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History

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HISTORY

1251

Dean Barthoff

The College of the Pacific is the child of a militant and zealous Methodism. In 1848 the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church authorized Bishop Beverly Waugh to select two young men of high qualifications for missionary service in California. Those selected were William Taylor and Isaac Owen. Both were among the chief founders of the institution now known as the College of the Pacific. A third founder was Edward Bannister, who arrived in San Francisco in October, 1850.

The first important educational conference was held in San Jose January 6-7, 1851, "to consult and advise as to the founding of a Seminary of learning in this state under the patronage and control of the Methodist Episcopal Church." The conference recommended the "founding of an institution of the grade of a university." A second conference, meeting in San Francisco, May 14, 1851, took further steps looking to the actual founding by appointing a board of commissioners "to select, secure, and plot suitable grounds for the University town...." The third conference, meeting the following June 26, adopted a resolution fixing the site of the proposed institution at Santa Clara.

Its first name was California Wesleyan College, whose charter was granted on the 10th day of July, 1851 by the State Supreme Court, thus being the first institution of college grade to be chartered in California. There was no statutory provision at that time for chartering a university. The name proved unpopular. At the first opportunity it was changed to the University of the Pacific, which change was sanctioned by the state legislature. The institution continued under this ambitious name until 1911, when, in accordance with its actual status and its plans and purposes, the name was officially changed to College of the Pacific.

The actual opening of the Preparatory Department of the University took place at Santa Clara, May 3, 1852, under direction of Edward Bannister, Principal. The Male Department and the Female Collegiate Institute were operated for years as virtually separate schools, both, however, being under the same president and board

of trustees.

In 1854 Martin C. Briggs was elected president, to be followed, in 1856 by William J. Macley, who in turn was succeeded by Alexander S. Gibbons, in 1857. The first college graduating class, consisting of five young men and five young women, received baccalaureate degrees in 1858.

Following the resignation of President Gibbons in 1859, Dr. Bannister was recalled to head the University, serving through the difficult Civil War period, to be succeeded, in 1867, by Thomas H. Sinex, who was continued as president until 1872. In 1871 the University had moved from Santa Clara to College Park, San Jose, where it remained until the move to its present site in Stockton, in 1924. The second administration of President Gibbons (1872 - 77) was followed by that of C. C. Stratton, whose administration (1877 - 87) was followed by that of A.C. Hirst (1887-91). Isaac Crook succeeded President Hirst, but only for a brief incumbency, when, after an interim under Acting-President W.C. Sawyer, J.N. Beard became President in 1894.

Napa College, also Methodist-controlled, of which Dr. Beard had been President since 1887, was consolidated with the University of the Pacific in 1896, and its graduates were enrolled among the alumni of Pacific. Eli McClish came to the presidency in 1896, serving for a decade; then, after the interim administration of Acting-President M.S. Cross, W.W. Guth was elected President. When Dr. Guth resigned in 1913, B.J. Morris, as Acting-President, served until the election of John L. Seaton as President. Tully C. Knoles succeeded Dr. Seaton as President in 1919. In 1946 Dr. Knoles became Chancellor, and Robert E. Burns was elected President.

After long consideration the College was relocated on its spacious campus in Stockton, in 1924, where it took on new life. With the organization of state-supported Stockton Junior College on the same campus, ^{in 1936,} the College of the Pacific restricted its offerings to the junior, senior, and one graduate year, thus becoming a three-year liberal arts college. Three prominent features are the Bible and

Religious Education Department, Conservatory of Music, and School of Education.

"A Golden Century Crowns Pacific": a ~~promising~~ future beckons.

challenging, alluring