

Dr. Bayard Delafield Clarkson

In the autumn of a life committed to serving humanity, he enters the Bertrand H. Snell Hall Peterson Board Room exactly on time- and thirty pair of eyes follow him while he walks to a seat he has occupied since 1967. Few alumni would recognize this distinguished and gentle man on a street corner in his hometown of New York City, nor would they know the important and long shadow he has cast during his service to Clarkson University.

Shortly after the American Revolutionary War, New York State passed a resolution creating ten towns along the St. Lawrence River in order to introduce a buffer zone between the United States and the British Colony of Canada. In 1802, a prominent New York City family hired Benjamin Raymond as its land agent; then David Clarkson and his brother-in-law, Garret van Horn purchased a large part of what would become the Township of Potsdam. In the decades that followed, Raymond established industries and a town plan with wide and symmetrical streets. One of those streets was the backdrop for a Clarkson University student's 1968 amateur spoof of horror movies that became the inspiration for Hollywood producer (and former Clarkson instructor) Wes Craven's smash box-office movie "A Nightmare on Elm Street" starring an up and coming Captain Jack Sparrow, known in those days as John Christopher Depp II. Potsdam evolved into an independent civic body with a township government and by 1831 the Village of Potsdam was incorporated under the laws of New York State.

He is a tall man who moves gracefully. His tailored tweed sport coat, close-cropped white hair, pleasant smile and crinkles in the corners of his light blue eyes give him a youthful and attentive appearance. He is a man who invites civil discourse and enjoys discussing the many points of view that arise from time to time on a diverse Board of Trustees that is seeking to propel Clarkson into the top ranks of similarly sized institutions. His counsel is sought, his opinions valued, his attendance and stamina legendary.

Sixteen years after the start of the Civil War, Thomas Streatfield Clarkson III, a businessman, entrepreneur, and successor of the founding family located himself in Potsdam and opened The Clarkson Sandstone Quarries on the banks of the Raquette River about three miles south of the Village of Potsdam. He died an untimely death seventeen years later in 1894, when he rushed to help an employee injured in an accident at the quarry. Mr. Clarkson's sisters, Elizabeth, Frederica and Lavinia established The Thomas S. Clarkson Memorial School of Technology, now Clarkson University, in 1896 to honor their brother. Members of the Clarkson family have been associated with, and have served the institution, since it was founded.

The name sandstone is, of course, based on the fact that this rock is made up largely of sand grains that have lithified. It is, however, the binding material in sandstone that determines its properties as a building material. Many examples exist in the United

States of sandstone construction that quickly decayed, split and cracked because the binding material in the lithification process was carbonate of lime or clay and unable to withstand the insults of weather and pollution. Potsdam Sandstone is unique. It was laid down during the Upper Cambrian period, some 490 to 540 million years ago and what distinguishes it from other sandstones is its silica-quartz binder, its density and the uniformity of the stone. The great Laurentide Ice Sheet, which covered much of North America 100,000 years ago, was up to two miles thick over what is now northeastern New York. As it retreated, breakout flood plains such as the Altona Flat Rock just east of Potsdam, over which the Little Chazy River now flows, washed away impurities and exposed the underlying sandstone. In the late 1800's the thickness of the outcropping of Potsdam Sandstone at Thomas Clarkson's quarry exceeded 70 feet and buildings constructed of this material, many now over 100 years old like the Parliament Buildings in Ottawa, Canada, and the Cathedral of All Saints in Albany, NY have not presented the deterioration common in construction with sandstone of inferior binding material. In addition to its ruggedness, Potsdam Sandstone expresses a warmth and massiveness owing to coloration related to the maroons or dusky reds of hematite, the pale reds of arkose and the pinkish reds of orange quartz. Many buildings around Potsdam, and particularly the original Snell Hall, Old Main, Trinity Episcopal Church and St. Mary's Church reflect the unique character of this material.

During Commencement exercises he wears the hood awarded him at the ceremony in 1974 when he was granted an Honorary Doctorate Degree by Clarkson. He could wear the hood of Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons where he received his medical degree after graduating from Yale University where he studied Political Science and International Relations before switching to premed. Standing in the phalanx waiting for the procession to begin, he chats easily with students, faculty and passersby, displaying keen interest and good humor as he asks questions about what motivated them to come to Clarkson and whether their experience at Clarkson has been a good experience. He turns to engage his friend and an Honorary Nominee for this day's ceremony, Roger Sant, the founder of AES, a global producer of electricity and the chairman of the World Wildlife Fund- whose National Council roster includes the name Bayard D. Clarkson. The leadership and balance shown by Sant in what appears to be diametrically opposed organizations is legendary and the two discuss Sant's ideas on how progress can be made in both domains. During the procession he is solemn, but once seated he gives full attention to the various speakers and to each of the 700 or so students who will receive a degree from the university bearing his family name.

On the morning of June 7, 1918, Ernest Hemingway stepped off the train at Milan's Garibaldi Station and assumed the duties of a Red Cross ambulance driver. These drivers were important personnel who played key roles during World War I. They had to risk their own lives, without covering fire, to go onto battlefields and pickup wounded. They often carried the wounded back to an ambulance then drove them to makeshift hospitals near the Front. Hemingway wrote of these dangers years later when he placed himself as the narrator, Fred Henry, a lieutenant ambulance driver in the Italian army. In 1915, Piatt Andrew, a political economics professor at Harvard University established the American Field Service as an ambulance arm for the American Hospital of Paris. The AFS actively recruited drivers from the campuses of American colleges and universities. The drivers all worked without pay and served under the extremely dangerous conditions on the Front described by Hemingway. Today AFS is one of the largest volunteer-based organizations of its kind in the world. It was to this organization in 1944 that a young Barney Clarkson was attracted before beginning his undergraduate

studies. His initial assignment in 1944 was with the British Eighth Army, which, after defeating Rommel in the Second Battle of El Alamein, was engaged in the capture of Rome via a beachhead on the Adriatic. The Eighth moved north to liberate Florence and then, in the spring of 1945, with Rome and Florence secure, it made a rapid advance through northeast Italy into Austria. He was reassigned to General Montgomery's twenty-first Army Group, which had closed up on the Rhine River by spring 1945 and subsequently was converted into the headquarters for the British zone of occupation after the German defeat. He has told many people it was the experiences in 1944-1945 that convinced him to seek a career in medicine. One can only imagine what gems accompanied the stories told at Mory's or the place where Louie dwells or at the dear old Temple bar when the rakish Barney Clarkson returned from Europe, with his personal version of "A Farewell to Arms", intending first to enter the very pin-striped diplomatic service before switching his major to premed studies. He served again in the US Army during the Korean War, a war David Halberstam called America's "Coldest Winter" in a location as far from privilege and comfort as one can imagine; then finished his medical residency at New York Hospital in 1958.

Virginia Clark Clarkson, who allows herself to be called Ginny, seeks him out at the end of a Board of Trustees Meeting. She has just taken a fabulous tour of the Frederic Remington Art Museum in Ogdensburg and is bubbling with exuberance. Remington was born in Canton, New York in 1861, and in 1878, a year after Thomas Clarkson began quarrying sandstone in Potsdam, Remington enrolled at Yale- lasting only three semesters. Ginny is a lovely and expressive woman, interested in everything she hears, sees and touches. She has had several volumes of poetry published and they reveal the same eye for detail and truth that can be seen in Remington's work. In 1989, she, too, was awarded an Honorary Doctorate Degree from Clarkson. Husband and wife celebrate the day's activities and their enthusiasm for all of it overflows to others in the room. Photographs of the Board of Trustees are to be taken shortly, and you can see her standing just to the side, arms folded, smiling proudly at her husband. If you dare look away from the camera, you can see him smiling at her too. In the back row, not quite hidden from view, is Dr. Bayard D. Clarkson, Jr., their son, who observes these secret exchanges with obvious pleasure and pride. The digital chip records the moment for posterity with no one giving a thought to Dr. Thomas Wedgwood, a British physician who, in 1802, while David Clarkson was acquiring the parcel of land where the Trustees now sat for their electronic portrait, produced the world's first photograph using leather sensitized with silver nitrate, but could not figure out how to fix the image, which quickly faded.

*I know
And I know you know
If I feel low
And I see you,
I always feel less worse.*

Contrariwise.

*If I feel fine
Feel truly fine,
When I see you,
I always feel more better.¹*

He has conducted cancer research all his professional life and has been associated with the Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center since 1958, when it was called the Memorial Hospital for Cancer and Allied Diseases. He was part of the team that put together the L2 protocol combining ten drugs known to have some activity treating acute leukemia. The protocol was based on what they had learned about the kinetics of growth in normal and leukemic cells. The results were dramatic for lymphoblastic leukemia; over half the children and about 25% of adults were cured. He has authored more than 450 research papers or book chapters. In 2003, he co-authored a paper with Paul Greengard, the 2001 Nobel Prize laureate for Physiology/Medicine, and Bill Netzer, both Rockefeller University researchers, and others, that explains a new application for Novartis AG's leukemia drug Gleevec. Gleevec, a breakthrough drug for the treatment of chronic myelogenous leukemia (CML), seems to slow the accumulation of the major protein component (beta-amyloid peptide) of senile plaques that characterize Alzheimer's disease. While not yet applicable to humans, it is one of those incremental breakthroughs that with patience and dedication move the science inexorably forward.

Lake Sunapee sits south and west of I-89 in the lower western part of New Hampshire. It is 35 miles, as the crow flies, from Squam Lake, made famous by the film "On Golden Pond." But, Sunapee is no less attractive, both scenically and geologically. It is a part of the large Acadian orogen, with numerous plutons now exposed after centuries of erosion- which include the disappearance, in May 2003, of the Old Man Of The Mountain, though it still is engraved on the New Hampshire quarter. Chalk Pond Fault is inferred in a northwest-southeast direction about mid-length of the lake, while Georges Mills Fault is a known normal fault lying in the same orientation at the lake's northern end. They are brittle faults, and despite their gneiss-granite composition, have eroded significantly. While the mid-length fault cannot be observed, the Georges Mills Fault exhibits a 2-mile horizontal displacement, due entirely to an ancient 3-mile vertical displacement: both the northeast side moving up and the southwest (lake) side moving down. In addition, the southern end of the lake has a "U" shaped glacial trough, similar to many notches in the White Mountains.

*I am the only one who knows
That on this dirt road
In a low wet place on the left,
A trio of green-white turtle heads were nitched.
On the right,
Where the woods blends into meadow,
A clump of bottled gentian, skyest blue, used to hide.
And in the meadow itself,
One peppered orange curled Turk's-cap lily
stood up above the grasses.*

They are all gone.

*Each silent extinction
Is a diminishment of no small account to me.
I, too, shall die:
Another small extinction.*

The sadness of that is

*There will be no one left to remember,
Probably, the green whiteness of the three turtle heads,
Definitely, the bottled blue sky gentians.
Possibly, the Turk's-cap, so singular in the meadow,
May yet have a memory life
In someone still walking down the road.²*

Sunapee is a glacial lake eight miles long, and two miles wide at its widest point and part of the 30,000 acre Connecticut River watershed. Its water is nearly pristine and feeds the Sugar River, which flows west into the Connecticut River then descends 800 feet where it enters the Atlantic Ocean. It is surrounded by green in the summer and green in the winter as a pleasant mixture of deciduous and non-deciduous tree species carpet the rolling hills and surround the grassy fields- and turn each fall into a Monet palette. Almost every year, residents are treated to the extraordinary sight of loons fishing en masse. Forty or more of the birds descend on the lake where they dive to depths of up to 100 feet to munch on the fry of Sunapee trout (*salvelinus aureolus oquissa*), landlocked salmon and small mouth bass. At the conclusion of their feast, they lift off the water reaching speeds of 95 miles per hour in full flight, seeking other fishing grounds. Bluebirds, Canada Geese, and the myrtle warbler visit early in the spring- and stay late. Black bear, moose, red fox, white tail deer and mink can be seen seasonally.

In this company and in this location Barney and Ginny escape their frenetic world as often as possible. At 1100 or so feet above sea level, and in the Eastern Time zone, you would expect the morning sun to drench the lake early. But it is protected on all sides by pieces of mountains that make the sun work a little harder before it is clearly day and time to rise. Soon white puffy cotton-ball clouds appear in the cobalt blue sky. Family and invited friends gather early for a day of activities: hiking, water sports, conversation on important public issues and policy, jokes, and dinner. By late afternoon the wind picks up from the west and hums as it washes the needles of tall sugar pines. It is a Ferde Grofe moment: rain falls, first in large infrequent kerplunks, then an intense summer shower with thunder rolling through the valley and echoing off mountain sides like a timpanist hidden behind a thick stage curtain. Lightening splashes into corners like television Kliegs, illuminating the bright-red cardinal, frozen still, its claws bent tightly around a swaying branch. The front passes eastward, headed to Concord and Kennebunkport. The day's heat is gone and the evening breeze blows drops of water off leaves and ripples the placid sheet on the lake. It is time to slow down...

*This hot scratchy day has finally ended.
The big sun has sizzled at the far end of the lake
And sunk.
Usually the gone sun allows the brain to cool if it
can't do the same for the body.
Not this time.
Left behind is a scorching shockingly vulgar pink
Staining the entire ceiling of the sky.*

*Much later, when I look again,
The sky (as an apology?)*

*Has given us a Japanese print:
Blue. Dark. Full moon through pine tree.
Cool.³*

The du Ponts have left Dupont, the Fords are leaving Ford, there is no Carnegie running a steel company, nor a Pullman manufacturing railroad sleepers. But here, 111 years later, there still is a Clarkson involved, engaged and contributing to Clarkson University. He once told an interviewer, "You have to have focus: you can't study everything in depth. The more you learn the more there is to know." Fortunately he has chosen an institution in Potsdam, New York as one area of focus. Someday soon, you should make a point of meeting this man, sharing some conversation, and receive his strong, welcoming handshake. It's a link to our past- and to our future.

*Jim Wood '64
Boston, MA
July 2007*

1. More of Less: 2. Dirt Road: 3. August Sun

Nevertheless, Poems by Virginia Clark Clarkson, Golden Knight Enterprises, Inc, 1992. The proceeds of all book sales are donated to Clarkson University.