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The History of UofSC's Gibbes Green

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A partnership of the classes of Dr. Christian Anderson and Dr. Lydia Brandt presents

The History of UofSC's Gibbes Green

An in depth examination of the buildings that represent university growth



Authors

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Image Credit: Mike Stroud, 2010, The Historical Marker Database, HMdb.org

A Foreword

The following report is a culmination of papers from the Spring 2022 students of Dr. Christian Anderson's Evolution of Higher Education and Dr. Lydia Brandt's History of American Architecture courses. The report contains research conducted on the creation of Gibbes Green on the University of South Carolina's campus. Gibbes Green was the first major expansion made by the university, and signifies an era of development and growth for both the school and Higher Education as a whole.

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James Rion McKissick: The Name Behind the Building

Samantha Clark

Introduction

Seated at the junction of the University of South Carolina's Horseshoe and Gibbes Green, the McKissick building emanates the exceptional history of the campus. Having gone from the University's main library to a museum of southern living, it reflects the changing times of the two greens it stands between, as well as higher education in the country. It is only fitting a building that boasts a renowned southern history exhibit should be named from a man who was as well-renowned for his contribution to the flagship university, who also had a particular interest in the education and teaching of southern history.

James Rion McKissick led an impactful and substantial life. With degrees in law and journalism, he offered a great amount of insight to South Carolina in his writings. McKissick held the position of University President from 1936 until his sudden death in 1944. During this time, he led the University through World War II and the New Deal Era, gaining the admiration of students, faculty, colleagues, and leaders nationwide. This paper will look at primary documents of McKissick's to further examine his life through his own eyes, as well as consider public opinion of him.

Overview of the Namesake

Born in South Carolina in 1884 (West, 2016) and growing up through grade school in the state, as well as an undergraduate degree from South Carolina College in 1905, McKissick felt a strong loyalty to the state. He briefly left the state while studying and obtaining a Law degree from Harvard, and later a Journalism degree in Virginia, where he worked for a few years as a reporter and chief editor for a publication in Richmond (West, 2016).

He returned to the state in 1914 and practiced law under the South Carolina Bar, before leaving the field and moving back to journalism in 1916 (West, 2016). He worked as a journalist until being elected to the university's board of trustees in 1924 (West, 2016), and moved on to becoming the Dean of the School of Journalism. Here he remained until becoming the university president in 1936. While Dean, he married Caroline Virginia Dick, who had been a former student of his, in 1927 (West, 2014). He also had taken classes from the University of Wisconsin and received a master's in journalism while he was Dean (West, 2014). He never lost his love for education and continued to stay within the classroom for the rest of his life.

McKissick participated in several extracurricular activities both during school as well as during his career. In 1926, he became a member of UofSC's Phi Beta Kappa fraternity chapter (Chapter certificate, 1926), and was initiated as a Freemason in 1938 (Freemason certificate, 1938). His wife also participated in organizational activities as a member of the Daughters of the American Revolution beginning in 1932 (DoAR, 1932).

Law Review

While McKissick was practicing law, he authored an extensive digest on South Carolina laws affecting newspapers. In this digest, he discusses several cases that have appeared in the newspapers and in court, how the court ruled, and if anything should have been different. He also delves into the implications of the cases held for others in similar circumstances, offering legal advice for those who read the digest.

One of his primary focuses in the digest was to discuss claims of slander against the virtue of women. This was a relatively common grievance in the court and one that he took seriously. While this was unusual enough for a man to take special interest in these cases during this time, it is mirrored in his presidency, as he is the president in office that established the first women's dormitory on campus in 1939 (Kalish, 2014).

Presidency

J. Rion McKissick entered his presidency at a time where the University's reputation was in question. It had been considered "elitist" and "immoral" by those who participated in what McKissick called a "whispering campaign from the University's enemies" (West, 2014). He was effective in his efforts to dispel these claims and the university found itself in an era of growth because of this. He acted as a harbinger for change among the campus and organization within the school and saw personally addressed the future prospects for the school. He called for growth and development of on campus residency and expanded the efforts to women, setting forth Sims College, the first women's dormitory on the campus. He also established an official Student

Union, something he claims he had dreamed of during his time as a student on campus. He described his vision in an address to the students, saying

I dream of a spacious building in a central location on our campus, at least four stories high, which will be a common clubhouse for all our students, where they may spend their leisure with their fellow students, where they may find rest, relaxation, recreation, and amusement in fair weather and foul (McKissick, 1939).

Inauguration

Elected at the end of 1936, Rion McKissick's inauguration as University President was held on April 6, 1937. It was held at the field house and boasted a large attendance, as many were openly excited for the change in administration for the school. Among those in attendance was Governor Olin D. Johnston, who was also the acting president for the University's Board of Trustees. Reverend Hugh Murchison and Chief Justice John Stabler were also keynote speakers. McKissick's former classmates also made an appearance in the roster of speakers to introduce the new President before his formal address.

The tone of his address was one of gratitude and humility. As these proceedings usually go, he begins his speech by thanking everyone in attendance and the speakers for his introduction but goes beyond the typical appreciations and thanks the specific individuals who he claims were vital in his personal and professional development. He ends his speech by saying the events were part of his "most memorable day of his life" (McKissick, 1937).

The New Deal and WWII

When the Great Depression's harshness reached the flagship university was in the midst of expansion. With projects beginning in 1908, the national economic collapse threatened to eradicate any hope of project completions. It was in this atmosphere that J. Rion McKissick stepped into upon his inauguration. His connections and reputation helped him to obtain a great amount of federal funding to complete the projects already begun, as well as accomplish new ones set by the new president.

With repairs to the campus buildings of LeConte, Davis, Sloan, Rutledge, DeSaussure, and the football stadium under way upon his arrival, McKissick was able to focus funding from the Public Works Administration to building Maxcy, Sims, and Preston colleges, as well as the McKissick library (Kalish, 2014). The latter of these is what was later converted to the McKissick Museum being discussed in this paper.

The University of South Carolina strongly felt the effects of World War II. With an Army Infantry Replacement Center in Spartanburg and the Army Air Base in Lexington County (Special Collections), South Carolina was a hub of movement for the military. The tumultuous impact of the bombing of Pearl Harbor shook the University as many students were drafted into the fighting. In the matter of a year, the University's student body of 2,051 in 1940 dropped to 1,743 students in 1941 (Horn, 2016). University staff tried to evade an exodus of students by advising they obtain letters from their professors to avoid the draft as long as possible (Horn, 2016).

McKissick addressed the issue of the plummeting enrollment and loss of staff in an address to the students, in which he offers support for the nation first and foremost. He justifies the sentiment in saying “Unless our country is preserved, the University is doomed” (McKissick, 1942). He goes on to discuss the advice decreed by President Roosevelt and other leaders, calling to the “patriotic duty to continue the normal course of their education;” the country needs citizens of sound mind and well-educated to handle future dilemmas (McKissick, 1942). He tells his students to take their time in coming to a final decision of how they choose to respond to the war. McKissick ends the address in a personal manner, saying

“With the deepest concern of my mind and heart for you, I urge you to avoid the deadly peril of drifting and delaying and to attend now to the supremely important matter of spiritual preparation for the days of danger and death. Whether you volunteer or wait your country’s call, whatever you do, wherever you go, the heartfelt prayer of your Alma Mater is: God bless you and send you safe deliverance” (McKissick, 1942).

Public Opinion

James Rion McKissick is revered as one of the University of South Carolina’s “most beloved Presidents” (Allen, 2015). He was often characterized as “gentle man, amiable, with elegance of diction and oratorical grace” (Bainbridge, 2017) and loved by all the faculty, staff, and students. He relished in personal connection with his University and would frequently be seen standing on a cafeteria table or in front of the Maxcy building giving an impromptu address to the “men and women of Carolina” (Allen, 2015). He was seldom seen without a cigar in his

mouth and a slouch hat, expressing an air of invitation rather than pompousness as former Presidents had been known for. His students loved him so much they even presented him with a bicycle one day so he could cross campus faster.

The beloved President's rule ended abruptly and came as a shock to all of those among the school. He suffered from a sudden heart attack on September 3, 1944. So well liked by his university, the students petitioned to the Board of Trustees and granted the former President the honor of being buried on campus; notably, he was the only person to ever receive such an honor. He was buried in front of the west wing of the South Caroliniana Library. His funeral was large in attendance and had prominent members of society in attendance, including South Carolina's Governor and many University Presidents from across the country.

The McKissick Building

As noted previously in this paper, the now McKissick Museum had once been the McKissick Library, later replaced by the Thomas Cooper Library across campus. The large building held a considerable number of special collections, established by McKissick through donations and special efforts made on his part. In total, he donated over five thousand books, manuscripts, and papers from his own collection.

After the creation of the Thomas Cooper Library, the building was repurposed into the museum that it is today. Following McKissick's passion for southern living and history, the museum is home to exhibits that focus on the history, literature, and culture of the state.

The position of the building stands where the former Presidents house used to be, which is fitting for it to hold the name of a University President. It is situated at the precipice of the Horseshoe and Gibbes Green, and justly reflects the transition between the two eras. The Horseshoe was the original configuration of the school's campus dating back to the turn of the 19th century. The campus had a legacy of slavery and male dominance, as did the rest of society at that time. It was not until the early 1900s that the school expanded in both campus and diverse student admittance to include women, and even later for students of color. This growth and development resulted in the creation of Gibbes Green, stretching out from the opposite side of the McKissick building.

Conclusion

It is evident through McKissick's own works and speeches that he took his positions both seriously and with humility. He accomplished a considerable number of things throughout his life, moving fluidly from practicing law, to journalism, to administration. In his wake of his movements, he touched the lives of many people, and gave even more reason to be proud of the school.

The way he managed the Great Depression, World War II, and the New Deal funds received by the University set a precedent for other Presidents of Universities and Colleges around the country. Many peers asked him how to navigate troubling situations, in which he would always respond with esteem and without belittlement for his colleagues. He gained the respect of state and even federal leadership and more than earned the honors given to him.

The McKissick building stands as a symbol of graceful change and can be used as inspiration for future Presidents. It is a physical monument to the greatness it is named after and does well to maintain the legacy of education which was held by James Rion McKissick. Shouldering a heavy history of the University and southern living, it can be used by scholars and students, as well as the general public, as a place to build on the education of growth, humility, and prosperity.

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Heart of a Campus: The McKissick Building's History as an Intellectual and Symbolic Center of the University of South Carolina since 1941

David Walls and Francis Hampton

Introduction

On June 2nd, 1941, the University of South Carolina dedicated a new library building at the head of its iconic Horseshoe that would quickly become the symbolic heart of its campus. It was the culmination of years of securing funding, navigating engineering problems, and determining various functions. The university's president, James Rion McKissick, led all these efforts. In a letter to Washington & Lee University president Francis Gaines, he stated "...the dedication of the new library will be the most important occasion in my administration."¹ This statement underscores McKissick's view of the library as an integral part of campus and his steep involvement in most aspects of its creation. The building became the McKissick Memorial Library shortly after his death in 1944.

Originally built due to a growing student body, the library had larger spaces for books and study areas. However, this growth did not cease, and the university constructed a larger library in 1976 near the corner of Blossom and Sumter Streets, which is now known as Thomas Cooper Library. The university soon rededicated the original building as McKissick Museum in 1986. In 2004, the university's visitor center began occupying the first floor. Despite these

¹ James R. McKissick to Francis P. Gaines, December 22nd, 1939, "New Library" folder, box 2 (1939-1940), Papers of James R. McKissick, 1936-1944, Records of the Office of the President, University Archives, The South Caroliniana Library, The University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC.

tenancy changes, the view of the building from the Horseshoe has not changed much at all (Figure 1).

When students encounter McKissick Museum today, there is little to hint at its former role as a library. An engraving states “McKissick Museum” on the frieze of the front façade, and banners placed between the towering ionic-order columns advertise the visitor center. Structurally supporting bookstacks are the main indicator of the building’s former function but are located in the collection storage rooms, which are not accessible to the public.

In this paper, we will explore the history of McKissick Museum since the recognition of the need for a new library space and attempts to acquire funding in 1936. First, we will discuss the building’s location in relation to the rest of campus and American architectural trends. Next, we will examine its origins and functions as a library. Lastly, we will discuss its architecture and how it has functioned as both a museum and visitor center later in its history. Ultimately, this paper will argue that despite changes in function, the McKissick Museum building has always maintained its status as the intellectual and symbolic heart of the University of South Carolina campus.

Location at the Heart of Campus

Although McKissick Museum is not at the exact center of campus, it is easily accessible and placed between two wide open green landscapes: the Horseshoe and Gibbes Green. Additionally, the different functions throughout its history have brought together students and faculty from across various programs of study.

The museum is at the head of the campus's iconic Horseshoe with its rear façade facing Gibbes Green. It is accessible from Pendleton Street from the north, Sumter Street from the west, and Green Street from the south. A row of buildings stretches out away from McKissick Museum on both sides of the Horseshoe towards Sumter Street (Figure 2). These buildings include student residence halls such as DeSaussure and Rutledge Colleges, South Caroliniana Library, and McCutchen House, which the College of Hospitality now occupies. The President's House stood near where McKissick Museum is, but the university demolished it in 1940. The South Carolina General Assembly founded the university's predecessor, South Carolina College, in 1801, and most of the aforementioned buildings arose at that time. According to architectural historian Paul Turner, their juxtaposition across a greensward – with a building at one end and another end open – is the first example of the mall plan, which later became a popular form for American campuses.² The mall form is a reimagining of the English collegiate quadrangle, which was prevalent in the early American colleges of the colonial period. The courtyard acted as a central landscape surrounded by buildings on all sides, but the mall plan left one side open. Turner also points out another architectural tradition taken from English colleges: the inclusion of a residence for the university president and their family, which is visible clearly in the former placement of the President's House at the head of the Horseshoe.³ While McKissick Museum clearly fits into a broader history of American architecture, it is important to discuss how its location compares to another example of the mall form.

South Carolina College's mall form set a standard which Thomas Jefferson followed when he founded the University of Virginia (UVA) in 1819. The university's central "Lawn" is

² Paul Venable Turner, *Campus: An American Planning Tradition* (MIT Press, 1984), 59.

³ Turner, *Campus: An American Planning Tradition*, 28.

similar in layout to the Horseshoe, but each building is connected, an example of how Jefferson held more tightly onto the concept of the English collegiate quadrangle (Figure 3). Jefferson's contribution to the mall plan is visible in the Rotunda, which he modeled after the Pantheon in Rome.⁴ The University of Virginia built the Rotunda library only a few years after its founding, while the McKissick Library appeared well over a century after the founding of UofSC. The Rotunda's relation to the Lawn is the perfect example of Jefferson's concept of an "academical village," which argues that the pursuit of knowledge is a lifelong process and emphasizes close interactions between faculty and students.⁵ Although South Carolina College first created the mall form, Jefferson placed a library, an architectural symbol of shared learning, as its centerpiece.

Unlike the Lawn, the Horseshoe opens toward a street on its western side. This allows easy access for students arriving via shuttle on Sumter Street and makes the Horseshoe more unified with the rest of Columbia's public. Much like St. Peter's Plaza in Rome, whose colonnades symbolized outreach to the public and brought people back to the church during the counter-reformation, the buildings of the Horseshoe stretch out towards Columbia's public, inviting them into the campus to see what it has to offer.

There is no evidence to suggest that the Rotunda at UVA directly influenced the architectural features of the McKissick building; however, we must not ignore that McKissick Museum's hemispherical dome, towering columns, and function as a library within a mall form are similar to the Lawn, which UVA proclaims as the "architectural and academic heart of the

⁴ "The Rotunda History," University of Virginia, last accessed April 14th, 2022, <https://rotunda.virginia.edu/history>.

⁵ "The Rotunda Homepage," University of Virginia, last accessed April 14th, 2022, <https://rotunda.virginia.edu/>.

university's community of scholars."⁶ Ultimately, though McKissick Museum arose in the 20th century, it nevertheless mirrors the similar Rotunda's role as the heart of a campus and contributes to the Horseshoe by acting as a centerpiece to which all other buildings point and paths lead.

The Creation of a New Library

Although the library was not officially dedicated until 1941, archival records show a recognition of the need for a new library and efforts to secure funding that date back to at least 1936. University President James Rion McKissick, who served from 1932 until his death in 1944, led the efforts for funding. McKissick was one of the few alumni to act as president, having graduated in 1905. His contribution to the state and university is evidenced by his career as a journalist, including editor for the Greenville Times and Greenville Piedmont newspapers.⁷ This career helped McKissick acquire leadership at the university. He first joined the board of trustees in 1924 and became dean of the School of Journalism in 1927.⁸ His tenure spanned tumultuous times for the country, most notably World War 2 and the Great Depression.

The Great Depression caused a great need for federal funding assistance, and after being elected president of the United States in 1932, Franklin Delano Roosevelt cultivated The New Deal, which spawned agencies such as the Works Progress Administration (WPA), Public Works Administration (PWA), and Civil Works Administration (CWA). The WPA focused on providing

⁶ "The Rotunda Homepage," University of Virginia, last accessed April 14th, 2022, <https://rotunda.virginia.edu/>.

⁷ Elizabeth West, "McKissick, James Rion," South Carolina Encyclopedia, last modified March 10th, 2017, last accessed April 14th, 2022, <https://www.sencyclopedia.org/sce/entries/mckissick-james-rion/>.

⁸ Elizabeth West, "McKissick, James Rion," South Carolina Encyclopedia, last modified March 10th, 2017, last accessed April 14th, 2022, <https://www.sencyclopedia.org/sce/entries/mckissick-james-rion/>.

funds and hiring unemployed Americans while the PWA gave loans and grants to state and local governments who would have agency in choosing projects and contractors.

The acquisition of funding for the university's new library has a complex history that saw the contributions of numerous parties. The New Deal had a previous impact on the university through the allocation of PWA funds to help construct Maxcy College in 1937 and the allocation of CWA funds to repair other buildings on Gibbes Green such as Davis and LeConte in 1934.⁹ With this in mind, the university applied for PWA funding in 1934. The requested \$300,000 funding would include a loan of \$165,000 and grant of \$135,000. Although there was much correspondence between McKissick and state leaders, a 1936 letter from McKissick to Governor Olin Johnston describes the university's efforts best.

In this letter, McKissick makes various arguments as to why the funding is necessary. He starts by referencing a bill passed by the General Assembly in 1935 that allowed the university to apply for a PWA loan of \$300,000 for additional housing for professors.¹⁰ He then discusses a 1936 bill allowing for the same application for funding to be used instead for an extension of the then-current library, South Caroliniana, which was constructed in 1840. Next, McKissick describes the inadequacies of South Caroliniana's space, specifically its lack of fireproofing, stating "Our priceless collections of books, newspapers, pamphlets and documents, many of them relating to South Carolina and South Carolinians, may at any moment be burned up."¹¹

⁹ "Historic Horseshoe," University of South Carolina, last accessed April 15th, 2022, https://sc.edu/about/our_history/university_history/historic_horseshoe/index.php

¹⁰ James R. McKissick to Olin D. Johnston, December 2nd, 1936, "Buildings and Grounds: Library Building" folder, box 2 (1936-1937), Papers of James R. McKissick, 1936-1944, Records of the Office of the President, University Archives, The South Caroliniana Library, The University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC.

¹¹ James R. McKissick to Olin D. Johnston, December 2nd, 1936, "Buildings and Grounds: Library Building" folder, box 2 (1936-1937), Papers of James R. McKissick, 1936-1944.

Additionally, McKissick continues by highlighting the support of students, who had signed an unprompted petition to Senator James Byrnes requesting his action regarding the application.¹² Perhaps the biggest argument made in this letter is the stark disparity between UofSC's PWA funding and that of other South Carolina universities such as Clemson and The Citadel. McKissick points out that Clemson received \$800,000 and The Citadel received \$610,900, a much higher amount compared to the \$225,454 that UofSC had received up to this point.¹³

The original intent of the university was to use funds to expand South Caroliniana, however, in a letter to the PWA State Director, Captain J. L. M. Irby, McKissick proposes the advantages of instead creating an entirely new and separate library building. He first describes South Caroliniana, stating:

"...it is one of extraordinary architectural beauty as to both exterior and interior. It is generally regarded as the most stately and beautiful building on the campus and about it much sentiment clusters. For these reasons I would not recommend any substantial alteration of it."¹⁴

This statement shows McKissick's awareness of the library's functional and architectural importance in relation to the university.

While funding from the PWA would be substantial, it would not be enough to create an entirely new building, and in January 1938, the university submitted a proposal to the WPA for

¹² James R. McKissick to Olin D. Johnston, December 2nd, 1936, "Buildings and Grounds: Library Building" folder, box 2 (1936-1937), Papers of James R. McKissick, 1936-1944.

¹³ James R. McKissick to Olin D. Johnston, December 2nd, 1936, "Buildings and Grounds: Library Building" folder, box 2 (1936-1937), Papers of James R. McKissick, 1936-1944.

¹⁴ James R. McKissick to Jack L. M. Irby, June 22nd, 1937, "Buildings and Grounds: Library Building" folder, box 2 (1936-1937), Papers of James R. McKissick, 1936-1944, Records of the Office of the President, University Archives, The South Caroliniana Library, The University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC.

\$332,000.¹⁵ The proposal was approved by congress two months later. Ultimately, the funding for McKissick Library was contributed by three main parties. The project’s final financial statement, dated December 9th, 1941, breaks down the funding fairly simply:

Special Appropriation by State Legislature.....\$325,000.00

State Highway Department-Sidewalks & Paving.....\$5,797.25

Works Progress Administration

Labor.....\$154,143.15

Material.....\$72,592.33

With the inclusion of smaller funding provided alongside the appropriation by the State Legislature, the total funding of the new library was \$560,374.25.¹⁶ The actual cost of the building was slightly less than this amount. There are no archival records of direct approval of funding from the PWA, however, it is highly likely that this money was instead categorized as “Special Appropriation by State Legislature” due to the agency’s funding going through state and local leadership. The impact of federal funding is evident in a large bronze plaque recognizing the WPA’s contribution that adorns the right wall of the building’s foyer (Figure 4).

An advisory library committee formed after funds were secured in 1938 and comprised mostly members from the committee for South Caroliniana Library.¹⁷ McKissick and the

¹⁵ WPA Project Proposal, January 4th, 1938, “Buildings and Grounds: Library Building” folder, box 2 (1937-1938), Papers of James R. McKissick, 1936-1944, Records of the Office of the President, University Archives, The South Caroliniana Library, The University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC.

¹⁶ Final Financial Statement of University Funds: New Library Project, December 9th, 1941, “Library” folder, box 3 (1941-1942), Papers of James R. McKissick, 1936-1944, Records of the Office of the President, University Archives, The South Caroliniana Library, The University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC.

¹⁷ James R. McKissick to Reed Smith, March 31st, 1938, “New Library Building” folder, box 5 (1937-1938), Papers of James R. McKissick, 1936-1944, Records of the Office of the President, University Archives, The South Caroliniana Library, The University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC.

university's chief engineer Robert L. Sumwalt, who would later become president in 1959, were tasked with assembling data concerning plans and costs. Additionally, they observed other university libraries and presented their findings to the board of trustees, which would later decide on the building's architect, plans, and site.¹⁸ In an untitled archival document, McKissick is quoted as saying "It is the aim of the board of trustees to provide a building which will be as spacious and as modern as possible."¹⁹ This document also emphasizes the president's desire to appoint faculty and student committees to provide suggestions for the overall design and construction of the building.²⁰ This effort to consider the needs of faculty and students shows McKissick's understanding that the library should serve those who live, work, and study on campus.

The selection of an architect to design and oversee construction of the library was seemingly straightforward. Architecture, function, and low costs were the main concerns of the board. Another untitled archival document states "The board firmly desires that the architecture of the new library will be in complete harmony with that of our other buildings and that it will effectively combine utility and beauty."²¹

On July 8th, 1938, the board of trustees elected Henry C. Hibbs as architect for what would become the heart of campus. The selection of Hibbs came after eight architects appeared before the Committee on Buildings and Grounds of the Board of Trustees.²² Hibbs was from Nashville, Tennessee and his experience was of great value to the university. In an unaddressed

¹⁸ James R. McKissick to (?), n.d., "Architect for Library" folder, box 2 (1938-1939), Papers of James R. McKissick, 1936-1944, Records of the Office of the President, University Archives, The South Caroliniana Library, The University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC.

¹⁹ James R. McKissick to (?), n.d., "Architect for Library" folder, box 2 (1938-1939), Papers of James R. McKissick, 1936-1944.

²⁰ James R. McKissick to (?), n.d., "Architect for Library" folder, box 2 (1938-1939), Papers of James R. McKissick, 1936-1944.

²¹ James R. McKissick to (?), n.d., "Architect for Library" folder, box 2 (1938-1939), Papers of James R. McKissick, 1936-1944.

²² James R. McKissick to (?), n.d., "Architect for Library" folder, box 2 (1938-1939), Papers of James R. McKissick, 1936-1944.

letter written by McKissick, the board attributed Hibbs' selection to his 34 years of experience in designing university buildings, successful library designs, and recommendations from various educational institutions.²³ The selection also made history for UofSC, as it was the first time in its 133-year existence that it employed an architect from outside of the state, breaking its own "buying at home" policy.²⁴

Hibbs' experience in designing university buildings, mainly in the collegiate gothic style, was extensive and included the Fisk University Library, the Pediatric Building at Meharry Medical College, and Scarritt College, for which he won the American Institute of Architects gold medal in 1929.²⁵ He graduated from the University of Pennsylvania and moved to Nashville in 1914 as head of the New York architecture firm of Ludlow and Peabody. As head of the firm, Hibbs supervised the construction of the George Peabody College for Teachers, which Ludlow and Peabody had designed to resemble UVA's Lawn.²⁶

Hibbs also had prior experience in the Carolinas. In 1922 he approached the president of Davidson College in North Carolina to propose that he should act as the university's architect for the Chambers Building, which burned down a year prior.²⁷ For the new building, Hibbs employed a Beaux Arts Southern Colonial style that was visually unified with other campus buildings. The new Maxwell B. Chambers Memorial Building, completed in 1929, is described as having a symmetrical composition with a domed and porticoed central section and flanking

²³ James R. McKissick to (?), n.d., "Architect for Library" folder, box 2 (1938-1939), Papers of James R. McKissick, 1936-1944.

²⁴ James R. McKissick to (?), n.d., "Architect for Library" folder, box 2 (1938-1939), Papers of James R. McKissick, 1936-1944.

²⁵ James Hoobler, "Henry Clossen Hibbs," Tennessee Encyclopedia, last modified March 1st, 2018, last accessed April 15th, 2022, <https://tennesseencyclopedia.net/entries/henry-clossen-hibbs/>.

²⁶ James Hoobler, "Henry Clossen Hibbs," Tennessee Encyclopedia, last modified March 1st, 2018, last accessed April 15th, 2022, <https://tennesseencyclopedia.net/entries/henry-clossen-hibbs/>.

²⁷ Robbie Jones, "Hibbs, Henry C. (1882-1949)," North Carolina Architects and Builders: A Biographical Dictionary, last modified 2013, last accessed April 15th, 2022, <https://ncarchitects.lib.ncsu.edu/people/P000112>.

wings (Figure 5).²⁸ The interior accounted for various functions by including a large auditorium, banquet hall, classrooms, and administrative offices, which allowed a variety of students and faculty to interact with it frequently. In addition to these functions, the building's symmetry, visual unity, and position at the head of a large green landscape make it a site for encounters between faculty and students, and the heart of Davidson College's modest campus (Figure 6).

The functions and architecture of the Chambers building were likely at the front of Hibbs's mind when designing UofSC's new library. Although the flanking wings of Chambers are made of brick, their overall design and use of simplified pilasters and frieze set a precedent for McKissick Library. The most notable similarity between these two buildings is the central section. McKissick Library's ionic columns, attic statues, and hemispherical dome are almost identical to the Chambers building. The library's addition of steps leading up to the portico is the only notable distinction.

Hibbs communicated frequently with McKissick and Robert Sumwalt, providing updates of construction and discussing materials, contractors, and costs. Sumwalt acted partly as a middleman between McKissick and Hibbs but also communicated with those needing to plan for the use of the interior, such as acting librarian R. H. Wienefeld. Wienefeld would view the interior during construction to determine the location of books and was notified of Hibbs and Sumwalt's belief that most rooms should be numbered.²⁹ McKissick's constant communication with Hibbs and Sumwalt reflects his steep involvement in the project, keeping in mind details

²⁸ Robbie Jones, "Hibbs, Henry C. (1882-1949)," North Carolina Architects and Builders: A Biographical Dictionary, last modified 2013, last accessed April 15th, 2022, <https://ncarchitects.lib.ncsu.edu/people/P000112>.

²⁹ James R. McKissick to Robert L. Sumwalt, January 7th, 1941, "Library Project 1941" folder, box 2 (1940-1941), Papers of James R. McKissick, 1936-1944, Records of the Office of the President, University Archives, The South Caroliniana Library, The University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC.

such as the wrought iron gates on Sumter Street, which he requested Hibbs design after student efforts to raise proper funding for them.³⁰

The construction of a new library created efforts to centralize knowledge at the university as well. McKissick communicated with various department heads to request that their departmental libraries be incorporated into the new one. In response, School of Engineering Dean Walter E. Rowe agreed, and he believed that the relocation of books to a central campus location would provide consistent supervision and increase the use of the general library by engineering students.³¹

Construction on the new library at the head of the Horseshoe finished on June 2nd, 1941. The original President's House was demolished a year earlier, allowing for a clear view of the library from Sumter Street. At the dedication, WPA Assistant Commissioner F. H. Dryden made an address. In it, he emphasized the WPA's achievements and education's importance as WWII continued in Europe. He spoke affectively about the library, stating:

“...I think that we can very properly consider this splendid new Library and this University, not only as an educational facility, but also as a weapon for our national defense...We in America are determined to increase and broaden the knowledge of our people, not to restrict it.”³²

³⁰ James R. McKissick to Henry C. Hibbs, January 3rd, 1941, ““Library Project 1941” folder, box 2 (1940-1941), Papers of James R. McKissick, 1936-1944, Records of the Office of the President, University Archives, The South Caroliniana Library, The University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC.

³¹ Walter E. Rowe to James R. McKissick, July 7th, 1938, “Buildings and Grounds: New Library Building” folder, box 2 (1937-1938), Papers of James R. McKissick, 1936-1944, Records of the Office of the President, University Archives, The South Caroliniana Library, The University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC.

³² Dedication Address delivered by F. H. Dryden, June 2nd, 1941, “Library” folder, box 3 (1941-1942), Papers of James R. McKissick, 1936-1944, Records of the Office of the President, University Archives, The South Caroliniana Library, The University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC.

The connection made to the broader aims of the country during wartime underscored the library's importance as a vital tool in shaping a young generation to make significant contributions to American society. These contributions would require the cultivation of knowledge in various fields, which the library could provide.

McKissick Library took two years to build and employed 45 sub-contractors. An untitled archival document, likely a press release, reveals that the bookstacks had a capacity of 350,000 volumes and total seating capacity was 700 people.³³ Despite the library's eventual move to a new building in 1976, the document claims that provisions were made for future expansion. There were 8 floors in total, including the basement and dome room, with most rooms containing bookstacks. The ground floor contained manuscript and photography rooms, the second floor contained reference and cataloging rooms, and the third floor contained most of the study rooms, a reading room, and an exhibition hall (Figure 7).³⁴ After the library's completion, South Caroliniana became a repository for manuscripts and archives related to the state.

McKissick Library's contribution to UofSC is evident in its housing of various resources for students of all programs, but it also stands today as proof of McKissick's care for students. In September 1944, McKissick died of a heart attack. His death had a great impact on the students who petitioned for him to be buried on campus. He is buried in front of South Caroliniana and is

³³ UofSC(?) Unpublished Report, (n.p., n.d.[1940?]), "New Library Project" folder, box 2 (1941-1942), Papers of James R. McKissick, 1936-1944, Records of the Office of the President, University Archives, The South Caroliniana Library, The University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC.

³⁴ UofSC(?) Unpublished Report, (n.p., n.d.[1940?]), "New Library Project" folder, box 2 (1941-1942), Papers of James R. McKissick, 1936-1944.

the only person to have received this honor.³⁵ The building was named the McKissick Memorial Library only months after his death.

McKissick's efforts to establish an intellectual heart of the campus became realized with the dedication of the library, however, the function of this heart would later change and provide new ways to serve the university.

Contributions to Architecture

The consequent placement of McKissick Museum in a location of already-established aesthetics and ideas, the architecture for the building needed to blend in while still making a statement of purpose. Stripped Classicism is the chosen facade for most buildings across the Horseshoe, and McKissick Museum most clearly emulates the modern lack of ornamentation and classicist presence of columns and an entablature. The combination of both modern and classical attributes of architectural decoration across the building's facades calls attention to the experimentation and recollection of certain "architectural ideas" that stand "somewhere between the traditional and the Modernist."³⁶

In a summary of the McKissick building in relation to the matters of its construction, Alfred Willis writes that "McKissick Library records in its fabric the challenges faced by American academic libraries in the mid-twentieth century."³⁷ Growth was persistently occurring

³⁵ Elizabeth West, "McKissick, James Rion," South Carolina Encyclopedia, last modified March 10th, 2017, last accessed April 14th, 2022, <https://www.sce/entries/mckissick-james-rion/>.

³⁶ Mark Gelernter, "Between the world wars," in *A History of American Architecture, Buildings in their Cultural and Technological Context* (University Press of New England, 1999), 231.

³⁷ Willis, Alfred, "McKissick Museum," SAH Archipedia, last accessed April 10, 2022, <https://sah-archipedia.org/buildings/SC-01-079-0090>.

across campuses from increased student bodies and coverage of curricula, but especially within the libraries that were trusted to provide resources of curricula and research. As the beliefs about academic institutions shifted and placed more emphasis on the role of libraries within the lives of the students and faculty, administration needed to prepare for the present and the future.

In response, administration strategically planned and constructed a monolith for the existing university campus: "...the new library that the University of South Carolina (UofSC) planned for itself in the late 1930s turned out to be a massive, centralized structure that dominated the campus's historic "Horseshoe" and contained a large number of relatively small rooms intended to serve specialized functions."³⁸ The monumental size of the intended library was impressive at the time of its construction, mainly for the UofSC community, but the space it allowed the university's collections only shrunk over time. The efforts of optimizing the "expandability did not equate to functionality."³⁹

Alongside the grand size of McKissick Library's footprint, the exterior design catches the eyes of spectators with its "Beaux-Arts principles" and "bilaterally symmetrical main and side facades [that] are centered on colossal colonnades."⁴⁰ McKissick Library needed to surpass South Caroliniana, which had been rendered obsolete by lacking the necessary space for growth. The image of tradition paired accordingly with its repurposed importance; an importance shared with past libraries that sought to serve a similar function. The revitalization of the interior space within the McKissick building to steward both a museum and visitor center also shares a necessary image with the exterior architectural aesthetic. Hibbs wanted the McKissick Library to

³⁸ Willis, Alfred, "McKissick Museum," SAH Archipedia.

³⁹ Willis, Alfred, "McKissick Museum," SAH Archipedia.

⁴⁰ Willis, Alfred, "McKissick Museum," SAH Archipedia.

proudly stand out despite its placement within an already established campus. As a result of their efforts, the building became a place that left an impression on students, faculty, and visitors alike as the heart of an evolving university.

From Books to Minerals

McKissick Library served the university to the best of its ability for over thirty years. While the steady growth of collections ignited some “dissatisfaction with the performance” of McKissick Library by the 1950s, it was not until the 1970s that the university sought to make any changes.⁴¹ Once storage and space for library activities became an unignorable hindrance, plans to create an even larger university library and vacate McKissick Library at its solitary location at the head of the Horseshoe emerged.

By the summer of 1975, McKissick Library would no longer be full of the growing collections of books that the University of South Carolina treasured and offered to its community in the city of Columbia. Instead, the university would be preparing the former library for something arguably more significant.

In a letter sent in July 1974 about the McKissick building’s abandonment as a library and the construction of Thomas Cooper Library as a bigger replacement, serving President Patterson reaches out to prospective committee members about researching a new function. The placement of the McKissick building remained ideal and central to the growing campus, so the new alternative purpose of the building had to reflect similar importance.

⁴¹ Willis, Alfred, “McKissick Museum,” SAH Archipedia.

The timeline set by Patterson gave the committee and those from the university and surrounding community a year to advocate for a respectable solution to the soon-to-be vacated library building. The “What to do with the McKissick Building” committee revitalized, consolidated, and reorganized the idea of a university museum.⁴²

Previously, university mineral and art collections had unfortunately fallen victim to the limitations of space and therefore could be found scattered throughout the university’s campus in different academic buildings. There, in buildings like LeConte and Wardlaw, separated collections had minimal space to be exhibited and admired.

The proposal for McKissick Library’s use as a collective museum and the approval from Patterson opened a door for the university. The university had gone long enough with maintaining a separation of history and culture, hiding valuable collections away from the students and staff of different academic divisions behind their respective closed doors. This new prospect of a singular university museum meant it was finally time to merge fragmented collections and forge a consolidated culture of the south and history of the university.

Many people saw the symbolism of the McKissick building as the steadfast heart of the university and supported this proposal and transformative process, especially Dean Smith from the university’s Division of Learning Resources. Smith would be consistently involved in the building’s transition even after his initial drafting of correspondences. He formulated a proposal for the Chairman of the “What to do with the McKissick Building,” with a supportive backing of

⁴² Jay C. Smith to Milledge B. Seigler, Department of English, Leonard Baker, Engineering, Kenneth Toombs, University Libraries, J. Edward Bass, Campus Planning, W. S. Turbeville, Campus Maintenance, and Richard Rempel, Department of History, November 13, 1974, “Learning Resources: Dean for Learning Resources” folder, box 7 (1974-1975), William H. Patterson Papers, The South Caroliniana Library, The University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC.

thirteen endorsement letters.⁴³ Smith's proposal details that the university's "artifacts and memorabilia of the Nation, South Carolina, and the Southeast" are not properly advertised and argues that the McKissick building is the perfect vessel for the relocation of all university collections.⁴⁴

As the Dean for the Division of Learning Resources, Smith provided an inventory of all that would be moved to McKissick should the decision on his proposal be unanimous in support.

⁴⁵ The "University's Mace and Medallion, Baruch Silver Collection, and J. Harry Howard Gemstone Collection" were only the beginnings of the culturally significant objects housed in the War Memorial Building. The L. L. Smith Geology Museum would offer "an outstanding collection of North and South Carolina rocks and minerals including the historically valuable collection of former USC President Thomas Cooper, and the collections of Colburn and Smith."

⁴⁶ A strong majority of the rocks and minerals were unable to be properly exhibited, as their then-current location only allowed enough display space for under fifty percent of the whole collection. Wardlaw College of Education also had its own museum with significant contributions from various subjects that would benefit from a collective display at the McKissick

⁴³ Letters of endorsement came from Rhude M. Patterson, University Curator, Eugenia C. Seibels, Gallery Curator at the War Memorial Building, Robert L. Stephenson, States Archeologist and Director of Institute of Archeology and Anthropology, John O'Neil, Acting Head for the Department of Art, John Bryan, Art Historian on several university committees and foundations, David R. Lawrence, Museum Coordinator for the Department of Geology, William H. Kanes, Director for the International Geological Program, Miles O. Hayes, Chairman of the Geology Department, Francis A. Lord, Curator of Historical Collections, Walter B. Edgar, Assistant Professor of History, Ann Rosen, Acting Curator for the L. L. Smith Geology Museum, and Charles Mack, Chairman of the Art History Division in the Department of Art. These letters can be found attached to Jay C. Smith to Milledge B. Seigler, September 25, 1974, "Learning Resources: Dean for Learning Resources" folder, box 7 (1974-1975), William H. Patterson Papers, The South Caroliniana Library, The University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC.

⁴⁴ Jay C. Smith to Milledge B. Seigler, September 25, 1974, "Learning Resources: Dean for Learning Resources" folder, box 7 (1974-1975), William H. Patterson Papers.

⁴⁵ Jay C. Smith to Milledge B. Seigler, September 25, 1974, "Learning Resources: Dean for Learning Resources" folder, box 7 (1974-1975), William H. Patterson Papers.

⁴⁶ Jay C. Smith to Milledge B. Seigler, September 25, 1974, "Learning Resources: Dean for Learning Resources" folder, box 7 (1974-1975), William H. Patterson Papers.

building. Similarly, a permanent art collection was also fragmented across campus as decorations in administrative offices or stored wherever space was available.

Parallel to the university discussing the possibility of turning the McKissick Library into a museum, the South Carolina Museum Commission was developing the plans for a state museum. Despite the McKissick building's shift in function not being related to the State Museum Program, there was momentary anxiety surrounding the "possible duplication and dilution possibilities" between the future university and state museums.⁴⁷ Guy F. Lipscomb, Chairman of the South Carolina Museum Commission, wrote to Patterson on behalf of himself and the Director of the same group, Bill Scheele, to hopefully put an end to any plans for a museum within the university. In this letter, Lipscomb refers to McKissick Library as "less than ideal for a Museum Site," a statement that goes against all the gathered endorsement letters provided to the president of the university and McKissick committee by Dean Smith from the Division of Learning Resources.⁴⁸ The aversion that Lipscomb hinted at in his correspondence with Patterson seems to have more to do with the idea of a museum that could possibly compete with the planned state museum rather than the utilization of McKissick building. His attempt at stopping the conversion of McKissick building into a museum has little to do with the idea that the heart of campus is a lacking location.

⁴⁷ Guy F. Lipscomb to William H. Patterson, December 10, 1974, "Learning Resources: Dean for Learning Resources" folder, box 7 (1974-1975), William H. Patterson Papers, The South Caroliniana Library, The University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC.

⁴⁸ Guy F. Lipscomb to William H. Patterson, December 10, 1974, "Learning Resources: Dean for Learning Resources" folder, box 7 (1974-1975), William H. Patterson Papers.

Of course, Patterson responds with clarification on the matter by stating that the “University Museum will not have the breadth, scope, and sophistication of a state museum.”⁴⁹ Patterson debunks the anxieties of Lipscomb by further referring to correspondences between Smith and Scheele, and even goes as far as including copies of those conversations as a post-script. Though similar to the South Carolina State Museum in their displays today, the consolidated contents within McKissick upon its rebranding would merely act as “a custodian of the heritage of the University and as a learning resource for the students at the University.”⁵⁰

Logistically, the conversion of the McKissick Library into a museum required minimal architectural changes. Spaces that had once been dedicated as reading and reference rooms would continue to serve an observational purpose as gallery spaces, and the lobby spaces of each floor would welcome new guests in addition to the same students and faculty members of the university (Figure 8). In an addendum to Smith’s original letter containing a proposal for McKissick Library’s use as a museum, Smith claims that “no room design changes would be necessary” in a series of points concerning the physical layout of McKissick building.⁵¹

Today, McKissick Museum continues to steward and conserve the permanent collections of the University of South Carolina, as well as temporarily visiting collections. From a 1994 edition of the McKissick Museum Newsletter, named *Under the Dome*, a quick note is added to a section to remind readers of the newsletter that “a number of the exhibits you see at McKissick Museum are developed into traveling exhibitions for other museums throughout the country,”

⁴⁹ William H. Patterson to Guy F. Lipscomb, December 13, 1974, “Learning Resources: Dean for Learning Resources” folder, box 7 (1974-1975), William H. Patterson Papers, The South Caroliniana Library, The University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC.

⁵⁰ William H. Patterson to Guy F. Lipscomb, December 13, 1974, “Learning Resources: Dean for Learning Resources” folder, box 7 (1974-1975), William H. Patterson Papers.

⁵¹ Jay C. Smith to Milledge B. Seigler, October 7, 1974, “Faculty & Staff Committees: Future Use of McKissick” folder, box 10 (1974-1975), William H. Patterson Papers, The South Caroliniana Library, The University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC.

before going on to mention such exhibits that were on display at the time.⁵² Between the three floors of McKissick Museum that maintain spaces for exhibition, three galleries are set up for four traveling shows. The two remaining gallery spaces house the “Natural Curiosity” ongoing exhibition and the “Invitation to Explore” permanent collection.

A New Welcome Mat

As of the beginning of the 2003-2004 school year, the university’s Visitor Center was housed within the Carolina Plaza alongside the University Press and other departments concerning “Regional Campuses and Continuing Education.”⁵³ In the 2004-2005 version of the Campus Guide, the Visitor Center is seen officially divorced from its previous location and introduced in McKissick Museum, where it continues to operate today.⁵⁴ A possible and likely reason for the move can be chalked up to a needed emphasis of the head of the Horseshoe as a multi-functional university hub.

If McKissick Museum was considered the heart of campus and the Visitor Center was comparatively dubbed the “front door” to the University of South Carolina, then the eventual merging of the two functions can be interpreted as necessary and ideal.

Today, after nearly twenty years together under the same dome, the Visitor Center works in tandem with the museum for the overall functionality within the building. At least on the first

⁵² “McKissick’s Exhibitions Travel the States,” *Under the Dome*, McKissick Museum, University of South Carolina, April 1994.

⁵³ “University of South Carolina Guide, 2003-2004: Campus Map & Guide,” Columbia: University of South Carolina, University Publications, 2003. Documentation about the placement of the Visitor Center is minimal, but the use of Campus Guides from the years 2003, 2004, and 2005 allows for an easy interpretation of a timeline for the continued functional changes within McKissick Museum.

⁵⁴ “University of South Carolina Guide, 2004-2005: Campus Map & Guide,” Columbia: University of South Carolina, University Publications, 2004.

floor where the Visitor Center resides within the McKissick Museum, the relationship between the two functions remains blurred and integrated. As both functions continue to serve the interests of the university's population and prospective students with their curious families, no obvious conflict is made publicly known to the average spectator. However, separation between Visitor Center and Museum is enforced beyond the first floor and throughout the rest of the public and private floors.

While the reach of the Visitor Center is confined to its respective wing on the first floor, the museum is all-encompassing. The division of space within the building leans heavily in favor of the museum, which leads to a staggering hierarchy of function. At least until the university decides that McKissick Museum has outgrown its purpose just as it had done decades before as a library, the building at the head of the Horseshoe will always be a museum first and a visitor center second.

Just as the size and architectural design of McKissick Museum had initially served to woo and impress the university as a colossal means for educating the masses, the purpose remains throughout the building's evolution as a museum and then a combined museum-visitor center. A Museum and a Visitor Center, both housed under the dome, express to a campus and community newfound messages of welcome and continued messages of educational enrichment.

Conclusion

The McKissick Museum continues to stand at the head of the Horseshoe and within Gibbes Green as a physical and metaphorical heart of the University of South Carolina campus

in Columbia, South Carolina. What was once just a proposed idea for an expansion of space before 1941 has grown, both in function and significance, to be a focal point for contemporary students, staff, faculty, and prospective students.

Starting as a university library funded by the Works Progress Administration, McKissick Library originally stood for the pursuit of knowledge and education. The need for a proper location to maintain and store the growing academic collections and educational materials resulted in the establishment of a focal point within the university campus where education reigned as a top priority.

Despite the replacement of function within the McKissick building as a museum rather than a library in 1976, education continued to be a predominant aspiration within the building. Preserving the history of the University and acknowledging the heritage of its southern location paired with the existing mission of educating the students of UofSC within the McKissick building. Accomplished with the extreme collections of objects ranging from rocks to fine art paintings, a consolidated museum finally had the means and space to reach an audience that could fully appreciate the scope of its exhibitions.

With the addition of the Visitor Center, a newfound purpose for welcoming prospective students only revamped the goals set by the university during its early drafting days. Through the extension of the university's reach and expansion of its student base, the Visitor Center contributes to the range of educational impact.

Architecturally, each of these different functions throughout the eventful history of the McKissick building are represented by the aesthetic of Stripped Classicism and the façade of

colossal order. Architect Henry Hibbs designed the building to properly represent itself as the heart of campus with its size and impressionable image, and the functions housed within the building represent what is expressed on the exterior.

Overall, both the evolving functions and modernized Classical architecture of McKissick Museum contribute greatly to the idea of a university focal point and heart of the campus. The integrity of McKissick Museum's status as the intellectual and symbolic heart of the University of South Carolina campus has remained unshakeable throughout the several decades of its existence. As long as the McKissick building continues to hold its placement at the head of the Horseshoe and amongst the Gibbes Green space, then the heart of the campus will continue to serve the university and surrounding community as a place for educational enrichment, remembrance of a collective history, and for expressed welcome into an inclusive environment.

Images



Figure 1. Front facade of McKissick Museum, David Walls, 2022

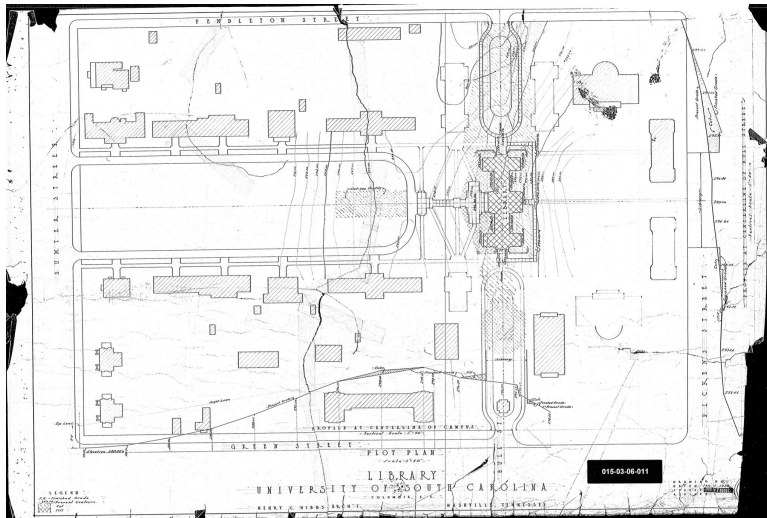


Figure 2. Plot plan drawing for McKissick Library, Hibbs, Henry C., *Plot Plan for Library, University of South Carolina*, 1939, Scanned blueprint, The University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC.



Figure 3. Map of the Lawn at the University of Virginia, last accessed April 15th, 2022, <https://visitormap.virginia.edu/>

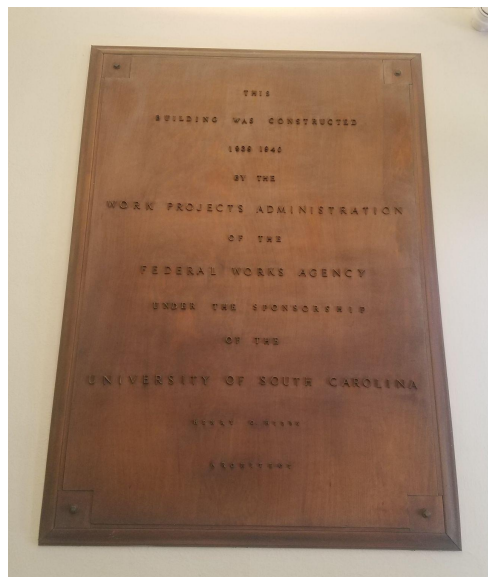


Figure 4. Bronze plaque commemorating the role of WPA in construction of McKissick Library, 1941, David Walls, 2022



Figure 5. Chambers Hall, Davidson, N.C., “Hibbs, Henry C. (1882-1949),” North Carolina Architects and Builders: A Biographical Dictionary, last accessed April 15th, 2022, <https://ncarchitects.lib.ncsu.edu/people/P000112>, Sarah Pope Postcard Collection, private.



Figure 6. Campus map of Davidson College, last accessed April 15th, 2022, <https://www.davidson.edu/about/campus-and-surroundings/maps-and-directions>



Figure 7. Reading Room in McKissick Library, 1943, University Archives Photograph Collection, South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC.

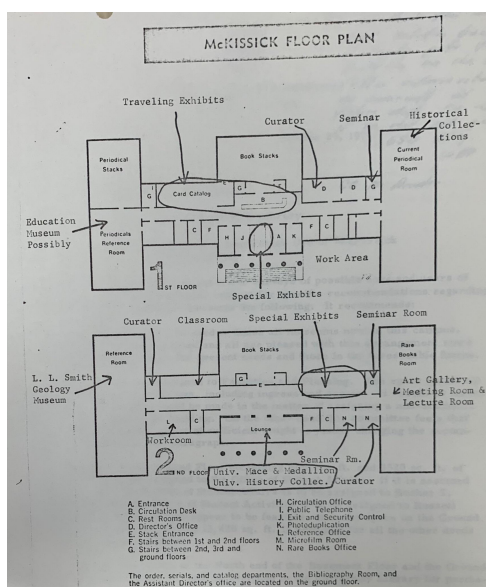


Figure 8. McKissick Floor Plan Draft, 1974, "Learning Resources: Dean for Learning Resources" folder, box 7 (1974-1975), William H. Patterson Papers, The South Caroliniana Library, The University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC.

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The History of McKissick Museum

Anna Spaschak

Introduction

There are so many components to higher education, and each campus is truly unique within its structure, culture and purpose. One can spend hours and hours on end diving into why different resources or structures are the way they are at different institutions, which is remarkable to think further into. When trying to best understand this practice and how important understanding the history of different components of higher education impacts student affairs professionals' daily work, throughout this semester I studied architecture on college campuses. I looked into how it has evolved overtime due to many societal structures. I focused on how the landscape of buildings on campuses is sometimes a forgotten part of the history of higher education, but is one of the most important structures to understand the true purpose of. Throughout this paper, I am going to dive deep into the ins and outs of the history of the McKissick Museum located right on the Horseshoe of The University of South Carolina's campus. This paper will focus on a wide variety of the overall history of the building ranging from the building structure, the origins and creation of the building, what it was used for overtime, the name of the building and why it was named after an important university leader, and many other critical aspects of its general history.

History of Higher Education

Understanding the general history of higher education at large is crucial to grasp when looking at the history of campus buildings and structures. Buildings were not just randomly placed on campuses, rather there was a reason for every move made in higher education as there is today, and one must understand how higher education is an ever changing culture before studying these aspects. The book *The History of American Higher Education: Learning and Culture from the Founding to World War II* by Roger L. Geiger talks a ton on how culture plays a big role in the overall structure of higher education. This book addresses the history of higher ed from the start of Harvard College in 1636 to right before World War II which is around when John R. McKissick was President of UofSC, which is where the McKissick Memorial Library, and present day McKissick Museum got its name after. Higher education is all about achieving an end goal. When students came to institutions within the 1940s, their end goal was to gain a valuable education to impact society and take on a scholarly career path. However, throughout this time period, those who were able to gain an education were those within the middle class or higher who had the resources to be able to do so.

There was not a diverse student body throughout college campuses, and structures on campus did not have to have a ton of resources. Those who came to a university understood its strict and educational structure. These credentials, allowed for a small minority of people to actually attend college during this era, and ones prior. As stated in chapter 12 of Geiger's book, "Upper-middle-class families looked to colleges chiefly to accomplish what today is called social reproduction" (Geiger, 2015, p. 540). This without a doubt affected the culture of institutions,

and rather the students who did attend college were more doing it to advance their social structure in society, rather than directly apply their education to their career work. Within these time periods, campus communities were very much so everyone knew everyone and truly had to honor those who were in leadership positions. As a student and overall member of the campus community there were strict rules one had to obey, and there were societal norms and structures they had to follow.

To continue looking back on the general history of higher education, when both Harvard and Yale were founded, throughout the 16th and 17th centuries their sole purpose and structure was to educate men who would become leaders within the church and state. Later on within the 17th century they started to expand their curriculums around college campuses, but not as advanced as it is today, still making college campuses small segregated communities. The mid 19th century is where we start to see more growth within women's education, scientific knowledge within learning environments, and understanding the importance of teaching information that would directly impact people's career work. Student voice was becoming more prevalent and crucial for overall campus development during this time.

It is important to bring great attention to the overall history of higher education, and noting what events and cultures took place before, after and during McKissick's time as President and the general campus climate, building structure and purpose. Having this general understanding and knowledge will help for a stronger baseline as to the evolution of higher education, and the McKissick Museum at The University of South Carolina.

History of Higher Education: at The University of South Carolina

When looking specifically at the University of South Carolina, and how it is overall structured, it is crucial to understand its partnership and relationship with the South Carolina State government. The source, *The University of South Carolina: College to University* (Volume II) written in 1956 by Daniel Walker Hollis, does a really good job of explaining how much the University of South Carolina had to obey to the state rules and how much they truly had a say in the overall campus structure. This is similar to today's climate with The University of South Carolina being the flagship institution of the state, its primary goal is to serve the people of South Carolina. Therefore, the state government has a big say in university policies, structure and overall funding. Over the years, especially in the 18th century the university has seen great changes in its name and overall structure with the end goal of serving the people from the state of South Carolina in mind. In 1865, it officially became The University of South Carolina, but this did not stop its evergoing changes within the institutional structure and overall naming of things. There were a lot of conversations between the university and the state in the sense of the people they wanted to serve, and what careers they wanted to focus on through the education system. But they concluded with serving the state, and making sure the institution went hand and hand with state goals and understandings to have students best serve South Carolina, and the ongoing world. This concept was an evolving concept, and one that is still seen and restructured within the present day.

It is impossible to talk about the general history of The University of South Carolina, without discussing the time period of World War II, and the changes that were made at the

university due to what was going on within society. Around and years prior to 1940, the university was considered a small liberal arts college, only serving a population of around 2,000 students. It was not until the 1990s that we started to see a population of over 25,000 and more funding being granted. This change over this fifty year time period, had a lot to do with the overall change of the state of South Carolina and the climate of the south. A History of the University of South Carolina: 1940-2000 by Henry Lesesne sums up this time period really well, by addressing the transition to a large research institution, and how a lot of the reasoning for the larger population transition had to do with overall funding for higher education during this time period, the governance structure both at the state and federal level, as well as college sports were becoming more and more a huge component of college culture. Throughout this time period, there was very much a shift from the old enrollment policies they had set in stone, which did not serve a diverse population but rather had a lot of racist components to it, and one where the student population was primarily very wealthy. This time period is extremely notable to talk about for this is when we see more of a shift of The University of South Carolina understanding to national education goals, and transforming into a large research institution with more resources and student populations, which all stemmed from John.R McKissick's presidency.

History of Building Structure: at The University of South Carolina

When looking specifically at The McKissick Memorial Library and its historical presence at The University of South Carolina, it is also important to understand the overall campus history in regards to each building and structure. The location of McKissick is unique for a wide variety of reasons, but the first being it is located at the tip of the heart of campus, the historical

Horseshoe. Throughout the 20th century the campus started to expand more and more past the horseshoe, but this truly is the center point of campus, and one that really brings the community together. Most people who interact with campus are aware where the building is located, and use it as a point of reference to guide others to different aspects of campus. Throughout the evolution of the University of South Carolina, those who worked for the institution more often than not, lived on the direct campus. Specifically throughout the 18th century it was expected that faculty members live on campus. When expanding the campus, there was much discussion if it was even worth renovating some of the old buildings on the horseshoe that represented the “old campus”. There have been a lot of changes to this old part of campus, but some of the roots of its belongings still remain the same for the Horseshoe is one of the most historical parts of The University of South Carolina’s campus.

History of McKissick Building Structure

Uniquely enough, the President’s house used to sit right in front of where McKissick Museum sits on the Horseshoe. In 1940, the McKissick Library was constructed as the campus library as the university started expanding, and this states volumes about the importance of the location of this building and how impactful this space is to the university. It is important to note this University Library was not named after President J. Rion McKissick until 1944 for he had put a ton of effort into the construction of this library and was loved by the campus community. When it was first built, it served the purpose of the university library up until 1959. Throughout its time serving as a library it stored around 150,000 books and was a place where the campus community could advance their knowledge and understandings. However, the numerous books

where one of the only great components of the library for the overall building structure had a lot of issues, and they were constantly dealing with renovation problems and it was not the most up-kept building. The structure of the overall library and its developments needed a lot of revamping and eventually in 1946 a document was created that opened peoples perspectives on the poor quality of this overall building structure. It was a survey of the University Libraries at South Carolina constructed by Louis R. Wilson and Maurice F. Tauber. This document addressed recommendations for the overall development of the library, and it helped push for renovations and changes to take place within the 1950s. The article McKissick Memorial Library from the South Carolina archives last updated on October 12th, 1999 put this perspective together by stating "University Librarian W. P. Kellam, in the 1947-1948 annual report, summed up the situation best when his report said, "Under the most favorable conditions, the provision of economical and efficient service in the present building will be almost impossible because of its poor arrangement." (Pascasio, 1999). Which was a great way to summarize the poor quality of this building during this time period.

Throughout the 1950s and on, the library was taking small steps forward but not enough, and still struggled with structural components. Eventually, the library space could not keep up with the expansions needed, and in 1976 students, faculty and staff moved boxes and books to the new library building, which present day one would refer to as The Thomas Cooper Library. June 4, 1976 was the official opening day for Thomas Cooper, which would stand at the end of McKissicks Memorial Library time serving as a library at The University of South Carolina. McKissick Memorial Library would then transition to McKissick Museum in 1976. Within the museum they have a wide range of gatherings that address the University of South Carolina's

overall history, and how their campus culture has evolved. The wide arrange of artifacts within this museum truly shows the history of the university. Today not only does it serve as a museum but it also is the visitor center for The University's Office of Undergraduate Admissions. Many admissions staff members have offices throughout McKissick as well as there are two rooms for presentations to take place where admissions staff showcase different opportunities for students visiting the university. The Universities Student Ambassadors also use McKissick as a home for them throughout their admissions work. Uniquely enough when people visit campus for a tour this is the first building they enter which shows volumes about its true purpose to the university in a wide variety of aspects.

Who was James Rion McKissick?

Now after touching base on a wide variety of history it is really important to take note of why McKissick Museum is called what it is, and who it is named after. In 1944, the University Library was renamed the McKissick Memorial Library in honor of James Rion McKissick, the 19th President of The University of South Carolina. Before becoming president he served on the University's Board of Trustees as well as held the position of the Dean of The School of Journalism. Something very much so worth noting when we look back at the overall history of higher education is that he served as a law school student at Harvard University before coming back to work at The University of South Carolina. He led the University during the very challenging years of World War II and The Great Depression, and he himself was actually a student at the University before becoming president. He oversaw a lot of change within the

campus structure, and was loved by the community. Some of his biggest accomplishments included advancing the academic curriculum of the University. Specifically adding more science courses than the university had had in the past. This was for university students to be able to grow into the best version of themselves, and develop stronger skills for them to be able to take on life post-graduation. This curriculum switch was very much so defense focused for he wanted to make sure those who entered the university were prepared to take on war related fields, understanding how much World War II was impacting society during his time as President. Another one of his fascinating accomplishments was working to create a more diverse population on campus and truly be a showcase to South Carolina's strong morals within serving the people. He was an extraordinary leader and one that many looked up to and greatly respected. Unfortunately he did unexpectedly die by a heartattack in 1944. Due to how much he was respected and loved throughout the campus community and for all he had accomplished within his role students' petitioned for him to get buried right outside of present day McKissick Museum, being the first President to become buried on campus grounds. McKissick was truly known for being a great human who served the people. He also donated thousands of books to the South Carolinian Library, therefore after his sudden death there was no better option than to name the McKissick Museum after his honor. Understanding who McKissick was and his true success within The University of South Carolina community is a crucial component of history to dive into when looking at this building structure and the power it has on campus throughout the present day.

Conclusion

John R. McKissick truly went above and beyond to solve problematic issues on the University of South Carolina's campus and was a true face of positive change to many components of the University during his time in power. Diving into the history of architecture on college campuses is crucial for overall understanding of campus climate and culture and where one's interstitial goals are driving to be. Oftentimes throughout history people can forget to look back and think about why a building is named what it is and how it might be problematic to current campus cultures and climates. The timeline of McKissick Museum and how it came to be what it is today is fascinating and really ties into the overall structure and history of the University of South Carolina. I hope next time you enter a new campus you take the time to really study the structure of the foundation of its culture, and the legacies people have made in an ever-changing and ever-growing field of higher education.

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University of South Carolina Heritage Stories: The Naming of Barnwell College

Emmah M. Muema

Introduction

The naming of buildings in a university is a commemorative act supporting heritage stories important to the institution. Over time, heritage stories priorities evolve, causing conflict over which heritage story is preferred. Buildings on campus form landscapes that are artifacts of culture and are a form of non-verbal communication. The buildings communicate messages broadly categorized as functional and symbolic emanating from their appearance and the way they are physically arranged. Examples of functional messages can be a bench in an open space or a bike rack in front of a building conversely, the lack of a water drinking fountain or sitting benches on campus are symbolic messages communicating the institution's disregard for specific values (Waite, 2014). Kirt Von Daacke, Assistant Dean and history Professor in the College of Arts and Sciences at the University of Virginia observed that universities, like organisms, are living and breathing institutions. Thus, building names are bound to change over time (Higher ED Dive, 2022).

The LeConte science building at the South Carolina College (S.C. College) was constructed in 1910 and was named after two brothers, John and Joseph LeConte. The new building was constructed to accommodate the growing number of science students. When it was completed in 1952, and given the LeConte name, the old science block was named for Robert W. Barnwell the third president at S.C. College.

This paper will examine the heritage stories leading to naming the Barnwell building and its different functions. After discussing what is in a name, the author will offer recommendations.

Heritage Stories

The first three universities founded in the United States, Harvard in 1636, William and Mary (1693), and Yale (1701), adopted English universities structures such as Oxford and Cambridge. These pioneer universities carried British traditions during the 19th Century and were established long before the United States gained its independence. During their formative years, these institutions of higher learning outlived two world wars, civil unrest, and world pandemics, and they thrived during slavery. The heritage stories that describe institutions of higher learning in America during the nineteenth Century are similar, including the naming of campus buildings which was done to honor people with a lot of social and cultural capital, renowned scholars, and politicians (Thelin, 2019). The building structures and architecture followed similar patterns and tell stories of their era. This section discusses heritage stories at the South Carolina College leading to the naming of the Barnwell building, known as Barnwell College.

Formation of South Carolina College

The S.C. College was chartered on December 19, 1801, in response to the changing political landscape in the Palmetto State. The state of South Carolina is nicknamed the Palmetto State, referring to the state tree (the sabal palmetto) and is commonly called the cabbage palmetto (Inodes Palmetto), which was displayed on the state flag after the state seceded from

the Union in 1861 (South Carolina Encyclopedia, n.d.). The S.C. College was formed to harmonize and bring together the sons of the Federalist elite of the low country with the sons of the upcountry Jeffersonians to promote good order and harmony in the state. The College was intentionally located in Columbia as a sign of its independence from the influence of Charleston interests. The General Assembly appropriated \$ 50,000 for the establishment of the College and an additional \$ 6,000 annually to pay faculty salaries. Governor Drayton chaired the first thirteen-member board, whose members were predominantly Episcopalian and Presbyterian. The Board included the State's lieutenant governor, the state senate president, and the presiding officer of the State's House of Representative (Dorn, 2017).

It took the Board of Trustees three years to plan, recruit and construct the first building located a short distance southeast of the State House before the College opened on January 10, 1805. By the end of 1802, the Board had planned to build a forty-eight-room residence for approximately one hundred students and three professors, a chapel, two lecture rooms, and a library. Building sites were strategically located close to the State House, symbolically representing the close relationship between the institution and the state (Dorn, 2017).

Besides constructing the new college, the board embarked on selecting the college's president and faculty. The S.C. college provided students with a cosmopolitan education. The College's curriculum and student behavior were governed by those adopted by the oldest universities in the country located in New England. Early faculty included renowned scholars such as Thomas Cooper, Francis Lieber, and John and Joseph LeConte. Similar to other institutions operating before the antebellum era, S.C. College education focused on literary works in Latin and ancient Greek, emphasizing the mastery of oratory. S.C. College was regarded as one of the nation's

premier intuitions of higher education, and it educated most of the state's antebellum elite, who were predominantly white males.

In 1862, S.C. College closed because of the Civil War, and some of its buildings served as a military hospital during the war. On December 19, 1865, the legislators passed a bill to rename the S.C. College the University of South Carolina (UofSC). However, due to the dilapidated buildings, the University reopened on January 10, 1866 (Greene II, & Parry, 2021).

University Presidents – Radical Stories

This section provides an overview of the first three presidents at South Carolina College to provide context, culture, and the environment within which decisions were made, who, and what were celebrated. Jonathan Maxcy served as the first president of the College until he died in 1820. Thomas Cooper was the second, followed by Robert Woodward Barnwell.

Jonathan Maxcy (1804-1820)

In 1804 the Board of Trustees appointed Jonathan Maxcy, a native of Massachusetts and a Brown University graduate, as the S.C. College's first president. He was only twenty-four years old when he was elected president. He was given free housing on campus and a salary of \$2,500 per year, significantly higher than his peers at Bowdoin College, where president Joseph McKeen earned \$1,000, and Princeton, where president Samuel Smith earned \$1,600 (Dorn, 2017). President Maxcy and Enoch Hanford (a Yale graduate), the first faculty member, founded the College in January 1805 with nine all-white, all-male students, two of whom were sophomores and the remaining seven were freshmen. In addition to his presidency, Maxcy was a

professor of belles lettres, criticism, and metaphysics (Dorn, 2017). He founded the Clariosophic Society and served as a member of the Board of Trustees at the College. The Clariosophic Society, a literary society (also known as Mu Sigma Phi), was one of the two original student organizations established at S.C. College in 1806. In 1827 the Clariosophic Literary Society, one of the two debating societies at the South Carolina College, commissioned a monument to be built in honor of Jonathan Maxcy. The monument was designed by Robert Mills, the renowned architect of the Washington Monument, and the monument is one of the nation's earliest examples of the Egyptian Revival style. Maxcy is the university's longest-serving president and is credited with significantly expanding the College during his tenure before he died of illness in 1820. He is buried at the First Presbyterian Church in Columbia, South Carolina (Darn, 2017). Figure 1 is an image of the Maxcy Monument.



Figure 1: Maxcy Monument, circa 1940s.

Image courtesy of South Carolinian Library, University of South Carolina

Thomas Cooper (1821-1833)

Thomas Cooper was the college president between 1821 and 1833. He studied at the University of Pennsylvania (1818-1819) and became a professor of chemistry at South Carolina College in 1819. Thomas Cooper was popular among students and advocated for the separation of the state and church. Due to these controversies, he was forced to resign as president in 1831 and as a professor in 1833. An immigrant from England, Cooper's ideologies asserted that the United States law tolerated the wise but persecuted those with opposing opinions - "tolerant in theory and bigoted in practice". Before migrating to the U.S., he fought passionately against slavery, writing, "negros are men; susceptible of the same cultivation with ourselves" (Cooper, 1787). However, after relocating to America, his views began to shift, and after moving to South Carolina in 1819, he purchased several enslaved families and began to defend slavery. In an essay in 1826, Cooper opined that the rich lands of South Carolina or Georgia could not be cultivated without slave labor. Further, in a private letter that same year, he wrote, "I do not say the blacks are a distinct species, but I have not the slightest doubt of their being an inferior variety of the human species, and not capable of the same improvement as the whites" (Duncan, 2021; South Carolina Encyclopedia, n.d.). Cooper also advocated for slaves rights and the nullification of slavery.

In 1959, the University upgraded the "undergraduate library" and named it after Thomas Cooper for his service as the second college president, scientist, and politician. In 1968, the Board of Trustees recognized Cooper's efforts to enhance the national reputation of the S.C. College. After that, the University embarked on a massive expansion of the undergraduate

library, adding five underground levels and two above-ground floors. The construction was completed in 1976.

Robert Barnwell (1835-1841)

Robert W. Barnwell was born in Beaufort, South Carolina, on August 10, 1801. He attended Harvard in 1817 and practiced law in Beaufort in the office of Petigru and Hamilton in Charleston. In 1835, the Board of Trustees at S.C. College summoned him to be president of the College, which then teetered on the brink of disaster due to the religious and political controversies created by the administration of Thomas Cooper. At thirty-four, Barnwell became the third president of the S.C. College, succeeding Thomas Cooper. He recruited strong faculty, including Francis Lieber and James Thornwell. Student enrollment also soared from his good administrative skills (Hollis, 1955).

His most notable accomplishment as president was the construction of the present South Carolinian Library, completed in 1840 at a total cost of \$23,900. He advocated for stocking the library with academic books and successfully petitioned an annual appropriation of \$2,000. The library was the first separate college library in the United States. Within ten years, the College library was one of the two best in the South, equal to that of the University of Virginia and more extensive than Princeton and Columbia. Barnwell resigned from the College presidency in 1841, citing poor health. After the Civil War and the reopening of the University, Barnwell became the chairman of the faculty and was instrumental in adding law and medical school in 1866. In 1877 he was appointed the university librarian and caretaker of campus grounds, holding both positions until he died in 1882 (Hollis, 1955).

Barnwell was a wealthy enslaver of 128 enslaved people. He defended slavery, arguing that Southerners could enslave people "with all good conscience" (University History, n.d.).

Slaves and University Buildings

Enslaved people played a dominant role in the construction and operations of the S.C. College during the antebellum era. The College owned a few enslaved people, but most of the enslaved labor force was contracted from private citizens who enslaved people, including faculty and contractors who were hired to build the campus. Enslaved people constructed College buildings and the historic wall around the Horseshoe in the early 1800 using slave-made bricks. Enslaved workers were essential to the daily operations of the College, cleaning, cooking, and attending to students and faculty. The enslaved people lived in outbuildings, one of which still stands behind what is now the President's House (Duncan, 2021, p. 26).

The heart of the University of South Carolina is the Horseshoe, which symbolizes the beginning of building construction at the University. Surrounded by 11 buildings, the Horseshoe houses the oldest buildings on campus. After the Civil War, there was no construction of new buildings for fifty years (1860-1909). The new era began with the construction of Davis College in 1909, on what was later to be referred to as Gibbs Greene. Seven more buildings were constructed on Gibbs Greene, primarily on the eastern side of the campus, for academic and residential purposes. These buildings include Barnwell (1910), Thornwell (1913), Woodrow (1914), Currell (1918, named Petigru initially), Sloan (1927), and Melton Observatory (1928). Barnwell, and Davis are similar in several ways, such as they are less than four floors high and have long columns.

Dr. Jonathan Holloway, Rutgers University's first Black president, argued during his first press conference on July 6, 2020, that most universities built before the Emancipation Proclamation have ties to slavery and that a building's name outlives the person it is named for (Weissman, 2020). Holloway's observation resonates with UofSC's heritage stories. Before the Emancipation Proclamation, buildings were named for politicians, the elite, the wealthy, those with social capital, renowned scholars, and students (Greene II, & Tyler, 2021; Thelin, 2019). Figure 2 illustrates the first eleven buildings at the S.C. College. Enslaved people's quarters were the houses behind the main campus buildings (Greene II, & Tyler, 2021).



Figure 2. University of South Carolina 1872 illustration of the Horseshoe

Source: University of South Carolina Library

Barnwell Building on Gibbes Green

Buildings at the University of South Carolina have a fascinating story to be discerned. Gibbes Green is located north of Davis College and the East of the Horseshoe. The University

acquired the land in the late 19th Century following contention with locals over the property. Major Wade Hampton Gibbes (1837-1903) owned the property East of Pickens Street, stretching to the North by Pendleton Street, East of Pickens and to the South of Devine, and West by Bull Street. The property was bought for \$40 by the College after an act of the legislature was passed in 1833. However, due to a fire in 1865, courthouse records were destroyed, and a private citizen acquired the property claiming it was abandoned land. In 1904, President Sloan had the Green laid out in golf links. The land remained in contention until the State Supreme Court ruled in favor of the University in 1909. The Board of Trustees was then ready to start construction to accommodate the growing and expanding University.

The buildings on Gibbes Green were constructed during the period 1908 to 1930. According to minutes of the Board of Trustees building committee dated June 23, 1910, presented to the full Board meeting on October 10, 1910, the construction of the science building was already underway. Davis College and LeConte science buildings were the first buildings constructed on Gibbes Green. A total of seven buildings were constructed on Gibbes Green. The area has been described as one of the most beautiful on campus. It has a wide circle of benches surrounding majestic oaks, curving brick paths, and undulating mounds complemented by dogwoods and azaleas.

LeConte Science Hall

The LeConte science hall was constructed in 1910 and was named after two brothers who were renowned science professors, John and Joseph LeConte (University of South Carolina, 1910). Joseph LeConte, a Geologist, taught chemistry, and his brother John taught physics. After

the Civil War, the brothers left South Carolina for California. Both brothers enslaved people and used slave labor on campus, similar to other wealthy and elite residents in South Carolina in their era. John LeConte supported the secession movement, and his brother Joseph remained an ardent Confederate and opposed Reconstruction. However, by the early 1940s, the building was overcrowded due to the university expansion and had outdated science equipment posing a fire hazard to students and faculty. In the late 1940s, the State General Assembly appropriated more than \$1 million for a postwar building program for the University. However, the funds were not utilized until 1950, after the state assembly threatened to rescind the funding (Hollis, 1955).

A new science hall was constructed in 1952, and LeConte's name was transferred from the old science building to the newly constructed building, leaving the old science hall nameless.

Barnwell Building

In June 1952, the Board of Trustees unanimously passed a resolution to honor the third president of S.C. College by naming the dilapidated science building after Robert Woodward Barnwell. The Gamecock announced the naming of the old science hall after the third president in its editorial on September 19, 1952 (Gamecock, 1952). The building was home to several state agencies; the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the Board of Health, the Department of Labor, and the Department of Commerce and Manufacturing. These state agencies moved out of the building due to the need for more classes as the University expanded. Barnwell building later became home to the Department of Psychology. In the late 1970s, the old Barnwell building was significantly damaged by a fire posing a significant risk to the users. The University renovated

the building and constructed an additional floor during the repairs. Figure 3 is a picture of Barnwell building.



Figure 3. Barnwell Building, circa 1920

Source: University of South Carolina Library

Changing Heritage Stories - What is in a Name

When Dr. Jonathan Holloway became Rutgers University's first Black president, he argued in his speech that he would not change the university's name because names outlive those they are named for. Rutgers University was named after Henry Rutgers, a member of the Board of Trustees and a wealthy third-generation slave owner. Dr. Holloway also linked the construction of universities before the Emancipation Proclamation to slavery (Weissman, 2020). Holloway's sentiments support the idea that institutions' heritage stories have a value that people of all ages should respect. When faced with the dilemma of changing the names of buildings

named after slave owners, Confederates, and racists, the Stanford University Board of Trustees observed that "today's decision makers should give the same respect to previous decision makers that they would like their decisions to be accorded in the future" (Stanford University, n.d.). This author was struck by the exemplary institutional leadership and maturity displayed by the Stanford University Board's sentiments. Although the individuals for whom buildings are named were slave owners, the author recognized that they were instrumental in the formation and development of the country's and the world's leading institutions of higher learning. These institutions might not have survived the challenges of the nineteenth or early twentieth centuries if it hadn't been for their contributions. That, however, was not an excuse to enslave others.

Holloway's remarks linking all universities built prior to the Emancipation Proclamation to slavery includes majority of institutions built during that time period. The University of South Carolina has faced similar challenges as Stanford University from students demanding that several buildings, including Barnwell College. Given that buildings reflect an institution's heritage and culture and are intended for nonverbal communication, should universities erase the past, or are there mechanisms that institutions could implement to allow generations from different eras to "correct" the past? Would rewriting history disregard previous leaders' decisions, yet these same leaders expect future leaders to respect their decisions? In retrospect, because universities are living organisms, opportunities to rename buildings should be documented to provide a framework for future leaders to work within.

Having said that, the University of South Carolina will face the challenge of renaming almost all of its buildings. Will this mean rewrite the institution's history and legacy? Would naming such structures after enslaved people make them appropriate? Can institutions correct the

past while preserving heritage stories? Barnwell College may soon have a third name, depending on future decisions made by the Board of Trustees. Universities may consider following Stanford University's footsteps to implement a framework that provides guidelines and the process of naming and renaming buildings, monuments, and memorabilia on campus.

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Rename Campus Buildings. Diverse Issues in Higher Education

Hamilton College: University Growth through the War Effort

Mason Joiner

In the early part of the twentieth century, the University of South Carolina did not have a significant presence in higher education, and it was not considered one of the leading universities of the South.⁵⁵ Students at the University of South Carolina primarily came from within the state and surrounding region, the university was primarily an undergraduate institution, and the proportion of faculty with graduate degrees was low compared to other Southern universities.⁵⁶ H. Clarence Nixon, a political scientist from Vanderbilt University, wrote an essay surveying Southern schools in the 1930s that reflected the status of the University of South Carolina: “It was as if USC did not exist”.⁵⁷ The president of USC, J. Rion McKissick, “declared that the University had long been the target of ‘unjustifiable criticism’ and discrimination in state appropriations because of its ‘poor moral reputation’.”⁵⁸ With the advent of World War II and a national war effort in the early 1940s, President McKissick seized the opportunity to improve the reputation of USC and its standing among American universities. McKissick’s efforts to fund and construct the Naval ROTC (NROTC) Armory at Hamilton College, along with the

⁵⁵ Henry H. Lesesne, *A History of the University of South Carolina, 1940-2000* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2001), 7.

⁵⁶ Lesesne, *History of the University*, 8-11.

⁵⁷ Lesesne, *History of the University*, 6-7.

⁵⁸ Lesesne, *History of the University*, 13.

introduction of the Naval College Training (V-12) Program that was housed in the building, restructured the idea of the campus at USC and set the stage for future university growth.

President McKissick fought hard to get funding for a new NROTC armory from the Work Projects Administration (WPA), and the support from state politicians and government officials elevated the importance of Hamilton College to the University of South Carolina and the state as a whole. By aligning the university with the Navy and committing to training future soldiers through the NROTC program, McKissick was setting the stage for the university to improve its reputation and to be seen as a significant contributor to the development of the country.

Correspondence between McKissick and Admiral W.H. Allen from the Charleston Navy Yard, concerning Admiral Allen's interest in building a NROTC armory at USC, exhibited how significant McKissick believed Hamilton College would be to the university. He wrote that "such a building would be of incalculable value to the unit and to the University", and claimed that the university "[would] do all in [their] power toward obtaining such an armory."⁵⁹ In addition to the armory being a valuable addition to the university, McKissick believed that it would result in "rapid, extensive spreading in South Carolina of favorable information about our Navy and increase of popular esteem of this great agency for national defense."⁶⁰ As the United States was engaging more in World War II, increasing war production and subsequently sending soldiers to fight, McKissick saw the opportunity for the university to grow alongside the military.

Beyond the practical military use for the NROTC program and the armory at Hamilton College, McKissick saw the program as something that would shape the men of the University

⁵⁹ J. Rion McKissick to W.H. Allen, February 25, 1941, Folder "National Defense Efforts: ROTC Armory," Box 7 (1940-1941), Papers of J. Rion McKissick, 1940-1941, Records of the Office of the President, University Archives, The South Caroliniana Library, The University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC.

⁶⁰ J. Rion McKissick to W.H. Allen.

into respectable, hard working people. In order to afford this armory, though, the university would need external funding. McKissick expressed his regrets to Admiral Allen, stating that it would be “impossible” for the university to fund the project because it has not had sufficient funds for maintenance and development “as has been the case throughout its 136-year history.”⁶¹ The solution to this problem is the Work Projects Administration, a program founded as part of President Roosevelt’s New Deal and initially named the Works Progress Administration. Many universities throughout the country benefited from federal funding through the WPA and similar programs, enabling them to make repairs and construct new buildings at a time when state funds were dropping due to the Great Depression.⁶² McKissick assembled a support team that all worked together to get WPA funding for the construction of Hamilton College, and the correspondence between them reflects the effort that was required to achieve this goal. McKissick was in close contact with Admiral Allen and Lawrence Pinckney, the State Administrator of the WPA, but they needed assistance from more powerful people in politics and the military. Admiral Allen asked the Secretary of the Navy to approve the project as a “National Defense Project”, and they quickly received word that it would be “certified to the Secretary of the Navy as important for military and naval purposes” once it had been approved by the WPA.⁶³ In a letter to South Carolina Governor Burnet Maybank, McKissick again stressed the importance of the NROTC addition: “I regard our Naval R.O.T.C. unit as one of the most valuable additions to the University in many years. I wish our entire student body could be

⁶¹ J. Rion McKissick to W.H. Allen.

⁶² Andrew Watson Chandler, “‘Dialogue with the Past’ – J. Carroll Johnson, Architect, and the University of South Carolina, 1912-1956” (master’s thesis, University of South Carolina, 1993), 150-151.

⁶³ W.H. Allen to Lawrence M. Pinckney, February 28, 1941, Folder “National Defense Efforts: ROTC Armory,” Box 7 (1940-1941), Papers of J. Rion McKissick, 1940-1941, Records of the Office of the President, University Archives, The South Caroliniana Library, The University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC; Chief of the Bureau of Navigation to Chief of Naval Operations (signed C.W. Nimitz), March 17, 1941, Folder “National Defense Efforts: ROTC Armory,” Box 7 (1940-1941), Papers of J. Rion McKissick, 1940-1941, Records of the Office of the President, University Archives, The South Caroliniana Library, The University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC.

enrolled in it. Its beneficial effects in developing the young men who are members of the unit are very marked.”⁶⁴ McKissick was attempting to overcome the perception of USC’s “poor moral reputation”, and the NROTC program was one of the ways to do this.⁶⁵

Governor Maybank played a significant role in obtaining WPA funding for the Hamilton College project, demonstrating that it was important to the state of South Carolina as a whole, as well as the University of South Carolina. The WPA initially rejected the university’s application for funding, citing the university’s small financial contribution to the project and the lack of skilled labor in Columbia.⁶⁶ Maybank wrote to McKissick and asked him how to answer the WPA, asserting that he was “not giving up” and that he would “urge that everything possible be done.”⁶⁷ The governor was deferring to McKissick and offering him his services, indicating the importance of Hamilton College to the state of South Carolina. With the country at war, every state wanted to contribute to the effort as a matter of pride and respect, showing that it was doing everything in its power to serve the country. With Maybank’s support, USC received \$31,500 from the state legislature in 1941, enabling them to increase their portion of the funding for Hamilton College and get their application to the WPA approved.⁶⁸ McKissick wrote to Maybank on behalf of the university to “express [their] deep and enduring gratitude for [his] active and valuable aid in securing this acutely needed building”, crediting much of the success of the

⁶⁴ J. Rion McKissick to Burnet R. Maybank, April 7, 1941, Folder “National Defense Efforts: ROTC Armory,” Box 7 (1940-1941), Papers of J. Rion McKissick, 1940-1941, Records of the Office of the President, University Archives, The South Caroliniana Library, The University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC.

⁶⁵ Lesesne, *History of the University*, 13.

⁶⁶ Howard O. Hunter to Burnet R. Maybank, May 23, 1941, Folder “National Defense Efforts: ROTC Armory,” Box 7 (1940-1941), Papers of J. Rion McKissick, 1940-1941, Records of the Office of the President, University Archives, The South Caroliniana Library, The University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC.

⁶⁷ Burnet R. Maybank to J. Rion McKissick, May 24, 1941, Folder “National Defense Efforts: ROTC Armory,” Box 7 (1940-1941), Papers of J. Rion McKissick, 1940-1941, Records of the Office of the President, University Archives, The South Caroliniana Library, The University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC.

⁶⁸ J. Rion McKissick to Burnet R. Maybank, May 29, 1941, Folder “National Defense Efforts: ROTC Armory,” Box 7 (1940-1941), Papers of J. Rion McKissick, 1940-1941, Records of the Office of the President, University Archives, The South Caroliniana Library, The University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC.

application to Maybank's "interest and efforts".⁶⁹ Once construction of Hamilton College was completed, Maybank took part in the groundbreaking ceremony alongside McKissick, an acknowledgement of the role he played in the building's development (Figure 1).

While Hamilton College was specifically part of the University of South Carolina, it contributed to the broader state focus on military service during the years of World War II. Students were demonstrating their patriotism and virtue by enrolling in military training programs at Hamilton College, reworking the university's reputation from a state school of poor morals to a national institution that produced upstanding men for its country. University handbooks and the South Carolina magazine reinforced the importance of the NROTC armory to the University of South Carolina and the state, respectively. The 1942 Freshmen Handbook was created and distributed while Hamilton College was under construction, but McKissick had already begun to promote the new program and NROTC armory through the "Message from President J. Rion McKissick" at the beginning of the handbook: "If you are going into our country's service, our University offers you the training that will aid in equipping you for advantages and advancement."⁷⁰ The following year, there was a one-and-a-half page description of the V-12 program that outlined eligibility and described the structure of the program.⁷¹ The Navy Department operated this program at universities across the country, with the goal to quickly train Navy officers to serve in World War II. The V-12 program was advertised to students and integrated into official university documents immediately after its onset, reflecting

⁶⁹ J. Rion McKissick to Burnet R. Maybank, July 4, 1941, Folder "Building Program: ROTC Armory," Box 2 (1941-1942), Papers of J. Rion McKissick, 1941-1942, Records of the Office of the President, University Archives, The South Caroliniana Library, The University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC.

⁷⁰ "Message from President J. Rion McKissick," Freshman Handbook 1942-43, Box "SoCar 378.757UR So8car 1898-1957/58," University Archives, The South Caroliniana Library, The University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC.

⁷¹ "Naval College Training Program—Class V-12," Carolina Handbook 1944, Box "SoCar 378.757UR So8car 1898-1957/58," University Archives, The South Caroliniana Library, The University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC.

that it was a priority of the university to recruit new V-12 students. The South Carolina magazine also featured numerous articles about the military in South Carolina, including several about the National Guard and military officers serving from South Carolina.⁷²

The V-12 program at the University of South Carolina, made possible by the addition of Hamilton College to Gibbes Green, significantly altered the use of the campus through the end of World War II. By December 1943, almost 73 percent of people living on campus were Naval trainees, and though the Navy was just using USC facilities, it was “hard to tell the difference” between that and a complete takeover of the university.⁷³ With an influx of naval students and trainees, it quickly became apparent that “the University’s campus buildings were inadequate to meet the needs of a student body numbering more than 2,000.”⁷⁴ Hamilton College expanded the university’s capacities, and the 1943 Garnet and Black yearbook described it as “one of the finest armory buildings in the nation” (Figure 2).⁷⁵ The yearbook also emphasized the importance of the armory and the naval training to the state and the nation: “This training in the Naval R. O. T. C. has assumed paramount importance since the outbreak of the war. The University of South Carolina is proud of its unit, the only one in the state. It is making an important contribution to the defense of our nation by training its young men to go forth and take their place in the service of their country.”⁷⁶ The building was specifically designed to house the NROTC and the V-12 program, with a shooting range and drill space inside, in addition to classrooms for instruction in specialized topics. Hamilton College was the heart of education at the university at this time,

⁷² “Officers from South Carolina,” *South Carolina Magazine*, Vol. 6 Nos. 1 and 2, c. 1943-1944, Collection “South Carolina magazine Vol. 5-8 (1942-1945),” University Archives, The South Caroliniana Library, The University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC.

⁷³ Lesesne, *History of the University*, 22-23.

⁷⁴ Lesesne, *History of the University*, 24.

⁷⁵ *Garnet and black*, 1943, Digital Collection “Garnet and Black Yearbooks, 1899-1994,” University Archives, The South Caroliniana Library, The University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC, 50-51.

⁷⁶ *Garnet and black*, 1943.

since the majority of the student population was enrolled in the naval programs, and a combination of Navy officers and university faculty taught courses like navigation and communications (Figure 3).⁷⁷

The presence of the V-12 program also caused the function of several other university buildings and spaces to change. Some civilian students had to move out of their dormitories to accommodate the growing population of naval students, and the cafeteria in Stewards' Hall, previously open to all students, became the naval mess hall (Figure 4).⁷⁸ The new University Library on the Horseshoe housed several naval offices, as well as classrooms before the construction of Hamilton College was finished.⁷⁹ Because of the lack of space, civilian students had to fit three or four people in one dorm room, some classes were taught in faculty's homes, and university offices moved into unused spaces in the basements of buildings.⁸⁰ In addition to commandeering buildings, the NROTC units took over outdoor spaces on campus, giving the university even more of the feel of a military base. The NROTC used the athletic field for drills and training, and additional drills and exercises were conducted on Gibbes Green and on the Horseshoe (Figures 5, 6).⁸¹ The 1944 *Garnet and Black* yearbook detailed the changes on campus, as well as the acceptance from the civilian population:

The Navy caused the regular life of the campus to be altered considerably. Fraternities were forced to vacate their beloved tenements. Sims College was caught in the tide in more ways than one. Sororities willingly gave up their sorority rooms knowing they

⁷⁷ Lesesne, *History of the University*, 23.

⁷⁸ *Garnet and black*, 1943, 19; *Garnet and black*, 1943, 40.

⁷⁹ *Garnet and black*, 1943, 44.

⁸⁰ Lesesne, *History of the University*, 25.

⁸¹ *Garnet and black*, 1943, 39.

would be returned to them after the war. With the V-12 came a new Carolina student with a different outlook on college life. Uniforms of white, blue, and khaki speckled the campus and crowded the canteen. Sounds of "hup, two, three, four" in the wee hours of the morning interrupted many a civilian's peaceful dreams. Though this seemed a little strange at first, the war-minded students of the University realized its expediency and accustomed themselves to the Navy routine. Carolina would have been like a ship without a sail had the V-12 training school not been acquired.⁸²

While the students had to make sacrifices and adjust to a new way of life on campus, they recognized the importance of these changes. The construction of Hamilton College and the V-12 program significantly altered the daily lives of students, and it changed the way that the university campus was used and understood during World War II.

By establishing USC as a center of military service during World War II, President McKissick started the process of expanding the university into a larger, more reputable institution. During his presidency, seven new buildings were constructed on the USC campus, but the addition of hundreds of new naval students demonstrated that the university's facilities were still not enough to accommodate a growing student population.⁸³ After the war ended, the campus began to shift away from the military hub that it had been for the previous few years, and the passage of the GI Bill made higher education accessible and affordable to thousands of new veterans.⁸⁴ With an increased demand for higher education in South Carolina, the university would have to continue to expand through the next several decades. President McKissick's

⁸² *Garnet and black*, 1944, Digital Collection "Garnet and Black Yearbooks, 1899-1994," University Archives, The South Caroliniana Library, The University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC, 53.

⁸³ Chandler, "'Dialogue with the Past'", 156.

⁸⁴ Lesesne, *History of the University*, 31.

wartime efforts to build Hamilton College and expand the NROTC programs established the University of South Carolina as a valuable contributor to the state and to the nation, launching a period of growth and expansion.

Images



Figure 1. Groundbreaking ceremony for Hamilton College (1942). Pictured from left to right are Captain R.A. Hall, State WPA Administrator Lawrence Pinckney, Governor Burnet Maybank, and USC President J. Rion McKissick. "Hamilton College", c. 1942, Digital Collection "University of South Carolina Buildings and Grounds", University Archives, The South Caroliniana Library, The University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC.



Figure 2. East elevation of Hamilton College. "Hamilton College", c. 1943, Digital Collection "University of South Carolina Buildings and Grounds", University Archives, The South Caroliniana Library, The University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC.

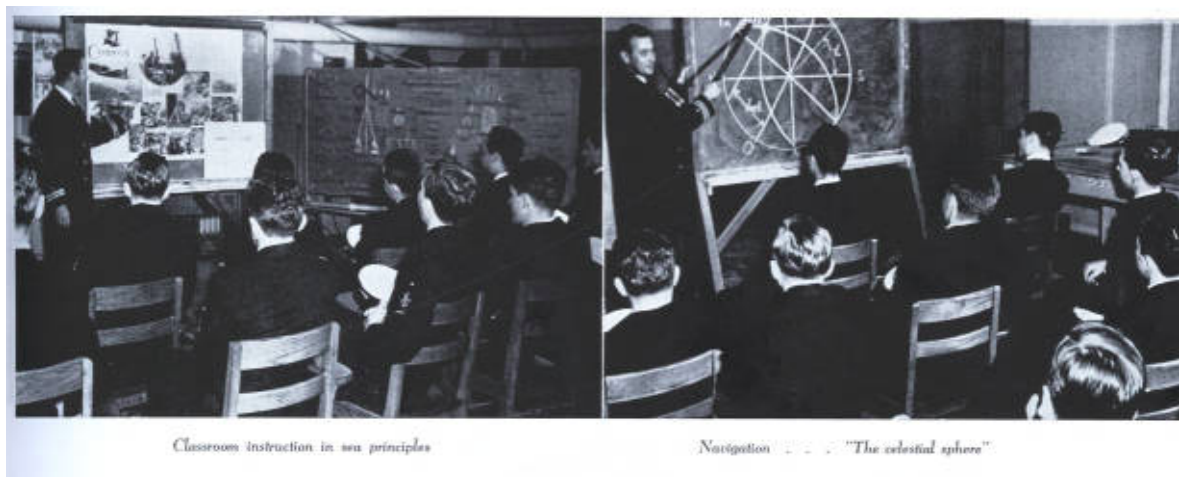
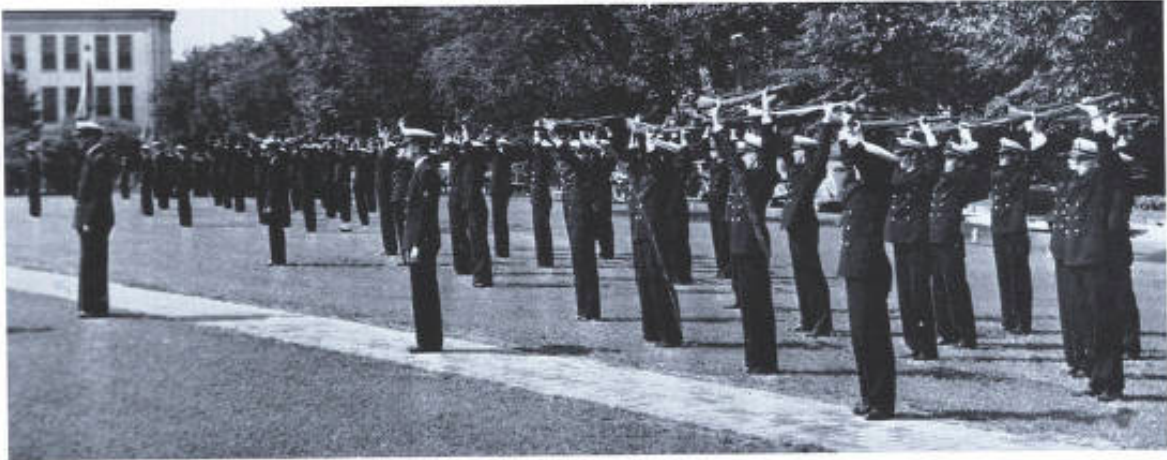


Figure 3. Classroom instruction in navigation and sea principles in Hamilton College. Garnet and black, 1943, Digital Collection "Garnet and Black Yearbooks, 1899-1994," University Archives, The South Caroliniana Library, The University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC, 51.



Figure 4. V-12 students eating in Steward's Hall, the temporary naval mess hall, with caption "Three times a day, seven days a week." Garnet and black, 1944, Digital Collection "Garnet and Black Yearbooks, 1899-1994," University Archives, The South Caroliniana Library, The University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC, 47.



Physical drill under arms

Figure 5. Naval drills on Gibbes Green. Garnet and black, 1943, Digital Collection “Garnet and Black Yearbooks, 1899-1994,” University Archives, The South Caroliniana Library, The University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC, 48.



Figure 6. Naval drills on the Horseshoe. Garnet and black, 1944, Digital Collection “Garnet and Black Yearbooks, 1899-1994,” University Archives, The South Caroliniana Library, The University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC, 52.

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Davis College

Lauren N. Eleazer

Davis College

Initial impressions are invaluable, especially on a college or university campus. Students may judge a college or university based on various characteristics, including campus appeal. A beautiful, well-maintained campus will likely attract prospective students, while an unattractive campus may be unappealing and potentially reduce school pride. Moreover, campus buildings convey significant details concerning the legacy and sophistication of an institution and may be the most memorable visual for a college or university. Understandably, every campus building has a unique history and story to tell. Historic campus buildings, particularly, possess a rich history.

While students, faculty, staff, and visitors may enjoy the appearance of many campus buildings, they may not pause to consider the origin or story behind each structure. There are numerous key considerations when contemplating the background of historical structures on campus, including the creation of the building, building name, aspects of its history, function over time, significant restoration projects, and the current role of the building. The historical importance of each building may not always be obvious to onlookers, but the buildings offer a way to preserve the past and continue to be a functional campus space for future generations of students.

When South Carolina College, now known as the University of South Carolina, was founded in 1801, the college was the first state-supported postsecondary institution in South Carolina (Hollis, 1956). Over 200 years later, the institution and campus have dramatically expanded and developed. The historic horseshoe, located in the heart of the campus, receives much praise and attention for its undeniable beauty. However, there are numerous buildings surrounding the iconic horseshoe which are just as impressive, including Davis College, one of the oldest buildings on the University's campus (Burner, 2014). Less than four floors high and located on Gibbes Green, Davis College has a stylish, collegial appearance with classical moldings, large white columns, and a symmetrical design.

For the first 100 years, most of the University's buildings were behind a brick wall, much of which still stands today, that was constructed between 1835 and 1836 (West et al., 2015). The brick wall runs along Sumter Street, Pendleton Street, Bull Street, Greene Street, and the historic Horseshoe (West et al., 2015). By 1860, the University's campus began to expand with the construction of new buildings which formed the shape of a horseshoe, which is known today as the University's historic Horseshoe (University of South Carolina Buildings and Grounds, n.d.). Including the adjacent Longstreet Theater, this is precisely how the campus remained for almost 50 years (West et al., 2015). Indeed, the college campus size "remained stagnant until 1909, when the university began expanding eastward, punching through the Bull Street side of the old brick wall for the construction of Davis College" (West et al., 2015, p. 2). There were numerous internal and external factors which contributed to the long hiatus of construction on the University's campus, including the Reconstruction era after the American Civil War.

Prior to the construction of Davis College, economic and political influences impacted the University's ability to expand (West et al., 2015). Due to the devastation resulting from the Civil War, political influences, economic crisis, and repeated institutional restructuring, there were no new buildings constructed on campus (University of South Carolina, 1990). However, by the beginning of the twentieth century, the University, relying on state funding, was in dire need of new academic buildings on campus. As a state supported institution, funding for the University was primarily reliant on the state government. As the state was also recovering from the economic and societal impact of the Civil War, the University was forced to continue to survive with the existing buildings on campus.

In 1906, South Carolina College became the University of South Carolina (Hollis, 1956). Fortuitously, financial stability and political stability began to increase that same year (University of South Carolina, 1990). By 1909, there was a rise in the "prosperity of the State and the general progress of public education, [thus] it has entered upon a new era of growth and expansion, and, with the generous support of the Legislature and of the people, it promises still larger and higher service than ever" (University of South Carolina, 1909, p. 5). Consequently, the University's trustees made funding requests to the South Carolina state legislature to build a new academic building near Bull Street (Davis College, n.d.). The funding requests were not immediately endorsed by the South Carolina state legislature, but eventually the state legislature appropriated \$30,000 for the construction of the new academic building in 1908 (Davis College, n.d.). The newly planned building would be used for classrooms and designated as the Arts building (Green, 1916). The University had previously purchased the land from the estate of Malachi Howell in 1838 (Green, 1916). The city of Columbia officials, at that time, were

attempting to claim a substantial portion of the land known as Gibbes Green, but the state supreme court ultimately sided with the University (Green, 1916).

University officials decided to construct the new academic building east of the brick wall surrounding the historic Horseshoe (Green, 1916). The building was designed by the University's architect Charles C. Wilson, and the building was completed at a total cost of \$34,273 (Hollis, 1956). The University's objective for Wilson was to create a useful, modern design plan (Green, 1916). By spring 1909, construction of Davis College was complete (Green, 1916). The new building had a formal opening on January 14, 1910 (Green, 1916). The University trustees then selected R. Means Davis College as the building's name in honor of the late Professor Robert Means Davis (Green, 1916). Remarkably, the historic building and the namesake have extraordinary histories and noteworthy significance on the campus of the University.

The decision to select a building namesake is an important one for an institution. When a building is named after an individual, there are many factors to consider whereas the choice is indicative of the institution's priorities and values. Likewise, it is also one meaningful way an institution can honor an individual for possessing the attributes and qualities that the University values (University of South Carolina, 1990). So, who was Professor Robert Means Davis and what was his role at the University?

Professor Davis was born in Winnsboro, South Carolina (University of South Carolina, 1990). He was a graduate of the University, class of 1872 (Burner, 2014). Earlier in life, Professor Davis' occupations included schoolteacher and newspaper editor (University of South Carolina, 1990). Later, he became a professor of History and Political Science at the University

of South Carolina (Green, 1916). Notably, Professor Davis also taught at the University's law school (University of South Carolina, 1990). Professor Davis was later chosen to be the chair of Political Economy, History, and Constitutional Law (Green, 1916). Certainly, his professional abilities were evident, but so were his personal traits and characteristics.

Reputedly, Professor Davis was well respected and admired across the University's campus as "his genial nature made him loved by all" (Green, 1916, p. 112). He was known to keep his campus office door open all the time, as well as always offering a friendly greeting and welcome to every student who entered (Green, 1916). Instinctively, Professor Means cared about the students, academically and personally. He was known for offering thoughtful advice and sharing his pragmatic knowledge with students, in addition to helping with their academic questions (Green, 1916). Although Professor Davis "left behind little of published work," he regularly contributed to the newspapers (Green, 1916, p. 126). Among his many duties, Professor Davis also managed the alumni records for the University (Green, 1916). In addition to his kindness and friendliness, Professor Davis believed there should be equality in education, and the University could provide that opportunity for the youth in the state of South Carolina.

Professor Davis had an inclusive stance regarding education. He also expressed what he thought the appropriate role of the institution was in the state of South Carolina. Professor Davis wrote the following regarding the University:

Here should be established one central college, in which the youths of all sections, all classes, and all creeds should meet as sons of a common mother, to sit in one common lecture room, lodge in one common dormitory, and feed at a common table, and thus

learn to know and respect one another, to appreciate, if not to imbibe, the opinions of one another, and to form ties of perpetual friendship with one another (Green, 1916, p. 10).

Professor Davis had an evident awareness and understanding of inequities in education, and across the state.

Understandably, his death was a significant loss for the University, and he was mourned on campus and across South Carolina (Green, 1916). Professor Davis was buried at his family's burial ground in Ridgeway, South Carolina, not far from where he was born (Green, 1916).

Unsurprisingly, students and faculty were present for his burial procession (Green, 1916).

Professor Davis is unmistakably a worthy and admirable namesake for Davis College whereas he greatly contributed to the University and the lives of students in numerous ways.

When Davis College turned 25 years old, the building was one of many on campus which needed repairs; a Civil Works Administration grant funded repairs in 1934 (University of South Carolina, 1990). Now, over 100 years old, Davis College remains significantly distinctive whereas its construction signaled an architectural resurgence on the University's campus.

Certainly, the construction of Davis College led to the continued expansion and redevelopment of the campus in response to the growing needs of South Carolina's flagship university (University of South Carolina Buildings and Grounds, n.d.). Building new facilities may enhance the quality of campus life for many, including faculty and staff from various college departments.

The building's original departmental layout included the following departments: English, History, Commerce, Finance, Mathematics, Modern Languages, and Ancient Languages (University of South Carolina, 1909). Still, alumni generally remember Davis College as the

home of the English department whereas Davis College housed the English Department until 1968 (Burner, 2014). Over the decades, the building also accommodated the Economics department and Psychology department (Burner, 2014). Davis College has undoubtedly been the content home for a wide variety of college departments for more than 100 years, providing an academic space and learning environment for countless students.

Postsecondary institutions are responsible for maintaining the legacy and heritage of campus buildings while also modernizing and renovating for enhanced performance and the safety of students, faculty, and staff. In 2013, the exterior of Davis College received some significant repairs and renovations, including repairs to the building's entrances, cracks in the plaster, and large columns (Burner, 2014). The Davis College Stabilization and Exterior Renovation Project also included paint scraping, repainting the exterior of the building, and repairs to the building's accents and pediment (Burner, 2014). The project involved strengthening and leveling the building's columns, repairing doorway moldings, rust removal, and repainting the columns (Burner, 2014). Concerns like lead paint, which is a significant safety hazard, led to unintended additional time and extensive effort focused on the columns whereas the paint on each column had to be chipped off by hand (Burner, 2014). Undoubtedly, countless details, considerable planning, and a degree of flexibility go into repairing and maintaining a campus building, especially a historic building like Davis College.

Currently, Davis College is home to the College of Library and Information Science (Burner, 2014). While the historical importance of Davis College may not always be apparent to the Library and Information Science students or passers-by, the building led the way to new expansion and needed development on the University campus after almost 50 years of no campus

construction. The University undoubtedly recognizes the importance of preserving the legacy of the past along with providing a safe, functioning space for students to develop and learn. Recognizing the importance of preserving the past allows the building to maintain authenticity while also continuing to be useful and practical for students, faculty, and staff. Thus, when considering the story behind the historical structures on campus, there are numerous key considerations, such as the creation of the building, the building namesake, aspects of its history, function over time, restoration and renovation projects, and the current role of the building. Sustaining the rich heritage of the institution by maintaining historic architecture promotes school pride, attracts future students, and may bring back alumni to campus to remember and reminisce about their student experience.

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Anchoring A New Beginning: Davis College

Noah Safari

Davis College marked the commencement of a new era for University of South Carolina (USC). The university was beginning to spread beyond the confines of the ‘Old Campus’ known as the Horseshoe and into the city beyond. The impacts from this growth would dramatically affect the form of the campus and the people who lived in the surrounding areas. The first thrust of development would take place on Gibbes’ Green, an adjoining parcel of land to the east. This expansion was a statement that South Carolina was no longer stuck in its past; it was on its way to becoming the national research university that it is today. The story of Davis was synonymous with the history university in many ways.

The legacy of members of both the USC and the state of South Carolina communities permeated the evolution of the university and propelled the school into the twentieth century. The building was named for R. Means Davis, an influential professor, and designed by Charles Coker Wilson, the first university architect. Both were native South Carolinians and graduated from USC.

USC is one of the oldest institutions of higher education in the United States. Founded in 1801, many have passed through the Columbia campus on their path towards higher education. Sons and daughters of aristocrats, artists, educators, and political leaders have been forged into capable citizens while in the process traipsing through the confines of the verdant quadrangle

known as the Horseshoe (Figure 1).⁸⁵ At the dawn of the twentieth century, the university was facing the potential for growth and the concomitant need for expanded facilities; it would need to mature beyond its existing confines and into the spaces beyond. This would not be an easy task, given that the school's central location in the urban state capitol of Columbia was constrained on every side.

The Horseshoe is the site of the original campus of South Carolina College and was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1970.⁸⁶ The design of the official plan was influenced by noted architect and native son Robert Mills.⁸⁷ The layout of this quadrangle bears a striking similarity to Thomas Jefferson's Academical Village at the University of Virginia.⁸⁸ However, as architectural historian John Bryan noted, "with its Federal style buildings flanking an open lawn, the college predated Jefferson's plan for the University of Virginia by two decades."⁸⁹ The Horseshoe serves as the true heart of the University, playing a central role in USC's marketing and in the lives of its students, faculty, staff, and alumni. When the school was planning for growth at the turn of the twentieth century, there was conflict about affecting the aesthetic of the Horseshoe landscape. This required that any expansion of the physical plant of the University would have to be both peripheral and complementary to the Horseshoe. The solution was to build a new campus quadrangle.

⁸⁵ The Horseshoe and Gibbes' Green can be seen in the lower right of this bird's eye view of Columbia, SC from 1872.

⁸⁶ Norman McCorkle, "University of South Carolina Old Campus District." NRHP nomination, 1970.

⁸⁷ John M. Bryan, *An Architectural History of the South Carolina College, 1801-1855*, (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1976).

⁸⁸ Andrew Watson Chandler, "'Dialogue with the Past' – J. Carroll Johnson, Architect, and the University of South Carolina, 1912-1956" (master's thesis, University of South Carolina, 1993), 54.

⁸⁹ Walter B. Edgar, *South Carolina: A History*, (Columbia, South Carolina: University of South Carolina Press), 1998, 289; Chandler postulates that perhaps Jefferson influenced Mills when discussing the plans he was developing for the University of Virginia in *Dialogue with the Past*, 54.

The college remained relatively static in the postbellum period. After flourishing for a short period during Reconstruction, the school closed for a time.⁹⁰ Upon reopening, competition for resources with the newly established Winthrop College in Rock Hill and Clemson College in the Upstate strained South Carolina College's ability to keep pace with the degradation of its aging campus.⁹¹ The existing buildings were "dingy and shabby and in need of extensive repair."⁹² After a serious effort to obtain appropriations from the state legislature finally paid off, the school officially rebranded itself as the University of South Carolina in 1906 and sought to expand its offerings.⁹³ The university recognized that there was a lack of adequate space. The minutes of the Board of Trustees detailed a discussion in 1906 that "should it be found necessary to have a new professor or a new instructor even, there would be for him absolutely no lecture room".⁹⁴ They noted that as "the college as it grows and grow, it must, will in the future need every foot of its new vacant lands to provide for the absolute necessities for its expansion."⁹⁵ The gaze of the Trustees fell on the neighboring expanse of open land to the east of the Horseshoe in Gibbes' Green, where a new campus would be built.⁹⁶

⁹⁰ Tyler D. Parry, "'Irrespective of Race or Color': Examining Desegregation at the Reconstructed University of South Carolina, 1868-1877," in *Invisible No More: The African American Experience at the University of South Carolina* (2021), 30-50.

⁹¹ Daniel Walker Hollis, *University of South Carolina, Volume II: College to University*, (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1956), 239.

⁹² *Ibid.*, 222.

⁹³ Edwin L. Green, *A History of the University of South Carolina*. Columbia, SC: The State Company, 1916.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

⁹⁶ Green, *A History of the University of South Carolina*, 130.

The Place-Gibbes' Green

One of the great tragedies to occur in the annals of Columbia's history would present an opportunity for the university to expand its footprint. General William Tecumseh Sherman and his Union Army had scorched the earth on their path through the southeast, and the grand prize of Columbia, the heart of the rebellion, sat squarely in their targets. After approaching the city from the west, the Union army laid siege to Columbia under a torrent of artillery and small arms fire. On the night of February 12, 1865, a combination of fleeing Confederate sympathizers and drunken cavalcades of raiding soldiers ignited the city.⁹⁷ Much of the area near the still-under construction state house was scorched, leaving a swath of land that was now open space. In the process, the records that detailed South Carolina College's titles to the land that would come to be known as Gibbes' Green were lost.⁹⁸ This set off a period of tumult for the property-the University had no way to document its land claims.

The property description of Gibbes' Green includes the parcel of land "bounded on the north by Pendleton Street, on the east by Pickens, on the south by Devine, and on the west by Bull."⁹⁹ The University bought the titles to this land in two separate transactions, the first in 1833 and the second in 1838.¹⁰⁰ The area was a green tract in the middle of a burgeoning metropolis. It became a highly sought-after piece of land, providing a place for tranquility and recreation. It was "almost the only breathing space in the city."¹⁰¹ People were naturally drawn to this location and started developing the surrounding area to take advantage of this oasis in the middle of the

⁹⁷ Edgar, *South Carolina: A History*, 373.

⁹⁸ Hollis, *University of South Carolina, Volume II: College to University*, 224.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ Hollis, *University of South Carolina, Volume II: College to University*, 225.

city. The State, the local newspaper, referred to the parcel as a “fashionable suburb” in a brief article announcing the subdivision of the tract.¹⁰²

In 1904, President Benjamin Sloan had a par three golf course built on this property, acting to solidify the University’s grasp on the title of this valuable tract (Figure 2).¹⁰³ Gibbes’ Green was the source of recreation and a place of tranquility for neighboring residents and students alike. The university had plans to create a “double campus” consisting of the Horseshoe and a new one built on Gibbes Green.¹⁰⁴ When news came about the Board of Trustees’ decision to expand eastward, many Columbia residents were not pleased. The State pleaded for USC to reconsider:

The green is a very beautiful park, with its grassy slopes and its pines, beautiful though too few. It is urged that the university has so much real estate that is available that it would be a sacrifice to mar the beauty of the green with any buildings, no matter how beautiful.¹⁰⁵

Considering the circumstances, this proclamation was strong and biased. These interested citizens sought to preserve Columbia’s “only remaining available park site”, but their motives may have been less than altruistic—they had invested significant resources to build in the area and had a vested interest in maintaining the environment they intended.¹⁰⁶ A telling part of the statement is that they considered this development “would do great hurt to those property owners in the neighborhood, many of whom have expended large sums of money in that vicinity under

¹⁰² “Fashionable Suburbs,” *The State* (Columbia, SC), July 13, 1891.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, p. 225.

¹⁰⁴ Green, *A History of the University of South Carolina*, 130.

¹⁰⁵ “Why a Building on Gibbes’ Green,” *The State* (Columbia, SC), June 26, 1908.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

the assumption that the green would always remain an open space.”¹⁰⁷ The university also faced the issue that it had supposedly deeded some of this property to the Columbia Academy.¹⁰⁸ The State reported that it was likely an issue that would have to be resolved by litigation.¹⁰⁹ The Trustees agreed that this would be the case, and proactively decided to employ counsel to determine the boundaries of their holdings.¹¹⁰ In 1909, the South Carolina Supreme Court ruled that the University did indeed definitively own Gibbes’ Green.¹¹¹ With this decision, the time to build had come. Charles Coker Wilson would spearhead the design of both a master plan for Gibbes’ Green and its first buildings.

The Designer- Charles Coker Wilson

Charles Coker Wilson (Figure 3) was born November 20, 1864 in Hartsville, SC.¹¹² He was a patrician South Carolinian, from a family of Pee Dee Patriots. All four of his grandfathers served under General Francis Marion in the American Revolution.¹¹³ He grew up at the family plantation in Society Hill and attended South Carolina College, graduating in 1886 with a degree in mechanics and engineering.¹¹⁴ He went to complete his master’s from the school in 1888, while obtaining his C.E. in the process.¹¹⁵

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ Green, *History of the Buildings of the University of South Carolina*, 142.

¹⁰⁹ “The University Building,” *The State* (Columbia, SC), August 4, 1908.

¹¹⁰ Trustees’ Minutes, 1908, 606.

¹¹¹ Hollis, *University of South Carolina, Volume II: College to University*, 225.

¹¹² John E. Wells and Robert E. Dalton, *The South Carolina Architects, 1885-1935: A Biographical Directory*. (Richmond, VA: New South Architectural Press, 1992), 209.

¹¹³ “Charles Coker Wilson Obituary,” *The State* (Columbia, SC), January 27, 1933.

¹¹⁴ Wells and Dalton, *The South Carolina Architects*, 209.

¹¹⁵ Ibid.; A C.E. is a Certified Civil Engineer

Wilson began his career working as an assistant civil engineer with the railroad in Columbia, supervising the construction of roads and bridges.¹¹⁶ He was also superintendent of roads for the city of Columbia, where he spearheaded the implementation of a novel paving material for local roads.¹¹⁷ Wilson's career trajectory took off in earnest when he took a position with the railroad in Roanoke, Virginia, a rapidly expanding transportation hub in the Appalachians.¹¹⁸ It was here that he became associated with a number of established architects.¹¹⁹ He brought his talents back to South Carolina in 1895 before traveling to train at the Ecole de Beaux-Arts in Paris from 1899-1900.¹²⁰ Upon his return, Wilson truly emerged when he was selected to complete the South Carolina State House in 1904.¹²¹ Construction on the building had begun prior to the onset of hostilities in the Civil War, but it had yet to be completed.¹²²

In 1906-1907, Wilson worked with Henry Ten Eyck Wendell; together they designed the Colonial Revival-style Coppin Hall at Allen University.¹²³ His firm Wilson, Sompayrac, and Urquhart was formed in 1907.¹²⁴ They produced notable works throughout the southeast, including North and South Carolina, Virginia, Georgia, Alabama, and Florida.¹²⁵ Among these were four buildings at his alma mater, the University of South Carolina.¹²⁶

¹¹⁶ Wells and Dalton, *The South Carolina Architects*, 209.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 210.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 209.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*

¹²¹ Wells and Dalton, *The South Carolina Architects*, 209.

¹²² *Ibid.*

¹²³ *Ibid.*, 210.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*

¹²⁵ "Charles Coker Wilson Obituary," *The State* (Columbia, SC), January 27, 1933.

¹²⁶ Wells and Dalton, *The South Carolina Architects*, 210.

Wilson's work in Columbia prompted President Benjamin Sloan to name him as the first University Architect in 1907.¹²⁷ He handled the development of a master plan that would build out a new campus east of the Horseshoe (Figure 4).¹²⁸ His work on Davis and the other buildings on Gibbes' Green brought some of the ideas of Beaux-Arts architecture to Columbia. Wilson tapped into his Beaux-Arts education and began the implementation of a new college quadrangle that was emerging on the canvas that was Gibbes' Green.¹²⁹

The American campus at this point generally consisted of a hodgepodge of buildings that were generally built as they were needed, without any overriding sense of unity.¹³⁰ The City Beautiful movement that took root among the burgeoning professional architect class was to change this. The World Exposition at Chicago in 1893 reintroduced classicism to the architectural vocabulary of a new generation who yearned for a grand and classical American tradition.¹³¹ The feeling of the time was that colleges were "cities of learning."¹³² Campus plans called for a Beaux-Arts style, orderly arrangement of buildings and greenspaces.¹³³ This was a revival of the "Enlightenment desire to plan rationally for the common good, while rejecting the laissez-faire individualism that had characterized the middle decades of the nineteenth century."

¹³⁴ A strength of this approach, specifically when considering the form of the college campus, was that it was "capable of including many disparate buildings or parts within a unified overall

¹²⁷ Ibid.

¹²⁸ Chandler, *Dialogue with the Past*, 50.

¹²⁹ Chandler, *Dialogue with the Past*, 44-55.

¹³⁰ Chandler, *Dialogue with the Past*, 53.

¹³¹ Mark Gelernter, *A History of American Architecture: Buildings in Their Cultural and Technological Context*, (Lebanon, New Hampshire: University Press of New England), 2001, 204.

¹³² Paul Venable Turner, *Campus: An American Planning Tradition* (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 1984), 167.

¹³³ Gelernter, Mark. *A History of American Architecture: Buildings in Their Cultural and Technological Context*, 203.

¹³⁴ Ibid., 204.

pattern.”¹³⁵ This would lead to a Jeffersonian Revival.¹³⁶ The Horseshoe itself was Jeffersonian in its design, so the imposition of a new quadrangle on Gibbes’ Green would be a natural progression.¹³⁷ With its heavy entablature and imposing tetrastyle porticos on each side, the design of Davis evoked an aesthetic lineage tracing back to the ancient beginnings of the western democratic tradition.

A member of the Board of Trustees indicated that there was a “plan of development...which contemplates the next fifty years.”¹³⁸ Wilson’s friend James Henry Rice, Jr. noted in a eulogy that “one of Charlie’s activities was forming a plan for buildings at the university and in rigidly adhering to it, as far as he was allowed to do so.”¹³⁹ This was an issue that deserved mention upon his demise, and with some consideration, one wonders why these plans were not maintained in the University’s records or in the South Caroliniana Library. Surely this would be the sort of thing that would be recognized as valuable to the greater history of the state and of the University for posterity, especially considering the stakes held by those involved. Perhaps these were part of an informal, aspirational planning method rather than a concrete plan of action? Or were they housed with Wilson’s papers, which were destroyed in a warehouse fire?¹⁴⁰ It is unfortunate that this work has been lost in the ether and we will never have this information to study.

Regardless of the historical impact of the loss of the planning documents, Charles Coker Wilson had a permanent impact on the USC landscape. His first effort as university architect

¹³⁵ Turner, *Campus: An American Planning Tradition*, 167.

¹³⁶ Chandler, *Dialogue with the Past*, 53-54.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, 55.

¹³⁸ “Why a Building on Gibbes’ Green,” *The State* (Columbia, SC), June 26, 1908.

¹³⁹ James Henry Rice, Jr. “Charles Coker Wilson”, *The State* (Columbia, SC), February 2, 1933.

¹⁴⁰ Chandler, *Dialogue with the Past*, 39.

yielded a new humanities building named for a charismatic man who exemplified the academic spirit that USC hoped to promulgate-Robert Davis Means.

The Spirit- Robert Means Davis

Robert Davis Means (Figure 5) was a beloved professor and mentor.¹⁴¹ This selfless educator was highly influential and well respected.¹⁴² He believed in the unifying force of education, and envisioned USC as a place:

in which the youths of all sections, all classes, and all creeds should meet as sons of a common mother, to sit in one common lecture room, lodge in one common dormitory, and feed at a common table, and thus learn to know and respect one another, to appreciate, if not to imbibe, the opinions of one another, and to form ties of perpetual friendship with one another.¹⁴³

Davis was born in Fairfield District in 1849 and graduated from USC in 1867 with a Bachelor of Arts.¹⁴⁴ He then moved to California to work as a teacher.¹⁴⁵ This experience inspired him, and he came back home to South Carolina to contribute to his community, which he would continue to do for the rest of his life.¹⁴⁶ He returned to USC and obtained a law degree and went on to open his own practice in Winnsboro.¹⁴⁷ He also wrote for newspapers in Fairfield and

¹⁴¹ R. Means Davis has Passed Away,” *The State* (Columbia, SC), March 14, 1904.

¹⁴² Green, *A History of the University of South Carolina*, 126.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, 10.

¹⁴⁴ “R. Means Davis has Passed Away,” *The State* (Columbia, SC), March 14, 1904.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

Charleston, gaining a reputation as “a writer of extraordinary merit.”¹⁴⁸ He was named a professor at USC in 1882, remaining at the school until his death.¹⁴⁹ Davis was known for his open door policy and his unwavering support of students and friends.¹⁵⁰

He passed away on March 13, 1904 to the deep sorrow of both the college and the community; he was a man revered for his compassion and service.¹⁵¹ Davis was eulogized as a “broad, literate, and true man.”¹⁵² As a history and political science professor who devoted his career to shaping the minds of the people of South Carolina, the Trustees decided that the new humanities building which would anchor the university's growth on Gibbes’ Green would be named for him.¹⁵³ It is noted in the 1909 Trustees’ Minutes that “the name of Prof. Means Davis should be associated with the hall in which the lectures on history are given.”¹⁵⁴ This would continue the tradition of naming the buildings on the Horseshoe after prominent South Carolinians.¹⁵⁵

The Building- Davis College

Davis College was the first building the university constructed on Gibbes’ Green, marking a new phase in the history of the University of South Carolina (Figure 6). USC was beginning to develop past the confines of the Horseshoe with the construction of a new infirmary

¹⁴⁸ “Robert Means Davis,” *The State* (Columbia, SC), March 14, 1904.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

¹⁵⁰ Green, *A History of the University of South Carolina*, 126.

¹⁵¹ “In Memory of Prof. Means Davis,” *The State* (Columbia, SC), March 16, 1904.

¹⁵² Ibid.

¹⁵³ “Davis College is New Building,” *The State* (Columbia, SC), January 11, 1910.

¹⁵⁴ Trustees’ Minutes, 1909, 718.

¹⁵⁵ “Davis College is New Building,” *The State* (Columbia, SC), January 11, 1910.

at the intersection of Green and Bull Streets.¹⁵⁶ The rationale for locating Davis on Gibbes' Green was to cement the University's grasp on the property and anchor a new quadrangle that would provide facilities for a new era of students.¹⁵⁷ The building was funded with an appropriation of \$30,000 from the state legislature and the Board of Trustees set out to begin the University's expansion in earnest.¹⁵⁸ King Lumber Company, a Charlottesville, Virginia-based contractor responsible for several post offices and schools throughout the southeast, won with the lowest bid of \$28,763.¹⁵⁹ Construction began in 1908 and was completed by early summer 1909.¹⁶⁰ The Board of Trustees determined that the remainder of the funds would be spent on seating.¹⁶¹

Davis was a building that was intended to be "a handsome building in the Greek style, thoroughly in harmony with the older buildings on the campus."¹⁶² The design was deliberate with an article in *The State* noting that "the character of the building will correspond with the general character of the present buildings but will be modern in every detail."¹⁶³ Davis would exemplify "the Doric order in classic design".¹⁶⁴ The Trustees' attention to detail extended all the way down to the furnishings, such as shades and the fire-suppression equipment.¹⁶⁵ They noted that "after this is done, the building will furnish a series of as fine lecture rooms and offices as is to be found in any institution."¹⁶⁶ Numerous bidders competed for the contract to furnish the building.¹⁶⁷ Instead of blending in, this Colonial-Revival building, flaked by imposing

¹⁵⁶ Edwin L. Green, *History of the Buildings of the University of South Carolina*, Columbia, SC: R.L. Bryan Co.), 1909.

¹⁵⁷ Hollis, *University of South Carolina, Volume II: College to University*, 225.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 226.

¹⁵⁹ "Government Work in City of Florence," *The State* (Columbia, SC), July 4, 1906.

¹⁶⁰ Green, *History of the Buildings of the University of South Carolina*, 47.

¹⁶¹ Samuel C. Mitchell, Letter to Mr. Sheridan and Mr. Hart, President's Papers, Mitchell, Samuel Chiles, March 24, 1909.

¹⁶² Trustees' Minutes, 1909, 674.

¹⁶³ "The University Building," *The State* (Columbia, SC), August 4, 1908.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁵ Trustees' Minutes, 1909, 717.

¹⁶⁶ Trustees' Minutes, 1909, 717.

¹⁶⁷ Trustees' Minutes, 1908, 615.

symmetrical colonnaded facades, elegant diamond mullion windows, and elaborate pediments boldly projected a new legacy and a new architectural style for an expanding university.

Davis College was laid out with two floors. There was much deliberation about which departments would be housed in the new building, with consideration given to the mathematics department, the department of foreign languages and the law school.¹⁶⁸ The notion of leaving several rooms unassigned to leave room for expansion was even deliberated by the Trustees.¹⁶⁹ In the end, the first floor was to house the “the departments of mathematics and engineering, history and political economy, and modern languages (one room).”¹⁷⁰ The departments of English and ancient and modern languages” were housed on the second.”¹⁷¹ The plans called for twelve well-lit 35’x70’ classrooms and an array of offices.¹⁷² There would be room for separate lounges for both students and faculty.¹⁷³

On the Inaugural Founders’ Day on January 14, 1910, Davis College was officially unveiled to much fanfare at the same time the cornerstone was laid for the new science building LeConte College (now Barnwell) on the opposite side of Gibbes’ Green.¹⁷⁴ The State indicated that “the new buildings represent not merely the material development of the state; nor the numerical growth of the students; but the fact that South Carolina wishes to give through beautiful buildings a permanency to this form of education.”¹⁷⁵

¹⁶⁸ Trustees’ Minutes, 1908, 645-646.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.

¹⁷⁰ Green, *History of the Buildings of the University of South Carolina*, 170.

¹⁷¹ Green, *History of the Buildings of the University of South Carolina*, 7.

¹⁷² *The State* (Columbia, SC), August 4, 1908.

¹⁷³ Trustees’ Minutes, 1909, 674.

¹⁷⁴ “Founder’s Day Great Success Marks Beginning,” *The State* (Columbia, SC), January 15, 1910.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid.

Conclusion

After a start as a small state college, like other large universities USC has been forced to deal with the trends of booming student populations, competition for resources with other institutions, and the specters of its past all while having the prescience to pragmatically chart a steady course into the future. The struggles for appropriations and space in a densely populated city environment continue to persist. As the University continuously expands its footprint, it must reckon with the impacts of this expansion on its existing plant and the community that lives and works in its vicinity. The path forged by USC since the turn of the twentieth century has been one of persistent progress, with a bright eye to the future.

Images

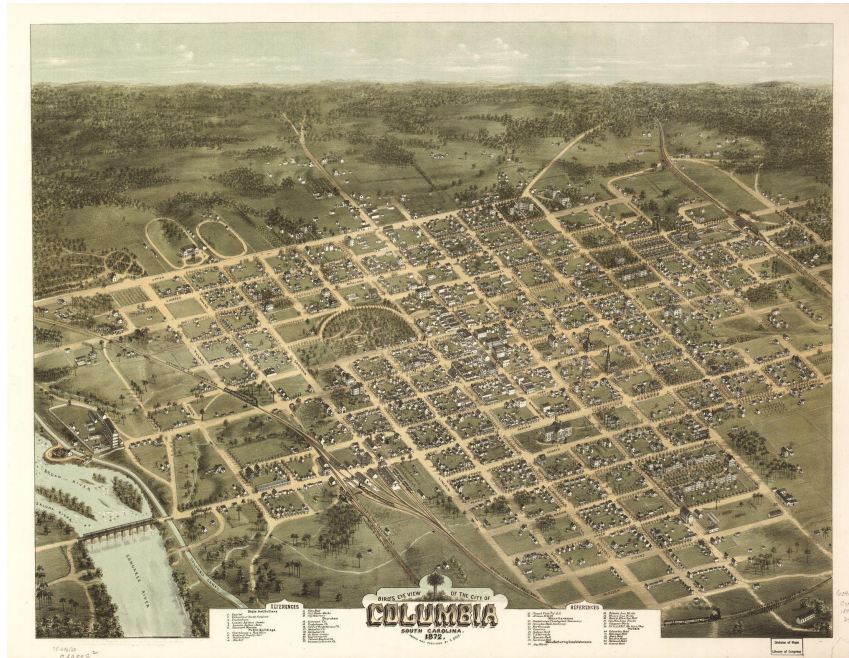


Figure 1. Drie, C. N. *Bird's Eye View of the City of Columbia, South Carolina*. Baltimore, 1872.
<https://www.loc.gov/item/75696568/>



Figure 2. Golf Course on Gibbes' Green
South Carolina Library History Project, c.a. 1900.
http://www.libsci.sc.edu/SLIS_history/gibbes.html



Figure 3. Charles Coker Wilson Sketch
Henry Palmer, *Charles Coker Wilson Architect-Engineer*, Columbia Record, January 26, 1923.

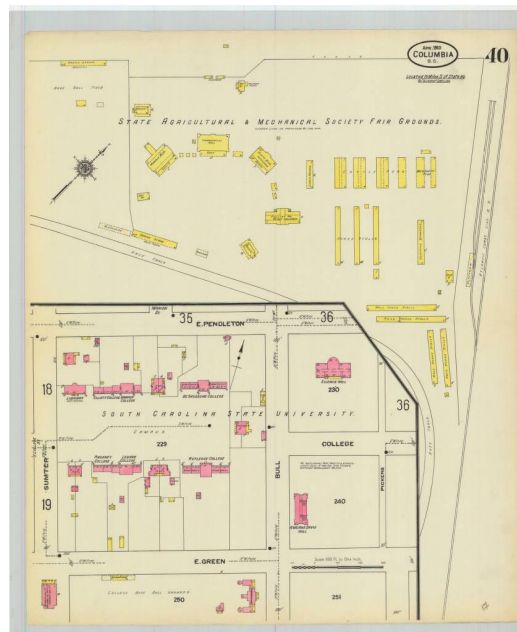


Figure 4. Sanborn, Columbia SC, Map (Sanborn Fire Insurance Company, 1930), 1910.

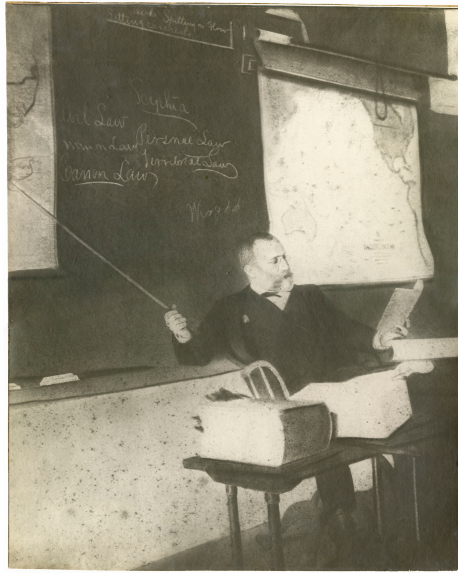


Figure 5. Robert Means Davis
Gaillard, Katherine Davis, *Photography of Robert Means Davis*, c.a. 1890.
Courtesy of the South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina, Columbia SC



Figure 6. Davis College Facing East
Davis College, University of South Carolina, Columbia, S.C. Known as Davis Greens
(Milwaukee. C. Kropp Company, 1943).
Courtesy of the South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina, Columbia SC

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“One of the Most Practically Designed Law Buildings in America”: The Life and Times of Petigru College

Grant Wong and Ellis McClure

Petigru College occupies an ambiguous place within USC’s history: it is necessary as a utilitarian space, but is inconsequential for the utter lack of cultural and intellectual meaning the university assigns it (Figure 1). Located on the periphery of Gibbes Greene, just off the corner of Greene St. and Pickens St., the college housed the University of South Carolina’s law school and law library from its construction in 1950 to the move of its facilities to the University of South Carolina Law Center in 1974. The building was important for its function as an outgrowth of the university’s expansion in the 1950s, but was unimportant for the little priority it held for its planners. Petigru College was thus understood by USC’s administrators, teachers, and students as important solely for its function as a space used to accommodate the university’s post-Second World War growth—not for any of its aesthetic attributes or symbolic meanings.

This understanding was evident in the pages of USC’s yearbook, *Garnet and Black*, in 1961, as its writers praised the law school but could not seem to muster the same level of admiration for the building it was housed in. “The School of Law, which is approved by and registered with Departments of Education in numerous states, the American Bar Association, and the Association of American Law Schools offers a well-trained faculty and a balanced curriculum,” they gushed. “It makes an outstanding contribution to the University as a whole by maintaining and adding to its standing in the legal educational world of the country.” Conversely,

their praise for its building was terse and half-hearted: “Since 1950 the Law School has been housed in Petigru College, which is one of the most practically designed law school buildings in America” (Figure 2).¹⁷⁶ The building struck the writers of *Garnet and Black* not for its grandeur or its symbolic meaning, but for its practicality. As another year passed, USC’s students published another edition of *Garnet and Black* for 1962 (Figure 3). Despite having had 365 days to further reflect on the meaning of Petigru College, they once again came to the same conclusion, replicating the text of their previous issue word-for-word: “Petigru College... is one of the most practically designed law school buildings in America.”¹⁷⁷

Today, the building is a shell of its former self. Petigru College no longer houses USC’s law school nor its law library, as the university eroded away its original meaning by converting it into a space for mixed-use classrooms and administrative offices. Any prestige the college once held as USC’s law building was thus displaced for the sake of its defining feature: its practicality. The prominent, unsightly ghost window on its west elevation and the accessibility ramp that slopes downward into it evidence this aim, as these alterations disrupt the building’s original visual hierarchy (Figure 4). Petigru College’s aesthetic and functional coherence are no longer valued by USC’s administrators and the law school it formerly housed. However, they continue to appreciate the building’s utility, albeit at the cost of its symbolic value as an outgrowth of the university’s expansion in the postwar years of the late 1940s and 1950s.

In stark contrast to the building’s present-day ambiguity, USC constructed Petigru College in 1950 out of definitive necessity and purpose as it scrambled to meet an explosive demand for new students. The end of the Second World War in 1945 caused a great surge in

¹⁷⁶ The University of South Carolina, *Garnet and Black* (Columbia, SC: 1961), The South Caroliniana Library, 48.

¹⁷⁷ The University of South Carolina, *Garnet and Black* (Columbia, SC: 1962), The South Caroliniana Library, 316.

university enrollments nationwide, driven by returning soldiers who used the financial aid of the GI Bill to pursue higher education. This new cohort of college students would then give rise to another in the form of the “baby boom,” which comprised the largest generation of young people America had ever seen. As these baby boomers came of college age in the 1960s, their enrollments exacerbated the need for American universities to expand their facilities and academic offerings, as from 1955 to 1970, the number of American university and college students skyrocketed from 2.7 million to 7 million.¹⁷⁸ By 1962, nearly all of the United States’ two thousand colleges and universities had plans for expansion.¹⁷⁹ As the state of South Carolina’s flagship institution, USC was an important regional center of this national growth. Over just two and a half years, from the spring of 1945 to the fall of 1947, USC’s student body skyrocketed, growing from 1,420 to 4,614: an increase of 225 percent.¹⁸⁰

To accommodate these students with new facilities, in 1947 the South Carolina General Assembly approved a \$10,260,000 state institution construction bill, with \$1,450,000 of it allocated to the development of new buildings. This money went unspent in the late 1940s, as an overly cautious President Norman M. Smith (1945-1952), alongside Governor Strom Thurmond and USC’s board of trustees, delayed its use for want of federal matching funds and lower construction prices (Figure 5).¹⁸¹ It was within this context that Samuel L. Prince (1946-1959), the Dean of USC’s law school, painstakingly fought the Smith administration to plan and build

¹⁷⁸ Philip Mills Herrington, *The Law School at the University of Virginia* (Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 2017), 106.

¹⁷⁹ Paul Venable Turner, *Campus: An American Planning Tradition* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1984), 249-250.

¹⁸⁰ Henry H. Lesesne, *A History of the University of South Carolina, 1940-2000* (Columbia, SC: The University of South Carolina Press, 2001), 40.

¹⁸¹ Lesesne, *A History of the University of South Carolina*, 51; “Joint Meeting of Grounds and Buildings Committee, Special Committee on Law School Building, and University Activities Committee,” December 14, 1948, “The Construction of Petigru College,” box 11, Robert McCormick Figg, Jr. Papers, The South Caroliniana Library, Columbia, SC.

Petigru College as a much-needed replacement for the existing law building (Figure 6). This building, formerly known as Petigru College, today known as Currell College, was bursting at the seams. The university first commissioned its construction in 1915, noting in a document for prospective architects that it only required “two class rooms each to seat from 90 to 100 and one class room to seat from 50 to 60 in chairs, with office rooms for professors.”¹⁸² For the law school, who by 1948 had 398 students enrolled, this was no longer adequate.¹⁸³

President Smith and his board of trustees eventually yielded to a threat from the General Assembly to relinquish USC’s construction funds if they remained unspent. However, Petigru’s construction in 1950 precluded their surrender: the building’s financing and construction had been resolved by a determined Dean Prince and hesitant President Smith before the latter loosened the university’s purse strings.¹⁸⁴ Therefore, the discourse surrounding Petigru’s construction did not concern the proposed law school’s architectural elegance and symbolic meaning, but rather its practicality: the matter of simply getting the building built. It did not enjoy the nearly the same level of support lent by USC’s administration to LeConte College, the College of Engineering, and a new administration building, all constructed to great acclaim in 1952.¹⁸⁵

Even as Dean Prince ardently advocated for Petigru’s construction to a filibustering Smith administration, the construction of the building was not his top priority. As the law school expanded alongside its parent institution, Prince’s foremost concern was its professionalization.

¹⁸² “Program of Competition for a Law Building,” 1915, (378.757UZL So8pr), South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC.

¹⁸³ “Historical Enrollment Data (1920-1955),” Office of Institutional Research, Assessment, and Analytics, accessed April 18, 2022, <http://oiraa.dw.sc.edu/enrollment/historical/1920.htm>.

¹⁸⁴ Lesesne, *A History of the University of South Carolina*, 74-75.

¹⁸⁵ Lesesne, *A History of the University of South Carolina*, 75.

His extensive correspondence with Elliot E. Cheatham, a Columbia University law professor who assisted him with the development of USC's law school, speaks to how most of Prince's energy was dedicated to this cause.¹⁸⁶ He profusely thanked Cheatham in a letter dated December 16, 1948, for his assistance in advocating for his reforms: "your method of operation, and your thoughts have been most stimulating and helpful in getting the barnacles off our ship in the sea of legal education."¹⁸⁷ Cheatham drew up memoranda for Prince and USC's administration a month later as a blueprint for the professionalization of the law school, chiefly concerning "the strengthening [of] the undergraduate training in law" and "expanding the sphere of activity of the law faculty."¹⁸⁸ The provisions Cheatham suggested to these ends, which included the hiring of more full-time faculty and the cultivation of closer relationships between the law school and the state government, were Prince's foremost priorities. The new building was peripheral to this agenda, important only as a replacement for the old one: "the school will soon have a new building and end the cramped existence in its old inadequate quarters."¹⁸⁹

Even as Dean Prince agreed with Cheatham's assessment, his advocacy for the building was met with stonewalling from President Smith, who had been delaying the use of its construction funds since their allocation in 1947.¹⁹⁰ Whatever Prince's original ambitions for the new building might have been, they were reduced out of necessity to simply getting a new space constructed. In a letter written to Cheatham on August 5, 1948, he bemoaned Smith's stalling: "As you know, the bottleneck of the law school operation, particularly in the matter of the

¹⁸⁶ "Dr. Elliott Cheatham Dies at 83; Long a Columbia Law Professor," *The New York Times*, January 14, 1972.

¹⁸⁷ Samuel L. Prince to Elliot E. Cheatham, December 16, 1948, "The Construction of Petigru College," box 11, Robert McCormick Figg, Jr. Papers.

¹⁸⁸ Elliot E. Cheatham to Samuel L. Prince, February 1, 1949, "The Construction of Petigru College," box 11, Robert McCormick Figg, Jr. Papers.

¹⁸⁹ Elliot E. Cheatham to Samuel L. Prince, February 1, 1949.

¹⁹⁰ Lesesne, *A History of the University of South Carolina*, 51.

building, has been the president of the institution... he is the Devil's own disease and has to be out-generated and short circuited."¹⁹¹ In order to placate President Smith, Prince and his allies prioritized the building's cost over all other considerations. Considerations of architectural style and symbolic meaning are completely absent from his correspondence, as his aspirations whittled down to simply having a functional building: "I still have to keep my eyes open to see that the building isn't cheapened... If we are going to have a law building, let's have one fairly decent."¹⁹² A letter addressed to Prince by a fellow attorney, A.C. Todd, echoed this perspective: "J.C. [J. Carroll Johnson, USC's resident architect] seems to think that \$300,000.00, or a little more, might buy a very good building. I don't think so. I can't figure out how we can spend any less than \$500,000.00, or more, if needed to build and equip the Law School building."¹⁹³

As such, the building's planning was marked by compromise. The law school's needs were neglected by USC's administration for other projects it valued more. The Special Committee on the Law School resolved on July 30, 1948 "to see that the location chosen will not interfere with the President's plan for the overall development of the University any more than necessary and consistent with the construction of an adequate law school building."¹⁹⁴ The new law building was to be "adequate" above all else, and "not interfere" with the construction of other projects. The construction of the building was also marred by bureaucratic dithering. As the Special Committee on the Law School finalized the architectural project, President Smith's

¹⁹¹ Samuel L. Prince to Elliot E. Cheatham, August 5, 1948, "The Construction of Petigru College," box 11, Robert McCormick Figg, Jr. Papers.

¹⁹² Samuel L. Prince to A.C. Todd, July 22, 1948, "The Construction of Petigru College," box 11, Robert McCormick Figg, Jr. Papers.

¹⁹³ A.C. Todd to Samuel L. Prince, August 2, 1948, "The Construction of Petigru College," box 11, Robert McCormick Figg, Jr. Papers.

¹⁹⁴ "Meeting of Special Committee of the Law School," July 30, 1948, "The Construction of Petigru College," box 11, Robert McCormick Figg, Jr. Papers.

interventions complicated the matter. Though one member of the committee insisted that USC's resident architect, J. Carroll Johnson, could handle the job on his own, Smith concluded that Johnson could not complete the work in a timely manner without help: "the market for architects and draftsmen is so limited that it is impracticable for him to secure the assistants necessary to expedite the work."¹⁹⁵

The committee decided to hire an architectural firm that would construct the building in consultation with Johnson. "The President said that the law building, being a state project, he believed each qualified state architect was entitled to the most impartial method of selection and therefore he favored drawing the name of one of these from a hat."¹⁹⁶ This decision appears to have frustrated other members of the committee: "Mr. Russell [Donald S. Russell, later a USC President and US Senator for South Carolina] said that he has never favored selection by drawing, nor do professional men, generally speaking, favor that method."¹⁹⁷ Of course, it is unlikely Smith would have suggested such a method for his pet projects. One firm understandably removed itself from consideration, "indicat[ing] unwillingness to participate in a drawing."¹⁹⁸ A Charlestonian firm, Simons & Lapham, was ostensibly drawn out of a hat and selected to finally begin constructing the building.¹⁹⁹ Once the committee selected the building's site on Gibbes Green, President Smith approved it, finally confirming its construction at a cost of \$370,000.²⁰⁰ No longer distracted by the logistics of the building's construction, Dean Prince

¹⁹⁵ "Meeting of Special Committee of the Law School," July 1, 1948, "The Construction of Petigru College," box 11, Robert McCormick Figg, Jr. Papers.

¹⁹⁶ "Meeting of Special Committee of the Law School," July 13 1948, "The Construction of Petigru College," box 11, Robert McCormick Figg, Jr. Papers.

¹⁹⁷ "Meeting of Special Committee of the Law School," July 13 1948.

¹⁹⁸ "Meeting of Special Committee of the Law School," July 13, 1948.

¹⁹⁹ Samuel L. Prince to A.C. Todd, July 22, 1948.

²⁰⁰ Samuel L. Prince to Elliott Cheatham, December 16, 1948.

dedicated his attention to the new space's use, deciding the curriculum for the new school, the staff that would fill it, and what name would go on the outside of the building.

The name that eventually did end up on the building's exterior was that of James Louis Petigru, a South Carolina lawyer who lived from 1789 to 1863 (Figure 7).²⁰¹ Despite never holding a prominent public office position, Petigru established a legacy that would outlive him. He did not subscribe to the predominant political and social order of the antebellum South, as he regularly represented Black Americans, both free and enslaved, without charging them for it. He also vehemently opposed South Carolina's secession from the United States, denouncing it as an act of self-destruction.²⁰² Undoubtedly, Petigru was an unpopular figure, which was likely the reason for Prince's reluctance to associate the new law building with his name, which was first chosen for the previous law building in 1918 to honor his forty years leading the South Carolina bar.²⁰³ In a letter to Donald Russell, Dean Prince laments that it is futile to try and "go back far enough to get the name of a man whose warts, if they ever existed, have now been dimmed by time."²⁰⁴ Not only was such an endeavor "futile," but it also did not align with Prince's vision of a "strong institution with its eyes to the future."²⁰⁵ Prince had lobbied for a more neutral title for the building: "I think that the University can gain in good will in the State simply by naming the building 'Law School' or 'School of Law' of the University of South Carolina."²⁰⁶ He was likely upset by the final decision to name the new building after Petigru.

²⁰¹ Whitney North Seymour Jr., "James Louis Petigru: A Role Model for Today's Lawyer," *Mercer Law Review* 41, no. 2 (Winter 1990): 651-654.

²⁰² Seymour Jr., "James Louis Petigru: A Role Model for Today's Lawyer."

²⁰³ Samuel L. Prince to Donald Russell, October 13, 1949, "The Construction of Petigru College," box 11, Robert McCormick Figg, Jr. Papers; "Petigru College Nearly Finished: Well Equipped Law School Admits Women," *State* (Columbia, SC), July 10, 1918.

²⁰⁴ Samuel L. Prince to Donald Russell, October 13, 1949.

²⁰⁵ Samuel L. Prince to Donald Russell, October 13, 1949.

²⁰⁶ "Agenda for Meeting of Trustees' Committee on Law School," November 29, 1949, "The Construction of Petigru College," box 11, Robert McCormick Figg, Jr. Papers.

Petigru's College's placement, as well as the design and structure of its interiors, were also afterthoughts to the building's planners. They originally aimed to situate it at the corner of Sumter St. and Greene St., but USC's administration scrapped this plan to preserve space for the potential expansion of the School of Education.²⁰⁷ The only requirement of the law school's location was that it would not "interfere with the President's plan for the overall development of the University."²⁰⁸ The building's placement on Gibbes Green was simply due to a lack of space: it had no particular meaning or motive relative to the rest of USC's campus. The space was available, and that was enough. Dean Prince's correspondence says even less about the building's interiors, as in it, decisions about their arrangement are nowhere to be found. It vaguely references the notion of needing a classroom or library space, but these considerations, like those surrounding the building's construction, revolved around cost. Dean Prince sent a copy of the floor plans to a colleague, noting in an attached letter that "the building is about 26,000 square feet. In my opinion it will probably cost you \$14.00 or \$15.00 a square foot to build. This would include elevator and may include air conditioning, but I do not think air conditioning could be put in now; not that I feel that ten years from now we will regret not having done so."²⁰⁹ This lack of regard for longevity is a common thread in both the spatial placement of the building and its interior components.

Petigru's construction coincided with University efforts to emphasize the law school's legitimacy. A 1954 promotional catalog for the school boasts an "adequate law library" as well

²⁰⁷ Meeting of the Special Committee on the Law School, July 30, 1948.

²⁰⁸ Meeting of the Special Committee on the Law School, July 30, 1948.

²⁰⁹ Samuel L. Prince to Albert C. Todd, August 2, 1948, "The Construction of Petigru College," box 11, Robert McCormick Figg, Jr. Papers.

as confirmation of its accreditation status: the bare minimum for operating a law school.²¹⁰

Carefully curated photographs fill the catalog: a few smiling faces at social activities, stuffy supper meetings with Dean Prince, and collegial meetings that give off a palpable sense of desperation for validation (Figures 8 and 9). Reflecting on the strain of catching up to surrounding law schools, Dean Prince writes in a letter, “all of the forgoing suggests that though the quality of training in our law school is improving, it is not near what it should be to answer the need of the State of South Carolina nor the immediate demand in the State.”²¹¹

Within twenty years of its conception, this demand had grown too much, causing Petigru College to suffer growing pains. The law school was quickly outgrowing its facilities, jeopardizing student morale and its accreditation status. However, building a better law school was not a priority of the university, which instead was focused on building a new stadium, much to its law students’ chagrin. The Student Bar Association’s president, Carl Epps, led efforts to rehome the University’s law school in 1969, citing the fact that “the present law school where 496 students are now enrolled, was opened in 1950 for a maximum capacity of 250 students.”²¹² The University argued that their image would be better enhanced by a stadium, which Epps countered: “an academic institution’s image is not dependent on the size—or beauty—of its

²¹⁰ University of South Carolina School of Law catalog, 1954, (378.757UZL So8u), South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC.

²¹¹ Samuel L. Prince to Norman M. Smith, Donald Russell, and Frank Bradley, December 9, 1950, “The Construction of Petigru College,” box 11, Robert McCormick Figg, Jr. Papers.

²¹² “Law Students Pledge to Fight USC Plans,” *State* (Columbia, SC), December 17, 1969; “Nelson Mullins Champions the Cause of School Districts in Successfully Challenging the Constitutionality of South Carolina’s Public Education,” Nelson Mullins, November 12, 2014, https://www.nelsonmullins.com/idea_exchange/news/press_releases/nelson-mullins-champions-the-cause-of-school-districts-in-successfully-challenging-the-constitutionality-of-south-carolinas-public-education-system. Despite what he might have considered to be a substandard law education, Carl Epps went on to have an impressive career. After representing poor school districts for over 20 years pro bono, Epps finally saw victory after the South Carolina Supreme Court ultimately ruled that the state had failed to give its children even a “minimally adequate education.”

edifices.”²¹³ His rebuttal admits that a single building does not make or break an institution.

Petigru, however, failed on both accounts of size and beauty. It stood, bloated and boring, as an emblem for the crumbling quality of the education it housed.

After extensive student complaints, the University of South Carolina finally caved in 1971, breaking ground on a new structure for the law school: a seven million dollar “Law Center” on Main St.²¹⁴ The move was credited with an immediate boost in morale and even an improvement in grades, with one of the law school’s deans remarking that “patience and performance were stretched about as far as they could go in the old Petigru building.”²¹⁵ As for the old Petigru building, it would meet its first major identity shift, becoming the home of the office of the registrar and treasury.²¹⁶ Its back segment, once the home of its mock courtroom, now housed office spaces to accommodate registration, complete with a treasurer’s office on the second floor (Figure 10).²¹⁷ During this period Petigru served many functions, as its third floor even housed the undergraduate library while the central library was undergoing renovations.²¹⁸ The University moved housing and resident life offices to Petigru as another solution to a space shortage.²¹⁹ Petigru was above all, a transitional space, housing displaced departments until they were lucky enough to be bailed out, like the bursar and registrar offices were in 2013.²²⁰ It was at

²¹³ William D. McDonald, “Law Students Pledge to Fight USC Plans,” *State* (Columbia, SC), December 17, 1969.

²¹⁴ Margaret N. O’Shea, “City Housing Authority-USC 20-Year Relationship Over,” *State* (Columbia, SC), March, 9, 1972.

²¹⁵ W. Clark Surratt, “New Law Center Enhances Study,” *State* (Columbia, SC), April 28, 1974.

²¹⁶ The University of South Carolina, *Garnet and Black* (Columbia, SC: 1975), The South Caroliniana Library, The University of South Carolina, 457.

²¹⁷ “Petigru College Renovations,” August 1973, (061- 01- 07- 010), University of South Carolina Architecture Archives, Columbia, SC.

²¹⁸ The University of South Carolina, *Garnet and Black* (Columbia, SC: 1975).

²¹⁹ *Garnet and Black* (Columbia, SC: 1976), The South Caroliniana Library, The University of South Carolina, 352.

²²⁰ Andrew Shain, “Adjusting for Growth,” *The State* (Columbia, SC), August 15, 2013.

this time that the offices of the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences moved into Petigru, where they still remain today.²²¹

It was on April 15, 1950 that USC commemorated the completion of Petigru College, welcoming the Honorable Arthur T. Vanderbilt, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of New Jersey, to deliver an address. Vanderbilt's speech spoke to the importance of investing in American legal education. "Give our law schools the men and the material, as you are doing here. Give them the encouragement and the cooperation to which they are entitled... and I have no doubt that they will respond effectively and enthusiastically to the greatest challenge that has ever come to American law or American lawyers."²²² Petigru College went on to serve as an effective space for USC's legal education, if not an enthusiastic one, until the University of South Carolina Law Center replaced it as the home of the university's law school and law library in 1974. Today, even as USC has renovated and altered the building, most recently in the wake of a building-wide flood on Thanksgiving Day, 2021, Petigru has remained functional as a space for mixed-use classrooms and administrative offices. A practically designed building, through and through.

²²¹ Shain, "Adjusting for Growth."

²²² Arthur T. Vanderbilt, "The Responsibilities of Our Law Schools to the Public and the Profession," April 15, 1950, *The South Carolina Law Quarterly*, "The Construction of Petigru College," box 11, Robert McCormick Figg, Jr. Papers.

Images



Figure 1. Grant Wong, Petigru College South Elevation, 2022.

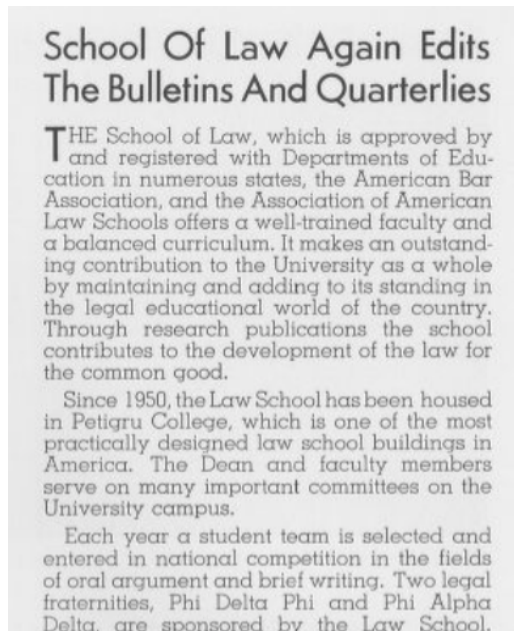


Figure 2. Garnet and Black (Columbia, SC: 1961), The South Caroliniana Library, The University of South Carolina, 48.

Maintains High Standing Among U. S. Law Schools

THE School of Law, established in 1868, is approved by and registered with Departments of Education in numerous states, the American Bar Association, and the Association of American Law Schools. It offers a balanced curriculum presented by a well-trained faculty. By maintaining and adding to its standing in the legal educational world of the country, the School of Law makes an outstanding contribution to the University. Research publications of the school contribute to the development of the law for the common good. Since 1950, the school has been housed in Petigru College, which is one of the most practically designed law school buildings in the United States. Members of the faculty serve

Figure 3. Garnet and Black (Columbia, SC: 1962). The South Caroliniana Library, The University of South Carolina, 316.



Figure 4. Grant Wong, Petigru College West Elevation, 2022.

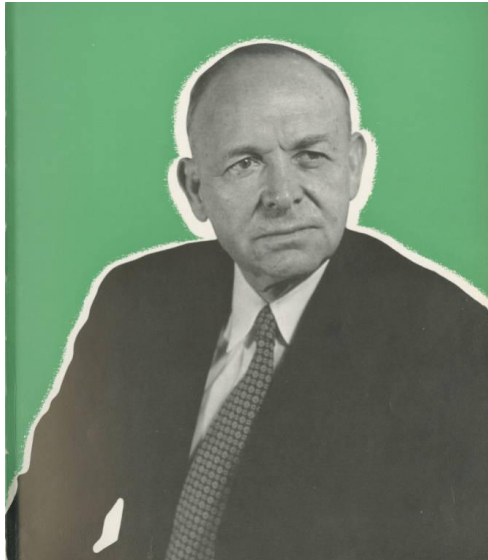


Figure 5. Garnet and Black (Columbia, SC: 1950), The South Caroliniana Library, The University of South Carolina, 21.



Figure 6. Garnet and Black (Columbia, SC: 1958), The South Caroliniana Library, The University of South Carolina, 52.



Figure 7. Grayson, William John, and South Carolina Historical Society. James Louis Petigru : a biographical sketch. New York: Harper & Bros, 1866. Sabin Americana: History of the Americas, 1500-1926 (accessed April 13, 2022).
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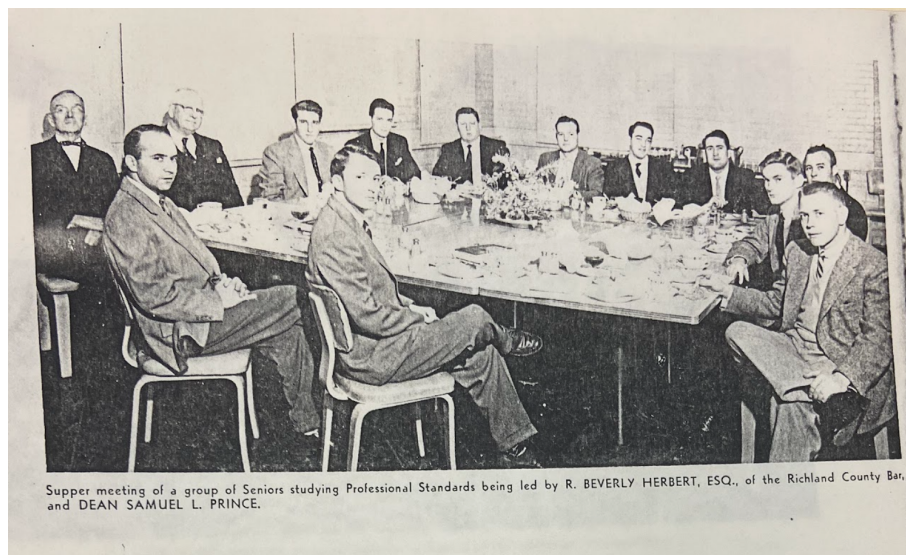


Figure 8. University of South Carolina School of Law catalog, 1954, (378.757UZL So8u), South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC.



Figure 9. University of South Carolina School of Law catalog, 1954, (378.757UZL So8u), South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC.

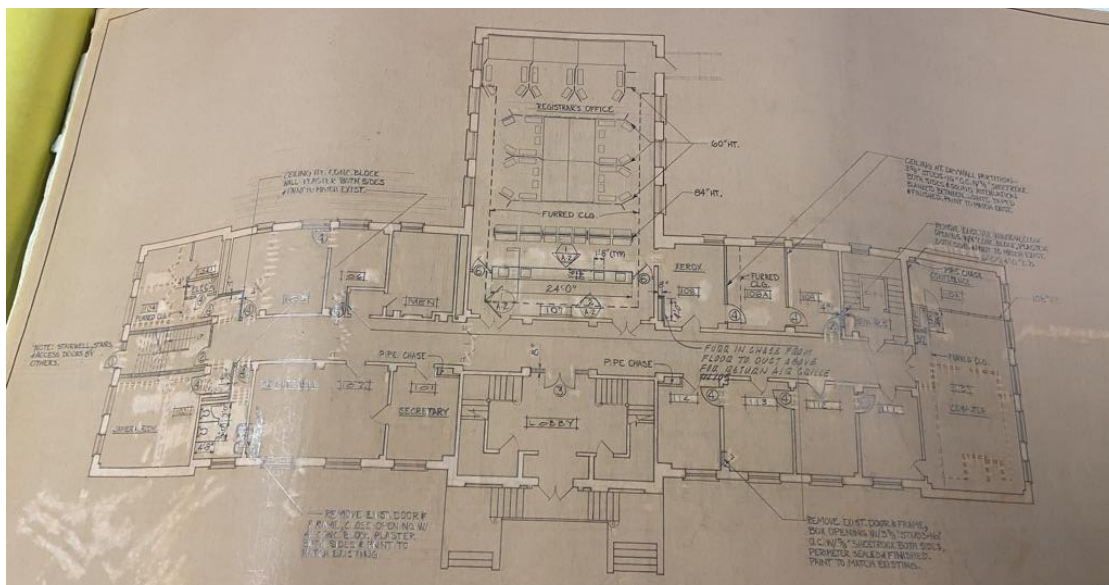


Figure 10. "Petigru College Renovations," August 1973, (061- 01- 07- 010), University of South Carolina Architecture Archives, Columbia, SC.

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The Works Progress Administration and the National Youth Administration at the University of South Carolina

Morgan Edlin

Introduction

In 1932, higher education in the United States saw an attendance drop for the first time since the Great War. However, by 1939, American colleges and universities saw an increase in attendance during the Great Depression, according to historian John Thelin (1997). This increase in student population was due to new funding available through the Works Progress Administration and the National Youth Administration. The Works Progress Administration aided the local community by providing jobs to individuals over 18 years old to construct new buildings using federal funds. The National Youth Administration would also offer jobs but were specific to aiding those 16 to 25 years old and providing funds for these students to attend college. Colleges and universities, including the University of South Carolina, constructed new facilities, including dormitories, recreational facilities, libraries, and more (Short & Stanley-Brown, 1939). The University of South Carolina also provided tuition grants and part-time jobs to students accepted under the National Youth Administration.

History of the Works Progress Administration

The Works Progress Administration (WPA) was created by Executive Order Number 7034 on May 6, 1935, as part of the Federal Emergency Relief Appropriation Act of 1935. The

purpose of the WPA was to manage the performance of the work relief program and ensure the maximum number of people were employed in the shortest time possible (“Purpose,” 1935). President Franklin D. Roosevelt appropriated approximately \$4.9 billion for use by the WPA. By its termination on June 30, 1943, WPA was the largest and most diverse New Deal public works program, employing nearly 8.5 million people and receiving almost \$10 billion in federal aid.

Projects under the WPA began immediately. The administration was able to build 12,212 buildings by October 1, 1937. In the WPA’s first two years, 3,039,000 Americans were employed to work on 69,000 federally funded projects (The United States, 1936). By its termination in 1943, 125,110 buildings, 8,000 parks, and nearly 650,000 miles of roads were built or improved (U.S. Government Printing Office, n.d.). In South Carolina, 201,618 citizens were employed during the WPA’s eight-year existence. Other buildings constructed in South Carolina with WPA funds included the Citadel Barracks, Citadel Chapel, the State Office Building in Columbia, and the State Psychiatric Building (Short & Stanely-Brown, 1939).

According to the *Final Report on the WPA Program* (n.d.), proposals had to show the project’s estimated cost and how much the sponsor could afford to contribute to receive funding from the WPA. Preliminary sketches and engineering plans were to be provided by the sponsor as they were responsible for these project features. Proposals were sent to the state WPA administrator. During the late 1930s and early 1940s, Lawrence M. Pinckney served in this role for South Carolina. The state WPA office would review submissions to ensure they were acceptable according to the federal regulations before sending them on to the Washington WPA office. Projects could only move forward to the Washington office if there were enough needy citizens within the local community to support the project. Projects could be delayed if the

district did not have enough disadvantaged workers to support the project. The Washington office would review proposals and approve or deny them. If approved by the Washington office, President Roosevelt would give final approval.

The project could begin once sponsors were notified via a letter from Congress of project approval. A sponsor's agreement form for financing non-federal projects was also sent to the sponsor for signature. It stated, "In consideration of expenditures to be made from Federal funds on proposal designated above, we, [University of South Carolina] the sponsors, do hereby agree that we will finance such part of the entire cost thereof as is not to be supplied from Federal funds" (U.S. Government Printing Office, n.d.). President J. Rion McKissick signed as an authorized agent for the University of South Carolina.

The Works Progress Administration at the University of South Carolina

At the University of South Carolina, the WPA funded the construction of Sims College along with the football stadium and an indoor swimming pool (Hollis, 1956). New construction projects on the University of South Carolina campus also included the World War Memorial Building in 1936, Maxcy College in 1937, McKissick Museum in 1939, and Preston College in 1939. According to *Living New Deal* (n.d.), improvements and additions were made to LeConte, Davis, Sloan, and Rutledge Colleges in 1934 and Thornwell College in 1937. Sims College, specifically, was seen as a necessary addition to accommodate the increasing housing needs for the female student population on campus.

On September 28, 1938, President McKissick spoke at a bi-weekly Kiwanis club luncheon about the university's plans to use WPA funding to build a new women's dormitory,

mentioned here for the first time in local newspapers (*the State*, 1938). On September 30, in the first voluntary chapel exercises of the 1938-39 academic year, President McKissick announced that the University had received final approval from the WPA for the women's dormitory construction project. Construction would begin in November.

Projects completed before the opening of Sims included the Student Union in Maxcy College, new wings at Thornwell College, the swimming pool, and additions to the heating plant, which cost a total of more than \$1.75 million. After Sims College was completed, the new library, later renamed after President McKissick, was open by February 1941. The state and the WPA funded the costs of the \$657,000 project. There were also three large construction projects, part of a master repair project, that cost \$144,578 on campus simultaneously (*Gamecock*, 1939).

Sims College

Frances Guignard Gibbes was the first admitted female student at the University of South Carolina on September 24, 1895. Forty years later, on June 30, 1938, the University's Dean of Women, Arney Childs, wrote a letter to President J. Rion McKissick outlining details of the need for the women's dormitory. Dean Childs stated that the University saw an increase from 397 enrolled female students in 1935 to 531 in 1938. Going into the 1938-39 academic year, the University only had enough beds on campus for 80 female students but nearly 800 beds for male students. With some off-campus housing available, only 130 female students lived on or very close to campus during the 1937-38 academic year. Between May 1 and May 16, 1938, the University received applications for all 80 female student beds in what is now known as Wade Hampton College and had 57 females on the 1938-39 session waiting list. With this letter,

President McKissick was able to lobby federal employees to grant WPA funds to the university for this project. According to the Enrollment Summary (n.d.) of the 1938-39 year, 498 undergraduate women students were enrolled at the university in the first semester. Dean Childs confidently relayed in her June 30, 1938, letter to President McKissick that the University would easily be able to fill a 125-room dormitory with 250 occupants at a rate of \$65 per year (Childs, 1938).

The neoclassical women's dormitory was erected on Green Street with 125 fireproof rooms arranged in a suite-style bath connecting the two bedrooms. Each bedroom would include beds for two students, a built-in medicine cabinet, towel racks, and other conveniences. In addition to the 250 students living in the dormitory, there would also be space on the first floor for the dean of women and the matron of Sims College. Study rooms, trunk rooms, music rooms, a canteen, restrooms, kitchens, and club rooms for sorority rentals were included in the layout created by architect J. Carroll Johnson (*the State*, 1939).

The luxurious women's dormitory cost \$300,000, 45% of which was funded by the WPA and 55% by a loan (*The State*, 1938). The University's board accepted this money before the end of October (*The State*, 1938). On September 30, 1938, President McKissick stated that work on the dormitory was expected to begin on November 1 (*The State*, 1938). On April 2, 1939, the State reported that the new dormitory would be completed in time for the 1939 fall semester. However, it was later reported on August 22 that only a portion of the dormitory would be open for occupancy by September 3. M. B. Kahn, the contractor for Sims College, stated that 150 men were working on completing the building no later than two weeks after the September 1 contract deadline (*The State*, 1939). Two weeks later, on September 3, *the State* stated Sims would be

completed in time for the university to begin its 1939 Fall semester starting September 18. In the September 23, 1939, issue of the Gamecock newspaper, it was announced that the dorms did open at the start of the semester. Updates were also given on other ongoing construction projects.

The new dormitory was to be named after Doctor J. Marion Sims. On January 25, 1813, Sims was born in Lancaster County, South Carolina. Sims began attending South Carolina College in 1830 as a sophomore and graduated in 1832. Despite his father's wishes, Sims chose not to pursue a career in law but a career in medicine. In 1833, Sims began attending medical lectures at Charleston Medical College in Charleston, South Carolina. His time in Charleston was short as he later enrolled in Jefferson Medical College in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, in 1834, graduating in 1835 with his MD. In 1840, Sims moved to Montgomery, Alabama, with his wife Teresa, where he had a productive gynecology practice caring for local enslaved people (Andrei, 2013).

Sims discovered new gynecological diagnoses and experimented with unethical medical operations and practices on at least three enslaved women known as Betsey, Anarcha, and Lucy (University History, 2020). Other enslaved women were also operated on due to Sims' arrangement with their owners. He would fix some medical issues in exchange for unlimited access to their bodies. Sims could not cure the women of their gynecological problems after many years of attempted procedures. In 1853, Sims moved to New York City to recuperate after a crippling illness that risked his life in 1849. Sims would gain national attention and the title of "father of modern gynecology" for many years. Sims died of what is implied to be heart disease in New York City, New York, on November 13, 1883, at the age of 70.

In November 1939, 56 years after the doctor's death, the new dormitory was named after him. Sims and Preston College were opened to the public during homecoming. Right before the public viewings, two plaques were erected at the front of the women's dormitory. The top plaque names the builders: the Public Works Administration and the Federal Works Agency. The bottom plaque lists the board of trustees members, the president of the University, and the architects of the building. These plaques were the final touches on the dormitory and can still be seen today. Remodels were performed on the building in 2013 and 2014 to connect them to the neighboring women's dormitory.

In 2020, University President Robert Caslen authorized the creation of the Presidential Commission on University History. This commission aimed to study and better understand the university's history, including the names of many campus buildings named after. This commission brought to the public's attention the unethical treatment of black women by Dr. Sims that could also be connected to the "Mississippi Appendectomy," which was the name given to a practice of sterilizing African American women without their consent. On June 15, 2020, the commission recommended to President Caslen that he request to remove the name of Marion Sims from the women's dormitory, bypassing the South Carolina Heritage Act's requirement for a 2/3 vote of the South Carolina General Assembly. The board of trustees asked the state legislature to change the name of the building, but it was not. It remains named Sims College and is part of the "Women's Quad," which contains Wade Hampton and McClintock dormitories.

History of the National Youth Administration

While the WPA funded the construction of public buildings, including those previously mentioned, with the help of local families from the Columbia area, the National Youth Administration (NYA) aided undergraduate and graduate students during their higher education careers. The NYA was established by Executive Order on June 26, 1935. The Administration had four primary objectives:

1. To provide funds for the part-time employment of needy school, college, and graduate students between 16 and 25 years of age to continue their education.
2. To provide funds for the part-time employment on work projects of young persons, chiefly from relief families, between 18 and 25 years of age – the projects being designed not only to give these young people valuable work experience but to benefit youth generally and the communities in which they live.
3. To encourage the establishment in job training, counseling, and placement services for youth.
4. To encourage the development and extension of constructive leisure-time activities. (Williams, 1937)

When the NYA was established, nearly 2.8 million 16 to 24 years old youths required financial relief (The United States, 1944), including 1.25 million who were seeking employment but unable to find it. In August 1935, another executive order placed the Student Aid Program, formerly governed by the Federal Emergency Relief Administration, under the management of the NYA. While under the Federal Emergency Relief Administration, the Student Aid Program permitted only college students to continue their studies. When moved to the NYA, the Student

Aid Program was expanded to include those in secondary schools and graduate studies. With this merge, educational aid, youth work relief, job guidance and placement, apprentice training, and youth community activities were now under one roof. Each state would have its own dedicated NYA director and advisory committee.

The student aid program was designed to aid students who could not afford to continue their education. The program offered the opportunity to earn small monthly sums. Nearly 105,000 college undergraduate students would be given a chance in 1939 to take advantage of the program and earn \$15 to \$20 a month. About 4,700 graduate students benefited from this program and made \$25 to \$40 a month. At the University of South Carolina, students benefited from NYA grants and jobs.

The National Youth Administration at the University of South Carolina

For students to receive grants to fund their collegiate education, they had to submit applications to the University's NYA committee. This committee, which received authorization from the state's NYA director Roger Coe, consisted of five faculty members. Applications were divided into two groups. Group one consisted of students who had an excellent academic record and showed that they could not afford to attend the university on their financial statements. Group two consisted of students with a poor academic average or those who should be able to attend the University without financial assistance. Unfortunately, some students who needed and deserved the aid could not receive funding because the University's allotment was insufficient. To determine whether a student could or could not financially afford to attend, the average family income had to equal \$775.20.

For the 1936-37 academic year, part-time work would average \$15 monthly for undergraduates and \$25 for first-year graduates. For the 1936-37 academic year, one hundred thirty-one students were accepted into the NYA program at the university. A list of these students was sent out to staff and faculty for them to elect who of the students wanted to work for them. The list shared information regarding the students, such as their class, school, allotted pay per month, and work they were prepared to do. These students were assigned to work in 42 departments and offices on campus and the city's YMCA and Columbia Housing Authority. Some students were employed to work on on-campus construction projects, such as Sims College. While records were unable to be located, there is a possibility that some students assisted in Sims College construction or worked as aids to Dean Childs after she moved into Sims College. Female students awarded NYA funds likely would have lived in Sims College during their first year. According to the Office of Treasurer (n.d.), 907 students were aided between 1934 and 1939 with \$100,909.28.

While the NYA was assisting students on campus, *the Gamecock* newspaper frequently provided reminders to students to submit their timecards to get paid. There were also updates about the total amount distributed to students. For example, in the November 6, 1936, edition, it was stated that a total of \$2,585 was paid to students for their work between September 15 and October 15 of that year. Two hundred eighteen students received these funds, with 8,373 hours to undergraduates and 146 hours to six graduate students. In the November 28, 1941, edition of the *Gamecock*, it was reported that NYA funding would no longer extend to new students. Students who had been receiving funding and appeared on timecards before November 21 of that year were to be paid for future services.

The NYA was estimated to have provided \$167,000,000 in aid to 2,134,000 students to continue their education, including approximately 634,000 college and graduate students. The cost to support these students totaled roughly \$89,014,982 for college students and \$4,263,294 for graduate students (The United States, 1944).

Conclusion

With the funding from the WPA, approximately 20,750 women have been able to live on campus since the construction of Sims College in 1939. The University built seven new buildings and updated five others between 1934 and 1943. Approximately \$800,000 was received from federal funding to support these new construction projects (Lesesne, 2001). The NYA employed 1,446 students at the University of South Carolina with approximately \$159,773.58. The University of South Carolina and other higher education institutions benefited greatly from the New Deal Administration.

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“Controlling Women on the Campus: A History of Sims College at the University of South Carolina”

Hannah MacDonald and Madeline Owens

In the college application process, dormitory selection and assignment are a large part of the incoming freshman experience. For some, the nicest, newest, residence hall is preferred. For others, the history of the dormitory is more important. Of course, incoming students with more traditional parents may prefer their children not live in a co-ed dormitory, leading to all-women and all-men residence halls. Sims College at the University of South Carolina is one of three female-only dormitories, all residing within the Women’s Quadrangle. Located in East campus, it has historically been a women’s dorm since its creation in 1939 as a part of the Public Works Administration at the university provided during the New Deal²²³. The building was built not only to house but subtly control women with its limited entry and exit ways. The most recent renovation, finished in 2014, even continued this idea by connecting the three women's dorms and creating less outside access.

In the late nineteenth to early twentieth century, more and more public universities across the United States were beginning to allow women to attend and giving them admission to their campuses. During this time the University of South Carolina was no different. After South Carolina state legislature mandated women have the ability to enroll in public colleges and

²²³ “Appendix 4: List of Named Buildings,” University of South Carolina, Accessed April, 2022, https://sc.edu/about/our_history/university_history/presidential_commission/commission_reports/final_report/appendices/appendix-4/index.php

universities in 1893, the University of South Carolina admitted its first female student in 1895²²⁴. However despite this, and women making up twenty-five percent of the student population by the 1920s, the university would not permit women to live on campus until after World War I²²⁵. During the outbreak of the first world war, female students were given permission to live in the campus dormitories while the male students were away²²⁶. After this, as the male students returned to campus, the first all female dormitory was constructed in 1924, called Wade Hampton College²²⁷. A little over a decade later Sims College was built in 1939, making it the second women's dormitory on campus²²⁸. Finally, in 1955, McClintock College was constructed as the third and final women's dormitory on campus²²⁹. These three women-only residence halls make up what more recent students and graduates of the university know today as the "Women's Quadrangle".

While the idea of coeducation on its own was a big success for women's rights, in practice these female students were often treated as second-class as opposed to their male colleagues. Women admittees were sometimes called "coeds" instead of students, were encouraged to acquire secondary education to simply prepare them for their futures as the homemaker, and sometimes were not even provided housing on campus. The inequality of

²²⁴ "Timeline," University of South Carolina, Accessed April, 2022, https://sc.edu/about/our_history/university_history/timeline/index.php

²²⁵ "Timeline," University of South Carolina, Accessed April, 2022, https://sc.edu/about/our_history/university_history/timeline/index.php

²²⁶ "Timeline," University of South Carolina, Accessed April, 2022, https://sc.edu/about/our_history/university_history/timeline/index.php

²²⁷ "Timeline," University of South Carolina, Accessed April, 2022, https://sc.edu/about/our_history/university_history/timeline/index.php

²²⁸ "Appendix 4: List of Named Buildings," University of South Carolina, Accessed April, 2022, https://sc.edu/about/our_history/university_history/presidential_commission/commission_reports/final_report/appendices/appendix-4/index.php

²²⁹ "Appendix 4: List of Named Buildings," University of South Carolina, Accessed April, 2022, https://sc.edu/about/our_history/university_history/presidential_commission/commission_reports/final_report/appendices/appendix-4/index.php

education standards bled into the social standards of the university. Both within and outside of the system, female students were being closely monitored to ensure they develop into distinguished and prepared homemakers. Deans of Women and “housemothers”, similar to those today often seen in sorority houses, quickly headed the women's dormitories to be sure no female student was acting out of place. In 1943, female students were given a pamphlet of rules to abide by while living in the residence hall²³⁰. The list of rules extended beyond controlling their behavior in the dorm and also instructed them on how to act when they were out in public²³¹. Women were given curfews and instructed to tell their hostess where they were going anytime they left the building at night²³². If women were to leave for the weekend their reason had to be approved by their house mom. Under a heading in the pamphlet titled “Social Life” women are encouraged to “date as often as they can up until a point.”²³³ Under no circumstances were women allowed to go to Fort Jackson dances or any event that was not listed on the university's social calendar for that matter²³⁴. If they were to attend a dance they were to return to the dorm no later than forty five minutes after it ended with no exception due to trains or late buses²³⁵. These grown women were also instructed to always have a “grown” person in the car if they were to ever be out after dark²³⁶. However, it does not specify what the qualification for a grown

²³⁰ *Building Regulations Marion Sims College*; (Columbia: Farrell Printing Company, July, 1943). The South Caroliniana Library, The University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC.

²³¹ *Building Regulations Marion Sims College*; (Columbia: Farrell Printing Company, July, 1943). The South Caroliniana Library, The University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC.

²³² *Building Regulations Marion Sims College*; (Columbia: Farrell Printing Company, July, 1943). The South Caroliniana Library, The University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC.

²³³ *Building Regulations Marion Sims College*; (Columbia: Farrell Printing Company, July, 1943). The South Caroliniana Library, The University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC.

²³⁴ *Building Regulations Marion Sims College*; (Columbia: Farrell Printing Company, July, 1943). The South Caroliniana Library, The University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC.

²³⁵ *Building Regulations Marion Sims College*; (Columbia: Farrell Printing Company, July, 1943). The South Caroliniana Library, The University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC.

²³⁶ *Building Regulations Marion Sims College*; (Columbia: Farrell Printing Company, July, 1943). The South Caroliniana Library, The University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC.

person was but obviously being a woman of or older than the age of eighteen living on your own to seek higher education did not cut it²³⁷. Women were only allowed to date soldiers if it was approved by their parents and proof of this approval was required to be on a file and expired after a semester²³⁸. Under a heading titled “Things We Do Not Like to Talk About”, women are warned that sometimes men like to hang around the back of the building and watch them while they undress²³⁹. But this however, is only of course if they were careless enough to be distasteful and forget to shut their blinds²⁴⁰. Overall, women were critiqued on every little thing and expected to be at fault for mens actions. If men were reckless, then they must have prompted them to be.

Men living in dormitories were also given a list of rules, none of which included any rules pertaining to how to treat women or act around them. In contrast to the lengthy, in depth pamphlet women received, men received one sheet that only outlined basic housekeeping rules.²⁴¹ The tone of their letter was much more light hearted and even apologetic for asking anything of them, which was in reality very little. Men were asked to make their beds every morning before attending class and to keep things tidy.²⁴² While the women's pamphlet mainly revolved around men and how to act around them, there was no mention of women in the men's

²³⁷ *Building Regulations Marion Sims College*; (Columbia: Farrell Printing Company, July, 1943). The South Caroliniana Library, The University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC.

²³⁸ *Building Regulations Marion Sims College*; (Columbia: Farrell Printing Company, July, 1943). The South Caroliniana Library, The University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC.

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²⁴⁰ *Building Regulations Marion Sims College*; (Columbia: Farrell Printing Company, July, 1943). The South Caroliniana Library, The University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC.

²⁴¹ David H. Hartzog, to Men in Dormitories December 29, 1953, box 8 (1953-1954), Presidents Papers, The South Caroliniana Library, The University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC.

²⁴² David H. Hartzog, to Men in Dormitories December 29, 1953, box 8 (1953-1954), Presidents Papers, The South Caroliniana Library, The University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC.

instructions. No instruction to not peep in their blinds because that was not their fault.²⁴³ Men could seemingly come and go as they pleased. The obligation of “proper” dating and behavior in coed settings was solely left up to the women who would receive punishment and backlash otherwise.

While today women living in Sims are not given lengthy lists of rules that cover all the bases of their lives, the building still functions as a way to control them. In fact, the most recent renovation that occurred in 2014 just so happened to align with the original idea to restrict womens comings and goings. Sims was connected with the other two all female dorms, Wade Hampton and McClintock. Each residence hall originally existed as a simple rectangular building and was now a part of a large U-shaped quadrangle. There are only two entry and exit ways that both require walking past the desk through the main lobby area of the building. The side entrances can be accessed by residence but when exiting through those doors a brief fire alarm is set off so all residents and guests are encouraged to exit through the two main entrances. The first floor is open to all students during regular operating hours, providing almost a false sense of freedom to the building, however, once it is after hours, the dormitory once again becomes limited access.

When it was announced in 1936 that a new female dorm was to be built, women began proposing ideas for who they thought it would be fitting to name it after.²⁴⁴ Women proposed that the new dormitory should be named “Keith Hall” after Frances Guignard Gibbes Keith, the first

²⁴³ David H. Hartzog, to Men in Dormitories December 29, 1953, box 8 (1953-1954), Presidents Papers, The South Caroliniana Library, The University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC.

²⁴⁴ Chandonnet, Nicole, "Memorialization of J. Marion Sims in Columbia, South Carolina" (2021). Senior Theses. 400. https://scholarcommons.sc.edu/senior_theses/400

woman to attend the University of South Carolina as a registered student.²⁴⁵ Keith exemplified the changing role of women in society in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. However, even though the women were told that they could propose ideas and then they would go through the Board of Trustees for approval they went unheard.²⁴⁶ Despite women proposing very fitting figures such as Keith who redefined true womanhood in Southern culture all of them were disregarded and the Board instead went with Sims against the female student body's wishes.²⁴⁷ Not so ironically Sims was ultimately named after a man whose name and legacy makes women very uncomfortable and upset. James Marion Sims, often referred to as J. Marion Sims, was an American physician and gynecologist in the mid to late nineteenth century.²⁴⁸ The South Carolina native is dubbed as "the father of modern gynecology" and is credited to have contributed much to gynecology and surgery alike during his lifespan. He is credited most notably with the first consistently successful surgery to aid in vesicovagula fistula, an incredibly unwanted and sometimes fatal complication women can experience during childbirth.²⁴⁹ Despite this great contribution, Sims is also a figure of great controversy. Sims' advances in gynecology and healthcare came with the cost of inhumane, cruel practices. J. Marion Sims operated on many enslaved women without anesthesia under the false impression that they were unable to feel pain due to the darker pigmentation of their skin.²⁵⁰ In one instance, Sims operated on a

²⁴⁵ "Timeline," University of South Carolina, Accessed April, 2022, https://sc.edu/about/our_history/university_history/timeline/index.php

²⁴⁶ Chandonnet, Nicole, "Memorialization of J. Marion Sims in Columbia, South Carolina" (2021). Senior Theses. 400. https://scholarcommons.sc.edu/senior_theses/400

²⁴⁷ Chandonnet, Nicole, "Memorialization of J. Marion Sims in Columbia, South Carolina" (2021). Senior Theses. 400. https://scholarcommons.sc.edu/senior_theses/400

²⁴⁸ Chandonnet, Nicole, "Memorialization of J. Marion Sims in Columbia, South Carolina" (2021). Senior Theses. 400. https://scholarcommons.sc.edu/senior_theses/400

²⁴⁹ Wall, L L. "The medical ethics of Dr J Marion Sims: a fresh look at the historical record." *Journal of medical ethics* vol. 32,6 (2006): 346-50. doi:10.1136/jme.2005.012559

²⁵⁰ Wall, L L. "The medical ethics of Dr J Marion Sims: a fresh look at the historical record." *Journal of medical ethics* vol. 32,6 (2006): 346-50. doi:10.1136/jme.2005.012559

young slave woman named Anarcha up to thirty times until he was able to successfully repair the holes torn in her bladder and rectum.²⁵¹ However, against the wishes of the largely female student body, the University of South Carolina still named the women's dormitory, Sims, after him in 1940. The Board of Trustees decision to go forward with this was and still is today very discouraging to women. By 1940, many more women made up the university population and the naming of an all female dorm after someone who had committed such vile acts against women felt like a setback in the progression of women's rights.

Fast forward eighty two years to the present day, and students and South Carolinians alike are still not happy about the building's name and the message it sends. In 2018 a statue of James Marion Sims was removed from Central Park but unfortunately, the Heritage Act in South Carolina stands in the way of the University taking action in changing the building's name.²⁵² However, that has not stopped groups of activists from fighting against this. Because the supermajority requirement has been nearly impossible to achieve, activists across the state have focused their efforts on repealing and/or declaring the Heritage Act unconstitutional.²⁵³

Today, the Sims dormitory continues to house many of the University of South Carolina's female students. The women's quadrangle is known by many as their first home away from home and where many young female students meet their lifelong friends. Though the strides of women's rights in the twentieth century were many, the irony that the largest women's dormitory

²⁵¹ Wall, L L. "The medical ethics of Dr J Marion Sims: a fresh look at the historical record." *Journal of medical ethics* vol. 32,6 (2006): 346-50. doi:10.1136/jme.2005.012559

²⁵² Chandonnet, Nicole, "Memorialization of J. Marion Sims in Columbia, South Carolina" (2021). Senior Theses. 400. https://scholarcommons.sc.edu/senior_theses/400

²⁵³ Chandonnet, Nicole, "Memorialization of J. Marion Sims in Columbia, South Carolina" (2021). Senior Theses. 400. https://scholarcommons.sc.edu/senior_theses/400

on campus is still named after such a controversial figure sends a message heard loud and clear by the female student population. The individual residence halls becoming one large quadrangle after 2014, whether purposefully or not, reinstates the idea that the women of the university do not have as many freedoms as their male colleagues. Of course in the present day, female students can choose to live in the multitude of coed residence halls and dormitories with some university-owned apartment complexes even allowing men and women in the same apartments. Sims College may not have the same written instructions it did in 1943, however, it is still inherently sexist in its design. With even less exit ways, and a main entry that requires visitors and residents alike to pass by a front desk, it would not be an outlandish question to ask if there truly has been progress since the dormitory's construction in 1939. Aesthetic changes and updates to modern technology aside, Sims College at the Women's Quadrangle has not changed physically all that much, perhaps allowing its sexist roots to affect its residents and history to this day.

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The Name Behind Sims College

Sarah Helen VanDevender

Sims College at the University of South Carolina was designed and constructed in 1939 in response to the growing need for living spaces as the number of women attending universities was rapidly expanding across the country in the 1930's. Originally referred to as Women's Dormitory, the Board of Trustees, specifically the Building and Grounds Committee, voted to name the new dormitory in honor of James Marion Sims. Sims was an alumnus of the University and someone they felt had been actively influential in expanding advantages to women (Chandonnet, 2021). Not only has this honor caused controversy amongst current students and administration but was also not widely supported at the time of the naming. While Sims is often credited as the "father of modern gynecology," he has a well-documented history of medical racism which has led to many calling for his name to be removed from various statues and memorials not just at the University of South Carolina but also across the United States.

James Marion Sims was born and raised in Hanging Rock Creek, South Carolina where he was educated by his father who was determined to have successful and well-rounded children. Following his home education and a brief stint at Franklin Academy, Sims enrolled in South Carolina College, the predecessor of the University of South Carolina, in 1830 before graduating just two short years later (Kenny, 2016). His interest in medicine did not develop until after graduation where he soon associated himself with a surgeon by the name of Dr. Churchill Jones and attended medical lectures at the Charleston Medical College despite his father's disapproval.

Sims claimed in his autobiography *The Story of My Life* that, “I never was remarkable for anything while I was in college except for good behavior. Nobody ever expected anything of me, and I never expected anything of myself.” This belief in his own lack of exceptionalness bled into his medical studies as well when he completed the requirements for his M.D. at Jefferson Medical College in 1833 and did not set himself apart in any special way (Sims, 1885).

After obtaining his M.D., Sims began his medical career in his home county of Lancaster where he lost his first two patients due to cholera infantum. Looking at the disastrous beginnings to his medical career in South Carolina, Sims and his new wife Eliza Theresa Jones decided to move to Montgomery, Alabama to seek a fresh start and perspective to his practice in 1835 (Kenny, 2016). While in Alabama, Sims gained an interest in surgery and developed a reputation for his bold surgeries on cross-eyes, clubfoot, harelip, and tumors of the jaw (Kenny, 2016). He felt that he found his passion and reached a turning point in his career once he was able to perform surgery. At the time it was uncommon for a doctor to take an interest in treating female patients, and Sims had no previous experience with gynecology. It was not until a woman was brought to him after falling off her horse and was experiencing back and pelvic pain that Sims coincidentally took an interest in women’s health and gynecology. Sims discovered the woman’s uterus was dislodged and needed correction. He was able to use a bent pewter spoon and his fingers to achieve this feat and thus the precursor to the modern speculum was invented. Not only was the speculum invented, but Sims also realized that this could be a potential method to cure vesicovaginal fistulas that previously had no known cure (Zhang, 2018).

Equipped with the idea that he could treat women with vesicovaginal fistulas, Sims began experimenting on women to find the cure; however, Sims only experimented on enslaved black

women and never white women. While most slaves were treated on plantations, those that were unable to reproduce due to medical problems were brought to Sims to see if a cure was available (Owens, 2017). He often maintained ownership while their treatment was completed and being located in Montgomery, Alabama never had a dearth of patients. In Sims' own words it was the most memorable time of his life because, "there was never a time that I could not, at any day, have had a subject for operation." Not only did these enslaved women serve as experimental patients, they were also still responsible for maintaining their slave duties while recovering and being operated on. They fulfilled the basic domestic needs that Sims, his wife, and five children needed throughout the day such as cooking, cleaning, and keeping the fire burning during the winter (Sims, 1885).

The three most well-documented patients from Sims himself were Lucy, Anarcha, and Betsey. His first patient was eighteen-year-old Lucy who had been unable to control her bladder after giving birth a few months prior. No anesthesia was used as Sims performed an hour-long surgery that resulted in extreme agony and no relief from her ailment as she was put into an operation that Sims thought she would likely die from. Lucy developed blood poisoning and did not recover for three months after the operation (Owens, 2017). In 1845, seventeen-year-old Anarcha had over thirty operations performed on her where Sims was attempting to perfect his speculum and cure the vesicovaginal fistula which Anarcha suffered from. He also developed wire sutures and the operative procedure eponymous genupectoral also known as the Sims position (Kenny, 2016).

From 1844-1849, Sims would continue to develop his operations without anesthesia or consent from enslaved black women before he decided he was able to successfully perform the

surgeries on white women. His lack of anesthesia during the experiments is likely contributed to his belief that black people have a higher capacity for pain than white people. Another contributing factor comes from the outdated belief that anesthesia would increase the chances of a patient bleeding to death during an operation and reduced the speed at which it could be successfully performed (Chandonnet, 2021). While many surgeons had this belief and hesitation to use anesthesia, Sims chose to use anesthesia for all of his white patients after he had perfected his techniques on the black patients.

After fully developing his methods on enslaved black women, Sims published an article in *The American Journal of Medical Sciences* in 1853 detailing his research and the procedure needed to cure vesicovaginal fistulas and how to utilize the speculum. His article garnered nationwide attention and the Sims' family decided to move to New York City so Sims could further his career and train other surgeons how to complete the procedure (Owens, 2017). However, the physicians did not need his training and Sims was struggling with his own practice since "he had no friends, no influence, no health and nothing to recommend me to business," (Sims, 1885). Operating an unsuccessful business was not an option for Sims so he decided to close his practice and open the first Women's Hospital of its kind similar to the one he had established in Alabama. This hospital served as a charity hospital and eventually was chartered as the Woman's Hospital of the State of New York on May 4, 1855 (Kenny, 2016).

Despite the hospital being successful, Sims left New York in 1861 reportedly because he was uncomfortable as a southerner residing in a northern state during the American Civil War. This change led Sims and his family to move to Europe where Sims was quickly able to establish a reputable presence in Edinburgh, London, and Paris even going as far as to tend to members of

the aristocracy (Kenny, 2016). His elite patients allowed him to maintain connection in Europe even when he chose to move back to New York following the end of the American Civil War in 1868. While tending to the Women's Hospital in New York, Sims chose to resign from the board of the hospital in 1871 due to a disagreement with other members over the proper treatment of cancer patients (Chandonnet, 2021). This in turn led him to being a key facet in establishing the New York Cancer Hospital- America's first cancer center. Sims was also made president of the American Medical Association in 1875 and was a founding member of the American Gynecological Society in 1877 becoming their president in 1880. His legacy is deeply attached to these accolades and is why he is memorialized in so many different areas of the country. Sims passed away on November 13, 1883, from coronary artery disease and is buried in Green-Wood Cemetery in Brooklyn, New York (Kenny 2016).

Since his death, many statues have been erected in his honor including one previously located in New York City's Central Park and another in downtown Montgomery, Alabama. Public opinion of Sims and his career were largely favorable until the 1970s when the women's rights movement in tandem with the growing attention to the social history of medicine called for a different perspective on his experiments and progress in women's health. Through this new lens his work was viewed as exploitative, unethical, and dangerous to those that he operated on (Kenny, 2016). Public opinion began to change as his merits of medical achievement were not debated; however, his method for which it was accomplished has been compared to the Tuskegee Experiment (1932-1972) and the "Mississippi Appendectomy" which involved sterilizing black women without their consent (Presidential Commission on University History, 2020). Sims exploited the women he purchased for his own medical advancement, and many believe his

legacy should not be honored while the slaves he operated on are forgotten for their forced sacrifice to women's health.

One such place where Sims' name has caused controversy is Sims College, a women's dormitory, at the University of South Carolina. Prior to students knowing that a new dormitory was being constructed for the growing women's population on campus, they created a campaign to name the already constructed women's dormitory. In an article from *The Gamecock*, the student newspaper, the author noted that they were taking suggestions for the name of the women's dormitory which would then be held to a vote and presented to the Board of Trustees. The Dean of Women, Arney Childs, proposed that a committee, called the Board of Women Councilors, be formed to decide the name of the women's dormitory while taking into consideration the student submissions and votes (Chandonnet, 2021). This committee was unable to gain traction with the Board of Trustees but did submit "Keith Hall" as the name for the already constructed women's dormitory. The namesake for "Keith Hall" was Frances Guignard Gibbes Keith who was the first woman to attend South Carolina College.

Despite the student survey and committee asking for Frances Guignard Gibbes Keith to be considered, the Board of Trustees began their own deliberations in 1936 where the project was referred to the Committee on Buildings and Grounds where the discussion was tabled for a year. Once talks resumed in 1937, the committee led by Solomon Blatt submitted five names for the new dormitory to President McKissick; however, after reviewing the name further Blatt suggested that the building should be named for a prominent woman connected to the university instead of a man (Chandonnet, 2021). He was met with the rebuttal of naming it for anyone that had been influential in creating advancements for women including a man. Ultimately, President

McKissick noted that it had been suggested to him to name the women's building after the "father of modern gynecology" and an alumnus of the university. The Board of Trustees approved the naming of Sims College and Wade Hampton College in the same meeting on July 27, 1939. It has been conjectured that the person who suggested naming it Sims College to McKissick was the wife of Solomon Blatt who was also instrumental in the construction of the Sims Memorial in Columbia, South Carolina (Chandonnet, 2021).

While students in the 1930s preferred to honor Frances Guignard Gibbes Keith on the women's building, controversy of Sims legacy has persisted to current students at the University of South Carolina as well and has taken on a more active form. However, despite outcries for Sims' name to be removed the naming of the building is protected by the Heritage Act which requires a supermajority, two-thirds of the General Assembly's votes, to create any change to a historical building. Even with a unanimous vote from the Board of Trustees, a full endorsement from President Caslan, and a petition with thousands of student signatures to change the name, the women's dormitory remains Sims College to this day (Nicholson, 2020). Critics of changing the name claim that it will be rewriting history and Senator Harvey Peeler from Gaffney stated that "changing the name of a stack of bricks and mortar is at the bottom of my to-do list," (Nicholson, 2020).

The University of South Carolina is not the only place where Sims has been memorialized and later questioned. New York City's Central Park had a statue of Sims erected in 1934 sitting across from the New York Academy of Medicine; however, in response to Sims' methods coming to light, New York City's Public Design Commission voted to remove the statue of Sims in 2017 and relocated it to Green-Wood Cemetery where he is buried (Waxman, 2018).

Even moving the statue to Green-Wood Cemetery with a plaque describing the history of Sims was controversial as some argued that it “denotes that this physical representation of anti-black violence will still stand and maintain its presence in the heart of yet another community of color,” (Neuman, 2018). Others argued that to demolish the statue in its entirety would be to remove history and run from it instead of recognizing that it happened (Neuman, 2018). These arguments are occurring around the country as Confederate statues are receiving a new wave of scrutiny as the public questions if these statues are honoring the historical figures and elevating the horrors of their actions or if they are there simply as a marker and reminder of history.

On the other end of the country another statue of Sims resides on the capitol lawn at the Alabama State House in Montgomery and is protected by law preventing any statues from being removed unless approved by the legislature. The Montgomery statue was proposed by Dr. Seale Harris who was the son of one of Sims’ disciples and president of the Medical Association of the State of Alabama (Hallman, 2020). Critics question why Montgomery should host the statue as Sims was never officially a resident of Alabama, and only the most horrific aspects of his career were centered in Montgomery. However, the statue still stands in a prominent location next to an even larger statue of the Confederate President Jefferson Davis. Since Alabamians were unable to remove the statue, a new monument in honor of the "Mothers of Gynecology" was erected on September 27, 2021, by artist and activist Michelle Browder. The 15-foot-tall statues were welded together from common metal items that were donated including surgical and gynecological instruments and represent Anarcha, Lucy, and Betsey showing where their bodies had been botched (Pillion, 2021).

As evidenced by reactions in New York, Montgomery, and Columbia, Sims' legacy has drastically shifted since many of his statues and memorials were instated in the 1930s to honor his medical accolades and surgical achievements. While his feats are not questioned for their benefits to women's health, they are negated in many people's eyes through his methods and racism displayed in his operations. By keeping his name on the women's dormitory, the state of South Carolina arguably continues to glorify and honor his exploitation of Anarcha, Lucy, Betsey and the eleven other unnamed slaves that he performed often times unsuccessful and excruciatingly painful surgeries on throughout his time in Montgomery. Learning the context and history of those honored on campuses through building names is an important responsibility of any student on every college campus.

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The Star Behind the Stars: The Funding of the Melton Observatory

Graciela D. Perez

Introduction

“Come look at the universe”, says the director of Melton Observatory, Martin Bowers. Located on the corner of Gibbes Green in the heart of the University of South Carolina’s campus lies the secret to unlock the wonders of the universe (or even just the univers-ity). The Melton Observatory first opened in 1928, and continues to function to this day as a working observatory. It was named after Dr. William Melton, who not only served as president of the university from 1922-1926, but was also a main spearhead for the building of the observatory on campus. While Dr. Melton was a strong advocate for the observatory’s construction, it was through a donation by alumni Edwin G. Seibels that actually allowed for the structure to finally be built and opened in 1928. To understand the significance of this venture between Melton and Seibels, we must first understand the history of this and other observatories on the university's campus.

History of the Observatories

Original Observatory & “The Old Observatory”

While the Melton Observatory was and continues to be an innovative structure on the University of South Carolina’s campus, it was not the first observatory to exist there. There have

been two other observatories constructed and operated on the campus beforehand. The first one was constructed in 1817 and was situated in a garden behind DeSaussure College close to the Horseshoe (Horn, 2021, 0:52). Besides its location there is not much else that is known about this first observatory. The next observatory, now known as “The Old Observatory”, was constructed by architect Jacob Graves in 1852 and while it is no longer used as an observatory, the building still sits on the Horseshoe and is used for administrative offices (West, E. C., Allen, K. T., & Edgar, W., 2015, p. 71). The observatory was constructed in response to the university acquiring a 7-inch achromatic telescope by the late Matthew J. Williams, who was a mathematics professor at the university. The structure of the observatory was only 18 feet by 20 feet situated with a 12 foot diameter dome, to accommodate the 8 foot telescope (West, E. C., et al., 2015, p. 71). After its construction the observatory was used by classes for instructional purposes until the start of the Civil War in 1861. After the war the observatory was “an unsightly ruin” as stated by Professor Benjamin B. Babbitt (a professor of Natural and Mechanical Philosophy). Not only were the windows smashed and the building vandalized, at some point during the war the telescope itself was stolen. Thieves took the telescope apart and they also reportedly sold off the valuable brass casing as well (Horn, 2021, 2:05). The building of the former observatory was then used as space for a fraternity on campus until they were all banned in 1897. Thereafter it was used as a general storage space and also specifically for a large abundance of golf clubs for a short while, and then eventually became an office for Professor William H. Hand, a former superintendent of Columbia (Horn, 2021, 2:30). As stated above, “The Old Observatory” now serves as administrative offices.

Construction of New Observatory

Similar to “The Old Observatory”, the spark for the construction of the Melton Observatory stemmed from the donation of a telescope. The telescope is a 16-inch diameter Newtonian reflector, donated by J. Wilson Hanahan from Winnsboro, South Carolina (Horn, 2021, 2:43). At the time of this donation President Dr. William Melton was lobbying the state legislature for campus improvements, including the funding for a new observatory on campus. However, his requests were denied. He then turned to friend and prominent Columbia businessman Mr. Edwin G. Seibels, who promised that he would provide the funding for the new observatory. When President Melton unexpectedly died in 1926, Seibels continued to follow through with his funding promise. Edwin Seibels announced his gift of \$15,000 for the construction of the observatory on June 7, 1927 at the Jefferson hotel during an alumni meeting. The final building constructed was forty feet high and surrounded by a balcony. This part of the building was designed by Columbia architect, Carroll Johnson, and the construction was completed by Columbia construction company, Rutherford Innes. The final structure also included a revolving dome made out of copper, designed by Connecticut architect R.W. Sellow and constructed by the Berlin Construction company from Berlin, Connecticut (“New Seibel’s Structure to Soon Be Ready”, 1928, p. 1) At completion the observatory was considered to be “an imposing appearance” but a “distinct addition” to the overall campus environment. The opening of the observatory was held on Friday, June 1st, 1928 (“Observatory to be Formally Presented”, 1928, p. 1). Upon opening the first floor was used as a classroom area for astronomy classes taught by Professor E. C. Coker, who also oversaw the everyday operations and maintenance of the observatory upon its opening. Then the second floor held the telescope and

observation space. The observatory continues to function as an observatory to this day, with weekly viewings opened to the general public. The construction of this observatory not only had an impact on the immediate U of SC campus culture, but also started to influence the way that the general Columbia public interacted with the campus as well. The Melton Observatory would not have been constructed without the perseverance of former President William Melton, the generosity of Edwin Seibels, but definitely not without the bond they shared through the university or the power they held with their community.

The Funding of the Observatory: Edwin G. Seibels

Early Life of Edwin G. Seibels

While President Melton could be considered the brains behind the observatory building, Mr. Edwin G. Seibels had the greens to get it done. Edwin Grenville Seibels was born on September 12th, 1866 in Columbia, South Carolina to his parents Edwin Whipple and Marie Jane Smith Seibels. He was raised on the plantation that his family lived on and operated (Mount Willing) in Edgefield County, South Carolina. While he grew up on the farm and aided his family in their cotton farming, Seibels never felt as though he was farming inclined, “I should also mention at least one of my inabilities. I could never plow a straight furrow [...] my efforts resembled my initial ‘S.’” (“Edwin G. Seibels: Legacy of Leadership Profile.”). In addition to his farm work, during the wintertime he attended private school in the city of Columbia, and even worked as a state Senate page for his godfather, Lieutenant Governor John Dr. Kennedy, when he was 15 years old (“Edwin G. Seibels: Legacy of Leadership Profile.”). He started to attend South

Carolina College (now known as the University of South Carolina) at the age of 16. Throughout his time at the college he studied mechanics and engineering, and joined a variety of organizations (Phi Beta Kappa, Omicron Delta Kappa, Blue Keys, and Sigma Alpha Epsilon). He graduated with honors in his majors in 1885, and after graduation intended on pursuing a career in engineering, but life had other plans.

Insurance Work

At some point in his younger life, Seibels' family moved from Edgefield to the city of Columbia, where his father opened up an insurance company in 1869. The company, E. W. Seibels' & Son, was run by his father and older half-brother, Robert, until his brother's death in 1882. (Seibels, E. W., 1989). After his brother's death, Edwin returned to his family's business and ran it with his father until his father's death in 1892, whereafter his younger brother John J. Seibels became his partner. They continued to run this business together and it continued to serve in the insurance and commerce community on an international scale, and Edwin incorporated the company in 1908. This company, now known as Seibels Bruce Group, Inc., is considered to be one of the South's largest insurance firms (CITE ENCYCLOPEDIA). In 1919, Edwin Seibels moved to New York to become the general manager of the Cotton Fire & Marine Underwriters Exchange Inc., an international holding company for insurance stocks. He then became president of that company in April 1929 and eventually moved his family and the headquarters for the company back to Columbia as, "the biggest figure in marine insurance in the world" ("Seibles Gets High Honor", 1929, p. 7). Edwin eventually retired from insurance in 1944 and continued

to live in Columbia until his death at the age of 88, on December 21, 1954. Throughout his life he also earned a Medal of Honor for his war contributions and even ran for public office and was elected to the South Carolina House of Representatives in 1909. Many decades after his death Mr. Seibels was inducted into the South Carolina Business Hall of Fame in 1990 (“Edwin G. Seibels: Legacy of Leadership Profile.”).

His Invention

In addition to his fortunate business ventures as an insurance salesman, Mr. Seibels is also credited with an invention that brought him fame, but not fortune. He is credited with inventing the vertical filing cabinet system in 1898. It was an invention that revolutionized businesses by providing, “a way to capture and store volumes of information in a manner that increased efficiency and organization without the need for laborious processes of binding knowledge into books” (Fallows, 2011). In 1898, The Globe-Wernicke Company of Cincinnati made five wooden filing cabinets to the specification provided by Seibels, and from there he then applied for a patent for his idea. Unfortunately, this patent never came to be. He was told that this was only an idea, and that only the device itself could be patented. While it was possible to patent his original device design that followed his exact specifications, it meant that others would be able to make a similar device outside of those specifications and they would not be in violation of the patent. At the end of the day, Edwin G. Seibels is still credited with having and inventing the vertical filing cabinet, even if he never saw a profit.

Giving Back to the University

The story of his invention embodies the generosity that Mr. Seibels came to be known for, through his donations to the University. After another one of his generous contributions they posted a thank you to him in *The Gamecock* stating that those who have been able to interact with him, “have come to think of him as one who is always willing to sacrifice to any extent for the advancement of its [the university’s] welfare” (“Why Not 'Seibel College'?", 1932, p. 4). After his graduation he became a very active member in the alumni association for the college (now University) and consistently made many gifts to the Alumni Loan Fund. His first major and most prominent donation to the university was the \$15,000 that he donated for the funding to build what is now known as the Melton Observatory. A long time friend of President Melton, Edwin promised that he would provide the funding for the observatory to be built, and when Dr. Melton unexpectedly died in 1926, he still followed through on that promise. This donation by Mr. Seibels is considered to be, “the first gift to the University of any consequence from an alumnus in the history of the institution” (“Observatory to be Formally Presented”, 1928, p. 1). In addition to this donation, Mr. Seibels also donated a billiards table to the university that was placed in Flinn Hall, over the summer of 1928. When students arrived back to campus in the fall they were greeted with this new addition to the residence hall. This billiards table was equipped with modern pockets and made out of the best materials and was said to be, “recreation equipment that will out-last any other that could have been presented” (“Thanks Again Mr. Seibels”, 1928, p. 4). The table soon became a popular gathering area for students as stated in a 1928 edition of *The Gamecock*, “students since that time [time of installation] have been busily

engaged in the pleasant sport of billiards and the crowd is usually found on the sideline waiting to find a chance for the next game” (“Thanks Again Mr. Seibels”, 1928, p. 4).

In addition to the physical structures and elements that Mr. Seibels donated to the University, he was a prominent member of the campus community and connected it to the larger Columbia community as well. In 1905, he was elected to serve as the president of the Alumni Association and that year the edition of *The Garnet and Black* (the school yearbook) was dedicated to him in his honor. While on the alumni board he was a part of the effort to raise funds and state legislative approval for the creation of a new football stadium on the campus. He also was known to hold community and alumni gatherings in his home, such as the 50th anniversary for his former fraternity, Sigma Alpha Epsilon in March of 1932. After being a part of these efforts he was officially elected as a trustee of the university in 1931 to fill a vacancy. He then went on to be elected as the chairman to the board in 1938 and even had the 1938 edition of the *Blue Key* directory dedicated to him in his honor (“Hon. Edwin G. Seibels Elected Chairman of Board of Trustees”, 1938, p. 1). With all these contributions to the university and interactions with its community, it is no surprise that there were efforts made to have a building on campus named after him in 1932. In 1932 an opinion forum in the April 22 edition of, *The Gamecock*, stated, “Why Not ‘Seibel College?’”. It went on to discuss the proposal of naming the formerly known “Wardlaw College” (tenement 25), “Seibel College” after Edwin G. Seibels. The support was astounding as they believed, “there is no man more worthy of some recognition from his Alma Mater” and since there was a need to have a building named after some alumnus versus faculty, “The Gamecock believes, there is no man more in line for that recognition than Edwin G. Seibels” (“Why Not 'Seibel College'?", 1932, p.4).

Conclusion

While Mr. Seibels never got a building dedicated to him, his legacy continues to live on through his donation of the Melton Observatory as it continues to serve as a prominent part of the campus today. Now managed by the university's Department of Physics and Astronomy, The Melton Observatory continues to connect the campus to the larger city of Columbia nearly a century after it was constructed. The observatory and its telescope are open for general public viewing every Monday night from 9:00 - 11:00pm, weather permitting. The observatory continues to use the original telescope donated by Mr. Hanahan in the 1920s, with some slight modern modifications to keep the quality of the viewings up to par. Through the COVID-19 pandemic the observatory even switched their Monday evening viewings to Facebook Live to be able to continue access to the amazing views that it provides. Having the observatory on campus has allowed for students of all majors to volunteer and work-hands on with the equipment. "It is a once in a lifetime opportunity to see and work with those things", stated a current volunteer.. (Ballantyne, 2021). While, Edwin G. Seibels did not live to see the first man land on the moon, through his contribution to The Melton Observatory, we can make the universe a more explorable place for all.

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