

A New Start—1860-1870

From 1858 until 1870 the Normal Department was the only part of the University in operation. In the fall of 1870 the Collegiate Department opened under a new president and faculty.

Amos Dean had resigned in 1859 rather than come to Iowa City to administer his office. On October 26, 1859, the Board of Trustees elected Silas Totten president of the University. As administrative head, President Totten was equipped both in experience and ability to launch the newly organized State University of Iowa. He had been President of Trinity College in Connecticut for eleven years, and Professor of Rhetoric and Mental Philosophy in the College of William and Mary in Virginia. A Southerner, he had come to Iowa City as the rector of the Episcopalian parish.

President Totten addressed the General Assembly on the functions of the University, recommended suitable persons for the faculty, and prepared a plan of organization for the University. He placed Theodore S. Parvin, with the title of Librarian and Curator, in charge of the books and museum collections. Professors, elected by the Board to the various departments, included President Totten to the Department of Intellectual and

Moral Philosophy and Rhetoric, also temporarily to the Department of History and Political Economy; the Rev. Oliver M. Spencer, A.M., D.D., to the Department of Languages; Nathan R. Leonard, A.M., to the Department of Mathematics and Astronomy; the Rev. James Lillie, M.D., D.D., to the Department of Chemistry and Natural Philosophy; and Theodore S. Parvin to the Department of Natural History. Professors Spencer and Lillie exchanged chairs with Board approval.

An appropriation of \$3,000 for repairs and \$10,000 for a new building, made by the General Assembly in March, 1858, provided funds for much needed repairs and alterations to the interior of Old Capitol for classroom purposes, and for the start of a new three-story brick building to the south to be used as a boarding hall, classrooms, dormitory, and a home for the literary societies. Completion of the latter building was impossible with the allocation made for it; but a second appropriation by the General Assembly in April, 1860—proceeds from the sale of saline lands—added \$5,000 for repairs on Old Capitol and \$5,000 to complete the new building.

The outward appearance of Old Capitol was little changed when the University reopened in the fall of 1860; but inside, the east half of the Senate Chamber was occupied by a cabinet for geological specimens and the west half was used as the library. Classrooms and offices for the President

and faculty occupied the rest of the first and second floors, while the janitor had his residence in the basement. The Normal Department, which had been housed in the southwest room of Old Capitol from 1858 to 1860, was moved to Mechanics Academy—the only building used by the University from 1855 to 1858. The new building rising to the south of Old Capitol gave evidence that the isolation of the latter would be broken.

Such was the campus of the University when the new session opened on September 19, 1860. There would be no further interruption of its services to the people of the State as both grew in stature and strength. Number of students entered in the fall of 1860 was 173. Co-education had been reinstated after its attempted abolition by the Board of Trustees in 1858.

University life, except as it was affected by enlistments for the Civil War, went on in regular unhurried rhythm in the sixties, and students sought new activities in various ways. Chapel exercises were conducted daily for fifteen minutes and strict discipline was exercised in regard to attendance. Students (especially those not living at home) were required to attend church services on Sundays. Social life expanded through a series of student sociables.

North Hall, north of Old Capitol, was added during the decade of the sixties. On its second floor was the chapel, adorned with gallery and

stained glass windows. The library occupied one end of the second floor. The first floor was used for the chemical laboratory. Two appropriations, totaling \$33,000, were made by the General Assembly for the new building, and this amount was augmented by private donations.

South Hall had many uses during the decade 1860-1870. It provided at times private rooms for faculty members, an office for the University Treasurer, classrooms, and rooms for the newly organized Literary Societies on the top floor. Mechanics Academy became the property of the University in 1866 and was fitted up to meet, in a small way, the great demand for cheaper living quarters for students.

The system of departments, as recommended by President Totten, persisted for a time as best adapted for students although college classes (Freshman, Sophomore, Junior, Senior) began to win approval of both students and faculty. In 1865 the Board of Trustees declared in favor of adopting the class plan for all students.

By the reorganization of the course of study in 1869, the Preparatory Department was incorporated into the collegiate course which now required five years for its completion, three years for general study, and two for specialized study in either of the major lines—Scientific and Literary—with an increased number of elective studies.

Sciences, especially in their practical applica-

tions, grew in importance at the University. Laboratory equipment was added as means permitted. In 1868, the General Assembly appropriated \$20,000 to the University, part of which was specifically allocated for the Science Department. A Chemical Laboratory, using features from the plans of four leading universities in this field, was built by Professor Gustavus Hinrichs, who promoted the spirit of scientific investigation in his Chemistry and Physical Science classes. The increasing enrollment in science courses brought, in 1868, the first University assistant professor.

When President Totten resigned in 1862, Professor Oliver M. Spencer was unanimously selected as his successor, serving as President for four years. In 1866 he was given a leave of absence for one year to become American Consul at Genoa, but did not return, tendering his resignation at the end of the year. Professor Nathan R. Leonard served as Acting President during his absence. Upon the final resignation of President Spencer, the Reverend James Black, Vice President of Washington and Jefferson University in Washington, Pennsylvania, was elected. He was the first formally inaugurated President.

Among the duties which devolved upon the faculty during this period was the government of the student body in matters of discipline, in conducting chapel exercises and the public rhetorical, and in supervising the literary organizations.

The Zetagathian Society, founded in 1861, and the Irving Institute were for men students; and the Hesperian and Erodolphian Societies were for women. Several other literary and scientific "clubs" were formed. A University Band was organized in 1865, and choir music became a feature at chapel and other assemblies.

The Civil War drained men from the University, and in 1863 the Board appropriated \$500 to establish a Military Department to increase the service of the University to the State and Nation. Arms and accouterment were received from the Federal Government. A like sum was allowed for gymnastic training. Both projects were popular for a time.

The faculty, adapting itself with patience to the limitations it met, was nevertheless alert to every opportunity for expansion. Outstanding for zeal and ability in their professions in this decade were Professor Hinrichs, whose teaching inspired enthusiasm in his students, and whose researches in Physical Science gained international recognition; Nathan R. Leonard, recognized as a teacher of exceptional knowledge; C. Augustus Eggert, who, answering the requirement that the teacher of Modern Languages should be a native German, raised the standards and status of his Department; Oliver M. Spencer, whose classes in Natural Philosophy were among the most popular and attractive; Theodore S. Parvin, capable and tireless

in all his duties; and Amos N. Currier, who possessed genuine talents as a teacher.

The University Reporter, its first issue appearing in October, 1868, reflected academic life and events on the campus. This was the beginning of journalism at the University.

Support for the University during this decade was drawn from four sources—interest from the University fund derived from sale of the original grant of land and from the sale of saline lands; appropriations by the General Assembly; rent from student rooms; and student fees. In spite of strict economy, money needed for salaries, Library, and for more buildings was in short supply.

Steps toward the organization of a Law Department were taken in 1865. In that year, a committee of Judges of the Supreme Court urged wholeheartedly the establishment of such a department. The General Assembly in March, 1868, made an appropriation of \$20,000 to the University to aid scientific and other departments which the Trustees deemed proper to establish. Thus authorized, the Trustees acted immediately to organize a Law Department.

In September of 1868 the Iowa Law School of Des Moines, founded in 1865 by George G. Wright and Chester C. Cole, Iowa Supreme Court judges, and conducted by them and William G. Hammond, was taken over as the Law Department of the University.

The founders of the Iowa Law School became the law faculty at the University. William G. Hammond was elected Resident Professor and Principal (Chancellor in 1870). Judges Wright and Cole were elected assistant professors and came to Iowa City, for part of the year, to give instruction. Of the \$7,600 set apart for the Law Department, \$2,000 was designated for a law library and the faculty helped by loaning their books to the library. Textbooks were purchased by the University and rented to students.

The Law Department operated its classrooms, library, and faculty rooms in an area partitioned off in the House of Representatives chamber of Old Capitol. The course comprised one year of three terms leading to a degree and admission to practice after a satisfactory examination. Twenty-five students were enrolled the first year—1868-69. The total attendance the last year of the decade was thirty-six. Nineteen received law degrees at commencement on June 28, 1870.

In September, 1868, while the Law Department was holding its first classes, the Board of Trustees established a Medical Department to be opened, if practical, in the fall of 1869.

The Medical Department contemplated in 1868 was a new organization, distinct from what had been known for twenty years as the Medical Department of the State University of Iowa at Keokuk. Physicians in eastern Iowa petitioned the

General Assembly to establish a Medical Department. State Representative John P. Irish of Iowa City gave strong support to the project. Legislative action was deferred, however, until September, 1868, when a definite plan of organization was provided and steps taken to carry it into effect. Chairs were created, faculty appointments made, and rooms in South Hall were prepared for use by the department. Administration of the new Medical Department closely paralleled provisions for the Law Department. Fees were threefold: matriculation, \$5.00; lectures, \$80.00; and graduation, \$30.00.

Before the opening took place, opposition to the department, especially from friends of the Keokuk school, reached the Legislature. In June, 1870, a bill to abolish it passed the Senate, but was indefinitely postponed in the House. Four of the nine members of the newly created Board of Regents also stated their opposition to the department in a resolution of protest.

Despite all opposition, the Medical Department was opened in September (October) 1870. The staff consisted of Doctors W. F. Peck, P. J. Farnsworth, J. H. Boucher, W. S. Robertson, John F. Kennedy, and John C. Shrader. Judge John F. Dillon and Professor Gustavus Hinrichs also served on the staff. Dr. W. D. Middleton was added the next summer.

Doctors soon had to concern themselves with

provisions for hospital facilities. Dr. Peck, dean and surgeon of the Medical Department, performed operations before his classes in South Hall. Patients then had to be sent to rooming houses in Iowa City. The need for a hospital was very great; and once more Mechanics Academy was pressed into service. The Regents used such slender funds as were available, supplemented by gifts from the faculty, donations from the City Council, and gifts from friends of the University. Nursing service was in charge of the Sisters of Mercy, supervised by Sister Barromeo, who had previously worked with Dr. Peck in Davenport.

In December, 1870, an event occurred which brought discredit to the new department. A newly made grave in the Iowa City cemetery was robbed of a woman's body and medical students were blamed. Sheriff Sam McCadden acted promptly to recover the body, Representative John P. Irish consulted with the students, and the body ultimately was returned to the undertaker. No charges were filed.

The last year of the decade (1860-1870) found some 430 students, representing 15 states and Canada, participating in the increased opportunities of the State University of Iowa. Alumni, gathering in reunion in June, 1867, noted with interest and pride the growth of the University of which they had witnessed the beginnings.