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Correspondence concerning Arnaud Marts publication on Darrel Roberts, titled "Amost Unforgettable Giver," 1968

Unforgettable Characters in Fund Raising:
Daniel C. Roberts

A MOST UNFORGETTABLE GIVER

by Arnaud C. Marts

The story of Daniel C. Roberts is a truly American saga - of a boy who started his career as a clerk, became a millionaire and discovered in later life that giving money, to help ambitious youth and to make a finer world, can be as much fun as making money. His story is best told in three parts - his early life, his active business career and his retirement years.

Dan Roberts, The Boy

Daniel was born in 1859 in Felts Mills, a small village near Watertown, New York. At 16, he got his first job for pay in a widely-patronized general store in Watertown - Moore & Smith. His $2.50 per week pay just about paid for his board and lodging, but in this store he came face to face with his future career. Four slightly older boys worked in the same busy store - Frank Woolworth, his brother Charles, their cousin Seymour H. Knox, and Fred M. Kirby. Each would, within a few years, start a store of his own, and one of them would take young Dan along with him.

The unique idea of the stores which these adventurous young men would soon open in three widely separated cities was suggested to them by a table in the rear of the Moore & Smith store on which Mr. Moore tossed many miscellaneous items and featured them for sale at the one price of five cents. That five cent table was a great attraction to customers. They would go first to the table to pick up a five cent bargain before making any other purchase. It became so popular that Mr. Moore searched for items which he might sell profitably on the five cent table.

Young Dan, energetic and enthusiastic, was having a grand time. When Mr. Moore raised his weekly pay to $3.50 a week, Dan was elated. He celebrated the next weekend by hiring a livery rig and driving nine miles to Felts Mills to report the good news to his father. His father congratulated him, but reminded him that the rig was costing him the amount of his raise for two weeks. American boys in those days were brought up on such bits of

folk wisdom as "A penny saved is a penny got." It was good advice for a boy destined to be the buyer for the great Woolworth Chain, which made profits in penny amounts.

His Active Career

The young clerks in the Moore Store were greatly impressed by the ~~5¢~~ FIVE CENT table and each decided to try out a ~~5¢~~ FIVE CENT store on his own. Frank Woolworth borrowed $300 from Mr. Moore and opened up his own store at Utica, New York in 1879, but it lasted only a short time. He then opened another in Lancaster, Pa., which was more successful. At Lancaster he added ~~10¢~~ ten cent items for sale - thus the "5 & 10" of our modern day. He opened more stores - in Philadelphia, York, Newark, New York and elsewhere.

Frank Woolworth encouraged his brother Charles and Fred Kirby to open a store in Wilkes-Barre which was to be the first in a chain of stores. His cousin Seymour Knox started a chain of similar stores in Buffalo, and Erie, Pa.

Fred Kirby

In a short time Kirby bought Charles Woolworth out and the chain became known as F. M. Kirby Chain. He had a store in Cleveland which was losing money and he thought of the smart ambitious boy in the Moore Store in Watertown - Dan Roberts. He sent Dan to Cleveland to manage the store. Kirby gave him no instructions as to "how to do it" but Dan did his best work when a job seemed impossible. In one hard gruelling year he turned the deficits into a small profit of $9,000. After three years Dan's store was the most profitable in the whole Kirby Chain of 96 stores in ten states, including the "mother store" at Wilkes-Barre. Kirby then called Roberts to Wilkes-Barre

as buyer for the whole chain of stores, and a few years later admitted him as a partner and officer of the F. M. Kirby Company.

The Big Merger

Frank Woolworth was obviously a man of large business vision and of courage to dare a great venture. He had learned that mass production for a massive array of customers could produce and market a vast number of items which could be sold at a profit for only ~~5¢ or 10¢~~ FIVE OR TEN CENTS.

By 1912 he had merged the S. H. Knox Chain, the F. M. Kirby Chain, the Charles Woolworth Chain with his own chain of stores, into the F. W. Woolworth Company, and thus acquired a merchandising apparatus of over 1,000 stores with millions of cash customers ready to buy in hundreds of cities.

He paid the owners of each of the merged chains with Woolworth Comapny stock. Thus, each of our former young clerks in the Moore Store eventually became a multi-millionaire and proceeded to live his own version of a millionaire's life.

Daniel Roberts - Woolworth Buyer

If they desired further active duties, the men who had been successful in creating and managing their own store chains were brought into the merged Woolworth Chain in responsible management positions. Daniel Roberts, who always preferred work to idleness, chose a continued active career and was appointed to the important job of buyer.

It appears that the success of the 5¢ and 10¢ business is far more dependent upon wise buying than it is upon persuasive salesmanship at the customer point of contact. Mr. Roberts went about his new duties with enthusiasm, energy and intelligence, and proved himself an able buyer.

He told me of one trip to Europe where he found a most interesting and useful item which he believed would attract interested buyers in the Christmas season. There was no automatic computer machine at that period,

so he had to figure out its sale potential with pencil and paper. This included mass production in Europe, shipping costs to New York, storage in Brooklyn, shipments to one thousand retail stores, display and sales in the stores. He estimated that a large quantity of them (I have forgotten what they were) would be sold for 10¢ each, with a Woolworth profit equal to the customary percentage. He ordered them. He told me that when he returned to New York he was greeted with jeers, - "no Brooklyn storage was available for that size shipment; no one would buy them; and they would bring a big loss."

Roberts arranged to buy an empty storage plant in Brooklyn. The articles were put on sale in the 1000 stores. They were bought so fast that all were gone by December 15. Mr. Roberts told me the story quietly, modestly, but with a happy smile.

His Years of Retirement ~~in Wilkes-Barre~~

By the 1920's the original Woolworth team of boys from the Moore Store in Watertown was no longer in charge of the mammoth "5 & 10" chain, which then had 2,400 stores in America and 600 abroad.

Frank Woolworth had died in 1919, and members of his family were more interested in enjoying his fortune than in pursuing careers in the Woolworth Company.

Fred Kirby built a fine stone home in Wilkes-Barre and became that city's most generous and responsive community leader. He also became a trustee of Lafayette College, at Easton, Pa. just over the Blue Ridge Mountains from Wilkes-Barre, and was the largest donor that college ever had until his son Allen P. Kirby succeeded him as trustee and donor.

In Buffalo, Seymour Knox became a leader in business, financial and community life. IN EAST AURORA, He developed a world-famous horse breeding farm which produced many winning horses. As ~~an East Aurora~~ high school boy, I was stat especially impressed with the farm's half-mile covered race track, but had no idea it had any relation to the "5 & 10" where I did most of my trade.

Daniel Roberts

Mr. Roberts had no comparable hobby or absorbing interest around which to polarize his retirement at about the age of 60. He bought the eight room frame house in Wilkes-Barre where his friend Fred Kirby had lived, and lived simply with his wife and a couple of servants. His married daughter, Mrs. Bessie Warner, made her home with her husband and teenage son, Daniel, several blocks away.

But the pace and thrill of the Woolworth life was gone, and Roberts was not born to just sit and brood. He had all the income he wanted. He had given his wife one half of his Woolworth stock before there were laws limiting this action, and set up trust funds for his daughter and his grandson. He took care of every family obligation and he could think of nothing else really important to do.

It was suggested that he get a place in Miami where Mrs. Roberts and he could spend the winter months. He tried it for two or three years but was not much interested. Persuaded to join a fishing club while there, he resigned after two years because it was really not his sport, and like a true Woolworth buyer he figured how much each fish cost him - $150. It was not a profitable deal!

Back in Wilkes-Barre, his leisure was no more rewarding. He felt complimented when he was invited to become a member of the leading social club. He accepted, paid his dues, and on the following Saturday afternoon he walked into the card room where many members were playing bridge or poker. They looked at him but no one asked him to take a hand. He walked out the other side, recovered his hat from the cloakroom and left the club. He never returned, but he continued to pay his annual dues as long as the bills were sent to him - for many years - he told me.

Meanwhile he was besieged by mail and phone by persons who heard of his wealth and begged for his charity. He showed me some of these letters. They were demanding, sobbing, or vilifying if he did not respond. It was a bitter experience for this man who was a simple and kindly person by nature. As a result he became somewhat withdrawn with strangers, distrustful and defensive. It began to be murmured about by disappointed solicitors that Dan Roberts was "the meanest man in town."

But he was generous at heart when given the privilege of choice. He once told me that he would never give to any one who asked him. This seemed to him to be his only way to keep his right to choose whom or what he would help. He became a somewhat unhappy rich man.

There was a Baptist Church up the street a few blocks from his residence which seemed to him to be composed of plain and good people, who were trying to live good lives. They undertook a campaign for a fund for a new building which was much needed. Mr. Roberts invited the Minister to visit him. At the close of the visit the Minister, Rev. Charles Rousch, took away the largest gift the Church had ever received.

When the new Church was dedicated, Mr. Roberts had a special invitation to attend. He accepted with pleasure and enjoyed the occasion immensely until he put on his overcoat and started home. He discovered that a pick-pocket had stolen his wallet with $200 in it. He told me this tale in later years with a wry look as though to say, "I can't even give money to a church without something happening to me."

I will tell of just one more event which helped to make his years of retirement disappointing to him. I have mentioned that years previously he had given to his wife one half of the several thousand shares of Woolworth stock which he had received from the Woolworth Company when it absorbed the F. M. Kirby Chain, of which he was a major stockholder. In the latter half of the 1930 decade, his wife was taken seriously ill and passed away.

Her estate was probated, of course, and it was announced that she had left her Woolworth stock, worth about $2,500,000, to her husband, which was quite to have been expected. But meanwhile, the New Deal Federal Government and the ~~Pennsylvania State Company~~ STATE of had enacted some estate taxes that were new to older generations of citizens, such as Dan Roberts. The federal and state tax collectors claimed and took about one half of the Woolworth stock values which Mrs. Roberts had bequeathed to her husband.

Mr. Roberts was amazed and furious. "That was my stock which I gave her. Now she gives it back to me and taxes consume one half of it, - I would rather have burned it up" he exclaimed to me and probably to many others. After Mr. Roberts' death, the tax collectors made me testify in court to having heard Mr. Roberts say this, much to my embarrassment and distaste for their motive and manner.

I have told enough, I believe, to suggest how a kindly, able, somewhat introverted, former village boy found retirement as a millionaire to be frustrating, and even hostile.

Now I will tell how, quite accidentally, he came to experience a new enthusiasm for life - a new enjoyment, which prompted his daughter, Mrs. Warner, to say to me, "I have never known my father to be as happy as he has been these last three years of his friendship with you, when he has had fun instead of pain from his money."

Daniel Roberts and I met in September, 1935, under entirely unplanned fortuitous circumstances. Neither of us had ever previously heard of the other. I was a resident of New Jersey with my business headquarters in New York City, and was a trustee of Bucknell University at Lewisburg, Penn. though that was not my Alma Mater. When the then President of Bucknell resigned, the Board of Trustees held an emergency meeting which I could not attend. After this meeting, I received the unexpected and startling news from another trustee that I had been elected President, contingent on my acceptance. I expressed my thanks for the compliment, but explained that my business responsibilities prevented my summarily leaving my firm, which I served as President.

My visitor was an extremely skillful salesman. He asked if I would become Acting President for one year and help Bucknell to find just the right president. I agreed, provided I could perform the duties of Acting President during half of each week and continue my own business duties in New York and my own home in New Jersey. He arranged for me to spend the following Saturday with a Bucknell trustee committee at the summer home on Harveys Lake, Penn. of Senator Andrew J. Sordoni, one of the trustees.

We met there as planned, a short auto ride from Wilkes-Barre. Next door to Senator Sordoni's lake-side house, was a modest frame house which Senator Sordoni told me was owned by an old gentleman named Daniel Roberts. "He has the reputation of being a crotchety old fellow," said Sordoni, "but I like him. He's all right at heart but he feels he has to put on a mean face to keep people from taking advantage of him. My boy, Jack," said Sordoni, "shot out a small pane of glass in Roberts' cellar window with his little rifle and Roberts came storming over to demand it be replaced. I asked Jack if he did it. Jack admitted it and I told Jack to use some of his own money and replace the window pane. Jack did, and Roberts and I have understood and respected each other ever since."

A couple of years later, Mr. Roberts told me the same story and added a bit that only a Woolworth buyer would have regarded as important. He added, "The glass repair man was taking away the broken pieces of the ~~broken~~ window after replacing it with the new pane, but I stopped him. They were my pieces and I might have need for the larger pieces of glass at some time in the future to patch up a window."

At this meeting of the Bucknell Committee at Senator Sordoni's lake-side house, the Senator told me that at a recent Bucknell Trustees' meeting he had nominated Mr. Roberts for membership on the Board and that Roberts had been elected and notified, but he had not yet accepted nor replied. Sordoni arranged for us to meet Mr. Roberts in his home. On our visit, we found a gentleman on guard against a stranger, but wanting to be friendly. It was explained that I did not feel I should leave my own business responsibilities but I was willing, as a trustee of Bucknell, to spend a few days at the college each

week for a year to help get a new administration installed. He seemed to understand and to agree, and said he would be willing to serve on the Bucknell Board if it was understood that he would not be required to make the 65 mile trip to Lewisburg to attend Board Meetings. I assured him we would not burden him, that we would keep him informed through the mail, and that I would drop in on him occasionally if he desired to be fully informed. We shook hands on that, and thus began a new interest for the frustrated millionaire; and a wonderfully new experience for me in becoming acquainted, and growing to know, admire and regard with deep affection the warm generous man.

Daniel Roberts - Trustee of Bucknell University

In October 1935 I began my part-time duties as Acting President of Bucknell and was presented to the students and faculty, who received me cordially.

I recognized at that moment that I was undertaking a most unusual relationship and responsibility. I made a brief speech and asked for a united effort by students, faculty, alumni and all other friends. I repeated remarks made by some of my friends who had advised me against absenting myself from business for half-time for a year. They had questioned "Why?". I could only reply that I had one thousand reasons, one for each Bucknell student, and looking at them I earnestly felt and said, "I hope that each of you will get some values, some motivations, and inspiration for lives of usefulness and fulfillment from your Bucknell experience in the coming year."

Apparently the Wilkes-Barre newspapers and radio reported this speech. The next day I had a message from my new friend, Daniel Roberts, inviting me to take lunch with him. He said, "I agree with what you said about

1,000 students being 1,000 reasons for helping Bucknell. I went to work at 16 and never finished high school, but times are different and boys need more education in order to succeed in life."

"You keep on giving what time you can spare to help these young folks get an education and I will help with money." It was a great encouragement to me and he lived up to his promise with great enjoyment.

He apparently told some of his friends about this conversation with me, because it was used after Mr. Roberts' death by an overzealous attorney in an unsuccessful attempt to attack the legality of Mr. Roberts' generosity, which I will relate later.

Rebuilding Bucknell's "Old Main"

My first fund-raising job was staring me in my face when I arrived as Acting President of Bucknell. "Old Main" had been burned down a few years previously and the charred remains were still on view at the crest of the beautiful campus. At the first meeting of the Board I asked approval of a fund-raising program for about $500,000 to rebuild the much needed buildin g. Alumni, trustees, local citizens responded well to the appeal; newspapers and college publications carried reports on the progress of the funds. Again I received an invitation to take lunch with Mr. Roberts at his home. He was interested in the progress of the fund and asked how much more was needed. After lunch, he asked me to step over to the bank with him. He went down to the vault and when he returned he asked me to step over to a broker's office. There he transferred 2,000 shares of Woolworth stock to Bucknell University. He handed it to me. "For Old Main", he quietly said, "worth about $50 per share." I was stricken speechless but recovered to give him my warm thanks. We walked

back to his residence where my car was parked. By that time I had an idea, and said, "Mr. Roberts, 'Old Main' is in three sections. The center section will cost $100,000. Would you permit Bucknell to name it the Daniel C. Roberts Hall?" His face broke out into a marvelously happy smile. He said, "If you would really like to."

We rebuilt "Old Main" promptly and Mr. Roberts was the "Mystery Guest of Honor" on the day of dedication. It had been announced that some one had given $100,000 but the donor's name had not been revealed. We prepared a bronze tablet honoring Daniel C. Roberts which still hangs in the lobby of Roberts Hall and reads:

"A Friend of Ambitious Youth

A Generous Benefactor of Mankind."

This tablet was unveiled at the dedication of the Daniel C. Roberts Hall, in the presence of Mr. Roberts himself, and the donor thus ceased to be a mystery. Mr. Roberts returned to Wilkes-Barre a thoroughly happy man, and the city's newspapers and radio programs were doing him well-deserved honor.

The begging letters to him were multiplied in number and invective. He was called many unpleasant names for "giving money to a rich college". He could shake these criticisms off more easily now because he was being recognized publicly as a generous man.

The Men's Gymnasium

During the next three years, prior to Mr. Roberts' death, he was enthusiasticly interested in the progress at Bucknell. His invitations to visit were frequent and he would ask eagerly what was most needed next. First, it was a

Men's Gymnasium. He gave me enough Woolworth stock to pay for more than half its cost. A half dozen generous trustees promptly gave the other half. He had the good judgment to decline having it named for him. "One Roberts building is enough," he said. He wanted it named for me. I declined, of course, and explained it was not acceptable practice for a college president to use his position to approve a memorial to himself. He was disappointed but understanding. We then agreed to recommend to the Board of Trustees that it be named for a trustee, John Warren Davis, who had maneuvered me into the presidency of Bucknell. This was agreed upon, without Judge Davis' fore-knowledge. Mr. Roberts came to the inaugural ceremony and helped to dedicate the building.

The Bucknell Junior College at Wilkes-Barre

When I was catapulted into the presidency of Bucknell, I quickly discovered that I was also President of Bucknell Junior College at Wilkes-Barre, 65 miles away from the Bucknell campus. My predecessor, Dr. Rainey, had started these classes in response to a request from a committee of local high school principals who were deeply concerned to see many of their able graduates unable to go to college. The general depression of the 1930's had been especially hard on the boys and girls of that anthracite coal area, because of the prolonged unemployment of the coal miners.

So Buckn ell had rented a vacant building, which had been built for a business college, and arranged for teachers from Bucknell to drive to Wilkes-Barre to give regular freshman and sophomore college courses to qualified high school graduates.

The response of the young people had been far beyond expectations,

and when I found myself President of this over-flowing Junior College, it was very clear that the new president of Bucknell had some hard decisions to make in Wilkes-Barre. It was obviously up to me to decide whether I should continue to hold the enrollment down to the 400 young men and women who could be crowded into the rented building, or seek additional buildings to accommodate the rising numbers of young people applying for admission. I chose the latter in favor of the ambitious young people. First, I searched for a man who would take charge. I found him in Eugene S. Farley, a six-foot Quaker and a Ph. D. graduate of the University of Pennsylvania. He accepted the job in part because his friends warned him not to - too many problems. He, like Daniel Roberts, seemed to enjoy impossible jobs, for he has made a magnificent record at Wilkes-Barre. The Junior College became Wilkes College ten years later when it was able to obtain its own charter, and Dr. Farley has been its only president. Under his leadership Wilkes College has developed into a highly respected and fully accredited four-year college with over 2200 students.

He and I proceeded to find or build suitable facilities for the growing Junior College. We interested several families who had large homes on River Street, which they no longer occupied more than a month or so a year, to give them to Bucknell as a campus for the Junior College. Mrs. John Conyngham of New York was the first to agree; then Admiral Harold S. Stark of Washington; then Allen Kirby of New Jersey. One followed the other so fast, it was quite breathtaking. I received an amusing radiogram from one Wilkes-Barre citizen, Mr. Julius Stern, who was on vacation in Bermuda. He owned a home on the next block beyond the Kirby home, and when word reached him in Bermuda of the River Street homes that were being given for the Bucknell Junior College, he radioed me, "Please don't take my home until I can return and remove my furniture."

I inject the story of the Buckn ell Junior College at this point because it brought me to Wilkes-Barre nearly every week until Dr. Farley was fully in charge. Mr. Roberts felt more comfortable about inviting me to visit him. Consequently we were drawn more closely together by these frequent visits. He knew that I had to make the 65-mile drive from Lewisburg to Wilkes-Barre each week on the Junior College business.

The Bucknell Debt

After the Davis Gymnasium was dedicated he asked what I was to work on next. I told him that Bucknell owed a Philadelphia bank several hundreds of thousands of dollars for operating deficits which had piled up during the deep depression when student enrollments and alumni gifts had fallen very seriously in all colleges. He looked at me very sharply and asked, "Are you operating at a loss now?" I replied, "No indeed, not at Bucknell nor in my business in New York, I have the same policy at both ends of my line - pay as you go, - if you can't pay, don't go." He looked at me and grinned. "Why must you pay this debt off now," he asked. "In order to stop paying interest. I need that money to restore faculty salaries that were cut in the depression." "Come on down to the bank," he said, and a few thousand more shares of Woolworth stock started me off on the next round of fund raising, which soon paid off an astonished bank vice president in Philadelphia who had been making a career of reminding me of the unpleasant things he might have to do to collect money from the college.

The Bucknell Student Petition

About this time, the student body of Bucknell did a very kind thing - bless their hearts! I think back about them as I read the street capers of present-day

student "activists" who are demanding full participation in all decision making. How naive the 1968 campus demonstrators are; how glibly they talk about complicated and burdensome responsibilities which they will only begin dimly to comprehend when they are about fifteen years older.

In order to remain visible and real to the Bucknell students, I arranged to be present at an assembly each Thursday morning which was attended by the faculty and the student body. About the end of my second year with the title of Acting President, I arose to close the Thursday morning assembly, when two students stepped out into the aisle and asked if they might come forward. There was a rustle of excitement in the crowded auditorium. Apparently I was the only person who was not in on it.

The two young men came to the platform, announced that they bore a petition addressed to me, which was signed by each of the 1200 students each member of the administration, and the faculty. They then read the petition which, in brief, asked me to accept the title of President of Bucknell University, and made "...a pledge to you of our local support in the years to come."

I was deeply affected by this friendly act, and promised to give their request full consideration. I dismissed the Assembly - they all rushed off to a belated lunch, and I drove up to the highest point on the golf course and gazed out over the Alleghenies to the west and the valley of the Susquehanna to the east to try to see my way into the future.

The Engineering Building

The next day I was in Wilkes-Barre as usual at the Junior College. Mr. Roberts asked me to visit him. His daughter, Mrs. Warner, was present. He was elated. The Wilkes-Barre radio had broadcast the news of the Bucknell

President who had been petitioned by the students to stay on, and the newspapers had headlined it. He was anxious to learn what I was going to reply to the petition. I said, "I would let them call me their President instead of Acting President, but I could not change my weekly divided schedule because my business associates feel they also need me." I said if the Trustees would wish me to continue the schedule as I had I would agree to drop the word "Acting" from my title. "That's all that is needed, in my opinion," he commented. Then he asked his customary question, "What are you working at especially now at Bucknell?" "New wings for the Engineering Building," I replied. "We must keep up to the requirements for new laboratories and equipment, or else," He nodded. "Let's go over to the bank."

Before we left, I had a few moments with his daughter and said, "Mrs. Warner, do you approve of your father giving away so much stock to Bucknell? Is Bucknell getting stock that should be given to you and your son Danny?" Mrs. Warner answered promptly, "Not only approve it, I encourage my father to do it. He has set up irrevocable trust funds for Danny and me that will provide each of us our needs for all our lives. You have brought a joy and a zest to his life during the past two years beyond anything I have ever known him to experience. Please continue your relations and continue to let him help you help deserving young people. You just can't realize what it means to him."

Mr. Roberts gave me his own thanks on one of my last visits before his death. As we sat in his parlor after lunch, an elderly man walked by. Mr. Roberts said, "I feel sorry for that old fellow. He is rich, but unhappy. He is about my age and he has about as much wealth as I have. But he has not learned what you taught me - how to enjoy my money. You showed me how I could give money to help ambitious boys get an education. You showed me how I could do it while I

am still alive and can see it - like the Daniel Roberts Hall and the Men's Gymnasium. But this old chap has only one enjoyment with his money. He plays a game each year - to keep his money invested so he will be worth more on December 31st each year than he was worth on January 1st of that year. He is so excited and happy when he wins that game that he tells all his friends about it. Poor old fellow; I pity him."

The New Library

I recall only one additional visit I had with Mr. Roberts, the last before his death. He asked his usual question, "What is next at Bucknell?" My reply was, "A new library at a cost of $500,000 or more." We talked about it for a while, and then made our trip to the bank. This time he handed me 5,000 shares of Woolworth stock, I believe, which was worth about one half of the estimated cost. Again I asked if we might name the building for him. Again he declined and suggested that it be named for me. Again, I declined. He then said, "I leave the name to your judgment." I suppose he realized he would not be alive to see the building and to help select the name. (Several years later the new library was built and named for a generous lady, who gave a large sum to supplant Mr. Roberts' gift and to endow the library.)

He was taken ill soon after this visit and died quietly, after a brief illness, at the age of eighty.

Mrs. Warner asked me to pay tribute to her father at the funeral, which would be conducted by the Rev. Charles Rousch in the Roberts' home. I was proud to be asked to pay a tribute to the life and spirit and memory of this generous man who, in his quiet, withdrawn manner, had helped thousands of ambitious young people who never knew him nor ever guessed how much they owed him for their college education.

His Will

I have referred above to two comments Mr. Roberts made to me which were used by a lawyer of state tax authorities in an endeavor to impose a tax on Mr. Roberts' generosity to Bucknell University.

The Roberts Will was being probated, and I was summoned as a witness. The state of Pennsylvania put in aclaim for a ~~state~~ tax on all the Woolworth stock which Mr. Roberts had given Bucknell during the last three years of his life. The claim was that Mr. Roberts had given the stock in anticipation of death, because he was angered when a heavy tax had been imposed on the Woolworth stock which his wife had left him in her will. The lawyer stated that Mr. Roberts had said in the presence of several witnesses that he would "...rather have burned up the stock than pay those taxes." The lawyer asked me in an irritating tone if I had heard Mr. Roberts make such a statement. I replied that I had, but that Mr. Roberts had begun to give Woolworth stock to Bucknell before his wife died and so I failed to see the connection.

The lawyer then said it had been generally understood among Mr. Roberts' friends that he had told me that if I would give my time for the students of Bucknell, he would give his money. The lawyer asked if he had said that. I replied that he had.

The lawyer jumped about and declared that this constituted a "contract" and as such put Mr. Roberts' gifts to Bucknell out of the field of philanthropy into taxable territory.

I commented that Mr. Roberts was only one of many persons who had offered their full support if I would continue to serve Bucknell.

It happened that at the time of this effort of the State ~~Bureau~~ to tax Mr. Roberts' gifts to Bucknell, I was a member of the Cabinet in Harrisburg of Governor

Arthur H. James, in charge of the State Council of Defense. Governor James' home is in Wilkes-Barre, so he knew all about my ordeal with the Tax Bureau attorney. When I next went to my office at the State Capitol in Harrisburg, Governor James sent for me. "I hear you were in Wilkes-Barre the other day," he said, "Did they give you a bad time?" "They tried to, but they had to make up with roughness for what they lacked in justice," I replied. "Maybe you are right," the Governor said. That is the last I ever heard of the matter.

Now a final backward glimpse of two of the boys in the Moore Store in Watertown where this story of "A Most Unforgettable Giver" started.

The frame home on West River Street where Daniel Roberts lived and died in Wilkes-Barre is now part of the campus of Wilkes College, which blossomed out of Bucknell Junior College in 1945, a gift of Daniel Roberts Warner, his grandson.

The stone house which Fred Kirby had built was given by his son, Allen P. Kirby, and became a major feature of the Wilkes College campus.

These are pleasant reminders of two of the young clerks in the Moore Store, who became generous millionaires through their interest in the "5¢ table" in the Watertown store.

Arnaud C. Marts is Honorary Chairman of the Board of Marts and Lundy, Inc., a fund-raising counsel for nonprofit agencies, of which he was a co-founder in 1926. He was formerly President of Bucknell University, which honored him recently by naming its administration center after him. He was a co-founder and past President of the American Association of Fund-Raising Counsel.

A MOST UNFORGETTABLE GIVER
DANIEL C. ROBERTS
by
ARNAUD C. MARTS

I will tell this story briefly, in three short chapters.

1. The village boy from the "North Country" of Western New York State, and his first job.

2. His active career in association with other founders of the great F. W. Woolworth Co. "5 & 10" cent"Stores.

3. His years of retirement in Wilkes-Barre, Penna. and his accidental discovery that giving money to help ambitious youth, and to make a finer world can be as much fun as making money.

Chapter I. Dan Roberts, the Boy.

Daniel was born in 1859 in a small village in Jefferson County, New York, Felts Mills, near Watertown close to Lake Ontario. When he was 16 years old he got his first job for pay in a widely-patronized general store in Watertown - Moore & Smith. His pay was $2.50 per week which just about paid for his board and lodging. In this store he came face to face with his future career. There were four slightly older boys at work in the same busy store - Frank Woolworth, his brother Charles Woolworth, Woolworth's cousin Seymour H. Knox, and Fred M. Kirby. They were local boys, the Woolworths from the town of Rodman, and Kirby from Brownville.

Each of these older boys would, within a few years, start a store of his own, and one of them would take young Dan along with him.

The unique idea of the stores which these adventurous young men would soon open in three widely separated cities, was suggested to

them by a table in the rear of the Moore & Smith store on which Mr. Moore tossed many miscellaneous items and featured them for sale at the one price of five cents. That five cent table was a great attraction to customers and they would go first to the table to pick out a five cent bargain before making any other purchase. It became so popular that Mr. Moore searched for many items which he might sell profitably on the five cent table.

Young Dan was having a grand time. He was energetic and enthusiastic. Mr. Moore raised his weekly pay to $3.50 a week. Dan was elated. He decided to celebrate the next weekend by hiring a livery rig and driving nine miles to his home at Felts Mills to report the good news to his father. His father congratulated him, but reminded him that the livery rig was costing him the amount of his raise for two weeks. American boys in those days were brought up on such bits of folk wisdom as "A penny saved is a penny got." It was good advice for a boy who was destined to be the buyer for the great Woolworth Chain of stores which made profits in penny amounts.

Chapter II - His Active Career

The young clerks in the Moore Store were greatly impressed by the 5¢ table and each decided to try out a 5¢ store on his own. Frank Woolworth borrowed $300 from Mr. Moore and opened up his own store at Utica, New York in 1879, but it lasted only a short time. He then went to Lancaster,Pa. and opened another 5¢ store which was more successful. It was at Lancaster that he added 10¢ items for sale - thus the"5 & 10" of our modern day. He opened more stores - in Philadelphia, York, Newark, New York and elsewhere.

Frank Woolworth encouraged his brother Charles and Fred Kirby to open a store in Wilkes-Barre which soon became the first in a chain of stores. His cousin Seymour Knox started a chain of similar stores in Buffalo, and Erie,Penna.

FRED KIRBY

In a short time Kirby bought Charles Woolworth out and the chain became known as the F. M. Kirby Chain, He had a store in Cleveland which was losing money and he thought of the smart ambitious boy in the Moore Store in Watertown - Dan Roberts. He sent Dan to Cleveland to manage the store. He gave Roberts no instructions as to "how to do it" but Dan did his best work when a job seemed impossible. At the end of the first hard gruelling year he turned the deficits into a small profit of $9,000. At the end of three years Dan's store was the most profitable one in the whole Kirby Chain of 96 stores in ten states. It was even more profitable than the "mother store" at Wilkes-Barre. Kirby called Roberts to Wilkes-Barre and appointed him buyer for the whole chain of stores, and within a few years admitted him as a partner and officer of the F. M. Kirby Company.

THE BIG MERGER

Frank Woolworth was obviously a man of large business vision and of courage to date a great venture. He had learned that mass production for a massive array of customers could produce and market a vast number of items which could be sold at only 5¢ or 10¢ but still at a profit.

By 1912 he merged the S. H. Knox Chain, the F. M. Kirby Chain, the Charles Woolworth Chain with his own chain of stores, into the F. W. Woolworth Company and thus acquired a merchandising apparatus of over

1,000 stores with millions of cash customers ready to buy in hundreds of cities.

The owners of each of the merged chains WERE ~~was~~ paid in Woolworth Company stock.

MULTI-MILLIONAIRES

Thus each of our former young clerks in the Moore Store became a multi-millionaire and each proceeded to live his own version of a millionaire.

DANIEL ROBERTS- WOOLWORTH BUYER

The men who had been successful in creating and managing their own store chains were brought into the merged Woolworth Chain in responsible management positions, if they desired further active duties. Daniel Roberts, who always preferred work to idleness, chose a continued active career and he was appointed to the important job of buyer.

It appears that the success of the 5¢ and 10¢ business is far more dependent upon wise buying than it is upon persuasive salesmanship at the customer point of contact. Mr. Roberts went about his new duties with enthusiasm, energy and intelligence, and proved himself an able buyer.

He told me of one trip to Europe where he found a most interesting and useful item which he believed would attract interested buyers in the Christmas season. There was no automatic computer machine at that period, so he had to figure out its sale potential with pencil and paper. This included mass production in Europe, the cost of a large freighter to New York, storage in Brooklyn, shipments to one thousand retail stores, display and sales in the stores. He estimated that a large quantity of them (I have

forgotten what they were) would be sold for 10¢ each, with a Woolworth profit equal to the customary percentage. He ordered them. He told me that when he returned to New York and made his report he was greeted with jeers, - "No Brooklyn storage was available for that size shipment; no one would buy them; and they would bring a big loss."

Roberts arranged to buy an empty storage plant in Brooklyn. The articles were put on sale in the 1000 stores. They were bought so fast that all were gone from all the stores by December 15. Mr. Roberts told me the story quietly, modestly, but with a happy smile.

CHAPTER III-His Years of Retirement in Wilkes-Barre

In the 1920's the original Woolworth team of boys from the Moore Store in Watertown was no longer in charge of the mammoth "5 & 10 cent chain" which then had 2,400 stores in America and 600 abroad.

Frank Woolworth had died in 1919, and members of his family were more interested in enjoying his fortune than in pursuing careers in the Woolworth Company.

The great Woolworth Building in New York had been designed by the famed architect Cass Gilbert as the tallest building in the world, and stood as a worthy monument to the achievements of the Moore clerks who had pioneered the "5 & 10" era of American community life.

Fred Kirby built a fine stone home in Wilkes-Barre and became that city's most generous and responsive community leader. He also became a trustee of Lafayette College, at Easton, Pa. just over the Blue Ridge Mountains from Wilkes-Barre, and he was the largest donor that college ever had until his son Allen P. Kirby succeeded him as trustee and donor.

In Buffalo, Seymour Knox became a leader in business, financial and community life. He also developed a world-famous horse breeding farm of thousands of acres in nearby East Aurora. Horses bred and trained on his farms won many races and prizes. A unique feature of his establishment was a covered half-mile race track which enabled his trainers to exercise and race their horses in foul weather as well as fair. As an East Aurora High School boy, I was especially impressed by this covered track and had no idea that it had any relation to the "5 & 10 Store" where I did most of my trade in nickel purchases.

DANIEL ROBERTS

Mr. Roberts had no comparable hobby or absorbing interest around which to polarize his retirement at about the age of 60. He bought the eight room frame house in Wilkes-Barre where his friend Fred Kirby had lived before building his fine stone home mentioned above. He and his wife lived simply with a couple of servants, and his married daughter, Mrs. Bessie Warner, made her home with her husband and teenage son, Daniel, several blocks away.

But the pace and thrill of the Woolworth life was gone, and Roberts was not born just to sit and brood. He had all the income he wanted. He had given his wife one half of his Woolworth stock before there were laws limiting this action. He set up trust funds for his daughter and his grandson. He took care of every family obligation and he could think of nothing else really important for him to do.

It was suggested that he get a place in Miami where Mrs. Roberts and he could spend the winter months. He tried it for two or three years but he was not much interested. He was persuaded to join a fishing club while

in Florida, but he resigned after two years because it was really not his sport, and like a true Woolworth buyer he figured how much each fish cost him - $150. It was not a profitable deal!

Back in Wilkes-Barre, his leisure was no more rewarding. He felt complimented when he was invited to become a member of the leading social club. He accepted, paid his dues, and on the following Saturday afternoon he walked into the card room where many members were playing bridge or poker. They looked at him but no one asked him to take a hand. He walked out the other side, recovered his hat from the cloakroom and left the club. He never returned, but he continued to pay his annual dues as long as the bills were sent to him - for many years - he told me.

Meanwhile he was besieged by mail and phone by persons who heard of his wealth and begged for his charity. He showed me some of these letters. They were demanding, sobbing, or vilifying if he did not respond. It was a bitter experience for this man who was a simple and kindly person by nature. As a result he became somewhat withdrawn with strangers, distrustful and defensive. It began to be murmured about by disappointed solicitors that Dan Roberts was "the meanest man in town."

But he was generous at heart when given the privilege of choice. He once told me that he would never give to any one who asked him. This seemed to him to be his only way to keep his right to choose whom or what he would help. He became a somewhat unhappy rich man.

There was a Baptist Church up the street a few blocks from his residence which seemed to him to be composed of plain and good people, who were trying tolive good lives. They undertook a campaign for a fund

for a new building which was much needed. Mr. Roberts invited the Minister to visit him. At the close of the visit the Minister, Rev. Charles Rousch, received from Mr. Roberts the largest gift the Church had ever received.

When the new Church was dedicated, Mr. Roberts had a special invitation to attend. He accepted with pleasure and enjoyed the occasion immensely until he put on his overcoat and started home. He discovered that a pick-pocket had stolen his wallet with $200 in it. He told me this tale in later years with a wry look as though to say, "I can't even give money to a church without something happening to me."

I will tell of just one more event which helped to make his years of retirement disappointing to him. I have mentioned that years previously he had given to his wife one half of the several thousand shares of Woolworth stock which he had received from the Woolworth Company when it absorbed the F. M. Kirby Chain of which he was a major stockholder. In the latter half of the 1930 decade, his wife was taken seriously ill and passed away.

Her estate was probated, of course, and it was announced that she had left all the remainder of her Woolworth stock worth about $2,500,000 to her husband, which was quite to have been expected. But meanwhile, the New Deal Federal Government and the Pennsylvania State Company had enacted some estate taxes that were new to older generations of citizens, such as Dan Roberts. The federal and state tax collectors claimed and took about one half of the Woolworth stock values which Mrs. Roberts had bequeathed to her husband.

Mr. Roberts was amazed and furious. "That was my stock which I gave her. Now she gives it back to me and taxes consume one half of it, - I would rather have burned it up" he exclaimed to me and probably to many others. After Mr. Roberts' death, the tax collectors made me testify in court to having heard Mr. Roberts say this, much to my embarrassment and distaste for their motive and manner.

I have told enough, I believe, to suggest how a kindly, able, somewhat introverted, former village boy found retirement as a millionaire to be frustrating, and even hostile.

Now I will tell how, quite accidentally, he came to experience a new enthusiasm for life - a new enjoyment, which prompted his daughter, Mrs. Warner, to say to me. "I have never known my father to be as happy as he has been these last three years of his friendship with you when he has had fun instead of pain from his money."

Daniel Roberts and I met in September 1935 under entirely unplanned fortuitous circumstances. Neither of us had ever previously heard of the other. I was a resident of New Jersey with my business headquarters in New York City. I had become a trustee of Bucknell University at Lewisburg,Penna. though that was not my Alma Mater. Suddenly a call came for an emergency special meeting of the Bucknell Board of Trustees. I was not able to attend because of the short notice, and had no information as to the nature of the emergency. The day after the Bucknell meeting it was announced in the newspapers that the President, Dr. Homer P. Rainey, had resigned to accept another educational position.

The following day, a Bucknell trustee visited me and reported that I had been elected the new president of Bucknell and the public

announcement had been held up pending my acceptance.

I was startled but managed to express my thanks for the compliment; also explained that I could not summarily leave my business and my partner and our large staff of men, all of whom had family responsibilities which I felt I shared as their corporation president.

My visitor was an extremely skillful salesman. He asked me if I would become Acting President for just one year and help Bucknell to find and install just the right president. I agreed to that provided I could perform the duties of Acting President during half each week and continue my own business duties in New York and my own home in New Jersey. He arranged for me to spend the following Saturday with a Bucknell trustee committee at the summer home on Harveys Lake,Penna. of Senator Andrew J. Sordoni, one of the trustees.

We met there as planned, a short auto ride from Wilkes-Barre. Next door to Senator Sordoni's lake-side house, was a modest frame house which Senator Sordoni told me was owned by an old gentleman named Daniel Roberts. "He has the reputation of being a crotchety old fellow," said Sordoni, "but I like him. He's all right at heart but he feels he has to put on a mean face to keep people from taking advantage of him. My boy, Jack," said Sordoni, "shot out a small pane of glass in Roberts' cellar window with his little rifle and Roberts came storming over to demand it be replaced. I asked Jack if he did it. Jack admitted it and I told Jack to use some of his own money and replace the window pane. Jack did, and Roberts and I have understood and respected each other ever since."

A couple of years later, Mr. Roberts told me the same story and added a bit that only a Woolworth buyer would have regarded as important.

He added, "The glass repair man was taking away the broken pieces of the broken window after replacing it with the new pane, but I stopped him. They were my pieces and I might have need for the larger pieces of glass at some time in the future to patch up a window."

At this meeting of the Bucknell Committee at Senator Sordoni's lake-side house, the Senator told me that at a recent Bucknell Trustees' meeting he had nominated Mr. Roberts for membership on the Board and that Roberts had been elected and notified, but he had not yet accepted nor replied. Sordoni arranged for us to meet Mr. Roberts in his home. On our visit, we found a gentleman on guard against a stranger, but wanting to be friendly. It was explained that I did not feel I should leave my own business responsibilities but I was willing, as a trustee of Bucknell, to spend a few days at the college each week for a year to help get a new administration installed. He seemed to understand and to agree, and said he would be willing to serve on the Bucknell Board if it was understood that he would not be required to make the 65 mile trip to Lewisburg to attend Board Meetings. I assured him we would not burden him, that we would keep him informed through the mail, and that I would drop in on him occasionally if he desired to be fully informed. We shook hands on that, and thus began a new interest for the frustrated millionaire; and a wonderfully new experience for me in becoming acquainted, and growing to know, admire and regard with deep affection the warm generous man.

Daniel Roberts - Trustee of Bucknell University

It was in October 1935 that I began my part-time duties as Acting President of Bucknell and Dean Romeyn H. Rivenburg was made Vice President for academic affairs. I was presented to the students and faculty. They

were told of my title and part-time duties and of my acceptance for one year's service. The announcement and explanation were made by a trustee and a cordial reception was given to me.

I recognized at that moment that I was undertaking a most unusual relationship and responsibility. I then made a brief speech and asked for a united effort by students, faculty, alumni and all other friends. I repeated remarks made by some of my friends who had advised me against absenting myself from business for half-time for a year. They had questioned "Why?". I could make only one reply and it was that I had one thousand reasons, one for each Bucknell student and looking at them I earnestly felt and said, "I hope that each of you will get some values, some motivations, and inspiration for lives of usefulness and fulfillment from your Bucknell experience in the coming year."

Apparently the Wilkes-Barre newspapers and radio reported this speech. The next day I had a message from my new friend, Daniel Roberts inviting me to take lunch with him which I did. He said, "I agree with what you said about 1,000 students being 1,000 reasons for helping Bucknell. I went to work at 16 and never finished high school, but times are different and boys need more education in order to succeed in life."

"You keep on giving what time you can spare to help these young folks get an education and I will help with money." It was a great encouragement to me and he lived up to his promise and with great enjoyment.

He apparently told some of his friends about this conversation with me, because it was used after Mr. Roberts'death by an overzealous attorney to attack the legality of Mr. Roberts' generosity. I will relate this unpleasant episode later but in passing will say that it was unsuccessful in its unworthy purpose.

Rebuilding Bucknell's Old Main"

My first fund-raising job was staring me in my face when I arrived as Acting President of Bucknell. "Old Main" had been burned down a few years previously and the charred remains were still on view at the crest of the beautiful campus. In the first meeting of the Board I asked approval of a fund-raising program for about $500,000 to rebuild the much needed building. Alumni, trustees, local citizens responded well to the appeal; newspapers and college publications carried reports on the progress of the funds. Again I received an invitation to take lunch with Mr. Roberts at his home. He was interested in the progress of the fund and asked how much more was needed. After lunch, at which his daughter, Mrs. Warner, was also present, he asked me to step over to the bank with him. He went down to the vault and when he returned he asked me to step over to a broker's office. There he transferred 2,000 shares of Woolworth stock to Bucknell University. He handed it to me. "For Old Main", he quietly said, "worth about $50 per share." I was stricken speechless but recovered to give him my warm thanks. We walked back to his residence where my car was parked. By that time I had an idea, and said, "Mr. Roberts, 'Old Main' is in three sections. The center section will cost $100,000. Would you permit Bucknell to name it the Daniel C. Roberts Hall?" His face broke out into a marvellously happy smile. He said, "If you would really like to."

We rebuilt "Old Main" promptly and Mr. Roberts was the "Mystery guest of honor" on the day of dedication. It had been announced that some one had given $100,000 but the donor's name had not been revealed. We prepared a bronze tablet honoring Daniel C. Roberts and it still hangs in

the lobby of Roberts Hall where it can be seen and read.

"A Friend of Ambitious Youth

A Generous Benefactor of Mankind."

This tablet was unveiled at the dedication of the Daniel C. Roberts Hall, in the presence of Mr. Roberts himself, and the donor thus ceased to be a mystery. Mr. Roberts returned to Wilkes-Barre a thoroughly happy man, and the city's newspapers and radio programs were doing him well deserved honor.

The begging letters to him were multiplied in number and invective. He was called many unpleasant names for "giving money to a rich college". He would shake these criticisms off more easily now because he was being recognized publicly as a generous man.

<u>The Men's Gymnasium; The Debt; The Junior College; the Engineering Building; A New Library</u>

During the next three years, prior to Mr. Roberts' death, he was enthusiastic and interested in the progress at Bucknell. His invitations to visit him were frequent and he would ask me eagerly what was most needed next. First, it was a Men's Gymnasium. He gave me enough Woolworth stock to pay for more than half its cost. A half dozen generous trustees promptly gave the other half. Their names were placed in a metal box which was enclosed within the cornerstone. Dr. Harvey Smith, a trustee and one of the donors, helped me in the formal cornerstone ceremony. Mr. Roberts had the good judgment to decline having the gymnasium named for him. - "One Roberts building is enough," he said. He wanted it named for me. I declined, of course, and explained it was not acceptable practice for a college president to use his position to approve a memorial to himself.

He was disappointed but understanding. We then agreed to recommend to the Board of Trustees that it be named for a trustee, John Warren Davis, who was the trustee who had maneuvered me into the presidency of Bucknell. This was agreed upon, without Judge Davis' fore-knowledge. Mr. Roberts came to the inaugural ceremony and helped to dedicate the building.

The Bucknell Junior College at Wilkes-Barre

When I was catapulted into the presidency of Bucknell, I quickly discovered that I was also president of Bucknell Junior College at Wilkes-Barre, 65 miles away from the Bucknell campus at Lewisburg. My predecessor, Dr. Rainey, had started these classes in response to a request from a committee of local high school principals who were deeply concerned to see many of their able graduates unable to go to college. The general depression of the 1930's had been especially hard on the boys and girls of that anthracite coal area, because of the prolonged unemployment of the coal miners.

So Bucknell had rented a vacant building which had been built for a business college and had arranged for teachers from Bucknell to drive to Wilkes-Barre to give regular freshman and sophomore college courses to qualified high school graduates.

The response of the young people had been far beyond expectations, and when I found myself president of this over-flowing Junior College, it was very clear that the new president of Bucknell had some hard decisions to make in Wilkes-Barre. It was obviously up to me to decide whether I should continue to hold the enrollment down to the 400 young men and women who could be crowded into the rented building, or should

I seek additional buildings to accommodate the rising numbers of young people applying for admission. I chose the latter in favor of the ambitious young people. First, I searched for a man who would take charge. I found him in Eugene S. Farley a six foot Quaker and a Ph.D graduate of the University of Pennsylvania. He accepted the job in part because his friends warned him not to - too many problems. He, like Daniel Roberts, seemed to enjoy impossible jobs, for he has made a magnificent record at Wilkes-Barre. The Junior College became Wilkes College ten years later when it was able to obtain its own charter and Dr. Farley has been its only president. Under his leadership Wilkes College has developed into a highly respected and fully accredited four year college with over 1600 students.

Me and I proceeded to find and/or build suitable facilities for the growing Junior College. We interested several families who had large homes on River Street which they no longer occupied more than a month or so a year, to give them to Bucknell as a campus for the Junior College. Mrs. John Conyngham of New York was the first to agree; then Admiral Harold S. Stark of Washington; then Allen Kirby of New Jersey. One followed the other so fast, it was quite breath-taking. I received an amusing radiogram from one Wilkes-Barre citizen, Mr. Julius Stern, who was on vacation in Bermuda. He owned a home on the next block beyond the Kirby home, and when word reached him in Bermuda of the River Street homes that were being given for the Bucknell Junior College, he radioed me - "Please don't take my home until I can return and remove my furniture."

I inject the story of the Bucknell Junior College at this point because it brought me to Wilkes-Barre nearly every week until Dr. Farley was fully in charge. Mr. Roberts felt more comfortable about inviting

me to visit him. Consequently we were drawn more closely together by these frequent visits. He knew that I had to make the 65-mile drive from Lewisburg to Wilkes-Barre each week on the Junior College business.

The Bucknell Debt

After the Davis Gymnasium was dedicated he asked what I was to work on next. I told him that Bucknell owed a Philadelphia bank several hundreds of thousands of dollars for operating deficits which had piled up during the deep depression when student enrollments and alumni gifts had fallen very seriously in all colleges. He looked at me very sharply and asked, "Are you operating at a loss now"? I replied, "No indeed, not at Bucknell nor in my business in New York. I have the same policy at both ends of my line - pay as you go, - if you can't pay, don't go." He looked at me and grinned. "Why must you pay this debt off now," he asked. "In order to stop paying interest. I need that money to restore faculty salaries that were cut in the depression." "Come on down to the bank," he said, and a few thousand more shares of Woolworth stock started me off on the next round of fund-raising which soon paid off an astonished bank vice-president in Philadelphia who had been making a career of reminding me of the unpleasant things he might have to do to collect money from the college.

About this time, the student body of Bucknell did a very kind thing - bless their hearts! I think back about them as I read the street capers of present day student "activists" who are demanding full participation in all decision-making. How naive the 1968 campus demonstrators are; how glibly they talk about complicated and burdensome responsibilities which they will only begin dimly to comprehend when they are about fifteen years older.

The Bucknell Student Petition

In order to remain visible and real to the Bucknell students, I arranged to be present at an assembly each Thursday morning which was attended by the faculty and the student body. At about the end of my second year with the title of Acting President, I arose to close the Thursday morning assembly, when two students stepped out into the aisle and asked if they might come forward. There was a rustle of excitement inthe crowded auditorium. Apparently I was the only person who was not in on it.

The two young men came tothe platform, announced that they bore a petition addressed to me, which was signed by each of the 1200 students, each member of the administration, and the faculty. They then read the petition which, in brief, asked me to accept the title of President of Bucknell University...and made..." a pledge to you of our loyal support in the years to come."

I was deeply affected by this friendly act, and promised to give their request full consideration. I dismissed the Assembly - they all rushed off to a belated lunch, and I drove up to the highest point on the golf course and gazed out over the Alleghenies to the west and the valley of the Susquehanna to the east to try to see my way into the future.

The next day I was in Wilkes-Barre as usual at the Junior College. Mr. Roberts asked me to visit him. His daughter, Mrs. Warner, was present. He was elated. The Wilkes-Barre radio had broadcast the news of the Bucknell President who had been petitioned by the students to stay on, and the newspapers had headlined it. He was anxious to learn what I was going to reply to the petition. I said "I would let them call me their President instead

of Acting President, but I could not change my weekly divided schedule because my business associates feel they also need me." I said if the Trustees would wish me to continue the schedule as I had I would agree to drop the word "Acting" from my title. "That's all that is needed, in my opinion," he commented. Then he asked his customary question. "What are you working at especially now at Bucknell?" "New wings for the Engineering Building," I replied. "We must keep up to the requirements for new laboratories and equipment, or else," He nodded. "Let's go over to the bank."

Before we left, I had a few moments with his daughter and said, "Mrs. Warner, do you approve of your father giving away so much stock to Bucknell? Is Bucknell getting stock that should be given to you and your son Danny?" Mrs. Warner answered promptly. "Not only approve it, I encourage my father to do it. He has set up irrevocable trust funds for Danny and me that will provide each of us our needs for all our lives. You have brought a joy and a zest to his life during the past two years beyond anything I have ever known him to experience. Please continue your relations and continue to let him help you help deserving young people. You just can't realize what it means to him."

Mr. Roberts gave me his own thanks on one of my last visits before his death. As we sat in his parlor after lunch, an elderly man walked by. Mr. Roberts said, "I feel sorry for that old fellow. He is rich, but he is unhappy. He is just about my age and he has just about as much wealth as I have. But he has not learned what you taught me, - how to enjoy my money. You showed me how I could give money to help ambitious boys get an education. You showed me how I could do it while I am still alive and

can see it - like the Daniel Roberts Hall and the Men's Gymnasium. But this old chap has only one enjoyment with his money. He plays a game each year - to keep his money invested so he will be worth more on December 31st each year than he was worth on January 1st of that year. He is so excited and happy when he wins that game that he tells all his friends about it. Poor old fellow; I pity him."

I recall only one additional visit I had with Mr. Roberts, the last before his death. He asked his usual question, "What is next at Bucknell?" My reply was, "A new library at a cost of $500,000 or more." We talked about ir for a while, and then made our trip to the bank. This time he handed me 5,000 shares of Woolworth stock, I believe, which was worth about one half of the estimated cost. Again I asked if we might name the building for him. Again he declined and suggested that it be named for me. Again, I declined. He then said, "I leave the name to your judgment." I suppose he realized he would not be alive to see the building and to help select the name. (Several years later the new library was built and named for a generous lady, who gave a large sum to supplent Mr. Roberts' gift and to endow the library.)

He was taken ill soon after this visit and died quietly, after a brief illness, at the age of eighty.

I visited Mrs. Warner and she asked me to pay tribute to her father at the funeral which would be conducted by the Rev. Charles Rausch in the Roberts' home. I was proud to be asked to pay a tribute to the life and spirit and memory of this generous man who, in his quiet, withdrawn manner, had helped thousands of ambitious young people who never knew him nor ever guessed how much they owed him for their college education.

His Will

I have referred above to two comments by Mr. Roberts to me which were used by a lawyer of State Tax authorities in an endeavor to impose a tax on Mr. Roberts' generosity to Bucknell University.

The Roberts Will was being probated, and I, as President of Bucknell, was summoned as a witness. The State of Pennsylvania put in a claim for a State Tax on all the Woolworth stock which Mr. Roberts had given Bucknell during the last three years of his life. The claim was that Mr. Roberts had given the stock in anticipation of death because he was angered when a heavy tax had been imposed onthe Woolworth stock which his wife had left him in her will. The lawyer stated that Mr. Roberts had said in the presence of several witnesses that he would "rather have burned up the stock than pay those taxes." The lawyer asked me in an irritating tone if I had heard Mr. Roberts made such a statement. I replied that I had, but that Mr. Roberts had begun to give Woolworth stock to Bucknell before his wife died and so I failed to see the connection.

The lawyer then said it had been generally understood among Mr. Roberts' friends that he had told me that if I would give my time for the students of Bucknell, he would give his money. The lawyer asked if he had said that. I replied that he had.

The lawyer jumped about and declared that this constituted a "contract" and as such put Mr. Roberts' gifts to Bucknell out of the field of philanthropy into taxable territory.

I commented that Mr. Roberts was only one of many persons who had realized that I was making a personal sacrifice of time away from my business in New York and had offered their full support if I would continue

to serve Bucknell.

It happened that at the time of this effort of the State Bureau to tax Mr. Roberts' gifts to Bucknell, I was a member of the Cabinet in Harrisburg of Governor Arthur H. James, in charge of the State Council of Defense. Governor James' home is in Wilkes-Barre so he knew all about my ordeal with the Tax Bureau attorney. When I ~~got~~ next got to my office at the State Capitol in Harrisburg, Governor James sent for me. "I hear you were in Wilkes-Barre the other day," he said. I admitted it. "Did they give you a bad time?" he asked. "They tried to, but they had to make up with roughness for what they lacked in justice," I replied. "Maybe you are right," the Governor said. That is the last I ever heard of the matter.

Now a final backward glimpse of two of the boys in the Moore Store in Watertown where this story of "A Most Unforgettable Giver" started.

The frame home on West River Street where Daniel Roberts lived and died in Wilkes-Barre, is now part of the campus of Wilkes College which blossomed out of Bucknell Junior College in 1945. This home was given to Wilkes College by Daniel Roberts Warner, the grandson of Mr. Roberts.

The stone house which Fred Kirby had built for his home was given by his son, Allen P. Kirby, to Bucknell Junior College, and became a major feature of the Wilkes College campus.

These are pleasant reminders of two of the young clerks in the Moore Store, who became generous millionaires through their interest in the "5 cent table" in the Watertown store.

The American Association of Fund-Raising Counsel, Inc.
500 Fifth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10036 • 212/LA 4-5468-9

BYRNE P. WHALEN
DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC RELATIONS

October 1, 1968

Dr. Arnaud C. Marts
Honorary Chairman
Marts & Lundy, Inc.
521 Fifth Avenue
New York, New York 10017

Dear Doctor Marts:

We have decided to publish your essay on Daniel C. Roberts as our autumn Quarterly Bulletin, rather than at the end of the year, as we originally planned.

Because of the length of the essay, we will use eight pages rather than six. To get it down to six pages would have necessitated some drastic cutting in your copy, which I felt would subtract from the excellence of the essay and destroy some of the flavor of your writing.

I have attached a copy of the draft I am sending to the printer. As we discussed, I have rewritten the lead paragraph and made some minor editorial changes. It may be necessary to cut a few more sentences, but I hope not.

I am looking forward to seeing the essay in print.

With warmest regards, I am

Sincerely,

Byrne P. Whalen

BPW/kr
enc.

A non-profit organization of fund-raising counseling firms which subscribe to an established code of fair practice in promoting high standards and ethics and principles of procedure in fund raising.

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF FUND-RAISING COUNSEL, INC.
500 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK, N. Y. 10036

October 22, 1968

Dr. Arnaud C. Marts
Honorary Chairman
Marts & Lundy, Inc.
521 Fifth Avenue
New York, New York 10017

Dear Dr. Marts:

Here is a copy of our Quarterly Bulletin containing your article on Daniel Roberts. I hope you like the treatment we have given to it.

If you will need a few extra copies, please let me know how many and I will send them over to you.

It has been a pleasure working with your article. The girls in the office have voted it the best one yet, and I agree with them.

With warmest regards, I am

Sincerely,

Byrne

BPW/kr
enc.

Byrne P. Whalen

October 24, 1968

Mr. Byrne P. Whalen
American Association of Fund-Raising Counsel, Inc.
500 Fifth Avenue
New York, New York 10036

Dear Byrne:

Thank you for yours of the 22nd and the copy of the Quarterly Bulletin which contains my story of Daniel Roberts. I like it very much.

Could I have about 25 copies of it? Perhaps I could use more later, but 25 will be sufficient for anything I have in mind now.

Do you suppose the President of Bucknell would care to distribute copies to members of his Board of Trustees and perhaps to some of the older faculty members and alumni? If you care to raise the question with him, he is President Charles H. Watts, Bucknell University, Lewisburg, Pennsylvania 17837. He saw the article in typewritten form some weeks ago when I first prepared it and, therefore, is quite familiar with it.

Thank you very much for your excellent editing and publication of this article.

With kind personal regards.

Yours sincerely,

A. C. Marts

ACM/csa

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF FUND-RAISING COUNSEL, INC.
500 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK, N. Y. 10036

October 25, 1968

Dr. Arnaud C. Marts
Honorary Chairman
Marts & Lundy, Inc.
521 Fifth Avenue
New York, New York 10017

Dear Dr. Marts:

You should have received the 25 copies of the quarterly Bulletin which you requested by this time. If you need more, we will have them on hand.

I have written to President Charles H. Watts suggesting that he might like to distribute some copies of the quarterly. A copy of my letter is attached.

It was a pleasure working on the article. Thank you for your fine contribution to our program.

With kind personal regards, I am

Sincerely,

Byrne P. Whalen

BPW/kr
enc.



THE COTTAGE
BOZMAN
TALBOT COUNTY, MARYLAND 21601

October 26, 1968

Dear Arnaud:

The Daniel C.Roberts story is terrific, and makes fascinating reading. It is great of you to write it for others of us to see.

What an example and inspiration! This story also discloses mighty fine and creditable angles in your own life.

Congratulations and best wishes,

Sincerely,

Ted

H.L.Giles

ISIDOR COONS
774 ADDISON STREET
WOODMERE, N. Y. 11598

October 29,1968

Dear Doctor Marts :

Your comprehensive article in "The Bulletin of the American Association of Fund-Raising Counsel titled "A Most Unforgettable Giver" brought to mind many fond recollections of my Wilkes-Barre days where my parents were also born and family history dated to the eighteen thirties.

In my one pleasant meeting with you in your office a few years ago,we talked of the Kirbys , the Roberts and others.It is my recollection that I attended High School with Bessie Roberts Warner.But the crux of my interest has been that in 1895 my father built our residence facing South River Street and F.M.Kirby ,just becoming affluent,built his house to which you refer on West River Street.Our back yards met and Allen and I have been life long friends. The last time I greeted him was at my Lafayette College Fiftieth Reunion in 1960.

I have no recollection of where or when I heard the legend of Woolworth,Kirby et alia getting the the "Five and Ten" Idea,but I have been telling it for years. My version,possibly wrong, is that one Saturday night Mr.Moore noticed many dusty pie pans on his shelves, and that he wrote a sign reading "Nothing Over Five Cents" on handy piece of card board,placed the pans on a table on the sidewalk in front of the store and they were enthusiastically bought.His farm boy helpers, Woolworth and Kirby were impressed and the results are obvious.

I like to recall F.M. Kirby as I knew him in my boyhood.There was an empty lot adjoining his property where the Nicholson home was later erected.We boys played base ball on the lot and I batted a ball through a picture window in the Kirby house. My father sent me over to Mr.Kirby to assure him of my desire to make full payment ,which he declined with warm appreciation of my offer.

After college graduation and seven years on a Wilkes-Barre Daily followed by service as an Infantry officer in World War I, I spent forty years directing Fund -Raising Campaigns of all types and wounduup my career as Executive Vice-Chairman of the United Jewish Appeal National Campaign of which I was one of the Founders.

With kind regards,I am
Sincerely Isidor Coons

JOHN GRENZEBACH & ASSOCIATES, INC.

October 29, 1968

Dr. Arnaud C. Marts
Marts & Lundy
521 Fifth Avenue
New York, New York 10017

Dear Arnaud:

I have just finished reading your delightful essay about Daniel C. Roberts in the autumn Bulletin of the AAFRC. I can only say after having completed the reading that I wish you would write a whole book of such reminiscences of your wonderfully eventful and joyous years in fund raising and education.

My very best to you and Mrs. Marts.

Sincerely yours,

John Grenzebach

JG:as

October 30, 1968

Mr. H. L. Giles
The Cottage
Bozman
Talbot County, Maryland 21601

Dear Ted:

Thank you very much for your kind letter of the 26th. I am glad you liked the Roberts story.

I hope you are having a happy time in your pretty cottage in Maryland. I think of you and our relationship with real pleasure.

With warm regards.

Yours sincerely,

A. C. Marts

ACM/csa

November 1, 1968

Mr. John Grenzebach
John Grenzebach & Associates, Inc.
211 East Chicago Avenue
Chicago, Illinois 60611

Dear John:

Thank you very much for your kind letter of the 29th. I am glad you enjoyed the story about Daniel Roberts.

I hope all is going well with you. I have most pleasant recollections of our association and friendship of past years.

With warm regards.

Yours sincerely,

A. C. Marts

ACM/csa

November 1, 1968

Mr. Isador Coons
774 Addison Street
Woodmere, New York 11598

Dear Mr. Coons:

I've greatly enjoyed your letter of the 29th.

Your long associations with the Kirby family and the Roberts family gave you the opportunity to learn much more detail about the Moore story than I learned from Mr. Roberts. I can't recall that he ever told me about the dusty pie pans, but that is certainly consistent with what I do recall of his recollections. There are not many men of my acquaintance left who had direct and personal contacts with the boys who built Mr. Moore's 5-cent counter up into the great Woolworth chain, and I am delighted to get this additional story from you.

This afternoon I am driving over to Wilkes-Barre to the dedication of their beautiful new Wilkes College Library. I believe, though I am not quite sure, that this new library includes the magnificent stone home of the late Mr. Weckesser whom, of course, you knew as one of the top officers of the Woolworth Company.

Thanks for your interesting note.

With kind regards.

Yours sincerely,

A. C. Marts

ACM/csa

November 15, 1968

Mr. Carlton G. Ketchum
Chairman of the Board
Ketchum, Inc.
Chatham Center
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15219

Dear Carlton:

Thank you for your letter of the 12th. I am glad you enjoyed my article about Mr. Roberts. You are not the only one who did not know how the Woolworth Company was created by the boys in the Moore store at Watertown. It is quite amazing how much history can be brought to light if the historian has the good fortune to become acquainted with someone who was there, otherwise many human interest elements get lost from the official records and accounts.

For instance, one of my Roberts' reprints came into the hands of a grandson of one of the Watertown boys. This young man never knew his graddfather who died before he was born, but he has all the Watertown records and has been planning to write a family history. In spite of this interest in the family background, he said in his letter that some of the stories I told were new to him and he was glad to get that additional background material.

It is pleasant to hear from you and I wish you the best of health and much happiness.

With warm regards.

Yours sincerely,

A. C. Marts

ACM/csa