



LET ME INTRODUCE YOU TO MR. MORRILL

By Monroe S. Miller

I'd hate to think where we would be today in our golf course business without our land grant colleges and all of the contributions they have made in the past 125 years. Much of what we have learned from research has been conducted at these institutions. Many of us received our educations from them - we have alums in the WGCSA from the UW-Madison, MSU, U. Mass. and Penn State, to name a few. And we receive continuing education from conferences sponsored by them - those above along with Purdue, Illinois and other neighboring states. These institutions are essential to our well being, professional wellness as well as personal.

Have you ever wondered how each state just happened to have a land grant college? Well, I sure did, a long time ago, and ended up doing a lot of reading and studying and visiting about the person who formulated the concept and pressed it into legislation and reality.

I'd like for you to meet Justin Smith Morrill of Strafford, Vermont. Mr. Morrill exemplified the qualities that New Englanders in general and Vermonters specifically prized in themselves, their state(s) and their leaders. The son of a humble blacksmith, Morrill was forced to leave school at the age of 15. He became a self-educated man and from employment as a merchant's clerk he found great success as a store owner. He was so successful that he retired at the age of 38 to devote his life to study and the more leisurely pursuits of a Vermont country gentleman.

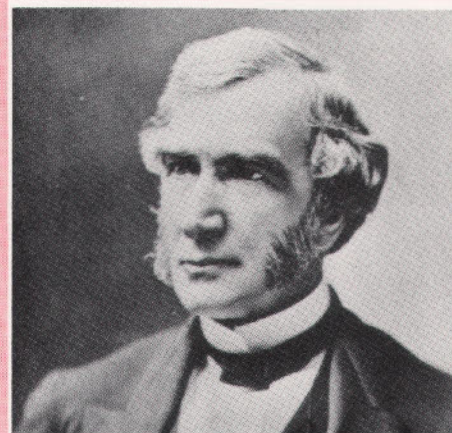
He wasn't retired long, however. The appeal of such a morally upright, small town merchant to the public was very considerable. As the epitome of Yankee achievement, Victorian virtue and homespun values, he ran for public office in 1854 at a very young 44 years of age and was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives. Mr. Morrill served the state of Vermont as a Representative in the House and later in the U.S. Senate until his death in 1898 at the age of 88. Over the years

of his long career in Congress he became a very influential man. An ardent protectionist, he helped push legislation safeguarding American industry and business. Mr. Morrill was one of the Senate's leading experts on monetary theory and chaired the Senate Finance Committee for many years. But all of these accomplishments pale in the light of what I think was his greatest contribution - the sponsorship of the Land Grant College Act. Few could argue, I submit, that that legislation has become the most important educational law ever passed in our country.

Representative Morrill introduced the bill in 1857 and finally, in 1862, persuaded President Abraham Lincoln to sign it into law. What it did was to create in each state a land grant college which would give a liberal and a practical education to farmers, mechanics, artisans and laborers. As I mentioned, Morrill had to leave school at 15 and I'm sure this lack of formal education inspired the concept of providing colleges to teach courses in science, agriculture and engineering in addition to the classics. The Act expanded American higher education into areas of practical training, not at the expense of classical studies, but in addition to them. No longer would colleges principally be for clergymen, teachers, physicians and lawyers.

As finally signed into law by Lincoln, vast tracts of Federal land, 30,000 acres for each member of Congress, were set aside as endowment for each college. Sale of this land raised enough money for the colleges to operate, but their operations gradually depleted the endowment. So Senator Morrill (he left the House in 1866 for the Senate) introduced a second bill in 1890 which established an annual cash subsidy of \$25,000 (Cals Dean Leo Walsh will tell you \$25,000 won't go very far today!) to correct the problem.

I don't think anyone can over-emphasize the timeliness of the Land Grant College Act. Encouraged by the construction of the first transcontinen-



Justin Smith Morrill - circa 1867 Photograph taken by famous Civil War photographer Mathew Brady shortly after Morrill was elected to the U.S. Senate.

tal railroad and offers of free land to settlers, expansion to the west was creating a need for new and improved farming techniques to help tame the west as well as to restore the overworked farmlands of the east. The new colleges developed research programs that discovered, developed and tested the methods which helped revolutionize American agriculture. Hybrid seeds, crop rotation and chemical fertilizers are the ones I think of first as being some of the best known results of these programs.

So we all owe a debt of gratitude to this old New Englander. If you are ever between Strafford and South Strafford, Vermont, treat yourself and visit Mr. Morrill's rural homestead. You will feel kinship with him for another reason - he was a serious student of landscape gardening. He designed extensive plantings and walkways and gardens around his house and farm buildings. His purpose was to experiment with many different plantings to see which would be best suited to the harsh Vermont climate. Many of the original plants he put in the ground in the mid-1800's are surviving today.

It seems to me that Mr. Morrill's legislative intents provide a framework to adopt **any** of the land grant colleges as one's own, since their purposes are the same. I've always said that if I were living in Iowa, my attention would be on Iowa State. The same would be true in Indiana and its land grant college, Purdue; if I was an Illinois resident I'd support the U. of I. in Champaign/Urbana, and so on, despite the fact that Wisconsin's land grant college is my

alma mater. Hopefully everyone working in Wisconsin has adopted our land grant college as their own..

So, how is our land grant college doing these days? I like to think that things are going better. It would be hard to believe that they could have gone much worse. It has been a rough five or so years - state budget deficits, no raises for UW faculty and staff, a decline in the spirit of a great school, a drop in staff morale and program underfunding, just to name a few. There were dramatic increases in the number of tenured professors leaving the Madison campus, subjects of "raids" from other institutions. There is no doubt in my mind that the idiotic merger foisted on the state by P. J. Lucey (he should be hung for it) has taken its toll on our land grant college.

But I think the greatness remains, in spite of difficult times and circumstances. Many UW-Madison departments rank in the top 10 nationally. Ten UW-Madison faculty, former faculty members or students have won Nobel Prizes. It has awarded more doctoral degrees than any other American

university. It is ranked third among all U.S. colleges and universities and first among public institutions in total funding for research and development (behind only John Hopkins and M.I.T.). In fact, the UW-Madison had \$208.4 million total R & D expenditures this year, up \$24 million from the previous year.

Our land grant college has the fourth largest single campus in America, behind only the U. of Minnesota, Ohio State and the U. of Texas. The UW-Madison was ranked 7th nationally in undergraduate programs by the Gourman Report and 9th in graduate programs. The "Selective Guide to Colleges" gives the UW-Madison the highest rank among Big 10 schools in overall programs for students.

And the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences has impressive facts to share; the highest number of faculty in the National Academy of Science - 14 active faculty and 14 emeritus faculty. The CALS at Wisconsin graduates more M.S. and Ph.D. students than any other institution, and has the highest ratio of research funding to faculty -

about \$100,000 per position.

We all owe Mr. Morrill a lot. I think he would be proud of the network of land grant colleges his legislation created. We should be particularly proud of our land grant college in Wisconsin. But we must be ever vigilant as we see the shrinking of federal research monies. Moral support and understanding of CALS administrators will be helpful as they continue to downsize the college in coming months. A continuation of our support for research to help replace dwindling federal dollars is definitely a key. Letters to legislators when budget time comes around can only be positive. And finally, a keen sense of pride in what an awesome resource we have at our land grant college will help all of us understand that we must be on guard to protect against any decline in the greatness of a truly great institution. Remember, it belongs to all of us.



LOVE TO RECEIVE GCSAA 'DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD' IN PHOENIX!

Dr. Jim Love, retired faculty member from the Department of Soil Science at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, has been selected as a 1986 recipient of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America's Distinguished Service Award. The award will be presented to Jim at the opening session of the Association's annual conference in Phoenix in January.

Professor Love spent 35 years in the UW Soil Science Department and for the last 25 years he developed and managed the Turfgrass Management Program for the University. He retired in July 1986. The hallmark of his tenure at the University was a devotion to teaching and counselling undergraduate students, a dedication seldom seen in an institution noted for its formidable research capabilities. The UW does not offer a two year associate degree program and all of Jim's students received B.S. degrees. Notable is the fact that a vast majority of his turfgrass graduates are still in the business of maintaining fine turf.

The GCSAA Distinguished Service

Award is presented to individuals "who have demonstrated dedication and outstanding service to Golf Course Superintendents and the profession". The list of past recipients includes only the best who have served our profession. The first honor was extended to Colonel John Morley, the founder of the National Association of Greenkeepers of America (later the GCSAA) and its president from 1926 to 1932. The award has recognized the business' best research investigators, USGA Green Section staff, golf leaders, Golf Course Superintendents and industry innovators. Dr. Fred Grau and Colonel John Morley each received the honor twice. The award has been given 51 times in the Association's 60 year history.

Only one other individual who lived and worked in Wisconsin has been extended this recognition. That man was O.J. Noer, and he is also the only person who received the Distinguished Service Award three times - 1952, 1959 and 1960. As all WGCSA members know, O.J. was a Stoughton native who

received his education from the University of Wisconsin in the same department where Jim Love was a staff member for so many years. It was, in fact, O.J. who guided Dr. Love's career into turfgrass management in the 1959 - 1960 period. And at O.J.'s request, Jim Love received the first research grant from the O.J. Noer Research Foundation.

We extend our congratulations to Dr. Love. He represents the best that Wisconsin has to offer and the WGCSA is proud to have sponsored his nomination. He rightfully joins a very special and select group that has given so much for the welfare, benefit and prosperity of our profession.

