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A STATE TEACHERS COLLEGE SERVING EASTERN KENTUCKY

KENTUCKY

by Henry Clay Haggan

In 1888, Frank C. Button and his mother came to the city of Morehead under the direction of the C. W. B. M. ^{Christian woman's Board of Missions} of the Christian Church and established a one-room school which later became the Morehead Normal School. This institution thrived and through liberal donations, four buildings were erected. The school operated continuously under the same management until 1922 when the entire school plant was donated to the state of Kentucky for the establishment of a school for the purpose of training white elementary teachers. The school was named the Morehead State Normal School. Frank C. Button was chosen as the first president and Charles D. Lewis the first Dean. The faculty and workers numbered nine. September 23, 1923 was chosen as the opening date and 75 mountain boys and girls comprised its first student body.

There were very few improved roads leading into Morehead in 1923 and contact with future students in the field was slow. The school was greatly assisted by traveling men operating out of Morehead. These men distributed its literature and solicited students. Among the men ~~that~~ ^{who} rendered the school a great service ^{in this respect} were Dr. Wales Brown, then county superintendent of Elliott County schools, Cleve Dillon, and Sam Wheeler of Morehead. The faculty looked forward to the trips of these men because their return meant additional students. By the end of the first semester, the student body had grown to 125 and additional members were added to the faculty.

There was not a paved street in Morehead in 1923 and at times the trunks of students were carried from the depot by hand to the dormitories. There was no water system in the town and the school received its supply from a well which supplied about 10,000 gallons daily. The

electric light plant was poorly equipped. The current was turned on about 4 o'clock in the afternoon and turned off a few minutes after the arrival of the night train from Louisville, which was near 10 o'clock. The telephone service ceased at 9 p. m. and service was resumed at 6 o'clock the next morning.

But let us take a look at the city of Morehead since the beginning of the school. Every street in Morehead has been paved. An improved network of highways extends in all directions. The college is now constructing a modern heat, water, and power plant which will be excelled by none. The antiquated ^{telephone} system of that day has given place to a modern equipped exchange with excellent 24-hour service. The campus now comprises 90 acres ^{compared with 75} ~~where~~ at that time it was only 75 .

The four original buildings have been replaced by none of the most modern and best equipped in the South. The original value of the school plant at that time was \$100,000 and today the total value of the school is \$1,976,741.78. This does not include the value of the heating plant, Science building and dormitory, now under construction. With the construction of these three buildings, the value of the school plant will go beyond \$2,500,000.

The Legislature in 1926 changed the name of the school to the Morehead State Normal School and Teachers College and in 1930 the same body saw fit to change the name to The Morehead State Teachers College, by which it is known today.

The library originally consisted of a few hundred volumes and was housed in a single room in the Administration Building. Now it has 20,000 volumes and the one room has given way to a beautiful white stone building with a capacity of 100,000 volumes. The college has enjoyed a steady growth from its beginning to the present, a fact made remarkable by occurring at a time when other institutions were showing a decrease in enrollment.

The college is now fully accredited by the leading accrediting agencies ~~throughout the nation~~: The Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools, the American Association of Teachers College, and the Kentucky Association of Colleges.

The college is organized as to instruction in eight major departments as follows: Agriculture, Economics and Sociology, Education, English, Foreign Languages, History and Government, Mathematics and Physics, and Science. The special departments are as follows: Art, Health and Physical Education, Home Economics, Industrial Arts, and Music.

The college is gradually enlarging each department and establishing new ones to meet growing ^{demands} ~~trends~~. The faculty has grown from 9 in 1923 to 52 in 1935. The institution has enjoyed a steady growth from 75 students, most of which were on a high school level, the first semester of 1923 to a peak enrollment of over 1250 college students in 1935. At the present time, the college has served 4,476 individual college students who have come from 75 Kentucky counties and 10 states.

The college operated four years before a student was graduated. Up until the college became accredited by the various accrediting agencies, many students remained until their senior year and went elsewhere for graduation. After the college became accredited and had the same professional rating as other nearby institutions, there was no need for students to go elsewhere for graduation and this has had a marked influence on the number of students now being graduated. The following table showing the number of graduates each year ^{illustrates this.} ~~shows steady~~ growth:

| | | |
|------|----|-------------------------------|
| 1927 | 4 | |
| 1928 | 7 | |
| 1929 | 3 | |
| 1930 | 11 | - The year we were accredited |
| 1931 | 16 | |
| 1932 | 29 | |
| 1933 | 40 | |
| 1934 | 64 | |
| 1935 | 68 | |

Morehead had no athletics when the school was opened in 1923. The second semester of 1923 marked the beginning of an athletic program in the securing of G. D. Downing as coach. The school had no athletic standing and belonged to no athletic conferences. In 1929 Morehead became a member of the West Virginia Conference and in 1930, application was made for membership in the Southern Intercollegiate Athletic Association and the institution became a full-fledged member two years later. The college has turned out excellent teams in the various fields of sport. Games are now booked with the leading colleges throughout this and neighboring states.

The best way to measure the influence of the school on its territory is to follow into the field the student which that school has turned out. In 1923, Morehead had no teachers in the schools of Kentucky. Its reputation had to be developed. The schools in this territory were ~~taught~~ ^{taught} by former students and graduates of other institutions. Today, it is safe to say that in many eastern Kentucky counties, fully 50% of the teachers are former students or graduates of this college. To accomplish this in a span of 12 years is no mean record. Let us see where some of our former students have gone.

Our records show that 23 former students have served or are now serving as county superintendents ^{in the following} ~~some of the counties which they have served or are now serving are as follows:~~ Bath ~~is~~, Breathitt ~~is~~, Carter ~~is~~, Elliott ~~is~~, Fleming ~~is~~, Floyd ~~is~~ ^{Greenup}, Lawrence ~~is~~, Magoffin ~~is~~, Martin ~~is~~, Menifee ~~is~~, Montgomery ~~is~~, Morgan ~~is~~, Pike ~~is~~ ^{Greenup}, Rowan ~~is~~, ~~Greenup~~ ~~is~~.

One ~~may~~ has but to pick up the high school directory issued by the State Department of Education at Frankfort to see how many former Morehead students appear therein. Some of those selected at random are as follows:

Morehead, Haldeman, Summitt, Cannonsburg, Carthage, Carter City, Fairview, Farmers, Tollesboro, and many others.

Morehead has not only supplied teachers in the smaller school systems but we find our former students in the largest school systems in the State, such as Louisville, Lexington, Covington, and others. From the reports we get concerning their work, they are making splendid records.

Quite a number of our former students and graduates now hold the positions of attendance officers throughout the state. One outstanding student in this field of work was on the program at the educational conference recently held in Lexington and again appeared on the program at the E. K. E. A. last week in Ashland.

Many superintendents and high school principals come to Morehead for qualified men to head their science work in the schools back home. Some of the majors in this field of work have been taken into the best school systems in the State.

Morehead has been doing a splendid piece of work in training for the home economics field. With the completion of the new Science Building, this field of work will broaden its scope. Many of our home economics majors have found employment in neighboring school systems.

Many of our former students are successful coaches throughout the State. Some of them are found in Raceland, Burgin, Corinth, Morehead, Soldier, Haldeman, Inez.

The department of Agriculture has assisted many students in choosing their life's work. Some of the former students now are employed as county agents, vocational agriculture teachers, or workers in the farm credit division of the federal land banks.

Former students majoring in Geography have not only secured excellent positions in Kentucky but in other states. Their services have been

in demand ~~work~~ for work in the high school and in the grades.

Many of our social science graduates and majors are employed in recognized school systems here and elsewhere.

Often a student comes to Morehead with the intention of becoming a teacher but later becomes interested in another field of work. Morehead offers splendid courses that are readily applied on pre-medical work, and some of our former students are now practicing physicians and dentists.

We also have ^{had} many students who have gone into the field of law after having done their pre-law work here. One advantage of our pre-legal work is that it is so arranged that very little credit is lost in a transfer to a recognized law school.

Morehead has done excellent work along the lines of oratory, declamation and debating, and many prizes have been won in competition with the best schools in this and surrounding states.

Morehead is proud of many of its former students on the campuses of other institutions. Their names are found in such honorary professional and scholastic fraternities as Phi Delta Kappa, Phi Beta Kappa, Kappa Delta Pi, etc.

During our years of existence, we have had several students who have taken part in state and national contests of all kinds, and who have won prizes in their respective contests: ^{one student} ~~Henry Lee Prichard~~ won a \$500.00 prize for having the best paper in a national chemistry contest; ^{another} ~~Robert Stewart~~ won the State prize on another topic connected with Chemistry; ^{another} ~~Ethelene Blair~~ won the State Music Contest; ^{two others} ~~Marion Hays and Mary Suskinder~~ won audition contests held in Ashland; and our band has been recognized numerous times in winning music awards.

Quite a number of former Morehead students have found success in the field of government and the coming session of the Legislature will find several of them as representatives and senators.

Many of our graduates have continued their work in higher institutions of learning and have found recognition in their respective chosen colleges. From there, some have branched out into college teaching, others have secured well-paying fellowships for research in recognized colleges and still others are pursuing higher degrees.