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A Methodist experiment in graduate education: John Fletcher Hurst and the founding of The American University, 1889–1914

Ross, William Edwin, Ph.D.
The American University, 1992

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A METHODIST EXPERIMENT IN GRADUATE EDUCATION:
JOHN FLETCHER HURST AND THE FOUNDING OF
THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY, 1889-1914
by
William Edwin Ross
submitted to the
Faculty of the College of Arts and Sciences
in Partial Fulfillment of
the Requirements for the Degree
of
Doctor of Philosophy
in
Education
Signatures of Committee:
Chair:

Dean of the College

Date 4/2/92
A METHODIST EXPERIMENT IN GRADUATE EDUCATION:
JOHN FLETCHER HURST AND THE FOUNDING OF
THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY, 1889-1914

BY
William E. Ross

ABSTRACT

The founding of The American University in 1891 was at once an extension of and a departure from the philosophical underpinnings of late nineteenth century higher education in the United States. Its founder, Methodist bishop John Fletcher Hurst, desired to create a German-style, graduate university in the Nation's Capital. Hurst viewed the proposed university as an intellectual antidote to the growing secularism in American higher education. At the same time, it would counteract the founding, in Washington, of The Catholic University of America a few years before. The new university would be a capstone, graduate institution to serve all of Protestantism. It would draw on the educational resources of Washington to become a university of "national" importance without direct federal assistance or control.

In 1892, the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church voted to support the university, with the
proviso that it raise five million dollars in endowment before opening. The fund raising challenge grew harder a year later with the onset of the economic "Panic of 1893." In addition to financial uncertainty, Hurst's efforts suffered from contradictory goals, grandiose building plans, competition from existing Methodist institutions, and confusion over efforts to create a federally-funded, national university in Washington. The American University's problems persisted through Hurst's death in 1903, and the lackluster tenure of his successor, Bishop Charles C. McCabe.

The university opened in 1914, only after the General Conference withdrew its endowment requirement and Chancellor Franklin Hamilton dispensed with Hurst's unrealistic educational vision. Hamilton's modest program depended upon the resources and experts of the federal government, and operated as such until 1924, when the university admitted undergraduates for the first time.

In spite of Hurst's idealistic vision, his support for coeducation, and the operation of the university as a graduate institution, the early history of The American University has been largely ignored by educational historians. This study is intended to remedy this longstanding oversight.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This writer wishes to acknowledge the many people who generously shared with him their time, ideas, comments, and assistance.

Foremost, is Dr. Bernard Hodinko, Professor of Higher Education, who coordinated the work of a degree candidate living over five hundred miles from The American University's quadrangle. The author also wishes to recognize the work of Dr. Charles McLaughlin, Professor of History at The American University, Dr. Charles Tesconi, Professor of Education at The American University, and Dr. William Fox, Emeritus Professor of History, Montgomery College. Each contributed mightily to what follows.

Thanks to Dr. Karin Alexis, for sharing her past and ongoing research on the development of The American University campus. Chapter Seven would have been a trial without her munificence.

To the memories of Miss Marion Logue and "Tad" Devan, both of whom taught me a thing or two about "American" history. And, to George Arnold and all the other archivists, manuscripts curators, and librarians who opened their doors, shared their holdings, and returned the author's telephone calls.

Lastly, and most importantly, my love and thanks to Pat: the wife, editor, and proofreader, par excellence, who has suffered through life with this writer for the past fourteen years (with double credit for the past two).

WER
Dover, NH
March 1992
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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

I

On May 27, 1914, President Woodrow Wilson and two of his cabinet secretaries took part in the opening ceremonies of a unique university in the District of Columbia. The ninety-acre campus near Tenally Town consisted of two buildings, one occupied and the other unfinished for lack of money. The university had no dormitories, no plans for a football stadium, and courted no prospective undergraduates. It would open as a graduate institution with an emphasis on research and collaboration with experts in the federal government.¹

This "new" university had been chartered over twenty

¹Secretary of State William Jennings Bryan and Secretary of the Navy Josephus Daniels also participated in the opening exercises. For a complete account of the ceremonies, see: Lodestar and Compass: An Adventure of the Immortal Part of Us, Franklin Hamilton, ed. (New York: Abingdon Press, 1915). The text of speeches made also appeared in the University Courier XXI (June 1914 and September 1914).
years before. Its founder, Bishop John Fletcher Hurst, died more than a decade earlier, in 1903. The university's name, "The American University", implied grandeur and promise. Its history, prior to that time, suggested otherwise.

On that special occasion, Wilson expressed his "imaginative excitement about witnessing the inauguration of a great adventure of the mind, an adventure of the immortal part of us..." The President's lofty and inspiring words obscured the struggle that had marked nearly a generation in the University's existence. His speech did not convey the sublimated goals and compromises made to bring the institution to that point. Wilson did note the uniqueness of this university, as it combined denominational support with graduate study only. That day marked the beginning of The American University's eleven year existence as an exclusively graduate university. The experiment ended in 1925, when the school, once again at a crossroads, admitted undergraduates for the first time.\(^2\)

II

The last quarter of the nineteenth century witnessed what has been termed a revolution in the development of American higher education.\(^3\) A number of educators, fueled

\(^2\)Ibid.

by an amalgam of American pragmatism, German-style scholarship, and unprecedented philanthropy, began pushing institutions beyond the bounds of traditional, liberal education. This led to the creation of new universities such as Cornell, Johns Hopkins, Clark, Stanford, and the University of Chicago. The most famous American universities, notably Harvard, Princeton, and Yale, responded to these developments with their own curricular reforms, which included advanced study based, in part, on the German university model. A number of research-oriented state universities added to this emerging educational mix. While the traditional colleges offered both the discipline of classical training and the piety resulting from their denominational roots, the university builders sought to go beyond, if not replace altogether, what many of them considered to be an archaic model for higher education.  

The establishment of The American University in 1891 represented an uneasy merger of this denominational tradition with the German university model. Its founder, John Fletcher Hurst, had experienced German higher education both as a student and faculty member. These experiences motivated him to create a center for advanced research and training

105-122.

in the Nation's Capital. In addition, as the resident Methodist bishop for Washington, Hurst wanted to create a church-supported graduate institution -- an intellectual antidote for the secular and materialistic ideals that he believed permeated both German universities and increasingly powerful state institutions in the United States. At the same time, he sought to counter the perceived inroads the Roman Catholic Church was making with the founding of The Catholic University of America a few years earlier. The result, Hurst argued, would serve as a capstone, graduate institution to serve all of Protestantism. It would draw on the educational resources of Washington to become a university of national importance without direct federal assistance or control.  

In spite of grand visions and much-publicized support, Hurst's university plans foundered, given economic uncertainty, contradictory goals, competition from other institutions, and confusion with a parallel, secular effort to create a "national university." Hurst's immediate successor, Bishop Charles C. McCabe, did not give the project his full attention and its promise suffered further. Eleven years after Hurst's death, a more pragmatic administration led by Dr. Franklin E. E. Hamilton abandoned most of Hurst's grandiose plans and opened a more modest graduate

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5For the only monograph biography of Hurst, see: Albert Osborn, John Fletcher Hurst: A Biography (New York: Eaton & Mains, 1905).
institution. It operated as such from 1914 until 1925, a fact altogether absent in the major histories which cover the development of graduate education in the United States.6

The uneven history and limited success of Hurst's scheme raise a number of significant questions that form the core of this study of The American University's beginnings. First, what are the intellectual foundations of The American University and how successfully did Hurst reconcile the obvious contradictions between evangelical Christianity and the secular ideals of late nineteenth century higher education? In this context, one must describe how the goals and aspirations of Hurst and his successors changed, and to what end. Second, what institutional and environmental factors contributed to the long-delayed opening of The American University and to what extent could these roadblocks have been circumvented? The development of the university must be viewed with an eye toward the economic, political,

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6Historians have overlooked the place of The American University in American graduate education primarily because there was little historical record. The university has been covered only in terms of its relationship to other institutions. In addition, its operation as a graduate school was on a small scale when compared to Johns Hopkins or Clark. See: George W. Pierson, "American Universities in the Nineteenth Century," in The Modern University, Margaret Clapp, ed. (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1950); Richard J. Storr, The Beginnings of Graduate Education in America (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1953); Frederick Rudolph, The American College and University: A History (New York: Vintage Books, 1962); and Laurence R. Veysey, The Emergence of the American University (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965).
religious, and educational environment of the late nineteenth century. Third, to what extent did the university that opened in 1914 differ from the vision of its founder? Finally, why have most histories covering this period failed to note the unique nature of The American University's emergence? Although accounts of the educational developments at Johns Hopkins, Clark, and The Catholic University are quite common, The American University's creation as an exclusively graduate institution has been altogether ignored.

Clearly, the founding of The American University can be attributed to many of the same intellectual forces that rocked American higher education in the closing decades of the nineteenth century. The desire of many American educators to pursue scholarly research based on the German model was a powerful attraction, even for those wary of its strong secular bent. This was particularly true for educators who had attended German universities. At the same time, one must explain The American University movement in terms of increased nationalism, the rise of nativist and anti-Catholic sentiment, as well as a number of reform impulses found in turn-of-the-century America. In addition, Bishop Hurst strove to renew and strengthen denominational support for higher education in an age when many looked to the government for funding. For The American University, these foundations were later joined with many of the governmental reform movements and educational developments common during
the Progressive Period.

The factors which contributed to the delayed opening of the university are numerous and, in many respects, provide a case study in institutional deformity. Of these, one must analyze the grandiose and unrealistic plans set forth by Hurst and his supporters. These idealistic and conflicting goals, along with excessive concentration on bricks and mortar, proved particularly deleterious, especially during a period of national economic uncertainty.

At the same time, one must examine the lack of widespread support for the university within the Methodist Episcopal Church (or from other Protestant denominations) that logically would have contributed to its success. Likewise, the institution failed to attract the level of philanthropy that successfully spawned similar educational enterprises. Finally, one must reflect on the qualities of Hurst's leadership. Although much-heralded for his success in saving Drew Seminary from financial disaster in the late 1870s, he proved lacking in the ability to guide a much more complex project through the economic, political, and intellectual turbulence of the 1890s. Success came only when his successors viewed the project more objectively and shrunk it down to a more manageable scale.

III

Not long before Hurst died, he asked his long-time
aide, Reverend Albert Osborn, to serve as his biographer.\textsuperscript{7} Unfortunately, as The American University approaches its centennial, no one has been so summoned to write a history of the university that Hurst created. For that reason, chapters in the university's history, both the bad and the good, both the truly dreary failures and the singular events of achievement, have remained captive to rows of archives boxes and dusty volumes of corporation records. The absence of such a history has much to do with the fact that educational historians have failed to note what has taken place in the past century at The American University. This is an attempt to help fill the void by providing those early chapters in the university's history.

At the same time, it is clear that the university's early years are inextricably linked to Hurst. In many respects, documenting this period is as much a biography of Hurst's final years as they are a history of The American University's beginnings. Understandably, Osborn filtered out many of the negative aspects of Hurst's life, including those relative to the university's founding. This study will focus on all aspects of Hurst's position as founder and first chancellor.

In documenting The American University's fitful beginnings and limited success as a graduate institution, one

\textsuperscript{7}Osborn gave an account of this meeting in the preface to his 1905 biography of Hurst. Osborn, John Fletcher Hurst, [v].
should grant the university its rightful place in the history of graduate education in the United States. Given the uniqueness of both Hurst's vision and the distinctive educational structure in place when the university finally opened, this long-standing omission should be rectified.

The American University originated in the midst of an intellectual revolution as an attempt to further the spirit of investigation while simultaneously combatting the effects of increased secularism. It was the brainchild of largely well-educated clergy who wished to renew their denomination's commitment to higher education by extending it to the increasingly important spheres of graduate and professional training.

Hurst himself had been a student of theology and history at the University of Halle, in Germany. He returned to the United States, entered the Methodist ministry and later joined the faculty of Drew Theological Seminary. After a successful tenure as president of that institution, Hurst was elevated to the Methodist episcopacy. In 1888, he moved to Washington where he assumed responsibility for a long-discussed university movement. Within months, early plans for a Methodist university began to materialize. At that time, he sought local support for his educational efforts, purchased land in upper northwest Washington, and laid the groundwork for what was to become The American University. The institution was incorporated under the laws of the
District of Columbia in 1891 and chartered by an Act of Congress on February 24, 1893.®

It was significant that Hurst selected Washington as the site for his enterprise. It reflected the growing importance of the city both nationally and internationally. It also represented a successful attempt to make available to nongovernmental researchers the growing resources found in federal museums, libraries, and research bureaus. While it was promoted as a privately-funded graduate institution of national importance, contemporaneous movements to erect a federally-sponsored national university and subsequently, a George Washington Memorial University, produced both local and national competition for funds. In fact, Hurst became part of an effective campaign to derail the national university movement. Such activities did, however, come at the expense of his own pet project.

The Washington location was also significant because of fears of the perceived gains of Roman Catholicism in the Nation's Capital. While Methodist leaders had discussed the need for a university in Washington as early as the 1850s, it took the 1889 opening of The Catholic University of America to galvanize support for such an enterprise. In the end, Hurst and his followers were able to exploit suspicions about Catholic motives to raise money in some areas, but they stopped short of fanning the flames of the more...

®Ibid., particularly 77-83, 193-219, 312-321.
virulent strain of anti-Catholicism that emerged in the early 1890s.

Thus, the genesis of The American University movement represented a synthesis of the old and the new, of the modern age of utilitarian research and sectarian educational traditions. That it ultimately failed to achieve the lofty desires of its founders should not relegate it to the dust-bin of educational history. Most historians have characterized the university movement of the late nineteenth century for its departure from the traditional, denominational college. Because he so stolidly cut across the grain of the educational mainstream, Hurst should be recognized for attempting something new, albeit intellectually unwieldy.

Although The American University did not achieve the early success of either Johns Hopkins University or Clark University, it did emerge as one of the few institutions to operate solely at the graduate level. At the same time, its close ties to the Federal government, emphasis on coeducation at the graduate level, and early support for minority graduate students should be noted. Its opening in 1914 marked the beginning of a new era in terms of operations. This pragmatic departure from Hurst's educational aims, however, also represents the end of a long and painful chapter in the history of The American University.
To understand the early years of The American University, one must gather, organize, and evaluate information gleaned from primary and secondary historical sources. For obvious reasons, the nature of this history precludes the use of interviews or extensive statistical analysis. Although most secondary sources do not mention The American University, they provide background information on the political and economic history of the age, the development of graduate education in America, and biographical information on the founders and their contemporaries. Secondary sources included monographs, journal articles, related dissertations, and biographical reference works.

Because of the lack of coverage that The American University has received, primary source materials provided the bulk of evidence cited. These included unpublished documentary materials from a variety of repositories, most notably the archival collections of The American University. Of particular interest was the Early History Collection, which includes institutional documentation from the university's founding to the 1940s. It is arranged topically and includes, in addition to more customary primary materials, related photocopies and clippings from other sources.

Of central importance were the John Fletcher Hurst Papers. This chronological collection of Hurst's correspondence proved invaluable in delving beyond the public image
of both the founder and the institution. While comprised largely of letters sent to Hurst, it does contain drafts and copies of some of Hurst's letters, the texts to some of his speeches, and notes and outlines related to the university. The papers of Chancellors Charles C. McCabe, Franklin Hamilton, John W. Hamilton, and Lucius Clark, along with those compiled by Albert Osborn, also proved helpful.

The American University Archives also retains copies of the minutes of the meetings of the Board of Trustees and of the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees. These comprise the official record of the university and of most of its activities. In addition, there are copies of official reports to the board and collected biographical materials on individual board members. The University Archives also houses copies of the University Courier (1892-1926), the first official publication of the university. This combination promotional/literary publication helps to isolate the intellectual currents that directed the university's early years. It likewise provides evidence of the institution's uneven public relations efforts from the earliest days to the time when the undergraduate college was added.

Other helpful periodical and documentary collections are located at the United Methodist Historical Society at the Lovely Lane Museum in Baltimore, at the Methodist Commission on Archives and History at Drew University, Madison,
New Jersey, and at the Boston University Theological Seminary Library in Boston. Related collections at the Library of Congress, Northwestern University, and Syracuse University also contained documentary materials useful to this study.

To supplement standard secondary sources and documentary materials, this author used contemporary newspapers, religious periodicals, and the published writings of nineteenth century educational leaders such as Charles W. Eliot, David Starr Jordan, and Daniel Coit Gilman. Of special importance are editorials from Washington area newspapers; these demonstrate the extent to which the public became interested in Hurst's project. The New York Times and other newspapers provided less regular accounts of Hurst's activities, yet these demonstrate the extent of interest in his educational plans. Pertinent religious periodicals include: the Methodist Review, the Christian Advocate (New York), the Western Christian Advocate, the Central Christian Advocate, the Northwestern Christian Advocate, the Zion's Herald, and the Baltimore Methodist. University publications, including bulletins/catalogues and historical articles in more recent titles, have also proven helpful.

In basing a history on such evidence, it was necessary to evaluate sources both for their authenticity and accuracy. Moreover, one must consider the competence of the writer, be it a primary or secondary account. In making
such a judgment, one must evaluate the time lag between the event and when it was recorded, the consistency of the account both internally and externally, and whether and to what extent the writer may be biased. Biases and ulterior motives are most important, especially considering the extensive involvement of many of those who wrote on educational issues. It is important also to scrutinize closely institutional publications for objectivity or the lack thereof. Understandably, these commonly include filtered accounts, since institutional promotion generally ranked higher in importance than did historical accuracy.

What follows is largely a synthesis of all the collected data. While the subject lends itself for the most part to chronological arrangement, broader topics such as fund raising and campus planning have been separated out for more extensive treatment. Where possible, the evidence has been permitted to stand alone, although informed generalizations and conclusions are indispensable in describing the institution's complicated and contradictory history. Toward that end, the need for objectivity has remained a guiding light throughout all stages of this work. It is hoped that the final product bears witness to that effort.
CHAPTER TWO

THE SETTING:

AMERICAN HIGHER EDUCATION IN 1890

I

During the last quarter of the nineteenth century, the landscape of American higher education was transformed with the creation of universities which institutionalized the elective system, graduate education, and scientific courses of instruction. Prior to that time, the denominational college ruled American higher education. Donald Tewksbury, in his landmark study of American higher education before the Civil War, illustrated that about ninety percent of the 155 permanent colleges founded between 1800 and 1861 had sectarian beginnings. Of the sixteen public institutions of that era, two later came under religious sponsorship.


2Donald Tewksbury, The Founding of Colleges and Universities Before the Civil War (New York: Teacher's College, Columbia University, 1932). Figures derived from Table IV, pp. 32-54. Recent writers have criticized both Tewksbury's reliance on the frontier thesis and his emphasis on
The dominance of new, denominational colleges, particularly along the frontier, had direct ties to established institutions such as Yale and Princeton. These early colleges relied on classical education, strict discipline, and religious teachings. In selecting faculty members, moral character took priority over learning and scholarship. As a result, approximately ninety percent of the college presidents and about one-third of college faculty during this period were clergymen. Indeed, if the latter part of the century could be called the "Age of the University," then the antebellum period could be called the era of the denominational college.


Hofstadter and Metzger, Development of Academic Freedom, 297; Veysey, Emergence of the American University, 45. Other authors confirm the strong influence that Yale and Princeton had on their frontier progeny. One cites the fact that of the seventy-five colleges operating prior to 1840, thirty-six were guided by Yale alumni and twenty-two others by graduates of Princeton. By contrast, only eight of the seventy-five had graduated from Harvard. See: Francesco Cordasco, The Shaping of American Graduate Education: Daniel Coit Gilman and the Protean Ph.D. (Totowa, N.J.: Rowman and Littlefield, 1973), 6-7.
the United States operated under a triad of assumptions articulated in a 1828 special committee report at Yale College. The landmark Yale Report, issued to defend the traditional liberal arts curriculum against calls for reform, was based upon the following tenets: 1) religion and tradition are supremely important to education; 2) pedagogy at the collegiate level should continue to use both the classics and rote learning; and 3) youth require both established precepts and rigid discipline. The report, based on the longstanding theory of "faculty psychology," lauded the mental discipline and uniform curriculum thought necessary to mold and train young minds. Inquiry or specialization had no place in such a setting. They were the province of the few professional schools that existed.4

In the decades following the Civil War, the United States went through an extraordinary period of social and economic change. During this period, the nation became increasingly urban and less homogeneous. With the rising forces of industrialization, the attitudes of young people became more materialistic and pragmatic. The country also began experiencing a related decrease in the strength of evangelism. The force of secular ideas from abroad, most notably Darwin's theory of evolution, made significant

4Hofstadter and Metzger, Development of Academic Freedom, 297; Veysey, Emergence of the American University, 23-31; and Brubaker and Rudy, Higher Education in Transition, 104-105.
inroads in American intellectual life, as well.\(^5\)

As society became more urban and secular, American higher education followed suit. Whereas educators previously espoused training that reflected cultural conservatism, many younger professors rejected the notion of "faculty psychology" and sought greater curricular choice. To them, a faculty should be comprised of scholars who investigate and analyze rather than just transmit a static body of knowledge. It was no accident that many of these newer faculty had firsthand experience with German university life.\(^6\)

Shortly after the close of the Civil War, the rumblings of change could be heard. In 1868, Cornell University opened as a premier example of reform in American higher education. Cornell's first president, Andrew Dickson White, had suffered under the second-class treatment that Yale College afforded its Sheffield Scientific School. For that reason, he created a university that treated vocational, scientific and literary subjects equally. In addition to the development of an "all-purpose" curriculum, White firmly embraced the precepts of coeducationalism and nonsectarianism. The latter incited strong opposition from evangelical Protestants in upstate New York, yet the name Cornell became

\(^5\)Hofstadter and Metzger, Development of Academic Freedom, 317.

\(^6\)Ibid., 291-293.
synonymous with innovation in American higher education.\(^7\)

In 1869, Charles William Eliot, a thirty-five year-old chemist, assumed the presidency of Harvard. In his inaugural address, Eliot made clear his support for the elective system. He immediately set about to institutionalize it, as well as other educational reforms. Under Eliot's guidance, modern literature and languages entered the curriculum. At the same time, Harvard tightened its admission standards and, in 1872, opened a fledgling graduate school.\(^8\)

As Eliot moved to bring reform to Harvard, the forces of reaction reigned in New Haven. In 1871, Noah Porter became president of Yale and, in spite of opposition from young faculty members, reaffirmed that institution's ties to the liberal arts college curriculum. Under Porter's stewardship, the Sheffield Scientific School continued as a


second-class appendage to the main college. At about the same time, James McCosh of Princeton, while openly debating with Eliot on the merits of the elective system, slowly began the process of wresting his institution from "the clutches of fundamentalist Presbyterianism."  

II

As the older colleges wrangled over the undergraduate curriculum, a growing number of scholars returning from graduate study in Germany began pushing for more extensive educational reforms. In increasing numbers, they traveled to Germany for advanced study with renowned scholars and specialists. While they occasionally displayed shock at some aspects of German culture and politics, American

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9Hugh Hawkins, Pioneer; A History of the Johns Hopkins University, 1874-1889, (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1960), 8; Brubaker and Rudy, Higher Education in Transition, 113. George W. Pierson provided a particularly colorful description of the situation at Yale when he wrote: "Hence Yale College continued to get most of the support and prestige and money, the Graduate Department the neglect, and the Sheffield Scientific School much of the scorn. . . . Yale remained a very one-sided, divided, and unevenly developed place." George W. Pierson, "American Universities," in The Modern University, Margaret Clapp, ed., 85.

10Charles F. Thwing, writing in 1928, estimated that ten thousand Americans studied at German universities between 1820 and 1920. Jurgen Herbst reduced that figure to nine thousand, citing the fact that approximately one-tenth of that number attended more than one university and/or received more than one degree. See: Charles F. Thwing, The American and the German University (New York: Macmillan, 1928) and Jurgen Herbst, The German Historical School in American Scholarship; A Study in the Transfer of Culture (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1965), 1.
students envied the spirit of Lernfreiheit -- literally, the freedom of study. The invigorating sense of emancipation that these expatriates felt must have stood in stark contrast to their undergraduate experience. In essence, these students went to Europe in order to exchange in loco parentis and rigid moral philosophy for self-discipline and academic freedom. For that reason, they returned highly critical of American colleges and, in many cases, with a burning desire to transplant something akin to the German university to this side of the Atlantic.11

The earliest expression of this desire came from Henry P. Tappan, the German-educated president of the University of Michigan.12 Writing in 1851, Tappan identified the German educational system as the model from which all future endeavors should be drawn. Tappan, like those who followed him, recognized American colleges as the equivalent of the German gymnasia, or preparatory schools. To American minds, both used a standardized curriculum and rote learning to...

11Herbst, German Historical School, 1-29; Hofstadter and Metzger, Development of Academic Freedom, 367-399.

12Other noteworthy manifestoes in support of German-style universities included: John Morgan Hart, German Universities: A Narrative of Personal Experience (New York: G.P. Putnam's, 1874) and John W. Burgess, The American University: When Shall It Be? Where Shall It Be? What Shall It Be? (Boston: Ginn, Heath & Co., 1874). Both authors decried the apathy and lack of support for quality education in the United States. Hart faulted the United States for adapting the English rather than the German model for higher education. Burgess proposed the creation of a model, privately funded university in a center of wealth and culture, i.e. Boston.
prepare students for advanced study. Tappan also appreciated the fact that universities were separate, graduate institutions that included libraries, well-equipped laboratories, and a wide-range of disciplines. His attempts to bring such reform to Ann Arbor met with some success, but Tappan's imperious personality and the widespread opposition to his ideas led to his ouster in 1863.

Ten years after Tappan left the University of Michigan and five years after Cornell University began, a Baltimore merchant earmarked the bulk of his fortune for the founding of a university and hospital. Three years later, in 1876, the Johns Hopkins University first opened its doors. Its physical plant did not resemble a major university -- Baltimoreans commonly mistook the institution for a piano factory -- however, the modest appearance of this new university was in inverse proportion to the impact that it

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13 Henry P. Tappan, *University Education* (New York: G.P. Putnam's, 1851), 43-48. In winnowing out students, the German gymnasia stood to "guard the entrance" of the universities.

14 Ibid.; Brubaker and Rudy, *Higher Education in Transition*, 107-109. Although he cited Tappan as a major innovator in the university movement, David Starr Jordan was not totally enthusiastic with the German university. He argued that it lacked the emotional attachment between students and faculty found in American and English universities. In his autobiography he wrote: "The University of Prague, a creation of soulless officialism, has on a whole no personality." Jordan, *Days of a Man*, I, 84.
would have on American higher education.\textsuperscript{15} 

The architect of Hopkins' meteoric success was Daniel Coit Gilman, a product of Yale's Sheffield School and, prior to his arrival in Baltimore, president of the University of California. Gilman sought to break new ground and, in doing so, garnered national rather than just local attention. In his attempt to bring a German-style university to Baltimore, Gilman first spent money in recruiting the best young scholars available. Impressive buildings and the customary trappings of American higher education would come later. In establishing priorities for the university, Gilman turned the American college on its ear by emphasizing research in partnership with teaching. Once he had gathered a faculty and student body bent on both instruction and investigation, his blueprint yielded a dynamic that would have immediate

and widespread impact on American higher education.\textsuperscript{16}

While his educational framework countered prevailing wisdom and garnered him substantial criticism, Gilman successfully marketed his concept of graduate education by showing the pragmatic benefits of inquiry for students and society alike.\textsuperscript{17} Ten years into the "revolution" that he was instrumental in fomenting, Gilman enumerated the societal benefits derived from graduate education: 1) universities advance knowledge because "every professor must be a student;" 2) universities conserve by promoting study of the past; 3) universities help refine knowledge by both identifying errors and promoting evident truths; and 4) universities disseminate knowledge when researchers share their findings with others. As one historian has suggested, Gilman created a demand for the products of academe and then set about to fill it. Thus, a concept as seemingly esoteric as "the university idea," would soon enter the nation's


\textsuperscript{17}Franklin, \textit{Daniel Coit Gilman}, 182-183; Hawkins, \textit{Pioneer}, 66.
Gilman's success at Hopkins proved a catalyst for change in many of the established American universities. Charles W. Eliot later admitted that Harvard's "feeble" graduate division did not progress "until the example of Johns Hopkins forced our Faculty to put their strength into the development of . . . instruction for graduates." The faculty-driven reform culminated in the creation of the Harvard Graduate School in 1890. With that advance, Harvard could finally compete with the upstart to the south.

At Yale, Timothy Dwight the younger, a proponent of the university idea, replaced the conservative Noah Porter as president in 1886. During his tenure, Dwight expanded graduate instruction, adopted an elective system, and allied the professional schools more closely to the old college.

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19 As quoted in Franklin, *Daniel Coit Gilman*, p. 389.


Columbia, with plans conceived by Professor John W. Burgess and guided by such presidents as Frederick A. P. Barnard and Nicholas Murray Butler, also made the transition from college to university. 22

Hugh Hawkins, in his book on the impact of the Johns Hopkins University on American higher education, identified 1889 as the turning point for the development of universities in the United States. Fifteen years after its opening, Hopkins was no longer unique. In the interim, it had served as a model for developing graduate programs at older institutions throughout the country. In 1889, it gave rise to a pair of new, exclusively graduate universities. 23 In that year, Clark University in Worcester, Massachusetts opened as a graduate institution. Under the guidance of G. Stanley Hall, a former Hopkins psychology professor, Clark

1955.

22Brubaker and Rudy, Higher Education in Transition, 183-184. Butler gave a vivid account of the period in his autobiography: "It would not be easy to convey to the reader of today an adequate conception of the extraordinary ferment - which was then going on in Columbia College. Indeed, the whole educational atmosphere was charged with the electrical effects of what was being said, written and done, particularly at Columbia and by President Eliot of Harvard, President White of Cornell and President Gilman of Johns Hopkins. Nicholas Murray Butler, Across the Busy Years (New York: Scribner's Sons, 1939), 146-147.

23Hugh Hawkins, Pioneer. Hawkins' final chapter is aptly entitled "The Meaning of 1889."
promised to be the fullest extension of the Hopkins ideal.  

Under a small, but highly-qualified faculty, it operated solely as a graduate university. Unfortunately, a meddling benefactor and quarrels between the faculty and administration cut short its potential.  

In that same year, the Roman Catholic Church, with papal authority and sponsorship, opened a graduate school in Washington, D.C. While clearly a denominational enterprise, its first rector, Bishop John J. Keane, studied Gilman's work carefully. When it opened, The Catholic University of America admitted graduates for study with the Faculty of Theology. Like Clark, it excluded undergraduates in its first few years of operation.  

By 1889, with the emergence of universities begun under the sponsorship of Ezra Cornell, Johns Hopkins, and Josiah Clark, and with the significant curricular and programmatic changes at many established universities, the "revolution in American higher education" was advancing at full throttle. Daniel Coit Gilman had not simply cloned the German


university, he had placed it in the American context. This modification of German educational ideals, along with the evolution of American pragmatism and the order that it contributed to American educational institutions, would help fuel the process for years to come.\textsuperscript{27}

III

In addition to the more fundamental forces behind university building, there lay an array of educational ideals supporting the creation of a new university in the Nation's Capital. These impulses, in various combinations, gained prominence in the minds of Methodist Bishop John Fletcher Hurst and other university advocates during the final decade of the nineteenth century. Foremost among these stimuli was renewed interest in the founding of a national university in Washington, an idea as old as the nation itself.\textsuperscript{28} Secondly, the opening of The Catholic University of America sent shock waves through much of the United States, particularly the rural heartland. The disciples of Methodism, who

\textsuperscript{27}Hofstadter and Metzger, Development of Academic Freedom, 277, 380-404.

professed their long-term commitment to higher education, were especially disturbed about the creation of a graduate institution with direct ties to the Vatican, in the shadow of the Capitol Dome.29

In addition, Bishop Hurst and other religious and educational leaders sought to challenge the secular direction developing within the higher education establishment. They believed that the creation of a graduate institution based on "Christian" (read Protestant) principles would do much to offset this unfortunate evolution. Like-minded educators and religious leaders also recognized the need and desirability for coeducation and, to a lesser extent, desegregated graduate education. In general, all proponents of graduate education in Washington pointed to the rich educational resources of the Nation's Capital.30

29 For histories of the early years of Catholic University, see: John Tracy Ellis, The Formative Years of The Catholic University of America (Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 1946) and Patrick Henry Ahern, The Catholic University of America, 1887-1896: The Rectorship of John J. Kearne (Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 1948). The University Courier, published by The American University, carried frequent articles on the founding of Catholic University and the threat of Catholicism to American, Protestant ideals. This was particularly true during its first two years of publication (1892-94).

30 Rev. Prof. Harrington, "Our Colleges," Methodist Quarterly Review, XXX (October 1879), 636; C.H. Payne, "Shall the Education of the State Be Exclusively Secular?" Methodist Quarterly Review, XXXII (April 1880), 299-315. The University Courier carried frequent articles and editorials on growing secularism in higher education, the need for coeducation, and the educational resources of Washington.
The movement to create a national university was of particular interest to many, a fact that would cause headaches for supporters of competing initiatives. By the 1890s, the national university movement strengthened with the quickening of American nationalism and increased calls for preserving the nation's traditional values and institutions. Such concerns had existed from the dawn of the republic, when Philadelphia physician Benjamin Rush first voiced the need for a national university. Rush's vision of such an institution probably resembled the University of Edinburgh in Scotland, where he had received his medical training. Rush was later instrumental in the founding of Dickinson College in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, Bishop Hurst's future alma mater. James Madison adopted Rush's ideas and carried them forth to the Constitutional Convention in 1787. Despite Madison's allusions to both patriotism and practical necessity in the debate, his entreaties fell predominantly on deaf ears. As a result, the final draft of the Constitution did not grant explicit federal powers for the creation of such an institution.31

Madison's failure in the Constitutional Convention did not mean the demise of the movement, however, as George Washington took up the cause in his first annual message to Congress. Throughout his presidency, Washington defined the

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31 Castel, "Founding Fathers," 282; Madsen, National University, 16-17, 19, 22.
need for a national university in correspondence with Edmund Randolph of Virginia, Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson, and Virginia Governor Robert Brooke. In his letters, Washington emphasized the need to train American youth in the United States, but also his desire for students from all regions of the new nation to make an educational pilgrimage to Washington, D.C. This would serve both as a force for homogenizing regional differences and for instilling American youth with requisite republican values. The early Congress considered Washington's proposal, but rejected it due to concerns over high costs.\textsuperscript{32} A few years later, during Jefferson's second term in the White House, there was renewed interest in the founding of a national university. Unfortunately, Jefferson believed that such action would require a constitutional amendment, a fact which helped derail the plan. Although the president's strict constructionism may have hampered chances for a national university, it did not prevent him from founding a similar institution, the University of Virginia, once he left office.\textsuperscript{33} The creation of the Smithsonian Institution in 1846 seemed to effectively eclipse interest in a national university. The movement lay more or less dormant


until the closing years of the nineteenth century. The timing of efforts late in the century to sponsor higher education in Washington coincided with the opening of The Catholic University of America on November 13, 1889. Many believed that the new institution, in combination with Georgetown University, gave the Roman Catholic Church too much power and influence in the capital of a Protestant nation. The New York Christian Advocate, a major Methodist newspaper, viewed The Catholic University with a mixture of fear and envy. In April 1889, it reported that "... Catholics plan wisely, and push forward here [Washington] . . . that puts to shame half-hearted Protestantism." To counter this development, the Christian Advocate enunciated the need for "a commanding National University at Washington." A few weeks later, a Washington resident expressed fears that without the founding of a university to

34Madsen, National University, 62-63.

35Daniel Coit Gilman, President of Johns Hopkins University, predicted a Protestant reaction to the founding of Catholic University when he wrote: "It is more than probable . . . that a Catholic university will ere long be initiated; and if it succeeds, the example may lead to a union of Protestants for a kindred object." He warned against strictly denominational efforts. This, he argued, would interfere with religious and educational progress in the United States. It would serve to split support for universities when truly large gifts were needed to get such enterprises off the ground. Daniel Coit Gilman, "Characteristics of a University," University Problems in America (New York: Arno Press, 1969, reprint of the 1898 Century Co. ed.), 102.

36Christian Advocate (New York), 18 April 1889, 250.
carry the torch of Protestant Christianity, the city would fall under the control of the "Romish Church." Such fears gave impetus to the birth of a movement that would culminate with the creation of The American University.³⁷

A third motivating force grew out of the perceived removal of religion from American higher education. While educated religious leaders greatly admired German higher education and the emphasis on research, they sought to stem the tide of secularism exhibited in model institutions such as Johns Hopkins and Cornell. The emerging state universities and the land grant institutions which resulted from the Morrill Act (1862) also marked a departure from traditional collegiate models. The increased power and influence of these public universities did even more to separate religion from higher education.³⁸

Although most Protestant educators did not want to return to the days when sectarian colleges promulgated pedagogy based on the use of the classics and rote learning, they could not bear for religion to be stripped from university education. What they perhaps did not recognize was the


³⁸Brubaker and Rudy, Higher Education in Transition, 62-64, 158-164.
role that urbanization and the related decline of evangelical Protestantism played in the nation's response to religion. At the same time, the American scientific community seemed to be particularly willing to accept new scientific theories that commonly contradicted Christian teachings.39

While serving as president of Cornell University, Andrew D. White came under attack for propagating ideas antagonistic to organized religion. Evangelists viewed the university itself as a seat of atheism, infidelity and Darwinism. White viewed his critics as a minority who attacked him and his university in order to bolster their waning influence.40 At Johns Hopkins, Daniel Coit Gilman tried to avoid sectarian struggles by employing "benevolent neutralism" on religious matters. Nevertheless, orthodox Christians proved ever vigilant in identifying signs of impiety emanating from the new university.41 Gilman later

39Hofstadter and Metzger, Development of Academic Freedom, 279, 317; Veysey, Emergence of the University, 56. In regards to the American scientific community, Metzger cites their acceptance of Darwin's theories before their counterparts in England or France. In fact, the American Philosophical Society awarded Darwin membership in 1869, only ten years after the publication of his Origin of Species, 322.


41The fact that the university's opening ceremonies included no prayer and featured evolutionist Thomas Huxley as speaker, did much to fuel suspicions. Hawkins, Pioneer, 68-69 and Franklin, Daniel Coit Gilman, 220-222.
reflected on the paradox of religious leaders who attacked universities, while professing a desire to be involved in higher education.\footnote{While he was not vilified to the degree that White was, Gilman had little patience for fundamentalist critics: "Alarmists are cowards. That piety is infantile which apprehends that knowledge is fatal to reverence, devotion, righteousness, and faith." Daniel Coit Gilman, "Characteristics of a University," \textit{University Problems}, 96. David Starr Jordan also derided attempts to maintain under-funded denominational schools. He claimed that "it was not an uncommon thing for college presidents to plead that if you let your college die, your church would die, too." Jordan, \textit{Days of a Man}, I, 86.}

Religious leaders and denominational college presidents watched as some private universities and state institutions eliminated chapel services and student prayer.\footnote{Two good examples are Harvard and the University of Illinois. In 1886, Harvard abolished its 250 year-old chapel requirement. Illinois experienced a protracted battle between sectarian forces and evangelical Christianity. See: Hugh Hawkins, "Charles W. Eliot, University Reform, and Religious Faith in America, 1869-1909," \textit{Journal of American History} 51 (September 1964): 191-213 and Winston U. Solberg, "The Conflict Between Religion and Secularism at the University of Illinois, 1867-1894," \textit{American Quarterly} 18 (Summer 1966): 183-199.} Their response was seldom equivocal, as was shown in 1884 when the New York \textit{Christian Advocate} proclaimed: "Let it be remembered that the best place for a Methodist young man is in a Methodist College."\footnote{\textit{Christian Advocate} (New York), 21 August 1884, as quoted in: Rogers, \textit{Andrew D. White}, 76. C. H. Payne, then president of Ohio Wesleyan, saw the move towards secular higher education as a life and death struggle between Protestant Christianity and atheism: "Shall the State become unqualifiedly atheistic? Shall it assume an attitude of absolute indifference to religion and that whole domain of fundamental truths and historic facts, based upon}
attack on moral authority, these critics portrayed state universities as political footballs, subject to the vagaries of partisan politics and, theoretically, to the denomination with the most political influence. The obvious remedy would come in the form of denominational universities.45

The issue of coeducation at the collegiate and graduate levels was also the subject of much debate during the late nineteenth century. Many separate women's colleges had opened after the Civil War, in part because the established universities refused to admit female students. Harvard and Columbia compromised on the issue by creating coordinate colleges, Radcliffe and Barnard respectively. Of the newer universities, Johns Hopkins and Roman Catholic institutions initially closed their doors to female students. Land grant

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universities and most institutions in the midwest and far west had more liberal policies regarding coeducation. In the east, however, Cornell and Boston University were the only major institutions to admit women.  

Although the concept of coeducation began to gain acceptance in the United States, opportunities for women in the established graduate schools remained limited. Attempts by coeducation's opponents to prove the biological and psychological weakness of women were sufficient to preserve the status quo at many of the nation's most prestigious universities.  

For that reason, Hurst and his followers strove to erect a coeducational university, one that would


provide the advanced training that was scarce in the eastern United States. In promoting the university, supporters often cited the achievements of women and decried "the barred and bolted doors" present at many American universities. Thus, coeducation became a fixture in plans for the creation of a Protestant graduate institution in Washington.  

Even more radical was support for biracial education, particularly at a time when much of the nation had begun enacting "Jim Crow" laws. Some of Hurst's strongest supporters from both within the Methodist Church and among graduate students unequivocally supported equal access to higher education. These made up a minority, however, and their influence in stemming the conservative tide waned as prospects for the university grew.  

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48 *University Courier*, III (March 1895): 10; IV (October 1895): 5; IV (March 1896): 2.

49 Among those openly promoting integrated graduate education were John P. Newman and Bishop William X. Ninde; both were bishops in the Methodist Episcopal Church and strong supporters of Hurst's educational initiative. They both made statements in this regard in speeches on behalf of The American University. See: Bishop John P. Newman, National Methodist University, First Public Meeting, 25 March 1890 and Bishop William X. Ninde, Stenographic Report of the Meeting in the Interest of the National University in the Metropolitan M. E. Church, Washington, D.C., 3 November 1890, John F. Hurst Papers, University Archives, Bender Library, The American University, Washington, D.C. Another example came in the form of a petition from American students studying in Berlin, who resolved: "that it shall be a university which shall permit of no discrimination as to color, sex, or religious conviction in its students . . .." Petition, Methodist Students in Berlin, 13 May 1890, Hurst Papers.
There is evidence to suggest that while Hurst carried the message of interracial education to select audiences in the north, these views were seldom articulated in print.\(^50\) Nevertheless, some fund raisers involved in the endeavor did entertain thoughts of soliciting support from wealthy African-Americans in the District of Columbia. The fact that this did not happen suggests a reluctance to advance toward a clearly-stated policy of open enrollment.\(^51\)

The one factor that seemed to attract the widest number of university promoters was the Washington location itself. While Washington remained in the late nineteenth century a small, southern city, the country's growing international influence nevertheless ushered in a more cosmopolitan environment. Conversely, Washington could boast no college or university of national, much less, international

\(^{50}\)David H. Moore to Bishop Hurst, 22 April 1892, Hurst Papers. In an endorsement of Hurst's plan the Christian Advocate (New York) editorialized that the "University should permit no discrimination as to color, sex, or religious conviction in its students." Christian Advocate (New York), 3 July 1890, p. 423.

\(^{51}\)University Courier, II (March 1894): 11. Any such statement would have been a radical departure from the norm. Between 1865 and 1895, 194 African-Americans graduated from Northern colleges, and seventy-five of those graduated from Oberlin College. The remaining 119 graduated from 52 different institutions, or an average of about two graduates over thirty years. Beyond these meager numbers, it should be pointed out that the social customs of Washington in 1890 could hardly be considered "Northern." Therefore, vocal support for an integrated university would have created a public relations nightmare. See Frank Bowles and Frank A. DeCosta, Between Two Worlds; A Profile of Negro Higher Education (New York: McGraw Hill, 1971), 33-34.
importance. Of the institutions operating in the District of Columbia in 1890, Howard University functioned as a university for African-Americans. Gallaudet College operated as a liberal arts school for the hearing-impaired. Georgetown University and The Catholic University of America clearly were subject to Roman Catholic control. The other was Columbian University, a nominally Baptist institution that would be transformed into George Washington University a few years later.52

The absence of a major, non-sectarian university obviously attracted the national university supporters who sought to carry out President Washington's dream in the Nation's Capital. John W. Hoyt, an educator and former territorial governor of Wyoming, moved to Washington in order to guide these efforts. To Hoyt and his supporters, such an institution would provide a political education of the grandest and most meaningful sort. The city likewise

52 University Courier I (October 1892): 20-23; III (March 1893): 7. For general histories of these institutions, see: Walter Dyson, Howard University, The Capstone of Negro Education; A History (Clifton, NJ: Kelly, 1941); Rayford W. Logan, Howard University; The First One Hundred Years, 1867-1967 (New York: New York University Press, 1969); Albert William Atwood, Gallaudet College, Its First One Hundred Years (Lancaster, PA: Intelligencer, 1964); John T. Ellis, The Formative Years of Catholic University (Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 1946); C. Joseph Nuesse, The Catholic University of America; A Centennial History (Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 1990); and John T. Durkin, S.J., Georgetown University; First in the Nation's Capital (New York: Doubleday, 1964); and Elmer Louis Kayser, Bricks Without Straw; The Evolution of George Washington University (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1970);
appealed to Hurst and his followers, who wanted to create a Protestant university to counteract the growing presence of Roman Catholic educational interests. Of far-reaching importance were the city's extensive scientific and cultural resources, which attracted most of those active in higher education.53

In addition to Washington's parks, avenues and government buildings, educational leaders pointed to the libraries, museums, galleries and government laboratories that increasingly populated the Nation's Capital. These included the Library of Congress, the Naval Observatory, the Corcoran Art Gallery, the Smithsonian Institution, and a wide variety of libraries, museums and laboratories connected to government departments.54 In 1892, John Wesley Powell, the


54Supporters of the National University obviously linked their efforts with the resources found in Washington, D.C. See: Madsen, National University, 67-70. Andrew D. White, of Cornell, and Daniel Coit Gilman, of Johns Hopkins, likewise wanted to exploit the scientific and educational resources of the city, however, they hesitated to latch onto the vague plans offered by the National University supporters. Nathan Reingold, "National Science Policy in a Private Foundation: The Carnegie Institution of Washington," in The Organization of Knowledge in Modern American, 1860-1920, Alexandra Oleson and John Voss, eds. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1979), 316. Gilman, while desiring the opening of government facilities for study, distrusted the national university concept. Instead, he saw the Smithsonian as the logical coordinating agency for research in Washington. Daniel Coit Gilman, "The Proposal for a National University in Washington," University Problems, 313-319.
director of the U.S. Geological Survey, placed the value of such resources in excess of thirty-two million dollars. Such facilities, he argued, "were useful and largely necessary to ... faculties and students" and could not be replicated by any university. He added that the government facilities were staffed by "a very large number of men employed as specialists, many of whom could be utilized ... as lecturers and demonstrators." Such instruction could broaden the range of subjects taught without incurring corresponding costs to the university.⁵⁵

Thus, beyond the more general forces behind late nineteenth-century university-building, there arose a number of tangential issues that helped fuel the effort that would lead to the founding of The American University. Its founders pushed the need for a coeducational and, to a lesser extent, bi-racial graduate education. They originally tried to subsume the national university idea, but it gained a life of its own and became a competing educational

⁵⁵John Wesley Powell to John Fletcher Hurst, 31 March 1892, Hurst Papers, American University Archives. The University Courier, reprinted Powell's letter as part of its ongoing campaign in support of the American University. University Courier, I (January 1893): 58-60. See also: XI (April 1904): 2-3 and XIV (January 1908): 4. Although they sat on opposite sides of the national university issue, Daniel Coit Gilman and David Starr Jordan both highlighted the educational resources of the Nation's Capital. Gilman saw them as resources for his students at Johns Hopkins, a scant hour from Capitol Hill. On the other hand, Jordan would later testify on behalf of the national university movement. See: Daniel Coit Gilman, "The Proposals for a National University in Washington," University Problems, 313-319 and Jordan, Days of a Man, I, 537-540.
project. As their image of the project developed, however, the religious and geographical motives would reign supreme. Hurst and his followers would rise to challenge Catholic influence in Washington, while simultaneously promoting the educational resources of the capital city. Such a cause would provide both sectarian and patriotic impetus for their plan.  

In addition to raising fears that Washington was becoming a seat of Romanism, the University Courier also appealed to patriotism: "The students here gathered from every quarter, and here taught, not alone by the university, but likewise taught and molded by the spirit and patriotic influences of the city itself, would in turn return to their homes more ardent patriots, the better qualified to serve their country, and more resolute in purpose to protect it from perils of every nature and to promote its highest welfare." University Courier XI (April 1904): 3.
CHAPTER THREE

THE FOUNDER:

JOHN FLETCHER HURST

I

John Fletcher Hurst, who became the resident Methodist bishop for Washington in 1888, seemed the obvious choice to establish a graduate institution in the Nation's Capital. Hurst had studied at both a Methodist college and two German universities before entering the ministry. He taught at institutions in the United States and Germany before rising to the presidency of Drew Theological Seminary, which he guided through the financial turbulence of the 1870s. By the late 1880s, Hurst was a respected educator, theologian, and religious historian. Given such a background, he embodied the varied and admittedly contradictory impulses that led to the creation of The American University.¹

¹The only full length biography of Hurst is Albert Osborn's *John Fletcher Hurst: A Biography* (New York: Eaton and Mains, 1905). Reverend Osborn, a longtime assistant to the Bishop, was Hurst's hand-picked biographer. Although this biography lacks objectivity, Osborn did make use of Hurst's personal papers, many of which have since disappeared. For that reason, the 1905 biography remains the single best source for information on Hurst's early life and career. Other useful biographical sources include: John Alfred Faulkner, "John Fletcher Hurst," *Methodist Review,*
To some extent, Bishop Hurst's residence in Washington constituted a return home after forty years in Europe, the Northeast, and the Midwest. He grew up near Salem on Maryland's Eastern Shore, where he was born in 1834, the second child of Elijah and Catherine Colston Hurst. The younger Hurst and his sister both learned to read and write at their mother's knee, while their father maintained upwards of one thousand acres of farm land. When Hurst was seven years old, his mother died following a long bout with asthma. By that time, he was attending a local grammar school preparing to enter the Cambridge (Maryland) Academy at age eleven. His father remarried shortly thereafter.

Before Hurst began his final year at Cambridge Academy, his father died. The young student then became the ward of John E. Hurst, a successful Baltimore merchant and Elijah

86 (May 1904): 345-356; the Dictionary of American Biography, vol. 9, 426-427; the National Cyclopaedia of American Biography, vol. 9, 122; articles in the University Courier, particularly ones published in the May 1893 and July 1903 numbers; and obituaries printed in the Washington Post, 4 May 1903, Washington Evening Star, 4 May 1903, the Zion's Herald, 6 May 1903, and in the Christian Advocate (New York), 14 May 1903.

While listing Elijah Hurst's farms, Osborn tended to downplay the extent of his holdings. On the other hand, Faulkner called Elijah Hurst "one of the shrewdest farmers in the whole section." According to Faulkner, John Fletcher Hurst inherited his father's "business instincts and his wonderful administrative talents." Osborn, Hurst, 3-5 and Faulkner, "Hurst," 345.

Osborn, Hurst, 13-19.
Hurst's half-brother.⁴ Despite such upheaval, Hurst continued to room with a family near the academy as he had done before his father's death. Timing suggests these events inspired him to establish what would be a lifelong tie to the Methodist church.⁵

Both of Hurst's parents were Methodist, but it was not until their orphaned son heard Reverend James A. Brindle at a Cambridge church, that he converted.⁶ As he approached graduation from Cambridge Academy, Hurst attended a camp meeting at which Jesse T. Peck, president of Dickinson College, officiated. Hurst's father had made some effort to prepare his son for a life of farming, but this chance encounter made the young Hurst consider attending college for the first time. In September 1850, with his uncle's blessing, Hurst took the stagecoach from Baltimore to

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⁴Osborn, Hurst, 23. Faulkner identified John Hurst as "a cousin of the bishop, being the second son of his father's brother Stephen." Regardless, Hurst always referred to his guardian as "Uncle." Faulkner, "Hurst," 345.

⁵Osborn, Hurst, 21-23. Hurst seldom failed to note the anniversaries of the deaths of his parents in his college diary. Although the ward of his uncle, Hurst dutifully stayed in touch with his stepmother. John Fletcher Hurst, College Diary, Hurst Papers.

⁶Hurst described his father as a "Christian man." Both Osborn and Faulkner described Elijah Hurst's generous subscription of $250 toward the construction of the Zion Methodist Church in Cambridge, Maryland. Osborn, Hurst, 5 and Faulkner, "Hurst," 345-346. Years later, Hurst recalled the impatience and confusion he experienced over converting: "I was seeking light all the time; trying to do something, trying to perform some obligation, trying to understand Him, and when I came to see that I could not understand anything He gave me light." As quoted in Faulkner, "Hurst," 346.
Carlisle, Pennsylvania, where Dr. Peck took the sixteen year-old freshman under his wing.⁷

The young Marylander joined thirty-five other members of the freshman class. His fellow students were largely Methodist, with a significant minority coming from slave-holding states. He roomed at 48 West College with William J. Bowdle, another native of Maryland's Eastern Shore. He joined the college's Union Philosophical Society where he displayed an affinity for books and oratory that would follow him throughout his life. Nonetheless, Hurst's first year was marked by ill-fated attempts to define his uncertain relationship with his guardian, as well as by nagging uncertainties about the depth of his religious convictions.⁸

These inner conflicts followed Hurst into his second year of college, when he roomed with S. T. Milbourne, a freshman from Maryland. In his diary, Hurst described

⁷Osborn, Hurst, 27. Hurst later reminisced at the funeral for then Bishop Peck: "Some one had said 'college' to me a few times before this, and I had thought of taking a college education, but this seemed . . . impossible. . . . I told him [Peck] something about going to college. Said he: 'Don't trouble yourself. Go home and wait until the opening of the term, and then take the stage across by York and come there and I will meet you, and we will live happily together.'" As quoted in Faulkner, "Hurst," 347.

himself as a young student torn between a desire for "entire sanctification" and frequent, sometimes guilt-provoking trips to the local ice cream parlor. For the most part, Hurst remained a diligent student, although long walks in the mountains occasionally lured him from his studies. He regularly judged sermons for both content and style of delivery, but admitted to a stubborn habit of falling asleep in church.⁹

It was during his sophomore year that Hurst first saw his words published, in the form of an article entitled "Comfort the Distressed," in the Sunday School Advocate. Months later, Hurst provided the Philadelphia Christian Advocate with a forceful defense of a movement to establish a second Methodist church in Carlisle. In addition, he began a practice of providing Eastern Shore newspapers with articles about education, college life, and the geography of the Cumberland Valley of Pennsylvania. These efforts were the start of a long and eclectic career in print.¹⁰

At the end of his sophomore year, Hurst returned to his farm in Maryland. He remained in Maryland for most of his junior year, studying to keep up with his class while enjoying the fruits of rural life. Hurst reportedly sought the

⁹Hurst Diary, Hurst Papers. Part of Hurst's diary is duplicated in Osborn's biography, although Osborn omitted some names and passages which deal with some of Hurst's frailties.

¹⁰Hurst Diary, Hurst Papers; Osborn, Hurst, 37-39.
sabbatical to recover from an undisclosed ailment, but there is evidence that his uncle desired relief from his nephew's college expenses. Nevertheless, after nine months of rural exile, the young student hungered for a return to college. As he observed in his diary: "Man is a social being and I am lonely." With his uncle's consent, he returned to Carlisle in April 1853.\textsuperscript{11}

While Hurst returned to his studies with renewed vigor, he also began to develop other, less scholarly interests. He continued to publish articles in Maryland newspapers, but these focused increasingly on historical topics. While continuing to satisfy his prodigious appetite for ice cream, Hurst also developed a taste for clothes, cigars, and young ladies. As a direct result, both Hurst's expenses and his uncle's admonitions increased. Correspondence from the elder Hurst more closely resembled lectures than letters and it was noteworthy if a visit to Baltimore failed to provoke reproof of young John Hurst's extravagance. While he recognized his weaknesses, Hurst rationalized his frailty with the observation that "Seniors do require money, especially when they sport among the girls."\textsuperscript{12}

\textsuperscript{11}Hurst Diary, Hurst Papers.

\textsuperscript{12}Hurst Diary, Hurst Papers. In April 1854, following a visit with his uncle in Baltimore, Hurst wrote: "Uncle John was really quite clever, and did not censure my extravagance any, although I really deserved it. Students are profligate animals [emphasis his]." As to the effect women had on his spending, Hurst recorded: "My expenses have surpassed those of any other year at college. I have bought
In spite of such diversions, he maintained his class standing and began to hone his oratorical skills. He spoke regularly at chapel services and presented an address on "Modern Hero Worship" at his commencement. Hurst read extensively outside of the prescribed curriculum, preferring history and general literature to geometry and Latin. One former classmate considered him the best-read student in his class. Although he occasionally worried about his own earthly weaknesses, Hurst considered his own religious experience "generally even." Nonetheless, he seldom strayed from the desire to pay more attention to his spiritual development.

II

On July 13, 1854, a month shy of his twentieth birthday, John Fletcher Hurst graduated from Dickinson College.

13A debate sponsored by the Union Philosophical Society showed both Hurst's skills as an orator and the degree to which the thorny issue of slavery inserted itself at Dickinson. In the face of many southern classmates, Hurst successfully argued the affirmative on the resolution "That the interests of the United States would be conserved by the abolition of slavery." Charles Coleman Sellers, Dickinson College, A History (Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, 1973), 228.

14Osborn, Hurst, 48.

15Faulkner, "Hurst," 348.

16Hurst Diary, Hurst Papers.
With the assistance of one of his mother's cousins, Hurst secured a teaching post at Greensboro Academy, a public school not far from his home in Maryland. He summarized his experience in a laconic passage in his diary: "stayed there about two months--didn't like it . . ." With help from Dr. Charles Collins, President of Dickinson College, Hurst received an appointment as "Professor of Belles-Lettres" at the Hedding Literary Institute in Ashland, New York. In this capacity, Hurst taught languages, literature and occasionally chemistry. While at the Institute, Hurst met and began courting Catherine E. LaMonte, who taught painting there. The two became engaged in June 1855.17

Soon thereafter, Miss LaMonte went to teach at Liberty, New York, and their courtship continued through the mail. In August 1855, Hurst reached his majority and returned to Maryland in order to settle affairs with his guardian. He returned to the Catskills for a second year at the Institute, but in November began planning a two-year sojourn for graduate study in Germany. Hurst initially thought the trip should follow his marriage to Miss LaMonte, so that they could travel abroad together. Eventually, Hurst would heed the advice of both his sister and his guardian and limit his

17Osborn, Hurst, 53-59; Faulkner, "Hurst," 348; Hurst Diary, Hurst Papers. By this time, entries in Hurst's college diary became few and far between. He did take the time to introduce his betrothed to his journal, although he did not record his complete feelings for fear that some "vulgar eyes might get a glimpse of these lines upon your [his journal's] forehead."
studies to one year, with the wedding postponed until after his return. On August 9, 1856, he traveled to New York in order to board the *Washington* for the six-day voyage to Bremen.\(^{18}\)

After traveling around Germany, Hurst went to Halle where he studied with members of the theology faculty. Of the four scholars with whom Hurst studied, the pietistic theologian, Friedrich Tholuck, made the greatest impression.\(^{19}\) Tholuck's guidance proved the exception, however, as Hurst's studies exposed him to the religious skepticism inherent in German rationalism. Nevertheless, his faith withstood the philosophical challenge.\(^{20}\)

Hurst was a pioneer, in a sense, for few Methodist scholars had preceded him to Germany. His studies at Halle opened his eyes to the scholarly aspects of religion, an interest that would serve as a foundation for his future writing and educational pursuits. He interspersed his


\(^{19}\)Osborn, *Hurst*, 77; Jurgen Herbst noted that many mid-nineteenth century theology students made the pilgrimage to Halle in order to study with Professor Tholuck. Herbst, *German Historical School*, 13-14.

\(^{20}\)The skepticism Hurst encountered in Germany had great impact on his future thought and work. While preparing to write a book on rationalism, Hurst wrote in his journal: "But the subject [rationalism] has been dwelling in my mind ever since I was in Germany and bore witness to the terrible ravages of Rationalism in the native land of Luther. Time has rather deepened my desire to write on the subject than erased it." John F. Hurst, *Notebooks*, 3 January 1860, Hurst Papers.
studies with travels to Weimar, Erfurt, Dresden and Berlin. In March 1857, he packed his books for shipment back to the United States and embarked on a tour of Italy, Central Europe, France and Great Britain. All the while, he recorded his experiences in a journal that served as the basis for a number of subsequent publications. In addition, he supplied the Christian Advocate with two articles on Rome. On October 3, 1857, after a brief tour of Scotland, he left Glasgow aboard the Edinburgh for the trip home.\textsuperscript{21}

During his return voyage, Hurst resolved to enter the Methodist ministry. Once again, the young scholar's changing career plans delayed his marriage to Catherine LaMonte. On December 6, 1857, Hurst preached his first sermon at the Cambridge, Maryland church that had been the site of his conversion. A week later, he accepted a position as a preacher on the Carlisle Circuit of the East Baltimore Conference. In April 1858, Hurst applied to the Newark Conference and was appointed to a pastorate at Irvington, New Jersey. The following month, he authorized the manumission of Tom, the slave he had inherited from his father. This probably represents a conversion to some level of antislavery sentiment, although there is little other evidence to suggest this.\textsuperscript{22}

\textsuperscript{21}Osborn, Hurst, 69-93; John F. Hurst, Travel Notebooks, Hurst Papers.

\textsuperscript{22}Osborn, Hurst, 96-105.
While serving as pastor at Irvington, Hurst completed a Master of Arts degree in theology from Dickinson College. In April 1859, the Newark Conference assigned him to a pastorate in Passaic, New Jersey. He and Catherine LaMonte were married in Charlottesville, New York, on April 28, 1859, the day before he was to report to his new parish. A year later, on April 8, 1860, Hurst was ordained by Bishop Levi Scott and reappointed to his post in Passaic. The following year, the Hursts' first child, John LaMonte Hurst, was born.23

Between 1860 and 1866, the Conference assigned Hurst to a number of churches in Northern New Jersey and on Staten Island, New York. At the 1862 Conference, Hurst was ordained as an elder by Bishop Thomas A. Morris. The following year, the young minister sold the farm left to him by his father, thus severing the most significant tie to his birthplace.24 While at Trinity Church in Staten Island, Hurst performed his ministerial duties and, in 1866, received a Doctorate of Divinity from Dickinson College. At the same time, he began writing his History of Rationalism and maintained a prodigious level of writing for both religious and secular periodicals. Nevertheless, in 1866, Hurst once again fell prey to the pull of Germany and life in

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23 Osborn, Hurst, 107, 116-127.

24 Osborn, Hurst, 128-145; Hurst, Notebooks, Hurst Papers.
III

In May 1866, Dr. L. S. Jacoby of the Mission Institute in Bremen invited Hurst to come to Germany to become a theological tutor at the institute. Hurst, who by that time had a second child, Clara Hurst, initially declined, but changed his mind before the summer ended. Although he had made great strides at Trinity Church in Staten Island, it was to be Hurst's final pastorate. On October 20, 1866, the young family sailed for Bremen on the steamer America.26

While living in Bremen, a third child, Carl Bailey Hurst, was born. The Hursts remained in Bremen until 1868, when the Zurich Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church decided to move the Institute to Frankfort. The Institute reopened in that city as the Martin Mission Institute. In June 1869, tragedy struck when the Hurst's seven year-old daughter, Clara, died after a bout with typhoid fever. While in Frankfort training young ministers, Hurst was asked to return to the United States to perform a similar service. In 1870, the trustees of Drew Theological Seminary in


26Osborn, Hurst, 146-150.
Madison, New Jersey, elected the young professor to the chair of Historical Theology. He accepted the new post in a letter to Bishop Matthew Simpson in late 1870. Hurst agreed to finish out the school year at the Institute, but took advantage of breaks for travel in Eastern Europe and the Middle East. On August 12, 1871, Hurst, his wife, his sons, and infant daughter Helen left Bremen bound for New York.27

Hurst settled his family on the wooded campus that would be their home for nine years. He relished teaching and managed to combine the investigative bent of German education with his own broad interests. Hurst's concentration on teaching was short-lived, however, as Randolph S. Foster's 1872 election to the Methodist bishopric left the seminary without a president. The following spring, the trustees elected Hurst president of the seminary.28

Hurst's election to the presidency of Drew Seminary must be considered a calculated risk on the part of the trustees. He was not yet forty, and while he had experience as a minister, professor and scholar, he was a novice administrator. While maintaining his professorial duties, Hurst set about to represent the fledgling seminary to adjacent Conferences, local churches, and potential students. His success in drawing seminarians to Drew caused

27Osborn, Hurst, 150-194.
Hurst to enact a gradual cutback in pre-seminary courses. In addition, Hurst launched the Biblical and Theological Library at Drew. It would become a major resource for the growing body of Methodist scholars.

In March 1876, just as the school began to reap the benefits of such efforts, founder Daniel Drew's endowment of $250,000 suffered paralyzing losses from reckless speculation on Wall Street. As a result, the school lost funding for salaries and operating expenses. The young president had to move quickly and decisively to save the seminary from collapse.

Hurst first turned to Daniel Drew, but the aged philanthropist had no resources with which to respond to such financial failure. Hurst then met with the faculty and students to explain the situation and next set about to find other sources of funding. While some faculty members survived on bank loans secured by using the promissory notes of others as collateral, Hurst obtained endowments to support two professorships. Later in 1876, as the seminary


30 Faulkner, "Hurst," 353.

struggled toward its tenth birthday, he took his message and pleas for support to the General Conference as well as regional conferences. In order to keep the institution afloat, he personally assumed responsibility for the bills and salaries, most of which had to be meted out with Solomon-like sagacity. In the fall of 1880, the finance committee of the trustees reported that the endowment had been built up to $310,000, a figure which surpassed the naming gift and assured the continued operation of the school. The finance committee gave Hurst much of the credit for this fund raising feat. He celebrated the close of the successful campaign with a four-month tour of Europe, traveling to Ireland, Great Britain, Germany and Switzerland.

The trustees of Drew Theological Seminary were not alone in recognizing Hurst's efforts. A number of his

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33 Ibid., 210-211, 214-219. The committee reported at the fall 1880 trustees meeting that "an endowment of more than $310,00 had been secured, and with simple justice gave credit to raising this vast sum, in a time of an unprecedented business depression, chiefly to Dr. John F. Hurst . . .", 210. At Hurst's funeral, Dr. Henry A. Buttz, then President of Drew Seminary, recalled the great effort that Hurst made in bringing the institution from the brink of bankruptcy: "The Conference heard him gladly. The preachers and laymen believed him. The foundation was laid in the faith of the Church, and after months and months of tireless and unremitting toil the endowment was completed." See: *University Courier*, X (July 1903): 6-11. Sitterly, in his history of Drew University, tends to downplay Hurst's efforts on behalf of the seminary, 61-64.
friends began to campaign for his election to bishop at the 1880 General Conference. Hurst refused to become involved in such efforts because of his strong ties to Drew, and presumably to higher education. Nevertheless, the Conference elected him bishop on the first ballot. Before the Conference ended, a surprised Hurst had selected Des Moines, Iowa as his first episcopal residence. With substantial misgivings and many fond farewells, the Hursts left Madison, much as they had departed Staten Island ten years earlier.\(^3^4\)

IV

Hurst reported to Des Moines in the fall of 1880 after having already embarked on a grueling schedule of regional conferences. During his four years in Iowa, Hurst presided over thirty-nine conferences, from Oregon to New Hampshire. When not traveling, the bishop worked hard for education and temperance initiatives. He received praise for his patience, understanding, and, in particular, his support for those entering the ministry.\(^3^5\)

The Hursts left Des Moines in 1884 knowing that they would be posted elsewhere and planning an extensive "episcopal tour" abroad following the 1884 General Conference. Hurst selected Buffalo, New York, as his next home, although


\(^3^5\)Osborn, *Hurst*, 235-250.
he spent fourteen months traveling to conferences in Germany, Switzerland, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Bulgaria, and India, prior to the assumption of his next episcopal residence in September 1885.36

The next six months were a time of both tragedy and success for Hurst, as the deaths of his daughter, Blanche, and his only sibling, Sally, coincided with his election to the Board of Education of the Methodist Church. While these losses took their toll emotionally, Hurst would remain an active and occasionally controversial member of the board for the remainder of his life. That post would have a profound impact on his emerging plans to open a Methodist university in the Nation's Capital.37

Following an official tour of Mexico and U.S. conferences ranging from Fremont, Nebraska, to Savannah, Georgia, Hurst attended the 1888 General Conference meeting in New York. While there, Hurst presided over three sessions and selected Washington, D.C., as his next episcopal residence. In mid-1888, Hurst moved his family from Buffalo to Washington, where they roomed at the Riggs House. The family furnishings and Hurst's eight thousand-volume library remained in storage until Hurst secured a home. In November


37 Osborn, Hurst, 268-282.
1889, the family settled at 4 Iowa Circle (later named Logan Circle), in a house formerly occupied by General John Logan. It may have not been clear at the time, but Washington would be Hurst's final episcopal residence. In years to come, his growing involvement in the fledgling university movement would keep him in that city for the remainder of his life.\textsuperscript{38}

\textsuperscript{38}\textit{Ibid.}, 279-294; Reverend Albert Osborn served as Hurst's assistant during the Bishop's residence in Buffalo. He was responsible for shipping the family's belongings to their new home. In 1891, Osborn moved to Washington to assist Hurst in the university movement. Albert Osborn, Diary, Osborn Papers, American University Archives.
CHAPTER FOUR

THE ACQUISITION OF LAND AND EARLY SUPPORT

I

In moving to Washington, Bishop Hurst assumed many of the same duties he had held in previous episcopal posts. He continued to preside at regional conferences and often paid unannounced visits to churches within his jurisdiction. It is clear, however, that Hurst carried with him responsibility beyond what was considered typical for a Methodist bishop. He had been sent to Washington, in part, to develop plans for a Methodist university.¹

Before Hurst’s move to Washington, he had received verbal and written pleas for the creation of a graduate-level Methodist institution. Supporters saw the need for a graduate university, founded under the auspices of the Methodist Church. Many saw Hurst as the obvious choice to lead such a movement, because the "logic of his life pointed him in that direction."² As envisioned, the institution would serve as a capstone to provide advanced study for the

¹Osborn, John Fletcher Hurst: A Biography, 290-295.
²Ibid., 312.
graduates of the many Methodist colleges in operation.\(^3\)

Methodists liked to point with pride to the long-term commitment their denomination had made to higher education. As early as 1785, with American Methodism still in its infancy, the sect had begun Cokesbury College in Abington, Maryland. With $50,000 collected from scores of "humble" Methodists, it operated for ten years. The college was rebuilt after it burned to the ground in 1795, but another fire the following year put an end to the nation's first Methodist college.\(^4\)

That initial failure, however, did not preclude the founding of other Methodist colleges in the years prior to the Civil War.\(^5\)

Calls for a post-graduate Methodist university in

\(^3\)One writer pointed out that 57 Methodist colleges were operating in the United States by the 1890s. He, and others, expressed the need for "a fitting head and crown of the educational system of Methodism." "An Educational Renaissance," *University Courier* IV (September 1895), 4.


Washington dated back to 1861, when local financier William Wilson Corcoran offered land for such an institution to Reverend John P. Newman. Newman became bogged down, however, with the debts of Washington's Metropolitan Memorial Church and could not carry through with the plan. In later years, Bishops Edward R. Ames and Matthew Simpson supported the founding of a university in Washington, although their other duties prevented them from acting upon the idea. During the 1880s, educators and clergy from both the United States and England outlined plans for such an institution.

For many Methodists, the main source of concern was The Catholic University of America, which began operations in 1889. In combination with Georgetown University, which celebrated its centennial that same year, it represented to some a sinister and foreign presence within the capital of a

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6In 1872, Corcoran gave the same tract of land to Columbian College as part of a campaign to secure a permanent endowment for that institution. Kayser, Bricks Without Straw; The Evolution of the George Washington University, 144-147.

7Christian Advocate, 19 June 1890, 392 and 1 May 1890, 273. According to one account, a Methodist theologian approached Simpson with an idea for establishing a university in Washington in 1856, although Simpson did not articulate such plans until years later. University Courier I (September 1892), 1.

8John F. Hurst, "The First Two Years of the American University," The American University and the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church (Omaha, Nebraska: Rees Printing Co., 1892): 7-8.
"Protestant Nation." Hurst and Methodism were not alone in their fears, however, as "all Protestants" and an unidentified Jewish rabbi wanted a university to counterbalance the influence of the Catholic Church in Washington. To the most distrustful, The Catholic University of America represented a fortress from which the Vatican would make an assault upon American institutions.

While Bishop Hurst may have come to Washington with a simple desire to build a graduate Methodist university, he could not have missed the consternation over the opening of Catholic University. One account claimed that Hurst arrived in Washington to find "the atmosphere full of the idea" to found a Protestant university. Furthermore, the opening of The Catholic University served to "crystallize the

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9 As the date of Catholic University's opening approached, many Protestants grew anxious. If the New York Christian Advocate was any indication, Methodists were no exception. The "Washington Letter" column carefully reported on the progress of Catholic University, and expressed the fear that "Catholicism will have unrivaled educational pre-eminence in the American Capital. "Washington Letter," Christian Advocate (New York), 18 April 1889, 250. Others clearly stated the need for a Methodist university to carry the torch for Protestant Christianity. "Washington Notes," Christian Advocate, 2 May 1889, 285; and Soloman J. Fagen to the Christian Advocate, 22 August 1889, 4.

sentiment." For that reason, Hurst was torn between his episcopal responsibilities and this externally-imposed sense of duty. Although the movement to found a Methodist university in Washington plagued him with uncertainty, Hurst nevertheless took the first concrete step toward that much-discussed goal on Christmas Day, 1889.12

On that day, accompanied by Washington attorney Theodore W. Tallmadge, Hurst began an exhaustive search for a suitable site. On the afternoon of the tenth day of searching, the pair came upon a ninety-acre tract along Loughborough Road in the far northwest section of the District. The land was perched along a broad, open ridge which provided a view westward from the Manassas plain in Virginia to the low-lying mountains of Maryland. As they turned from one vantage point to the next, it was clear to both men that the Bishop had found the site for the proposed university.13

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11Editorial, Christian Advocate (New York), 1 May 1890, 273. At about the same time, Hurst made a trip to Ohio Wesleyan University where he gave an address on his "Recollections of German University Life," Osborn, Hurst, 292.

12Osborn, Hurst, 313. Because Hurst failed to open the American University during his lifetime, Osborn may have intentionally overstated the Bishop's initial reticence in embarking on the project. In 1892, Hurst gave his own account of the demand for a Methodist university: "The pressure came from humble pastors; from men and women in different parts of our country; and from every class of life. So pressing and frequent were the monitions from the great outside world, that at last I felt ashamed to sit quietly in an easy chair and look out through the window upon finished things." Hurst, "First Two Years," 8.

13Osborn, Hurst, 313-314.
With the quest for real estate over, Hurst had to consider the cost and possible financing available for the site, recorded by deed as parts of the "Saint Philip and Jacob" and "Friendship" tracts owned by Achsah C. Davis of Washington.\(^\text{14}\) The negotiations grew more complicated when the Bishop left Washington to preside over conferences in Georgia and Alabama. Hurst left the bargaining to attorney Tallmadge and a Washington realtor, John F. Waggaman. Tallmadge's correspondence with the Bishop clearly shows that Hurst left Washington undecided about whether or not he would consummate the purchase. While Waggaman traveled to New York to negotiate the deal with the owner's nephew, Tallmadge remained behind to stay in touch with Hurst. By January 13, 1890, the owner had placed the price at $100,000, although Tallmadge thought that it might be bought for eighty-five thousand dollars or less. Nonetheless, he cautioned the Bishop about the value of land surrounding the tract. He also mentioned the possibility that the World's Fair would be located in Washington, thus driving up the price of local real estate.\(^\text{15}\)

Tallmadge wrote four days later that the price had been

\(^{14}\) Deed, Achsah C. Davis to John F. Hurst, 28 February 1890, Early History Collection, American University Archives.

\(^{15}\) Thomas W. Tallmadge to J. F. Hurst, 13 January 1890, Hurst Papers. At first, Tallmadge incorrectly reported that the negotiations were carried out with Achsah Davis' son. In later correspondence, he was identified as Davis' nephew.
fixed at $100,000 and that the owners had advertised the property in a Washington newspaper. The attorney sent Hurst the necessary legal documents and tried to assuage the Bishop's uncertainty over the deal. On January 23, Tallmadge sent a telegram to Hurst, who by that time was in New Decatur, Alabama. The telegram pressed Hurst to permit them to secure the purchase with one thousand dollars down and an additional nineteen thousand to be paid by March 1.\(^\text{16}\)

Upon receiving the telegram, Hurst met with a friend, Dr. Jesse Lyman Hurlbut of the Sunday School Union, to seek advice. Hurlbut recalled agreeing with Hurst's plan to build a university, but he was hesitant "to advise him to make the purchase." The two talked into the night, and in the end, Hurst had decided to buy the land.\(^\text{17}\)

The next morning, Hurst telegraphed Tallmadge directing him to close the deal and accepting responsibility for the advance of one thousand dollars towards the purchase price. Catherine LaMonte Hurst, who remained in Washington, personally guaranteed the one thousand dollar advance.\(^\text{18}\) Tallmadge wired Waggaman in New York and wrote Hurst that the deal was being carried out. He informed the Bishop that the balance of eighty thousand dollars could be paid over

\(^{16}\text{Tallmadge to J. F. Hurst, 17 January 1890 and 22 January 1890. Telegram copy, Tallmadge to J. F. Hurst, 24 January 1890, Hurst Papers.}\)

\(^{17}\text{As quoted in Osborn, Hurst, 314.}\)

\(^{18}\text{J. F. Hurst to T. W. Tallmadge, 24 January 1890.}\)
several years. On January 25, both Waggaman and Tallmadge informed Hurst that they had closed the deal for the Davis tract. It was now the Bishop's responsibility to raise nineteen thousand dollars in less than five weeks.19

Bishop Isaac W. Joyce stepped in to preside over the Central Alabama Conference and Hurst quickly returned to Washington.20 By January 30, he had prepared a fund raising letter which stated his immediate objective:

Finding a sentiment in the Methodist Episcopal Church . . . favorable to the location of a National University, in the city of Washington . . . I as resident Bishop, after consultation with other members of the Episcopacy and with a number of laymen of known liberality, interested in advanced education, have visited several locations, and have received several liberal propositions, with a view of that purpose.

The Davis Tract, situated on the Loughborough Road, is found to be adapted to that purpose, and I contemplate buying it, provided proper assistance are furnished I should be glad to have the generous cooperation of all persons interested in the promotion of such an enterprise.21

With many copies of the letter in hand, Hurst, accompanied by Reverend Charles W. Baldwin of the Baltimore Conference, set out to raise the balance of the down payment. According to Osborn, the pair "canvassed the city; visiting from house to store, from store to office, and from office

19T. W. Tallmadge to J. F. Hurst, 24 January 1890; 25 January 1890; and J. F. Waggaman to J. F. Hurst, 25 January 1890, Hurst Papers.

20Osborn, Hurst, 315.

21J. F. Hurst to ______, 30 January 1890, Hurst Papers.
back to home again, securing pledges and money."

Coverage in the Washington newspapers must have contributed to the initial success of their effort. On February 10, both the Evening Star and Post ran front-page stories about the incipient university. The Star listed Hurst as the prime force behind the movement and identified Second National Bank President Matthew G. Emery as treasurer for the fund raising effort. The Post reported that the Davis tract was "considered one of the most valuable properties near Washington." It included a brief interview with the somewhat reluctant university founder. A day later, the Star ran another article that included words of support from California Senator Leland Stanford, Sr., as well as a number of local Methodist ministers. On February 12, the Star ran a third consecutive article along with an editorial of support for their enterprise. Three days later, it featured a lengthy interview with the Bishop.

As the deadline approached, it grew clear that Hurst's

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22Osborn, Hurst, 315.

23Washington Evening Star, 10 February 1890, 1, and Washington Post, 10 February 1890, 1. Hurst's reluctance to discuss the project avowedly stemmed from the fact that the $20,000 down payment had not yet been secured: "I was desirous... that the matter be given no newspaper publicity at the present, but I find it an exceedingly difficult undertaking to prevent the enterprising news gatherers from keeping fully up with all that is going." Hurst confirmed that he had inaugurated the movement to the Post reporter, but warned that "the trade [land deal] has not been closed."

24Washington Evening Star, 11 February 1890, 1; 12 February 1890, 8; 15 February 1890.
early fears were for naught, for he and Baldwin had secured
twenty-two thousand dollars toward the purchase of the site.
On February 28, Hurst signed the deed for the property along
Loughborough Road, thereby assuming personal responsibility
for the eighty thousand dollar balance.25

In the meantime, Hurst had been gathering advisors and
setting the stage for a public meeting at the Metropolitan
Memorial Church on behalf of the university project. Among
Hurst's early confidants were Bishop John Newman and Senator
Stanford. The former had once entertained a notion of
embarking on the project himself. He offered his colleague
some sage advice about fund raising and agreed to come to
the Washington meeting, which by then had been set for March
25, 1890.26 Stanford, the railroad magnate and former
governor of California, was a less certain ally. His wife
and he had already begun building a university in Palo Alto,
California as a memorial to their only son, Leland Stanford,
Jr., who had died a few years before.27 Nevertheless,
Hurst took great care to involve Senator and Mrs. Stanford
in the project even prior to his agreement to purchase the

25Deed, Achsah C. Davis to John F. Hurst, 28 February
1890.

26John P. Newman to J. F. Hurst, 6 February 1890; 28
February 1890, Hurst Papers.

27Jordan, The Days of a Man, I, especially 354-402.
For a history of Stanford University's early years, see:
Orwin L. Elliott, Stanford University: The First Twenty-five
Years (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press,
1937).
site. Their involvement and counsel, however, did not necessarily translate into significant financial support.\(^{28}\)

Tragedy merged with Hurst's initial success when Catherine LaMonte Hurst, his wife of nearly thirty-one years, died suddenly on March 14, 1890. Mrs. Hurst had appeared to be in good health while Hurst traveled to New York on behalf of the university, but a few days later she complained of a headache. Hours later she suffered a stroke, lapsed into a coma, and died shortly thereafter. Reverend George Corey of the Metropolitan Church conducted services at the Hursts' Iowa Circle residence. Catherine Hurst was interred at Rock Creek Cemetery on March 18, one week before the meeting at Metropolitan Church.\(^{29}\)

\(^{28}\)In early January, Tallmadge reported having "called for a nice social talk with Senator and Mrs. Standford [sic] and during our conversation . . . suggested [that] you would like their opinion as to location . . ." T. W. Tallmadge to J. F. Hurst, 13 January 1890, Hurst Papers. The Washington Star article, of February 11, likewise belied Stanford's involvement. It quoted Stanford: "Yes, I am interested in the establishment here of a Methodist university. Interested so far, to the extent that I think it would be a good thing. No, I have not subscribed and cannot say what I might do in this matter." Washington Evening Star, 11 February 1890, 1.

\(^{29}\)Osborn, Hurst, 296-299. In addition to her duties as mother and clergyman's wife, Kate Hurst found time to continue her painting and, between 1870 and 1880, published four biographies.
Although the first public meeting on behalf of the new university was well-attended, it was not an unqualified success. Hurst had withdrawn from making arrangements for the event because of his wife's death. In addition, the Baltimore Conference had just concluded and a number of ministers who normally would have attended the meeting were en route to new pastoral assignments. On the positive side, the *Evening Star* promoted both the meeting and the project in a March 24 editorial.\(^{30}\) The audience for the meeting comprised "of Methodists and other Protestant people," braved foul weather to fill the pews and galleries of the spacious Metropolitan Church, near Capitol Hill.\(^{31}\)

Hurst, while still mourning the recent loss of his wife, presided over the gathering. The distinguished guests included: Bishop Newman, seven U.S. senators, five members of the House of Representatives including future President William McKinley, various government officials, and a number of prominent Washingtonians. The featured speakers were: Bishops Hurst and Simpson, Dr. William A. Bartlett, pastor of the Fifth Presbyterian Church of Washington, Senator John R. Hawley of Connecticut, and Representative Elijah W. Morse

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\(^{30}\) *Washington Evening Star*, 24 March 1890, 4.

\(^{31}\) National Methodist University, First Public Meeting, 25 March 1890, Hurst Papers, 1; *Washington Post*, 26 March 1890, 1.
of Massachusetts. Senator Leland Stanford, although listed as an officer for the meeting, was called away from the city. He likewise failed to provide an expected letter of support.

Hurst rose from the president's chair to give the evening's opening address. He described the magnificence of the newly-purchased tract of land, as well as the liberal schedule of payments of twenty thousand dollars per year for the balance of eighty thousand dollars. Furthermore, he expressed optimism that half of that balance might be raised during the evening. In establishing themes that he would employ for the next decade, Hurst articulated the lofty role he saw for the incipient university: "the institution, in the very center of our national life, may help hold together the whole structure of our social, political and Protestant civilization."

Hurst did acknowledge the challenge his project represented to Roman Catholic interests in Washington; however, he expressed the desire not to appear "combative." With that aside, Hurst identified five long-standing themes for

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32 First Public Meeting, 25 March 1890, 2.
33 Washington Evening Star, 26 March 1890, 6.
34 Star, 26 March 1890, 6.
35 Hurst's disclaimer was, however, provocative in its wording: "Our purpose is not combative. We have no contention with any forces except ignorance and darkness." Star, 26 March 1890, 6.
the proposed university. First, he sought to counter the growing strength of doubt, materialism, and agnosticism in the United States. He considered these forces a threat to the nation's "social and religious fabric." Training American youth in "the excellencies of a Protestant citizenship" would be the perfect antidote. Secondly, Hurst proposed the establishment of a "true" university, based on the German model. This, he believed, would distinguish the enterprise from extant Methodist colleges. Thirdly, Hurst cited the need to supplant the state universities where, he argued, secularism and petty partisan squabbles overshadowed education. The Bishop then outlined the need for an organized defense of evangelical Protestantism, lest it be dispatched "to a high and gruesome[sic] shelf among the bric-a-brac of other days." Finally, Hurst pointed to the obvious educational advantages of the Washington site. The Nation's Capital would provide an abundance of libraries, museums, and laboratories, while a university of the stature he intended would fill an educational void for city and nation alike. Hurst concluded with a comparison to past educational glories: "Here then, is where we intend to lay the foundations of our National University. As in the elder days Damascus was the 'Eye of the East,' so in these days Washington is the 'Eye of the West.'"

36Washington Post, 26 March 1890, 1.
37Ibid.
Dr. William W. Bartlett, a friend of Hurst's from their student days at Halle, followed the Bishop to the pulpit. He based his support for the project on three basic premises: 1) Washington was the proper place for such a university; 2) the time was ripe for the creation of a Protestant institution; and 3) Hurst had the education, the experience, and the ability to inaugurates the enterprise. With an obvious eye on Catholic University and the secularism of the age, Bartlett emphasized the moral necessity of the movement: "The whole nation will inhale the perfume or drink the poison of everything here [in Washington] . . . Thought now is running wild. In the Great molten mind of the world there is either being cast a demon or an angel."\(^{39}\)

Congressman Morse of Massachusetts and Senator Hawley of Connecticut followed Hurst and Bartlett on the platform. Morse argued that Methodism, as the largest Protestant denomination, was the logical sect to spearhead a university movement in Washington. Hawley, a Congregationalist, likewise lauded the Methodists for taking up the flag and leading an educational movement that exemplified "protestant catholicity." He also appreciated the fact that the project, while fulfilling the supposed need for a national university, would not be dependent upon Congressional

\(^{38}\)National Methodist University, 25 March 1890, 2-4.

\(^{39}\)Ibid., 5-6.
funding. He foresaw a university within which one could "mention the name of Almighty God and invoke His blessings." Furthermore, chapel services and prayers would "not be ridiculed and a form of Christianity despised, as in some (so-called) universities."\(^4^0\)

Bishop Newman closed the evening with his sermon of support for the nascent university. He chose to accentuate the "simon-pure American" nature of the undertaking, as well as the need for a capstone university for Methodism. Newman went beyond that to challenge established norms with regards to sex and race. According to Newman, the university not only would admit women, it would "include all, without regard to . . . color or previous condition: co-education in the grandest sense."\(^4^1\) Newman closed with a call for additional subscriptions, not only to fund the project, but also to put to rest claims that the Methodist were "a stingy set."\(^4^2\)

Following the addresses on behalf of the university,

\(^4^0\)Star, 26 March 1890, 6; National Methodist University, 5-8.

\(^4^1\)National Methodist University, 8. The Washington Post included a similar account of Newman's remarks, including the reference to racially integrated university education. The Star, however, made no mention of Newman's statements on race. It is likely that the Star, whose editors openly supported the enterprise, were more concerned about offending the southern sensibilities of the Nation's Capital. See: Post, 26 March 1890, 1 and Star, 26 March 1890, 6.

\(^4^2\)National Methodist University, 8-9.
the gathering agreed to set April 27, 1890, as "University Sunday," at which time local Methodist churches would collect money on behalf of the university. A collection taken immediately following the meeting garnered the university a total of $4,503. Subscriptions increased to a total of $33,550. Among those contributing were: Reverend Charles W. Baldwin, who gave one thousand dollars; and Representative Morse, attorney Thomas W. Tallmadge and suffragette Susan B. Anthony, who each gave one hundred dollars. Additional subscriptions included: one thousand dollars each from Senator Stanford and John F. Goucher, President of the Women's College of Baltimore; two thousand dollars from realtor John F. Waggaman; and five hundred dollars from carriage builder Clem Studebaker. In addition, Mrs. Studebaker pledged $250 -- one dollar for each of the members of Milburn Chapel, their home church in South Bend, Indiana.

III

In the weeks following the March 25 meeting, Hurst moved to consolidate support for the university project. He

43University Courier I (December 1892): 45.

44Post, 26 March 1890, 1 and Star, 26 March 1890, 6; Although Mr. Studebaker paid his subscription in a timely fashion, the pledge on behalf of the church went unpaid for four years. Charles W. Baldwin reminded Studebaker of the pledge in August 1892. He sent a draft for the pledge in March 1894. See: Clem Studebaker to Charles W. Baldwin, 2 August 1892 and 12 March 1894, Early History Collection.
remained in regular contact with James M. Buckley, editor of the *Christian Advocate*, who implored Hurst to keep him up to date with the project. Buckley offered his publication as a medium for laying Hurst's plans before the weekly's readership. In mid-April, Hurst received a solicited letter from historian George Bancroft and a petition from twenty American Methodist scholars who were studying in Berlin. The latter seconded the need for both a Methodist university in Washington and for "a university which shall permit of no discrimination as to color, sex, or religious conviction of its students."

On the negative side, some of Hurst's correspondents warned of budding opposition to the university project. George F. Comfort, dean of fine arts at Syracuse University, exercised great caution in writing to Hurst. He correctly assumed that the "local interests" brandished by Syracuse President James R. Day would lead to friction between the two institutions. James Buckley reported some vocal

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45 James M. Buckley to John F. Hurst, 11 April 1890, Hurst Papers.

46 George Bancroft to John F. Hurst, 14 April 1890, Hurst Papers.

47 One of the students, Franklin E. E. Hamilton of Boston, later became the third chancellor of the American University. Petition, Methodist Students in Berlin, 13 May 1890, Hurst Papers; *Christian Advocate*, 3 July 1890, 423.

48 George F. Comfort to John F. Hurst, 11 February 1890 and 24 February 1890, Hurst Papers. Comfort offered his services to Hurst in his initial letter. He withdrew the offer shortly thereafter, presumably because he feared
opposition at a New York conference to a resolution of support for the university; the motion, however, later carried by a sizable margin.\textsuperscript{49} From the beginning, John Newman warned Hurst that his own alma mater, Dickinson College, might work against the project within the Baltimore Conference. Two months later, Newman reported that while he had solicited support for the university from every conference at which he had presided, the supporters of Connecticut's Wesleyan College were lining up against it.\textsuperscript{50}

In early May, Hurst and Newman took the university plan before the Board of Bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church. At their semi-annual meeting, the board went beyond the adoption of a general resolution supporting higher education in general and resolved to advocate the planned "national university." They accepted Methodist sponsorship for the enterprise because it "would be of great service to both church and the state." The bishops did, however, cite the financial need of existing institutions and suggested that an endowment of two million dollars be raised from "men

\textsuperscript{49}James M. Buckley to John F. Hurst, 11 April 1890, Hurst Papers.

\textsuperscript{50}John Newman to John F. Hurst, 6 February 1890 and 23 April 1890, Hurst Papers. At the time, Newman seemed to dismiss the mounting opposition from Wesleyan: "I am surprised at the littleness of the friends of Middletown, they stand in their own light. . . . [Such] opposition is born of locality."
of great wealth who may forward" the new university.\textsuperscript{51} At that same meeting, Hurst's colleagues took account of his emotional burdens and new-found responsibilities and relieved him of some of his episcopal duties for the upcoming year.\textsuperscript{52}

Hurst took advantage of the time to sail to Europe with his three youngest children, Carl, Helen, and Paul. While the trip presumably served as a balm to soothe the family's recent loss, Hurst also used the opportunity to study European universities. While in Great Britain, Hurst reported "studying the University of London"\textsuperscript{53} as a possible model for his own project. Hurst visited other influential universities during the weeks the family spent at Tübingen, Geneva and Paris.\textsuperscript{54} The family, minus Carl, who remained behind to study in London, left for the United States on August 27, 1890.\textsuperscript{55}

\textsuperscript{51}Washington Evening Star, 14 May 1890, 3.

\textsuperscript{52}Osborn, Hurst, p. 303.

\textsuperscript{53}John F. Hurst to Albert Osborn, 17 June 1890, Osborn Papers. In a letter to Charles C. McCabe, Hurst also reported on his observations in Europe: "I am studying matters here somewhat with reference to the University [emphasis his], and hope that I shall be of use in Washington. Our plan will succeed. We are working for the future!" John F. Hurst to Charles C. McCabe, 20 June 1890, Hurst Papers.


\textsuperscript{55}Osborn, Hurst, 303-304.
Upon landing in New York, Hurst received word that Carl had been stricken with typhoid fever. The bishop returned to London on the next available ship and helped nurse his son to health. As a consequence, Hurst did not return to Washington until mid-October.\footnote{\textit{Ibid.}}

Hurst arrived in Washington just in time for the semi-annual bishops' meeting on October 30. In late September, a committee of Washington businessmen had appealed to their peers to help raise the remaining sixty-five thousand dollars outstanding on the purchase of the site. That solicitation, however, fell well short of the goal. Bishop Newman arrived in Washington a few days before the meeting and granted an interview to the \textit{Evening Star} in which he listed the virtues of the university project. Once again, he emphasized the need for a Christian-based, coeducational university that could utilize the educational resources of Washington.\footnote{\textit{Washington Evening Star}, 23 September 1890, 8, and 27 October 1890, 9.} Hurst took advantage of the occasion to plan another meeting on behalf of the university movement.

This second meeting, held on November 3, 1890 in the Metropolitan Memorial Church, once again featured Bishop Hurst as presiding officer. Twelve out of the sixteen Methodist Episcopal bishops attended and four spoke at length. Henry O. Claughton, who was active in the national
university movement, was the sole laymen on the program. Bishop Thomas Bowman followed the opening prayer and hymn with an appeal for donations from Washingtonians to launch the project until more national support could be solicited. Bishop William X. Ninde followed Bowman. He contended that the proposed university should match the unbribled greatness and diversity of American society. It would serve as the "crown" of the Methodist educational system, while also providing instruction to students "of all creeds, and all races and every condition of life." Ninde went on to push the need for a great and truly Christian university:

We don't want godless schools, dear friends. In this University, let God's book be the classic of classics; let every exercise be saturated with the spirit of the gospel of Jesus Christ and let the humblest Christian worker feel reinforced by the learning, the influence and the prestige of this National Methodist University.

Bishops John H. Vincent and Henry W. Warren followed Ninde. Vincent emphasized the longstanding ties between higher education and Methodism, while also describing the proposed university's broad appeal to Protestants, national orientation, and commitment to American institutions.

58 Washington Evening Star, 4 November 1890, 8.

59 Ibid. In its account of the meeting, the Star once again omitted a speaker's reference to the desirability of multi-racial education at the proposed university. Compare with: Bishop William X. Ninde, Stenographic Report of the Meeting in the Interest of the National University held in Metropolitan M. E. Church, Washington, D.C., 3 November 1890, Hurst Papers.
Warren stressed the importance of American higher education, a fact that he thought would prompt wealthy men to give to the proposed Methodist university. Major Henry O. Claughton concluded the event by evoking the memory of George Washington, who had been an early supporter of the national university idea. Claughton despaired that "legislators and politicians [did] not have patriotism enough" to create such an institution. In the absence of such leadership, he praised the Methodists for underwriting the project.

By the close of the first year of his activity on behalf of the Methodist university, Hurst had mustered widespread support for the project. Through the efforts of Hurst's episcopal colleagues, many of the conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church had already endorsed the plan. In addition, many Protestant clergymen,

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61 Claughton was quite active in the National University movement and represented its interests before the officers of The American University a few months later. Minutes, Executive Committee, Board of Trustees, 27 June 1891, The American University. Hereinafter cited as: Executive Committee. Lengthy accounts of the November 3 meeting appeared in the Washington Evening Star, 4 November 1890, 8, and in the Christian Advocate, 13 November 1890, 750. In expressing support for Bishop Hurst and his efforts, the editor wrote: "Although many years may elapse before his ideas are fully realized, yet such faithful and persistent effort will doubtless be rewarded with success.", 750.

62 Dr. Charles W. Baldwin, a member of the Baltimore Conference and longtime secretary of The American University, maintained a list of conference actions on behalf of the
noteworthy lay persons, and a number of educators had given Hurst their support. Perhaps as important, he could count the influential Methodist press and the major Washington newspaper, the Evening Star, among his supporters. To illustrate the importance of the Washington location, Hurst had also garnered public support from members of Congress, government officials, and local civic leaders. In October 1890, Hurst added an endorsement from President Benjamin Harrison. Despite this growing list of supporters, Hurst had come to realize that it was time to give form to what was then only an idea and a parcel of land.

63 Harrison wrote to inform Hurst that he would be unable to attend the November 3 meeting on behalf of the university. His response did, however, include a strong endorsement: "This movement should receive, and I hope it will receive, the effective support and sympathy, not only of all the members of your great Church, but of all patriotic people. . . . It must be a National University, with strong emphasis on both words." Benjamin Harrison to John F. Hurst, 31 October 1890, Hurst Papers.
CHAPTER FIVE

THE INCORPORATION OF THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY

I

Hurst's efforts in 1890 focused on the acquisition of both property and support for the erection of a Protestant, graduate university in the Nation's Capital. During the second year, he moved to establish the university as a legal entity. January 1891 also marked the first time that the institution was given a name: the "American Methodist University," soon to be shortened to "American University", an obvious attempt to make it appear less sectarian. Beyond that, the name helped to distinguish this private endeavor from a renewed movement to create a federally-funded, national university in Washington.¹ The new year also saw Hurst beginning to select men and women from among those identified as supporters to serve as incorporators and

¹Charles W. Baldwin, Notes, 1923?, Early History Collection and Leland Stanford, Sr., Signed Pledge for $10,000, 23 January 1891, Hurst Papers. Stanford pledged money towards the purchase of "the site of the American University."
Evidence suggests that Senator and Mrs. Leland Stanford became the focus of Hurst's efforts to establish the corporation. In January, Hurst outlined a four-page appeal to Stanford, in which he cited the need for a "fortress of Christian Truth . . . at the National Capital." To that end, he asked that Stanford emerge as the patron and spokesman for the project. Stanford, in declining health, rejected the notion of becoming deeply involved in the creation of another university, but he did pledge ten thousand dollars towards the acquisition of land. In February, both Senator Stanford and his wife rejected further attempts to involve them officially with the university. They cited their ongoing efforts to open the Leland Stanford, Jr. University in California that fall.²

²Among Methodist educators, both John F. Goucher, President of the Women's College of Baltimore (later Goucher College) and William F. Warren, President of Boston University, rejected invitations to join the board of trustees. Goucher cited time as a problem, but also hinted at possible conflict from the fact that both institutions would seek support from the Baltimore Conference. John F. Goucher to John F. Hurst, 22 March 1891, Hurst Papers; John F. Hurst to William F. Warren, 2 June 1891, William F. Warren Collection, Boston University Archives, Mugar Library, Boston University, Boston, Massachusetts.

³John F. Hurst, Draft Appeal to Leland Stanford, [18-91], Hurst Papers; Leland Stanford, $10,000 Pledge, 23 January 1891; Jane Lathrop Stanford to John F. Hurst, 7 February 1891, Hurst Papers; Leland Stanford, Sr. to John F. Hurst, 18 February 1891, Hurst Papers. First Stanford President David Starr Jordan noted that Senator Stanford was in waning health in 1890 and desired to open the university during his lifetime. The Leland Stanford, Jr. University opened October 1, 1891. Stanford died less than two years
Hurst convened the first meeting of the incorporators at the Arlington Hotel in Washington on May 28, 1891. Participants included: Charles W. Buoy and John A. Wright of Pennsylvania; David H. Carroll of Maryland; and Washingtonians Andrew B. Duvall, Benjamin F. Leighton, Elizabeth J. Somers, Matthew G. Emery, Benjamin Charlton, Hosea B. Moulton, John E. Beall, Samuel W. Woodward, and Brainard H. Warner. As their first official act, they considered a charter proposed by Duvall, the preamble of which read as follows:

Know all men by these Present, that the undersigned citizens of the United States, desiring to associate ourselves and to become incorporated in order to establish and maintain in the District of Columbia, under the auspices of the Methodist Episcopal Church . . . An Institution for the promotion of Education and Investigation in Science, Literature and Art . . .

The founding charter, written according to the laws of the District of Columbia, established the name of the institution as "The American University" and listed twenty

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Minutes, Board of Trustees, American University, 28 May 1891, American University Archives (Hereinafter cited as: Board of Trustees.) and Certificate of Incorporation of the American University, 28 May 1891, recorded 3 June 1891, Early History Collection.
founding trustees. In addition to the incorporators, the board of trustees included: Robert E. Pattison of Pennsylvania; James McMillan of Michigan; Julian S. Carr of North Carolina; John E. Andrus and Mark Hoyt of New York; William M. Springer of Illinois; and Mary S. Logan of Washington. The charter allowed for up to fifty trustees, yet it required that the chancellor of the university and at least two-thirds of the board be members of the Methodist Episcopal Church. In addition, it established the university as a home to graduate study in "All branches of Science, Literature and Art . . ." and included a broad statement on the hiring of a faculty to maintain such a curriculum.  

The incorporators approved the charter unanimously. They subsequently adjourned and reconvened that same day as the board of trustees of The American University. Bishop Hurst proposed a list of by-laws which were approved unanimously. These provided for semi-annual meetings in May and December, formalized the election of officers and an executive committee for the corporation, and established terms of office and provisions for the removal of trustees. The by-laws also identified three university officials: the university chancellor; the secretary of the university; and the registrar of the university. The board then elected Mark Hoyt and Matthew Emery, respectively, as president and treasurer for the trustees. By a unanimous vote, Bishop

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5Certificate of Incorporation, 28 May 1891.
Hurst became the first chancellor of The American University. The board elected Charles W. Baldwin of Baltimore to serve as secretary for the university, as well as for the corporation. Reverend Albert Osborn of Buffalo, New York, filled the undefined post of university registrar. ⁶

Following the election of officers, the newly-constituted board launched into the business at hand. Hurst presented the names of sixteen people to fill remaining vacancies on the board. Of the sixteen, four were Methodist bishops, five others were Methodist clergy, and three were members of Congress. The list included: Reverend James M. Buckley, editor of the *Christian Advocate*; President William W. Smith of Randolph-Macon College in Virginia; Reverend Charles Cardwell McCabe, a well-known Methodist fund raiser assigned to the Church Extension Society⁷; and Charles C.

⁶Board of Trustees, 28 May 1891. Osborn had served as an assistant to Hurst during his years as resident bishop for Buffalo. He would serve much the same purpose in Washington, although Hurst borrowed a more officious title from his recent travels to England: "For my part I consider the word "Registrar of the higher character, and so it stands in the London University, and is a very honorable office . . ." Hurst appeared, however, unsure about when Osborn's duties would begin: "It is possible we may want you to come on earlier, but I am inclined to think we will try and make special arrangements to get along until you finish up your year [fall 1891]." John F. Hurst to Albert Osborn, 6 March 1891, Osborn Papers, American University Archives.

⁷For accounts of McCabe's fund raising abilities and rise to prominence within the Methodist Episcopal Church, see: Frank Milton Bristol, *The Life of Chaplain McCabe, Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church* (New York: Revell, 1908) and William E. Ross, "The Singing Chaplain: Bishop Charles Cardwell McCabe and the Popularization of the 'Battle Hymn of the Republic,'" *Methodist History* 28 (October
Glover, chairman of Riggs Bank in Washington, D.C. The board also voted to recognize the President and Vice President of the United States, the Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives as *ex-officio*, honorary members of the corporation.\(^8\)

Other business included: setting at fifteen the quorum for meetings; consideration of a proposed merger of the university with the professional schools of another institution; and the transfer of the land and related obligations from Hurst to the board of trustees. Hurst then presented his concept for the educational structure and physical plant of the university. John E. Beall followed Hurst's presentation with a motion "to employ a Landscape Architect to lay off the grounds and also to plant trees at an expense not exceeding $1,000." That option carried, as did one setting salaries for the secretary and registrar of the university.\(^9\) The executive committee of the board convened in June 1989): 22-32.

\(^8\)Board of Trustees, 28 May 1891.

\(^9\)Ibid; *Christian Advocate*, 4 June 1891, 367, 374. Bishop Hurst's papers contain notes and diagrams that show he had contemplated the structure of the university from the beginning. His scheme included four or five departments, depending upon whether he separated government from the "Philosophical" department (which also included psychology, logic, political economy, and sociology). The other three departments focused on the sciences, language and literature, and the study of history. He planned for these departments to be housed in four separate buildings. A library/administrative building, possibly combined with a
to discuss the proposed merger with the national university's professional schools. These included: a medical school; school of dentistry; and law school. After the executive committee met with emissaries from the national university, it rejected the proposal on the grounds that "the American University is not at the present time prepared to assume the responsibility which would be involved in its acceptance."\textsuperscript{10}

Hurst, whose episcopal duties were light at the time, concentrated on continued fund raising and publicity for The American University.\textsuperscript{11} In May 1891, the Board of Control of the Epworth League, an organization for Methodist Episcopal youth, endorsed a plan for raising $300,000 towards both construction of and endowment for the new university. The Epworth League conference instructed each local league to collect one dollar for each local member. A year later, university officials placed the goal at $500,000 and offered "a beautiful and suggestive certificate" for each chapel, rounded out Hurst's vision of the campus. University buildings would face a major boulevard; however, it was unclear whether that meant an extension of Massachusetts Avenue or a widened and straightened Loughboro Road (later re-christened Nebraska Avenue). John F. Hurst, Miscellaneous Notes on Buildings and Departments, 1890?, Hurst Papers.

\textsuperscript{10}Executive Committee, 27 June 1891.

\textsuperscript{11}Osborn, John Fletcher Hurst, 304.
contributor to the Epworth Fund. On the other end of the fund raising spectrum, Hurst and his followers continued to identify potential major donors for the project. This continued even as Hurst publicly announced his intention to aim appeals primarily towards rank and file members of the Methodist Church.

At the same time, Hurst continued to promote the university to a variety of media. In addition to the Washington newspapers, the Christian Advocate and its editor, James Buckley, continued to trumpet Hurst's achievements. It printed the Bishop's appeal for support from the members and friends of Methodism. In the same issue, Buckley

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12 Christian Advocate, 25 June 1891, 422; University Courier I (September 1892): 9.

13 Reverend Charles C. McCabe, in a letter dated July 10, 1891, suggested that Hurst approach Hetty Greene, a New York millionaire who by some accounts was worth thirty million dollars. "We have nothing to lose anyway ..." McCabe wrote. "I think an effort to secure some of this vast fortune for the cause of God will be just what we ought to make. Somebody will get this money." Charles C. McCabe to John F. Hurst, 10 July 1891, Hurst Papers.

14 In a July 1891 interview, Hurst identified his central fund raising strategy: "We shall make our appeal primarily to our own Church—indirectly to all people who, from benevolent, patriotic or religious considerations, feel that this is the right place to establish a central university." Reprint from Kate Fields Washington, 22 July 1891, Hurst Papers. A speech by Hurst's friend, Reverend William Bartlett, may be the fullest expression of the "common man" ideal in fund raising. In an October 1891 address, he argued: [The Methodists] are a mighty denomination. They can gather the necessary money in driblets. They have rich men, and what is a most blessed thing they have poor men. And the poor man's dollar will build bigger buildings than the rich man's millions and better ones." University Courier I (September 1892): 11.
editorialized that "[t]he establishment of this university is believed to be in the order of divine Providence." Such an initiative demanded a greater financial foundation to insure its success and extend its influence.¹⁵

Hurst also agreed to an interview for Kate Fields' Washington, a publication that provided him a popular platform for voicing his standard themes: the need for a graduate, Methodist university based on the German model; the desirability of coeducation in university study; and the correctness of Washington as the site for such an institution.¹⁶ By the end of the summer, Hurst had begun stating the need for an endowment of ten million dollars. This appeared to be a public expression of the appeal he had made to Leland Stanford months earlier. The ten million dollar figure -- five times that suggested by the Board of Bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church -- would become bonded to Hurst's fund raising efforts for years to come.¹⁷

II

In late 1891, Hurst took advantage of another chance to promote The American University within the Methodist Church. His episcopal colleagues selected him to organize the Second

¹⁵Christian Advocate, 20 August 1891, 551, 553.

¹⁶Kate Fields' Washington, 22 July 1891.

¹⁷John F. Hurst, Appeal to Leland Stanford, [1891]; American University and the General Conference, 8 and 59; Evening Star, 14 May 1890.
Ecumenical Methodist Conference, scheduled to meet at the Metropolitan Memorial Church in mid-October. Early that month, Hurst twice convened the executive committee of the board to discuss how they might use the conference "to further the interests of the University." The group voted to sponsor a reception on the evening of October 15 at the Arlington Hotel.\(^{18}\)

By one account, Hurst served as "organizer, guide, and inspirer" for the Ecumenical Conference. In addition to welcoming delegates from France, Germany and Italy in their native tongues, Hurst included President Benjamin Harrison and two of his cabinet secretaries, Secretary of the Treasury Charles Foster and Secretary of the Interior John W. Noble as speakers for one of the conference sessions.\(^{19}\)

Interspersed with conference events were assemblies on behalf of The American University. The October 15 reception, given by the local trustees at a cost of approximately one thousand dollars, featured a number of addresses on behalf of the university. Two days later, the university sponsored an excursion by members of the Ecumenical Conference to the university site.\(^{20}\) The Christian Advocate praised Hurst's use of the Ecumenical Conference to spread

\(^{18}\)Osborn, Hurst, 305; Executive Committee, 5 & 6 October 1891.

\(^{19}\)Osborn, Hurst, 305-308; Faulkner, "Hurst," 354.

\(^{20}\)University Courier I (December 1892): 43.
the word about The American University. During the twelve day conference, it reported that Hurst "took a carriage and visited all three mass-meetings, delivering . . . in-spiring words respecting The American University . . ."21

Following the success of the Second Ecumenical Conference, Hurst began to focus on gaining the endorsement of the upcoming General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Although the Omaha Conference was still months away, the Bishop strove to ensure recognition by the quadrennial meeting of Methodism. A resolution of support from the Methodist College Presidents was a necessary ingredient for success.22

The college presidents met in Cleveland, Ohio, on November 11, 1890. Although Hurst did not attend, he made certain that President James W. Bashford of Ohio Wesleyan was there to represent the university's interests. The day after the meeting, Bashford reported to Hurst that although the meeting unanimously sanctioned The American University, it came only with significant lobbying and compromise. Among other things, opponents did not want the university to have a special advantage with respect to the resources of the Methodist Church. The presidents of Northwestern and

21Christian Advocate, 22 October 1891, 709-710, and 29 October 1891, 732.

22Although Hurst had lobbied many of the college presidents, he had been warned of possible opposition to his plans. See John P. Newman to John F. Hurst, 6 October 1890 and 23 April 1890, Hurst Papers.
Wesleyan both resented Hurst's suggestion that no "real post graduate work" was being done in Methodist institutions. In the end, however, they voted "to recognize the unique and providential position of the American University." It permitted the continuance of Hurst's special relationship to the Epworth League, but voted to require a five million dollar endowment before the university could open its doors.  

The board of The American University did not convene in December 1891, as scheduled, but met in special session on March 31, 1892. At that meeting, Bishop Hurst reported on the support given their educational initiative and announced an ongoing effort to have government collections opened to student research. Following his prediction that the university would secure one million dollars and begin its first building in the upcoming year, Hurst proceeded to enumerate...  

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23 James W. Bashford to John F. Hurst, 12 November 1891, Hurst Papers. Bashford presented a more positive account of the meeting in a speech before the General Conference: "I think I can speak for all the college presidents in telling you that we feel no jealousy of The American University... [W]e would rather trust our colleges and universities to a Methodism which will wisely found and magnificently endow The American University. So the conference of the Presidents of Methodist colleges at its last session unanimously adopted a resolution asking the General Conference to give suitable recognition to this enterprise. James W. Bashford, "Providential Aspects of The American University," The American University and the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church (Omaha: Rees Printing Co., 1892): 38-39.
the reasons behind the special session.\textsuperscript{24}

First and foremost was the creation of a committee to guide the university's case through the upcoming General Conference. Secondly, Hurst sought the creation of the post of vice chancellor "to assist in the work necessary to the establishment of the University." The board initially elected William Waugh Smith, president of Randolph-Macon College, to that post. Smith eventually declined the office, despite Hurst's entreaties, and the post remained unfilled until March 1893.\textsuperscript{25}

Hurst also announced the need to elect a new president to replace Mark Hoyt, who resigned because of poor health. The board selected John E. Andrus of New York to serve in that capacity. Hurst also promoted the establishment of a "Woman's Fund", an attempt to organize the nation's women on the university's behalf. The board elected Mary Logan, wife of General John A. Logan, to head the movement. The

\textsuperscript{24}Board of Trustees, 31 March 1892; John F. Hurst, Report of the Chancellor to the Board of Trustees, 31 March 1892, Trustees Records, American University Archives. Hurst's report noted that "On July 7 the Executive Committee elected Dr. George W. Gray . . . to take charge of the Church at large in the interest of the University." That action took place the following July, suggesting that Hurst rewrote his report months after the meeting.

\textsuperscript{25}Three weeks later, at a meeting of the Executive Committee, Hurst announced that "Doctor Smith . . . could not accept the position." Hurst later led a second attempt to persuade Smith to accept the post. Although Smith remained active on the board, he remained steadfast in warding-off enlistment as vice chancellor. See: Executive Committee, 20 April and 7 July, 1892.
corporation also created a committee to begin the process of applying to Congress for a new charter, an action intended to give the nascent institution greater national visibility.26

In May 1892 Hurst finally had the opportunity to bring his appeal on behalf of The American University to the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church. After two years of taking the project to various components of the denomination, the General Conference provided access to delegates from all over the country, as well as visitors from all over the world. In the months prior to the General Conference, Hurst and the ad hoc committee worked to solidify support for the institution. Bishop Newman, who was responsible for arrangements for the conference, provided Hurst with both advice and assistance in taking his case before "the wealth of Methodism."27

Hurst arrived in Omaha a few days prior to the May 2 opening of the Bishops' meeting. Hurst's main effort came the following Sunday, May 8, at a mass meeting "held in the

26Board of Trustees, 31 March 1892.

27Executive Committee, 7 July 1892; John P. Newman to John F. Hurst, 23 March 1892, Hurst Papers. Newman helped support Hurst in his preparation for the meeting before the General Conference. In addition, he provided Hurst with advice and moral support: "Let us improve the golden opportunity. Give publicity to the notice. We will have ten days to prepare after your arrival."
interest of The American University." On that occasion, three of Hurst's fellow bishops, along with other noted Methodist clergy, a Methodist college president, an English delegate, and a representative of the Methodist press, joined Hurst on stage to promote the university cause.

The mass meeting at the General Conference was similar to previous meetings held on behalf of the university, but on a much grander scale. Hurst later described the meeting as "large and enthusiastic." As was customary and expected, the Bishop presided over the meeting and opened with an account of the first two years of his university movement. He presented an inventory of his supporters and proclaimed his aim to raise ten million dollars for the university. Hurst concluded with an attempt to distinguish his project from extant Methodist colleges. This clearly was intended to validate his desire for special recognition for The American University in an environment rife with concerns over institutional competition for the

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28 Osborn, Hurst, 309; University Courier I (January 1893); 55-56.

29 Omaha General Conference, [3], [5]; University Courier I (January 1893); 55-56. In March 1892, Hurst asked Dr. William F. Warren, President of Boston University, to speak on the university's behalf. Although it is clear that Warren rejected the invitation, no given cause has been found. John F. Hurst to William F. Warren, 8 March 1892, William F. Warren Papers, Boston University Archives.

denomination's educational support.  

The list of speakers that followed Hurst included some familiar faces, five of them university trustees. Bishop John P. Newman was first in line, with an early history of the university movement and praise for Bishop Hurst's initiative. Charles H. Payne, secretary of the Board of Education of the Methodist Episcopal Church, came next. He concentrated on the state of Methodist higher education in the United States and how The American University would serve as the "crown" that would "enrich and ennoble, the whole educational body and the whole Church." Bishop Charles H. Fowler followed with a long speech entitled: "The University, The Defender of the Faith." His address constituted a call to arms in a life and death struggle against heresy and Roman Catholicism. Without universities, he argued, Methodism would suffer the ignominious fate of

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31 Hurst, "The First Two Years of The American University," The American University and the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church (Omaha: Rees Printing Co., 1892), 7-10. In his address, Hurst professed accordance with the five million dollar restriction imposed by the Methodist college presidents: "Our plan is to raise a fund of $5,000,000 besides the buildings before we begin operations, but not to regard our equipment complete until we shall have raised $10,000,000."


the wooden ships that first confronted ironclad vessels. The American University, he concluded, located so providentially in the nation's capital, would help protect Protestant America from the joint evils of Jesuitism and skepticism.\(^3^4\)

The remaining addresses focused on many of the same themes, particularly the necessity for combating Roman Catholicism in Washington. The other speakers, however, added a few new justifications for denominational support. Hurst's confidant Charles C. McCabe, Reverend Frank M. Bristol, David H. Moore, editor of the *Western Christian Advocate*, Ohio Wesleyan President James W. Bashford, and Bishop James M. Thoburn all emphasized the necessary link between education and the ministry. Thoburn and McCabe, who was then Secretary for Church Extension, focused on the need for trained missionaries for work overseas. These speakers were joined by John E. Searles, Jr., of Brooklyn, New York, and Reverend William F. Moulton, a delegate from England.

Searles represented the trustees of The American University at the General Conference. Although speaking as a layman, he emphasized the need for Methodism to lead the way in creating a university of national significance that would provide moral training for America's youth. Toward that end, he petitioned for greater support of Bishop Hurst and

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the university that he had begun. Moulton, who spoke unexpectedly and therefore extemporaneously, praised the work begun and, while not promising wholesale support from abroad, assured the crowd that his countrymen would follow the institution's certain progress.35

The rigors of the meeting took their toll on Hurst, who remained in his room for several days to convalesce. He recovered enough to preside over two morning sessions toward the end of the conference.36 In addition to the meeting on behalf of The American University, the General Conference featured the quadrennial address of the Bishops, written and presented by Bishop Randolph S. Foster. The speech contained praise for the university, although Osborn later described Foster's words as "cordial though guarded commendation."37


36 Hurst's exhaustion following a conference meeting was not a singular event as is evidenced by his remarks concerning a regional conference a few months earlier: "You know what Sunday is to a presiding officer Conference week, and I do not think there will be much left of me by evening." John F. Hurst to Reverend James Mudge, 25 February 1892, New England Methodist Historical Society Collection, Theology Library, Boston University, Boston, Massachusetts.

37 Hindsight obviously colored Osborn's critical observation. Months after the General Conference, Charles W. Baldwin, writing in the University Courier, asserted that the speech "highly commended the enterprise." See: Osborn, Hurst, 309 and University Courier I (January 1893): 55. For the relevant text from the Bishop's address, see: "Extract from the Episcopal Address--May, 1892," American University
The climax of Hurst's efforts came on May 25, when the General Conference passed a series of resolutions on behalf of the institution. The resolutions recognized the Washington location and "the imperative duty of the Protestant Church" to counter the founding of The Catholic University. The conference also approved both the university's charter and board, while sanctioning a nationwide collection on behalf of the institution. That solicitation, christened the "Columbian Memorial Fund," was set for the following October. The General Conference's unanimous support, however, did not come without restrictions. In exchange for accepting "the patronage of [The American University] according to the terms of its charter," the General Conference adopted the five million dollar endowment requirement set by the Association of College Presidents. Thus, the university would need to build such an endowment, "over and above" the value of its real estate, before it could admit a single student. According to Osborn, Hurst reacted to the

and the General Conference, 58.

38 Year later, Reverend Charles W. Baldwin claimed authorship for the resolutions: "You may not know that the resolutions adopted by the Gen Conf. of '92 were composed by me. There may have been verbal changes suggested by some one tho' I do not remember." Charles W. Baldwin to Albert Osborn, 17 January 1928, Miscellaneous Correspondence, Board of Trustees, American University Archives.

39 University Courier I (September 1892): 3. All votes were unanimous, save the one providing for the Columbian offering. There was one dissenting vote on that resolution. In his report to the board of trustees, Hurst gave much of the credit for gains at Omaha to the committee selected to
vote by turning to a friend and proclaiming: "I could kiss the whole Conference." The five million dollar requirement, while only half of the fund raising goal mentioned by Hurst in his speech before the mass meeting, was and would remain the subject of a good deal of controversy. The Methodist college presidents and the Board of Education of the Methodist Episcopal Church were adamant concerning this stricture. Some even wanted to place a time limit on the acquisition of such funds. Although Hurst supported the restriction, in part to get the support of the General Conference, the associated debate clearly showed the strength of local interests among the Methodist colleges and universities. This was particularly true for those institutions, such as Northwestern, Syracuse, Wesleyan, and Boston memorialize the conference. John F. Hurst, Report, 7 December 1892, Hurst Papers.

40 Osborn, Hurst, 318.

41 James W. Bashford to John F. Hurst, 12 November 1891, Hurst Papers; Quadrennial Report of the Board of Education of the Methodist Episcopal Church to the General Conference of 1892 (New York: Board of Education, [1892]), 8. The Board of Education, of which Hurst was a member, used its 1892 report to strengthen guidelines for Methodist colleges. The following sentiment was especially pertinent given the corresponding debate over support for The American University: "... new educational enterprises are being constantly inaugurated in the name of Methodism that are doomed to total or partial failure from the beginning. The history of such enterprises can be given in a very few plain words: a big educational scheme, a big building, a big debt, a big failure ..." This debate over regulating such efforts gave immediate rise to the creation of the University Senate of the Methodist Episcopal Church.
University, that had begun supporting graduate study.\textsuperscript{42}

III

At the close of the General Conference, Hurst traveled to Denver to visit his eldest son, John LaMonte Hurst. Afterwards, he presided over conferences in Colorado, Utah, and Wyoming. Hurst returned to Washington on July 5, two days before a meeting of the executive committee of the board of trustees.\textsuperscript{43} At the July 7 meeting, Hurst reported on the General Conference's endorsement and of his plans for the Columbian offering slated for October 1892. He also announced that Reverend George W. Gray, who had considerable experience in fund raising, would be employed for one year as general secretary for the university.\textsuperscript{44}

The next meeting of the full board of trustees took place on December 7, 1892. At that time, Hurst moved to solidify the operational structure of the institution. Toward that purpose, the by-laws were amended both to

\textsuperscript{42}James W. Bashford to John F. Hurst, 12 November 1892, Hurst Papers. Reverend Charles W. Baldwin, who wrote the General Conference resolutions, recalled years later: "Of course I was obliged to insert the resolution requiring an endowment of $5,000,000 before opening to overcome the opposition of Dr. [William F.] Warren [of Boston University] & some other educators." Charles W. Baldwin to Albert Osborn, 17 January 1928, Osborn Papers.

\textsuperscript{43}Albert Osborn, Diary, Osborn Papers.

\textsuperscript{44}Executive Committee, 7 July 1892. For a more complete description of the "Columbian Thank Offering" and Gray's other fund raising activities, see the following chapter.
enlarge the executive committee and to define its responsibilities. The latter included control of all expenditures, custody of the buildings and grounds, and supervision of all the university's employees. In addition, the board established a financial committee to direct the corporation's loans and investments. The by-laws gave the Chancellor a seat on both committees. The board also authorized the executive committee to adopt an official seal for the institution.45

The final major organizational task was the re-chartering of the university by the United States Congress. Hurst believed that this action would "confer the powers and privileges necessary to a great University."46 The committee of trustees charged with this task had been appointed at the March 31, 1892 meeting, but it would be the following winter before Congress acted upon the requisite legislation.47 William M. Springer, a trustee of the university and a congressman from Illinois, introduced the bill of incorporation (H.R.10304) on January 23, 1893. Five days later, another trustee, Senator Redfield Proctor of Vermont, introduced the same act of incorporation (S.3792) in the

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45Board of Trustees, 7 December 1892.

46University Courier III (March 1894): 4-5.

47Board of Trustees, 31 March 1892. The board directed the committee "to prepare a charter and apply to Congress for the same. . . ." The members of the committee were: Hurst, Aldis B. Brown, Andrew B. Duvall, S. S. Henkle, Benjamin F. Leighton, and William W. Smith.
Senate. The only discussion emerged in the Senate, where there was confusion between The American University and proposals for a national university. This misunderstanding probably stemmed from the fact that Proctor chaired the Senate Committee on the University of the United States. Both bills were referred to the respective Committees on the District of Columbia.48

The legislation sailed through committee, spawning little debate and few changes. The bill was called up in the House on January 13, 1893. The only changes concerned the spelling of proper names, the deletion of the name of a recently-deceased trustee, the capitalization of the article "The" in the name of the official name of the institution, and the addition of a clause requiring two-thirds of the board to be members of the Methodist Episcopal Church. The following day, the Senate passed the House version of the bill. President Benjamin Harrison signed the bill into law on February 24, 1893.49 The board of trustees would

48Congress, House, Representative Springer Introduces A Bill to Incorporate the American University, H.R.10304, 52nd Cong., 2nd sess., Congressional Record (23 January 1893), vol. 24, 812; Congress, Senate, Senator Proctor Introduces a Bill to Incorporate the American University, S.3792, 52nd Cong., 2nd sess., Congressional Record (28 January 1893), vol. 24, 902. When asked whether the bill pertained to the National University, Proctor responded: "This is not a bill concerning the National University but the American University, an institution under the auspices of the Methodist Church. It is a mere act of incorporation."

49Congress, House of Representatives, Consideration of a Bill to Incorporate the American University, H.R.10304, 52nd Cong., 2nd sess., Congressional Record (13 February
convene under the Congressional charter at their December 13, 1893 meeting.\textsuperscript{50}

President Harrison's signature on the bill of incorporation marked the culmination of Hurst's efforts to establish The American University as a legitimate entity. In the meantime, Hurst had assembled his supporters as a legal corporation and brought the university's case before the quadrennial conference of the Methodist Church. As the movement entered its fourth year, Hurst began efforts to raise money and to place bricks and mortar along the still-barren ridge. The five million dollar requirement would have to be met and the university opened before his vision could be realized. These efforts would consume the remainder of his life.

\textsuperscript{50}Board of Trustees, 13 December 1892.
CHAPTER SIX

THE CHANCELLORSHIP OF JOHN FLETCHER HURST:

THE STRUGGLE TO RAISE MONEY

I

Once Hurst had secured both the Congressional charter and the nominal support of the Methodist Episcopal Church, he began trying to realize his educational vision of The American University. By May 1893, he had moved to establish the administrative structure of the fledgling institution. To the initial triumvirate of Charles W. Baldwin, Albert Osborn and himself, Hurst had earlier added a general secretary, Reverend George Gray, to oversee the fund raising machinery of the university. At the May 24, 1893 meeting of the board, Hurst finally announced the appointment of a vice chancellor, Reverend Samuel L. Beiler of New York. The position had been authorized a year before to provide Hurst with assistance in the day-to-day operations of the university. It appeared that Hurst finally had the enterprise moving on a course which seemed to promise imminent success.1

1Board of Trustees, 24 May 1893.
To this administrative structure, Hurst added many symbols and features expected of an institution of higher learning. By the end of 1893, the Trustees had fully incorporated the changes required by the Congressional charter. In addition, they had adopted a motto, Pro Deo et Patria -- "For God and Country", as well as a university seal. The latter seemed to borrow official sanction from the Federal Government by depicting a southwest view of the U.S. Capitol building. In addition, the seal featured both the motto and the date of the first charter, 1891.2

The corporation also inaugurated a publication, the University Courier, to promote "the interest of Christian Education." While editorially committed to "the scope and present condition of university education" in the United States and abroad, the Courier rapidly became a de facto organ of The American University. In the first year of publication, it concentrated on the general state of university education but, before long, the editors began to focus on The American University itself. According to its editors, the need for strengthened Protestant higher education in the United States became synonymous with the need for this new, Methodist institution.3

2Board of Trustees, 13 December 1893.
3University Courier I (September 1892): 1. In November 1892, the Courier represented itself in the following advertisement: "During the year the University Courier will contain articles from some of the most prominent educators of the country. You cannot afford to do without it."
Fund raising was of prime importance to Hurst and his assistants. With the five million dollar General Conference restriction firmly in place, raising money became essential to the institution's survival. In 1892, Hurst delegated many of these responsibilities to Reverend Gray, the general secretary. As events would reveal, Hurst's appointment of Gray created problems that would sidetrack the fund raising activities of the university.¹

Gray did hit the ground running, however. By mid-July he had enlisted a fellow minister, John A. Foster, to help him develop a publicity and fund raising campaign for the university. The campaign strategy he envisioned would try to combine such potent images as service to Methodism, patriotism, and Abraham Lincoln. The campaign would involve calls for donations, subscriptions, and bequests in exchange for such collectibles as medals, certificates, or prints.²

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¹In announcing the selection, "[Hurst] said he had secured the Rev. Dr. George W. Gray a man of wide fund raising experience to take charge of the Columbian Offering and . . . moved that Dr. Gray be employed for one year as General Secretary at a salary of $3,000. and necessary traveling expenses." Executive Committee, 7 July 1892.

²John A. Foster to George W. Gray, 16 July 1892 and George W. Gray to "My Dear Brother", 22 July 1892, Early History Collection. The latter is a fund raising letter which stated the university's goals for donations beyond the Columbian Thank Offering.
Gray's diverse plans would also diminish his efforts on behalf of the Columbian Thank Offering, the fund raising event for which he had been employed in the first place. As a result, the university's attempts to exploit a largely secular, patriotic event fell far short of anticipated goals.6

Other fund raising initiatives were often clumsily-executed and poorly-monitored. Even worse, they sometimes generated vehement opposition from many Methodist educators and clergy who considered the university's wide-ranging efforts a direct challenge to local interests and regionally-funded institutions. W. H. Wilder, President of Illinois Wesleyan College, challenged Gray with an argument that would become a mainstay for critics of the university. He declared that he would withhold opposition so long as The American University stuck to graduate and professional education and did not compete with existing colleges for support. Wilder contended, however, that the institution's lofty goals were incompatible with the grassroots fund raising that Gray and Hurst promoted. Besides, such efforts

6In Gray's final report to the board, he began with the following description of the Columbian Thank Offering: "From my election, July 1st, 1892, to January 1st, 1893, my time was mainly given to pushing the Columbian Thank Offering ordered by the General Conference, which, it seems to me, came one year too soon to reap the best harvest from the Columbian spirit. During this six months I did the best I could to awaken an interest which could produce the largest returns, but the results were not so flattering. . . ." Report of the General Secretary [George W. Gray] to the Board of Trustees, 24 May 1893.
did compete directly with local and regional support for Methodist colleges. Another minister opposed Gray's position outright, citing the more pressing needs of both established colleges and of new educational institutions opening in the South.\(^7\)

One of Gray's first schemes involved the production of a Lincoln medal to generate contributions for a Lincoln Memorial Hall. These medals, which were minted of aluminum,\(^8\) were to be given out in exchange for a one dollar donation. Gray believed that African-Americans in the South and Civil War veterans' groups, most notably the Grand Army of the Republic, would welcome an opportunity to honor President Lincoln. The lack of any coordinated effort in the South, coupled with the crushing poverty experienced by the freedmen of that region, made it an untenable source of funding. Nevertheless, one supporter suggested that Gray solicit contributions from Southern blacks in conjunction with annual Emancipation Day festivities. There is no evidence, however, that any such effort materialized.\(^9\)

\(^7\)J.C. Hartzell to George W. Gray, 3 August 1892 and James S. Chadwick to George W. Gray, 4 August 1892, Early History Collection. W. H. Wilder to George W. Gray, 17 August 1892. Gray received similar letters from William King, President of Cornell College (Iowa). William King to George W. Gray, 27 July 1892 and 12 August 1892, Early History Collection.

\(^8\)E. J. Seward to George W. Gray, 21 August 1892, Early History Collection.

\(^9\)Wilbur L. Thirkield to George W. Gray, 9 January 1893, Early History Collection.
Gray did focus his efforts on the Grand Army of the
Republic by attempting to enlist the support of their influen­
tial leadership. Without consulting with anyone in Wash­
ington, Gray "secured the services" of G.A.R. staffer, P. L. 
McKinnie, who promoted both the Lincoln medal and the uni­
versity in a letter to the organization's membership. For
the most part, however, the G.A.R. leadership shied away 
from the institution because of its sectarian overtones. 
This failed initiative notwithstanding, Gray unsuccessfully 
tried to have McKinnie placed on the university's payroll at 
a salary of $2,500 per year. In his attempts to persuade 
Hurst to hire McKinnie as an agent, Gray also pointed out 
that he was "a prominent member of an anti catholic [sic] 
order," likely the American Protective Association, which 
flourished during the early 1890s.10

Gray's efforts on behalf of the Lincoln Hall campaign 
resulted in the production of architectural plans for a 
heroic Gothic building to honor the martyred President. 
Although the board never officially accepted architect
Wesley Arnold's plans for the building, the Washington

10George W. Gray to John F. Hurst, 13 August 1892 and 5 
January 1893, Hurst Papers; P. L. McKinnie to E.[sic] Os­
born, 23 September 1892, Early History Collection; P. L. 
McKinnie to "Dear Sir or Comrade," 6 September 1892, Early 
History Collection; George W. Gray to John Fletcher Hurst, 5 
January 1893, Hurst Papers. In addition to the cost of 
minting the medallions Gray authorized McKinnie to have 
stationary printed on behalf of the Lincoln Hall effort. P. 
L. McKinnie to George W. Gray, 28 September 1892, Early 
History Collection.
Evening Star featured them in an article and announced that the cornerstone would probably "be laid about the first of next October [1893]." The writer revealed that a million dollars would be raised in the upcoming year in order to fund construction. In reality, fewer than eight thousand medals were minted and shipped out, and a large portion of those remained unsold. It became clear through this and other projects that Gray's expenses often outweighed any derived financial benefit.11

In addition to the Columbian Thank offering and Lincoln Hall campaign, Gray also served as editor for the University Courier, ran the Epworth Campaign, and coordinated fund raising for the American University League (a women's organization founded in support of the university). By the end of 1892, he had developed plans to build both an Asbury Hall, to honor the first American Methodist bishop, Francis Asbury, and a center for advanced study, which he named the "School of Discovery." He proposed raising the requisite funds using the slogan, "A million for The American University in 1893." To validate his fund raising drive, Gray pledged ten thousand dollars in the event the goal was

11 Wesley Arnold to George W. Gray, 28 December 1892, Early History Collection; Washington Evening Star, 18 February 1893; E. J. Seward to George W. Gray, 31 March 1893, Early History Collection.
reached prior to January 1, 1894.\textsuperscript{12} Although the Epworth campaign and Asbury Hall fund were somewhat successful, Gray's efforts generally tried the patience of members of the board.\textsuperscript{13} In addition to inaugurating expensive and misguided fund raising schemes, Gray seemed to have a knack for accomplishing the exact opposite of what he intended to do.\textsuperscript{14}

The board took action at its May 24, 1893 meeting, when it abolished the office of general secretary. Likewise, the
\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{12}Board of Trustees, 7 December 1892. George W. Gray to John F. Hurst, 13 August 1892, 15 August 1892, and 4 January 1893, Hurst Papers; Report of General Secretary [George W. Gray] to the Board of Trustees of The American University, December 1892. At the 23 November 1892 meeting of the Executive Committee, Gray submitted plans for Asbury Hall and professorships, support for which was to come from Methodist preachers, as well as a constitution for the American University League.
  
  \item \textsuperscript{13}Gray's report at the executive committee's meeting of 2 December 1892 apparently raised a number of red flags. Immediately after Gray presented his report, W. W. Smith resolved to set up an auditing committee to examine accounts of the secretary and treasurer. Benjamin Leighton passed another pertinent resolution: "[A]ll the officers and all other persons authorized by the University to collect or receive moneys, shall immediately on such collection and receipt, be and they hereby are requested and required to pay the same to the Treasurer, who alone is authorized to give receipts and discharges for moneys collected or donated to the University." Leighton's resolution also forbade the creation of debts or liabilities on behalf of the university without prior permission of the Chancellor or Executive Committee. Executive Committee, 2 December 1892.
  
  \item \textsuperscript{14}A prime example might be his letters to Methodist college presidents attempting to assuage their objections to the project. Evidence suggests that Gray's voluminous correspondence may have instead galvanized opposition to The American University. Gray to Hurst, 13 August 1892; Report of the General Secretary [George W. Gray] to the Executive Committee of The American University, [November 1892].
\end{itemize}
body announced that Gray's ties to the university would end on July 1, 1893. Gray would later blamed his failures on the "opposition of the Executive Committee" and its unwillingness to invest money for the sake of raising money. Because of the board's scrutiny, Gray claimed that it would have taken him 250 years to raise the money required for the university to open. As a parting shot, Gray cited the trustees reluctance to pledge significant amounts of their own money for the university. In the end, Gray's admonishments fell on deaf ears.\(^\text{15}\)

At best, Gray's fund raising schemes were grandiose and shortsighted; at worst, some grew suspicious that he put his financial interests ahead of those of the university. As it turned out, Gray's ineptitude actually paled when compared to the economic misfortune the nation as a whole confronted in the spring of 1893.

\textbf{III}

In February 1893, the Reading and Philadelphia Railroad went into bankruptcy, which led to a contraction in normally healthy investment in railroad stock. In April, the U.S. Treasury's gold reserve fell below the one hundred million

\(^{15}\text{Board of Trustees, 24 May 1893; Gray, Report to Board, 24 May 1893. Gray submitted a more complete report for the December 13, 1893 meeting of the board. It contains a more detailed response to his dismissal. Report of the General Secretary [George W. Gray] to the Board of Trustees, 13 December 1893.}\)
dollar minimum for the first time since the nation returned to the gold standard in 1879. The uncertainty which followed led to weakening stock prices, tighter money, and a less favorable balance of foreign trade. To further exacerbate the problem, New York had emerged as the nation's banking center. Consequently, a fifteen point loss on Wall Street on May 3, 1893, served as the catalyst for a depression of disastrous proportions. By all accounts, "The Panic of 1893" had begun. Economic uncertainty would continue in varying strength until eventual recovery during the summer of 1897.16

For The American University and its embryonic fund raising program, the depression could not have come at a worse time.17 As early as August 1892, Congressman J. D. Taylor effectively withdrew his subscription for one thousand dollars when his investments in Washington did not prove as lucrative as he had anticipated.18 In April 1893, Mary Logan, who led fund raising efforts on behalf of


17Lawrence Veysey reported that the panic only slightly affected established institutions, primarily because society had accepted the concept of higher education. Smaller colleges and, presumably, emerging institutions would suffer the greatest. Veysey, Emergence of the American University, 264.

18J. D. Taylor to Charles W. Baldwin, 4 August 1892, Early History Collection.
the American University League, reportedly had talked to many potential donors with little tangible success. Secretary Charles Baldwin informed Hurst that Logan had grown discouraged with the effort, although she would work on behalf of the institution for five more years.19

While Baldwin met with some success through his oversight of the Columbian Thank Offering, excuses by potential donors proliferated as the panic deepened.20 In June 1893, Samuel Beiler reported that he had "received some assurances that they [donors] may or will do something in the autumn." He thought most were cautious "because of the financial uneasiness . . . ."21 Unfortunately, the autumn was no better. Following the New York Central Conference, Beiler reported that "[t]imes do not seem to improve much here in N.Y. . . . I only received one pledge . . . ."22 Beiler maintained accounts of his extensive travels and fund raising encounters. The responses he recorded in 1894

19 Charles W. Baldwin to John F. Hurst, 19 April 1893, Hurst Papers. Logan later resigned from the Board in 1898 because she believed the movement was not going forward in a timely fashion. Mrs John A. Logan to John Fletcher Hurst, 21 October 1898, Hurst Papers.

20 Samuel L. Beiler to Charles W. Baldwin, 2 May 1893, Early History Collection.

21 Samuel L. Beiler to Albert Osborn, 8 July 1893.

22 Samuel L. Beiler to Albert Osborn, 19 October 1893. See also H. L. West to Samuel L. Beiler, 29 July 1896. As events would show, fund raising efforts by Chancellor James R. Day may have adversely affected Beiler's efforts in Central New York.
illustrated the economic climate and the challenge that he and the others faced:

"Will not say now, but will give. I intend to help."
"intend to have a hand in it when times change."
"Nothing would give me more pleasure but not now."
"Not till this year is closed."
"Would like to, but not in these times."
"Will when this year is past."  

To make matters worse, the depression affected trustees, among whom Gray detected reluctance to offer the university substantial financial support. In October 1894, John E. Andrus, a New York businessman and president of the board of trustees, referred to the economic climate as "the darkest hour yet--" Trustee Hosea B. Moulton, a lawyer and future judge, paid only half of his one thousand dollar pledge. In acknowledging a loss of over thirty-nine thousand dollars through investments, he admitted: "I have met with business reversals that have crippled me beyond the power of immediate recovery."  

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23 Samuel L. Beiler, Notes on Possible Donors, [December 1894?], Early History Collection.

24 Beiler to Osborn, 19 October 1893.

25 Hosea B. Moulton to Samuel L. Beiler, 24 July 1896. John Beall, a founding trustee, also wrote requesting an extension of time for his pledge. John Beall to American University, 2 January 1894, Early History File. In reviewing the university's progress, the Washington Post painted a much brighter picture, one that was obviously based on Hurst's public accounting of subscriptions on behalf of the institution. It used subscription totals as evidence to conclude that the university had made a "splendid showing" in "one of the gloomiest and most disastrous years in the business history of this country." The writer concluded that such a showing "may be regarded as a sure foreshadowing
As if to illustrate Gray's shortcomings, economic misfortune seemed to dog the university's every step. The seemingly ironclad ten thousand dollar pledge from Senator Leland Stanford, Sr. remained unpaid and drifted further from Hurst's grasp. At first, Stanford denied having made the pledge, despite the written copy that Hurst maintained. After Stanford's death in 1893, Hurst approached his widow for the payment of the pledge and, perhaps, more substantial support. Mrs. Stanford respectfully disavowed knowledge of the pledge and declined support for any institution apart from the one bearing her son's name. As events would transpire, the Senator's estate went through a lengthy and complicated probate process that made any payment impossible, although the pledge remained on the university's books for over a decade.26

Another financial setback occurred when an unidentified donor withdrew a ten thousand dollar pledge because of Bishop Hurst's strong stand on temperance reform. Temperance leader Frances Willard wrote to console Hurst on the loss and promised him that his stand would reap greater benefits as a result. Willard's words, however, did little of ultimate success." Washington Post, 24 January 1894, 3.

to restore money to the university's modest coffers.\textsuperscript{27}

In spite of such setbacks, not all of the financial news was bad. In March 1894, the University Courier reported the "queenly benefaction" of $100,755 in stocks and securities by an unidentified women in New York City.\textsuperscript{28}

At the May 2, 1894 meeting of the board, Hurst identified the donor as Mary Graydon, the reclusive daughter of New Yorker John Graydon. He also reported that she had made a generous provision for the university in her will.\textsuperscript{29} When the value of some of the stocks faltered years later, Miss Graydon further emphasized her support for the university by adding another fifty-five thousand dollars in securities to her initial gift. During her lifetime, she gave the university a total of $316,000. In spite of this significant support, Mary Graydon requested anonymity and demanded that her gifts go to educational purposes rather than "bricks and mortar."\textsuperscript{30}

Including her bequest, Graydon's contributions to The American University totaled well over $800,000. Following her death, the university named a gymnasium after her grandfather, Patrick Clendenen. Twenty years later, in spite of

\textsuperscript{27}Frances E. Willard to John F. Hurst, 15 February 1893, Hurst Papers.

\textsuperscript{28}University Courier 2 (March 1894): 1.

\textsuperscript{29}Board of Trustees, 2 May 1894.

\textsuperscript{30}Washington Evening Star, 10 March 1927.
her desire to remain anonymous, the university named its women's residence hall after her. The COURIER noted a number of smaller gifts of securities, although many of those lost value in the volatile stock market of the mid 1890s. A similar problem came from gifts of real estate, most of which were valued by donors far in excess of par and which, in many cases, came with hidden difficulties. Among such gifts were lots adjacent to campus. These donations came primarily from developers who saw the university as a catalyst for the development of the surrounding countryside.

Such enterprises soon became an embarrassment to the administration, when some of these developers represented themselves as agents of the university and, in two cases, borrowed the university's name. One even went so far as to remove the fence between the university site and some lots he was trying to sell. As a result, at the executive committee's June 6, 1896 meeting, it resolved:

to publish in the Church Papers a statement that The American University has not sold, and is not selling any land, and never has had, any interest in land sold by other parties, claiming that their ground

31 Ibid.

32 John F. Waggaman, who had assisted Hurst in the purchase of the university site, and Thomas E. Waggaman, who served as treasurer for The Catholic University, developed lots in Wesley Heights, a name that was obviously intended to appeal to Methodist buyers. John F. Waggaman to John F. Hurst, 28 February 1891, Hurst Papers and S. C. Swallow to J. D. Croissant, 20 June 1091 [1901], Early History Collection. See also Nuesse, Catholic University of America, 139.
is contiguous to the University site, and that its sale is of advantage to The American University.\textsuperscript{33}

The confusion continued to result in complaints from some who had purchased lots in American University Park.\textsuperscript{34} As the direct result of such legal pressures, Hurst implemented the executive committee's resolution by taking out advertisements to make it clear that the developers did not speak for the university. Those same developers had only recently purchased advertising space in the University Courier and continued to advertise in the Christian Advocate (New York).\textsuperscript{35}

\textsuperscript{33}The Board passed another motion notifying "The American University Heights Co." and "The American University Park Co." to stop using the name of the university "in any of their Real Estate Speculations. . . ." Executive Committee, 6 June 1896.

\textsuperscript{34}In addition to misleading sales practices, the lots in American University Heights often left something to be desired. Many lots were a mile from the university and did not front a street, because the city had not extended Massachusetts Avenue beyond the intersection with Wisconsin Avenue. Others bordered on marshy farmland and were valued considerably less than the sale price. Edwin W. Jackson to Albert Osborn, 5 October 1901, Early History Collection.

\textsuperscript{35}The University Courier contained an advertisement for American University Heights in its second issue. It listed George H. Corey and J. D. Croissant as "trustees" [of the company], which understandably led many buyers into thinking that the development was linked financially to the university movement itself. As late as May 1895, the University Courier contained a full page advertisement for American University Heights. The presentation featured a letter of reference from Bishop John P. Newman, a Hurst confidante and long-time member of the Board. University Courier I (October 1892): [unnumbered page] and III (March 1895): [12]. On page eight of the March 1895 issue, an editor inserted a filler which referred readers to the advertisement. It read: "We understand that lots in The American University
Among those victimized were a number of elderly ministers who invested their money in the venture because they thought it would help the university. The confusion was understandable given that one of the worst offenders, J. G. Croissant, was a Methodist minister. Others were told that the property was not taxable, an interesting claim given that the university property itself was taxed by the District of Columbia. One of Croissant's clients purchased land, after the developer allegedly explained "the importance of keeping the Catholics from securing these lots," a possible reference to the Waggamans. Some tried to get Hurst to intercede on their behalf, but the university had little influence in the matter beyond the disclaimers that it had published. Resulting litigation made the charges public, a fact that brought the university more negative publicity.36

Other gifts of real estate included royalties on a coal Heights are selling rapidly. See last page for their advertisement." A similar advertisement appeared as late as 25 November 1897 in the Christian Advocate. See C. W. Simmons to James M. Buckley, 2 December 1897, Early History Collection.

36Reverend F. B. Riddle attributed his paralysis "to brooding over having been deceived into buying lots near the American University." When Riddle failed to get help from Hurst, his lawyer warned "that the matter touches the good name of the University closely." Several letters mentioned uncited evidence that the university received a payment for each lot sold. No evidence exists to support this accusation. S. C. Swallow to John F. Hurst, 5 June 1901; 21 June 1901; 28 June 1901; John F. Hurst to S. C. Swallow, 24 June 1901; and Edwin W. Jackson to John F. Hurst, 8 July 1901, Hurst Papers.
mine, properties in Ocean Grove, New Jersey\textsuperscript{37}, and a Tivoli, New York sanitorium. Hurst accepted the facility from General Watts DePeyster because DePeyster's minister believed that the General would subsequently fund the construction of a Hall of Languages. When further gifts did not materialize, the university was left with a property for which costs routinely outstripped profits. Eventually, the board agreed to lease the unsalable, unprofitable facility to the Methodist Episcopal Deaconess Society.\textsuperscript{38}

\textsuperscript{37}The donor of the coal mine initially guaranteed the value of the gift to be one hundred thousand dollars, but later thought better and retracted the guarantee. The donor later admitted that the prospects of profits from the coal mine were poor. Thomas H. Pearne to John F. Hurst, 12 December 1893, Hurst Papers; Thomas H. Pearne to Trustees of The American University, 23 November 1894, Early History Collection; Thomas H. Pearne to John F. Hurst, [April/May?] 1899, Hurst Papers. The New Jersey properties were accepted conditionally; however, it became obvious that expenses and taxes would outweigh potential income. The executive committee eventually voted to return the property to the donors, noting that "during the seventeen months past, [the property] has cost the university $1913.26 over and above all receipts obtained from them." Belle N. Chandler to John F. Fletcher Hurst, 13 July 1896 and John F. Hurst to Belle N. Chandler, 24 July 1896, Hurst Papers; Kennard Chandler to Samuel L. Beiler, 24 July 1897, Early History Collection; Executive Committee, 30 June 1898.

\textsuperscript{38}General Watts DePeyster to John F. Hurst, 29 May 1895 and 27 July 1895, Hurst Papers; Executive Committee, 20 October 1896, 11 January 1897, and 25 March 1897; University Courier VI (September 1897): 5. Three years later, Addie Grace Wordle, Corresponding Secretary of the Deaconess Society, outlined the problems the society had with the lease arrangement, including the lack of a right-of-way between the property and the public highway. Such problems made it impossible for them to operate under an agreement that required them to pay off the debt incurred by the university. Addie Grace Wordle to John E. Andrus, 25 July 1900, Board of Trustees Records. In 1902 the sanitarium was operating at a deficit of $5,000. At that time, the board
Other properties came with unforeseen tax burdens or other factors which made them unprofitable. Such gifts would only exacerbate the university's already considerable tax burden, the result of its inability to secure an exemption from property taxes until it opened its doors to students. Early on, Hurst probably regarded these taxes as a temporary nuisance. Over the years, these taxes became burdensome, because they came out of the university's already slim operating budget. By 1902, the District of Columbia's annual assessment had risen to twenty-three hundred dollars, which the Courier pointed out would pay half the salary of "a great professor."^39

Beyond gifts of real estate, the university received many books, artifacts, and curiosities that did little to improve its poor financial standing. Albert Osborn, who assumed the responsibilities of librarian as well as registrar, took charge of the many books that came in. Many came from Methodist clergy and were understandably religious in nature. Osborn listed and often reviewed such gifts in a column in the University Courier.^40 The university also received a number of Bibles important because of their voted "to dispose of this property on the best terms possible." Board of Trustees, 14 May 1902.

^39Executive Committee, 13 February 1894 and 27 April 1894; University Courier IX (December 1902): 6.

^40University Courier II (June 1894): 9; IV (September 1895): 10-11; IV (March 1896): 10; IV (July 1896): 4, 9-10; and VI (December 1896): 7-10.
association value -- such gifts included Bibles once owned by John Wesley's father and by Francis Asbury, the first American Methodist bishop. Other early gifts included: a collection of prehistoric stone implements; two boxes of fossil fish; a mineralogical collection; a two-headed snake (preserved in a jar); historically significant pieces of furniture; and a variety of historical documents, many related to the history of Methodism. Another prospective donor offered Bishop Hurst a piece of John Wesley's pear tree. There is no record of Hurst's response.

One of the most unusual and, for the university, expensive gifts was an enormous telescope lens crafted by a retired Pennsylvania minister. In 1893, John Peate of Greenville, Pennsylvania, announced his intention to build the world's largest telescope lens for the new Methodist university. The proposed lens would be over five feet in diameter and weigh close to a ton. Peate placed the potential value of such a lens at twenty-five thousand dollars.

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41 University Courier I (December 1892): 44 and I (May 1893): 77.

42 University Courier IV (December 1895): 1; II (December 1893): 3; VI (September 1897): 3; W. E. Catlin to John F. Hurst, 15 December 1891 and M. E. Brieden to John F. Hurst, 25 June 1900, Hurst Papers. Gifts of furniture included: a table and chairs that had once belonged to Senator Charles Sumner; the "war desk" of Lincoln's Secretary of War, Edwin M. Stanton; and a sofa that had once been the property of Lincoln himself. To date, these items have not been located and no records exist concerning their disposition. University Courier V (December 1897): 3; V (October 1896): 2; and IV (July 1896): 2.
In exchange, he wanted the university to provide thirty-five hundred dollars for the supplies he needed for the project. In addition, he expected the lens to be mounted in a telescope of comparable size. In 1894, Vice Chancellor Beiler accepted Peate's offer and agreed to provide money for supplies.43

A Pennsylvania foundry cast the lens in June 1895, after which Peate began the two-year process of grinding the glass into usable shape. After many shipping delays, the lens arrived on campus in August 1898. Fanfare over the apparatus later faded when experts advised against mounting it on account of defects.44 The lens would remain in storage at The American University for over thirty-five years. In 1934, the university gave it to the Smithsonian Institution.45

The proliferation of such gifts did little to improve the university's shaky operating budget. Clearly, books, artifacts, and curios would have been more appropriate gifts for an established institution. Endorsements and building pledges certainly were more helpful in meeting the General

43 John Peate to John F. Hurst, 28 September 1893, Hurst Papers; Samuel L. Beiler to John Peate, 21 October 1894, Early History Collection; Executive Committee, 28 November 1894; and University Courier III (December 1894): 3.

44 University Courier VI (September 1897): 5 and VII (November 1898): 4-5 and W. R. Warner to Henry Ives Cobb, 6 November 1903, Early History Collection.

45 J. E. Gray to H. E. Walter, 9 October 1934, Early History Collection.
Conference restriction; however, these did not pay the salaries, traveling expenses or printing costs needed for day-to-day operations. On December 11, 1893, the university's cash on hand had dropped to $111.35. Five months later, it dropped below one hundred dollars. Expenses ate up much of this account, particularly during the year Gray worked on the university's behalf. A report presented at the May 1893 meeting of the board meeting showed that Gray's expenses from December to May totaled $337.15. Beiler, Baldwin, and Osborn combined reported a total of $208.56, a figure which included supplies for running the university office.  

As the depression deepened, the time between pledges made and actual payment grew longer. In December 1892, less than forty thousand dollars of what had been pledged toward the land fund had been collected. Ten thousand dollars of the outstanding sixty thousand dollars was Stanford's uncollectible subscription. A year later, Hurst reported that ministers had pledged $61,800 to the Asbury Memorial Fund. Of that, thirty-nine hundred dollars had been collected. Although the University Courier reported a

46"Report made at May-meeting, including 6 mo-"," [Charles W. Baldwin, 24 May 1893], Board Records.

47Report of the Secretary [Charles W. Baldwin] to the Board of Trustees, 7 December 1892.

significant increase in bequests to the university, it was clear that planned giving would not help the institution meet its current needs. These problems would persist for the remainder of Hurst's years as chancellor.

IV

Central to Hurst's fund raising failures was his inability to attract a major benefactor for The American University. His failure did not stem from a lack of effort, however, as he sought the equivalent of a Johns Hopkins or Josiah Clark throughout his tenure as chancellor. From the beginning, Hurst maintained a list of millionaires to be targeted as potential donors. In early 1893, he tried to attract financier Jay Gould as a major benefactor, but to no avail. Hurst solicited larger contributions from the likes of General Watts DePeyster, Clement Studebaker, and Senator Stanford, yet no one would step forward as a major benefactor.

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49 *University Courier* IV (July 1896): 3; V (October 1896): 2; and IX (December 1902): 5, 7.

50 John F. Hurst to Jay Gould, 29 February 1893. Hurst's papers contain his draft letter, along with voluminous notes and arguments on behalf of support for the university. Hurst and his assistants also made personal contacts with prospective donors, usually while traveling to or from regional conferences or meetings on behalf of the university. In 1892, while traveling to the Presiding Elder's Convention in Illinois, Charles W. Baldwin met with Clement Studebaker, Gustavus Swift, and a number of other potential backers. See: Charles W. Baldwin to John F. Hurst, 17 December 1892, Hurst Papers.
benefactor. In subsequent years, Hurst or his associates would approach a number of other persons of wealth, including John D. Rockefeller, Jr., Gustavus Swift, Philip D. Armour, Washington Duke, Phoebe Apperson Hearst, and Frederick H. Rindge, each of whom declined to become major patron for the financially-strapped university.

Hurst also worked hard to enlist the aid of Daniel B. Wesson, the wealthy Massachusetts gun manufacturer. Wesson, who was unapologetically anti-Catholic, did agree to become a university trustee in 1892. Years later, he was asked to fund the development of a "College of Protestant Civilization," a request clearly aimed at his religious bigotry.

Hurst's last hope for meeting the General Conference restriction appeared to be Andrew Carnegie. Although George W. Gray had singled out the philanthropist as early

51 Leland Stanford, Sr. to John F. Hurst, 9 February 1894; John F. Hurst to General Watts DePeyster, 27 June 1895; and Clement Studebaker, 2 July 1892, Hurst Papers.

52 John D. Rockefeller, Jr. to John F. Hurst, 4 January 1901; John F. Hurst to Mrs. Gustavus F. Swift, 25 July 1897; John F. Hurst to Philip D. Armour, 17 June 1898, Hurst Papers; Wilbur L. Davidson to Washington Duke, 23 March 1899, Early History Collection; and Phoebe Apperson Hearst to John F. Hurst, 3 April 1897 and 1 June 1897. With the example of the Stanford's clearly in mind, Hurst suggested to the Swift's that they give as a memorial to the memory of their recently deceased daughter.

53 John F. Hurst to Daniel B. Wesson, 1 January 1898; Daniel B. Wesson to John F. Hurst, 8 January 1898, Hurst Papers; and Wilbur L. Davidson, 23 March 1899, Early History Papers.
as 1893, Hurst's efforts came in the waning years of his
tenure as chancellor. Some counseled Hurst to use the
influence of his friend, President William McKinley, to
snare the evasive Carnegie. This became even more important
when it was rumored that Carnegie would fund the creation of
a national university, a notion that McKinley opposed.
With the board of trustees divided over the best way to
approach Carnegie, McKinley's death seemed to take the steam
out of their efforts. Nevertheless, the university's at­
tempts to enlist Carnegie's support would reemerge after
Hurst's death in 1903.

V

The specter of The Catholic University served as the
rationale for some of The American University's fund raising

54George W. Gray to John F. Hurst, 26 January 1893, Hurst Papers.


56Board of Trustees, 11 December 1901; John F. Hurst to Thomas N. Boyle, 21 December 1901, Hurst Papers and Thomas N. Boyle to Wilbur L. Davidson, 3 January 1902, Early History Collection.
efforts. Clearly, the timing of the university's founding was linked to the competition offered by the graduate institution over in Brookland. As early as April 1890, the New York East Methodist Conference passed a resolution supporting "the establishment of a great Protestant University" to counter "the ambitious designs for papal aggrandizement at the capital" that The Catholic University represented.\(^5\)

This wording reflected a growing trend during the 1890s, when many Protestants began viewing the rising tide of immigrants, many of whom were Catholic, as a corrupting influence both to urban politics and to the long-established religious culture of the United States.\(^5\) Increasingly, Hurst and those who supported him looked to exploit this sentiment to the university's advantage.

In seeking support for the university, Hurst would admit the "movements of the Roman Catholics" served as a catalyst for the establishment of The American University. He even succumbed to language which borrowed from contemporary racist jokes when he claimed that the "something under every Washington woodpile . . . is Romanism." Other


university supporters clearly saw "the Methodist Episcopal Church as the Providential Antagonist of Romanism." The tactic was well-entrenched by the time of the 1892 General Conference, when many of the speakers, including Hurst, took calculated jabs at The Catholic University. As with financial problems, attempts to profit from anti-Catholic feelings would outlive Bishop Hurst.

In 1892, the trustees added new members who represented the two contemporary strains of anti-Catholicism. One was Reverend James M. King, who served as general secretary of the National League for the Protection of American Institutions, a committee of correspondence that pushed for legislation to protect public schools and other institutions from Roman Catholic encroachment. The other was Daniel B. Wesson, the Massachusetts-based inventor and arms


60 At the General Conference, Hurst emphasized the desirability "of planting a Protestant force on the banks of the Potomac ..." Bishop Charles H. Fowler and Reverend Frank M. Bristol warned of Catholicism's "merciless superstitions" and "the prostituting influences of superstition and bigotry," respectively. David H. Moore, editor of the Western Christian Advocate, argued that the American University would lead the fight against the "Romish Goliath" that had exhibited a "deliberate purpose to plant another Vatican [in Washington] ...." See: The American University and the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church (Omaha: Rees Printing Co., 1892).

manufacturer, who unabashedly sympathized with the American Protective Association, an anti-Catholic organization that flourished in the early to mid-1890s. In a letter to Charles W. Baldwin, Wesson's minister admitted that his parishioner's "one hobby [was] antagonism to Romanism."

Wesson later confirmed his sympathies in a letter to vice chancellor Samuel L. Beiler when he stated:

> When I see the tremendous influence of the Romosh [sic] Church . . . I feel that the A.P.A. has not come along one day to [sic] soon. . . . My interest in the American University has not abated . . . because . . . of it's [sic] necessity in saving and preserving our Republic."

Wesson seldom attended board meetings and had little influence beyond the twenty-five thousand dollars he contributed to the university. On the other hand, trustee Mary S. Logan spent several years as an advisor to Hurst and as director of the university's women's guild. She may have represented many supporters when she confirmed her support for "sounding the alarm in the name of Protestantism."

Although she cautioned that it "must be done adroitly," Logan considered it "the right way to enlist people."  

Reverend Beiler echoed such sentiments in the pages of the University Courier, when he questioned the motives

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62Wallace McMullen to Charles W. Baldwin, 30 March 1892 and Daniel B. Wesson to Samuel L. Beiler, 16 March 1894, Early History Collection.

63Mary S. Logan to John F. Hurst, 10 February 1893, Hurst Papers.
behind the placement of "the Pope's University at the Capital of this Protestant nation . . ." He went on to challenge supporters to endow The American University so that the Pope would learn "that there is a Protestant University at Washington, better . . . in every way than his pet scheme for capturing the educated men and women for America."\textsuperscript{64}

The emergence of the American Protective Association, a secret, anti-Catholic society, posed both promise and problems to Hurst and his colleagues. In general, the better-educated, eastern clergy shunned the A.P.A.; however, the organization shared with The American University considerable support in the midwest. In March 1894, Reverend Dennis Murphy, a member of the Iowa state council of the A.P.A., offered his services to raise money for a building and professorship to represent "the General Subject of Religion and the Republic." In his correspondence, Hurst did not appear averse to hiring Murphy as an agent or even to getting an endorsement from the A.P.A., yet he and Beiler made it quite clear that they wanted no public alliance between the two. In one letter to Murphy, Beiler may have summed up the university's philosophy in dealing with the Catholic issue: "We believe the two [opposition to Catholicism and support for advanced study] can be combined, and the blows

\textsuperscript{64}University Courier III (March 1895): 9. The Courier frequently ran reports on the successes and failures of their Roman Catholic counterparts at Catholic University. These were clearly designed to inspire readers to support Protestantism's answer to the Catholic University.
at Rome be more effective, if perchance they may seem a little less of a direct attack." Although Beiler advised Hurst to send Murphy a commission, no record exists either of this taking place or of Murphy raising money on the university's behalf.  

Although Hurst and his supporters publicly disavowed themselves from the more virulent strain of anti-Catholicism brandished by the A.P.A., they seemed to have few qualms over raising fears about the potential for Catholic ascendency in Washington. Their language was liberally sprinkled with militaristic and confrontational imagery as they sought to "enlist" supporters to counter Roman Catholic "aggression." The recently-established Methodist university would serve as a "bulwark against the ... encroachments of Catholicism ..." and "would go farther than anything else to checkmate the ambitious and dangerous plans of Rome." According to one editor, contributors would not only serve Protestant Christianity, but as "generous and far-seeing Methodist patriot[s]," national interests as well.  

In retrospect, it is difficult to gauge the extent to which fear of The Catholic University benefitted The

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65 Dennis Murphy to John F. Hurst, 15 March 1894; 11 April 1894; 21 April 1894; Samuel L. Beiler to Dennis Murphy, 10 May 1894; Samuel L. Beiler to John F. Hurst, 31 May 1894, Hurst Papers; and Dennis Murphy to Samuel L. Beiler, May 1894 and 19 June 1894, Early History Collection.

66 Northwestern Christian Advocate, 16 July 1902, 10-11; Christian Advocate (New York), 26 February 1903, 17; and Western Christian Advocate, 22 November 1899.
American University. While many Protestants viewed Roman Catholicism as a major contributor to the growth of intemperance, vice and political corruption, these concerns did not fill the university's coffers. From the beginning, concerns over the founding of The Catholic University had been a driving force behind the university's founding. It, along with concern over increased secularism in higher education, continued to be central to the university's fund raising efforts during Hurst's tenure and beyond. Nevertheless, given the uncertain economic climate and competition from other institutions, these factors did not hasten the university's opening.

VI

While established, in part, to confront "the Romish goliath" in Washington, The American University also found itself in competition with a number of other established or proposed institutions. To some extent, the university competed for attention with some of the non-sectarian universities such as Cornell, Johns Hopkins, Clark, and Stanford. More significantly, Hurst's visits to regional conferences and his reliance upon congregation-based solicitations placed The American University on a collision course with established Methodist institutions. This competition not only affected fund raising, but served to create ill will with a number of Methodist educators. To make matters
worse, Hurst and his colleagues had to confront almost annual attempts to create a federally-sponsored, national university in the Nation's Capital.

By the mid 1890s, the aforementioned universities were established and well-endowed. The fact that they were predominately non-sectarian precluded direct competition for funds. Although the University Courier's editors could not condone the secularism they represented, they carefully reported on educational developments at these institutions. This led to the development of philosophical competition as Hurst and his followers sought to maintain a place for religion in university education. They would argue that in spite of such educational advances, a sectarian university was needed to fulfill the "broadest patriotic and Christian impulses." The American University would help to reverse the "widespread movement away from Church and religion."67

While some institutions were presented as models for emulation, state universities and private schools with a pronounced secular orientation became targets for criticism. Of the latter, Johns Hopkins seemed exempt from either

67 Nearly every number of the University Courier carried reports on contemporary developments in higher education. Johns Hopkins University and the Clark University, both of which emphasized advanced study, were frequently featured. Other articles reported on the concomitant development of materialism and secularism in American higher education. One went so far as to refer to such developments as a "scholastic plague." University Courier II (September 1893): 9; II (December 1893): 4; II (June 1894): 2; and III (March 1895): 8-9.
Hurst's or Beiler's censure, but that may have stemmed from fact that its president, Daniel Coit Gilman, opposed the national university movement. One short article in the University Courier noted concerns over secularism in Baptist institutions, a likely reference to the University of Chicago.\textsuperscript{68} Most criticism, however, was reserved for Andrew Dickson White and David Starr Jordan, the founding presidents of Cornell University and Stanford University, respectively. White, the veteran of well-publicized battles with religious fundamentalists, was viewed as an enemy of both religion and denominational education. Jordan followed in his mentor's footsteps by attacking sectarian colleges as imperfectly-endowed, substandard institutions that relaxed standards to maintain enrollments.\textsuperscript{69}

Hurst and his colleagues did not hesitate to return criticism, particularly after Jordan endorsed plans for a tax-supported, national university. Wesley C. Sawyer, who provided the bishop with an account of Stanford University's first commencement, predicted that students at that institution would encounter "a materialistic skepticism, a

\textsuperscript{68}University Courier II (June 1894): 2.

\textsuperscript{69}University Courier V (February 1897): 6-8 and II (September 1893): 5. Beiler also criticized Jordan as dogmatic in his opposition to requiring Greek at the undergraduate level. Jordan, Days of a Man I, 86-87. Jordan also gave an unflattering description of a western New York camp meeting, in which he equated religious emotionalism to hysteria, see pp. 49-50. Jordan may have also incurred the wrath of Hurst and Beiler because of his public support for a "University of the United States." pp. 537-540.
fashionable intemperance, and a loose morality." Sawyer identified weakness "in the Departments of Literature and Philosophy" and, in a swipe at Jordan's training in ichthyology, added "Fishes, they understand [emphasis his]." The writer concluded that The American University would provide a much-needed haven from such a secular and unbalanced environment.70

While Hurst and Beiler fought secularism on philosophical grounds, The American University suffered financially from its competition with existing Methodist colleges and universities. Although the university had received the collective support of Methodist educators on several occasions, many eyed it with a combination of suspicion, envy and concern. This sense of competition would intensify as the economy worsened. From the beginning, Hurst received accounts of opposition at the conference level. Subsequently, his fellow college presidents had remained steadfast in imposing endowment restrictions at the Omaha General Conference.71

As the university began to expand its fund raising efforts in early 1893, complaints began to trickle in from across the country. An Ohio conference voted unanimously to

70 Wesley C. Sawyer to John F. Hurst, 17 June 1892, Hurst Papers.

71 Comfort to Hurst, 11 February 1890; John Newman to Hurst, 6 February 1890 and 23 April 1890, Bashford to Hurst, 12 November 1891, Hurst Papers.
defer contributing to The American University because of local needs, namely Ohio Wesleyan University and Berea College. Hurst received a similar letter from a Colorado pastor who argued that his primary responsibility was toward the University of Denver. Connecticut continued to be a problem in the east, as area Methodists directed all support to Wesleyan University. The South also provided a challenge, as William W. Martin struggled to open "the clenched fist of Southern Methodist[s] . . ." on behalf of The American University. Even within the Baltimore Conference, support for local Methodist colleges reduced collections for the university. Some Methodists regarded these solicitations as further evidence that the Bishops were out of touch with local interests and needs, particularly when Hurst publicly downplayed the institution's denominational ties. Clearly, many Methodists neither understood nor were willing to support such an institution.  

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72C. Gallimore to John F. Hurst, 15 April 1893 and W. C. Madison to John F. Hurst, 18 March 1893. Contributors also emphasized local needs. A Kokomo, Indiana minister cited such needs even as he transmitted $35.00 from the Northern Indiana Conference: "Our DePauw has universal needs now also. I "chip in" a little there too. We are about loaded down to the edge. We will get through however." William D. Parr to John F. Hurst, 21 December 1895, Hurst Papers.

73W. S. Winans, Jr. to Wilbur L. Davidson, 9 June 1902; William W. Martin to Samuel L. Beiler, 4 January 1895; and David H. Carroll to William W. Martin, 14 March 1899, Early History Collection. William North Rice, a professor at Wesleyan, complained that his words on the need for a Methodist university had been inappropriately used to support The American University. He requested, but did not receive,
Some of The American University's most potent opposition came from the presidents of Methodism's largest institutions. Many of them resented the fact that Hurst discounted the graduate work already being done at universities such as Boston, Northwestern and Wesleyan. They particularly opposed Hurst's desire to make The American University the only doctoral-granting institution of American Methodism.

Hurst did gather some evidence that Henry Wade Rogers of Northwestern and Bradford P. Raymond of Wesleyan were critical of The American University within the College Presidents' Association. While such opposition was


Bashford to Hurst, 12 November 1891 and Manley J. Mumford to Wilbur L. Davidson, 10 June 1901, Early History Collection.

Both men were instrumental in modernizing the curriculum at their respective institutions. Although a minister by training, Raymond attracted an impressive, research-oriented faculty at Wesleyan. Rogers, a former law professor, was an active Methodist layman. Nevertheless, his reorganization and expansion of Northwestern resulted in
certainly real, Hurst may have exacerbated the situation with frequently antagonistic responses to criticism. One such occasion arose when Hurst accused William F. Warren of Boston University of working against The American University. Although Warren exhibited great deference in denying Hurst's accusations, it is likely that the episode adversely affected relations between the two.77

A more bitter and long-standing feud developed between Hurst and James Roscoe Day, the former Methodist minister who served as chancellor of Syracuse University. Friction probably arose from the genesis of Hurst's project, as Day sought to protect both his faculty and financial standing from the new university. In addition, a number of Day's educational initiatives, such as the development of both a graduate school and a Christian-based school of sociology, actually paralleled many of Hurst's ideas. This probably


77B. P. Raymond to Samuel L. Beiler, 16 January 1896; Samuel L. Beiler to B. P. Raymond, 18 January 1896, Early History Collection; and William F. Warren to John F. Hurst, 27 December 1895, Hurst Papers. A rift also developed between Hurst and former board member William Waugh Smith, president of Randolph-Macon College. He and Hurst had an arrangement whereby The American University and Randolph-Macon would divide monies solicited by Smith. When Hurst later balked at the arrangement, Smith threatened legal action. William W. Smith to Samuel L. Beiler, 1 March 1895, 20 March 1895, 22 March 1895, 23 March 1895, Early History Collection.
contributed to problems between the two chancellors.\textsuperscript{78}

Hurst's supporters also accused Day of organizing elders within the Northern New York Conference to block fund raising on behalf of The American University. In addition, Day developed a knack for canvassing local churches and meetings just prior to fund raising trips by Hurst, Beiler, Baldwin, or Osborn. On one such trip, Osborn heard Day making statements against Hurst's educational plans.\textsuperscript{79}

As the result of such activity, Hurst's frustrations escalated into a spate of name-calling in which he referred to Syracuse as a superfluous "country college." Day countered with criticisms about Hurst's "impecunious" fund raising, while providing evidence of the remarkable growth of his own institution. In a March 1897 letter, Day chided Beiler for his work on behalf of The American University:

"You ought to subscribe $500 to Syracuse University for the sound educational thought which I gave you to the Christian Advocate! I wish I had you here in some position among us where you could render real value to the church instead of wasting your time in chasing rainbows!!"\textsuperscript{80}

\textsuperscript{78} From the time Day became chancellor at Syracuse, he struggled to modernize the institution on a very shallow financial foundation. Gilpin, \textit{Syracuse University}, 3-13, 113-125.

\textsuperscript{79} Edmund M. Mills to Samuel L. Beiler, 28 January 1895; J. B. Polsgrove to Wilbur L. Davidson, 11 May 1903; William W. Martin to Samuel L. Beiler, 20 November 1897 and 29 November 1897, Early History Collection.

In 1901, the Central Christian Advocate acknowledged the existence of a feud between Hurst and Day, when it called for a halt to the infighting and criticism of "our chief pastors [bishops]." Day finally proposed a truce after Hurst's death and shortly before his election as a bishop at the 1904 Los Angeles General Conference.81

As Hurst and his financial agents competed against established institutions throughout the country, a more compelling challenge arose within Washington itself. From the beginning, Hurst had attempted to portray The American University as the embodiment of the national university ideal. He went so far as to purchase a George Washington letter, in which the first president outlined the need for such an institution to preserve American values. Hurst carried copies of the letter to show to prospective supporters. As Hurst's plans developed, however, it became clear that his sectarian designs would not block efforts to establish a federally-sponsored institution.82

John W. Hoyt, who had held several academic posts in

81 Central Christian Advocate, 27 March 1901, 409; and James R. Day to Charles C. McCabe, 30 December 1902, McCabe Papers.

82 Hurst efforts would correspond with a major movement toward establishing a University of the United States. See Madsen, National University, 92-102 and Robert D. Calkins, "The National University," Science 152 (13 May 1966): 886-888. The Washington letter, which was later purchased from the Hurst estate, remains in the university's possession. George Washington to Robert Brooke, Governor of Virginia, 16 March 1795, American University Archives.
addition to an appointment as territorial governor of Wyoming, almost single-handedly revived interest in the national university idea. In 1890, he moved to Washington so that he could shepherd legislation through Congress. In both 1893 and 1894, the Senate Select Committee for the Establishment of the University of the United States reported favorably on the project, yet the measure never went before the entire body for a vote. By 1895, Hurst and Beiler orchestrated opposition to the legislation, particularly among prominent educators. In that year, they wrote a four-page leaflet entitled "Arguments vs. A National University," in which they used national concerns to mask the interests of The American University. The publication was sent to a long list of educators and legislators. In the University Courier, Beiler went to great lengths to portray the chairman of the Senate Committee, James Henderson Kyle, of South Dakota, as a Populist.

As the result of this campaign, Hurst and Beiler figured prominently in the committee's deliberation. Both testified at the committee hearing and supplied their

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arguments against the legislation. In the end, the committee split five to four in favor of a national university.

The short, yet effective, minority report closely resembled Hurst's and Beiler's leaflet. It included a history of why the cause had been defeated in the past, as well as philosophical and economic reasons for why it should not have been supported then. The strength of the minority report probably doomed the cause to failure for yet another session.  

Although the presidents of Harvard, Yale, Columbia, Pennsylvania, and Johns Hopkins opposed the legislation, Hoyt clearly saw Hurst's hand in the minority report. In rebutting the report, Hoyt referred to Hurst as "chief opposer," "this reverend advocate," and "our ecclesiastical opposer." He went on to label Hurst's and Beiler's arguments as biased, inaccurate, and self-serving.

Later in the decade, when similar legislation was introduced, Hurst and Beiler once again attacked the effort in the pages of the University Courier, the Christian

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85Congress, Senate, Committee to Establish the University of the United States, University of the United States, Report 429, part 2, 54th Cong., 1st sess., 1896. In a letter appended to the minority report, Hurst begins: "I regard the bill . . . as one which would bring only disappointment and disaster to the interests of higher education in this country."

Advocate, and the Baltimore Methodist. Although Hurst focused on the financial, political, and moral costs that a federal university would exact, he clearly was worried about the confusion and competition that it would provide. Once again, his and Beiler's efforts helped defeat the movement and inspired more vituperative words from Governor Hoyt. In 1899, then vice-chancellor Charles C. McCabe used strong words in response to Hoyt's criticism of Hurst:

I must tell you plainly that I do not believe in your enterprise at all. If you get a National University it will get under the control of the non-Christian population of this country. I regard Bishop Hurst as one of the noblest of men. . . . Your violent language concerning Bishop Hurst shows that you are not fitted for the leadership of such a movement at all.

The defeat of the national university movement in Congress did not come without some costs. For one, both it and the related movement to memorialize George Washington created confusion which hampered The American University's fund raising. Secondly, Hurst's efforts highlighted the poor communication and differences of opinion that existed within the Methodist Episcopal Church. In 1895, David H. Moore, the editor of the Western Christian Advocate and a

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87Madsen, National University, 101-102; Calkins, "National University," 887; University Courier VI (March 1898): 8-9; John F. Hurst, "The American University and Other Movements in Washington," Christian Advocate (New York), 10 March 1898, 387 and Baltimore Methodist, 1 February 1898, 3, 8; and Charles C. McCabe to John W. Hoyt, 4 September 1899, McCabe Papers.

88McCabe to Hoyt, 4 September 1899, McCabe Papers.
supporter of The American University, ran a story that was complementary of Hoyt's efforts in Washington. At the same time, President Henry W. Rogers of Northwestern came close to "throwing his influence on the side of a secular instead of a Christian Methodist University."89

Bishop Hurst's heavy-handed response to such moderation alienated some of his own supporters. Newspaper accounts highlighted the controversy by focusing on his strident opposition to what many considered a patriotic movement. Trustee Brainard H. Warner advised Hurst to tone down the attack, arguing that Washington was big enough for several disparate universities. He cautioned: "I really believe that antagonism to this project is injurious to the American University. . . . Many of our own people are interested in this other project and also in sympathy with yours."90

Joan Minor Kennedy of the George Washington Memorial Association took Hurst to task for referring to the members

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89Numerous letters to Hurst and others show confusion over the relationship between The American University and the National University. The use of the "University of the United States," in reference to the latter, did little towards resolving the problem. William F. Warren to John F. Hurst, 20 December 1895, Hurst Papers. Warren, greatly upset with both the Western Christian Advocate article and President Rogers' support for the National University, worked aggressively to lessen the damage either might cause The American University. This, in itself, seems to refute the distrust that Hurst displayed toward his counterpart at Boston University.

90Washington Evening Star, 1 March 1898 and 17 February 1899; Brainard H. Warner to John F. Hurst, 10 March 1899, Hurst Papers.
of her organization as "frauds and humbugs" [as quoted in Ohio newspapers]. She responded further to Hurst's attacks:

"there are numbers of intelligent Methodist[s] who . . . recognize no possibility of rivalry and conflict with any Sectarian University [emphasis hers]. The Methodist Church has been ever foremost in Sectarian education, but this is an age when the public are [sic] demanding that the youth of this Country shall be educated by the public [emphasis hers]. . . ."

Thus, Hurst's crusade against the national university did little to move The American University forward, especially given the time, effort, and negative press that surrounded his efforts. The conflict better served as a showcase for Hurst's educational philosophies, mistrust, and natural combativeness.

VII

Although renowned for his fund raising at Drew Theological Seminary, Hurst's efforts on behalf of his own educational scheme proved far from laudatory. Part of his failure was directly related to the unfortunate juxtaposition of a period of economic uncertainty with the university's initial drive to raise the requisite start-up funds. Although the "Panic of 1893" affected established universities only slightly, the impact on smaller colleges and beginning enterprises was considerably more palpable. Furthermore, it did heighten a sense of competition for students and

91Joan Minor Kennedy to John F. Hurst, 28 February 1899, Hurst Papers.
faculty, a fact which caused college presidents to eye new institutions warily. The General Conference requirement was itself an impediment and Hurst's own promotion of the ten million dollar restriction was clearly a miscalculation on his part. The requirement to raise such a sum would outlive Hurst, and would be a major roadblock to the university's opening.

The failure of Hurst and his colleagues to secure substantial backing from a major benefactor clearly hampered their efforts, particularly in an age when such support was a necessary ingredient in the university movement. Other Methodist institutions, such as Vanderbilt University and Trinity College (later Duke University), blossomed with such benefaction, yet circumstances would not so bless Hurst's vision. Many of the symptoms of failure emerged during Reverend Gray's ill-fated tenure with the university. At that stage, it became clear that the trustees themselves were reluctant to support the enterprise and, more importantly, that there was no coherent, mutually agreed-upon plan for raising over ten million dollars.

While casting about for a philanthropist, Hurst and

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92Veysey, Emergence of the American University, 264, 324.

93For the best survey on the impact of philanthropy on higher education, see: Merle Curti and Roderick Nash, Philanthropy and the Shaping of American Higher Education (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1965). Chapter Six, entitled "Great Gifts for New Universities" is particularly pertinent to this study.
his associates simultaneously embarked on elaborate cam-
paigns to raise modest amounts of money from struggling
ministers and working class churchgoers. A number of ob-
servers considered this incompatible with such a grandiose
vision, a fact that itself may have affected fund raising on
a major scale. Moreover, so long as the institution re-
mained closed to students, real estate taxes would burden an
already weak financial base. To make a bad situation worse,
the exploitation of anti-Catholic feeling did not bring The
American University any closer to opening, while competition
with other institutions proved detrimental to giving,
stretched resources, and harmed the emerging institution's
image.

For whatever reason, Hurst, in his eleven years as
chancellor of The American University, could not match the
fund raising achievements that likely led to his election as
a bishop two decades before. In December 1902, when Hurst
resigned as chancellor, about $1,150,000 had been pledged to
the university. Of that amount, only $500,000 had actually
been collected.94

94Faulkner, "John Fletcher Hurst," 354.
CHAPTER SEVEN

THE CHANCELLORSHIP OF JOHN FLETCHER HURST:
BUILDING A UNIVERSITY

I

Despite the difficulties John Fletcher Hurst encountered in raising money for The American University, he remained committed to developing the university site into a magnificent educational enterprise. During Hurst's twelve years as chancellor, the rolling, ninety-acre site that was to become The American University became the cornerstone of his plans. Indeed, the apocryphal story of his determined search for land quickly became part of the young institution's lore.¹ The acreage came to represent the fullest expression of his desire to erect a Protestant, graduate

¹Osborn, John Fletcher Hurst, 313. Osborn embellished the story with his own description of the search: "But pleasure was not the chief purpose of two gentlemen who, on Christmas Day, 1889, began a series of rides together; for they rode with frequent regularity for ten days, and chose neither pleasant weather nor smooth roads. . . .

The first was Bishop Hurst hunting for a site. Under a sense of duty, and yet with a lurking hope that for the lessening of his own burdens he might not succeed, he had enlisted the help of Mr. Theodore W. Talmadge to take him from point to point until he could say either 'Eureka -- I have found it!' or, 'No suitable site can be found.'"
university in the Nation's Capital. Likewise, the terrain and symbolism of the site itself would affect future plans for the institution.

In Hurst's mind, the farm land he purchased was rich with history and fertile with promise for the future. The title to the property had originated in 1713, when the establishment of the "Friendship" grant celebrated the partnership of owners Thomas Addison and James Stoddert. The university later made much of the fact that Addison was the American-born cousin of English essayist Joseph Addison. This symbolism augured well for "soil now dedicated to literature, science, and religion."^2

Ownership of the land had passed through marriage to the Murdocks, one of the most prominent families of Maryland and early Washington. One member of the family served in the Stamp Act Congress of 1765; another married into the family of President John Adams. At one time, the family owned a substantial number of slaves, but the shift from tobacco to wheat in the mid-nineteenth century reduced dependence on involuntary servitude. During the Civil War, the land itself was called into service as the site for Fort Gaines, one of several installations established to help defend the city from Confederate attack. Although the fort never came under attack, many Union troops passed through its gates on route to battlefields in Virginia or the Deep

^2University Courier III (December 1894), 7-8.
South. Once again, Hurst considered these historic and patriotic antecedents to be providential for his own project.

II

Bishop Hurst was not alone in emphasizing the importance of the university site to the overall project. At the first meeting of the board in May 1891, the trustees voted to hire a landscape architect at a cost not to exceed one thousand dollars. Soon thereafter, Hurst hired Frederick Law Olmsted, the most renowned landscape architect in the country. Nevertheless, his preconceived notions of what a university should be would foster a client-firm relationship rife with conflict.

Olmsted, the patriarch of the firm of Olmsted, Olmsted, & Eliot, earned his reputation through his designs for Central Park in New York, the Fenway in Boston, and the U.S. Capitol grounds in Washington. Indeed, he became recognized as the father of municipal park architecture. In

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3Minutes, Board of Trustees, 28 May 1891.

4The author wishes to acknowledge the scholarship of Karin M. E. Alexis on the early history of architecture at The American University. Her "The American University: Classical Visions of The National University," Records of the Columbia Historical Society (1989) and "'The White City Upon a Hill': Architectural Genesis of The American Campus," unpublished manuscript, courtesy of the author, 1984, were both central to this chapter. Both are the outgrowth of her master's thesis: "The American University: Romanesque Visions of the National University," American University, 1978.
addition, Olmsted had been involved directly in the design of a number of important American universities. His stature and architectural philosophy extended his imprimatur to many more.\(^5\)

Olmsted's association with The American University began in 1891, shortly after the board appropriated money for the undertaking. Hurst wanted the landscape architect to tour the site in July 1891, but Olmsted's poor health and a prior engagement made such an examination impossible. Olmsted chose instead to travel to Asheville, North Carolina, where he consulted with George Washington Vanderbilt about his estate, "Biltmore."\(^6\) Olmsted's subsequent commission as landscape architect for the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago further delayed the firm's work on behalf of the university.\(^7\)

\(^5\)Alexis, "The American University," 165-166 and Roy Lowe, "Anglo-americanism and the Planning of Universities in the United States," History of Education 15 (December 1986): 251. Lowe figures that Olmsted was involved in the design of fourteen college campuses. Lowe also points to ties between Olmsted's conspicuous reliance on English university models and the overt anglophilia exhibited by many educational leaders toward the end of the nineteenth century.

\(^6\)Frederick Law Olmsted to Charles W. Baldwin, 9 July 1891, Early History Papers.

\(^7\)Alexis, "The American University," 163-165. In serving as landscape architects for the Chicago exposition, Olmsted and his firm selected the site and developed a comprehensive plan. For more detailed accounts of the architects and their work at the Chicago Fair, see: Titus Marion Karlowicz, "The Architecture of the World's Columbian Exposition" (Ph.D. diss., Northwestern, 1965) and David F. Burg, Chicago's White City of 1893 (Lexington, KY.: University Press of Kentucky, 1976), especially pages 75-100. For a contemporary account of
In February 1893, Hurst toured the university site with two fellow college presidents and an unidentified architect. William Waugh Smith, president of Randolph-Macon College, warned Hurst that the hilly acreage was far from ideal. He cautioned Hurst not to rush headlong into a building program, recommending instead that he concentrate on finances and institutional development. Neither Smith nor President John F. Goucher of Baltimore Women's College (later Goucher College) considered themselves qualified to give Hurst the kind of specific advice he desired in respect to placing particular buildings or overall campus planning. Soon thereafter, Hurst engaged an architectural firm in order to hasten development of the university site.®

In June 1893, Hurst brought in the Kansas City-based firm of Van Brunt & Howe, who had also done important work at the Chicago World's Fair. At the time, they were considered the best architectural firm west of Chicago. Henry Van Brunt and his partner, Frank Howe, had been responsible for the design of the Electricity Building, the Hygeia Cooling Plant, and the Wyoming Building at the Columbian Exposition.


®William Waugh Smith to John F. Hurst, 22 February 1893 and Charles W. Baldwin to John F. Hurst, 24 February 1893, Hurst Papers. In May 1893, Beiler wrote that a "Washington Architect has visited the site . . ." Later events would suggest that architect William M. Poindexter of Washington was already assisting Hurst and Beiler with their plans. Samuel L. Beiler to Van Brunt & Howe, 20 May 1893, Early History Collection.
Besides their proven ability to work with Olmsted and their mastery of the monumental architecture favored by Hurst, the firm had something else working in their favor -- a rich California Methodist advocated their employment and commissioned them to design a building for The American University. The possible benefits stemming from such an arrangement did not escape Bishop Hurst.9

The wealthy, young Californian was Frederick H. Rindge, a devout, Methodist millionaire. The son of a successful Boston manufacturer and banker, Rindge had moved to California where he helped organize the Pacific Mutual Life Insurance Company and Artesian Water Company. His work in the laymen's evangelical movement made him well-known within Methodism. A Harvard man, Rindge often directed his contributions toward education, libraries, and his alma

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9Alexis, "The American University," 165-166; Samuel L. Beiler to Van Brunt & Howe, 20 May 1893 and John F. Hurst to Van Brunt & Howe, 15 July 1893, Early History Collection. In introducing themselves to Hurst, Van Brunt and Howe emphasized their work at Wellesley College and the Chicago exposition, as well as their successful collaboration with Olmsted's firm. They also referred to the possibility that Frederick H. Rindge would underwrite the construction of a building at The American University. Van Brunt & Howe to John F. Hurst, 23 May 1893, Hurst Papers. In a January 1895 statement read before the board, Hurst reported: "A friend of the University, whose name must be withheld [Rindge], has commissioned a firm of architects [Van Brunt and Howe] whose reputation is national, to visit our grounds and to present plans for a building." Report of the Chancellor [Bishop John F. Hurst] to the Board of Trustees, 16 January 1895, Trustees Records.
mater. According to his minister, William Stevenson, Rindge had already commissioned Van Brunt & Howe to design the Cambridge [Massachusetts] Public Library. Stevenson also reported that his parishioner's devotion to Methodism had caused Rindge to turn "his attention to the American University as the object of contribution."\textsuperscript{11}

The relationship between Rindge and the firm of Van Brunt & Howe was not made clear, but it certainly influenced Hurst's decision to employ the firm. In July, Hurst received $5,000 from Rindge through Reverend Stevenson. Evidently, this was beyond what Rindge paid Van Brunt & Howe, because the university never recorded a disbursement to that firm until years later. In his letter to the donor, Hurst commented on the Kansas City firm's "singular appreciation of our plans" and expressed hope that Van Brunt & Howe would "have charge of all our buildings."\textsuperscript{12} In correspondence with Van Brunt & Howe, Hurst clearly expected the architects to represent the university's interests in future meetings or correspondence with Rindge. For their part, the

\textsuperscript{10} When Santa Monica, California voted to close its saloons, Rindge agreed to reimburse the city treasury for any lost revenues. He died in 1905, months shy of his fortieth birthday. *National Cyclopaedia of American Biography* XVI (New York: James T. White & Co., 1937), 432.

\textsuperscript{11} William Stevenson to John F. Hurst, 8 May 1893; 30 May 1893; and 30 June 1893, Hurst Papers.

\textsuperscript{12} John F. Hurst to Frederick H. Rindge, 10 July 1893, Hurst Papers and American University Financial Statements, Trustees Records, 1893-1898.
partners appeared willing to operate as agents for the university.\textsuperscript{13}

In May 1893, Samuel Beiler reported that the senior Olmsted had made only a preliminary survey of the grounds, but the addition of Van Brunt & Howe and the completion of work at the Chicago exposition served to energize the work contemplated two years before. Furthermore, Vice Chancellor Beiler had assumed the duty of coordinating work related to buildings and grounds. By September 1893, the University Courier could report that "Landscape artists and architects are at work on schemes for laying out the grounds for, locating and planning the halls for the different departments."\textsuperscript{14}

By late summer, Van Brunt & Howe had already incorporated Hurst's ideas into a preliminary design. This involved plans for an orderly arrangement of the university's first three buildings: the administration building, chapel, and library. Initially, it was assumed that Rindge would contribute a Romanesque bell tower similar to the one he

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\textsuperscript{13}John F. Hurst to Van Brunt & Howe, 15 July 1893 and Van Brunt & Howe to John F. Hurst, 23 August 1893, Hurst Papers. After a meeting between Howe and Rindge months later, the firm reported: "The trip to California was made by Mr. Howe wholly in the interests of the American University. Otherwise he would have gone no further than Portland, Ore. where his business carried him. If good results follow we shall not regret this time, or expense involved." Van Brunt & Howe to John F. Hurst, 19 October 1893, Hurst Papers.
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\textsuperscript{14}Samuel L. Beiler to Van Brunt & Howe, 20 May 1893 and University Courier II (September 1893): 4.
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once had considered adding to the chapel at Harvard. This may have led the firm to favor that style in their initial plans for the American University. The firm did caution Hurst that the "disorderly conditions of topography" and the pending Olmsted report would likely affect the arrangement of additional buildings.\textsuperscript{15}

In their report, Olmsted, Olmsted, & Eliot were highly critical of the university site, especially given Hurst's vision for its development. Upon visiting the tract, Frederick Law Olmsted immediately decided that the property was "extremely unfit" and inquired as to whether the university could effect a trade for a piece of level ground. Hurst remained steadfast in his support of the tract he had chosen. As a result, Olmsted began developing sketches for an "irregular and picturesque" arrangement of buildings, a plan that would create some friction with Van Brunt & Howe and passionate opposition from Hurst and his associates.\textsuperscript{16}

Although Van Brunt & Howe had worked with Olmsted's firm in Chicago, the university site offered far greater challenges, particularly for a formal arrangement of buildings. Van Brunt & Howe understood the topographical

\textsuperscript{15}John F. Hurst to Van Brunt & Howe, 15 July 1893; and Van Brunt & Howe to John F. Hurst, 23 August 1893 and 31 August 1893, and William Stevenson to John F. Hurst, 8 May 1893, Hurst Papers.

\textsuperscript{16}Van Brunt & Howe to Hurst, 31 August 1893 and Olmsted, Olmsted & Eliot to Van Brunt & Howe, 8 September 1893, Early History Collection.
problems outlined by Olmsted, but they were so eager to keep the commission to build the university campus that they sought middle ground.\textsuperscript{17} Thus, they worked between Hurst's-desire to construct imposing structures in a formal arrangement and the Olmsted firm's "accidental", park-like design.\textsuperscript{18}

Olmsted's landscape scheme emerged in a plan forwarded to Beiler on July 2, 1894. The firm explained that the "broken and undulating" topography would make it impossible to execute a large-scale, symmetrical design. The most important buildings would occupy the highest ground, with the library and chapel loosely flanking the administration building. Additional buildings would be placed on lower ground, connected by a series of curving, asymmetrical roads. Olmsted also included space for a gymnasium and running track, because he believed athletics should be central to modern education. The firm acknowledged that their plans were "purely tentative," although the partners probably did not foresee creating dozens of revisions to

\textsuperscript{17} Van Brunt & Howe to Hurst, 23 May 1893 and 31 August 1893, Hurst Papers.

\textsuperscript{18} Olmsted, Olmsted & Eliot to Van Brunt & Howe, 8 September 1893. Olmsted took offense at Van Brunt & Howe's use of the adjective "accidental." The landscape architects countered that a design that ignored the "conditions of topography" would, in reality, appear accidental.
their initial work.\textsuperscript{19}

Beiler's correspondence with both firms outlined the extent to which the university and the architects disagreed. In spite of precipitous grades, Hurst wanted the university to front the proposed Massachusetts Avenue extension. He envisioned a "White City" of imposing classical structures, reminiscent of Chicago's Columbian Exposition. This demanded a "sense of display," rather than park-like seclusion. Olmsted countered that grades along the proposed avenue made a formal entrance impossible. In addition, the landscape architects pointed out that the timing of the Massachusetts Avenue extension was uncertain and that the finished grades would be hard to predict. The firm also wanted Hurst to look at the long-term effects of a formal design, particularly when many colleges were turning to more informal campus plans.\textsuperscript{20}

Olmsted and his son and partner, John Charles Olmsted, returned to Washington in late 1894 to consult with government officials on plans for extending streets in the District of Columbia. This was necessary in order for the landscape architects to complete their plans for


\textsuperscript{20}Alexis, "The American University," 169-170 and "The White City Upon a Hill" 51; Olmsted, Olmsted & Eliot to Samuel L. Beiler, 7 June 1894; and Van Brunt & Howe to Samuel L. Byler [sic], 7 June 1894, Early History Collection.
establishing grades, landscaping, laying roadways, and locating buildings along the future Massachusetts Avenue extension.\textsuperscript{21} The university already had a powerful ally in Senator James McMillan of Michigan, chairman of the Senate Committee on the District of Columbia. He had already initiated plans to complete Pierre L'Enfant's original design for the city, a plan that included extending Massachusetts Avenue into Maryland.\textsuperscript{22}

While in Washington, the Olmsteds also met with Hurst and Beiler to iron out a long list of differences over their initial plan for the grounds.\textsuperscript{23} Problems continued to arise over "Bishop's Hill," an earlier planting of eighteen trees representing the eighteen bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Olmsted considered a formal arrangement on an exposed hillside unlikely to survive intact. Questions also arose concerning plans for a central heating house, an addition that Hurst and Beiler had overlooked.

\textsuperscript{21}Alexis, "The American University," 170-171.

\textsuperscript{22}Alexis "White City Upon a Hill," 24-26. Although one of the university's incorporators, McMillan later resigned from the board because of a potential conflict of interest with his committee work. He nonetheless remained a stalwart supporter of the university and its future needs. The McMillan Plan of 1902 would extend the avenue through university property, thereby linking it to downtown.

\textsuperscript{23}Report of the Vice-Chancellor [Samuel L. Beiler] to the Board of Trustees, 16 January 1895, Trustees Records. At this stage, Beiler publicly displayed some impatience with the negotiations over the plans: "I have held two conferences with the architects . . . and while the plans . . . are not all that I could wish, or rather just as I wished, we hope that they will at least help forward the enterprise."
In addition, Beiler questioned the emphasis on athletic facilities for a graduate school, implying that Olmsted might be out of touch with the university's overall purpose.\textsuperscript{24}

The \textit{University Courier} first published a copy of a transitional Olmsted Plan in the March 1895 issue.\textsuperscript{25} The new design showed a formal entrance from a circle at the intersection of the planned Massachusetts and Nebraska Avenues. Although some buildings faced Massachusetts Avenue, most extended from a small formal courtyard into a park-like setting. Van Brunt & Howe continued to embrace a less expensive, Romanesque design for the university's buildings. The architects maintained that Romanesque buildings could be built of inexpensive, local stone, rather than

\textsuperscript{24}\textit{University Courier} III (December 1894): 3; Olmsted, Olmsted & Eliot to Samuel L. Beiler, 28 September 1894; and Samuel L. Beiler to Olmsted, Olmsted & Eliot, 6 October 1894, Early History Collection. A similar question arose over the need for dormitories to house graduate students. Beiler requested that these buildings be left unidentified on the 1895 plan. Samuel L. Beiler to Olmsted, Olmsted & Eliot, 5 February 1895, Olmsted Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. and Olmsted, Olmsted & Eliot to Samuel L. Beiler, 10 September 1896, Early History Collection.

\textsuperscript{25}\textit{University Courier} III (March 1895): 1. Although the firm continued to work on plans for the university, Beiler reported shortly thereafter that "The final Plan of the Grounds of the University by the Olmsteds has been accepted, paid for, and printed or lithographed." Report of the Vice-chancellor [Samuel L. Beiler] to the Board of Trustees, 22 May 1895, Trustees Records. The university paid Olmsted, Olmsted & Eliot $859.40 for their services. In July 1897, the university reluctantly paid the firm $154.48 more for revision to their 1895 Plan. American University Financial Statement, 17 May 1895, Trustees Records and Samuel L. Beiler to J. C. Olmsted, 3 July 1895, Early History Papers.
the costly marble used for classical architecture. In addition, Romanesque buildings could stand alone or in less formal groupings, thus accommodating both the university's irregular topography and uncertain finances.26

Hurst continued to insist upon a formal, classical style. His insistence probably stemmed from the influence of the Chicago Fair, but also as an extension of Pierre L'Enfant's classical design for the capital city. Regardless, Hurst's intransigence forced Van Brunt to submit renderings in both styles. More significantly, Hurst's resolve made Olmsted's park-like scheme virtually unworkable.27

In 1896, after years of haggling over entrances, roadways and building grades, the university abandoned the Olmsted plan in favor of a classical arrangement of marble buildings.28 For the time being, Van Brunt & Howe, who

26 Alexis, "White City Upon a Hill," 44.

27 Alexis, "The American University," 171-173. The Olmsted's made several last minute concessions, including moving the main entrance to Massachusetts Avenue and redrawing the quadrangle to permit "the erection of a distinctly monumental building, treated, if possible, in a severe and classic style." They did not, however, wish to extend the length of the quadrangle or conform to an overall classical design, as Hurst wished. Olmsted, Olmsted & Eliot to Samuel L. Beiler, 25 June 1896 and 10 September 1896, Early History Collection.

28 The break, for all practical purposes, probably came in March 1896, when Beiler wrote: "This proposed sketch [#40] only convinces me all the more that we are not in shape at present to go any further with studies." Samuel L. Beiler to Olmsted, Olmsted & Eliot, 2 March 1896, Early History Collection.
were busy with drawings for the university's first building, assumed responsibility for the general plans. The University Courier explained that the shift from Romanesque to classical architecture necessitated a change in architects. In spite of the fact that the university continued to operate with a limited budget, Hurst and Beiler refused to acknowledge the tremendous expense in both building materials and grading that their preferred design would require. Nonetheless, the decision to construct symmetrical rows of classically-inspired, marble buildings fit closer with Hurst's vision for the university.

29Alexis, "The American University," 172-173; Van Brunt & Howe to Olmsted, Olmsted & Eliot, 6 January 1896, 31 January 1896, and 20 February 1896, Olmsted Papers; and Beiler to J. C. Olmsted, 3 July 1897. A year later, J. C. Olmsted had trouble obtaining reimbursement from The American University for his firm's expenses.

30University Courier V (February 1897): 5.

31Concerns over the cost and quality of marble would effect plans for the university's second building, which was reduced in size in order to save money. In 1899, the vice chancellor reported that while ten thousand dollars had been spent grading the grounds, that "sum was insufficient to complete the [grading] work required" to carry out a formal master plan. Report of the Secretary [Wilbur L. Davidson] to the Board of Trustees, 11 December 1901, Trustees Records and Board of Trustees, 17 May 1899.

III

From the time Hurst agreed to purchase the site, he held well-entrenched ideas about the proposed university's academic structure. Hurst's educational proposals probably emerged from his educational experiences in Germany and at Drew Theological Seminary. By the time the university was chartered, he had developed plans to establish four academic departments, each tied to a building. Hurst's proposed science department would include mathematics, physics, chemistry, and biology. His philosophy department would include such eclectic fields as: metaphysics and the history of philosophy; psychology and logic; political economy and sociology; and constitutional law and political science. His planned languages and literature department would merge the study of ancient, Semitic, and Asian languages with modern European languages. History, divided into "American, European (west and north), Mediterranean [and] Oriental" departments, comprised the fourth and final academic unit. To these departments, Hurst proposed adding schools of law and medicine.33

It soon became apparent that educational and curricular designs were little more than extensions of building plans,

33University Courier I (December 1892), [i]. In addition, Hurst envisioned ancillary studies in Christian archaeology, Christian evidences, and government. Earlier, Hurst had planned for a school of government. John Fletcher Hurst, "Buildings," [1890?], Hurst Papers.
with 1893 department listings being described in terms of buildings a year later. This likely evolved out of recognition of the fact that most supporters and potential supporters more closely identified with buildings than with curricular innovation. This was even more true given Hurst's focus on graduate education, an idea that was commonly-supported but little-understood. For these reasons, Hurst would alter his pre-conceived ideas about departmental structure in order to please potential donors, particularly if a building was involved.\(^2\)

Once Hurst established the university as a legal entity, building plans seemed to develop more out of a desire to appeal to a particular group of donors rather than in support of a specific educational purpose. The first three buildings named -- the Asbury Hall, the Epworth League Hall, and the Lincoln Hall -- all seemed to fit into this category. Reverend George Gray oversaw the development of all three building campaigns during his short tenure with the university.\(^3\)

The university created the Asbury Hall Fund to honor the founder of American Methodism as well as to solicit donations from Methodist ministers. While the desire to honor Bishop Francis Asbury was clear, the University

\(^2\)University Courier I (February 1893): 67 and II (March 1894): [2].

\(^3\)For the initial mention of these fund raising effort see: University Courier I (September 1892): 5, 7, 9.
Courier made no mention of the educational purpose for which the building might be used. Similarly, Gray's fund raising efforts for the Epworth League Hall were directed towards Methodist youth. Again the building itself became the object of the campaign. The Lincoln Hall campaign, while nominally focused on building an administration hall, was intended to appeal "... to the American citizen, independent of church relationship, race or color ..." to build a monument to the martyred President. Clearly, these campaigns took on greater importance than did any curricular design.28

In subsequent years, potential donors and prominent Methodist clergy proposed entire academic programs, heretofore unmentioned by Hurst. These sometimes became part of both the university's scholastic structure and building plans, especially if proposals came with a corresponding promise of financial support. The three most prominent clearly sprang from the school's Methodist foundations. McCabe and several other ministers spawned interest in the College of Missions, while the leadership of the Woman's Guild of The American University established the College of Comparative Religion as the object of their main fund raising effort. Both focused directly on religious education.

28 Ibid. Although the Lincoln Hall fund was dropped with Gray's departure, the Asbury and Epworth League campaigns continued. To illustrate the lack of purpose for these buildings, the Washington Evening Star ran a long article on the plans for the Lincoln Memorial Hall without mentioning once the function which it was to serve. Washington Evening Star, 18 February 1893, 3.
The School for Scientific Temperance was a multi-disciplinary college proposed by an entirely distinct group.\textsuperscript{37}

Samuel Beiler received the proposal for a School for Scientific Temperance in the summer of 1894. At the time, Hurst was traveling in Europe with his second wife, Ella Agnes Root Hurst. The other members of the executive committee also were widely-dispersed. Mary E. Hunt, superintendent of the Women's Christian Temperance Union, proposed a new department. The department would promote the teaching of temperance in the schools with the goal of producing a generation "of intelligent total abstainers . . ." She had already developed an associated organization, the Temperance Education Association, to train a cadre of instructors to go forth to teach temperance in the schools. Hunt wanted The American University to house this educational apparatus.\textsuperscript{38}

Mrs. Hunt sent Beiler a longer letter the following month -- one that outlined the specific need for such a program. She reiterated the goal of scientifically training teachers in the cause of temperance, while funding research to bolster the cause. Beiler took the proposal to the

\textsuperscript{37}Charles C. McCabe to T. D. Collins, 27 November 1898, McCabe Papers, American University Archives; University Courier IV (December 1895): 1, 5, 6; (March 1896): 8; V (October 1896): 4, 5; VIII (December 1900): 3; and (July 1901): 4, 5, 9, 10.

\textsuperscript{38}Mary E. Hunt to Samuel L. Beiler, 21 July 1894 and Samuel L. Beiler to Mary E. Hunt, 9 August 1894, Early History Collection. Beiler responded quite positively, but informed Mrs. Hunt that Hurst and the Executive Committee would make the final decision on such a proposal.
executive committee, where it was accepted on the condition
that the requisite funds be raised by Hunt's organiza-
tion. The full Board took up the proposal at a January
1895 meeting and agreed "to organize such a department . . .
on the condition that an endowment of at least $250,000 be
provided therefor." The board of trustees appointed a
committee comprised of Hurst, Beiler, and Dr. Charles H.
Payne to meet with the Board of Counsel of the Temperance
Educational Association to negotiate an agreement.

The two committees met in New York on October 17, 1895.
The agreement once again stipulated the $250,000 endowment,
although the board could accept a lesser sum if it were
enough to inaugurate such a program. The school would
investigate temperance pedagogy and "reformatory measures,"
along with the scientific, physiological, psychological,
legal, and economic manifestations of alcohol consumption.
The administration acknowledged that some might deem the
department as unscientific, although it used the proposal as
an example of how the university would "adapt itself to the
practical needs of the times." In the end, funding for the
College of Scientific Temperance did not materialize and the

39 Mary E. Hunt to Samuel L. Beiler, 20 August 1894, Early
History Collection and Executive Committee, 14 September 1894.

40 Board of Trustees, 16 January 1895 and "Proposed
Agreement Between the Board of Counsel of the Temperance
Educational Association and the Trustees of The American
University, Washington, D.C.," 21 October 1895, Early History
Collection.
proposal drifted into obscurity.¹⁴¹

Apart from an unsuccessful attempt to develop a medical school, these remained the only curricular innovations to Hurst's earlier plans.⁴² Because the university could not open until it met the General Conference's endowment restriction, its building program took on more importance than developing academic programs or gathering a faculty. For that reason, most supporters equated an active building program with progress. Hurst believed that the institution needed both to show evidence of progress and to mollify critics who contended that the university was satisfied merely to invest its financial holdings. Given such

¹⁴¹"Proposed Agreement"; "Agreement Between the Board of Counsel of the Temperance Educational Association and the Trustees of The American University, Washington, D.C.," (n.p.: n.p., [1895]); University Courier IV (December 1895): 5; and Mary E. Hunt to Samuel L. Beiler, 5 October 1896, Early History Collection. Hunt reported that the "great financial depression" had caused a delay in her organization's fund raising efforts on behalf of the department. There was no further mention of the proposal in the University Courier and no donations toward the school were recorded by the university. University Courier IV (March 1896): 8 and Financial Statements, The American University, 1896-1898, Trustee Records.

⁴²The university authorized Dr. C. B. Stemen of the Fort Wayne (Indiana) College of Medicine "to develop and organize the Medical Department of the American University." Stemen took his assignment enthusiastically, with the intention of raising money from his fellow doctors and their wealthy patients and friends. Within a year, however, the strain of fund raising during a depression began to show. In the end, both Stemen and the university lost interest in the project. See: Board of Trustees, 16 October 1895; University Courier IV (December 1895): 3; and C. B. Stemen to Samuel L. Beiler, 2 January 1896, 17 November 1896, and 23 February 1898, Early History Collection.
concerns, the race to construct the university's first building overshadowed most efforts toward curricular development. 43

V

In May 1894, the board of trustees resolved to build the university's first structures. The board voted to erect a Hall of Administration and a College of History, the latter already endowed by benefactor Mary Graydon. At the same time, they agreed not to begin construction until money was in hand to cover the building contracts. For that reason, the agitation to construct a building evolved into another protracted struggle to raise funds. 44

The following January, the board approved Van Brunt & Howe's plans for both buildings, but designated the College of History as the first structure to be built. Frederick Rindge's waning interest in the university and the Hall of Administration probably led to the board's decision and may have hampered Van Brunt & Howe's ability to maintain a

43 Two anonymous letters, both highly critical of the university's investment policies and lack of "tangible Progress," were attached to the 16 January 1896 board minutes. These likely helped influence the decision to begin the construction of the Hall of History later that year. Reports to the Board of Trustees, 16 January 1896, Trustees Records.

44 Board of Trustees, 2 May 1894. At that same meeting, the board voted to yield the right of way for the extension of Massachusetts Avenue.
monopoly over the university's architectural work. At that same meeting, five trustees subscribed a total of $23,500 toward the estimated total of $150,000. Four months later, Hurst reported that subscriptions fell almost thirty-three thousand dollars short of the $150,000 target, but members of the board and the university administration pledged the remainder before the close of the meeting. At that point, the board resolved to select detailed plans for the College of History at its next meeting. Upon the recommendation of W. W. Smith, the board also agreed to create a building committee, a body that would have increasing responsibility as time wore on.

Following nearly three years of work on behalf of the university, Van Brunt & Howe were logical favorites in the competition over the College of History plans. They already had produced a general design for the building as part of their reworking of Olmsted's campus plan. Besides, they had proven themselves willing to abide by Hurst's unwavering architectural desires. The trustees, however, permitted

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46 Board of Trustees, 16 January 1895.

47 Board of Trustees, 22 May 1895. Among some of the more interesting pledges were three by Samuel Beiler, totaling some thirty-five hundred dollars, and $650 by Spencer Root Hurst, the Bishop's infant son.
other architects to submit plans for the building.48

The board met again in October 1895, to decide on plans for the Hall of History. To complicate matters, General Watts DePeyster's "guarantee" to finance the construction of a College of Languages resulted in consideration of plans for that building, as well. The executive committee and the board as a whole clearly focused on the designs of Ernest Flagg of New York and William M. Poindexter of Washington. The former designed the Corcoran Art Museum and portions of the United States Naval Academy; the latter planned the new Columbian University building at the corner of 15th and F Streets, N.W.49

It soon became clear that the university wanted to shape a cooperative arrangement between Flagg and Poindexter. Flagg would serve as the primary designer, while the locally-based Poindexter would serve as supervisory architect. In the end, Flagg balked at such an arrangement. As a result, the board adjourned without a decision, leaving the building committee with the responsibility of selecting

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49 Washington Evening Star, 16 October 1895; Executive Committee, 15 October 1895; Minutes, Board 16 October 1895; and Kayser, Bricks Without Straw, 162-164. The New York Times featured another New York architect, James Brite, as a leading candidate for the commission. The Executive Committee did not list Brite's plans among those submitted for consideration. New York Times 23 August 1895, 9.
an architect.\textsuperscript{50}

By the end of 1895, the committee selected the team of Van Brunt & Howe, who continued to bring Olmsted's plan more on line with the university's desires. The architects displayed a willingness to cooperate with Poindexter and dismissing Flagg's Beaux-Arts design as "grandiose and scholarly." Flagg later used his "grandiose" plans at the United States Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland.\textsuperscript{51} The agreement between the architects and the university stipulated that Van Brunt & Howe would receive three and one-half percent of the total cost of the building (estimated at $150,000) to perform "all work usually known as office work in the practice of architects . . . ." The university agreed to pay Poindexter one and one-half percent of the cost to supervise construction, obtain estimates, and make adjustments when needed.\textsuperscript{52}

Van Brunt & Howe's design for the building was clearly

\textsuperscript{50}Executive Committee, 15 October 1895 and Board of Trustees, 16 October 1895. Before adjourning, the board passed a resolution which established their belief in the need for architectural unity on campus: "That the representatives of The American University in soliciting funds and other gifts . . . respectfully ask that all selection of architectural plans of the buildings be left to the Board of Trustees with a view to the unity and harmony of the whole system of buildings."

\textsuperscript{51}Turner, \textit{Campus}, 188.

\textsuperscript{52}Articles of Agreement \textit{[Between The American University, Van Brunt & Howe, and W. M. Poindexter] December 1895 and [Samuel L. Beiler] to Van Brunt & Howe, 17 January 1896, Building Files, American University Archives.}
classical. It featured a granite foundation floor topped with upper floors of chiseled marble, a concession to Hurst's monumental vision of the university. The three-story building would measure 176 feet long by seventy feet wide, even though the Olmsteds continued to argue that it should be smaller. The College of History would contain space for offices, study rooms, a historical library and a museum.\textsuperscript{53} The building committee ordered the grading of the site soon after Van Brunt & Howe agreed to serve as architects. On March 9, 1896, some six years after the selection of the site, Hurst witnessed the ceremonial ground breaking for the university's first building. A number of local ministers, three members of Congress, and the presidents of Columbian University and Howard University braved the brisk March winds to attend the ceremony. The Washington \textit{Post} reported that the laying of a ceremonial cornerstone would follow in four weeks.\textsuperscript{54}

The four weeks turned into six months -- the time needed to hire a contractor and to complete the foundation


\textsuperscript{54}Washington \textit{Evening Star}, 3 January 1896, 1; 9 March 1896, 5; and Washington \textit{Post}, 10 March 1896, 2. The \textit{Post} reported that the university site would soon "become the home of one of the largest institutions in the country."
and basement. In June 1896, James L. Parsons of Washington submitted the winning bid of $158,600 to construct the College of History.\textsuperscript{55} The more elaborate cornerstone-laying took place on October 21, 1896, following an abbreviated meeting of the board of trustees. As a result, most of the board witnessed what was described as a "great religious event."\textsuperscript{56}

The ceremony featured the singing of "America" and a number of speeches, including one by Hurst, who again emphasized the need for a Protestant university in the United States. The speeches predictably emphasized the patriotic and evangelical Protestant underpinnings of the university movement. Interestingly enough, also Hurst cited the efforts of Frederick Law Olmsted in designing the university grounds. The ceremony ended with the entombment of a time capsule in a specially-prepared, ceremonial cornerstone. The Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of the District of Columbia assisted in the laying of the cornerstone, employing the gavel used by George Washington to set the cornerstone for the United States Capitol. In this way, 

\textsuperscript{55}Contract Between James L. Parsons and The American University, 20 June 1896, Building files.

\textsuperscript{56}Washington Evening Star, 21 October 1896, 1; University Courier V (October 1896): 1-11; VI (September 1897): 1. Albert Osborn recalled the event in his notes on the university's history: "Great Day! We laid the corner-stone of the College of History of the A.U. Exercises lasted from 2:15 to 5:15pm. Fine weather. Some wind and colder about 4-5." Notes, 21 October 1896, Albert Osborn Papers, American University Archives.
Hurst highlighted the institution's ties to the President who first championed the national university concept. At the same time, the inauguration of construction silenced critics who despaired that The American University had not assumed tangible form.  

As planned, the building ran parallel to Nebraska Avenue, facing the elongated quadrangle or "Court of Ceremon y" that Hurst and Beiler had fought so long and hard to preserve. The Olmsted firm continued to push for the adoption of an overall campus plan, warning that "[i]t will almost certainly result in a botch if you erect one building in advance of a correct map of the ground. . . . They renewed their contention that the College of History was too large for the site, fearing that its size would lead to the development of a larger quadrangle than was desirable. While the Olmsteds criticism would not impede construction, other factors would.  

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57 Washington Evening Star, 21 October 1896, 1; Washington Post, 21 October 1896, 1; University Courier V (October 1896): 1-11; VI (September 1897): 1. The Courier pointed out that two professors from Catholic University were in attendance.

58 Alexis, "American University," 173-176; Olmsted, Olmsted & Eliot to Samuel L. Beiler, 21 February 1896, Early History Collection. Beiler responded the Olmsted's remonstrations in like fashion: "We do not see the way to determine these matters more definitely at present. Indeed, the latter sketches that you have sent us are so unsatisfactory, that we are inclined to let the whole matter rest and locate the Hall of History at about the place you put it in the original plan." The ground breaking for the building took place ten days later. Samuel L. Beiler to Olmsted, Olmsted & Eliot, 29 February 1896, Olmsted Papers.
Labor problems developed at the work site, when the stone cutters went on strike a month before the cornerstone was laid. The Stone Cutter's Union contended that the pre-cut stone marble used in the construction came from a non-union quarry owned by Senator Redfield Proctor of Vermont. The contractor, James L. Parsons, argued that the stone did not come from Proctor's quarry (although it did). Parsons also maintained that he "understood that there was no stone cutters' union in Vermont." The two sides soon came together. The union agreed to come back to work and Parsons promised to continue employing union labor at the site. 59

A more serious problem emerged as construction progressed. Van Brunt & Howe sent their plans to Poindexter as required by the agreement. Poindexter in turn was supposed to explain the drawings to the building committee and oversee their implementation. 60

By early summer, the lack of communication from Washington caused the Kansas City firm to suspect that something was amiss. Before long, Van Brunt & Howe concluded that Poindexter was replacing their plans with his own. On June 12, 1896, they wrote Poindexter a stinging letter accusing him, in complicity with the building committee, of going


60Van Brunt & Howe sent Poindexter a friendly, collegial letter in January 1896 which reiterated their respective duties as outlined in their agreement. [Van Brunt & Howe] "Extract from a letter to Mr. Poindexter dated Jan. 7, 1896," Building Files.
behind their backs to make changes to their "carefully-studied and economical scheme." They were even more incensed that Poindexter did not have the professional courtesy to inform them of changes made, a fact which they thought impugned their "professional reputation."\(^{61}\)

When Poindexter continued to alter plans without consulting them, Van Brunt & Howe, "through motives of self-respect," withdrew from the building project altogether. The firm still hoped to retain the commission for the university's remaining buildings, but the university later passed over them to hire Henry Ives Cobb of Chicago. Another veteran of the Columbian Exposition, Cobb also had served as designer for the University of Chicago.\(^{62}\)

Before the dust settled, Van Brunt & Howe challenged Poindexter's professional ethics and prepared to take him before the Board of Directors of the American Institute of Architects. Poindexter apologized profusely for his actions and, in letters to Van Brunt & Howe, pleaded for his professional life. Van Brunt & Howe later asked the American Institute of Architects to suspend their investigation of Poindexter for "professional misconduct."\(^{63}\)

\(^{61}\)Van Brunt & Howe to William M. Poindexter, 12 June 1896, Building Files.


\(^{63}\)William M. Poindexter to Van Brunt & Howe, 22 February and 2 March 1897, Building Files.
Poindexter and Parsons continued work on the building, delayed only by problems with marble cutting for the cornice and gables. Parsons continued to promise that the building would be ready by October 1, 1897, but it was considered best not to rush the work. Although the College of History was virtually completed by the close of 1897, Parsons formally transferred it to the building committee on February 1, 1898. With architectural fees, drainage work, and the expense of hiring a superintendent, the total cost of the building was reported to be $175,000. The completed building contained forty-two rooms finished in Tennessee marble and oak. There was no money left for furnishings and equipment and, consequently, no plans for immediately occupying the new building.

VI

The year 1898 marked the completion of The American University's first building, as well as the hiring of Henry Ives Cobb to serve as both university architect and campus planner. In addition, there were some significant changes made in the university's administration. After five years with the same administrative leadership, Hurst lost two

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64 University Courier V (May 1897): 1; VI (December 1897): 1-2; VI (March 1898): 6-7. A financial statement presented at the 12 December 1898 meeting of the board showed total expenditures of $174,029. Of that amount, $90,616 had been collected, leaving a deficit of over $83,000. Financial Statement of The American University, 12 December 1898, Trustees Records.
important aides in 1898. Reverend Charles W. Baldwin, university secretary, resigned to devote more time to his church in Baltimore. He remained secretary to the board of trustees and later joined that body as a member. Hurst also received the resignation of Reverend Samuel L. Beiler, vice chancellor. Both had been important fund raisers. Beiler had succeeded Gray as editor for the University Courier and wielded considerable power in managing the university's day-to-day affairs.\(^{65}\)

Hurst replaced Baldwin with Professor William W. Martin, formerly of Vanderbilt University. Martin served as secretary for a year, before returning to a teaching post at Vanderbilt. Martin cited problems in moving his family to Washington as cause for his resignation. Wilbur L. Davidson, who had been employed by the university as a fund raiser, replaced Martin. As in 1893, filling the vice chancellor's chair took a while. Finally, at the May 17, 1899 meeting, the board elected Bishop Charles Cardwell McCabe to the post. McCabe was a long-time trustee and a gifted fund raiser, but his episcopal duties would limit the

\(^{65}\)Beiler's letter of resignation alluded to the strain of his five-year tenure as vice chancellor: "Having given five years of unremitting toil to the American University . . . I now feel that the time has come to tender you my resignation to take effect on May 1, 1898. While looking with joy toward more congenial work . . . I shall ever feel the deepest interest in the American University, and will be ready to assist in the development in any way consistent with other duties." Board of Trustees, 25 May 1898 and University Courier VI (July 1898): 4.
amount of time he could give the university.  

Following his appointment as the university's architect, Henry Ives Cobb began locating the remaining two dozen buildings proposed in earlier master plans. Cobb had already opened an office in Washington, presumably to be closer to the project. Unlike Olmsted, Cobb embraced the formal design for the campus and even expanded upon it. He also adapted readily to the unified style employed by his predecessors.

Hurst introduced Henry Ives Cobb at the December 13, 1898 meeting of the trustees. At that time, he unveiled and explained a watercolor rendering of his campus plans. He had added a third quadrangle to the intersecting ones already planned. Although he retained the symmetry and homogeneity present in much of his other work, Cobb had considerably more space at his disposal than had been the case with the University of Chicago. Above everything else, Cobb's plan would yield monumental buildings visible from long distances, a feature that obviously appealed to Bishop Hurst. Nevertheless, his design would require even more grading, especially for Cobb's two remaining quadrangles,

\[\text{Board of Trustees, 25 May 1898, 17 May 1899, 14 December 1899. Many applauded the appointment of Martin because of his strong ties to the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.}\]

\[\text{Alexis, "American University," 177-179; "Site of The American University" [Print made from watercolor rendering], Henry Ives Cobb, Architect, 1898. Several copies of these prints are maintained in The American University Archives.}\]
the largest of which would require leveling a steep incline.\(^68\)

Like Van Brunt and Howe before him, Cobb immediately set about to produce drawings for the remaining twenty-three buildings on the campus plan. Cobb continued the classical theme of his predecessors, although his designs were more ornate. As a result, although tied together by a common architectural theme, no two university buildings would be alike.\(^69\) In early 1899, the University Courier led the way in praising Cobb's designs for the university:

> It was rarest wisdom in the projectors of The American University to secure the services of the eminently distinguished architect, Henry Ives Cobb, and in this way be assured of noble edifices, rich and harmonious in their architectural features and imposing through their splendid proportions.\(^70\)

At the May 1899 meeting of the board of trustees, the body voted to endorse a plan calling for the establishment of separate endowments to finance the construction of

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\(^68\)The lack of money and high cost of grading left most of Cobb's plans unrealized. Board of Trustees, 13 December 1898; Alexis, "American University," 177-179; "Site of The American University," Henry Ives Cobb, 1898. The added acreage made for extensive changes in Cobb's architectural composition. Whereas at the University of Chicago, he used buildings to enclose space, at The American University the added room allowed university buildings to occupy space. Dober, Campus Planning, 32-33.

\(^69\)Alexis, "The American University," 177-179 and Dober, Campus Planning, 32-34. According to Dober, Cobb's work came to represent the evolution towards more formal campus planning around the turn of the century.

\(^70\)University Courier VII (February 1899): 7.
"state" buildings. Again, Hurst appeared to base the university's architectural development on the Chicago World's Fair. Thereafter, the College of Government, which had been featured in the February 1899 University Courier, became known as the Ohio College of Government. The domed Ohio building would reside at the junction of the two main quadrangles. It would be the next building inaugurated.  

At the same meeting, Professor Martin reported on the daunting task of grading the hilly site. The ten thousand dollars the board had appropriated fell far short of what was required, but gave "definite form to the quadrangles" that Cobb envisioned. Using picks and shovels, laborers moved over fifty thousand cubic feet of earth. Martin described the magnitude of the effort in his report:

> I made the contracts for the [grading], and employed an engineer to give me the elevations. . . . In order to make the proper elevations, at times I was obliged to make fillings of fourteen and fifteen feet deep. The contact called for seventeen cents per cubic yard where the haul was not above six hundred feet. I found it necessary to modify this contract, as at least a third of the grading required a haul more than twice that length.  

As work on the grounds progressed, donors began pledging funds for the Pennsylvania Hall of Administration and

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71 Board of Trustees, 17 May 1899; University Courier VII (February 1899): 7-8; (September 1899): 2-4; and VIII (January 1900): 3.

72 University Courier VII (September 1899): 2-3 and Report of the Secretary [W.W. Martin] to the Board of Trustees, 17 May 1899.
the Illinois College of Languages. Cobb patterned the former after Independence Hall in Philadelphia. It was to be the largest building planned. The College of Languages would feature "two wings, joined by a central portion with a colonnade" comprised of ten Corinthian columns. Cobb soon added drawings for the Epworth College of Literature and the Woman's Guild College of Comparative Religion.\(^73\)

In December 1898, a committee of trustees led by Bishops Hurst and McCabe visited President William McKinley at the White House. They carried with them Cobb's "bird's-eye view" of The American University. McKinley, a Methodist and Ohio native, expressed his sincere support for the University and its plans, although he voiced mock concern that "Penn's building is by far more pleasing than Ohio's."\(^74\)

President McKinley, who was elected to the board the following May, would later agree to serve as dean of the College of Government after the end of his second term.

\(^73\)University Courier VII (September 1899): 1; VIII (January 1900): 1, 5, 9; (December 1900): 3, 6-8; (July 1901): 2-5, 9; and Christian Advocate (New York), 25 May 1899, 829. An entire edition of the University Courier [VII (June 1900)], the "Epworth League Edition," encourage Methodist youth to support The American University. Each contributor to the Epworth College of Literature would receive a specially-designed certificate.

\(^74\)University Courier VII (February 1899): 8 and Board of Trustees, 12 December 1898. Hurst was a long-time friend of President and Mrs. McKinley. He was a frequent visitor to the McKinley White House and regularly led Sunday "evenings of sacred song" for Mrs. McKinley, who was unable to attend church with her husband. Osborn, John Fletcher Hurst, 347-348 and Osborn Diary, Osborn Papers.
Consequently, university officials began to draw parallels between McKinley and Thomas Jefferson, who founded the University of Virginia after he left the presidency. McKinley would later be memorialized because of his short-lived involvement with The American University.\textsuperscript{75}

Pledges for the Ohio and Pennsylvania endowments outstripped all others, leading the board to select those as the next buildings to be erected. Those two buildings also attracted the most prominent supporters. Former Pennsylvania governor Robert E. Pattison spearheaded efforts on behalf of the Pennsylvania building. Besides McKinley, four former Ohio governors and the state's two U.S. senators made contributions toward the College of Government.\textsuperscript{76}

At the May 1901 board meeting, William L. Woodcock moved that work begin on the foundations of those two buildings. The cornerstone-laying ceremonies would take place in conjunction with the December 1901 meeting of the board. Although the University Courier reported that two gifts totaling eighty-five thousand dollars had been given towards the Pennsylvania building, financial reports showed considerably less cash on hand for the two buildings. As of December 1901, $10,811.29 had been collected for the Ohio

\textsuperscript{75}Board of Trustees, 17 May 1899 and Alexis, "White City Upon a Hill," 66.

\textsuperscript{76}University Courier VIII (January 1900): 1-2 and Alexis, "White City Upon a Hill," 64-65.
building and $6,856.55 for the Hall of Administration.\textsuperscript{77}

The summer issue of the \textit{University Courier} announced that President McKinley would preside over the cornerstone-laying for both buildings. The President also had provided Bishop Hurst with a strong letter of endorsement that Hurst used in fund raising. In the meantime, Hurst had added Vice President Theodore Roosevelt to the board of trustees. With such support and with plans for new construction set in motion, Hurst left on his eighth trip to Europe.\textsuperscript{78}

In early September 1901, while attending the Ecumenical Methodist Conference in London, Hurst received word that President McKinley had been shot. On September 14, the Bishop learned that the President was dead. Two days later, Hurst suffered the first in a series of strokes. A week later, accompanied by his daughter Helen, Hurst set sail for the United States. Osborn recorded that Hurst appeared

\textsuperscript{77}Board of Trustees, 9 May 1901; \textit{University Courier VIII} (July 1901): 2-3, 10; \textit{Christian Advocate} (New York), 23 May 1901, 834; \textit{Washington Evening Star}, 29 May 1901, 9 and "Brief Ledger account of the different funds received in cash up to date," 11 December 1901, Trustee Records. In spite of the scarcity of cash on hand, Osborn asserted in both the \textit{Courier} and the \textit{Christian Advocate} that "[t]he trustees of the American University have ever been conservative. They have realized that they are handling a great enterprise, the life of which is coexistent with the life of the republic; that no great haste is necessary . . . ."

\textsuperscript{78}\textit{University Courier VIII} (July 1901): 2; William McKinley to John F. Hurst, 27 February 1899, Hurst Papers; Board of Trustees, 11 December 1900; and Osborn, \textit{John Fletcher Hurst}, 355.
feeble, but moved about better than he had feared.\textsuperscript{79}

The President's assassination, Hurst's poor health, and inclement weather in December all contributed to a delay in the cornerstone-laying ceremonies for the Ohio College of Government. In the interim, the board decided to concentrate on the construction of the Ohio building, for which excavation began in November 1901. The money already deposited was enough to cover the cost of the bid. Other expenses would depend on the strength of the sixty-six thousand dollars that had been pledged toward the building. At the December meeting, Secretary Wilbur Davidson announced the plan to make the structure a memorial to the fallen President. The following May, the building under construction officially became the McKinley Memorial Ohio College of Government.\textsuperscript{80}

On May 14, 1902, President Theodore Roosevelt officiated at the cornerstone-laying of the McKinley Memorial Building. Among the featured speakers were Senator James P. Dolliver of Iowa, Senator Marcus A. Hanna of Ohio, and

\textsuperscript{79}Osborn, \textit{John Fletcher Hurst}, 357 and Osborn Diary, 7 October 1901, Osborn Papers.

\textsuperscript{80}Board of Trustees, 11 December 1901 and 14 May 1902; Report of the Chancellor [John F. Hurst] to the Board of Trustees, 11 December 1901, Trustees Records; Report of the Secretary [Wilbur L. Davidson] to the Board of Trustees, 11 December 1901, Trustees Records; and Washington \textit{Evening Star}, 12 December 1902, 17. From the beginning, financial considerations governed construction. Prior to the ground breaking, the high cost of marble caused the building committee to lower the planned height of the Ohio building by four feet. See: Davidson's Report, 11 December 1901.
Bishop William F. Mallalieu. Each spoke of the late President and of his commitment to both Methodism and higher education. After some brief words of his own, President Theodore Roosevelt applied a layer of cement before the cornerstone was lowered into place. Conspicuous in their absence were Chancellor Hurst, who was too weak to attend, and Vice Chancellor McCabe, who was in Europe.\(^{81}\)

VII

Recent years had taken their toll on the ailing Hurst. Apart from his considerable duties as both Methodist Bishop and university chancellor, his personal life had caused him considerable grief. In 1898, Hurst's second wife travelled to Europe with their young son for the announced purpose of taking voice lessons. The visit grew into months and then years. Finally, she refused to return altogether. Although Hurst never saw his wife or his youngest child again, he refused to consent to a formal separation. In his grief, he moved from his home on Iowa Circle to a smaller house on Connecticut Avenue.\(^{82}\)

The added shock and grief over McKinley's assassination probably contributed further to his already failing health.

\(^{81}\)University Courier IX (June 1902): 1-10 and Washington Evening Star, 15 May 1902, 1.

\(^{82}\)Osborn, John Fletcher Hurst, 354. Osborn recorded many conversations with Hurst "on matters personal." Osborn diary, Osborn Papers.
Following his initial stroke, Hurst gave up riding a bicycle, but strove to resume the daily walks that always had been a part of his regimen. In January 1902, Hurst, Davidson and Osborn met with Senator James McMillan concerning street improvements to the university site. Afterwards, the Bishop appeared weary. Thereafter, Osborn frequently reported on Hurst's growing weakness and mental confusion. Hurst suffered a second stroke in April 1902, but recovered enough to leave Washington for the summer. Following an extended vacation in Massachusetts, Hurst's health began to fail once again. Soon thereafter, he moved to the Bethesda, Maryland home of trustee Aldis B. Brown.83

Hurst's illness made it impossible for him to resume full-time duties as chancellor, particularly at such a critical juncture. The university was beginning a campaign to have the five million dollar endowment restriction removed or, at least, reduced at the 1904 General Conference. That action would permit the university to open at a sooner date. Hurst was in no shape to lead such a contentious fight. In November 1902, Osborn wrote to one of Hurst's sons to tell him that the Bishop's resignation was imminent. Weeks later, James Buckley, editor of the Christian Advocate, expressed the widely-accepted view that Hurst was "certainly beyond permanent recovery." At that point, it

83Osborn, John Fletcher Hurst, 402-405 and Osborn Diaries, Osborn Papers.
was clear to both Osborn and Buckley that Bishop McCabe would succeed Hurst as chancellor.  

In a letter drafted by Albert Osborn for the December 10, 1902 board meeting, John Fletcher Hurst resigned as chancellor of The American University. He pointed to the steady progress made and to the accumulated "affection of millions of our people." The trustees responded with a letter citing Hurst for his "keen vision" in inaugurating the movement. Hurst's hand-picked followers bestowed upon him the "title of Chancellor Emeritus," while adding "the distinctive and unique name of Founder."  

The new year saw Hurst decline further. In mid-February, he reported that his health remained poor and that he stayed inside despite the unusually mild winter. By March 1903, the veteran pedestrian needed assistance to walk through the house. In mid-April, Hurst suffered a final stroke. He recovered enough to draft a letter, in which he reported: "My health has not improved with the return of pleasant weather and I am not able to be out-of-doors at

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84Albert Osborn to Carl Bailey Hurst, 12 November 1902, Hurst Papers and James M. Buckley to Charles C. McCabe, 2 December 1902, Early History Collection. Buckley considered the university movement in grave danger, particularly if the 1892 restrictions were allowed to stand. He also believed that Hurst's long-time adversary, James R. Day of Syracuse, probably had enough votes to be elected Bishop.

85John F. Hurst to the Trustees of The American University, 10 December 1902, Trustees Records and Charles W. Baldwin to John F. Hurst, 10 December 1902, Hurst Papers.
Shortly thereafter, Hurst gradually sank into unconsciousness before dying just after midnight on May 4. He was three months shy of his sixty-ninth birthday. On May 7, 1903, many leading citizens and clergymen attended memorial services held at the Metropolitan Memorial Church. Bishop Charles H. Fowler delivered the funeral address. A private interment in Rock Creek Cemetery followed the memorial service.\(^87\)

\(^{86}\)Osborn Diaries, Osborn Papers. Hurst continued to serve the university in an official capacity. He corresponded with Eliza E. Smith of Lancaster, Pennsylvania concerning the $8,000 remaining on her $10,000 pledge. He asked her to make checks payable to "The American University" and to send them to him. At this point, he drafted responses on the letters received. Eliza E. Smith to John F. Hurst, 11 February 1903 and 25 April 1903; and John F. Hurst to Eliza E. Smith, 12 February 1903 and 29 April 1903, Hurst Papers.

\(^{87}\)Osborn, *John Fletcher Hurst*, 415-416 and Osborn Diaries, Osborn Papers.
CHAPTER EIGHT

THE DRIVE TO OPEN THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY

I

That Bishop Charles Cardwell McCabe would assume the duties of chancellor after Bishop Hurst's resignation was a foregone conclusion.¹ He had been associated with The American University from the time it was chartered in 1891. Following the resignation of Reverend Samuel L. Beiler in 1898, McCabe had agreed to serve as the University's vice chancellor. McCabe soon realized that his duties would increase as Hurst's health began to fail. At the General Conference of 1900, he went before the Committee on Episcopacy to request a reduction in duties so that he could help "Bishop Hurst build and endow the American University."² When Hurst became incapacitated two years later, McCabe "consented to give enlarged service to the work of the

¹In November 1902, McCabe informed some of the bishops that he would replace Hurst as chancellor. John A. Gutteridge to Wilbur L. Davidson, 15 November 1902, Early History Collection and Albert Osborn to Carl Bailey Hurst, 12 November 1902, Hurst Papers.

²Charles Cardwell McCabe, To the Committee on Episcopacy of the General Conference of 1900 [Omaha, NE: n.p., 1900], 12-14.
Hurst's resignation in December 1902 gave McCabe the title to accompany his added responsibilities. McCabe was only two years younger than his predecessor, but he appeared stronger and more vigorous. Although Hurst and McCabe had enjoyed a long and close relationship, the two were leagues apart in temperament and intellectual orientation. Whereas Hurst had always assumed the mantle of the bookish scholar, McCabe was driven by emotion and bluster. Hurst rose to prominence through his writing and educational leadership. McCabe attended college in order to enter the ministry and would gain fame through his singing, lectures, and fund raising abilities. He distinguished himself as an evangelist for God and country — the movement behind The American University combined those concerns.

McCabe was born in Athens, Ohio, on October 11, 1836. The McCabe family later moved to Burlington, Iowa. It was there, on New Year's Day 1851, that McCabe joined the church. He always identified that date as the beginning of his religious career. A few years later, McCabe gave up working in his father's store to enter Ohio Wesleyan University. From the beginning, McCabe concentrated on evangelism.

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3University Courier IX (December 1902): 1, 6.

4Charles M. Stuart, "Charles Cardwell McCabe," Methodist Review 90 (January 1908): 12-13, 16, 19. Of McCabe, Stuart wrote: "Next to the church his love went out to the nation. Patriotism was but the national aspect of his piety, as piety was his specific for the national well-being."
rather than mental discipline. He graduated in 1860, still averse to scholarship and religious criticism. On the other hand, the young evangelist had become immensely popular with the largely Methodist population of central Ohio. This reputation would foreshadow his rise to become, as one biographer claimed, "The best loved man in Methodism."\(^5\)

McCabe entered the ministry in 1860, but left his post two years later to serve as chaplain of the 122nd Regiment of Ohio Volunteers during the Civil War. He commandeered a tent from the commissary and held regimental camp meetings virtually every night. Within a few months, McCabe had converted over five hundred soldiers. He also taught them to sing Julia Ward Howe's stirring poem, "The Battle Hymn of the Republic," to the tune of a popular marching song.\(^6\)

In June 1863, following the rout of the Union forces guarding Winchester, Virginia, McCabe was taken prisoner while caring for his wounded comrades. His captors sent him to Libby Prison in Richmond, where he taught his fellow inmates to sing the "Battle Hymn." After his release a few months later, McCabe moved to Washington, D.C., to begin work for the U. S. Christian Commission. While in


Washington, McCabe had the opportunity to sing what he sometimes called "my hymn" to President Abraham Lincoln. A year later, he was called forward to sing the same song at a memorial service for the fallen President. Many, including Julia Ward Howe, cited McCabe as the force behind the song's rapid rise in popularity. It would remain a mainstay in his large repertoire of hymns and patriotic songs.\(^7\)

Drawing on his prison experiences, McCabe developed a lecture entitled "The Bright Side of Life in Libby Prison." Coupled with McCabe's singing, the lecture made McCabe a formidable fund raiser. In a career spanning four decades, McCabe raised many thousands of dollars for the Christian Commission, Ohio Wesleyan University, the Church Extension Society, and the Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church. His expertise did not escape Hurst, who enlisted McCabe as a founding member of the Board of Trustees of The American University. Although one friend drolly addressed him as "the great American Champion Beggar," McCabe's renown on the lecture circuit certainly spurred his election to the episcopacy at the 1896 General Conference.\(^8\)


\(^8\)Ross, "McCabe," 30-31; Wilbur L. Davidson, "Chancellor McCabe," University Courier XIII (January 1907): 1-3; and Bristol, McCabe, 243.
Unlike Hurst, who resided in Washington, McCabe remained resident Methodist bishop of Omaha for two years after becoming chancellor. In addition, he continued to be an indefatigable lecturer and fund raiser. Many considered the enlistment of McCabe as a boon to a movement that was losing momentum. Even Hurst's old nemesis, James R. Day of Syracuse, saw fit to praise the selection. McCabe, he said "brings more hope into that institution [The American University] than anything that has happened since it was unfortunately founded." In spite of such praise, the new chancellor soon showed evidence of being stretched too thin and, although he was reluctant to admit it, signs of old age.

Despite McCabe's long-time association with the university, it became clear to some insiders that the new chancellor had never been intimately involved in the workings of the university. He had attended fewer than half of the trustees meetings and his tenure as vice chancellor was


10In a letter to University Secretary Wilbur L. Davidson, McCabe admitted that he was having trouble with cataracts in both eyes. He rationalized that his reduced episcopal duties benefitted both the university and his ailing eyes. Charles C. McCabe to Wilbur L. Davidson, 29 December 1903, Early History Collection.
certainly less arduous than that experienced by his predecessor, Samuel L. Beiler. Only days after his election, McCabe admitted to Wilbur Davidson, the university secretary, that he had little knowledge of the university's assets or finances. To remedy the situation, he asked Davidson to prepare for him a crib sheet of facts about the university.\(^{11}\)

Bishop William F. Mallalieu, a long-time trustee, knew McCabe well and worried that he would not concentrate fully on his responsibilities as chancellor.\(^{12}\) A year later, Mallalieu was still singing the same refrain. In noting the rapid progress of The Catholic University of America, Mallalieu maintained that "Bp. McCabe ought to drop everything else to attend to the American University."\(^{13}\)

\(^{11}\)Charles C. McCabe to Wilbur L. Davidson, 29 December 1902, Early History Collection.

\(^{12}\)Mallalieu pointed out that McCabe's reduced episcopal responsibilities would give him six full months to work for The American University. He continued: "I hope he will make his headquarters in Washington and go right to work." Instead, McCabe spent the first part of 1903 on an extended episcopal tour of South America. William F. Mallalieu to Charles W. Baldwin, 19 November 1902, Charles W. Baldwin Papers, Lovely Lane Museum, Baltimore, Maryland and Report of the Secretary [Wilbur L. Davidson] to the Board of Trustees, 26 May 1903, Trustees Records.

\(^{13}\)William F. Mallalieu to Wilbur L. Davidson, 10 October 1903, Early History Collection. Instead, McCabe resumed his duties out west. He would not return to the East Coast until after the Los Angeles General Conference until the summer of 1904. Charles C. McCabe to J. C. Thomas, 18 November 1903, Charles C. McCabe Papers, Library, Archives and History Center of the United Methodist Church, Madison, New Jersey.
would later complain privately of the lack of leadership shown by the new chancellor. This displeasure stemmed from the fact that he was frequently left alone to conduct the affairs of the university. In late 1903, he confided in Charles W. Baldwin:

I don't like to take the initiative and call together the Executive Committee. I don't believe it is quite my province to do it. Yet, I am left alone here that I must undertake to do things which don't quite seem to belong to me.\(^\text{14}\)

Another period of economic uncertainty and a concomitant stretch of poor receipts came on the heels of McCabe's taking the helm. McCabe invoked the names of Andrew Carnegie and John Pierpont Morgan, but neither were willing to contribute to the university.\(^\text{15}\) Financial Secretary John A. Gutteridge approached Jane Stanford about her late husband's thirteen year-old pledge for ten thousand dollars. She denied any knowledge of his subscription and expressed hurt at the long procession of letters from Hurst inquiring

\(^{14}\text{Wilbur L. Davidson to Charles W. Baldwin, 21 December 1903, Baldwin Papers, Lovely Lane Museum. Other examples exist of McCabe's lack of active or informed leadership. In his four years of chancellor, McCabe never submitted a written report to the Board of Trustees. In addition, his absence negated the utility of the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees. Between December 1902 to December 1906, that body only met only three times. McCabe did not attend any of those meetings. See the Minutes of the Executive Committee, Board of Trustees, 1902-1907 and Reports of the Chancellor, Board of Trustees Records, 1902-1907.}\)

\(^{15}\text{James M. Buckley to Charles C. McCabe, 2 December 1902, McCabe Papers; John A. Gutteridge to Wilbur L. Davidson, 14 February 1903, 17 December 1903, and 2 December 1904, Early History Collection.}\)
about the pledge.  

To make matters worse, John E. Andrus, president of the board of trustees, was resigning due to poor health. His departure came without the gift of two million dollars that McCabe had assumed was forthcoming. Given the failure to secure large donations, McCabe resigned himself to continue a more widespread and modest fund raising campaign. As a result, the $36,000 raised in the first half of 1903 was just enough to keep the movement going. In a confidential letter to a colleague, McCabe bemoaned the fact that he had allowed himself to be elected chancellor.

In the midst of continued financial problems, the administration renewed a not-so-subtle campaign of anti-Catholicism. The themes remained the same as before, although some new faces entered the fray. John B. Polsgrove of Pennsylvania, one of the university's top financial agents, reportedly prepared a lecture "to be delivered . . . to the secret societies that are especially opposed to Catholicism." At the end of each lecture, he planned to "take up a subscription for the University." A retired

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16 John A. Gutteridge to Wilbur L. Davidson, ? June 1904 and 29 June 1904, Early History Collection. Gutteridge, like Davidson, assumed much of the responsibility for keeping the university going. A veteran Methodist minister, Gutteridge had been financial secretary at Syracuse University before coming to The American University in 1900. University Courier VIII (December 1900): 3.

17 Charles C. McCabe to Charles H. Fowler, 2 June 1903, 12 June 1903, McCabe Papers and Charles C. McCabe to Wilbur L. Davidson, 19 June 1903, Early History Collection.
minister, Polsgrove served as one of the university's field agents for fourteen years.\textsuperscript{18}

Because McCabe was less intellectual than Hurst, his religious prejudices were more visceral and pronounced. To McCabe, Catholicism contributed to Mexico's backwardness and bred crime on the streets of America's cities. From his home in Evanston, Illinois, McCabe wrote:

\begin{quote}
We are having an awful time in Chicago with our City government. It is utterly incompetent. Our Mayor is a Catholic, the Sheriff is a Catholic and the chief of Police is a Catholic, and the devil is to pay generally. . . . If we could have a Protestant for Chief of Police, and a thousand Protestant policemen were appointed, in two weeks this City would be as quiet as a New England village.\textsuperscript{19}
\end{quote}

In 1903, he complained that the Catholic infiltration of the U. S. Civil Service favored Catholic applicants for government jobs. Senator Jonathan P. Dolliver of Iowa, himself a former member of the American Protective Association, tried to dissuade McCabe from spreading such rumors. Nonetheless, McCabe would later report that Theodore Roosevelt's appointment of a Roman Catholic to a government post

\textsuperscript{18}A year later, Polsgrove gave a report of his work to the Board of Trustees. The minutes acknowledged that his work "was of a very promising character." Board of Trustees, 13 December 1904. \textit{University Courier} XXIV (July 1918): 6; John B. Polsgrove to Wilbur L. Davidson, 11 May 1903 and 10 July 1903, Early History Collection.

\textsuperscript{19}Charles C. McCabe to William W. Martin, 18 February 1899, McCabe Papers and Charles C. McCabe to Wilbur L. Davidson, 12 July 1905, Early History Collection.
was the result "of a Jesuitical trick."

As before, the anti-Catholicism fund raising tactic did little to improve the university's financial situation. In late 1903, personal tragedy nearly converged with financial misfortune when Davidson narrowly averted death in a Baltimore and Ohio train accident. McCabe upbraided Davidson for taking that line in the first place, but to John Gutteridge, the accident symbolized the university's many troubles: "It was a journey sorrowful enough without such misfortunes, but truly, as you say, trouble never comes singley[sic]. That has been our sad experience."

III

McCabe's main success as chancellor came with the lifting of the five million dollar endowment restriction at the 1904 Los Angeles General Conference. Bishop Hurst had begun the campaign to have the "embargo" lifted prior to the 1900 General Conference. He had appealed to the College Presidents' Association to modify the restriction so that

20 Jonathan P. Dolliver to Charles C. McCabe, 31 October 1903, McCabe Papers and Charles C. McCabe to Wilbur L. Davidson, 30 January 1906, Early History Collection. McCabe also took Dolliver to task for a newspaper report that claimed the Senator had reprimanded Iowa ministers "on account of their hostility to the Catholic Church . . ." Dolliver blamed the account on poor reporting.

21 Charles C. McCabe to Wilbur L. Davidson, 14 April 1904 and John A. Gutteridge to Wilbur L. Davidson, 5 December 1903, Early History Collection.
the university could open with a smaller endowment, but that body insisted on the original agreement. Although a university supporter offered to introduce a resolution at the General Conference, Hurst stopped him because of the "opposition of the College Presidents present."²²

The campaign against the restriction intensified with Hurst's resignation as chancellor. In the December 1902 issue of the University Courier, Davidson cited rising real estate taxes and the need for tangible development as reasons for the university to open. For the first time, he stated publicly that the restriction was "eminently unfair and hurtful." Elsewhere in that same issue, he wrote: "The handicap which the General Conference has placed on the University ... is enough to distance even the fleetest steed on the educational track."²³

Davidson and Gutteridge spearheaded the campaign with appearances at regional conferences in late 1903 and early 1904. Of the fifteen conferences Davidson visited, fourteen passed resolutions supporting the lifting of the restriction. Although Gutteridge appeared to have less success, most conferences eventually sided with the university on the

²²College Presidents' Association to the Chancellor, President of the Board of Trustees, and Secretary of the American University, 6 December 1899 and Frank B. Lynch to Wilbur L. Davidson, 16 April 1904, Early History Collection.

²³University Courier IX (December 1902): 5, 6.
Davidson also continued the campaign in the University Courier. In January 1904, it quoted Professor John Alfred Faulkner of Drew Theological Seminary, who had attacked the 1892 restriction because it prohibited The American University from opening. Faulkner observed that such requirements "would have prevented the opening of every University in Europe and America . . ."\(^{25}\)

Davidson worked to get McCabe more involved in the campaign in time for the General Conference. This included having McCabe meet with the college presidents at their spring 1904 gathering. Both Davidson and McCabe discerned an organized conspiracy of Methodist educators against the university, yet McCabe hoped "to get the college presidents to cease their opposition." Unfortunately, as the time for the meeting of the presidents approached, McCabe grew

\(^{24}\)Former secretary Charles W. Baldwin worked on the university's behalf at the Baltimore Conference. This resulted in an unpleasant confrontation with President John F. Goucher of the Women's College of Baltimore, who sided with the college presidents and wielded considerable power within the conference. Charles W. Baldwin to Doctor Davy, [1904?], manuscript copy of letter, Early History Collection; John A. Gutteridge to Wilbur L. Davidson, 13 April 1904, Early History Collection; Report of the Secretary [Wilbur L. Davidson] to the Board of Trustees, 16 February and 13 December 1904, Trustees Records and University Courier X (October 1903): 4.

\(^{25}\)As quoted in the University Courier X (January 1904): 4. In addition, the Western Christian Advocate and other Methodist periodicals published editorials to have the restriction removed and the university opened. Levi Gilbert to Wilbur L. Davidson, 31 December 1902, Early History Collection.
increasingly combative, an attitude that would not bode well for the university's efforts.²⁶

The college presidents met early in 1904 to consider The American University's plea for relief from the General Conference restriction. The university sent out a form letter to the membership prior to the meeting, but it did little to mollify those in attendance. McCabe responded to their collective opposition by losing his temper. He opened his response by facetiously wishing death upon the college presidents in attendance and subsequently launched into a tirade of episcopal hubris. He accused the presidents of conspiring against The American University and, in the process, verbally attacked John F. Goucher directly. The damage done, McCabe departed without the support of the College Presidents' Association.²⁷

In the wake of the meeting, McCabe prolonged the confrontation with a stinging letter of rebuttal to most of

²⁶Davidson advised McCabe to "... please remember that you are now committed to a far more important work,—a work that needs all of you. Let it be the crown of your noble life." Charles C. McCabe to Wilbur L. Davidson, 16 October 1903, 17 December 1903, and 24 December 1903, Early History Collection and Wilbur L. Davidson to Charles C. McCabe, 17 October 1903, McCabe Papers.

²⁷James R. Day to Charles C. McCabe, [March 1904], James R. Day Papers, Syracuse University Archives, George Arents Research Library, Syracuse University, Syracuse, New York. An article in the April 1904 University Courier may shed some light on McCabe's treatment of Goucher. It questioned the rationale behind allowing the Woman's College of Baltimore to operate at a $500,000 deficit, while The American University was prevented from opening. University Courier XI (April 1904): 6.
those who had been in attendance. In his letter, McCabe re-
sponded to "misleading statements" about the university's
fund raising, specifically the Lincoln Memorial and Epworth
League campaigns begun years before under the direction of
Reverend George W. Gray. McCabe argued that the Lincoln
Memorial campaign could still bear fruit through bequests
and blamed unnamed members of the College Presidents' Asso-
ciation for the failure of the Epworth League movement. He
angrily answered charges that the College of History was a
problem-ridden "botch in its architecture," although he was
forced to admit the existence of leakage and dampness prob-
lems. McCabe replied to concerns over the relative isola-
tion of campus from downtown Washington by citing the antic-
ipated extension of Massachusetts Avenue through campus.
While more measured than he had been in the public meeting,
McCabe clearly considered his colleagues' criticism as a
direct attack on the university. After writing the letter,
he boasted to Davidson:

"I think it [the letter] will please you and
it will do us a world of good. It will show them
at least that we are in fighting trim and are able
to defend ourselves. The day will come when these
men will wish they could blot out from their histories
the fact that they interfered with the American Uni-
versity."28

28Charles C. McCabe to James R. Day, 8 March 1904, Day
Papers, Syracuse University Archives; Charles C. McCabe to
John F. Goucher, 8 March 1904, Goucher Papers, Lovely Lane
Museum; and Charles C. McCabe to Wilbur L. Davidson, 9 March
1904, Early History Collection.
Chancellor James R. Day of Syracuse responded to Bishop McCabe's performance and missive with a letter of similar timbre. He dismissed both Hurst and McCabe as impractical educators who championed a cause that should have never been begun. He pointed to the success of graduate programs at other Methodist universities and to the fact that both Johns Hopkins and Clark had opened undergraduate colleges. Day also criticized McCabe for throwing his weight around in a most unseemly fashion: "Your talk . . . was as bad a piece of bad taste as I ever witnessed and some portions of it were unchristian in temper and utterance."°

The aftermath made the university's campaign even more difficult, but Davidson and Gutteridge met the challenge head-on. The two continued to meet at regional conferences while Davidson orchestrated a mailing to all of the conference delegates. Davidson produced a thirty-page "Year Book" and an enlarged edition of the University Courier for the mailing. These included the university's history to-date, a description of both its physical and educational plans, as well as a plea for support for this symbol of Christian education.°°

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°°[Wilbur L. Davidson], The American University ([Washington, D.C.: The American University], 1904) and University Courier XI (April 1904). Although McCabe signed the year book, Davidson acknowledged writing it in his report to the trustees. The publication is significant in that it shows
In May 1904, McCabe, Davidson, Gutteridge, Financial Secretary T. D. Collins, and David H. Carroll, a trustee from the Baltimore Conference, attended the Los Angeles General Conference. All were delegates and, with the exception of McCabe, all sat on the committee on education. Davidson expressed suspicion concerning many members of the committee, including his predecessor, W. W. Martin. Nevertheless, the education committee and the college presidents seemed inclined to compromise, perhaps by reducing the endowment restriction to one or two million dollars.31

Problems seemed to arise not so much from the opposition as from McCabe and Gutteridge. McCabe published a paper which threatened that The American University would begin undergraduate work if it did not get relief. This naturally caused problems with many of the Methodist college presidents. Gutteridge tended to clutter the four committee meetings with tiresome interruptions and points of order, a fact that probably contributed to one session lasting over three hours. Davidson also reported that his colleague "did

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31 Davidson Report to Trustees, 13 December 1904; Wilbur L. Davidson to Albert Osborn, 11 May 1906 and 16 May 1906, Early History Collection.
not make his points very clear either."

As the deliberations entered their second week, David Carroll also "showed a little pepper." He proposed an amendment to eliminate the restriction altogether, a course that Davidson considered dangerous. Carroll remained insistent and, to everyone's surprise, the committee on education voted to turn the matter over to the administration and trustees of The American University.

Opponents of the majority report later sought to restore some endowment requirement on the floor of the conference. They submitted the minority report, but on May 28, 1904, the last day of the meeting, the majority report prevailed by a vote of 274 to 112. In exchange for dropping the endowment restriction, the university agreed to a

32 According to Davidson, "[t]he Statements of Bishop McCabe in his intense enthusiasm too, have made the way a little harder. He has said that if we did not get relief, that we would put in collegiate work. . . ." Davidson to Osborn, 16 May 1904; Wilbur L. Davidson to Albert Osborn, 21 May 1904, Early History Collection; and *University Courier* XI (July 1904): [1]-3.

33 *University Courier* XI (July 1904): [1]-3; Davidson to Osborn, 21 May 1904; Wilbur L. Davidson to Albert Osborn, 23 May 1904, 24 May 1904, 25 May 1904, and 27 May 1904. By most accounts, the committee's deliberations were amicable, yet Davidson tired of the struggle. At one point, he professed: "I do not know what tactics the enemy may take, I am sorry there is an enemy." Davidson to Osborn, 25 May 1904. Throughout the meetings, Davidson privately opposed Carroll's amendment to eliminate all restrictions. After years of sometimes bitter feelings, Davidson concluded that compromise on the amount of the restriction was preferable to the total victory that Carroll's amendment represented.
provision which required "that in the future the Board of Trustees [of The American University] shall be approved by the General Conference. . . ." Henceforth, the decision to open the university rested with the administration and board of trustees.\textsuperscript{34}

IV

The removal of the five million dollar endowment restriction did not greatly enhance the university's receipts. Nor did McCabe focus his boundless energies on the institution in his charge. He showed little interest in developing plans for the university's opening, preferring instead to rely upon the blueprint established by Bishop Hurst. The General Conference moved the bishop from Omaha to Philadelphia so that he could be closer to his work. Even so, McCabe's many fund raising ventures, coupled with the fact that he continued to maintain a permanent residence in Evanston, Illinois, would continue to hamper his work for the university.\textsuperscript{35}

A number of trustees, weary of McCabe's inattention, began a quiet campaign to rid the Bishop of his episcopal duties. They pointed to the lack of progress and need for


\textsuperscript{35}University Courier XI (July 1904): 4.
strong leadership. Trustees Norman T. Arnold and Brainard H. Warner wanted McCabe to resign as bishop to become a full-time chancellor. McCabe rejected the ten thousand dollar salary they offered, arguing that his position made him a more effective fund raiser. Bishop Mallalieu even began an ill-fated petition drive among trustees to get McCabe on the job full-time. He argued that "for the last two years [1904 and 1905] we have been playing at this business." Five months later, he expressed even more pessimism: "To my mind it is thoroughly humiliating to see the business drag as it has done."

These efforts did little to lengthen McCabe's attention span. While Davidson managed the affairs of the university, the chancellor continued to seek large donations from a few wealthy men. In 1906, McCabe proposed creating "a list of 20 millionaires who might give $500,000 each..." Such efforts bore little fruit. That same year, Bishop and Mrs. McCabe paid Andrew Carnegie a visit. The meeting was cordial but, like past correspondence with the steel magnate, yielded little but press coverage. To make financial matters worse, claims totaling nearly forty thousand dollars against the estates of two Pennsylvania women became

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36Brainard H. Warner to Charles C. McCabe, 18 May 1905, McCabe Papers; Charles C. McCabe to Wilbur L. Davidson, 19 May 1905, Early History Collection; and Charles C. McCabe to Brainard H. Warner, 19 May 1905, Early History Collection.

37William F. Mallalieu to Wilbur L. Davidson, 18 January 1906 and 13 June 1906, Early History Collection.
tied up in court. Both were eventually lost.\textsuperscript{38}

The university's weak financial standing led to proposals for a merger between it and two other institutions, the Columbian University and the George Washington Memorial University. John W. Hoyt, the long-time champion of the national university, set aside past differences and proposed the merger in a long letter to McCabe and the board of trustees.\textsuperscript{39} At the outset, McCabe rejected the notion, going so far as to send an unread newspaper clipping to Davidson for his comment; evidently, McCabe did not even want to read about a possible merger. Statements in the University Courier likewise denounced the possibility of involvement in a sectarian educational movement.\textsuperscript{40}

In January 1905, Washington retailer and former

\textsuperscript{38}Charles C. McCabe to Wilbur L. Davidson, 22 June 1904, Early History Collection; Edward D. Ellis to Charles C. McCabe, 14 June 1906, McCabe Papers; Philadelphia Evening Bulletin, 18 April 1906; Report of the Secretary [Wilbur L. Davidson] to the Board of Trustees, 16 May 1905; George S. Bennett to Wilbur L. Davidson, 26 October 1903; Wilbur L. Davidson to George S. Bennett, 2 November 1903; Wilbur L. Davidson to Benjamin F. Leighton, 22 March 1904, Early History Collection; and Benjamin F. Leighton to Franklin Hamilton, 31 December 1907, Franklin Hamilton Papers, American University Archives.

\textsuperscript{39}Washington Post, 4 March 1904, 2 and John W. Hoyt to Mr. President, honored Chancellor, and gentlemen of the American University, 16 February 1904, Early History Collection.

\textsuperscript{40}Columbian University did merge with the George Washington Memorial University to form George Washington University. The merger removed Columbian University from nominal Baptist control. Charles C. McCabe to Wilbur L. Davidson, 1 July 1904; University Courier XI (April 1904): 5-6 and (July 1904): 5; and Kayser, Bricks Without Straw, 188-192.
university trustee Samuel W. Woodward joined with The American University's architect Charles Ives Cobb to get McCabe to consider the merger. Woodward was then a trustee of George Washington Memorial University. Cobb probably sought more financial stability for his client. By that time, McCabe had moderated his views on a possible merger, though both he and Davidson were troubled by the notion "of hauling down the denominational banner." The board of trustees chose not to consider the merger at its May 1905 meeting. In the end, The American University would remain the only Protestant institution in the Nation's Capital.

While rejecting affiliation with other institutions, the trustees forged ahead with the construction of the McKinley Memorial Building and even proposed starting the Pennsylvania Hall of Administration. In December 1904, the trustees voted to spend money on hand to construct the McKinley Building on the already-completed foundation. At the next meeting, they awarded a $137,729 construction

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42 Charles C. McCabe to Wilbur L. Davidson, 16 January 1905, Early History Collection; Wilbur L. Davidson to Aldis B. Browne, 17 January 1905, Early History Collection; and University Courier XII (July 1905): 4.

43 At the same time, Davidson was closing down the university's offices on New York Avenue to save the institution eight dollars per month. Minutes, Board of Trustees, 13 December 1904 and Davidson Report to the Board, 13 December 1904.
contract to the firm of Richardson and Burgess. A year later, the university borrowed fifty thousand dollars from Treasurer C. C. Glover to pay the contractors.\textsuperscript{44}

In addition to money problems, the process of constructing the McKinley Building took on a nightmarish quality. First of all, the Columbian Marble Company violated its contract when it began supplying marble of a lesser quality than that used for the College of History. As the university waited for replacement marble, the financially-strapped company went bankrupt. Later on, a strike and lockout halted all construction on the building. By December 1906, the building was not yet under roof. Cobb placed some of the blame on the university, which he claimed was "too good natured with the Marble Company" and with the contractors, Richardson and Burgess.\textsuperscript{45}

In the midst of such problems, McCabe continued to attend any fund raising event "where the need seemed

\textsuperscript{44}The trustees themselves showed little personal commitment to the project. In December 1904, they had subscribed $23,000 towards the completion of the McKinley Building. Two years later, only $5,200 had been received. Board of Trustees, 16 May 1905, 16 May 1906, and 12 December 1906.

\textsuperscript{45}James B. Hammond to Charles Ives Cobb, 23 June 1906; Charles Ives Cobb to Richardson & Burgess, 8 October 1906 and 29 June 1907; Charles Ives Cobb to Wilbur L. Davidson, 10 October 1906; 17 October 1906; and 23 May 1907, Building Files, American University Archives.
His doctors warned him that his pace might prove deleterious to his health. In late November 1906, McCabe recognized his vulnerability in a letter to a colleague: "I am still strong and vigorous, but sometimes men break down suddenly."47

In December, McCabe embarked on a lecture and fund raising tour of New York and Western Connecticut. On December 10, 1906, he traveled to Torrington, Connecticut, where he tried to raise ten thousand dollars to pay off the mortgage on the local Methodist church. The next day, McCabe suffered a massive stroke while boarding a train in New York City. He was rushed to a local hospital where he lapsed into a coma and died on December 19, 1906. Not long before he died, McCabe had prophesied to a friend: "I will soon have a long rest, sudden death would be sudden glory."48

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46Bishop Charles H. Fowler later wrote of his colleague: "He had this peculiarity, that whenever he touched a great cause it adhered to him and did not escape from his heart. So all along the way he was constantly helping these interests. . . . he seemed like a packhorse whose load almost concealed his presence . . ." Charles H. Fowler, Notes Sent to McCabe's Funeral, [December 1906], McCabe Papers, Library, Methodist Archives and History Center. Fowler, who was too ill to attend McCabe's funeral, sent written remarks.

47Bristol, Chaplain McCabe, 400 and Charles C. McCabe to Edmund J. Janes, 29 November 1906, McCabe Papers.

48Bristol, Chaplain McCabe, 401-402; Ross, "Singing Chaplain," 32; and Rebecca P. McCabe to Wilbur L. Davidson, 12 June 1907, McCabe Papers.
IV

Hurst's death had been expected. McCabe died suddenly, at a time when, as Davidson claimed, "He [McCabe] seemed to be just freeing himself from the burdens which filled his hands and heart when he became our Chancellor. . . ."\textsuperscript{49}

For the second time in four years, Davidson sent a wreath of red roses in the shape of the letters "AU" to honor a deceased chancellor. Davidson assumed many of the same duties that he performed before, but "without a head, a leader, a counsellor, and a helper," his work seemed "dark and lonesome." The responsibility weighed on him as never before.\textsuperscript{50}

From his five months as acting chancellor of The American University, Davidson could offer advice on the selection of a new chancellor. He was not alone in projecting the need for "a great leader," yet his experience suggested other criteria. He advised the board of trustees to select a man with both impeccable academic credentials and experience in fund raising. Davidson also argued that the university needed one who could give his full energies to the endeavor. In other words, he did not want another

\textsuperscript{49}Report of the Secretary [Wilbur L. Davidson] to the Board of Trustees, 15 May 1907, Board of Trustees Records.

\textsuperscript{50}Ibid.
bishop to fill the office of chancellor.\textsuperscript{51}

At that same meeting, the board of trustees unanimously elected Dr. Franklin E. E. Hamilton to the post of chancellor of The American University. Hamilton did not accept immediately, but promised that "he would give his election the most careful and prayerful consideration, and would at as early a day as possible make his response."\textsuperscript{52} Hamilton, however, did not have a ready reply. He waited until the following month to answer in the affirmative.\textsuperscript{53}

The trustees must have believed strongly in the forty-two year-old Boston native. He was the youngest son of Reverend William Charles Patrick Hamilton and the brother of Bishop John W. Hamilton. He graduated from the Boston Latin School before attending Harvard University. While at Harvard, Hamilton served as president of the Harvard Daily Crimson, was inducted into Phi Beta Kappa, and delivered the undergraduate oration for Harvard's 250th anniversary. His graduate studies took him to Boston University, as well as universities in Paris and Berlin. He received a doctorate in speculative philosophy from Boston University in 1899. Prior to his election as chancellor, Hamilton joined the New England Conference. His Massachusetts pastorates included

\textsuperscript{51}Charles W. Baldwin to Albert Osborn, 21 December 1906, Early History Collection and Davidson report, 15 May 1907.  

\textsuperscript{52}Board of Trustees, 15 May 1907.  

\textsuperscript{53}University Courier XIV (July 1907): 1.
East Boston, Newtonville and the First Methodist Church of Boston. In addition he twice served as university preacher at Harvard University and wrote extensively for magazines and journals.54

Hamilton emerged as the first full-time, salaried chancellor of The American University. After assuming the office of chancellor on September 1, 1907, he wielded a combination of scholarship, rhetorical persuasiveness, and diplomacy that eventually would move the enterprise closer to opening.55 At the same time, the practical new chancellor exhibited a level of frugality that affronted some members of his administration. Chief among them was Albert Osborn, who was demoted to the clerical position of assistant secretary, with his salary reduced from twenty-one hundred dollars to fifteen hundred dollars per year.56

In his first year, Hamilton brought a number of new faces into the administration. In April 1908, he enlisted an endowment secretary, Reverend Fred M. Stone, who had served in a similar capacity at the Woman's College in Baltimore. The executive committee also added a field

54Ibid, 1-2.

55University Courier XXIV (July 1918): 1 and Report of the Chancellor [Franklin Hamilton] to the Board of Trustees, 11 December 1907.

56Notes, Albert Osborn, 11 December 1907, Albert Osborn Papers and Minutes, Board of Trustees, 11 December 1907. Gutteridge maintained his position when Davidson resigned the following year.
secretary, Reverend David B. Johnson, a member of the Central Illinois Conference and organizer of the Anti-Saloon League. These men assumed responsibility for most of the university's fund raising duties. Consequently, Wilbur Davidson resigned in October 1908 with the announced purpose of spending more time with church extension and Chautauqua work. Osborn assumed many of Davidson's secretarial duties as well as the editorship of the University Courier.

Under Hamilton's guidance, the university petitioned for and received a reduction in its real estate taxes. At about the same time, it assumed responsibility for the newly-enclosed, yet unfinished McKinley Building. The high cost of marble and continued problems with the marble company postponed completion of the building. In the end, the Board of Trustees had to borrow eighty-two thousand dollars from Riggs Bank to pay the contract price of $138,804. The loan created some friction with trustee and treasurer Charles C. Glover, the chairman of Riggs Bank. He directed Hamilton to retire at least fifteen thousand dollars of the debt. To raise this amount, the board borrowed money on

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57 University Courier XV (April 1908): 5, 7 and Minutes, Executive Committee, 16 October 1908. The Executive Committee also confirmed Johnson's brother, James A. Johnson of Los Angeles, as a field agent for the university.

58 Board of Trustees, 9 December 1908 and University Courier XV (October 1908): 4.
some its real estate holdings.59

Besides financial problems, Hamilton inherited the legacy ofwaning interest among prospective donors. To help rectify the situation, Hamilton orchestrated an all-expenses-paid visit to the campus by delegates to the 1908 General Conference, held in Baltimore. To assure public attention, the executive committee invited President Theodore Roosevelt to speak at the gathering. Roosevelt accepted the invitation for the May 16, 1908 event.60

The university distributed more than nine hundred free tickets to conference delegates, bishops, missionaries, and the press. The general public purchased an additional six hundred tickets. Delegates travelled from Baltimore to Washington's Union Station in specially-appointed passenger cars. Chartered street cars brought the guests to Loughboro Road, where a wagon ride or half-mile walk lay between them and the College of History. A Washington caterer served a buffet luncheon in the building's main hall as the crowd restlessly awaited Roosevelt's arrival. Outside, the U. S. Marine Band entertained others who gathered around the speaker's stand.61

59Report of the Secretary [Wilbur L. Davidson] to the Board of Trustees, 11 December 1907 and Board of Trustees, 16 May 1908.

60Board of Trustees, 11 December 1907; Executive Committee, 19 February 1908 and 28 February 1908.

61University Courier XV (July 1908): 1-2.
Roosevelt arrived promptly at 3:00 P.M. In spite of the chilly, overcast day, an estimated crowd of four thousand people had gathered to hear the President. After introductory remarks by Hamilton and Bishop Earl Cranston, Roosevelt stepped forward to address the crowd. In a brief, yet spirited address, the President reminded the crowd that The American University fulfilled President George Washington's dream for a national university. He went on to emphasize the importance of religion's service to society, maintaining that Methodists represented the best aspects of American citizenship. Following a speech by trustee and Iowa Senator Jonathan P. Dolliver, the guests returned to Baltimore and the curiosity seekers dispersed. Afterwards, the General Conference passed a resolution thanking the university and the President for the excursion. More importantly, the resolution commended the university "to people everywhere, who believe that patriotism and sound learning are the safeguards of the republic."62

VI

In the March 1909 University Courier, Hamilton reported that $500,000 was needed to open The American University. That amount would retire all of the university's debt, complete the interior of the McKinley Building, furnish the

62Ibid., 2-8.
institution's two buildings, and erect a heating plant. Hamilton also proposed to follow "the plan of that genius of landscape architecture, Frederick Law Olmsted" to construct a winding lane from the quadrangle through the undeveloped portion of the campus. The same issue featured testimonials by Professor Borden Parker Bowne of Boston University, bank president Charles C. Glover, and Bishop William F. Anderson of Chattanooga, Tennessee. Each emphasized the advantages and educational imperative of locating The American University in Washington.

In succeeding months, Hamilton raised the target figure for the "Opening Fund" to $1,500,000. This change obviously reflected the need for an endowment fund to help support the continued operation of a graduate university. The fund raising emphasis shifted drastically from raising money to construct buildings to accumulating endowment support. Consequently, Hamilton began receiving gifts toward the fund needed to open the university. Such gifts included sixty thousand dollars for the opening fund, an endowed lectureship from the Chancellor's brother, Bishop John W. Hamilton, and fifty thousand dollars for scholarships from the estate.

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63 *American University Courier* XV (March 1909): 1-2. That same issue featured a title change to the *American University Courier*. In order to maintain consistency, the publication will be referred to as the *University Courier* in the text.

of Hart A. Massey, the Canadian farm equipment manufacturer.  

In September 1909, Hamilton articulated a more practical approach to opening the university with the existing physical plant. Although the trustees hoped to begin work immediately, Hamilton did not offer a specific educational program nor did he select a date for the formal opening. By that time, the university had received over $140,000 in subscriptions toward opening, far short of the $1,500,000 goal. That fact may have inspired several references in the same issue to the strong Roman Catholic presence in Washington. The pace of such commentary increased, as articles in the University Courier reported on "The Papal Propaganda from Washington" and quoted extensively from Bishop Earl Cranston's pamphlet, "The Papacy Still Anti-American."  

In subsequent months, the university reported a number of gifts toward the opening of "the bulwark of Protestant and Christian Americanism." In addition, the university adopted red, white, and blue as its official colors, thereby emphasizing the institution's link to the nation. Hamilton also assigned Osborn to a protracted and unsuccessful attempt to locate plans for the national university proposed.

65 American University Courier XVI (June 1909): 1 and Board of Trustees, 5 May 1909.

66 American University Courier XVI (September 1909), 1-2, 5, 8; (December 1909), 6-7; (March 1910), 2-3; and XVII (June 1910), 8.
in Washington's day.\textsuperscript{67} The following February, Hamilton sent a plea for financial support to members of the Baltimore Conference. He argued that support from the conference would spur giving from other parts of the country.\textsuperscript{68}

In spite of nagging financial concerns, there were some signs of progress for the emerging university. Chief among them was the long-awaited completion of the Massachusetts Avenue extension. Trustee Charles C. Glover used his considerable influence to expedite the completion of this direct link with downtown Washington and provided the board of trustees with an insider's view of progress on the route.\textsuperscript{69} Glover's actions confirmed how important the influential banker was to the struggling university. Wilbur L. Davidson had recognized this fact in 1903:

"[Glover] is worth any hundred men in Washington in getting large appropriations through Congress to do thoroughly the work of opening and grading. He wines and dines all the members of the District Committee in both Houses of Congress, and is on intimate terms with them . . . ."\textsuperscript{70}

\textsuperscript{67}American University Courier XVI (December 1909), 2; Osborn Diaries, Osborn Papers; and Alexis, "White City Upon a Hill, 8.

\textsuperscript{68}In his plea, Hamilton added that "this undertaking . . . is now fraught with such vast interests to our Church and to Protestantism." Franklin Hamilton to Members of the Baltimore Conference, February 26, 1910, Franklin Hamilton Papers, American University Archives.

\textsuperscript{69}American University Courier XV (October 1908): 1-2 and Board of Trustees, 19 May 1910.

\textsuperscript{70}Wilbur L. Davidson to Charles W. Baldwin, 26 December 1903, Charles W. Baldwin Papers, Lovely Lane Museum, Baltimore, Maryland.
In September 1912, the *University Courier* finally announced the completion of the macadamized thoroughfare through its campus. That same issue reported on efforts to bring electric streetcar service to campus. Once again, the university's friends in Congress helped to speed through the enabling legislation. The line would connect Wisconsin and Massachusetts Avenues via Macomb Street. From the intersection of Macomb and Massachusetts, the line would proceed along Massachusetts Avenue into Maryland. The line was completed in time to provide transportation for soldiers posted on campus during the First World War.

The period also witnessed substantial growth in the university's library collections. Although the administration downplayed the need for a library in light of the institution's proximity to the Library of Congress, the university had received thousands of books. Following Hurst's death, the university received sizeable collections from the estates of General John A. Logan and trustee William M. Springer. Albert Osborn served as the librarian for

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71 *American University Courier* XIX (September 1912): 5.

72 *American University Courier* XIX (September 1912): 4-5; (March 1913): 2-3; and XX (September 1913): 4.

73 The 1904 promotional booklet claimed: "With the Congressional Library at our doors we shall never feel the necessity of providing such elaborate library facilities as must be made by schools removed from such advantages as are afforded by the Capital City." [Davidson], *The American University* (1904), 25.
the growing, albeit little-used collection.\textsuperscript{74}

Unfortunately, the university could not prevent Hurst's own library from going on the auction block. Consequently, the Library of Congress and other, better-funded libraries outbid The American University for the books collected by its founder. One significant exception was the George Washington letter that Hurst had used in fund raising. Wilbur L. Davidson bid $465 to make certain that it stayed in the university's possession. The board later repaid Davidson for his efforts.\textsuperscript{75}

In June 1909, the University Courier announced the creation of a university museum containing a fifty thousand dollar collection of Near Eastern artifacts. The benefactor, Lydia Mamreoff Von Finkelstein Mountford, was a popular lecturer on life and customs in the Holy Land. Madame Mountford, as she was usually called, intended the museum to be a memorial of herself and her late brother. The collection, officially called the Lydia M. Von Finkelstein Mountford and Peter Von Finkelstein Mamreov Museum Illustrating Bible Life and Customs. At Madame Mountford's death,

\textsuperscript{74}\textit{American University Courier} XV (October 1908): 6-7.

\textsuperscript{75}\textit{American University Courier} XII (July 1905): 1-2. Of the 2,098 pieces sold at auction, the Library of Congress purchased 1,025. The American University purchased 64. In addition to many important American imprints, the collection included an illuminated fifteenth century manuscript, several incunabula, and numerous historical manuscripts.
ownership would revert to The American University.  

Hamilton clearly saw the arrangement as a fund raising opportunity, since he asked that Madame Mountford be designated a financial agent of the university. In addition, the effort seemed compatible with the university's religious aims. The museum and its benefactor attracted considerable attention in the pages of the University Courier. In the end, however, Madame Mountford's poor health and mental instability detracted from her service to the university. As a result, Hamilton clearly lost interest in the project. The museum collection languished in the College of History until removed by Madame Mountford's heirs years later.  

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77 Report of the Chancellor [Franklin Hamilton] to the Board of Trustees, 5 May 1909 and American University Courier XVI (December 1909): 2; XVII (December 1910): 6; (March 1911): 3; XVIII (June 1911): 5-6; and XIX (March 1913): 7-8. In 1915, Madame Mountford requested to be placed on the university payroll as a lecturer. Evidence suggests that she was too ill to return to the lecture circuit. The board turned down the request and resolved for Mountford to remove her collection from the Hall of History. The collection remained on the premises until after her death in 1917, at which time the estate sold the collection to a friend of Madame Mountford's. Lydia M. Von F. Mountford to the Board of Trustees of The American University, 26 May 1915, Early History Collection; Nanette B. Paul to Franklin Hamilton, 2 December 1915, Franklin Hamilton Papers; Nanette Paul to Madame Mountford, 30 January 1916, Early History Collection; Resolution, Board of Trustees, 27 April 1916; and Philip M. Ashford to John W. Hamilton, 8 June 1917, Early History Collection.
As the university moved closer to operation, Hamilton nevertheless faced weaknesses in both the financial and curricular arenas. Hamilton, like Hurst and McCabe before him, anticipated the successful opening of the university. Unlike them, his quick grasp of the many problems facing the institution lent some credence to his measured optimism.  

Toward that end, as Hamilton explored new avenues for support, he looked to reduce the institution's ongoing expenses. In 1909, he fired the university's long-time printing contractor after determining that the company regularly inflated publication figures and printed the *University Courier* on an inferior quality of paper. Hamilton also moved to strengthen the board of trustees, re-lease unproductive financial agents, and reduce office costs. Furthermore, he used undesignated gift monies to reduce the university's carrying charges on its debt.  

More importantly, Hamilton strove to fashion a blueprint under which the university eventually would operate.

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78 Report of the Chancellor [Franklin Hamilton] to the Board of Trustees, 5 May 1909. In his report, Hamilton stated: "Personally I am confident that the darkest days of the undertaking are over and that from now on the enterprise steadily will grow in prestige, security and good will as well as material form."

79 Ibid.

80 Report of the Chancellor [Franklin Hamilton] to the Board of Trustees, 15 December 1909; 19 May 1910; and Board of Trustees, 6 June 1912.
To a great extent, that meant abandoning many of the educational precepts established by Hurst and continued by McCabe. In mid-1912, Hamilton outlined two possible approaches to opening which illustrated this departure from the past. For one, he suggested that the university seriously consider a merger proposal from the trustees of the George Washington University. The second approach involved establishing the university as an agency for conferring fellowships for students to pursue graduate studies elsewhere. The merger proposal went no further, but the idea of distributing fellowships would figure into Hamilton's later plans.  

Six months later, at the December 1912 board meeting, Hamilton submitted a plan of operations for the university. Unlike his predecessors, Hamilton stressed frugality and the use of the extant physical plant. His plan included the following features:

1) the formation of a seven person Board of Award to select fellowship recipients and "pass upon the qualifications of any student who is a candidate for a degree from the American University;"

2) the creation of an Institute of Research "to make available for advancement of knowledge the unparalleled facilities of Washington to graduate students;"

3) plans to develop University Lectures, "by eminent specialists," to be held each year;

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81Report of the Chancellor [Franklin Hamilton] to the Board of Trustees, 13 December 1911 and Board of Trustees, 6 June 1912.
4) admission to students holding undergraduate degrees from recognized colleges and universities. According to Hamilton's initial plan, there would "be no charge except a small matriculation fee and a small diploma fee . . .;"

5) the establishment of selected fellowships to enable recipients to pursue graduate study at any receptive university in the United States or in Europe;

6) degrees conferred by the Board of Award upon the completion of "a thesis which shall be satisfactory to the Board . . .;" and

7) established that the first Wednesday in June be set aside for an annual University Convocation.  

The board of trustees referred the plan to a subcommittee comprised of Hamilton, Washington lawyer Aldis B. Browne, former university secretary Charles W. Baldwin, resident Methodist Bishop Earl Cranston, Judge Thomas N. Anderson, and Bishop John W. Hamilton, brother of the chancellor. The Chancellor added Bishop William F. McDowell, former chancellor of the University of Denver, to serve in an advisory capacity.  

Hamilton was unapologetic for the new direction he proposed for the enterprise. He considered Hurst an idealist who developed plans for a "university of loftiest pretension" in order to advance Methodism's intellectual stature. Hamilton continued, in an article in the Methodist Review:

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82 Board of Trustees, 11 December 1912.

83 Ibid.
"Thus, in the American University, as now projected, we have a plan that is at once irenic and practical. It can be worked from the plant as now we have it. But far more vital than this is the fact that this proposition covers the latest modern needs in life-training.

The plan of Bishop Hurst, for example, only a quarter of a century ago, without question was the last word in higher education at that time. But within these twenty-five years the whole spirit of education and the emphasis of the education and the emphasis of the educated life itself have shifted. And so the original plan of Bishop Hurst—let us be frank—is outgrown, and we are forced into a new adjustment."^84

Several Methodist publications joined with Hamilton in professing the need to move away from Hurst's original plans. Reverend James C. Baker, writing in the Zion's Herald, agreed that Washington needed a Protestant university. Even so, changes in American higher education over the past twenty years made much of Hurst's vision impractical. Baker argued that while graduate education was firmly established in the United States, high costs had thwarted attempts to create separate, graduate universities.85

An editorial in the Central Christian Advocate caustically reminded readers that Hurst had "foolishly obligated himself" to raise a five million dollar endowment. Soon thereafter, he had agreed with the General Conference

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requirement to raise an additional five million dollars for buildings and equipment. Above all else, the editorial faulted Hurst's decision to create a post-graduate institution. Given the financial demands of other Methodist institutions during the 1890s, his was a "utopian scheme built on mist." In the end, Hamilton's pragmatic actions toward opening the university elicited tentative editorial support from the Central Christian Advocate.86

Such analysis gave impetus to Hamilton's more streamlined educational plan. In March 1913, the University Courier announced that the plan for opening was being studied carefully by the subcommittee. In addition to soliciting advice from "some of the most prominent men in the country," the committee was encouraged by its progress. In addition, the bequests of David H. Carroll, former president of the board, and trustee John Fritz brought opening day even closer to reality.87

On May 14, 1913, Hamilton went before the Board of Trustees to read the subcommittee report on the plan for opening The American University. The board considered the proposal and adopted it, first item-by-item and then as a whole. Afterwards, the trustees voted to open the university according to the plans outlined by the chancellor. They

86 As reprinted in the American University Courier XIX (December 1912): 7-8.

87 American University Courier XIX (March 1913): 4; XX (June 1913): 1; and (September 1913): 1.
agreed to set June 4, 1914 as the opening date for the university.  

The opening plan remained essentially the same as the one Hamilton submitted months earlier. Hamilton outlined the proposal in a March 1914 article in the *Methodist Review*. He explained the innovations in terms of changes in higher education. The need for research, as part of "search for ultimate reality [italics his]," made mining the "Federal treasure house of educational material a necessity. University support for lectureships would help disseminate research findings and "assist in the vitalizing of truth [italics his]." Finally, reliance upon government researchers and personalized programs of study would "meet the demand for a higher development of "individualism [italics his]." Thus, Hamilton's innovative approach to graduate education stressed a pragmatic and progressive departure from those employed by his predecessors.

Hamilton's plan received much praise from the Methodist press, particularly from those which had been cool to Bishop Hurst's original plan. Former vice chancellor Samuel

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88Board of Trustees, 14 May 1913 and American University Courier XX (June 1913): 1.

89Hamilton, "Life-Girding," 3-5.

90An editorial in the *Northwestern Christian Advocate* echoed Hamilton's observations on graduate education, as well as emphasized support for the new design: "The changed conceptions of education in these later years, have finally necessitated a like shifting of base by those in charge of this institution [The American University], until now the
Beiler wrote Hamilton to congratulate him on setting a date for the opening of the university. Beiler also praised Hamilton "for the three-fold scheme of work you have selected." He considered the plan "worthy of the high ideals of the early days" and, more importantly, believed that it did "not clash with the work of our other schools." Hamilton also received assistance from one of Hurst's most bitter adversaries, Bishop James R. Day, who agreed to serve on a committee to oversee the organization and opening of The American University.

In March 1914, the University Courier announced that President Woodrow Wilson had agreed to preside over the opening of The American University. To accommodate the President's schedule, the board changed the date of the opening from June 4 to May 27. In addition, the board approved the hiring of Dr. Frank W. Collier of Boston as the director of research. It also approved the appointment of

program projected is wholly different from that originally planned....We confess to never having been enthusiastic over the plan as originally projected, but with the present plan we find ourselves in heartiest accord." Editorial in the Northwestern Christian Advocate, as reprinted in the American University Courier XX (June 1913): 1-2.

91Samuel L. Beiler to Franklin Hamilton, 22 July 1913, Hamilton Papers.

92Report of the Chancellor [Franklin Hamilton] to the Board of Trustees, 27 May 1914. Albert Osborn identified further evidence of rapprochement when he reported the warm reception that both he and the University received at a the Central New York Conference held at Syracuse. Report of the Assistant Secretary and Registrar [Albert Osborn] to the Board of Trustees, 17 December 1913.
the board of award, which was comprised of: Secretary of State William Jennings Bryan; Secretary of the Navy Josephus Daniels; U.S. Commissioner of Education Philander P. Claxton; Dr. Alfred True, dean of the Graduate School of the U.S. Department of Agriculture; Dr. Thomas N. Carver, director of the Rural Organization Service and professor of economics at Harvard University; Dr. John W. Hancher, assistant secretary of the Board of Education of the Methodist Episcopal Church; and Dr. Andrew Wood, a Methodist minister from Lynn, Massachusetts. 93

With the machinery of the university in place, Hamilton sought the official support for opening from the Methodist Episcopal Church. Toward that end, the opening of the university received the unanimous endorsement from the Board of Education of the Methodist Episcopal Church. The plan received more guarded support from the College President's Association and the University Senate. Dr. John Hancher lobbied vigorously to encourage those bodies to recognize the institution as a bona fide university. With those endorsements, the university would formally and officially open on May 27, 1914. 94

93 American University Courier XX (March 1914): 8

94 Report of the Chancellor [Franklin Hamilton] to the Board of Trustees, 27 May 1914.
CHAPTER NINE

JOHN FLETCHER HURST AND THE BEGINNINGS
OF THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY

I

Before Bishop Hurst even decided to purchase the ninety-acre tract in Northwest Washington, he had a clear idea of the kind of educational institution he wanted to create. Long before he stood on that open hillside in December 1889, his educational philosophy had been shaped by his experiences at Dickinson College, several German universities, and Drew Theological Seminary. Those experiences, coupled with his spiritual and professional education within the Methodist Episcopal Church, molded not only his academic vision, but also the course of The American University's early history.

Among Hurst's many problems in establishing The American University was the philosophical unwieldiness of a merger between evangelical Christianity and freedom of inquiry. In the South, some Methodist universities had
difficulty with the concept of academic freedom. In the North, the larger Methodist universities were becoming less dogmatic, thereby permitting more faculty-centered education. As conceived by Hurst, The American University would not have fit totally into either category, although it is clear that the institution would have embraced traditional Methodist doctrines to a significant extent.

For example, while there is no evidence that Hurst would have rejected the teaching of evolution, there are other instances of how religious concerns may have colored the university's teachings. For one, Hurst unabashedly promoted the university as "the defender of the faith." Even though the University Courier and Hurst's supporters took Roman Catholicism to task for slanting its teachings, Hurst clearly intended to do the same from the Protestant perspective. Plans to inaugurate a college of missions, a school of Christian sociology, and a college of scientific temperance provide good examples of what might have been had Hurst himself been able to open the university. Such a sectarian orientation would have weakened open inquiry. That aside, it showed a tendency to bend academic planning towards potential sources of money.

From the beginning, Hurst displayed weakness as a

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1The most famous case involved Alexander Winchell, who was fired from Vanderbilt University in 1873 for teaching evolution. Winchell went on to chair the geology department at the University of Michigan. See Hofstadter and Metzger, The Development of Academic Freedom, 330-32.
university planner and fund raiser. Although he had an educational program in mind, Hurst spent considerably more time on planning buildings and participating in educational intrigue. This fascination with both bricks and mortar and controversy yielded a university in name only. As a result, Hurst attracted little support from mainstream educators and left himself open to attacks by critics, particularly those aligned with competing Methodist institutions or the national university movement.

Even more problematic was Hurst's single-mindedness in building a grand and monumental university. Although his successors pointed to the endowment burden enacted by the 1892 General Conference, Hurst had endorsed the five million dollar endowment restriction, as well as a requirement to invest an equal amount in land and facilities. In fact, Hurst had proposed a ten million dollar fund raising target months before the conference. While this may have been fund raising hyperbole or the result of advanced knowledge that such a restriction would be imposed, Hurst appeared confident that he could raise the requisite funds.

Although the conference imposed the restrictions with the purpose of keeping The American University from becoming another poorly-endowed, struggling Methodist school, experience would lend credence to later charges that the "embargo" was concocted by the university's enemies. As a result, the restrictions forbade the university from opening as anything
less than the grandiose institution that Hurst proposed. Consequently, the implementation of the restrictions denied the university the luxury of a modest beginning, requiring the struggling institution to pay thousands of dollars in real estate taxes before it opened.

One could speculate that Hurst might have been able to surmount these handicaps were it not for a prolonged and unanticipated period of economic uncertainty that began in May 1893, one year after the General Conference. Although Hurst had successfully led Drew Theological Seminary through the economic turbulence of the 1870s, he could not duplicate that success twenty years later. Hurst's later problems may be attributed to timing: whereas the depression of the 1870s rivaled the "Panic of 1893" in intensity, the crisis resulting from the loss of Drew's endowment came in 1876, toward the end of a prolonged economic downturn. The depression of the 1890s began in early 1893, at the exact same time Hurst and his colleagues commenced their fund raising efforts for the newly-chartered university. While economists agree that the depression ended in 1897, the nation's economy did not rebound fully until after the turn of the century.²

Several other factors also distinguished Hurst's later

²Hoffmann, Depression of the Nineties, 10, 54-57. In fact, the failure of the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad, the event which triggered the panic, came four days before President Benjamin Harrison signed the university's charter.
efforts from those on behalf of Drew. At Drew, Hurst raised $310,000, a tidy sum in 1876, but only a fraction of the five million dollars demanded by the 1892 General Conference. In addition, Drew was an established, on-going educational enterprise. It had a physical plant, a faculty, and alumni, as well as the support of the Newark Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Conference. The institution was a tangible entity and Hurst's singular fund raising goal was to keep it open.

Twenty years later, Hurst did not have the same clarity of vision. His efforts on behalf of The American University represented contradictory purposes, as well as a lack of direction in fund raising. He personally sanctioned campaigns that drew little distinction between millionaires and the Methodist rank and file. The costs of such efforts commonly exceeded the sums of money raised. In addition, the latitude given financial agents such as George Gray embarrassed the university and would hamper its fund raising for years to come.

Unlike Drew, The American University existed for years as little more than a charter and fallow farmland. Until 1898, it had no buildings. It would be a generation before it assembled a faculty and enrolled students. Indeed, in spite of the support of the Methodist bishops and of the General Conference, The American University in its nascent form had no real constituency. When money became tight
during the 1890s, the needs of extant Methodist colleges and universities prevailed. Understandably, in the competition over limited resources, regional conferences chose to support local interests rather than to "chase rainbows" in Washington.³

On top of the General Conference restrictions, Hurst's dogmatic vision of the university made compromise difficult and resulted in another set of problems. Because Hurst viewed the university as the "defender of the faith," he rejected the secular, faculty-centered model of Johns Hopkins University. Instead, Hurst strove long and hard to erect rows of marble buildings that would serve little purpose, apart from giving the university physical visibility and prominence. His classical vision denied economic reality and his refusal to recognize the topographical limitations of the site, which landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted and others had pointed out to him, spawned additional complications and public embarrassment.

Consequently, Hurst's failure can be attributed to his emotional involvement with the project. In many respects, Hurst had so closely identified himself with The American University that, for fifteen years, he and the institution were virtually synonymous. The university, intended to be a

conspicuous monument to Methodist education, also reflected the desires, prejudices, and vanity of its founder. Hurst's imprimatur prevailed throughout Bishop McCabe's years as chancellor, because McCabe's inexperience with higher education made it difficult for him to alter his predecessor's personalized blueprint for the university.

Clearly, it took the lifting of the General Conference restriction, coupled with third chancellor Franklin Hamilton's more practical and flexible educational approach, to alter Hurst's design and make The American University a reality. The passage of time also helped to erase the memory of the many problems the university experienced during its infancy and to fade the imprint of its founder's obsessed vision. Ironically, Hamilton had to completely revise Hurst's plans in order to give the long-dormant university life at all.

II

The institution finally did come to life on May 27, 1914, when The American University's opening ceremony took place on the lawn in front of the Hall of History. The institution's two marble buildings shone white under a cloudless spring afternoon. Bishop Earl Cranston served as master of ceremonies for the opening. The event featured a keynote address by President Woodrow Wilson, as well as speeches by Secretary of State William Jennings Bryan, and
Secretary of the Navy Josephus Daniels. Bishop Cranston took note of the dignitaries seated on the dais and quipped:

"We have drawn very heavily upon the executive departments for our program today. We have no thought, however, of suspending the operations of government. Important as the hour is, we shall not have ventured so far. We are very sure there can be no war measures taken this afternoon. We are bound to have peace."¹

In a brief address, the President set the tone for remarks by describing the university as the source of direction for mankind: "Let men who wish to know come and look at this compass and thereafter determine which way they will go!" Thereafter, The American University employed the lodestar and compass as unofficial symbols. Secretary Daniels used the university's motto, Pro Deo et Patria, as the theme for his remarks. Bryan placed Christian faith and Methodism in the context of American history. In addition, the three-time presidential candidate returned Cranston's partisan jibes: "It is worth while waiting fifty-four years to hear a Methodist Bishop say 'we are all Democratic'."²

The school's working life began in October 1914, when The American University opened its doors to twenty-eight students. The director of research, Dr. Frank W. Collier, oversaw the individualized programs of these first students. Collier described the operation of this institute for

⁴American University Courier XXI (June 1914): 1-6.
⁵American University Courier XXI (June 1914): 6-7 and (September 1914): 4-8.
research in the university's first catalog:

This institute is not intended to carry on research work of its own. Rather is it simply a nexus or connecting link, by means of which students may be introduced to the opportunities for research now existing in the government departments.®

Unquestionably, the absence of an established faculty at the university lowered its overhead and payroll costs. This educational model led most students to study directly with government scientists and experts. Collier spent much of his time visiting government agencies and he reported that many bureau chiefs and department heads expressed interest in providing research opportunities for graduate students. He was particularly successful in placing students with researchers at the Department of Agriculture. In addition to overseeing work done in government departments, Collier taught a class in philosophy and a teachers' training class at Georgetown's Foundry Church. He made plans for more extensive course offerings during the university's second year of operations.?

The university also employed a "Board of Award," which judged "the qualification of any student who is candidate for a degree for the university." In addition, the board selected the university's fellowship recipients from a list of those nominated by other institutions. Between 1915 and


[^7]: American University Courier XXI (June 1915): 6-7.
1923, the university awarded sixty-eight fellowships, or about seven per year. Most fellows chose to study at more established universities but, beginning in 1920, an increasing number decided to study at The American University. Twenty-five percent of the university fellowships went to female graduate students. One African-American and two Asian students also received fellowships from The American University.\(^8\)

The university held its first convocation on May 26, 1915, although it did not award any degrees. In addition to showing off the institution's new amphitheater, Hamilton used the occasion to announce The American University's first five fellows. All opted for study in the United States, due to the outbreak of war in Europe. The ceremony also featured an address by Bishop Hurst's old nemesis, Syracuse University Chancellor James R. Day. Day used the address to praise the newly-opened university and to soothe some old wounds. In addition, he defended American "big business," the nation's slow drift toward the war raging in Europe, and pleaded for a return to "Puritanism" in the United States. Toward that end, Day claimed that he "would give more for four days of Billy Sunday's righteous making than four months of righteous making by the Congress of the

\(^8\)Ibid., 13-14. For lists of fellowship recipients, see the \textit{American University Courier}, 1915-1923.
During its second year of operation, the university employed additional faculty, expanded its course offerings, and gained much-needed financial support. Besides acquiring a bequest valued at over $100,000, the university received fifty thousand dollars from the estate of Hart A. Massey, the Canadian farm implement manufacturer. The Massey bequest funded fellowships to enable Canadian men and women to study at the university. A Washington-based business association also provided the university with a "moving-picture machine", so that it could present educational films in the assembly hall of the College of History.  

June 1916 witnessed two important events in the history of The American University. The first was a major change in administration: the 1916 General Conference elected Franklin Hamilton bishop and appointed him resident Methodist bishop for Pittsburgh. The board responded by electing his elder brother, Bishop John W. Hamilton, to the post of chancellor. According to university lore, the new chancellor had pledged the first dollar for The American University. During his career, he also had served as an informal advisor to Bishops Hurst and McCabe, as well as to his younger brother. June 1916 also marked the university's second

10American University Courier XXII (December 1915): 1-3 and (March 1916): 1, 3.
convocation and the graduation of its first students: a Ph.D. in agricultural chemistry and a Ph.D. and a Masters degree in agricultural economics. Two of the three were employees of the Department of Agriculture and all three were supervised in their research by government specialists. The university also awarded ten university fellowships at the open air ceremony.\(^{11}\)

In April 1917, the United States entered the First World War. In response to President Wilson's declaration of war, the board of trustees voted to turn the campus over to the government for the duration of the conflict. The War Department quickly accepted the offer and sent an inspection team to survey the university's facilities. Three weeks later, a regiment of engineers had pitched their tents on the quadrangle, not far from where Wilson had opened the university three years before.\(^{12}\)

The war would have a tremendous impact on both the infrastructure and educational programs of The American University. Thousands of specialized engineer troops received their training at Camp American University or an adjacent facility, Camp Leach. In addition, the precursor of the Army Chemical Corps completed and occupied the McKinley Building and constructed dozens of temporary frame

\(^{11}\)American University Courier XXI (June 1916): 1-6.

\(^{12}\)American University Courier XXIII (April 1917): 1; Osborn Diary, 17 and 21 May 1917; and Report of the Chancellor [John W. Hamilton] to the Board of Trustees, 31 May 1917.
buildings. Before the end of the war, the U.S. Army would occupy a large portion of the Hall of History. As a result, the university purchased a row of townhouses in downtown Washington to house offices and classroom space. In spite of the inconvenience, the university administration relished its contributions to the war effort.\textsuperscript{13}

The graduate programs remained downtown at 19th and F Street Northwest, where they were closer to the government agencies and to government employees who sought graduate programs. On campus, the board leased the McKinley Building to the Department of Agriculture's Fixed Nitrogen Research Laboratory. The facility housed research on fertilizers using chemical processes similar to those employed by the U.S. Army Chemical Corps. The War Department later destroyed or sold off many of the temporary buildings that had been erected on campus.\textsuperscript{14}

In 1922, John W. Hamilton retired. Lucius C. Clark, a Methodist minister, assumed responsibility for the small, under-funded graduate university.\textsuperscript{15} The potential for

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{13}Between 1917 and 1919, the war effort received extensive coverage in the \textit{American University Courier}. Among other things, the university was the birthplace of the U.S. Army Chemical Corps. Following the war, the university leased the McKinley building to the Department of Agriculture, which used the laboratory facilities for fixed nitrogen research.

\textsuperscript{14}See various issues of the \textit{American University Courier}, 1917-1921.

\textsuperscript{15}\textit{American University Courier} \text{XXII} (June 1916): 1-2 and \textit{XXIX} (October 1920): 2.
\end{footnotesize}
opening an undergraduate college on the uptown campus did not escape Clark or the board who, with an eye on the institution's precarious finances, voted a year later to create a College of Liberal Arts. Thus, The American University's days as a purely graduate institution ended in 1925, when seventy-five students were admitted as undergraduates. As a result, the university joined its predecessors in abandoning the pure graduate model. This event also marked the ultimate departure from Bishop Hurst's educational ideals.16

In its ten years as a graduate institution, The American University awarded 137 graduate degrees: sixty Ph.D.s and seventy-seven Masters. In keeping with Hurst's coeducational aspirations, a substantial number of women pursued studies at the new university. However, no black students would be admitted until 1936. In 1949, the university added a professional school when it merged with the Washington College of Law. The law school, founded by Ellen Spencer Mussey and Emma M. Gillett, had been created in 1896 to provide legal education for women.17

In 1991, one hundred years after it was first chartered, more than eleven thousand students attended The American University. Roughly half were undergraduates, with graduate and law students comprising the other half. The

16Board of Trustees, 29 May 1923; American University Courier XXVI (January 1920): 2; XXIX (January 1923): 2-3; and XXXI (November 1925): 5-8.

17American University Eagle, 27 May 1949, 1, 4.
The American University currently maintains sixty-five undergraduate, seventy-eight Master's, seventeen doctoral, and two law degree programs. The American University has perpetuated one aspect of Hurst's vision by utilizing both the information and human resources found in the Nation's Capital. For example, the university's 472 full-time faculty are joined by over seven hundred adjunct faculty, many of whom are professionals employed by the federal government. In addition, many government employees continue to take advantage of the career-oriented educational programs offered by the university. Thus, a century after it was begun, The American University represents the realization of Hurst's dream, but minus his theological and educational vision.¹⁸

III

Given the countless books and articles written about the history of higher education in the United States, why has the history The American University been assigned to such relative obscurity? Although it represents a significant departure from the mainstream educational movements of its day, the university is not even mentioned in all of the standard histories. What accounts for this absence from the history of higher education?

The oversight may be attributed to the fact that, for a

generation, The American University existed as a university in name only. Clearly, its long-delayed opening and early lack of success diluted its impact on higher education. Despite press coverage from the Washington newspapers and the Methodist media, the university received only sporadic attention outside of Washington and Methodism. Neither did the university gain serious notice from mainstream educators, thanks to Hurst's status as an educational outsider with a sectarian educational vision.

By the time The American University finally did open, years after it was first conceived by Hurst, the excitement over graduate education had passed. By 1914, Johns Hopkins University was nearly forty years old. Relative newcomers, such as Stanford University and the University of Chicago, had celebrated twenty years in operation. The delayed opening of The American University denied it a place among the pioneers, instead relegating it to the more nebulous role as successor. Furthermore, even though it operated exclusively as a graduate school for more than a decade, the university's modest beginnings and low overhead yielded little excitement or national coverage. Thus, its limited success and practical dependence on the intellectual resources of the federal agencies kept it in the shadows of American graduate education.

Given John Fletcher Hurst's poignant lack of success as founder and first chancellor of The American University, why
chronicle the development of an institution that existed in its founder's lifetime as little more than a name and grandiose vision? On a broader scale, what contribution does its early history make in the evolution of American higher education?

The narrative of Hurst's role in the founding of The American University cannot be considered a success story. However, if one puts aside his failures, Hurst's crusade to open the university provides a case study of many of the notable educational ideals prevalent in the last decade of the Nineteenth Century and serves as an example of how some of them misfired. This is true both for those objectives Hurst shared with other university founders, as well as those which departed from the educational main-stream.

Obviously, Hurst's promotion of German-style graduate education allied him with many American academic leaders. His intention to create a graduate university placed him in more select company, particularly as similar experiments moved toward eventual failure. And his proposal to merge advanced study with evangelical Protestantism, although never fully realized, put Hurst within the vanguard of yet another distinctive educational movement.

In addition to serving as an antidote against increased secularism, Hurst viewed the creation of The American University as a Methodist barrier to stem the spread of Roman Catholic influence in Washington and the nation as a whole.
While Hurst's anti-Catholicism was not unusual, given the nativism of the 1890s, his attempt to link pronounced religious motives with institutional promotion was quite distinct. It is unlikely that, had he lived, Hurst could ever have forged a viable amalgam of such contradictory philosophical strains. Nevertheless, his intellectual juggling remains significant in both the content of his message and the manner in which he displayed his educational vision.

On a more positive note, Hurst clearly and strongly embraced the then-controversial notion of coeducation. It remained a prominent feature of his educational plan and became a reality when the university opened in 1914. More controversial was Hurst's support for interracial graduate education, particularly in what was still considered a southern city. Although the admission of black graduate students was not carried out until 1936, the fact that it was proposed at all is meaningful.

The early history of The American University also underscores the importance of higher education to the cultural, religious, and economic development of the Nation's Capital. For one, the university was one of several contemporaneous movements of national or international significance begun in Washington. Others included the Catholic University of America, George Washington University, the Carnegie Institution, and the national university movement.
In addition, The American University movement helped highlight the perceived rivalry felt among Protestants after the creation of Catholic University. The Washington location only heightened this sense of competition.

Indeed, The American University played a noteworthy role in the development of Washington into a major city. Support for the university could be seen in the unabashed boosterism of Washington newspapers, the involvement of several prominent Washington business leaders with the institution, and the fact that the university was included in renewed plans to complete Pierre L'Enfant's design for the city.

The American University's early history also illustrates the sometimes fierce competition that existed between the proponents of higher education. Within Washington, the contemporaneous existence of a national university movement in Congress and the George Washington Memorial Association led to competition, confusion, and conflict. The bitter clash between national university proponent John W. Hoyt and Bishop Hurst made its way to Capitol Hill, while Hurst's fight with the George Washington Memorial movement was played out in the Washington newspapers.

Even more significant was the varying levels of competition between Methodist educational leaders. While some Methodist leaders promoted the creation of a Methodist university in Washington, economic realities made it
difficult for them to support the movement financially. Others, such as Syracuse University's James R. Day, opposed the university in principle, and likely carried on a shadow campaign to keep it from becoming a reality. The result meant continued delay for the university and created divisions within the educational councils of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

Finally, although the development of the early universities in the United States is often tied positively to the personalities and philosophies of their respective founders, The American University is illustrative of the darker side of such a relationship. Hurst personalized the effort to such an extraordinary degree that support or opposition was tied more to individuals or allegiances, rather than to the merits or inherent problems of what was proposed.

Hurst's emotional investment also colored the development of both his educational and campus plans. The resulting organizational dysfunction subsumed educational plans and wreaked havoc with university fund raising. Hurst's educational hubris created ill-advised campus plans, led to conflict between the planners and the administration, and resulted in the hiring of architects as much for their propensity for agreement as for the soundness of their designs.

Ultimately, the early history of The American University may serve as a case study in how not to establish a
university. Hurst's grandiose and intellectually imprecise ambitions were difficult for modest Methodists to accept, particularly in the depths of a national depression. Moreover, the personalization of plans for the university resulted in conflict and made compromise or change difficult, even in the face of obvious necessity. Indeed, The American University finally admitted its first students only after Hurst's successors so altered his original plans that the founder's main contribution to the university was the name under which it lay dormant for so long.
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