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0282: Lawrence Corbly Papers, 1890

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Lawrence Corbly Collection, ca. 1890

ACC 1979/10.0282



Special Collections Department
James E. Morrow Library
Marshall University
Huntington, West Virginia
2019

Lawrence Corbly Collection, ca. 1890

Summary:

Title: Lawrence Corbly Collection

Span Dates: ca. 1890

Creator: Various

Repository: Marshall University Special Collections, Morrow Library (Huntington, WV)

Processed by: Elizabeth James, 2019

Accession Number: 1979/10.0282 Accession 1979/09.0272 was absorbed into this collection.

Date Completed: September, 2019

Access to Collection: Open

Extent: 0.5 feet

Donor: Mrs. Sidney Thomas Corbly, ca. 1951

Search Terms:

Lawrence Jugurtha Corbly

Marshall University Presidents

Marshall University Principals

Higher education

Biographical Notes:

Lawrence Corbly (1858-1935) was the seventeenth principal and first president of Marshall University. The son of Andre Lynn Corbly and Miranda (Moore) Corbly, on a farm near Alma, Tyler County, West Virginia. He was the sixth of eleven children. His early life was spent on the family farm, while he attended local public schools. He completed the normal course at Fairmont State School Normal (now Fairmont State University) in 1884, at the age of twenty-two.

He joined the law offices of W. I. Boreman, in order to read for the law, but before taking the bar examination, he entered West Virginia University, graduating with a bachelor of arts degree in 1890. He felt "that to be a well-trained lawyer one should have university training." His experience in obtaining a bachelors of arts in the classics, dissuaded him from the practice of law and he turned to teaching instead, "his eminent fitness for this profession having thus far prevented his giving attention to the law."

After his graduation, he moved to the South to take a position as superintendent of schools at Water Valley, Mississippi, serving from 1890-1892. He returned to West Virginia, taking a similar position, as the principal of Clarksburg Graded Schools, where he remained until 1895. He completed all the course work for a Ph.D. at West Virginia University. During 1895-1896 he traveled to Europe to study languages at universities in Halle, Jena and Berlin. While at Berlin he received a message, calling him back to West Virginia to accept a new position as the principal of Marshall College. He took over the new position, leaving his Ph.D. uncompleted. This began his nineteen-year association with the College as its Principal. In 1907 an ambitious plan was approved by the state that looked toward the time when the College would be allowed to offer degrees. As part of the plan, Corbly's title was changed from "Principal" to "President" and the faculty received the commensurate title of "Professor," replacing "Teacher." During the

remaining years of his tenure, Corbly continually sought to upgrade the school, but when he left in 1915, his desire to see the school become a degree-granting institution remained unfulfilled. He resigned in 1915 to pursue a business career in real estate.

In 1925 he returned to the College as a faculty member of the German Department, becoming the department chairman. He continued to teach, even teaching courses in astronomy, "a subject with which he was well acquainted." During these years he "faithfully and efficiently fulfilled his professorial duties at the college, excelling as a teacher of science, the languages and the Bible." In 1887 he met Elizabeth "Lizzie" Holland of New Cumberland, while competing for a scholarship examination to the Peabody College at Nashville. When they tied for the scholarship, he graciously bowed out and let her have the scholarship. A romance ensued, and they were married on December 23, 1887, at Belmont, Ohio. The couple had no children. His wife died in 1906. He then married Sydney Thomas of New Haven, Connecticut, on December 24, 1907. The couple had no children. She survived him.

Corbly died suddenly on October 20, 1935, while at home from a heart attack. That morning he had preached a sermon at the Central Christian Church, substituting for Dr. W. H. Shaffer who was out of town; he was also scheduled to deliver the evening sermon. His funeral services were held in the Old Main auditorium, where he laid in state. He is buried in the Corbly mausoleum in Spring Hill Cemetery.

Scope and Content:

This collection contains objects belonging to Lawrence J. Corbly that would commonly be found on a desk. These materials appear to have been collected during Corbly's European travels, especially in Switzerland and Germany. This collection absorbed accession 0272, the folder labelled "Corbly Family". This folder contains a 1979 manuscript sent to Marshall President Robert B. Hayes regarding Lawrence J. Corbly's ancestors. Also included is a manuscript possibly by Agnes Corbly Kiger (niece of Lawrence Corbly) regarding the "Corbly's as She Knew Them", Andrew Lynn Corbly and Miranda Moore Corbly.

Processing Notes:

This collection was already processed at the time the finding aid was created. No folder names, content, or other information was changed.

Preferred Citation:

Lawrence Corbly Collection, Accession No. 1979/10.0282, Special Collections Department, Marshall University, Huntington, WV.

Access and Use:

For more information or to use any collection, contact:
Special Collections, Morrow Library
Marshall University
One John Marshall Drive
Huntington, WV 25755
(304) 696-2343
speccoll@marshall.edu

Container

Contents

Box 1

Object	Picture holder: white alabaster
Object	Jise brickette (for burning)
Object	Ornate egg with an Italian rosary and coins inside
Object	A piece of copper from Michigan
Object	Cup made from the olive tree in Jerusalem
Object	Wooden watch case from Luzern, Switzerland
Object	Wooden sleeping lion dated 1792, but not made in 1792
Object	Inkwell from Corbly's time at the University of Hatte or Berlin
Folder	Descriptions of Objects (brief)
Folder	Corbly Family (originally accession 0272)