

Establishment of an Educational Institution:  
Crothers and the Others

Lucas Garron  
Spring 2009  
PWR 1: Rhetoric of Stanford – Susan Wyles



George Edward Crothers  
(Berg, Jerry E., Ed. A Legal History of Stanford University, Vol. 3)

When they lost their only son to typhoid in March 1884, California railroad tycoon Leland Stanford and his wife Jane Lathrop Stanford were left with no heirs to their fortune. Within five weeks, they amended their will to prepare for a memorial endowment, and eventually the Stanfords resolved to build a university –for the benefit of society, and as a monument to their deceased son (Lewis 182). On November 14<sup>th</sup>, 1885, the Stanfords signed an elaborate, 40-page copy of the university's *Founding Grant* (Allen 15), and a newspaper article from the *San Francisco Daily Evening Bulletin* announced that "the boys and girls of California were, in effect, declared the legal heirs of the noble pair, in the place and stead of the promising youth who has passed away." The Stanfords hoped to accomplish grand, noble goals with their institution, and their *Founding Grant* demonstrates this clearly in its first provision:

*"Its nature, that of a university with such seminaries of learning as shall make it of the highest grade...*

*Its object, to qualify its students for personal success, and direct usefulness in life;  
And its purposes, to promote the public welfare by exercising an influence in [sic] behalf of humanity and civilization, teaching the blessings of liberty regulated by law, and inculcating love and reverence for the great principles of government as derived from the inalienable rights of man to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."*

The university opened in 1891, and among Stanford University's "pioneer class" of '95 was a student who grew up to embody and protect its ideals: George Edward Crothers. His biographer, friend and associate Henry C. Clausen, notes that Crothers was eagerly present at Stanford's cornerstone ceremony in 1887. He entered "the door of opportunity" and graduated from Stanford with a bachelor's degree in '95, and a master's degree in 1896. Thereafter, he immediately joined his brother, Thomas G. Crothers, in the profession of law. (Clausen 26, 40) He contributed greatly to the university in his life, and Stanford students will recognize his name in one of his latest benefactions: Crothers Hall.

After graduating, Crothers would soon return services to his alma mater. He discovered that the university was in a precarious situation: in addition to facing financial issues, it rested on shaky legal grounds; for example, *Founding Grant* itself had not been completely legal. Distressed, yet motivated,

Crothers stepped in, and dedicated much of the rest of his life tending to Stanford University. His “ability to sniff out legal defects and loopholes overlooked by others” allowed him to help reform the university's legal grounds (Clausen 5), and his affinity with Jane Stanford toward the end of her life shaped his philanthropy toward her university, and its maintenance. Although Leland and Jane Stanford had founded their university with long-term goals of an independent institution of educating students to contribute to society, the founders committed many legal mistakes; these were resolved by the under-credited George E. Crothers, who became the main legal patron of Stanford University and was responsible its preservation, true to the ideals of its founders. Fifty years after his death, he is only remembered in the name of a dorm, and he deserves greater recognition for his accomplishments.

**T**hough Leland and Jane stated many goals for the university, a few key ideas prevailed throughout their statements. Mainly, their decisions were devoted to establishing a school that could offer students a fair, comprehensive education, so that they could become exceptional citizens upon graduation. Before the death of Leland Jr., his father had risen to notoriety and wealth as California governor and president of the Central Pacific Railroad, and he had the status to found a unique university and enforce his own ambitions (Lewis 183). Though he intended to establish a university to complement the schools on the East Coast, Crothers notes how Leland Sr. made personal decisions in defining his private institution, as “Leland Stanford's purpose was not to create a university upon the model of any existing educational institution.” (“Founding of”, part 2) Stanford was very adamant about a practical education, and in particular, he wanted to stress the importance of the growing sciences at his institution (Tutorow 71). Stanford's practical ideals were summarized in an article in *Scientific American* magazine five days following the university's commencement ceremony:

*“Senator Stanford has had in view mainly the large class of boys and girls who desire to make their own way in life the moment they come out of school. While the higher education will not be neglected, the greatest attention will be given to those special studies that will enable pupils to do something for their own support as soon as they are graduated. For this purpose tho schools in... the sciences will be made the most perfect in*

*the country.*” (“Opening of”, column 1)

While the Stanfords had lofty intentions for their memorial endowment, they had to undertake a convoluted legal effort dedicated to their conception of a university. In addition to setting up an educational system, they had to establish an accommodating legal foundation: to accomplish this, they wanted to transfer their wealth to a Board of Trustees that would maintain the university properly. For this purpose, former governor Leland Sr. drafted a piece of legislation called the *Enabling Act* by himself, which was approved by the California legislature within a year of Leland Jr.'s death (Trustees Manual 31). It was intended to allow the Stanfords to commit their *Founding Grant* and set up a trust with Trustees wielding proper powers. Though the relationship between two documents would surface again, they set the original ground for the university to open.

In order to get a better idea of the specific intentions of the Stanfords with the *Founding Grant*, it is actually more informative to look at what did not occur, and why: for example, Stanford could have refrained from writing the *Enabling Act*. Legally, the Stanfords could have established an “educational corporation” that had most of the intended powers of the Board of Trustees. However, the couple wanted to retain power over their bequeathal, which would have been disallowed. In addition, such a corporation had a lifespan of 50 years, after which the legislature could assume control of the corporation. The Stanfords wanted an independent institution, and their choice to push for a new kind of trust was instrumental in achieving their goals. (“Speech to...” 2)

Though the university opened in 1891, Leland Stanford died in 1893, and Jane assumed the sole role of surviving founder. She took an active interest in guiding the university, and beginning in 1897 she delivered several addresses to the Board of Trustees that would be considered amendments to the *Founding Grant*. In these, she set down miscellaneous directions in order to maintain her purpose for the university. But even as she went on, the death of her husband brought up complicated legal issues with her actions that no one fully appreciated until she came across the right person: George Crothers.

Beginning in 1898, Crothers took up many responsibilities for the university, partially supplanting Jane Stanford herself. Jane had met Crothers several times while he was a student, and took a liking to him, who had a particular physical resemblance to her son, the namesake of the university (Clausen 26). However, Jane and George did not interact much until 1898, when she talked to Crothers (and a William Harrelson) at a meeting about moving the Sigma Nu fraternity house. She invited them to stay for tea, and gradually became inclined to unburden herself of the university's current struggles by recounting them to the two graduates (Clausen 41). Beginning with this meeting, Crothers quickly became involved with Jane's efforts, and took on a primary and unique role in the university's leadership.

Following Leland Sr.'s death, the university became involved in various financial legal struggles that threatened the university; several sources detail the issues that Jane was encountering, but the confusion took on a different status once Crothers became involved. Crothers had graduated from Stanford, and the university had prepared him for the "direct usefulness in life" advocated in the *Founding Grant*. Crothers applied his law degree, and went beyond his duty: although Jane told him about the financial chaos plaguing the university (particularly the transfer of railroad stocks to the Board of Trustees), he looked at the bigger imminent issues, and eventually helped reform the entire university. He did this with swiftness: immediately after his meeting with Jane, Crothers embarked on a project of tax exemption to help the university handle its finances. At first he organized a "mass meeting" to publicize the issue, but his efforts evolved, until eventually he was in charge of promoting an amendment to the California constitution. (Clausen 43)

From 1898 until the early 1910's, Crothers was tirelessly dedicated to undertakings for the university. In his later years, when his involvement was not as dramatic, he was fond of recounting and clarifying those acts. Already on May 2, 1910 he delivered a speech to the Phi Delta Phi fraternity, detailing his first few years of humble service. Stanford's Special Collections and University Archives

contain numerous hand- and typewritten revisions of the speech, and the final 43-page copy gives a thorough, first-hand look at his biggest accomplishments. (“Speech to...”) In 1932, he published an extended account entitled “Founding of the Leland Stanford Stanford University.” Though the various topics in his histories could each merit pages of supported analysis, a few excerpts from these two writings by Crothers himself will demonstrate his dedication and insight in these years.

After Jane introduced him to her struggles during their fateful 1898 meeting, Crothers examined the original founding documents with a comprehensive approach to resolving the troubles. Upon examining the *Enabling Act* and *Founding Grant*, “Crothers thought that the educational plans, ideals, and philosophies expressed in the *Founding Grant* were sound and inspirational,” but he was appalled at the inconsistencies and near-illegalities under which the university had been operating (foreword to “Founding of...”). They had been laying dormant and disregarded, but he took an interest in mitigating future troubles.

Though Leland Sr. had carefully composed the *Enabling Act*, Crothers came to the (gravely amusing) conclusion that the *Founding Grant* did not fully follow the act that had been written for it! It did not allow for the board to receive donations, or even additional funds from the Stanfords. And though the *Enabling Act* states that “the person making such grant may therein reserve the right to alter, amend, or modify the terms and conditions thereof and the trusts therein created” (Trustees Manual 33), Jane's revisions were of questionable validity.

In his speech, Crothers boldly highlighted the main problems he had discovered and helped settle. He stated his discovery that the powers reserved in the *Founding Grant* had exceeded the *Enabling Act*, and he explored this by asking: were Jane's amendments to the *Founding Grant* legal? Although it had not been brought up by anyone else, Crothers authoritatively claimed that the *Founding Grant* did not conform to the *Enabling Act* because the Stanfords did not coordinate the language that allowed the grantors to amend the grant, “nor did Mrs. Stanford make her important

grants and her attempted amendments to the trusts executed in the late 'nineties conform to either.” (“Speech to...” 15) In particular, Crothers was also concerned that Jane had technically only been an “assenting spouse” to Leland under California law, and did receive the powers claimed in the Grant. She had been making amendments and “immense donations of real and personal property” under the supposition that this was valid under the grant. (Phi 15) However, Crothers explains that the couple did not have the foresight to prepare the board to receive gifts beyond the initial endowment (“Founding of...” part 3). In fact, the Board itself was an ambiguous entity, since “neither the Board of Trustees nor the University constituted a legal name.” The Board had no corporate powers, just intentions set forth in the *Founding Grant*, and in order to exercise any legal power, the University and the Board had to “name themselves relative to the Grant” where they were defined (“Speech to...” 18). Quite readily, Crothers concluded that the university was in a perilous mess, and he did not hesitate to correct that.

Although Jane had actually consulted Crothers about specific financial issues, Crothers responsibly expanded the scope of his involvement. In his own words:

*“I was shocked to find the legal status of the University which I have already outlined, and considered that, however important tax exemption might be, infinitely more important was the laying of entirely new and different legal foundations for the University, and its creation into a legal entity with all the necessary powers legally granted to the trustees, and all the hampering limitations and restriction removed.”* (“Founding of...”, part 5)

Thereafter, Crothers was involved in numerous legal proceedings: he participated in –and led–many successful efforts, including complicated reformations of the University and an entire amendment to the California constitution (see Appendix B for a longer list). In response to their findings, “we [Crothers, et al.] accordingly prepared the Amendments of October 3rd, 1902, which, after submission by Mrs. Stanford to Judge Leib, was signed by her with some explanatory additions.” (“Speech to” 35) Therein, she revokes many troublesome directives from her previous amendments. (Trustees Manual 18) While it is unclear what discord would have arisen from without these re-amendments, Crothers

was involved in a purely mitigative effort intended spared the university from eventual technical conflicts.

Although his service to Jane and the University continued for many years, the episode of Stanford's own amendment to the California Constitution illustrates his prime dedication to the university. The amendment was an extension built around a concern Jane expressed to Crothers in 1898; namely, that she could not convey railroad stocks (inherited from her husband) to the financially ailing university without incurring prohibitive taxes (“Founding of”, part 4). Crothers eventually resolved this by personally writing an amendment to the constitution that gave the Board corporate powers, granted them the right to receive “gifts, grants, bequests, and devises” like Jane's stocks, and allowed these gifts –as well as property such as the land held by the university– to be exempt from taxation (Trustees Manual 39). Despite his expectations, George Crothers –with associates Thomas Crothers, Francis Keesling, and John Sheehan– succeeded in having the amendment approved by the California legislature and the voters of the entire state in 1900 (“Founding of”, part 6). Such a momentous amendment was a great boon to the university's financial and operative objectives, and George Crothers deserves strong responsibility for promoting the interests of the university.

Throughout the work of the amendment, Crothers gained the trust of Jane Stanford, and when it came time to negotiate the transfer of stock from her to the Board, she took the suggestion of S. F. Leib and decided to “give, grant, assign, transfer and deliver [the stock] unto George E. Crothers” for him to reconvey after her death (Berg, Vol. 3, August 5, 1903). Indeed, immediately upon Jane's death on February 28<sup>th</sup>, 1905, Crothers returned from a business trip to Mexico, and took the valuable stock “direct from a Montgomery bank safe deposit box” to the other trustees (Clausen 63). By then, Crothers had also become Jane's attorney, and had helped her carefully resign all her founder's powers to the Board. He had also become a member of that board, becoming the university's first alumnus to be named a Trustee. In his many capacities, official and unofficial, George Crothers helped Jane and the

Board discover and resolve so many issues that he would receive numerous accolades from other prominent Stanford figures whose names would strike a chord of familiarity in any Stanford student: Herbert Hoover (his '96 classmate), Rayman L. Wilbur, Donald B. Tresidder, and so on... (George Edward Crothers, a Friend of Stanford University 53-55) His contributions were so free and numerous that at the dedication of Crothers Hall, Board President Dinkelspiel would thank him for touching “more than fifty technical and policy matters” (Clausen 155) –Dinkelspiel was only referring to his help with Jane's address of 1902, one of many endeavours.


**A**lthough George Crothers was clearly dedicated to Stanford, one might wonder “Why Crothers?” What made him such a figure worthy of recognition, and may there not be others who contributed just as much? In order to see how Crothers occupied a unique, critical role in Stanford's history, and we can look at his colleagues to contrast his accomplishments: among the accounts that describe Stanford's early legal history, there are recurring mentions of his brother Thomas G. Crothers, Judge S. F. Leib, and even the university's first president, David Starr Jordan.

Thomas G. Crothers (“T. G.”) was a member of Stanford's first graduating class of '92, and though Thomas worked closely with his brother, George seems to have led their work more often. Both of them graduated from Stanford, and joined in law practice to form Crothers & Crothers (Clausen 93). Thomas had considerable responsibility in their Stanford work, and he handled the task of assembling 511 pages of legal documents into a “Matter of the Petition” for Jane's resignation (“Founding of...”, part 9), what George called “in effect the real charter of the university” (Clausen 61). However, Thomas, and associates Keesling and Sheehan, who worked together on such tasks as the university's tax exempt status (Bartholomew, et al), are almost invariably connected to the university in mention with George Crothers, and George's service corresponds with, and supersedes theirs.

Judge S. F. Leib is a cloudy figure; an “old friend of the Stanfords” (“Founding of”, part 11) he played a significant legal role, but few sources describe the scope of his involvement with the

university. According to archive records, he served as a Trustee for 32 years, 1891 to 1923 (Trustees, Board of), and in 1899 Jane decided to “name Mr. S. F. Leib as President” of the Board (Trustees Manual 13). As a distinguished member of the Board, Leib was often a participant in formal legal acts, but rarely without the involvement of Crothers. For example, when Jane consulted S. F. Leib about her stocks, Leib advised her to “appoint George Crothers as a trustee of the stock and that he could be counted on to carry out her wishes regardless of the consequences.” –which Crothers did (Clausen 63).

Compared to Crothers' and his legal peers, Stanford University's first president David Starr Jordan was a very strong figure in shaping the campus's early history, one of the people who made decisions on a scale comparable with Leland and Jane. His leadership defined the academics of the growing institution: modern Stanford professor Norman Tutorow, writing about the ideals of the university, notes that Jordan “persuaded Stanford that a 'real university...would be better’” with a “traditional curriculum including medicine, law, economics, and political science.” He also describes that some of the Stanfords' values “gave way to the classic conception of a university as formulated by Jordan.” (Tutorow 73) But while we should not forget Jordan's great influence on the university, he operated from the prestigious hired position of university president, and his legacy leaves him with significant recognition for his work on academic policy. Compared to the man whose name is sported prominently on JORDAN HALL at the front of campus, the name and legal work of George Crothers and his altruistic, volunteered personal efforts are generally unknown.

rothers had such a suspiciously perfect record of positive actions, but his unique, privileged role allowed him to contribute generously without the prominence of a strong official position (although Jane would have promoted Crothers to university presidency, he declined; Clausen 51). In a collection of Crothers' later correspondence, there is a single “secret” letter from Frederick Rand Rogers (who researched universities) detailing his notes from a private conversation between him and Crothers in 1946. Although the facts in the letter are unsupported by citation, there is no reason to

doubt their validity. Even in this account, Crothers' work is presented modestly, and it reveals several of his thoughts in a form that would not be accessible in normal records and publications (letter in Berg, Vol. 1, August 31, 1946).

Crothers frequently advised Jane, and she trusted his judgement fully. The letter mentions that she considered several dramatic shifts of power, and received critical dissuasion from Crothers. She was somewhat dissatisfied with President Jordan, and “at last she resolved to supplant him [Jordan] – even take the reins herself” (page 2). But Crothers advised her that Jordan's eminence was valuable, and she “submitted to his advice.” In another incident, when she received inferior help from her lawyer Wilson, Crothers took over his position and helped her draw up a will that seems to have stood the test of time (page 2).

While Crothers pursued the university's interests, he had to be quite deliberate about his presentation, and was obligated to remain within certain lines. For example, page 3 of the letter mentions that “Crothers never criticized university men – for had he done so Mrs. Stanford would have acted instantly.” Also, he considered subordinating tax exemption in the 1900 constitutional amendment, but Jane (and others) reminded him to keep it a priority. Thus, while he advised Jane, he had to guide himself to stay in her favor. It is unclear to what extent he needed to take care in shaping his views for Jane, but his choices certainly kept him in her favor, and he only needed oppose her when he found it important. He “never crossed her except at crucial points,” so after her death his words “became law” because he had accumulated immense trust from her. No one else had developed this merit from the founders themselves.

Wildly unexpected, there is a single, extremely interesting line in Rand's letter that sheds a little light on Crothers' noble status compared to the other university men:

*“Judge Leib also was jealous of Crothers' influence. He was checkmated by --- (Please fill in on reverse of sheet?)” (page 3)*

(The name of the checkmater that seems to have eluded Rand's memory is absent from the copy.) Since the annals of Stanford do not contain a single negative word about Crothers, this is the sole suggestion that there might have been some tension about his role, even from people like S. F. Leib, who often supported Crothers. George had accomplished strong ties with Jane, and had had the privilege of being involved in numerous commendable efforts for the university. Others like S. F. Leib, despite deep involvement on the Board, never developed quite the same chances (in particular for Leib, the next page describes a small conflict between him and Jane wherein she even burned a memo “before his eyes.”). Thus, Crothers' position was highly covetable, and some of the “constant attention” he exercised on the behalf of Jane was likely dedicated to tending to vigilance of that attention. His history shows a constant motivation for the university, and Crothers probably had considerable pressure to act charitably –which he did.

**E**ven if Crothers George Crothers was pushed to work earnestly, and did so alongside many other capable men, he has one of the most impressive and historically obscured role in Stanford in Stanford's early history. Other than the Stanfords themselves, no one comes close to Crothers in responsibility broad legal accomplishments for the university. He gained the personal trust of Jane, and skillfully managed critical task in maintaining the university, its ideals and legal resolution. His distinguished service included many activities and titles:

As aforementioned, Crothers was the first alumnus on the Board of Trustees. He became Jane's attorney and handled her will, storks, estate, etc. Throughout his involvement, he used his legal expertise to guide the university according to Jane's wishes.

Despite difficult work, Crothers never charged Stanford any money for his legal work. This allowed him to keep his name clear while it saved the university thousands of dollars in addition to the millions he helped save (Clausen 155). Crothers only accepted checks reimbursing his and his brother's funding of the campaign for tax exemption, which he received after S. F. Leib brought their personal

contributions to Jane's attention. (“Founding of”, part 6) And he was willing to sacrifice his work beyond giving up his pay: when other lawyers claimed \$65,000 for work Crothers had done, “rather than cause agitation,” he yielded (Clausen 65).

Although he performed some very public work –such as state-wide campaigning– Crothers sometimes had to work at levels of secrecy, to ensure safety for Jane during her life. For example, Clausen describes that the matter of the transfer of Jane's stack was kept private to prevent pressure from other interested parties. Thus, “many times... not even the University trustees knew of George's services and risks” (Clausen 63)

While it is not straightforward to tell which of Crothers' legal efforts are still in effect (most documents like the constitutional amendment have been superseded by others), he laid an enormous body of work whose philosophies and directives have remained with the university. His work also did not fade: for 50 years after Jane's death, he carried out correspondence that maintained and clarified his work. (Berg, Vol. 1) Unfortunately, Crothers' legacy is greatly obscured by now. While it would be difficult to say if Stanford University would still be operating without his help, he was responsible for a lot of legal work that helped it stay open safely, in the face of tremendous legal troubles: he helped the university stay independent, and gave the Board of Trustees the necessary powers to keep Leland and Jane Stanford's original intentions alive.

**I**n February 15<sup>th</sup>, 1905, shortly before taking a leave of vacation, Jane Stanford felt compelled to compose a letter to George Crothers. She was poisoned in Honolulu on February 28<sup>th</sup> (“Mrs. Stanford Dies...”), so this letter unintentionally served as final farewell to her friend and legal advisor. It shows how important Crothers was to the university, and to the motivation of its surviving founder:

*“It would be doing my heart injustice, were I to go away from my home –my sacred interests, the University– without giving expression to all I feel in regard to your helpfulness to me for the past few years.*

*Your enthusiasm, your strict adherence to the laws of the Grant, your cheer when I felt discouraged... Very many times when battling with.. doubt, fears, questions, you would drop in to see me. Your topic of conversation always the University... I was glad that one young man had been benefited. I placed my son in your place and was thankful I knew you.*

*I have taken this opportunity to let you know how serviceable you have been to me, and I realize deeply how serviceable you are now and will be in the future to the University –you have it at heart, it is a part of your life, you know its needs...” (George Edward Crothers, a Friend... 49)*

Having lived through the first dozen years of her and her husband's university, Jane Stanford had had the privilege to see her life's dedication flourish. At her commencement address in 1891 she had expressed her hope to the Pioneer Class her “[hope] that you will resolve to go forth from these class rooms determined in the future to be leaders with high aims and pure standards.” George Crothers would fulfill and embody this memorial hope, and he was responsible for shaping the university into a strong institution by solidifying the legal constructs of that hope. While the university enjoys its indefinite contribution to society, we should take time to remember why it was founded, and why it is still running –we should not forget George Edward Crothers, who was among the first of many to graduate from the Leland Stanford Junior University into noble life of service unto that same memorial institution.

## Appendix A: Timeline of Selected Events

- 1884-03-13: Leland Jr. dies in Florence (Lewis)
- 1885-01-25: *Enabling Act* presented to CA legislature (Tutorow, FOUR UNIVERSITIES)
- 1885-03-09: *Enabling Act* signed into law on Leland Sr.'s birthday (Trustees Manual)
- 1885-11-14: Jane and Leland sign the *Founding Grant* (PC040)
- 1887-05-12: Ground-breaking ceremony of Stanford University (Clausen 25)
- 1893-06-01: Leland Sr. dies (“Founding of...”)
- 1898-05-??: Crothers & Harrelson meet Jane at Sigma Nu (“Founding of...”)
- 1900-11-06: Section 10, Article IX of CA Constitution amended (Trustees Manual, page 39)
- 1903-10-03: Crothers made Trustee - 10-year term (Trustees, Board of)
- 1903-06-01: Jane resigns powers (“Founding of...”)
- 1905-02-28: Jane poisoned in Honolulu
- 1947-1948: Crothers Hall built (Clausen)
- 1957-05-16: George Crothers dies (Trustees, Board of)

## Appendix B: What did Crothers do?

- Redid legal foundations of the University
- Drew up deeds of reconveyance for Jane's property (“Founding of...”)
- Helped pass several pieces of California legislation
- Wrote and helped campaign an amendment to the California constitution
  - Acquired corporate powers for the Board of Trustees
  - Ensured tax exemption for Stanford property
- Became Jane's attorney, wrote her will, and helped her resign founding powers
  - Helped Jane “radically revise” the trust provisions – Oct 3, 1902 (“Speech to” 38)
  - Passed a law to ensure legality of resignation – March 13, 1903 (“Founding of...”, part 8)
  - Sat next to Jane when she resigned her powers (“Founding of...”, part 10)
- Handled Jane's railroad valuable stock
- Became the first alumnus Trustee
- Admitted to the California bar and practiced law with his brother (and others)
- Became a judge – August 12, 1913 (Clausen 119)
- Led and participated in many organizations, including Alumni Association (Clausen 57)
- Helped select and design the original Stanford seal
- Helped lift Jane's cap of 500 women enrolled per class
- Donated money for Crothers Hall and Crothers Memorial Hall

## Appendix C: Fun Trivia

During the course of my research, I came across miscellaneous interesting stories (many from Clausen) and discoveries, some more related to my paper than others. In order to refrain from sprinkling them throughout the paper, I've decided to assemble them into this appendix.

- Leland Stanford Junior was actually named Leland DeWitt Stanford, until the boy insisted that he wanted his father's name –exactly. Hence, we have LSJU, not LDSU. (Clausen 26)
- Originally, the Stanfords were not going to found a new university –they were going to donate a technical school to UC Berkeley. But the state legislature would not confirm Leland Sr.'s appointment to the UC board of regents, and the former governor took his money elsewhere (Lewis 184).
- The Stanfords originally planned to expand their university to more grade levels, more directly complementing the public school system at earlier levels. From Leland Sr.'s commencement address:
 

*“In time we hope to extend its scope from the kindergarten through the high school to the university course, and afford opportunities for improvement and investigation to postgraduates and specialists.”*

Apparently, this “early notion” was “never acted upon” (Tutorow 73) Interestingly, in her amendments, Jane forbade the establishment of an elementary school. In her revision with Crothers, she revoked that. (Trustees Manual 15, 19)
- “When my Stanford boys grow up,” Jane said to Huntington, “they will settle with you for your treatment of me.” To which Mr. Huntington had replied, “You will never see the day when one of your boys will lift a finger in your defense.” (Elliott 312)
- Clausen says that “a story is told of” Jane: “that she once attended a dance and was publicly chided” by her minister. “As a result, she went to a different church the following week. There, for the first time, she met young Leland Stanford.” Clausen 30-31)

- George Crothers, unfortunately, seldom danced (Clausen 40). However, he met his wife Elizabeth Mills through her sister, who was his partner at the grand march the Governor's 1899 inaugural ball (Clausen 73)
- Interestingly, “Mrs. Stanford... had in mind that he should marry her niece, Amy Lathrop,” but this connection was never established. Rather, George Crothers married Elizabeth Mills, a graduate of the University of California [Berkeley] on March 23, 1911. Elizabeth had varied interests; she was nearly an expert on vertebrate paleontology, and wrote many literary works like poems and plays, most of them unpublished (SC130). Unfortunately, Elizabeth died, 38 years of age, on August 18, 1920. The two could not, and did not, bear children, and Crothers never remarried (consistent with this, note that he “did not believe in divorces” and never took up a divorce case in his law practice; Clausen 110). Like the Leland and Jane Stanford, he has no heirs aside from, metaphorically, the students of Stanford. (Clausen 73-76)
- Stanford's distinctive red tile roofs were slowly being left out of new buildings in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. Crothers insisted that his hall feature the nostalgic red tiles, and eventually the style was restored to much of the central campus. (Clausen 26)
- When Crothers' term as a trustee expired, he recommended his classmate for succeeding his position: Herbert Hoover (Clausen 57).
- When Volume I of the Board of Trustees' minutes were burned in the 1906 earthquake, Crothers reconstructed them himself, from memory and surviving records. (Clausen 113).
- George V (England) cured by ultraviolet ultraviolet (Clausen 147)
- Amusingly, George Crothers' exact last name goes back only a generation. His father John Crothers was actually born as John “Carrothers” (SC130, box3, folder 5)
- Crothers Hall is named after George Crothers. Crothers Memorial Hall was built afterwards as a complementing addition. Crothers named it in honor of his mother (Margaret Jane Fair; SC130, box3, folder 3).
- George Crothers was born in Wapello, Iowa on May 27, 1870. His first American ancestor was James Fair, who settled in Chicago in 1843 (SC130, box3, folder 3).

- S. F. Leib shows up a lot in Stanford's legal history, but for inexplicable reasons, almost no records show his full name (even an online biography of him!). A list of trustees in the University Archives reveals that he was “Samuel F. Leib,” and his first name can be found in several legal documents, such as the 104-word title of T. G. Crothers' petition. His middle name is still a mystery to the author.
  - Although his biography mentions nothing of his involvement with Stanford University, we know that “aside from his legal practice, Mr. Leib is extensively interested in orchard property.” (<http://files.usgwarchives.net/ca/santaclara/bios/leib1211nbs.txt>)
- Crothers rarely failed to prevent Jane from doing things he found unwise. Among them: Jane's cap on enrollment for women at 500 at her resignation. Crothers advised her to give the board at least the power to change it, but she didn't want the number to become a tool for the board. She hoped that the board could eventually overturn it with enough legal force, if necessary. With Crothers' help and authority, this happened in the early 1930's.
- Crothers helped design the Stanford seal, and suggested the tree visible on it. Interestingly, he was opposed to “Die Luft der Freiheit weht” as a motto, which was nevertheless eventually adopted and placed on the seal. ( <http://www.stanford.edu/dept/pres-provost/president/speeches/951005dieluft.html> )
  - Although it was more of a philosophical statement than a directive, Jane once stated that “love for humanity must ever be the university's motto as long as time lasts” (Berg, Vol. 3)

## Works Cited

- "Opening of the Great Leland Stanford Junior University." *Scientific American* 10 Oct. 1891.
- "Mrs. Stanford Dies in Sudden Agony at a Honolulu Hotel, declaring "I am poisoned!"" San Francisco Chronicle 2 Mar. 1905.
- "Trustees, Board of" Stanford Special Collections and University Archives, Ready Reference
- Allen, Peter C. Stanford: From the Foothills to the Bay. Stanford, Calif.: Stanford Alumni Association and Stanford Historical Society, 1980.
- Bartholomew, Karen, Claude S Brinegar, and Roxanne Nilan. A Chronology of Stanford University And Its Founders: 1824-2000. Stanford, CA: Stanford Historical Society, 2001.
- Berg, Jerry E., Ed. A Legal History of Stanford University (Vol. 1), compiled 1963 from Special Collections (George E. Crothers Collection), Stanford
- Berg, Jerry E., Ed. A Legal History of Stanford University (Vol. 3), compiled 1963 from Special Collections, Stanford
- Clausen, Henry C.. Stanford's Judge Crothers: the Life Story of George E. Crothers, Faithful Son, Loyal Citizen And Political Leader, Successful Lawyer, Jurist And Businessman, Wise Counselor And Kindly Benefactor. San Francisco: George E. Crothers Trust, 1967.
- Crothers, Thomas G. In the Matter of the Petition of the Leland Stanford Junior University, And of Timothy Hopkins, Horace Davis, Thomas B. McFarland, George E. Gray, William M. Stewart, Joseph D. Grant, Samuel F. Leib, Leon Sloss, Thomas W. Stanford, Frank Miller, Charles G. Lathrop, Russell J. Wilson, Whitelaw Reid And George E. Crothers, As Trustees of the Leland Stanford Junior University, for the Ascertainment of the Existence And Terms Of, And for the Determination of the Validity And Legal Effect of Grants Or Other Instruments, Creating, Changing Or Affecting Trusts And Estates for the Founding, Endowment And Maintenance of the Leland Stanford Junior University: Petition. [San Jose?]: Superior Court, County of Santa Clara, State of California, 1903. (SU Archives, LD 3003.5 S72 1903)
- Elliott, Orrin Leslie. Stanford University: the First Twenty-five Years. London: Stanford Univ. Press, 1937.
- George E. Crothers, Founding of the Leland Stanford Junior University, reproduced at [http://histsoc.stanford.edu/crothersphotos/crothers\\_01.shtml](http://histsoc.stanford.edu/crothersphotos/crothers_01.shtml) (also <http://tinyurl.com/lgpwr-2>)
- George Edward Crothers, a Friend of Stanford University. [Stanford: Stanford University Press], 1949.

- Lewis, Oscar, The Big Four, 1938 Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.
- PC040: Pictures of the Founding Grant, date unrecorded, Stanford University Archives and Special Collections; PC040, Box 1
- Speech to Phi Delta Phi Fraternity, Special Collections, SC130, Box 13, Folder 9, Crothers, George (“Marked copy of final draft”)
- The Leland Stanford Junior University, *Daily Evening Bulletin* (San Francisco, CA) November 14, 1885; pg. 2; Issue 33;  
[http://infotrac.galegroup.com/itw/infomark/533/282/66566338w16/purl=rc1\\_NCNP\\_0\\_GT3000859624&dyn=3!xrn\\_5\\_0\\_GT3000859624&hst\\_1?sw\\_aep=stan90222](http://infotrac.galegroup.com/itw/infomark/533/282/66566338w16/purl=rc1_NCNP_0_GT3000859624&dyn=3!xrn_5_0_GT3000859624&hst_1?sw_aep=stan90222) (also <http://tinyurl.com/lgpwr-1>)
- Trustees Manual: Founding Grant, Amendments, Legislation, Court Decrees. [Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University], Seventh Edition, 1964 (similar to a copy of the *Founding Grant* available at <http://wasc.stanford.edu/files/FoundingGrant.pdf>) (also <http://tinyurl.com/lgpwr-0>)
- Tutorow, Norman E., et al. "FOUR UNIVERSITIES: Founders' Visions and Today's Reality." *Academic Questions*, Volume 11, Number 2 (1998): 70-73.