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HERITAGE, DREAMS, AND FULFILLMENT  
OF  
THE LIFE AND SERVICES  
OF  
GOVERNOR JOHN MOTLEY MOREHEAD  
OF NORTH CAROLINA



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*An Address by*  
JOHN MOTLEY MOREHEAD, III  
*On the Occasion of the Dedication of the  
Port Terminal at Morehead City, N. C.*

August 14, 1952



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## THE OCCASION

SOME ceremonial occasions in the life of a people bring into focus their historic traditions, present developments, and future hopes. Such an occasion is the dedication of the Port Terminal of Morehead City. Here today come together the name and significance of a man and a city, the past and the present programs, and the high hopes of a progressive people.

The man is John Motley Morehead, whose name this city bears and one of whose dreams is being fulfilled here today. Well it has been said that those who do not commemorate their fathers will not deserve to be remembered by their sons. I recall him here today not so much with filial pride, but more as a fitting part of this occasion and as a symbol of all those North Carolinians who in the past and in the present have dreamed dreams and built nobly for a great State. Some of those dreamers and builders still live and are represented on this platform today.



# I

## BACKGROUND AND EARLY YEARS

The name Morehead was given to the families in Scotland who, since they lived at the head of the moors, came to be variously known as Moorehead, Muirhead, and Morehead. In common today with uncounted millions of Americans, the Moreheads, in their composite inheritance, are descended from the nobility, gentry, and commons of Britain and the old world. The Moreheads had lived at the head of the moors of Scotland as farmers and shepherds, served as members and chiefs of Highland clans, as parishioners, pastors, and bishops, as crusaders to the Holy Land, as knighted lairds, as ministers of state, as Scottish rebels against English kings, as merchants in Edinburgh and London, and as colonizers and colonists in the new world. Of such are the people of America where are melted together in freedom and democracy the peoples of the old world as the pioneer substance of the new world and now, thank God, the chief hope of freedom and peace both in the old world and the new.

From Scottish moors and London business houses, the Moreheads came in 1630 to the lands of the Northern Neck of Virginia between the Potomac and Rappahannock and thence to the fertile valleys between the Banister and Dan rivers which join to make the Roanoke and tie together much of North Carolina and Virginia. The first John Motley Morehead was born on July 4th, 1796,

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in Pittsylvania County, Virginia, of John and Obedience Motley Morehead, whose father served as a captain under Washington in the French and Indian War and whose six brothers served under Washington in the Revolution. John Motley Morehead was brought by his parents as a two-year-old child to their new home in the fertile lands of Rockingham County, North Carolina, in 1798.

Historic traditions were in the air of the times and place in which he lived. Not far away from his boyhood home was the battlefield of Guilford Court House to which his mother's mother, Karenhappuch Norman Turner, had ridden on horseback from her Maryland home to nurse her son and other soldiers severely wounded fighting under the able General Nathanael Greene. That stubborn fighting checkmated the advance of the conquering British and prepared the way for the final American victory of George Washington over Lord Cornwallis at Yorktown.

The maternal and humane compassion of this typical American mother was also in the spirit of the British General, Lord Cornwallis, who, tradition has it, directed his surgeon to attend alike the wounded as he found them on the battlefield, whether friend or foe. Also not very far from his Rockingham County home, over in Guilford County, was the famous Log College of David Caldwell who later prepared young Morehead for the University. He was one of the sons of Princeton, who, in his preaching and teaching, helped to light the fires of the American

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Published

Jan. 10, 1906

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Revolution and for whose capture Cornwallis offered £200. Caldwell himself nevertheless nursed alike the British and American soldiers wounded on that crucial battlefield.

## II

### AT CHAPEL HILL

In such traditions of heroism and humane devotion young Morehead grew to manhood and dreamed his youthful dreams amid the hills, fields, and streams of Rockingham County and on the campus and in the halls of the young State University at Chapel Hill. At the University he developed in association with young men who were to become governors, judges, members of presidential cabinets, senators, ambassadors, preachers, teachers, agriculturists, manufacturers, builders, and leaders of the people in many Southern states.

As a tutor at Chapel Hill, tradition has it, Morehead associated with, as friend or tutor, among other future leaders, William Mercer Green, one of the founders and the chancellor of the University of the South at Sewanee; Robert Hall Morrison, one of the founders and the first president of Davidson College; a fellow tutor, William Hooper, later president of Chowan College and Wake Forest College; and James K. Polk, first honor man of the class of 1818, who became president of the United States. He had high respect for Polk since their Chapel Hill days,

but campaigned against him in support of Henry Clay, his Whig party favorite, for president.

At Chapel Hill, Morehead came under the influence of President Joseph Caldwell and a young graduate and instructor, Archibald De Bow Murphey. Both of these leaders, with their vision of public schools, constructive public investments, and building programs, exerted a profound influence on his life and his leadership of the people of North Carolina.

Archibald De Bow Murphey's Report to the legislature in 1817, and President Caldwell's teachings and his letters to the press and to the people, written under the "nom de plume" of Carleton, in behalf of public schools, roads, industries, railroads, and internal improvements, are among the great documents of our State which express the vision without which the people perish.

## III

### RAILROADS AND SHIPS

Near the center of Morehead's dream was the invention by his kinsman in Scotland. The steam engine, the motive power of the new factories in England, became the pulsing heart of the world-wide Industrial Revolution through the invention of James Watt, who was the son of Agnes Muirhead of Scotland. Stephenson put the steam engine on rails in England; Robert Fulton put the steam engine in big boats on the Hudson. John Motley



Morehead put the steam engine on rails in North Carolina to meet the steamships which, in his vision, would some day ply all the seas of the earth.

#### IV

##### DREAMS AND FULFILLMENT

To the dreams of his teachers he added larger dreams of his own to which he gave his long and devoted life. His dreams are yet being fulfilled in our time.

Hear this prophetic man more than a century ago speaking out for the freedom of the mind, the freedom of enterprise, and the unfettered equal opportunity of the people of our State. When fighting for the equal representation in the legislature of the people of the more heavily populated piedmont and western counties, he was reminded by the opposition that in Virginia, the home of Thomas Jefferson, no person was allowed to vote or hold office who was not a freeholder of property. Morehead replied in substance that, while he esteemed the character and achievements of Virginians, and highly respected and even felt veneration for their great leaders, he "shuddered to think that the poor freemen of his State should be excluded from the legislative councils of the country. To whom did this country belong when it burst the British fetters and became independent? It certainly belonged to the whole community and not to the wealthy alone. Why then should the

people be deprived of any privilege for which they jointly fought and to which they are justly entitled?" This challenge is being met in his prophetic spirit in our time.

At the request of the Quakers of Guilford County he introduced a bill in the State legislature for the gradual liberation of the slaves. One of North Carolina's great sons, Judge William Gaston of New Bern, who, by the way, was the first student to enter Georgetown University in 1789 and who wrote our state song "The Old North State," and John M. Morehead were leaders of the minority which voted in the constitutional convention of 1835 against taking away from free Negroes the right to vote. When governor, he recommended ahead of his time State institutions for the training of the blind, the deaf and dumb, and for the care of the insane.

A large slaveholder, he was opposed both to slavery and to reckless abolitionism, and favored gradual and responsible emancipation. Opposed to secession, he tried with other moderate leaders, North and South, to save the Union but cast his lot with the Confederate States against the Northern invasion of the Southern States.

He fought against unequal representation, against the poverty, illiteracy, and isolation of a people devoid of highways, railroads, waterways, and seaports. He fought for education and transportation as necessary for the advanced agriculture and industries upon which depend



the free enterprise and prosperity, the enlightenment and culture, the opportunity and progress of a free people.

As agitator and builder, as leader of the Whig Party, as trustee of the University of North Carolina for thirty-eight years, organizer and first president of its Alumni Association, of which, incidentally, his namesake was president exactly one hundred years later, as one of the reformers of the State Constitution, as chairman of the National Whig Convention which nominated Zachary Taylor, as president of the North Carolina Railroad Association, founder of Edgeworth, a woman's college in Greensboro, friend of religious dissenters, champion of the equal representation of the people, of gradual emancipation of the slaves, of the right of free Negroes to vote, planter, builder of mills and factories, promoter of highways, railroads, and seaports, founder of Morehead City, he was both a prophetic idealist and a practical agricultural, industrial, and political statesman.

More than a hundred years ago he helped to lay the foundations of Morehead City and across the state from the sea to the mountains the enduring foundations of the progressive traditions of a humane and hopeful people.

In the vision of Morehead, not only was the North Carolina railroad to tie together in travel and trade both the eastern and the western sections of our State and the turnpikes and railroads to be built across eastern America from Boston to New Orleans, but also the seaport at Morehead City was to connect the highways, the interior

waterways, and the railways with the seaways of the world. After he retired from public office he invested his talents and much of his fortune in the founding of this city, in the further development of railroads, and in the promotion of this port to be the juncture of the rails and roads of the continent and the ship lanes between the continents.

## V

### SOME PRESENT PIONEERS AND BUILDERS AT MOREHEAD CITY

Others have told the story of those before him and after him who worked and built on Shepard's Point. They have told of the times from the days of Bridgers Arendell, to the times of the Morehead City Port Commission composed of W. Hufham, B. F. Royal, S. Woodland, W. P. Freeman and G. R. Wallace, to the days of the State Survey Commission, composed of the directors of the Atlantic and North Carolina Railroad, Selby Anderson of Wilson, Luther Hamilton of Morehead City, J. Y. Joyner of LaGrange, and later M. D. Stephenson of New Bern. They have told the story of the vision of Governor Cameron Morrison and his great program for building roads, educational and humanitarian institutions, and seaports in North Carolina, all since carried on through the recent state administration of Governor Gregg Cherry, who set up the present State Port Authority, directed by Chairman A. G. Myers, Executive Director Col. G. W. Gillette,



and their associates, J. Harry White, David O. Holton, W. J. Bason, Dr. J. M. Hedrick, E. G. Henderson, and George R. Ross. They have all ably brought forward this enterprise to this happy occasion and hopeful outlook. All know of the work of Governor W. Kerr Scott, who made North Carolina seaports a fighting part of his go forward program through large public investments in schools, in agriculture, in educational and humanitarian institutions, in interurban and rural highways, and in commercial seaports at Wilmington and Morehead City. Colonel Gillette and others still will tell of the engineering layout of the harbor, the docks and the Terminal, their facilities, and their limitations.

## VI

### HISTORICAL MOMENTUM BACK OF NORTH CAROLINA'S FORWARD MARCH

By the cooperative leadership and work of North Carolina people of an original rugged American pioneer stock, and their daily work in churches, schools, libraries, factories, and power plants, and on farms, on railroads, highways, airlines, and seaports, North Carolina is on the march.

#### *A. North Carolina's Colonial and Revolutionary Heritage*

A proud history gives background and momentum to the forward march of a great people. The first settle-

ment of the English-speaking people and the first English child born in the New World was over there in Dare County on Roanoke Island. At Alamance in 1771, in Mecklenburg in 1775, and at Halifax in 1776, North Carolina blazed the trails of an insurgent people on the way to the American Revolution which started the march of the peoples' revolution around the earth. This revolution for the freedom of the people could not be stopped by Adolph Hitler and cannot be halted now by the reactionary and no less monstrous dictatorship of Joseph Stalin.

#### *B. The University with Rootage in the People's Revolution Now Consolidated as the Threefold University of the People*

At Chapel Hill, as a child of this American people's revolution there was founded by the soldiers of George Washington and Nathanael Greene the first State University to open its doors as a university of the people in the New World. Today, consolidated with the distinguished State College in Raleigh, and the eminent Woman's College in Greensboro, and in cooperation with Duke University, Wake Forest, Davidson, and all our other splendid colleges for men and women, the University of North Carolina is with them all an advancing hope of "light and liberty" for our people.

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, in



recent decades, has led, and leads, the Southeast below the Potomac in the number of academic departments, both in the College of Liberal Arts and in the Graduate School, which have been adjudged of national distinction in a rating made by academic departments in Southern and American Colleges and Universities. In professional schools, in scientific, social, educational, and humanistic research, in studies in rural economy, race relations, labor relations, in Southern historical and other valuable collections, in studies in Southern regionalism, and in freedom of teaching, research, and publication the University of North Carolina has also led the way.

The University helps develop and serves teachers, librarians, high school and community directors of drama, bankers, merchants, insurance executives, farmers, business and labor groups, the State's fisherfolk, ministers, doctors of medicine and of dentistry, nurses, pharmacists, lawyers, journalists, and local, state, and federal public officials in a pioneering way through academic departments, the general University Extension Division, and through the nationally unique Institute of Government.

The University Press, with its academic freedom to publish, and the local group of scholars, humanists, scientists, dramatists, novelists, poets, essayists, historians, and biographers have made Chapel Hill a national center of both scholarly research and creative productions in drama and literature.

The North Carolina State College has moved to the forefront in teaching, research, and extension in agriculture, engineering, and textiles. In cooperation with the University at Chapel Hill, the Institute of Statistics at State College has become an acknowledged world center of mathematical statistics, drawing upon university centers in Europe and in Asia, and serving many departments of our national life. The Woman's College in Greensboro, in its faculty, standards, plant, and equipment, is one of the largest and best colleges for women in the country.

The increasing cooperation between the coordinated University of North Carolina, the nationally eminent Duke University, the other colleges, and the university center soon to develop greatly around Wake Forest in Winston-Salem, will, in time, make North Carolina, as has been said, "one of the great intellectual and spiritual centers of the world."

### *C. Maritime Traditions*

In this City of Morehead, where "men go down to the sea in ships" and fisherfolk as "the sons of the sea capture the wealth of the leaping tides," we are reminded that at Edenton, N. C., Joseph Hewes, as the first Chairman of the Naval Affairs Committee of the Continental Congress, founded the American Navy and enlisted for the American Revolution John Paul Jones of Scotland. It was John Paul Jones, who, at the very beginning, set



high the fighting traditions of the American Navy so that ever since, by his example, American sea captains,

"When armored wrong makes terms to right,  
Fling back his proud reply, 'We have not yet  
begun to fight.' "

Joseph Hewes was forerunner of four North Carolinians who became secretaries of the United States Navy—John Branch, George E. Badger, William A. Graham, and Josephus Daniels, three of them sons of the University. George E. Badger was a Yale graduate. Another son of our State University, John Y. Mason, a Virginian, was also Secretary of the Navy. One of these sons of the University projected the expedition of Commodore Perry, which opened up Japan to the world, recently fateful with hazards and now hopeful with resurgent strength for the free peoples of the world. The last of North Carolina's secretaries of the Navy directed the Navy to victory in the First World War, my old friend, Josephus Daniels.

As we look out upon North Carolina waters today we are also reminded that not far from the sister port of Wilmington, near the mouth of the Cape Fear River, Fort Fisher held out for four years as a gallant stronghold for the Southern Confederacy. At Wilmington the State has now developed a promising port near where the historic Cape Fear joins the wide sea.

## VII

### THE NORTH CAROLINA RENAISSANCE

In fulfillment of these great traditions, and on the foundation laid by Archibald De Bow Murphey, Bartlett Yancey, Calvin H. Wiley, Alexander Graham, M. C. S. Noble, E. P. Moses, Braxton Craven, Edwin A. Alderman, James Y. Joyner, Charles D. McIver, E. C. Brooks, J. I. Foust, and others, Charles B. Aycock led a great public educational crusade in North Carolina. North Carolina became the leader of the New South in education, agriculture, textiles, the tobacco and furniture industries, and in public health and the general welfare.

As parts of the North Carolina Renaissance we see advancing today the state-wide, nine-month, twelve-year public school system, two great Universities, many noble state, church, and private colleges, three distinguished medical schools—Duke in Durham, Bowman Gray of Wake Forest in Winston-Salem, and the State Medical School in Chapel Hill—a state-wide toll-free system of interurban and rural highways, a state-wide system of hospitals and medical care launched by Broughton and carried forward by Cherry and Scott. This medical education and hospital program, by the vote of the representation of the people, is pointing the way for freedom and competence in the medical care of the people across the State from the sand dunes to the mountain coves.

Nearby Morehead City, "the menhaden capital of



the world," not far from where the warm waters of the Gulf Stream meet the cold waters from the north, is the Beaufort Federal Marine Laboratory, the University of North Carolina Institute of Fisheries, the Duke University Teaching Center of Marine Biology, and the North Carolina State College Technical Institute of the University of North Carolina. Also nearby are Camp Lejeune and Cherry Point, two of the most important bases of the United States Marines, and Fort Bragg, the nation's largest artillery camp.

## VIII

### THE COMING OF INDUSTRIES TO NORTH CAROLINA

The recent and the prospective building of large industrial and power plants in eastern, piedmont, and western North Carolina are other examples of the expanding enterprises of the State.

The main business of this port is to serve North Carolina, its farms, factories, and people. North Carolina farmers grow 40 per cent of all the tobacco and 70 per cent of all the leaf cigarette tobacco grown in the nation. The tobacco factories in Durham, Winston-Salem, and Reidsville make more than half of the nearly half billion cigarettes annually smoked in the United States. At Canton is one of the nation's large pulp and fibre plants. North Carolina ranks near the top among the forty-eight states in agricultural and manufactured products. North

Carolina has the most textile spindles and leads all of the states in the manufacture of tobacco, towels, denims, and furniture. Today other important industries are coming to North Carolina, such as General Electric, General Motors, Western Electric, DuPont, Union Carbide, and American Woolen. A total of 101 industries invested over \$140,000,000 in plants in North Carolina in 1951, and estimates of the expenditures for similar purposes for the first part of 1952 have equalled or exceeded those of 1951 for a like period. The manufacture of their products alone will approximate an additional \$1,000,000,000 a year, which will serve to increase the State's per capita income which is much too low for the general well-being. These companies require and demand world markets for their goods and world sources for their raw materials, hence the Morehead Port Terminal comes hopefully into the picture as an outlet to the sea from the State with east-west and north-south railways, and with a statewide system of hard-surfaced highways without one toll bridge or a toll gate in the entire State.

It is singularly appropriate that the Union Carbide Company should establish a plant in North Carolina, as it was in this State just sixty years ago that this giant industry had its beginning in the discovery of a method of producing calcium carbide in the electric furnace. During that sixty years the Company has established businesses in every one of the forty-eight states, and in eighteen foreign countries, and has built up a business in ex-



cess of \$2,000,000 a day. Having made a round trip in the sixty years, it has come back home and is now building a \$20,000,000 plant in Rockingham County, within less than two miles of the spot where it first saw the light.

The Union Carbide Company was born at Spray. The industrialists at Spray requested the chemical department at Chapel Hill to identify the gas produced by the reaction between calcium carbide and water. Dr. Francis P. Venable, head of the department, leader in scientific research, and later president of the University of North Carolina, and future president of the American Chemical Society, identified this gas as acetylene. Industrialists and engineers at Spray promoted its development with the risks of their capital investments and commercialized the process for the use of mankind. Acetylene gas has been used for illumination in local and in isolated installations, in mines, in early motor car lighting, in portable lighting, in cutting and welding, in the manufacture of steel, and as an intermediate in innumerable ways in the gigantic chemical industries. The adventurous leadership of the Union Carbide & Carbon Corporation around the earth is one of the many industrial sagas of modern times.

If these industries come to our State, spend vast amounts of money in the location of their industries here, if they give employment to many thousands of our people and dispense many millions of dollars each year to the people of our State, in taxes, payrolls, and through other

channels, it is only fair and right, and it is good business, that the State provide every reasonable and fair means to encourage them to make a just profit. Without favorable conditions and a fair profit, industry will not be attracted to the State to develop more income for workers and better markets for farmers and merchants. Without a profit they cannot produce. With a profit they contribute their fair share to the revenues of the State, the schools, and the health of the people, and continue, through decent wages, to contribute to the economic welfare of the people.

## IX

### SOME OTHER DEVELOPMENTS

The scenic parkway from Washington to the Great Smokies National Park will soon connect the vast population of eastern America with the majestic mountains of North Carolina. The historical and symphonic folk dramas of Paul Green's "The Lost Colony" on Roanoke Island, and "The Highland Call" at Fayetteville, and Kermit Hunter's "Unto These Hills" at Cherokee, and "Horn in the West" at Boone are eloquent and beautiful with their tales of the North Carolina pioneers.

## X

### MOREHEAD CITY AND WILMINGTON AS TERMINALS FOR NORTH CAROLINA AND THE WORLD

Not the least of all these enterprises, movements, and events is the dedication of the port, the terminal and the



docks of Morehead City as a juncture of railways, highways, airways, and seaways for the exchange of goods in the commerce of the world.

Too long has North Carolina been mainly tributary to the ports to the north and the south. Too long the raw materials of the South were mainly tributary to the great financial centers of the gigantic industrial belt which reaches from Boston, New York, and Philadelphia to Chicago and St. Louis. All honor to that great region in the building of modern industrial America, whose power helped to turn the tides of victory for freedom against the might of the Fascist powers, a region which is a chief bulwark of freedom and peace against the threats of the ruthless Communist totalitarian police state in the present world.

Rising to play its productive and powerful part in America, and in the world, is the New South of farms, factories, electric power, transportation, communications, universities, and research on the farthest frontiers of creative ideas and humane hopes. As the ship channels are further deepened through the sandbars to the sea, the ports of Morehead City and Wilmington will become increasingly hopeful North Carolina centers of commerce, as a vital part in a more productive South in a stronger America, for a more prosperous and peaceful world.

## PUBLISHER'S NOTES

### I

JOHN MOTLEY MOREHEAD, B.S., U. N. C., 1891, LL.D., 1926; D.Eng., Wake Forest College, 1944; D.Sc., Upsala University (Swedish) 1944; long time Chief Engineer and Executive, Union Carbide and Carbon Corporation; Minister to Sweden, 1930-34; donor with Rufus Lenoir Patterson of the Morehead-Patterson University Bell Tower at Chapel Hill, N. C.; donor of the High School and Community Stadium at Draper, N. C.; donor of The Morehead Building and Planetarium at the University of North Carolina; and founder of The Morehead Foundation for Scholarships and Fellowships at the University of North Carolina, his Alma Mater.

### II

Mr. Morehead wishes gratefully to acknowledge that in the preparation of this address he had much help.

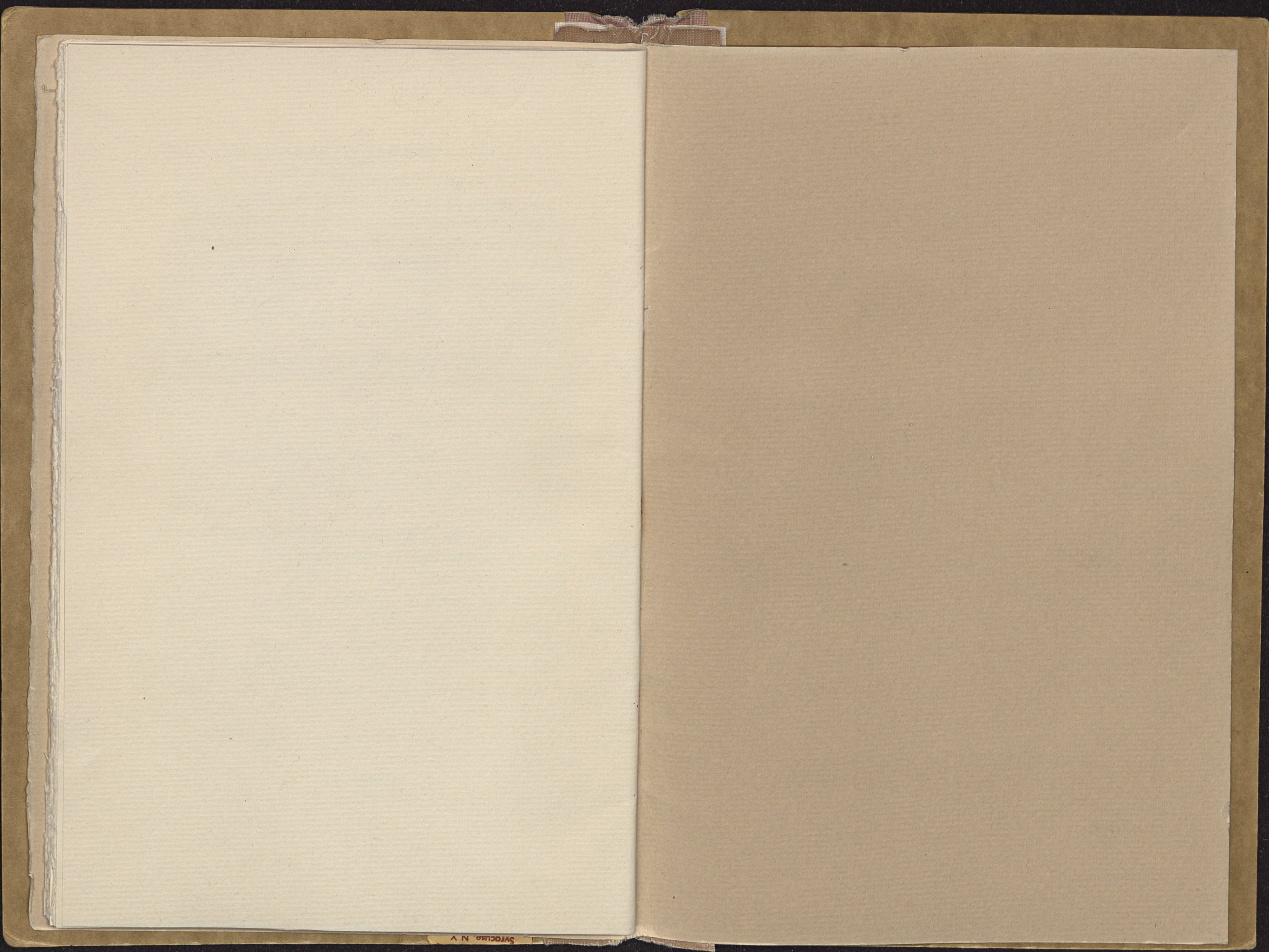
### III

This address is printed in full as compared with the abbreviated copy adjusted to the time schedule of the dedication ceremonies.











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