

Elizabethtown College 125th Anniversary
National Historic Preservation Trust This Place Matters Campaign & Campus Historic Building Survey
Based on the National Parks Service Historic American Building Survey
2024 Summer Creative Arts and Research Program SCARP
Ava Barton Class of 2027 and Shawn Gipe Class of 2027
Jean-Paul Benowitz, Director of Prestigious Scholarships and Fellowships and Public Heritage Studies



Isaac Newton Harvey Beahm (1859-1950)

At the sixth board meeting of the trustees on April 12, 1900, a motion was passed for Isaac Newton Harvey Beahm to be elected as Principal of the College. At this point, a head of the College had been elected before the planning for the building was even complete.¹ Following the dismissal of the seventh board meeting, I.N.H. Beahm's financial arrangements were discussed for his position as Principal, however, nothing was agreed upon since not enough members were present to vote.² Instead, three others and Beahm met at Joseph Doster's house at six o'clock that evening and agreed upon terms employing I.N.H. Beahm, still awaiting board approval. It was established that if Beahm couldn't teach then he would be given \$300 for organizing and managing the school, but if he could teach then an appropriate pay arrangement would be set up. Around this time a meeting was set up among several trustees and I.N.H. Beahm to make arrangements due to his deteriorating health. In the *Early History of The College* G.N Falkenstein wrote about Beahm's health: "It should be noted that I.N.H. Beahm was an invalid at this time, and for some months, from a serious nervous breakdown. It was the hope of his family that he would be able to recuperate some as to assist in the organization and even do some teaching. But much to the regret of all of us he was bedfast long before the opening of the school and was bedridden for the most part for several years. He was not able to do a day's work during the years of my administration. Some references will appear from time to time in regard to his heroic struggle for his health, and to our great gratification after some four years he won his battle." At the eighth board meeting, the Trustees met at S.H. Hertzler's house in the morning of June 11, 1900, at eight o'clock to discuss

¹ Ralph Schlosser, *History of Elizabethtown College 1899 - 1970*. (Lebanon, PA: Sowers Printing Company, 1971), 32.

² Schlosser, 32-33.

the position offered to I.N.H. Beahm. Beahm stated he would not take less than \$300 and not more than \$350.³ During this meeting, Beahm was also asked to prepare a four-page folder announcing the opening of the College.⁴ During the ninth board meeting, a committee was created for catalogs, textbooks, and printing and stationery, with I.N.H. Beahm's and three others being appointed.⁵ On



August 20, 1900, G.N. Falkenstein spent the day with Jesse C. Ziegler compiling the first catalog of Elizabethtown college. Regarding this day, Falkenstein claimed that “It was one of the hardest days of my life. I.N.H. Beahm, a member of the committee on catalog, could give us no service whatever. He seems to have settled down to the conviction that he is an invalid. He is still almost helpless. He walks with much difficulty on two canes. When the Principal should be the embodiment of tremendous energy, I pity him and the principalship. I hope the lord will direct him. I had intended that I.N.H. Beahm and Elizabeth Meyer should complete the work done by the committee on catalog at the home of S.H. Hertzler, but I found it was useless to think of getting any such work out of I.N.H. Beahm at this time. He was not able to do anything.”⁶ An adjourned session of the Board was held in the Lancaster Church of the Brethren in the afternoon of October 3, 1900, and I.N.H. Beahm plus two others were appointed for the committee on Furniture.⁷ Now that a Principal and Faculty of three had been selected, the college was set to open on November 13,

1900, however, due to Beahm’s illness, G.N. Falkenstein was given the responsibility of preparing for the opening day.⁸

The first college catalog was published in August, 1900, with I.N.H. Beahm being listed in the faculty roster as the Principal and teacher of Bible, Psychology, and Pedagogy courses.⁹ For the year of 1900-1901, I.N.H. Beahm served as the Principal and Teacher of Bible, Psychology, and Pedagogy at a salary of \$300 for organizing the school and an additional salary for teaching. Due to a nervous breakdown, Beahm was unable to perform his duties as Principal and G.N. Falkenstein essentially became the Acting Principal for the first year of the College.¹⁰ For the year of 1904-1905, I.N.H. Beahm was President and Teacher of Psychology and Ethics. This is the first year the head of the college became designated as “president.” The years of 1905-1907 remained the same, but for the years of 1908-1910, I.N.H. Beahm was the President and Lecturer on Bible.

³ Ibid., 33.

⁴ Ibid., 34.

⁵ Ibid., 35.

⁶ Ibid., 35-36.

⁷ Ibid., 37.

⁸ Ibid., 39.

⁹ Ibid., 41.

¹⁰ Ibid., 44.

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The minutes of the Board of Trustees that for the years of 1908-1910, Beahm “was elected as nominal President,” mostly spending is time lecturing, preaching, and soliciting funds and students for Elizabethtown College.

I.N.H. Beahm was first elected Principal of Elizabethtown College on April 12, 1900, but did not assume his full duties until 1904-1905 when he was elected President of the College. Beahm served as President for three years and was then elected as the Nominal President from 1908-1910. Beahm was a graduate of Bridgewater College in the class of 1887 and then taught there, eventually founding the Botetourt Normal School in 1897.¹¹ Additionally, Beahm accepted the position of President in Lordsburg College in California, which today is known as Laverne College, but found himself ill and unable to continue the work a few months later.¹²

During the first commencement of Elizabethtown College in College Chapel (Alpha Hall) on June 13, 1903, I.N.H. Beahm started the program by giving the invocation.¹³ On March 15, 1904, a committee of the faculty comprised of I.N.H. Beahm and two others submitted a proposal to the Board of Trustees on the management of the College by an Administrative Committee of the Faculty. One of the main points of this proposal was that I.N.H. Beahm and two others would organize themselves into a committee known as the Administrative Committee, with Beahm as the President and each member being paid \$700 per annum by the Board of Trustees.¹⁴ On January 8, 1901, the Board of Trustees voted to institute a Bible term, with one of the earliest teachers hired being I.N.H. Beahm. This term was very successful, and enrollment was around 115 for the first year, reaching 356 students for the year 1909.¹⁵ On May 4 of 1904, the first issue of *Our College Times* released, and the editorial staff included I.N.H. Beahm as the Editor-in-Chief.¹⁶ On June 15 of 1904, Beahm wrote, and the board adopted, a paper setting forth the policy of Elizabethtown College on intercollegiate sports: “First, That modern match games of baseball and football are not in accord with Christian virtue and true education. Second, that we favor physical education in every aspect. Third, That we especially commend Manager J.M. Miller, Captain J.Z. Herr, and all others assisting in having called off a math game which had been arranged for. Fourth, that we plated with the spirit of conciliation shown by the two boys. Fifth, That we gladly reiterate our purpose to Elizabethtown College excel in moral virtue. Sixth, That cordially invite parents and all friends of Christian education to assist in the reformation of College life along these lines as headed already by leading education of our day.”¹⁷

By the end of the fifth year of the College, the student body growth called for additional buildings. A committee was then formed, comprised of I.N.H. Beahm and S.H. Hertzler, to determine the costs of a second building. Drawings of the building submitted to the Board of Trustees were approved on April 7, 1905, and by April 26, 1905, over twelve thousand dollars was

¹¹ Ibid., 45.

¹² Ibid., 47.

¹³ Ibid., 49.

¹⁴ Ibid., 52.

¹⁵ Ibid., 53.

¹⁶ Ibid., 57.

¹⁷ Ibid., 58-59.

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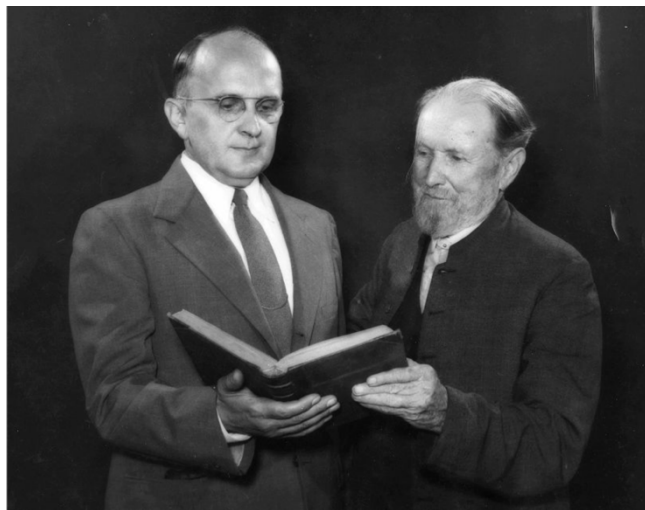
solicited in cash and pledges. A building committee was then appointed with I.N.H. Beahm and two others, with the total cost of construction being \$14,347.45.¹⁸

When I.N.H. Beahm resigned his presidency on June 30, 1909, the Board of Trustees quickly found a successor in D.C. Reber at the beginning of the 1902-1903 school year.¹⁹ Dedicatory services for the Zug Memorial Library were held on October 20, 1950, while also celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the college. I.N.H. Beahm, the First President of Elizabethtown College, gave the invocation to start the services.²⁰ Less than two months after giving the invocation at the Zug Memorial Library dedicatory services, President I.N.H. Beahm was tragically killed in a car accident on November 11, 1950, in Virginia.²¹

In May of 1904, the first issue of Our College Times was published as a booklet of twelve pages, containing short articles by Elizabeth Meyer and D.C. Reber. Additionally, this issue included an editorial by the editor-in-chief of the paper, President I.N.H. Beahm.²²

G.N. Falkenstein served as the Principal of Elizabethtown College for the first two years when I.N.H. Beahm was ill.²³

Isaac Newton Harvey Beahm, also known as Brother Beahm in the Church of the Brethren, was chosen by the Board of Trustees on April 12, 1900, to serve as Principal of Elizabethtown College. Beahm was born at Good's Mill in Shenandoah Valley, Virginia, on May 14, 1859. Illness initially prevented Beahm from serving as Principal to Elizabethtown College, but in four years Beahm had greatly recovered, allowing him to be elected by the Board of Trustees once again for the school year of 1904-1905. Beahm continued serving as President for Elizabethtown College until the end of the 1909-1910 school year. In his early years, academic opportunities were limited for Beahm, but he was nonetheless able to attend Bridgewater College, Virginia, and graduated from the Normal English course with an A.B. degree in 1887. After teaching for a short time, Beahm was requested to teach courses in elocution and rhetoric for the Alma Mater of his Faculty. Beahm founded the Botetourt Normal School and Prince William Normal School in 1897, both located in Virginia. Beahm was elected to be President of Lordsburg College (known



¹⁸ Ibid., 60.

¹⁹ Ibid., 65.

²⁰ Ibid., 195.

²¹ Ibid., 197.

²² Ibid., 207.

²³ Ibid., 226.

as La Verne College today), California, but was too ill and physically incapable of working at the time. Beahm was also called to serve at Elizabethtown College as President in 1900 but was unable to take up the position initially for three years, however, recovering from his illness allowed him to start serving again in the school year of 1904-1905. In 1908, President Beahm was asked to organize a new school at Nokesville due to the Prince William Normal School closing down. The school was named Hebron Seminary, and Beahm took up residency in Nokesville with his family for many years. On July 23 of 1881, Beahm was elected to the Christian ministry and ordained on November 23, 1889. Beahm was away from home for much of his life while he was lecturing and doing evangelical work within the Church of the Brethren. In 1906-1907, Beahm conducted a tour to the Holy Land and preached to a large audience in Jerusalem, which he based many of his future lectures on.²⁴ Beahm was also a participant in the Fiftieth Anniversary Program of the founding of Elizabethtown College. The history of the Church of the Brethren of Eastern Pennsylvania, 1915-1965, contains information on the career of I.N.H. Beahm, much of which has been used to create biographical sketches of his life: "But apart from service within college walls, I. N. H. Beahm was eager all the while to further Christian Education in general as eager educator-at-large and an ambassador of good will... To sit and be neutral was not his way. Rather he spoke out again and again the did not become sour or vindictive or violent when opposed or ignored... Brother Beahm had an inexhaustible fund of native wit... B.M. Mow reports that he remarked about it once to his father-in-law. With a twinkle I. N. H. replied: "Yes, I have it pretty well mastered, except for two points." "What points?" asked Brother Mow. "First, what to say; second how to say it." Said I. N. H., Thus his ministry has been especially sought after by the conservative and lowly. Home missions, new churches, evangelism, and trouble shooting carried him into the far corners of his state and nation. He did not spare himself. ... There was his famous feat of preaching twenty different sermons in a two hundred mile dash across his state in one day, July 26, 1931, to celebrate his fifty years in the ministry." Beahm met an unfortunate and tragic death on November 11, 1950, when he was instantly killed in a car accident at age ninety-one. Beahm had just attended a communion service at the Jones Chapel Church of the Brethren and was on his way to an appointment with W.C. Sweitzer in North Carolina. As he had always wished, Beahm had supposedly met his death with "his boots on". Isaac Newton Harvey Beahm's funeral services were conducted at Nokesville, Virginia, by his brother-in-law, Rufus P. Bucher of Quarryville, Pennsylvania.²⁵

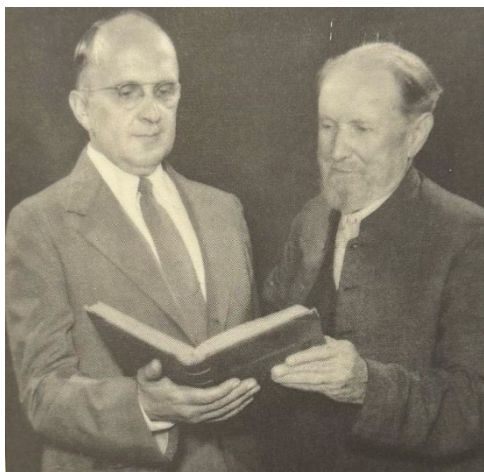
Information from Uniting Work and Spirit:

At the time when Elizabethtown College was discussing potential teachers, forty-year-old pioneer, Isaac Newton Beahm's name came up. Beahm was born in 1859 to an itinerant Virginia preacher and schoolteacher who had married one of his students. Beahm was the fifth out of fourteen children in a religious family. Beahm also found interest in religion and was elected to

²⁴ Ibid., 228.

²⁵ Ibid., 229.

the German Brethren Baptist ministry in 1881. The Beahm family lived a few miles west of Bridgewater, where the Brethren Bridgewater College was located, in which Isaac Beahm enrolled in 1884 and received his bachelor's degree as valedictorian in 1887. Brethren schools such as Bridgewater attempted to get their best students into teaching and this proved true with Beahm, as he taught nine subjects at the school, including elocution and rhetoric. Like his father, Beahm married one of his students in 1890. Later in 1890, Brethren families around the Daleville, Virginia, area wanted to start their own school, and Beahm helped them found the Botetourt Normal College. Beahm managed Botetourt Normal College and taught classes for four years, then travelling as an evangelist for two years, which surprisingly helped lessen his workload and returned his body to health. While on the road Beahm came upon another Virginian town known as Brentsville, and Beahm helped in founding the Prince William Normal School in 1897 and staying there until 1899 when he was requested to a Californian College. At this time Beahm's health started to deteriorate again and he thought taking up Presidency in Lordsburg (La Verne) College, located in California with dry weather, might help his health, though, it did not.²⁶ At the April 1900 Board meeting for Elizabethtown College, Beahm was elected to be Principal of the College as he had already helped founding two other Church of the Brethren schools, though, it would be found that Beahm was physically and mentally incapable of serving as Elizabethtown College's Principal.²⁷ Even though Beahm was ill, the Board of Trustees kept the offer on the table with the added contingency that if he was unable to teach then he would still receive \$300 for organizing and managing the school. There was no contingency in place if Beahm was unable to manage and organize even the College, but this inevitably ended up happening.²⁸



When G.N. Falkenstein was offered a position on the Elizabethtown College Faculty and needed to take 10 days to decide, I.N.H. Beahm wrote a persuasive letter to Falkenstein informing him of how beneficial he would be to the faculty. On the day of the August 16 Board meeting, Falkenstein accepted the faculty position and agreed to help Beahm manage and organize the college.²⁹ With Beahm's illness continuing to progress, most of the work ended up falling on Falkenstein.³⁰ Even with his illness, Beahm was appointed to the committee for the school's catalogue, textbooks, printing, and stationery, and though Falkenstein and Ziegler would end up doing the entirety of the work, the first catalogue was completed on August

²⁶ Chet Williamson, *Uniting Work and Spirit: A Centennial History of Elizabethtown College* (Elizabethtown, PA, Elizabethtown College Press, 2001), 28.

²⁷ Williamson, 29.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 29-30.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 32.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 39.

21. Additionally, on I.N.H. Beahm's recommendation, J.A. Seese was hired as a teacher at a salary of thirty dollars a month. The Board of Trustees also decided to hire Mrs. Beahm as matron of the College, her reimbursement being free room and board for the Beahm family of six. They would live in one of the large recitation rooms and Beahm's sister-in-law was also hired to cook at a salary of two dollars per week.³¹ After the chapel exercises on the opening day of the College, four of the "Faithful Six," students who were enrolled to the College, had their meals at I.N.H. Beahm's home.³² During the interim classes finally started, however, Principal Beahm was unable to attend due to his health.³³ While Falkenstein continued carrying on the duties of Principal Beahm, he also gave Beahm massage treatments for his health. On November 28, Falkenstein describes an attempt to use experimental treatment for Beahm's health: "Gave Brother Beahm magnetic treatment (by clasping his ankles in my hands) hoping to be rejuvenated (sic) by my overflow of vital fluid...I had no faith in it, but I was interested in him and was anxious to help him if I could, even though it seemed utterly useless." Elizabeth Meyer mentioned the circumstances of these initial days of the College in her "History of Elizabethtown College": "It might be well to say right here that at the time of the opening, the Principal, Prof. I. N. H. Beahm, now President of our College, was confined to his bed with nervous prostration, and Prof. G. N. Falkenstein was obliged to perform the duties of Principal and teach besides. Those of you who have been pioneers in any kind of work can imagine the arduous duties and discouraging conditions which Prof. Falkenstein and his corps of workers were obliged to meet perseveringly."³⁴ For the school year of 1903-1904, D.C. Reber served another term as Principal while Beahm was ill, however, Beahm became well enough to become Business Manager of the College. This was an extremely difficult period in Beahm's life and at the time he had spent a year in a sanitarium.³⁵ During this year, Beahm's wife used their home as a boarding house and charged 50 cents a day for room and board. Finally, by 1903, Beahm had "recovered his youthful resiliency, in the main; and he learned to stay clear of the danger line," living to the health age of 91. On March 14, 1904, Beahm, Reber, and Ober proposed putting management of the College into the hands of an "Administrative Committee of the Faculty." During the 1904-1905 school year, Beahm's health had mostly recovered, and he took up presidency of Elizabethtown College while also teaching psychology and ethics.³⁶ At the start of the 1906-07 school year, Beahm once again resigned from his position of president, but this time not due to his health. Due to Beahm's knowledge of the bible and classical lore, he was named a "cultural attaché" to take American travelers on a tour to the Holy Land. I.N.H. Beahm's expenses were completely paid for this trip, and he accompanied the group from Damascus to Egypt. Beahm also sent letters back to Elizabethtown and were published in *Our College Times*. During this time Reber served as "acting" president and managed the college while Beahm was away.³⁷ After this,

³¹ Ibid., 33.

³² Ibid., 40.

³³ Ibid., 41.

³⁴ Ibid., 43.

³⁵ Ibid., 47.

³⁶ Ibid., 48.

³⁷ Ibid., 49.

Beahm only taught during the annual Bible term and devoted most of his time to preaching, representing the school, and essentially serving as a goodwill ambassador, recruitment officer, and fund raiser. Despite Beahm's ill health and bad investments in his early years, Beahm was a man who was tirelessly persistent, incredibly kind, and had much literary knowledge. At the slightest provocation, Beahm would apparently quote Shakespeare and the Bible. A church history described Beahm's want for unity over old tradition: "It is more important to keep the church united than old fashioned." Beahm acted as the warm public face of Elizabethtown College.³⁸ In 1904 when students requested to play against teams from different schools, Beahm wrote a policy statement published by the Board of Trustees: "the modern match games of baseball, football, etc. with outside teams are not in accord with Christian virtue and true education."³⁹ In 1904 *Our College Times*, a monthly college magazine, was started and first used as a platform for administrative agencies with I.N.H. Beahm as their editor-in-chief.⁴⁰ I.N.H. Beahm was also part of a temperance committee, specifically being chosen to speak before a legislature in Harrisburg to encourage banning alcohol locally through a "Local Option Law, thought the law was defeated. In the *Our College Times* magazine, students might find Beahm addressing topics like smoking, swearing, the need for sleep, and health. For example, Beahm wrote things such as, "Do not use language that you would not use in the presence of your mother," "If they are able to buy a five or ten cent cigar and hold it up at an angle of 45 degrees while they puff, they think that it is manly, that is a farce," "If I were starting to go to College now, I would have my time to go to bed – ten o'clock," and "Take care of your stomachs, the stomach is a very important organ."⁴¹

On June 30 of 1909, I.N.H. Beahm resigned from his presidency and the position was filled by D.C. Reber. Back in 1908, Beahm had helped in founding the Hebron Seminary school in Nokesville, Pennsylvania and had a house nearby. At the time of Beahm's retirement, Nokesville became his new home and he decided to put his effort into the Hebron Seminary.⁴²

I.N.H. Beahm, the College's first Principal, died on November 11, 1950, in a head-on car collision, a year after G.N. Falkenstein's death in 1949.⁴³

Two years after the construction of Founder's Hall was complete, the four wings of the hall were named after people who were instrumental in founding the College, one of which was I.N.H. Beahm.⁴⁴

In 1998 a centennial steering committee was formed and a centennial kickoff was announced at a special press conference in Leffler Chapel on February 10, 1999. A man named David Eller portrayed I.N.H. Beahm and discussed the college history during this event.⁴⁵

³⁸ Ibid., 51.

³⁹ Ibid., 51-52.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 53.

⁴¹ Ibid., 56.

⁴² Ibid., 63.

⁴³ Ibid., 186.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 262.; Jean-Paul Benowitz, Peter J. DePuydt, "Elizabethtown College" (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2014), 76.x

⁴⁵ Ibid., 332.

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College Principals and Presidents: I.N.H. Beahm, Principal, 1900-01; President, 1904-08.⁴⁶
Information from the first three centuries:

When Alpha Hall was still under construction, the Board of trustees at Elizabethtown College hired the first members of the faculty, one of whom was I.N.H. Beam from California.⁴⁷

In 1904, Elder Zug from the Elizabethtown Church of the Brethren resigned and called I.N.H. Beahm to the ministry.⁴⁸

Information from find a grave:

Find a Grave, database and images

(https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/23655629/isaac_newton_harvey-beahm: accessed June 7, 2024), memorial page for Isaac Newton Harvey Beahm (14 May 1859–11 Nov 1950), Find a Grave Memorial ID 23655629, citing Valley View Cemetery, Nokesville, Prince William County, Virginia, USA; Maintained by MVC (contributor 46923575).

Isaac Newton Harvey Beahm

Birth: 14 May 1859

Death: 11 Nov 1950 (aged 91)

Burial: Valley View Cemetery Nokesville, Prince William County, Virginia, USA

MEMORIAL ID: 23655629

Parents: Henry Abraham Beahm 1822–1899 Ann Elizabeth Showalter Beahm 1833–1891

Spouse: Mary Bucher Beahm 1867–1947

Siblings: Samuel Peter Beahm 1853–1929, John Henry Beahm 1856–1930, Rev William Edward Beahm 1861–1938, Rev Joseph Charles Beahm 1864–1957, Benjamin Christly Beahm 1869–1906, Elizabeth Susan "Betty" Beahm Sours 1869–1950, Rev George Wiley Beahm 1874–1960, and Adria Cline Beahm Varner 1878–1909

⁴⁶ Ibid., 341.

⁴⁷ Richard Kerwin MacMaster, *Elizabethtown: The First Three Centuries* (Morgantown, PA: Mastof Press, 1999), 164.

⁴⁸ MacMaster, 201.

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Children Mary Beahm Baber 1904–1989, Lois Beahm Kintner 1909–2005, Lois Beahm Eyles 1909–2005, Child Beahm unknown–1891



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