

## NOTES FROM THE LIBRARY

### PHILIP MILLEDOLER PAPERS

This *Journal* does not ordinarily take notice of acquisitions by other institutions, but it seems entirely appropriate that some reference should be made to the Philip Milledoler Papers, recently deposited in the New York Historical Society.

Dr. Milledoler, who was born in Rhinebeck, New York, in 1775 and died on Staten Island in 1852, served as President of Rutgers College from 1825 to 1840. One of his daughters, Abian, married James W. Beekman, and it was from the Beekman Family Association that the Milledoler manuscripts were obtained by the New York Historical Society.

The collection is a voluminous one and contains a mass of materials relating to the history of Rutgers during Milledoler's eventful presidency. Of special interest are a manuscript autobiography extending down to 1825, two volumes of confidential memoirs dating from 1825 to 1842, diaries for the years 1807, 1808, 1809, 1810, and 1819, and a journal of events for the year 1841. In addition, there are in the collection some two thousand letters, over seventy-five sermons, miscellaneous theological writings, and a folder of newspaper clippings.

Through the courtesy of the New York Historical Society and its Director, Mr. R. W. G. Vail, the Rutgers University Library will obtain microfilms of the entire collection. Films of the autobiography and the confidential memoirs have already been received. With these rich ma-

terials an unusually significant period in the history of the University can now be explored.

RICHARD P. McCORMICK

### THE AUTHOR OF THE FIRST RUTGERS FOOTBALL SONG

One year after that famous premier football performance of 1869, Rutgers graduated a man who was as ardent a rooter and enthusiast as "The Banks" has ever produced. Alexander Johnston, whose thirty-six line poem, "The Noble Game,"<sup>1</sup> appeared one year later, continued to follow the Scarlet, as is evidenced by his poem on page one of *The Targum* for November, 1873. Titled "Foot-balling at New Haven," it humorously describes our first defeat by Yale on ". . . the cursed hard and stony ground on which is built New Haven."

Undoubtedly Johnston's crowning achievement in popularizing this new sport was the publication in 1876 of his "Rutgers Foot-ball Song."<sup>2</sup> The editor of the collection in which this song appeared claimed it was a complete collection of American college songs. It contains only two football songs: the Rutgers song and one by an anonymous Columbia rooter set to the tune of "Nelly Bly."<sup>3</sup> These two songs are the first known American football songs and were both set to the music of popular tunes of that day.

<sup>1</sup> *The Targum*, Rutgers College, November, 1870.

<sup>2</sup> *Carmina Collegensia*, Boston: Oliver Ditson and Co. 1876, p. 147.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 66.

Johnston in the first verse of his song indicated that he had not forgotten that hard and stony New Haven soil, and in the chorus he tells how “. . . we'll kick her over or rip the cover . . .”, referring to our first game with Columbia in 1870.<sup>4</sup> That game had to be halted until a new ball could be located, the first one having been ripped by the terrific kicking of the Rutgers players. In the second verse we find the first account of early football attire. The scarlet had been adopted as the College color only the preceding season. And the caps and hose referred to may have been borrowed from the baseball team.

Born in Brooklyn April 29, 1849, the son of an Army captain, Johnston graduated from Rutgers in 1870 with the highest honors and the classical prize. His first position was that of tutor at the Rutgers College Grammar School.<sup>5</sup> At the same time he served in the law offices of Governor George C. Ludlow in New Brunswick and six years later was admitted to the New Jersey Bar.<sup>6</sup> Instead of entering actively into the practice of his profession, he continued to teach at the Grammar School until 1879 when he accepted the principalship of the Latin School at Norwich, Connecticut. Throughout these nine years he took an active part in Rutgers athletics and even though he had been a graduate for some time, the *Scarlet Letter* for 1873, 1874, and 1875 shows him to be a member of the Scarlet baseball team.

He shortly thereafter published his first book, *The History of American*

*Politics*, and President Emeritus William H. S. Demarest remembers helping him with the proofreading. This book soon became the leading text on American politics, and in recognition of Johnston's profound and broad knowledge of American political history and his clear insight into the principles of the Constitution, he was called, in 1883, to the chair of Jurisprudence and Political Economy at Princeton. This chair he occupied until his death, on July 20, 1889, at the age of forty. He was followed in that chair by another gifted teacher, Woodrow Wilson.

After 1886, Johnston's health began to fail, yet, in spite of a very full life and poor health, he managed in the last ten years of his life to contribute many articles to the leading magazines of the day and in addition to contributions to notable historical series was author of the following works: *History of American Politics*, 1879; *Connecticut*, 1887; *History of the United States for Schools*, 1892; *A Shorter History of the United States for Schools*, 1890; and *The United States, Its History and Constitution*, 1889.

Two years after his death he was eulogized by J. Hampden Dougherty in an address given before the Academy of Political Science at Hamilton Hall at Columbia. This address was later published because no other suitable memorial appeared.

OLIVER KIP WESTLING

<sup>4</sup> *The Targum*, Rutgers College, November, 1870.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, October, 1870.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, March, 1876.