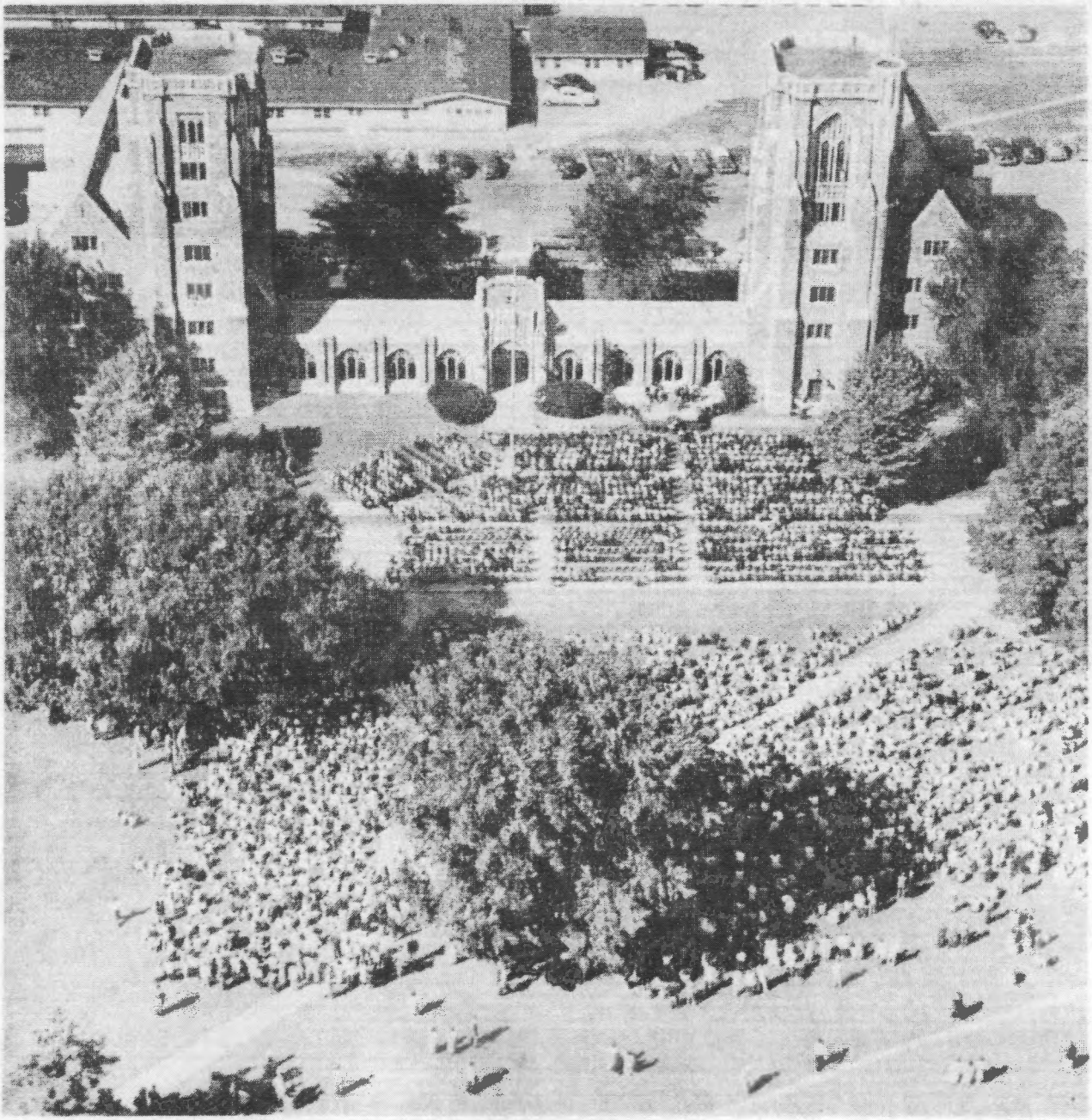
CORNELL
ALUMNI NEWS



COMMUNITY GATHERS AT WAR MEMORIAL FOR INSTALLATION OF PRESIDENT MALOTT

VOLUME [illegible] NUMBER [illegible] OCTOBER 17, 195[illegible]

versity should be equipped to turn out a steady stream of such men.

At this time, no course in American history was taught in any college or university in the United States. This, White felt, was "monstrous," and he established at Cornell the first chair of American History in this country, a chair held for many years by Moses Coit Tyler. White organized the President White School of Political Science. He endowed fellowships for graduate work in this field, and he made historical research possible by giving to the University one of the finest private libraries in the country. He laid, in short, the foundations upon which Cornell's national and international reputation in the fields of history and economics has been built.

I have been discussing some of the notable ways in which Cornell University broke new paths, some of the ingredients which went into the making of what we call the Cornell tradition. There are others which I do not have time to mention.

Set New Charter of Freedom

I think if one stands off and looks at the composite achievement of these two pioneers, Cornell and White, one sees running through it all a dominating principle which governed all they did. They were driven by the conviction that American college and university education needed a new charter of freedom; and virtually every new idea that went into the founding of Cornell was a plank in that charter. They were bent upon founding a University devoted to the ideal of a completely free intellectual life. The old restraints, taboos, prejudices, dogmas, and superstitions which had warped and suffocated American higher education were to find no place on the Cornell Campus. The free life of a great university is a constant challenge to the teacher to broaden the vision and deepen the understanding of his students, a challenge to the scholar to extend the frontiers of human knowledge, and Cornell and White were determined that the life of Cornell University should be a free life. They were themselves pioneers, and they expected the University they founded to keep on breeding pioneers!

It is unfortunately true that the tradition of a college or a university is not always noble or inspiring. It may be narrow; it may be bigoted; it may even be shoddy. There are institutions in which tradition demands that the president be a devout and orthodox member of some religious sect or denomination. There are others in which he must be ruggedly conservative in his political and economic views. In many Southern institutions, he must sympathize with, and administer, rules of racial segregation. In still others, he may go his own way as long as his educational policies do not endanger the success of the football team! In all of these cases, tradition lies like the hand of the dead upon the university itself, and upon its president. It demands conformity rather than independence; docility rather than leadership.

I have tried to make clear that the Cornell tradition is the tradition of freedom. That tradition does not dictate to President Malott what he must do, or what he must not do. It tells him merely that it is customary for Cornell Presidents to lead and not to follow, to plot their own courses, to defend and cherish their own ideals. The only restriction or limitation which the Cornell tradition imposes upon him is that which is imposed by his own sense of responsibility to conserve scrupulously and to exploit generously the freedom which is the life-blood of a University.

It is an honor and a pleasure to speak for the Cornell community and all the friends of Cornell in welcoming President Malott. We look forward to his leadership and we pledge him our loyal support and our friendly cooperation. We feel that the Cornell tradition is safe in his hands. We are eager to work with him in this forward-looking venture in which we are all engaged: the building of a greater and finer Cornell. We are proud that he is to share with us the rich life of this great University. A University is a community of scholars, teachers, and students in quest of the truth. Its life is the life of freedom, for "the truth shall make you free."

Again came the Glee Club strains, led by Director Thomas B. Tracy '31, singing now "Cornell," with the solo by Edwin C. Gibson '53.

President Looks Ahead

Calling the new President to the front of the platform, Chairman Becker said: "By virtue of the authority vested in me by the Board of Trustees of Cornell University, I hereby declare you to be duly inaugurated as President, with all the rights, duties, and privileges of that office, and deliver to your custody in token thereof the original Charter of Cornell University." With a vigorous handshake and smile, and to a standing ovation from the audience, President Malott said:

Mr. Chairman, on behalf of the students, Faculty, and alumni of Cornell University, I accept this high honor, firm in the belief that education is America's first line of defense. There is practically no other.

Many transient fears are roaming the world today as to what may be going to happen in the years ahead. Dire prognostications are made about dangerous trends or directions. There is a feeling of hopelessness abroad in the land that we are heading for destruction and that nothing can be done about it. What a difference it would make in the psychology of the nation if we could merely be assured that truth would prevail; that people would be sufficiently enlightened to know what to do and how to do it, and to influence others into a like state of mind.

Simply stated, that is perhaps the task, and the whole task, of all education and specifically of us charged with responsibility in Cornell University. Through the hallways and along the gorge-side paths of this beautiful Campus walk today many of the business, professional, and political leaders of tomorrow. The challenge to us is there, in the unfolding lives about us, to transmit something of the imagination, the courage, the self-discipline, the moral strength, the spiritual faith, and the sense of individual responsibility of the sturdy Founders of this institution. Otherwise, we have not justified the trust placed in us.

Family Greetings—President Malott happily receives congratulations, after his installation, from his daughter, Janet, and her husband, Ensign Jared Elliot, USN, (Yale '50), to whom she was married in Barnes Hall, September 15.

America has always believed in the fundamental value, the veritable necessity for education. President Washington in his first message to the Congress said: "There is nothing which can better deserve your patronage than the promotion of science and literature. Knowledge is in every country the surest basis of public happiness." And in his Farewell Address he again urged the promotion of institutions for the general diffusion of knowledge and the enlightenment of public opinion.

President Madison believed that "popular government without popular information or the means of acquiring it to be the first step toward farce or tragedy, or perhaps both," as people who intend to be "their own governors must arm themselves with the power which knowledge gives." President Jefferson said that "if a nation expects to be ignorant and free in a state of civilization, it expects what never was and never will be."

This belief of Americans, past and present, in education and in its vital relation to the perpetuation of our American concept of life, has built some 1800 institutions of higher learning in this nation. It has provided the motive for millions and millions of dollars to flow into private and public colleges and universities.

Education Must Save Free World

Education stands as steward for the accumulated values of our civilization. If it does its part, it will everlastingly set forth the positive values of America; it will make crystal clear the dangers of the widening discrepancy between what the theory of democracy requires of its citizens and what the function of democracy reveals. Education must stand sponsor for the free world, and lead our thinking people to understand the price we must pay to maintain that freedom.

We fear today the threat of armed aggression. So did ancient Rome as she sat securely and proudly on her seven hills behind the spears of the Roman legions. But as historians have pointed out, that Empire fell, not by force of arms, but by the spiritual collapse of her people, succumbing to the debilitating contagion that the government of Rome could do all things for all people.

The long shadow of that fallen Empire looms over America today, a greater threat than all the schemes of furtive and sinister plotters behind the Iron Curtain. Too many are asking our officials in Washington to do what our forefathers would have done gladly for themselves. Old ideas of initiative and thrift and integrity are disappearing. Government, like a giant octopus, is wrapping itself around ever more and more phases of our lives. It is the direction of Ancient Rome, and its implications stand stark before us.

There must come a new thinking into America which insists that government be not an end in itself but a servant of free enterprise, an expediter for the industry and the energy of a free people. Otherwise, an unseen paralysis sweeps over the nation and we sink slowly from the free republic of decentralized government to the welfare state, to the handout state, to the police state. Over and over again in the history of man, this cycle has repeated itself. Storm signals are flying in our mounting and uncontrolled Federal deficits,

in high costs and high taxes, in our failing to think through these trends and their inevitable result on our freedom.

Education must help and help vigorously, lest we ignore our spiritual heritage. We must not put our faith in mere mechanical skills, in mere material wealth, or in government paternalism; else we shall perish, strutting to our doom as has many a civilization before us. In these sweeping changes, in the thrusts and pressures of a world unstable in its very foundations, education has a task to do, else mankind cannot continue to live securely in the environment which it has created.

Now Have Opportunity

Never in the long history of Cornell since that distant opening day of October 7, 1868, has the task been so difficult. In those times, the American way of life was regarded as a permanent conquest of the human spirit. We accepted democracy with scarcely a thought; it was not really a major topic of discussion. We were not then concerned at all as to whether capitalism would survive; the fiscal structure of the nation, difficult always, was not endangering the very economic life of the country; self-respecting people worked hard and expected to take care of themselves.

But in spite of all the dire predictions of the apostles of doom, the outlook is far from dark as the academic year 1951-52 opens today.

Ralph Waldo Emerson perhaps best stated the mood of America, at its youthful best, when he asked, "If there is any period one would desire to be born in, is it not the age of Revolution? When the old and new stand side by side and admit of being compared; when the energies of all men are stimulated by fear and hope; when the historic glories of the old can be compensated by the rich possibilities of the new era?" If our wish is Emerson's, we have it today. The trouble is that for a number of people, the future is a bit too rich in alarming possibilities, and when they take the old and the new side by side, they would much prefer the old!

The fearful ones who hate and condemn the liberalism in our colleges never suggest any additions to the store of human knowledge, but always substractions. They want us to leave out all that is interesting and vital, the great current social issues, the great controversies in forms of government, systems of finance, and policies of ethics on which they wish neither professor nor students to take sides.

Such a course would not mean free minds. We cannot be free and at the same time preserve ourselves only amid "the fertility of the obvious and the tedium of the uncontroversial." Young people, at least, cannot be expected to reserve their greatest enthusiasm for the *status quo*. Yet our freedom must always be exercised with tolerance for others, with responsibility for the good name of this great institution from which we of the Cornell staff can never completely disassociate ourselves.

University Must Progress

This ceremony today is merely a sort of channel-buoy in the living stream of the University, as it flows steadily on its way from the ancient past to the distant future. We who participate for a brief time together, to create the Cornell of the moment, lend our hands to an educational project with deep traditions, builded slowly by the life-long devotion of many men and women: teachers who have guided the intellectual life of Cornell to a place among the nation's greatest; administrators who have dreamed and planned and toiled for an ever-better institution; generous benefactors who have left the imprint of their lives in the buildings and collections and apparatus of this far-flung educational venture; the taxpayers whose support has been returned times over in the abilities of the graduates and in the applied research from our laboratories; alumni and Trustees who have loved this Hill and all for which it stands and who have given of their time and thought and energy and substance; and students who in endless procession have given character and tradition to their Cornell.

We stand humbly today among this galaxy of the builders of the University, living and dead, mindful of our responsibility not only to them but to the generations that lie ahead. For if we fail in our custodianship of this distinguished center of learning, if for one single generation its standards of conduct and performance are allowed to slip, we shall have obliterated something of the immortality of these founders and builders, we shall have shattered their dreams and destroyed something that can never be recovered.

On some far future day, another channel-buoy in the timeless stream of Cornell's existence will mark another installation ceremony. It is my pledge today, in which I know I am joined by the entire Cornell Faculty, staff, and student body, that we shall transmit to those unknown participants in that phantom ceremony an ever stronger University, where unsullied freedom shall still prevail, where the highest intellectual endeavors shall be nurtured, where character and abiding faith shall be evidence of Cornell's contribution to a better world and to the continued defense of America through the great forces of liberal and professional education which fear neither truth nor heresy.

Following the President's address, the audience rose again for a prolonged ovation. Then the Glee Club sang the "Evening Song" and the Chimes accompanied the dispersing spectators, up the Hill and down, all remarking upon the beauty of the day and striking effectiveness of the entire exercises. In a wheelchair at the edge of the crowd was Mrs. Malott, recovering from a broken leg suffered in an automobile accident near Ithaca, September 2, and in the audience were their daughters, Mrs. Jared Elliot with her new husband, Ensign Elliot, USN, and Edith Malott.

Receives Greetings at Luncheon

About 350 invited guests at the luncheon in Statler Hall included Trustees and University officials, members of the Faculty, heads of student organizations, and the alumni officials and Club presidents. Speakers were introduced by Arthur H. Dean '19, chairman of the Board of Trustees' executive committee, who recalled that as an Ithacan and a Cornellian he had known all the University Presidents except Charles Kendall Adams and welcomed President Malott as the sixth.

John C. Lankenau '52, president of the Student Council, expressed the good wishes of the students and said they are glad to be increasingly regarded as adults at Cornell and given "greater opportunities to participate in the solution of University problems."

Harry V. Wade '26, president of the Alumni Association, told the President that "Cornell alumni are not behind you; we are at your side. Our job is to stand by you, take our directions from you, and do the things you want us to do to the best of our ability. We know that the whole duty of an educated person is not just to sit in the football stands and cheer. We are intensely proud of Cornell. We do not ask you to take Cornell back to the days when we were here; we know that our University must exist as of today, with its eyes on the future. You have our loyalty, devotion, and industry. To you and Mrs. Malott may I extend the warm loyalty and sincere affection of all Cornell alumni."

Claude L. Kulp, AM '30, superintendent of Ithaca schools, warmly pledged "the whole-hearted support of this community" and jocularly told the President, "You now belong as an Ithacan." He expressed the pride of Ithaca that it is known as a center of education and said that more than half its residents, some 18,000 persons, are directly connected with education. "Ithaca prizes Cornell for the cultural opportunities made possible because this University stands on East Hill. The community is also an important part of the University's life," he said, and cited the fact that thousands of residents had given generously to the Greater Cornell Fund.

The Savage Club Quartet of Allan H. Treman '21, William B. Corcoran '23, C. Wesley Thomas '25, and Truman K. Powers '30 sang three selections.

Governor Pays Tribute

Governor Thomas E. Dewey in jocular vein complimented the alumni singers and his own State Department of Education for "acquiring for the first time a sense of humor with Claude Kulp," who shortly goes to Albany as Associate Commissioner. He quoted "a distinguished American" who had remarked to him," 'There is no man in the United States whose judgment I would cherish more than the new President of Cornell'." Addressing President Malott directly, he said:

"In this great, well-rounded University which is also a land-grant college, you will find, I believe, an extraordinarily happy blending of State, Federal, and private effort. Cornell is a world University and I hope it will always continue to be, regardless of local pressures. It is a most useful servant of the people and of their progress, and I congratulate you on the magnificent opportunity you have before you."

Citing that Ezra Cornell had walked from his home in Ithaca to Albany, the Governor said his University had maintained the Founder's "strong strain of real tough Americanism." He paid tribute to the late President Edmund E. Day for his "outstanding leadership in the intellectual life of this country" and to his close friend, the late H. Edward Babcock, former chairman of the Board