

He arrived in Pella September 15, 1854, prepared to open school immediately, but on arriving here he found, to his disappointment, that no rooms had been engaged and that the furniture for the school was still growing in the virgin forests surrounding Pella. Dr. Scarff and the board at once went to work. Rooms were secured, trees cut down and hauled to the mill, and carpenters were soon engaged in fashioning seats and desks. In the short space of four weeks so much was accomplished that the school was opened with about forty scholars. Caleb Caldwell and Miss Julia Tolman assisted Dr. Scarff as teachers.

In the autumn of 1856 the east end of the third floor of the new college building was so far completed as to permit the moving of the school there. At this time Dr. Scarff was principal of the college and pastor of the Baptist Church. In 1857 he resigned his place as principal that he might devote his entire time to the work of the ministry. Professor Currier was engaged to take the vacant place. At the general board meeting he was given the chair of Latin. At the same meeting Rev. Joseph K. Hornish settled upon the college an endowment of ten thousand dollars, with the provision that Rev. Elihu H. Gunn be first called to the presidency of the college. But the great panic of 1857 swept over the country, making it impossible to realize on the promised capital. The result was that the new president of the college soon found himself without a salary. In 1858 Dr. Scarff resigned his pastorate and Dr. Gunn took charge of the church, while Dr. Scarff resumed his duties in the school in 1859. Mrs. Stoddard was then at the head of the Ladies' Department.

The new school now began to experience very hard times. Farm products had to be hauled to the Mississippi river, and merchandise brought back on the return trip. Almost the only money in circulation at that time was of the "wild-cat" variety, and its value sometimes failed to exceed that of the paper on which it was printed. The best pork was worth in Pella one dollar and a quarter per hundred; wheat was twenty-five and corn ten cents a bushel; the best butter five cents a pound, and eggs two cents a dozen. Schools sustained by tuition fees alone, of course had to suffer in this state of affairs; but although it was a bitter struggle, the little college bravely held its own, and gathered in new pupils each term. A few years later, when the civil war broke out, the new institution of learning again almost went to pieces. But this time it was patriotism and not lack of funds. It will remain a matter of deep pride as long as one friend or one member of Central's alumni lives, that in the hour of our nation's peril, the entire body of male students (122) enlisted. Dr. Currier as head of Central set the example by leaving the peace of the schoolroom for the strife of the battlefield.

FIRST BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The first board of trustees, elected when the school was established in 1853, consisted of the following men:

Rev. John Bates	S. C. Conrey
Rev. Wm. H. Turton	Rev. H. P. Scholte
Rev. O. Sperry	G. S. Hampston
Rev. I. C. Ward	B. Goff
Dea. Luce	Ira Kelsey
B. Putman, M. D.	Rev. E. O. Towne
E. Metcalf, M. D.	Rev. Wm. Elliott
C. W. Brand	Rev. D. Jewett
C. Craven	Dea. W. Nossaman
W. Coop	Dea. H. A. Ritner