

St. Andrew's Society

Presidents 1859-1884

SAINT ANDREW'S EARLY PRESIDENTS

Few communities, let alone organizations, have been fortunate enough to be served by a group of civic, political and business leaders of the quality of the Presidents who led the St. Andrew's Society of Milwaukee during its first twenty-five years. They were men of vision, resources and energy. They brought intelligence, talent and civic virtues to a rising frontier village and contributed materially to its commercial, cultural and municipal successes. Even booming Chicago could not boast of a more capable, resourceful and effective a group of civic and business leaders.

In 1839, when the Society's first president Alexander Mitchell emigrated to Milwaukee from Scotland, the community was three bitterly divided villages with a combined population of 1,500 contentious residents. The entire Wisconsin Territory of the time boasted of only 30,000 inhabitants, concentrated mainly in the southeast and in the lead mining areas along the Mississippi River. The Black Hawk War, which destroyed Indian power in Wisconsin, had only been concluded seven years before, and statehood was still nine years away. By 1887, when he died, Milwaukee's population exceeded 150,000 and the State of Wisconsin was home to 1,500,000 citizens. Mitchell's adopted home had evolved into a thriving frontier metropolis, which was often referred to as "The Athens of the West".

Alexander Mitchell (1859-60 & 1862-63)

Alexander Mitchell was born in 1817 in Ellon, Aberdeenshire, Scotland. He was educated in a parish school, and served a two year apprenticeship in the law firm of Sir Alexander Anderson. Young Mitchell worked for the North of Scotland Bank in Peterhead, where he met Scottish financier George Smith, a visionary entrepreneur who was investing avidly in the American Midwest. Smith and Mitchell saw an opportunity to capitalize on a loophole in Wisconsin's banking ban, reaping huge profits on the currency starved frontier.

Wildcat banking, runaway inflation and unregulated speculation in land, canals and railroads had brought the nation, and especially the new West to the brink of disaster. Following the panic of 1837, when eastern banks refused to honor their currency and the entire national economy collapsed, the frontier was resentful of all banks and trusted only silver and gold. The frontier population and all of its businesses were starved for credit and currency. But, there was no one, political or financial, capable of stepping into the economic void. At this auspicious moment the 21 year old Scot arrived in Milwaukee on May 28, 1839 with native intellect, a shrewd plan and a carpet bag with \$ 50,000 in cash from his backers in Scotland as working capital.

Since the state legislature banned banks throughout the depression, he created the Wisconsin Marine & Fire Insurance Company. It wasn't a bank, but he could issue Certificates of Deposit. They immediately were accepted as de facto currency. Within five years Mitchell dominated the economy of the Northwest. His certificates were the most popular and stable means of exchange from Cincinnati to the Dakotas. Angry legislators tried to revoke his charter, but he tied them up in court and continued in business. By 1852 over \$1,500,000 of his currency was in circulation. Eventually, the state enacted a new banking law, and Mitchell's "insurance company" became a bank. It was hard for the State of Wisconsin to say, "No". Mitchell was one of the few people in the nation who would buy their bonds. In addition, he led all banks in farm financing, the creation of small businesses and the dynamic trade in wheat and lumber, which served as the base for Milwaukee's and Wisconsin's industrial expansion; all popular causes.

From the beginning, Mitchell saw the need for strong transportation links with the East and Milwaukee's agricultural hinterlands, and he became an avid promoter of canals and railroads. He spearheaded the earliest attempts at canal building, and he compiled the report for the Federal Government on the needs of the Milwaukee harbor. When all of the state's early railroads went bankrupt, and Chicago appeared poised to dominate the rails to the agriculturally rich Northwest, Mitchell stepped into the breach. He began, in 1857, to buy up and consolidate all of Wisconsin's ruined lines. By clever purchases and sound management he turned them into a success. By 1863 he had built a system which froze Chicago out of the rich hinterland and shipped everything he could through Milwaukee's port. In 1863 he became President of the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul RR (Milwaukee Road), a position he held until his death.

During the Civil War, this railroad system helped to make Milwaukee the greatest wheat shipping port in the world. With the lines to the East dedicated to troops and the Mississippi closed to traffic, all the grains from Iowa and Nebraska to the Dakotas passed across Milwaukee's docks. This trade monopoly continued for over twenty years, and the proceeds helped to build the factories and business of a booming Milwaukee. And, Alexander Mitchell was orchestrating virtually every investment. He bankrolled virtually all of Milwaukee's early industrialists. He was such a great manager that that he was eventually even made the President of the competing Chicago & Northwestern RR. He brought competitive peace and prosperity to both roads. During his tenure he built over 5,000 miles of track, creating the largest rail line in the world, paid regular dividends, repaid all of the past railroad bonds of the City of Milwaukee, and even had two towns, Alexandria and Mitchell, in South Dakota, named in his honor.

Mitchell was active in real estate, grain and lumber trading, and in other commodities. He was active in the manufacture of wagons and buggies, and was an inventor of household locks and other practical products. He was a noted horticulturist, and understood the dynamics of the crops of the Midwest better than any grower or trader.

He was above all a clever and knowledgeable investor. On one occasion he lent grocer Daniel Newhall \$300 and some advice on the wheat market, which Newhall turned into an overnight profit of \$10,000. Newhall went on to become one of the greatest of the grain speculators, and used his immense new wealth to buy a fleet of cargo vessels and built the fabled hotel, The Newhall House.

By the 1860's Mitchell's annual income was conservatively estimated at \$170,000, in an era when a living wage for an ordinary craftsman was \$1.00 a day and \$1.25 could buy an acre of choice farmland. He was the President of the largest bank in Wisconsin (later the Marine Bank), but he wanted to be back in the insurance business so he founded the Northwestern National Fire and Marine Insurance Company, one of the largest casualty insurers in the nation, and served as a director of other major companies.

The role of leading financier was not, however, without its challenges. During the 1850's, when the City of Milwaukee became insolvent through its excesses in railroad bonding, Mitchell was called upon to refinance the debt and put the city on sound financial footing. He was appointed to head the Public Debt Commission, and he remained on that body throughout his life. He led the City of Milwaukee out of its crippling debt, and put it on a sound financial footing.

He had his own close call in 1861. The Civil War cut off the South, and most of the Wisconsin banks had used the cheap bonds of southern states to back up their currency (most banks issued their own bank notes in those days), so the Civil War rendered much of the northern currency worthless. Many banks failed, and the strong ones like Mitchell's and Ilsley's refused to accept the worthless bank notes of the defunct banks. A riot ensued, and Mitchell, in a rare lapse of judgment, personally appeared before the mob to quiet them down. He was met with a barrage of bricks. Retreating into his bank, he gathered up all of the gold, money and securities and fled in his carriage. His friend George Burnham took him to the middle of Lake Michigan on his steamer. There in deep water they waited out the turmoil. The mob sacked the downtown, and set several banks afire. To restore order, the Governor dispatched a regiment of Union Regulars, who were in the area on their way to the front lines in the Civil War, into action to quell the disturbance.

When the mobs dispersed, in typical Mitchell style, he responded by personally saving the remaining banks, restoring confidence in the currency, making a huge profit, and emerging as a hero and a patriot. He knew that the State was bankrupt. Its credit was shattered, and yet it was faced with the duty of raising and equipping many regiments for the Civil War. He convinced his fellow Milwaukee bankers to go to the Governor and offer to lend the State of Wisconsin all the money that it need throughout the entire war. In exchange they would receive state bonds, backed by tax revenues, at a rate of 12% per annum. The Governor readily agreed, since no one else would lend him a dime. The bankers returned to Milwaukee, used the gilt edged bonds to back up their bank notes. Confidence in the currency rose, depositors returned, and the bankers even used some of their profits to shore up the marginal banks and to buy up most of the worthless currency from poor investors. They all emerged as sympathetic and respected figures.

Alexander Mitchell had originally been a Whig, and later a Republican, but changes in the monetary policies of that party drove him over to the Democrats after the Civil War, and he became more active on the political scene. After declining the positions of Mayor and Governor on several occasions, he finally decided to run for Congress and was elected to the House of Representatives in 1870. When he arrived in Washington, D.C., it was noted in the Capitol's press that he was then the richest man in the history of the Congress; with a fortune estimated to exceed \$ 20,000,000.

In Congress, he was active in tariff and fiscal matters, worked for port development on the Great Lakes, fathered railroad legislation, was active on agricultural issues, was a staunch advocate for disabled Civil War Veterans and for the needy families of the war dead. As a good Wisconsinite and pork-barrel politician, he avidly pursued government building projects throughout the state. His name was suggested for the US Senate in 1874, but he declined to run, and did not seek reelection to a third term in 1875. In 1885 he also declined President Cleveland's offer of a Cabinet position in his administration (rumored to be that of Secretary of the Treasury).

During his life Mitchell had always been civic minded, and he served in numerous highly visible volunteer capacities. He served the City of Milwaukee as Commissioner of the Public Debt for over thirty years, he was Water and Sewer Commissioner when the city began to build its water works and sewer system, he headed the 4th of July Commission, and for many year, in the days before fire departments, maintained his own volunteer fire brigade. He set the standard for volunteer public service, which fostered a tradition of business and social leaders giving of their money, time and effort for the public good.

For the State of Wisconsin he was Banking Commissioner for most of his life. At the national level Alexander Mitchell was a Congressman for two terms, served on the Commission to Reorganize the District of Columbia, was a member of the US Tariff Commission, and served the Democratic Party as several times as a national delegate, as chair of its Resolutions Committee and was on the Democratic Party National Executive Committee. For decades he dominated the Democratic Party of Wisconsin with his political savvy, personal charm and powerful resources.

Mitchell's service to professional, charitable and nonprofit organizations spanned the fields of education, banking, sports, religion, horticulture, livestock and culture. He served as president of two hospitals, four private clubs, three sporting groups (including a yacht club, a curling club and a shooting club), five professional organizations, and several cultural groups. He helped to found many of these organizations, and selflessly poured his money into the agencies he served.

In business Mitchell was President of two railroads (The Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul (Milwaukee Road) and the Chicago, Milwaukee & Northwestern), a street car company, two major insurance companies, a shipping line, a grain elevator company, and the Milwaukee Cement Company. In addition he was an officer or director of the Milwaukee Gas Light Company, the Milwaukee Rolling Mill, the Milwaukee Iron Works, the Northern Pacific Railroad, the State Historical Society, the Milwaukee Horticultural Society, and the Wisconsin Agricultural and Mechanical Association. Recognizing the power of the press to affect business, political and social policies, he also bought and published the *Evening Wisconsin*, one of the state's most powerful and influential newspapers.

Alexander Mitchell's donations served as an example, and incentive, for the other leaders of his era. These men tended to be equally high minded when it came to issues of civic pride, economic development, public improvements and charity. Mitchell, who had a special place in his heart for education, frequently gave scholarships to local school children, provided cash grants to honor students to continue their education, bought books for needy students, and provided books for the Milwaukee Public Library and for school libraries. He donated four city blocks for the construction of the city's first secondary schools (North, South, East and West Division High Schools). He also helped to build the Milwaukee Female College (later Downer College) and Racine College, and in 1884 rebuilt Science Hall on the Madison Campus of the University of Wisconsin.

Mitchell's civic pride was demonstrated in everything that was Milwaukee of that era. He sponsored industrial and trade expositions, donated park lands, erected fountains and statues, paid to have the Menomonee Canal dredged, provided money (with Mariner and Pfister) to erect the North Avenue Viaduct, and paid \$50,000 out of his own pocket to connect Milwaukee with Dubuque by telegraph.

Always active in cultural, ethnic and sporting events, he sponsored the Highland Games; donated \$5,000 so that the German community could stage a gigantic song fest; underwrote the curling, rowing, sailing and rifle clubs; and equipped the entire Milwaukee Light Horse Squadron. Mitchell also helped to stock the public library and museum, started art collections at several colleges and universities, donated to the restoration of Mount Vernon and funded the establishment of the State Historical Society. He maintained a large personal library and art collection, and had an immense greenhouse attached to his mansion to further his interest in horticulture and botany.

Mitchell was seriously religious and helped to build several churches in Milwaukee, Racine and Elkhorn. He led, in a highly ecumenical fashion, to fund drives for the YMCA, Protestant Home, St. Rose's Orphanage, and to add a wing to St. Mary's Hospital. He paid one third of the cost of the construction of St. James Episcopal Church, a church which he connected to his home with a flower bedecked bridge across the, always muddy, Grand Avenue in 1882 for the wedding of his niece to Dr. William Mackie. The wedding and dinner were attended by over 1,000 guests. He was also one of the social leaders of the city, entertaining such dignitaries as the Duke of Sutherland, Archduke Alexis of Russia, Presidents and Congressmen, and many other notable visitors. During his lifetime, he and his wife were the leading host and hostess of Milwaukee on almost every festive occasion.

From 1847, during the dreadful famines in Ireland and Scotland, when he acted as chief fund raiser for Scottish relief and as Treasurer of the Irish Relief Fund, he was constantly involved in charitable works. He donated to fire, flood, famine, and cyclone victims. He was especially active as the head of the Central War Committee in raising funds for the widows and children of Civil War soldiers, and he provided over \$30,000 to help support soldiers families while they were away at war. He lost a nephew, Robert Chivas, in the war and his own son was left nearly blind following his service with the 24th Wisconsin Volunteers. As a result Alexander Mitchell had a special commitment to veterans of that conflict, and after the war he helped to create, build and equip the Soldier's Home on the southwest outskirts of the city. When he died Mitchell left \$ 50,000 to various local causes.

Throughout his life, Alexander Mitchell was always the man who was singled out in Milwaukee and Wisconsin as the person to recruit when a crisis was at hand or when funds had to be raised for some worthy cause. Usually, he began by putting enough of his own money into the venture to ensure its success. On several occasions he averted financial panics by propping up the regional economy with his own resources.

He had the friendship and confidence of a wide circle of wealthy and prominent men (such as Pfister, Plankinton, Armour, Ilsley, Pabst, Wells, Burnham, Mariner, Allis and Layton) so he could mobilize great wealth and power when needed. Mitchell always had a clear vision of his social and civic duty, and a highly developed sense of business integrity, so he was invariably successful in his undertakings. He did a great deal to make Milwaukee a strong, vibrant and prosperous community, and a better place to live.

Alexander Mitchell died in 1887 while on a business trip to New York.

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Arthur MacArthur (1860-62 & 1863-66)

Arthur MacArthur was born in Glasgow, Scotland in 1815, and emigrated to America as an infant. He was educated at Amherst Academy and Wesleyan University, and in 1841 began to practice law in New York. He became the Public Administrator of Hampden County, Massachusetts in 1843, and served as the Judge Advocate of the Western Military District of Massachusetts until 1845, when he returned to the private practice of law in New York City.

Upon relocating to Milwaukee in 1849 MacArthur became a sought after attorney and lecturer. In 1852 he was elected City Attorney. He won the office of Lieutenant Governor on the Democratic ticket in 1855. The election was immediately challenged by the Republicans, who contended that Governor Barstow had won by fraudulent methods. During this hectic period of political turmoil in 1856, MacArthur served as Acting Governor. Governor Barstow was eventually removed from office, when the courts agreed that his election was indeed tainted. Mac Arthur, who had been fairly elected Lieutenant Governor, refused to relinquish the office, but yielded to the new Governor, a court order and a mob of hostile Republicans.

In 1857, he returned to Milwaukee and was elected Judge of the Circuit Court. In 1870 MacArthur relocated to Washington, D.C., when President Grant appointed him a Justice of the Supreme Court of the District of Columbia.

He retired as a justice in 1884. During his tenure as a jurist, MacArthur made a reputation as a brilliant constitutional scholar, and rendered many landmark decisions on railroads, banking, utilities, taxation, real-estate, municipal and maritime law; and was know as an innovator in court operations, efficiencies and procedures.

Always active in politics, MacArthur was prominent in the Democratic Party on the local, state and national levels . He was an active and eloquent orator and lecturer, and was an avid promoter of his community and state. He was especially active in developing industrial, commercial and agricultural fairs and expositions in the United States and Europe; and he served as the United States Commissioner to the Paris Exposition of 1867. Late in his life MacArthur became a prolific writer, and he authored several volumes on language, the law, and Scottish and English History.

In his community, MacArthur was active in cultural and educational activities, served as President of the Milwaukee Boat Club and as a board member of the Commercial College, and was a leader in the legal profession . He donated a meeting hall to the Odd Fellows and a valuable law library to the Milwaukee Bar Association. His activities in fund raising were concentrated on the relief of destitute soldiers and their families, and for the assistance of war widows and orphans; probably as a result of his exposure to the horrors of the war related by his son.

Arthur MacArthur died in 1896 in Atlantic City, New Jersey.

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Robert Menzies (1866-68)

Robert Menzies was a successful banker, lumber dealer and newspaper editor. He became an officer and director of the Prairie du Chien Bank, State Comptroller of Banks and Milwaukee's Postmaster. Mr. Menzies was an officer of the Milwaukee Female College (Downer College), Milwaukee Literary Club, Milwaukee Musical Society, a delegate to the National Convention of the Presbyterian Church, and initiated the Sunday School of Bethany Church.

Throughout his life Robert Menzies was a sought after lecturer and singer. He gave many concerts and recitals for worthy causes and for special occasions. He was usually accompanied by his wife, who was a noted pianist and organist.

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Archibald McLean (1868-69)

Archibald McLean was a successful businessman and ship builder, and he operated a large steamship line on the Great Lakes, carrying cargos of grain, lumber and other products of Milwaukee's hinterland.

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John Hill, Sr. (1869-70)

John Hill, Sr. was an accountant and executive with the firm of Atkins, Steele & White, a major manufacturer and wholesaler of shoes, boots and other leather products. He was President of the Milwaukee Curling Club in 1873, and was a national championship curler. His son John Hill, Jr. was also an officer of that organization for many years in the 1870's and 1880's.

John Hill, Sr. died in 1885.

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John Johnston (1870-71 & 1878-80)

John Johnston, Alexander Mitchell's nephew, was born at Overton of Auchnagatt Farm in Aberdeenshire of a wealthy farming family. His father was a prominent member of the landed gentry and stressed education in his son's upbringing. Johnston attended the University of Aberdeen, and graduated with a Master's Degree in 1855. He emigrated to Milwaukee in the company of his aunt, who was visiting Scotland in 1855.

Johnston was probably the most colorful and controversial of all the Society's Presidents. He was a man of perception, brilliance, great eloquence and strong (often rigid) principles. A respected banker, insurance executive, civic leader and sportsman; his intense and often unpopular opinion denied him the affection, acclaim and political successes of other family members. It seemed that he could not curry favor with the masses at the price of his own opinions and principles; regardless of the consequences.

In business Johnston was an officer of the Marine Bank, Milwaukee Road, Milwaukee Cement Co., Milwaukee Rolling Mills and of several insurance and investment companies. He was an incorporator of the Wisconsin Trust Company and Milwaukee Title Insurance Company, and was the owner and publisher of the Evening Post newspaper.

Johnston was prominent in business circles as President of the Chamber of Commerce, director of the Merchant's and Manufacturer's Association, Vice-President of the Milwaukee Advancement Association, Director of the Milwaukee Industrial Exposition, an officer of the National Board of Trade and delegate to the American Free Trade Convention. During his career, he represented Milwaukee's commercial interests at scores of conventions and trade shows across the nation.

He served his community as Alderman, Commissioner of the Public Debt, and as a member of the Library Board of Trustees, Civil Service Reform Commission and as a delegate to the Judicial Convention.

Johnston's aggressive and active lobbying, and strong (often contentious, fiery, impolitic, or belligerent) positions on major issues affecting the business, commercial, banking, insurance and railroad interests he represented, cost him the Governor's chair or a place in the U.S. Congress which he clearly sought. He did serve, with distinction on numerous boards and commissions, and was once offered the position of U.S. Comptroller of the Currency; a position which he declined. In 1890 he had the distinction of nominating Milwaukee's Mayor, George Peck, for Governor. Peck was the first Democrat elected to that post since before the Civil War, and was one of the few Milwaukeeans to ever achieve that distinction.

In the private sector, Johnston gave his services as President of the Female College (Downer College), Treasurer of that institution, University of Wisconsin Regent, Trustee of Calvary Presbyterian Church, and as director of the Milwaukee Humane Society and Milwaukee Art Institute. He was an incorporator of the Emergency Hospital, donated the land upon which the hospital was built, and was honored by having the hospital named for him. He headed the West Side Literary Circle and was a respected author. It was Johnston who wrote the article on Milwaukee for the Encyclopedia Britannica. He was a prominent and active Mason. Throughout his life Johnston served as the most visible and vocal spokesman and lobbyist for many nonprofit organizations on the local, state and national levels.

His charities included many educational and recreational causes. He donated land to the City of Milwaukee for a high school, donated several parks, paid for a statue of the German hero von Moltke, granted many prizes and scholarships for local students, donated art works to colleges and galleries, and endowed colleges across the state. He was a financial backer and President of the State Historical Society, actively supported the Soldier's Home, University of Wisconsin, Fireman's Relief Fund, and founded the Milwaukee Public library.

At one point Johnston built a state of the art theatre in Downtown Milwaukee, so that Milwaukeeans could enjoy the best of drama and music at moderate prices. He was always ready to lead fund drives for organizations, and was one of the greatest speakers of his age in the causes of charity and benevolence.

Johnston was an avid and accomplished sportsman. He was a champion curler, who owned his own rink, contributed regularly to curling events and competitions, and competed successfully at the national level. In 1881 his rink won the U.S. National Championship. He served as President of both the Milwaukee Curling Club and the Grand National Curling Club. As a rifleman he was even more distinguished, supporting the sport financially, serving as President of the local and national organizations, and competing as a champion throughout the United States and Europe. He was national champion, and in 1878 journeyed to Great Britain, where he won the North of Scotland Shoot at Aberdeen and the British National Championship at Wimbeldon. He was also a respected competitor at quoits and lawn bowling. One of his daughters returned to England and married Lord Butterfield.

John Johnston died in Milwaukee in 1904.

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William P. McLaren (1871-72 & 1880-82)

William P. McLaren was a commodities trader, produce dealer, insurance executive and municipal reformer. He owned several firms, factories, a printing company and a hotel. He was a director of the street railway company, Northwestern Mutual Life Insurance Company, and the Northwestern National Marine and Fire Insurance Company.

As an expert on wheat and corn, he served as the inspector of grains for the Board of Trade. McLaren was also the vice-president of the Chamber of Commerce, was on the National Board of Trade, was the lobbyist in Washington, D.C. for the Western grain interests, was State Commissioner of Railroad Rates and served on the Post Office Building Committee.

As a civic leader he served as President of the Female College (Downer College) and of the Wisconsin Industrial School For Girls, and as President and Incorporator of the Milwaukee College, as President and renovation chairman of the Emergency Hospital, as Vice-President of the Central Red Cross and as Director of the Humane Society and Emmanuelle Presbyterian Church.

As a philanthropist, McLaren donated magic lanterns to the public schools, donated a lot for the construction of a mission school, donated the observatory of the Female College (Downer College), led in fund drives for the victims of natural disasters in Iowa and Michigan, headed the relief efforts for the victims and the families of victims of the Newhall House fire, presented the City of Milwaukee with the Newhall House Monument and interceded on behalf of the imprisoned Bay View Mill rioters. He was also the President of the Committee on Associated Charities.

In sports McLaren served as a frequent donor to curling and rowing events and to the activities of the Highland Games. He had his own curling rink and was an incorporator of the Milwaukee Curling Club.

As a politician and reformer William P. McLaren was chairman of the Milwaukee County Republican Party, was President of the Hayes Club in 1876, and sacrificed a certain Assembly seat rather than tie up the State Legislature in legal challenges. This selfless gesture earned him the respect of people throughout the community and the praise of newspapers from both political parties across the State of Wisconsin. McLaren also served on the Executive Committee of the Municipal League, on the Industrial Exposition Committee and River Clean-Up Committee and as Chairman of the 1st Ward Citizen's Club.

As an innovative community leader he was always on the cutting edge of technology, and had one of the first telephones in town installed from his home to his office in 1878, just two years after its invention by Alexander Graham Bell. In 1879 McLaren had a concert in Chicago transmitted live to a stunned audience in Milwaukee by telephone, and amazed the city when he had the noted artist of the day, Adolph Liebig, decorate his residence with colorful frescoes.

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James MacAlister (1872-74 & 1876-77)

James MacAlister was born in Glasgow, Scotland. After emigrating to America he attended the law school of Albany University, and was admitted to the New York Bar in 1865. His real love, however, was education and when he relocated to Milwaukee, while he did continue to practice law, he soon began what was to become a distinguished career as an educator. MacAlister became a notable local and national figure in the field of education, a noted linguist and a successful sportsman.

As a teacher and administrator he introduced gymnastics and fitness, German and French language curricula, and evening classes to the Milwaukee Public School system. He initiated the inoculation of students in the public schools, and started the first Kindergarten classes, modeled after the classes which Engelmann had begun in the private German Academy.

MacAlister served as a teacher, principal, school commissioner and finally as Superintendent of Schools. He was hailed for his effective and efficient management, and for his innovative administration. As a teacher, he was also the President of the State Teachers Association. James MacAlister was a State Board of Regents Visitor, Normal School Regent, Library Board member, Vice-President of the YMCA, and he served on the Ripon College Board of Examiners. As an active Republican, MacAlister was a delegate to numerous state and national conventions. He was a leading Republican orator, and stated the parties position in speeches throughout the state.

In 1865, when Mrs. Lydia Ely, Mrs. Alexander Mitchell and other prominent Milwaukee women organized the Soldier's Home Fair to assist in the construction of the new facility, on land secured by John Mitchell, they proposed that one of the main attractions be an exhibition of some of America's greatest contemporary art. James MacAlister was recruited to visit galleries, museums, artists and collectors across the East to assemble this show. He was also to make all of the arrangements for the transportation and display of the art works. MacAlister succeeded in mounting a major exhibition of some of the finest paintings and sculpture of the age. Alexander Mitchell and other prominent Scots were also approached for items to sell and raffle at the event. They responded generously and enthusiastically. The fair netted the amazing sum, for that era, of \$100,000 , and guaranteed the construction of the Home.

In 1882 James MacAlister left Milwaukee to become Superintendent of Schools for the City of Philadelphia. In 1885 he was appointed a Trustee of the University of Pennsylvania, and went on to become President of Drexel University.

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James H. Walker (1874-75)

James H. Walker was the Superintendent of the Milwaukee Gas Works, and during his tenure street illumination was begun in Milwaukee. Services were, also, extended to the music hall and insane asylum, and additional works were established in Sheboygan and Minnesota.

He was known as a customer oriented businessman, and a responsible and creative leader in his industry. Walker also became a successful manufacturer of gas stoves, ovens and water heaters. He was a member of the Chamber of Commerce, a trustee of Calvary Presbyterian Church and a founder of the Milwaukee Rifle Club.

James H. Walker died in 1887.

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Archibald Stephenson (1875-76 & 1877-78)

The tenth man to serve as President of the St. Andrews Society, Archibald Stephenson, was an accountant for a major commission merchant, an investment executive, and he had his own commodities business in the 1870's and 1880's. At the St. Andrew's Banquet of 1878 he addressed the gathering on the subject of the Scottish currency.

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William E. Smith (1882-83)

William E, Smith was born in Inverness, Scotland in 1824, was educated in Edinburg, and came to Milwaukee in 1849. He became a prominent educator, produce and grain dealer, and political leader. As a wholesale produce merchant he founded the firm of Smith & Roundy, and at the end of his career he founded a grain brokerage with his son.

Smith was president of the Chamber of Commerce and the Frontier Bank , was Vice-President of the National Board of Trade and of the Normal School Board of Trustees, was director of the Northwestern Mutual Life Insurance Company, was trustee of the Baptist Theological Union, of the University of Chicago and of Wayland University, and was a board member of the Milwaukee Female College (Downer College). He was, also, the Chief Prison Examiner of the state and served as Commissioner of Wisconsin Prisons.

In 1851, even before he received his citizenship, William E. Smith was elected to the State Legislature. In 1858 and 1862 he was elected to the State Senate. He was promoted by the Republican Party and the voters to State Treasurer in 1865, and returned to the State Assembly in 1870. Smith had been a frequent delegate to state and national party conventions, and in 1875 was the Republican nominee for a congressional seat.

In 1877 William E. Smith was elected Governor of the State of Wisconsin; one of the few men from Milwaukee to ever attain that position. Smith, as was typical of that turbulent era, led an eventful, tumultuous and colorful career as Governor; but was successful in office and popular enough to be reelected in 1879. In 1878 he acted as the official host to President Rutherford B. Hayes during his visit to Milwaukee and Wisconsin.

William E. Smith died in 1883 in Milwaukee.

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J. G. J. Campbell (1883-84)

J. G. J. Campbell was a successful businessman, who became the leader of the state's industrial and agricultural expositions. He served as President and manager of the Milwaukee Industrial Exposition, Director of the Wisconsin Agricultural Exposition, and as a frequent delegate from Milwaukee and Wisconsin to the national and international meetings of industrial and agricultural fairs. He was an incorporator of the Associated Charities Committee, was President of the Board of Charity and Reform, and was Chairman of the public school's Kindergarten Committee. J. G. J. Campbell also served as an officer of the Humane Society, curling club, rowing club and archery club.

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John Lendrum Mitchell (1884-85)

The President of the St. Andrew's Society, as it completed its twenty-fifth year, was John Lendrum Mitchell. As Alexander Mitchell's son, it would have been easy for John L. Mitchell to disappear in the shadow of such a powerful and renowned father, but John L. Mitchell was very much his own man, a unique character intent upon carving out his own legacy and having his own impact on Milwaukee and Wisconsin.

John L. Mitchell was born in Milwaukee on October 19, 1842. He was educated at the Hampton Military Academy in Connecticut, and at schools in Chester, England ; Geneva, Switzerland; and Munich and Dresden, Germany. He returned to the United States to complete his higher education, but he left the University in 1862 to enter the Civil War as an officer in the famed 24th Wisconsin Volunteers, a unit which included his friend Arthur MacArthur, Jr, and his cousin Robert Chivas.

In the war John L. Mitchell served with distinction in the Army of the West , performing heroically at the Battle of Stone River. Following this engagement, however, he had to retire from the army since he was going blind from some malady contracted during the arduous campaign. He returned to Milwaukee to recuperate on his farm, *Meadowmere*, which encompassed most of what today is the City of West Allis.

While at *Meadowmere* he began experimenting with crops and in the breeding of poultry and livestock. He had inherited his mother's love of horses and became a noted breeder of racing stock. His mother, the daughter of pioneer businessman and land speculator Seth Reed, had been educated in the East, was a linguist and avid reader, and was a passionate equestrian. Upon his recovery Mitchell entered the University of Wisconsin Law School in 1867, but he did not graduate, and withdrew because of his deteriorating eyesight.

Mitchell returned to Milwaukee to become President of the Marine Bank, Milwaukee Cement Company, Milwaukee Gas Company, a street railway system, and to serve as an officer or director of several insurance and commodity firms. He became a successful businessman, philanthropist, educator, author, sportsman and political leader. He, also, distinguished himself in the sciences of horticulture, biology and zoology; and became one of the nation's most distinguished figures in animal husbandry and livestock and poultry breeding.

John L. Mitchell owned a fleet of ships, docks, warehouses and factories. He served as the President of the Chamber of Commerce, Juneau Club, Wisconsin Agricultural Association (and once wrote off their entire deficit), was a director of the Merchant and Manufacturers Association, Milwaukee Advancement Association and the Bureau of Information, and served on the Executive Committee of the Banker's Association.

An active leader in charity, recreation and culture, Mitchell served on the Board of Visitors of Milwaukee Hospital, as President of the Library Board and 24th Wisconsin Volunteers Association. He was Vice-President of the Milwaukee Art Association, incorporator of the Milwaukee Art Institute, a member of the Soldier's Monument Committee, school commissioner, Trustee of Milwaukee College and the Mission Band Fund. During his life he contributed generously to art galleries, schools, hospitals and libraries. He also gave freely to the Fireman's Relief Fund and other local charities. In 1871 Mitchell was official spokesman for Milwaukee's charities in their appeal for relief from the Legislature. He offered the City of Milwaukee the money to rebuild the Michigan Street Bridge. They declined the gesture, but eventually accepted his offer to buy the city's bonds necessary to complete construction of the bridge.

As President of the Wisconsin Horticultural Society, and a regent, he introduced short courses in agriculture and animal husbandry at the University of Wisconsin. Thus began the University of Wisconsin's great Agriculture School. He worked to advance all aspects of agriculture, fought for conservation of our state's and nation's natural resources, and as a legislator was the sponsor of the bill which established the State of Wisconsin's fish hatcheries.

He was probably the most prominent and wealthy farmer in the history of his state. He headed the State Agricultural Association, Wisconsin Horse Breeder's Association, State Poultry Association, Northwest Breeder's Association, Wisconsin Trotter's Association and was a perennial delegate to the National Farmer's Convention. During his career Mitchell bought many of the nation's most notable thoroughbred stallions and breeding mares. He had a passion for race horses, which he could afford to indulge, and his horses won many important races.

John L. Mitchell's interest in all things agricultural led him naturally to a leadership role in agricultural and industrial fairs. He participated in meetings and conventions, was a delegate to the World's Fair, and served as Vice-President of the International Association of Fairs and Expositions. During his life, he owned thousands of acres of land throughout the country. At one point he sold the Wisconsin Central Railroad a valuable stretch of land for \$80,000, he once purchased 24,000 acres of farmland in Iowa, he held vast parcels of forest and farmland throughout Milwaukee and surrounding counties, and he even developed large orange groves in Florida.

As an art collector and patron of the arts John L. Mitchell was a legend. On numerous occasions his purchases in New York and Europe were highlighted in the local and national press. He, also, gave generously of his collection to universities, colleges, the State Historical Society, Public Library, Layton Art Gallery, and to the Milwaukee Art Institute. He built the Davidson Theatre as a venue for fine performing arts in downtown Milwaukee. He hosted the convention of the North American Caledonian Union, was a renowned collector of rare firearms, and possessed the largest and most comprehensive privately owned library collection in Wisconsin.

Throughout his career John L. Mitchell never forgot his shattering Civil War experiences, or the death of his beloved cousin Lieutenant Robert J. Chivas at the Battle of Chickamauga. Chivas had lived with the Mitchell family after he emigrated from Scotland at the age of fifteen in 1857, the young men grew up together, and had enlisted and served together in the 24th Wisconsin Volunteers. Mitchell's memories were haunting and enduring.

As a state legislator, and later in the U.S. Congress, he championed the cause of pensions for the forgotten veterans, and benefits for the widows and orphans of the conflict. In 1862, before he went off to war himself, he was the General Recruiting Officer for Milwaukee County. In 1867 he assembled and sold the U.S. Government the land on which to build the Soldier's Home (at an extremely reasonable price). He immediately financed the construction of the first dormitory out of his own pocket. At about this same time he hosted the reunion of the 24th Wisconsin Volunteers, and pledged to personally finance the cause of soldier's relief. He became an avowed pacifist, and vigorously opposed the U.S. entry into the Spanish-American War.

In politics John L. Mitchell began slowly, serving as a School Commissioner, before he became President of the School Board. In 1870 he was elected to the State Senate, where he remained for two terms before stepping down to devote himself to his business interests and farms. He ran unsuccessfully for Mayor in 1884. Following his father's example he gained a dominant position in the Democratic Party, and in 1885 he became Chairman of the Milwaukee County Democratic Party. He formed a Young Democrats Club, and began to extend his influence. He was soon named to the Democratic National Committee, and he was a delegate to subsequent state and national conventions.

In 1890, just before the congressional elections, he donated \$1,000 to build the Kosiusko Monument, a vote getting gesture which outraged his opponents. (This would not have been crucial, since his father's providing railroad flat cars to bring the building materials from Chicago to complete St. Josaphat's Basilica had already guaranteed the affection of the city's Polish Community). When all was said and done, even the Republican Party endorsed his candidacy, and he ran unopposed. Mitchell was elected to Congress in 1890, and to the U.S. Senate in 1893. He served there until he retired in 1899. While in the Congress, John L. Mitchell was an opponent of tariffs, a pacifist, an advocate of the income tax and social welfare legislation, and concentrated on agricultural, business and transportation issues; especially those which affected the welfare of Wisconsin and the Midwest.

Mitchell had indulged his, and his mother's, passion for the French language and culture while recuperating from his Civil War afflictions at Meadowmere, and near the end of his life he moved to Grenoble, France, where he taught at the University of Grenoble from 1900 to 1903.

Returning to Milwaukee, John L. Mitchell died at Meadowmere in 1904.