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# UA1A Brief Historical Sketch of the Bowling Green Business University

J. Lewie Harman Sr.

*Bowling Green Business University*

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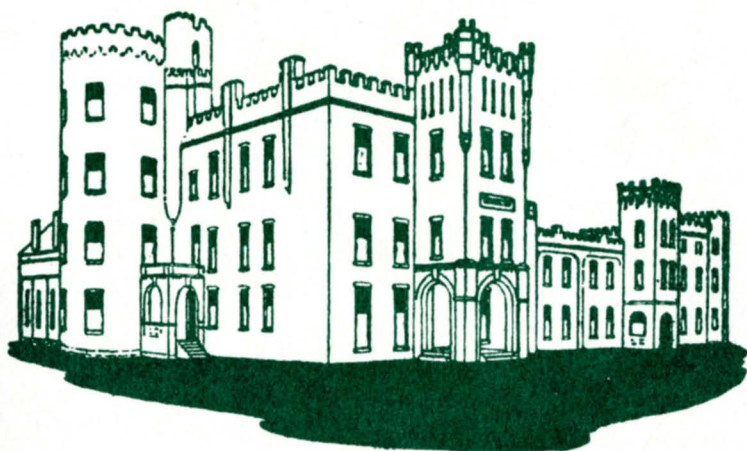
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BRIEF  
HISTORICAL SKETCH  
OF THE  
Bowling Green Business  
University

BOWLING GREEN, KY.



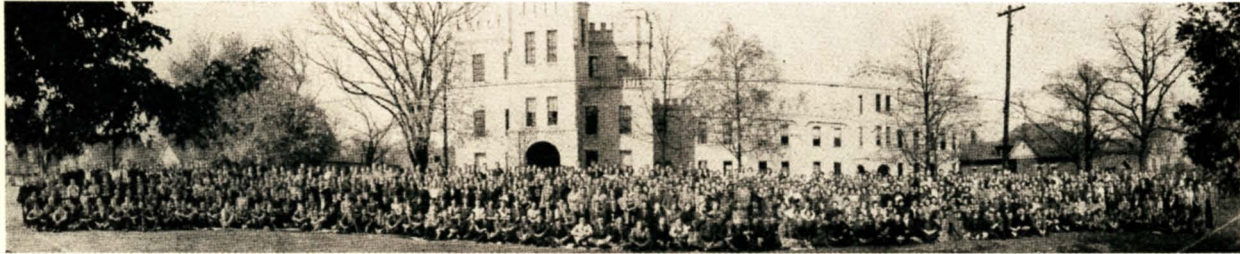
BRIEF  
HISTORICAL SKETCH  
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BOWLING GREEN, KY.

By

J. LEWIE HARMAN, SR.

1948



*Students in front of building before World War II—1940  
Attendance twice as large now—1948*

## THE INVITATION

April 2, 1948.

DR. J. L. HARMAN, *Ex-President*  
Bowling Green Business University  
Bowling Green, Kentucky  
Dear Dr. Harman:

As members of the 1948 staff of the TOWERS, the annual yearbook publication of the Business University, it has been our good fortune to produce it at a saving over the estimated cost. Notwithstanding our position of personal liability had a deficit been incurred, we feel that this excess above production cost should be used in a manner that would benefit each student who purchased a TOWERS.

Because of the intensely interesting seventy-four years' history of the Business University, we feel that a published historical, yet personal, sketch of this institution would be sentimentally valued by each purchaser of a yearbook.

Mindful of the fact that your memory of this institution and your connection with it in some capacity from the lowest to the highest for fifty-five years go farther into the past than that of any other person, we request that you prepare this sketch, and we shall have it published in booklet form.

We ask that you make profuse use of the pronoun "I," and if in so doing your modesty interferes, let us take the responsibility for the rather personal touch you may give to the sketch.

We shall feel honored to have you grant the request we have made.

Respectfully yours,  
BOBBIE HILL  
HUGH J. (JACK) FLOYD

## INTRODUCTION

This sketch was prepared at the invitation of members of the Annual staff, the letter on page 3 explaining the invitation. Many interesting features about the Bowling Green Business University have been omitted and some trivial matters have been included. There has been no attempt at fine-point accuracy, no documentary evidence consulted. Written under pressure of duties and the short time allowed for its completion have made it a sketch that can be easily criticized.

This story is neither a valedictory nor a swan song of the writer or the institution. Neither is decrepit and neither is looking backward.

April, 1948.

J. L. HARMAN, SR.



*The Main Entrance*

## FOUNDED

This institution was founded by A.W. Mell at Glasgow, Kentucky, in 1875. He had no money, but courage and enthusiasm that were boundless. Ten years the school grew in Glasgow, thirty miles from Bowling Green, grew beyond the size of its building, and the citizens there failed to provide larger quarters, and in 1884 it came to Bowling Green where the public gave it a larger building.

On College Street there stood one of the largest and most pretentious residences in the then small town, which had been the home of the Bowling Green Female College. Most of that building stands today, but there have been so many changes around and above it that it bears little resemblance to the original. Added to the residence in 1884, was the section now known as the large typing room and the rooms over it.

The school was on a new basis and grew rapidly until the two proprietors, Mell and Williams, allowed commerce to absorb their educational interests. It dwindled from five or six hundred students to a low ebb of twenty-eight, when in 1892 H.H. Cherry and T.C. Cherry took charge. They covered the South with advertising "like the dew," added vigorous teachers to their staff, and despite the panic of 1893, despite inadequate building and less adequate equipment, and with no capital except the low tuition charges collected from students—\$18.50 for six months in the literary division and \$45 for five months with "two months extra if necessary" for a business course, succeeded. There were only eight typewriting machines and they had double keyboards. No typewriter instructor and no text were used, and the touch system had never been heard of. Mr. Cherry assembled his eight machines in one corner of a room with eight typists at work, and then shifted the machines with another eight operators to the opposite corner and put under the picture, "The Typewriting Department in the Northeast Corner" and "The Typewriting Department in the Northwest Corner."



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Sample of Cherry Brothers early advertising, 1895

T. C. Cherry came up from Louisiana, where he was the head of a college, and joined his brother in the conduct of the Bowling Green school. Cherry Brothers became a widely known signature. H. H. had an extraordinary desire for institutional growth and extraordinary ability to produce it. T. C. had an extraordinary desire for profound scholarship and for executive work. A few years after their joining, they dissolved partnership on a friendly basis. T. C. became the superintendent of the Bowling Green city schools which position he held for thirty-two years. H. H. continued conducting the Southern Normal School and Business College. His energy and ambition were as perpetual as Tennyson's Brook, and his vision was always to the front.

## COURAGE AND GROWTH

In 1874, it required courage to launch a business school anywhere, and especially in a small community. The founders never thought that in seventy-four years the infant they nurtured might become a leader in the training of every type of commercial work in every type of business in the greatest commercial country of all history.

Nor did they think that supreme judges, railroad presidents, bankers—leaders in every activity of man would emerge from the school which they started.

Nor could they visualize that later, in the greatest of all wars, that the little, insignificant school they were starting would, in 1944, have in that war one hundred and thirty-seven of its students serving as commissioned officers, and probably the school founders never thought that if they could live until 1948 they could look back upon about 57,000 former students and see in every state, city, town, and hamlet of America their product at work, and see students coming from everywhere and being sent to many parts of the earth.

Is it reasonable to believe that they ever thought their institution would, in one six months, be asked for more than a thousand of its students, ranging in calls from one at a time to a hundred at a time, and some of the calls growing into appeals?

Could they have visualized that in the height of prosperity, the horrors of war, and the depth of depression the institution would place a hundred per cent of its product—commercial teachers, business administrators, accountants, bookkeepers, stenographers, and secretaries?

In seventy-four years, from a half dozen or so students, it has grown to an enrollment of thirteen hundred in daily attendance.

The steps of the castellated building on College Street have been worn by the tramp of Cordell Hull, Walker D. Hines, Director General of all the railroads of the United States; Justice Wylie B. Rutledge of the United States Supreme Court; Judge D. H. Kincheloe of New York City; Ralph Quinn, General Manager of the Cincinnati Inquirer; Ex-Attorney General and United States Judge Charles I. Dawson; S. T. Bledsoe, President of the Sante Fe Railroad; James F. Ramey, Executive Vice-President of the Washington National Insurance Company; Harry C. Spillman, Author and Lecturer, New York City; O. M. Hinton, Vice-President of the largest coal mining company in the world, New York City; the Stamps twins, two of the wealthiest

and leading business men of Arkansas; John Rhea Maxey, Official, Chrysler Corporation, Detroit; Claud Young, Personnel Director, Illinois Central Railroad Company, Chicago; V. V. Boater, Ex-President, Chicago Great Western Railroad Company; M. M. Hill, President, Sterling Drug Company, largest in the world, Washington and New York; Gordon Ford, of Yeager & Ford, Public Accountants, Louisville; W. C. Lane, President, Business College in Connecticut; John L. Foust, Superintendent City Schools of Owensboro, Kentucky; S. E. Ruley, President, Spencerian Commercial School, Louisville; C. C. Steed, President, Business College, Elizabethton, Tenn.; Claud Toler, President, Toler Business College, Paris, Tenn.; Walter Matherly, Head, Department of Business, University of Florida; Hollis Guy, Permanent Secretary, Business Section of the National Educational Association, Washington, D. C.; J. K. Kincaid, President, Miller Business School, Cincinnati; Judges N. Porter Sims and Osso W. Stanley, members highest court of Kentucky, Frankfort, Kentucky; Mat O'Hearn, Vice-President, United Fruit Company, Washington, D. C.; W. B. Ferguson, President, Building Loan Company, Louisville, Kentucky.

## FEBRUARY, 1893

The morning I entered the chapel hall, February 7, 1893, there were forty-five students. The forty-five soon became a unit revolving around a spirit that was and still is rare in school life. Then there were no efforts to make college credits or to secure diplomas and degrees, but there was hard work done for the joy of doing it. Nearly all of the students were paying their own expenses, a majority here of their own accord. Only a few were sent. Most of them had strong minds that readily grasped instruction. Hard work and with little money with which to dissipate, unified a group whose eagerness for education was impelling and purposeful.

## FRUITFUL FEATURES

Two features of the institution that have stood to the fore were Chapel and a "Moot House of Representatives." The first was a builder of both morals and morale. Thousands of men and women, now influential and in many parts of the world, date their inspiration from their chapel attendance here which was never compulsory. So fresh and vigorous were the programs that the students seldom absented themselves from them.

The House of Representatives was a builder of leaders. After Cordell Hull became a national personality, he discussed the principle of income tax so effectively in the U. S. Congress that he was asked where he first got the idea and replied, so the papers stated, "In the Moot House of Representatives in the Southern Normal School and Business College of Bowling Green, Kentucky."

Dr. Cherry was the speaker of the mock Congress, and his knowledge of parliamentary law and congressional procedure was a challenge to all of us. There were debates, intellectual sparring, pretended and actual fights. One evening two students staged what might have been a major tragedy. One of them flashed a bicycle wrench, and this being considered by the audience as a revolver, the hall was emptied through the doors and windows. Such pranks were seldom. My later contacts with the public were made easier by my years of pretending to represent a congressional district in Georgia.

## SUBJECTS

In the first catalog of the institution the following subjects were listed as composing the general business course:

"Spelling, penmanship, English grammar, arithmetic, debating, composition, single and double entry bookkeeping, commission business, banking, compound partnership, commercial terms and business correspondence."

Obviously some of the subjects were combined under one head. Probably banking, compound partnership, commercial terms and commission business were to be taught in the same class, or made parts of bookkeeping and other subjects.

Cost the first year: Tuition \$15, board \$45, books and stationery \$5. There is no available evidence to show the time involved in the cost.

The present offerings are: Bookkeeping, Stenography, Banking, Salesmanship, Accounting, Business Administration, Commercial Teacher Training, Secretarial Science. Some of them require four years for completion.

Subjects taught: Bookkeeping, Accounting, Arithmetic, Commercial Law, Penmanship, Grammar, Spelling, Type-writing, Rapid Calculation, Business Correspondence, Machine Bookkeeping, Economics, Office Practice, Salesmanship, Office Machines, Mathematics, Shorthand, Index and Filing, Education, Health, Physical and Safety Education, Psychology, Natural Science, English Composition, Amer-

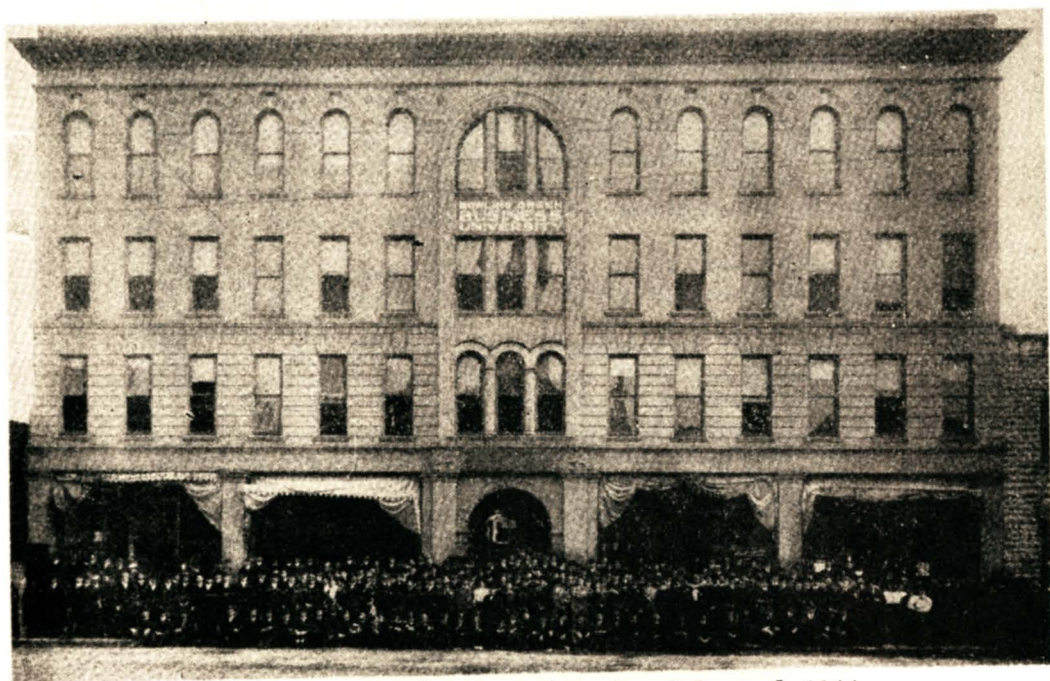
ican History, European History, American Government, Law, Public Questions, Trigonometry, Public Speaking, Secondary Education, Marketing, and Statistics.

## LOUISIANA

Thirty to fifty years ago Louisiana was second to Kentucky in the number of students in attendance here, and most of them were from Southern Louisiana. A high per cent were French. Patronage from that state began under the administration of Mell and Williams, but it was greatly accelerated when T. C. Cherry, who was president of a college in Crowley, Louisiana, resigned to join his brother here in the ownership and management of the Southern Normal School and Business University. Many young men and young women followed Mr. Cherry to Bowling Green, and they in turn brought others. The enrollment from that state was still further enlarged by one of the Cherrys or their representative soliciting in the southern state. The railroads could lawfully issue passes and were glad to give them to anybody who promoted travel. For six years I rode on every railroad in the southern half of the "Pelican" state, ferried every river and bayou, drove over every road (and usually they were deep in mud or dust); met many types of people, rich and cultured, poor and benighted. When the fruits of my labor were gathered in New Orleans for a trip to Bowling Green, there might be a coachful or a half-dozen, nearly all speaking French. Some of them were unable to order the simplest food or to make known a simple want. A considerable number of them became prominent in many fields of activity.



*College Street Building about 1898*



*Home of Business University when it burned, 1911*

## DISASTER

In the autumn of 1899, fire destroyed the building on College Street, except the walls. A homeless school sought quarters in every available room in the business section of the city, the main headquarters and teaching space being in what is now the Davenport Building on the north corner of State and Tenth Streets. Mr. Cherry met the discouraging situation with his accustomed courage. The citizens of the city assisted in a limited way, and the two-story structure connected at the northeast end of the building, a third story on the residential section, and the business hall were added, plus the towers and the attractive castellated effect of the building as it now stands.

In its larger and more beautiful form, it was occupied and served until 1938, when the wing to the left of the front entrance and a trifle to the rear, containing recitation rooms, and the library, and the section containing President Hill's office and the secretarial force, were constructed.

The building has had four definite periods of growth—a sort of installment process. The small classroom building in the rear was no part of the four expansions mentioned, but erected in the flush days of Western, a year or so before that school moved to its present site. The Southern Normal School and the Business University grew together until 1907, when Mr. Cherry succeeded in inducing the state to take over the literary division of the institution, making it a State Normal School for Teachers. The state legislature passed the act creating Normal schools in Bowling Green and Richmond in 1906 and the first classes were held in Jan. 1907 in the Southern Normal School. The accomplishment was one of the most difficult experiences through which Kentucky education progress has passed.

## CHANGE

After seven years as a student in the Normal School and Business University, occasionally being used as a part-time teacher, Mr. Cherry engaged me to head the shorthand department and to teach other subjects as necessity arose and my ability warranted. It was about then he took me to Frankfort to assist him in his fight before the General Assembly to induce it to take over the Normal School. We carried a petition about sixty feet long signed by most of the people in this section, asking that Kentucky make the Southern Normal School a state institution. The fight was won and state schools were established at Bowling Green and Richmond.

## SHIFT OF OWNERSHIP

When the State School was ready to be launched, Mr. Cherry sold the Bowling Green Business University to J. S. Dickey, W. S. Ashby and J. L. Harman, each of whom

was connected with the institution before they purchased it. Mr. Dickey was made President; Mr. Ashby, Business Manager, and Mr. Harman, Vice-President. In January, 1907, the Business University was moved to the McCormack Building, a four-story structure on the corner of State and Tenth Streets, which up to that time was the most elegant public building in Bowling Green and probably none yet has surpassed it.

The new State College opened in the College Street building which the Business University now occupies. In 1911, the State School moved, leaving the College Street building vacant. On the morning of July 5, 1911, fire originated in a nearby building at daylight, destroying one-fourth of a block, and the McCormack structure was one of the chief victims. Most of the Business University's equipment went up in flames. Six o'clock a.m. found students and the staff of teachers standing around a heap of damaged schoolroom equipment. It was a period of gloom and uncertainty. Under pressure many people do more than when they lag along in normal stride. The state offered the use of the vacant college building to our homeless school which offer was eagerly accepted. The building was out of repair—no desks, no chairs, no tables. The school had saved a few machines from the fire. At nine o'clock the teachers and students assembled in what is now the Business Hall, all having done certain physical tasks, until perspiration and soot gave them the appearance of a group of laborers. By noon nearly all classes were reciting. It is to the credit of the institution and the generosity of the organizations from which it purchased its machines, books, furniture, and various supplies that telegrams came in saying, "Order from us anything you need, money or no money. Your credit is unlimited." The citizens of Bowling Green offered us every facility they possessed.

It was the hardest but most resultful summer the school had ever had. Putting in a heating system, plumbing, wiring, all going on at the same time and classes in session! Students seemed to catch the "tonic of the task."

### TRAGEDY

On the evening of January 16, 1921, President Dickey died suddenly. It was a shock to all who knew him and a loss to his home, the city, his church, the state, business education, and especially the Business University.

J. Murray Hill, who was then connected with the institution, purchased Mr. Dickey's interest and became the Vice-President, Mr. Harman being made President, and Mr. Ashby remaining Business Manager.



## NEW EVALUATION

In 1922, at a meeting of the Kentucky Education Association in Louisville, the Business University invited a group of educators to dinner. Present were men from the University of Kentucky, from "Western," from the city schools of Bowling Green, from the State Department of Education, and others. We presented our application for accreditation. The attitude of the meeting was genuinely sympathetic toward our request and a committee was appointed to survey the Business University. Upon that survey, the College of Commerce was organized and was made a Junior College in 1922. Shortly thereafter it became a four-year college, the first privately owned business school to get such a rating. None since has attained it.

In 1938, because of ill health, Mr. Ashby retired, and W. L. Matthews purchased Mr. Ashby's interest and was made second Vice-President, Mr. Hill taking over the Business Manager's duties that had been performed thirty years by Mr. Ashby, Mr. Hill continuing in charge of correspondence with prospective students and attending to details too numerous to list. Mr. Ashby was an energetic, resourceful personality, his industry being without limit.

About this time the building was enlarged by adding the wing to the left of the front, containing the library and classrooms and the private office of Mr. Hill and the secretaries.

In 1945, Mr. Harman retired as President and was succeeded by Mr. Hill, Mr. Matthews becoming Vice-President and Dean, and Mr. Harman continuing with the institution but not as an executive.

## LONGER YEARS

Ogden College for boys flourished here for about fifty-seven years. The buildings and grounds were leased by "Western" on Jan. 1, 1928.

Potter College for Young Ladies stood where Henry Hardin Cherry Hall now stands. It attracted young ladies from most of the Southern states. Western bought the property in 1909.

Potter Bible College stood on the site now occupied by the Potter Orphanage on the Nashville road two miles south of Bowling Green.

The life of the Business University is considerably longer than either of the three and is seemingly in its youthful vigor.

## GROWTH

In 1907, when Dickey, Ashby, and Harman took charge, there were twelve persons on the faculty. In 1947, seventy-two. In 1907, there were about three hundred students. As this is written, April, 1948, there are thirteen hundred.

The first four-year graduate class was in 1927. There were two graduates. This year—1948—two hundred.

The following is quoted from a 1905 issue of the *Times-Journal*, a flourishing daily here of that date:

“Our reporter visited the Business University today. The entire third story of the big building on College Street is used by the School of Telegraphy. It is no unusual sight to see one hundred boys and girls at the keys. The walls of the rooms are hung with large railroad maps, and railroad orders. An L. & N. wire passes through the department and students were busy taking actual messages.

“At any hour of the day, forty typewriters may be seen in operation at once and what is more interesting, the operators do not look at the keys!”

Only forty machines and no looking! Two hundred and fifty now, and still “no looking.”

## GREAT-GRANDCHILDREN

It was a proud day when the school enrolled the first sons and daughters of former students. There came another proud time when the grandchildren came, and it is now pleasing if not exciting to enroll great-grandchildren.

Twenty-five years ago, it was found that thirty-six Roger students from Mississippi, all relatives, had been enrolled in this institution. Others of the clan have come since, but no count has been made.

## ACTIVITIES

Only one of the long-time features popular with the students and teachers is now one of the school's activities. The oldest was the Chestnut Hunt, beginning in the '90's and continuing annually until a few years ago when blight destroyed all chestnut trees in the United States.

The next in years of age were the Boat Excursions down Barren River to the locks and dams at Greencastle and Woodbury. Several years trips were made down Barren River and up Green River to Mammoth Cave. The school grew too large for boat facilities.

The third in age were the Annual Debates between the Big Four and Coreco. No ball game of this modern day puts more excitement into its fans than did those debates

put into their followers. Tickets were sold and often "Standing Room Only" had to be hung where the contests were held. A number of times the speeches were put in print after the debate, and these were sold. The state of Washington bought ten thousand copies of one of the debates and distributed them to the high schools of the state.

The present popular feature is the Christmas Party, at which the prettiest girl in the institution is selected. For twenty years this has been popular, and it shows no signs of abatement.

Telling of the three features that are seemingly gone forever might not be mentioned here if their going could be charged to negligence or indifference, but the parasites got the trees; enlarged enrollment got the boats; radios, picture shows, and automobiles got the debates; but the girl crop seems in no danger.

## ATHLETICS

In the early part of this century an earnest attempt was made by the Business University to promote and maintain organized athletics. For two years a football team was given the best possible support, the school engaging the famous Dan McGugin, the Vanderbilt University coach, to coach our team. McGugin travelled to Bowling Green in the morning and returned to Nashville on the noon train to conduct his own practices at Vanderbilt. About the time a team was ready to play, one of the players would secure a position and thus break any hope of meeting other teams or building an enduring organization. Thirty years ago our basketball team was one of the leaders in this section, playing some of the best college teams; but our students did not attend the games and for lack of interest the attempt to maintain a team perished. In addition to the above, the work here is so exacting that students could not profitably engage in organized athletics.

## COMMERCIAL TEACHER TRAINING

The following is a quotation from the Thesis of Mr. Chas. E. Patterson in the "History of the Bowling Green Business University" for the Master's Degree at the University of Kentucky:

"In 1905, a young lady student told her teacher \* \* \* that she was going to New Jersey to teach in a commercial school. She sought information regarding teaching, and the conversation resulted in regular conferences on teaching between the teacher and four or five of the young lady's friends. At the suggestion of that small group, regular teacher-training classes were organized for the

summer sessions. These developed one of the most outstanding features of the University's offerings.

"In 1916, the Bowling Green Business University was designated by the National Association of Accredited Commercial Schools as the official training school for commercial teachers. This meant that teachers employed by business schools belonging to the Accredited Association would receive the training at the Bowling Green Institution."

For many years the Business University has made a display in the showrooms of the important educational meetings of the United States, along with business firms and other schools. Its supreme position in the field of Commercial Teacher Training makes it necessary that it keep contact with college and high school officials who engage commercial teachers. One of its interesting attractions has been the use of a United States map about eight by ten feet into which was inserted a red-headed tack representing the place to which we had sent a commercial teacher. A prize was offered to the one who could come most nearly guessing the number of tacks in the map. It attracted general attention and guesses ranged from one hundred fifty to twenty-five thousand. The incredible part was that we had sent so many teachers to New Jersey that the space on the map representing that state was too small to hold the tacks. They made a solid red spot on the map as large as the New Jersey section. In order to place the overflow, a heavy red line was drawn out into the ocean and the overflow tacks were placed there. A wag passing our booth remarked, "When a school sends teachers to the middle of the Atlantic, it's stepping beyond all bounds and mistreating poor teachers!"

Good authority reported to us five years ago that more commercial teachers had been developed here than in any other American institution.



*Noon adjournment before World War II. Small group compared with present attendance*

## ACCOUNTING AND BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

Since the beginning of the Business University, Book-keeping and Stenography have been popular subjects and for several years were the major offerings of the institution. They still maintain their original prominence. Accounting and Business Administration have caught up with the originals.

It is the proud record of the B. U. and College of Commerce that every graduate of Accounting and Business Administration courses has secured a position. Many of them rank high in business and other activities.

From all states have come students attracted here by the wide reputation of the institution—its course content, instructional staff and successful placement of graduates.

Compared with other professions, Accounting is new, and is growing in importance as American business grows. We began offering Accounting and Business Courses at the beginning of the demand for such training and have held a conspicuous position in this field. Probably two hundred of our Accounting graduates have the distinction of being Certified Public Accountants, and these and other hundreds are engaged wherever business demands experts.

### WIDE RANGE

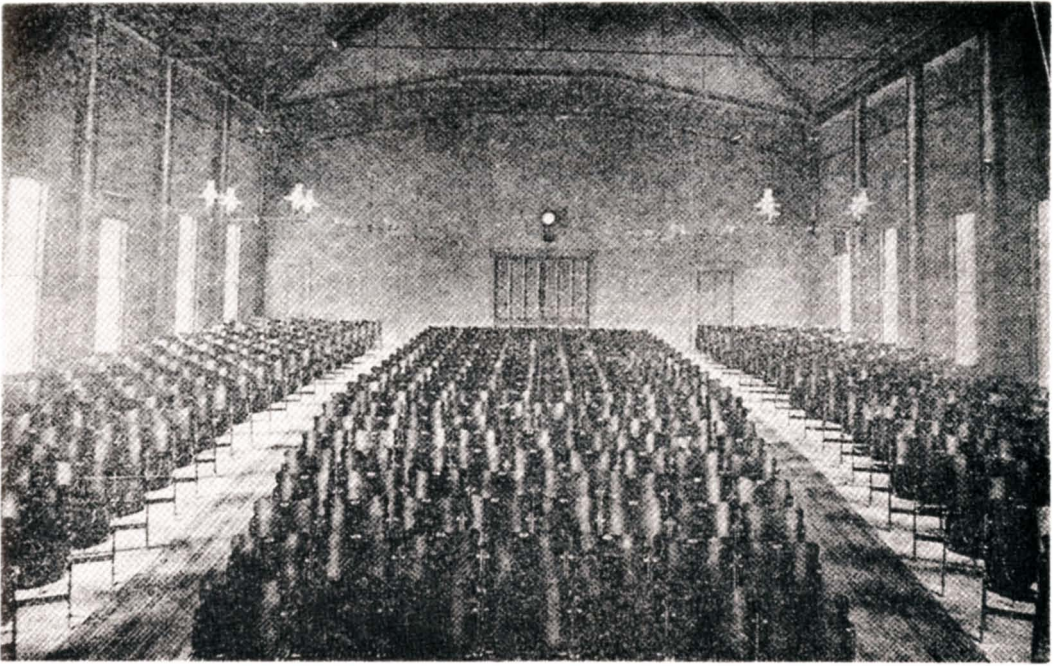
Mississippi, West Virginia, Tennessee, Florida, North and South Carolina send us more students than any state except Kentucky, but they are not named in order of their patronage. All the other states have been represented here, but the representation has not been as great as from the states mentioned. It is not unusual to have students from thirty-five states at the same time.

Students have been sent to positions in every state, Cuba, Hawaii, Philippine Islands, Porto Rico, China, France, Mexico, Argentina, Panama, Nicaragua, Canada, Brazil, Venezuela, Tibet, England, and Italy.

### MISCELLANEOUS NOTES

#### PENMANSHIP

Penmanship has always been a specialty of business schools. In other days birds abounded in artistic pen flourishes; eagles, more dignified and less embellished; "Bounding Stags Bearing Diana to the Chase"—every type of pen work from accurate etchings to elaborate ornamentation; every type of letter from the plainest to the most ornamental old English, and from box-marking to loud, highly colored letters done with a Sonagen pen, were labored over with the patience and zeal of a Celtic monk. On the fingers—sometimes to the elbows of youngsters—went ink. They worked, chewing tongues, watching touch, slants and shades, each eager to acquire what he had been taught to admire or at least to need. Now bare are the walls of modern business schools upon which once hung in gilded, expensive frames elaborate pieces of pen work. Unfortunately tempo of the times has sent the penmanship specialists and the extensive penmanship courses of business schools "to join the two-toed horse and the Ichthyosaurus of the fossil age of the historic past." Death has claimed most of the old masters and new ones are not rising up rapidly to take the places of the dead.



*Assembly Hall prior to conversion to Business Hall and  
General Assembly Room*



*Receiving a shipment of new typewriters*

## EXCELLENT SCHOOL ALLIES

Fraternities, sororities and clubs here are and always have been a definitely helpful influence, they having administrative approval and in turn supporting the institution faithfully. They are void of a "holier than thou" attitude. Their proposed constitutions and by-laws are submitted to the faculty and the administrators before the organization is completed, and so are the names of all persons proposed for membership. These are discussed in faculty meetings and all suggestions of the faculty pertaining to plans and purposes of the organization or the rejection or acceptance of members are usually accepted without argument by the promoters. If not, representatives are given the privilege to present their argument to the faculty.

## AN INTERESTING FACILITY

Probably the hundreds of students who enter our library are not aware that it is a facility that business schools do not possess. So far as we know, there are only two privately owned business schools in the United States that have organized libraries, and the Business University is one of them. This institution specializes in developing skills, and in addition, gives four-year courses which require a broad comprehension of the science of business and a familiarity with literature, mathematics, social and political science. A library is an essential in our conception of what this school ought to be. Twenty thousand books and most of America's leading magazines are at students' command.

Hanging in the library are two diplomas, one granted to L. W. Coakley on March 31, 1884, and the other to Sam Cristal, City, on May 27, 1886. One of these was presented to us by Mrs. Samuel Cuthbertson of this city, niece of Mr. Coakley, of Greensburg, Kentucky, and the other was presented in person by Mr. Cristal shortly before he died a few years ago. They are the oldest diplomas from this institution of which we have knowledge.

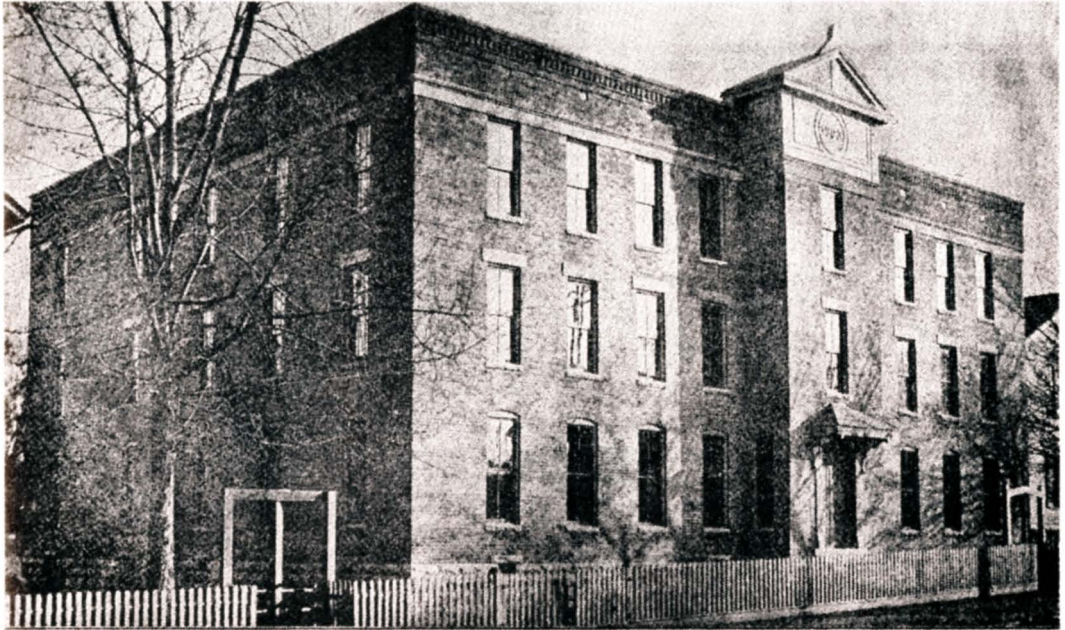
Dr. A. M. Roe, eighty-five years of age, a substantial citizen of Bowling Green, is the oldest living graduate of the Business University of whom we have record.

## "WOODMAN, SPARE THAT TREE"

The setting of the University is made attractive by the shapely trees in the yard. There is only one on the property that was here when I came, and that is the elm that stands near the office windows on the south side of the building. The others, including the large ones on the lots to the rear which face Center Street, I saw planted.



Once on a rainy day two boys had a fist fight in the passageway between the Business University and Center Street. A young tree was in the way of the fighters. It was pushed over and trampled in the mud. That same tree, now three feet in diameter, asserts its majesty as a reminder that mere school boys cannot always alter nature's process, although at times they think they are smart enough to conquer the world.



*Erected 1904 as a rooming hall for students of Normal School and B.U.  
Frisbie Hall, now greatly altered, is Earl Hotel*

#### FIRST FRISBIE HALL

The building to the rear of the Business University now housing the Earl Hotel was built on state property by the Southern Building Association as a dormitory for the Southern Normal School and Business University. A few years after its erection, the Normal School moved to "The Hill," and it was found that the dormitory, then called Frisbie Hall, was too far from classrooms. It was sold and since then has borne the names Logan Lodge, Homey Haven, The Kentuckian, The Milner Hotel, and the Earl Hotel.

## EXPLANATION

It is regrettable that the space to spare in this booklet does not allow the listing of the high qualities of W. S. Fuqua and L. T. Dickey whose services to the institution have meant so much and of many other superior classroom teachers, present and past.

## NOW SEEMS STRANGE

There appears in one of the first catalogs issued by the school seventy-three years ago, a strong argument by the versatile founder, Mr. Mell, in favor of co-education which was not popular then. It now seems strange that it was ever an issue.

## A BLENDING

In the earlier days of commercial education more attention was given to the artistry of work and less to thought and theory. Now business problems requiring a high order of thought are in the ascendancy. The Business University and College of Commerce take pride in blending the theoretical *why* and the skillful *way* plus an earnest attempt to give their students an understanding of the importance, the spirit, and the profit of commerce.

## UNAIDED WE HAVE BUILT

Without endowment or aid from state, church, or from any source, the Business University has grown for seventy-four years. The joy of work with young men and young women and the challenge to win vanished many obstacles.

Political and church affiliation have never been a consideration in this institution. Every Christian denomination plus Jewish have been on our faculty, and we have never inquired into the way a faculty member votes.

Since 1895 our commencements have been cultural, inspiring high points of each summer. Distinguished men have been speakers; the banquets have been as colorful as the best efforts could make them; the sermons scholarly and spiritual, and the class day speaker a successful former student.

## SPIRITUAL

The spiritual objective of the Business University is to exalt the principles and practices of religion, and from the school's beginning, seventy-four years ago, up to 1946, when the influx of G. I.'s was too great for the assembly room, there was no neglect of daily devotion, and a constant effort was made to advance the young people's views of spiritual values, or at least to keep them as devoted to their church duties as they were when they came.



A. W. MELL



J. R. ALEXANDER



J. S. DICKEY



H. H. CHERRY



J. L. HARMAN



J. MURRAY HILL

### PRESIDENTS

Six men have been President of the institution since its establishment in 1874. A. W. Mell served fourteen years; H. H. Cherry, sixteen; J. S. Dickey, fourteen; J. L. Harman, twenty-five; J. Murray Hill, present President, three. The above statement is approximately correct, not counting fragments of years nor listing the brief period of about twelve months when J. R. Alexander was in charge.

### GLIMPSES OF DECEASED PRESIDENTS

#### MELL

Mr. Mell was tall, careless of dress, energetic, vigorous of speech, wore a short, well-trimmed mustache, walked with a quick, firm step as if he were on an important mission that must be completed immediately. His voice was loud and forceful, calling every man he knew by his

initials, and he knew them all. Conversations I had with him and with many of his students would lead to the conclusion that enthusiasm was his most conspicuous characteristic. His greetings indicated that he was overjoyed in pronouncing them. The force of voice and flash of eye in his delivery put impressiveness into his words.

#### ALEXANDER

Mr. Alexander was of the philosophic, scholarly type, reflecting more than promoting; independent of many conventionalities which some others think essential; a lover of nature whether in the direction of the stars or down to the crudest object on the bank of an insignificant stream; an enthusiast in sport, but not of the organized kind; a fisherman who could sleep all night on a rock and wade a trout stream all day—rugged, free—too free to be confined to executive duties. He preferred spending his working time in the professor's chair, his leisure hours at home reading and his recreation far removed from the tramp of the masses. His character was high and his years many.

#### CHERRY

Mr. Cherry in youth was tall and thin, and there were many indications that he would be short lived. A well-formed head with some classic features was firmly poised on a frail body. His eyes were steady, his hair long and voice strong and forceful. As he grew older, he grew stouter, won better health, overcame his youthful shyness, substituting in its place aggressive self-confidence. The seeming unmatched energy of his young manhood continued growing, and at the age of seventy-two, young people on his staff had difficulty in matching his physical and intellectual strides. His interests widened, but "This one thing I do" never forsook him.

Forty-six years he was head of an educational institution, the longest tenure of consecutive service ever reached by any American school administrator, save one.

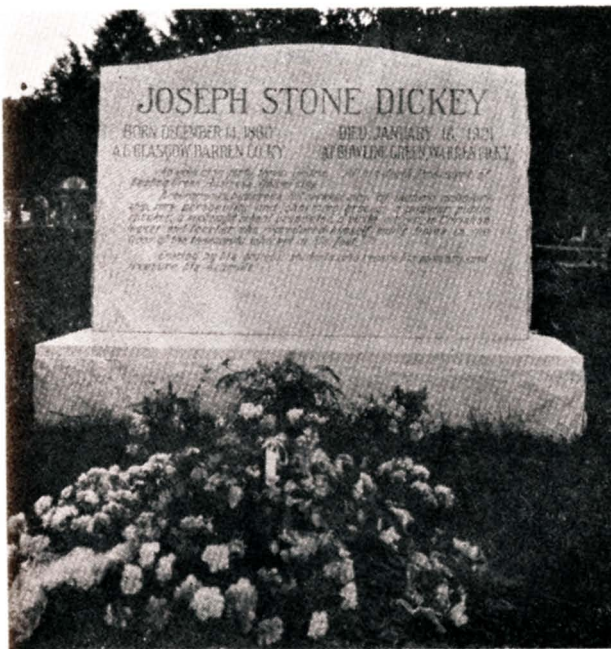
The superb statue at the head of College Street not only displays accurately his appearance, but reveals his physical and mental vigor. On the base of the statue are these words:

"HENRY HARDIN CHERRY

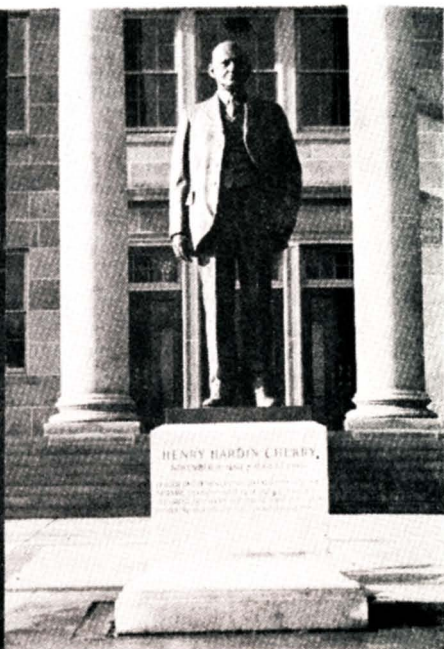
"Educator & Inspirer of Youth. Philosopher.

"Erected by his students and friends.

"1864-1917"



*Dickey Monument in Fairview Cemetery*



*Cherry Statue  
Front of Cherry Hall*

#### DICKEY

Mr. Dickey's body was normal in size, compactly built and well proportioned; head large, eyes in perpetual twinkle, and his tongue was quite as perpetual in speaking words of wit, humor, and profound philosophy. His step was quick, dress becoming, form erect, manner gracious, countenance revealing a superb character and attracting all persons to him. He never leaned against an object for support nor assumed a slovenly position standing or sitting. No one ever felt the sting of his humor, the one toward whom it might be turned enjoying it more than any one else. He was my daily associate for twenty-one years, and in private conversation and public address I never heard him make but one error in grammar. His scholarship was as classical as it was practical, but his personality transcended his rare accomplishments.

His integrity, sincerity, and faith never drooped, and his loyalty, devotion to duty and industry were unwavering to the day of his sudden death.

No college ever had a more sparkling, inspiring president than he.

In Fairview Cemetery of Bowling Green is a monument at his grave, and on it is the following:

“JOSEPH STONE DICKEY  
1860-1921

“An educator forty-three years. At this death President Bowling Green Business University.

“A courteous, humorous but serious man of mature scholarship, rare personality and charming graces; a popular public speaker; a successful school proprietor; a virile citizen; a Christian leader and teacher who reproduced himself many times in the lives of the thousands who sat at his feet.

“Erected by grateful students who revere his memory and treasure his example.”

### HILL

Mr. Hill, being young and yet among the living, is making and will continue making his own impression. He is one of the country's strong, forceful men, succeeding as an educator, in business and as a superbly influential citizen. To give even a list of his private and public duties and accomplishments, to say nothing of his personality and character, would make a biographical sketch which good taste might say should here be devoted only to the deceased.

(The following article was written by Dr. Harman, but he discarded it. We are responsible for its insertion here. THE SPONSORS.)

### TEACHERS AND TEACHING

Teaching is a man's greatest work. It is the passing on of knowledge from the one who possesses it to one who does not; the leadership from ignorance to wisdom; the awakening of interest; the creating of ideals; the explaining and broadening of life.

There are teachers by profession, and teachers who do not bear the title. Some of the latter are more effective than some of the former. There are those who teach informally and unconsciously and those who meet every teaching situation by methods and objectives.

The eminent professionals are of two types, either of which may be result impelling. The systematic, rule-serving, do-it-the-same-way-every-time, accurate, painstaking-of-subject-matter-and-of-learning-process kind of teacher is, and has always been a mighty force in the kingdom of knowledge and in the field of human kind. A time and a

way of presenting everything and a manner of having everything done by his pupils are as much a fixed part of his processes as the color of his eyes and the shape of his face are fixed features of his body. He is slow to get started, sometimes ponderous, never entertaining, scintillating or inspiring and never starts with a dash. Students seldom like him at first and seldom forsake him at last. They come under his orders by slow degrees, sometimes reluctantly—even rebelliously, but once under his regime they are as loyal to him as were the soldiers to the "Little Corporal." His instruction becomes as authoritative as his commands, and his commands never bend in the classroom. It matters little to him whether teaching the rule of three to a child of six, following the philosophy of history, portraying the majesty of an epic or working in the laboratory of science with painful precision, he remains always the pedagogical despot with transcendent education virtue in his despotism. As long as his pupils live they may silently sing:

"Oh happy bond, that seals my vows  
To him who merits all my love."

Far to the left is the other type, differing widely in processes but quite as effective in results. He never does the same thing the same way the second time; could not use a method if he knew them all; keeps his pupils guessing what he will do next; reaches heights today and may droop tomorrow; is as interesting the first day of the class as the last; inspiring, life-giving. For his pupils he subsidizes every subject and to his pupils he makes subjects pay tribute. He condemns ignorance and illuminates knowledge. At one outburst of eloquence or enthusiasm he may create imperishable ideals and at another may destroy the evil tendencies of those who come under his moving power. From him young people catch visions of college degrees, gain technical skill, follow useful careers. His is an immeasurable force in every domain of man's interest, and as long as his pupils live they too may silently sing:

"Oh happy bond, that seals my vows  
To him who merits all my love."

Between these extremes most teachers reach their level. "Since life is strife" for men and institutions, it follows that the private school, with no support save its own earnings, must do something extraordinary to justify its existence or even to exist. Immediate, positive, and concrete results must be its first concern. These can be reached only through good teachers. When results cease, private

schools cease. Behind them is no income from state, church or endowment fund. Outside or independent incomes have kept some public, church, or endowed schools going long after the need for them, and long after poor teaching made them as cold as "some lone nest from which the birds have departed."

The teacher's pride must be in the outcome of his work and not in his processes and prestige. If seeking the latter, he may find the way more restricted in the private school since few of them are financially sound and as far flung in reputation as are some public institutions. He is constantly aware of his struggles to remain in the educational sun.

After character of a teacher, the second most important requirement is scholarship. In this, private schools are making rapid advances. Probably no class of educators in America have improved their general educational rating more during the past ten years than have those in the private business schools. Such institutions have overstressed the practical as some of the colleges of arts and sciences have understressed it. The most conspicuous difference between a group of academic, and commercial teachers of private schools is, or at least has been, that the academicians have had more scholarship and respect for scholarship, while the commercial teachers have been more practical and have had more respect for those who could do some one vocational thing well. A blending of the two extremes is developing rapidly. Managers of private schools or teachers in them who discount the work and ideals of liberal arts colleges are wrapping themselves in the doom of the ignoramus. They are out of step with human development, human happiness, and institutional growth. Their narrowness is surpassed only by their ignorance. They would remove from education all romance and imagination and reduce it to dead facts and some one skill. If such an attitude should become too general, private institutions would destroy themselves by their own stupidity.

By the same token those who, from their self-assumed academic prominence, look with disdain upon the work of private schools are as narrowly educated as they who maintain that there is no art in science and no science in art.

Even earning a living, maintaining independence, poise, and creative thinking—all fail to produce the most pleasing satisfaction if with them there is no capacity for enjoyment. Millions of things and situations are drab and burdensome to those who are unable to see the beauties or hear the music or to feel the thrills that they offer to those who can see, hear, and feel.



Since enjoyment is so much an essential part of the life of the race, *giving* enjoyment is quite essential. Cultivated men and women ought to be able to impart their enjoyment as they impart other attributes of their culture.

Teachers will keep opened wide the avenues that lead from their own glorious educational enjoyment to those who look to such teachers for pleasure as well as for thought guidance.

He who gives the kind of service that has been here suggested will live long in the hearts of his students and help to perpetuate the institution he serves.

The Business University has had a few of the two distinct types mentioned and many who leaned to one or the other right types. It has had four or five with leanings in neither direction. They were useless and happily a few, and their stay here was short lived.

Expanding this sketch into a volume would be pleasurable to me but might be tiresome to the reader. The soul of the institution has not been revealed herein nor could it be unless the character and the work of the administrators, instructors, and students were portrayed and the stories of innumerable former students told.