

cultures; a 1984 concert series emphasized world music, and new courses illustrated contemporary developments. Tom Ross, ethnomusicologist, student of Mbira, had come to Union in 1966; he introduced a course on the music of India and also extended the electronic studio. Students were once again encouraged to study composition and to use student ensembles as laboratories—reassuring omens for the decade leading to the College's 200th birthday.

—Edgar Curtis

**Musical Concerts.** Union's student musical groups, active since at least 1854, gave many concerts on campus; these groups are chronicled in the article STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS: PERFORMING ARTS. The present article discusses non-student concerts on campus.

For many decades, most concerts depended on the patronage of the president and his wife. The earliest known is a "parlour concert and reading" sponsored on February 6, 1879, by Eliphalet Nott's widow, URANIA NOTT, at her house; some students were present by invitation. President ELIPHALET NOTT POTTER's wife, Helen, played the piano; JULIA BENEDICT sang; Lt. Best, the professor of military science, played the violin; "Mr. Pierson" (probably William L. Pearson '68) played the zither; and Professor WENDELL LAMOROUX gave a reading. Three months later the Baseball Association sponsored another concert and reading with some of the same performers.

President CHARLES ALEXANDER RICHMOND's wife, Sarah, took the initiative in organizing the first concerts at Union by distinguished musicians, beginning with a series of three in the winter of 1909/10. In that period even the most famous of America's musicians frequently performed in provincial halls.

The Flonzaley String Quartet, one of the country's first chamber music groups to gain an international reputation, performed at that time in Old Chapel, and returned at least twice. Other performers during Richmond's administration included the Dolmetsch Trio, Efrem Zimbalist, the Adamowski Trio, Alma Gluck (she returned to sing "Home, Sweet Home" at the dedications of Payne Gate and of the Alumni Gymnasium), Ignaz Paderewski (in the gymnasium!), and Julia Culp. The First World War ended the concerts for a while, but Mrs. Richmond revived them in 1925 with a performance by Sophie Breslau of the Metropolitan Opera, followed the next year by violinist Max Rosen, harpsichordist Wanda Landowska and the Russian Symphonic Choir.

President Richmond retired in 1928, and the wife of his successor was more interested in art than in music, but the Civic Music Association sponsored a concert series in 1931, mostly in Memorial Chapel. The following year, trustee WALTER C. BAKER '15 and his wife, May, underwrote the first of several concerts

over a period of years, an appearance by Metropolitan Opera baritone Friedrich Schorr. Ticket sales benefited the student loan fund.

The 1930s also saw several series of "Capehorn concerts" in Memorial Chapel and in the Mountebanks theatre—i.e., records played on a phonograph.

Julius Huehn of the Metropolitan Opera sang in Memorial Chapel on the 1940 spring prom weekend, and the following year President DIXON RYAN FOX launched a series of concerts which succeeded remarkably well in their purpose of raising money for scholarships: the first year's performers included Paul Robeson, Helen Jepson and violinist Albert Spalding. The 1943 schedule included the Trapp Family Choir, Yehudi Menuhin and pianist William Kapell. Walter Baker made a gift of five concerts in 1946/47; these included the Gordon String Quartet. The first College-sponsored jazz concert was held in Memorial Chapel in April 1952.

Since 1953, the SCHENECTADY MUSEUM—UNION COLLEGE CONCERT SERIES, held in Memorial Chapel, has been the principal sponsor of classical music performances.

**National Youth Administration.** A New Deal program created in 1935 as a part of the Works Projects Administration, the NYA provided work for unemployed young people between sixteen and twenty-five, including those who would not otherwise be able to remain in college.

FRANCES TRAVIS, in charge of the program at Union, reported in June 1936 that an average of 133 students a month, or almost sixteen percent of the student body, had earned a total of more than \$13,000 during the past year. Work ranged from manual labor about the College to laboratory computations.

The allotment gradually decreased, to 105 students in 1936/37 and 82 in 1937/38, but the College was still receiving \$10,395 in 1940/41, which may have been the program's last year at Union (it ended nationally in January 1944).

**Newman, John** (Nov. 28, 1813–Jan. 27, 1896). Class of 1838. Professor of Latin, 1852–63.

Born in Amsterdam, N.Y., the son of Elias and Elizabeth Hopkins Newman, John Newman taught in a district school before entering the sophomore class at Union, aged twenty-two, in 1836. He joined Psi Upsilon and was elected to Phi Beta Kappa. On graduating in 1838 he became assistant mathematics and English teacher at the newly-founded Troy Conference Academy in Poultney, Vermont.

The Academy was a coeducational school sponsored by the Methodist Church. Newman was ordained a Methodist clergyman, but he was never pastor of a church; rather, over the next fourteen years he served the school as teacher, vice-principal, principal,

financial agent, trustee, secretary and treasurer of the board of trustees. In 1841 he married Maria Ester Dorr, a music teacher at the academy. Two of their four children died in infancy.

Newman stepped down as principal in 1851, and the following year he replaced THOMAS REED as professor of Latin at Union. One of Newman's qualifications was apparently that he was a Methodist; the College in those days tried always to include one person of that denomination on its faculty.

From 1854 the Newmans lived in the south faculty apartment in North College. In 1858 he helped found the Schenectady YMCA. He apparently declined a call in 1859 to the presidency of Lawrence University, in Wisconsin. Wesleyan University awarded him an honorary Doctor of Divinity degree in 1861.

Newman's time at Union was not very successful, and after eleven years he felt compelled to leave. All we know of the reasons is summed up in the diary of Jonathan Pearson, who seems to have been uncertain that he had all the facts:

When he first came, he perhaps was not over and above fitted for the post; this was well enough known at the time and a better scholar (Methodist) was recommended, but Dr. Nott chose N[ewman] because he heard he was an easy, good-natured man, a qualification always first with the Dr. Some dissatisfaction after a time was expressed by some of the fac. that N[ewman] did not study in his profession and was not prepared in his lessons. This was told N[ewman] and spurred him on to do better and, as is said by Dr. [Taylor] Lewis, he latterly taught well. However this may be, the reputation first acquired never left him.

Tis charged that one or two of the fac. and one or two of the Trustees continued to urge his removal and talked about him outside of College, creating a public opinion prejudicial to his good name. However this may be, it was at last resolved by some of the Trustees to bring his case before the Board and ask for his removal. As this would have been a still farther blow to his reputation, some of his friends were forced to say to him plainly: you had better resign to save a worse fate and so he did but with no good feeling to those who forced him to it.

Pearson elsewhere identified Newman's faculty adversaries as ISAAC JACKSON and JOHN FOSTER. Newman left Union at the end of 1862/63.

The Troy Conference Academy had already fallen on hard times before Newman left, and in 1855 the Conference sold a 999-year lease on the building and land to a former trustee, who became the school's proprietor. By 1863, with enrollments depressed by the Civil War, the proprietor was ready to give up, and he sold the lease to John Newman and Seaman Knapp. They obtained financial backing from a wealthy Rutland resident, William Ripley, and opened the Ripley Female College.

Knapp, who had been Newman's student at the academy and then again at Union College (Class of

1856), would eventually become a trailblazer in agricultural education, but he was compelled by an injury to withdraw from the Ripley Female College after about one year. Newman carried on for a decade as principal of the first college in Vermont to grant degrees to women, but he was then forced by the institution's worsening finances to withdraw, selling it back to the Troy Conference. The school survived and is now Green Mountain College.

Newman lived for a time in Troy, then spent his later years in the West, engaging in unspecified business in Iowa, Colorado and Nebraska, and frequently preaching in Methodist churches. He died in Lincoln, Nebraska.

**Nistiquona Hill.** Presumably another spelling of "Niskayuna," Nistiquona Hill was an old name for the rise on which Union's present campus is situated.

**North College and South College.** North and South Colleges have served as dormitories since they opened in the fall of 1814. For the first year or two, until the colonnades were built, they also contained all classrooms and administrative offices; until recently, a faculty residence flanked each dormitory on each end.

Work on the foundations began in November 1812, before ELIPHALET NOTT met JOSEPH RAMÉE; later, Nott couldn't remember who was responsible for the original plan, but JONATHAN PEARSON speculated that it was David Burt, a local builder.

Work recommenced using Ramée's plans by May 1813; roofed over by the end of the year, the buildings were first used in the fall of 1814, when the College moved to the present campus. Eliphalet Nott later said that he had personally supervised construction of South College, while THOMAS MCAULEY was in charge of the building of North.

It was common at that time to call individual college buildings "colleges" and to name them for compass points; many other institutions, including Hamilton and Williams, had North and South Colleges. At Union, the terms "North College" and "South College" were long used ambiguously, referring sometimes to those buildings as a whole, sometimes to the dormitory sections in the middle of them, and sometimes to the colonnades or even to the terminating buildings at the east ends of the colonnades.

The present article deals with the physical buildings and the succession of their occupants. Student dormitory life is treated in the article DORMITORIES.

No early interior plans of the buildings are extant, and little is known of their layout. Each of the three dormitory sections of each building originally had its own exterior entrance and was independent, with no connecting north-south hallway. The dormitories had hallways paved with brick, and stairways of heavy timber. In 1857, Jonathan Pearson called them "our dirty,

repulsive old barracks," but there would not be a major renovation until 1902. In 1872, however, some of the South College rooms were remodeled by cutting a door through the wall separating the front from the rear room, and dividing the rear rooms into two bedrooms, thus apparently creating a precursor of the suite system which became popular a century later.

Exterior changes were few. North and South Colleges and Colonnades were newly stuccoed with a thin coat of mortar in 1873, and given a rough-cast stuccoing in 1886. New limestone steps were added in front of the section doors in that year; in 1925 granite replaced the limestone and iron railings were added. Both buildings were reroofed in 1888/89 and acquired slate roofs the summer of 1907; at the same time, a fire escape was attached to each section. In the summer of 1948, the chimneys were replaced.

Several fraternities began in one or the other of the dormitories; it was common for the College to assign blocks of rooms to a fraternity, and (in the nineteenth century, at least), to assign meeting rooms to fraternities and other organizations.

Faculty residences at each end continuously served that purpose until late in the twentieth century. By then, both the size of the College and the conception of a college community had changed greatly from Eliphalet Nott's time, and when the north house in North College became vacant in 1966, it was converted to other purposes. Although President Martin announced in 1973 that the remaining tenants of faculty residences would be moved out and the space converted to student rooms, the change occurred gradually. Only two of the four houses became dormitory units; the others were needed for offices.

On October 17, 1914, the College formally celebrated the centennial of the building of North and South Colleges. On November 22, 1938, a 21-cent postage stamp was issued to honor President Chester Arthur. North College, where Arthur had lived, appears in the background.

**North College.** Because administrative offices were confined to the south side of the campus until recently, the history of North College has been somewhat simpler than that of South. There were doubtless classrooms in North College in the early years; later we know only of the large recitation room adjacent to the south faculty apartment dating from 1862: it extended from the front to the rear of the building and later became famous as the domain of Professor WILLIAM WELLS.

In 1833, and perhaps from 1814, the College library was in North College, at the end of a long, narrow passage, probably on the third floor above the south faculty apartment. The library moved to West College in 1840.

The Adelpic Society had a room in North College (probably above the north faculty house) from 1814

until it moved to the newly-opened Silliman Hall in 1900. From 1837 until its demise in the early 1850s, the Delphian Institute had a room at the top of the south faculty house; in 1856, the Theological Society took that space.

Electric lighting came to the lower hallways of North College in 1902. The next year all sections enjoyed electric lighting, steam heat and renovated bathrooms (though one section still lacked running water.)

During the summers of 1929 and 1930, North College was gutted and rebuilt, and the entire foundation repaired and resilled where necessary. Steel stairways replaced the original wood.

Upon the opening of Davidson House in early 1967, the residents of North College were moved there, and it was planned to renovate the building in the near future. Larger than anticipated enrollments in each of the next few years, however, made it necessary to continue using part of North College, and it was not until 1971 that the interior was completely rebuilt, at a cost of \$852,000, by the Hanson Construction Co. During the interim, the portion of North College not being used as a dormitory was made available to house women guests on weekends, and was unofficially called "North College Hotel." Some of the rooms were also used during this period as temporary offices—e.g., of the Capital District Library Council and of the UPWARD BOUND PROGRAM.

After the 1971 renovation, North College opened as a women's dormitory; it became a co-ed dormitory sometime after 1990.

Because Eliphalet Nott believed in close, quasi-parental supervision of students, he had the dormitories designed with a faculty residence at each end. As far as can now be determined, these residences have been occupied as follows:

**North Faculty House (Bronner House).** The first occupant of the north faculty house was Thomas McAuley, who began the nearby garden made famous by ISAAC JACKSON. On McAuley's departure from Union in 1822, Eliphalet Nott's daughter Sarah and her husband, Professor ALONZO POTTER, were probably the next occupants. After they left in 1826, the house probably quartered the president's son, JOEL NOTT, who left the College in 1831. He was succeeded in the residence by Isaac Jackson, who remained until his death in 1877. CADY STALEY, assigned the house in the spring of 1878, remained until his departure in 1886. The next occupant was JAMES TRUAX, who, when he left the College in 1903, was succeeded by Frank Blair Williams. HORACE MCKEAN occupied the house from the spring of 1907 until his retirement in 1926, and it was then assigned to PETER WOLD. When Wold left in the summer of 1944, JAMES CLINE moved in for a brief one-year residency; for the next twenty-one years it was the home of FREDERICK BRONNER.

On Bronner's retirement in 1966, the house ceased to be a faculty residence. It was named Bronner House, and after brief service as a dormitory unit in the fall of 1967 it became a kind of precursor to the student union, with a Freshman Recreation Center on the first floor, and offices for the *CONCORDIENSIS* and rooms for student organization meetings on the second. In January 1968, the first floor was home to the "North End Coffeehouse," separate from the Freshman Recreation Center.

In 1971, the Coffeehouse moved to Old Chapel, the *Concordiensis* and student organization rooms moved to the student union (the future CAMPUS CENTER), and following the general renovation of North College in 1971 Bronner House became a co-operative dormitory. In 1987/88 it was assigned to the Cultural Unity Center, "a theme house that highlights the Afro-American and Hispanic cultures."

**South Faculty House.** The south faculty house was first occupied by ANDREW YATES, probably until he left the College in 1825. He was succeeded by BENJAMIN JOSLIN, who left in 1837, and then by THOMAS REED. After Reed left in 1851, the house remained vacant until it was assigned to JOHN NEWMAN in 1854. Newman was succeeded in the summer of 1863 by Nathaniel G. Clarke, who left in 1866.

William Wells moved in and remained until his death in December 1907, at eighty-seven. His daughter stayed on during the construction of WELLS HOUSE, and was then succeeded in the spring of 1909 by JOHN IRA BENNETT. Following Bennett's death in 1920, it was the residence of CHARLES GARIS, who had become dean of students the previous year and would later become dean of the faculty.

When Garis retired in 1946/47, the house was assigned to his successor, Dean C. William Huntley, who remained until the end of 1985/6. After being remodeled, the residence was occupied from 1985 until 1989 by Vice President for Academic Affairs Thomas D'Andrea; it was then converted to offices.

**South College.** Because there were no separate administrative buildings on the early campus, offices were necessarily in the dormitory buildings. From about 1817 until 1856, the registrar's office was on the first floor rear of North Section, South College. From 1833 the room was also the treasurer's office, as JONAS HOLLAND held both positions. About 1837 or 1838 the front room was added to the office, and the rear room was used also for the post office. In 1856 the registrar/treasurer's office moved to the two lower east rooms in GEOLOGICAL HALL. The rear room in South College continued to be the post office, now kept by a student.

From 1814 until it moved to South Colonnade about 1842, the College chapel was on the top floor of the north faculty house, President Nott's residence). It was a peculiar room, "dirty, rough and uninviting," ac-

cording to Jonathan Pearson; though used as a chapel for about twenty-eight years, it was always regarded as temporary.

Because the dormitory had four floors while the faculty house—with the same roofline—had only three, student access to the chapel was up three flights of stairs within the dormitory, then down one short flight and through a narrow doorway. The president had his own internal stairway. A north-south partition divided the room; in the east half sat the juniors and sophomores; in the west, the seniors and freshmen. The divider stopped short of the north wall, against which the faculty sat on a rostrum. The officiating officer stood in a wide opening between the two rooms. To provide sufficient seating space for the entire student body, galleries were constructed along the west, south and east walls. The freshmen and sophomores occupied the galleries of their respective rooms.

After the two rooms ceased to function as a chapel, at least one was used for many years as a lecture hall. About 1856, Nott offered one room to the Anti-Secret Society. By 1893 the former chapel space had been separated from the dormitory and joined to the faculty residence below. About 1925, it was returned to the dormitory, and in 1937 it was again joined to the faculty residence.

The classics recitation room adjoined the south faculty house, long occupied by the classics professor. There may have been other classrooms in the dormitory part of the building. The Philomathean Society had two rooms in South College from 1814 until the opening of Silliman Hall in 1900. President Webster (1888–94) had his office on the first floor of middle section, but his successors located elsewhere.

In June 1899, the trustees accepted a proposal of the Class of 1899 to assume responsibility for the complete interior renovation of South College. Architect A. W. Fuller drew the plans. A campaign to raise money from alumni for this purpose was apparently only partly successful, but the dormitory sections were remodeled and furnished with steam heat, electric lights and a bathroom at the east end of each of the hallways on all but the first floor.

Renovation of Middle Section in 1928 brought removal of the ornamental corrugated iron ceilings which had been added in the 1880s, replacement of the wooden staircases with steel, and paving of the hallways with tile laid in concrete. The College could not afford to renovate the other sections at that time, and North Section was in such poor condition that it had to be closed. It was finally renovated in the summer of 1937, at which time the layout underwent radical change: fifteen rooms, each seventeen feet square, were replaced with twenty-three smaller rooms intended for single occupancy (but later used by two people). Addition of a north-south hallway providing

access to the Middle Section stairway permitted removal of the North Section stairwell.

Students in South Section petitioned the administration in December 1936 for improvement of "deplorable living conditions"; their section was finally remodeled in 1944, with the addition of nine rooms. The College's hand had been forced: the Navy refused to allow their V-12 men to use the rooms in their existing condition.

In 1961/62, the interior of South College was gutted and entirely rebuilt, at a cost of \$325,000. The rooms were enlarged and four lounges were added. The former entrances to North and South Sections, closed for some time, disappeared entirely, and the building was restuccoed. It re-opened in April 1962.

The yard behind the south end of South College at one time accommodated a series of sheds, including Tayler Lewis's shed, a carpenter shop, and a blacksmith shop. Sometime before 1899, the yard was the site of a washroom for the dormitory, and in 1936 faculty garages were erected and the yard, long a mud hole, was first paved.

Apparently a bakery later existed in these structures, perhaps in connection with the HALE HOUSE Annex during the Second World War. The Union College Locker Association, a faculty food cooperative, maintained a freezer there when the association was founded in 1952. Two new garages were built behind South College that year. The entire cluster of small buildings behind South College was razed in 1980 in conjunction with the renovation of BECKER HALL and the construction of a new road from Library Lane entering the South College yard from the south.

The South College faculty residences have been occupied as follows:

**North Faculty House.** Eliphalet Nott was undoubtedly the first resident of the house on the north end of South College, which is said to account for the fact that it has a larger portico than the other faculty houses. Sometime before 1837, Nott moved around the corner to the faculty apartment in South Colonnade, allowing his son-in-law and heir-apparent, Professor Alonzo Potter, to occupy the north end house. Potter's family was growing—his sixth child was born in 1836—while Nott's children had all left home.

When Potter left Union in 1845, Nott returned to the house, then went back again to the South Colonnade residence and turned the house over to Vice-President LAURENS PERSEUS HICKOK, probably in 1853 but certainly by the fall of 1855. Hickok remained until he retired, as president, in 1868.

The next known resident was Nathan Hale, Acting Professor of Mental and Moral Philosophy, who remained at Union only from 1869 to 1871.

It is not known who occupied the house during the next few years, but it was assigned to Professor HARRISON WEBSTER in 1878. After his departure in 1883, the

next occupant was mathematics professor Winfield S. Chaplin, who left Union in 1885. Mathematics professor THOMAS W. WRIGHT then occupied the house from 1885 until 1891. After the two-year tenancy of German professor Arthur Silas Wright, in the fall of 1893 Professor JAMES STOLLER began the longest period of residency, which ended on his retirement in 1925.

Thereafter, only administrators occupied the house; first, until 1944, Graduate Secretary CHARLES WALDRON, then, for a few months, Navy V-12 Executive Director Lt. Crawford Brubaker (and perhaps his successors in that position after Brubaker left in October 1944). From 1948 until he left in the fall of 1951, the house reverted to Alumni Director Waldron's successor, Frederic Wyatt.

After the brief residence of the College Chaplain, Robert B. Fulton, from the fall of 1953 the house was occupied by Business Manager THEODORE MCILWAINE until his death in 1970. When its last administrative occupant, Dean Martin Lichterman, left in 1977, the house was converted to student dormitory rooms, assigned at first to SIGMA DELTA TAU. It now bears the name Chester Arthur House.

**South Faculty House (Whitaker House).** Following initial occupancy by Professor THOMAS CHURCH BROWNELL, the house on the south end of South College was for a long period assigned to the professor of classics; the classics recitation room adjoined it. The house was occupied by Professor ROBERT PROUDFIT from 1818 until 1830, when it became the home of Professor JOHN AUSTIN YATES. On Yates' departure in 1849, the house was assigned to Professor TAYLER LEWIS. After Professor ELIAS PEISSNER married Lewis's daughter, Margaret, in 1856, the couple took up residence in the Lewis house for about five years. In 1865 the trustees compelled the deaf and frail Lewis to vacate the house because they wanted all the faculty houses occupied by professors able to keep order in the dormitories. The next resident was probably BENJAMIN STANTON; he may have been succeeded by CHARLES AIKEN, during his presidency (1869–71). Professor HENRY WHITEHORNE, living there in 1873, remained until his death in 1901.

The residence then ceased to be reserved for the professor of classics; chemistry professor Richard S. Curtis was the next tenant. It is not known who occupied the house between Curtiss's departure from the College in 1904, and 1909, when Professor (later, Dean) EDWARD ELLERY moved in. Ellery remained until his retirement in 1940; Professor BENJAMIN WHITAKER then occupied the house until his own retirement in 1965.

The next tenant was Provost Theodore Lockwood. After Lockwood's departure from campus in June 1968, the house was occupied by three deans of students: Edward Malloy (1968–73), Mark Smith (1973–77), and Robert Kellett (1978–80). It was

named Whitaker House by 1979. For a few months in 1980–81, it housed the Admissions Department while Old Gym Hall was being transformed into Becker Hall. Whitaker House was then used for the last time as a faculty residence, by Vice President for Academic Affairs Thomas D'Andrea, 1981–85.

After D'Andrea moved out, the house was converted to offices. The first floor became, and remains, the undergraduate Registrar's office. The second floor briefly housed the Chaplain's office, and then the WRITING CENTER moved there from Old Chapel. The editorial office of the UNION COLLEGE PRESS was added about 1987. The third floor remains a part of the dormitory.

**North Colonnade.** Built in 1815, immediately after completion of NORTH COLLEGE AND SOUTH COLLEGE, North Colonnade and SOUTH COLONNADE housed most of the College's recitation rooms and laboratories until the erection of Philosophical Hall (1852) and GEOLOGICAL HALL (1856).

There is little direct evidence of the pre-1852 tenancy of North Colonnade. An informed guess, based on the state of the building at mid-century, would be that during its first thirty-seven years North Colonnade contained recitation and other miscellaneous rooms. The College's "philosophical" (i.e., physics) apparatus was located there from 1816 until Philosophical Hall (the present ARTS BUILDING) opened next door in 1852. The chemistry laboratory, no doubt quite rudimentary, was in South Colonnade at that time.

Ramée's surviving drawings for the colonnades show one-storey buildings, but Nott described them in an 1817 letter to his brother as two-storey. It may be that some parts were not yet divided into two stories: Asa Fitch's diary account of an 1830 visit to the College describes an apparatus room, probably (though not certainly) in North Colonnade, as a large room lined with glass-fronted cases. "There are two stories of cases and a gallery leads around to all parts of the upper row."

A storeroom in North Colonnade was large enough to contain the College's crated-up library and mineral collection from 1854 to 1856. After the storeroom was unpacked into Geological Hall in 1856, several changes were made in North Colonnade. Professor WILLIAM GILLESPIE, who had started Union's engineering program in 1845, probably used rooms at the east end of North Colonnade from that time; by 1855 he was agitating for more space. He got it in 1856 when three new rooms were built in the Colonnade, producing the following array on the first floor, from west to east: 1) a kitchen for Professor Newman's faculty house at the south end of North College; 2) a coal room; 3) a new recitation room, for Newman; 3) a new drafting room for Gillespie; 4) an instrument room, probably for the scientific apparatus used for physics

demonstrations; 5) Gillespie's recitation room; 6) Gillespie's model room (he had a collection of civil engineering models).

A second floor recitation room, the third new room created in 1856, was made for Professor ISAAC JACKSON from the room occupied since 1848 by the Theological Society, now moved to North College.

Gillespie wanted still more space; when he acquired Newman's recitation room in 1862, civil engineering had all of the first floor of North Colonnade except Newman's kitchen on the extreme west.

In 1882, Professor MAURICE PERKINS took the initiative in getting three rooms on the second floor of North Colonnade fitted for sick students. This infirmary was used a year later and then disappears from the record (see HEALTH SERVICES).

An "electrical laboratory" was quartered in North Colonnade by 1905, but it presumably moved when the new Electrical Engineering Building (see BIOLOGY BUILDING) opened in 1907. Civil engineering moved to the new General Engineering Building (see CAMPUS CENTER) in 1910, creating a vacancy in North Colonnade; in the summer of 1910, the second floor recitation rooms were converted to eleven single-occupancy dormitory rooms. Probably at this time, but at any rate by 1916, chemistry, which had been confined to Philosophical Hall, occupied the entire first floor of North Colonnade. The Cosmopolitan Club had a room on the second floor in 1912, and other organizations may from time to time have been assigned rooms there.

Chemistry moved to BUTTERFIELD HALL in 1918, and most of its North Colonnade space was taken over by biology, which moved there from Geological Hall. The former chemistry lecture hall in North Colonnade was used by physics until the 1927 expansion of the Physics Building, when the lecture hall was turned over to biology. Two years later, a large portion of the second floor was renovated as classrooms and laboratories for biology.

Biology moved to the former Electrical Engineering Building in 1931, and psychology took over North Colonnade. ERNEST LIGON created a "child testing laboratory" in 1947, and the following year, a gift from FRANK BAILEY built a two-storey addition on the north side of the east end for Ligon's use; it originally contained a "child guidance observation room."

At the end of the period covered by this book, North Colonnade still housed the Psychology Department, and the changes since 1947 had affected only the internal division of the space. In 1996, the department moved to Bailey Hall, and North Colonnade was remodeled.

A belfry surmounted the North Colonnade roof by 1860, if not sooner. The bell was rung by a rope until 1911, when it was electrified and controlled by clockwork; in 1925 it was moved to the top of the Physics Building (see BELLS AND CHIMES).

**North Hall and South Hall.** In 1814 and 1815, immediately after the completion of NORTH COLLEGE AND SOUTH COLLEGE, the College built two boarding halls, called North Hall and South Hall, at opposite ends of the campus. They replaced the College Commons in old WEST COLLEGE. South Hall, erected in November and December, 1814, occupied the present site of the PRESIDENT'S HOUSE, and North Hall (1815) was on the present site of FERRO HOUSE.

The boarding halls reflected Eliphalet Nott's desire to make the campus as self-contained as possible, but eventually, if not immediately, many students preferred to pay a little more for better meals at boarding houses in town. In July 1820, the trustees directed that one of the boarding halls be devoted to "charity scholars," who were to be charged no more than \$1.25 per week for board, and that the other be rented out. Later, both were privately-managed.

In 1848, according to William James Stillman, the North and South boarding halls still charged \$1.25 a week for three meals a day, while much better meals were available in town for \$1.50–1.75. In 1854, and perhaps at other times, a few students also lived in North Hall, and Professor and Mrs. JOHN FOSTER roomed there at the end of the decade.

Little else is known of the history or finances of the boarding halls, but they must ultimately have been deemed failures, because both were given up at about the same time. The brick and stone structures, though not very old, were dilapidated by mid-century, and South Hall was razed in 1854; the President's House was later built on the site. In 1862, the College totally renovated North Hall—all interior walls were removed and rebuilt—and made the building into a private residence for Professor and Mrs. Foster.

The house was destroyed on March 17, 1896, by a fire that started when the aged John Foster dropped an oil lamp while ascending the stairs. The new house built on the site is described in the article on Ferro House.

**Nott, Benjamin** (Nov. 20, 1803–Jan. 10, 1881). Class of 1823. The fourth child and third son of ELIPHALET NOTT and SARAH MARIA BENEDICT NOTT, Benjamin Nott was only a few months old when his mother died. He lived elsewhere for three-and-a-half years until his father, who had in the meantime become president of Union, married GERTRUDE PEEBLES TIBBITS NOTT and brought his children to the College.

After graduating from Union, Benjamin studied law in the office of then Senator Martin Van Buren. In 1827 his father established a company in Albany to manufacture the stoves he had invented (see NOTT STOVES), and he put Benjamin and his younger half-brother, HOWARD NOTT, in nominal charge of it. H. Nott & Co., having become very successful, moved to

New York City in 1831. The Notts lost control of the firm in the financial panic of 1836.

In 1832 Benjamin married Elizabeth Cooper (whose sister, Margaret, had married his brother JOEL NOTT); they had ten children. Although he eventually became a judge in the Albany County Court of Common Pleas, it was probably her family's wealth that enabled him to live as a gentleman farmer in Guilderland.

He published an anti-abolitionist tract entitled *Constitutional Ethics, no. 1* (1857), re-issuing it in 1860 as *A remedy for the "Irrepressible conflict."*

Owing, apparently, to the fact that the Nott Trust Deed had effectively disinherited them (see NOTT TRUST FUND), Benjamin and Joel were estranged from their father in his last years.

**Nott, Eliphalet** (June 25, 1773–Jan. 29, 1866). Fourth president of Union College, 1804–66.

Eliphalet Nott's unequaled career of sixty-one years as a college president was marked by public and private enterprise as noteworthy for its variety as for its consequences.

Second son of nine children born to Stephen and Deborah Selden Nott, Eliphalet grew up on a hard-scrabble farm in Ashford, Connecticut, "pious and poor," as he put it. He was largely under the tutelage of his mother, who taught him at three to read and to memorize what he read, and of his brother Samuel, nineteen years his senior, a Congregational minister in whose household he lived and worked off and on for several years.

The mother's practice of child-rearing was marked by a warm, sensitive intelligence. The brother's methods were as harsh as they were thorough. In later years the rebellious cadet remembered not fewer than three or four whippings a week; nonetheless he learned well enough to persuade the Rhode Island College (later Brown) to permit him at age twenty-one to take the examinations required of seniors for the baccalaureate degree. When he passed without difficulty, the faculty, observing a college restriction on awarding the BA to anyone not formally enrolled for study, granted him the degree of Master of Arts instead.

Looking back on the punishments he had endured at the end of his brother's stick, Nott resolved in his first posts as teacher and then principal of an academy in Plainfield, Connecticut, that he would not be like other men in the treatment of children. "I made up my mind," he wrote later in an autobiographical sketch, "to substitute moral motives in the place of the rod." In that decision lay the roots of the "parental discipline" which four decades later doubters and disparagers cited as the ground for their depiction of Union College as an American "BOTANY BAY," an Ultima Thule for the undisciplined and riotous offscouring of other colleges.

Following a period of study under the scholarly Reverend Joel Benedict, exponent of a theology close to that of the New Light Calvinists, who proclaimed salvation open to all who seek it rather than to the by-God-forechosen "elect" of Augustinian doctrine alone, Nott returned to his brother for a final exercise in solid Calvinist orthodoxy. Thus coached, he was examined and then, on June 26, 1796, granted a license to preach in the Congregational Church of Connecticut.

Seven days later, on July 4th, he married Benedict's daughter, Sarah Maria, and, having already learned that the Domestic Missionary Society was sending missionaries westward, on the following day he set out for the raw country of upper New York State. He traveled on horseback across Connecticut, through Albany as far as Cherry Valley where he stopped briefly before riding on into the wilder Oswego region. After two months of scouting prospects there, he returned to Cherry Valley where he found welcome as principal of the local academy and pastor of its Presbyterian, and only, church. Once settled, he brought his wife to join him and there a first child was born.

On the way to Cherry Valley Nott made his first acquaintance with Union College through a chance meeting with its president, JOHN BLAIR SMITH; a friendship developed and Smith eventually recommended to the elders of the First Presbyterian Church of Albany that they consider Nott as a candidate for their then vacant pulpit. At the same time he urged on his young colleague the view that duty required him, like the Apostles, to preach where he could have the greatest influence.

First Presbyterian offered Nott, now twenty-five years old, a prospect commensurate with his ambition and self-confidence. On invitation he moved to this second parish in the summer of 1798 and was ordained in the Presbyterian ministry the following October. Two years later he was appointed co-chaplain of the State Legislature, a sinecure but an important one, as events would show.

Nott did not confine his preaching to Albany. Like a man driven or inspired, he responded to calls from all over the area, his reputation steadily rising. It reached an acme with the request of the City Council that he deliver a eulogy on the death of his friend and parishioner Alexander Hamilton, following a pistol duel with his challenger Aaron Burr. The eulogy itself was generous and moving, but the long address that preceded it shook not only its auditors but the entire nation. It was less a sermon than a formal charge of criminal conspiracy, brought not only against the murderer but against the murdered as well and, most forcefully, against his listeners and all those who in permitting and condoning a deadly "code of honor" violated the most solemn of God's laws and in so doing tore at the root of a nation designed to lead the world to a new and higher state of being.

The discourse, written and memorized down to the least gesture, was immediately reported in major city newspapers throughout the country; many others reproduced it in full and for the next thirty years it would be a staple of the anti-dueling movement. What might have followed for Nott from that powerful oration—a new pastorate, for instance, in Boston or New York or Philadelphia, from two of which offers subsequently came—did not happen because Nott deliberately turned from that triumph to a new career.

Since 1800 Nott had been a trustee of Union College. He was fully aware of its bad financial condition (income running less than half of expenditures), of instability deriving from its disputed location in Schenectady, to which Albany would not become reconciled until the end of the century, the worrisome significance of three presidencies in nine years (one ended by death but two by resignation), the tensions within an unharmonious governing body (conservative Federalists and radical Republicans, professional men and tradesmen and speculators, men of aristocratic culture and men of no culture at all), and not least a Legislature little inclined to add support even for a promising upstate college (Columbia College in New York, chartered in 1784, having already protested legislative grants to Union amounting to \$78,000 in cash and land).

Why, then, did Nott accept his fellow trustees' invitation in 1804 to succeed JONATHAN MAXCY as president of so troubled an institution? An immediate reason was the death of his young wife in March of that year after the birth of their fourth child (see NOTT, SARAH MARIA BENEDICT) and his feeling that he needed to narrow the focus of his work in order to provide properly for their care. He was also discouraged by the failure of his efforts to create a universal free common school system in the City of Albany. And he appears to have developed doubts that the ministry was an adequate base for effecting the changes he believed necessary to realize in America the achievement of its divine mission, the one he had made the subject of an inspiring series of sermons and the final point of his discourse on the death of Hamilton—the creation of a new Zion, the preparation for a millennium to herald the second coming of Christ.

How deeply this chiliastic vision lay in Nott's mind it is hard to say, but there can be no doubting his conviction that man's free will had more to do than an inscrutable destiny with the outcomes of human endeavor. Somehow he reconciled the contradiction, and somehow he saw in the presidency of Union College an opportunity to demonstrate for America that, given leadership, perseverance would conquer all—that phrase being the slogan which he introduced into every Commencement exercise of his long tenure.

At the level of action, getting came first. The College could make no progress, he told the trustees, un-



less it immediately acquired money to support and extend itself. As he had argued in Albany for local responsibility to create public schools, so he argued now for state responsibility to support both common schools and institutions of higher education. The method he proposed for the second was a lottery for the benefit of Union. To make it secure he needed an act of the Legislature, preceded by approval of his Board of Trustees.

The trustees were slow to acquiesce so, displaying for the first time that headstrong persistence which would mark his whole career at Union and at a later date even threaten its existence, Nott avoided a formal vote on the matter and simply went ahead with the initiative, calling for help to frame the necessary bill from men he had cultivated during his years in Albany as co-chaplain of the Legislature. To win he had to compromise away his second bill, for support of a common school system, and to surrender the autonomy of his Board of Trustees. As with the contradiction between his faith in a divine mission for America and his absolute belief in freedom of the will, he found both actions defensible because necessary to the success of his plan. A year after taking office Nott had legislative approval for four successive LOTTERIES totaling \$80,000, nearly half of which was stipulated for buildings. (Eighteen years later he was able, by an ingenious legislative maneuver, to restore the independence of the Board of Trustees.)

Once the lottery was launched Nott's first serious crisis occurred. Having adopted and, in a letter to his brother, boasted of the pattern of "parental discipline" introduced by his predecessor on the model of an eighteenth-century English "public" school, Nott quite suddenly learned its problems. The system—boys moving in class groups under the supervision of a teacher, living in quarters closely supervised, filling all seven days of the week in concerted action apart from the enticements and distractions of the city—depended for its effectiveness on a second system, that of swift and arbitrary punishment for infractions by decision of a faculty court. Both systems were common in colleges at the time, and both almost encouraged rebellion. In 1809, following episodes of forbidden behavior and a faculty court decision to expel one provocateur, Nott intervened and the faculty, led by its head teacher, appealed to the trustees for a reversal. After a formal hearing, Nott was vindicated, the opposition leader, BENJAMIN ALLEN, resigned and "parental discipline" from that time forward took on an entirely different character with Nott as the sole "parent" using what he had called in Plainfield "moral motives" as the means of correction and reform. Cases of discipline were by his order thereafter referred to him and were handled for the most part privately and in the view of some too leniently. It was from that and from Nott's willingness

to admit students expelled by other colleges that the hostile cry of "Botany Bay" arose.

By the end of the decade Nott was certain enough of the success of the lottery to proceed with his plans for a college to match or outdo those well established along the Atlantic coast—Harvard, Yale, Rhode Island (Brown), Queens (Rutgers) and Princeton. Using his own slender assets and the large ones of his second wife, the widow Gertrude Peebles Tibbits (see NOTT, GERTRUDE PEEBLES TIBBITS) whom he had married in 1807, Nott bought more than 250 acres of land on the outskirts of the city, and had a foundation laid for North College. Then in 1812–13 he took advantage of the temporary presence in the area of the distinguished French architect JOSEPH RAMÉE, and engaged him to draw plans for an entire college campus on NIS-TIQUONA HILL.

As construction moved ahead on the hill, the evidence that costs would far outrun even the improved financial resources of the College persuaded Nott to call for a second lottery. This time the stakes were to be higher and they would turn out to be much higher than calculated. What Nott asked of the Legislature in 1814 was approval for a \$274,000 project to benefit four institutions: Hamilton College to the west, in New York City the College of Physicians and Surgeons and the Asbury African Church and, upstate, Union itself—which as initiator was to get the lion's share, \$200,000. Nott moved his residence to Albany for months to prosecute the job of lobbying a bill through both houses of the Legislature, exploiting every connection he had and every argument he could contrive, and again he won.

If anything was needed to show that Nott was fast becoming a powerful figure in the State, the victory and even more its consequences would have settled the matter. The new lottery was soon in trouble. The country was engaged in a second and unpopular war with England, embargoes had deeply injured trade, and rising insolvencies produced a general depression. After eight years so few lottery tickets had been sold that the Legislature discontinued its involvement and threw the project into the arms of the hopeful beneficiaries. Three of them refused to take the responsibility, their share being minor, and Nott borrowed from Albany financier WILLIAM JAMES the money to buy them out, thus making Union the sole but independent beneficiary and adding a debt of \$74,000 to carry on top of debts already incurred. Later, in an 1826 lottery crisis, Nott borrowed \$100,000 from James, putting up the College lands and buildings as collateral.

The intricate story of Nott's role as mover of this second lottery requires more than a third of the text of Professor Codman Hislop's fine biography of the doughty president and represents sleuthing on his part of high order; his findings are summarized in an arti-

cle elsewhere in this book, s.v. LOTTERIES. The story involves a major brokerage house as managing agent and quondam "partner" in side deals, speculation in a variety of uncertain ventures, secret agreements, siphoning of receipts into private pockets, tortuous bookkeeping and none at all, law suits, a case in chancery court, and in the end investigation by a hostile legislative committee which besmeared the president with charges of self-dealing and the trustees with equally serious charges of dereliction of duty. Their exonerations in 1853, forty years after passage of the so-called "Literature Lottery" bill and more than thirty after Union's assumption of its management, was the result of an arduous year-long study of the evidence and a consummate written defense prepared by one of the most highly regarded lawyers of the state, John C. Spencer, an alumnus of Union and both former student and close friend of Nott. From the lottery as enlarged again and again in the course of its exploitation by Nott and others the College indirectly gained the NOTT TRUST FUND, estimated at \$600,000 in the form of land in and near New York City paid for out of lottery receipts (see HUNTER'S POINT, GREENPOINT AND STUYVESANT COVE PROPERTIES OF UNION COLLEGE.) No one has calculated the costs incurred over the years of suits and counter-suits and auditors' conflicting reports and there is no way of calculating the cost in public esteem, but both must have been great. Yet the "devil's contract," as JONATHAN PEARSON and others called the lottery, seems not to have slowed—and may actually have increased—Nott's taste for risking much to gain more, for his own pocket and for the coffers of the College as well.

Throughout the years of the lottery game Nott carried on vigorous public and private careers apart from his administrative and teaching duties at Union. From 1829 to 1845 he served as president of Rensselaer Institute in Troy, an academy-level school for "learning by doing," because he saw it in the germ of a program he had already announced in 1828 in his proposal for an Institute of Science and Industry at Union. He became a leading figure in the temperance movement and active in the anti-slavery cause, lessening his efforts only when prohibitionists came to dominate the first and abolitionists the second. In politics as in College affairs his instincts were for compromise and negotiation rather than conflict, even to claiming, in private conversation at least, that dividing the country into two nations would be preferable to civil war.

Gertrude died in 1841 after many years as an invalid, and eighteen months later the sixty-nine-year-old Nott married Urania Sheldon, the thirty-five-year-old headmistress of the Utica Female Academy (see NOTT, URANIA SHELDON).

Nott's private career was as venturesome as his public career was discreet. Though untrained in the sciences, he plunged into a series of what he called "caloric

experiments," efforts to design safer heating units for homes and public buildings, acquiring thirty patents for them between 1832 and 1839 to protect his investment (said by his manager to exceed \$100,000) and to supplement his College income (see NOTT STOVES). The success of the stoves led him next to design a steam-boiler system different from Fulton's for the passenger boats running between New York and Albany, a project which entailed buying land on the East River in New York City, machines, materials and labor for constructions of a factory, dock and slips to build a steam-boat, the *S.S. Novelty*. His stoves made the use of cheaper and cleaner-burning anthracite coal feasible, so he invested in mines—for coal, then for lime, for copper, and for gold. Ventures that succeeded paid for those that failed, and those that failed encouraged additional ventures. Apparently (the count is apocryphal) hundreds of thousands were invested, the yield from them unknown, perhaps even to Nott himself.

There is so much of the buccaneer in this side of Nott's character that the really important academic achievements of his tenure as president now look tame by comparison. That they were anything but tame is evident from the record of hostility (and imitation) which some of them aroused.

His iconoclastic action on student discipline stirred opposition on two scores: it subordinated faculty control in institutional management and at the same time, in extending students' self-government, it set an example as attractive to young men as fearsome to their elders. Less striking but more significant was Nott's decision, implicit in his concern for development of common schools, to extend the founders' provision for non-degree-seeking students and create at Union a class of "university students," young and not-so-young men with limited entering credentials who might enroll, like today's "extension students," in courses suited to their needs and interests. His term for this was "a wide curriculum, to be as varied or enlarged as circumstances may demand." This democratizing of an historically elite educational system may have been more hopeful than practical at the time, but it unquestionably marked the beginning of a change which would come to national fruition in the Morrill Act of 1862 creating the first of the land-grant colleges.

By 1828, when a stern report from Yale appeared, denouncing heresies and reaffirming as gospel the curriculum inherited from Oxford and Cambridge, Nott had already announced the creation of "parallel courses of study," a traditional "classical course" like that insisted on elsewhere and a "scientific course" to meet the needs and interests of young men looking for a life of action rather than one of scholarship, emphasizing in the two upper years mathematics, natural history and the sciences and requiring no classical languages after the freshman year. The Yale Report heartened conservatives, but the revolution had already been won: in

1830 Union graduated 96 students, Yale 71, Harvard 48 and Princeton 20.

A rapid growth at Union in the number of upper classmen, especially seniors transferring from other colleges, may have been in some measure a product of the more independent climate it offered to students but it probably was more the result of the president's growing fame. That fame, as far as students were concerned, derived principally from Nott's conduct of a five-day-a-week course required of all seniors. Such capstone courses, usually the prerogative of the president, were not uncommon but the one taught by Nott became as well known, in college circles, as the text he chose for its base—the *Elements of criticism*, one of several much-admired books by Scottish philosopher Henry Home, Lord Kames. Like the capstone course, this text was in wide use, but it was Nott's management of it that made a difference. Markedly different from the didactic process dominant in college teaching at the time, Nott's class substituted challenge for explanation, making the text not a Scripture to be conned but a vulnerable text to be challenged. Extant student notebooks and textbook marginalia reflect Nott's procedure. Characteristically he picked an assertion from the assigned reading, converted it into an issue within the reach of the students' experience, then like Socrates directed a question to an auditor, pursued his answer with objections or another question until he could reach a summing-up of some kind. Sometimes he ignored the text entirely, starting from some episode or observation of his own which he submitted to inquiry and challenge. The course became one less in Kames than in Nott, and it remained for many of the graduates the best remembered of their classes, memorable because Nott himself was so open to contest, so skilled in discourse, yet so confident in judgment. He seemed, and may at times have felt himself to be, a sage—not remote or other-worldly but instead a giant of wisdom usable for the times. (See KAMES, [ELIPHALET NOTT'S COURSE IN]).

The course Nott set in the first quarter-century of his presidency paved the path not for more radical actions but for implementation of those already taken. In 1845 he hired the first-rate scholar-engineer WILLIAM MITCHELL GILLESPIE to create a civil engineering program, an innovation prefigured by ALONZO POTTER'S 1841 introduction of a course in technology. In 1852 Nott announced the imminent beginning of graduate courses: "The Graduate's Department" the next year's catalogue promised, "will consist of at least five Professors, giving more comprehensive instruction than the College course anywhere permits, in Natural Science, Mathematics and Astronomy, Ancient Philology and Literature, History and Metaphysics; and designed for a three years' course, to secure as thorough and complete scholarship in General Literature and Science as may be attained in any European University.

With the execution at the beginning of 1854 of the Nott Trust Deed (see NOTT TRUST FUND), the president provided what he believed—wrongly as it turned out—would be sufficient assets to add the nucleus of a graduate faculty. Although Nott's intended transformation of Union into a university never began, a fully divided curriculum for undergraduates was first implemented in 1854/55; the classical and the scientific courses now differed throughout the four years.

Had Nott been less preoccupied with the scramble to make a fortune for endowment of the College and with the troubles consequent from that, he might have done more, though by mid-century he and the college he had made in the image of his aspirations had become seed-ground for following generations.

Ironically, as the records scrupulously prepared by Jonathan Pearson and his successors show, although engineering graduates largely remained in that field, sometimes with distinction, graduates of the scientific course to the end of the century became in the main not the leaders of industry and trade whom Nott may have had in mind when he redirected the curriculum. Most turned out instead to be members of the professional classes: lawyers, ministers, physicians, teachers. From those classes arose, however, a considerable number of leaders, men influential in affairs of state included, and with almost unanimous voice they paid tribute to Nott.

The ground for so remarkable a concurrence of respect, approval and even affection is not to be found in breadth or depth of learning; Nott was neither scholarly nor intuitively profound. Nor is it to be found in heroic stands against powerful adversaries on behalf of people or causes; flamboyant orator though he was, his effectiveness was the product of patience and persistence and an instinctive faith in the capacity of men to wish and do good. His faults—an edge of arrogance, some degree of cupidity, incapacity in the light of his self-confidence to accept his errors for what they were and too great reliance on cleverness to obscure or justify them—were softened by his susceptibility to passing fads such as mesmerism and craniology, his unaffected pleasure in small honors, his gentleness of manner even in quarrel and above all by ample evidence of deep convictions about matters that mattered. By any measure he ranks with Charles W. Eliot, Mark Hopkins, James McCosh, Francis Wayland, and Andrew Dickson White among the half-dozen great college presidents of the nineteenth century.

In 1859 Nott suffered the first of several strokes which eventually rendered him incompetent, but he did not resign and because the board was deeply divided over the succession of Vice President LAURENS PERSEUS HICKOK, Nott remained in office for another six years until his death at ninety-two. He was survived by his third wife, one son from his second marriage (HOWARD NOTT) and three of the four chil-

dren from his first (JOEL NOTT, JOHN NOTT and BENJAMIN NOTT).

—Harold C. Martin

**Nott (Eliphalet) Memorial Highway.** The section of Connecticut Route 74 which lies between Warrentonville and East Willington, thus passing Eliphalet Nott's birthplace, was designated the "Eliphalet Nott Memorial Highway" by act of the Connecticut Legislature on March 7, 1933. Although no longer so marked, the portion of the highway within the Ashford Town Line still officially bears that name.

At the same time, the State purchased the former site of the Nott farmhouse, and in dedication ceremonies on October 21, 1933, with ten of Nott's descendants in attendance, Dean EDWARD ELLERY presented Governor Wilbur Cross with a bronze tablet attached to a large foundation stone. It may still be seen.

George Weed Barhydt '85 proposed the memorial; the plan was brought to fruition by Ludlow Melius '96, a member of the Connecticut Legislature, and by Charles Bennett '01, Connecticut Road Commissioner.

**Nott, Gertrude Peebles Tibbits** (Sept. 12, 1771–Jan. 5, 1841). Three years after the death of his first wife, ELIPHALET NOTT, by then president of Union College, married Gertrude Peebles Tibbits on August 3, 1807.

Born at Half Moon, New York, the daughter of Thomas and Elizabeth (Bratt) Peebles, Gertrude was the widow of Benjamin Tibbits (1765–Sept. 12, 1802), a wealthy Troy merchant in grain, dry goods and whale oil. Her substantial inheritance from Tibbits enabled her and Nott to buy the land on which the College now stands (see CAMPUS), and later enabled Nott to pursue the speculations that proved so consequential for him and for the College.

With Nott's marriage to Gertrude, the four children of his first marriage returned to his household, where they were joined by Gertrude's son Benjamin Tibbits Jr. '17. Concerning their own offspring the record is fragmentary and perhaps contradictory. The baptismal records of the First Presbyterian Church show that their daughter Ann was baptized September 10, 1809. Nothing more is known of her, but Nott's biographer Codman Hislop states, without citing a source, that a child of the union died in 1817. Against the possibility that Ann lived so long, however, must be weighed the fact that Nott, writing to his brother Samuel in 1842 to console him on the death of his own daughter, said of SARAH MARIA NOTT POTTER, who had died three years before, "I had but one daughter to lose, and of her God has deprived me."

Gertrude and Eliphalet's second child, unnamed in the baptismal record, was born on March 26, 1810,

and baptized September 16, 1810. This was probably HOWARD NOTT, whose date of birth is otherwise unknown, but who reported to the 1850 census of Clifton Park that he was forty years of age.

The Presbyterian Church registers also record the death on October 6, 1811, at six months, of Clarkson Nott, who must have been a child of Gertrude and Eliphalet. (Nott greatly admired his contemporary, the British anti-slavery crusader Thomas Clarkson, and Sarah Maria Potter several years later commemorated her half-brother by naming one of her own sons Clarkson Nott Potter.)

If, as the record seems to show, Gertrude Nott did bear three children within about two years in her late thirties, that would be sufficient explanation for the fact that, although she survived to her seventieth year, she was a semi-invalid for the latter half of her life. She also became a notorious scold; JONATHAN PEARSON, then a junior, recorded an instance in his diary for 1833:

Dr. Nott by a second marr[i]age is so unfortunate as to be yoked with a scolding helpmate who on many slight pretences [be]rates the poor old man soundly with her unruly tongue. It so happened that in one of her gales he opened the door of his study, [to see] if the shame of publicity would not cause her to cease, at the same time remarking quite loud to a student then passing in the hall that he tho[ugh]t they would soon have a storm since it was so squally.

A year and a half after her death, the sixty-eight year-old Nott married for a third time (see NOTT, URANIA ELEANOR SHELDON).

**Nott, Howard** (March 26, 1810 (?)–Dec. 24, 1884). Eliphalet Nott's fourth son and the only surviving offspring of his marriage to his second wife, GERTRUDE PEEBLES TIBBITS NOTT, Howard Nott was probably the unnamed child of that union born March 26, 1810, and baptized September 16, 1810. That date would be consistent with his listing as aged forty in the 1850 census of Clifton Park.

Unlike Nott's three other sons, who attended Union, Howard apparently did not go to college. In 1827, his father established the seventeen-year-old and his twenty-four-year-old half-brother BENJAMIN NOTT as the nominal proprietors of H. Nott & Co., at Washington and Central Avenues in Albany. Manufacturing the coal-burning stoves of Eliphalet Nott's invention, the company quickly became Albany's largest stove manufacturer. About 1831 it moved to New York City where, after it became the agent of Eliphalet Nott's attempts to create a safer steamboat boiler, it was renamed the Novelty Iron Works. Howard and Benjamin lost control of the company during the financial panic of 1836.

In 1839, Howard succeeded Jonas Holland as Registrar of Union College; he served in that position

until 1843. He and his wife Margaretta had two children, Eliphalet Jr. (April 1, 1833–January 21, 1901), who graduated from Union in 1854 and became a physician in Brooklyn, and Margaret (Maggie), born in 1839. In 1845, Howard purchased a 216-acre farm in Rexford, on what is now called Nott Road. He apparently passed the remainder of his life as a gentleman farmer.

**Nott, Joel Benedict** (Dec. 14, 1797–May 22, 1878). Class of 1817. Professor of Chemistry, 1820–31.

The first child of ELIPHALET NOTT and his first wife, Sarah Benedict Nott, Joel Nott (named for his grandfather, Joel Benedict) was born in Cherry Valley while his father was principal of the academy there. His mother died when he was six; three years later his father remarried.

The most scholarly of Nott's four surviving sons, Joel may have taught in a secondary school after graduating from Union in 1817. The College appointed him tutor in 1820, and the following year sent him to Europe for brief further study; while there he acquired for the College a large science library and scientific apparatus. Back by Commencement, he accompanied ANDREW YATES on an expedition to upper Michigan; Nott's role was to make mineralogical observations and a geological survey of the country. Circa 1822–24, he assisted Amos Eaton in making a geological survey for the Erie Canal. He was also a friend of Joseph Henry.

Promoted to lecturer on chemistry in 1822, succeeding THOMAS CHURCH BROWNELL, and to professor of chemistry the following year, Nott was probably the author of the anonymous *Syllabus of lectures on chemistry* (1825), of which only the first of four projected parts was published. In the same year he became secretary of The Association of Graduates of Union College, the first Union alumni association and the fourth in the nation. He occupied the faculty residence at the north end of North College.

About 1828, Joel became increasingly involved in promoting his father's improved steamboat boiler and, circa 1829–30, in outfitting what was to become the S.S. *Novelty*. In 1828/29, his teaching was confined to some lectures on geology and mineralogy; he may have been the cause of trustee concern, expressed about this time, over faculty members who were too often absent from their duties.

He soon withdrew from the S.S. *Novelty* venture, however, and sailed with his wife for England in August 1830 to promote his father's inventions there. His resignation from the Union faculty was accepted a year later.

Joel had married Margaret Taylor Cooper, of a wealthy Albany family (his brother Benjamin married her sister); Joel and Margaret's daughter, Louisa, was born in London, and in January 1832 their son John Henry Verner Nott was born in Glasgow.

In 1836 Joel was back in Albany, promoting the Albany Tunnel Co. and playing some role in Albany County politics. By virtue of his status as a gentleman farmer in Guilderland, he served in 1842 as president of the State Agricultural Society; in 1850 he represented the Second District of Albany in the New York State Assembly, pleasing the anti-rent movement by his strong opposition to the doctrine of perpetual leaseholds.

As chief marshal at the College's semi-centennial celebration in 1845, Nott, astride a white horse, led the alumni procession from old West College to the present campus. He also acted as his father's agent in real estate transactions, and frequently, with President Nott's permission, borrowed money from the College. By 1858, however, Joel—like his brother Benjamin, who also had a farm in Guilderland—was estranged from Eliphalet Nott. As the president entered his dotage, and was disabled by a succession of strokes, it became a matter of scandal that he was never visited by these two sons, who apparently resented the fact that the Nott Trust Deed (see NOTT TRUST FUND) would deprive them of their expected inheritance.

In 1857, Joel applied for the job of Superintendent of New York City's Central Park, then being planned; fortunately for posterity, Frederick Law Olmsted got the job instead. By 1862, however, Nott held some kind of political position in the administration of the New York Metropolitan Police.

Although almost sixty-five years old, he served in the Civil War, entering military service October 31, 1862, as a Captain in the Commissary of Subsistence Volunteers. During 1863 he was attached to the Office of the Provost Marshall General in New Orleans (one of his duties entailed escorting some prisoners to Boston), and the following year he was in the Office of the U.S. Relief Commission in New Orleans. He was mustered out May 7, 1865.

Joel Nott died at eighty, ten days after his brother JOHN NOTT.

**Nott, John** (Dec. 14, 1801–May 13, 1878). Class of 1823. Professor at Union College, clergyman.

Born in Albany, the third child and second son of ELIPHALET NOTT (then minister of the First Presbyterian Church) and his first wife, Sally Benedict Nott (who died two years later), John Nott grew up at Union College. He matriculated in the fall of 1817, at fifteen, but later dropped back two years and graduated at twenty-one. After touring Europe, he spent a year each at Princeton Theological Seminary and Andover Theological Seminary and was ordained on May 19, 1827, by the Albany Presbytery.

During his first twelve years as a clergyman, Nott substituted in the pulpits of local churches; finally, in 1839, he was called to the Reformed Church of Rotterdam, where he remained until 1854. Concurrently,

from 1830, he taught at Union College, first as a tutor, then from 1839 as Assistant Professor of Rhetoric and Hebrew (changed the next year to Rhetoric and Natural History, and in 1845 to Rhetoric and Physiology).

Nott appears to have made no important contribution to the College; rather, he was always someone for whom allowances had to be made, and there can be little doubt that he owed his position solely to nepotism. He suffered from a variety of physical impairments, including poor eyesight, partial deafness, and lameness. The exact nature of his mental deficiencies, however, was a little mysterious even to his contemporaries. JONATHAN PEARSON made several attempts in his diary to pin it down:

John Nott is an odd fish. He went to London this fall and staid 12 days!! Whether 'love-cracked,' 'non compos mentis,' or what, I cannot say, but this much is certain: he is an oddity. (1836)

Tries to imitate his father in some things. He seems to me an unhappy old bachelor with few prospects in the world which are pleasant in the contemplation. (1840)

Dr. Nott said of his son John, 'He is very pious but not very moral.' (1840)

John has the reputation of being one of the oddest of all odd fellows—odd in dress and manners, and yet often showing great shrewdness and tact, much like his father's. John's eyes are bad and he can't read. So he has always had some one to read for him since I have known him, sometimes a poor boy from town and often students. Latterly, however, his taste is getting more refined and he has a young girl, some 18 years old, plump, rosey, and very good-looking for his reader, the daughter of some poor man in town. He does it out of pure charity! He's fitting her for a school marm! (1842)

Of [all] the odd mortals I ever knew John Nott surpasses all. He is a bachelor of some 40 years, a kind of bishop of the neighboring Dutch Churches, blind almost in both eyes, rides an old white horse big boned and spavined, with a hair trunk strapped behind him for a valise, is a patron of all poor folks' small children whom he employs to read for him. He never got married because nobody would have him. (1842)

As Pearson suggested, Nott's search for a wife did not go unnoticed: student satires made sport with the subject in 1840 and 1841, but in March 29, 1846, at forty-four, he was married (his father officiating) to the twenty-one-year-old Mary Ann Lawrence of Schenectady. They had no children.

Like Eliphalet Nott's other sons, he was bitterly disappointed by the establishment in 1853 of the NOTT TRUST FUND, which deprived him of the prospect of a large inheritance. By 1854 he was so deeply in debt that he had to flee his creditors; announcing that they were going to Europe, he and his wife removed to Virginia. Nott subsequently became pastor of a small Presbyterian church in Goldsboro, North Carolina. His father paid several thousand dollars of his debts and sent him additional money to live on ("My father has supported my family at a large yearly expense," he

wrote a correspondent in 1857, "I being obliged to travel for my health and to stay mostly in hotels.").

Pearson thought "There is no doubt that his leaving and staying away from Un. College has been a great relief to his friends in more ways than one. He is much better adapted for a Southern Minister than for a Northern Professor." In 1858, when it was feared the president was going to bring John back to the faculty (by his father's wish, John's name had remained in the catalogue), the students—most of whom knew him only by repute—petitioned the trustees against such an appointment. He finally returned in 1860, again in debt and with his health further impaired by a blood disease. Though he did not resume teaching, his father persuaded the Finance Committee to put him on half-salary.

From 1861 until his death in 1878, he served as supply pastor of the Reformed Church of Auriesville, New York.

**Nott, Sarah Maria Benedict** (Aug. 29, 1774–March 9, 1804). ELIPHALET NOTT's first wife, Sarah ("Sally") Maria Benedict Nott, was the eldest daughter of his mentor, the Rev. Joel Benedict. She and the twenty-three year-old Nott were married July 4, 1796; their four children were JOEL NOTT (1797), SARAH MARIA NOTT POTTER (1799), JOHN NOTT (1801) and BENJAMIN NOTT (1803). She died after a long illness, probably tuberculosis, five months before Nott was chosen as president of Union.

**Nott, Urania Eleanor Sheldon** (Sept. 25, 1806–April 18, 1886). Educator, third wife of Eliphalet Nott.

In 1842, a year-and-a-half after the death of his wife GERTRUDE PEEBLES TIBBITS NOTT, the sixty-nine-year-old ELIPHALET NOTT married for a third time. A Troy native, daughter of Asa and Isabel (Low) Sheldon, Urania Sheldon had attended the Emma Willard Seminary and then worked briefly as a governess in Elizabeth, New Jersey.

In 1827 she opened a private school for young ladies in Union Village, New York, moving it to Schenectady in 1830. Known formally as the Schenectady Female Seminary (or Schenectady Young Ladies Seminary) and informally as Miss Sheldon's School, it was located on Liberty Street until about 1834, when it moved to 47–49 Washington Avenue. In 1837, Utica citizens who had raised funds to build a young lady's school in that city persuaded her to move her school again; for the next five years she served as the first headmistress of the Utica Female Academy.

She probably first met Nott when her school was in Schenectady, but she also had several indirect connections with the College. Nott's friend and disciple Francis Wayland '13 had been her friend since childhood, and Mary Hosford taught at Urania's schools in Schen-

ectady and Utica until she married JONATHAN PEARSON in 1841. When Urania went to Utica, Nott endorsed her work, and five years later, on August 8, 1842, he married her and brought her back to Schenectady.

The thirty-five-year-old Urania, described as a tall, "somewhat slender" brunette, had pursued a successful and highly responsible, independent career for fifteen years before her marriage, the only Union president's wife within the scope of this book to bring such experience to her new role. During the twenty-five years remaining to Nott, she became indispensable to him as the manager and hostess of a household frequented by illustrious public men as well as by students.

Eventually, his dependence on her became total. In May 1860, about a year after Nott's first stroke, Jonathan Pearson recorded in his diary that the president "says he is completely under 'Uranie's' thumb now, and has to do just as she says." From his incapacitating stroke of January 1863 until his death three years later, she answered his correspondence and served in some degree as his spokesperson.

Although her protective role was galling to some in a College racked with dissension over whether Vice President Hickok should succeed to the presidency, she seems merely to have been entirely loyal to her husband throughout their long ordeal, near the end of which she often rocked him to sleep in a special cradle while singing lullabies.

After Nott's death on January 29, 1866, Urania, not yet sixty, continued to live in the President's House—a right guaranteed her when it was built—and devoted herself to local good works. She served as president of the Ladies Benevolent Society (whose delicately balanced purpose was to "elevate the physical and moral condition of the indigent; to secure a wise and healthful application of charity; and to prevent, as far as possible, indiscriminate and injudicious assistance.") When the society reorganized and established the Home for the Friendless, an asylum for "infirm and homeless women"—which survives as the Heritage Home for Women—she served as its First Director from its opening in 1868 until a year before her death in 1886.

**Nott Elm.** The Nott Elm stood in JACKSON'S GARDEN, on the north side of the brook opposite the main horticultural area, on a level piece of ground south of a steep slope. It was cut down in 1937.

Contrary to a legend current by 1871, the Nott Elm was certainly not planted by Eliphalet Nott—its age at death was variously estimated at 350–600 years—nor is it likely that Nott sat under it to write his sermons. The tree was, however, admired in Nott's time; ISAAC JACKSON called it "the big elm" in his 1854 diary, and an 1865 report of a visit to Jackson's Garden singles out "a plat of rich verdure in the midst of which

stands a very large elm surrounded by gradually rising walks. It is, perhaps, the most attractive and pleasing spot in the whole garden."

CLASS DAY exercises were held under the elm by 1863, and perhaps earlier, but the first noted use of the term "Nott Elm" is in connection with the Ivy Exercises in 1897. Elms had a patriotic significance to nineteenth-century Americans (see LANDSCAPING), and were frequently chosen as the site of important ceremonies. Jackson's funeral was held under the Nott Elm in 1877.

By 1908, the Nott Elm looked ill, and following a dire prognosis by Dr. W.T. Hornaday, the alumni formed a "Nott Elm Committee" and called in Dr. Hermann W. Merkel of the New York Zoological Park. At his direction the hollow was filled with stones and concrete and the three remaining branches of the crown were attached to each other with chains and eyebolts. The west fork blew down on May 24, 1919, and on October 26, 1937, fearing that someone would be injured by branches falling from the tree, which had been virtually dead for several years, the College reluctantly had what remained of it cut down.

The old Nott Elm survives in the form of Nott Elm paperweights—five-inch by two-inch by one-inch pieces of the tree, weighted with lead and topped with a picture of the Nott Elm—which were sold by the College Bookstore from 1939 until they were gone. The two dollar price was applied to the upkeep of Jackson's Garden.

Seeds from the tree had been sent to alumni who requested them, and there were also numerous presumed seedlings in the woods near the tree. Shortly after the demise of the Nott Elm, one of its seedlings, by then thirty years old and twenty-five feet tall, was transplanted to a nearby site and dubbed "New Nott Elm." An ice storm destroyed it in December 1964, and "Nott Elm III" was later planted by the Class of 1965. Its fate is unknown, but if it survived other dangers it would have been doomed by the Dutch elm disease.

In 1926, President Richmond planted the so-called "Moline Elm" about thirty feet from the Nott Elm.

**Nott Memorial.** Since its completion, the building now called the Nott Memorial has been the most distinctive feature of Union's campus, often serving as an icon of the College itself. For even longer, it was a cause of frustration to the College administration, consuming scarce funds while defying every attempt to devise an entirely suitable use for it.

Indeed, the building's primary function has always been aesthetic; it was conceived as the linchpin of the campus plan, and proposed uses were a secondary consideration from the start. When work on "the round building" began, the College, for the first time in its existence, and perhaps for the last, had all the buildings

it needed; every function a mid-nineteenth-century college expected to perform had been reasonably well accommodated. Geological Hall and Philosophical Hall had just been completed, and a President's House was under construction. But this building boom had enough momentum to start one more building, needed or not.

The Nott Memorial, as designed by Edward Tuckerman Potter '53, derived from a round central building in the Ramée Plan, which in turn had many antecedents in the history of architecture; the Radcliffe Camera and the Dome of the Rock are most often mentioned. (The Rotunda at the University of Virginia, executed in 1826, was designed later than the Ramée plan.)

In the Ramée plan, where the building is labelled "chapel," the aesthetic function is fundamental; architect John Mesick points out: "the great domed cylinder...derived from its dominant position and elemental shape enough power to juxtapose the visual impact of the western vista" which the campus faced. Metaphorically, it was an "emanating dynamo."

In a 1978 interview at Union, architectural historian Vincent Sculley described the building's function *vis-à-vis* the rest of the campus:

"What a wonderful building! It's a very beautiful campus, but would really fall apart without it....That dark shape in the middle is fundamental to the whole thing, it pins the whole thing, gives it a gravity. Otherwise those gray and white buildings, set as they are along that axis, would just float away. And that big, dark thing which has that wonderful quality of small columns within the larger windows which seem to pull down and make the windows stretch. That happens in the drum above. At the same time it's very dark in relation to the light forms around, and it is very much a center, a power and a presence."

Detailed drawings of Ramée's proposed round building no longer exist; surviving views and sketches show a structure different in several respects from the one eventually designed by Edward Tuckerman Potter: Ramée's building was round (not 16-sided), windowless, and of uniform diameter until surmounted by a drum-less dome much lower than Potter's. It was almost devoid of embellishment.

The history of the Nott Memorial recalls the history of overly ambitious structures everywhere: spasmodic building interrupted by long delays, radically changed plans, mixed aesthetics, resolve lost and regained, escalating costs, financial crises, controversy and compromise. More than that of any other building, the history of the Nott Memorial intertwines with the fortunes and the morale of the College.

**The Struggle to Complete the Building.** Eliphalet Nott broke ground for Ramée's chapel when he built North and South Colleges, but no money was available to go further. In 1848 the trustees accepted a plan by Nott to complete the seven principal buildings

of Ramée's plan, but except for the planting of a ring of trees around the future site of the round building, nothing happened.

In 1856, Nott started raising money from the alumni to proceed with the building, which he now saw could be used for alumni meetings as well as for a chapel. From then until it was essentially complete in 1877, it was called Alumni (or Graduates') Hall, or sometimes "the chapel" or "the library." By mid-1858 only \$4,000 had been raised, but with his usual fiscal insouciance, Nott went ahead with a cornerstone-laying ceremony during Commencement Week of 1858. As architect he chose one of his grandsons, the twenty-seven year-old Edward Tuckerman Potter, who was already working on plans for the President's House.

Actual work on the foundations began in the spring of 1859, but by October of the same year, when the stone work was only six feet above grade, work ceased for lack of funds. The foundation, dubbed by students "Fort Gillespie" for the civil engineering professor who helped survey it, remained for the next thirteen years a daily reminder that nothing in Union's affairs justified optimism that the building would ever be completed. The Civil War and Nott's death in 1866 were only the most obvious causes of a decline in the College's fortunes that would almost last out the century.

On the night of September 2, 1868, students protested a decade of inactivity on Alumni Hall (and the failure to choose a new president) with a mock "Burial of the Trustees"—a variation of their traditional "Burial of Logic" (see CREMATION OF TEXTBOOKS). Three years later the students took credit for a revival of plans for Alumni Hall by holding a "Resurrection of the Trustees" on October 20, 1871. [See BURIAL AND RESURRECTION OF THE TRUSTEES].

The trustees, in an attempt to return to Union's golden age following two weak administrations, had chosen as Union's next president another of Eliphalet Nott's grandsons, the architect's younger brother, ELIPHALET NOTT POTTER. Conscious that it was expected to save Union, the Potter family rallied around. One of their first projects was to finish Alumni Hall, and to this end two other brothers, Clarkson Nott Potter, a trustee, and Howard Potter, the head of the Alumni Association, contributed a total of \$40,000.

For that amount, the College entered into a contract with a New York City builder named Rollins to complete the walls, roof the building over (but without a dome), and divide the interior to accommodate numerous College functions—a major departure from the architect's plan. However, in 1874, when the walls were up but before a roof was put on, a dispute arose with the builder; it was finally resolved by the College paying \$35,000 for the work done. The trustees then appropriated another \$50,000 to complete the building, and the architect persuaded them to follow his plan, which now incorporated recent developments in



fireproof building construction, using iron rather than wooden structural elements. To help make this possible, Clarkson Potter contributed an additional \$10,000.

The Cornell Iron Works of New York City sped iron framing to completion in the latter half of 1874, using stock production members exclusively. A roof of purple, green and red Vermont slate was laid in 1875. 709 "illuminators" speckled the dome; apparently invented by Potter, these were 1 1/4" diameter discs of red, yellow, purple, orange or green glass, each bearing the outline of a star and mounted in the center of a slate-sized zinc plate. Beneath each disc, a 3 1/2" long tube allowed the colored light to pass through the decking and plaster to the interior, producing the effect of a starry heaven. In the southern half of the dome, the colors are from the Newtonian red-orange-yellow-green-blue-violet spectrum; in the northern half, the emphasis is on purple and violet hues.

Set in purple slate in a rusty red band around the lower part of the dome were eight Hebrew words from the Talmud (in the simplest translation: "The work is great, the day is short, the wages are ample, the master presses the workmen"). (Cf. HEBREW INSCRIPTION ON THE NOTT MEMORIAL).

Wooden inserts, intended to be temporary, were then fitted between the columns in the drum below the dome; they remained for twenty-five years. A low skylight, or oculus, was placed at the top of the dome, where the architect had intended a lofty lantern. Wooden entrance steps and platforms led up to the four doors, which faced north, south, east and west.

Once again, financial difficulties brought work to a stop in 1876, and the builder finally proposed a settlement tantamount to a large contribution to the College on his part.

In 1877, using more money raised by President Potter, the College itself became the general contractor, with Professor CADY STALEY as supervising engineer. The interiors were luxuriously finished. Mottled white and gray marble wainscoting, trimmed with bands of black and red marble, covered the entire first floor walls, while the floor was laid with an elaborate design of encaustic tile pavement, imported from England and largely paid for by Howard Potter's sister-in-law, Mrs. Alexander Brown.

**The Struggle to Use the Building.** Even before being finished, the building was used for an alumni banquet in June 1877, but after installation of the flooring in November 1877, there is no record of further construction. By 1879 the library had been moved from Old Chapel into the top gallery, and in 1880 the Catharine Wolfe collection of plaster casts of statuary was placed on the lower gallery. Though now officially known as the Nott-Potter Memorial, the building was usually referred to as "Memorial Hall," or, most often, "the round building."

Nothing ever came of the notion that the building might serve as a chapel, and it proved almost impossible to heat in the winter, despite President Potter's hope that heat could be trapped with curtained partitions. Not long after Washburn Hall was completed, the library was shifted to its more comfortable accommodations in 1884, leaving Memorial Hall for the next nineteen years as a rarely-visited museum and the scene of Commencement banquets and receptions. After 1891, when a removable hardwood floor was constructed at student expense, it also served for Commencement balls, but when the experiment of a winter dance was tried in February 1899, it took four days and nights of continuous fires to warm the building sufficiently.

President Potter resigned in 1884, following a long and bitter controversy in which his handling of funds emerged as a major issue. He was well aware that the building into which he had sunk so much money as a matter of family prestige had become the butt of jokes and might stand virtually useless for generations, at the center of Union College. Incredibly, from his deathbed in Mexico City in 1901, the former president redeemed "Potter's Folly" by writing to Andrew Carnegie, reminding him of a promise to convert the building into a proper library.

Carnegie came through with \$40,000 for a major renovation in 1902/3. A copper facade superseded the wooden inserts in the drum, new leaded glass windows were mounted, colored slating on the lower roof was replaced with black, and with the construction of stone steps and a vestibule at the south entrance, the other three entrances were eliminated. A wooden flagpole was added to the dome. Inside, the upper gallery was widened and, so the dome would not have to be heated, the remaining aperture was glazed; toilets, and electric lighting were installed, and following connection to the new steam boiler plant behind Washburn Hall, radiators provided heat.

The renovations complete, the library returned and reopened on November 2, 1903: the next year—the centennial of the beginning of Dr. Nott's presidency—the building was re-dedicated as the Nott Memorial Library. The Wolfe collection of plaster casts was removed to the upper gallery (where it was joined in 1907 by the College MUSEUM), while the library filled the lower gallery and the periphery of the first floor; the center of the first floor was occupied with reading tables except when needed for banquets. In 1908, the first floor was the scene of the Commencement ball one last time, with booths situated between the bookcases.

Dispersal of the collections of the College Museum on the top floor in 1932 freed the space for library purposes.

In 1936, a \$24,000 gift from FRANK BAILEY made possible another renovation, which relieved severe

crowding in the library and allowed more efficient operation. The heating and lighting systems were upgraded, the basement was made usable for book stacks and connected for the first time to the rest of the building by an internal stairway, offices were constructed on the first floor, reinforcement of the first gallery enabled it to bear a heavier load of books, and monumental curved oak reading desks which President Dixon Ryan Fox had obtained as a gift from Columbia University were installed on the first floor.

Although these were understood to be only palliative measures, the library would wait another twenty-five years, during which it became desperately overcrowded, before moving into Schaffer Library in 1961.

When the library left, a circular stage was constructed in the center of the first floor and in 1962 the College theatre moved in; the faculty advisors to the Mountebanks expressed grave reservations about being committed to a theatre-in-the-round for what might prove an extended period. The period turned out to be nearly three decades.

In 1963 the college bookstore moved into the basement (both the theatre and the bookstore had been in Washburn Hall, which was razed in 1963). Later, a sculpture studio and the offices of the campus police (1963–72) would also find quarters in the building. The Union College Coffeehouse used the theatre in 1970–72. When the bookstore moved to the Campus Center in 1987, the basement was given over to music practice rooms.

**The Struggle to Restore the Building.** The deterioration of the building is an old story: by 1896 many of the windows were broken, and frost had loosened a marble slab on the interior wall. In 1938 a stone above the door was discovered to be about to fall. Pieces of interior marble trim fell in 1951. The years after the library's evacuation in 1961 saw steady dilapidation of the building and intermittent debates about its future. The issue was aired with some comprehensiveness in the April 1971 *Union College Chronicle* and very thoroughly in John Mesick's *The Nott Memorial; a historic structure report* (1973), to which readers are referred for a much more detailed technical description and history of the building, and for a review of uses considered then. That report recommended specific immediate measures to arrest the deterioration of the building, focusing especially on the roof and the masonry, and proposed a comprehensive restoration at an estimated cost of \$1,546,000.

Little was done, however, except that once again a ring of trees—hedge maples (*acer campestre*) this time—was planted around the building in the 1970s; they were cut down about 1994.

Harking back to their 1869 "Burial of the Trustees," students twice more agitated on behalf of the Nott Memorial, organizing a "Save the Nott Day,"

in May 1976 and launching a "Restore the Nott Student Initiative" in February 1988.

On June 28, 1989, the building drew everyone's attention by shedding an eighteen square foot section of its blue stone (greywacke) facing. Beams were strapped to the surface to prevent further deterioration, and three months later the College received a \$300,000 state grant, which it used to begin a \$3,000,000 fund drive to restore the exterior. After the period covered by this book, work was finally begun on a full restoration of the Nott Memorial in 1993, supported by a five million dollar gift from Margaret Dyson, and the gloriously restored building was re-dedicated on Founders' Day, 1995.

**What Might Have Been.** An account of all of the roads not taken belongs to a full history of the Nott Memorial; here only the most important can be mentioned.

When construction began in 1859, Edward Tuckerman Potter, emulating Ramée, planned a white and gray stuccoed brick building, with a west-facing portico and Romanesque window arches similar to those Ramée had indicated for other buildings; by the time construction resumed in 1872, however, he had decided, under the influence of Ruskin, to introduce color into the design by specifying colored stone and to employ a gothic style of fenestration. In 1874 it was proposed to crown the dome with a bronze statue of Eliphalet Nott—an unexecuted proposal revived in 1973 by John Mesick.

In 1880, plans by Edward Tuckerman Potter's half-brother William Appleton Potter '64 for a building complex (of which only WASHBURN HALL was ever built) called for modifying the Nott-Potter Memorial through addition of a parapet around the lower sloped roof, sixteen gothic gables over the bays in the clerestory drum, and a cross atop a lantern on the dome.

The firm of MCKIM, MEAD AND WHITE, the College's architect from about 1925, repeatedly offered major modifications. An early campus plan called for razing the Nott Memorial and replacing it with a similar structure about where Schaffer Library now stands. In 1932, the firm suggested turning the Nott Memorial into a commons, and four years later Lawrence Grant White recommended that, if the College would not tear down the building ("the best solution"), it should alter the exterior, "[which] strikes a most unfortunate false note at the focal point of your group of buildings," by stuccoing it and adding a wooden arcade around it, in imitation of a building in the background of Raphael's "Marriage of the Virgin."

In 1938 the architects produced three different schemes for enlarging the building, ranging from a modest addition on one side, to a scheme which would have changed the shape of the dome and incorporated the Nott Memorial into the body of a much larger

building. In 1954, they proposed converting it into an administration building, with a narrow ring of offices on each of three floors. To the exterior they would have added gray stucco to harmonize with North and South Colonnade, and a west-facing portico similar to Ramée's original design; that idea was still alive in 1960, when the trustees authorized the architect to draw plans for the conversion. In 1962 and 1963, Steinman, Cain and White revised the plan, proposing to replace the drum and dome of the present building with either a lower dome or a funnel-shaped roof.

The difficulties of finding a new use for the Nott Memorial were manifold: it is a very unusual structure, built for no particular use, and seemingly incapable of expansion—except perhaps underground—without great aesthetic violence. The interior was intended to be unencumbered, but, as John Mesick put it, "How does one use an eighty-foot round room one hundred feet high with two encircling galleries?" Compounding the problem, the Nott Memorial is a dominating building at the visual center of the campus; whatever goes in it must seem worthy of the position. The library was an acceptable tenant, but housing part of the administration in the Nott Memorial has seemed symbolically ideal to some and symbolically monstrous to others. In 1960, a Union faculty member in exile from Latin America warned in a letter to the *Concordiensis* that to "plant an administrative cathedral in the very heart of our campus...behind walls once hallowed by books" illustrates "the growing hegemony of administration over education."

#### **What the Nott Memorial Has Meant to Union.**

One of the most distinctive buildings on any American college campus, the Nott Memorial has always attracted the attention and excited the imagination of visitors and of the College community. Students originally called it "The Cheesebox" and "one end of the bolt that holds the earth together"; later sobriquets included "Minerva's Breast" and, when the building housed the library, "The Nipple of Knowledge." The library's basement stacks were forced by the shape of the building into an approximation of a maze, which inspired many jokes.

The universal urge of college students to climb buildings found expression at Union circa 1900–02 as freshmen and sophomores vied to keep their class flags on the dome's flagpole.

Perhaps because those forced to accommodate to the building were so aware of its functional limitations, its full appreciation came first from the outside—indeed, it began to be widely esteemed during the latter half of the twentieth century. Architectural historian Sarah Bradford Landau calls it "one of the most colorful and elegantly decorative High Victorian buildings ever built in the United States." Christopher Tunnard

took the building's context into account in comparing it to "late Italian opera in a program of early Mozart."

The most dramatic scene in the 1972 movie *THE WAY WE WERE*, featuring Barbra Streisand's oratory, was filmed with the Nott Memorial as background. The building was added on May 5, 1972, to the National Register of Historic Places, and on June 24, 1986, to the list of National Historic Landmarks. Ominously, in February 1989 it was added to the Interior Department's list of historic landmarks that are seriously damaged or threatened with damage.

In 1988, Union Professor Carl George and Albany Medical College student Robert Uzzo published their study of the symbolism of this and other Potter buildings, especially as it concerns the 32 hexalphas (six-pointed stars) of the slated exterior of the dome and the 709 illuminators in the dome, the form of arches used, and Potter's use of the "Golden Mean" ratio throughout. After the period covered by this book, the ahistorical idea that the building symbolizes the unity of Christianity, Judaism and Islam—a notion that would have shocked its builders—gained some currency.

The full influence of the building on the College has scarcely been recognized, but some general observations may be made. In reaction against the Nott Memorial and Washburn Hall, subsequent building at Union was probably for a long time more utilitarian than it would otherwise have been. Frank Bailey, a student when the first ill-fated attempt was made to use the building as a library, long had a veto over all building, and was fond of saying, "A good teacher in a barn is better than a poor teacher in a palace."

For seventy-eight of its first two hundred years, Union had at its center a large, unfinished (1859–1903) or underused (1885–1903, 1961–95) building, and for the most recent several decades, the structure was visibly decaying. The influence on College morale, though subtle, could only be baleful; a test of the positive influence of a fully functioning and healthy central building has now begun.

Perhaps the most perceptive observation on the Nott Memorial came very early, from alumnus Charles M. Culver '78, writing pseudonymously in the *Concordiensis* in 1879. Discussing possible uses for the building, he pointed out that, as a last resort, it could always be used to draw morals from. He might have added that it would inevitably serve as a corporate character test.

**Nott News.** The "official bulletin of the Class of 1966," *Nott News* was launched by Jack Seifert '66 in March 1963 and edited by Robert P. Hoffman '66, "as a vehicle of communication between the class officers and the Freshman Class." It published a total of seven 8 1/2 by 11 multilithed issues of news and opinion, the last in the fall of 1964.

**Nott Professorships.** The Nott Trust Deed under which ELIPHALET NOTT and URANIA NOTT conveyed to Union College in 1854 property worth an estimated \$600,000 (see NOTT TRUST FUND), specified thirteen purposes to which portions of the trust were to be devoted. The first two were:

- 1) "Two Hundred and Twenty-Five Thousand Dollars, shall always be devoted to the establishment and maintenance of Nine Professorships [each with an annual] salary of Fifteen Hundred Dollars.
- 2) "Sixty Thousand Dollars, shall always be devoted to the establishment and maintenance of Six Assistant Professorships [each with an annual] salary of Six Hundred Dollars."

The positions became known as the "Nott Professorships" and, in accordance with the trust deed, were numbered ("Nott Professor no. 1," etc.)

The deed gave the Board of Trustees and the Trust's Board of Visitors (initially controlled by Nott and his relatives) joint power to appoint the Nott Professors and to determine their duties. It also required that full Nott Professors forswear the use of "spirituous liquors" and promise to "discourage the use of such liquors by others." Assistant professors (if any had been appointed) would additionally have had to remain unmarried and abstain from the use of tobacco.

More controversially, Nott tried to perpetuate his personal style of student discipline. Nott Professors were required to continue "the same paternal government now established in Union College, and the same system of reporting delinquencies by the Professors and other officers, to the President, and of correspondence by him with the parents of delinquents, and of privately dismissing from College, with the least possible injury to the offender, where reformation is hopeless, as is now practised...."

Most of the assets of the Nott Trust were lands at and near the present site of Long Island City (see HUNTER'S POINT, GREENPOINT AND STUYVESANT COVE PROPERTIES OF UNION COLLEGE). Because it proved impossible to derive the anticipated income from this property, and for other reasons, the provisions of the deed were never fully implemented. No assistant professors were ever appointed, and initially only three full professors were appointed: ISAAC JACKSON, TAYLER LEWIS and CHARLES JOY.

Lewis, who thought corporal punishment essential to college discipline, at first refused to sign the oath; he relented after being allowed to register his formal objection. Joy's appointment aroused much resentment because, although he was only twenty-two and had just joined the faculty, as a Nott Professor he would be paid more than the senior faculty not appointed to Nott professorships.

The number of Nott Professors remained at three until 1861, then gradually rose to eight in 1869. After 1876, incumbents were not replaced when they died or left the College; the designation "Nott Professor" was last used in 1902. By then, Union's Long Island City property had been sold and most of the proceeds used to retire the College's debts.

The Nott Professorships were not understood to confer any particular honor—the title merely recognized a funding source—but they did serve to raise the general level of faculty salaries. Moreover, when Nott Professors retired from teaching, they kept their position and drew a partial salary, apparently Union's first formal pension.

**Nott Stoves.** ELIPHALET NOTT, Union's president from 1804 to 1866, though well known as an innovative educator, was at least equally famous in his time as the inventor of improved wood and coal-burning stoves. "Nott Patent" coal stoves became so commonplace that Oliver Wendell Holmes and James Fenimore Cooper could mention them in literary works with confidence that their readers would recognize them as especially good stoves.

In those days before central heating, every Northerner had a keen personal appreciation of the value of an effective and trouble-free stove, and the fact that Union College was presided over by a man of such undeniable practicality long enhanced the institution's reputation. Moreover, some of the money Nott made from his stoves eventually found its way to the College via the NOTT TRUST FUND.

Nott began conducting experiments with heat by 1812, eventually acquiring twenty-six patents and the epithet "Philosopher of Caloric." After moving to the present campus, he probably used a shop in SOUTH COLONNADE, employing Nicholas Vedder and Joseph Horsfall to make wooden patterns for the stoves.

Nott's first successful stove, a horizontal wood-burner dubbed "the coffin," heated Union's dormitory rooms from about 1815. It was designed to withstand the roughest student abuse, including being tumbled down the dormitory stairs.

Coal stoves at that time burned charcoal or bituminous coal. The harder anthracite coal was capable of producing cleaner, hotter and longer-lasting fires, but they were very difficult to maintain in existing stoves. The Lehigh (Pennsylvania) Coal Mine Co. sent Nott some of their anthracite coal in 1820 and asked him to work on the problem. Nott took out patents on a base-burning anthracite stove in 1826, 1828, 1832 and 1833 as he gradually overcame the difficulties. The first model, called the Saracenic Grate, patented in 1826, was improved by 1832 as Nott corrected a defect which allowed escaping gas to explode if the stove were operated carelessly. The several models of Nott stoves

were base-burners employing a vertical brick-lined chamber, into the top of which coal was added. The key innovation by which Nott kept the fire hot enough to burn anthracite coal was convex rotating grates to remove the ashes.

In 1827, Nott set up the Albany firm of H. Nott and Co. (also called "The Union Furnace"), nominally headed by his sons Benjamin and Howard, to manufacture the stoves; it was soon casting more than one thousand tons of iron stoves a year. The foundry moved to New York City in 1831, and the Notts lost control of it in the financial panic of 1836.

Nott had also licensed other companies in New York, Pennsylvania and London to manufacture his stoves, and in 1845 he was still receiving about \$2,000 a year from his stove patents. His designs were widely imitated (he won a patent infringement suit in 1834), and he also designed cook stoves on similar principles. Directly, and through the competition they inspired, Nott's stoves raised the American standard of domestic comfort and at the same time affected the national economy by greatly expanding the market for hard coal.

The Albany Institute of History and Art and the New York State Museum possess a Nott stove each. The College has two; at this writing one is on loan to the Schenectady Museum and the other is in storage.

**Nott Trust Fund.** Following years of investigation by the New York State Legislature into President ELIPHALET NOTT's practice of commingling the College's funds with his own, his attorney, John Canfield Spencer '06, virtually compelled him to place most of his personal assets in a trust fund for the College. These assets derived ultimately from Nott's role in the LOTTERIES.

According to JONATHAN PEARSON, Spencer said to the recalcitrant Nott (who had long claimed that he intended to bequeath his property to the College), "with a withering look and a tone of thunder, 'Sir, you have not a shadow of a right to that property. Your title to it is not worth a straw.'" On January 28, 1854, Nott and his wife URANIA NOTT executed the Nott Trust Deed, with assets valued at \$600,000, to be used by the College for specified purposes.

Chief among these purposes were the NOTT PROFESSORSHIPS, endowed with a total of \$285,000. In addition, Nott specified twelve other endowments, the net effect of which would have been to turn Union into the university he had long envisioned: an astronomical observatory (\$60,000); sixty auxiliary scholarships (\$10 and \$12 per term); sixty prize scholarships for graduates or fellows, (\$300 a year); a cemetery (\$20,000); an apparatus fund (\$10,000); text-books (\$5,000); an eclectic library (\$30,000); a geological and mineral cabinet (\$5,000); an historical cabinet (\$5,000); a lecture fund (\$10,000), and a miscellaneous fund.

The trust was to be managed by six "Visitors," including, during their lifetimes, Nott, his wife, his son JOHN NOTT, and his son-in-law, ALONZO POTTER; each Visitor, except the president, would receive \$200 a year. The deed also guaranteed Urania Nott the use of a campus house for her lifetime, but this provision was superseded by a similar guarantee made when the PRESIDENT'S HOUSE was erected in 1861.

Nearly all of the Nott Trust Fund's assets consisted of lands at HUNTER'S POINT, GREENPOINT AND STUYVESANT COVE on New York City's East River. The actual value of this property was hard to determine because most of it could not be sold or made income-producing without costly improvements. The College's income from this property over the next forty-four years, though often substantial, was never sufficient to do more than fund some of the Nott Professorships. With the sale of the last of the Hunter's Point property in 1898, the College used the proceeds to pay off debts and the Nott Trust Fund ceased to exist.

**Nu Sigma Gamma.** A mock fraternity founded November 3, 1886, by members of the Class of 1889, Nu Sigma Gamma was allegedly devoted to girl-hunting. The initials were said to stand for "North Section Guards," but were also understood as a play on "Not Sustained"—i.e., a failing grade.

**O.A.N.** Sometimes but not often called Omicron Alpha Nu, O.A.N. was a freshman honorary society founded about 1922; it expired in the early 1930s.

**Ode to Old Union.** The Union College Alma Mater ("Let the Grecian dream of his sacred stream / And sing of the brave adorning...") was first sung at the July 23, 1856, Commencement exercises, and at least the first stanza and the chorus have been sung at every Commencement since.

Written by Fitzhugh Ludlow, one of that year's graduates, it was sung to the then well-known tune "Sparkling and Bright," composed by James B. Taylor, a New York City composer and performer on piano and guitar. "Sparkling and Bright" began as an unabashed drinking song, with words by Charles Fenno Hoffman (1806–84): "Sparkling and bright in liquid light / Does the wine our goblets gleam in / With hue as red as the rosy bed / Which a bee would choose to dream in...."

By 1856, Hoffman's verse had inspired several imitations, including a smoking song and a "temperance glee" published in 1846: "Sparkling and bright in its liquid light / Is the water in our glasses...." At Union, another member of Ludlow's class had used the tune in July 1854 for a song at Union's first "burial of text-books" ceremony ("We'll poll no more for the hidden lore / Within our Logic's pages, / But let it rest in the earth's cold breast, / To slumber there for ages....")