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Dedication Speech for Early Lindenwood Presidents Plaque

Clara C. Pullis

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ADDRESS OF MISS CLARA C. PULLIS OF KIRKWOOD, MISSOURI,
AT UNVEILING OF MEMORIAL TABLET IN SIBLEY HALL TO
EARLY PRESIDENTS OF LINDENWOOD COLLEGE, ST. CHARLES, MO.

Commencement Day, Tuesday, June 4, 1929.

In grateful appreciation I come before you today and thank all who have by their generous contributions made possible the gift we offer. This booklet presented to the College for its new library contains the names of all contributors, - students, friends, and the Clubs as a whole. My associates and I myself thank you all.

It was an inspired thought of Dr. and Mrs. Roemer, when two years ago the month of May, they planned to have Lindenwood give a four-day party to celebrate her hundred years of splendid labor and good work. Embossed invitations were issued to all students, old and young, to come and make merry. Did we come? We did! in droves; on foot, in cars, in busses, on bikes, on anything having wheels. We came from the effete East; we came from the distinctive West; we came from the cool Laurentian hills of Canada on the North; we came from the sun-kissed shores of the Gulf of Mexico on the South; we came from Europe; and we came from St. Charles. Came ancients, some few antiques, the mid-Victorians, the early nineties, the bob-skirted, gay old sport who thought herself as cute as her pretty grand-daughter sailing the grounds, and the moderns. It was another "Charge of the Light Brigade" - students to the right of us, students to the left of us, teachers in front of us, onward we charged.

As we greeted our former comrades on the grounds and began looking and gazing at the changes made, we knew that better times

had come for our College. Our College was poor in those early days, though we scarcely knew it. We had plenty to eat, and we had more clothes than you of today (at least, we wore more). In the eighties, Lindenwood sprouted wings and began to soar. Money came in at different periods, administration heads changed, until finally came the right help, and with it came the man of ability, good judgment, and broad mind, who with the aid of his wife for fifteen years has given this school a splendid administration, and made our College what she is today, glorious and ideal.

We found one thing lacking as we viewed things, - no honor scroll erected anywhere for our early Presidents, and so we felt that something must be done to mark their early work in laying the foundation stones for the Lindenwood of today. The spirit of Lindenwood, the love and loyalty to the College existed then, as now, and the early Presidents rightly deserve the honor of this tribute to their memory.

I wish I could give you extracts of letters I have received in answer to my calls and letters. You would understand how very grateful I am for their help; and so I take this opportunity to thank each and all who joined me in this work.

Some of us who have fought life's storms and battles, as well as tasted the sweets and felt the sunshine, like to look back to our early days, -

When Life was a beautiful meadow,
Starred with the flowers of youth,
And we dreamed.
No shadows of care beset us,
And love was everywhere.

Youth, dreams, hallowed memories, of friendships, - priceless!

Dr. Roemer! I have the honor and the privilege and the great pleasure to come before you today, after fifty years and more have passed since those days, and on behalf of my old mates, myself, students, and friends, I ask you to accept this simple token of love, reverence, and esteem, presented to our old College, and ask that it be placed in the consecrated Hall of Sibley, - consecrated not only by virtue of the honorable name it bears, (that of its founders) which we all revere, but consecrated by the earnest work of those pioneer educators, four men and one woman, scholars and splendid teachers, each, who followed and taught the teachings of the Master Teacher. These five comprise the early Presidents of Lindenwood College. They are -

A. V. C. Schenck,
Thomas P. Barbour,
French Strother,
John Howard Nixon,
Mary E. Jewell, -

who in most perilous times in the history of our beloved school, fought the good fight and kept the College from perishing; who gave of their utmost and to their best ability, service to the noble cause of education and to their God.

CLARA C. PULLIS.

1874 - 1877.