

**HISTORY OF RENSSELAER  
POLYTECHNIC  
INSTITUTE, 1824-1914**

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History of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, 1824-1914 by Palmer C. Ricketts

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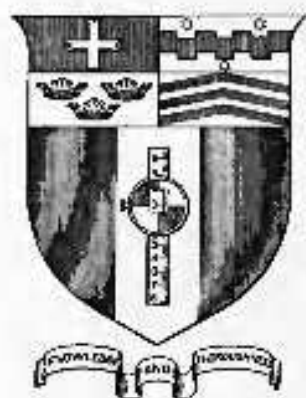
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**PALMER C. RICKETTS**

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INSTITUTE, 1824-1914**





Coat of Arms, 1904



Old Bank Place. Occupied, 1824-34 and 1841-44

HISTORY  
OF  
Rensselaer Polytechnic  
Institute

1824-1914

BY  
PALMER C. RICKETTS, E.D., LL.D.

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1914

TO THE MEMORY  
OF  
**Stephen Van Rensselaer**  
AND  
**Amos Eaton**





## PREFACE

HAVING recently been compelled to write several brief historical sketches of the Institute, the writer became interested in its early history. In preparing these narratives he found the official publications giving the characteristics of the School at the time of its foundation to have become very rare. In fact, very few of them antedating 1840 are known to be in existence. For these reasons he determined to expand the sketches and publish a short history of the Institution which should consist largely of a description of the development of its curriculums.

The student of the history of education will recognize the importance of an account of the early methods of instruction pursued in an institution which was, at once, the first School of Science\* and the first School of Civil Engineering to be established in any English-speaking country, and if the conceded originality of these methods be also considered, it is believed that no excuse for the appearance of this somewhat condensed narrative will be thought necessary.

Interesting information has been obtained from the recently discovered original minutes of the board of trustees for the twenty-five years immedi-

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\* See Preface to the Second Edition.

ately following the founding of the School, which were believed to have been destroyed in the fire of 1862, and the thanks of the writer are due the President and Secretary of the present board for placing at his disposal the minutes covering the period from 1862 until the present time.

The author is also under obligation to Prof. Henry B. Nason for the loan of a number of the early circulars, to A. J. Weise, Esq., for the picture of the Van Der Heyden mansion; to James Irving, Esq., for that of the building on the Infant School Lot, and to Prof. William G. Raymond for the two photographs from which the pictures showing railroad and hydrographic work of students were taken. The Bibliography at the end of the last chapter shows other sources whence information has been obtained.

P. C. R.

RENSELAER POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE,  
TROY, N. Y., January 1, 1895.