

# Skidmore's Past Presidents



## **CHARLES HENRY KEYES**

Charles Henry Keyes, a well-known educator from Teachers College, Columbia University, became Skidmore's first president in 1912. His vision and energy gave the school the momentum it needed to grow into something more than a hybrid college and vocational school. In 1922 Dr. Keyes fulfilled his avowed ambition of having the Skidmore School of Arts chartered as Skidmore College, a four-year degree-granting institution.

In addition to developing a liberal arts curriculum that became the basis for Skidmore's present curriculum, Dr. Keyes pioneered the formation of a baccalaureate nursing program and began the more active shaping of a campus. By the time of his death in 1925, Dr. Keyes had played a key role in acquiring several of the large Victorian homes overlooking Congress Park, which began to give the College a recognizable physical identity.

The Keyes Quadrangle (Howe, Rounds, and Wait halls and Jonsson Tower) is named for him. ■



## **HENRY T. MOORE**

Henry T. Moore became Skidmore's second president in 1925, ready to take on the challenge of developing the young college both academically and physically.

Moore's 32-year presidency brought Skidmore College to a position of leadership in women's education. Under his tenure, academic programs were developed and refined, and an excellent faculty recruited. A library, infirmary, residence halls, and dining halls were built, and other acquisitions allowed the College to grow further.

Even more significant than his administrative and financial abilities was his influence on a generation of Skidmore students whom he inspired to intellectual and creative achievement. The young college had grown to an enrollment of more than 1,100 by his retirement in 1957.

Moore Hall, the only building on the Scribner campus still in use, and the Moore Quadrangle (Kimball, Penfield, Wilmarth, and McClellan halls) are named for him. ■



## **VAL H. WILSON**

Val H. Wilson became Skidmore's third president in 1957. He concentrated on strengthening the faculty and academic programs, initiated inroads in the creation of interdepartmental offerings, and encouraged more and more students to enter graduate school.

Under Dr. Wilson, Skidmore's growth strained its campus at the seams. Enrollment had risen to 1,300, and many of the turn-of-the-century buildings were growing obsolete, requiring increased maintenance and renovation. The adequacy of the physical plant also was threatened by the loss of 50 acres of athletic fields to a new superhighway as Interstate 87 worked its way northward.

It was at this critical time in Skidmore's history that the board of trustees decided to build a completely new campus on a 650-acre tract on North Broadway.

By the time his tenure was cut short by his sudden death in 1964, Dr. Wilson saw construction begin on the Lucy Scribner Library and on the first residential and dining complex.

Wilson Chapel, on the edge of North Woods, is named for him. ■