

CHAPTER 3

ACADEMY HISTORY: HIGHLIGHTS AND SIDELIGHTS

I. INTRODUCTION

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This Academy has had many golden years already before reaching this, our Golden Anniversary Year. Yet while we have the year right, we are jumping the gun on the date. It was not in May, but on September 13, 1947, that the Academy was founded at the old Stevens Hotel right here in Chicago.

If we consider that date—September 13—in our history, we find that on September 13, 1814, Francis Scott Key watched the British bomb Fort McHenry and wrote the words to “The Star Spangled Banner.” That was an act of great imagination.

September 13, 1914, was the birth date of Joseph Louis Barrow, who became Joe Louis, the great heavyweight champion. In his occupation, Joe Louis was a person of outstanding ability.

September 13, 1860, was the birth date of John J. Pershing, who became the famous World War I General “Black Jack” Pershing. He was known as a person of unimpeachable integrity.

September 13, 1883, was the birth date of Lewis Lawes, who became the famous reform warden of Sing Sing prison. Lawes championed the impartial administration of justice.

On September 13, 1947, all of these characteristics came together in the founding of this Academy, and ever since then we have greatly imagined ourselves to be persons of outstanding ability, unimpeachable integrity, dispensing impartial justice.

Some advocates in the audience may appreciate the fact that on September 13 each year Yuba City, California, begins its annual Prune Festival, and on this same date Worthington, Maine, annually celebrates Wild Turkey Day.

This morning we commemorate our Golden Anniversary by recalling some highlights and sidelights in our proud history.

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