

1944

## **Rich, William**

Gallaudet University Archives

Follow this and additional works at: <https://ida.gallaudet.edu/daavf>

---

### **Recommended Citation**

Gallaudet University Archives, "Rich, William" (1944). *Deaf African American Vertical Files*. 33.  
<https://ida.gallaudet.edu/daavf/33>

This News Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Vertical Files at IDA@Gallaudet. It has been accepted for inclusion in Deaf African American Vertical Files by an authorized administrator of IDA@Gallaudet. For more information, please contact [james.mccarthy@gallaudet.edu](mailto:james.mccarthy@gallaudet.edu).



# Just Once a Month

Vol. XXIV, No. 1

Kendall School

Washington, D. C.



WILLIAM G. RICH

## PICNIC HONORING WILLIAM RICH

By Mr. Roy Stewart  
Near the Kendall School building is the finest grove of elms on Kendall Green. It has become a

favorite place for happy gatherings. There the Kendall School holds its out-door exercises, the Kendall Alumni its reunions, and the local N. F. S. D. its Fourth of July picnics. It was there, on July 23, that the Kendall alumni held



a surprise party in honor of William Rich on his seventy-sixth birthday—William having been janitor of the Kendall School for 56 years, starting in at the age of twenty. He is still hale and hearty and brimming over with reminiscences.

The idea of honoring Mr. Rich was broached at the N. F. S. D. picnic on July 2. It spread like a prairie fire and in less than no time a committee consisting of Wallace Edington, president of the alumni, Esther Culverwell, Jack Craven, and Ellen Stewart was formed. They got in Craven's car and started hunting for the secretary of the Kendall alumni. Finding him near 8th Street and Florida Ave., on his way home, they told him to get in the car and come along. Then they drove around to Principal Craig's house where they found him engaged in a heated game of croquet. Mr. Craig liked the idea as much as they did and told them to go ahead. So by sundown the small committee had about been expanded to a committee of the whole and \$50 had been pledged as a gift to Mr. Rich.

Along came July 23 and what a beautiful day it turned out to be! The alumni and friends of Mr. Rich were there in full force. The matter of bringing about William's presence was left to the crafty Jack Craven. He was there on time and

Mrs. Rich was with him. They came under the impression they were attending a party in honor of Dr. Hall—William having already given the crafty Jack one dollar to help the party along. Imagine his surprise when he found it was all for him.

The addresses were few, brief, and to the point. Mr. Rich's faithfulness to duty, his gentlemanliness and unfailing courtesy were tressed. President Edington made the presentation address and was followed by Dr. Elizabeth Peet. Secretary Stewart conveyed to Mr. Rich Dr. Hall's regrets that circumstances forced him to be away from Kendall Green on that day. The sum of \$76 was presented to Mr. Rich. Several days after the 23rd \$40 more was given him, making \$116 in all.

Mr. Rich responded, expressing his happiness over the gift. He related some of his reminiscences that have accumulated during his stay on the Green. He told of having been there before the houses on Faculty Row, and the Gym, were built. He said that back of the stable, where Mr. Fowler kept his faithful dobbin and Dr. Gallaudet his coach horses, was a duck pond with real live ducks swimming on its surface. This writer does not remember the pond but he does recall that Douglas Craig had rooms above the stable and he used to call



on him there to listen to his stories of old Kendall Green. At that time Douglas had gone into business in the yard surrounding the stable. He converted it into a rabbit warren and a guinea pig farm. This was in the interest of thrift on Douglas' part and a desire to supply the public with pets and the medical profession with rabbits and guinea pigs with which to experiment for the purpose of advancing health. But as time went on Dr. Gallaudet found it necessary to argue Douglas out of the business in the interest of peace on Kendall Green.

Following the presentation the afternoon turned out to be one of those impromptu Kendall alumni reunions we all enjoy so much. A picture exhibit had been arranged and folks flocked around it like honey bees over a patch of crimson clover.

Along with the \$76 Mr. Rich was given a list containing the names of those who had contributed. Dr. and Mrs. Hall and Principal and Mrs. Craig were among the first to contribute.

Among those who attended the picnic given in honor of Mr. William Rich, July 23, were:

Mr. and Mrs. Sam B. Craig, Mr. and Mrs. Wallace D. Edington, Mr. and Mrs. Frank Ketner (Mildred Miller), Mr. and Mrs. Andrew J. Parker (Maud Edington), Miss

Viola A. Servold, Mr. and Mrs. Thomas A. Hicks, Mr. and Mrs. J. B. Eskin, Mr. Warren Blackwell, Mr. and Mrs. Edward Carr (Isabelle Long), Mr. and Mrs. Wasil Simero (Rosie Norcia), Mr. and Mrs. Simon Alley, Mrs. Laura R. Bryant, Mrs. William Lowell, Mr. and Mrs. Benjamin Beavers, Miss Helen Beavers, Mr. and Mrs. C. C. Sullivan, Mrs. Rose Bond Hough, Mr. Jacob Manoogian, Miss Nellie Gentry, Mr. and Mrs. Florence V. Neal, Miss Elizabeth Peet, Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Kline, Mr. and Mrs. Morton W. Galloway, Mr. and Mrs. J. S. Rosenbloom, Mr. and Mrs. John Miller, Mr. and Mrs. F. E. Ridgeway, Mr. and Mrs. Gilbert Corman, Mrs. Leonard Downes, Mr. James A. Nash, Mrs. Olaf Hanson, Mrs. Mary Vermillion, Miss Georgia Pruitt, Miss Catherine Noland, Miss Lillian E. Anderson, Mrs. Thelma Higgins Heiner, Miss Adeline M. Tate, Mr. Fred Hill, Miss Sylvia Cohen, Mrs. Leonard Starke, Mr. Edmund F. Buman, Miss Grace D. Ely, Mrs. Grace Lowe Craven, Mr. and Mrs. Albert J. Rose, Mr. and Mrs. H. I. Antila, Mr. Louis P. Schulte, Mr. Thomas G. Rippe, Mr. and Mrs. Alexander H. Ewan, Mr. Leonard J. Stark, Mr. and Mrs. Anthony D'Onfrio, Mr. Theodore Chaconas, Mr. William P. Hill, Mr. Fred Connick, Mr. J. D. Hospital, Mr. Victor Hugo Lomonosoff, Mrs. Bessie K.



Feast, Mr. Fred L. Tschiffely, Mr. and Mrs. Valentine E. Johnson, Dr. and Mrs. Herbert C. Merrill, Miss Florence Hall, Mr. Phillip Slaughter, Mr. Ray Baxter, Mr. Percival Hall, Jr., Mr. Edward Lynch, Miss Dorothy Agar, Mrs. James A. Nash, Mr. and Mrs. M. W. Galloway, Mrs. Reuben I. Altizer, Mr. and Mrs. John V. Wurde-  
mann, Mr. and Mrs. Robert M. Werdig, Miss Alice Forbes, Mrs. Laurence N. Surber, Dr. Powrie Doctor, Mrs. Doctor, Mrs. Marion Fisher, Mr. and Mrs. Ray Allen, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Boswell, Mr. Woodrow Zimmerman, Mrs. Harley Drake, Miss Esther Culverwell, and Mr. and Mrs. Roy Stewart.

#### WILLIAM G. RICH

William G. Rich was born in Westmoreland County, Virginia, July 1, 1868.

He entered the Kendall School, September 24, 1875, and was graduated, June 14, 1885.

One of his proudest possessions is a certificate of graduation from the Columbia Institution for the Deaf bearing the date of graduation and the signature of Edward Miner Gallaudet.

He began his work shortly after graduation and from that time on he has performed his duties with alertness and cheerfulness that has won for him high esteem. He holds

the respect of all the "Kendall Greeners" and is a leader among his group in the city.

He thanks his many friends for the lovely birthday "Gift" they gave him on the 23rd of July, 1944. It was a very great surprise to him. He enjoyed the party and the gift and wants everyone to know that he is truly appreciative.

#### ADDRESS TO KENDALL SCHOOL GRADUATES JUNE 2, 1944

By Edmund B. Boatner, Superintendent of the American School for the Deaf, Hartford, Conn.

Mr. Craig, Dr. Hall, members of the class of 1944, and friends of Kendall School:

It is a real pleasure for me to be here to speak to you on this occasion, an occasion which is rightfully termed Commencement Exercises, since it denotes the commencement of each member of the graduating class upon a larger scale of endeavor. It is an added pleasure to me because some of the members of the class are known to me. Eleven years ago this June I also was finishing my course at Gallaudet College and Kendall School, and at that time some of you were in school as very small children. Since then I have had occasion to visit the college once or more every year, and to some extent have been able to keep my con-



## Fifty Years of Handicaps Meant Nothing to Him



WILLIAM G. RICH, Sr.,

of 1718 Montello Avenue Northeast, who was recently given \$100 by the faculty of the Gallaudet College for the deaf and dumb in D.C., in appreciation of his 50 years of service as custodian of the school. Mr. Rich was graduated from the school June 17, 1885. Percival Hall, white, president of the college, made the presentation address in the chapel, where the honor was conferred. Mr. Rich resides with his wife at their Montello Avenue home. He has three children: Vernon Rich, a graduate of Howard, in business in New York; William Jr., who received his master's degree from New York University, last year, now in the government service there, and a daughter, Celestine, a graduate of Dunbar High School, who resides with her parents.

1942



### WILLIAM J. RICH

William J. Rich died at his home in Washington, July 27, in his 78th year. He had been in poor health since early spring and at the close of the school year, he retired as janitor of the Kendall School, a position he had filled faithfully and well for 60 years.

"Rich", as he was affectionately known, was one of the oldest living graduates of the Kendall School. He was born July 1, 1868 and entered school in the fall of 1875. At that time Negro children who were deaf attended this school. He was graduated in 1885. One of his proudest possessions was the diploma bearing the date of his graduation and the signature of Edward Miner Gallaudet.

He began his work shortly after graduation and from that time until his retirement he performed his duties with an alertness and cheerfulness that won him the highest esteem of all who knew him. He was a leader among his group in the city and his opinion was respected by the hundreds of pupils who attended the school while he was employed here.

In June of 1937 a special chapel exercise was held and Dr. Percival

Hall congratulated "Rich" upon his more than 50 years of efficient service. A government bond was presented to him and the good wishes of his friends, young and old, were expressed. Again, in 1944, an alumni picnic was held to honor "Rich" on his 76th birthday. A large group of alumni and teachers attended.

Mr. Rich is survived by his widow, a daughter and two sons. The sympathy of all who knew him is extended to them.

*Just back a month  
Oct '45*



Dr. Edward Miner Gallaudet:

Dr. Gallaudet was a learned and dignified man. It was said of him that he could have made good in any walk of life he chose. His life interest was with the deaf. His mother was deaf, he was brought up among the deaf whom he understood better than any other man of his time.

He regarded the boys at Gallaudet as gentlemen and expected them to act like gentlemen. No betide those who did not.

Now and then there was an outburst of hazing which soon subsided when Dr. Gallaudet went into action. The first year class was called the Introductory Class. Very soon the upperclassmen shortened that to just plain Ducks. Ducks take to water naturally. It was considered an unpardonable sin for a Duck to show symptoms of having a "swelled head." That was a matter requiring the immediate attention of the Freshman Class, aided and abetted by members of the upper classes. The Duck had no chance. Now and then he would be escorted to the Bath Room. This room then had no shower baths as modern progress had not yet reached Kendall Green. However, there were several oversized bath tubs. The procedure was to escort the Duck, with the regnum caput, to the Bath Room, put in the stopper and turn on the cold water faucet. Thus the Duck had a few moments of meditation before being immersed clothes and all. This procedure was considered the best cure for the swelled head known to the upperclassmen.

In due time Dr. Gallaudet became aware of the situation and decided to put a stop to it. He had all the men students meet him in the Chapel. Gave them a good lecture on the evils of hazing. Told them he looked on them as gentlemen and expected them to act like gentlemen. He said he was going to his office and expected those who took part in the hazing to meet him there and confess. If they did not four of the students would be expelled. He left for his office leaving the students in stunned silence. The first to wake up was William Dudley, our big freshman from Texas. He made his way to the office door and stood in the middle of the hall. With his right thumb he beckoned toward the door, and with his left hand spelt the magic word: "Confess." All trooped in and confessed. Dr. Gallaudet shook hands with each student and there were tears in his eyes. The sentence of the four boys to be expelled was suspended pending good behavior.

Shortly after the above incident we all signed a pledge not to indulge in hazing. As far as I personally know there was no hazing worth mentioning during the balance of my years at Gallaudet. Of course there was some joshing—much.

A good title for a story of Douglas Craig would be: One Of The Most Unforgettable Characters I'VE MET. He was a waif discovered on the streets of Washington by a gentleman whose name is thought to have been Craig. He was deaf and could not speak. He never knew how old he was or where he was born. Like Topsy he just grew. Dr. Gallaudet took charge of him and gave him the first name of Douglas after a prominent colored man of the time.

Douglas Craig was placed in the Kendall School where he remained to grow to be a very strong youth and was then given work, as general handy-man, on Kendall Green. He remained in that capacity for many years and up to a short time before he passed away. There is not a square foot on the Campus over which Douglas' rake or lawn never has not passed. One of his many duties was to hoist the flag to the top of the flagpole in the morning and to take it down in the early evening. It was Douglas who hoisted the first flag to the top of the flagpole that now stands in front of College Hall. He was then quite feeble and sat in an armchair until they were ready for the flag-raising ceremony.



There was another deaf colored man, William Rich, working on Kendall Green during Douglas' time. William was a bright person and well groomed. He was for years janitor of the Kendall School. Whenever there was a reception at Dr. Gallandot's house William would appear all dolled up in a tuxedo and preside at the front door.

In a way Douglas was kind of jealous of William's success. William had successfully courted Dr. Fay's cook who was a hearing person. They were married and lived happily thereafter. William believed in a college education and saw to it that his boys attended Howard University.

Douglas was not lucky until late in life. It was said of him, and I do not know if it was true, that he proposed to every colored cook that came to Kendall Green. Finally he discovered that the lady of his choice lived in Baltimore. That was a situation requiring correspondence and Douglas was not any too strong in letter writing so he appointed a student in the College as his "private secretary." The result was successful. Douglas and his bride were married in a new church for colored in H.E. Washington. Dr. Hall was the interpreter. Douglas appeared in full dress, white tie, white gloves, and a broad smile. Nearly the whole faculty of the College and many friends were present. After the wedding they went on a honeymoon to Baltimore and then settled down in what had been an officer's cottage at Fort Meigs, better known to us as the Patterson estate adjoining Kendall Green.

The honeymoon in Baltimore was not entirely happy for some miscreant relieved Douglas of his pocketbook containing \$200.

Along came an alumni reunion and Douglas invited the alumni to visit his cottage. Thinking only a few would come he had a small amount of icecream ready. Everyone attending the reunion went over to Craig's cottage. The late Robert P. McGregor was appointed speaker of the day. He was in fine form. Not only did he give Douglas a birthday, which was the very day we were there, but told him how old he was which was 70. Seeing there was not enough icecream to go around none was offered. I heard a long time afterwards that Mr. and Mrs. Craig partook of some of the icecream and gave the balance to the Drake children who lived in the Old Farm House that was once the home of Anne Kendall.

One time Craig wanted a new hat and went to Dr. Gallandot about it. Dr. Gallandot, thinking to save him money, tried to postpone the buying of a new hat. Craig held out his hat and said: "Would you like to wear it?" He got a new one.

There is a story about Lucas, the colored man who lived in the little cottage by the gate. Lucas attended to the marketing and was a sort of general watchman. One Sunday he was sitting on the little porch when a gentleman drove his horse and buggy through the gate. Lucas rushed off the porch and said, "No visitors on the grounds on Sunday." "Who says so?" asked the gentleman. The reply was a classic and was: "No and Dr. Gallandot."

Craig was good at chasing city boys off Kendall Green. One look at his approach was enough to make them head, with all speed, in the general direction of H Street.

In late years William and Douglas were friends. William taught Sunday school in a church for colored deaf. He was a welcome visitor at Douglas' house and when he left Douglas would always ask him to pray for him.

Anyone wishing to see Dr. Gallandot as he looked in real life, and to note the beauty, clarity, and dignity of his use of the signlanguage can do so by viewing his moving picture film. The title of the film is: The Lorna Doone Country of Devonshire, England. I was the "production manager" of that film of fifty years ago.