
DIVISION III

THE BLOSSOMING

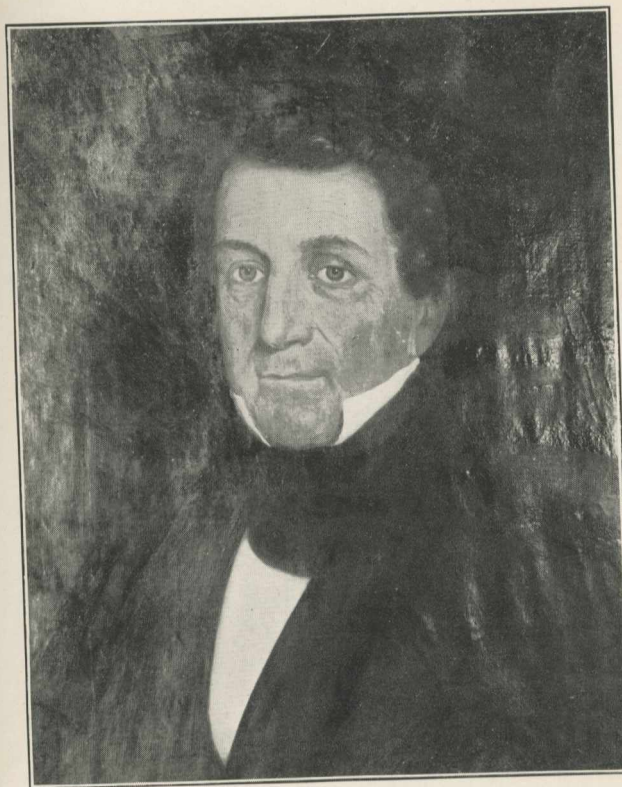
EPISODE ONE

THE TRANSFER TO REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
PITTSBURGH CONFERENCE, JULY 17, 1833

[JOHN REYNOLDS and JOHN DICK come in quickly at the back of stage, and, looking off as if expecting someone, hurry to the center door of Bentley Hall. Unlocking this, they throw up the windows from the inside and open the other doors as if airing a closed building. They take some time about this. Immediately after their entrance, a group of ministers on horseback comes in at the right, riding slowly. As they approach, all look critically at Bentley Hall. From the vague murmur of their conversation, rises, as they draw near, the voice of CLARK]

CLARK. *[Enthusiastically]* Bishop Roberts, I believe this will be a memorable day in the annals of our church. BISHOP ROBERTS. Certainly, my friend, it has been a day full of business for the Conference. We have not only completed the conditions for the taking over of Allegheny College, but we have elected Martin Ruter here as President, you as Vice-President, and Augustus Ruter here as Professor of Languages. More than that, plans for the richer development of this college have been offered on all sides.

[80]



MARTIN RUTER

CENTENARY PAGEANT

RUTER. The step we are taking is certainly thoroughly in accord with the newer spirit of Methodism, which more and more demands the higher education for its future ministers. Wesleyan, in Connecticut was founded only two years ago, yet this year finds the Philadelphia Conference taking over Dickinson from the Presbyterians. And now, we have secured this fine property.

REV. BARRIS. I have heard it valued as high as \$50,000.

CLARK. I am sure it is well worth that, or it will be when we have developed it. Shortly after I first came to this town, I coveted this institution for our church. It is the happiest event of my life that we are able to obtain it for her.

REV. BRUNSON. How do you mean to find students? The College has been closed for two years.

ROBERTS. We have a great field in which to secure students, for we shall be able to send out 200 alert Methodist preachers as agents for the College.

CLARK. Surely each of these should be able to send us at least two students. Think what that would mean! Four hundred students! If only in some way we can devise an inexpensive and attractive plan of tuition.

REV. COLSON. Surely with the church pledged to raise ten thousand dollars, for a professorship bearing the name of our honored Bishop here, [*Pointing to ROBERTS*] we make an exceedingly good start.

CLARK. And there has even been talk, as you must well know, of a second chair to be endowed in honor of Bishop Soule.

BISHOP ROBERTS. [*Gravely*] Certainly the outlook is promising, particularly as our vote today has joined together in the interests of the College, the enthusiasm and the resourcefulness of our friend Clark, the worldly experience and tried wisdom of Dr. Ruter here.

ALLEGHENY COLLEGE

RUTER. I wish, my friends, I could take up this work with complete enthusiasm. I do not feel so sure of my enterprises. I have yielded to your kindly insistence, but, as you know, inborn desire and long training draw me toward missionary work.

BISHOP ROBERTS. [*In a kindly way*] The church has assigned you, for a time, my friend. It is to the home missions.

[*During the latter part of the conversation, DICK and REYNOLDS have reappeared on the steps, and have been moving slowly down stage. As the group on horseback see them, they dismount. As DICK draws near, he takes from his pocket the key of Bentley Hall. This he passes to JOHN REYNOLDS*]

REYNOLDS. [*As he, in turn, passes the key to RUTER*] In handing over the key of Bentley Hall to you as the new President of Allegheny College, I wish to state my appreciation of the generous and Christian spirit of the conditions of transfer. We of the old board appreciate much your willingness to retain us, and we welcome to the Board Bishop Roberts here and the other trustees nominated by you.

RUTER. [*In receiving the key*] We shall hold strictly to the contract we have made with you, reiterating for ourselves that article from the charter granted this College by the State, which declares that "the institution shall be conducted on liberal principles, no person having any advantage because of his religious belief." We shall not permit any particular theological views to influence any of the Board's decisions.

CLARK. Throughout its history thus far, Allegheny College has, I believe, consistently sounded the note that Christian faith and higher education must be inseparable.

CENTENARY PAGEANT

BARRIS. [*As they turn to go up stage*] You see, Dr. Ruter, even if you must give up being a missionary yourself, you are to be here the head of an institution which, in all probability, will train many who shall reclaim the heathen.

DICK. The tradition is already here—

REYNOLDS. Firmly rooted by my good friend, Timothy Alden. If the College falls from that tradition, it will not be what we meant it to be.

CLARK. [*Cheerfully*] Why not believe, gentlemen, that the College is about to enter an era in which it will train men more than ever before for service both at home and abroad?

[*Two by two they go up to the steps of Bentley. There, DICK and REYNOLDS, leading, usher BISHOP ROBERTS, PRESIDENT RUTER, VICE-PRESIDENT CLARK and AUGUSTUS RUTER into the hall. The others, dividing the horses among them, lead the horses to left and right around Bentley*]

EPISODE TWO

MUSTER DAY ON THE DIAMOND, JUNE, 1838

[A man with ginger bread and small beer in two large baskets comes in from left, as two women, selling flags and popcorn draw near from the other side. All three place themselves to sell their wares. At once, from all sides, groups of younger and older women, men and children gather to stand or sit, waiting for the soldiers. A group of boys and girls rush in calling "The Citizen Militia are coming. The Citizen Militia." This body appears at right center carrying sticks instead of guns. Just as they appear, a group of marching students may be seen far back at stage left. A crowd of boys comes in shouting "The students, the students." As the students come on stage, there are laughter and applause from the women and jeers from the Citizen Militia. Only three or four carry guns. The rest are armed with cornstalks, beanpoles, brooms, etc.]

A BOY. Mother, mother, where are their guns?

MOTHER. The arsenal never has enough for the College boys, or the Citizen Militia. They have only just enough for the regular companies.

A GIRL. Oh, won't there be any guns?

MOTHER. Yes, yes, watch the Meadville Greys.

SECOND BOY. You just wait till the Cussewago Rifles and the Saegertown Guard come, then you'll see.

CAPTAIN OF THE CITIZENS. Attention!

[The lines formed are very bad]

CAPTAIN. Here, then, if you can't go straight, back up against that bank and get into line.

CENTENARY PAGEANT

[By means of this, the line is formed. Then, not very successfully, they go through a very simple manual. "Attention, shoulder arms, stand at ease"]

FLEURY. Is that standin' at ease you call it?

CAPTAIN. Shoulder arms. Right and left wheel. Break ranks.

FLEURY. Gentlemen, its a cake of my superfine ginger bread I'm givin' the company of the two of you that does the finest.

CAPTAIN OF COLLEGE BOYS. Fall in!

[They, too, are put through the manual, but rather less successfully]

FLEURY. *[Coming forward as they are dismissed, scratching his head]* It's hard put to it, I am to decide between you two, so bad you both are. But knowing where my best customers have been, I give my prize here. *[He hands a cake of ginger bread to the College Boys]*

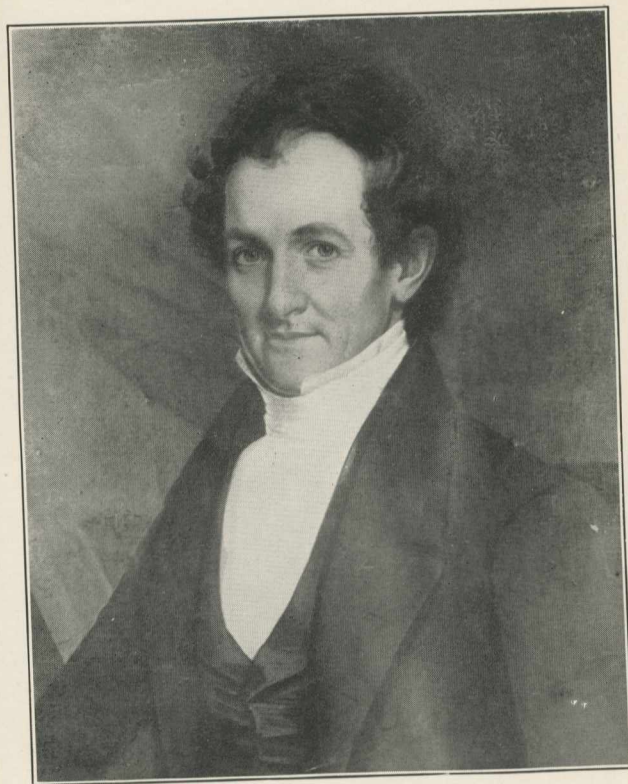
[There is some excited protest from the citizen militia, who gather about him. As this begins, a fiddler strikes up "Hull's Victory." Some girls begin circling about him, clapping their hands in time. Men from the two militia groups, running to them, pick partners, and return to the front stage]

FLEURY. Ah, now, let me see you dance "Hull's Victory" as well as your fathers and mothers before you.

[They dance it to great applause. As it ends, there are cries from both the dancers and the crowd for "Pop Goes the Weasel." Swinging into this, the young people dance it with vigor, if not correctly. Just as this ends, drums and fifes are heard off right. The Meadville Greys, the Artillery, the Dragoons, the Saegertown Guards and the Cusse-

ALLEGHENY COLLEGE

wago Rifles enter in order. From the other side come the Reviewing Officer and his Adjutants. The companies pass this group at the back of the stage. When they are well on stage, this group rides to the front. The reviewing then takes place. At its finish, the companies march out amid the acclaim of the people—and Muster Day is over]



PRESIDENT CLARK

EPISODE THREE

PRESIDENT CLARK AND THE SECOND CLOSING
AUGUST, 1843

[Enter a group of three men talking earnestly. As they approach the voice of one rises clearly]

AGENT OF CONFERENCE. There is only one thing for you trustees to do, close the College and close it for good.

FIRST TRUSTEE. But we can't let Allegheny end as Madison College ended.

SECOND TRUSTEE. Certainly not.

AGENT. As agent of the Pittsburgh Conference, as you know, I have worked for the College for the past four years. I believe there is no money to be had for the College. Look at the state of affairs. Because the students have been steadily falling off the last four years, and because of lack of funds, the Board of Trustees, to which you two belong, voted today to close the College temporarily. Well—

FIRST TRUSTEE. *[Breaking in]* "Temporarily," mark that my friend.

SECOND TRUSTEE. We merely want time, without steady running expenses to bethink ourselves.

AGENT. What new plan is likely to come to us? In '39, at the Centenary of Wesleyan Methodism, I did think that in the stirring all over the country, this college would benefit. Well, did it?

SECOND TRUSTEE. No, I must admit it didn't.

[The FIRST TRUSTEE shakes his head]

ALLEGHENY COLLEGE

FIRST TRUSTEE. I have always had hopes that the suggestion for personal assessment of the members of the Pittsburgh Conference might be the way out.

AGENT. How much general favor has that ever met? [*He looks first at one and then the other of the TRUSTEES*]

TRUSTEES. None, none.

FIRST TRUSTEE. We are still feeling the panic of '37, that's what's the matter.

AGENT. It isn't the panic—it's apathy. Can you tell me that in the past five years you have, as Trustees, had any response to your loud and repeated calls for aid?

[*TRUSTEES shake their heads sadly*]

AGENT. Well, there you are! Close, and close for good, that's what I advise.

[*The TRUSTEES gloomily shake their heads. The AGENT looks belligerent. PRESIDENT CLARK and VICE-PRESIDENT BARKER enter in earnest talk*]

TRUSTEES. Good morning, President Clark. Mr. Barker.

[*The greetings are answered*]

CLARK. Well gentlemen, you look downcast. Don't, I beg of you, take the closing so hard. It is only temporary.

AGENT. Temporary! Mr. President, we can't draw money from the air.

BARKER. No, but President Clark thinks he can draw it from the hearts and heads of our countrymen.

[*The AGENT looks utterly unbelieving*]

CLARK. I am not at all discouraged. If the Trustees at their meeting day after tomorrow authorize it, [*To the TRUSTEES*] and I have asked that you two meet me here in order to induce you to favor the plan, I will start at

CENTENARY PAGEANT

once on a canvas of the Middle States to bring students here. I shall sell Scholarships on these terms: Any one paying \$25 shall have a perpetual scholarship entitling him to tuition at Allegheny.

SECOND TRUSTEE. But can we afford it for so small a sum?

CLARK. I figure it this way. Many will take the scholarships, so small is the amount, as benevolence. Others, who hope to use them will not be able. Only a reasonable percentage of the holders will appear here.

FIRST TRUSTEE. May any member of a man's family use the scholarships?

CLARK. Any male member, yes.

[*The TRUSTEES look at each other dubiously, and then at BARKER*]

SECOND TRUSTEE. Do you think the plan feasible?

BARKER. Interesting, ingenious, and, with President Clark's enthusiasm, feasible.

AGENT. And, how much, may I ask, do you expect to raise by this method?

CLARK. The limit I have set is \$75,000.

[*The AGENT throws up his hands, speechless*]

CLARK. [*Smiling*] You don't think it possible?

AGENT. For four years I have been trying every kind of plan—so have the Trustees and you. Look at the results!

CLARK. Well, I still have hope.

[*During the last speech, a man hurries in*]

LEIGHTON. Forgive me, President Clark, for intruding, but I want to see you at once.

CLARK. Welcome, Mr. Leighton. Gentlemen, this is the

ALLEGHENY COLLEGE

Reverend Herbert Leighton, of Akron, Ohio. I met him there some months ago when journeying for the College.

LEIGHTON. President Clark, at your house, I have just heard of the closing of Allegheny, and of your present anxieties for its future. I have hastened here with important news.

CLARK. Yes?

[All are attentive]

LEIGHTON. Last spring you confided to me a plan of yours for \$25 scholarships. It interested me greatly. Recently at a camp meeting I suggested something of the sort. Almost at once some twenty persons agreed to take such scholarships if offered.

BARKER AND CLARK. Good, good.

[The AGENT looks amazed. The TRUSTEES are encouraged]

CLARK. Splendid news, Mr. Leighton!

MR. LEIGHTON. And I stayed here my journey to New England, to bid you come to the summer and autumn camp meetings. At them we will make a campaign for the scholarships.

CLARK. Count on me. You see, gentlemen!

AGENT. Mr. President, I remember an old saying about "a bird in the hand—"

CLARK. Come, come, don't lose faith in man's generosity or his hunger for education. Not to take this fighting chance is to invite the lifted finger of public scorn, and to hear "this man began to build and was not able to finish." I cannot stand that.

BARKER. Nor do we expect it.

FIRST TRUSTEE. We do not.

SECOND TRUSTEE. I pledge my support.

CENTENARY PAGEANT

CLARK. Good, good. The meeting, then, tomorrow to ratify the plan!

FIRST TRUSTEE. Certainly.

SECOND TRUSTEE. Count on us. Good night.

AGENT. President Clark, you have a fine fighting spirit, but this time you go to defeat.

CLARK. Not at all, not at all. Good night, good night.

[As the other three go out, CLARK turns to BARKER]

CLARK. I know I shall leave the College safe in your hands.

BARKER. Count on me absolutely.

LEIGHTON. And on me to aid you all I can.

CLARK. Good, good. *[As they go out]* That building may be closed, but please God, it shall open again soon to great and uninterrupted success.