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# Growing as a College

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# Growing as a College

## The Anchor of Hope is dropped

Hope College was incorporated on May 14, 1866. The name chosen by the Board of Superintendents, of the then Holland Academy, was derived from founder Albertus C. Van Raalte's 1851 statement "this is my Anchor of Hope for this people in the future." What followed was the name we know now and the symbol that graces the lawn in front of Graves Hall is the form of a large anchor.



Phillip J. Phelps

The following fall, Hope College enrolled 19 students for coursework taught by five faculty members, who also served as Holland Academy teachers and were theology students for the seminary. That all-male group included the Rev. Philip Phelps (Hope president and professor of intellectual and moral philosophy, logic, rhetoric and English literature), the Rev. Peter

J. Oggel (professor of sacred literature), the Rev. Theodor R. Beck (professor of the Latin and Greek languages and literature), the Rev. Charles Scott (professor of chemistry and natural history) and the Rev. Cornelius E. Crispell (professor of mathematics, natural philosophy and astronomy). Area ministers were called into service as professors when the academic program needed them. Over time, the faculty grew to meet the demand and the ministers were not needed as instructors.

President Phelps was a busy man serving both as the college's chief administrator and professor. And learning, except for chapel and physical exercises, took place in the Academy building (officially changed to Van Vleck Hall in 1883) -- the college's oldest surviving structure (built in 1857-1858). This venerable building also continued to serve faculty and students as living quarters, a library and administrative offices.

Hope Academy continued as a preparatory school after the college was founded in 1866, enrolling local students from the Holland area and beyond who had graduated from the city and rural schools. The Academy continued to be an important training ground for future Hope College students until closing in 1938, when it was known as the College High School.

## The early, lean years

Hope College continued to grow slowly throughout the 1860s adding both students and faculty members. The slow faculty growth was largely due to the financial situation of the young college and its lack of extra funds for anything beyond the basic needs. By 1872, the college boasted 21 students -- including theology and preparatory school students -- and eight faculty members.

To commemorate the 25th anniversary of the Holland colony's founding, the college received a new source of money, the \$15,000 Ebenezer Endowment. However, even that money could not stop the deep financial trouble looming over the college due to overspending from a tiny budget. In 1877, the college faced a \$29,000 debt and had to eliminate its theological department, a mainstay for this Christian liberal arts college. The crisis continued into 1878, the year females were first admitted as students.



Female Graduates of 1882 and 1885

The General Synod of the Reformed Church in America, a major funding source of the college, ordered the college to reorganize, with the help of the Council, to settle the debt. The Council demanded the resignations of Phelps and the entire faculty as it began the process of rebuilding the educational and administrative staff. Phelps tendered his resignation, and it was accepted. His replacement, Giles H. Mandeville (1825-1904), served as the provisional president, in charge of finances. He also continued to hold his pastorate at Harlem Reformed Church in New York City and spent most of his time there, only visiting Hope occasionally. His position allowed the eastern states to feel a sense of control of this western college. Faculty members did resign and then were either reappointed, let go, or moved into administrative positions.

During this time, Professor Charles Scott (1822-1893), was appointed vice president, in charge of



Graves Hall and Winants Chapel

administration. He would become Hope College's next provisional president in 1880, but Mandeville was retained as financial agent until 1882 to continue the work of eliminating the debt, which he did. In 1885, Scott was elected the second constitutional president and served until his resignation in 1893, due to failing health. During both his provisional and constitutional presidential years, Hope College, preparatory school and theology classes continued to grow both numbers of faculty (seven to nine) and students (78 to 203). He also put Hope on firm financial ground, maybe for the first time since its founding. The stability would allow his successors to continue the building process of the college curriculum, faculty and students, and the facilities as well.

### Kollen takes the reins

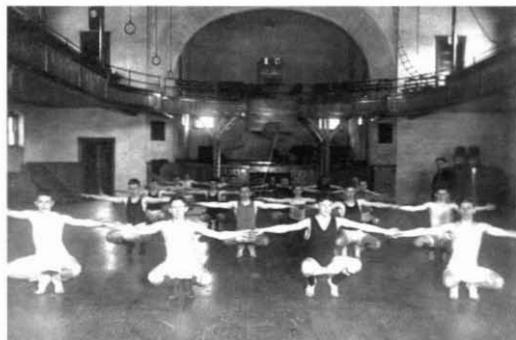


Gerrit J. Kollen

Professor Gerrit J. Kollen (1843-1915) succeeded Scott in 1893 and became the college's third president. He was the first Hope College president who had also graduated from the college (class of 1868) and served as a faculty member (1872-1873, 1876-1893). He was also the first president not to have been an ordained minister. Having grown up in Overisel, Kollen was very familiar

with the Holland area and Hope College when he took the reins. He built upon Scott's legacy and vision of more buildings, grew the faculty to teach

more students and found the financial support to create an endowed Chair of Bible to educate more students in a Christian atmosphere. To achieve these high, but obtainable goals, Scott had appointed the Rev. James F. Zwemer to raise \$50,000 for the endowment. That goal was reached in 1893 as Kollen took office. Kollen had the task of raising funds for some of Hope's greatest buildings – present-day Graves Hall (1894), which housed Graves Library



Students Exercising in Carnegie Gymnasium

and Winants Chapel; the former Ackerman Hoyt Observatory (1894); the former Van Raalte Memorial Hall (1902), which housed laboratories and classrooms; the former Carnegie Gymnasium (1906); and present-day Voorhees Hall (1907) dormitory. Kollen resigned his office in 1911, after 40 years of service, leaving 21 faculty members, 357 students and a healthy endowment.