

Why a University For Chicago And Not Cleveland? Religion And John D. Rockefeller's Early Philanthropy, 1855-1900

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Clevelanders sometimes seem to have a “What have you done for me lately?” attitude with regard to John D. Rockefeller. As if the creation on the Cuyahoga’s shores of one of the country’s most powerful and influential corporations is not enough, some Clevelanders look to Rockefeller’s enormous charitable giving and wonder why he built no major institution in Cleveland to provide jobs and world renown under the Rockefeller banner. Most people who express such opinions often point, with a hint of jealousy, to the University of Chicago as an example of Cleveland’s missing Rockefeller landmark.

To believe that a Rockefeller-endowed University of Cleveland would today have the same academic and intellectual reputation as the present-day University of Chicago, one must assume that the same personalities and forces that shaped the University of Chicago would have been present in Cleveland, and that they would have behaved and acted exactly the same way in this different environment. Rather than to deny history, as such an assumption would require, I want to take the opportunity in this essay to look at the historical record — quite literally in this case at the archival record — to trace the development of the University of Chicago. This essay will show why there is a University of Chicago and not a University of Cleveland, and it also will

discuss the scope and nature of Rockefeller's charitable giving in Cleveland in the same years that he was funding the development of the school in the Windy City. (See Appendices A & B.)

For several years now I have been looking at particular cases in what I call the lost years of Rockefeller philanthropy.¹ This is the period between 1855, when Rockefeller got his first job, and roughly the turn of the century, just before he began to create the major institutions that are largely responsible for shaping his image as a philanthropist: the Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research (1901; now The Rockefeller University), the General Education Board (1903-1964), the Rockefeller Sanitary Commission for the Eradication of Hookworm Disease in the South (1909-1914); the Rockefeller Foundation (1913), and the Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial Foundation, a philanthropic tribute to his wife that he established in 1918 and which was absorbed into the Rockefeller Foundation during a reorganization of Rockefeller philanthropy in 1929. What interests me about this period of roughly forty-five years are the apparent contradictions and the contrasting images of the ruthless robber-baron as a kindly philanthropist; of a devoutly religious man moving toward the funding of scientific institutions; and of a political and presumably social conservative taking an interest in such issues as the welfare of Native Americans and the education of women, and especially the education of African-American women at Spelman College. I am interested in both the trees and the forest: in both the general evolution of Rockefeller philanthropy during this period and the particular stories one finds embedded within this larger tale.

For students of Ohio and the Western Reserve, this is an important period as well, for it is a time of great institution-building as churches, schools, and social welfare institutions emerge throughout the area to cope with the realities of population growth, industrialization, and urbanization. As one of the richest men in the area, John D. Rockefeller became a potential source of funds to the founders and supporters of these institutions, and, once it became known that he was willing to give, many of them wrote to him. Many of their letters are preserved in the John D. Rockefeller Papers at the Rockefeller Archive Center, and, along with copies of Rockefeller's replies, as well as his ledgers, pledge books, and charities index cards, they constitute an extremely rich and underutilized resource for students of the late 19th century. For example, using the earliest of two sets of Rockefeller's charities index cards, Archive Center volunteer Kyle Larson and I have compiled a computer database of the individuals and

institutions that received charitable gifts from Rockefeller from about 1864 through 1903.² Using Rockefeller's notations on these cards, I was able to compile the list of Cleveland recipients of Rockefeller gifts contained in Appendix B.

These records demonstrate that from his earliest charitable gifts in late 1855, John D. Rockefeller tied his philanthropy closely to the religious tenets of the Baptist church, to the organizational and financial needs of the church, and to social needs as perceived by the leaders of that denomination. One needs only to read the list of donations dutifully recorded in his personal ledgers — long lists of giving to the poor, to local churches, to efforts to erect Baptist churches for various ethnic groups, to temperance organizations, and to local and state Baptist societies — to understand the role of the church in defining and widening the scope of his giving.³ As his wealth grew from his business endeavors, so too did his charitable giving, not only resulting in larger gifts but in gifts to a wider range of activities and to individuals and institutions across a wider geographic area. Word of his wealth and his generosity spread, and the appeals for aid multiplied. “Be not surprised at receiving this letter,” wrote the chancellor of the University of Des Moines in 1884, “your charities are to[o] publicly known to escape my ears.”⁴

Rockefeller's giving went through several stages of evolution, and until the early years of the twentieth century, the Baptist church was important to these changes. In the 1860s, 1870s, and early 1880s, Rockefeller for the most part was a local and regional philanthropist, and during this time he drew upon his own personal contacts and the advice of a few trusted acquaintances to help him determine which were worthy causes. He often drew upon the advice of Baptist ministers with whom he was acquainted, men like the Rev. G.O. King of the Willson Avenue Baptist Church and later the Logan Avenue Baptist Church in Cleveland.⁵ But as Rockefeller's wealth and his national reputation grew, appeals for aid came from further and further away in the 1880s and 1890s. His desperation to keep up with the flood of appeals is evident in many letters during this period. In a March 14, 1881, letter to King, Rockefeller began by apologizing for his delayed response: “I have been holding back [an] answer,” he wrote, “in part from the fact that I had so many obligations for benevolent objects that I was almost overwhelmed.” On another occasion he noted that he was “trying to stop and catch breath, having had innumerable calls continuously for weeks and months.” Still later, after asking King for advice about a letter

from a minister in Tiffin, Ohio, Rockefeller complained that he had “no time to investigate all these calls from different churches throughout the country” but that he was reluctant to “pass them by” even though he was “not organized to manage all the demands of the missionary work.”⁶ On King’s advice, Rockefeller eventually contributed a total of \$500 to the Tiffin church.⁷

Rockefeller’s correspondence with the Rev. King appears to be typical of the relationships he cultivated with men who could advise him on his philanthropic affairs. Strictly professional and business-like at first, the relationship eventually became more personal, as their wives and families were drawn into the acquaintanceship, and the two men grew comfortable enough to ask more and more of one another. At one point the Rockefellers were sending fresh flowers to the King home, for example, and later Rockefeller invited King to accompany the Rockefeller family on a vacation. For his part, King gradually expanded the range of requests he put before Rockefeller, moving beyond purely church and denominational matters to make requests on behalf of needy members of his church, acquaintances in search of work, and, occasionally, on his own behalf. Rockefeller regularly advanced King money to meet his traveling expenses to attend church-related meetings around the state, for example; he sent the minister a dress suit on one occasion; and in 1883 he paid King’s paving tax of \$243.00. Rockefeller’s years of church service meant that he knew well how little ministers were paid, and he sought to help out his friends. Early in his correspondence with the Rev. King, for example, he added a “confidential” note to a letter: “I have been troubled that your salary was so small,” Rockefeller reported, “and have already taken the liberty to speak to some of your people about it.”⁸

Rockefeller’s correspondence with King shows him to have been a generous philanthropist. For example, when asked, Rockefeller almost always extended the deadlines on his pledges to enable organizations to meet his challenges. He never disregarded the advice he solicited from King with regard to a benevolent request, and he almost always responded to the unsolicited appeals he received from King. For example, between 1885 and 1892, Rockefeller contributed more than \$1,300 toward the education of Florence Gray, a needy young girl in whom King saw promise; and he gave more than \$285 toward the education of the son of another

minister that King knew. On King's advice, Rockefeller also provided \$100 for a Baptist church in St. Mary's and \$1,000 for a church in Jamestown, New York.

As liberal as he was in his giving, Rockefeller never lost sight of the value of his money, and he repeatedly expressed his concern that it be well spent. "It seems to me that they do not want \$2.20 opera chairs," Rockefeller wrote in passing along to King a letter from Pastor B.H. Thomas. "Can they not get something for \$1.00 or \$1.25 that will answer just as well?" This same letter expresses a hint of reluctance that only occasionally crept into Rockefeller's writing: "I thought I had done about my share in this quarter," he confided to King, "but this is to ask what you think about the necessities of the case, and whether they are likely to yet pull through without my lifting."⁹

If Rockefeller rarely suggested that he was making a contribution grudgingly, rarer still is any hint of annoyance or anger with respect to his philanthropic projects. In December 1889, however, he expressed surprise not to have been consulted about the selection of a new president for Denison University, the Baptist school in Granville, Ohio. Denison had received Rockefeller's first sizeable gift to a Baptist college in 1868, when he contributed \$500. The school received two \$1,000 gifts from Rockefeller in 1878 and \$10,000 gifts in both 1881 and 1882, remaining his most favored Baptist school. In December 1889, Rockefeller had another large pledge outstanding, but he was in no mood to extend it: "My pledge to Denison University expires January 1st, 1890," he wrote to King, who had asked for an extension of it, "and I do not recall any promise to renew the same. I suppose the Mr. Peters you refer to is the new President of Denison. I have not the pleasure of knowing him, and had no knowledge whatever in respect to his being chosen for the position, until I chanced to hear of his appointment. The choice of a President for such an important educational institution brings with it a great responsibility, and I sincerely hope those who took this responsibility, as well as others equally interested in the affairs of the University, will see as time goes on, that he is in every way the best man for the place."¹⁰ Rockefeller was clearly upset that an important Baptist college had not consulted with one its major donors and one of the denomination's leading citizens prior to making such an important decision. But by 1889 his charitable giving had evolved in size and in scope such that few institution builders — certainly none within the Baptist denomination — could afford to overlook him as a source of support.

During the mid and late 1880s, Rockefeller the philanthropist came under the tutelage of another Baptist minister in whom he built up trust, one with a national office and national responsibilities. Rockefeller was beginning to work more closely with the Reverend Henry L. Morehouse (1834-1917), the new corresponding secretary of the American Baptist Home Mission Society (ABHMS). The Mission Society, which had been supporting Baptist missions and promoting Baptist education since 1832, had three departments: one “to establish churches and Sunday schools,” another “to aid in the erection of church edifices,” and a third “to provide normal and theological schools for the Freedmen and Indians.”¹¹ Rockefeller provided support for the Society as early as June 4, 1879, the same year that Morehouse took over as the organization’s corresponding secretary.¹² One colleague described Morehouse as “a man of unusual foresight, executive ability, fearlessness, pertinacity, religious zeal, and public spirit. . . . In the development of denominational policies and in bringing them to effectiveness he had no equal.”¹³

Morehouse and Rockefeller first corresponded in the spring of 1881 regarding a proposal to change the Society’s Church Edifice Fund from a loan program to an endowed fund that would make grants “to aid feeble churches in procuring suitable houses of worship.” Rockefeller, one of the original contributors to the fund, consented to the change.¹⁴ By the summer of 1882, Morehouse was seeking a meeting with Rockefeller to discuss general denominational needs, but was unsuccessful. By mid-August of 1882, however, Rockefeller was beginning to realize that he could bring his denominational giving together through the Home Mission Society.¹⁵ On Christmas Eve, 1883, Rockefeller sent Morehouse the kind of letter Morehouse had been hoping to receive. It marked the beginning of a change in the wealthy Baptist’s procedure for making his charitable donations and started him on the road toward corporate philanthropy rather than individual charity.

Rockefeller was growing weary of the constant appeals that came to him, and before him sat a letter regarding the Scandinavian Church in Bridgeport, Connecticut. He decided to send it to Morehouse, whose organization was charged with building churches. But Rockefeller was seeking relief from these appeals as much as he was seeking advice. He told Morehouse that he wanted “to avoid having all these people from every part of the country calling on [him] and [was] considering whether it is not much better for the cause” for him to “give all through the

Home Mission Society.” “If I were to pay into the Edifice Fund of the Home Mission Society five or ten hundred dollars,” Rockefeller asked, “would it seem to you best to give an additional sum to this or have you other more important calls?”¹⁶

For Morehouse this was an open invitation. After unsuccessfully pressing Rockefeller for an interview, he now had an invitation not only to call upon him for large contributions to the Mission Society for church-building, but also an invitation to approach the wealthiest Baptist with his “other, more important calls.” To Morehouse, this meant the education of blacks and Indians. Morehouse quickly arranged his first meeting with Rockefeller for January 5, 1884 at the Buckingham Hotel; five days later Morehouse received a \$5,000.00 check for the Edifice Fund, “as agreed.” Morehouse wasted no time in arranging another meeting for January 28, 1884, a meeting that resulted in two significant pledges from Rockefeller. In reply to a desperate plea from Sophia Packard of the Atlanta Baptist Female Seminary, Rockefeller made a “confidential” agreement with Morehouse “to give the balance required to pay off the debt of the Atlanta Seminary, some \$4950.00, in addition to [his] former pledge of \$2,500.” The school would be renamed Spelman Seminary, as Packard had suggested in her letter.¹⁷ Rockefeller also pledged \$25,000 “for a Professorship or Chair in a Colored Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond, Virginia . . . provided another equal amount is raised.”¹⁸ Morehouse clearly had interested Rockefeller in black education in a big way, and continued to press his case for donations to this cause. On February 7 he arranged a meeting between Rockefeller and the president of Shaw University, who left New York with Rockefeller’s \$250 check deposited in the school’s account with the Mission Society.¹⁹

This flurry of activity between Morehouse and Rockefeller in early 1884 illustrates Rockefeller’s realization that he needed organizational help in carrying out his charitable work, and his increasing trust in Morehouse and the Mission Society. Theirs became a closer working relationship during the next two years, and by March 20, 1885, Rockefeller felt sufficiently comfortable with their arrangement to send Morehouse an unusually long letter that marked still another change in their relationship.

Rarely did Rockefeller write letters of more than two pages, but his March 20, 1885, letter to Morehouse stretched to four. He again asked for advice regarding a specific church-building proposal, this one in Wheeling. But now he went beyond merely asking for

advice and information, and made three proposals of his own. One of these plans was a donation of \$20,000 toward a proposed \$70,000 church project in New York City. He then solicited advice regarding ideas he had for new gifts to Spelman and to the Indian university. Morehouse was overjoyed with the letter and endorsed all of Rockefeller's ideas for new gifts: "How inexpressibly refreshing are such spontaneous suggestions and purposes to honor the Lord with one's substance, as contrasted with high-pressure, cork-screw methods to obtain benevolent contributions from some who hold on to every dollar as if they expected to take it to glory with them!"²⁰ Rockefeller's new trust in Morehouse's opinions and advice intensified their relationship, and soon Morehouse hoped that Rockefeller would provide major support for a new educational initiative.²¹

By the late 1880s, Morehouse had become concerned about the denomination's inability to provide financial assistance to its schools. The Mission Society was only empowered to assist schools for Indians and blacks, and in 1887 Morehouse began advocating the creation of a national Baptist organization to assist Baptist academies and colleges across the country. He found ready support for such an organization among Baptists in the West and in the South, while Eastern leaders were less eager for such an organization. Despite the sharp divisions, Morehouse succeeded in establishing the American Baptist Education Society (ABES) in May 1888 to promote "Christian education under Baptist auspices in North America." As Frederick Gates recalled in his memoirs, the vote to establish the Education Society was "a popular victory for the moneyless and educationally destitute West and South, over the moneyed and educationally well-provided Eastern and New England states."²²

As secretary of the new organization, Frederick T. Gates knew firsthand the problems that the promoters of Baptist education faced in the West. After his graduation from the University of Rochester (1877) and the Rochester Theological Seminary (1880), Gates spent eight years as pastor of a church in Minneapolis, and he had most recently completed a successful drive to raise \$50,000 for the endowment of a "feeble academy" in Owatonna, Minnesota, surpassing the goal by nearly \$10,000. Despite his sympathy and support for the idea of a national organization to raise funds for Baptist education, Gates still voted against the plan in May 1888, believing the timing inappropriate, given the sharp divisions within the denomination's leadership. But with a foot in each of the bitterly divided camps, Gates became a logical choice to mediate the

differences and bring about a reconciliation, and Morehouse nominated him as the only candidate for executive secretary.²³

Gates soon had an opportunity to show exactly how “educationally deprived” the Baptists in the West were. A major reason for the geographically-based division among Baptist leaders over the establishment of the Society was the on-going debate about whether to build a great Baptist university and where to locate it. The chief rivals were Augustus Strong of the Rochester Theological Seminary, who favored New York City as the site of the university, and Thomas W. Goodspeed of the Morgan Park Theological Seminary, who favored Chicago. In thinking about how best to promote Baptist education in the West, Gates decided that a major Baptist university located in Chicago would be the best stimulus to education. In October 1888 he prepared a report entitled “The Need for a Baptist University in Chicago, as Illustrated by a Study of Baptist Collegiate Education in the West.” As its title suggests, the report argued for locating the university in Chicago, and it is credited with persuading other leaders of the denomination in this direction.²⁴ Gates’s report compared Baptist educational efforts in the West with those of other denominations, and offers valuable insight into how Baptist leaders judged their own work.

Gates painted a demographic portrait of Baptists in the West that illustrated the denomination’s relatively poor educational work there. He defined the West as that part of the country north of the Ohio River, west of the state of Ohio, and east of the Rockies, an area that held 373,000 Baptists. (Thus Gates’s definition of the area in need automatically excluded Cleveland as a site for the school.) This region contained eleven Baptist schools offering at least some collegiate courses. Total enrollment at these schools was 1,257 students, only about a fourth of whom were taking college courses. These schools owned property valued at \$881,670. By comparison, the 145,000 Congregationalists in the West operated fewer colleges (eight) worth more money (\$1,743,000) and enrolling more students (1,639). The Presbyterians, with only 119,000 members in the West, had as many schools as the Baptists (eleven), but these were worth far more (\$2,437,000) and enrolled 1,874 pupils. The Methodists had twenty-one schools, worth \$5.3 million, and enrolling 5,652 students. Gates calculated that on a per member basis, the Congregationalists owned five times more educational property than the Baptists and enrolled four times as many students; the Presbyterians had nine times as much educational property and

four times as many pupils; and the Methodists more than six times the educational property and five times the students.²⁵

Gates then turned from his denominational comparison to actual conditions in the eleven Baptist schools. Each was located poorly, so that “the area of their attractive influence in their respective states” was small. Only about a fifth of the western Baptists lived “within the effective attraction of our western colleges.” None of these small-town schools was significant enough to attract students from far away. The result was that many of “the ablest and most promising” Baptist youths were going to the schools of other denominations or, even worse, to state-supported schools, which Gates characterized as “the State Higher Schools of Irreligion.”²⁶ Moreover, the existing Baptist schools in the West were poorly financed: only six of the eleven had endowments, and the sum of these endowments was only \$409,000, less than the individual endowments of the denomination’s three leading eastern colleges. As a result, buildings on the campuses of these western colleges were “few, small[,] . . . cheap, inadequate and old,” Gates found, while western Baptist professors, on average, were paid about half the salaries of their eastern colleagues.²⁷

The problems that Gates enumerated were not, he argued, the result of apathy or niggardliness on the part of western Baptists, who had shown great sacrifice and generosity. Instead, Gates found that the “great and fatal difficulty” for Western Baptist education lay “in the unfortunate locations chosen for our institutions.” With the exception of the college in Des Moines, Baptist colleges were located in “small obscure towns . . . far removed from the centres of our western life and western means. . . . out of the sight and interest of our wealthy men.” The solution Gates advocated was for the denomination “to found a great college, ultimately to be a university, in Chicago,” a well-endowed, exemplary university that would rival the best on the continent. “Chicago is the heart of the West,” Gates argued, “the fountain of western life,” and the city alone would “lift so far aloft a Baptist college as an intellectual and religious luminary, that its light would illumine every state and penetrate every home from Lake Erie to the Rocky Mountains.”²⁸ Gates’s report proved persuasive to the members of the Society and to John D. Rockefeller, who read it in November. Six months later Gates persuaded Rockefeller to pledge \$600,000 toward a one-million dollar endowment for the new university at Chicago.²⁹

Prior to pledging his support for the University of Chicago, however, Rockefeller had agreed to support the broader work of the American Baptist Education Society, a decision prompted again by his growing trust in the man charged with running the operation. In the summer of 1888, as Gates and Morehouse set about creating the “financial constituency of the Society,” Morehouse asked Rockefeller to support the young Society, but Rockefeller knew little about its work and what he had heard came from acquaintances who were hostile to its formation, a fact which he duly noted to Morehouse. “I am not prepared to make a pledge to the American Baptist Education Society,” he replied, “maybe in part because of a lack of sufficient information, but I do remember having some conversation at the time with those who did not regard it a necessity.”³⁰

The burden of educating Rockefeller fell to Morehouse, Gates, and those who supported the plan for a university at Chicago. A series of correspondence and meetings in the ensuing months, aided by Gates’s report, succeeded, and in mid-January 1889, Rockefeller asked to see “a statement of the expenses . . . and the receipts” of the Society. He then asked Morehouse to bring Gates to a luncheon meeting, after which he invited Gates to accompany him on the train from New York to Cleveland. Sizing up Gates favorably, Rockefeller soon sent \$500 toward the expenses of the Society. A month later he pledged \$100,000 to its work on the condition that all of the Society’s appropriations from this gift be approved by him first: “I will contribute \$100,000 to the American Baptist Education Society, payable as required for its contributions to educational work in the United States; providing such contributions are not payable faster than \$10,000 during each month, beginning with March and ending with December next; and providing I am advised and endorse in advance the proposed contributions.”³¹

Founded by denominational leaders to promote and improve Baptist education throughout the country, especially in the Midwest and in the South, the American Baptist Education Society became essentially a philanthropic arm of John D. Rockefeller in the process of fulfilling its purposes. Rockefeller appears to have been the only large contributor to the Society, and he used it to channel a total of \$539,069.24 to thirty-four different schools during the 1890s, and between May 1, 1902, and May 1, 1914, the Society paid out another \$273,494 to various schools.³² Rockefeller’s experience with the Society was his first effort at organized giving; that is, giving his money through a third party which in turn made appropriations

according to his guidelines and approval. This was an important step in the evolution of his philanthropy, as he sought to organize his charity to make it more orderly, more deserving, more effective, and less burdensome. His disappointing experience with the American Baptist Education Society led him next to create the General Education Board in 1903. By then another Baptist minister, Frederick T. Gates, was playing a major role in charting the course of Rockefeller philanthropy, for Rockefeller had hired him in 1891 to help him organize his benevolent work.

Why Chicago and not Cleveland, then, as the site for the nation's Baptist university? That decision was made by Baptist leaders nationwide, not by John D. Rockefeller. Their concern about the needs of Baptist education in the West precluded Cleveland as a location for the school, for it was too far East. And, given all that Baptists in Cleveland had done to build up the denomination since the Civil War, Cleveland was seen as fairly secure ground for the denomination: it was not defined as a problem area. As the list in Appendix B shows, Rockefeller and his network of local associates were hard at work trying to meet the spiritual and social needs of Clevelanders.

In fact, Rockefeller appears to have been willing to do more for Baptist education in Cleveland than some of his advisors thought wise. A letter from the Rev. King, dated March 31, 1880, suggests that Rockefeller once offered to donate land at his Forest Hill estate to relocate Denison University from Granville to Cleveland. "I remember a conversation we once had with reference to Cleveland being a better location for a College than Granville," King wrote, "and your offer to donate the land for the purpose at Forest Hill if a change could be made in location." King had agreed with Rockefeller that Cleveland would be best, but after spending two weeks on the Denison campus teaching elocution, he found his views "modified very much." "There are not so many things in Granville to distract the attention of the students from their studies," he had found, and "there are not the same temptations to dissipation." Moreover, King argued that "the atmosphere of city social life is unfavorable to correct habits of study to those who inhale it and especially such as inhale it freely." On this point King was very much impressed by the contrast he found between the students at Denison and those at Cleveland High School, especially with regard to the "entertainments" they favored. While at Denison he had attended "two entertainments given by the Literary societies." "These entertainments," he

reported, “had a good deal of *character* to them. Original debates, orations, and papers, with a good deal of *thought* and *faith* in them, where the High School would bring forward a worthless farce, full of love and slang. The difference I think springs mainly from two things[:] the character of instructors and the social atmosphere.” “I do not think it possible in the city to concentrate so much religious influence upon” the students, King concluded. “I think a city location might secure a large number of students, but less moral and intellectual power.” At a time when the country most needed “men of *mind*, men of *earnest moral convictions*, men with good *back bone*,” King expressed his “great fear that our High School is taking the moral *stamina* out of the youth of this city.”³³

King’s letter suggests that Cleveland may well be lacking its own University of Chicago as a result of the social outlook of local Baptist leaders like King, who found the moral atmosphere of small towns preferable to the temptations of the city when deciding where to locate the denomination’s schools and colleges in Ohio.

ENDNOTES

1. These efforts include one published essay with Darwin H. Stapleton, "Toward a 'Universal Heritage': Education and the Development of Rockefeller Philanthropy, 1884-1913," *Teachers College Record*, 93 no. 3 (Spring 1992), pp. 536-555; and two presentations in Cleveland: "John D. Rockefeller, the American Baptist Home Mission Society, and the Growth of Higher Education in the Midwest," at the annual meeting of the Great Lakes American Studies Association, Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland, Ohio, October 13, 1990, and "Struggling Welfare Institutions and Organized Charity: The Case of Cleveland's Floating Bethel Mission and the Home for Aged Colored People," at the Western Reserve Studies Symposium, November 11, 1989, in Cleveland, Ohio.
2. Rockefeller Family Archives, Record Group 1, John D. Rockefeller Papers, Charities Index Cards. The earliest set of cards, arranged alphabetically by individual or institutional name and contained in eight boxes, cover the years from about 1864 through 1903. A second set of cards begins in 1904 and is not yet included in the database. Rockefeller apparently began keeping this alphabetical card file sometime in the 1880s and went back through his ledgers to add earlier gifts. The top of each card lists an individual or institutional name; the date and amount of each gift to that recipient is then recorded, along with the name of to whom it was sent. Since incoming letters to Rockefeller are filed alphabetically by correspondent, we hope that our data base will make it easier for researchers interested in particular institutions to identify and locate relevant correspondence.
3. See especially his first three ledgers, A, B, and C, in the JDR Papers at the Rockefeller Archive Center. The ledgers enable the researcher to trace easily Rockefeller's giving from about 1855 until 1871 (see, for example, Ledger B, pp. 91-93, and 130-131). In 1871 his list of donations became fragmented and more difficult to follow, as his donation list came to include cross references to his office ledger, to "Mrs. Rockefeller's House Account," and "Expense Book at Home" (see Ledger B, pp. 201-202). By 1878 it is again fairly easy to follow his donations. These ledgers and, beginning in late 1882, the pledge books offer researchers a chronological view of the growth and expansion of Rockefeller's charitable giving.
4. F.W. Corliss to John D. Rockefeller, April 28, 1884, in the JDR Papers, Office Correspondence, box 8, folder 62.
5. Biographical information on the Rev. G.O. King is scarce. He appears only fleetingly in most accounts of Rockefeller philanthropy, although, as I will try to show, he was an important part of Rockefeller's Baptist network. He is known mostly for having introduced Rockefeller to the work of Sophia Packard and Harriet Giles at their school in Atlanta, which eventually was transformed into Spelman College. King had been a student of Packard and Giles at the Connecticut Literary Institution (1859-1862); from there he graduated from Brown University (1866) and from Rochester Theological

Seminary (1869) and served churches in Cincinnati and in Jamestown and Fredonia in New York as well as Cleveland. See Florence Matilda Read, *The Story of Spelman College* (Atlanta, Georgia: Spelman College, 1961), p. 18. The Rockefeller letterbooks suggest that he left Cleveland for Fredonia, New York, in or prior to 1905; he died in 1918.

6. Rockefeller to King, March 14, 1881, John D. Rockefeller Papers, Letterbook series, volume 2, p. 562; May 7, 1886, John D. Rockefeller Papers, Letterbook series, volume 10, pp. 198-199; December 28, 1889, John D. Rockefeller Papers, Letterbook series, volume 21, p. 478; hereafter cited as JDR Letterbooks, volume: page number.
7. See the Charities Index card for the Tiffin, Ohio Baptist Church, which records Rockefeller's two payments of \$250 each to the Rev. F.S. Lyon in 1890. King's response to Rockefeller's request has not survived, but 108 other of his letters to Rockefeller, dating from 1880 into 1891, are located in two folders in the John D. Rockefeller Papers, Office Correspondence, box 23, folder 178 (1880-1880) and folder 179 (1889-1891). Rockefeller's letterbooks contain copies of about 120 letters to King, beginning in 1880 and continuing until King's death in March, 1918.
8. Rockefeller to King, April 10, 1880, JDR Letterbooks, 2: 297.
9. Rockefeller to King, November 25, 1885, JDR Letterbooks, 9: 633.
10. For Denison University, see Ledger B, p. 131; Ledger C, p. 97; Ledger D, p. 157; the charities index card for "Dennison University" [sic] in the JDR Papers, Financial Material, Charities Index, box 2; and Ziba Crawford to John D. Rockefeller, April 20, 1882, and July 30, 1882, JDR papers, Office Correspondence, box 10, folder 74. The latter acknowledges receipt of his final \$10,000 payment toward his conditional pledge to the college, paid by a check drawn on the Standard Oil Company's account. Unfortunately, none of Rockefeller's surviving correspondence reveals why he gave so early and so largely to Denison. Rockefeller's letter to King is dated December 31, 1889, JDR Letterbooks, 22: 7-8.
11. These departments were described on the letterhead of the ABHMS in the 1880s; see also Read, *Spelman College*, p. 31, for a brief discussion of the history of the ABHMS.
12. See Ledger C, p. 169. Because of the confusing nature of Rockefeller's ledgers in the early and mid 1870s, it is not clear whether this \$1,000 gift in 1879 was his first gift to the ABHMS, but it is the first gift noted on the ABHMS Charities index cards (JDR Papers, Financial Material, Charities Index, box 1).
13. Thomas W. Goodspeed offers this description of Morehouse in his *History of University of Chicago*, p. 40. For the basic biographical information on Morehouse, see *Who Was Who in America*, volume 1, 1897-1942, p. 864.

14. Morehouse to Rockefeller, March 9, 1881, JDR Papers, Office correspondence, box 28, folder 215; and George D. Rogers to Morehouse, March 16, 1881, JDR letterbooks, vol. 2, p. 56.
15. See Morehouse to Rockefeller, August 16, 1882, and other letters for 1882-1883 in JDR Papers, Office correspondence, box 28, folder 215.
16. Rockefeller to Morehouse, December 24, 1883, JDR Letterbooks, vol. 6, p. 112; Morehouse to Rockefeller, December 27, 1883, JDR Papers, box 28, folder 215.
17. See JDR Pledge book, 1882-1887, p. 26; Packard to Rockefeller, December 29, 1883, in JDR Papers, Office Correspondence, box 30, folder 233.
18. JDR Pledge Book, 1882-1887, p. 25.
19. Morehouse to Rockefeller, February 7, 1884, JDR Papers, Office correspondence, box 28, folder 215; and Rockefeller to Morehouse, February 7, 1884, JDR Letterbooks, vol. 6, p. 230.
20. Rockefeller to Morehouse, March 20, 1885, JDR Letterbooks, vol. 8, p. 5; Morehouse to Rockefeller, March 21, 1885, JDR Papers, Office correspondence, box 28, folder 215.
21. See Morehouse to Rockefeller, October 3, 1888, JDR Papers, Office correspondence, box 28, folder 216.
22. Frederick T. Gates, *Chapters in My Life* (New York: The Free Press, 1977), p. 91; Goodspeed, *History of the University of Chicago*, pp. 40-41; Constitution of the American Baptist Education Society reprinted in the *Fourth Annual Meeting of the American Baptist Education Society, Held at Philadelphia, May 28, 1892* (New York: Winthrop and Hallenbeck, 1892). On the history of the University of Chicago and the American Baptist Education Society, see Thomas W. Goodspeed, *A History of the University of Chicago*, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1916) and Richard J. Storr, *Harper's University: The Beginnings* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1966). Rockefeller's biographers discuss his role in founding the school and the society. See John Ensor Harr and Peter J. Johnson, *The Rockefeller Century* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1988), and Allan Nevins, *Study In Power: John D. Rockefeller, Industrialist and Philanthropist*, 2 vols. (New York: Charles Scribner's sons, 1953).
23. Gates *Chapters in My Life* pp. 84, 86-88, 91-93; Goodspeed, *History of the University of Chicago*, pp. 40-42.
24. Nevins, *Study In Power*, pp. 156-178; Gates, *Chapters in My Life*, p. 96; Goodspeed, *History of the University of Chicago*, pp. 41-43.

25. Gates, "The Need for a Baptist University in Chicago, as Illustrated by a Study of Baptist Collegiate Education in the West," paper presented at the Baptist Minister's Conference, October 15, 1888 and to the Executive Board of the American Baptist Education Society, December 4, 1888, in the OMR, Education Interests series, box 102, folder entitled, "University of Chicago — Mr. Gates — 1886-1888."
26. "The frequently fatal influence of the State universities on the religious life of their pupils, is acknowledged by all Christians who are well informed," Gates argued. "They are certainly raising up a race of infidels to become the leaders of our western life." Gates, "Need for a Baptist University in Chicago."
27. Gates, "Need for a Baptist University in Chicago."
28. Gates, "Need for a Baptist University in Chicago."
29. Nevins, *Study in Power*, pp. 168-170; see also Gates, *Chapters in My Life*, pp. 96-108, and Goodspeed, *History of the University of Chicago*.
30. Rockefeller to Morehouse, August 6, 1888, JDR Letterbooks, vol. 17, p. 99. The financial constituency quote is from Gates to the Rev. I.L. Cairns, September 16, 1888, in the copies of select Gates's ABES letters, in the Gates papers, box 4 folder 80, at the RAC.
31. Rockefeller to Morehouse, January 14, 1889; January 15, 1889; and January 24, 1889, in JDR Letterbooks, vol. 18, pp. 284, 293, 324; and Rockefeller to Gates, February 20, 1889, JDR Letterbooks, vol. 18, p. 462; Nevins, *Study in Power*, pp. 175-177; Gates, *Chapters in My Life*, pp. 106-108. See also Rockefeller's pledge book for October 6, 1887-December 31, 1889, p. 112. On the attempts to educate Rockefeller about the needs of the Society, see, for example, Morehouse to Rockefeller, October 3, 1888.
32. See the Rockefeller Family Archives, John D. Rockefeller Papers, Financial Material, Charities Index cards, box 1, for the American Baptist Education Society. For the 1902-1914 payments, see the letter to Frank W. Padelford, May 14, 1914, and the attached list, in the Rockefeller Family Archives, Office of the Messrs Rockefeller, Religious Interests, box 4, folder 24. Schools that received assistance from Rockefeller's pledges in the 1890s were Baylor, Bucknell (Lewisburg, Pennsylvania), California College (Oakland, California), Carson-Newman College (Mossy Creek, Tennessee), Cedar Valley Seminary (Osage, Iowa), the University of Chicago, Clinton College (Clinton, Kentucky), Colby, Connecticut Literary and Scientific Institute (Suffield, Connecticut), Cook Academy (Havana, New York), Des Moines College (Des Moines, Iowa), Franklin College (Franklin, Indiana), Furman University (Greenville, South Carolina), Grace Seminary, Grand Island College, Hall Institute (Sharon, Pennsylvania), William Jewell College (Liberty, Missouri), Kalamazoo College (Kalamazoo, Michigan), Keystone Academy (Factoryville, Pennsylvania), McMinnessville Tennessee College, Mercer University (Macon, Georgia), Mississippi College (Clinton, Mississippi), Ottawa University (Ottawa, Kansas), Seattle University (Seattle, Washington), Shurtleff College

(Upper Alton, Illinois), South Jersey Institute (Bridgeton New Jersey), Southwestern Baptist University (Jackson, Tennessee), Spelman Seminary (Atlanta), J.B. Stetson University, Walla Walla College, Wayland Academy (Beaver Dam, Wisconsin), Western Pennsylvania Literary and Scientific Institute (Mt. Pleasant, Pennsylvania), Williamsburg Institute (Williamsburg, Kentucky), and Worcester Academy (Worcester, Massachusetts).

33. King to Rockefeller March 31, 1880. Emphasis in the original.

APPENDIX A. ROCKEFELLER GIFTS TO CLEVELAND, 1855-1959

In May 1987, Joseph W. Ernst, Rockefeller Family Archivist and founding director of the Rockefeller Archive Center, calculated that John D. Rockefeller and John D. Rockefeller, Jr. together had given more than \$5,520,000.00 to organizations in Cleveland.

John D. Rockefeller's contributions between 1855 and 1934 went to 178 different institutions and totaled \$3,369,650. Nine institutions received 88% of these funds:

INSTITUTIONS	GIFTS 1855-1934
Cleveland Parks	\$865,038.00
Euclid Avenue Baptist Church	\$727,754.00
Alta Social Settlement	\$308,429.00
Western Reserve University	\$262,500.00
YMCA	\$153,521.00
Case School of Applied Science	\$200,000.00
YWCA	\$153,521.00
Baptist City Mission	\$115,407.00
East End Baptist Church	\$112,262.00
TOTAL	\$2,045,000.00

Ernst also reported that John D. Rockefeller, Jr. gave gifts of \$100,000 or more to four Cleveland institutions: Forest Hill Park to East Cleveland and Cleveland Heights (\$1,452,000); the Cleveland Orchestra (\$250,000); the Cleveland Baptist Association (\$131,000); and the Phyllis Wheatley Association (\$101,000). He made large gifts to the Alta Social Settlement (\$99,474); the Euclid Avenue Baptist Church (\$78,1183); the Cleveland Community Fund (\$30,000), and the Baptist Home of Northern Ohio (\$9,131).

Source: Memo, Joe Ernst to George Taylor, May 19, 1987, Administrative Files of the Rockefeller Archive Center.

APPENDIX B. CLEVELAND ORGANIZATIONS THAT RECEIVED SUPPORT FROM JOHN D. ROCKEFELLER, ca. 1864-1903

The following is a list of 136 organizations and 18 individuals in Cleveland, Ohio, to which John D. Rockefeller made charitable contributions between about 1864 and 1903. These gifts total \$1,625,522.77.

This list is derived from a review of the Charities Index cards in the John D. Rockefeller Papers at the Rockefeller Archive Center, Sleepy Hollow, New York. The dollar amounts are taken from the index cards as well; these calculations appear to be Rockefeller’s own, and they have not been recalculated for this project. The dates represent the year of the first and last contribution to a given recipient; gifts were not necessarily given continuously during the period indicated.

This is by no means a definitive list of Rockefeller’s contributions in the Cleveland area. First, the list covers only a limited period of time, and it appears to be incomplete for the 1870s. Secondly, it includes only institutions and individuals that are identified on Rockefeller’s index cards as being in Cleveland, or ones which are easily recognizable as Cleveland institutions by someone familiar with Cleveland’s history. Some relevant institutions and people undoubtedly have been overlooked.

I am grateful to Kyle Larson, a volunteer at the Rockefeller Archive Center, who spent many hours in the compilation of the database from which this list is drawn.

<i>Organizations</i>	<i>Total Amount</i>
Adams, A.H. Mrs. 1900-1902	\$300.00
Adams, S.W. Mrs. (work among the Germans) 1891	\$50.00
Alta House, 1899-1903	\$68,811.23
Arion Quartette (Cleveland) 1895	\$25.00
Bethel Cleveland 1864-1881	\$3,777.00
Bohemian Mission (Cleveland, Ohio) 1883-1893	\$850.00
Broadway Baptist Mission, 1879-1895	\$1,165.00
Budge, Mrs. Mary A. (Cleveland, Ohio) 1892-1899	\$470.00
Campbell, Mrs. Fannie Fuller (Cleveland, Ohio) 1892-1903	\$1,695.00
Central High School Gymnasium, 1882	\$15.00
Charity Organization Society, Cleveland, 1882-1899	\$8,350.00
Christ M.E. Church, 1879	\$250.00
Christian Endeavor Convention (Cleveland) 1894	\$250.00
Cleveland Amateur Orchestra, 1889	\$25.00
Cleveland Art School (Western Reserve Academy), 1884-1903	\$4,610.00
Cleveland Associated Charities, 1900-1902	\$1,500.00
Cleveland Association 1863-1866	\$4.55
Cleveland Baptist City Mission, 1894-1900	\$46,264.57
Cleveland Baptist Union, 1878-1892	\$7,539.00
Cleveland Bible Readers Home, 1890	\$500.00
Cleveland Central High School — Library, 1897	\$50.00
Cleveland Chamber of Commerce, 1894-1900	\$1,050.00
Cleveland College of Physicians and Surgeons, 1900	\$10,000.00
Cleveland Day Nurseries, 1884-1894	\$600.00
Cleveland Day Nursery & Kindergarten Association, 1894-1901	\$43,039.78
Cleveland Educational & Industrial Union, 1889-1893	\$170.00
Cleveland Fireman’s Pension Fund, 1894	\$100.00

<i>Organizations</i>	<i>Total Amount</i>
Cleveland Fowler School for Piano, 1898	\$100.00
Cleveland Fresh Air Fund, 1889-1902	\$400.00
Cleveland Fund for Crippled Children, 1900-1901	\$200.00
Cleveland Grays, 1889-1893	\$1,310.00
Cleveland High School, 1898-1901	\$1,084.85
Cleveland Homeopathic College, 1891-1896	\$17,000.00
Cleveland Humane Society, 1881-1903	\$2,055.00
Cleveland Huron Street Hospital, 1899-1901	\$5,200.00
Cleveland Infant's Rest, 1891	\$50.00
Cleveland Loan Exhibition — Relief of Poor, 1894-1895	\$200.00
Cleveland Maternity Home, 1891-1902	\$1,275.00
Cleveland Men's Home, 1893-1896	\$450.00
Moses Cleveland Monument, 1888	\$100.00
Cleveland Municipal Association, 1899-1900	\$750.00
Cleveland Normal Training School (library), 1896	\$50.00
Cleveland Orphan Asylum, 1869-1881	\$83.20
Cleveland Parks, 1900	\$183,797.50
Cleveland Orphan Asylum, 1869-1881	\$83.20
Cleveland Philharmonic Orchestra, 1892	\$300.00
Cleveland Police Pension Fund, 1898	\$50.00
Cleveland Public School(Art Education Society), 1898-1899	\$600.00
Cleveland Quintette Club, 1892	\$25.00
Cleveland Sabbath Commission, 1881	\$50.00
Cleveland Sunday Union, 1902	\$200.00
Cleveland Training School, 1885-1886	\$1,000.00
Cleveland Tunnel Disaster, 1898	\$50.00
Cleveland Vocal Society, 1891-1901	\$2,210.00
Cleveland World	\$500.00
Cook, G.L. (Mrs.) (Cleveland, Ohio) 1898-1900	\$300.00
East Cleveland Baptist Church, 1901	\$25.00
East Cleveland Methodist Church, 1886	\$200.00
East Cleveland Temperance Work, 1892	\$6.17
East Cleveland Volunteer Fire Department, 1901	\$50.00
East End Baptist Church, 1892-1903	\$17,179.62
Eliza Jennings Home for Incurables, 1889-1897	\$15,993.39
Erie Street Baptist Church [church projects], 1883-1888	\$4,964.40
Erie Street Baptist Church — Sundry donations	\$43,876.40
Euclid Avenue Baptist Church, 1880-1903	\$168,977.94
Euclid Avenue Baptist Church — Poor fund	\$1,242.60
Euclid Avenue Baptist Church — Ladies Society, 1882-1890	\$468.00
Euclid Avenue Baptist Church — Sunday School Orchestra, 1883-1890	\$949.50
Euclid Avenue Baptist Church — Sexton, 1888-1892	\$60.00
Euclid Avenue Christian Church, 1888	\$500.00
Euclid Avenue Congregational Church, 1886-1887	\$1,000.00
Fifteenth Regiment (Cleveland, Ohio) 1878-1879	\$65.00
First Baptist Church, Cleveland, Ohio 1879	\$50.00
First Cleveland Troop 1879	\$50.00
Frese, Andrew (Cleveland, Ohio) 1893	\$100.00
Friendly Inn, Central, 1879-1891	\$14,484.68

<i>Organizations</i>	<i>Total Amount</i>
Friendly Inn, River Street, 1879-1881	\$325.00
Friendly Inn, St. Clair Street, 1879	\$50.00
Frost, Mrs. (Cleveland) 1892	\$30.00
Garfield Monument Fund, 1882	\$1,020.00
German Baptist Church (Case Avenue) 1883-1886	\$4,868.20
German Baptist Publishing Society, 1887-1889	\$3,700.00
Grand Army of the Republic (National Encampment, Cleveland) 1901	\$5,000.00
Green, John P. (trip to Europe) 1893	\$400.00
Gregg, Mrs. (Cleveland, Ohio) 1898	\$15.00
Grimmell, Mr. J.C. (Cleveland, Ohio) 1899	\$100.00
Hiram House, 1898-1904	\$12,100.00
Historical Society, Cleveland, 1882	\$50.00
Home for Aged Colored People, 1902-1903	\$700.00
Homeopathic Hospital (Huron Street, Cleveland, Ohio) 1869-1899	\$8,530.00
Industrial School, Cleveland, 1892-1902	\$7,260.28
Invalids Home, Cleveland, 1887-1903	\$200.00
Jones Home for Friendless Children, 1903	\$4,075.00
Jones School for Children, 1891	\$50.00
Judson Mission Society (Cleveland, Ohio) 1884-1890	\$35.00
King, Rev. G.O., 1881-1891	\$1,174.53
Ladies Musical Association, 1886-1890	\$1,250.00
Lake View Congregational Church, 1890-1902	\$1,450.00
Lake Wood Baptist Church	\$4,490.00
Lakeside Hospital, 1894-1900	\$21,722.10
Lakeview Cemetery, 1899-1903	\$23,015.00
Law and Order Association, Cleveland, 1882-1886	\$130.00
LeRanger, Dr. (Cleveland, Ohio) 1893	\$10.00
Logan Avenue Baptist Church, 1884-1888	\$11,175.00
Madison Avenue Congregational Church, 1888	\$300.00
Music Hall (Cleveland, Ohio) 1886	\$5,000.00
Music Hall Missionary (Cleveland, Ohio) 1887-1888	\$400.00
News Boys Home, Cleveland, 1878, 1882	\$12.00
Nightingale Society (Cleveland, Ohio) 1890-1891	\$50.00
Old Ladies Home, Cleveland, 1879-1888	\$1,085.00
Olivet Chapel, 1885-1887	\$400.00
Parks, Mrs. (Cleveland, Ohio), 1898	\$30.00
Pilgrim Congregational Church, 1894	\$500.00
Plymouth Congregational Church, 1881-1899	\$2,810.00
Rainbow Cottage, 1894-1901	\$175.00
Retreat, 1878-1893	\$2,286.00
Rockefeller Park, 1896-1898	\$627,908.56
St. Clair Street Hospital, 1896	\$500.00
St. Marks Episcopal Church (West Cleveland, Ohio) 1901	\$250.00
Salvation Army Rescue Home, 1895-1905	\$600.00
Scott, George (Cleveland; for bicycle), 1894	\$25.00
Scoville Avenue Baptist Church, 1863-1879	\$2,995.00
Scranton Avenue Baptist Church, 1893	\$300.00
Second Baptist Church (or Euclid Avenue Baptist Church), 1868-1882	\$22,015.08
Second Presbyterian Church, Cleveland, 1880	\$300.00

<i>Organizations</i>	<i>Total Amount</i>
Soldiers Monument (Cleveland) 1868-1869	\$53.00
Stollem, Mrs. (Cleveland, Ohio) 1899	\$50.00
Stratton, L.A. (Cleveland, Ohio) 1899-1902	\$290.00
Superior Street Baptist Church, 1878-1902	\$6,975.00
Tabernacle Cleveland, 1878-1884	\$1,850.00
Temperance Work, Rocky River, 1881-1885	\$100.00
Third Baptist Church, 1885, 1889	\$465.00
Trinity Baptist Church, 1878-1882	\$1,050.00
Trinity Baptist Church (Newburgh), 1900-1901	\$5,500.00
Van Duzer, Mrs. (Cleveland, Ohio) 1885-1903	\$1,480.00
Viaduct Celebration (Cleveland, Ohio) 1878	\$25.00
Waller, Mrs. E.E. (Cleveland, Ohio) 1892-1902	\$975.00
West Side Baptist Church, 1865-1889	\$328.50
Western Reserve College, 1881	\$2,500.00
Western Reserve Historical Society, 1892, 1899	\$10,400.00
Willow Mission Chapel, 1892	\$1,000.00
Willson Avenue Baptist Church, 1878-1901	\$8,025.00
Willson Avenue Methodist Church, 1884	\$100.00
Willson Street Hospital, 1869	\$25.00
Windermere Presbyterian Church, 1897	\$100.00
Womens and Children Dispensary, 1882-1902	\$5,799.98
Women's Christian Temperance Union Nonpartisan, Cleveland, 1884-1903	\$26,865.00
Women's Exchange, 1894	\$25.00
Women's Home, 1869	\$5.00
Women's Relief Fund, 1898	\$50.00
Woodland Avenue Presbyterian Church, 1879, 1891	\$750.00
YMCA-Cleveland, 1867-1901	\$72,969.66
YMCA-Cleveland, Railroad Branches, 1879-1899	\$700.00
YMCA-East Cleveland Branch, 1882	\$20.00
TOTAL	\$1,625,522.77