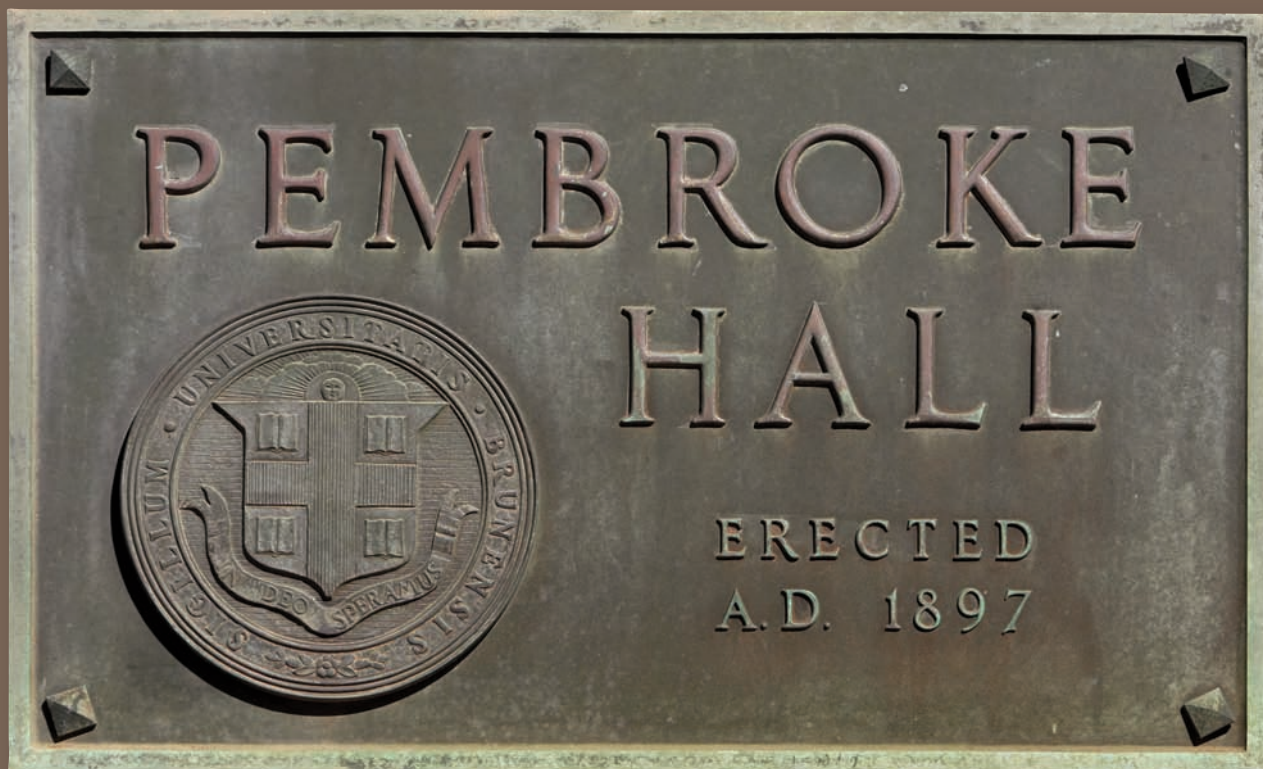


# The Rhode Island Society for Collegiate Education of Women and the History of the Funding of Pembroke Hall, 1897



*On the Occasion of the  
Rededication of Pembroke  
Hall, October 2008*

## Foreword

Pembroke Hall has a rich history at Brown University. Dedicated in 1897 with the name “Pembroke Hall,” it was the first permanent building for the Women’s College in Brown University, later named Pembroke College in 1928. The building is a testament in brick and mortar to the determination of Sarah Doyle and the Rhode Island Society for the Collegiate Education of Women, a group of women who fought for access to higher education for women and then raised the funds to erect buildings such as Pembroke and Alumnae Halls.

The Pembroke Center for Teaching and Research on Women, named to honor the academic excellence of Pembroke College, celebrates the 2008 rededication of Pembroke Hall, which it now occupies with the Cogut Center for the Humanities. Originally designed by the Providence architectural firm of Stone, Carpenter and Wilson, the building has been stunningly renovated by Toshiko Mori P’05, Architect. Mori, an internationally renowned architect and the principle of her firm, is also the Robert P. Hubbard Professor in the Practice of Architecture at Harvard University, and chair of the Department of Architecture there from 2002 to 2008.

This booklet offers some information on the history of the funding of the building and of women’s education at Brown, beginning with a lecture given by Joan W. Scott, the founding director of the Pembroke Center and currently the Harold F. Linder Professor of Social Science at the Institute for Advanced Study. Following Scott’s lecture is an abridged version of the minutes of the Rhode Island Society for the Collegiate Education of Women for the period 1895-98. Jane Lancaster, PhD’98 provided the editorial comments on the significance of items discussed in the minutes.

We hope you enjoy this view of Pembroke Hall’s history.

## Financing Women's Education: The Historical Perspective

*(Address to Providence Chapter of the American Association of University Women on February 8, 1982, by Joan W. Scott)*



The University Grammar School Building, torn down in 1910, was used by the Women's College in Brown University in 1891 as its first home. It was used by the Women's College for one semester.

### Women and Money

When Mrs. Miles called and invited me to address you this evening, I asked what subject she wanted me to talk about. She said I was free to choose my own topic, of course, but that the American Association of University Women's (AAUW) theme this year was women and money. At first I was concerned about addressing that topic. I am not an economist, nor is managing money my great strength, and though I have written about women and work, it was from the perspective of social and not economic history. I accepted the invitation and promised to think about a topic and title for this talk.

In the intervening weeks, I had several occasions to delve into Pembroke's early history before it was Pembroke, when it was the Women's College at Brown University. I also read a very interesting honors thesis written last year by Jane Levine that talked about the activities of the women who had helped found the Women's College. Perhaps because the idea of women and money was simmering in the back of my mind, I began to see

things I had never noticed before. For example, every meeting of the R. I. Society for the Collegiate Education of Women discussed money. Providence women who were graduates of other colleges and members of the Association of Collegiate Alumnae, the forerunner of the AAUW, helped raise funds, and their discussions with Presidents Andrews and Faunce of Brown involved negotiating about finances. I began to realize how much the founding of the Women's College and its maintenance from 1891 on was a story of women and money. And then I knew that I really did have something to say on the theme you are considering this year and that I could say it in the way and from the perspective most comfortable to me—that of the historian.

When I talked again to Mrs. Miles, I gave her the title you have seen, and I began to collect information in earnest on the history of the founding of the Women's College. That founding seems to me a wonderful example of the creative uses of money by women, and it touches not only on the Women's College but on the history and activities of the AAUW itself. An examination of that far away history illuminates two simple points still true today. First, for those interested in promoting higher education for women, raising money was central to fulfilling that goal. Second, money brought with it the political and practical power to influence the direction of women's education. In the history of women's higher education, finances have played no small part and women have been largely the sources and controllers of those finances.

### Sarah E. Doyle's Advocacy

Let us see how those points operated in the 1890s and early 1900s, as the women of Providence, in their clubs and associations, took on the task of creating the first college for women

in Rhode Island. Women in Providence were eager to pursue higher education, and, as Women's Colleges were founded elsewhere in New England, they began discussions following the example of Vassar (1865), Wellesley (1873), and Smith (1875). A generation of schoolteachers had developed in their high school students an excitement about learning and a sense that women's advancement depended on their education. Sarah E. Doyle, the Girls' Principal at Providence High School, was an example of this kind of teacher, and though she never had the opportunity to go to college, she encouraged her students to do so and became the leader in Rhode Island of the movement to create a Women's College. One of her former students remembered Doyle's formative influence this way:

*She was not only our teacher but the individual friend of each, and by her adaptability, insight into character, and the delicacy with which she treated one and all, [she] roused the ambition, fired the intellect, and toughened the tenderest chords of the heart.*

In 1874, Doyle persuaded her best student, Alice D. Mumford, to apply to Brown. Along with Doyle, Mumford's aunt, Sarah Dean, a founder of the R. I. Women's Club and teacher at Providence High School, coached Alice and intervened everywhere on her behalf:

*My aunt Sarah Dean saw personally President Robinson and different members of the Faculty and Trustees, and the matter was brought before the Corporation. . . . [I]n June 1874 they decided it was inexpedient to admit me. Dr. Robinson . . . urged my being sent to Vassar College, where his daughters had gone. The matter of expense, however, precluded that for me, and subsequently . . . I entered Boston University taking my AB in 1878.*

Mumford later succeeded Doyle as principal of the Girls Department at Providence High School, and she, like her mentor, became a staunch supporter of higher education for women.

## The Struggle for Pembroke Hall

Doyle and her allies finally convinced President Andrews and the Corporation to permit women to stand for a degree in 1891. That year, seven women entered as undergraduates; the next year there were forty-five; then seventy; and by the fourth year, one hundred women had enrolled in the Women's College. The first women at Brown were given classes separate from the men students, and they were taught by Brown faculty hired specifically to help them prepare for exams. All payments—to the faculty and for hiring the building on Benefit Street in which the women met—came from student fees. The Women's College cost Brown nothing; instead, the women paid their way entirely.

By 1895, overcrowded conditions in the Benefit Street building that housed the Women's College led Sarah Doyle and her associates to ask the Brown Corporation for an allocation to construct a formal recitation hall. Without a building, Doyle argued, the Women's College was a temporary and unstable institution. When the corporation refused to grant her request, she rallied her friends to the cause. Women's colleges needed "endowments, buildings, librar[ies], and apparatus," she argued, and women should take an active role in securing those things. Doyle and her friend Mrs. E. B. Andrews (wife of Brown's president) invited a group of women to tea on January 31, 1895 and asked them to "consider plans for raising a sum of money to erect a building for the Women's College." The women included Mary Emma Woolley, who would go on to be president of Mount Holyoke, Mary C. Wheeler, Miss Amelia Knight, Mrs. James Tillinghast, and other prominent women in the community, all active in public affairs, all familiar with the importance of raising money to further their goals. After tea, Sarah Doyle was elected chairwoman, and the minutes of this first meeting of the R. I. Society for the Collegiate Education of Women (formed for the purpose of building what would become Pembroke Hall) record her words to the group:



The Women's College moved to the State Normal School at 235 Benefit Street, where it would remain until Pembroke Hall was built.

*This is the day of education, and women must be educated . . . Under President Andrews, the education of women at Brown University is well under way. It is our duty and privilege to help in this work, and we can best help by providing a suitable building for these women students. Now, how shall we proceed to raise this money?*

Each member of the group agreed to take on individuals and organize efforts to raise money. President Andrews and Dean Louis Snow (who had been appointed to head the Women's College) wrote a pamphlet called "An Appeal to the Friends of Higher Education for Women." The text outlined the needs of women students and set a goal of raising \$50,000 for a building fund. "The present small building on Benefit Street is wholly inadequate to the needs of the students. It is now so crowded that all are uncomfortable and some are driven to seek refuge during study hours in the University library and elsewhere." (Despite her feminist views about education, Doyle disapproved of the mixing of the sexes.) If the funds could be raised, the pamphlet concluded, women would become full members of the university.

Money came in slowly during the winter of 1895. By March 25, \$14,999 had been pledged; in May it increased to \$15,910; in June \$17,500 had been raised; and in October, the treasurer reported \$18,800. By December 1896, some \$28,000 had been raised, enough to provide a down payment for the mortgage that was held by the R. I. Women's Society (not Brown). Support came from a variety of places—from individual contributions, of course (always small but plentiful), and from musical and lecture benefits. School girls in Pawtucket, undoubtedly goaded by a high school teacher, raised \$102.99, which they proudly turned over to Miss Doyle. Important aid came from women's clubs and especially from the Association of Collegiate Alumnae (the ACA).

The ACA had been founded in 1881 by graduates of Smith and Wellesley. In the 1890s, the organization tried to help Women's Colleges secure endowments and permanent facilities. Membership in the ACA was restricted to women graduates of colleges that met certain requirements: an endowment of at least \$500,000; professors as teachers (and no teachers who were secondary school teachers); at least six academic departments. Brown women thus did not qualify for membership in this prestigious organization. Members of the ACA, however, wanted to help change that situation. The ACA was headed in 1895 by Mrs. Louise Prosser Bates (the first woman to receive a graduate degree from Brown—a masters in 1895), and she called a meeting of her organization to discuss helping the RISCEW raise the needed funds. The minutes show that she alluded to the local interest in the higher education of women called out by the opening of the departments of Brown University to women, and by efforts being made to secure money to put up for them a suitable building.

The secretary of the ACA at that time was Annie H. Barus, a Vassar graduate (BA 1874), wife of Professor Barus of Brown, and member of the Providence school board, the Consumers League, and the Advisory Council of Women's Colleges. Under her leadership, the group decided to sponsor a series of fundraising events. During commencement week they held a reception, and later, they invited the Wellesley Glee Club to perform at a lavish benefit concert.

## In Brick and Stone

The dedication of Pembroke Hall in 1897 celebrated a major achievement: the guarantee of the continuing availability of collegiate education for Rhode Island women. Sarah Doyle spoke at the ceremony and paid tribute to women's effectiveness in promoting this cause. She told her audience how important education was for changing women's lives:

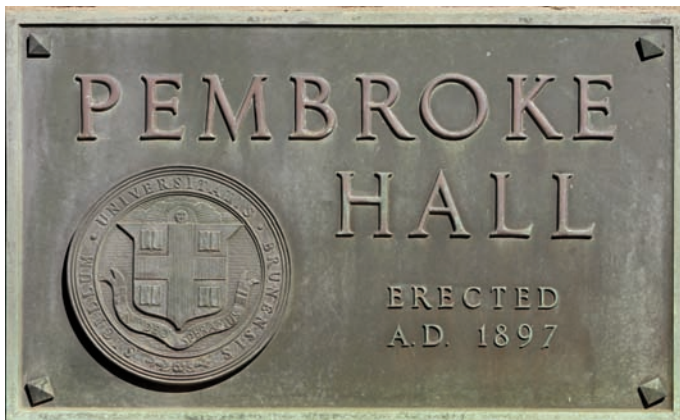


Photo Credit: Hank Randall

*Today marks an era in the education of women in the State. No longer need they stand at the door of the temple of knowledge, but [they] may enter and be ministered into its shrines. What an immense gain has been achieved in the intellectual training of women since Hannah Adams, a hundred years ago, expressed her idea of heaven to be a place where women would have their thirst for knowledge gratified.*

She ended her speech with a dream for the women who would graduate in future years from the Women's College:

*We dedicate Pembroke Hall to the service of women who, like Mary Somerville or Maria Mitchell, shall prove their ability to grapple with scientific problems; to women like George Eliot and Elizabeth Barrett Browning, who will enrich the literature of the world by their imagination; to women like Florence Nightingale and Dorothea Dix, who will practice and teach the Christian spirit of love. We dedicate, nay, we consecrate it to the highest, holiest womanhood.*

The fund drive for the Women's College involved Rhode Island women in an important effort. They knew the importance of securing the Women's College by putting it in a building and they saw their efforts as part of a larger campaign to further women's higher education in the state and in the nation. As Dean Emily James Smith of Barnard College put it, "A college edifice is a form of argument [for women's education] in brick and stone." The effort did not end with the dedication of Pembroke Hall (the name was suggested by Sarah Doyle because Pembroke had been Roger Williams's college at Cambridge).

## Funding the Women's College

There were always new things that had to be built or bought. For the first ten years of the Women's College, money came entirely from the efforts of women's groups. All affairs at the College were handled by an advisory committee of members of the RISCEW, and the women who provided the funds in effect ran the Women's College, in consultation with the President and Dean Snow. In 1897 the group set out to raise an endowment for the college; then it was suggested that a chair for a woman professor be created; then their attention was drawn to the problem of needy students. When in 1899 it was reported to RISCEW that some students could not meet their board payments, a committee was appointed "with which individual students who are in trouble may consult." The committee provided loans



Pembroke College celebrates its 50th Anniversary with a graphic display of the growth of its Alumnae Fund.

and then set out to raise funds on “behalf of women students needing financial aid to continue their college course, such aid to be given in the form of a loan to women student candidates for a degree in Brown University and who have shown a creditable record for scholarship during the Freshman year.” This money was seen as an integral part of the effort to help women as individuals pursue a college career, at the same time that the institutional effort was being promoted.

By taking on the responsibility of financing the Women’s College, the women also gained a certain power over its direction, and they used that power to influence the presidents and corporation of Brown. The RISCEW held the initial mortgage for Pembroke Hall, and when they voted to transfer it to Brown’s management and control, they extracted a solemn pledge that “the building would be used always for a Women’s College.” The women consulted the firm of Edwards and Angell to make that pledge legally binding; they reserved the right to name the building and to oversee its use.

In 1897 there were negotiations between Brown and the RISCEW over an endowment for the Women’s College, and the women set down certain requirements that had to be met. More courses had to be available for the women, and the University had to help meet the ACA standards for membership by alumnae. In 1898, the

women began to insist that the corporation help them raise endowment funds, that Brown representatives point proudly to the Women’s College in their fundraising efforts, and that monies be given by the University to support women’s education. When, in 1899, President Faunce suggested that the RISCEW devote itself to raising funds for a professorship for a woman, the group discussed the proposal at length and replied that the women would decide on priorities for the uses of the funds they raised. It was not that they did not want to see a woman professor at Brown; on the contrary, they deeply desired that goal. But there were other things that first needed to be done. In addition, the women began to argue that Brown ought to contribute “a share of” its own funds to the Women’s College. It wasn’t fair, they argued, that funds pledged to the University went entirely to men; women were, after all, an important and increasingly large part of the university community. That petition was eventually successful and led to Brown’s including the Women’s College in its budget. As a result, alumnae met ACA standards, and the first Women’s College graduates were admitted to this organization. Though relieved of the entire burden of supporting the Women’s College, Rhode Island women went on to provide additional help: they raised most of the money for buildings on the Pembroke Campus, supported students with loans and scholarships, and then became informal advisory councils to the women deans who succeeded Dean Snow.

The story of the founding of the Women’s College is exciting in its own right because it involved determined women in a creative and impressive enterprise. Every time I pass Pembroke Hall, I see in it the clear intention of its founders to solidify higher education for women and establish it on a firm and enduring foundation. The story is also an illustration of the organizational power of women who, working together in their clubs and associations, helped one another further a common goal. The way women rallied to the fund drive is a heartwarming example of an active and cooperative female spirit. And it shows, of course,

that even in an age when women were far more confined than they are today and had far fewer opportunities, they were capable of courageous and daring actions, and they had all the organizational and financial skills they needed to forge ahead. Finally, of course, money gave them power, the power to shape an important educational institution, its buildings, its students, its curriculum and most of all, its future. In that petition of 1902, the members of the RISCEW set forth the terms that guaranteed women their full share of the resources—educational and financial—of Brown University. It was the full share—and not the buildings, scholarships, and loans—that constituted the real legacy of those pioneering women to future generations. With their determination, imagination, and money, the members of the RISCEW and the ACA opened the doors to a future that women students of today have inherited.



With the merger of Pembroke College with the men's college at Brown, the Rhode Island Society for the Collegiate Education of Women meets for the last time in September of 1971.

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| <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Scholarships Offered</b></p> <p><b>To Freshmen Only:</b><br/> <b>THE MARY E. WOOLLEY SCHOLARSHIP</b><br/> <b>OF \$500 (covering two semesters)</b></p> <p><b>SIX REGIONAL SCHOLARSHIPS</b><br/> <b>OF \$450 EACH (covering two semesters)</b></p> <p><b>TWO UNIVERSITY SCHOLARSHIPS</b><br/> <b>OF \$450 EACH (covering two semesters)</b><br/> <small>In 1945-1946 one of these scholarships is to be offered to a student who wishes to register for the degree of Bachelor of Science (in Nursing).</small></p> <p><b>To Freshmen and Students Transferring from Other Colleges:</b></p> <p><b>A limited number of scholarships</b><br/> <b>varying in amount from</b><br/> <b>\$100 to \$200 (covering two semesters)</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Note</b></p> <p>1. Applicants for admission in March will be given every possible consideration for scholarship aid, although the large scholarships are not in general open to them.</p> <p>2. Of the nine large awards, the Rhode Island Regional Scholarship and the University Nursing Scholarship are the only ones open to residents of Providence and its vicinity.</p> <p>3. Recipients of the large scholarships, with the exception of the holder of the Rhode Island Regional Scholarship and the possible exception of the holder of the University Nursing Scholarship, are expected to live in Pembroke College dormitories.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Application for Scholarships</b></p> <p>Formal application should be made on a blank which may be obtained, upon request, from the Office of the Dean or the Office of Admissions at Pembroke College. A scholarship application cannot be considered until an application for admission has also been filed.</p> <p>The scholarship application blank must be filled out and returned before <b>March 1, 1945</b>, by applicants who propose to enter in July or November; before <b>January 1, 1945</b>, by applicants who propose to enter in March.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Selection</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>IS BASED ON:</b></p> <p>1. Presentation of an outstanding school record, together with evidence of genuine intellectual interests, excellent health, sound personal qualities, and good habits in both work and play.</p> <p>2. A high rating on the Scholastic Aptitude Test of the College Entrance Examination Board, which every scholarship applicant must take in <b>April 1945</b>, unless she has taken a previous test of the Board with scores satisfactory to the Committee on Admissions.</p> <p>3. Evidence of financial need, with definite assurance that scholarship aid can be supplemented adequately by other resources.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Note</b></p> <p>The recipient of a scholarship of \$450 or \$500, who maintains during her first two semesters and each succeeding two semesters of her college course an academic average which places her in the upper tenth of her class, will receive \$450 the following two semesters. If she stands in the second tenth, she will receive \$300; if she stands in the third tenth, she will receive \$200.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Notification of Awards</b></p> <p>Notification of scholarship awards will be made between <b>May 15 and June 1, 1945</b>, in the case of those who propose to enter in July or November; about <b>February 1</b>, in the case of those who propose to enter in March.</p> |
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A brochure about available scholarships at Pembroke from the 1940s.

*I am grateful to Jane Levine for all her help and for letting me refer to her honor's thesis, "Towards an 'Infinite Sphere': Separatist Politics in the R. I. Women's Club Movement, 1878—1910," Brown University, 1981.*

## The Women Who Built Pembroke Hall: The Rhode Island Society for the Collegiate Education of Women

*The first two women students entered Brown University in 1891. By 1895, more than a hundred young women crowded into rented premises on Benefit Street, where the noise made studying difficult.*

*A group of local women got together to remedy this, and on January 31, 1895, eighteen of them met for tea at the College Street home of Ella M. Andrews, wife of Brown's President Elisha B. Andrews. They kept minutes of their meetings that are now in the University Archives at the John Hay Library.*

*Until they incorporated in September 1896, the fundraising committee was known as the Committee on the Women's College Fund of Brown University. Thereafter they were the Rhode Island Society for the Collegiate Education of Women (RISCEW).*

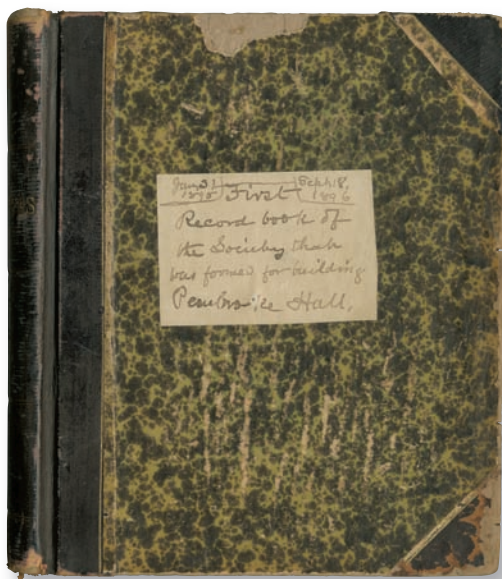
*Although Sarah Doyle recommended disbanding*

*RISCEW after 1911, it persisted and was to serve as the main fundraising organ for the Women's College until the establishment of a large and vigorous alumnae association, and continued its financial and moral support through the 1971 merger of Pembroke with the men's college at Brown.*

### January 31, 1895

After tea had been served, the meeting was called to order by Mrs. Andrews and proceeded to organize by electing Miss Sarah E. Doyle chairman and Mrs. Francis E. Bates as secretary.

Miss Doyle briefly stated the object of the meeting and the purpose for which the committee has been formed. "This is the day of education; and women must be educated. Some one has well said 'Who educates a woman educates the race.' Under President Andrews the education of women and Brown University is well under way. It is now our duty and privilege to help in this work and we can best help by providing a suitable building for these women students. Now how shall we proceed to raise this money?"



Photograph of the first book of minutes from January 1, 1895 – September 18, 1896.

**In attendance were:**

Miss Sarah E. Doyle  
Mrs. J.L. Wheaton  
Miss Mary E. Woolley  
Miss Emma Howard  
Mrs. Andrew Comstock  
Miss Mary C. Wheeler  
Mrs. J. W. Danielson  
Mrs. B.B. Knight  
Mrs. William Binney  
Mrs. Gustav Radeke  
Miss Susan Sawyer  
Miss Amelia S. Knight  
Mrs. James Tillinghast  
Mrs. L.F. Snow  
Mrs. G.W.R. Matteson  
Mrs. Moses L.R. Bradford  
Mrs. E.B. Andrews  
Mrs. F.E. Bates

*They named themselves “The Committee on the Women’s College Building Fund,” elected Miss Sarah Doyle chair, and began meeting weekly.*

*Their officers had impressive reputations and connections that would serve their cause well.*



Portrait of Sarah E. Doyle by Bryan Konietzko, after Cecilia Beaux.

*Sarah E. Doyle (1830-1922), educator, suffragist, clubwoman, and sister of Providence’s long-serving mayor Thomas Doyle, was a leading supporter of women’s higher education and the moving spirit behind the creation of Pembroke Hall. A teacher at Providence High School for thirty-six years, and principal of the girls’ department there for fourteen of those years, she was a founding member of the Rhode Island Women’s Club in 1876, a charter trustee of the Rhode Island School of Design in 1877, and from 1898 was chair of the Board of Lady Visitors to the Women’s College at Brown. She left a substantial legacy for books for the Pembroke library, and after her death in 1922 the Providence Journal described her as “one of the five or six most prominent women in the country.”*

*Louise Prosser Bates, secretary of the Committee for the Women’s College Fund, was in 1893 one of the first two women to earn a master’s degree from Brown.*

*Amelia S. Knight (1848-1929), treasurer, was a president of the Rhode Island’s Women’s Club and vice-president of the national Daughters of the American Revolution.*

*Another key proponent was Brown’s president Elisha Benjamin Andrews (1844-1917: president of Brown 1889-98), who strongly supported women’s higher education.*

## February 4, 1895

*The women discussed a detailed proposal from President Andrews that they should raise \$50,000 for a building for the Women’s College.*

Voted and seconded—That we accept the circular prepared by Dr. Andrews and Dean Snow.

An animated discussion followed as to whether \$50,000 was a large enough sum to aim for and the following amendment was made by Mrs. Goddard and seconded by Mrs. Binney—That the words \$75,000 be substituted for \$50,000 in the circular.

Voted—That we receive the circular as amended.

*It is difficult to compare prices over time, but if we look at consumer prices, this represents almost two million dollars today (as calculated in 2007 dollars).<sup>1</sup>*

*They proposed trying two methods of raising money: locating a few major donors who would give more than a thousand dollars each (\$25,000), and persuading a thousand women to give five dollars apiece (about \$127).<sup>2</sup>*

## March 11, 1895

The sum total reported in specified amounts was \$13,215 (*almost one third of a million dollars*) an encouraging result of two weeks' work.

## March 25, 1895

Resolved: That a gift of \$5000 or more may entitle the giver to some suitable recognition in the building either in his own name or in memory of some person mentioned by him subject to the approval of the Building Committee.

*These large donors included Mr. Jesse Metcalf, who gave \$5,000 in memory of his wife, Helen Adelia Metcalf (more than \$127,000 at 2007 values); and gifts of at least \$1,000 in honor of Mary Miles Aldrich, Abby Greene Beckwith, Mary Ann Shaw, Eliza Howard Slade, and Sarah Benson Tillinghast. (\$1,000 in 1895 represents about \$25,000 at 2007 values). Further major gifts came from John Nicholas Brown, Juliette Paine Comstock, Abby Metcalf Harris, Rowland Hazard, Ella Sturtevant Kellen, the Rhode Island Collegiate Alumnae, and the Rhode Island Women's Club.*

## April 8, 1895

The treasurer reported cash and pledges \$15,315.00 (*\$390,000*). Miss Doyle presented a circular from Martin & Ball, Architects, but it was decided to take no action in the matter at present.

## November 4, 1895

Treasurer Miss Knight reported \$102.00 (*\$2,600*) received from the "Little Women of Pawtucket" a contribution made by the girls in the Pawtucket schools under the High School Grade. Also \$104.45 interest, making the total sum to date \$20,197.88. (*\$513,000*)

## January 6, 1896

The treasurer reported no additions to the fund during the last month, owing partly to the Christmas holidays and possibly also to the uncertain financial feeling that prevails. This is the first month since the committee was organized that no additions have been reported.

*The women were raising money in difficult times. The United States had been in a major economic depression since 1893, although things would begin to improve in 1896. More than five hundred banks had failed, and some fifteen thousand companies nationwide had collapsed. Many middle class people were unable to meet their mortgage obligations and walked away from their homes. The unemployment rate stood at about eighteen percent at the height of the depression and industrial cities such as Providence were badly affected.*

## February 19, 1896

The committee then reported that Dr. Andrews heartily approved of the plan to build immediately.

They also reported that the land on Meeting St., extending to Cushing St. has been donated by the University Corporation for a Women's College and is in every way desirable for the purpose.

After discussion it was Voted— That the land belonging to the University extending from Meeting St. to Cushing St. and on Cushing St. is considered desirable for the building of the Women's College, and is accepted by the Committee on the Women's Building Fund for that purpose.

## February 17, 1896

It was Voted:—That the chairman be appointed a committee to consult some architects on the cost of such a building as we wish to erect.

The chairman chose Mrs. Binney and Mrs. Radeke as alternates.

*Josephine Angier Binney (1840-1814) was the childless second wife of the Hon. William Binney (1825-1909) a prominent Rhode Island lawyer, politician and a founder of the Rhode Island Hospital Trust bank.*

*Eliza Greene Metcalf Radeke (1854-1931) daughter of Helen Rowe Metcalf, founder of the Rhode Island School of Design (RISD) and textile manufacturer Jesse Metcalf, graduated from Vassar in 1876. She served as chair of RISD's Museum Committee from 1893-1931, and succeeded her mother as president of RISD from 1913 until her death in 1931.*

## March 2, 1896

Miss Doyle presented sketch plans prepared by Stone, Carpenter and Wilson as a result of the consultation of the committee appointed at the last meeting, with some architects whom they were authorized to choose.

These plans were in general considered to meet the requirements and it was voted that Stone, Carpenter & Wilson be chosen as architects of the building and asked to make such changes and additions as were thought advisable and to submit them again to the committee on March 9th.

*Providence architectural firm Stone, Carpenter and Wilson also designed Barrington Town Hall (1887-88), the Ladd Observatory (1891), Providence's Union Station (1896-98), Providence Public Library (1900) and the Sayles Gymnasium (1906), now Smith-Buonanno Hall.*

## September 8, 1896

Miss Doyle in a few words explained the purpose of the meeting, alluding to the necessity that we become a corporate body in order to make legal contracts for the new building.

*The Charter of the newly-named Rhode Island Society for the Collegiate Education of Women was signed by Charles P. Bennett, Rhode Island Secretary of State, on September 14, 1896. Charter members were: Sarah E. Doyle, Amelia S. Knight, Louise Prosser Bates, Sarah L. Danielson, Eliza G. Radeke, Anna M. Wheaton, Juliette P. Comstock, Nancy A. Dyer, Susan C. Sawyer, Lucretia G. Chace, Emily R. Matteson, Mary E. Woolley, Anna Metcalf, Susan A. Ballou, Eliza H.L. Barker, Julia E. Smith, Josephine Angier Binney, Isabel Harris Metcalf, Eliza Greene Chace, A.I.C.D. Ames, and Rebekah B.G. Goddard.*

## September 18, 1896

The final meeting of the Women's College Fund Committee was held at Mrs. Danielson's, 160 Waterman St., Friday September 17 at eleven o'clock.

The meeting was called to order by Miss Doyle who stated that the purpose of the meeting was to accept the charter granted by the State and to organize under this charter.

On motion of Mrs. Radeke it was Voted:—That the funds in possession of the Women's College Fund Committee [be] transferred to the Rhode Island Society for the Collegiate Education of Women upon the organization of such a corporation.

## September 23, 1896

Voted:—That the plans presented by Stone, Carpenter & Wilson for the new Recitation Hall are hereby accepted.

## November 10, 1896

Mrs. Danielson reported for the Building Committee that in order that this contract might be signed by our treasurer one thousand dollars must be immediately raised, and that in order to light and heat the building in the best way five thousand dollars are needed. No action was taken but a large number of members was assigned to the different ladies to solicit aid.

## January 4, 1897

Mrs. Danielson reported for the Building Committee that the outside timbers of the Hall are well up, but the need of more money is felt in order to provide for proper heating and plumbing. The question of finishing is receiving careful attention.

The desirability of raising money by means of one or more entertainments was favorably discussed but no action taken.

## February 1, 1897

Mrs. Danielson reported for the Building Committee that the hall is to be piped for gas and also that both direct and indirect heating must be used.

## March 1, 1897

A slight alteration in the plan for the lunch room was called to the attention of the meeting. After a short discussion of the price of furnishings and the firms to be called on for estimates the meeting adjourned.

Ivy Chain procession departing  
Pembroke Hall, 1911



Cafeteria in Pembroke Hall, 1920

## March 3, 1897

Miss Doyle reported that the main hall and hallways of the new building will be ready by Class Day. It was the sense of the meeting that the graduating class at the Women's College should be allowed the use of the building.

## June 7, 1897

Mrs. Comstock reported for the Committee appointed to confer with the Senior Class if the Women's College, that the senior class is to meet on Monday June 14 at 2.30 p.m. for Ivy Day Exercises at Recitation Hall and will also give a reception the same evening.



## September 18, 1897

Voted:—that the request of Miss Amelia S. Knight, the donor of the library furniture and decoration, asking that no change be made in the furnishing or decoration of the room during her lifetime without consultation with her, be communicated to the Corporation of B.U.



The frieze room, photographed in 1899.

*Miss Knight organized and funded the library, hiring Providence sculptor Hippolyte L. Hubert to create the frieze, which has now been restored. The focal point, the panel over the fireplace, shows a mother with her children. One young boy is balancing blocks, thereby learning about gravity, and the panel was intended to demonstrate that “the greatest mission of education is to fit the woman for her duties in the home” according to an article in the Providence Journal of the day.*

## October 4, 1897

The Treasurer reported the total receipts from the opening of the work in 1895 to the present date as

|                          |             |
|--------------------------|-------------|
|                          | \$37,937.32 |
| <b>Total expenditure</b> | \$37,816.66 |
| <b>Balance</b>           | \$120.66    |

The actual expenses of the building aside from the staking of the land and other incidentals has been \$37,601.06

The report was accepted.

*\$37,601.06 in 1897 is worth almost one million in 2007 dollars; \$969,684.89 in terms of the consumer price index. This amount, using the unskilled wage as comparison, rises to over \$4.6 million, using the normal gross domestic product per capita it is worth \$7.7 million, and as a relative share of the gross domestic product it would represent a massive \$32.1 million. Whichever measure we use, it was a lot of money.*

On Miss Doyle’s suggestion that the name of the Recitation Hall commemorate the college where Roger Williams was educated, it was Voted: that the new building be named Pembroke Hall.

*Roger Williams, the founder of Rhode Island, was educated at Pembroke College, Cambridge, England, which was founded exactly five hundred and fifty years earlier by a woman, Mary, Countess de St. Pol.*

*The Women’s College at Brown was renamed Pembroke College in 1928, though the women students had long been known as “Pembrokers.”*

## October 30, 1897

Voted: that Friday November 19, be appointed as the date for the dedication.

It was the sense of the meeting that the dedicatory exercises shall be held at three or four in the afternoon, as shall be found most convenient, and shall be immediately followed by a reception.

## November 1, 1897

The President [of RISCEW] reported from the Trustees that Miss Smith, Dean of Barnard College, will deliver the dedicatory address at Pembroke Hall, that the invitations will be sent out by the Corporation of B.U., and that the date of the Dedication has necessarily been changed from Nov. 19 to Monday Nov. 22.

*Emily James Smith was a graduate of Bryn Mawr's first class. She was a classicist, who also studied at Girton College, Cambridge, and the University of Chicago. She was Dean of Barnard from 1894-1900, resigning due to her pregnancy, some time after her marriage to publisher John Haven Putnam. She returned to work in 1914 and taught at Barnard until 1930.*

*The Dedication of Pembroke Hall was a festive occasion. It took place in the large upper hall, where the platform was banked with ferns and palms, and the platform party of Miss Doyle, Dean Smith and President E. Benjamin Andrews sat in front of the Stars and Stripes, the Rhode Island State flag, and Brown colors. The frieze room, where the reception took place, was decorated with yet more palms and potted plants, plus borrowed bric-a-brac and oriental rugs to make it look more finished.*

## December 6, 1897

The President [then] presented a request made by the Dean for the use of Pembroke Hall on five nights for a dancing class, at \$20 a night.

Voted:—that the Hall shall not be rented for purposes of mere entertainment.

The need of an endowment for the Women's College was very forcibly presented by the President [of RISCEW]. Without endowments there can be no guaranty that the instruction will be maintained at a desirable standard, nor can the graduates of Brown become members of the Association of Collegiate Alumnae.

## March 7, 1898

Mrs. Andrews was asked to present to Brown University the recommendations of the Corporation that the grounds of Pembroke Hall be graded and put in order and then report at the April meeting what the University is willing to do in the matter.

## April 4, 1898

The President reported the following vote passed by the Advisory and Executive Committee of Brown University regarding the grounds around Pembroke Hall: "Voted: That this committee does not feel it has any funds to expend for this purpose at the present time." It was recommended by the Advisory Committee of Ladies that the Society put the grounds in order.

Mrs. Radeke presented an inquiry from Dean Snow asking if the Corporation would approve of an effort to raise a \$250,000 endowment for the Women's College. The effort to be made in connection with the movement to raise a two million dollar endowment for Brown University.

*The proposed Women's College endowment represents about six and a half million of today's dollars.*

*President E. Benjamin Andrews left Brown in 1898, to be succeeded by W.H.P. Faunce who would be president of the University for thirty years. RISCEW continued meeting, and fighting for proper recognition of—and funding for—the Women's College with Brown.*

*They finally disbanded in September 1971 after the merger of the Women's College with Brown.*

### Notes:

- 1 Price comparisons use the website <http://www.measuringworth.com/calculators/uscompare/result.php>
- 2 Figures in parentheses indicate the approximate sum calculated in 2007 dollars.

*Historical annotations by Jane Lancaster, PhD'98.*

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