

Centennial Moments

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American Medical Missionary College Stone

The large rock sits in the lawn adjacent to the basic sciences quadrangle, between Shryock Hall and Evans Hall, a lone reminder of the bond between Loma Linda University and the Battle Creek, Michigan, beginnings out of which the Adventist health education work grew. Therein lies a story.

The promotion of healthful living as a Christian responsibility is not a modern teaching of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Rather its presence was always there, although not widely practiced. It was particularly exemplified in the life of Captain Joseph Bates, one of the three founders of the denomination. The teaching rose to significance during the 1860s especially after Ellen White promoted it.

In 1866, the Health Reform Institute, where healthful living was actively taught and practiced, opened in Battle Creek, Michigan. Out of that institution, in 1877, grew the Battle Creek Sanitarium with the youthful Dr. John Harvey Kellogg as its medical superintendent. The American Medical Missionary College (AMMC), the first medical

school supported by the Seventh-day Adventist Church, was founded in 1895. While not a part of the Battle Creek Sanitarium, AMMC used its



facilities for clinical training along with two other hospitals in Chicago. Dr. Kellogg was president of the school, which offered a four-year course leading to the MD degree. In 1899 the first graduating class gave the rock, which bears the engraved message, "Let us follow Him," to its alma mater as a graduation gift.

Many of the first teachers and administrators at Loma Linda University, then the College of Medical Evangelists (CME), were graduates of AMMC. Alfred Quimby Shryock, Julia Ann White, Wells Allen Ruble, Lyra Ernestine George, Florence Armstrong Keller, George Knapp Abbott, Edward Henry Risley, Benton Noble Colver, Daniel Delos Comstock, and Lillian B. Magan number among that group. AMMC closed in 1910, a year after medical training began at CME.

The rock remained in Battle Creek, Michigan, until 1955. Olaf Anderson, who had been a nurse at Battle Creek Sanitarium for 60 years, learned that the rock was to be taken to the dump. He contacted some friends, graduates of the class of 1899, who raised funds to pay for the transportation of the rock to Loma Linda in time for it to be rededicated as part of Loma Linda University's 50th anniversary celebration. There are plans for the rock to figure in the University's 100th anniversary celebration as part of the Centennial Pathway to be located in the Founder's Plaza near Magan Hall. Rock on!