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Butler University and the dream of distinction

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The University of Michigan, 1993

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BUTLER UNIVERSITY
AND
THE DREAM OF DISTINCTION

by

John P. Kondelik

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirement for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
(Education)
in The University of Michigan
1993

Doctoral Committee:

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Preface

When I came to Butler University in January 1984 I had no thought that I might be undertaking this study of its history. The idea came at the suggestion of Professor Robert T. Blackburn when it became obvious that my original idea of doing a sociological study was impractical due to the lack of funding. The suggestion appealed to me for a couple of reasons. First, I had long been interested in history. My undergraduate major was history and I had started graduate studies in the field in 1965; however, the lack of financial resources back in the mid-1960's forced me to abandon graduate study in history. I chose librarianship instead because I was able to get financial assistance and complete the degree in a little over a year. I found librarianship appealing because it permitted me to be part of the academic world where I have always felt most at home. My love of history continued over the years, and the opportunity to do an historical dissertation was very attractive.

The second factor was my growing fascination with the history of Butler University. At the time, there were very few historical studies of Butler. No official history had ever been written. The only scholarly work was a single monograph on the founding of Butler by Henry King Shaw and a master's thesis by Thomas B. Fields. The University's

records were in poor condition. Official papers and documents were stashed in various locations around the campus, including one small room in the Irwin Library. No official archives policy existed and many important papers were missing or scattered in various repositories from University basements to local libraries and archives. Many others were in the hands of individuals and families of people associated with Butler.

One of the first tasks that had to be undertaken was the establishment of an official University Archives and the collecting together into this Archives of as many official papers and records as could be found. The University approved a proposal prepared by Gisela S. Terrell, Rare Books and Special Collections Librarian, in 1985. It is to Gisela Terrell that I owe a special thanks for her monumental efforts to organize the huge pile of documents and papers that have come together to form the Butler University Archives since 1985. I also owe a deep sense of gratitude to her for the continuous assistance and encouragement she gave me throughout the research and writing phases of this dissertation. Her advice and suggestions on the various drafts saved me countless hours of effort.

I have learned the truth of the warning against doing an historical dissertation that Dr. Zee Gamson gave me, as my first advisor at the Center for the Study of Higher Education. Such research takes a long time, especially when one must first establish the archives before the research can

begin. My task was greatly assisted by a four month administrative leave in 1989. This paid leave from my position as Director of Libraries permitted me to complete most of the research for the dissertation. I must acknowledge with appreciation the willingness of my colleague in the library, Karl Rusa, to act as director for me during this leave.

I also want to thank for his helpful advice, suggestions, and encouragement Dr. George Waller, official historian of Butler. His willingness to share with me his research on the early history of Butler and our discussions of the sources and figures in Butler's history were fascinating and very helpful. I only hope that my own research will be as useful to him as he writes the first official history of Butler University. The late Dr. Mac Cripe deserves a special mention for his many pep talks that kept me going when I was experiencing considerable discouragement with the slowness of the writing.

The library staff of Butler University have been so helpful in so many ways. In addition to Gisela Terrell, I would like to thank Sharon Lewis for her ever willing assistance with interlibrary loan requests, sometimes for the same titles over and over again. Linda Horvath, writer and formerly a member of the Reference Department, was very helpful in encouraging me with the writing of the early chapters. I especially want to express my gratitude to my long suffering secretary, Marianne Eckhart, for all of that early typing before I discovered the wonders of word processing and for be-

ing such a wonderful gate keeper in protecting the few hours a week that I had available for research and writing.

I wish to thank the members of my committee for their support and advice. I will always remember kindly the early encouragement I received from Dr. Jerry Miller after my qualifying examination. My thanks go to Dr. Stephen Tonsor for agreeing to take on such an unknown quantity as I must have seemed to him at the time of his agreeing to be on my committee. Dr. George Geib, of the Butler University History Department, pointed me in the right direction many times throughout my research. His knowledge of Indiana history and politics has been very useful. I only wish I could have done more justice to his insights into the era and the institution that I studied. I am particularly grateful to Dr. Robert T. Blackburn, who never gave up on me throughout these many years since I started my doctoral studies. It is through his encouragement and help that I have been able to persist in this enterprise and not become one of the fifty percent of doctoral students who never finish the degree. Bob Blackburn has shown me what mentoring is all about.

Finally, I want to thank my family. I want to express my love and gratitude to my mother who always said I could do it. But it is to my wife, Marlene, and my daughter, Vicki, that I owe the most. They sacrificed so much so that I could pursue this degree, helped me cope with many emotional crises, and helped me with the research and writing through-

out. I owe to them far more than I can ever express in words.

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Introduction

This is an historical case study of Butler University, 1915-1933. It is the story of the efforts of a small group of men (mainly trustees) to realize a vision of a great university for Indianapolis. It is also the story of the failure of this attempt to build a great university for Indianapolis. I present a description and analysis of the context, the forces, and the people that were involved in this effort. These were critical years for Butler University because they established a pattern of missed opportunities, shortsightedness, and provincialism that prevented the institution from emerging as a major independent urban university.

This study will be of primary use to those who are interested in the history of Butler University.¹ The study may also provide some insight into the process of institutional development.

It is not the intent of this study to suggest that Butler University has somehow failed as an institution of higher learning. Butler has been successful in many respects. It enjoys a good reputation as a medium sized, primarily undergraduate institution with an unusually diverse

¹There is no general history of Butler University, although there is an official history in progress that was commissioned by the University a few years ago.

curriculum serving mainly upper middle class students from Indiana and the contiguous states.

Butler is financially healthy today with an endowment of over \$100,000,000 and a pattern of steady enrollments that hovers around 3,500 students. For many years Butler has been a "comfortable" place for teaching and learning. Faculty members earn respectable salaries. Performance expectations are modest, with the primary emphasis on teaching rather than research. Students are academically slightly above average in ability and generally moderate to conservative in their attitudes. They generally come from above average income families. There are relatively few minorities or international students. The "Greek" presence is very strong.

Why did Butler not achieve the greatness envisioned by its founders, and, especially, by the men who attempted to re-invigorate the institution from 1915 to 1933? The lack of a major higher education institution in Indianapolis today is unusual for a large American city. The opportunity seemed to be available for Butler to emerge as a large private urban university similar to Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, Boston University, Boston College, the University of Denver, Emory University in Atlanta, Southern Methodist University in Dallas, Washington University in St. Louis, or Northeastern University in Boston. The institutional profiles of such large private urban universities might differ in particulars, but, in general, they are characterized by the presence of such elements as strong professional schools,

particularly law, medicine, and engineering, but frequently nursing, dentistry, architecture, social work, education, and library science. They also frequently exhibited a strong interest in serving local post secondary needs through continuing education programs for professionals and extension programs for general enrichment. Their undergraduate programs were often centered on instruction and, in many cases, primarily to commuting rather than residential students, although this has varied considerably among these institutions. Enrollments at these institutions ranged from from a few thousand to tens of thousands. Butler was different from these institutions in that it was one of a number of private institutions in urban locations that tried and failed to become large urban universities.

Some questions to be addressed concerning Butler University and that relate to the general historical context of the development of American higher education over the last century are:

- What outside influences, both local and national, affected the development of Butler University? How important were the influences of the Church (Disciples of Christ), alumni, accrediting bodies, and foundations upon the development of Butler? What was the general climate for support of higher education in Indianapolis?
- How did Butler adapt to the trends in institutional governance and administrative structures

that emerged at most American colleges and universities in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries? To what extent was the particular nature of Butler's charter and bylaws an important factor in the development of the University?

- What characterized academic leadership at Butler? What was the role of the faculty in the development of the institution? Who ran the University?
- What role did intercollegiate athletics play in the development of the University? In what way was this a factor in the failure to realize the vision of a "greater" Butler?

An effort will be made to address these questions in this study by telling the story of the "Greater Butler idea."

Chapter 1

The External Context and the Administrative Development of Butler University

This chapter is presented by way of prologue and background to the main story of the "Greater Butler". Very little has been written about Butler and higher education in Indianapolis. Butler has never had an official or "house" history written about the institution.¹ For this reason and because of the peculiar administrative development of Butler this chapter is intended to provide some background so that the reader may better understand the context in which the "Greater Butler" idea developed.

Beginning in the 1890's Indiana entered an era of increasing interest in education, literature, and the arts. This is clearly linked to the rising prosperity of the urban professional and business classes. New wealth led to a greater interest in and support of the arts, especially architecture and painting. It was an era of especially fine domestic architecture that can still be seen in many parts of Indianapolis. In painting, the "Hoosier Group" became particularly prominent in the early decades of the 20th century. Trained in Munich in the last years of the 19th century,

¹An official history to mark the 150th anniversary of the institution is a work in progress by Professor Emeritus George Waller of the Butler History Department.

artists like Theodore C. Steele, William Forsyth, and J. Otis Adams had a permanent influence on the arts in Indiana through the sale of their romantic landscapes and portraits, and the founding of the John Herron Art Museum and Institute where several of them taught for many years.²

Beginning in the 1870's with Edward Eggleston's Hoosier Schoolmaster, there began an era that is often called the "Golden Age" of Hoosier literature which reached its peak in the years between World Wars I and II. Many writers produced works that became national best sellers. Among the best known of these authors were James Whitcomb Riley, Booth Tarkington, Meredith Nicholson, George Ade, and Gene Stratton Porter.

Indianapolis as the state capital was the only city of any significant population size. It had developed as a center for transportation with numerous railroads feeding into the city by the end of the nineteenth century. It was also the hub of the inter-urban electric railroad network that reached out to nearly all of the major population centers of the state. Important banks, insurance companies, publishers, and the early automobile industry prospered in the era before the Great Depression. The City had long been a center for agriculture related industries such as meat packing and processing, farm implements, and milling. State and community

²James H. Madison, Indiana Through Tradition and Change, A History of the Hoosier State and its People, 1920-1945 (Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Society, 1982) 361-3.

pride had grown to the point that there was active planning for a world's fair to be held in Indianapolis in 1915. Unfortunately the enterprise failed because War broke out in Europe in 1914.

The rise of isolationism after World War I and an increase of intolerance and bigotry was particularly evident in Indiana with the emergence of the Ku Klux Klan. The rapid rise of the Klan in the early 1920's, and its domination of the political scene in Indiana by 1924, was symptomatic of many Hoosier's concern with the decline in morality and fear of influence that many of them felt were un-American. Although the Klan in Indiana instilled considerable fear in the state's relatively small African-American population, the main focus of the Klan's bigotry was against Catholics, Jews, and recent immigrants. Morality and 100% Americanism was the primary rallying cry for the Klan in attracting so many Hoosiers to membership.³ The criminal conviction of Klan leader D. C. Stephenson in 1925 for a particularly sordid crime and the revelations of the hypocrisy and debauchery in Stephenson's life undermined the support for the Klan. The failure of many Klan sponsored programs, inside factionalism, and the opposition of many prominent Indiana citizens also contributed to the rapid decline in the last years of the

³John A. Davis, "The Ku Klux Klan in Indiana, 1920-1930: An Historical Study" Ph.D. dissertation Northwestern University, 1966. 95.

decade. The Klan's power and influence was gone even faster than it had arisen.⁴

Social and Cultural Changes

The decade of the 1920's was a period of rapid change for American society and culture. There were a number of distinct characteristics associated with the post World War I era that marked it off from the pre-War years, even though most of the roots of these changes had their origins in the earlier period. There is little doubt that the experience of the War exacerbated these tendencies.⁵

First there was a shift in the moral climate related to the increasing urbanization of the population and the rise of a youth culture that openly defied and challenged previous standards of behavior. The triumph of Prohibition offered only another challenge to this youth culture as it saw Prohibition as an example of the moralism of an earlier age. For most youth the age offered greater freedom and less restraint from parental control and social taboos.⁶

Particularly marked was the change in the behavior of young women. This was not only manifest in the changes in

⁴Ibid. 99-113.

⁵John D. Hicks, Republican Ascendency 1921-1933. (New York: Harper & Row, 1960): 1-22.

⁶Paula S. Fass, The Damned and the Beautiful, American Youth in the 1920's. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977): 6-8; 365-76.

women's fashions, but in the expectations of women with the coming of the vote, and opportunities for women in the work place, including higher education. Women's traditional role in the family was also undergoing important changes due in part to the continuing development and improvements in home appliances which tended to give women greater freedom and opportunities for involvement in work and community.⁷

The youth culture of the 1920's was particularly evident in American colleges and universities. Students attending college in the 1920's found that the automobile and the telephone extended freedom of movement and opportunities to explore and socialize. There was also the attraction of the motion picture theaters, the rise of radio, and the strong appeal of jazz music and dancing. Spectator sports like football with its "big game" weekends provided opportunities for traveling to other cities and campuses.⁸

College enrollment continued to increase dramatically as they had since the 1890's, but there was also a tremendous growth in the extra-curriculum. The social side of college came to occupy center stage. This trend continued until after the stock market crash and the impact of the Great Depression. The end of the prosperity of the 1920's also brought a short period of stagnation in college enrollments

⁷Ibid., 23-5.

⁸Ibid., 129-34.

and a decline in the dominance of the social side of academic life.⁹

Higher Education in Indiana

The early years of higher education in Indiana were dominated by the rivalry of the religious denominations. Even the state university in Bloomington was largely a battleground for interdenominational conflict in which the victory apparently went to the Presbyterians, at least for a time.¹⁰ The religious issue was one of the most important factors in the founding of colleges in Indiana before World War I. There were fifteen collegiate level institutions founded before the Civil War, and at least 20 after 1865.¹¹

Indiana and Purdue remained largely undergraduate institutions up until World War II. Once the medical school controversy of 1905 was resolved, the two institutions settled into developing their respective areas of collegiate and professional education. Professional education was divided between them, with medical and legal education within the purview of Indiana, and agriculture and engineering at

⁹Roger L. Geiger, To Advance Knowledge, The Growth of American Research Universities, 1900-1940. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986): 111-6.

¹⁰Clark, vol. 1, p. 121-45.

¹¹Richard G. Boone, A History of Education in Indiana (New York: Appleton, 1892; Reprinted Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Bureau, 1941) 410.

Purdue. The only area of the health sciences to go to Purdue was Pharmacy.

Indianapolis was served by a variety of higher education institutions in 1915. The oldest of these was Butler University chartered in 1850 as North Western Christian University; the name was changed in 1875 in honor of its principle founder and benefactor. Indiana Central College became only the second four year undergraduate college in Indianapolis in 1902.

By 1905 the proprietary medical schools that dominated medical education in Indiana had merged and become the Indiana School of Medicine, after considerable conflict between Indiana University and Purdue University over control of medical education in the state. Earlier, Butler had maintained close ties with one or the other of these schools through affiliation agreements and within the old University of Indianapolis, a federation of higher education institutions in which Butler University was the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, allowing for almost two decades of the popular mis-appellation as "Butler College."

There were a number of other health sciences institutions in Indianapolis in the era. The Indiana Dental College was also affiliated with Butler for a number of years. Butler had some desire to strengthen this tie, but the lack of a medical school led the Dental College to merge with Indiana University in 1925. The only one of the proprietary health sciences schools to merge with Butler was the Indiana

College of Pharmacy which merged with Butler after World War II.

Indiana Law School was a proprietary law school in Indianapolis that remained affiliated with Butler until 1929 when it, too, was absorbed by Indiana University, despite the efforts of a number of Butler trustees to make it part of Butler.

In the 1915-1933 era there were other professional schools in Indianapolis; nearly all of these maintained a kind of affiliation with Butler. There were two music schools: the Metropolitan School of Music and the Indiana College of Music and Fine Arts. There was the John Herron Art Institute which was affiliated with Butler and Indiana University until its final absorption by Indiana University in the 1960's. Teachers College of Indianapolis was a private normal school for the training of kindergarten and elementary school teachers. It was founded by Eliza Blaker, who remained its president until her death in 1928. The Blaker School then merged with Butler's secondary education program in the same year to form Butler's College of Education.

The College of Missions was a professional training school for missionaries that was located adjacent to the Butler campus in Irvington. Although administratively separate, it maintained close ties to Butler. The decision by Butler to leave Irvington forced the College of Missions to find a new affiliation and it moved to New Haven, Connecticut in 1927.

For many years the state universities did not attempt to offer instruction in Indianapolis. This changed in 1916 when Indiana University opened its extension program in the city. This program remained relatively small for many years, but it steadily grew until it became a concern of the Butler trustees in the early 1920's. Despite various understandings over the years between Butler and Indiana University, the demand for state supported higher education continued to grow. This was especially true after World War II with the impact of the GI Bill. Indiana University Extension formed the nucleus of what became IUPUI (Indiana University/Purdue University in Indianapolis) in the 1960's.¹²

In 1915, Butler was clearly the leading higher education institution in the Indianapolis area. Even after the loss of the medical school in 1905, the opportunity was there for Butler to emerge as the leading university in Central Indiana. It was in recognition of this opportunity that the "Greater Butler" idea began to emerge.

Butler's Early Years

The charter and by-laws of Butler are a key to understanding why Butler developed as it did. These governing instruments and the various revisions up through the 1920's

¹²Madison, 236; Clark, vol. 3, p. 614-5. For details about affiliations, mergers, and other schools in the area, see John P. Kondelik, "Butler Affiliations," 1991, TMs, BUA.

help to explain why the institution failed to emerge as a major private urban university, why it was dominated by its Board of Directors, and why it failed in the first 30 years of the century to develop a strong academic administration. The charter granted to the university's founders in 1850 also provided the basis for both the inspiration and the aspirations of the institution. The key figure in the founding of Butler University was Ovid Butler. He was the author of the Charter of North Western Christian University, and it is his vision that is reflected in this document.¹³ Even the original name of the institution reflects what Ovid Butler had in mind.

From all the available evidence, Ovid Butler wanted this institution to differ from other colleges and universities founded in this era.¹⁴ First, he clearly wanted it located in Indianapolis. The city was the state capital and, he felt, needed an institution of higher learning. By 1850 Indianapolis had emerged as the most important city in Indiana and was becoming one of the leading cities in the Old Northwest region.¹⁵ In this context Ovid Butler wanted North Western Christian University to be a regional institution

¹³Henry K. Shaw, "The Founding of Butler University, 1847-1855," Indiana Magazine of History, 58, no. 3 (September 1962): 243-4.

¹⁴Ibid., 244; Charter and By-Laws of the North-Western Christian University and an Ordinance for the Government of the Institution (Indianapolis: Indianapolis Journal, 1857), 6-7. (Cited from here on as: Charter, 1857.)

¹⁵Shaw, "The Founding," 245.

that drew students from all the states that were formed out of the Old Northwest Territory. Furthermore, he had a definite idea of what this university should be like: it was to be an institution encompassing all of the important fields of academic and professional learning, and it was to be a non-sectarian institution with a Christian moral foundation, not limited to the Disciples of Christ. North Western Christian University would be open to men and women of all faiths and all races.¹⁶

A key section of Ovid Butler's Charter has provided some of the most quoted words in the history of Butler University. Major documents produced by the University have often referred to this section.

That the objects and purposes contemplated by this act of incorporation are hereby declared to be, to establish and build up, maintain, sustain and perpetuate, through the instrumentality of said company, at, or in the vicinity of Indianapolis, in the state of Indiana, an institution of the highest class, for the education of the youth of all parts of the United States, and especially of the states of the Northwest; to establish in said institution departments or colleges for the instructing of the students in every branch of liberal and professional education; to educate and prepare suitable teachers for the common schools of the country; to teach and inculcate the Christian faith and Christian morality, as taught in the Sacred Scriptures, discarding as uninspired and without authority all writings, formulas, creeds, and articles of faith subsequent thereto; and for the promotion of the sciences and arts.¹⁷

¹⁶Shaw, "The Founding," 245; Waller, 2.

¹⁷Charter, 1857: 6.

There was not to be direct control of the university by the Disciples of Christ. However, there was through most of the University's early history, a continuous and dominant presence of Disciples on the Board, in the administration, and on the faculty. The same was not true of the student body, which for the most part after 1915 has been broadly representative of nearly all religious groups in Indiana.

The predominance of Disciples on the Board of Directors did lead, from time to time, to efforts to impose their beliefs on the college. During his lifetime Ovid Butler opposed efforts to narrow the institution.¹⁸ Usually the more open-minded and secular members of the Board were able to win out through compromise. Ovid Butler and members of his family often fulfilled the role of mediators. In later years, it was usually Hilton U. Brown as President of

¹⁸A good example of such a controversy occurred in 1879 when three members of the faculty were threatened with dismissal by the passage of a resolution of the Board of Directors on a five to three vote requiring all members of the faculty to be Disciples. The three were: Melville Best Anderson, who left in 1881 and later gained renown as a translator of Dante; Catharine Merrill, who was at first dismissed but later reinstated, a greatly loved teacher, holder of the Demia Butler Chair of English Literature, and friend of John Muir; and Charles E. Hollenbeck, who was College Librarian and secretary to the Board of Directors. David Starr Jordan, Head of the Department of Natural Science and later President of Indiana University and first President of Stanford University, was the faculty member the resolution was probably aimed at because of his unorthodox views on religion. Jordan resigned before it was passed but spoke out in disgust at this action of the Board. See Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting, April 24, 1879 and David Starr Jordan, The Days of a Man, Being Memoirs of a Naturalist, Teacher and Minor Prophet of Democracy (Yonkers, N. Y.: World Book Publishing Co., 1922), 1:183-4.

the Board of Directors who was able to steer the opposing parties to an acceptable compromise on issues of this kind.¹⁹

The direct financial support of the university by the Christian Church was fairly constant, but rarely very substantial. This support usually came through the Board of Education of the Church or through the efforts of the Field Secretary working with churches in the state. The most support for the University was usually generated for ministerial or religious education.²⁰ For the most part it was the contributions of individual wealthy Disciples that sustained the institution over time.²¹ Disciples throughout Indiana considered Butler University a Disciples institution, and the University worked hard to maintain good relations with the churches throughout the period of this study.²²

College Organization and Administrative Offices²³

¹⁹Henry K. Shaw, Hoosier Disciples: A Comprehensive History of the Christian Churches (Disciples of Christ) in Indiana ([St. Louis]: Bethany Press for the Association of Christian Churches in Indiana, 1966), 231-3.

²⁰Ibid, 260-5.

²¹This was particularly true of Marshall T. Reeves and Joseph I. Irwin in the period from 1890 to 1915 and of the descendants of James Irwin usually referred to as the Irwin-Sweeney-Miller family, especially William G. Irwin and his sister Linne Sweeney. Shaw, Hoosier Disciples, 304-5, 350.

²²Ibid., 304-6, 346-7, 350, 387.

²³For a full and more detailed discussion of the development of Butler University governance see: John P. Kondelik, "The Development of Board Offices, Committees, and Other Entities" 1991. TMs, BUA.

One of the most peculiar aspects of the original North Western Christian University (NWCU) Charter is the organization of the University as a stock company. Although this was not a unique form for college charters in the antebellum era of college founding, Butler was to retain this feature of its corporate structure longer than most.

Scrip was paid as a dividend to the stock holders of the University. This device was used for two reasons. First, the laws of Indiana made this a relatively easy way to organize a college.²⁴ Second, and more important, the stock issuing device provided a convenient way to raise money at a time when and in a region where cash was scarce. Many people were more willing to support such an enterprise if they thought there would be some direct benefit to themselves or their heirs. The direct benefits were dividends in the form of paper scrip that could be used for tuition by anyone presenting it to the university upon enrollment.²⁵

²⁴Ibid., 50; John S. Brubacher and Willis Rudy, Higher Education in Transition: A History of American Colleges and Universities, 1636-1976, 3d ed. (New York: Harper & Row, 1976), 59.

²⁵Minutes of the Board of Directors, July 8, 1908, Hereafter cited as Minutes; Edward C. Elliott and M. M. Chambers, eds., Charters and Basic Laws of Selected American Universities and Colleges (New York: The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 1934) 57-8. A number of institutions in addition to NWCU used this device including Hiram College, Franklin College (Ind.), the University of Buffalo, and Kentucky University (later Transylvania University).

The big disadvantage of the scrip was that the University was left with reduced income from tuition fees as the number of students using this scrip increased. The money made from the initial sale of stock went into land, buildings, equipment, and into providing a small endowment. Unless enough new stock was sold for additional endowment, the college would be hard up for cash to satisfy its needs. In order to provide for current cash needs it was necessary to charge students special fees in addition to tuition.

A Charter limit of \$500,000 on the amount of endowment that could be supported by stock further complicated this situation for NWCU. To eliminate the stock/scrip cycle, the options were either to buy up the stock or persuade the owners to transfer or donate them to the institution. First it was necessary to request special legislation to change the charter language so that Butler was no longer a limited stock corporation.²⁶ Another motivating factor to change the Charter was the desire to be eligible for Carnegie Foundation money. Carnegie would not give to institutions that were stock issuing corporations.²⁷

First and most important in Butler's administrative development was the role of the Board of Directors and its officers and committees in the operation of the university. From the very beginning, the Board was and continued to be

²⁶Minutes, July 8, 1908.

²⁷Minutes, July 8, 1908; Brubacher and Rudy, 358.

involved in the direct operation of the institution. While at most colleges and universities the role of the governing board became limited to matters such as policy development, oversight of fiscal matters, appointment of the president, and approval of faculty appointments, the Board of Directors of Butler University developed the habit of direct supervision of most operations of the university except teaching. However, the Butler Board tended to be more involved with faculty appointments and activities than was the general practice.

A number of characteristics may explain this development. First, Butler was primarily a local institution, with the overwhelming majority of its students coming from the Indianapolis area. During the years in Irvington, before the University moved to its present campus, it was a small intimate place where everybody knew everybody else. Faculty, administrators, and many trustees lived in Irvington. There were strong family ties to Butler with two or even three generations having attended by the 1920's. Board members were often graduates of Butler, and their children and grandchildren were students or alumni as well. Of the 49 men and one woman who served on the Board from 1915 to 1933, eighteen were alumni and 21 had children or relations who attended. At least 30 of the directors were Disciples and influential

members of congregations that were important supporters of Butler.²⁸

A second characteristic was a charter that had provided for a board of directors that was elected triennially by the stock holders. By 1903, control of large blocks of this stock was in the hands of the descendants of Ovid Butler and the Irwin-Sweeney-Miller family of Columbus, Indiana.²⁹

Ovid Butler, as principal founder and benefactor of the institution, controlled the largest block of stocks and served on the board until his death in 1881. He left his stock to his children, two of whom, Chauncey and Scot, were to be very active within the University and on the Board. Scot Butler was professor of Latin for thirty-six years, and served as President of the College for over fourteen years (1891-1903, 1906-07). Chauncey Butler served many years (1897-1906) as Secretary to the Board. Both were members of the Board of Directors. The last member of the Butler family to have a major role at the institution was Evelyn Butler, the daughter of Scot, who held the Demia Butler Chair in

²⁸Two of the most important of these churches were the Tabernacle Christian Church of Columbus, Indiana and Central Christian Church of Indianapolis. The pastors of both of these churches were almost always on the Board. Tabernacle was for many years the church of the Irwin-Sweeney-Miller Family, while Central Christian remains today the principal Disciples' congregation in Indianapolis. These numbers have been extracted from the Minutes of the Board of Directors for 1915 through 1933 and from information about individual Board members contained in the Butler University Archives Biographical Files.

²⁹George M. Waller, "Historical Sketch of Butler University, June 1990." TMs, p. 1. BUA.

English Literature from 1918 to 1930, and who served as Butler's first Dean of Women from 1923 to 1930.³⁰

Joseph I. Irwin became a major supporter of the University in the late nineteenth century and had accumulated many shares of Butler stock. He was a member of the Board from 1868 until his death in 1910, and President of the Board from 1871 to 1873. His son William G. Irwin became a prominent Director and benefactor of the University, serving on the Board from 1908 until his death in 1943. William Irwin was vice president of the board for many years, and chairman of several board committees. He also served on other Butler corporate boards such as the Butler Foundation and the Corporation for Physical Education and Athletics. Joseph Irwin's sons-in-law and grandson-in-law were also prominent members of the Board. The Rev. Z. T. Sweeney, minister of the Tabernacle Christian Church in Columbus 1872-98, married Irwin's daughter Linnie. She was to succeed her husband on the Board a few years after his death. Z. T. Sweeney was a very prominent Disciple and often used his influence in the Church to promote Butler's interests. He served on the Board from 1906 until his death in 1926. Hugh Thomas Miller was the grandson-son-in-law of Joseph Irwin. He married Nettie Sweeney, the daughter of Z. T. Sweeney and Linnie Irwin

³⁰Hilton U. Brown, A Book of Memories (Indianapolis: Butler University, 1951), 50-2; Shaw, Hoosier Disciples, 168-80, 222-34; BUA Biographical Files on members of the Butler family.

Sweeney. Miller was an 1888 graduate of Butler University and had been on the faculty of Butler for several years when he decided to join Irwin's Bank in 1899. At the time of his death, he was President of the Irwin Union Trust Company of Columbus Indiana. He served as a director of Butler University from 1909 to 1947.³¹

Both of these families, but especially the Irwins, were very prominent supporters of the Church. The Irwins' support of Butler University, although usually quite generous and diverse, was to prove over time to be very closely connected to their interests in supporting religious education, especially what eventually became the College of Religion and later Christian Theological Seminary.

From the beginning the President of the Board and many of the Board committees involved themselves directly in the management of the institution. This often included the hiring and firing of non-faculty staff. A distinction was maintained between the responsibilities of the faculty, headed by the President of the College, and the responsibilities of the Board of Directors, headed by the President of the Board. In principle, the faculty and the President of the College were responsible for the curriculum, teaching, and student life, while the Board took care of everything else and claimed not to interfere with the faculty's responsibility. In practice

³¹Shaw, Hoosier Disciples, 263; Brown, 70; and BUA Biographical Files on Irwin, Sweeney, Miller family.

the boundaries of authority were less clear as the Board did not hesitate to intercede when questions or criticism arose about a faculty member's teaching, character, patriotism, or religious and political views.

The faculty had a highly constrained role in University governance, and the role of the President was little more than that of an academic dean's. Despite this fact, there did not appear to be much tension between the faculty and the Board except for the perpetual problems of low salaries, lack of equipment, library books, and inadequate facilities, all of which the Board was continuously trying to resolve.

The president's role was one best described as primus inter pares with other members of the faculty. Up until the presidency of Thomas Carr Howe, the president did not usually give up teaching, but had a reduced teaching load so that he would have time for various administrative duties: working with the faculty in planning the curriculum, handling the College's business affairs and correspondence, maintaining good community relations, personal counseling of students, and raising money. Throughout most of the nineteenth century the president usually taught the senior capstone course in moral philosophy.³²

Until 1915 the Butler administrative structure consisted of the president, a small group of faculty officers

³²Butler Catalogs, 1855-1905.

for the academic program, and the officers of the Board. The Board officers were the President of the Board, the Secretary of the Board, the Treasurer, and Field Secretary. These positions, except the Field Secretary, were the officers of the corporation. All could be paid positions under the stock company charter. The officers of the institution were the President of the Faculty, the Secretary, the Registrar, the Examiner, the Adviser, the Curator of the Museum, and the Assistant to the President. Except for the last, members of the faculty filled all of these positions. One person might hold more than one position. For example, the same person held the positions of Registrar and Secretary from 1905 to 1919. For the most part, the faculty who held these positions also taught regular course loads.

The President of the University³³

This section is intended to help in understanding the weakness of the office of President of the University. The main role of the President of the University was as leader of the faculty, responsible to the Board for the supervision of

³³The title of this office is variously given in the Board Minutes and other official records of Butler as President of the Institution (Charter and By-laws), President of the Faculty, President of the University and President of the College. The form President of the University will be used here except in quotes or references specifically using one of the other forms. The President of the Board is always referred to by this title.

the curriculum, the faculty, and the students. For just about everything else he had to go to one of the other Board officers.³⁴

The President of the University recruited the faculty and recommended their election for one year appointments by the Board. Each April the list of faculty was submitted to the Board for election, along with promotions and raises in salaries. There was no tenure system; nor were there long term contracts, paid leaves of absence, or sabbaticals.

The curriculum was recognized as being the special prerogative of the faculty as long as it was within the Board-approved degree programs and majors. Courses were designed and approved by the academic areas and the faculty as a whole. Considerable power and control over this process was exercised by heads of departments, usually full professors and sometimes holders of endowed chairs. The role of the President of the University was primus inter pares with the senior professors on all curriculum matters. There was no formal faculty governance structure except meetings of the faculty as a whole. The available minutes of these faculty meetings are quite short and reveal little substantive discussion.³⁵ Issues of any great concern to the faculty were usually presented by committees of senior faculty to the president or directly to the Board of Directors. Any author-

³⁴Charter and By-Laws, 1903, 1-8.

³⁵Minutes of the Faculty Meetings, 1921-1933, BUA.

ity that the faculty carried within the university largely rested upon the respect they had won for their teaching and their loyalty to the institution. This did seem to carry some weight, especially with Board members who were alumni.

The President of the University's authority included all aspects of student life within the university. He was expected to deal with discipline, academic performance, social matters, admissions, and scholarships. The President submitted an annual budget to the Board for approval. This budget dealt almost exclusively with anticipated instructional expenditures for the upcoming year and did not deal with income or sources of funding. These were considered Board responsibilities, some of which were delegated after 1921 to the Financial Secretary. Both the Treasurer of the Board and the Treasurer of the University reported directly to the Board. Even purchase orders of the President had to be approved by the Board Treasurer.

Characteristics of the Presidents

Between 1855 and 1933 thirteen men served as president or acting president of Butler University. They had a number of characteristics in common. First, every man who served as President from 1855 to 1933 was a Disciple; six of them were ordained ministers of the Church. These six all served before 1906. Another common characteristic of most of the nine presidents before Thomas C. Howe was their relatively short

terms of service. Only three of them served more than four years.

Six of the first ten presidents (Young, Hoshour, Benton, Scot Butler, Brown, and Howe) were chosen from among the Butler faculty, two came directly from Church pulpits, one from the editorship of a Church newspaper, and only two from another college presidency. Not only was there a lack of previous administrative experience among presidents, but except for three of them, they had never worked in any other college or university.

Thomas Carr Howe succeeded Scot Butler as President in 1907. He had been Armstrong Professor of Germanic Languages and Dean before his election by the Board to the presidency.³⁶ Howe was given a leave of absence from his teaching in 1906 to head up a committee to complete the final drive to make the goal for a \$250,000 fund raising campaign for the College. Upon the successful completion of this campaign and

³⁶Howe was an 1889 graduate of Butler and began his academic career in the Fall of the same year when he became an instructor of German at his alma mater. In 1890 he married Jennie Armstrong of Kokomo, Indiana. His father-in-law, A. F. Armstrong, was founder and President of the Armstrong-Landon Hardware Company in Kokomo. Mr. Armstrong also served as President of the Butler Board of Directors from 1894 to 1903. Howe spent two years, 1890-92, in Europe studying at the University of Berlin. He returned to Butler in the Fall of 1892 as the Armstrong Professor of Germanic Languages. In 1896 he took a leave of absence of three years to study at Harvard for his masters and doctorate degrees. During 1898-99 he was an instructor of German at Harvard. He returned to Butler in 1899 where he resumed his post as Armstrong Professor. In 1905 Howe served one term as a representative from Marion County in the state legislature.

the retirement of President Scot Butler, he was named the first Dean of Butler College. A short time later, in 1907, he was elected President of the University by the Board of Directors. Howe was to serve thirteen years as president (1907-1920).³⁷

Howe's years as president were difficult for him in a number of ways. He developed a close working relationship with the President of the Board, Hilton U. Brown. Their ties went back to shared experiences as students at Butler and neighbors in Irvington. Howe was a strong supporter of Brown's efforts to realize the full potential of Butler as a university for the City of Indianapolis as well as the leading Disciples school in the country. But Howe had neither the patience nor the perseverance of Brown and grew more and more frustrated with many of the members of the Board in their resistance to change. In addition, his many other interests prevented him from devoting full time to the presi-

³⁷It is evident from the available records that Howe had a number of outside interests in addition to serving as president. He was a vice president in his father-in-law's business. This required a growing amount of his time over the years. Because of this business interest he accepted a very modest salary as Butler President. Howe was also a very active layman in the Christian Church, holding offices and serving on several church boards and committees. He was also very active in the Church-sponsored Men and Millions Movement to raise money through a national campaign in support of Christian Church-sponsored education efforts. Howe never lost his interest in politics after serving in the Indiana General Assembly. He maintained close ties with a number of leading politicians in the state. He was an active Republican, and after he left Butler in 1920, he made an unsuccessful bid for the Republican nomination for Mayor of Indianapolis.

dency. This situation probably contributed to the strengthening of the power and authority of Hilton U. Brown. Howe never challenged the idea of the dual presidency.

James W. Putnam served three times as acting president of Butler until he was finally named president in his own right in 1934. He was acting president in 1920-21 between the leaving of Thomas Carr Howe and the appointment of Robert Judson Aley. He was very briefly acting president between the retirement of Aley and the arrival of Walter Scott Athearn in the Summer of 1931. He was named acting president for the third time when Athearn left in 1933. The Board named him president in 1934, and he served until illness forced him to retire in 1939.³⁸

Putnam's major role in this period was as the number two administrative officer of the University. He was Dean of the College and Vice President of the University from 1919 to 1934. He also served as registrar, director of the summer session, and director of the evening division -- the latter two posts for most of the time he was Dean of the College.

He was named Dean of the College in 1919 in an effort to relieve President Howe, probably part of the effort of Hilton

³⁸Putnam was a graduate with the Ph.B. degree from Illinois College in 1894. He earned the A.M. degree at Cornell University in 1903 and the Ph.D. at the University of Wisconsin in 1909. After teaching history and economics at a number of institutions including Illinois College, the University of Wisconsin, Northwestern University, and the University of Missouri, he came to Butler in 1909 as Professor of Economics.

U. Brown to convince Howe to stay on as President of the University. After serving as acting president during the interval between Howe and Aley, the board decided to recognize and reward Putnam's good service by naming him Vice President in addition to Dean of the College.

Putnam was evidently a man of high energy and capacity for work. As Dean he was responsible for student activities, being in effect a dean of students. He also was the administrative head of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and head of the program in economics and business. He did all of this without a secretary and almost without any other assistance. He always had the complete confidence of the presidents, the faculty, and the Board. During Putnam's years as President, Hilton U. Brown evidently considered him to be the perfect type of academician, both compliant and non-complaining.

Robert Judson Aley became President of Butler in 1921.³⁹ He was noted for his serenity and adaptability,

³⁹He was a native of Indiana having been born in Coal City in 1863. Aley attended Valparaiso University where he earned a B.S. degree and then taught public school in Spencer, Indiana. He then attended Indiana University where he received an A.B. in 1888 and a Master's degree two years later. It is claimed that he was the first person to graduate from Indiana University with a degree in mathematics. He then taught for several years at Vincennes University and Indiana University and while on leave earned the Ph.D. degree from the University of Pennsylvania. His major contribution was in the area of teaching mathematics to which he contributed a number of articles on the pedagogy of his discipline for public school teachers. His reputation was such that he became State Superintendent of Schools in 1909. It was from this position that he was named in 1910 President of the University

qualities which evidently served him well during the slow and laborious process of the transition of the University from the Irvington campus to the Fairview campus. On the surface, at least, he carried out the limited duties of the office of President of the University without complaint. Toward the end of his administration there is some evidence that he had grown weary of the overwhelming power and control of the Board of Directors and its powerful president, Hilton U. Brown. His negotiated retirement during a crisis over accreditation with the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools may have been precipitated by a perception of disloyalty on his part by certain key members of the Board. He left the presidency of the University little changed from how he received it.⁴⁰

The same can not be said of the tumultuous presidency of Walter Scott Athearn. Athearn appeared to the Board of Directors to be the ideal selection as President of Butler University in 1931. He was a nationally known Christian religious leader and educator, a prolific writer and advocate of the use of social science methodologies in education. Athearn's prominence in church circles and his widely known writings on religious education issues appealed to the religious sentiments of the majority of the Butler Board. He

of Maine. He remained there for over ten years when he returned to Indiana in 1921 as President of Butler University.

⁴⁰James W. Putnam, "The Death of Robert Judson Aley, President Emeritus," Butler Alumni Quarterly 24 (January 1936): 227-31.

also had strong credentials as an academic administrator. Athearn appears to have been very high principled, but somewhat rigid in his opinions and perceptions of the situation at Butler. His abrupt and confrontational style and his suspicion of conspiracy and wrong doing on the part of others in the Butler community led almost immediatly to conflict. As we will see in the last chapter, his challenge to the Board's authority and his unbending moralism would lead to conflict and the end of an era of institutional growth and promise for Butler University.

Other Key Offices of the University

There were two offices of the Board and University which were historically important in the administration of the University. They were Secretary to the Board of Directors and Treasurer of the University. Up until World War I these offices were held by different men. In 1916 they were combined into a single office with the appointment of Barton W. Cole as Secretary-Treasurer. This came about because of the death of the Treasurer Winfield Scot Moffett in 1915 and the retirement of the long time Secretary to the Board, Chauncey Butler in July of the same year. Chauncey Butler was a son of the founder Ovid Butler and had served the University for many years as a member of the Board and as Secretary. Cole served in the dual role until 1918 when he

suddenly resigned, probably because the Board would not grant him a requested pay raise.⁴¹

After Cole's resignation, Stanley Sellick was named secretary-treasurer in October, 1918, and served until 1923. After an interim in which H. L. Clevenger served as Acting Secretary and P. H. Clifford, a Board member, served as Treasurer, Charles W. Wilson was named Secretary, and Elijah Johnson, Professor of Mathematics, was named Treasurer in late 1923. Wilson continued to serve as secretary until 1934 when he became Bursar of the University.⁴²

It is not always clear as to the responsibility of each of these offices. The Secretary to the Board, in addition to keeping the minutes of the Board, was also an officer of the University. He handled some of the business affairs of the institution, including all purchasing of equipment and supplies. Essentially his role was that of a business manager. The Treasurer of the University had responsibility for the supervision of all accounts and keeping track of the endowment. Much of the endowment was invested in short term loans and mortgages. It was the job of the treasurer to keep track of these investments and to keep the Board informed on their performance. This position became less important with the emergence of the office of Financial Secretary after 1920.

⁴¹Ibid., July 14, 1915; Butler Catalogs, 1915-16 through 1918-19.

⁴²Butler Catalogs, 1922-23 through 1933-34.

As the financial needs of the university grew with rising enrollments after the turn of the century it became more important than ever to have someone spend as much time as possible on fund raising. In the past the board usually hired someone part time to serve as an official agent or fund raiser for the university. The availability of financial support from philanthropists like Andrew Carnegie and John D. Rockefeller was also an important motivation to have someone spend more time in this activity. The requirement to raise matching funds in order to qualify for such gifts was yet another factor leading to the necessity to have a regular fund raiser. The Campaign for \$250,000 in 1906-07 demonstrated the necessity of having competent leadership and staff for success in fund raising at this level. Thomas Carr Howe's success in this campaign led the Board of Directors to believe that he could continue this success even after he became President in 1908. The nation wide church supported fund raising effort for Christian colleges known as the Men and Millions Movement of 1913-1919 further proved the need for Butler to have a full time fund raiser.

Established by Board action in January 1920, the position of Financial Secretary was intended primarily to be a chief fund raiser or development officer for the Greater Butler.⁴³ Within a few years, however, the office developed into the administrative arm of the Board of Directors with

⁴³Minutes, January 16, 1920.

its offices located in downtown Indianapolis rather than on the campus. The "Downtown Office" became the headquarters of the Butler Foundation, from 1922, and the Corporation for Physical Education and Athletics, from 1927, as well as serving as the secretariat of the Board itself.⁴⁴ In effect there emerged a dual administration of Butler University.

The Dual Presidency

Strange as it seems, there was little concern about the dual nature of the administrative structure of the University before the North Central Association accreditation review of 1928 and the presidency of Walter Scott Athearn from 1931-1932. This is so probably due to the overwhelmingly local nature of the institution up to this time. It also relates to the qualities possessed by the people who ran the institution and the personal relationships among these same figures.

By 1915 Hilton U. Brown had been President of the Board of Directors for twelve years and a director since 1888.⁴⁵ He was the seventh President of the Board of Directors, having succeeded A. F. Armstrong in 1903. One of his first re-

⁴⁴Ibid., February 6, 1922; May 5, 1927.

⁴⁵Brown became a director just eight years after graduating from Butler in 1880. His only experience of higher education had been Butler University. He had grown up in Indianapolis, entered Butler in the preparatory department and was well acquainted with nearly everyone associated with the institution since the mid 1870's.

sponsibilities as Board President was finding a successor to Scot Butler as President of the University. Butler was stepping down in 1904 after twelve years as President. The choice fell upon Winfred Garrison, who was President for only two years due to very poor health.⁴⁶ Brown's brother Demarchus, Professor of Greek and Librarian, agreed to be Acting President until Scot Butler returned to assume the office again from 1906 to 1907. The office was finally stabilized when Thomas Carr Howe was named President in 1907.⁴⁷

Four presidents in three years probably involved Hilton U. Brown more extensively than usual in the day to day operations of the university. This period also saw the emergence of Thomas Carr Howe as a key member of the faculty and of the Board. A graduate of the Class of 1889, and son-in-law of A. F. Armstrong of Kokomo, Howe became Armstrong Professor of Germanic Languages in 1890, a chair established for him by his father-in-law. After Armstrong retired from the Board of Directors, Howe took over his seat as a Director as well as a member of the faculty.⁴⁸ As mentioned above, he had proven himself to be particularly effective in completing the last minute effort to meet the goal of the \$250,000

⁴⁶Garrison lived to be 94 years and died in 1969, BUA Biographical file.

⁴⁷Minutes, 1906-08.

⁴⁸Howe's brother Will was also a member of the Butler faculty. He served as Demia Butler Professor of English until 1906 when he went to Indiana University where he served as a distinguished professor of English for many years. "Howe, Will," Butler Biographical File, BUA.

Campaign in March, 1907. When Scot Butler returned to the presidency in 1907, Howe was named Dean of the College to assist with the administrative load.⁴⁹

Howe's only experience of academic administration was at Butler. Based upon what is available of their personal correspondence, Howe and Hilton U. Brown developed a close working relationship. Side by side in Howe's presidential correspondence there are official letters, personal letters, and notes between the two men which indicate a close relationship and one that involved considerable frankness on various people and issues.⁵⁰ Brown and Howe, above all, shared a common vision for Butler. Their desire to see Butler as an institution serving Indianapolis and the region drew them into a partnership that slowly but surely moved the Board of Directors toward their vision.

The personal and emotional cost was high for Howe. He had other interests; there was the tragic suicide of his daughter and he evinced growing displeasure with the opposition to the Greater Butler idea. By 1918 he began to feel that he wanted to leave the presidency.

The load has grown exceedingly heavy and my connection with the college has been very costly. You may recall Will Irwin's saying that he wondered that I remained here. Well, it has been a pleasant connection and I have felt that somebody should give something of himself toward bringing the college into the position which it de-

⁴⁹Minutes, May 5, 1907.

⁵⁰Thomas Carr Howe - Hilton U. Brown correspondence in Howe Papers, Box 26, BUA.

serves to occupy. But in all truth, Hilton, I should be much better off financially if in these last eleven years I had paid the salary of the president of Butler College outright and gone about my other affairs.⁵¹

On the other hand, the frustration both men experienced with the Board seemed to bring out the best in Brown. He became a sort of evangelist and gadfly, continuously reminding the Board of its responsibility and obligation to meet the challenges confronting Butler.⁵² Where Howe became unhappy, Brown seemed to gain strength and perseverance.

A factor that strengthened the authority and control of the President of the Board was the apathy of most of the directors on the Board, to wit: the difficulty in achieving quorums for many Board meetings.⁵³ Rarely were all Board members present at any one meeting. More often a meeting convened with a minimum quorum of eleven, or maybe twelve to thirteen, members. A quorum was frequently only reached through proxy votes.⁵⁴ To get around this problem some meet-

⁵¹Thomas Carr Howe to Hilton U. Brown, October 26, 1918. Howe Papers, Box 26, BUA.

⁵²Brown's annual reports to the Board in the Minutes of the Board in June or July of each year of this period reflect his fervent commitment and constant urging of the Board to act.

⁵³A quorum was normally eleven members of the Board of Directors when the Board had twenty-one living members. Vacancies due to death or resignation were not always immediately filled, so there were times when fewer than eleven made a quorum.

⁵⁴Minutes, 1916-17. Of the eleven meetings of the Board for 1916 and 1917 one had to be postponed because it lacked a quorum, another lacked a quorum and met "informally", one had a quorum only because there was a proxy, four just made a quorum of eleven, one met with only

ings were simply called informal or executive committee meetings, with the minutes approved at the next meeting that had a quorum.⁵⁵

A related problem was the ineffectiveness of many Board committees. The by-laws of 1903 provided for eight standing committees.⁵⁶ Although these by-laws were in effect until revised in 1921, the number of committees often varied from year to year. There were also a number of ad hoc committees appointed by the President of the Board to deal with special situations. The 1903 by-laws also provided for an executive committee, but it was not formally constituted until it was rediscovered with the growing frustration over the lack of quorums at Board meetings.

The President of the Board appointed all committees and the chairmen with the approval of the Board.⁵⁷ All directors were appointed to at least one committee, with some members frequently serving on two or even three committees.

seven members present, two meetings had 12 members present, and one meeting had 16 members present.

⁵⁵After the Board was reminded that the by-laws allowed for an executive committee, this became a convenient mechanism around the quorum problem. Minutes, June 12, 1918; January 22, 1919.

⁵⁶Charter and By-Laws of Butler University (Indianapolis: Hecker Brothers, 1903), 9-10. The Committees in 1915-16 were: Finance and Auditing; Buildings, Grounds, and Real Estate; Library, Apparatus, and Cabinets; Faculty, Salaries, and Condition of Schools; Affiliations and Relations with Educational and Religious Interests; Judiciary and Claims; College Residence; Endowment; and Equipment. Butler College Bulletin 3, no. 3 (March 1916): 5.

⁵⁷Charter and By-Laws, 1903.

Brown was always careful to have majorities that were sympathetic to his views on such key committees as Finance, Buildings and Grounds, and Faculty, Schools and Salaries.⁵⁸

The committees apparently met only when there was some matter to be dealt with. The Board minutes reveal few regular reports from committees at Board meetings, and there are no extant records of committee meetings except for a few minutes of the Faculty and Salaries Committee and the Finance Committee which can occasionally be found among the regular Board minutes. Available evidence points to rather inactive Board committees, and general complacency of the members of the Board of Directors. This situation further contributed to the concentration of power and decision making into the hands of the President of the Board and his immediate circle of confidants.⁵⁹

⁵⁸In his appointments to these committees, Brown tried to appoint directors where their interests and expertise would come into play. Typical of his appointment process was the academic year 1915-16. The Finance and Auditing Committee was chaired by William G. Irwin, the main benefactor of Butler for four decades and an, at first, reluctant supporter of Brown's vision for Butler. Irwin was continuously on this committee for over 45 years. The Judiciary and Claims Committee always had an attorney or a judge as a member. In 1915-16 there were two judges, James L. Clark and Marshall Hacker, on the Board; both served on this committee. Ministers tended to be assigned to the Committee on Affiliations and Relations with Educational and Religious Interests. The Reverends Z. T. Sweeney, Thomas W. Grafton, Girney L. Reeves, and W. H. Book all served on this committee in 1915-16. Butler College Bulletin 3, no.3, (March 1916): 4-5.

⁵⁹For details about Board committees, see the authors's "The Development of Board Officers, Committees, and Other Entities of Butler University." 1992, BUA.

In addition to the standing committees, the President of the Board appointed special or ad hoc committees. This tactic was commonly used in dealing with special problems or particularly important issues. The more important the committee, the more likely Brown would appoint himself as a member or at least as an ad hoc member. A good example of a special problem committee was the Site Committee of 1917. In the establishment of this ad hoc committee, Brown selected William G. Irwin, Judge James L. Clark, Thomas C. Howe, George F. Quick, and Allan Philputt. All were men who were sympathetic with his own views or whose support was crucial to arriving at a favorable decision.⁶⁰

Possibly the most important factor in the emergence of Hilton U. Brown as the dominant figure in this period of Butler's history is the weakness of the office of President of the University in comparison with the same office at other colleges and universities of the time. None of the five men who served as President of the University from 1903 to 1931 was able to establish the office of President of the University as the chief executive office of the university. They either lacked the leadership skills and competence or

⁶⁰Howe, Irwin, and Clark were sympathetic to finding a new campus site. Clark, Quick, and Philputt had important connections in Indianapolis. Philputt was the minister of the Central Christian Church, the largest Disciples' congregation in the state. Minutes, January 26, 1917. "Philputt, Allan" BUA Biographical File, BUA.

the desire and opportunity necessary to make the office what it had become in most other American institutions.

Scholarly and mild mannered, Scot Butler was typical of the old time college president of the nineteenth century. Garrison's health problems never permitted him an opportunity to demonstrate what kind of leadership he might have provided. Howe had his special relationship with Brown and appeared to work on a more or less equal basis with Brown. Actually Brown emerged early on as the dominant member of this partnership. Robert Judson Aley, president from 1921 to 1931, presents more of a mystery in that he came to Butler with considerable experience as President of the University of Maine. Despite this experience, he did not assume a strong leadership position vis a vis Hilton U. Brown or the "Downtown Office" headed by John Atherton. It was to take a crisis over accreditation to bring to the presidency of the University a man of strong views about what the office of President of the University should be. Walter Scott Athearn attempted to make the office into the chief administrative officer of the University. In the process he ran directly into the established power of Hilton U. Brown.

The men who held the office of president of the University through the first fifty years of Butler's history were apparently content with the limited role granted them by the Charter and By-laws. There is no reason to assume that the men who held the office up to 1907 were somehow lacking in leadership qualities and therefore failed to make the of-

fice into what it had or was becoming at most other colleges and universities. As long as the institution remained small and close knit, as it was until after 1910, there was no reason to change the relationship of the President of the University with the Board and its officers. It was only with the strain brought on by the ambition of a grander vision that this structure began to show its weakness.

Chapter 2

To Build a Greater University

On the late Saturday afternoon of October 28, 1933, Walter Scott Athearn, President of Butler University, received in his home three members of the Board of Directors and was informed by their spokesman, Mr. Hilton U. Brown, that the Board had just adjourned a meeting at which it voted to declare a vacancy in the office of President of Butler University. Thus, Walter Scott Athearn found himself dismissed as President of Butler University after only a little over two years and three months in office.

This incident is significant not so much for the abruptness and the dramatic way in which Athearn was dismissed, but for the circumstances and the events leading up to this action, and perhaps to the consequences of the event. This chapter begins an examination of these circumstances and events with the story of how the University came to the decision in 1921 to relocate Butler from Irvington, an east side suburb of Indianapolis where the University had been since 1875, to Fairview Park on the North side of the City. The story begins with a renewal of the original vision of Butler as a major urban university serving the Midwest.

The concept of a "Greater Butler" was not new in the World War I period. It was part of a recurring pattern of effort undertaken by the Board of Directors since the found-

ing of the institution by Ovid Butler. From time to time members of the Board would recall Ovid Butler's statement in the 1850 Charter describing the university as an institution providing various programs and serving the whole region of the Old North West. Despite the failure of previous efforts, there was an element within the Butler leadership in 1915 that was confident that Butler could achieve the goals stated by Ovid Butler in the original Charter.

Not long after Hilton U. Brown became President of the Board of Directors in 1903, he began reminding his fellow Board members of the need for Butler to grow and become the university for Indianapolis. It is most likely that Brown, as a young Director in the 1890's, was a supporter of the establishment of the failed University of Indianapolis in 1896.¹ The University of Indianapolis was an attempt to establish a major urban university through the federation of a number of already existing private (some proprietary) institutions in the City.² The University of Indianapolis' weakness was its federated structure that permitted the constituent colleges nearly complete autonomy.³ The structure amounted to little more than a set of affiliations among the

¹Minutes of the Board of Directors, January 8, 1896; April 8, 1896.

²Hilton U. Brown, A Book of Memories (Indianapolis: Butler University, 1951) 86-92; Edward Scribner Ames, "The University Idea," Butler Collegian 13 (November 1897): 46.

³"Editorial," Butler Collegian 13 (February 1898): 199-200; Minutes of the Board of Directors, April 18, 1896.

various institutions. Each of the institutions remained in its original location. The governing board of the University of Indianapolis was made up of representatives from the member boards of trustees. All of the affiliated colleges were financially weak which meant they were dependent upon enrollments for income. The collective financial weakness of the institutions and the lack of strong central administration led inevitably to its failure. Although, the idea of a University of Indianapolis was not abandoned immediately, there was little left except a name by 1905.⁴

Once it became clear that the idea of a University of Indianapolis was not going to succeed,⁵ the efforts of Butler University's Board became more focused upon the immediate needs of improving faculty salaries, increasing endowment, and improving facilities.

Hilton U. Brown recognized that Butler could be the locus of any new effort to establish a major university in

⁴The University of Indianapolis continues to be referred to in various Butler publications and in the Minutes of the Board of Directors from time to time well into the 1920's when the idea was finally abandoned after one last effort to revive it in the early 1920's. Then Butler College again calls itself Butler University. It is interesting to note that in his regular remarks about Butler, Hilton U. Brown would continue to lapse into a familiar reference to the "college" when mentioning Butler.

⁵The final blow to the University of Indianapolis was the initial loss of the medical schools to Purdue University in 1905 and their final loss to Indiana University in 1908. Minutes of the Board of Directors, July 8, 1903; Thomas D. Clark, Indiana University: Midwestern Pioneer, vol. 2, In Mid-Passage (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1973), 69-92.

the city, but that it had to have a new site if it was to grow and realize its potential. This was the critical factor that had to be resolved if the idea was to succeed.⁶

However, at the beginning in 1903 of his long tenure as President of the Board, Brown was more concerned about the financial needs of Butler.

Rejuvenation and Re-assessment

By the end of Scot Butler's Presidency of Butler in 1903, there was growing concern about the finances of the university. The end of each year brought deficits requiring special fund drives or special gifts from among the Directors to make ends meet. A major effort to resolve this problem was begun in 1904 with the launching of the "Campaign to Raise \$250,000" for endowment.⁷ The successful completion of the campaign in 1908 brought attention to Butler College and served as an example for other colleges which sought the advice of the then Dean of Faculty Thomas Carr Howe on how to plan such a campaign.⁸ Howe headed up the last minute effort to raise the final \$80,000 needed to meet the campaign goal. The success of the campaign led to Howe's being offered the

⁶Minutes, May 24, 1918.

⁷Minutes, July 2, 1906; July 13, 1904; July 8, 1908.

⁸Frederick A. Henry to Hiram College Trustees, October 30, 1907. Howe Papers Box 1, file 16 BUA. Henry was Chairman of the Hiram College Board of Trustees and arranged for Howe to come to a special Trustee's meeting in Cleveland to describe the successful "Campaign for \$250,000".

presidency of the College in 1908. His success as a fund raiser also led to his active participation in the national fund raising campaign of the Disciples known as the Men and Millions Movement.⁹

Even more important to Butler was gaining the support of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and the General Education Board of John D. Rockefeller. A Carnegie grant of \$25,000 helped to top off the "Campaign for \$250,000" in 1907, and Scot Butler became the first Butler faculty member to be qualified in 1907 for a Carnegie retirement annuity.¹⁰

The desire to qualify for the Carnegie approved list of colleges and for a grant from the General Education Board brought about a significant change in the Butler Charter.¹¹ The Carnegie Foundation required colleges to meet a specific set of standards such as a minimum endowment of \$200,000 and nonsectarian control. Neither Carnegie nor the General Education Board would recognize Butler as long as the insti-

⁹Butler was to benefit from this national fund raising effort of the Christian Church, but not, as had been hoped, to the extent of solving the problem of annual budget deficits. The Men and Millions Movement raised nationally \$5,300,000 from 1913 to 1918, of which \$300,000 came to Butler. Henry K. Shaw, Hoosier Disciples: A Comprehensive History of the Christian Churches (Disciples of Christ) in Indiana ([St. Louis]: Bethany Press for the Association of Christian Churches in Indiana, 1966), 316, 345; Minutes, July 14, 1915; Howe to Brown, July 9, 1918. Howe Papers, Box 26, BUA.

¹⁰Minutes of the Board of Directors, July 11, 1906; July 14, 1909.

¹¹Ibid., July 8, 1908; November 26, 1915.

tution remained what appeared to be a proprietary stock corporation.¹²

Another problem in the Charter was the limitation of \$500,000 on the value of the capital stock which represented a large part of Butler's endowment. This situation made it hard to meet Carnegie's requirement because there was considerable difficulty in accounting for all of the stock. After a forceful appeal from Hilton U. Brown, the Board of Directors agreed to seek legislation from the Indiana General Assembly to change the Charter. The goals of the proposed changes in the bylaws were first to make the Board a self-perpetuating body and second to allow the Board to recall all stock.¹³ Thomas Carr Howe led the effort to get the needed legislation through the General Assembly. The task was successfully completed when Senate Bill 244 was passed by the legislature and it was signed into law by the governor in March, 1909.¹⁴ With the change in the Charter, Carnegie advised the Association of American Universities to add Butler to their approved list.¹⁵ Carnegie Foundation approval was

¹²Ernest Victor Hollis, Philanthropic Foundations and Higher Education (New York: Columbia University Press, 1938), 31, 54-6, 137-39.

¹³Minutes, July 8, 1908; April 14, 1909.

¹⁴Charter and By-laws of Butler University. (Indianapolis, 1941) 16-25; T. C. Howe to Adolph Seidensticker, February 26, 1909. Howe Papers, Box 2, BUA; T. C. Howe to Edward Lord, March 6, 1909. Howe Papers, Box 2, file 13, BUA.

¹⁵Minutes, July 14, 1915; Wm. S. Learned to T. C. Howe, March 31, 1915. Howe Papers, Box 24, BUA.

also instrumental in Butler being elected to membership in the Association of American Colleges and for the adoption of new bookkeeping practices.¹⁶

Rapid Growth in Enrollment Begins

Annual student enrollment began to increase markedly for Butler after 1910. In a letter to Hilton U. Brown in the Fall of 1908, President Howe gave the enrollment as 193 students, 99 of whom were men. By 1915 enrollment had grown to 381, and in October 1916, Howe reported to the Board of Directors that the College was at capacity with 401 students enrolled for the Fall.¹⁷ This pattern of increasing enrollments was to continue up until the Great Depression with only a few years of declining and static enrollments during and just after the World War I years from 1916 to 1919. Butler was not prepared for this unexpected increase in students. The limited facilities and space on the Irvington campus would not allow the college to respond easily to the continuing increases in enrollments.

In general, the increases were part of a national trend of growing college enrollments.¹⁸ Nearly all higher

¹⁶Minutes, April 28, 1915; July 14, 1915; and August 14, 1915.

¹⁷Minutes, August 2, 1916; Oct. 18, 1916.

¹⁸Seymour E. Harris, A Statistical Portrait of Higher Education (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1972), 412-13.

education institutions in Indiana were experiencing similar increases in enrollment.¹⁹ Butler, however, was unique in that, being located in the state's capital and largest city and with no state university in the city, it was the first choice of many local students who preferred to live at home or needed to work their way through college. Despite growing enrollments, the College continued to run annual operating deficits, which for 1915-16 amounted to \$9,475.22. President Howe and Hilton U. Brown repeatedly brought this situation to the attention of the Board with the hope that a way could be found to provide for all of these students.²⁰ The Board was slow to react to the obvious need to raise money, expand facilities, and add faculty.²¹ A number of factors -- including growing enrollments, community expectations, lack of space for the College to grow, the need for additional faculty, continuing annual deficits, a small endowment, and differences among the Board of Directors as to the role and purpose of the College -- contributed to a growing sense of concern about the future of Butler in the years 1915 to 1919.

President Howe was concerned about the lack of consensus on the Board and at the difficulty of getting decisions due to the frequent lack of a quorum at Board meetings. By about 1917 Howe had reached the point where he wanted to re-

¹⁹Eber W. Jeffrey, "History of Private Normal Schools in Indiana" (Ph.D. diss., New York University, 1932), 35.

²⁰Minutes, July 14, 1915 and June 14, 1916.

²¹Ibid., August 2, 1916.

sign. He submitted a letter of resignation in February, 1918, but Brown talked him out of this action and convinced Howe to postpone his decision for awhile longer. Howe did finally resign the presidency in the summer of 1920 and from the Board in 1921.²²

Among the factors precipitating the growing sense that a critical juncture in Butler's history had been reached were the differences in the perceived purpose and role of the institution by the college's various constituencies. Particularly important is the perception of Butler by many Disciples as their college. This perception was further reinforced by the overwhelming presence of Disciples on the Board of Directors. In 1915 the Board members were nearly all Disciples, and at least five were ministers of churches or held some position within the Christian Church.²³

In addition to the ministers on the Board, the two wealthiest members of the Board, Marshall T. Reeves and William G. Irwin, were strong supporters of the Church as

²²T. C. Howe to Hilton U. Brown, January 6, 1917; T. C. Howe to John M. Judah, July 25, 1917; T. C. Howe to Hilton U. Brown, October 26, 1918; T. C. Howe to Hilton U. Brown, March 11, 1920. Howe Papers, Box 26, BUA; Minutes of the Board of Directors, June 16, 1920; April 13, 1921; "Thomas Carr Howe Presidency Assessed," Butler Alumna Quarterly 9 (October 1920): 187.

²³Among the twenty-one members of the Board of Directors listed in the Annual Catalogue, 1915-16, W. H. Book, Thomas W. Grafton, Allan B. Philputt, Ginnie L. Reeves, and Z. T. Sweeney were all prominent Disciple ministers. In a questionnaire completed for the Carnegie Foundation the religious affiliations of the Directors were described as all Disciples except one. Howe Papers, Box 24, BUA.

well as of the College. Reeves was the founder of the Christian Foundation for support of religious education and had recently contributed \$25,000 towards the last \$80,000 needed to meet the goal of the \$250,000 Campaign.²⁴ Irwin and his family were probably the wealthiest supporters of Butler.²⁵ His father Joseph Irwin had offered Butler \$100,000 if the remaining \$150,000 of the \$250,000 Campaign was raised by March, 1907. Will Irwin's support was essential to any plan for Butler's expansion. Hilton U. Brown, recognizing this, always sought to link Irwin's strong support for the Church and ministerial education with the expansion of Butler. William G. Irwin had very close ties to Butler. He was a member of the Class of 1889 as was Howe. His father, Joseph Irwin, had been a long time Director of the college in the late nineteenth century, while two other members of the Board in 1915, Rev. Z. T. Sweeney and Hugh Thomas Miller, were close relations. With so many connections to Butler, Irwin's interest seemed assured, but his support was frequently linked to the Church and religious education. Unless new donors could be found, the financial support of Irwin and Reeves was essential to the creation of the greater Butler.

²⁴Shaw, Hoosier Disciples, 308; Minutes of the Board of Directors, June 14, 1907.

²⁵Shaw, Hoosier Disciples, 349.

While this fact was probably recognized by nearly all trustees, administrators, and faculty of Butler,²⁶ Howe, on the other hand, was not afraid to show considerable irritation with Irwin, Reeves, and other Board members to whom he referred to as the "Columbus Group". This group included the Irwin family block of Will Irwin, Z. T. Sweeney, and Hugh Thomas Miller, and four other directors from Columbus, Indiana: Marshall T. Reeves, Ginnie L. Reeves, W. H. Book, and Marshall Hacker. An example of Howe's irritation can be found in some personal correspondence between Howe and Brown in 1918 in which Howe expresses his frustration with Irwin over a recent controversy about the nomination of new directors to the Board.²⁷ Evidently, Irwin was pressing for the nomination of John Canaday, a Disciples minister from Anderson, for one of the two vacancies on the Board in 1918. Howe was hoping for some real change on the Board to help press for the greater Butler. Canaday represented just another ally for the "Columbus group". Howe wrote privately to Brown:

. . . . Now I do not know what to say. I do not exactly feel like taking this thing up with Will Irwin myself. T. Grafton was pastor at Anderson for a number of years and knows John Canaday very well. It is perfectly absurd to put him on the Board, although he is a very nice gentleman. . . . My impression is that those people are anxious to secure and control the Board so they can do

²⁶Minutes, July 8, 1914.

²⁷Howe to Brown, October 26, 1918. Howe Papers, Box 26, BUA.

as they please. I am getting pretty tired of their doing nothing. . . .²⁸

The above reflects Howe's continuing frustration with the Columbus group's resistance to the idea of Butler as a larger, more comprehensive university serving the city of Indianapolis as well as the Church.

The delicate balance between a strong church-oriented group on the Board and the broader vision of Butler of another group led by Howe and Brown was maintained through the close personal relationships among these men and their common interests in the Church and the College. It should be remembered that Brown and those who supported his vision for Butler were not at odds with the Columbus group over the role of the Church in the College, but rather on the issue of the effect upon the Church's influence and control if the College became a large urban institution. Irwin was the key to the balance on the Board, and it was important for Brown to keep Irwin involved and satisfied with the College in order to swing him over to support Brown's broader vision.

Probably the most critical problem that needed to be confronted by the Board was the developing space problem on the Irvington campus. Butler simply could not easily expand at the Irvington site. The campus of twenty-five acres was hemmed in by two railroad lines and the surrounding community. The College, which had been in Irvington since 1875,

²⁸Howe to Brown, February 17, 1918. Howe Papers, Box 26, BUA.

had close ties to the Irvington community. Most of the faculty and staff lived there. Many residents feared that the loss of the College would be a final blow to the once prestigious area.²⁹ An Irvington citizens group made a plea to the Butler Board not to leave. The Board did, in fact, consider a couple of possible sites in and near Irvington before making its decision to purchase Fairview Park in 1922.³⁰

A number of alumni were also concerned about moving Butler from Irvington. Although some alumni actively opposed the move, another group of prominent and influential alumni formed a strong nucleus of support for moving the campus and were important advocates for a greater Butler.³¹

Representatives of this group formed the Committee of Twenty-five that presented to the Board in January 1919 a resolution containing a set of recommendations.³² Out of this alumni committee emerged a number of future directors who became key figures in the development of Butler. Committee of Twenty-

²⁹In fact, Irvington had been in decline for a number of years and the departure of Butler probably did not contribute that much more to its continuing decline. Timothy J. Sehr, "Three Gilded Age Suburbs of Indianapolis: Irvington, Brightwood, and Woodruff Place," Indiana Magazine of History 77 (December, 1981): 319-20; Jean Brown Wagoner, "Memories of Irvington," Irvington Historical Society Collected Papers (1970-1972): 30-1; Jeanette Covert Nolan, Hoosier City, the Story of Indianapolis (New York: Julian Messner, 1943), 282.

³⁰Minutes, July 12, 1922.

³¹"Alumni Expressions on the Location of Butler College," Butler Alumna Quarterly 11, (October 1922): 238-44.

³²Minutes, January 16, 1920.

five members R. F. Davidson, Emsley Johnson, and Lee Burns all became Directors in 1921 and helped swing the support of the Board behind relocation of the campus. This group was also interested in upgrading intercollegiate athletics at Butler. They wanted Butler to be competitive with the best athletic programs in the Midwest. They soon became very influential in developing and controlling Butler athletics, especially football.³³

A major factor in the "greater Butler idea" was the City of Indianapolis. Many civic leaders wanted a university to serve the higher education needs of the city and to provide the prestige that such an institution would bring to a city with high ambitions. The University of Indianapolis had been the hope of a number of these leaders twenty years before, but it failed. It is not clear whether or not the City had a role in the success or failure of this institution. Some other leaders in the city and in the legislature wanted to move Indiana University, or at least the professional schools of that institution, from Bloomington to Indianapolis.³⁴ Indiana University responded to some of this demand by establishing in 1916 an Indiana University Extension Center in Indianapolis.³⁵ The leadership of Butler was always

³³John W. Atherton, "College Conditions," Butler Alumnae Quarterly 9 (October 1920): 190.

³⁴Thomas D. Clark, Indiana University: Midwestern Pioneer, vol. 1, The Early Years (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1970) 59-60.

concerned about any suggestion that the state universities might establish a branch campus or programs in Indianapolis.³⁶ Clearly the opportunity was present for someone to fill the higher education needs of Indianapolis. It was this role that the supporters of a "Greater Butler" wanted their institution to fulfill.

The Decision to Find a New Site

In August 1916, Hilton U. Brown announced to the Board of Directors that the Special Committee on Building and Site had secured Mr. George E. Kessler of St. Louis to do a confidential study on the suitability of the Irvington campus to continue to meet the needs of Butler.³⁷ Kessler was a landscape architect and urban planner who had been working for some time with the City of Indianapolis. His reputation as a leading urban and university planner was well established throughout the United States.³⁸ Kessler's report was presented to the Board of Director's regular quarterly meeting on January 26, 1917.³⁹

³⁵Robert E. Cavanaugh, Indiana University Extension, Its Origin, Progress, Pit Falls, and Personalities, (Bloomington: n.p. 1960), 8.

³⁶Minutes, January 24, 1921.

³⁷Ibid., August 2, 1916.

³⁸"Kessler, George Edward," in The National Cyclopaedia of American Biography vol. 20, (1929), p. 296-7.

³⁹Minutes, January 26, 1917.

The Kessler report clearly marks the beginning of serious consideration of relocating Butler to a new site. Suggestions by Brown on the possibility of the expansion or relocation of the campus were not pursued very vigorously by the Board until after this report was presented. Kessler's report begins with a statement of facts about Butler and Indianapolis as he sees them.

In Indianapolis there is no institution serving the same field. The work so far done by Butler College proves the necessity for and the value of just this service, not only to Indianapolis, but to the State and, in a broader way, to the church with which this church [sic] is affiliated.

It is evident that Butler College has established itself firmly in the field it occupies. It is also evident, however, that the limitations placed upon it through the absence of ample means and facilities, both in ground space and equipment, has brought the institution practically to a standstill.

Consideration of a service such as this institution renders leads to the conclusion that unless the College progresses in every sense, at least in proportion to the increase in the field it occupies, that some other institution of similar character will supplant and suppress it.⁴⁰

This part of the report clearly supported the long standing view of Brown and Howe and probably strengthened their efforts to convince key members of the board such as Irwin and Marshall Reeves to support an expanded vision of Butler. But even more important were Kessler's conclusions on the Irvington campus site.

⁴⁰Kessler to Board of Trustees, January 16, 1917.
Kessler Report, 1917, BUA.

The fundamental question of space within which to supply all the needs of the school at once brings into question the problem of site. The only conclusion that can wisely be reached in this connection is that the College must be placed upon an adequate site, which is not physically or economically possible on the present site when all its surroundings and attendant conditions are fully considered.⁴¹

Kessler described the limitations of the Irvington campus due to being restricted by railroad lines on two sides of the campus, the prospect of a major railroad yard being developed near by, and the expense of acquiring already developed residential property. He further pointed out that even if the College were to attempt to expand at the present site the declining neighborhood would make the school less attractive and more unpleasant to students. Kessler also put considerable emphasis upon the beauty of surroundings as conducive to the right kind of atmosphere for students to learn and faculty to teach. Kessler described the characteristics of a good site for the College.

If you conclude that my positive recommendation to change sites is correct, than it will be necessary to assure a site comprising ample area to serve not only the need of the building space and its attendant setting, but as well the necessary space for recreational service, having in mind the probable material expansion of the work of the College from period to period as the community develops.⁴²

Kessler pointed out a number of possible sites within the city. He cautioned, however, that the selection should

⁴¹Ibid.

⁴²Ibid.

take into consideration such elements as the preservation of the spirit that already existed among the students and faculty at the current campus and the need to consider the pattern of transportation in all forms. He also reminded the Board that the present campus had to be maintained and improved to the extent of meeting the needs for adequate facilities and equipment until the new campus was built. The importance of the decision facing the Board was reflected in these words from the report.

Since the question of life or death of the institution is involved in this entire investment, it is evidently therefore the task of the present Board to determine whether to go forward, and if it determines to go forward, then it would undoubtedly be the finest of opportunities for the Board of today to take the initial steps toward the establishment of what would become one of the great educational institutions of the country.⁴³

After hearing rhetoric like this read to the Board, Hilton U. Brown immediately used the opportunity to get the Board to accept the report and proceeded to set up to two committees to act on the recommendations. The first committee was a new site committee with Judge James L. Clark, President Thomas C. Howe, George F. Quick, Allan B. Philputt, and Brown himself as members and Will Irwin as chairman. The second committee was to "consider some additional room for the present needs of the college." The members were Howe,

⁴³Ibid.

Marshall C. Hacker, Perry Clifford, Rev. Thomas W. Grafton, James B. Percy, and Rev. Girnie Reeves.⁴⁴

Despite the enthusiasm and support generated among the directors by the Kessler report in January 1917, the acquisition of a new site was not to happen until Fairview Park was purchased in November, 1922. There were a number of reasons why it took almost six years to find and acquire a site.

World War I was probably the main reason for the delay in pursuing new site possibilities at this time,⁴⁵ although it is likely that those members of the Board least inclined toward the Kessler recommendations welcomed the postponement of action upon the issue. By April 1917, when the United States entered the War, preparedness for the War had already begun at Butler with the suspension of athletics and the substitution of military training for men and Red Cross training for women.⁴⁶ During the summer of 1917 Brown tried to motivate the Board toward moving ahead with the search for a new site, but there was no support for his efforts, probably due to the increasing attention of everyone on what was happening in Europe.⁴⁷

⁴⁴Minutes, January 26, 1917.

⁴⁵"Butler's 'New Era,' " Butler Alumna Quarterly 8 (April 1919): 76.

⁴⁶Minutes, April 18, 1917; July 11, 1917.

⁴⁷Ibid.; War File, 1917-1920. Howe Papers, Box 48, BUA. This file contains a large correspondence reflecting the extensive involvement of Butler in the War effort.

Brown's frustration with the Board at this time comes out most poignantly in a lengthy statement he makes to the Board at the May 24, 1918, meeting. After referring to the purposes of Butler stated in the Charter and to the importance of the church, he emphasizes the need to have a committed Board of Directors to create a greater Butler despite the problems of money. He begins by contrasting the well-known devotion and dedication of some of the most highly regarded members of the faculty with the lack of enthusiasm and resolution of the Board.

These purposes have in the main, I believe, actuated our Board. Where we have failed has been chiefly for the lack of money.

We have not failed but why have we fallen short? Is it because of Professor Morro, Professor Hall, Professor Underwood, President Howe, or other members of the faculty? I believe rather it is because of ourselves. Butler College was chartered in 1850 and opened its doors in 1855. In the main we have kept the faith. We have sent many young men and women out to preach and teach and "carry on". We must not decry what has been done. But in this inner sanctum we must examine and plan. Have we an institution here commensurate with our age, opportunity and situation? If your answer is in the negative, we should elect the next board with a commitment to realize to a higher degree the obligations that we have assumed.

. . . We must not undervalue the opportunity to contribute to all the professions, sciences, business, and arts.

We have failed to do larger things and better things because we have reasoned that we cannot afford it. We have pointed in dismay to our annual deficit. We have had little faith. But the American people are learning to give, and our own people are not different from the rest. They will give. They will enable us to make here an educational institution of the highest learning. Are we ready to start into a new course? I, for one, am

ready.⁴⁸

He places particular emphasis on new programs.

President Howe has been recommending for some years, and renews these recommendations now, new departments that we should establish. We are under obligation at the very earliest hour to have here a department of education. We can not, if we are to maintain our position as a standard college, defer action longer. . .

We must have a department of domestic science, for the whole economy of living has been revolutionized, and Federal and State Governments, not to speak of the common schools, high schools, and the state colleges, have turned their attention to this practical branch of learning. . .

We must give our young men military instruction, both for their physical upbuilding and for the good of the country.

We must have more equipment in our laboratories and we must give our teachers more money.⁴⁹

As to how this is to be done Brown offers:

Properly and aptly you ask how these things can be done on our present resources. It cannot be so done. But yet it must be done. And the problem is to find a way. It is more complicated than finding a new plant for the whole college. We have committed ourselves to finding a new location; and have paid for expert advice that this is what we should do. We appointed a committee to look for a location; but nothing has been done. . . .

You will again ask how we are going to do these things. Well, how have other institutions been doing such things? Certainly not by simply staring at the expense. . . .

I want to commit myself, if I am to remain on the board, to some large enterprise worthy of the Christian Church and Butler College; worthy of Indianapolis and of Indiana, and of the whole northwest for that matter . . . in accord with the provisions of our charter. If we undertake some great thing, and all, mind you, in accord with the letter and spirit of the charter and of the high purposes of our people, we shall forget that we have had minor differences and that we are so poor.

⁴⁸Minutes, May 24, 1918.

⁴⁹Ibid.

Some of the members of this board have had no other avocation than Butler College. Some of us received the only collegiate education we have had in this institution, and owe to it everything; others have given generously of their funds and I do not forget the obligations to them. But if we have given, we must give more. . . . At any rate I feel that the time has come when inaction is no longer safe.

If any one should desire to vote for me for re-election to the board of directors . . . I wish him to do so with the full belief that I shall press for the accomplishment of the things enumerated above, or their equivalent. I want some concrete thing to work for. And I beg of this board, before it is too late, to create here an institution of the highest learning. Let us forget the things of the past and dedicate ourselves to the development of the high purposes for which this institution was created.⁵⁰

Convening board meetings with a quorum continued to be a problem. Of the fifteen meetings called between July 1915 and October 1918, four lacked a quorum of eleven members present, while five had just barely a quorum counting proxies, four others had only twelve or thirteen members counted as present. Although it is not clear from the Board's minutes why it was so hard to get a quorum for a meeting, it would appear that the reasons stemmed from apathy and from a sense that election to the Board was mainly an honorary position and therefore did not require regular attendance. The quorum problem continued to plague the Board so much that it became part of the long deliberations of the committee to nominate new directors for the triennial elections in July 1918. At the June 12, 1918, board meeting, Brown reporting for the nominating committee, said that Irwin suggested:

⁵⁰Ibid.

That an executive committee of five active and available members be designated by the board to take charge and direction of the affairs of the college, subject only to the ratification, in annual or semi-annual meeting, of the full board. The difficulty of assembling a body of twenty-one members frequently to pass on details, with the business now growing to large proportions, makes it self evident that lost motion and delay are involved. Slight changes in the by-laws will make it possible to put the proposed rule into effect. We recommend, therefore, the creation of such a committee, or rather its reorganization on the new basis, for there is provision for such a committee under the by-laws. . . .⁵¹

It was at this same meeting that John E. Canaday and Merle Sidener were elected to fill two vacancies created by the death of James B. Percy and the resignation of John H. Frazee.⁵² While Canaday was the candidate of the "Columbus group", Sidener became a supporter of Hilton U. Brown's vision of a greater Butler.

By the end of the Fall of 1918 Butler had an agreement with the War Department to establish a unit of the Student Army Training Corps (SATC) on campus.⁵³ The SATC unit was barely under way before the War ended on November 11, 1918, but it had, during its brief existence, a dramatic impact on the life of the College. Some 266 young men were enlisted in the unit. The campus also provided a hospital facility in a recently donated building on Ritter Avenue to help with the very severe influenza epidemic of the Fall and Winter of

⁵¹Ibid., June 12, 1918.

⁵²Ibid.

⁵³Ibid., September 5, 1918; "The Student Army Training Corps," Annual Catalog for the 64th Session, 1918-1919, (Indianapolis: Butler University, 1918): 68-9.

1918-1919.⁵⁴ Despite the War, enrollments in the College continued to increase so that for 1918-19 there were 628 students enrolled (356 men and 276 women), an increase of 225 over 1917-18.⁵⁵ This was, in large part, due to the SATC unit and the encouragement by the government of young men to go to college as a recognition of the need for educated and skilled manpower for the War effort.⁵⁶

At the October 4, 1918, Board meeting an Executive Committee was established. Two potential sites in and near Irvington were brought to the attention of the Board by Brown, and it was agreed to discuss these sites at the next meeting. Between the October meeting of the Board and the next meeting in January, the War ended. Hilton U. Brown learned of the death of his eldest son, Hilton U. Brown, Jr., in the Argonne just eight days before the Armistice.⁵⁷ Despite this great loss and many other obligations, including a fourteen week stay in Europe in 1919 as correspondent for the Indianapolis News, Brown continued to pressure the Board toward some action on a new site for the College.⁵⁸

⁵⁴Minutes, October 4, 1918.

⁵⁵"Enrollment," Butler Alumna Quarterly 7 (October 1918): 236.

⁵⁶Minutes, July 11, 1918; Charles F. Thwing, The American Colleges and Universities in the Great War 1914-1919 (New York: Macmillan, 1922), 46-57.

⁵⁷Hilton U. Brown, ed., Hilton U. Brown, Jr.; One of Three Brothers in Artillery (Indianapolis: United Typothetae of America School of Printing, 1920), xviii.

⁵⁸Hilton U. Brown, "A Letter from France," Butler Alumna Quarterly 8 (October 1919): 269-73.

At the January 15, 1919 Board meeting, which once again lacked a quorum, Brown urged the immediate location of a new site. The Directors also discussed the resignation of President Howe. Howe was increasingly unhappy, especially with the burden of the Men and Millions Movement and other fund raising activities for the College.⁵⁹ In an effort to get Howe to remain, the Board offered to relieve him of the burden of fund raising for the expansion of the College.⁶⁰ Brown and the Board were successful in convincing Howe to remain for a while longer, but only until the Summer of 1920.

The Board met again on January 22, with a quorum of twelve present. As it turned out, this was one of the most productive Board meetings in some time. A number of important actions were taken. First, an Executive Committee of five members was finally agreed upon, with Judge James L. Clark as chairman and Thomas Howe, Will Irwin, and Merle Sidener as members. Brown served as an ex officio member.⁶¹

Brown then launched into one of his "sermons" to the Board, reminding them again of the broad nature of the institution provided for in the original charter and of the necessity to act upon the Kessler report. Brown then set forth a specific program which established two committees, one to select an agent to raise \$1,000,000 for a new site and physical

⁵⁹Howe to Brown, July 9, 1918; October 26, 1918. Howe Papers, Box 26, BUA.

⁶⁰Minutes, January 15, 1919.

⁶¹Ibid., January 22, 1919.

plant, another to select a site. The goal was to have a new campus selected, funds raised and buildings completed by September 1, 1923. The Committees were to report as quickly as possible so that an announcement could be made at commencement in June 1919.⁶²

Brown also reminded the Board that membership on these committees need not be restricted to Board members. This interpretation of the by-laws permitted Brown to include the new voices and influences of some key alumni and civic leaders from Indianapolis. In an Executive Committee meeting on March 4, 1919, the membership on the new committees was set. The Committee to Select a New Site was appointed and included Directors Gurnie L. Reeves, Thomas C. Howe, Henry Jameson, and Hilton U. Brown. In addition, alumnus Arthur V. Brown,⁶³ an attorney and financier, was appointed along with local business leaders, L. C. Huesmann and John H. Holliday. The latter agreed only to serve in an advisory role, probably because of his age.⁶⁴ James H. Lowry, of the City Park Board,

⁶²Ibid.

⁶³No relation to Hilton U. Brown.

⁶⁴Holliday was the founder, owner, and editor of the Indianapolis News at the time Hilton U. Brown first went to work for the paper. Holliday sold the paper in 1892 to the Smith-Fairbanks family. He was also a founder and president of the Union Trust Co. At the time of this appointment Holliday was 74 years old and in poor health, but was willing to lend his name in support of Brown's greater Butler idea because he had been a long time supporter of Butler and friend of Brown. Holliday attended Butler for four years before the Civil War, but graduated from Hanover College where he was for many years a trustee. Brown, Book of Memories, 117, 188-94; "Holliday, John Hampden," in The

also served on the committee. The Committee to Select a Financial Agent included Directors William G. Irwin and Merle Sidener and business leader James K. Lilly.⁶⁵

Just how Brown was able to get the Board finally to act upon the site question is not all together clear from the available evidence. His persistence was no doubt a factor, but another possibility is the emergence at this time of the desire on the part of the Disciples to organize a college of applied Christianity. The desire to move forward quickly on this issue may possibly have led the Columbus Group, which had supported Butler as a Disciples college all along, to be more willing to go along with Brown on the site question.⁶⁶ It is clear that the Columbus group, through the Christian Foundation, wanted to develop a college of religion at Butler. This coincided nicely with Hilton U. Brown's hopes for Butler, and he evidently used the college of religion idea to solidify the support of the Irwin family and their friends in the Church to his cause of a greater Butler. It was probably not just a coincidence that this development came about in such close proximity with the decision to form the site committee and financial agent search committee.

Despite all of this activity, there was no announcement of plans at the June 1919 Commencement. However, the

National Cyclopaedia of American Biography, vol. 19 (1926) p. 398-9; "John H. Holliday," Butler Alumnae Quarterly 10 (January 1922): 335-6.

⁶⁵Minutes, January 15, 1919.

⁶⁶Ibid., April 9, 1919; April 29, 1919.

Butler Alumna Quarterly of October, 1919 does have a story on the relocation of Butler, the Kessler report, the appointment of the two committees, and the need to raise \$1,000,000.⁶⁷

⁶⁷"Plans for Relocating Butler," Butler Alumna Quarterly 8 (October 1919): 287-8.

Chapter 3

The Need to Raise "Lots" of Money

The decision to appoint a financial agent or fund raiser was based partly on the promise to relieve President Howe of the responsibility of fund raising for the College and on the recent loss of Carl Van Winkle, who had been Butler's field agent with the Indiana churches and to the Interchurch World Movement in New York City.¹ It was also recognized by the Board that the College needed to raise money for endowment to solve the continuing financial problems, and to begin a major campaign to raise funds for a new campus.

The two biggest financial problems were the continuing annual deficits in the operating budget and low faculty salaries. It appears that in the minds of Board members, the two problems were clearly linked to endowment income rather than to income from tuition and fees. There is little evidence of much concern about income from tuition and fees in the Board minutes. The attitude appeared to be to keep the tuition and fees as low as possible in order to attract students. Low tuition also kept the College competitive with state institutions.

¹Minutes of the Board of Directors, July 10, 1919.

In general, the Board sought a solution to the income shortage through an improved endowment. In particular, faculty salaries were usually linked to endowment in the form of endowed chairs of which there were several. Most of the academic department heads were holders of these chairs. The problem with the endowed chair concept was that the income from the initial gift setting up the chair became insufficient over the years to maintain the salary for the position, unless, of course, additional funds were added to the endowment.

Because endowment was felt to be the solution to the income problem, the Board supported the idea of hiring a financial agent to raise the needed endowment.² Both the \$250,000 Campaign and the Men and Millions Movement had been largely viewed as ways to secure enough endowment to meet the income needs of the College. In both of these efforts, members of the faculty and the President of the College played important parts. Carl Van Winkle had been the field secretary for the College, working with alumni and the Church Board of Education to maintain good relations and raise money. Van Winkle was not a full-time employee of the college, so the decision to hire a financial agent as a regular employee was a new step.³

²Ibid., January 22, 1919.

³Ibid., July 10, 1918; July 10, 1919; October 22, 1919.

The search for a financial agent was closely linked with the appearance of the so called alumni Committee of Twenty-five. The decision to create the office of financial secretary was made in January 1919, just before this group's appearance. The man chosen for the office, John W. Atherton, was supported by the Committee of Twenty-five.⁴ Just how this committee came about is not clear from the evidence. It was perhaps a genuine reflection of alumni concern about Butler and a desire to influence the direction of the institution. The first mention of an alumni group was in a letter read to the Directors at the Board meeting of October 22, 1919. The letter, signed by Clay Trusty and Charles O. Lee, states that:

We, the undersigned committee, speaking for a representative and interested group of alumni who believe in the plans of Butler College for taking immediate steps looking to the enlargement of its equipment, for obtaining a new location, and for the raising of an endowment commensurate with her needs, in order to meet the opportunities now at her door, hereby tender our individual and collective services for the raising of sufficient funds for these purposes, and to co-operate with the Board of Trustees in any program that may seem advisable.

They further requested the formation of a committee of one hundred.⁵

⁴Ibid., February 9, 1920.

⁵Committee of the Alumni of the College to Board of Trustees of Butler College, October 21, 1919, in Minutes, October 22, 1919.

On January 16, 1920, the Board met with a delegation from the Committee of Twenty-five and heard their resolution in support of an expanded role for Butler. Among the eight known members of the Committee of Twenty-five were Clay Trusty, Charles O. Lee, Emsley Johnson, R. F. Davidson, Lee Burns, Harold B. Tharp, Frederick E. Schortemeier, and Justus Paul.⁶ These leaders of the Committee came to the Board with mixed motives. Some of them clearly supported Brown's desire for a "greater Butler," while others were more motivated by a desire to see Butler enter into "big time" inter-collegiate athletics. The Committee's report first asked the Board to consider five facts and then presented a nine point program for Butler. The five facts were:

1. That Butler College is one of the best if not the best located small colleges in the United States.
2. That the City of Indianapolis and its vicinity requires and will ultimately demand an institution of higher learning commensurate with the needs of a growing metropolis like our own.
3. That Butler College, by virtue of her many years of faithful service and by virtue of her high

⁶"Butler Adopts Building Plans," Indianapolis News, 17 January 1920, p. 10. Trusty and Lee were both Disciples ministers. Trusty was Chairman of the Committee of Twenty-five and Lee Burns was Vice-Chairman. Minutes of the Board of Directors, January 16, 1920. Trusty was the minister of the Seventh Avenue Christian Church where, in a confrontation with his congregation over his opposition to the Ku Klux Klan, he was forced to resign in 1924. Kenneth T. Jackson, The Ku Klux Klan in the City, 1915-1930 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967), 150.

scholastic standard, is in a position to offer herself to the citizens of Indianapolis and vicinity to form the basis for this larger institution.

4. That Butler stands at the parting of the ways-- either upon the threshold of a great advancement if she will determine to go forward immediately, or at the beginning of a retarding movement which will spell her doom.

5. Our investigations have led us to believe that the citizenship of the state of Indiana in general and of the City of Indianapolis in particular will provide sufficient funds for the realizing of a collegiate institution at the capitol [sic] of the state, of large proportions, provided the plans for such and [sic] institution are commensurate with the needs and are presented to the public in the proper manner.⁷

These points clearly reinforced what Hilton U. Brown had been saying to the Board for some time, but the nine recommendations contained at least a few things that may have been new to some Board members in addition to supporting Brown's hopes for Butler. The recommendations were:

1. That Butler College be enlarged upon the basis of the present Charter to meet the needs of the City of Indianapolis and vicinity . . .
2. That a definite program based on the survey made by the College Authorities,⁸ . . . be endorsed by the board of trustees, showing the sum of money needed for additional ground, buildings and equipment together with an adequate endowment.
3. That as a first step toward this goal, a campaign be inaugurated during 1920 by the Board of Trustees of Butler College, assisted by this Committee, for the raising of two million dollars for permanent endowment and equipment.
4. That the President's salary be raised to at least \$5,000.00 per year, the salaries of all department heads to \$3,000.00 per year and all other members of the faculty in proportion.

⁷Minutes, January 16, 1920.

⁸Probably the Kessler report.

5. That the Board of Trustees endorse the action of Twenty-five in creating a permanent Alumni Athletic Committee which shall, in co-operation with the College Authorities, have control of the Athletics of the College.

6. That an emergency fund of at least \$25,000.00 be raised annually to defray the increased expenses of the institution (together with the enlarged athletic program), until such time as sufficient endowment interest and other incomes will be realized

7. That a new site be selected to provide ample room for the future enlargement of the institution.

8. That new and suitable buildings be erected as rapidly as funds will permit . . .

9. That to facilitate the closest co-operation between the Board of Trustees and the Alumni of Butler College, five members of the Board of Trustees be proposed for election by the Alumni Association.⁹

During the meeting, R. F. Davidson spoke about the importance of athletics and the need for expansion in order to give Butler a higher profile and to satisfy the interest in and support for college athletics among the alumni and in the community. The recommendation on athletics and Davidson's remarks mark the beginning of an adventure in "big time" athletics which, as we will see, had unfortunate consequences for Butler in the late Twenties and early Thirties.

Another member of the Committee, Emsley Johnson, spoke to the Board on the support for Butler in Indianapolis:

That Butler has always stood in the highest estimation by those who knew her, that her standard of work was the best, that Indianapolis felt that with

⁹Minutes of the Board of Directors meeting with the Committee of Twenty Five, January 16, 1920.

Butler enlarged into a University including other colleges along with it as well as a College of Liberal Arts, she would be meeting a long felt want in the city. He explained that the city wanted it, and that unless the authorities at Butler took advantage of the opportunity, the increased enrollment which increased her expenditures and cut into her resources, would soon place her in a situation where she would not even fill the place which she is now doing. The Alumni want a larger Butler College and come willing to co-operate with the Board in any new plan which it contemplated.¹⁰

Hilton U. Brown then spoke in support of the Committee's plan and asked for and received approval of the plan.¹¹

The Board met again with the Committee of Twenty-five in joint session in February. The two main topics of discussion were the qualifications needed for the new athletic director and the hiring of a financial agent. Clay Trusty pressed for the hiring of John W. Atherton as Financial Secretary. All present agreed to name Atherton to the new position at a salary of \$6,000 and a travel allowance of \$1,500.¹² The location of his office was left up to him.¹³ The decision on the location of the office was to prove over time to be controversial. Atherton decided to locate his office in downtown Indianapolis rather than on the campus and so it came to be known as the "Downtown Office". The office

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹Ibid.

¹²This salary was \$1,000 more than what was proposed for the new President of the College, Minutes of the Board of Directors, January 16, 1920.

¹³Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting with the Committee of Twenty-five, February 9, 1920.

was to remain in existence, in a number of different locations in downtown Indianapolis, for over forty years. Over the years it was often criticized and became an object of complaint and some derision.

Merle Sidener, one of the newest members of the Board commented, at this meeting on the necessity to educate the full Board on the decisions made by the joint committee. The minutes report that: "He stated that the biggest liability to the enterprise and to the future of the College was the indifference of the Board."¹⁴

Sidener's comment was in part a reaction to the fact that there were only four directors present at the joint meeting on February 9, 1920. There had been only eleven of the twenty-one directors present on January 16. Using the authority of his office, Brown called the no quorum meetings to order as Executive Committee meetings and had the Board approve the actions later.¹⁵

Despite the lack of evidence there is at least room for suspicion that Brown was carefully orchestrating the whole process behind the scenes. Some supporters of Butler were particularly suspicious when it became known that the new Financial Secretary, John W. Atherton, was Brown's son-in-law.¹⁶ On the other hand

¹⁴Ibid.

¹⁵Minutes, July 12, 1916; April 18, 1917; January 15, 1919; April 6, 1920.

¹⁶Ibid., January 22, 1919; February 1, 1919; October 22, 1919; January 16, 1920; February 9, 1920; April 6, 1920;

it seems clear that the Committee of Twenty-five did reflect the sentiments of a significant number of alumni and of the Indianapolis community in supporting the vision of a greater Butler and in Atherton's ability to head up the fund raising effort.¹⁷

Any doubts about Atherton that anyone may have had were quickly dispelled by the energy and success he demonstrated in his new responsibility. The fund raising priorities given to Atherton included first an emergency drive for \$35,000 to solve the annual budget deficit problem and to help launch the athletic program. Such a drive was to be held annually until the endowment became large enough to meet this need.¹⁸ Second, Atherton was to raise \$2,000,000 for endowment funds to support salaries and other expenses. Third, he was to undertake a campaign to raise \$600,000, (later raised to \$1,400,000) to secure funding for a new campus site and the buildings on this site.¹⁹ All three funding goals had to be increased as the Fairview project developed. The campaign started out with a total goal of about

April 28, 1920; Minutes of the Executive Committee, March 4, 1919.

¹⁷Ibid.; Minutes, June 16, 1920; Howe to Brown, February 23, 1920. Howe Papers, Box 26, BUA; "A Petition," Butler Alumna Quarterly 10 (July 1921): 236-7. This petition was signed by 125 prominent Indianapolis citizens.

¹⁸Minute of the Board of Directors meeting with the Committee of Twenty, February 9, 1920.

¹⁹Minutes, April 28, 1920;

\$1,000,000 and ended up raising nearly \$4,000,000.²⁰ These three projects were to consume most of Atherton's time over the next several years.

As to the anticipated sources of funding, there were a number of prospects. The Irwin-Sweeney-Miller family, most certainly, was expected to give significantly towards the effort. It was probably anticipated that other wealthy directors would contribute as well, especially Marshall T. Reeves who had been generous in the past. The alumni and the Church were also thought to be an important source of support. But more important were the expectations from residents of the City of Indianapolis, where it was hoped that wealthy new friends of a greater Butler would be attracted by the ambitious plans for an urban university. It was also expected that the Carnegie Foundation would again contribute, and there was an effort made early in the campaign to seek the support of the General Education Board.²¹ All of these sources were, in fact, to make important contributions. However, before describing the successful efforts of Atherton to raise the needed funds, we need to examine the progress toward a decision on a site for the university.

²⁰Ibid., January 16, 1920; April 28, 1920, July 13, 1927; "From the City Office," Butler Alumna Quarterly, 15 (Jan. 1927): 247.

²¹Minutes of the Board of Directors with the Committee of Twenty-five, January 16, 1920; Minutes, April 28, 1920.

The Decision on a Site

The first recorded meeting of the new Site Committee was on March 14, 1919, at the office of James H. Lowry in City Hall. Three possible sites known as the Hibben tract, Ketchum tract, and Ellenberger Park were mentioned and discussed. The only decision made at this meeting was to request Lee Burns, an architect and former Butler student, to act as architectural agent and to have preliminary drawings prepared showing the land needed to meet the requirements for the university.²² All of these sites were eventually rejected because they were either too small or too expensive.

Fairview Park as a desirable location was first mentioned in the Board minutes of June 16, 1920.²³ This site, which was eventually to become the location of Butler University, was in 1920 the site of an amusement park owned by the Indianapolis Street Railway Company. It was located on the north side of the City between 42nd and 56th Streets with the White River and the Indianapolis Water Company canal bordering it on the northwest side. The Park consisted of approximately 250

²²Minutes of Site Committee, March 14, 1919, in the Minutes of the Board of Directors, March 14, 1919 and April 9, 1919.

²³Minutes, June 16, 1920.

acres. Part of this consisted of a large tract of flood plain between the canal and the White River. About 160 acres were south of the canal, with most of this on a low ridge overlooking the canal and river.²⁴

Fairview was indeed an ideal site. The Street Railway Company had developed the Park at the northern end of its line as a family amusement park with boating and picnicking facilities. In addition to such popular amusements of the time as a merry-go-round, a pony ride, a diving horse show, and evening pageants along the canal, the park also contained extensive formal gardens.²⁵ To the east and south of the park were newly developing residential areas which promised to protect the campus from the encroachment of industrial development.

By October, 1920, negotiations had been opened between Butler and the Indianapolis Street Railway Company.²⁶ But before an agreement could be reached, another crisis appears to have developed within the Board of Directors.

At least in part, the new crisis may have been precipitated by Howe's announcing his resignation to the Board. Howe was becoming increasingly unhappy and began

²⁴Ibid., April 12, 1922.

²⁵Walter B. Hendrickson, The Indiana Years, 1903-1941 (Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Society, 1983), 85-90.

²⁶Minutes, October 13, 1920.

to press for acceptance of his resignation. Brown, who had been withholding Howe's letter from the Board, decided to have the resignation announced at the March 19, 1920, Board meeting. Brown explained to the Board the special arrangements under which Howe served as President of the College. He received a modest salary of \$3,000 for his duties as President and was granted time for other personal affairs which included being a vice president of his father-in-law's manufacturing company in Anderson.²⁷

Brown read Howe's letter in which, among other things, Howe expressed strongly the necessity of increasing the salaries of the faculty and of the next President of the College.²⁸ It is possible that those members of the Board who opposed Brown may have felt that Howe's resignation might weaken the support for Brown and the greater Butler idea. Some indication of this is revealed in the minutes of the next three Board meetings.

The very next meeting on April 6, 1920 had been called to ". . . sense the feeling of the Board with respect to the larger plans of the College."²⁹ There was

²⁷Shaw, Hoosier Disciples, 306; Who Was Who, s.v. "Howe, Thomas Carr."

²⁸Howe to Brown, March 11, 1920. Howe Papers, Box 26, BUA; Minutes, March 19, 1920.

²⁹Ibid., April 6, 1920.

no quorum, but the meeting continued without a quorum, and Brown responded to the objections raised to his direction for the College. Some of his displeasure with the Board comes through, even in the somewhat sanitized form of the minutes.

Mr. Brown presented the objections which certain members of the Board had raised in connection with these plans, and pointed out the end to which these would lead, i.e. by part of the Board refusing to show any interest in the College, and another part not being willing to act unless all cooperated, disaster would be the result.³⁰

Brown then suggested three dates for a continued meeting.

Brown kept up the pressure on the Board at the April 28 meeting and at the Annual Meeting of the Board on June 16. He made a strong plea for the Board to come to decisions and avoid faction.

We have met in the hope of agreement on a policy that will put the interests of Butler College above all considerations that may have prevented most effective action in the past. . . .

The present emergency - and we all recognize that an emergency exists, - paradoxical as it may seem, comes at the moment of the College's highest prosperity. . . .

To conduct and sustain such a school the Board should not only have conviction, but should be deeply and constantly concerned for the welfare of the institution. I do not think it wise that it should be required that all members of the Board shall be members of our church. . . We ought to heed the suggestions of the alumni and accord them free right of nomination of certain members. . .

³⁰Ibid.

Now we have been trying to reach an understanding so that we may all work to one purpose. . . But you as a Board must act. . .

There are few things more enduring than a college. This is because education is a perpetual duty. Congregations may be dissipated; families may scatter and become attached to new interests; but our religious duty, as a people, to maintain educational facilities is continuous and unchangeable. I hold before you, and particularly before those of us who wish this to be known as a Christian Church school, the conviction that if the church wishes a great rallying center, a scene of religious triumphs, and multiplying contributions to the common good, we can nowhere achieve these desires so easily as by promoting here an institution that will speak authority and wisdom through its preachers and teachers and its lay alumni, to all generations that seek knowledge and divine guidance.³¹

He also noted the need to find a new president and appealed for the Church to be a participant in the College's development. Above all he wanted commitment. The response of his fellow Directors, in addition to those supporting Brown, revealed a deep seated sense of the importance of Christian education.³² Out of this meeting came a commitment of those present to participate actively in the effort to raise the funds needed to realize the new Butler.

In his annual report to the Board on June 16, Brown reviewed past efforts to build an urban university for Indianapolis and emphasized what effort it would take for Butler to achieve this goal.

No one should be satisfied and entirely content with what has been done. In our case, and particu-

³¹Ibid., April 28, 1920.

³²Ibid.

larly in my own case, I feel that we have not done what we might; that we have not had sufficient breadth, faith nor courage, and that the only restriction and repentance that will be acceptable will be effort and contribution of every sort, to make up what may seem to have been lost time in developing this institution.³³

After this meeting, on the eve of the availability of the Fairview site, the resistance on the Board quieted; but it was not to disappear until after the Board elections in 1921 when a large block of new directors was elected including a number of members of the Committee of Twenty-five.

The Purchase of Fairview Park

Fairview Park became available to Butler due to a fortuitous set of circumstances. First of all is the central role played by Dr. Henry Jameson, a longtime member of the Butler Board and strong supporter of a larger role for Butler in Indianapolis. Jameson was a physician and a leading figure in medical education in Indiana.³⁴ As head of the Park Board, he was largely responsible for bringing George Kessler to Indianapolis to plan the beautification of the City. Hilton U. Brown wrote in his memoirs:

³³Ibid., June 16, 1920.

³⁴Clark, Indiana University, Vol. 2, 76-97; Minutes, May 12, 1921.

Citizens as they pass through the ample parkways of Indianapolis ought to give a thought to those who brought the blessings of open spaces and trees to every section of the city. Fall Creek and Pogue's Run used to be practically open sewers and storage space for tin cans. No wonder the Lord provided occasional floods to clean out these dumping places. A park board with vision came into existence with Dr. Henry Jameson as its head. It sought an authority who could lead in plans for a permanent park system. . . . So Dr. Jameson found Mr. Kessler and brought him to Indianapolis.³⁵

Jameson was also a member of the Board of Directors of the Indianapolis Street Railway Company.³⁶ As we noted above Jameson also helped Butler secure the services of George Kessler in determining the space needs for the new Butler.

A second circumstance that was very helpful in acquiring Fairview Park was a very sympathetic city administration. Mayor Lew Shank supported the acquisition of Fairview Park by Butler. He had various city offices work with Butler through the process of acquiring and developing the new campus.³⁷ In the early 1930's the Indianapolis Times ran a series of articles which charged Butler with receiving excessive favoritism from the city in acquiring and developing the Park.³⁸

³⁵Brown, A Book of Memories, 271-272.

³⁶Ibid., 98.

³⁷Ibid., 98; Minutes, October 11, 1924.

³⁸"Taxpayers Repaid Butler for Campus, Threw in Profit of \$33,925," Indianapolis Times, 15 November 1933, p. 1. Cited as "Taxpayers".

Finally there was the willingness of the Indianapolis Street Railway Company to sell Fairview for a price of \$200,000. This price was well below the true market value of the site. A far less desirable farm land site east of Irvington had been available for \$1,000 an acre. Fairview, with approximately 250 acres of developed park land, would have to be considered a bargain at \$800 an acre, given its location in a rapidly developing middle class neighborhood and its setting on high land along the canal and river. Brown's recollections on the purchase of Fairview are interesting:

Fairview Park, a tract of about 250 acres north of the city on the river and canal, used by the street railway company as an amusement center, was coveted as an incomparable location for the unlimited development of a university. It was finally purchased for \$200,000, John J. Appel and Dr. Henry Jameson, local members of the street railway company board, saying that they wanted to be the first contributors to the purchase fund.³⁹

From all of the available evidence, the sale price was a case of genuine philanthropy on the part of the Board of the Indianapolis Street Railway Company. They were not in a position to donate the park outright for fiduciary reasons.⁴⁰

Despite the willingness of the Street Railway Company to sell Fairview at such a bargain price, the

³⁹Brown, 98.

⁴⁰Minutes, July 12, 1922.

Board moved very slowly and deliberately before making a decision to purchase. This was a major undertaking for the Board; many members expressed skepticism, still others needed much reassurance.⁴¹

The Board received a letter from the Street Railway Company in December, 1920, suggesting the availability of Fairview Park if Butler were interested.⁴² Once again there ensued a series of "no quorum" Board meetings and Executive Committee meetings that reflect no discussion of Fairview.⁴³ It seems likely that the site committee may have been involved in discussions with the Street Railway Company, but there is no indication of this in the available records.

A special meeting of the Board of Directors was called for May 12, 1921 ". . . to discuss and vote on presentation of a letter to the Indianapolis Street Railway Co."⁴⁴ The letter was addressed to Dr. Henry Jameson, Chairman of the Board of Directors and Mr. Robert I. Todd, President of the Indianapolis Street Railway Company. Interestingly, the letter is not from the Butler Board of Directors, but supposedly from a citizens committee.

1922. ⁴¹Ibid., April 12, 1922; June 10, 1922; October 11,

⁴²Ibid., December 18, 1920.

1921. ⁴³Ibid., January 4, 1921; January 24, 1921; April 13,

⁴⁴Ibid., May 12, 1921.

The undersigned committee represent, we believe, a large body of citizens interested in the development here of an educational institution of university grade and preferably to be known as the University of Indianapolis.

We have conferred with the Directors of Butler College concerning the enlargement of that college, which they have already been considering, and the creation of additional colleges or departments, and the incorporation of all of such colleges or departments in some legal way within the proposed university, so as to give to Indianapolis an institution of higher learning in keeping with the present and future development of the city. . . .
 . . . We are now moved to suggest, if the Street Railway Company can see its way clear to renew the thought once had in mind, that this ground be given for educational purposes, and that the Board of Directors of Butler University - since this board already is legally in existence - be designated as the trustees of this property, with the understanding that it be used as a site for an institution which it is hoped will be so distinguished in character and excellence as to make Indianapolis a great educational center.⁴⁵

What is strange about this letter of petition is why it was felt necessary to put it in this form in the first place. Surely there was no subterfuge intended, at least not to the parties involved; they all knew each other very well. The best explanation appears to be one of public relations, or possibly the need for the Street Railway Company to justify to its stockholders any arrangements made with Butler for Fairview Park. It was apparently important to Hilton U. Brown and other supporters of the greater Butler idea to present an image of general community support for the acquisition of

⁴⁵Ibid.

Fairview Park. The use of petitions and committees throughout was probably an effort to broaden the base of support and to maintain an image of community involvement.

A committee was also appointed at this same meeting to recommend the form of a charter for the "new" University of Indianapolis. This attempt to revive the idea of a University of Indianapolis was soon dropped because of the memory of the failure of the earlier attempt to organize an institution with this name.⁴⁶

At the annual meeting in July, Brown reminded the Board of the need to move quickly on Fairview.⁴⁷ Fairview is mentioned in the minutes only one more time during 1921, and that is in a report given by R. F. Davidson, Vice President of the Board and Chairman of the Executive Committee, at the last meeting of the Board for the year in November; however, there are no details in the minutes.⁴⁸

A period of activity began in January, 1922, in which for the next seven years nearly every Board meeting and Executive Committee meeting was taken up with some discussion of the Fairview project. The slowness of the Board to act in the early years may be understood, in part at least, by the weight of other issues

⁴⁶Ibid.

⁴⁷Ibid., July 13, 1921.

⁴⁸Ibid., November 16, 1921.

before the Board during this time such as the search for a new President of the College, changes in the by-laws, the work of the capital campaign, the formation of the Butler Foundation, and the development of a College of Religion. All of this was also going on amidst the post World War depression. The new activity beginning in January was motivated by the announcement of a fifty-five day deadline for a decision at a Board meeting on the eleventh of January.⁴⁹ The Site Committee chaired by Will Irwin was authorized to negotiate for the purchase of Fairview at the January 17 Executive Committee meeting.⁵⁰ On April 12, 1922, the Board voted to take an option on the Fairview site.⁵¹ Emsley Johnson reported at the Board meeting on June 10 that there had been considerable delay in negotiating an option for the Fairview site. Once again doubt was expressed about continuing to pursue the option. Rev. Thomas Grafton even offered a resolution:

WHEREAS, for a number of years this board has contemplated the removal of Butler College to some more desirable site, and whereas, thus far, nothing has presented itself more suitable than the present site, and the present plant and equipment has become inadequate to care for the needs of our growing student body:

Resolved, that we remain permanently on our present site, hallowed as it is by the memories of

⁴⁹Ibid., January 11, 1922.

⁵⁰Minutes of the Executive Committee, January 17, 1922.

⁵¹Minutes, April 12, 1922.

fifty years of splendid history, and with a campus large enough to accommodate the needs of the college for fifty years to come . . .⁵²

The resolution was not voted upon and the Site Committee was instructed to report again at the next meeting.

There is no evidence from the minutes of this meeting of how much support, if any, there was for Grafton's resolution. It certainly represented the sentiments of some members of the Board⁵³ and a number of alumni. The deferral of the resolution and of the report of the Site Committee probably bought time to assuage the opposition to Fairview.

The decision to take an option was not a decision to purchase. It would take several more discussions at Board meetings, a formal site visit by the entire Board, and an extension of the option to December 31, 1922 before the Board finally voted to purchase Fairview on November 21, 1922.⁵⁴

Be it resolved by the Board of Directors of Butler University that the President of the Board be authorized to appoint a committee of five from

⁵²Ibid., June 10, 1922.

⁵³In addition to Grafton, Marshall T. Reeves seems to have been the member of the Board most opposed to the purchase of Fairview. Reeves rarely attended Board meetings in these years and his support of Butler was closely linked to the Christian Foundation and the organizing of a College of Applied Christianity at Butler. Robert J. Aley to Frederick Kershner, Indianapolis, 19 June 1924, Aley papers, BUA Box 14.

⁵⁴Minutes, June 29, 1922; July 12, 1922; October 11, 1922; November 21, 1922.

the membership of the Board to complete negotiations for the purchase of Fairview Park as a site for Butler University, and that such committee be given full power and authority to work out the details of the purchase price and otherwise carrying out as nearly as possible the recommendations of the Site Committee this day made.

Be it further resolved that the officers of the Board authorized, and they are hereby authorized, to execute any and all legal papers necessary upon behalf of the University in carrying out the purchase of Fairview Park.⁵⁵

But even before the vote to purchase Fairview was taken, certain conditions and assurances were recommended by the Site Committee and voted by the Board. These conditions were:

. . . (1) That ample approaches to the College grounds . . . shall be guaranteed before the College establish itself on the Fairview site. . . so that there can be no congestion in traffic when large numbers of people in automobiles or on foot seek to reach the College simultaneously. The Indianapolis Park Board and the city of Indianapolis have already looked with favor upon this suggestion but there should be no uncertainty. The Welfare of the city, as well as of the college, demands that ample facilities for a future that cannot be cramped or hampered, be provided. . . (2) The question of street car facilities is vital . . . Without this the College on those grounds would be so seriously handicapped as to make its establishment there practically impossible. To that end, the college should seek and acquire a contract that will guarantee service into the grounds or to the gates of the College that will forever give the protection for a future that will call for the amplest transportation facilities that an institution of thousands may require. (3) Besides street car facilities, the most liberal provision for other vehicles should be contemplated. Assurances should be required that a boulevard or other thoroughfare passing to or through the grounds from north to south will be provided. Egress and exit should be made easy and convenient. Let it not be overlooked

⁵⁵Ibid., November 21, 1922.

now that this College is to be one of the institutions of this city to which its people will frequently repair and which strangers may find without guide or obstruction. (4) Proper assurances should be secured from property owners living near Fairview Park that good homes will be offered for residence to a large student body from out of town until adequate dormitories can be provided.⁵⁶

Privately, the Board also requested an abatement of the interest on the first payment and assurances that parcels of the tract could be sold so that proceeds from such sales could be used to help pay off the mortgage which was held by the Street Railway Company under very reasonable terms.⁵⁷ When the final vote was taken, there was only one dissenting vote, that of a proxy vote by Marshall T. Reeves.

Henry Jameson delivered letters from the Indianapolis Street Railway Company and from the City of Indianapolis to the Board at a special called meeting on December 6, 1922. These letters provided the assurances and guarantees requested by the Board.⁵⁸ Even Marshall T. Reeves was convinced to change his vote, so that it could be announced as a unanimous decision of the Board to purchase Fairview Park as the new site of Butler University.⁵⁹

⁵⁶Ibid.

⁵⁷Ibid., November 21, 1922; July 12, 1922.

⁵⁸Ibid., December 6, 1922; "The Relocation of Butler College," Butler Alumna Quarterly 11 (January 1923): 277-281.

Almost nine years had passed since Hilton U. Brown had first suggested to the Board that a change of site for Butler should be considered. From the time that Fairview Park first became available the Board had taken over two years to decide to make the purchase. We have seen that the hesitancy of the Board was based primarily on two things: (1) Some alumni, many in the Church and one strong faction within the Board had a desire to remain in Irvington and to strengthen Butler's ties to the Church. Coupled with this was probably a fear that the greater Butler idea would lead to an inevitable break in the college's ties to the Church. (2) There was a reluctance to take the risks involved in launching Butler on an ambitious and costly venture without as many assurances and guarantees as possible. This cautious and conservative Board was slowly but steadily coaxed along by Hilton U. Brown with the support of a growing majority of the Directors, a vigorous group of alumni, and the support of a number of influential civic leaders in Indianapolis who wanted their city to have a major urban University.

⁵⁹Ibid., 281. Even though Reeves was convinced to change his vote for the sake of unanimity, he evidently remained unhappy with the decision and, despite his strong interest in the College of Religion project, he resigned from the Board of Directors just before the triennial election. Minutes of the Board of Directors, June 16, 1924.

One key factor that may have made the difference in bringing the Board around to support the purchase of Fairview Park was the unusually large turnover of Board members between 1918 and 1922. Within only four years, eight new directors were elected to a Board of twenty-one members. They were: John E. Canaday and Merle Sidener in 1918; R. F. Davidson and Emsley Johnson in 1920; and Henry Kahn, Lee Burns and Arthur V. Brown in 1921. All of these new directors were supporters of the greater Butler idea.

The Financing of the Fairview Purchase

The terms of the sale of Fairview Park to Butler University were contained in the option agreement between Butler and the Indianapolis Street Railway Company. According to this document the Street Railway Company was the holder of the first mortgage on the property.

The purchase price for the above described real estate shall be Two Hundred Thousand (\$200,000.00) dollars, payable as follows: Twenty Thousand (\$20,000.00) dollars at the time the deed is executed and delivered to Butler University. The balance of the purchase price shall be paid at the rate of Twenty Thousand (\$20,000.00) dollars per year, the first payment beginning two (2) years after the date of the deed. All deferred payments shall bear interest at the rate of six (6) per cent

per annum, payable semi-annually⁶⁰

These were quite liberal terms and were made more so with the acceptance by the street railway company of the condition requested by Butler that there be no interest charged on the first deferred payment.

After the down payment the first payment was not due until 1925, but it proved unnecessary because the entire mortgage was paid off in October, 1924. Just how this came about is subject to different interpretations. The Indianapolis Times story in 1933 suggested special favoritism and possibly collusion between the city administration of Mayor Lew Shank, the Park Board, and certain Butler directors.⁶¹ The facts are that the city had agreed to provide improved access to Fairview for Butler. These improvements were to include widened streets or boulevards and landscaping or parks. The strips of land around Fairview Park for this project were purchased from Butler based upon an appraisal provided by the city for \$233,925.49, or, in other words, more than enough to pay off the mortgage.⁶²

The Indianapolis Times maintained that Emsley Johnson as a member of the Butler Board and of the Park Board had engineered the whole project in collusion with

⁶⁰Minutes, July 12, 1922.

⁶¹"Taxpayers."

⁶²Minutes, October 16, 1924.

Mayor Shank. There was, in fact, considerable overlapping of directors in the various boards involved. Johnson and Jameson were both on the City Park Board as well as being Butler directors. Jameson was also Chairman of the Board of the Indianapolis Street Railway Company. John Atherton, Butler Financial Secretary, became a member of the City Planning Commission in 1924; and George Kessler and Lawrence Sheridan, both employed by the City, also worked with the University on the early planning of the campus.⁶³ It is probably true that Johnson, as a member of both boards, was instrumental in working out a plan to meet the city's commitment, but whether this constitutes any misfeasance would be difficult to prove and is very unlikely. The apparent conflict of interest that would be obvious for us today does not seem to have even occurred to these men. There is no reason to impugn their integrity or evidence to question their honesty. They, no doubt, felt that their efforts were for the good of the City and the University.⁶⁴

Even so, just the amount paid for the strips of land around the campus is surprising given the sale price to Butler. But the appraisal appears to have been

⁶³"Taxpayers"; "Atherton Member of City Planning Commission," Butler Alumnae Quarterly 12 (January 1924): 227; Minutes, December 6, 1922; May 22, 1923.

⁶⁴"Taxpayers."

arrived at based upon actual real estate values for comparable property in the city. In his interview with the Indianapolis Times in 1933, Emsley Johnson is reported to have said:

. . . that it definitely was understood when Butler got the campus site from the street car company for \$200,000 that the company was making a contribution to the betterment of Indianapolis.

The Butler Board of Trustees . . . felt that the land was worth three or four times what it cost the university. The transaction through which the park board acquired the 100-foot strip was made on the recommendation of competent appraisers . . .⁶⁵

If Butler had not purchased the site, it certainly could have been sold for considerably more than \$200,000 to some enterprising developer. This was probably something that the City Park Board and Planning Commission were particularly anxious to prevent from happening.⁶⁶

One thing that may have contributed to the suspicions of the 1933 Indianapolis Times reporters was that nothing was said about the source of the funds when Butler announced that the Fairview mortgage was paid off. This is only revealed in the Board minutes.⁶⁷ Whatever the reasons for the lack of frankness about

⁶⁵Ibid.

⁶⁶It is interesting to note that the Butler Board of Directors was considering the sale of some of the Fairview site as a way of paying off the mortgage before the City's decision to pay Butler for the 100 foot strips for street improvements. Minutes, November 21, 1921.

⁶⁷John W. Atherton, "Endowment News," Butler Alumna Quarterly 13 (October 1924): 184-185; "Taxpayers."

this arrangement, the consequences proved somewhat embarrassing in 1933 and were to add to the burden of other troubles occurring at that time.⁶⁸

Butler University now had a new site which was paid for in cash, but there were no buildings and the school would not move to the new campus until the Fall of 1928. It is to this story that we turn next.

⁶⁸It is also possible that given the political situation in Indianapolis in 1923-24 with regard to the rise of the Ku Klux Klan there may have been an effort to keep as low a profile as possible. Mayor Shank opposed the Klan at every opportunity and a number of people associated with Butler also had strong anti-Klan feelings. Rev. Clay Trusty, Chairman of the Committee of Twenty-five, lost his pulpit over his opposition to the Klan and President Aley went out of his way at a Board meeting to deny involvement with the anti-Klan American Unity League. Minutes of the Board of Directors, December 4, 1923; Jackson, 150.

Chapter 4

Designing and Building a Campus

Why did it take almost six years for Butler to move from Irvington to Fairview? At first, it was estimated that it would be at least two years before the move would be possible.¹ The Fall of 1925 would seem to have been a reasonable goal if it had not been for a number of difficulties, not the least of which appears to have been enough money to build in 1923 or even 1924. The fund raising campaign had achieved half of its goal of \$2,000,000 by July, 1923, but was not to surpass the goal until the end of 1926.²

The real difficulties of constructing the new campus were: (1) the immediate need to raise sufficient funds for the building to begin, (2) delays in finding an architect, (3) delays in developing an acceptable building plan, (4) delays in finding a builder and in actual construction, and (5) coping with other developments and oversights.

As it turned out, the fund raising may have been the easiest of these difficulties to overcome. The pay-

¹Minutes of the Board of Directors, July 11, 1923.

²Ibid., July 14, 1926. Atherton reported \$2,485,932.65 as total assets of the City Office, \$1,074,801.10 in Butler Foundation endowment and \$1,346,897.27 in Building Funds.

ing off of the mortgage through the settlement with the city took care of one of the concerns. Once the Fairview site was secured, a series of major benefactions quickly removed the immediate concern for funding.

The first choice to manage the planning of the new campus was George Kessler. Kessler, who had an excellent reputation as a campus planner,³ had already been influential in moving Butler to Fairview. Butler contracted for his services in January, 1923. He began discussions and meetings with the faculty and Butler officials in February. But then suddenly on March 19, 1923 Kessler died.⁴

The Board now had to find a new planner and architect. Once again the Board turned to Dr. Henry Jameson to find someone to take on the task of planning the Fairview campus. By May 1923 Jameson recommended, as Vice-Chairman of the Committee on Buildings and Grounds, that Lawrence Sheridan, of the City Planning Commission, should be hired to replace Kessler in order to maintain proper coordination between the Commission's work in the Fairview area and the development of the new campus. Jameson also recommended a topographical survey

³"Kessler, George Edward." in The National Cyclopaedia of American Biography vol. 20, (1929), p. 296-7.

⁴Minutes, January 10, 1923; February 10, 1923; "The Relocation of Butler College," 281; John W. Atherton, "From the City Office," Butler Alumna Quarterly 12 (April 1923): 47.

of Fairview. The Board immediately approved a contract for the topographical survey, but there is no record that the board considered hiring Sheridan.⁵

Hilton U. Brown's annual report to the Board in July 1923 may help explain why Sheridan is not mentioned again. Brown informed the Board that it would be at least two years before a move is possible and that he hoped construction would begin in the Spring of 1924. He also reported that a topographical survey was completed, layouts of the grounds were nearly complete, and that:

These plans will contemplate a complete and well-equipped institution of the first order. They can not be worked out in a year, or five years. No collegiate institution is ever complete. There will be constantly arising new needs. This generation must do its part, for the next will find its obligations no less exacting than those which we are to meet. . . . We are committed to great enterprise which will make the College one of the outstanding features of this city and state.⁶

It seems, at times, as if Brown's rhetoric becomes particularly eloquent when there are problems within the Board. The problem in this case appears to be the question of whom to choose as the architect and what should be the style of the buildings. Certain Board members were apparently becoming more and more involved with the planning process. At the October Board meeting, Brown

⁵Minutes, May 22, 1923.

⁶Ibid., July 11, 1923.

reported on the search for an architect, and that examples of the best college buildings were being studied. He put special emphasis on the importance of the exterior look of the buildings.

Within a few months the campaign should have reached a point where the goal is in sight. Then the urgent need for additional buildings to care for the constantly increasing attendance will make it necessary to start new buildings at Fairview Park within the shortest possible time.

It would be a mistake to start any of these buildings before the plans have been carefully thought out and then studied and revised before working drawings are made. For this reason an architect should be selected at least six months before any plans are needed. The plans of the best modern college buildings over the country should be studied and adjusted to our own needs

The whole plan of the college should be developed in a way that will permit of flexibility so that it can be expanded from time to time without destroying its general unity.

The exterior should have definite architectural merit. If it does not Butler will have failed to grasp a great opportunity. An attractive building is in itself of important educational value and the students are at an impressionistic age when they are greatly influenced by their surroundings.⁷

The men most involved in this bit of internal wrangling appear to be Henry Jameson, Will Irwin, and Lee Burns. The Buildings and Grounds Committee was having some difficulty coming to an agreement on an architect and a design. The committee was chaired by Arthur V. Brown with Jameson as vice chairman. In addition to Irwin and Burns, the other members of the committee were

⁷Ibid., October 10, 1923.

Emsley Johnson and Henry Kahn. Hilton U. Brown, John Atherton and Robert J. Aley, the newly appointed President of Butler, were ex officio members.⁸ At one point in these deliberations, Lee Burns offered the services of his firm's architects to do the work, but this was diplomatically refused by Hilton U. Brown.⁹ In January, 1924, Arthur Brown reported to the Board that the matter of finding an architect had been referred to a sub-committee of Jameson, Irwin, Atherton, and Hilton U. Brown.¹⁰

On March 7, a decision was announced to a special meeting of the Board that the Executive Committee had appointed Robert Frost Daggett as the architect for Butler University. Not long before this meeting, Jameson died. During the discussion of Daggett's appointment, Lee Burns came out in opposition to Daggett and pushed for having an architectural competition. After losing on this issue, he strongly recommended a consulting architect to oversee Daggett's work.¹¹ Possibly because of Burns' opposition the Board resolution was very carefully worded:

⁸Ibid., January 28, 1924.

⁹Ibid., November 28, 1923.

¹⁰Ibid., January 28, 1924.

¹¹Ibid., March 7, 1924.

Therefore be it resolved that the Board of Directors ratify the action of the said committee .

It should be provided that all preliminary drawings required by the Board shall be submitted without additional cost to the Board over and above five percent. . . The Board reserves the right to suggest modifications or rejection of preliminary plans and that contract for construction of any work shall only follow when plans for the same are accepted by the Board.

The Board also reserves the right to engage the services of an advisory or consulting architect, or board of architects, to survey all plans and in general to assist in developing a scheme of construction befitting an educational plant designed not only for the present but for all future time.¹²

By the Fall of 1924 it was still hoped to have construction started in the Spring of 1925. Three resolutions were passed concerning the development of the building plans and the architect. Irwin, in particular, had growing concerns about the quality of Daggett's designs.¹³ Otherwise, everything seemed to be moving along quite satisfactorily. In January, Director L. C. Huesmann reported for the Buildings and Grounds Committee that the buildings at Fairview should be ready by Fall, 1926. Daggett also appeared before the Board with preliminary plans. These called for English Gothic as the style of architecture and the use of stone rather than brick. The estimated cost was \$775,000 for a group

¹²Ibid., April 28, 1924.

¹³Ibid., October 11, 1924; John W. Atherton, "From the City Office," Butler Alumna Quarterly 13 (January 1925): 246.

of buildings connected by colonnades. He announced that he would need four months to complete the plans.¹⁴

Meanwhile, Daggett and his associate Thomas Hibben, a Butler graduate, were working closely with the Board on the final design of the new buildings. Hibben traveled extensively, making drawings of collegiate building styles.¹⁵ Brown, Irwin, and Hibben traveled to Europe in the Spring of 1925, viewing the architectural styles of universities in several countries.¹⁶ They were especially impressed by the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge in England. Hibben was brought along to make drawings of buildings they especially liked.

At the first Board meeting after his return, Hilton U. Brown informed the Board that there would be a delay in building at Fairview.

We have found that removal to Fairview cannot take place as early as we had hoped. The more we have investigated the more impressive the outlook and our responsibility become. . .

The building plans may be modified as a result of the studies of Mr. Daggett's assistant, Mr. Hibben, who is spending much time abroad. He is now at Oxford, England, and will go next week to Cambridge. In these two institutions the best examples of collegiate architecture no doubt are to be found. Sketches and photographs in endless number have been made, and it is perfectly apparent that

¹⁴Minutes, January 21, 1925.

¹⁵John W. Atherton, "Endowment News," 185.

¹⁶"Personal Mention," Butler Alumna Quarterly 14 (July 1925): 127.

what we must do must be done in keeping with our opportunity and the experience of others.¹⁷

Irwin sent word that the Board should proceed advisedly because he and Brown had seen the best examples of collegiate architecture at Oxford and Cambridge and there would have to be modifications in the plans for the buildings at Fairview.¹⁸

The delay would consume another year, despite the exhortations by Brown to get the construction under way before people began to lose interest in the project. Finally, on July 14, 1926, the Board approved the plans. The major cause of delay had, of course, been the extensive changes in the plans brought about by Irwin's and Brown's trip to England, but there was also a debate on the precise location of the buildings and on the decision to use North Carolina granite instead of Indiana limestone for the exterior.¹⁹ To top off all of these causes for delay in beginning construction, there was a last minute challenge, by Will Irwin, to Daggett's and Hibben's final plans. Irwin wrote to the architectural firm of Bertram, Grosvenor, Goodhue Associates of New York City and asked their opinion of the plans. Their

¹⁷Minutes, July 8, 1925.

¹⁸Ibid.

¹⁹"From the City Office," Butler Alumna Quarterly 14 (October 1925): 166; "From the City Office," Butler Alumna Quarterly 15 (April 1926): 45-6; Minutes, October 14, 1925; April 23, 1926; June 8, 1926.

response was that they saw no reason to criticize the plans and had high praise for the drawings that Hibben showed them. They suggested to Irwin that:

The whole matter boiled down amounts to this - either the man you have chosen as your architect is good enough to carry out the entire project, in which case you ought to have full confidence in him and leave matters to his discretion - or else he isn't - in which case you ought to get somebody else to do it.²⁰

A contract was let at this same meeting for the W. C. Smith Construction Company to begin the excavations for the new buildings at Fairview. Meanwhile, a couple of months before this meeting, the building campaign achieved its latest goal with a \$350,000 gift from Arthur Jordan. Jordan's total contributions to Butler were to amount to a \$1,000,000 by the end of 1927 and the Board decided in the Fall of 1927 to name the academic complex Arthur Jordan Memorial Hall.²¹

Construction began with the excavation of the basement for the three building complex on September 27, 1926.²²

However, this was not the end of problems and delays. A contractor was needed who could do the construction work. It was at first decided to ask for bids from local contractors. Louis C. Huesmann, Chairman of

²⁰O. H. Murray, Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue Associates to W. G. Irwin, July 12, 1926, in Minutes, July 14, 1926.

²¹Ibid., October 12, 1927.

²²"From the City Office," Butler Alumna Quarterly 15 (October 1926): 180.

the Building Committee, invited a series of local contractors to make presentations on their ability to undertake the construction at Fairview. A contractor named Moneyhan recommended that the work should be done on a fee basis rather than on a bid basis because of the flexibility the fee basis provided. He also felt the first building could be ready by September 15, 1927.²³

Within a month Huesmann was dead and the Building Committee was faced with the decision to build on a fee basis or a bid basis. Bids were apparently already in hand by the time of the next Committee meeting on October 12, but the sentiment within the Committee was in favor of a fee basis. Apparently one major donor had objected to the idea of a fee basis because he considered the funds for the project to be semi-public. The Committee decided to recommend to the Board a fee or salary basis for working with a building contractor.

The committee proceeded to open the bids received and found that a contractor named McGaughy had the lowest bid. In meeting with the Committee, McGaughy asked that his bid be kept confidential because it was so low. This should have been a warning to the

²³Minutes of the Building Committee, September 14, 1926. Moneyhan was also asked about the construction of athletic facilities and a dormitory and suggested that they might be financed through bonds. This suggestion is probably the original source for the means eventually used to finance the athletic plant and was seriously being considered for financing dormitories just before the 1929 Panic hit.

Committee, but McGaughy was given the job. His resignation from the project was reported to the Board at the January 20, 1927, meeting.²⁴

Once again the project had been held up with another nagging delay. Finally, Arthur Jordan reported to the Board for the Building Committee on June 8, 1927, that a contract for construction of \$917,000 had been awarded to the Hegeman & Harris Construction Company of Chicago and New York.²⁵ Bids were opened on May 17, and Hegeman and Harris was the low bidder. They also agreed to build the field house. The contract called for completion of the academic buildings in eleven months from June 1, 1927, and the field house by February 15, 1928.²⁶ Thus the field house would be completed before the academic buildings.

A number of other problems were to arise just before and after the move from Irvington to Fairview. The most immediate of these problems was the furnishing and equipping of the classrooms, laboratories and offices of the new Jordan Memorial Hall. Evidently insufficient time was allowed for planning and ordering the needed items, and makeshift arrangements had to be made

²⁴Minutes of the Building Committee, October 13, 1926, (in the Minutes of the Board of Directors, January 20, 1927). No reasons or explanation were given for this sudden resignation, but the scale of the project and its cost may have been beyond the means of McGaughy.

²⁵Minutes, June 8, 1927; June 13, 1927.

²⁶Ibid., June 13, 1927.

to use some of the old equipment from Irvington until the new equipment and furnishings were ordered and delivered.²⁷

The lack of paved roadways on campus, parking areas, and sidewalks proved a messy problem in the fall and winter months before these could be completed.²⁸ Meanwhile, it seems the city did not live up to all of its agreement with Butler on the provision of "boulevards" and access to Meridian Street. Butler had to agree to pay for a substantial part of the work; and by the time it was under way, some of the right-of-way could no longer be purchased because of the construction of new houses.²⁹

Immediately after the start of classes at Fairview in September 1928 the University found it had a problem because no one had anticipated the need for some kind of food service for the students. Because the neighborhood was largely residential or undeveloped, there were no commercial enterprises in the area to provide for various student needs, including eating places. The Board hurriedly authorized the construction of an emergency cafeteria to serve the campus. Students quickly named this rough wooden building the Campus

²⁷Ibid., January 17, 1928; October 16, 1928.

²⁸Minutes of the Fairview Buildings and Grounds Committee, June 14, 1928, in Minutes of the Board of Directors; Minutes, October 16, 1928.

²⁹Ibid., October 9, 1929.

Club. It was to remain a popular campus eatery until it burned down in 1947.³⁰

Yet another problem that proved troublesome was the lack of dormitories. This had been talked about for several years, and plans were made and even a financing scheme developed based upon the idea used to finance the athletic facilities. But the Board was not willing to take the risk of additional debt that this would entail and instructed the Financial Secretary to raise the needed funding first. The idea that was advocated was a combination dormitory and business building to house a bookstore and administrative offices. This project and the construction of the College of Religion building were delayed for years because of the onset of the Great Depression and of the illness of John Atherton.³¹

Hilton U. Brown tried to convince the Board of the importance of building dormitories, but for the first time he lost on a proposal, and soon other more pressing is-

³⁰Ibid., October 16, 1928; "Executive Council Meets to Consider Replacement of Fire-Gutted 'C' Club," Butler Collegian, 18 November 1947, p.1.

³¹Minutes, May 5, 1927; June 13, 1927; October 12, 1927; January 17, 1928; April 19, 1928; May 25, 1928; June 15, 1928; June 27, 1928; October 16, 1928; November 7, 1928. Atherton's health problems are alluded to in the Board Minutes throughout this period. From the available evidence Atherton apparently suffered some kind of nervous breakdown that required an extensive rest cure. The first dormitories were not built until 1954 and the administrative offices were accommodated in Jordan Hall by converting or renovating space originally designed for instructional uses or faculty offices. "New Men's Dorm Nears Completion," Butler Collegian 19 March 1954, p. 1.

sues intervened.³² The lack of dormitories at Fairview until the early 1950's probably contributed to Butler's inability to attract out-of-town students and especially students from other states.

The last of the problems associated with the early days in Fairview was the inadequate and poorly designed library in Jordan Hall. Almost immediately after the library was moved to Jordan it was apparent that the facility was not going to accommodate the collections or provide enough space for library users and staff. Evidently Professor Baumgartner, the long time acting librarian, was very unhappy about the situation and resigned as Librarian in the fall of 1928. Hilton U. Brown admitted that the transfer of the library was the most difficult part of the move to Fairview. In all likelihood, the inadequacy of the new facility was part of the reason. This was to remain a major and embarrassing problem for decades. It was a source of continuing problems with the North Central Association. Various make-shift arrangements were attempted to provide adequate space for collections, study areas, and staff work space. At one point, during the accreditation crisis of 1929-31, Hilton U. Brown suggested moving the Bona Thompson Memorial Library from the Irvington campus to Fairview to solve the problem. This proved to be too

³²Minutes, October 16, 1928; November 7, 1928.

costly an undertaking, and the idea was dropped.³³ Over the years a number of branch libraries were developed to ease the strain until a new building, the Irwin Library, was built in 1963 to replace the Jordan Hall library.³⁴

A good part of the academic year 1927-28 was spent in anticipation of the move to Fairview. Plans were carefully made for the move to take place over the summer; and, for the most part, the move was completed in time for the start of classes in September.³⁵ The new academic building, Jordan Hall, was spacious and monumental compared to the overcrowded and rapidly deteriorating Irvington campus. The new building was a wonder to its new occupants and a point of pride in the community. The excitement and optimism about the new campus at the beginning of the 1928-29 academic year was reflected in the various student and university publications, as well as in the local press. The Butler Alumna Quarterly waxed eloquently about the new Arthur Jordan Memorial Hall:

As you survey your university on the opening of its seventy fourth year, do not feel that you are acting strangely in giving breath to those exclamations of astonishment and admiration. There is probably nothing you can say in its praise that has not been the common expression of the hosts of vis-

³³Brown, Book of Memories, 91.

³⁴"Library Opens on Schedule," Butler Collegian, 13 September 1963, p. 3.

³⁵Minutes, June 22, 1928; October 16, 1928.

itors who have come to look on it in the last two months. There seems to be about it that universality of appeal that leaves no room for a dissenting voice. A group of architects brought from the East to inspect it asserted that as a type of college edifice, the Arthur Jordan Memorial Building is unexcelled by anything in America. A member of the faculty who has travelled the world around, taught in the Orient, and visited the greatest universities in Europe, said that in his opinion this structure surpasses anything of its kind in the world.³⁶

The Indianapolis Star recognized the significance of the event in an editorial:

The opening of the new Butler at Fairview yesterday marked an important milestone in the history of the institution and the educational development of Indianapolis. Those interested in the creation of a first-class school for higher education in Indianapolis have watched for months the gradual evolution of the handsome structure which constitutes the main building. The dream of years has been realized in part with the seat of activities transferred from Irvington to the beautiful tract of land which formerly was Fairfield Park.³⁷

Jordan Hall received considerable national recognition among architects with a lengthy pictorial article in the American Architect, a national architectural journal.³⁸ Jordan Hall is a classic of American collegiate Gothic based upon good models. Although it appears to be one building, it actually consists of

³⁶"Introducing New Butler," Butler Alumna Quarterly 17 (October 1928): 132.

³⁷"The New Butler," Indianapolis Star, 18 September 1928, p. 6.

³⁸Thomas Hibben, "Arthur Jordan Building, Butler University," American Architect 135 (January 5, 1929): 1-26.

three buildings in an E shape, three stories high, with each building on a slightly different level and closely connected to each other by two massive towers. The buildings make for an impressive sight and must surely have satisfied Brown's expressed desire for such a facade.

Chapter 5

The Role and Development of Athletics

Like most other Midwestern colleges in the late nineteenth century, Butler developed a tradition of student involvement in popular sports in competition with other colleges. At Butler many of these were sponsored by student clubs, but a few received outside support from various groups interested in athletics. Among the sports that were popular in the early post Civil War years were gymnastics, baseball, and tennis. There were also a number of very rough games that were associated with class rivalries and freshmen hazing. Among these were a tug-of-war match between the men of the sophomore and freshmen classes, and the climbing of a greased pole in order to place a freshmen beanie on top. The latter, if successful, allowed the freshmen to dispense with wearing the beanies. The pole was defended by upper classmen. Such activities were generally popular with students and often turned out sizable crowds rooting for their favorites. Butler in that sense was very much like many other American colleges of the period.

It has been remarked that the development of athletics was one of the distinctive contributions of students to the extracurriculum of colleges in the nineteenth century. Athletics and the Greek letter society have probably been the most enduring contributions of students to the academic cul-

ture we know today in the United States. These activities became so popular that it became essential for the colleges to provide some kind of control and supervision of their often rowdy and destructive tendencies. They represented a form of power that students could exercise along side of the seemingly omnipotent power of the college over the academic curriculum and student life. If, as Rudolph suggests, the development of the extracurriculum was a rebellion against the rigidity of the classical course, then the students have long since won. The response of the colleges was to institutionalize the extracurriculum. This has not remained a happy union, as can be seen by the continuing and long standing animosity of many academics towards the huge amounts of money associated with intercollegiate athletics and the often regrettable barbarism and violence sometimes associated with fraternities. As Rudolph says "... in the extracurriculum the students erected within the gates a monster."¹

College football, as a form of "big time" sports entertainment, was already well established by the 1920's in the United States. Basketball, although a popular sport, was somewhat slower in developing as a popular entertainment pastime. It took a number of changes in the game beginning in the 1930's before it too entered the big time sports arena along with football and baseball.

¹Frederick Rudolph, The American College and University, A History (New York: Knopf, 1962) 155, 156-7.

College football came of age as a major sport in terms of popularity and competition in the decades from 1890-1920 and entered what has been called the "golden decade" in the 1920's. In the Midwest the sport rose steadily in popularity with the public at large throughout this era. The dominant football powers were most often members of the Western Athletic Conference or "Big Ten". However, there were a large number of other colleges that played the game and other conferences emerged quickly in the era before World War I. Some of these other colleges became major competitors with the Western Conference teams. Most notable of these was the University of Notre Dame in South Bend, Indiana.²

Many colleges were to attempt to match the success of Notre Dame, but few have succeeded. Butler was one of the institutions that attempted to find fame and distinction through football, but ended up over committed and in deep difficulty financially and academically.

The sport became so competitive in the 1920's that coaches could demand high salaries for success. The importance of winning became so great that abuses became prevalent throughout the game. Among the abuses were illegal recruiting practices, ineligible admission and retention of athletes, cash payments and gifts of various kinds to athletes, and special treatment of athletes by school officials with

²Tom Perrin, Football, A College History (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 1987) 67-145.

respect to housing, allowances for expenses, and lower academic standards.³

One of the most peculiar characteristics of American college alumni has been their continuing and often intense loyalty to "alma mater". It usually takes its most intense form in the support of athletic teams, but it was also displayed in the financial support for academic and building programs. Butler was clearly a beneficiary of both kinds of alumni support. A powerful group of alumni could be a major factor in the development of an institution. If this alumni group wanted strong athletic teams in order to hold their interest, this was often what they received, especially if they also happened to be key donors or members of Boards of Trustees. This was very much the case at Butler in the early 1920's. The movement for a "greater Butler" received a significant boost in the early 1920's when a group of alumni who were mainly interested in intercollegiate athletics were brought into key positions within the University.

Intercollegiate sports in Indiana emerged in the 1880's. At first baseball was the major sport. There was also some competition with cross-country running and outdoor gymnastics. Other sports such as tennis and rowing also pro-

³W. H. Cowley, "Athletics in American Colleges," Journal of Higher Education 1 (January 1930): 29-35; Howard J. Savage, American College Athletics (New York: Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 1929), 28-9, 32.

vided some limited opportunities for intercollegiate competition in the state.

Football began as a club sport on various campuses until 1887 when the Indiana Athletic Club in Indianapolis first sponsored the organization of an Indiana football association of colleges to play three intercollegiate football games. The Club promised to cover the cost of team travel and the officials, but the schools had to provide uniforms for their teams.⁴ The success of this competition provided the impetus for the sport to rapidly develop in popularity and participation. Butler was one of the original members of this competition.

There was an intercollegiate athletic tradition at Butler dating back to at least the 1880's. Baseball was considered the major sport in the early years. Basketball did not emerge until after 1897. Butler was one of the six founding members in 1886 of the Indiana College Football Association, the first football conference in Indiana. The other members of the new league were Wabash, Hanover, Indiana, DePauw, and Franklin. Purdue University joined a year later. Butler won three championships in 1889, 1892, and 1894. These teams were undefeated and untied and were the source of pride among the alumni who pushed for big time football in the 1920's. One of the captains of these unde-

⁴"First College Football in Indiana," Butler Alumna Quarterly 12 (January 1924): 205-8.

feated teams of 1880's and 1890's was R. F. Davidson. He was the leader of the alumni Committee of Twenty-five that was instrumental in the development of Butler athletics in the 1920's.⁵ Other members of this big time sports group included Emsley Johnson, Lee Burns, and John Atherton, all of whom became key figures in the development the greater Butler as members of the Board of Directors and in the running of the University.

Of all of the college sports that students participated in, it was football that emerged as the sport with the greatest public appeal and support by the 1920's in Indiana. This popularity was particularly strong among the students and alumni of the various colleges in the State. The rivalries intensified to the point that they even spread into non-athletic and non-academic arenas such as politics and the various social and service clubs in urban areas. College alumni groups and athletic associations were often instrumental in pressuring the colleges into providing greater support to building winning football teams.⁶

Despite the championship teams of the 1880's and 1890's, Butler's athletic success, especially in football, was modest before World War I. The popularity of football

⁵Ibid.; Christy Walsh, ed., Intercollegiate Football, A Complete Pictorial History and Statistical Review from 1869 to 1934 (New York: Doubleday, 1934) 307-8.

⁶"First."

after 1910 led a number of local Indianapolis fans, including some Butler alumni, to press Butler to launch a big time football program in order to have a successful team in the city. Alumni interest and pressure continued to grow in the immediate post-War years. The coincidence of this rising alumni interest with the efforts of Hilton U. Brown to garner support for the "Greater Butler" idea led to the establishment of the Committee of Twenty-five whose support for both the "Greater Butler" and football led to the development of the new campus at Fairview and of the hiring of Harlan O. "Pat" Page from the University of Chicago as Athletic Director and Head Coach.⁷

Attendance at Butler athletic events before 1915 was a popular pastime in Indianapolis. There were few other local colleges in the area with the same kind of immediate appeal. Both Indiana University and Purdue had been members of the Western Athletic Conference since 1895. Butler's athletic competition had been mainly with other colleges in Indiana, and loyalties to teams tended to be local and in the immediate vicinity of a team's hometown. The development of "traditional rivalries" also added to the appeal of the "big games" by drawing crowds in support of the competing teams wherever they played. Even though Indiana and Purdue were in

⁷"New Athletic Director: Harlan Orville (Pat) Page." Butler Alumnae Quarterly, 9 (April 1920): 67-9.

the Big Ten they frequently played non-conference games against other Indiana institutions.⁸

Football became the major spectator sport in Indiana with a wide appeal to students, alumni, and the general public. Alumni support for big time football had grown rapidly to a peak by 1921-22. Hilton U. Brown was an avid fan himself and even hosted special dinners and parties for the Butler team in his home in Irvington.⁹ Will Irwin had provided the money to build Irwin Field, the home football field for Butler in Irvington. Many of the active alumni supporters were themselves former athletes who had fond memories of their successes on the playing fields.

The success of the University of Notre Dame was probably a key influence upon these Butler alumni and athletic boosters. To them Notre Dame had shown the way to national prestige through football, and they saw no reason Butler could not follow this same model of success. Another factor was the rise of the Big Ten or Western Athletic Conference as one of the premier intercollegiate football leagues. The Big Ten set the standards and rules for competition, and many smaller colleges were being left out as the members of the Big Ten and Notre Dame eliminated most of the local schools

⁸Thomas D. Clark, Indiana University, Midwestern Pioneer (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1973) Vol. 2, 163-89.

⁹Hilton U. Brown, Book of Memories (Indianapolis: Butler University, 1951) 108-10.

from their schedules as they sought to play major teams from other regions of the country in order to establish national reputations.

The costs of this national competition were also growing as teams had to travel long distances by train to play teams from the East and West coasts. Inevitably the competition in recruiting and retaining outstanding athletes led to abuses requiring more stringent rules on the part of conferences and greater efforts to enforce these rules.

Athletics as a Community Service

Collegiate athletics was justified by some athletic boosters as a community service. Successful athletic teams would bring fame and recognition to the community. Butler owed it to its many loyal local fans to have winning teams, according to these men. There was clearly an appeal to local community pride on the part of the Committee of Twenty-five throughout the drive to establish winning teams at Butler. The idea of community service was extended even further when, in the planning of the new campus at Fairview, there arose the opportunity to justify the construction of a major athletic plant on the basis that this would be a contribution to the community's need for adequate facilities to host the high

school state championships in football and basketball.¹⁰

Indiana high school athletics, particularly football and basketball, were very popular by the 1920's. There had been a continuous search, for some time, for adequate facilities in which to play the various state high school championships. Indianapolis, because it was the state capital, largest city, and at the geographical center of the state, was considered to be the best place to host these games. Unfortunately, the city did not have adequate facilities for the size of crowds that these events attracted.¹¹

John Atherton and the other athletic boosters on the Butler Board of Directors saw a great opportunity for Butler to promote both athletics and public service if the new campus could be the site of first class athletic facilities for the city and the University. Atherton negotiated a contract with the Indiana High School Athletic Association for \$10,000 a year for use of a field house and stadium to be built by the Spring of 1928 on the Butler campus. The field house for basketball, swimming, and indoor track meets was to seat 15,000 people making it by far the largest such arena in the Midwest. The football stadium, called the Butler Bowl, was to seat 32,000 when it opened, and have the potential to grow to a capacity of 60,000 or more. At this time, the stadiums

¹⁰Minutes, October 13, 1926; May 5, 1927.

¹¹Ibid., June 13, 1927.

at Indiana, Purdue, and Notre Dame could seat 30,000, 13,300, and 35,000 respectively.¹²

Before 1920 the control and regulation of Butler athletics was in the hands of University faculty and administration. Butler competed with other Indiana colleges and universities in football, basketball, tennis, and baseball. Each of these teams also had regular coaches, but football was the sport that drew the crowds. By 1913 when George Cullen Thomas was named football coach, Irwin Field was constructed to provide a home field with sufficient seating for popular games. Butler games frequently attracted several thousand fans for a games. Big games could draw as many as 10,000 in attendance with many fans having to crowd around the bleachers and isles in order to see. Thomas remained coach through the War years, but the lack of winning seasons and the desire of the alumni athletic boosters for a higher level of competition led to his dismissal after the 1920 season.¹³

The new era of Butler athletics began with the hiring of a big time coach. The choice of the Committee of Twenty

¹²Ibid.; "Looking Ahead," Butler Alumna Quarterly, v. 16, no. 3, October 1927; "New Athletic Plant at Butler University, Modern in Every Detail, A Far Cry From 'Shinny on Your Own Side' Days at Old Seminary," Indianapolis News, 3 November 1928, p. 21.

¹³Minutes, July 20, 1920; Atherton, John W. "College Conditions," Butler Alumna Quarterly 9 (October 1920): 188-90.

Five was Harlan Orville "Pat" Page of the University of Chicago. Page was a protege of Amos Alonzo Stagg, the legendary coach at Chicago. Page had been a multiple sport athletic star at Chicago and after graduation had become Stagg's chief assistant and basketball coach. He left Chicago in the middle of the basketball season in order to become Butler Athletic Director and Head Football Coach. Page brought with him another young coach, Paul "Tony" Hinkle, who was, in time, to become a coaching legend at Butler in his own right. Hinkle served as Page's chief assistant and was baseball coach.¹⁴

The new Butler athletic program included football, basketball, baseball, track and field, cross country, tennis, and women's basketball. The focus of the program was upon football, and Page proceeded to give the Alumni what they wanted, winning teams against top flight competition. The football opposition under Page included Big Ten teams like Illinois in the era of "Red" Grange, and a number of other national opponents in addition to the traditional Indiana college opponents.

Page was hired at a salary of \$6,500, an amount that was higher than that of any other employee of the University at the time. In addition he controlled the distribution of game tickets and publicity. All of the income from ticket

¹⁴"Page, Pat" Butler Biographical File, BUA; "Hinkle, Tony" Butler Biographical File, BUA.

sales went to the athletic program, but the program also received additional funds from the University for coaches and managers. The control of the athletic program and, in particular, the control of ticket income became the central issue in a controversy between Page and the Board of Directors in 1926. Page's demands for control of the program became too great for the Board to accept and Page left Butler in 1926.¹⁵

At first, Page's departure led to fears among faculty and others that enrollment might decline. These fears proved unfounded, and the Board of Directors moved quickly to replace Page. At first they gave the job to Page's assistant Paul D. "Tony" Hinkle, but Hinkle's lack of enthusiasm for the big time athletic program desired by the Board and alumni soon led to his being replaced as Athletic Director. George "Potsy" Clark was hired in 1927 from the University of Minnesota at a salary of \$10,000 to be the Athletic Director and Head Football Coach.¹⁶

One of the reasons that Clark was attracted to Butler was the prospect of having within a year of his arrival the use of what promised to be the premier college athletic fa-

¹⁵Joint Meeting of Board of Directors and Committee of Twenty-five, February 9, 1920; "Harlan O. Page," Butler Alumna Quarterly 15 (April 1926): 43-4.

¹⁶"From the City office," Butler Alumna Quarterly 15 (April 1926): 47-8; Minutes, June 8, 1926; July 13, 1927; "George (Potsy) Clark Becomes Athletic Director," Butler Alumna Quarterly 16 (October 1927): 81-4.

cility in the Midwest. The construction of this facility came about through the efforts of Butler Financial Secretary John Atherton. Atherton perceived a need for and an opportunity to provide for the Indianapolis area and Butler a premier athletic facility with far more spacious arenas than existed any where else in the region at the time. He approached the Indiana State High School Athletic Association with a proposal to build such facilities at Butler if they would sign a contract to use the facilities for their championships. The agreement that was signed provided for the payment of \$10,000 a year by the Association provided that the facilities were ready by the Spring of 1928, in time for the basketball championships.¹⁷

This undertaking proved to be one of the least successful of John Atherton's projects. The financing scheme for the new facility was based upon the prospect that Butler's athletic program would generate significant income in time to help pay off the indebtedness to the investors. The financing scheme for the \$1,500,000 project provided for gradually increasing payments over fifteen years with a large balloon payment in 1941 of \$500,000. The whole scheme was set up under the aegis of a special corporation called the Corporation for Physical Education and Athletics. The Board of Directors of this new corporation were, for the most part,

¹⁷Minutes, June 13, 1927.

members of the Butler University Board of Directors. Stock in the corporation was sold to finance and construct a field house and football stadium. Butler payed rent to the Corporation for the use of facilities by its athletic teams. Rental income also came from the high school athletic association. In addition, the annual interest due on the stock was to be paid by Butler University, and the stock was to be repurchased by the University. Essentially, the Board of Directors had mortgaged the University's Endowment to finance the new athletic facility on the tenuous notion that athletic success and the University would continue to grow over the next fifteen years at the same rate it had grown over the last ten years. Of course, no one expected a great depression to intervene or that the athletic program would fail to realize the success envisioned by the Board.¹⁸

The beginning of the end came almost exactly two years after the triumphant opening of the new athletic facilities in the Spring of 1928. Butler lost its North Central Association accreditation in March 1930 largely because of the over extension of the University's finances to build this facility. Within a year Clark was out as athletic director because he would not accept a major cut in his \$10,000 a year salary and Harry Bell, was hired to replace him at a much lower salary. Attendance at Butler football games had been

¹⁸Ibid., October 12, 1927, Brown, 99-100.

declining for several years as the teams failed to produce the level of play that they had in the early and mid 1920's. The only great success came in basketball where the low key Tony Hinkle's teams achieved significant success and won the Amateur Athletic Union sponsored national championship in 1929.¹⁹

There were two other factors that brought about the demise of big time athletics at Butler and of the Greater Butler idea. These were the Great Depression, that began in the Fall of 1929, and the disastrous presidency of Walter Scott Athearn.

¹⁹"News From the City Office, " Butler Alumnae Quarterly 18 (January 1930): 196.

Chapter 6

The Crises over Accreditation & Control of the University

The opening of the new campus in the Fall of 1928 was joyous for all concerned. Despite the last minute problems such as the lack of a cafeteria, the failure to provide for student housing needs, and the inadequacies of the library, nearly everyone seemed pleased with Jordan Hall, the athletic facilities, and the potential of the new campus. There certainly was a world of difference from the badly overcrowded conditions at the deteriorating Irvington campus. The dreams of so many seemed finally to have been realized.

All of this hope and optimism was soon to be tested by a crisis that was entirely unexpected, and from a source that had apparently been largely taken for granted in the past. The North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools placed Butler on probation after a visit early in 1929. Dean James Putnam informed the Board members of this action in March at a joint meeting of the Financial Committee and the Faculty Committee of the Board.¹ There was no discussion recorded in the minutes about this apparently unexpected action by North Central. Much more important to the Directors was their concern over Professor Richardson's rec-

¹Minutes of a joint meeting of the Financial and Faculty Committees of the Board, March 29, 1929.

ommendation that \$5,000 be budgeted for the formal dedication of the new campus, the setting of faculty and athletic salaries for 1929-30, and the authorization of gardener Willard Clute to purchase plants for the new campus.

The full Board met on April 9, and President Aley called the Board's attention to the situation with the North Central Association and of the necessity for correcting the problems before the next report was due to North Central. The Board established a committee of three to work with the President of the Board and the President of the University on responding to the report of North Central.²

What had happened to precipitate this crisis? First, there was the developing role of the North Central Association as an accrediting agency for institutions of higher learning. The Association was founded in 1895 as an accrediting agency for high schools. It did not include colleges until 1908 when a policy for inspecting colleges was adopted. The first set of standards for colleges was adopted in 1909, and in 1912 all colleges that were members of the Association were granted accreditation. Another significant development came in 1924 when the Association adopted a greatly increased standard for the amount of productive endowment required of colleges. Finally, during 1929 and 1930 the Association undertook to thoroughly study and revise all

²Minutes of the Board of Directors, April 9, 1929.

of its standards and compare them with other accrediting agencies.³

Butler was elected a member of the Association in 1915⁴ and had never run afoul of any of the standards before 1929. Butler was never an active participant in the development of the standards of the Association, and it would appear the institution had not kept up with the changes in standards that had taken place since 1912. Butler completed a routine report for North Central and a supplemental report on the finances of the University in 1927. The supplemental financial report was based upon the new 1924 standards for endowment. Aley referred these reports to John Atherton to complete. After the reports were completed and returned to North Central, Aley had some concerns about some of Atherton's responses on the financial report and questioned his handling of some transfers of funds to meet the standards. Atherton's response to Aley was somewhat scolding and deferential, as if Aley had no business questioning his handling of the report.⁵ As things turned out, one of the major criticisms by North Central leading to Butler being put on probation in 1929 had

³Calvin Olin Davis, A history of the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools, 1895-1945 (Ann Arbor: Publication Office, North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools, 1945), 69-72, 277-9.

⁴ Minutes, July 14, 1915.

⁵ Atherton to Aley, February 19, 1927; Atherton to Aley, February 21, 1927; Aley to Atherton, February 23, 1927; Atherton to Aley, February 28, 1927; Aley to Atherton, March 5, 1927, Aley Papers, Box 97 BUA.

to do with the inadequacy of Butler's endowment as reported by Atherton in the 1927 financial report.

According to Dean James Putnam the probation by North Central was based upon nine charges.

1. Too many oversize classes.
2. Too small a percentage of students in Junior and Senior classes.
3. Too small laboratory replacement value per student.
4. Too small per capita library expenditure
5. Too small per capita number of volumes in library.
6. Too small per capita income.
7. Too small per capita endowment.
8. Too small per capita expenditure on educational programs (Faculty and Library).
9. Too large percentage of Faculty in lower ranks.⁶

The North Central Association probation was clearly based on the lack of financial support for the academic programs of the University. Most of the new money raised by the Financial Secretary during the decade of the 1920's was going into the construction of the new campus. Very little of this money went to increase faculty salaries, to improve support of instruction, or to improve services for students. The highest salaries paid by Butler were to the athletic coaches. A huge new athletic complex had been built by essentially mortgaging the University's endowment. Butler's tuition remained very low in contrast to other private institutions. A General Education Board study showed that Butler's annual fee of \$160 a year placed it among the lowest tuition rates with

⁶ Minutes of a joint meeting of the Financial and Faculty Committees of the Board, March 29, 1929.

a small group of 6.3% of private universities charging less than \$200 a year for tuition.⁷ The disproportionately large freshmen and sophomore classes resulted from low admissions standards and a consequent high attrition rate.

The priorities of the Board of Directors was on bricks and mortar and athletics. A weak university administration could not overcome the momentum and will of the strong men of the Board such as Hilton U. Brown, Will Irwin, and Emsley Johnson. President Aley and Dean Putnam also had no control and little influence with the principal agent of the Board, Financial Secretary John Atherton, who worked out of, and ran, the Downtown Office of the University. Yet another member of the Downtown Office, Secretary to the Board Charles Wilson, was becoming increasingly powerful as the Board began to delegate more budget oversight authority to him. This was especially true while Atherton was ill in 1928 and 1929.⁸

The Board did not seem to take the North Central probation very seriously at first. Their attitude was that this issue could be set aside and taken care of at the next meeting of the Association by sending a strong delegation to plead for more time. There was no effort made to immediately correct the problems cited by North Central. The impression one receives is that the Board leaders felt that the North

⁷ Trevor Arnett. Trends in Tuition Fees in State and Endowed Colleges and Universities in the United States From 1928-29 through 1936-37 (New York: General Education Board, 1939), 95.

⁸Minutes, January 30, 1929; July 10, 1929.

Central probation was just a nuisance issue that related only to the academic side of the University, one that President Aley had failed to handle very well. Irwin suggested seeking a meeting with North Central to discuss and find a settlement to whatever was troubling them about Butler.⁹ Aley was unable to arrange such a meeting because North Central did not at this time have a regular executive staff. The various committees of North Central were convened as needed.¹⁰

There is no evidence that the University made any additional effort to respond to its probation until the March 1930 meeting of the North Central Association. Brown, Atherton, and Putnam attended the meeting and met with officials of the Association and its Board of Review. Their pleas for another year of probation were denied and Butler was immediately suspended from the list of accredited institutions.¹¹ A letter from George F. Zook, dated April 4, 1930, informed President Aley of this decision and was placed in the Board minutes:

I have been instructed by the Executive Committee of the North Central Association to notify you officially that the Name of Butler University has been dropped from the list of colleges and Universities accredited by the Association.

The chief factors contributing to the decision of the of Review were as follows:

1. Control of Athletics

⁹Ibid., June 15, 1929; Ibid., July 10, 1929.

¹⁰Minutes of a special meeting of the Board of Directors, March 24, 1930.

¹¹Ibid.

2. Endowment
3. Library
4. Internal Administrative conditions¹²

At the opening of the April 17, 1930, Board meeting Hilton U. Brown commented on the meeting with the Review Committee of North Central.

The action as outlined in the press was accurate; that is, that we had been thrown out of the Association because of Athletics. However, there were some other things, it appears in the verdict, that weighed against us.

When the first report came that we had been threatened with expulsion, the Financial Secretary and I, having been informed by Dean Putnam as to what was in the air, went to Chicago by appointment and met with the Appeal Committee. We stated the situation as we saw it, that we had tried to establish here practically a new institution on a basis comparable with the needs of a great city and particularly in the athletic field where there were the requirements of the Indiana High School Association, the members of which are amenable to the criticism and endorsement of this association which criticized us so badly.

We were unable to secure any modification of the verdict of the committee up there. In fact, they seemed hard-hearted and I think they had made up their minds that for once we would be made the victims of the attitude of the Association towards athletics.

....
 You will see... that the method of the organization of athletics, the amount which we have expended for athletics, on their basis, is the value of the investment we have made in the plant, because, they contend, we are back of the investment and must pay a rental sufficient to meet the interest value of those investments. They held that by reason of that liability our endowment is reduced by \$750,000 since it would be threatened if we had to furnish protection for the preferred stock that represented the funds for the athletic plant. Well, we pleaded in vain that it was a separate corporation that had made this investment and we had rented it. They set out on this appeal that we had paid so much for coaches; that there was nothing

¹²Ibid., April 17, 1930.

left for us to do except to employ high priced ones and thereby expect a big return for our money.¹³

Brown continued his report in this vain and pointed out to the Board:

...the only thing I have to recommend is that we convert disaster into advantage. We are suffering now and we are going to suffer this year from this affair... We have got to get more money so that this association which is absolutely merciless, cannot criticize us, and thus stimulated, we have an advantage instead of a disaster from this attack.¹⁴

Unfortunately, the University's chief fund raiser, John Atherton, was not well. Apparently, he had suffered a nervous breakdown. His doctors prescribed rest, and so he spent most of 1929 recuperating in Miami, Florida. Atherton returned in October 1929, not yet fully recovered, at the pleading of Brown, who clearly needed him to deal with some of the growing financial problems of the University.¹⁵

The Efforts to Regain Accreditation

Once the news of the loss of accreditation became public, it was essential that the University make every effort to protect its reputation and credibility in order not to lose enrollment. There was a particular concern about stu-

¹³Ibid.

¹⁴Ibid.

¹⁵"Atherton Still Recuperating in Miami" Butler Alumna Quarterly Vol. 18, no.1 (April 1929): 48; "Return of John Atherton" Butler Alumna Quarterly Vol. 18, no.3 (October 1929); Minutes, July 10, 1929.

dents in education who needed to graduate from an accredited institution in order to be certified to teach.¹⁶

The key figure in the effort to regain accreditation was William G. Irwin. One of the first actions taken at Irwin's suggestion was to seek the advice of local men like President Elliott of Purdue, Principals E. Kemper McComb of Manual Training High School, and George Buck of Shortridge High School who were also officials of the North Central Association.¹⁷ Irwin sought advice and through his connections in the Christian Church contacted Walter Scott Athearn in Washington, D.C. Athearn claims to have advised Irwin to work directly with the local representatives of North Central. He evidently studied the North Central report on Butler and recommended to Irwin that a solution to the financial situation of the University with respect to the athletic facilities had to be resolved first before accreditation could be restored to Butler. Irwin met with the local North Central Association representatives, using an agenda prepared by Athearn, to resolve the Association's concerns over the manner in which the athletic complex had been financed and the state of Butler's endowment.¹⁸ These were the most difficult of the charges that had to be resolved. Irwin offered to set up a special trust fund of a million dollars

¹⁶Ibid., March 24, 1930.

¹⁷Ibid., October 10, 1930.

¹⁸Walter Scott Athearn. Dual Control of an Urban University. (Indianapolis: [the author], 1934), 5, 20; Minutes, January 27, 1931.

to take care of the University's obligations in interest payments on the stock for the Athletic facilities. He presented this proposal in a private meeting in Chicago with the representatives of North Central. This arrangement was approved by North Central and thus removed the greatest of the obstacles to re-accreditation.¹⁹

Irwin's trust fund provided sufficient income to meet the payment obligations to the stock holders of the Corporation for Physical Education and Athletics. This trust fund and the gift to the University of the athletic corporation's preferred stock by the stock holders permitted the dissolution of the Corporation for Athletics and Physical Education by the mid 1930's.²⁰

There were other changes required by North Central before accreditation would be restored. The athletic policy of the University had come under careful scrutiny and found to be greatly disproportionate in scope to the size of the institution and there was no faculty oversight. The salaries of the coaches, particularly the Athletic Director, who received a salary of \$10,000 a year, were questioned. At the time the Athletic Director's salary was more than double that of the highest paid faculty member or dean.²¹ The Board

¹⁹Ibid., April 9, 1931.

²⁰Hilton U. Brown. A Book of Memories (Indianapolis: Butler University, 1951), 99.

²¹Minutes of the Joint Meeting of Faculty, Schools and Salaries Committee and the Finance Committee, May 11, 1928; Ibid., May 10, 1930.

moved quickly to make changes in this area by reducing the coaches' salaries. Athletic Director, George "Potsy" Clark, who was on a three year contract, arranged a settlement with the Board and resigned on August 11, 1930.²²

The Board also strengthened the oversight authority of the Faculty Athletic Committee.²³ This committee had existed for many years, but it had very little real power over the athletic program until these changes were implemented. The faculty committee now had responsibility for eligibility of athletes, team schedules, and practice time. As a consequence, alumni influence on athletic policy was reduced and there was less direct involvement of Board members in the running of the athletic program.

Although athletics was one of the main concerns of the North Central report, there were other issues that they wanted corrected. One of these was improvements in the library. The lack of a head librarian since the resignation of Professor Baumgartner in 1928 was a relatively easy matter to correct. Leland R. Smith was appointed Librarian in the Summer of the 1930. He was the first professionally trained head librarian of Butler.²⁴ Other improvements in the library were also recommended by the North Central report. The report described the library as: "A very poor makeshift

²²"Butler Coach Gives Official Resignation," Indianapolis News 11 August 1930, pt. 1, p. 1, 3.

²³Minutes, April 9, 1931.

²⁴Ibid., July 3, 1930.

arrangement."²⁵ In fact, the space allotted the library in Jordan Hall was very inadequate and poorly furnished and equipped. The collections were also weak and the library staff had no authority to make decisions. The Board provided for some of the needs of the library by carpeting the reading room to reduce the noise level, that had been a major complaint by students and library staff. Leland Smith provided much needed leadership and developed an active program of library improvement. There were also a number of important gifts to the library in the early thirties which helped improve the library collection.

Another area of North Central concern was with faculty welfare and the academic program. The report was critical of the lack of tenure for and heavy course load of Butler faculty. There was also concern expressed about the nature of the affiliations Butler maintained with institutions like the Herron Art Institute and the Arthur Jordan Conservatory. The large number of five credit hour courses in the catalog was noted as being non-standard. The lack of faculty involvement with admissions was yet another concern as was the overall weakness of admission standards.²⁶

None of these concerns were as critical to the Board of Directors as the athletic and financial issues. The board absolutely refused to institute a tenure system for

²⁵Ibid., April 17, 1930.

²⁶Ibid.

faculty.²⁷ The faculty teaching load was adjusted down from twenty to sixteen credit hours per semester.²⁸ A faculty committee was established to oversee admissions and maintain standards. The affiliations with Herron School and Jordan Conservatory continued, but some others, such as that with the Curtis Flying School, were dropped.²⁹

On one of the visits to the campus, members of the North Central committee picked up a sense of internal dissension concerning the administration of the University. At first, some members of the Board suspected Aley, but both he and Putnam denied having reported any concerns about the administration of the University to North Central.³⁰ North Central continued to be concerned about the role of the President of the University. The Board did not want to make this office the chief executive of the University, which is what North Central advocated. This issue probably further eroded the confidence of Brown and Atherton in Aley for not deflecting it in his meetings with North Central representatives.

The organization of the teacher education program and of the business courses was another problem area identified by North Central. The University had been planning to merge the University's Education Department and the Teachers

²⁷Ibid., June 15, 1934.

²⁸Ibid., April 9, 1931.

²⁹Ibid., July 3, 1930.

³⁰Ibid., April 17, 1930.

College programs, but this had proceeded slowly because of the cost and the difficulties of relocating Teachers College to Fairview and disposing of the property of Teachers College. North Central's position probably speeded up this process, and it was completed within a couple of years. The business administration program had long been a part of the Department of Economics and Political Science. North Central urged that this program should be set up as a separate college because of the size of its enrollment. This did not happen until 1937, two years after Dean Putnam was named President of the University.³¹

The workload of Dean Putnam was yet another problem identified in the North Central report. One of their suggestions was to relieve him of the burden of the Summer School program and the Evening Session by appointing another officer to administer these programs. The Board did not follow up on this recommendation until 1931 when upon the recommendation of new President, Walter Scott Athearn, the office of Dean of the Division of Extension and Evening Programs was established.³²

By the early 1930's there was a growing concern among the Board leadership over the effectiveness of President Aley. The first evidence of this was his failure to have the 1931-32 academic budget ready for Board action. The growing

³¹"Two New Colleges Established" Butler Alumnus October 1937: 4.

³²Minutes. April 20, 1932.

financial crises due to the impact of the depression and the absorption of Teachers College seemed to cause Aley considerable consternation. Added to this was the pressure created by the long effort to resolve the North Central accreditation issue, Aley may well have been exhausted. Aley was 68 years old in May 1931 and probably was considering the possibility of retirement if he could be provided for financially.³³

Whether the initiative for a change in the presidency of the institution came from Aley or Hilton U. Brown can not be clearly determined from the available evidence.³⁴ Whatever the truth of the matter may be, Aley submitted his letter of resignation to the Board at a special meeting on May 12, 1931. His retirement arrangements with the Board were quite amenable. In exchange for the donation of his new home adjacent to the Fairview campus as a presidential residence, Aley received a retirement annuity from the University.³⁵ The announcement seems to have caught some Board members by surprise. Hilton U. Brown's explanation to

³³Ibid., April 9, 1931; April 17, 1931.

³⁴Unfortunately it is impossible to document what actually happened beyond this surmise because of the lack of any personal correspondence or official documents other than the Minutes of the Board of Director's Minutes for the period after the move to the Fairview campus. The only other testimony as to the circumstances of Aley's retirement is the questionable report contained in Walter Scott Athearn's apologia Dual Control of a University. Athearn claims in this document that he was offered the position of President even before Aley knew that he was retiring. There is no corroborative evidence for this statement and there is sufficient internal evidence in the Board Minutes to doubt Athearn's accuracy on this point.

³⁵Minutes, May 12, 1931.

these members was that "In some way unbeknown to me it was in the air that Dr. Aley had tendered his resignation so I advised him to give immediate release so that proper representation of the affair might be made."³⁶ It is clear that the decision to retire had been made some days and possible weeks before the May 12, 1931 formal announcement. Brown clearly wanted Aley's retirement to be as amicable as possible.

The Presidency of Walter Scott Athearn

A search committee headed by William G. Irwin moved quickly to find a new president to replace Aley, whose retirement went into effect on July 1, 1931. The search committee recommended to the full Board on July 7, 1931, that the position be offered to Walter Scott Athearn.³⁷ Irwin was clearly in control of the search for the new president. His recent rescue of the University from the debacle of the loss of accreditation placed him in a position of strength in determining who would be the next president. Brown clearly acknowledges Irwin's role in finding a financial solution to the situation that North Central insisted had to be resolved before accreditation could be regained. Even with Irwin's

³⁶Ibid.

³⁷Ibid., July 7, 1931.

settlement, accreditation was granted provisionally for only two years instead of the normal ten years.³⁸

Irwin may have had Walter Scott Athearn in mind for the Butler presidency even before Aley's decision to retire. One thing is clear; Irwin had known of Athearn for some time. It is less clear how well the two men may have known each other. The connection was through the Church.

Irwin's knowledge of Walter Scott Athearn was based upon Athearn reputation's as a leading figure in the religious education movement of the 1920's. Athearn was instrumental in the founding of the School of Religious Education and Social Service at Boston University. He originated the concept of a dual education system in the United States. In Athearn's scheme public school systems would have parallel systems of religious education sponsored and supported by the Protestant denominations of the country. Athearn developed a very elaborate plan and vigorously promoted it through the interdenominational International Sunday School Association and the Inter Church World Movement. These were the early days of the interdenominational cooperation that was to develop into the ecumenical movement. Athearn, as a member of the Disciples of Christ, was a strong believer in the idea of Christian unity. He soon ran into difficulties with the old line denominational interests who defeated his efforts to get

³⁸Ibid.

his plan accepted by the International Sunday School Association.³⁹

Irwin may have first met Athearn sometime in the period from 1919-23 when Athearn was conducting a major survey of religious education in Indiana sponsored by the Inter Church World Movement and funded by John D. Rockefeller. Athearn even spoke at a Butler Founder's Day Dinner in February of 1921.⁴⁰

Another connection between Butler and Athearn was through William Errett of the Standard Publishing Co. of Cincinnati which published the The Christian Standard and The Outlook, two leading Disciples publications. Athearn worked for the company and wrote regularly for both of these publications after leaving Boston University.⁴¹ Errett was a member of the Butler Board of Directors, one of the few not from Indiana.

There was something else which was attractive about Athearn and that was his claim to have connections with a number of wealthy Disciples. There appears to be some truth to Athearn's claims, but he also seems to have exaggerated his ability to attract major funds to Butler. Among his more significant connections was with the family of philanthropist

³⁹Charles Russell Gresham, "Walter Scott Athearn, Pioneer in Religious Education" (Rel.Ed.D. dissertation., Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1958), 18-36.

⁴⁰Walter Scott Athearn, '[address]' in "Founder's Day Dinner," Butler Alumna Quarterly, 10 (April 1921): 17-25.

⁴¹Gresham, 41.

Philip H. Gray of Detroit. Gray was an early supporter of Athearn's religious education ideas. He was probably a supporter of Athearn's work at Boston University. Gray died in 1922 in Boston, but his widow continued to assist Athearn with many of his publishing projects and was a strong supporter of his religious education proposals.⁴² Athearn made this connection known to a number of people at Butler and elsewhere. An example of this was a notice appearing in Zion's Herald, at the time of Athearn's appointment to the Butler presidency, announcing that Athearn would receive \$2 million from a prominent philanthropist to assist with his work at Butler. When the editor of the paper later wrote to Athearn asking for verification and the identity of this donor, Athearn's response was elusive. He refused to name the person on the grounds that the benefactor wanted to remain anonymous. The benefactor may have been Mrs. Gray or possibly even Will Irwin.⁴³

Athearn was named President of Butler in July of 1931 by a unanimous decision of the Board of Directors. He arrived in Indianapolis on August 19, 1931 to take up his duties.⁴⁴ His administration began rather quietly. He spent

⁴²"Gray, Philip Hayward," National Cyclopaedia of American Biography, vol. 23 (1933) p. 346; Eva Lemert to Walter Scott Athearn, March 2, 1932 (Athearn Case File, BUA).

⁴³L. O. Hartman to Walter Scott Athearn, February 12, 1932, Athearn Case File, BUA; Athearn to Hartman, February 25, 1932, Athearn Case File, BUA. A clipping of the announcement from Zion's Herald is attached to Hartman's letter.

much of his first few months studying and assessing the situation at close hand. As was noted above, he had previously spent some time, at the request of Will Irwin, examining the record of Butler's loss of North Central accreditation. In these first months at Butler he also took time to visit some of the key figures in North Central including George F. Zook at the University of Akron and B. L. Stradley at Ohio State.⁴⁵

Athearn's preliminary assessment of the situation at Butler led him to certain conclusions. First, Butler should become an urban university. Athearn commented that upon his arrival:

Butler University had moved to the Fairview campus, and was, with increased resources, carrying on the same general program as it did on the Irvington campus. I opened my administration, as President of Butler University, by announcing in an address before the Chamber of Commerce in Indianapolis my intentions to devote my administration to making this high-grade cultural college the organizing center of a great urban University for the City of Indianapolis. I consciously set the institution to the task of providing both cultural and professional training for the whole population of the metropolitan area.⁴⁶

In assessing his tenure as Butler President Athearn found:

Almost without the City's knowing it, Indianapolis has now in Butler University a great urban university which does for Indianapolis what similar institutions are doing for New York, Chicago, Detroit, Syracuse, Denver,

⁴⁴Athearn Dual Control, 5.

⁴⁵Ibid.

⁴⁶Ibid., 6.

Los Angeles, Cleveland, Akron, Toledo, Cincinnati, Louisville, Dayton -- to name but a few of the American cities with successful urban universities.⁴⁷

Athearn advocated a stronger extension and evening program to attract more local residents to attend Butler. He felt it important that Butler reach out to the population of the City and provide a wide variety of non-traditional programs both for credit and not for credit. He also advocated a stronger program of graduate and professional studies.⁴⁸ In terms of his thinking about the future of Butler, he was considerably ahead of his Board of Directors. He made little, if any, effort to work within the Board to develop support for his vision of the future of Butler. He often assumed an adversarial attitude in his communications with the Board and individual members of the Board. In a letter to Athearn George Zook discerned from Athearn's annual report that Athearn wanted Butler to become a publicly supported municipal university.

I had the feeling several times in reading this report that you were almost ready to suggest that Butler become a municipal institution supported by the city.⁴⁹

This idea was, from the Board's point of view, an example of Athearn's assuming too much authority and the correspondence was included in the case file developed to defend themselves

⁴⁷Ibid.

⁴⁸Ibid., 11-12.

⁴⁹Zook to Athearn, January 18, 1933, Athearn Case File, BUA.

against Athearn's suit for wrongful dismissal. Athearn admitted to Zook that the Board was not yet ready for this concept.⁵⁰

Second, Athearn wanted to change the organization of Butler in order bring it into line with what he described as the standard practice of academic administration of the time. His criticism of the structure he found upon assuming the Butler presidency was severe and he said so before and during his first meeting with the Board and again in his inaugural address in which he openly challenged the Board with the necessity for change in the governance of the University.⁵¹ He saw the Charter as antiquated and in need of major revision. He advocated the establishment of his office as the chief administrative officer for the University with the offices of Financial Secretary, Dean of the College of Religion, and Secretary-Treasurer of the Board reporting to him instead of to the Board. He particularly wanted more control over the finances of the University. In his effort to secure these changes he sought the support of Will Irwin and attempted to convince Irwin of the corruption and incompetence of what he called the political faction on the Board. This "faction" included Hilton U, Brown, Emsley Johnson, and above all and most particularly John Atherton. Athearn also used the

⁵⁰Athearn to George F. Zook, January 9, 1933, Athearn Case File, BUA.

⁵¹Minutes, October 14, 1931; "The Inauguration of W. S. Athearn," Butler Alumna Quarterly 21 (April 1932): 20-4.

threat of again losing North Central accreditation as a cudgel in his efforts to force the Board to make the changes he wanted implemented.

If the Board in its coming reorganization chooses to ignore the suggestions of the North Central Association which were made by President Zook who has just been appointed United States Commissioner of Education and who will be the investigator of Butler University next winter, there is not a shadow of a doubt but that the University will be dropped from the North Central Association with such a scathing national rebuke from the Commissioner that it will decades before the institution can possibly recover from the shock....

Now, Mr. Irwin, you may re-elect any or all of these men, and I shall not protest but the fight against my administration made by these men must be called off or I shall certainly tell the truth when the North Central Association investigators arrive next winter. And telling the truth will mean adverse action on their part.⁵²

Third, Athearn saw an opportunity at Butler to test his ideas about religious education in a higher education environment. Athearn's idea of a parallel structure for religious education and public education included higher education. He was particularly concerned about the preparation of religious teachers and administrators for his parallel system. Butler offered him the opportunity to build the academic programs needed to prepare the personnel to carry out his vision for a dual education system.⁵³

The Colleges of Education and Religion were the two areas in which he made immediate changes. He quickly com-

⁵²Aley to Irwin, June 9, 1933, Athearn Case File, BUA.

⁵³Gresham, 129-36; Athearn, Dual Control, 11; Walter Scott Athearn, Religion at the Heart of a Christian University (Indianapolis: Butler University, 1932?)

pleted the merger of Teacher's College into Butler's College of Education by centralizing all of the programs at the Fairview campus and abandoning the old Blaker School facilities. He also removed the undergraduate program in religion from the College of Religion and placed it in the College of Liberal Arts. Then he added a number of programs in the College of Religion for the preparation of support workers in churches and for religious education programs. He evidently carried out many of these changes in the face of opposition from within the College of Religion. His reaction to this opposition was to get rid of those he could and to make life difficult for others like Dean Frederick Kershner. In Kershner's case, Athearn removed his secretary, who was essential to Kershner because he was nearly blind.⁵⁴

Still another aspect of Athearn's religious orientation was his re-instituting of daily campus chapel. This had been a long time tradition on the Irvington campus, but had been dropped after the move to Fairview because of the lack of an appropriate facility. Athearn solved this by using the Field House for daily chapel until a College of Religion building could be constructed that would have a chapel.⁵⁵

His concern about student morality was another reason he wanted regular chapel services. Athearn was appalled at

⁵⁴Butler University. Board of Trustees, [Outline of charges brought against President W. S. Athearn to the Board of Trustees] 1933, Athearn Case File, BUA, 3.

⁵⁵Athearn, Dual Control, 12.

what he considered to be rampant student immorality on campus. He lacked any sympathy or understanding of the student culture of the era. He particularly objected to the students' heavy emphasis on the extra curricular side of the University. Major confrontations occurred between Athearn and students over football victory celebrations and the activities of fraternities and sororities. His opinion of the latter was reported in a Board document.

The President, upon a number of occasions, made the statement that Butler University was the most ungodly institution of any other college in the United States when he came here; that the fraternity and sorority houses were in some instances houses of prostitution.⁵⁶

Athearn became so obsessed with what he perceived to be the corruption and immorality at the University that he went so far as to hire a private detective to investigate and document the existence of these conditions. Athearn included in this investigation students, faculty, other employees, and even certain Board members. This was probably the last straw for most Board members. When the investigation failed to turn up any real evidence to support Athearn's allegations, he lost his most important supporter, William G. Irwin.⁵⁷

Athearn sought to de-emphasize intercollegiate athletics even more than had been mandated by North Central. His approach was to do away with special scholarships for ath-

⁵⁶[Outline of charges], 4.

⁵⁷Ibid.; Athearn to Irwin, July 11, 1933, Athearn Case File, BUA.

letes and special coaches for athletic teams. He pushed the adoption of an inter-mural model for athletics that would involve all students at Butler. This program was to use the athletic team coaches to teach inter-mural sports. Needless to say many of these coaches were less than enthusiastic about the program, and the intercollegiate athletic interests among the alumni and Board of Directors opposed the program as well. Athearn got his way by using the threat of loss of accreditation to force acceptance.⁵⁸

Athearn saw his major enemies on the Board as John Atherton and Emsley Johnson. Both were closely associated with the athletic program as well as being key figures in the finances of the University. Atherton, as Financial Secretary, controlled all of the investments and income of the University. He was also the secretary of the Butler Foundation which controlled the University's endowment. Athearn saw a clear conflict of interest in Atherton's position as a paid employee of the University, a member of the Board of Directors, and the son-in-law of Hilton U. Brown, the President of the Board. Although possibly not an unheard of situation, it certainly was most unusual and provided considerable fuel for controversy in the Butler community.⁵⁹

⁵⁸Athearn, Dual Control, 8-9; Minutes, April 13, 1932.

⁵⁹Athearn, Dual Control, 15-6; Basil Gallagher, "'Dual Control' Perils Existence of Butler, Faculty Members Say: 'House-Cleaning' Is Urged," Indianapolis Times, 6 November 1933, 1, 5.

Emsley Johnson was the University's attorney as well as a Board member. His membership on a number of public agency and corporate Boards provided him with opportunities to look out for the University's interests. Such was the case in the acquisition of Fairview Park. Johnson was on the Board of the Indianapolis Street Railroad Company that made the property available to the University at a price far below market value. He was also on the City Park Board, that approved a payment of over \$233,925 to Butler for street and sewer improvements around Fairview.⁶⁰

Athearn came into conflict with both of these men almost immediately after he began his presidency. Throughout his tenure, he sought ways to counterbalance their power and influence on the Board. He seems to have had fewer conflicts with Hilton U. Brown, although their relationship was often difficult. Athearn's principle weapons against Atherton and Johnson were first of all the support he received from Irwin and the members of his family on the Board. Irwin's financial support was essential to the University and all factions recognized this reality. Second, Athearn had the leverage of the eminent re-investigation of the University by the North Central Association that had already removed Butler once from its list of accredited institutions and had been very critical of the athletic policy, the finances and the administra-

⁶⁰Al Lynch, "Taxpayers Repaid Butler for Campus, Threw in Profit of \$33,925, Survey of Books Shows," Indianapolis Times, 15 November 1933, 1, 3.

tive organization of the University. Ultimately the question came down to how long Irwin would continue to support Athearn in the face of the growing controversy surrounding his presidency.⁶¹

The crisis built throughout the academic year of 1932-33. There were a series of incidents beginning in the Fall of 1932. One of the first of these was a confrontation over a spontaneous celebration that took place on campus after a football victory. Athearn called it a riot and severely punished the person he thought was the ringleader, a student named Harry Weaver. Weaver was very popular with his fellow students, a fine athlete, and President of the Senior Class. Athearn removed him from all of his campus activities and reprimanded him severely. Nearly everyone on campus supported Weaver and the President found himself even more isolated than he had been before.⁶²

Not long after this incident a novel entitled Star's Road was published, which quickly became a local best seller because it was so transparently clear that the setting for the story was Butler University. The novel was typical of a type called the college novel that was popular in this era. It was considered a bit "racy" and was a story of intercollegiate athletics gone wrong and depicted the social and sex

⁶¹Athearn to Irwin, June 9, 1933; July 11, 1933; Irwin to Athearn, July 8, 1933, Athearn Case File, BUA.

⁶²[Outline of charges], 5. Conversations with George Waller, Official historian of Butler University, 1987-89.

life of college students in a less than idealistic mode. Most of the characters could easily be identified with real persons associated with Butler. The author, Lloyd Stern, had been a student at Butler in 1928 and 1929. He evidently was an athlete who participated in baseball and track and had considerable inside information about the relationship between the "Downtown Office" and the athletic program. Athearn condemned the book as obscene and made an effort to have the book suppressed.⁶³

It would seem that Athearn also saw the book as more evidence of the extent of corruption and immorality that existed at the University. It pointed directly to Atherton and Johnson as key figures in this corruption. Athearn saw evidence of this all around him in the purchasing practices of the University which were controlled by Atherton and in the favoritism given to athletes that Athearn blamed Atherton and Johnson for perpetuating. Athearn was also suspicious of the property management practices of Atherton with respect to numerous University properties around the city.⁶⁴

In order to collect sufficient evidence to condemn these men, Athearn hired a private detective to investigate. The detective was hired under the guise of a student welfare worker who was supposed to find jobs for students in the

⁶³Lloyd Stern, Star's Road. New York: Vanguard Press, 1932; Athearn to Irwin, July 11, 1933, Athearn Case File, BUA.

⁶⁴Ibid.

city. The activities of the detective did not remain secret for long and once Hilton U. Brown learned of his existence, he asked Athearn to fire him. Athearn refused to do so and Brown then fired the detective on his own authority.⁶⁵

Still Athearn held on because Irwin continued to support him. The conflict that finally undermined Irwin's support for Athearn came over the issue of the deficit of the Evening Division. Athearn insisted that there had been a profit in this area despite the report of the Secretary-Treasurer and of an independent auditor to the contrary. It seems that Athearn tried to argue that the value in publicity and good will of the Evening program in the city was worth more than the deficit that the program actually experienced. Irwin evidently paid off this deficit, and it was from this moment that Irwin's confidence in Athearn was gone. Athearn was able to last only until after the beginning of classes in the Fall of 1933.⁶⁶

A special closed door meeting of the Board was called, and a resolution was adopted to inform Athearn that the Board wished him to resign. Athearn refused to resign, and the Board had no other recourse but to dismiss him immediately.⁶⁷

⁶⁵[Outline of charges],4.

⁶⁶Ibid., 1; Minutes, October 11, 1933.

⁶⁷Minutes of Specially Called Meeting of Board, October 28, 1933; "'Politics': That's Brand Laid on Butler System by Dr. Athearn," Indianapolis Times, 31 October 1933, 1-2.

After his dismissal, Athearn immediately went to the press. The local papers, especially the Indianapolis Times, made Athearn's dismissal one of the biggest stories of the year in Indianapolis. Athearn kept the Times well supplied with leads, including the revelation of the circumstances surrounding Butler's acquisition of Fairview Park.⁶⁸

Athearn's own defence of his administration of Butler came through the writing and publishing of Dual Control of an Urban University. This lengthy apology for his administration was distributed to the press, the North Central Association, and to the Board of Directors. He called for North Central to investigate the circumstances of his dismissal. For the most part the document is taken up with an account of his hiring and his accomplishments as President. His analysis of the charter and of the weakness of the organizational structure of the University were particularly effective in explaining the root of the problem with the administration of the University. This problem was to persist for another forty years before the charter was finally changed to bring it into line with the standard of governing structures at most American universities and colleges.⁶⁹

Athearn's charges against the Board were specific and, although no names were mentioned, it was clear who the individuals were that he accused of mismanaging Butler. Athearn

⁶⁸Lynch.

⁶⁹Athearn, Dual Control,

also filed a civil suit against Butler for \$100,000 in April 1934 for damages to his reputation.⁷⁰

North Central investigated Athearn's firing, but found no reason for taking action against Butler. James Putnam was named Acting President and several months later he was named President of the University. Athearn became President of Oklahoma City University in June 1934, but died of a heart attack in St. Louis on November 14, 1934. His civil suit never came to trial and Butler settled with Mrs Athearn for \$1,000.⁷¹

This tragic story of the Presidency of Walter Scott Athearn also marked the end of the pursuit of the "Greater Butler" idea. Butler seemed to slip back into quiet anonymity and somnolence. The movers and shakers of the Greater Butler idea remained in control of the University for another twenty years, but they no longer had the same enthusiasm for and energy to pursue grand ideas.

⁷⁰Minutes, June 15, 1934; "Ousting Shield, Athearn Charge: Former President of University Asks \$100,000 Damages in Court Suit." Indianapolis Star, 8 April 1934, 6.

⁷¹"The Death of Walter Scott Athearn," Butler Alumna Quarterly 23 (January 1935): 279-80; "Papers in Legal Case, Walter Scott Athearn vs Butler University, no. 12628, 1934." Athearn Case File, Folder 8, BUA.

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