

## Reverend Joseph L. Collie - Founder of Camp Collie



Rev. Joseph L. Collie

Dr. Collie was born on the bank of the Dee in Aberdeenshire, Scotland. Nov. 4, 1824, his father dying the same night. His mother was left with the infant and two older sons to care for. In 1836 they came to America and settled in Kane County, Illinois, just west of Aurora. Here the family remained for six years then moved to the lead region of Wisconsin, near Platteville. In the Autumn of 1845 Joseph Collie went to Mineral Point and went to work as a clerk in a grocery store.

That same fall the young man made up his mind to secure an education and attended the Mineral Rock academy during the winter and spring terms. In the fall of 1846 he came to Beloit and entered what was then known as Beloit Seminary. One year later the college was organized with a freshman class of five young men, one of whom was Joseph Collie. He

graduated at the end of four years' course, being valedictorian of his class. Determining to be a minister Mr. Collie went to Andover Theological Seminary where he graduated in 1854.



Congregational Church, Delavan, Wisconsin

[Collie wanted to become a] missionary to some place in Wisconsin. The board sent him to Delavan where he entered upon where he entered upon his pastorate Oct. 1, 1854, and where the struggling church became one of the strongest and most prosperous in the southern part of the state. During his forty-one years of service he preached three times each Sunday, occupying the pulpit of the Delavan church morning and evening and preaching at some outlying point in the afternoon.

### Interested in Education

Outside of his regular pastoral work Dr. Collie took an active interest in educational affairs. He was superintendent of schools in Delavan township for several years, and afterwards a member of the board of coeducation until his removal to Williams Bay. He was early elected a member of the board of trustees of Beloit College and served repeatedly on the committee on instruction and other standing committees. For a few years past he had been an honorary member of the board, being unable longer to serve on the active list.

Dr. Collie was chosen secretary of the Beloit Ministerial Association in 1865 and served in this

capacity for over thirty years. As stated clerk of the Beloit convention of Congregational churches he served continuously for over twenty-five years. In 1865 he was elected a delegate of the Christian commission and for some time had charge of the hospital and prison work at Lodisville, KY.

More than twenty-five years ago Dr. Collie received his degree of Doctor of Divinity from his alma mater. When the Wisconsin Missionary Society was organized in 1872 he was made a member of the executive committee on which he remained as long as he lived.

### **Founder of Camp Collie**

Camp Collie, the summer resort at Williams Bay, had its origin in 1869 when Dr. Collie and a number of friends camped out on the Manierre property near the head of the lake. In 1873 a tract of ten acres was purchased and for several years was operated on the cooperative plan. Most of the campers were ministers and their families, but gradually others were admitted and now Camp Collie is one of the most popular summer resorts on the lake.



Camp Collie lakefront



Cottage at Camp Collie

After passing his seventieth year Dr. Collie felt his physical strength becoming unequal to the duties of his pastorate and so, in the 41st year of his service, he tendered his resignation which took effect in July 1895. The beautiful grounds at Camp Collie offered a suitable retreat and there a comfort-able house was built in which [he lived. However,] North Walworth was without a pastor and here Dr. Collie preached until September, 1899, then completing forty-five years in the ministry. (1)

### **Class Holds a Reunion**

Three years ago this summer Dr. Collie met the other two survivors of the class of '51, William C. Hooker of Carthage, Ill., and Dr. Stephen D. Peet of Chicago, at his son's home in the city, and the three held a fitting celebration of their fiftieth anniversary as alumni. At the same place Prof. Geo. L. Collie and his fellow classmates of 1881 held their reunion.

Dr. Collie was married in July 1856, to Miss Ann Elizabeth Foote, daughter of Rev. Lucius Foote, Dr. Collie's predecessor as pastor of the Delavan church. She survives her husband as do four sons, Prof. Geo. L. Collie, Beloit College; Dr. J. Arthur Collie, Williams Bay; Dr. Winfred R. Collie, Williams Bay; and Dr. Henry Glenwood Collie, Orient, S.D.

[Rev. Collie passed away June 8, at home in Williams Bay.] Funeral services will be held at the Congregational church in Delavan Sunday afternoon at 3 o'clock, Rev. S.P. Wilder being assisted in the service by Rev. H.W. Carter and Dr. Leavitt of this city.(2)

*Excerpt from a Delavan newspaper, June 1904.*



Advertisement for Camp Collie from June 26, 1904 Chicago Tribune

Reverend Joseph L Collie© By Michelle Bie Love

### **Footnotes:**

(1) In 1873 Reverend Joseph Collie bought 10 acres of land on Lake Geneva. Reverend Collie was a pastor at the Congregational Church in Delavan. Rev. Collie, family and some of his associates built cottages for their summer stays. Many of the cottages were completed during the 1880's.

Due to public interest, Rev. Collie opened Camp Collie to everyone. He advertised rooms and boats to rent, milk, ice, excellent water, a laundry, stable for horses, cook stoves and wood.

During these years Rev. Collie continued to buy tracts of land on Geneva Lake, and eventually owned 43 acres of prime lake frontage

(2) Rev. and Mrs. Collie are buried in Spring Grove Cemetery, Plot 30-16-0, Delavan Wisconsin.