanitation created a tactical enfilade of germs more withering than any field commander ever studied at West Point.

A year later, when Louis Wilmette guided C. Colbee Benson to Ontac's Village on the northern Illinois prairie, no whites lived in the vicinity of what would be named Ohio Grove. But even aging Ontac, who had not raised his hatchet against the whites since he had joined Tecumseh in 1812, would be allowed to remain east of the Mississippi only two more years. By 1835 among the early settlers near Ohio Grove, who had heard from the returning soldiers of the richness of the lands of northern Illinois, were the Churchills and the Kinyons.

With the threat of the Red Man extinguished, a need arose for a different kind of soldier. Now disease was the scourge of the pioneers. Malaria remained endemic, so that when Charles Dickens visited Illinois in 1842, the aspect of pioneer life that most impressed him was the sickliness of the population.<sup>5</sup> Cholera's first invasion of 1832 was merely the opening skirmish of a dreadful struggle that would be repeated in other epidemic "cholera years"—1849 being the worst.

Other equally mysterious ailments could strike without warning. Milk sickness, which became known to the pioneers as the "trembles" or the "slows," was well known by its symptoms, but the settlers had not yet linked it to a poisonous weed. One Black Hawk War Veteran with a wry and sometimes caustic wit named Abraham Lincoln, who had lost his mother to the ailment, many years later accused his lethargic commander of the Army of the Potomac, General George McClellan, of having contracted the "slows."<sup>6</sup>

To do battle with the strange and rampant diseases of the Prairie State, doctors were needed. Yet the state contained not a single institution dedicated to producing physicians in 1840. Certainly a few students were attempting to learn the art by preceptorship with the limited number of qualified practitioners who emigrated to Illinois, but their numbers were insufficient for the rapidly expanding population.

Education in general was not well organized in the Illinois in 1840. The literacy rate in the United States when the old Northwest Territory was created by the Ordinance of 1787 was about 25%.<sup>7</sup> Literacy rates varied widely, being generally higher in New England than in the South, and higher in urban areas than in rural. The first 75 years of U.S. history actually saw a substantial fall in literacy rates, probably to as low as 10%. The Old Northwest and Northern

Illinois were not exceptions to this trend, even though its settlers largely came from the best educated section: New England. Also, the high sounding language of the Ordinance of 1787 concerning education was not translated into fiscal support by Territorial or State Legislatures.

Until just before the Civil War, common, or public, schools were not widespread or of very high quality. Most local primary schools were funded by subscriptions from families whose children attended them. The dominant providers of secondary education were private academies, which sprung up all over Northern Illinois. The Elgin Academy and Mount Morris Academy are examples. The peak popularity of these academies was reached between 1850 and 1860.<sup>8</sup>

Northern Illinois was slightly better off in establishing public education than other venues in the Old Northwest. In addition to the funds garnered through the sale of lease of section 16 (the "school section") of each township, the Illinois State Legislature mandated that 3 per cent of the proceeds from the sale of public lands be used "...for the encouragement of learning, of which one sixth part shall be exclusively bestowed on a college or university." But in 1827, the State Legislature almost killed higher education along with public primary and secondary schools, by declaring; "No person [could] be taxed without his consent."<sup>9</sup>

Local politicians often did little positive for schools either, and sometimes did out right harm. For example, school section 16 of St. Charles Township of Kane County, Illinois, was sold "...at a mere pittance of 10 schillings per acre [to well connected individuals], thus cheating the [schools] out of \$9600."<sup>10</sup>

Medical education in the United States in 1840 was in a curious state of transition. During the 18th century American medical schools were departments of colleges or affiliates of medical societies. However, the number of schools was so small that they could not possibly supply the necessary number of physicians for the far flung and rapidly expanding populace. Apprenticeship was the most common form of medical education. After the War of 1812 a new type of medical institution appeared. These schools were independent of any college or society and were chartered by a few individuals. Many existed in small towns of New England. Sir William Osler described the faculty members:

*The Early American Peripatetic Teacher*

For many years there was in this country a group, who, like the Sophists of Greece, went from town to town, staying a year or

## Nelson

two in each, or they divided their time between a winter session in a large city school and a summer term in a small country one. Among them Daniel Drake takes the precedence, as he made eleven moves in the course of his stirring and eventful life. Bartlett comes an easy second, having taught in nine schools. Dunglison, T. R. Beck, Willard Parker, Alonzo Clark, the elder Gross, Austin Flint, Frank H. Hamilton, and many others whom I could name, belonged to this group of wandering professors. The medical education of the day was almost exclusively theoretical; the teachers lectured for a short four months' session, there was a little dissection, a few major operations were witnessed, the fees were paid, examinations were held, and all was over. No wonder, under such conditions, that many of the most flourishing schools were found amid sylvan groves in small country towns. In New England there were five such schools, and in the State of New York the well-known schools of Fairfield and Geneva. As there was not enough practice in the small places to go round, the teachers for the most part stayed only for the session, at the end of which it was not unusual for the major part of the faculty, with the students, to migrate to another institution, where the lectures were repeated and the class graduated.

William Osler<sup>11</sup>

The first and most famous of these small town medical schools was the College of Physicians and Surgeons of the Western District of New York at Fairfield (a village of three hundred souls in 1812, the year the school was chartered). Fairfield had a strong educational tradition, for one of the country

academies that characterized secondary education in New England had been established there in 1803. Early in its twenty four year life, the medical college had close ties to the academy.

Although the Fairfield Medical School had three lay founders, the fourth founder was a physician and faculty member: Dr. Josiah Noyes. Among its graduates, the Fairfield College counted Nathan Smith Davis in 1837. Davis founded the American Medical Association and was a giant in medical education during the 19th century. Asa Gray, Fairfield alumnus of 1831, was the era's pre-eminent botanist.<sup>12</sup> Alonzo B. Palmer (Fairfield, 1839) founded the University of Michigan School of Medicine during his productive career.<sup>13</sup> George Washington Richards was an 1828 diplomate of Fairfield.

Schools such as the ones at Fairfield, Woodstock, Castleton, and others marked an evolution from the pure apprenticeship method of medical education, which was frequently the only method available to aspiring doctors. Indeed, the most famous physician of the old Northwest Territory, William Beaumont, M.D., received all of his training as an apprentice, primarily of Dr. Benjamin Chandler in St. Albans, Vermont. On this basis, and after an examination, Beaumont was granted a License by the Third Medical Society of Vermont in 1812. Beaumont later trained at least one physician by this same tradition.

Beaumont described his own method of acquiring his license to his younger brother Abel. Yet William recognized the importance of a degree, and he recommended the Fairfield school to his brother as "...the best, the cheapest & most respectable."<sup>14</sup> (Abel attended the Fairfield School, but died in New York City of cholera in 1832.)

By 1840 there were many medical schools in the East that granted degrees. By and large, these were proprietary schools controlled by the faculty. Curricular requirement were not stringent, and payment of lecture fees was at least as important as proficiency in the awarding of diplomas. The following advertisement appeared in the *U.S. Medical and Surgical Journal* in 1835 for Dr. Richards' alma mater:

13. College of Physicians and Surgeons  
of the Northern District.<sup>15</sup>

*Fairfield, Herkimer County, New-York.*

The college<sup>16</sup> opens annually on the first  
Tuesday of October, and the Lectures will be  
delivered as follows:-

**Nelson**

**On Midwifery, by Westal Willoughby,  
M.D.<sup>17</sup>**

**Chemistry and Materia Medica - James  
Hadley, M.D.<sup>18</sup>**

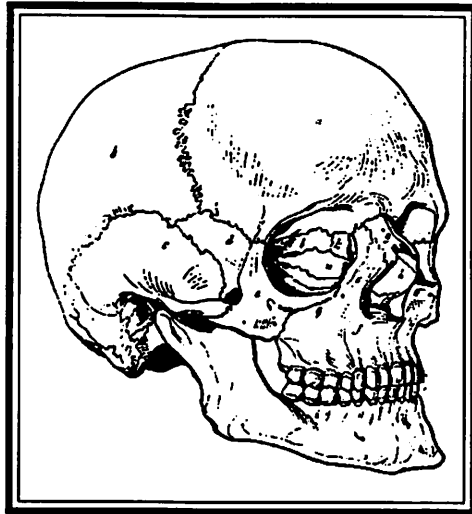
**Anatomy and Physiology - James  
McNaughton, M.D.<sup>19</sup>**

**Practice of Physic and Medical Jurispru-  
dence - T. Romeyn Beck, M.D.<sup>20</sup>**

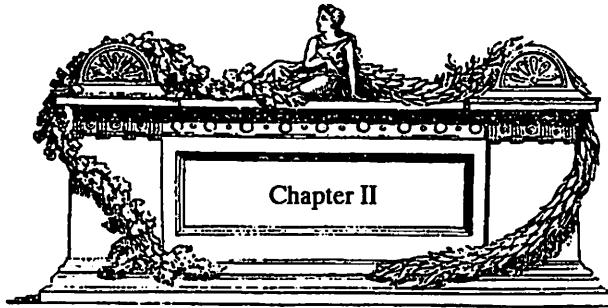
**Surgery - John De La Mater, M.D.<sup>21</sup>**

The course continues sixteen weeks.

From the arrangement adopted in delivering the Lectures, it will be found advantageous to students to attend them at the commencement of their medical studies. After having attended two Courses, all the expense is avoided, as the Tickets thereafter are gratuitous.



From: Knox, Robert: *A Manual of Artistic Anatomy*. London, 1852. p. 27.



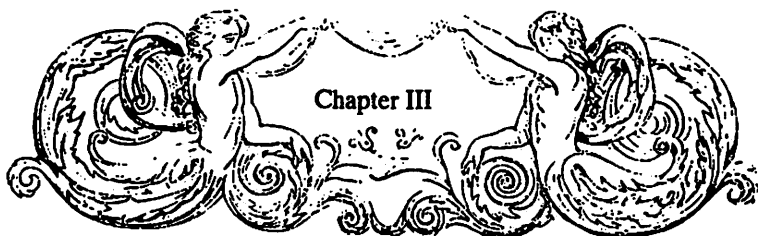
## ANATOMICAL STUDIES

“...Abundant proof of his attention to the art of surgery” is how Colonel Abraham Eustis described William Beaumont’s “anatomical preparations” in a glowing letter of recommendation urging Dr. Beaumont’s reappointment to the U.S. Army in 1819.<sup>22</sup> These “preparations” were actually parts of human bodies that Beaumont had dissected and preserved. No questions were then asked, nor were any records kept, to show how Beaumont happened to acquire his material. Beaumont lamented the fact that he had not been allowed to dissect the remains of a War of 1812 deserter who had been shot.

Knowledge of anatomy was “...allowed on all hands, to be the foundation both of physick and surgery...” At least, this is how the first public announcement of a course of lectures in anatomy in America put it in 1752.<sup>23</sup> The first regular American teaching program in anatomy was instituted by Dr. William Shippen in Philadelphia in 1762. With the establishment of the medical school at the College of Philadelphia in 1765, Shippen became the first American professor of Anatomy.<sup>24</sup> No less a personage than Oliver Wendell Holmes owes at least a part of his everlasting fame to his reputation as an anatomical lecturer and demonstrator.<sup>25</sup>

The universal recognition of its importance coupled with the practical difficulties in the procurement of materials made anatomy a difficult discipline for 19th century medical schools. Daniel Drake required his students in Cincinnati to take the dissection course in 1835, but as late as 1849 (the year of the Richards Riot), the University of Pennsylvania, Jefferson Medical College, The College of Physicians and Surgeons of New York, and Yale did

not require dissection.<sup>26</sup> In many ways the students of the small country medical schools and apprentices like William Beaumont had an advantage in their access to both living and dead clinical material. The indefatigable Dr. Drake even wrote a report in 1836 about the "Best method of introducing and prosecuting the study of anatomy and physiology" in schools and colleges. Drake noted the lack of "anatomical preparations and models" greatly hampered progress.<sup>27</sup> Only one method was available to obtain material for dissection: grave robbing.



### THE TIMES AND PLACES OF GRAVE ROBBERING<sup>28</sup>

When were graves robbed, both in relation to the seasons of the year and to the date of burial? Disinterments for use of preceptors in teaching their students and for the use of physicians in improving their own knowledge and art occurred at all seasons of the year except the hot months of summer. The popular opinion that physicians were likely to disinter the body of one who had died of an obscure disease in order "to find out what was the matter" was largely imaginary. The average practitioner was not sufficiently skilled in pathological anatomy to make such acts profitable. A few records show disinterment of the body of one having a rare abnormality, such as hydrocephalus in a child.

The acquisition of bodies for dissection at a medical college was seasonal and closely related to the dates of the sessions of the medical colleges, because during most of the nineteenth century few institutions had provision for preserving bodies. A body was dissected immediately after its receipt, both because the process of embalming was not in use and for the further reason that

search for bodies illegally acquired constantly impended.

A majority of the medical colleges of the nineteenth century in New England held their sessions from early November until February. The medical instruction at Dartmouth College was given in the fall, that at the Vermont Medical College at Woodstock in the spring. Castleton Medical College gave both a spring and a fall session. Spring sessions extended from early March to late May, fall sessions from early September to late November. Berkshire Medical College, for a time, began its session in July, but no dissection was done until September. Therefore the procuring of bodies for use in the medical colleges was wholly interrupted in June, July, and August, and largely so in May and September.

For several reasons a grave was opened as soon after burial as possible, often in the first night following burial. The grass and ground about a grave had been trampled at the time of the funeral and further trampling a few hours later would not be detected. If a rain storm intervened between the burial and the disinterment, the loose soil in the grave would be mud and less easily handled. Moreover, after the surface of a grave had been beaten by a storm, it was impossible to make the part that was excavated in a disinterment appear like that which was not excavated. Grave robbing when the ground was covered with snow was barred except when more snow was falling to cover tracks of men and vehicles.

Where were graves robbed, or more pertinently, where were they not robbed? A grave near an inhabited dwelling was avoided because of the risk of discovery by inhabitants of the dwelling during the disinterment. This was well known and in some cases temporary burial was made in the garden of the home of the deceased, or, in one recorded case, immediately under the bedroom window. In such cases the body was exhumed and removed to a cemetery after a few days. Churchyards in the centers of towns and closely surrounded by dwellings were not invaded.

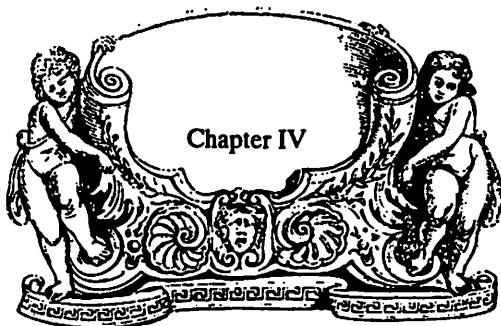
The cemeteries of towns and villages were usually removed some distance from inhabited dwellings, and often off the main highway and reached by a lane. Such locations offered less risk of interruption of a disinterment. Private burial plots on farms were favored locations for disinterments. Graves were robbed not more than twenty miles from the medical college to which the body was to be taken, a distance that could be driven with a span of horses in time to return before daylight so that early risers should not see suspicious activities around a medical college building in the early dawn. Disinterments were made in the early hours of the night to give time for this arrival.

Another factor entered in cities and some larger towns, where, in some



cemetery, an area was set aside for burials at public expense, and known as potter's held. The origin of this name goes back to Jerusalem. Judas Iscariot, repentant, returned to the chief priests of the temple the thirty pieces of silver he had accepted for the betrayal of Christ. The priests ruled that this money could not be put in the treasury because it was blood money, and decided to use it to buy a plot of ground for the burial of strangers who died in the city of Jerusalem. An abandoned field, formerly the site of a pottery, lay on the slope of the Mount of Olives. This area, known locally as potter's field, was bought for a place of public burial. This local name has been applied to similar plots for public burial in this and other countries for nearly nineteen hundred years.

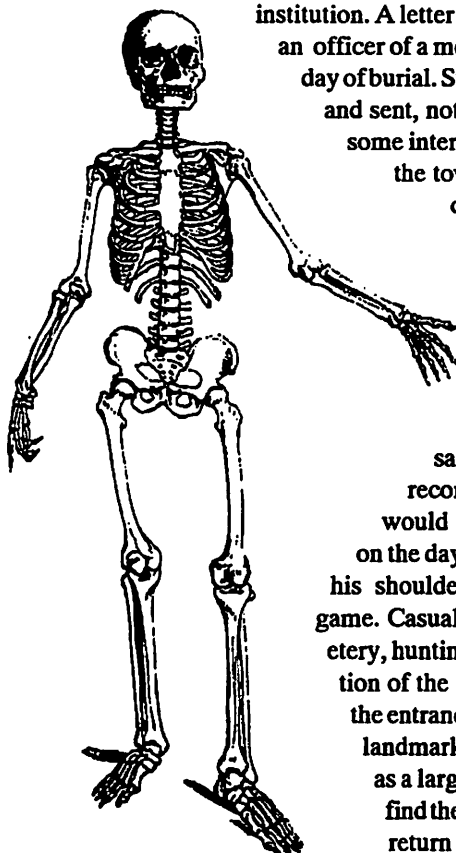
A body buried in a potter's field near a medical college did not remain long in the grave. Public authorities made no effort to investigate when a grave in a potter's field was found to have been disturbed. The story is recorded that in some cities having more than one medical college, a gentleman's agreement among the several demonstrators of anatomy brought a system of rotation in disinterment of bodies in potter's field.



## THE TECHNIQUE OF GRAVE ROBBING

The fine art of grave robbing involved a technique of several stages. Detection of disturbance of a grave rarely occurred if each step was meticulously followed. The instances of detection resulted from failure to observe some part of the technique.

The first step was to secure knowledge of a prospective burial usually supplied by some former student of the medical college to the authorities of the



institution. A letter by mail or messenger advised an officer of a medical college of the place and day of burial. Such message was often in code and sent, not directly to the officer, but to some intermediary, such as a druggist in the town of location of the medical college, who understood the import of the message and hastened it to its destination.

The next step was to locate the grave accurately in daylight hours so that search in the dark would be unnecessary. A common method was to reconnoiter as a hunter. A stranger would appear in the neighborhood on the day of burial with a shotgun over his shoulder, apparently hunting small game. Casually strolling through the cemetery, hunting for game, he noted the position of the open grave and its relation to the entrance of the cemetery and to some landmark observable in the dark, such as a large monument, allowing him to find the grave quickly when he should return a few hours later.

Three men and a conveyance were needed in a disinterment. One man must remain with the conveyance, and it was driven away to return at a specified time if the cemetery was located on a public high way, because a conveyance standing in front of a cemetery at night would arouse suspicion of anyone who chanced to pass along the highway.

Two able bodied men were needed to make the disinterment. The entire surface of the grave was carefully examined with a shaded lantern on arrival. A common practice was for some friend of the deceased to arrange on the closed grave a careful pattern of stones, shells, sticks, or flowers in order to detect disturbance. This pattern had to be mapped so that it could be restored exactly after the disinterment.

Two large tarpaulins were necessary parts of the equipment. One was spread beside the grave and all the excavated soil thrown upon it so that when this soil was returned to the grave there should be no telltale bits left on the grass. Inasmuch as in each cemetery all burials were with the head in a certain direction, the position of the head of the grave could be determined by neighboring tombstones.

An excavation approximately three feet square was made at the head end of the grave until the rough box was reached. The depth of the excavation was four feet or less, so that not over thirty-five cubic feet of soil need be handled. Because this was loose dirt, excavation was not a difficult job unless slabs of stones were encountered.

The head end of the rough box was removed by boring a row of holes with an auger. A saw could not be used and use of ax or hatchet made too much noise for safety. The removal of the cover of the frail coffin was a simple matter.

The next step was withdrawal of the body, usually done with what was called "the hook," a strong iron bar five feet in length; one end was turned up into a blunt hook of about two inches, while the other end had a cross bar handle. The hooked end was placed under the chin of the body and two able bodied men could draw the body from the coffin onto the second tarpaulin previously laid at the head of the grave. The hook seriously injured the structures of the floor and roof of the mouth and an alternative was the use of a harness strapped under the arms of the body, with a ring in the back to which a rope was tied.

The body having been drawn onto the tarpaulin, the shroud or other apparel was usually stripped off and thrown back into the grave. The later disposal of apparel involved difficulty and complete disposal was necessary because clothing, if found, made identification positive. Then the body was closely wrapped and tied or strapped in the tarpaulin. Failure to observe this step of the technique often resulted in something from the body, its apparel, or ornaments being left near the grave and when found giving positive evidence that the grave had been disturbed.

The body having been wrapped, the excavated soil was returned to the grave and the surface carefully restored to the exact condition in which it had been found. Next all tools were counted and wrapped in the tarpaulin upon which the soil had been thrown and the tarpaulin securely tied so that no tool could drop out. This gave only two bundles which two able-bodied men could carry to the waiting conveyance in one trip.

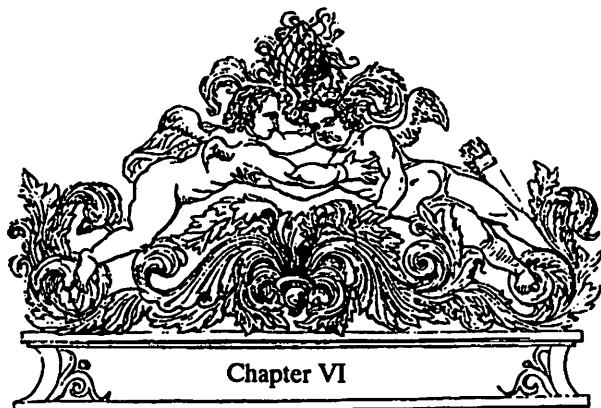
A lantern was used in the work and it was essential that it be fully shaded. The type known as a dark lantern was employed. In some cases the hook was set up on end and the second tarpaulin thrown over it to make a tent over the

site during excavation as a further protection of gleams from the lantern. Failure to protect the lantern led to many an interrupted disinterment. A light in a cemetery seen by neighbors would bring a group of enraged citizens to the scene. The men engaged in the disinterment might escape into the darkness but with loss of all of their equipment.

Two able bodied men could complete a disinterment in an hour from the time they entered the cemetery and be on their way. The return was uneventful unless discovery had been made and pursuit followed.<sup>30</sup>

The medical student of today enters a well-appointed dissecting room, finds the cadaver prepared and the environment as hygienic and comfortable as the circumstances will permit. He can hardly realize that the study of practical anatomy 150 years ago was cultivated at the risk of personal safety and often of life. Many a solemn procession wound its way to the churchyard to restore to the embrace of Mother Earth the remains of some departed denizen of the town or village. But those who had gathered around the open grave to listen to the last farewell spoken by priest or preacher, were not all mourners. There were some in that sombre assembly who thought not of the dead but of the living and had come thither in the interests of the knowledge of life and of the art of preserving it. These interested spectators were the professional or amateur "resurrectionists" who were ready to make the mortal coil of the departed perform a post-mortem duty on behalf of those who believe that the study of anatomy is real and earnest, and, therefore, the grave should not be the goal of a good anatomical subject. In the eternal fitness of things, many a man or woman was given a chance to redeem by such post-mortem service the emptiness of all the years which preceded the final march to the grave.





### Some Particular Incidents

Chronologically the amateur "resurrectionist" preceded the professional procurer of dissecting material. Before 1825 the students were required to take part in graveyard excursions, arranged and personally conducted by the professor of anatomy or other members of the faculty. When medical colleges sprang up in different parts of the country, there was a regular demand for subjects for dissection, and, as a natural result, the professional "resurrectionist" established himself to meet the demand. He had his regular customers with whom he made a contract in regard to the number of subjects and the price he was to receive. The ordinary amount paid was \$10 for a body. Sometimes he would receive more, depending on the fluctuations of the market. Professional "resurrectionists" in Cincinnati were doing business about 1830 when the professors of the Medical College of Ohio arranged with one or two of them to furnish bodies for dissection. This did not deter the students from procuring additional material.

One of George Richards' schoolmates, Nathan Smith Davis (founder of the

AMA) wrote that in 1840 when he was still a neophyte practitioner: "I occupied every leisure moment in study...every winter refreshing my anatomical knowledge by dissecting one or more subjects in the work-room over my office and instructing students (generally had to get the subjects with my own hands)..."<sup>31</sup>

Dr. Shippen, the father of American anatomical study, had his share of travail. "[Dr. Shippen's] house was frequently stoned, and the windows broken; and on one occasion Dr. Shippen's life was put into imminent danger. While engaged within, the populace assembled tumultuously around the house. His carriage fortunately was at the door, and the people supposing that he was in it made their first attack there. The windows of the carriage being up, they were speedily demolished with stones, and musket ball was shot through the body of the carriage. The coachman applied the whip to his horses and only saved himself and his vehicle by a rapid retreat under a shower of missiles. The Doctor hearing the uproar, ascertained its cause, and extricated himself through a private alley."—In apparent documentation of the above story, Dr. Shippen placed the following advertisement in the *Pennsylvania Gazette* for September 26, 1765: "It has given Dr. Shippen much Pain to hear that notwithstanding all the Caution and Care he has taken to preserve the utmost Decency in opening and dissecting dead Bodies, which he has persevered in chiefly from the Motive of being useful to Mankind, some evil-minded Persons, either wantonly or maliciously have reported to his Disadvantage that he has taken up some Persons who were buried in the Church Burying Ground, which has disturbed the Minds of some of his worthy Fellow Citizens. The Doctor with much Pleasure, improves this Opportunity to declare that the Report is absolutely false; and to assure them that the Bodies he dissected were either of Persons who had wilfully murdered themselves or were publicly executed, except now and then one from the Potter's field, whose Death was owing to some particular Disease; and that he never had one Body from the Church."<sup>32</sup>

John T. Shotwell<sup>33</sup> was always called Professor Wellshot by the students, in pleasant remembrance of an occurrence that marred a body-snatching expedition in which Shotwell had participated. One of the best known medical teachers of the early 20th century, in fact, the dean of a medical college, was shot at while on a visit to Potter's Field, and, as a result, limped through the remainder of his life.

Many a weird romance is told of the "resurrectionist" as he plies his ghastly trade by the pale light of the moon or when the leaden clouds of the Winter sky make the night seem colder and lonelier.

*Pullman's Paranoia*

When the millionaire George M. Pullman, inventor and builder of railway cars that bear his name, died he left "extraordinary precautions against disturbance of his grave. His coffin was wrapped in tarpaper and then completely covered and sealed with a coating of asphalt an inch thick. It was lowered into an underground vault of massive concrete, reinforced with steel bars. This chamber was then poured full of concrete and covered with bolted railroad rails. The process formed a solid block of concrete and metal, immovable except by heavy machinery, indestructible except by prodigious charges of dynamite." Thus, Pullman met the age-old fear of grave-robbers, a fear that began to haunt him when he heard as a boy the tales of ghouls digging up bodies and purveying them to the dissecting rooms of medical schools, and that seized and took overpowering possession of him when the desecration of the graves of Lincoln and of Stewart were publicized. In 1901, when the body of Abraham Lincoln was placed in its final resting place in a vault beneath the monument in the cemetery at Springfield, the order which the son, Robert T. Lincoln, then president of the Pullman Company, gave for the preparation of the tomb was implicitly obeyed: "Bury him now and for all time exactly the way Mr. Pullman was buried in Chicago."<sup>34</sup>

*The Ipswich Incident*

The inhabitants of Chebacco Parish of Ipswich, Massachusetts, saw flickers of light in their cemetery on a night in January, 1818. Snow was falling rapidly, but when the snow melted a hair ornament of peculiar design was found in the cemetery. This ornament had been buried on the person of a young woman who had died just a few days before the lights were seen in the cemetery. (The finding of combs seems to be an element in many legends about resurrection.) Her grave was opened and found empty, and also the graves of seven others who had been buried that fall or winter. The violation of two cardinal rules of resurrection led to the detection: the neglect to shade the lantern properly when disinterring, and failure to wrap the body so that the comb could not fall off.

The local physician was arrested when identifiable parts of three different bodies were found on his premises. At the time, he had a group of students under instruction in operative surgery.

Three indictments were found for possession of disinterred bodies. One indictment was withdrawn on the plea of counsel that it was inaccurately drawn. The physician was tried and convicted on the two other indictments and

financed a total sum of \$800.

Daniel Webster was attorney for the defendant. Mr. Webster was at this time a Member of Congress, and invited the physician to remove to Washington because his local practice had been ruined. Mr. Webster promoted the cause of the physician in Washington so that he became the personal physician of three presidents of the United States, and later founded the first medical college in Washington.<sup>34</sup>

### *The Hubbardton Raid*

Seven months later the grave of a woman at Hubbardton, Vermont, in Rutland County, was found empty. What followed was an episode very similar to the Richard's Riot of 1849. At daylight on Monday, November 29, 1830, a body of three hundred men, in three divisions, one led by the sheriff of the county, started from Hubbardton and marching five miles to Castleton, surrounded the medical college building at nine o'clock. Entrance was delayed for some time on the pretext that the dean had lost the key. A committee of the attackers was permitted to enter and searched the building. The searchers were about to leave when one of them noticed a loose nail in a board of the wainscoting (one writer says it was the floor) and tearing off the boards found the body of a woman which could not be identified because it had been decapitated.

Meanwhile a student had passed through the crowd of attackers walking leisurely with an unnoticed bundle under his overcoat, which he took to a neighboring barn and deposited in the haymow. The sheriff demanded the missing head. The dean said it would be produced if the sheriff would pledge that no arrests would be made. This pledge having been given, the student made another leisurely trip to the haymow and, returning with a bundle under his overcoat, handed it to the sheriff. The body was taken back to Hubbardton and returned to its grave. This episode was known in southern Vermont as "The Hubbardton Raid."<sup>35</sup>

The faculty attempted to divert suspicion from themselves, as shown by a statement in the announcements of the medical college during a few subsequent years and printed in italics with a pointer calling special attention as follows:

"No subject for dissection will be received from any person at any time."<sup>36</sup>

### *Trouble in Pittsfield*

The grave of a young woman buried in a village not far from Pittsfield Massachusetts the location of the Berkshire Medical College was found to have been emptied in September 1840. The medical college building was searched



and the body recovered and returned to the village where a second funeral was held. The attendance at the first funeral was about forty persons. The second funeral attracted over six hundred people from that and surrounding villages. There are various instrumentalities through which some have acquired posthumous renown. This is one in which the instrument was a grave robber's hook.

### *The Eccentric McDowell*

Joseph Nash McDowell, Drake's brother-in-law, was a great anatomist and ever on the alert when there was a chance to get a good specimen for dissection. Strangely enough, he was a spiritualist. One day he was told that a girl had died with a very unusual disease. He at once determined to get her body. He started out with two of his students and, at the first break of day, he deposited the body in the college. The matter leaked out and he was informed that the friends of the dead girl would call at the college, get the body back and, incidentally, make it hot for him. To forestall matters, he decided to hide the body, and went to the college at 11 o'clock. All was quiet. He went through the dissecting room with a small lantern in his hand. He picked up the cadaver, and, after throwing it over his shoulder, proceeded to carry it to the top loft to hide it between the rafters.

The rest of this strange story is best told in his own words: "I had ascended one flight of stairs when out went my lamp. I laid down the corpse and re-struck a light. I then picked up the body, when out went my light again. I felt for another match in my pocket, when I distinctly saw my dear, old mother who had been dead these many years, standing a little distance off, beckoning to me."

"In the middle of the passage was a window; I saw her rise in front of it. I walked along close to the wall, with the corpse over my shoulder, and went to the top loft and hid it. I came down in the dark, for I knew the way well; as I reached the window in the passage, there were two men talking, one had a shotgun, the other a revolver. I kept close to the wall and slid down the stairs. When I got to the dissecting-room door, I looked down the stairs into the hallway: there I saw five or six men lighting a lamp. I hesitated a moment as to what I should do, as I had left my pistols in my pocket in the dissecting-room when I took the body. I looked in the room, as it was my only chance to get away, when I saw my spirit mother standing near the table from which I had just taken the corpse. I had no light, but the halo that surrounded my mother was sufficient to enable me to see the table quite plainly.

"I heard the men coming up the stairs. I laid down whence I had taken the body and pulled a cloth over my face to hide it. The men came in, all of them being armed, to look at the dead. They uncovered one body,—it was that of a man, the next a man; then they came to two women with black hair,—the girl

they were looking for had flaxen hair. Then they passed me; one man said: 'Here is a fellow who died in his boots; I guess he is a fresh one.'

"I laid like marble. I thought I would jump up and frighten them, but I heard a voice, soft and low, close to my ear, say, 'Be still, be still.' The men went over the building, and finally downstairs. I waited awhile, then slipped out. At the next street corner, I heard three men talking; they took no notice of me, and I went home."

"Early in the morning I went to the college and found everything all right. We dissected the body, buried the fragments and had no further trouble."

McDowell was a strange man. He often did things that were almost sublime in their heroism and, yet, at heart he was a coward. One day his students prepared to play a trick on him. They had exhumed a body and had placed it in a covered wagon, leisurely driving towards town. McDowell sat with the driver. It began to rain and from time to time the rumbling of distant thunder could be heard. McDowell was afraid of thunder storms and was getting very uneasy, when suddenly there was a sharp report of a shot. McDowell looked around and saw the dead man sitting up in the wagon, his white, bony fingers holding a pistol. This was too much. McDowell jumped out of the wagon and ran in a drenching rain as fast as his feet would carry him. When he appeared before the class the next day, he told a wonderful story about exhuming a body and being shot at. He told the students that in spite of the rain and the distance, he had jumped from the wagon and had pursued the cowardly assailant. The students applauded and cheered, McDowell receiving the ovation with many smiles and bows of acknowledgment. It never occurred to him that the ovation was a part of the hoax that had been played.

### *Wright's Flight*

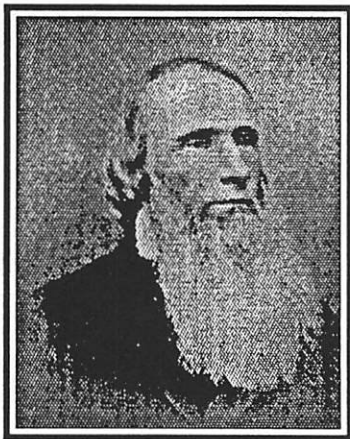
M. B. Wright tells the following story about one of his body-snatching adventures: "I was one of four who had agreed to exhume the body of a man of immense size. After procuring the necessary pick and spades, rope and sack, we proceeded to the designated place of burial. But the light from the surrounding windows fell brightly upon the tomb-stones, and rendered it unsafe, at so early an hour, to engage in the execution of our task. Wrapped in our cloaks, we lay concealed in the dark shadows of the church, until after midnight. Then we assumed the duties assigned us. One was stationed at the entrance, another at the outlet of the graveyard, as sentinels, while a third and myself commenced the digging. No countersign was given of approaching danger, until we had reached the lid of the coffin. It was made of thick boards, and fastened with long screws, so that much force was required to break it. It

gave way with a loud noise, which resounded from house to house, and roused the faithful watch-dogs from their slumbers. A general barking ensued, lamps were lighted, and forms were dimly seen, passing the windows. Not a footstep, however, was heard approaching us, and we returned to our labour, which had been temporarily suspended. A rope was fastened around the neck of the corpse, and, after much and long-continued effort, it was dragged from its resting-place. We had not gone far with our burden, when, as we turned a corner, a man came suddenly upon us. We did not falter, for we discovered at once that he was a staggering drunkard. At length we became weary, and transferred our load to a wheelbarrow, which we found after much search under a woodshed. It gave a relief to our shoulders, but the noise of its rusty axle grated harshly upon our ears. Daylight was fast approaching, smoke was issuing from many a chimney, the butcher's wagon was passing on its way to the market, and every step we took was attended with hazard. In sight of home we came to a halt. 'Doctors, what have you there?' inquired one gruffly. With our hearts in our throats, we fell back a short distance, and watched the movements of the intruder. We saw him lift the sack, and place his hand upon its cold, human contents—we saw him start—shudder—and, with uplifted hands, run until out of sight. We seized this as the only favorable moment of escape, and carrying our treasure with us, reached the place which had been prepared for our reception."

### *Old Cunny*

The man about whom more graveyard stories have been told than about any other "resurrectionist," was "Old Cunny," the prince of ghouls, who in his day was known to every person in this part of the country, at least by name. He was the bogeyman for all ill-behaved children. He was popularly called "Old Man Dead." His real name was William Cunningham. He was born in Ireland in 1807. He was a big, raw-boned individual, with muscles like Hercules, and a protruding lower jaw, a ghoul by vocation, a drunkard by habit and a coward by nature. His wife was a bony, brawny, square-jawed Irish woman, with a mouth like an alligator. Both had a tremendous appetite for whiskey. Cunny had sold his own body to the Medical College of Ohio. When he died of heart trouble in 1871, the body was turned over to the college. Mrs. Cunningham, the bereaved widow, managed to get an additional \$5 bill for the giant carcass of her deceased spouse. The skeleton of "Old Cunny" was the *piece de resistance* in the Museum of the Medical College of Ohio.

One of the older doctors who knew Cunny in a business way, when interrogated about this interesting personage, grew reminiscent, and gave the



John Scott Harrison

following account of him:

"Cunny was an expert in his business. I have seen him operate and can testify to his skill. He would dig a hole about two feet square right over the head of the coffin. When he got down to the coffin, he would break out the coffin-head, fasten big hooks to which strong ropes were attached, under the arms of the corpse and pull the latter out by main force. Usually he took the body to town in a buggy. One night I met Cunny driving into town. There was a corpse sitting in the buggy on the seat beside him. The corpse was dressed up in an old coat, vest and hat. Cunny held the reins in his right

hand while he steadied the corpse with his left arm around the waist of his silent companion. Every now and then the upper part of the corpse gravitated forward and downward. Whenever people passed, Cunny would slap his inoffensive partner in the face and say to him: 'Sit up! This is the last time I am going to take you home when you get drunk. The idea of a man with a family disgracing himself in this way!' With such words and a few picturesque phrases by way of emphasis and rhetorical decoration, Cunny kept people from guessing the truth. In spite of his precautions he was peppered with buckshot more than once. His ghoulish nature was well shown when he took a horrible revenge on a few students who had played some sort of a trick on him. He dug up the body of a small-pox victim and succeeded in infecting many of the students with the terrible disease."

#### *The Theft of J.S. Harrison*

The "resurrectionists" all but passed into history in the 1880's, when most State Legislatures enacted laws pertaining to the dissection of dead bodies in medical colleges. The profession had repeatedly asked for such a law. The final passage was brought about by one of the most sensational occurrences in the medical history of this country, namely, the finding of the body of John Scott Harrison in the building of the Medical College of Ohio on Thursday, May 30, 1878.

John Scott Harrison was a son of Wm. Henry Harrison, "Old Tippecanoe," distinguished statesman and soldier and ninth President of the United States.

Wm. H. Harrison had been closely identified with the early history of the Medical College of Ohio. His son, John Scott, was born in Vincennes, Ind., in 1804. He was a member of the national House of Representatives for three years. He died suddenly at his home in North Bend, Ohio, May 26, 1878. He was much beloved on account of his many excellent traits of character. His sister, Lucy, had been the wife of Hon. David K. Este, a member of the first board of trustees of the Medical College of Ohio. John Scott Harrison was buried May 29, in Congress Green Cemetery, North Bend, Ohio, amid a large concourse of people, among them many prominent citizens of Cincinnati. On May 30 John Harrison and George Eaton, son and nephew of the deceased, came to Cincinnati, and, armed with a search warrant, visited the various medical schools to find the body of Wm. B. Devin, a young friend of the Harrison family, who had died a few days previously. His body had been stolen and was supposed to have been taken to Cincinnati. They went through the building of the Medical College of Ohio without finding any trace of the body and were about to abandon the search when the rope attached to a windlass and suspended in the chute or hoist through which cadavers were brought up to the dissecting room, was noticed to be taut, as though something heavy was attached to the end of the rope down below. Without any difficulty a naked body was brought up. The head and shoulders were found to be covered with a cloth. When the cloth was removed and a light turned on the face, the features of John Scott Harrison were recognized by the son and nephew of the deceased. The patriarchal beard had been cut off below the chin. The scene which followed can be better imagined than described. Public sentiment was aroused by Benjamin Harrison, another son of the deceased and subsequently President of the United States, who arrived the following day. That the newspapers of the city, and, in fact, of the whole country contributed their share towards exciting the people by making an unfortunate occurrence appear in the light of a crime committed by the faculty of the Medical College of Ohio, can readily be understood. After a few days the excitement quieted down. The body of John Scott Harrison was deposited in the tomb of his father at North Bend.

The true details of this unfortunate occurrence will probably never be known. That the professors of the college had nothing whatever to do with the matter, in fact, were a unit in condemning the action of the man who had procured the body, is an undeniable fact. That the predicament of the Ohio professors was noticed with ill-concealed satisfaction by the faculty of one of the rival schools, is likewise true. It was ascertained that the basement of the institution alluded to was a regular storehouse for anatomical subjects and that medical colleges as far away as the University of Michigan were supplied with

cadavers from this Cincinnati institution. Whether the body of John Scott Harrison was taken directly to the Ohio College or came from the aforesaid storehouse, is not known. Why it was taken to the Ohio College, without an order from the demonstrator of anatomy, and after the dissecting season, is likewise an open question. That the action was prompted by malice towards the Ohio College, or towards some person connected with it, is believed by some. Who the perpetrator was and what motive actuated him, will probably never be known. "Resurrectionists" never reveal their secrets and the story of John Scott Harrison's body will probably never be told until the day of the final resurrection. The body lies at the side of that of the elder Harrison, amid scenery as beautiful as can be found anywhere. The tomb, hallowed by a thousand recollections connected with the life and services of a distinguished American, seems to have been forgotten by the present generation. The evidences of neglect are apparent everywhere. Near by is the tomb of John Cleves Symmes, whose name can not be separated from the early history of Western civilization. Here, too, where Nature appears in her most beautiful garb, man has forgotten the debt he owes to the past and its heroes. The tooth of time is slowly but surely destroying the humble slab of sandstone beneath which the founder of Cincinnati rests from his labors.

#### *The Dartmouth Affair*

One of the last episodes of grave robbing occurred in December, 1895, when two students of the Dartmouth Medical College, on their way to a party, noticed a newly made grave in a rural cemetery in Vermont. On their return in the early morning hours they disinterred the body and took it to the medical college. The two students were amateurs in grave robbing and left evidence of disturbance of the grave which was temporarily obscured by falling snow. The snow melted after a few days and the disinterment was discovered and followed by search of the medical college building and recovery of the body. The two students were arrested, tried, convicted, and fined.<sup>37</sup>

The procedure of robbing graves was distasteful to all members of the medical profession. A physician either personally helped in a disinterment or was an accessory before the fact if he employed an agent to do it, or an accessory after the fact if he received a body which he knew must have been illegally disinterred.

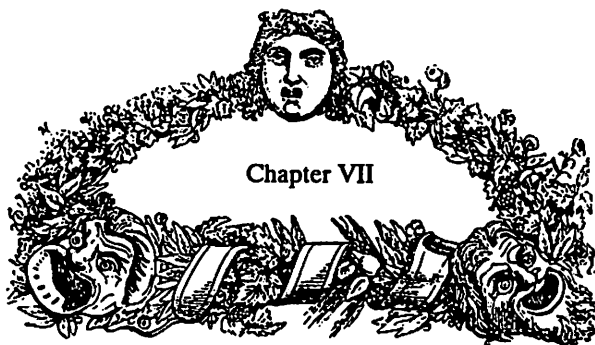
However, the physician who engaged in teaching, either as a private preceptor or as a member of the teaching staff of a medical college, faced the alternative of such participation or of recommending to the community as a

medical practitioner a young man that was inadequately trained because of lack of opportunity to study practical anatomy. It was better to be a party to emptying one grave than to be responsible for sending into the community to practice medicine one who, for lack of knowledge of human anatomy, might become the agent of filling many graves with bodies sent there before their time.

Grave robbing, primarily charged to the medical profession, was equally or more the fault of the entire public who neglected to provide through their representative lawmakers for adequate material to teach anatomy properly.

Grave robbing was definitely related to medical education in the nineteenth century and was a necessity in the absence of legal provision for human dissection. The long road before adequate anatomical laws were adopted in each state in the closing years of the nineteenth century and the opening years of the twentieth century is another story with many interesting features. The robbing of graves ceased completely when such laws came into force, and could have been stopped many years earlier had not the aversion and prejudices of the people delayed enactment of proper laws.





## THE LITERATURE OF GRAVE ROBBERING

Charles Dickens published serially in a magazine in 1859 a work in which is a chapter with the title, "The Honest Tradesman." This introduces the character of Jeremiah Cruncher who pursued a respectable vocation by day and at night supplemented this by activities as a "resurrection-man" in London.<sup>38</sup> The scene is laid late in the eighteenth century. The author describes exhumation of the coffin, which is opposed to the basic principle in the technique that no evidence of disturbance of the grave should be left. Such a plan would also much increase the labor in securing the body.

Robert Louis Stevenson in 1881 wrote a tale with the title, "The Body Snatcher." It was first published in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, a magazine in London, in December, 1884.<sup>39</sup> This magazine issued posters which were so lurid that the police confiscated them.<sup>40</sup> The plot is based upon events connected with the extensive robbing of graves near Edinburgh in the eighteen twenties, which led to some executions for murder. The author includes some of the real characters of these events with slight changes of names. He repeats the inaccuracy of Dickens in describing the removal of the coffin from the grave.

A third item of English authorship was published in 1896 and purports to be the diary of one of the resurrectionists of Edinburgh in the 'twenties. The authenticity is doubtful but the book cleverly simulates an actual record of an uncouth offender and is of value for its extensive bibliography.<sup>41</sup>

An informative and well written book was published in 1928 by a physician



of St. Louis who was interested in medical history. It shows much study of records of events both in Europe and the United States and is probably the best illustrated account readily available.<sup>42</sup>

Mention has already been made of "The Hubbardton Raid" at the medical college in Castleton, Vermont, in 1830. The forty-ninth anniversary of this episode was observed at Castleton on November 29, 1879 in the form of an "oyster supper," a favored method of entertainment in the latter decades of the nineteenth century in New England. A physician who had been in practice in Castleton for more than twenty years read on this occasion a poem with the title of "Song of the Hubbardton Raid." It is written in the meter of Longfellow's *Hiawatha* and contains nearly five hundred lines.<sup>43</sup>

Another piece of poetry regarding grave robbing contains only a few lines in halting meter and defective rhyme that attempts to predict the final destiny of most physicians. These lines occur in an epitaph in a cemetery in Hoosick, New York. They read as follows:<sup>44</sup> "Ruth Sprague, aged nine, died 1846. She was stolen from the grave by Roderick R. Clow and dissected at Dr. P. M. Armstrong's office at Hoosick, New York, from which place her mutilated remains were obtained and deposited here.

"Her body stolen by fiendish men,  
Her bones anatomized,  
Her soul, we trust, has risen to God,  
Where few physicians rise."

Dr. Prosper Merrick Armstrong was graduated at the Berkshire, Medical Institution at Pittsfield, Massachusetts, in 1826. A record of Mr. Clow has not been found.

An interesting item in this group of literature, and now a rare item for collectors of medical history, is a novel published in Boston in 1846.<sup>45</sup> The author was a student in Harvard Medical School during one session a few years earlier. He did not continue in medicine but became a writer. His work was articles in magazines, short novels, and tales, chiefly of a lurid nature. He was one of the popular writers of the latter half of the nineteenth century and published more than twenty novels. The novel here described was one of his earlier works.

The scene is Boston. The major theme is grave robbing with a secondary theme of prostitution, which reflects the current public opinion of that era regarding the morals of medical students. They were reputed to be given to drunkenness, sexual immorality, gambling, and other excesses to such an extent that they were not welcomed in polite society. This popular opinion

arose in large part from the fact that every medical student was considered to be a grave robber, either actual or potential, and grave robbing was popularly considered despicable. Some medical students of that period (and others) strove to live up, or down, to their reputation with the laity.

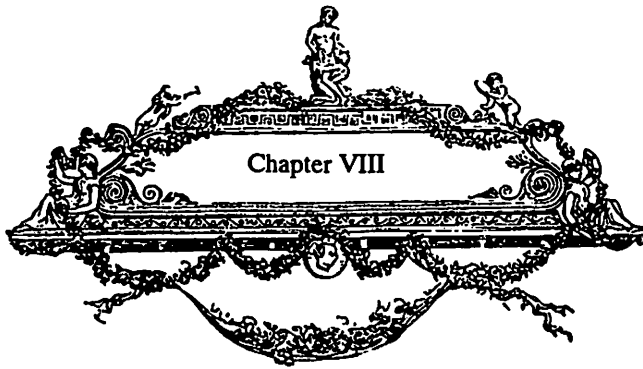
The plot is unique. A commercial grave robber brings to a medical student the body of a young woman. The student, on viewing the body, concludes that it is too beautiful to be dissected. He calls the grave robber and pays him to return the body to its grave. The student removes a ring of peculiar design from a finger of the body and replaces it with one from his own hand, also of peculiar design.

The grave robber, instead of returning the body to its grave as directed, sells it to a second medical student, who, noticing signs of life, calls in a "medical professor," and with the use of electricity they revive the young woman and she is restored to health and her family.

A few months pass and the first medical student is introduced to a beautiful young woman at a social gathering and recognizes on her hand the ring he formerly owned. He asks to examine it. The young woman says she has no idea where she acquired the ring. The student then shows her the ring on his own finger which she at once recognizes as one she formerly owned. They are married and live happily ever after.

This ingenious plot shows imagination. However, in a history of the southern part of Maine, under the heading of "Fireside Tales," a story is told of a young woman who apparently died suddenly and was buried late in the same day. That night a medical student disinterred the body. He noticed signs of life when carrying the body to the residence of his preceptor, where they revived the young woman, and she and the medical student were later married. Although the author of the volume says that at the time this was written there were people of veracity yet living who attested the truth of the story, the tale itself has internal evidence of falsity, such as the disinterment by one individual singlehanded.<sup>46</sup>

The occurrence of this bizarre plot in two tales seems a curious coincidence until it is recognized that the author of the novel was a native of the region in which the scene of the second tale is laid. These two related tales suggest the topics of revival after apparent death and of burial alive.

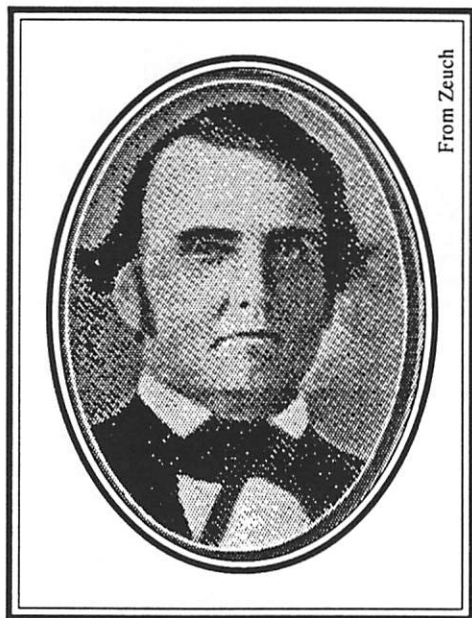


### **Dr. G.W. Richards and the Franklin Institute**

In 1842 several public spirited entrepreneurs from St. Charles, Illinois, simultaneously recognized the opportunity presented by the void in medical education in Illinois. Bela Hunt, Read Ferson, Doctors A.B. Dewolf and Thomas Whipple, and six others sought to monopolize the field by using their substantial political influence to cause the Illinois General Assembly to pass an Act incorporating at St. Charles "*The Literary and Medical College of the State of Illinois*." <sup>47</sup> In spite of the impressive name, the Assembly stipulated that the new college could only operate within Kane County. No record exists to indicate that the august sounding institution ever caused a class to be taught or a degree to be awarded. If the board of directors thought that they had insured for themselves a monopoly, they were mistaken.

For while the Hunt-Ferson-Dewolf faction was legislating, Dr. George W. Richards was in town and already teaching. Richards was a giant in the field of medical education in the Midwest, having had a hand in the formation of medical schools in Indiana, Illinois, and Iowa. Born in Norwalk, Connecticut in 1800, he graduated from the College of Physicians and Surgeons of the Western District of the State of New York at Fairfield in 1828. <sup>48</sup> Like so many westerling sons of the Nutmeg State, Dr. Richards was a born pedagogue.

Just when Dr. Richards first arrived in St. Charles is disputed. One of his first students put the year at 1839. W.G. Todd remembered that Richards had arrived in town from Lockport, Illinois. With him Richards brought the body

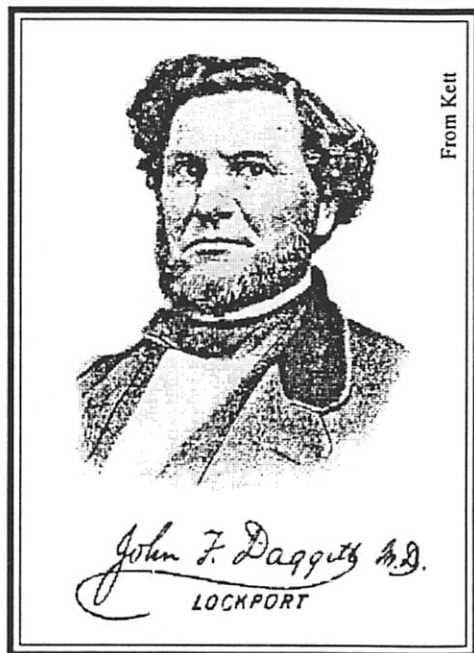


**George Washington Richards, M.D.**

of a recently killed canal worker<sup>49</sup> to use for anatomic demonstrations. History is silent on how Richards came into possession of his specimen. Todd fondly remembered Richards as "...a splendid teacher."<sup>50</sup>

Actually, the Lockport connection may have been more significant than anybody has realized. For Lockport was the home of a prominent frontier physician named John F. Daggett, M.D. Daggett was born in Charlotte, Chittenden County, Vermont, on February 19th 1815. After a common school education, he began teaching at the age of 16. He then entered into professional study, probably as a student of some local physician. He attended the medical lectures at Woodstock, Vermont, and he also attended lectures at the school in Pittsfield, Mass. He received his diploma from Woodstock in 1837, and arrived in Lockport in 1838. Thus, he was a few years junior to Dr. Richards.

Now Dr. Daggett had a distinguished and unblemished career in Illinois. However, in Northern Illinois the name of Daggett was not unassociated with dishonor during the late 1830's and early 40's. A man named Daggett, "...who had once been a Baptist preacher in the East, but had fallen from his high



estate...," was charged by the legendary Rock River Regulators with stealing horses. He was found guilty by the posse, and sentenced to 500 lashes on his bare back. The "agonized appeals...of a very prepossessing daughter" of about sixteen secured a remission of the sentence on condition that Daggett immediately leave the vicinity.

Unfortunately for poor Daggett, a part of the Regulator posse had a change of heart and returned to administer ninety-six lashes "well laid on." During the course of this punishment Daggett admitted to participating in the theft, and he was afterward never

seen in Northern Illinois. A short while later the Regulators further reduced the zeal of the banditti by apprehending, trying, and shooting two members of the Driscoll family. What relation, if any, this Baptist preacher turned horse thief was to the eminent Dr. Daggett is not known.<sup>51</sup>

Shortly after Dr. Daggett's arrival in Lockport, he was marshall of the grand Fourth of July procession. He was also appointed as "...a committee of one to procure..." the services of a "fiddler" for the affair to be held at the Canal office. The only fiddler "...of any note was living in St. Charles, Kane Co." The old fellow's services being in great demand for the "Fourth," a spirited bidding war ensued. Dr. Daggett was not to be denied, and for \$60.00, the Lockport celebration promised to be the liveliest in Northern Illinois. Regrettably, the newly affluent violinist over refreshed himself from the cider jug, and the orchestral portion of the evening ended somewhat prematurely. This minor flaw did not tarnish the luster of Dr. Daggett's civic contribution. Dr. Daggett later served as editor of a newspaper and as a state legislator. He was clearly a pillar of his early pioneer community.

Not until the 1920's did a darker side of Dr. Daggett's character come to

light. While researching the history of anatomical study in Illinois, Dr. Otto Kampmeier read Waite's work on the identical topic in New England.<sup>52</sup> Waite reported that only seven indictments were ever handed down in Vermont for "disinterring the body of the dead." Four episodes of grave robbing led to seven indictments of five individuals.

The two convictions stemmed from a grave robbing in Burlington, Vermont, in March, 1834. Two brothers, one a student at the Clinical School of Medicine at Woodstock, were arrested, tried, and convicted. The records of the Vermont State Prison show that the two men were received on September 2, 1834. The trail proceedings apparently lead to the following letter, signed by twenty five citizens of Burlington, found by Dr. Waite in a second hand book store in Vermont:<sup>53</sup>

Burlington, March 25, 1834.

To the Faculty of the Medical College at  
Woodstock Vermont.

Gentlemen,

The examination of John F. Daggett, bound over for a trial at the next term of the County Court, recently a student in your institution, as well as very intelligible intimations from him since his trial renders it certain, in the opinion of the undersigned and of this community, that the body of Mrs. Holbrook late of this place was removed to Woodstock and is now in your College. Mrs. Holbrook was, and her family are highly respectable; and the disinterment of her remains has occasioned to her relatives a distress which you can properly appreciate, and is universally regarded as a vile outrage which will not be submitted to unless the laws have lost their power to punish.

Information upon which we rely renders it probable that the dissecting Knife has not been used upon her remains; and the undersigned submit to you, Gentlemen, whether

Nelson

your duty to the publick does not demand that her body be restored. We are unwilling to beleive {sic} that Gentlemen so respectable as the Faculty of the Woodstock Medical School would countenance in the smallest degree an outrage of the kind—and although we fully believe that the true character of the outrage was unknown to you at the time, and would be indignantly reprobated by you at any time, yet we can have little doubt that your endeavors to procure the restoration of the body would be successful, and probably would be the sole means of effecting it.

We ask, therefore, your assistance and believe it will be granted, as due to justice, to the feelings of a family lacerated for the means, the atrocious motive of gain, to public opinion and to the character of your institution.

Yours respectfully.

The older of the two Daggett brothers served the full three year sentence. The younger one was released after serving two years in prison, finished his studies at Woodstock, and left immediately for the west. Whether the later career of the older brother included the Baptist ministry is not known. The name of the younger resurrectionist was John F. Daggett!<sup>54</sup>

Dr. Richards informally taught anatomy to a group of eager students immediately upon his arrival in St. Charles from Lockport in 1839.<sup>55</sup> Dr. Daggett knew the way to St. Charles from Lockport ever since his “fiddler” sortie there, which also happened to occur in 1839. It is difficult to accept that two men who shared such zeal for anatomical study did not at least know each other. How much beyond acquaintance their relationship went can only be speculated, but anatomic material was frequently procured at a distance from sites of instruction.

In 1842 Richards organized the Franklin Medical College, the first medical

school in Illinois to actually operate. Richards did not avail himself of the charter of the previously incorporated St. Charles school, but rather formed his own board of trustees (Horace Bancroft, William Rounseville, Lucius Foote, John S. Christian, Alex. H. Baird, Leonard Howard and Stevens S. Jones). Dr. Whipple died that year and Dr. Dewolf became associated with the Franklin Institute, as did others, like Dr. Nichols Hard. A year after Richards commenced instruction, Rush Medical College was founded in Chicago.<sup>56</sup>

Just where Richards held his classes and demonstrations is another disputed point. Local tradition holds that it was the limestone building that still stands on the corner of First Avenue and Main in St. Charles.<sup>57</sup> Another account states that the limestone building that once housed the school has since been torn down. Still others recollected the site to have been a white faced building in the next block just east of the river, where Mr. Gartner ran his bakery in the 1920's, and since razed to make way for the current St. Charles municipal building.<sup>58</sup> Perhaps both structures were used at various times.

The Franklin Medical Institute flourished for several years. At least it continued to graduate many of the physicians who then took up practices in Northern Illinois towns like Oregon, Sycamore, Hicks Mill (now Kingston), and Sugar Grove. Dr. Richards received a faculty appointment as Professor of Anatomy and Physiology at LaPorte University in Indiana, lending further prestige to his own institution. Other prominent physicians joined the faculty, and with the continued growth of St. Charles, the future looked bright.

Furthermore, Richards was one of the wealthiest men in Kane county by 1848, at least in terms of taxable personal property. The assessor put Richard's personal property at a value of \$1582. Such local scions as Bela Hunt and Read Ferson were assessed at less than half that figure.<sup>59</sup> In 1846 it was said that Dr. Richards had the names of three quarters of the residents of St. Charles on his books.<sup>60</sup>

Richards was Professor of Anatomy, but human material for demonstration was always difficult to find. Early in his tenure in St. Charles Richards came into possession of the skeleton of a Potawatomie Chief who had been buried sitting up and with his worldly possessions, as was the Indian custom. The exact site of the violated grave is lost to history, but it was on the farm of Calvin Colton in Mayfield Township in central DeKalb County west of Ohio Grove.<sup>61</sup> Indeed, Richard's may have possessed the troubled bones of old Ontac himself. (In Iowa, a similar resurrection befell the remains of poor Black Sparrow Hawk.)

However, Dr. Knapp related that in the year 1848 eleven "subjects" had



# Western Mercury

GENEVA, KANE CO., ILL.

Thursday, July 19, 1869.

**✂** We apologize to our readers this week on account of the length of our story. We could not avoid giving the whole of it in this number. We can assure them that although they have perused one similar to this within a few weeks, yet this one excels in interest, &c., and on the whole is quite an interesting document. The moral of the story is applicable to a great many individuals.

**✂** Cholera still continues its ravages and is spreading. A fatal case occurred at St. Charles on Friday last, which, however, might have been prevented by a timely application of remedies. It is on the increase at Chicago. St. Louis is still suffering dreadfully—150 deaths occurred there on 11th inst. It is also raging with unabated fury in Cincinnati, and is on the increase in New York, and other principal cities.

**✂** The weather continues highly favorable for the wheat and hay harvest, which is progressing very rapidly. We are sorry to hear, however, that winter wheat has been materially injured by the rust.

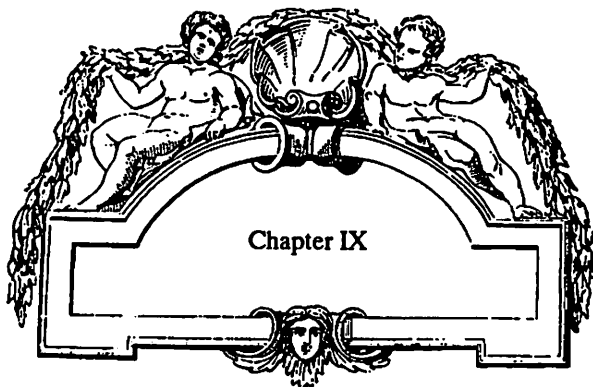
From the Geneva Western Mercury

been used in demonstrations by Dr. Richards, and that both Dr. Richards and Dr. Hard had "amphitheatres" above their offices where students could view or participate in dissection of human material.

One of the St. Charles medical students was a lad named John Rood from the vicinity of Lodi (now Maple Park) at the west central edge of Kane County. In 1849 Rood actually may have been a student of Dr. A.B. De Wolf, not Richards.<sup>62</sup> Rood's family later ran a prosperous carriage works in Lodi, but young John aspired to a more learned profession. Dr. Everts later recalled his schoolmate as "...poor and ambitious, and being unable to pay for material necessary in the prosecution of his studies, he resolved to procure it himself."<sup>63</sup>

Rood was about the same age as George Richards, Jr., the professor's

son. The two had youthful adventure and a clandestine purpose in mind when they and a third unnamed student (Harvey?) hired a two horse spring-wagon and headed west one April day in 1849. Whether they pursued their errand with Dr. Richard's blessing or knowledge has never been learned.



### **The Richards Riot**

The verifiable details of the Rood-Richards expedition of resurrection that culminated in the destruction of the Franklin Medical College are lost in the murky depths of northern Illinois folklore, though the essential elements of the legend are well enough documented. Plus, many of the physical artifacts of the affair can still be plainly seen. The most contemporaneous account of the "*affray*," written in 1868, is also perhaps the most fanciful. Henry L. Boies<sup>64</sup> of DeKalb County wrote that first early account, but his narrative bears the marks of both bitter partisanship and vivid imagination. None the less, supposedly more scholarly accounts written during this century contain more verifiable factual errors than Boies'.<sup>65</sup>

As Rood, Richards, and their co-conspirator bounced along the route of the old plank road that ran from St. Charles through Campton Hills to Sycamore past Timothy Garfield's Tavern, they began to lose a little nerve.<sup>66</sup>

The trio may have been experienced in their trade, as rumors of empty graves had become all too common after Professor Richards came to St. Charles. Rood was said by some to have financed his education through such procurements. In fact, the three may have been traveling toward more distant opportunities where they were totally unexpected. Rood must have known that the sixteen year old bride of George Kinyon had very recently been laid to what grieving families had hoped would be eternal rest in the Ohio Grove Cemetery, just a couple of miles north and west of Lodi. (Dr. Everts recalled that "a friend

or relative" tipped Rood off to the death of Marilla.<sup>67</sup> When the spring-wagon passed the north edge of Ohio Grove the three young strangers stopped at James Lovell's tavern, which was located north of where Lovell Road runs into what is now called Barber Green Road. While the three supped and otherwise fortified themselves, Lovell's young daughter overheard a few snatches of conversation as she waited on their table with victuals and lubrication for their tongues. What the girl heard horrified her.

She immediately reported her suspicions to her father, who at first dismissed them as flights of a young girl's fancy. But when she insisted, Lovell sent a boy out to reconnoiter the strangers' wagon. The lad reported back the disturbing intelligence that the wagon contained shovels, ropes, and other paraphernalia suitable for grave robbing!

Of course, an alternate explanation for Lovell's apprehensions may have been that Lovell knew young John Rood, who had grown up nearby, and knew him also to be a student of medicine.

In any event, by the time the three would-be thieves were back on their way to Sycamore, Lovell had set a plan into motion. Knowing of only two recent deaths in the area, that of Marilla Kinyon buried at Ohio Grove and that of a "friendless German" buried in the south burying ground at Sycamore, Lovell reasoned that the late, unlamented German was the likely object of the trio's raid. Consequently, Lovell sent a messenger to H.A. Joslyn, a friend and neighbor of George Kinyon and of the grieving father of Marilla, David Churchill. Joslyn lived just across the road from the Baptist Church and the Ohio Grove Cemetery and only a couple of miles south and west of Lovell's.

At this juncture, Boies' narrative becomes so complex as to stretch the bounds of complete credibility, although all his characters and his geography are thus far quite verifiable. According to Boies, Joslyn, who lived a few hundred yards from the farms of Kinyon and Churchill in central Cortland Township, was sent on ahead to raise the alarm in Sycamore, while Lovell traveled to alert Kinyon and Churchill of the imminent danger. On the other hand, Joslyn was for many years a sheriff or deputy sheriff of DeKalb County, so his more active role is plausible.

Somehow Joslyn is said to have gotten astride the St. Charles-Sycamore road some few miles north of his farm before the felonious trio passed. While this feat is possible, it would have required great resolve and a fast horse on the part of Harry Joslyn. Preceding the suspects into Sycamore, Joslyn had time to alert the constable, Herman Furness, and raise a posse. Boies' narrative thus portrays three armed squads of men lying in the grass in the cold April night,



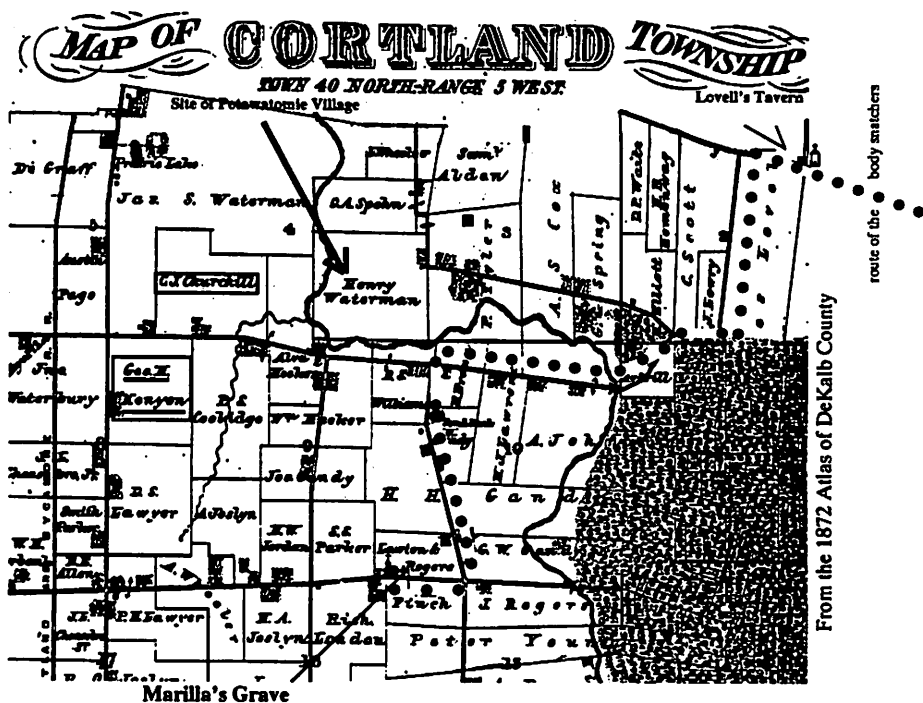
**Dr. DeWolf's House [in 1925] on Main Street  
in St. Charles [Yur's Funeral Home in 1991]**

hiding, awaiting the commission of the ghastly crime. One suspects that Boies, a lawyer and no lover of physicians, scripted this part of the narrative to introduce another element into the plot.

For, according to Boies, when the wagon arrived at the old south Sycamore burying ground<sup>68</sup> that night, four shadowy forms, not three, were seen disembarking from it. The trio had apparently recruited a traitorous Sycamore to their evil scheme. But, alas, the carefully orchestrated trap was sprung prematurely when a member of the posse could not suppress a cough in the cold night air. Startled, three of the four marauders in the burying ground were paralyzed by fear. The fourth, who many members of the posse claimed to recognize as a "resident physician of the village" of Sycamore, bolted into the darkness and escaped.

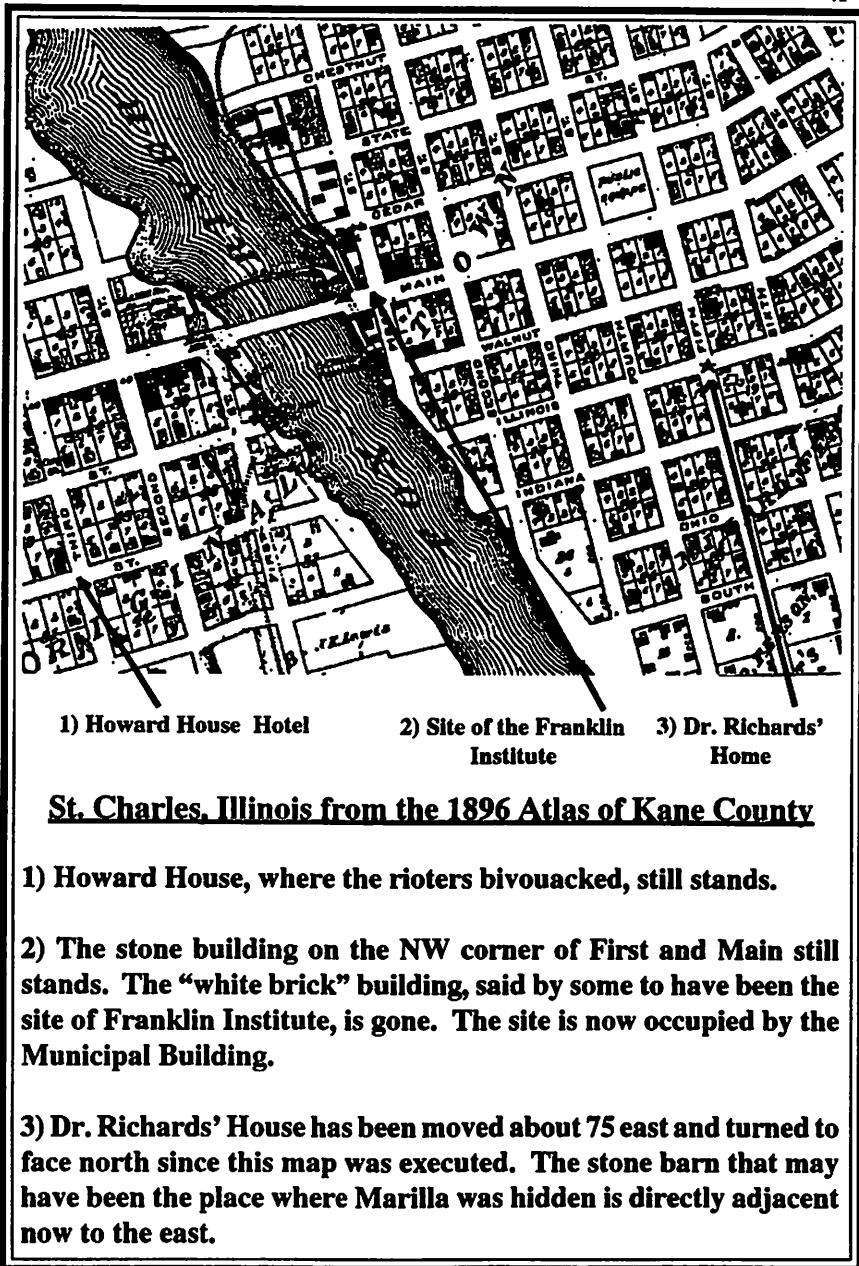
The three captives were told that they would most likely be shot in the first morning light. Boies identified them as the son of Dr. Richards, "a charity student named Rude, who it was reported paid for his medical education by furnishing bodies for dissection," and a third unnamed student. E.L. Mayo, "the principle lawyer of Sycamore" (also a close neighbor of Kinyon and Churchill and elected as a judge in 1849), was summoned.<sup>69</sup> Before the sun rose on the whole affair, Mayo determined that there was insufficient evidence to warrant shooting the three.

Mayo may have been kindly disposed toward young Richards since he had



represented Dr. Richards, Dr. Hard, and Dr. Everts in a suit in DeKalb County in 1846 against a Doctor Flynn who had matriculated in the "*Franklin Institute*" without paying his full tuition.<sup>70</sup> (Possibly, Flynn was the shadowy character who escaped. He may have been trying to "work off" his debt to the Richards' Institute.) The already event filled evening was apparently still young when the three thwarted would be felons were escorted out of town.

Meanwhile, back at the Ohio Grove Cemetery, Churchill and Kinyon kept a lonely vigil over the tomb of lost daughter and wife. But all was quiet there. In fact, two of Marilla's girlish friends had carefully laid twine across the grave to serve as a warning if anyone violated the site. The twine lay undisturbed. Not yet completely satisfied, the grave was gently probed by anxious loved ones for evidence of tampering. The surface had barely been disturbed when the horrified family discovered lying in the dirt the comb that had adorned Marilla's hair when she had been laid to rest.<sup>71</sup> In a frenzy, the coffin was exhumed. It was empty!



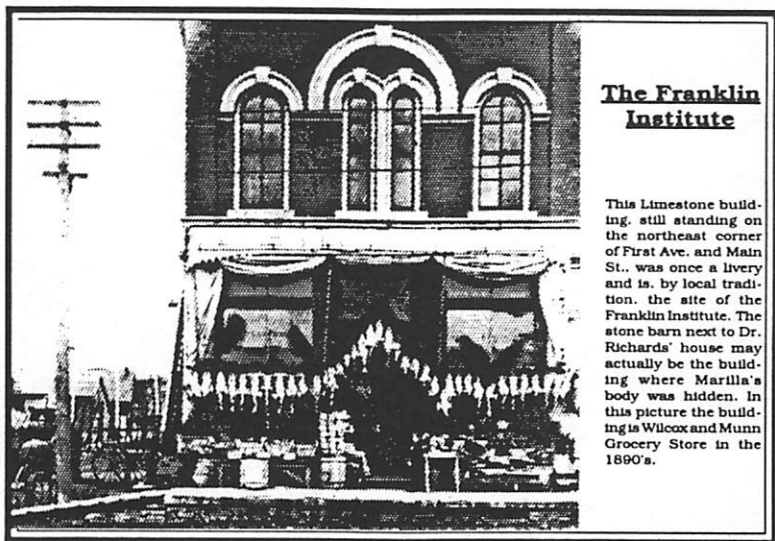
1) Howard House Hotel

2) Site of the Franklin  
Institute

3) Dr. Richards'  
Home

**St. Charles, Illinois from the 1896 Atlas of Kane County**

- 1) Howard House, where the rioters bivouacked, still stands.
- 2) The stone building on the NW corner of First and Main still stands. The "white brick" building, said by some to have been the site of Franklin Institute, is gone. The site is now occupied by the Municipal Building.
- 3) Dr. Richards' House has been moved about 75 east and turned to face north since this map was executed. The stone barn that may have been the place where Marilla was hidden is directly adjacent now to the east.

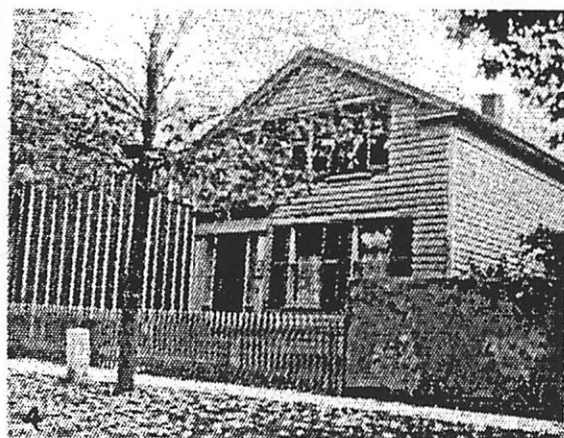


David Churchill was described as "a noble old man, honored and loved by the whole community" and his grief became the catalyst for rallying the countryside to his cause. Most of Boies' description may have been true, except that David Churchill drowned at the young age of 44 in 1854 while returning from the gold fields of California. (Marilla's mother, Maria, lived to age 91, dying in 1901.)<sup>72</sup> Boies' may have mistaken David for his kinsman, Reverend Castle Churchill,<sup>73</sup> who was the first school teacher in Ohio Grove, and did live to a ripe old age. In any event, a party of twelve relatives and neighbors set off in hot pursuit of the robbers.

Just how and when the robbers surreptitiously stole Marilla, Boies does not speculate. Legend holds that Marilla was hidden for a time in a haystack at Garfield's Tavern.<sup>74</sup> In fact, her remains may have been stolen the night before the frenetic night of Boies' narrative, and transported part way back to St. Charles. Had not the trio become greedy, the theft of poor Marilla might never have been discovered.

Arriving in St. Charles, the pursuing party went immediately to "Richard's Institute," which Boies described as a "...large stone building, formerly a barn, which served as a lecture and dissecting room..."<sup>75</sup> There the posse found a horse "...splashed with mud and foaming with perspiration."

The horse, of course, belonged to the Sycamore physician who was



**The house of Dr. George W. Richards  
after it was moved to face Illinois Street**

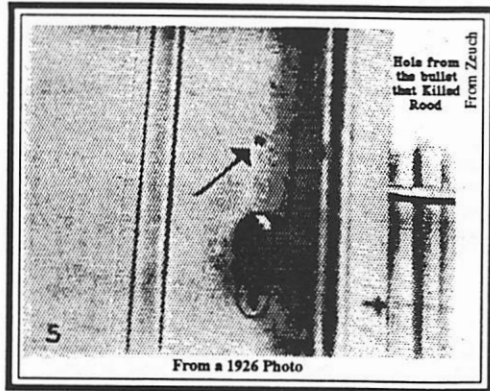
suspected of having been the shadowy escapee from the south burying ground, and who also happened to be a graduate of Dr. Richards' school. Knowing the alarm had been sounded, the Churchill party searched the limestone building anyway, and found numerous "fragments of human bodies," but not poor Marilla in fraction, sum, or total.

Dejected and about to quit their painful mission, George Kinyon's downcast eye glimpsed "...upon the stone flagging of a floor, a lock of golden hair...the peculiar shade of his lost wife's hair..." When Professor Richards was confronted with this damning, if circumstantial evidence, he was said to have replied: "I have no subjects now, but if you will come back in a few days I will have a lot of 'em, and from out your way too."

On this cordial note, the men from Ohio Grove returned to their homes. Just what was going through the mind of the distraught George Kinyon can be easily imagined. He had married his pretty blond bride on November 12th, 1848, and fair Marilla was only 16 when she died on March 26th, 1849.<sup>77</sup> She had been little older than a toddler when David and Maria came to Dekalb County in 1838. George had chiseled into her headstone the touching inscription "Remember thy creator in the days of thy youth."

If Boies is to be believed, poor George Kinyon did not receive any comfort





in his misery from his neighbors. Rather, when they learned that Kinyon had not taken the life of the villainous Richards on the spot when the lock of hair had been discovered, they berated the poor grief stricken man.

Taunts instead of condolences greeted the entire returning party. Quickly a second force, larger and better armed, was assembled for an

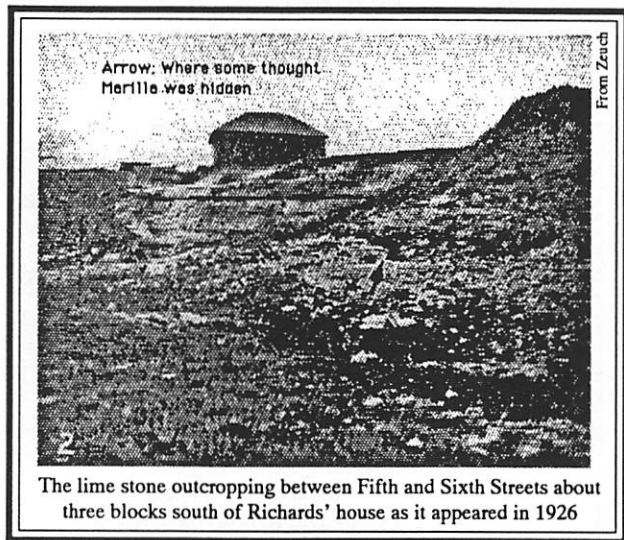
assault on the Richards' Institute. Forty men set forth, and they recruited four times more on their way from among the outraged populace, (including a contingent from Geneva, by one unlikely account).<sup>78</sup> Fortunately for Richards and his student body, a spring freshet had washed away the bridge at St. Charles.<sup>79</sup> A crucial cooling off period was forced on the vigilantes when they reached the western bank of the Fox while a temporary foot bridge was fashioned.

The mob bivouacked outside and inside Howard's Tavern at 3rd and Illinois, a building that later housed an overall factory and still stands. Ironically enough, Leonard Howard was an original trustee of the Franklin Medical School, a fact he and his wife undoubtedly did not divulge to their guests. Concerned citizens scurried about trying to find a responsible civil authority interested in intervening (Howard himself was a deputy sheriff), but those individuals seemed to have recognized that the confrontation, now quite literally brewing at Howard's, could not be thwarted.

The committee of five sent to parlay with Richards (his house was on the southeast corner of Fifth Avenue and Illinois) returned to the main force after brief and unsuccessful negotiations during which Richards pleaded ignorance of the whole affair. In the interim, a "German" turncoat employee of Richards allegedly reported to the boisterous invaders that he had witnessed in Richards' dissecting room "...a golden haired young woman, whose appearance perfectly corresponded with the description of Mrs. Kinyon."

The entire angry throng that legend has swelled to the hundreds (others have reported the mob as being between 40 and 200)<sup>80</sup> then gathered in front of Professor Richards' little Greek Revival house. (The house, recently reno-

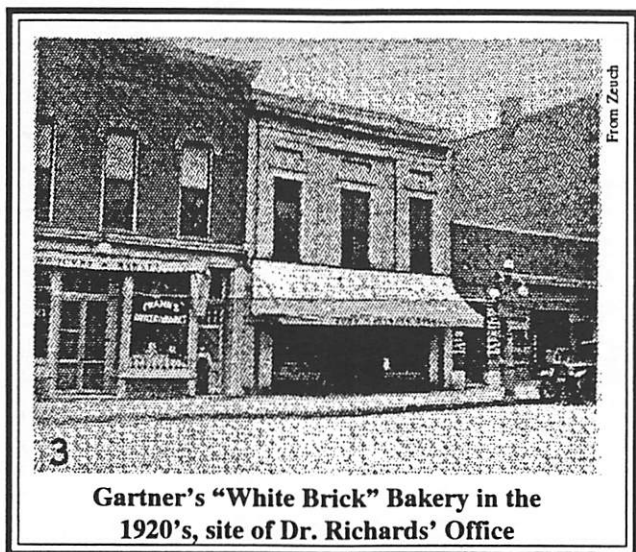
Note added in 2020: The daughter of Otho Perkins later recalled how Dr. Richards had saved her own life when she was grievously burned at age 4. The Perkins place was very close to where Marilla's body had been hidden. She also remembered "Fritz," Richard's loyal hired man. *Sycamore True Republican*, May 11, 1918.



vated, faces Illinois now in the middle of the block between Fifth and Sixth Avenues). Richards appeared at the door, "heartless, impudent and defiant." Kinyon spied Rood and "could hardly be restrained from shooting him on the spot." The date most likely for the affair was April 19th, 1849.

As is usual in these types of controversies, the finger that squeezed the first trigger cannot be identified. Boies claimed that when Richards barred his door to the invaders, an attempt to storm the place by force was greeted with the muzzle of a gun. Only the quick action of Churchill in deflecting the muzzle to the earth saved a life. Kinyon then "fired blindly" through the door. Rood, who was using his hindquarters to force closed the door to the besieged headquarters, received Kinyon's bullet and was "pierced through the hips".

A general melee ensued, during which "every window and sash" of Richards house was "smashed to atoms." Old Gilman Smith of Sycamore, a veteran of the War of 1812, was credited by Boies with having put two bullets into Dr. Richards, one in the shoulder very near the apex of the right lung, and another in the leg. In a letter written in 1885 Dr. Everts described the injuries this way: a bullet "...passed through the right shoulder joint of Dr. Richards below the collar bone, wounding the apex of the right lung, and so injuring the nerves that supplied the right arm as to produce immediate and permanent paralysis of that arm. He received also a blow from a stone on the left side of



**Gartner's "White Brick" Bakery in the  
1920's, site of Dr. Richards' Office**

the face which knocked him down.”<sup>81</sup>

Actually, according to Everts, Richards returned to the front porch of the house dripping blood from his shoulder wound, and was then literally knocked from the fray by the stone that struck him.

Apparently none of the attackers was injured. This fact alone casts much doubt on the veracity of Boies' account, since an armed defending force firing from a protected position inside the house should have inflicted more casualties than the attacking force in a prolonged siege.

Boies claimed that the wounded Richards, shot through the brachial plexus, was “cowed” and begged for mercy. Other accounts described a completely unbowed Richards appearing unarmed and defiant on his front porch to chastise the lawless attackers for their brutal and unprovoked acts. All accounts then agree that Richards was struck in the face by a stone or brick, and had to be dragged back into the house. Dr. Richards' daughter Mary (the wife of Dr. Everts), livid with anger, was then said to have appeared on the porch to demand the dispersal of the mob.

Returning to their base on the western bank of the Fox, the invaders pondered their next move. They still had not recovered the object of their mission. The defenders were not idle—they posted a guard on the foot bridge,

## **Aurora Beacon.**

**THURSDAY, APRIL 12, 1849.**

### **Accident—Surgical Operation.**

A child between two and three years of age, son of Marcus LATIMER, of this village, was taken out of a cistern, near the house, into which it is supposed he had precipitated himself in search of his shoes, which he first threw in. He was soon restored from his nearly drowned state, but in a few days was seized with fever, followed by acute inflammation of the larynx, (the upper part of the wind-pipe,) which, in a few hours from the attack, ran so high as to threaten instant death by suffocation. In this emergency Dr. HARRIS was called in, and proceeded immediately, as the only resource left, to perform the operation of *tracheotomy*—(cutting an opening in the wind-pipe.) The urgent symptoms were immediately relieved; but the little sufferer continued in a very precarious state for some thirty-six hours, when he began to show obvious signs of improvement. He is now (the eighth day) in a fair way to recover, and breathes quietly through the natural passages.

and intended to contest the invaders recrossing. Cooler heads then finally prevailed. A prominent St. Charles lawyer and a friend of Churchill, William Barry, intervened (Barry later became a Kane County judge, but he was also licensed in New York to practice medicine!).<sup>82</sup>

Mrs. Caroline Howard, the Innkeeper's wife, was a local self proclaimed "spiritualist" and clairvoyant (who local legend holds once counselled the troubled Mary Todd Lincoln).<sup>83</sup> She was said by some to have divined the location of poor Marilla's remains.<sup>84</sup> Most others invoked a more worldly process of discovery.

Barry urged the invaders to return home in the morn-

ing. He argued that further blood shed would not avail anything. Barry boldly promised that poor Marilla would return home soon. Temporarily satisfied, the angry mob left St. Charles, vowing a return if Barry failed. Boies told of the women of St. Charles gaily waving from their windows to the retiring heroes, in a scene similar to the liberation of Paris. Summoning Dr. Nichols Hard and Hard's brother in law John Farnsworth, Barry expected to learn of the whereabouts of the body. To his surprise, Dr. Hard, who was affiliated with the Franklin Medical College, knew nothing. Almost that very day Dr. Hard had performed Illinois' first tracheostomy. No one made note of the irony that the life had been saved by virtue of anatomical knowledge.

Hard did agree to intercede with the medical students. He brought back to Barry a student named Harvey,<sup>85</sup> who alone claimed to know where the body was hidden. Durant claimed that Barry met with all the medical students at the Howard House told them that if they did not return the body they would all die.

Dr. Danford from Geneva also told them the same thing. Harvey and Barry, in the dead of night, went to the spot where the body was hidden, supposedly near "the Geneva Cemetery." Again legend has it that the body was located in a shallow grave on a limestone ledge near Cedar Bluff "...within a few rods of the village of Geneva." But many feel that two legends have here become intermingled.

In 1842 "a citizen of St. Charles" wrote a little essay for the first edition of the St. Charles *Patriot* called "The Spirit Bluff: A Tale of St. Charles."<sup>86</sup> The author describes the promontories now occupied by Oak Hill Cemetery and Good Templar Park in Geneva. The bluff just north and west of "Cedar Run Creek" was known both as "Spirit Bluff" and "Cedar Bluff" and contained

Upon the first appearance of the epidemic in our village, many good and able bodied men were "taken with a leaving." How grateful the contrast, in seeing Physicians of the adjoining villages come to our aid, and at a time too, when our own were worn down with fatigue.

Many persons have reason to remember kindly, Dr. Buck of Little Rock, who left his family and practice to come to our aid and battle with the monster.

Dr. Richards of St. Charles is deserving of the highest encomiums of praise for his services. Such acts spring from noble hearts, and have their own reward.

**OUR PHYSICIANS.**—Too much praise cannot be awarded to our Physicians who have remained in town and responded to calls during the prevalence of the cholera. Ready and attentive to every patient, and in many instances performing the duties of nurse as well as prescribing, their kind attentions will be long remembered.

# Aurora Beacon.

THURSDAY, MAY 3, 1849.

## United States Senator.

There seems to be great doubt involved in the matter of appointing or electing a Senator from this state, to fill the place to which Gen. SHIELDS was elected last winter. It is contended by some that the vacancy did not occur until Gen. S. was declared ineligible by the Senate, and that the fact of notifying Governor FRENCH of such vacancy implies his power to appoint. Others maintain that the mere form of electing Gen. SHIELDS did not necessarily constitute him a Senator, and that, in reality, the Legislature failed to elect, by casting a majority of its votes for a man who was ineligible to the office.

The St. Louis Republican says, upon what it believes good authority, that Gov. FRENCH has come to the conclusion that he does not possess the power, under the constitution, to appoint a Senator to fill the existing vacancy. If this be so, there must be a called session of the Legislature, and that before the next Congress convenes.

Dr. Richards, who was recently wounded at St. Charles, was last week removed to Chicago. He was quite feeble, but it was still thought he would recover.

We learn that sixteen persons were last week indicted by the Grand Jury of this county, for joining in the late riot at St. Charles.

## Rock Island Medical School.

THE LECTURES will commence in the New Medical School at Rock Island, on the First Monday of November next, and will continue sixteen weeks.

### FACULTY:

Geo. W. Richards, M. D., of St. Charles, Ill. President, and Professor of the Theory and Practice of Medicine.

M. L. KNAPP, M. D., of Chicago, Ill., Professor of Materia Medica and Therapeutics, and Dean of the Faculty.

C. B. CHAPMAN, M. D., of Madison Wis. Professor of the Principles and Practice of Surgery.

W. S. PIERCE, M. D., of Rock Island, Illinois. Professor of General and Special Anatomy.

JOHN F. SANFORD, M. D., of Farmington, Iowa. Professor of Midwifery and Diseases of Women and Children.

CALVIN Gaudy, M. D., of Taylorville, Ill., Professor of Chemistry and Pharmacy.

S. G. ARMOR, M. D., of Rockford, Ill., Professor of Physiology, Pathology and Medical Jurisprudence.

ORPHEUS EVERTS, M. D., of Fond du Lac, Wis., Demonstrator of Anatomy.

### TERMS:

Matriculation, \$5. Each Professor's Ticket \$10. (Lecturing Ticket (optional.) \$5. Graduation, \$20. Credit on the Professors' Tickets if desired.

The fees are low, boarding very low, and the location free from the distractions and expenses incident to a city, and of easy access. The preparations are complete, and the course of instruction will be full and perfect. One course will enable a Practitioner without a Diploma, to graduate. For further information, address either of the Professors.

M. L. KNAPP, of Chicago.

Dean.

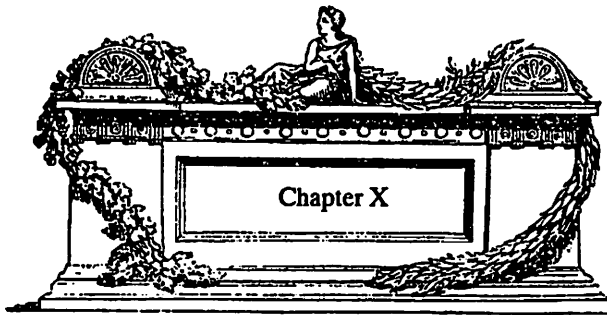
From the *Wisconsin Argus*,  
Madison, September 26th, 1848

Indian burial mounds. The tale itself, an unhappy love story of an Indian maiden, is interesting enough. The then already famous Spirit Bluff or Cedar Bluff with its association with burials thus became a natural, if fictitious, scene for part of the drama of the resurrectionists.

Others have placed the site of Marilla's second temporary grave at what is perhaps a more logical site: the small limestone outcropping just east of now Route 25 where it angles away from the river. This is a just three blocks south of Dr. Richards' barn where the body was probably stashed for a time.

Barry solicited from Mr. Eben Danforth<sup>87</sup> of Geneva, a cabinet maker and noted inventor, a new coffin. With the help of a man named Nelson, Barry retrieved the body, which was naked except for being wrapped in an old horse blanket. Other accounts say it was Captain Lewis Norton who helped Barry with his grisly chore. Barry and his companion washed the body in the river, and Nelson or Norton gave up some of his own clothing for the corpse.

A St. Charles relative of Churchill named Prescott, who discovered directions left anonymously on his door step, found the coffin in some woods west of the river where Barry left it and took it immediately back to Ohio Grove. A second, larger funeral was held, and Marilla was once more and permanently (as far as we now know) laid back to rest in her original coffin with a new lid.<sup>88</sup>



### Aftermath of the Riot

John Rood paid the ultimate price for his alleged crime. After lingering a few weeks with the wound inflicted by George Kinyon, he died on May 12th.<sup>89</sup> The site of his grave is ironically not known, in spite of a search in and around both Maple Park and St. Charles. Could Rood himself have provided educational material for his schoolmates?



A week before Rood died the St. Charles *Platform* reported that Dr. Richards was indicted by a DeKalb County Grand Jury for "exhuming the body of Mrs. Kinyon." Indeed, in the dank and dusty catacombs of the DeKalb County Court House still resides the volume of court records that reports a "true bill" signed by the foreman of the Grand Jury, and setting bail at \$500. No file

**Dr We learn that John Rood, the medical student who was shot in the late affray at St. Charles, died on Saturday last.**

*Aurora Beacon, Thursday, May 17, 1849*

of the proceedings could be found, and no record could be found to indicate that the State's Attorney ever prosecuted the matter.

The Kane County Grand Jury simultaneously indicted sixteen citizens of DeKalb county for their part in the "affray." Regrettably, the record of that proceeding is apparently now stored away "in a barn west of St. Charles somewhere."<sup>90</sup> Boies claimed that Kinyon and Churchill were arrested, but released on bail. The week before the indictments the May 3rd edition of the *Aurora Beacon* reported that Dr. Richards was removed by wagon to Chicago. "He was quite feeble, but it was still thought that he would recover." Recover he did, though he never regained the use of his right arm. He returned to St. Charles, but the Franklin Medical College was heard of no more.

After the attack Dr. Richards had been removed to the home of O.M. Butler, where he remained a few days. The house was patrolled by a guard of citizens including Aaron Blanchard, Hiram Bowers, George Sill, William Buck, Robert Rogers, and Washington Hammon. Then Richards was taken to Chicago in a spring wagon.<sup>91</sup> Richards moved on to Rock Island and then Keokuk, Iowa, named for Black Hawk's arch rival Sac Chief, and founded still another medical school. His days of anatomic dissection and surgery were ended by his paralysis.

The search for "material" for anatomic study in northern Illinois did not end with the St. Charles "affray" of 1849, as the following letter demonstrates. The letter also casts some light on the character and final days of Dr. Richards.<sup>92</sup>

**THE CHOLERA IN CHICAGO.**—It is rumored that the Cholera had broken out in Chicago, and that three deaths had occurred in one day. The *Tribune* contradicts the rumor, and the other city papers, up to Tuesday last, are silent on the subject.

**The St. Charles Platform** says that Dr. RICHARDS, of that place, has been indicted by the Grand Jury of De Kalb county, for exhuming the body of Mrs. KENYON.

**The only bridges on Fox River** are at Dundee, Batavia and Ottawa.—*Chicago Com. Adv.*

We tell you again, friend DUTCH, that the ~~three~~ bridges at this place were not injured by the late flood, and that they are still in good traveling order.

*Aurora Beacon, Thursday May 10, 1849*

*OSWEGO, March 7th, 1851.*

*Geo. A. BUNKER*

*My Dear Sir:*—Can you tell me any thing about *material*? My boys have returned from lectures and we are going to make some preparations; and sir, if you can be instrumental in forwarding our plan I have no doubt you will do so—*immediately*.

I may say in this connection, Sir, that I received your last letter, and was much pleased to find that all great minds run in the same channel. I am still sanguine (not in the one idea) but in the belief that much good may result from our discovery.

Prof. Richards is at Dubuque, thinks of locating there. They had ten graduates and

Nelson

fifty students at the College of Physicians and Surgeons of the Iowa University. Old Doc is the sheet anchor and the strong man in peril and distress, that he ever has been. He resigned again.

Sir, if you will say to me when and where I can find what we want I will be there and no trouble shall follow. We want a boy, age 12 to 14. Don't disappoint us, Sir.

Yours truly,  
Willis Danforth

We shall expect an answer by return mail. Business is moderate today. But, sir, we are preparing for a heavy run this summer. We congratulate you, Sir, and your progress in practice. We expect brighter days for you. We have an eye on you, Sir, and take an honorable pride in witnessing your outgoings, etc.

Most truly Sir, your friend

W. Danforth<sup>93</sup>

By 1925 the St. Charles *Chronicle* would report: "It was pretty well acknowledged that Dr. Richards did not know of the stealing of the body."<sup>94</sup> S.W. Durant, an old and usually reliable St. Charles historian, even went so far as to claim that jealousies among competitors of Richards in St. Charles led to the whole affair with the object of framing Richards and forcing him out of town.<sup>95</sup>

Durant's testimony must be taken at least as seriously as Boies'. Durant was an 18 year old resident of St. Charles when the affair took place. In fact the announcement that his uncle had been appointed postmaster at St. Charles appeared in the same issue of the *Aurora Beacon* that announced Rood's death. Furthermore, S.W. Durant was a professional historian. Not only did he write a history of St. Charles, but he also was involved in historical atlases and other

G. W. RICHARDS, M. D.	R. I. THOMAS, M.
<b>Richards &amp; Thomas,</b>	
<b>PHYSICIANS AND SURGEONS</b>	
<b>DUBUQUE, IOWA,</b>	
OFFICE—Fourth street, in the rear of the City Hotel.	
RESIDENCE—Iowa street, between Eleventh and	
twelfth sts. Jan 7—d2m1m	

from the *Dubuque Miners Journal*, April 6th, 1852

publications all over Illinois. In 1881 he founded the *Valley Chronicle* in St. Charles, which still continues.<sup>96</sup>

The last reference to Dr. Richards while he resided in the Fox Valley appeared in the August 9th, 1849, edition of the *Aurora Beacon*. Cholera was on the rampage in Aurora, and Dr. Richards went there to help.<sup>97</sup> "Dr. Richards of St. Charles is deserving of the highest encomiums of praise for his services. Such acts spring from noble hearts, and have their own rewards."

Dr. Richards was not finished as a medical educator. He removed to Rock Island, Illinois, where he was instrumental in starting another medical school. This time the professors had a charter from the State of Wisconsin that permitted the establishment of a "branch" school. Through this loop hole they were able to circumvent Illinois' more stringent laws. Also, The Franklin Literary and Medical College of Galena was chartered by the State in 1845 (but never functioned), and this may have stood in the way of a charter for the Rock Island school. Jealousy aroused by Richards' success may have been the precipitating factor that caused the creation of both Rush Medical College in Chicago and the Medical School of Illinois College in Jacksonville.<sup>98</sup>

The Rock Island school soon moved to Davenport (apparently after another botched resurrection)<sup>99</sup> and then to Keokuk. Poor Richards never fully recovered his health or his finances, and he was forced to solicit his former students for help. Below is the plaintive epistle he addressed to Dr. George Bunker of Kaneville, Illinois.<sup>100</sup>

KEOKUK, Lee Co., Iowa, Oct. 4th,  
1850.

GEORGE A. BUNKER, M. D.

*My Dear Sir:*—Severely pressed for funds and deprived of (by the injustice of my fellow men) the power of practicing the

*For the Miners' Express.*

# **MEETING OF THE MEDICAL FACULTY.**

At a meeting of the Medical Faculty of Dubuque, held April 23d, Dr. R. S. Lewis being called to the Chair, and Dr. E. Kirkup, appointed Secretary, the following resolutions were adopted:

*Resolved,* That while we deeply deplore the death of our professional brother, Dr. G. W. Richards, cut off from among us in the midst of his usefulness, and in the prime of his manhood, we feel that ourselves and the profession at large have sustained a loss of one of its most devoted advocates—whose medical attainments and social worth were highly appreciated by all within the sphere of his extensive and wide spread reputation.

*Resolved,* That we sincerely sympathize with his afflicted family and relatives in their sad bereavement.

*Resolved,* That we will attend the funeral of our esteemed brother, to-morrow, at the hour appointed.

*Resolved,* That the proceedings of this meeting be published in the daily papers of this city, and that a copy of these resolutions be sent to the widow of the deceased.

R. S. LEWIS, Ch'n.

E. KIRKUP, Sec'y.

From the Dubuque Miner's Journal, April 23, 1853

profession of my choice, I am compelled to call in all my dues and ask of those to whom I have been merciful in time of need to remember me in affliction. Can I appeal to you and my many young medical friends in vain? I think not. I am sure not. If I had an arm on the right side of my body that was of the least use to me I know I never should have been compelled to make this appeal to you. But circumstances open up to us that

which we never can see in the future.

Will you respond to this directed to this place.

In June last I resigned my connection with College of Physicians and Surgeons, expecting never again to meet a medical class—yet by strong and continued importunity I have consented to give one course more, and where my destiny may then fix me I know not. I think, however, it will be in the extreme south. Prospects I think are good in view of a large class here and the citizens of the city are finishing a fine building for a college and another for a hospital. I think they will be ready by term time.

Especially and very truly yours,  
G. W. RICHARDS

“Destiny” did not “fix” Dr. Richards in the “extreme south.” He died in Dubuque, Iowa, on April 22nd, 1853, of pneumonia, an illness perhaps exacerbated by the bullet that injured his right lung. He was attended in his final illness by his son in law and former pupil, Dr. Robert I. Thomas.<sup>101</sup> Another son-in-law, Dr. Orpheus Everts later reported: “It is probable that the injury sustained at the time of the riot in St. Charles predisposed him to the disease [pneumonia] from which he died, but was not the cause of his death.” Ironically, and in spite of extensive efforts, the grave of Dr. Richards has not been found. He likely was buried in the old cemetery on the Dubuque flood plain. The remains from this cemetery were removed to the higher and larger Linwood Cemetery in about 1855, but no records of the early transfers survived.<sup>102</sup> A certain irony exists in the fact that Dr. Richards’ final resting place remains unknown.





### Some Prominent Members of the Faculty

**Armor, Samuel G. (1818-1885).** Samuel G. Armor was born January 29, 1818, in Washington County, Pennsylvania, and soon after came to Ohio with his parents who were of Scotch-Irish descent.

He went first to Franklin College, New Athens, Ohio, which institution in 1872 honored him with the degree of LL.D., then read medicine with Dr. Irvine, Millersburg, Ohio, and graduated from the Missouri Medical College in 1844. Rockford, Illinois, was chosen for his life's work, but the turning-point in his career came in 1847 when he accepted an invitation to deliver a short course of lectures on physiology in Rush Medical College. Later he was tendered the chair of physiology and pathology, but declined because of the previous acceptance of the same chair in the medical department of the University of Iowa, at Keokuk. This position was soon exchanged for the chair of natural sciences in the University of Cleveland (non-medical) in connection with which he also engaged in general practice.



In 1853 Dr. Armor was awarded a prize by the Ohio State Medical Society, which held its annual meeting in Dayton, for an essay, "On the Zymotic Theory of the Essential Fevers." This paper focused the attention of the college men of southern Ohio on the talented young author and led to his accepting in the fall of that year, the chair of physiology and pathology in the Medical College of Ohio, where he soon fell heir to the chair of practice, made vacant by the death of Lawson.

In May, 1856, he married Miss Holcomb, of Dayton, and in 1861, having been tendered a professorship in the University of Michigan, he went to Detroit, becoming a member of the firm of Drs. Gunn & Armor. After a service of five years he accepted the chair of therapeutics, materia medica, and general pathology in the Long Island College Hospital, Brooklyn, and in the following year succeeded to the professorship of practice and clinical medicine made vacant by the resignation of the elder Flint.

After years of wandering this peripatetic teacher found himself at last permanently anchored and retained this position until his death in 1885.

Dr. Armor was tall and well-formed, in complexion dark, with hair straight and black as an Indian's. He was immensely popular in college and one of the finest lecturers to whom I have ever listened. His graceful delivery and modulated voice, the rounded sentences of pure English, and a wealth of illustration enabled him to breathe life and beauty into the driest of medical themes and to enthuse the dullest of students.

Dr. Armor was not a voluminous writer, although his contributions covered a wide range of subjects and were valuable. Neither was he an original thinker. For years he held a position well to the fore among the medical celebrities, and yet he left behind him no lasting imprint upon the doctrines of his day.

Dr. Armor died from cancer of the abdominal viscera in 1885 and sleeps by the side of his first wife in Woodland Cemetery.<sup>103</sup>

William J. Conklin

**A.B. DE WOLF.** One of the oldest and best known physicians of this section, having practiced here for the long period of forty-six years, is Dr. A. B. DeWolf, a native of Trumbull County, Ohio, born March 2, 1817. He is a son of Tensard R. and Polly (Bartholomew) DeWolf, who at an early day came with their parents to Ohio from Connecticut, their native State. Here they reached their maturity, married, and resided until their deaths. Tensard R. DeWolf was a prominent, public man, for many years a member of the Ohio State Legisla-

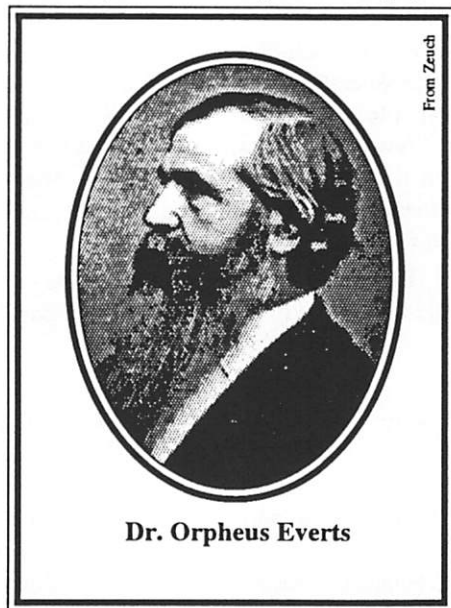


ture. He was in the War of 1812.

Dr. A. B. DeWolf was, after the manner of the boys of his time, reared amid the privations of a pioneer period. He comes of an old and noble line of French ancestry. The progenitors of the DeWolf family in America were three brothers who, coming to the Western continent at an early day, settled in Rhode Island, New Orleans and Canada, respectively. Dr. DeWolf comes of the Rhode Island branch of the family. His grandfather was for seven years a commissioned officer in the War of the Revolution. At the age of fifteen the Doctor entered the academy at Jamestown, Penn., where he remained some time, and when he had attained his nineteenth year he began the study of medicine at West Greenville, Penn., and by close application progressed rapidly. Shortly afterward he entered Ohio Medical College for the purpose of attending lectures. This was about the year 1838. He soon began the practice of his profession at Sharon, Penn., but in 1841 determined to locate farther west, and accordingly started for Iowa, having in his possession letters of recommendation from ex-Gov. Lucas and others. He set off on his journey with a single horse and carriage, and had driven as far as St. Charles, when he became impressed with the beauty of the country and its fine location for a city. Altering his first intentions he determined to locate here, which he did September 22, 1841, and at once commenced the practice of his profession in this place. Some years later he returned to Ohio, and graduated from Cleveland Medical College. During his residence of forty-six years in St. Charles the Doctor has had an extensive practice, and has become well known to the medical fraternity. Politically he is a supporter of the Democratic party. He was one of the charter members of St. Charles Lodge, No. 14, I. O. O. F.

In 1840 Dr. DeWolf formed a happy matrimonial alliance with Mary Herrington, a native of Pennsylvania, and a cousin of A. M. Herrington, who is identified with the history of Kane County as one of its original founders. Her father, Jacob Herrington, was also a prominent citizen, and for fourteen years was a member of the Pennsylvania State Legislature. Dr. and Mrs. DeWolf have had four children (one son and three daughters), of whom two are now living: Mary, wife of Henry M. Sill, of St. Charles, and John S., a resident of Livingston County, Ill. The Doctor is proprietor of a drug business, in which he has been engaged for thirty years, in St. Charles. He and his wife are actively interested in all progressive and deserving movements. The Doctor is in every sense of the word a self-made man, as he has by close study, attentive observation and kind, genial disposition, won for himself the satisfactory results he now enjoys.<sup>104</sup>

**EVERTS, Orpheus (1826-1903)**, pioneer alienist of Indiana. The ancestors of Orpheus Everts came from Vermont and settled in Ohio in 1795. They included Mercy, daughter of Josiah Standish, son of Miles Standish. Orpheus, son of Dr. Sylvanus and Elizabeth Heywood Everts, was born in Salem Settlement, Indiana, on December 18, 1826, and after early education at local schools, studied medicine under his father and Dr. Daniel Meeker. Graduating from the Medical College of Indiana in 1846, he later received honorary degrees from the University of Michigan and Rush Medical College. He began to practice in 1846 at St. Charles, Illinois, but after ten years (1846-1856) retired to take up the editorship of a newspaper in La Porte, Indiana. When he had



**Dr. Orpheus Everts**

served in this capacity for three years he studied law, and was admitted to the bar in 1860. The beginning of the Civil War found him at the front, as surgeon and major of the twentieth regiment Indiana Volunteers. After the war he devoted his attention to psychiatry and diseases of the nervous system, and in 1868 was appointed superintendent of the Indiana Hospital for the Insane, a position held for eleven years; and for thirteen years he was professor of nervous and mental diseases in the medical College of Indiana, then, until his death, medical superintendent of the Cincinnati Sanatorium. For thirty-four years he was an active and honored member of the

American Medico-psychological Association and its predecessor, the American Association of Superintendents of Hospitals for the Insane.

He married March 14, 1847, Mary Richards, daughter of Dr. George W. Richards of St. Charles, Illinois, and had five children: Charles Carroll, Juliett, Orpheus, William Porter, and Carolyn. Charles Carroll and William Porter graduated in medicine, but the latter died soon after finishing his course. Dr. Everts was a frequent contributor to the press. Among his more important

**ORPHEUS EVERTS, Physician & Surgeon, St. Charles, Ill.**

*The Kane County Democrat, Wed. Nov. 15, 1850*

contributions to non-medical literature, were: "Giles and Company, or Views and Interviews concerning Civilization," a novel illustrating some phases of heredity; "The Cliffords," a philosophical allegory introducing impersonations of religion and science; "Facts and Fancies," in blank verse (a modern American epic). He was the author of numerous medical papers published in the "American Journal of Insanity," the "Cincinnati Lancet-Clinic," and "Journal of the American Medical Association." One of the last acts of his professional life was to prepare a paper for the section on "Nervous and Mental Diseases" for the American Medical Association at its meeting in New Orleans, in May, 1903, which appeared in the "Journal of the American Medical Association," April 16, 1904. A tolerably full list is in the Surgeon-general's Catalogue, Washington, District of Columbia.

He died at his home in College Hill, Cincinnati, June 19, 1903. The cause of death being advancing years, and the failure of the digestive functions.<sup>105</sup>

A. G. Drury.

**Hard, Nichols (1818-1851)**, of Aurora, Illinois, was descended from a long line of educated ancestors who had lived in the State of New York. He was one of four brothers, each of whom studied medicine, and three of whom were among the ablest practitioners in northern Illinois during their lifetime. Nichols Hard was born July 4, 1818, probably at Geneva, New York. While his sons were still young, the father, Peter Nichols Hard, moved from New York to Grass Lake near Dexter, Mich., where he was drowned in 1837. Thrown on his own resources when 18 years of age, Nichols matriculated in the Medical College of Ohio at Cincinnati in 1839, and graduated from that school in 1841, when 22 years old. One week after his graduation he began a journey by boat from Cincinnati to New Orleans. A little "Journal," which he kept during the trip, enables us to form some picture of this modest, enthusiastic youth, and to recognize the qualities which characterized him always. There is evidence of his acute power of observation, interest in the objects of nature, love of the beautiful, and a gentle humor. The first entry in the "Journal," a farewell to the "Queen City," "Peace be within thy walls, where I have passed hours of sadness

## Aurora Beacon.

THURSDAY, SEPT. 13, 1849.

### Aurora Woolen Factory.

We yesterday paid this establishment a visit, and were agreeably surprised to find its internal arrangements so nearly completed. The lower story is already filled with the best of machinery, designed for carding, spinning and weaving, most of which is properly adjusted and ready for use. Mr. STOLF, the well known proprietor, informs us that during next week he will commence giving wool to the machines, and that he will then be prepared to manufacture all kinds of cloths on the most reasonable terms.

**SERIOUS ACCIDENT.**—As a young man named JOSEPH LEONER was yesterday engaged in working a threshing machine at Lone Grove, his foot became entangled in the machinery, and was literally torn off at the ankle joint. Dr. N. Hard was called, when it was found necessary to amputate the leg a few inches below the knee. Chloroform was administered in the operation with the greatest success, rendering the patient insensible to the slightest pain, and no injurious effects following its use.

and moments of bliss," suggests that he had not secured his medical education without a struggle. Reference is made to points of interest along the Ohio and Mississippi rivers. At Northbend he saw the "log cabin" of President Harrison and remarked: "Here from this spot on the banks of the Ohio, have the millions of freemen chosen a Chief Magistrate—whether in wisdom or weakness, time will soon inform us." Near Baton Rouge, he accomplished the principal purpose of his journey in visiting an elder half-brother, whom he had never seen. This half-brother, Anson Owen Hard, was his senior by 5 years, and received the degree of M. D. from Yale College in 1836. He was practicing medicine at Stony Point, near Baton

Rouge, La. The "Journal" ends at New Orleans, of which he wrote with much interest. In the fall of 1842, we find him at St. Charles, Ill., beginning his successful career as a teacher, and writing enthusiastic letters of his work and prospects to Eunice Farnsworth, whom he married April 9, 1843.

He continued to teach in the medical school operated by George W. Richards and to practice medicine at St. Charles until 1845, when he moved to Aurora, Ill., where he successfully practiced medicine until his death.

In 1844, Nichols Hard became professor of obstetrics and diseases of women and children in the Medical Department of LaPorte University, and served in this capacity until 1850, when the school was discontinued. Two

addresses prepared by him while connected with the medical school at LaPorte have been round. One is a valedictory address given at the close of the session in 1846, entitled "The Practice of Medicine—Its Roses and Thorns—the Way to Secure the Former and Avoid the Latter." The other address is an introductory lecture read in 1848. He then departed from the common custom and presented a discussion of a purely scientific subject. The subject of "Atresia Vaginae" was discussed in a masterful manner, illustrated from personal experience and showed his skill as a teacher and writer. From the time he settled in St. Charles to his death, he was a popular preceptor of medical students, large numbers of whom came to him for instructions. At the meeting of the Fox River

Medical Association at Elgin Feb. 1, 1850, he "delivered an able and interesting address on cholera, showing its contagious character as exhibited in the epidemic of 1849, especially in which appeared at Aurora, Kane Co., Ill., the fallacy of specific cures and the departure from the usual concomitant symptoms as there exhibited."

In 1850, N. Hard was made professor of anatomy in the University of Iowa at Keokuk. In the summer of 1851, he contracted cholera, and with impaired health an attack of dysentery caused his death, Oct. 16, 1851. A colleague wrote of him: "Prof. Hard maintained a good character as a pleasing and instructive lecturer

during his connection with the medical schools at LaPorte, Ind., and Keokuk, Iowa, and enjoyed a high reputation as a practitioner in Aurora, Ill., the place of his residence. He has been cut down in the prime of life and in the midst of his usefulness." N. Hard was fond of the best literature, and had excellent musical taste, as had also his wife. They were the first in Aurora to possess a piano. He collected a cabinet of geological specimens and wrote shorthand. Kindly toward others, he received an unrelated orphan girl into his family, and



Nichols Hard

took an active part in the education of his two younger brothers. Both brothers became able physicians. Chester Hard in Ottawa and Abner Hard in Aurora, Ill. His life work was completed when he was but 33 years of age.<sup>106</sup>

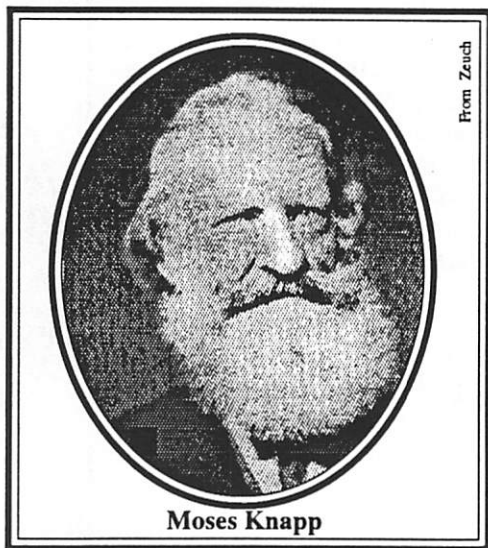
George H. Weaver

**Moses L. Knapp (1799-1879)**, a member of the first class graduated from the Jefferson Medical College (1826), said that his "thesis was the first handed in to the dean, the first examined, and he was understood by the professors and the class to be the first graduate." George McClellan, professor of surgery, had promised a diploma to Knapp, and another professor had promised to another student the honor of being the first graduate, so they compromised by accepting Knapp's thesis as first and awarding his diploma the third place. His thesis on "Apocynum Cannabium (Indian Hemp)" was the first thesis published by Jefferson. Knapp was professor of materia medica and president of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of the University of Iowa, also Professor of Materia Medica in the Indiana College of Medicine (organized 1842, extinct, 1849) 1844-1847.

An affliction of the lungs induced him to move to Mexico, where it is said his life was prolonged by a "diet of succulents and fruits (goat's milk, oranges and sweet potatoes, especially). He died at Cadereya, Nuevo Leon, Mexico, in 1879.

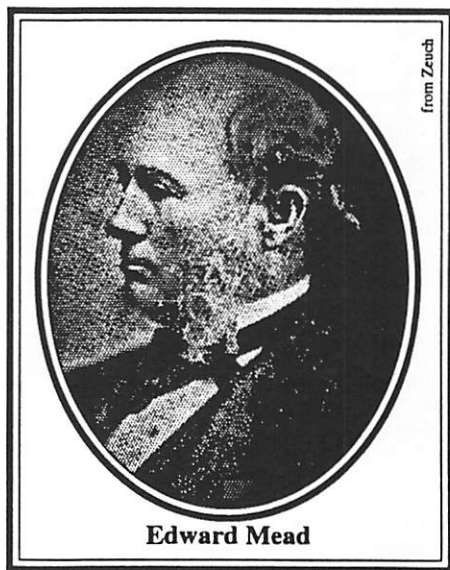
The volumes of his so called pathology ("Researches on Primary Pathology and the Origins and Laws of Epidemics," 2 vols. 312 pp., Phila. 1857-8) are rather treatises on epidemic cholera, cholera infantum, nursing sore mouth, and scorbutic diathesis."<sup>107</sup>

Howard A. Kelly



**Edward Mead (1819 -1883)** Among the teachers in the early medical schools of Illinois. Edward Mead stands as the pioneer student of psychiatry in this region and as the first to offer institutional care for the insane in Illinois. He was born in Leeds, Yorkshire County, England, March 21, 1818. When 12 years of age, his parents brought him to America. Little is known of his early years. About 1838 he began the study of medicine with Dr. Robert Thompson of Columbus, Ohio. In 1841 he graduated from the Medical College of Ohio and then Journeyed to Europe to complete his education. On his return, he settled In Cincinnati, and In 1842, moved to St. Charles, Illinois. Here he carried on an extensive practice among the settlers. Almost at once he began agitation for the establishment of a state hospital for the insane, and after years of persistent endeavor, backed by his colleagues in Illinois College, the Illinois State Hospital at Jacksonville was established in 1847. When a medical school was organized at St. Charles, Ill., in 1843, he was one of the teachers. In 1844, he wrote a report on medical education for an Illinois school convention, and he made a report on medical education at the Illinois State Medical Convention at Springfield, Dec. 16, 1846 In 1845-1846 he was professor of materia medica and therapeutics in the Medical Department of Illinois College. As a delegate from this school, he attended the National Medical Convention in New York being

the only representative from Illinois. Here he was appointed a member of a Committee to prepare a report on the preliminary education of students in medicine, and he contributed to the report of the committee which was presented in Philadelphia the following year when the American Medical Association was organized. In 1847, Mead opened a private hospital for the insane in Chicago, at the time being the only hospital for the mentally afflicted west of Columbus. Ohio. The institution was situated on 20 acres of land 2 1/4 miles northwest of the business part of the city. The institution came to an end



in 1851, when the buildings were destroyed by fire. During its existence, treatment was given to 139 patients, nearly half of whom were discharged cured. After the loss of his institution he accepted the chair of obstetrics in the Cincinnati College of Medicine and Surgery, lecturing also on his favorite topics mental diseases and medical jurisprudence. In 1851, he founded the "American Psychological Journal," which was published for one year. Unable to subscribe to the methods followed in conducting the medical school, he resigned after two years. He then founded the Cincinnati Retreat for the Insane, which he conducted until 1869, when he moved to Boston. From 1872 until his death, he conducted private hospitals for the insane in Winchester and Roxbury, Mass., near Boston.

In 1883, while on a trip for his health, the vessel in which he sailed was wrecked on the coast of Pico in the Azores, and he was drowned.<sup>108</sup>

George H. Weaver

**Meeker, Daniel** (1806-1876), was the originator of the LaPorte, Indiana, medical school and later in the faculty. He was born in Schoharie Co., New York., Dec. 17, 1806; attended his first course of lectures at Fairfield, N.Y.; graduated at the close of his second year at Willoughby, Ohio, and settled at LaPorte in 1835. "He was a man of iron will, great physical endurance, and withal a firm believer in the resurrection of the dead, just the man to start successfully a medical college in a small town. 'Old Death,' as the students familiarly called him, never failed to keep the dissecting room abundantly supplied with fresh subjects."

In 1844, he was a candidate for a professorship in Rush Medical College, but failed to receive it. About this time, he published a very good description of epidemic erysipelas as it occurred in LaPorte. Dr. Meeker was president of the Indiana State Medical society in 1857. To the Transactions in 1857, 1858 and 1859 he contributed three articles on "Fractures and False Joints." In the Civil War, he was surgeon of the Ninth Indiana Volunteers (3 months), and later, for a short time, was surgeon of the same in the 3 years' service. After the LaPorte school was discontinued, he gave a course on anatomy at Indianapolis and 5 courses at Keokuk, Iowa. He was a thorough anatomist and a bold, successful operator in surgery<sup>109</sup>

George H. Weaver



**Richards, George W. (1800-1853).** Among the early medical teachers in the Middle West, George W. Richards stands out as one of the most forceful characters, and he was probably second in influence only to Daniel Brainard. His skill and enthusiasm as a teacher brought to him numerous students, and this with his organizing and executive ability caused him to be sought by medical schools. About all we know of him before he studied medicine is that he was born in 1800 at Norfolk, Conn. Nothing has been learned of his parentage or early education. He graduated in 1828 from the College of Physicians and Surgeons of the Western District of New York at Fairfield. The next year, he became a member of the Onondaga County New York Medical Society, of which he was vice-president in 1835, and president in 1836. During this time, his address is given as Camillus, N. Y. At a meeting of this society, in 1835, he "reported a case of the wound of the heart of a child with a small knife producing death in 10 minutes, the child having, to appearance, been well most of the time." Just when he came west is uncertain, but he settled in St. Charles, Ill., about 1841. W.G. Todd, who was a student at the first session of Rush Medical College in 1843-1844, says: "About 1839 Dr. George W. Richards came to St. Charles from Lockport, Ill., bringing with him a subject, a man who had been killed on the canal. He sent an invitation to all the students around to make him a visit. I came with the rest. He was a splendid teacher and after listening to his first lecture, I decided at once to be one of his students." For many years, he was the leading physician in and about St. Charles. In 1842, Richards organized a medical school at St. Charles. The reputation of Richards and his associates and the number of their students led to his being placed on the faculty of the LaPorte Medical College as head of anatomy in 1844-1845, and as professor of theory and practice in 1845-1847. In the catalog of the LaPorte school for 1846-47, he appears as preceptor for 13 students. In 1848, he was active in organizing the Rock of Island Medical School, taking with him M. L. Knapp from the LaPorte School. He was professor of theory and practice of medicine and president of the faculty. In his address of at the opening of the Rock Island school, M. L. Knapp, speaking of Professor Richards, said: "His office of late years, especially since he commenced public teaching, has been thronged with students, ranging from 20 to 40 in number, who have received daily instructions and examinations in the various branches of the medical sciences."

In the spring of 1849, he was suspected of having in his office the body of a young woman which had been removed from a recent grave in the neighborhood. Having given assurance that the body was not in the building, he resisted the efforts of a mob to search the house, and a bullet, fired by member of the mob, passed through his shoulder, and caused such injury to the nerves that his right arm was permanently paralyzed. When the medical school at Rock Island was moved to Davenport, Iowa,

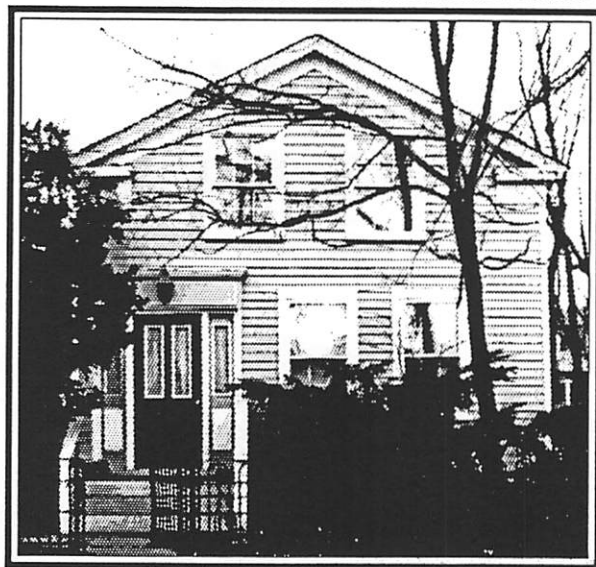


photo by the author

**Dr. Richards' House in 1991**

in 1849, Richards remained on the faculty as dean and professor of theory and practice of medicine, and when later, in 1850, the school again moved, to Keokuk, Iowa, he continued to occupy the same chair.

When Nichols Hard, of the Keokuk faculty died in 1851, Richards and Armor left the school because they could not endure the friction that arose among the the faculty over the appointment of a successor. Richards then went to Dubuque, Iowa. Here, he took an active part in the organization of the North-Western Medical Society, and was elected its first president on Jan. 11, 1853. He enjoyed this honor but a short time, dying in Dubuque, April 22, 1853, of pneumonia, aged 53 years.

After the loss of the use of his right arm in 1849, Richards learned to write well with his left hand, but he was restricted in his ability to practice medicine, and the experience seems to have left permanent effects on the man. This appears in the affecting letter, written in 1850 to one of his earlier students, Dr. George A. Bunker, in which he appeals to his "boys" for financial aid.

This fragmentary information is all we have been able to find regarding G.W. Richards, but it is enough to convince us that he was no ordinary man, and that he was naturally a teacher able to attract and hold young men.<sup>110</sup>

George H. Weaver

## Appendix B

**HISTORY**

OF

**ILLINOIS,**

BY

**HENRY L. BOIES.**

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O. P. BASSETT, PRINTER,  
95 AND 97 WEST RANDOLPH STREET, CHICAGO.  
1888.

### **THE RESURRECTIONISTS**

During the years 1847 and 1848, the inhabitants of the village of St. Charles, in Kane County, and of that section of the country which surrounded it, were kept in an unpleasant state of excitement by a suspicion that the graves of their friends, whose remains they had buried, were being invaded and robbed by the faculty and students of a medical institute located at that place, which was under the charge of one Dr. Richards. Two or three graves of honored citizens of that place had been examined, and discovered to be emptied of their precious contents.<sup>111</sup> Many who had recently lost friends commenced the painful task of examining their newly made graves, while many others only refrained from it lest they should find their fears realized and that the outrage so hopeless of redress had been consummated. To the gloom and terrors which surround every death-bed were added the dread surmise, even the grave was no secure resting place for the sacred remains of the dead. The restlessness, the irritation, the indignation that was caused by this feeling may readily be imagined.

But until the spring of 1849 it was not known, nor generally suspected, that the reckless grave robbers extended their depredations beyond the near vicinity of the hated institute.

It was one gloomy afternoon in March of that year, that three young men, driving a pair of horses attached to a large spring-wagon, stopped for supper at the well-known tavern kept by Mr. James Lovell,<sup>112</sup> on the Sycamore and St. Charles road, near Ohio Grove.<sup>113</sup> A few words of the conversation between the party caught the quick ear of the landlord's daughter, who waited on the table, and startled her with the suspicion that the party were body-snatchers, designing to rob some grave in that vicinity. She communicated her suspicions to her father, who at first paid no attention to them, but on second thought sent out a boy, quietly, to search their wagon. The lad returned and reported that, concealed beneath the buffalo robe in the bottom of the wagon, were a couple of spades, ropes, hoops, etc... — all the tools required for that ghastly trade. This left no room for doubt about their intentions, and landlord Lovell at once determined to set means at work to defeat their purpose, and capture them in the guilty act if possible.

He dispatched one of his boys out on the west road to Mr. H.A. Joslyn's<sup>114</sup> and Mr. Levias Dow's,<sup>115</sup> notifying them that the resurrectionists were coming

that way, and asking them to follow and watch the rascals. He thought over the names and locations of those who had been buried in that section of country within the space of a few weeks. Among the healthy, hardy pioneers who then inhabited the country, a death was a rare occurrence, and none were consigned to mother earth without the knowledge, and, indeed, the presence, of most of the inhabitants for miles around.

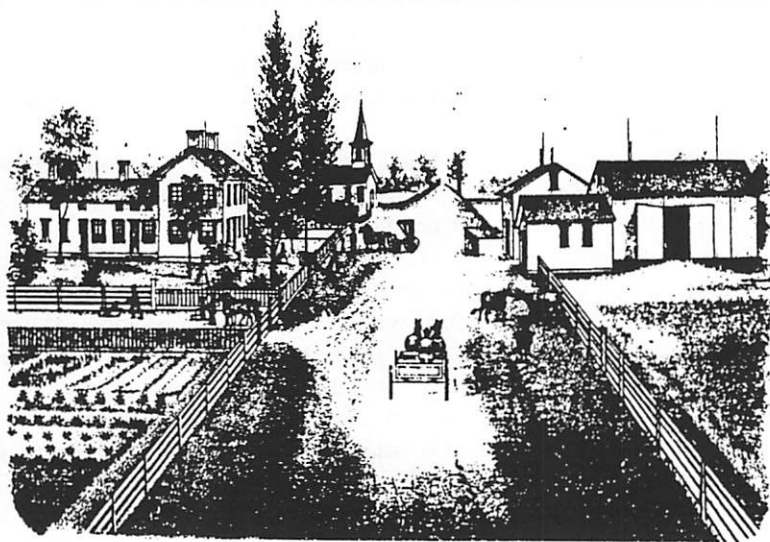
Two bodies had been interred within a short period. One was that of a friendless German, who had been buried in that South Burying Ground in the village of Sycamore, from which the bodies have this year been removed. The other was the corpse of the fair young bride of Mr. George M. Kinyon, which but a few days before had been conveyed to the grave-yard of the Baptist Church, near Ohio Grove, in the present town of Cortland.

Leaving his friendly neighbor Josyln, to look out for raids upon the Sycamore grave-yard, he made his own way down to Mr. David Churchill, the father of the late Mrs. Kinyon, and warned him to guard the sanctity of her grave.

Meantime the grave robbers had passed on toward the village of Sycamore, and Harry Josyln, lying concealed by the road fence, had seen them pass in the growing darkness, and quietly followed them.

They made some considerable delay in the village, which delay Mr. Josyln employed in rousing some of his neighbors from their slumbers, and in watching and arranging them. Mr. Herman Furness,<sup>116</sup> a constable, was made leader of the party, to which was added Lorenzo Whittmore,<sup>117</sup> John A. Waterman,<sup>118</sup> E. P. Young,<sup>119</sup> and one or two others.





From the 1872 Atlas of DeKalb County

**The Tavern and Residence of James Lovell, located north of Ohio Grove on the St. Charles Sycamore Road. The church is gone, but the residence still stands.**

When the wagon had turned down Soonmank<sup>120</sup> [Somonauk] Street and stopped near the grave-yard, this party of detectives divided into three squads and so posted as to enable them to cut off all chance of escape, were lying down in the grass and awaiting developments. Four men got out of the wagon and clambered into the burying ground. One, after a moment's delay there, was seen making his way back to the village. The watchers thought that they recognized in this person the figure of a resident physician of the village, and imagined that he came to point out the location of the grave, but the obscure light may have deceived them—they may have been mistaken.

Unfortunately, at this critical juncture, one of the hidden watchers was seized with an uncontrollable fit of coughing. The noise startled the guilty party, who ran for their wagon, and were jumping into it, when Constable Furness seized the horses and demanded a surrender. They were thoroughly alarmed and their fright was not lessened by Waterman answering their questions to what would be done with them, by the promise to shoot them in the morning.

Thoroughly cowed, they were taken back to the village tavern, and were there recognized as students from Dr. Richards' Medical School. One was a son of the Doctor, another a charity student by the name of Rude,<sup>121</sup> who it was reported paid for his medical education by furnishing bodies for dissection. The name of the third was unknown.

The captors sent at once for Mr. E. L. Mayo,<sup>122</sup> the principal lawyer of the town, but after consultation he concluded that there was not sufficient evidence of their guilt to warrant their detention. They were released, and joyfully fled away in the darkness. Meantime the Churchills and Kinyons had spent the night watching the grave of the lost daughter and wife, but all was quiet there. Morning came, and they examined it closely. There was no visible evidence of its having been disturbed. Two of her girlish friends, uneasy at the stories about grave robbers which had been circulated through the country, had, with tender thoughtfulness, laid a twine over it which they fastened on each side as a means of detection. This was still in its position. But something made the friends still uncertain and uneasy. They determined to dig down and assure themselves, if possible, that the sanctity of her last resting place had, indeed, not been invaded. The excavation had proceeded but a couple of feet, when their fears were confirmed by finding in the soil the comb with which her hair had been confined. The father and husband were excited almost to frenzy by the discovery, and, dropping their spades, ran round like madmen, with heart rending groans and bitter tears. Reaching the coffin at last, it was found emptied of its precious contents, the grave-clothes alone remaining with in it.

The news of this discovery quickly spread over the country around. Mr. David Churchill was a noble old man, honored and loved by the whole community and the grief and indignation which tortured him and the relatives were shared by the entire community.<sup>123</sup> It was certain that this grave had been desecrated. No one knew how many more in this region had also been violated. A party of twelve of the relatives and neighbors was speedily made up, to go to the medical college and demand the return of the body. They went without delay, and on arriving there a search warrant was procured,<sup>124</sup> and they proceeded to examine the premises. But they were an hour too late. When they entered the town they saw there a horse belonging to a physician of their own neighborhood. It was splashed with mud and foaming with perspiration. It was evident that its owner, who had formerly been a student of Richards' Institute, had heard of their intention, and ridden post-haste, to warn his medical associates of the danger of their detection. They had spirited away the body, and it could nowhere be found. In the large stone building, formerly a barn, which

served as a lecture and dissecting room, they found fragments of human bodies, and in the loft above a half decayed skeleton was hung up to dry; but none of them were recognized as parts of that dear form which these distressed relatives sought.<sup>125</sup>

The fruitless search was nearly completed, when the quick eye of the bereaved husband discerned upon the stone flagging of the floor, a lock of golden hair. It was the precise, peculiar shade of his lost wife's hair, and he knew it in an instant. It was not evidence enough to convince a jury, perhaps, but it satisfied him. If he had any doubts before, they were all gone now. He begged piteously for the return of what might be left of the remains of his wife. But Richards, who seems to have been a coarse and brutal fellow, treated the party with anger and contempt.

"I have no subjects now," said he, "but if you will come again in a few days I will have a lot of 'em, and from out your way, too."

Discouraged and disheartened, the party went back to their homes. They knew that the body was there; they thought with horror of the dear form of their loved and lost one carved and gashed, and made the sport of a mob of heartless medical butchers. But, alas, they saw no hope of securing it—no prospect of redress.

To their neighbors they told the story of their reception; they showed the lock of hair. Their indignation was universal. Some of them taunted the young widower with a lack of courage, because he had not, upon the spot, taken the life of the villain, who, to the injury he had done him by the robbery, had added the insult of such coarse, brutal, taunting language. With one accord, the people pledged themselves to go back next day with them, in a body too strong to be resisted, and to force the rascals to yield up their prey.

About nine o'clock next morning forty stalwart men, the best citizens of the country around, armed with guns, pistols and clubs, gathered together in the village of Sycamore, and started again on the journey of twenty miles, to rescue the remains of the lost child of their neighbor and friend. As their wagons passed in procession along the road the neighboring farmers in both counties, learning the purpose of the expedition, joined it with determined good will, and before they reached St. Charles, its numbers had quadrupled.<sup>126</sup> As they neared the town they halted and gathered together, selected a committee of five of their party to go forward and demand the return of the body, and give the inmates of the Institute fair warning that the consequence of a further refusal would be the destruction of their buildings, if not of the lives of the inmates.<sup>127</sup>

The Committee consisted of Esquire Currier<sup>128</sup> of St. Charles, John C.



Waterman, William Fordham<sup>129</sup>, Lorenzo Whittemore and Kimball Dow, of Sycamore.

Backed up by most of the party, the Committee proceeded to the house. Richards met them at the door, and within were his family and some dozen or more of his students. Pistols were seen in his side pocket, and behind the door were a number of guns. He was still heartless, impudent and defiant. He denied any knowledge about the body they sought for, but said perhaps his students could account for it.

A good deal of angry conversation passed between the parties. Rude, the student, who had been detected in the crime at Sycamore, was particularly active, and Kinyon, although he had never before seen him and did not know him to be that one, yet took an instinctive aversion to him, and could hardly be restrained from shooting him upon the spot.

The Committee went back and consulted with their party. It was evident that nothing was to be gained by parley. Kinyon was determined to recover the corpse of his wife, or make a corpse of him who robbed the grave. They resolved to capture the place by storm, seize Richards and take him into Fox River, then hold him under water until he would reveal the place where the body was concealed. In the mean time some Germans had been found who said that on the Sunday previous, a German friend who had worked for Richards had shown



photo by the author

Lovell's Tavern in 1991

them, in the dissecting room, the corpse of a golden haired young woman, whose appearance perfectly corresponded with the description of Mrs. Kinyon. This added to their confidence that the brutal Richards was still in possession of her remains, and they were sure that nothing but violence would induce him to restore them. Headed by David Churchill, the noble old father of the deceased, and Kinyon the youthful widower, a party of thirty marched up to the building and made a rush upon the door, and as the pressure forced it partly open, the muzzle of a gun was thrust out and fired. It would have proved fatal to some of the party had not Churchill forced down the barrel so that the bullet struck the stone pavement and bounded over their heads. This first act of war was followed by a shot from Kinyon who raised his gun and fired blindly through the door. Fate directed his bullet to the death of the man who had really been the robber of the grave. Rude was pierced through the hips, and was borne away fatally wounded. A number of shots followed on both sides, and those of the crowd outside, who had no guns, hurled stones from the street until every glass and sash in the house was shattered to atoms. Old Gilman Smith, of Sycamore, who had been a soldier of War of 1812 was conspicuous for his coolness.<sup>130</sup> He loaded and fired, whenever he saw any part of a person exposed, with as much coolness and deliberation as if he was shooting squirrels. It is said that he put two bullets through Richards, one through his lungs and another in his leg.<sup>131</sup> During a pause in the battle, Richards now thoroughly cowed and bloody with his terrible wounds, came out to appeal for mercy.<sup>132</sup>

"You have killed two of us," said he, "now, for God sake, stop and go away."<sup>133</sup> Just then a large stone struck his head and prostrated him. He crawled back into his house and was laid upon a couch.

Soon after, the students were seen escaping from the rear of the building, and Henry Thrall rather cruelly poured a charge of small shot into the rear of one of them as he clambered over a wall. The assaulting party now crowded into the house. They found it fearfully riddled and occupied by the two wounded men. Small mercy they gave to their misfortunes.<sup>134</sup>

"Now," said one to Richards, "now your students can have a subject without sending to Dekalb County for it."

But Richards still refused to give up the body, and as it seemed impossible to get any satisfaction, and as warrants were out to arrest the party as rioters,<sup>135</sup> they retreated in an orderly manner across the river. As they passed through the town the ladies cheered them from their windows, with waving handkerchiefs and encouraging words. The popular indignation at the outrages of the men of

the Institute was nowhere greater than in their own town.

Night now came on and another—a night attack—was expected by the occupants of the establishment. The bridge across the river had been carried away,<sup>136</sup> and only a temporary foot-bridge accommodated passengers, while teams crossed at the fords. The town's people and the friends of Richards established guards at three points and halted every person who attempted to cross. They did also what was more effectual. They sent to Naperville for William D. Barry<sup>137</sup> (a St. Charles lawyer then temporarily absent), who knew Churchill, the leader of the invaders, and upon whom he would place confidence. Barry arrived late at night, and as soon as he learned the situation crossed over to the little hotel on the west side, which was the headquarters of the invading party. After a long pacific conversation he urged them all to go home in the morning, promising upon his honor, that the body should be speedily returned to them if it was in existence. "You can cross the river again and kill some more of them," said he, "and some of you will as certainly be killed also, but what good will all that do? You can never get the body in that way. Take my word for it, the body shall be given up to you."

They took his word for it and next morning they went, but left word that if the promise was not fulfilled, they would come again and destroy the entire establishment.

Barry had promised more than he was quite authorized to promise, but he now took measures to redeem his word. He summoned John F. Farnsworth,<sup>138</sup> a lawyer of the town, Dr. Hard, who was a brother-in-law of Farnsworth, and had some acquaintance with the affairs of the College, to a secret consultation at his office. Contrary to his expectations, Dr. Hard could tell nothing about the body, but after a long talk the Doctor sallied out to see if he could not find some one who could. He brought back a young medical student named Harvey, who, it seemed, alone knew the exact spot where the corpse was concealed, and after a multitude of pledges of secrecy, he promised to reveal to Barry, alone, the place of its concealment on the following night.

In the gloom of that night the two started out on the search and, after some miles of travel through the woods they came to a spot upon the banks of the Fox River, within a few rods of the village of Geneva, which Harvey pointed out as the grave of Mrs. Kinyon.<sup>139</sup> Harvey, who had now revealed enough knowledge of the affair to make him liable to arrest, and at least to subject him to the vengeance of the relatives, if they ever discovered his connection with it, now told Barry that he would leave the country forever. He bid him good-bye,

started out in the darkness, and was never more seen in this section of country.

Barry then went to Geneva, roused from his slumbers Mr. Danforth,<sup>140</sup> who then kept a kind of cabinet shop there, and ordered a coffin to be ready next night at midnight, specifying no purpose for which it was to be used, but enjoined the closest secrecy. Determined that no person should be known as having been connected with the affair, he now contrived a plan for returning it to the relatives, without their knowing whence or through whom it came.

Old Mr. Prescott,<sup>141</sup> of St. Charles who was a distant relative of the Churchills, and had been active in an effort to aid the recovery of the remains, found next day upon his door step an anonymous note, very cautiously worded, but giving him to understand, that if he would go alone with a wagon, at a certain hour on the following morning to a designated spot in the woods, on the west of the river, he would find the body.

It was the midnight following that Mr. Barry, accompanied by a young man named Nelson, stopped at Danforth's, took the rude coffin which had been prepared for him, and drove back again to the spot where the body was buried. Nelson, who was sworn to secrecy, as to all that might transpire that night, was still uninformed about what his companion's strange actions meant and was in a tremor of terror as, digging down a couple of feet, they came to the body of the fair young woman. It was wrapped in an old horse blanket, and still undecayed. The two drew it down to the river, washed off the earth that had adhered to it, and then Nelson, unwilling that it should be coffined entirely nude, drew off his own underclothing and placed it on the corpse, then drove back up the river.

Prescott next morning repaired to the place to which he had been directed. He found there the coffin, and opening its lid recognized the corpse of his niece. Without communicating with any person, he placed it in his own wagon and starting back to Sycamore restored it to the husband. He received it with hysterical delight—laughed and wept, and raved by turns. Never was there gathered at any one funeral before, so large a concourse of people as met on that next Sabbath day, to consign a second time to the grave the body which had caused such an excitement in all the country round. A new grave was dug close under the husband's window, and there the long lost body was at last consigned to await the resurrection only of the last great day.

Undoubtedly many other graves had been robbed before this time in this same section of country, but it is believed that there were none since. The medical school was broken up. Rude, the student, died a few days after. Richards, the principal, partially recovered, moved away to Missouri, but never

fully recovered his health, and died about three years after. Indictments were found against Kinyon and Churchill in the Courts of Kane County and they were arrested, but released on bail. Indictments were also found in one Court of DeKalb County, against the body-snatchers. Neither were ever brought to trial. Public opinion seemed satisfied that the crime had been duly expiated and that nothing was to be gained by further prosecution of the matter, on either side.



### Appendix C

#### S.W. Durant's Account

#### *THE RICHARDS RIOT* <sup>142</sup>

Dr. George W. Richards, from Manlius, Onondaga Co., N. Y., settled in St. Charles about 1842. He was a well educated man, and immediately entered into an extensive practice. To a fine physique he added a very independent spirit, and soon made himself conspicuous among medical men in particular and with the public generally. In February, 1843, in company with other medical gentlemen, he was instrumental in organizing and incorporating the Franklin Medical College in St. Charles. The trustees of this, the first medical institution in this region, were Horace Bancroft, William Rounseville, Lucius Foote, John S. Christian, Alex. H. Baird, Leonard Howard and Stevens S. Jones. The various chairs were filled by Dr. George W. Richards, Dr. Nichols Hard, Dr. John Thomas and Dr. Edward Meade, and it is probable that Dr. D. D. Waite was connected with the school.

Among its more prominent students were Dr. Orpheus Everts, who married a daughter of Dr. Richards, and is now at the head of a very successful private asylum for the insane at Cincinnati, Ohio; Dr. Addison Danford, Dr. R. I. Thomas, another son-in-law of Dr. Richards; Dr. Jerome F. Weeks, recently

deceased; Dr. Bunker, who married a daughter of James Evans, and practiced for years in Oregon, Ill.; Drs. Torrey, King, two Hopkins brothers, and John Rood, who lost his life in the riot of April 19, 1849, of which we give a brief synopsis from data furnished by Dr. O. Everts, Judge W. D. Barry, Dr. J. F. Weeks, and several Sycamore parties, many of whom were witnesses of the affair.

The immediate cause of the emeute was the exhumation and carrying away of the remains of Mrs. George M. Kenyon, a daughter of David Churchill, of Sycamore, who had been married only a short time.

The student, John Rood, was studying medicine with Dr. A. B. De Wolf at the time. As Dr. Everts said, "He was poor and ambitious, and being unable to pay for material necessary in the prosecution of his studies, he resolved to procure it himself."

According to Dr. Everts' recollection, a friend or relative of Rood, living in De Kalb County, furnished him information regarding the death and burial of Mrs. Kenyon; whereupon Rood, accompanied, as is supposed, by George W. Richards, a son of the Doctor, proceeded to Sycamore in a one-horse wagon, carrying the necessary excavating tools. The body was taken up, most of the work being done by young Rood, and conveyed several miles toward St. Charles and hidden in a straw stack near the residence of T. P. Garfield in Campton, and a few days later taken to St. Charles where it was placed in Dr. Richards' barn.

Hearing of the great excitement at Sycamore, and expecting a visit from the friends of the deceased, Rood took the body and concealed it in the timber between St. Charles and Geneva, on the east side of the river, where it remained until after the mobbing of Dr. Richards' dwelling.

A delegation from Sycamore waited on Dr. Richards and demanded the body, but he denied all knowledge of it, and the delegation returned to Sycamore. A few days later, on the 19th of April, 1849, a party of men, variously estimated at from 40 to 200, many of them armed with rifles, shot guns, pistols, etc., drove from Sycamore to St. Charles early in the morning, and putting up their teams at the Howard House, now the Mallory House, proceeded on foot to the residence of Dr. Richards, crossing the river by a new foot bridge just completed, the wagon bridge having been carried away by the flood in March preceding. Renewed attempts were made by the leaders of the Sycamore party, Messrs. John Waterman, U. B. Prescott, David Churchill, Fleming Holcomb, Phineas Joslyn, Sylvanus Holcomb, James Lovell, Alvin Dayton and George M. Kenyon, to obtain the body and satisfaction from Dr. Richards and his

students, but unsuccessfully. The crowd then assembled in the east part of the lot now owned and occupied by R. H. Leake, where they were addressed by several of the leaders. Some counseled one course and some another, but the outcome was that they determined to storm the Doctor's premises and search it from bottom to top. A number of his students were in the house with the Doctor, as well as his family, and hasty preparations were made for defense in case of attack.

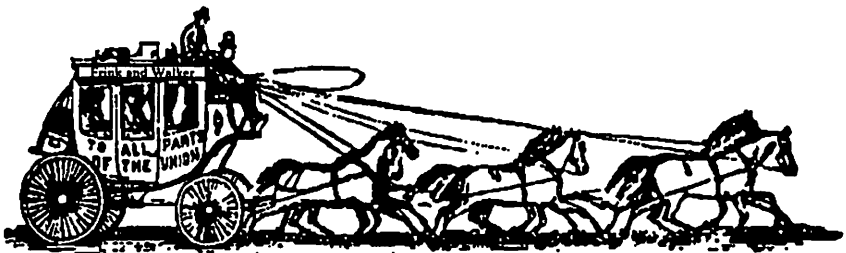
The Sycamore men now formed in two ranks, and, led by Messrs. Churchill & Kenyon, approached the house, still standing on the southeast corner of East Illinois and Fifth Streets. As they came up Dr. Richards, who was standing in the door with one hand in the opening of his vest, stepped back and closed it in their faces. An attempt was made to push it open, and partially succeeded, when the barrel of a gun appearing through the opening, the attacking force fell back for a moment. Young Kenyon ran down north of the house a few rods, but came back in a moment, and placing his rifle against the closed door fired through the panel, the shot, it is believed, wounding John Rood, from the effects of which he died within a few weeks. Some accounts claim that the first shot came from within the door, but it has never been definitely proved who fired first. Following the first shot a half dozen or more were fired into the house, one of which "passed through the right shoulder joint of Dr. Richards, below the collar bone, wounding the apex of the right lung, and so injuring the nerves that supplied the right arm as to produce immediate and permanent paralysis of that arm. He received also a blow from a stone on the left side of his face which knocked him down." 143

At the commencement of the firing the women of the family fled across the garden to the house of a neighbor, and some of the students also hunted safer quarters. When the Doctor was struck he walked back through the hall and dining room to a bedroom on the right, where he divested himself of his coat and vest and then returned to the front door, where he showed himself to the mob covered with blood.

The sight did not appease their vengeance for they fired and threw missiles at him, one, as stated, knocking him down. At this stage, several of the citizens, among whom were Luther Dearborn, N. E. Dearborn, Henry Stevens, Aaron Blanchard and A. R. Wheeler, believing the Doctor was killed, stepped between the mob and the wrecked building and called a halt. They informed the Sycamore men that Dr. Richards was probably killed and a student mortally wounded, and requested them to desist. Mrs. Dr. Everts, or she that was afterward Mrs. Everts, stood in the door and upbraided the crowd bitterly for what

they had done. This ended the assault. The crowd withdrew and the matter was afterward settled by the return of the body of Mrs. Kenyon, which had not been mutilated, to the friends of the deceased. It is more than probable that had the students stood by the Doctor there might have been a terrible loss of life. Dr. Richards was taken to the house of O. M. Butler, where he remained for a few days, during which the premises were patrolled at night by a guard of citizens, among whom were Aaron Blanchard, Hiram Bowers, George N. Sill, William Buck, Robert Rogers and Washington Hammon. The Doctor was then taken to Chicago in a springwagon, where he was cared for until able to travel. when he removed his family to Dubuque, Iowa, where he died April 22, 1853, almost exactly four years from the date of receiving his wound. In speaking of his death, Dr. Everts says: "It is probable that the injury sustained at the time of the riot in St. Charles predisposed him to the disease (inflammation of the lungs) of which he died, but was not the cause of his death."

The affair caused intense excitement in this region, the people being pretty evenly divided in their sympathies, many severely blaming the Doctor, while others defended him zealously. Some attempt was made to prosecute the rioters, but the matter was finally dropped and the excitement at last died away.





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**CHAPTER XXVI.****THE RESTORATION OF A STOLEN CORPSE.**

**W**HEN I returned from the Mexican War I had large unsettled accounts with the United States Government, and pending the settlement I entered the law office of W. D. Barry, Esq., at St. Charles, and commenced the study of law. During my absence in the service, Dr. Richards had established his medical institute at St. Charles, and, by the way, from that establishment were turned out some of the most eminent practitioners of our day, among whom are Dr. Boice, of Santa Rosa, Dr. Obed Harvey, and others.

I had heard many complaints in regard to resurrectionists and body-snatching throughout the adjoining country, and one day I was awakened from my studies by a party rushing in and informing me that Professor Richards and John Rood, one of the students, had been shot by a mob, or company of riflemen from De Kalb County, numbering about eighty. I dropped my book and, on inquiry, learned that a young married woman, the daughter of a respected farmer by the name of Churchill, had suddenly died in full flesh, and that the body had been stolen, the effect of which was to craze the mother and so exasperate the father and his neighbors that, in their wrath, they had armed themselves and, in a perfectly organized state, had marched upon the institute and demanded from Richards the remains of their dead. Richards and the students indignantly denied having the remains, or knowing aught of them. This denial was anything but satisfactory to them, al-

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though I have reasons for believing that Richards did not know much about the affair at the time, the whole matter having been a little private enterprise of George Richards, son of the professor, and one John Rood, a student.

The crowd, however, persisted in the demand, and became very clamorous, while Richards and Rood, who stood with their guns in their hands in the door, became very insolent, Richards telling the father of the deceased that if they did not leave he would have a better subject. At this, several shots were fired almost simultaneously by both parties. Richards was struck by a rifle ball in the right hand, while his shot-gun was still raised, the bullet passing through just below the knuckles, out at the wrist, and then penetrating his right shoulder, close to the chest. Rood was also struck by a rifle ball on the right side, the ball following a rib round to the back, not entering the chest. Rood survived five or six days only, the concussion having caused such internal injuries that mortification ended the chapter of his life.

On my arrival upon the ground, I found the sheriff of the county and several prominent citizens attempting to quiet the then exasperated rioters, who were determined to demolish the buildings, and amid the howl and fury it was next to impossible to be heard. Several attempts having been made by the sheriff and others to calm them, I saw the condition of things at a glance, sprang upon a horse-block and, after several efforts, succeeded in making myself heard. I told them that, as citizens, we deeply felt and acknowledged the outrage that had been committed, and that they had our fullest sympathy; that we were ready and willing, in every

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legitimate manner, to aid them in prosecuting the search for the body; but we could not, and would not, suffer them to go into the destruction of property to gratify revenge. I then said, "I have this proposition to make you: select from your body a committee of five to search the premises, and every bolt and bar shall yield to your touch, and if the body is here you surely can find it." From the crowd there was a universal acclaim that the proposition was fair. They selected their committee. I called Professor Hall, son-in-law of Richards, to bring the keys of the establishment. The sheriff, Hall, and myself went through the whole establishment, prosecuting the most vigilant search, not neglecting out-buildings, barns, and stables, but nothing was to be found. The day was now far advanced. The search was abandoned and the crowd retired. The institution was broken up and Richards was removed to Chicago; but this did not end the excitement. The public press was full of reports and comments and dire vengeance was threatened to all who were suspected of having a hand in the outrage. On the other hand, Richards had at once commenced suit for damages, and retained W. D. Barry, my preceptor, as counsel. All this had occurred in less than a week from the time of the outrage, when one day Judge Barry came into the office, evidently with something on his mind. He walked the floor for a few minutes, when he suddenly turned to me and said, "Norton, I know your sympathy is with those people. Now I will give you a chance to show it. You have been to the wars and have seen many men killed and have had much to do with dead folks. I want to restore that body, but I have not the nerve to do it. You are a clerk in the office

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and they cannot put you upon the stand as a witness. I have made every preparation; will you do it?"

I unhesitatingly agreed to do anything that I could to restore the body. He then gave me these instructions. "At twelve o'clock to-night, go to a certain point [describing it] in town, and you will find a span of horses and a spring-wagon, with a shovel in the wagon. Take the horses and first drive to Geneva [this was a town two miles below, on Fox River]; go to Danforth's shop, where two men will bring you a coffin. You need not speak. Then drive to Cedar Bluff [describing the point], where you will hitch the horses. On examination, you will see the white bones of a horse's head at the commencement of a path, and strewn along the path, you will find white bones until it leads you through the woods, to the head of a ravine, near Otto Perkins' fence; thence follow down the ravine about three-fourths of a mile, where you will find the tops of the bushes all broken in toward each other. There dig."

At midnight I was at the point, found the horses hitched, untied them, drove to Geneva, and to Danforth's shop. Two men emerged from the shop, carrying a coffin. They placed it in the wagon without a word. I glanced at it and saw that the lid was screwed down, when I remarked, "Bring a screw-driver." One of them soon returned and placed a screw-driver in the wagon, when, without another word, I drove back to Cedar Bluff, where I hitched the horses, and soon found the horse's skull, with other marks indicating my path through the woods. I followed it with the shovel on my back. I do not remember whether I whistled to keep up my courage or not; but as I am a poor whistler and

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a worse singer, I probably kept silent. I found the white bones, as Barry had told me, which I followed until I reached the head of a dark gulch, the one referred to in my instructions; thence down through the tangled brush and underwood until I came to the spot indicated, where the bushes were all broken in towards each other.

There was no moon, but a starlight night. Owing to the thick woods and heavy foliage overhead, it was very dark. When I commenced digging, I found the bed of the gulch very wet and muddy. I had not prosecuted my labors very long, until my shovel struck something yielding. I cleaned the dirt away as well as I could, put my hand down and got hold of a sack. I pulled it out, found that it contained the body, shut up like a jack-knife, having the limbs from the hips bent forward so that the face and feet were together. I took the body from the sack and found that the oozy mud had settled all over it. I wiped it off as best I could, shouldered it, and made my way back to Cedar Bluff. There was a small creek of pure water, and I washed the body clean. I found that they had cut through the skin and flesh on the forehead and skinned it down till it fell like a flap over the eyes. I placed it back as smoothly as I could, preparatory to putting it into the coffin; but here was a dilemma! No one had thought of a shroud, and I could not think of placing the body in the coffin in a nude state. While revolving the matter in my mind, I happened to think of my outer shirt. I at once pulled it off and put it on the corpse. I then gathered some moss, placed it in the coffin for a pillow, placed the body in the coffin, screwed down the lid, and drove the wagon back where I found it, according to directions.

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Now, I do not believe that I am more cowardly than most of the human family, and probably as far removed from superstition as any one; but when I found myself away in the woods, in the depth of night, with all its surrounding gloom, trudging along with a cold, clammy corpse on my back, I plead guilty to having felt a kind of involuntary shudder pass over me, an undefined something—not fear, but a species of desolation and awe wholly indescribable.

As I started in to give a simple recital of facts, I have wandered a little; but please excuse the digression. After hitching the horses where I found them, I pushed on toward home, but could not repress my curiosity to dodge around a corner and watch to see what would become of the wagon. I saw a man unhitch the horses and drive through Fox River at the ford, making his way west in the direction of the home of the distressed parents and friends of the deceased. I returned home and thought I would slip into bed and that my wife would not discover the missing shirt; but not so. She threw her arm over me and exclaimed, "Oh! my God, Lewis; what has become of your shirt!" I was compelled to deceive her and pretend that I had been out fishing; that it had caught fire and I had to tear it off.

Two days elapsed, when news came from De Kalb County that the missing body had been restored; that it was found in a coffin, sitting on the father's porch, and that there was great rejoicing. But there was one feature they could not understand—the body had a man's shirt on, for a shroud! The friends proposed to remove it, and put a different shroud on the corpse before the

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interment; but the mother interposed and exclaimed, "No! no! the hand that placed it there was a friendly hand, and it will be a charm that will protect my child."

When my wife heard the story, she remarked to me, "That, my dear, was your shirt; and had they removed it, they would have found your name on the bottom of it." There are many living, doubtless, even in this State, who knew of the occurrence and have often heard the query, "Who restored the body?" and, as it is no longer a secret, and after the lapse of a third of a century, I give the world the facts.

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## The Franklin Institute



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7) Soltow, Lee, and Edward Stevens: *The Rise of Literacy and the Common School in the United States....* Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1973. p. 39, 117.

8) Miller, G.F.: *The Academy System of the State of New York*. Albany, N.Y., 1922.

9) Stevens, E.W., Jr.: Structural and Ideological Dimensions of Literacy...in the Old Northwest. in: Klingman, D.C. and Vedder R.K., eds.: *Essays on the Economy of the Old Northwest*. Athens, Ohio, Ohio University Press, 1987.

10) Pierce, H.P., A. Merrill, & W. Perrin; *Past and Present of Kane County, Illinois*. Lebaron, Chicago, 1878. p. 336.

11) Osler, W.: Elisha Bartlett. *Trans. Rhode Island Med. Soc.*, 1899.

12) "Gray, Aza, botanist, b. in Paris, Oneida Co. N. Y., 18 Nov., 1810; d. in Cambridge, Mass., 30 Jan., 1888. He received his early education in the Fairfield Academy, after which he began the study of medicine with Dr. John F. Trowbridge in Bridgewater, N. Y., and was graduated at the College of Physicians and Surgeons of the Western District of New York [Fairfield] in 1831. He soon left his practice and began the study of botany with Dr. John Torrey. In 1834 he was appointed botanist to the U. S. exploring expedition sent out under the command of Capt. Charles Wilkes, but, in consequence of the delay of that enterprise, resigned the post in 1837.

He was elected professor of botany in the new



Aza Gray



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University of Michigan, but he declined this chair and accepted in 1842 the Fisher professorship of natural history at Harvard, continuing there till 1873, when he retired from the active duties of his office, but retained charge of the herbarium. Prof. Gray's scientific work began at a time when the old artificial systems of botany were giving way to the natural system, and, with Dr. John Torrey, he was among the first to attempt the classification of species on the natural basis of affinity. His first paper, presented to the New York Lyceum of natural history in December, 1834, bears the title "A Notice of Some New, Rare, or Otherwise Interesting Plants from the Northern and Western Portions of the State of New York." Prof. Gray's herbarium, numbering more than 200,000 specimens, and his library of 2,200 botanical works, were presented to Harvard on the completion, in 1864, of a fire-proof building for their reception. He received the degree of A. M. from Harvard in 1844, and of LL. D. from Hamilton in 1860, and delivered three courses of lectures in the Lowell institute. In 1874 he received the appointment of regent of the Smithsonian institution, succeeding Louis Agassiz in that office. For ten years, from 1863 till 1873, he was president of the American academy of arts and sciences, and in 1872 was president of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, delivering his retiring address at the Dubuque meeting.

Prof. Gray was one of the original members of the National Academy of Sciences, and afterward passed to the grade of honorary membership. Besides his connections with societies in this country, he was either corresponding or honorary member of the Linnean Society and the Royal Society in London, and of the academies of sciences in Berlin, Munich, Paris St. Petersburg, Stockholm, and Upsala. Prof. Gray was a very large contributor to periodical literature, and his separate papers include nearly 200 titles. For many years he was one of the editors of *The American Journal of Science*. "Appleton's Cyclopaedia of American Biography. Appletons, New York, 1900. Vol. II, p. 728-9.

13) \*Palmer, Alonzo Benjamin (1815-1887), Professor of Medicine in the University of Michigan, was born October 6, 1815, in Richfield, New York, of Puritan parents; his father, a native of Connecticut, died when he was nine years old. His early education was at the schools and academies of Oswego, Otsego and Herkimer. In 1839 he took his M.D. from Fairfield Medical College, Fairfield, New York. After practicing twelve years at Tecumseh, Michigan, he removed to Chicago, where for two years he was associated with Dr. N. S. Davis (q.v.) Meantime he spent two winters in New York and Philadelphia studying in hospitals and clinics. During the cholera epidemic of 1852 he was city physician in Chicago and had charge of the cholera hospital, caring for about fifteen hundred patients yearly. In 1852 he was appointed professor of anatomy, medical department, Michigan University, but from lack of funds never occupied the chair. In 1854 he was as given the chair in materia medica and therapeutics and diseases of women and children, and in 1869 was transferred to the chair of pathology and theory and practice of medicine, which he occupied till death. In May, 1861, he was appointed surgeon of the Second Michigan Infantry and surgeon in Gen. Richardson's Brigade, at the first battle of Bull Run, and other operations of his regiment until he resigned in September. In 1864 he was professor of pathology and practice of medicine in Berkshire Medical Institution at Pittsfield, Massachusetts. In 1869 he was called to a similar position at the medical department, Bowdoin College, Maine, doing the work in the vacations at the other institutions. From 1854-60 he was an editor of the *Peninsular Medical Journal*, and the consolidated *Peninsular and Independent Medical Journal*, Detroit, and President, in 1872, of the Michigan State Medical Society. In 1875 he succeeded Dr. Abram Sager as dean of the medical department, Michigan University, and except for one year held the office till his death. In 1855 the University of Nashville, Tennessee, gave him the honorary A.M., and he had the LL.D., University of Michigan, in 1881. Above everything else he loved to lecture; one year to the same

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class he delivered one hundred and ninety-six lectures, half of them new. At any moment he was ready to fill a vacant hour in any course in the department, never regarding it a hardship.

In 1867, he married Love M. Root, of Pittsfield, Massachusetts, who survived him and perpetuated his memory by endowing the Palmer Ward at the University Hospital, also by erecting a tower on St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, of which he was a member. They had no children. Dr. Palmer died at his home in Ann Arbor, December 23, 1887, from septicemia.

Alonzo B. Palmer's most ambitious publication and towards which all other writings pointed was his *Treatise on the Science and Practice of Medicine, or the Pathology and Treatment of Internal Diseases*, two volumes of about nine hundred pages each, published in 1882, followed by *A Treatise on Epidemic Cholera and Allied Diseases*, of two hundred and twenty-four pages, Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1885. Many of his papers are to be found in the columns of the Transactions of the Michigan State Medical Society." Conner, L.: in Kelly H.A., and Burrage, W.L.: *Dictionary of American Medical Biography*. Appletons. New York, 1928. p. 932-3.

14) Nelson, R.B.: *William Beaumont, America's First Physiologist*. Grant House Press, Geneva, Il. 1990. p. 134.

15) *United States Medical and Surgical Journal*. Number II, September 1834. p. 79. Though listed as "northern" in this announcement, the school has usually been referred to as the *College of Physicians and Surgeons of the Western District of New York*.

16) The Fairfield school operated from 1816 until 1840, and it graduated a total of 585 doctors. [Waite put the number of graduates at 609.] Clarke, E.H., et al: *A Century of American Medicine*. Philadelphia, 1876. p. 357.

17) "Dr. Westel Willoughby, of Newport, Herkimer county, New York, was one of the most distinguished men in western New York. He was the founder of the Willoughby University of Lake Erie, Ohio, and the town in which it is located received its name from his liberal donations to that institution. He was also one of the founders of the College of Physicians and Surgeons in western New York. My associations with both these Medical Colleges as Professor and lecturer, led me to an acquaintance with the character of this estimable man. The following abridged notice of him is from the Christian Register of October 19th, 1844.

Hon. Westel Willoughby, M. D. It is seldom that we have to record the death of one so useful and so distinguished in usefulness in the community and of so wide a sphere of action and influence in other days. In early life Dr. Willoughby went to reside in Herkimer county, N. Y., in the town of Norway, and for upwards of forty years had his residence in that part which was set off from Norway as the town of Newport. Here he shared with the first inhabitants the many privations of the wilderness. Devoted to his profession as a physician, few can adequately appreciate the difficulties to be surmounted in visiting the sick, over almost impassable roads, and through pathless woods, by night as well as by day, in winter's storms and summer's heats. At an early period and for many years he served the town as a magistrate and town clerk. He was repeatedly elected a member of the State legislature, and during several years was a Judge in the County Court of Common Pleas; his fellow citizens chose him their representative in the Congress of the United States, and he served with honor to himself and advantage to them. When the College of Physicians for the Western District went into operation, he was elected Professor of Obstetrics, and annually delivered a course of lectures in that department of medical science for upwards of twenty-five years. The long duration of this term of service evinced the value of his lectures, and the very general satisfaction they afforded; and he was finally elected President of that highly useful institution.

Thousands of medical students have been benefited by his studies and untiring labors to promote the extended knowledge and practice of the healing art. In all parts of our country,

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where they pursue their useful and honored vocation, the name of Professor Willoughby is to them 'like precious ointment poured forth ;' and their last interview with their venerated and beloved instructor they will recall with emotions of gratitude and delight.

In domestic life Dr. Willoughby was a dutiful son, affectionate brother, faithful husband, and ever trusted friend. Dr. Willoughby for upwards of thirty years was a professor of the religion of the Gospel of Christ. Eighteen years ago he united with the Unitarian Congregational Church in Trenton, Oneida county, N. Y., and the even tenor of his Christian example has been beautiful, in its serenity of faith, an peace and love. He fellowshipped with all who breathed the spirit of Christ, and delighted in the exceeding beauty and peace of his reign in the heart. He invaded no man's liberty, political or religious and nobly, and in a truly catholic spirit, maintained his own; he had long desired his departure from earth; the interests of this world were gradually unclasped from his heart, and his hope was laid up in heaven.

On Thursday, the 3rd instant, the conflict of disease and death terminated, and his soul passed into the unseen state of being; there, as we have no doubt, to meet 'a smile of welcome' to the bliss of heaven. Dr. Willoughby was born in Goshen, Conn., and was nearly 75 years of age when he died." Williams, S.W.: *American Medical Biography*. Milford House, New York, 1967. p. 643-5.

18) James Hadley has not been further identified.

19) A graduate of Edinburgh in 1816, McNaughton settled in Albany and won fame for his unflagging heroism during the 1832 cholera epidemic. Kelly and Burrage, p. 796.

20) Author of *Elements of Medial Jurisprudence*, Beck began is career in medical education at Fairfield in 1815. Kelly and Burrage, p. 86-7.

21) "...peripatetic lecturer on medicine and organizer of the Western Reserve Medical Department..." Dr. DeLaMater taught in more than a half dozen institutions. He was at Fairfield from 1827 until 1840. During that time he also delivered lectures at several other medical schools, including Maine, Dartmouth, Bowdoin, and the University of Vermont. Kelly and Burrage, p. 316-7.

22) Nelson, op. cit., p. 65.

23) Krumbhaar, E.B.: The Early History of Anatomy in the United States. *Ann Med. Hist.* 4: 274, 1922. The quote is from a New York newspaper ad placed by "Thomas Wood, Surgeon of New Brunswick, New Jersey." It is not known whether the lectures were ever given.

24) Blake, J.B.: The anatomical lectures of William Shippen, 1766. *Trans. & Stud. Coll. Phys. Phila.*, 4th ser., 42: 61-66, 1974.

25) Morse, J.T., Jr.: *Life and Letters of Oliver Wendell Holmes*, 2 Vols. Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 1896.

26) Corner, G.W.: The Role of Anatomy in Medical Education. *J. Med. Ed.* 33: 2, 1958.

27) Drake, D.: Report on the best method of introducing and prosecuting the study of anatomy and physiology. *Trans. of the Sixth Annual Meeting of the Western Literary Institute*. Cincinnati, 1837. p. 234-237.

28) Juettner, Otto: *Daniel Drake and His Followers*. Harvey Publishing Company, Cincinnati, 1923.

29) Waite, F.C.: Grave Robbing in New England. *Bull. Med. Lib. Assoc.* 33: 272-94, 1945.

30) Bell, W.J., Jr.: Nathan Smith Davis: An Autobiographical Letter, Previously Unpublished. *J.A.M.A.* 224:1014-16, 1974.

31) William Shippen (1736-1808) was a graduate of Edinburgh and had studied with the Hunters and with Hewson. Along with Benjamin Rush, Shippen was a major figure in 18th century American medicine. Kelly, H.A.: *A Cyclopedia of American Medical Biography*. W.B. Saunders, Philadelphia, 1912. vol II, p. 367-70.

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32) "Shotwell, John T. (1807-1850), professor of anatomy in the Medical College of Ohio, was born in Mason County, Kentucky, January 10, 1807, to which place his parents had emigrated from New Jersey at an early period in the history of the West. The boy's early love of literature determined his father to give him a liberal education, so the family moved to Lexington, Kentucky, and the son entered Transylvania University in 1822, and was graduated in 1825, with so high a reputation that Dr. Drake persuaded him to take up medicine. He began to study with Dr. Drake in 1826, and became his partner in 1830. In 1832 he received his M.D. from the Medical College of Ohio, and was immediately appointed adjunct professor of anatomy to his friend, Dr. Jedediah Cobb. He was demonstrator of anatomy in the Medical College of Cincinnati, Ohio, from 1836 to 1838 and in the latter year succeeded Dr. Cobb as professor of anatomy, occupying this chair, with the exception of the session of 1849-50, until his death. In 1842 he went to Europe, to visit the great medical centers. In 1832 he married Mary Ward, daughter of John P. Foote of Cincinnati. During the cholera of 1850 his strength was overtaxed, and, a victim to the importunities of his patients, and his desire to relieve their suffering, he died July 23, 1850." Kelly and Burrage, p. 1108.

33) Collins, Charles, in *Chicago Sunday Tribune*. March 22, 1953.

34) Waite, F.C.: An episode in Massachusetts in 1818 related to the teaching of anatomy. *New Eng. J. Med.* 220:221-27, 1939.

35) Currier, John M.: *Song of the Hubbardton Raid*. Rutland, Vermont, 1880.

36) *Announcement of the Clinical School of Medicine at Woodstock, Vermont*. October 18, 1835.

37) Waite, F.C.: Grave Robbing in New England. op cit.

38) Dickens, Charles: *A Tale of Two Cities*. New York, 1907. Book II, Chapter XIV, p. 162-72.

39) Stevenson, Robert Louis: *The Works of Robert Louis Stevenson*. New York, 1906. Vol. III, p. 247-67.

40) Colvin, Sidney, ed.: *The Letters of Robert Louis Stevenson*. New York, 1899. Vol I., pps. 238, 245, 251, 400.

41) Bailey, J.B.: *The Diary of a Resurrectionist*. London, 1896.

42) Ball, James M.: *Sack 'em up men*. London, 1928.

43) Currier, op cit.

44) Waite, F.C.: A History of Grave Robbing in New England. p. 290.

45) Robinson, J.H.: *Marietta or the Two Students, a tale of the Dissecting Room and Body Snatching*. Boston, 1846.

46) Ridlon, G.T.: *Saco Valley Settlements and Families, Historical, Biographical, Traditional, and Legendary*. Portland, Me., 1895. p. 387-88.

47) *Laws of the State of Illinois Passed by the Thirteenth General Assembly*. Springfield, Illinois, 1843. p. 69.

48) *Dubuque Daily Herald*, April 23, 1853. This is the citation given by Weaver. However, a review by library staff of that day's issue at the Iowa State Historical Society in Des Moines did not reveal an obituary for Richards. Nor is there one in the *Dubuque Miners' Journal* of that date.

49) The Illinois/Michigan Canal was under construction at the time.

50) Todd, W.G.: Bulletin of the Alumni Association of Rush Medical College. Chicago, 1911. Vol VII, #3, p.1. Todd was a student in the first session of Rush Medical College in 1843-4.

51) *The History of Ogle County*, H.F. Kett & Co., Chicago, 1878. p. 359.

52) Waite: History of Grave robbing in New England. op cit.

53) The original document is now in the possession of the Vermont Historical Society Library.

54) Kampmeier was working on an longer treatise on anatomy in Illinois, and possessed additional information on Dr. Daggett based on interviews in Lockport with old settlers.

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Regrettably, in spite of the previous loss of original papers and source materials from the creation of Volume I, and provision for preventing a recurrence of the same misfortune with volume II, the Kampmeier papers are not in the Archives of the Crear Library (now housed at the University of Chicago), where they were supposed to have been originally deposited. For a detailed description of the Daggett affair see: Waite, F.C.: *A Country Medical College*. Montpelier, Vt., 1945. p. 91-2.

55) Todd, op cit.

56) The little one room law office of Trustee Steven Jones is now located on the grounds of the Dunham Hunt Museum in St. Charles. Five pioneer medical schools emerged in and around Chicago during this period. They were: The Medical Department of LaPorte University (later Indiana Medical College), organized in 1822 and discontinued in 1850; Franklin Medical Institute, St. Charles, Illinois, organized in 1842 and discontinued in 1849; Illinois College, Jacksonville, Illinois, organized in 1843 and discontinued in 1848; Rock Island Medical School, Rock Island, Illinois, organized in 1848, and after one year removed to Davenport and later to Keokuk, Iowa; and Rush Medical College, Chicago, organized in 1843 (now again in operation after a hiatus in the mid 20th century).

57) The limestone building on the northeast corner of First Avenue and Main Street in St. Charles was once used as a stable. However, a stone barn was just across the street from Richards' home. This is likely the stone building of Boies' account, where the lock of Marilla's hair was supposedly sighted.

58) This likely refers to the Gartner Bakery Building.

59) *Personal Property List for Kane County, Illinois, 1848*. Kane County Genealogical Society, Geneva, Illinois, 1984.

60) Joslyn, Waite, and Joslyn, Frank W.: *History of Kane County, Illinois*. Pioneer Publishing Company, Chicago, 1908. 2 vols. p. 517

61) "At the first settlement of the country, a chief of the Potawatomie, whose name has not been preserved, was enshrined in the above manner [braced in a sitting posture with knives, rifle, blanket, pipe, and a good supply of tobacco] on the farm of Calvin Colton, in Mayfield. His skeleton, with the bullet in it which caused his death, was afterwards obtained by Dr. Richards, of the St. Charles Medical School." *Voters and Taxpayers of DeKalb County, Illinois*. Chicago, H.F. Kett, 1876. p. 89.

62) *Commemorative Biographical and Historical Record of Kane County, Illinois*. Beers, Chicago, 1888. p. 1085.

63) *ibid*.

64) Henry Lawson Boies was born July 5th, 1830, at South Hadley, Mass., being the son of Artemas Boies, a distinguished clergyman. His father died when Henry was 15, and he lead a nomadic life for many years, partly in search for a climate conducive to healing his "consumption." He visited Liverpool and London before settling in Charleston, S.C., where he taught school for two years. He purchased an interest in a gun powder plant in New York, but when his consumption relapsed he settled in northern Illinois on a farm in 1852. In 1858 Boies was active in promoting the construction of a rail spur from Cortland to Sycamore. In 1863 he first became associated with the Sycamore *True Republican*, which he edited for many years. He laid out three separate additions to Sycamore in 1865, 1871, and 1876. In 1870 he was chosen secretary of the Illinois State Senate, and later became post master in Sycamore. *Voters and Taxpayers...*, p. 148.

65) Buley, apparently using *Past and Present of Kane County, Illinois* as his only source, has Marilla's last name as "Runyon." Packard, M.E. and Buley, R.C.: *The Midwest Pioneer: His Ills, Cures and Doctors*. R.E. Banta, Crawfordsville, Indiana, 1945. p. 137-8.

66) Marilla was probably taken from her grave within a few days of her death, which occurred on March 26th, 1849.

67) *Commemorative Biographical and Historical Record of Kane County, Illinois*. Beers, Chicago, 1888.

68) This cemetery no longer exists, the bodies were removed in 1876. *Voters and Taxpayers of DeKalb County*.

69) E.L. Mayo's son was a physician in DeKalb County: "Mayo, E.L., M.D. Physician, DeKalb, Ill, born in Sycamore, June 16, 1843, Graduated at Rush Medical College Chicago in 1868; real estate \$6000, personal property \$3500; wife Alice L. Ballou; Erie County N.Y., Oct 1852,

married Jan 1, 1872." *Voters and Taxpayers of DeKalb County*. p. 188.

70) *Docket Book for 1846*, DeKalb County Courthouse.

71) This detail, particularly the finding of a comb, is common to several grave robbing legends.

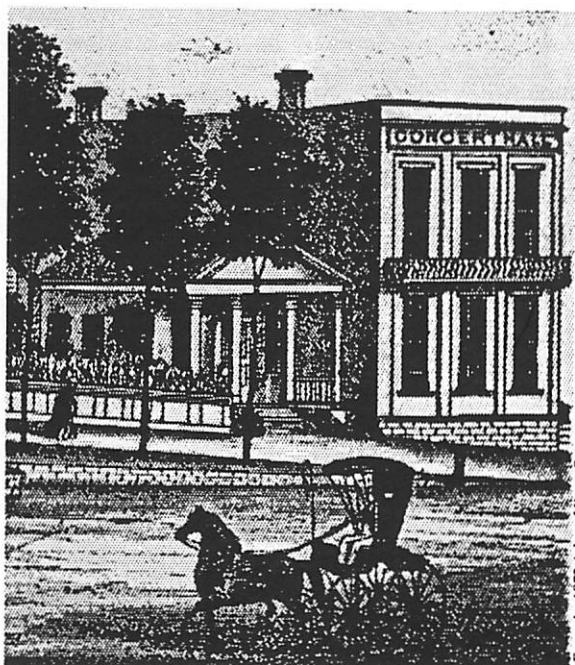
72) *Port. and Bio. of DeKalb County*, p. 253.

73) *Port. and Bio. of DeKalb County*, p. 811

74) Joslyn, Waite and Joslyn, Frank W.: *History of Kane County, Illinois*. Pioneer Publishing Company, Chicago, 1908. 2 vols. p. 133.

75) Boies, Henry L.: *History of DeKalb County, Illinois*. O.P. Basset, Chicago, 1868.

76) *Combination Atlas Map of DeKalb County, Illinois*, Drawn and Published from Personal Ob-



The Little Greek Revival Building was Barry's Office

*servations and Surveys*. Thompson & Everts, Geneva, Illinois, 1871.

77) *Port. and Bio. of DeKalb*, p. 253.

78) *Past and Present of Kane County, Illinois*; A large contingency from Cortland Township is not improbable, as Cortland was by far the most populous township in DeKalb County, even though it did not contain a single village. The 1000 people residing in Cortland Township in 1850 was more than twice the number of any other DeKalb County township. *Voters and Taxpayers of DeKalb County*, p. 134.

79) *Aurora Beacon*, Thursday, May 10, 1849.

80) *Commemorative Biographical and Historical Record of Kane County, Illinois*. Beers..., Chicago, 1888. p. 1085.

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81) *Commemorative Biographical and Historical Record of Kane County, Illinois*, p. 1086.

82) "Judge W. D. Barry is one of the oldest, best known and most honored citizens of the city of St. Charles. He was born in Oneida County, N. Y., March 28, 1809, and is a son of John and Eunice (Sweet) Barry, natives of Connecticut and Vermont, respectively, who after their marriage moved to the State of New York. The family was of Irish extraction, one of its members being Hon. W. T. Barry, who was United States Minister to Spain during President Jackson's administration, and who died in London in 1833.

In 1828, when nineteen years old, our subject was employed as a stage driver from the then village of Utica, in his native county. Later he was employed as an attendant in the State's prison at Auburn, N. Y. Having applied himself assiduously to the study of medicine he was, in 1835, licensed by the New York Medical Society, and began practicing. During the same year he removed to Napoleon, Henry Co., Ohio, and while there became a contractor on the Wabash & Erie Canal; but, giving that up, he began reading law with State Senator Bates, and was admitted to the bar, a month after which event he was elected States attorney for Henry County.

In April, 1840, he came to St. Charles, where he commenced practicing law, and in 1852 he was elected county judge for Kane County. During the War of the Rebellion he was a member of the military board from this district; at present he is president of Kane County bar.

Mr. Barry has been twice married; his first wife was Eliza Sealbrooke, and his present wife, whom he married at St. Charles, January 18, 1845, was Isabella Thom, a native of the vicinity of Aberdeen, Scotland. Her father, John Thom, was a lieutenant in the famous Forty-Second Regiment of Highlanders ("Black Watch"), and was present at the battle of Waterloo. Mr. Barry is the father of two children, Eliza D. and William T. (both deceased). Mrs. Barry is a member of the Congregational Church."

from: *Portrait and Biographical Record of Kane and Kendall Counties, Ill.*, 1888. p. 500-501. Mr. Barry's office still stands on the south side of East Main Street in the block east of the Franklin Institute.

83) Mary Todd Lincoln was known to be very much taken by the clairvoyants and spiritualists who became very popular during the middle of the 19th century. She did spend several weeks in Dr. Patterson's hospital in Batavia, but just when she visited with Caroline Howard (if ever) is not known. Mary Lincoln did have access to a carriage while at Bellvue in Batavia, so such visits were certainly possible. Baker, J.H.: *Mary Todd Lincoln, A Biography*. W.W. Norton & Co., N.Y., 1987. p. 327-338. Ross, Rodney A.: Mary Todd Lincoln, Patient at Bellvue Place Batavia. *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society* 63: 5-34, 1970.

84) Mrs. Alice Davis (an early 20th century St. Charles school teacher), in her book, *St. Charles Pioneers* (privately printed, St. Charles, Illinois [1907?]) told the story that Mrs. Howard divined for the Sycamorites "...the exact location of the body."

85) Harvey apparently was a student at the Franklin Institute. Dr. Richards referred to "Harvey" in a letter to George Bunker, another student, in October of 1848. See: Weaver, op cit, p. 461.

86) *St. Charles Patriot*, #1; Feb. 5th, 1842.

87) "Danforth" is from Boies' account. He probably is referring to Eben Danford, who was a Geneva furniture maker. See: *Geneva Illinois, a History of its Times and Places*, Geneva Public Library, Geneva, Illinois, 1976. p. 33. The Danford farm is now Wheeler Park on Geneva's west side. This lends credence to Boies account that Marilla's body was picked up in its new coffin in a grove between St. Charles and Geneva and west of the River. This would place the hiding spot in proximity to Danford's farm.

88) *Port. and Bio. Album of Dekalb County*, p. 253. This account states that Marilla was buried in the same coffin with a new lid. This is quite plausible, given the standard grave

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robbing technic of breaking a hole in the lid.

89) *Aurora Beacon*, May 17th, 1849.

90) The Kane County bureaucrats were singularly uncooperative in assisting with a search for any legal documents related to the riot.

91) *Commemorative Biographical and Historical Record of Kane County, Illinois*. p. 1086.

92) *Zeuch*, p. 598.

93) Weaver, p. 469. Willis Danforth later became an ally of Robert Lincoln in his legal battle to have his mother declared insane, and testified for Robert's side in the Mary Todd Lincoln insanity trial.

94) *St. Charles Chronicle*, Thursday, October 22, 1925.

95) This jealousy hypothesis was also raised in the Harrison case (vide supra).

96) Now *The Kane County Chronicle* again.

97) *Aurora Beacon*, August 30, 1849.

98) A statement in a letter written by John Dillon, a medical student in the Rock Island Medical College, printed in *Zeuch*, throws light upon the antagonism of the faculty of Rush Medical College against those in authority in the Rock Island institution. "The college [Rock Island] is in full and successful operation. Owing to the ridiculous coup d'etat by Rush Medical College for the ignoble purpose of crushing this new co-laborator in the cause of medical science there are only at this time about twenty five students in attendance." *Zeuch*, p. 646. The Galena "Franklin Literary and Medical College of Illinois" was chartered by laymen Joseph Johnson, Abner Eads, John Dement, Henry J. Morrison, Benjamin C. St. Cyr, and Nicholas Dowling. One physician was an incorporator: Horatio Newell, M.D. Newell was a long lived resident of Galena and served as a newspaper editor and lead speculator during his long career. I have not been able to trace any link between Richards or his associates and the Galena men. The Galena school was incorporated in 1844, and Richards did not arrive in near by Dubuque, Iowa until several years later. *Laws of the State of Illinois*. Walters & Weber, Springfield, 1845. p. 219.

99) Letter from John Dillon to George Bunker, June 4, 1849. Weaver, p. 463. "You were not in the St. Charles affray! From all I can learn from various sources respecting the matter, I am strongly inclined to the opinion that The Rock Island excitement is not for a moment to be compared with it. I am apprehensive that the occurrence will injure Dr. Richard[s], pecuniarily, and perhaps in other ways, i.e. in respect to practice and collection of his debts, however, I hope not."

100) Weaver, op cit., p. 468.

101) *Commemorative Biographical and Historical Record of Kane County, Illinois*. Beers..., Chicago, 1888. p. 1086.

102) *Linwood Cemetery, 1875-1975*. privately printed. [Dubuque?], [1975?].

103) Kelly H.A., and Burrage, W.L.: *Dictionary of American Medical Biography*. Appleton, New York, 1928. p. 35-6.

104) *Portrait and Biographical Record of Kane and Kendall Counties, Ill.*, 1888. p. 274.

105) Kelly and Burrage, p. 393.

106) Kelly and Burrage, p. 525-6.

107) Kelly and Burrage, p. 708.

108) Kelly and Burrage, p. 823,

109) Kelly and Burrage, p. 826.

110) Kelly and Burrage, p. 1030-1.

111) No record has been found of any other specific local thefts, though the practice of "resurrection" was widespread among medical preceptors.

112) Lovell's establishment is pictured in the *Atlas of DeKalb County*. Lovell first settled in St. Charles in 1837 (*Past and Present of Kane County, Illinois*, p. 339,) before moving to



Cortland Twnsp., Dekalb County. However, another source claims that it was Alonzo L. Lovell of the Village of Cortland who first settled in St. Charles before moving to Dekalb Co. (Kett, Dekalb, p. 226.) Both Lovells were from New York and were brothers who came together to Illinois. They are buried in the family plot in the Ohio Grove Cemetery.

113) Roads were laid around the groves, as too much labor was required to traverse them.

114) Harry A. Joslyn was born in Genesee County, New York, on December 10, 1816, and came to Cortland Township in 1837 on a claim in section 9. He later bought a farm in section 4, and finally in section 3, before selling out in 1854 and moving to Sycamore. In 1849 he was a close neighbor of Lovell, Churchill, and Kinyon. Joslyn later engaged in a mercantile business in a partnership with Kimball Dow in Sycamore. In 1858 he was appointed deputy sheriff, and was later elected to one term as sheriff. He later owned a farm in section 16 before finally settling in a house in section 5 adjoining the village of Sycamore. He married Lucy Ann Waterman, who had many kinsmen in Cortland Township. *Port. and Bio. of DeKalb*, p. 432-433.

115) Mr. Dow was in the medicine business himself, being the agent for Sloan's Ointment in Sycamore. *Geneva Western Mercury*, Thursday, July 19th, 1849.

116) H. Furness was sheriff of Dekalb County in 1850-51. The sheriff in 1849, M. Stark, is absent from Boies' narrative. *Port. and Bio. of DeKalb*, p. 788.

117) Further information on Mr. Whittmore has not been found.

118) Probably John C. Waterman, one of two prominent brothers who were early Sycamore businessmen and land investors. *Port. and Bio. of DeKalb*, p. 315-6.

119) Further information on E.P. Young has not been found.

120) Somonauk Street ran south out of the Village of Sycamore.

121) Rude or Rood was an early student at the Franklin school, but apparently had not graduated with his class. He was actually a student of Dr. DeWolf in 1849, by some accounts (see Durant). Rood's family later ran a prosperous carriage manufacturing shop in Lodi, as illustrated in: *Combination Atlas Map of Kane County, Illinois*. Thompson and Everts, Geneva, 1872.

122) Edward L. Mayo was born in 1807 in Moretown, Vermont and arrived in Sycamore in 1841. He was a lawyer, judge, newspaper editor, and the unsuccessful Democratic candidate for Congress in 1854. He was elected Judge in 1849. *Port and Bio. of DeKalb*, p. 754-5.

123) Churchill was not an old man in 1849, being but 44 years of age. *Port and Bio. of DeKalb*, p. 253.

124) No legal record of a warrant has been found.

125) The "large stone barn" may have been the building still standing on the northeast corner of First Avenue and Main in St. Charles. However, a stone barn also stands near the corner of Sixth Avenue and Illinois, then just behind Professor Richard's house, now immediately adjacent to the east.

126) The crowd of 160 does match some other estimates. However, other accounts document the large popularity that Dr. Richards enjoyed among his townsmen.

127) Apparently the mob stopped at Howard's Tavern, a building constructed by Leonard Howard in 1848. Howard was active in the construction of many early St. Charles structures including the first post office and an early mill. *Past and Present of Kane County*, p. 341-2. \*

128) Currier has not been further identified.

129) Fordham has not been further identified.

130) No listing of Gilman Smith can be found in Heitman (Heitman, F. B.: *Historical Register and Dictionary of the United States Army*. GPO, Washington, D.C., 1903), though he may have served in a militia unit not regularly mustered into the U.S. Army.

131) No other account claims two bullets struck Richards.

132) Other accounts claim that Richards was defiant throughout the affair.

133) This language is close to what other accounts have Richards saying from the front porch of the house. Mary was the wife of Orpheus Everts, one of Richard's students who went on to a distinguished

\* Leonard Howard and his brother Daniel purchased the original building from Joel Witherall who built it in 1840. The Howard brothers added the Greek Revival south portion in about 1842-3.

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career treating mental illness in Indiana. Where Everts was during the Riot is not stated, even by Everts.

134) Joslyn, Waite and Joslyn, Frank W.: *History of Kane County, Illinois*. Pioneer Publishing Company, Chicago, 1908. 2 vols. p. 517, claims that if the students had been bolder Richards and Rood might have fared better, and the attackers worse.

135) A record of these warrants has not been found.

136) Many bridges were out up and down the Fox River according to the *Aurora Beacon*.

137) See Joslyn for photo of Barry's office on main street.

138) Farnsworth, a personal friend and supporter of Mary Todd Lincoln, was an important local figure, a civil war Brevet general, and an active abolitionist.

139) Harvey remains a mysterious character, and he may have been a principle in the theft of Marilla. See the suspicious letter in Weaver, p. 461.

140) Danford [Danforth] was an inventor of a reaper and also was involved in its manufacture. [See note #87, above.]

141) R.S. Prescott was in the lumber trade in St. Charles. He lived for a time near DeKalb, and he had relatives in the Ohio Grove vicinity. *Past and Present of Kane County, Illinois*. p. 650.

142) From: *Biographical and Historical Record of Kane County*, Chicago, 1888. Prepared by S.W. Durant. p. 1085-1086.

143) Dr. O. Everts letter to S.W. Durant, April 22, 1885. *Biographical and Historical Record of Kane County*, Chicago, 1888.



From the 1872 Atlas of Kane County

Residence of Judge John F. Farnsworth

