

## EPWORTH UNIVERSITY

By Roy Asplin\*

The first session of the Oklahoma Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church was held in Oklahoma City on December 14-19, 1892, with Bishop Goodsell, presiding. At this session a committee on education was appointed consisting of J. F. Palmer, L. W. B. Long, J. P. Smith, William Dawson and J. F. Smith. After four days of due consideration, this committee made its report, in which it stated, "We recommend that the Conference give early and energetic attention to the matter of establishing two or more good conference seminaries to furnish our young people a good course of study of advanced grades."<sup>1</sup>

The Legislative Assembly of Oklahoma Territory enacted a law giving a charter to Oklahoma Methodist University, in 1893, under the patronage and control of the Oklahoma Conference of the Methodist Church, naming a board of trustees for it. The trustees met and reported favorably on the charter and the carrying out of such a school. The Conference met in 1894 and an attempt was made to establish a Methodist Hall at Edmond in connection with the Central State Normal College, but this did not meet the approval of the Conference. Also, an attempt was made to establish an Oxford Hall at Norman in connection with the University of Oklahoma which was not approved.<sup>2</sup>

The matter of establishing a college was talked about from time to time, but no definite action was ever taken. However, the Conference at Oklahoma City in October 1899 appointed a committee to consider the establishing of a school and to report their progress at the next session of the Conference.

Suggestions were made in the spring of 1900, that a university should be founded under the joint patronage of the Methodist Episcopal Church and the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. In the spring following, the matter was discussed seriously and a meeting of a few of the representative churchmen of both branches of the Methodist Church was planned. A meeting was held in the United States Land Office in Oklahoma City, On June 22, 1901. Here the idea of a joint ownership of a university was discussed.

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<sup>1</sup>J. E. Brill, *The Story of Oklahoma City University and Its Predecessors* (Oklahoma City, 1938), p. 27.

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 28.

Mr. Anton Classen,<sup>2</sup> of the Methodist Episcopal Church and Mr. C. B. Ames<sup>3</sup> of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, pointed out various phases of the proposition, and how both churches could benefit by this act of union. Anton Classen representing the Commercial Club, in consultation with three from the two conferences, reached the conclusion that the plan was not only practical but feasible, and it was agreed that the matter would be presented to the coming sessions of the two Conferences in October.<sup>4</sup>

The Commercial Club sent a delegation to both Conferences which were in session, October 23rd to 28th, 1901. Hon. C. B. Ames, R. Q. Blakeney and Ministers Broyles and Thompson and others were sent to Chickasha, where the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, was in session, while a similar delegation consisting of Mr. J. B. Thoburn<sup>5</sup> and Messrs. Johnson, Blackwelder and others were sent to Shawnee, where the Methodist Episcopal Church was in conference. Each of the delegations was authorized to submit the proposition to each conference that Oklahoma City would donate 240 acres of land, about 40 acres of which would be set aside as a campus and the remainder to be platted as town lots and sold. The proceeds

<sup>2</sup> Anton H. Classen was born in Illinois in 1861. He graduated from the University of Michigan Law School in 1887. He came to Oklahoma in 1889, settling at Emond, where he practiced law, published the *Edmond Sun* and dealt in real estate. He was appointed receiver of the United States Land Office in Oklahoma City, in 1897. Upon his removal to Oklahoma City he developed many additions to the city and was a street railway builder. He was a promoter and served on the Board of Trustees of Epworth University. He died December 31, 1922.—"Passing Pioneers". *The Chronicles of Oklahoma*, Vol. I, No. 3 (June, 1923) pp. 254-255.

<sup>3</sup> Charles B. Ames was born August 1, 1870 in Macon, Mississippi. He received his B.S. and LL.D. degrees from Emory and Henry College and his LL.B. degree from the University of Mississippi. He practiced law in Mississippi and Kansas City, before he came to Oklahoma City in 1899. He promoted the single statehood idea and was a delegate to Washington. He was Supreme Court Commissioner at large, 1911-13, Federal Food Administrator for Oklahoma during World War I, Assistant Attorney General for the United States, 1919-20. He was counsel for business and industry, served as Chairman of the Board of the Texas Company. He helped promote Epworth University, served on its Board of Trustees, and Dean of its law school. He died in July, 1935.—Boren, Lyle H. and Boren, Dale. *Who Is Who In Oklahoma*, (Guthrie, Okla., 1935) p. 15.

<sup>4</sup> Brill, *op. cit.*, pp. 32-3.

<sup>5</sup> Joseph Bradfield Thoburn was born in Ohio, in 1866. He grew up on the Kansas frontier and received a B. S. degree from Kansas State College in 1893. He learned the printers trade and moved to Oklahoma City in 1899. He was secretary of the Oklahoma Territorial Board of Agriculture, 1902-05, Director of the Oklahoma Historical Society 1903-17, research assistant 1917-19, Secretary 1919-26, curator and research director 1926-31, member of the directorate 1933-37, curator 1938; newspaper writer until 1907, instructor in history, University of Oklahoma 1913-17. From 1907 he devoted attention mainly to local and midland history and archeology. He was author of *History of Oklahoma*, (1916) co-author with Muriel H. Wright, *Oklahoma—A History of the State and Its People*, (1929) and many other writings. He received a Litt.D. degree from Oklahoma City University in 1931. He was a promoter, served on the Board of Trustees, and gave the name to *Epworth University*. He died March 2, 1941. (Muriel H. Wright, "Pioneer Historian and Archaeologist of the State of Oklahoma," *The Chronicles of Oklahoma*, Vol. XXIV No. 4, (Winter 1946-47) pp. 396-413.)

from the sale of the lots would be about \$100,000 which would be set aside for the erection of the first building and as an endowment fund.<sup>7</sup> The proposition also provided that the two churches should give the institution united support and use a certain percent of the donation for endowment solicitation; the two churches to elect an even number of directors and take full control of the institution.<sup>8</sup>

Several other cities were before the conferences with offers to secure the location of the university, principal one of which was Enid where the citizens offered to donate 100 acres of land and \$10,000 in cash.<sup>9</sup>

The Reverend E. B. Rankin, made a motion at the Shawnee Conference that a joint commission of ten members be appointed to confer with a like commission from Chickasha.<sup>10</sup> Bishop Hamilton then appointed a commission<sup>11</sup> of five ministers and five laymen to act jointly with the South Church, to locate, build and equip an institution of learning, to be jointly owned and operated by the Methodist Episcopal Church and the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.<sup>12</sup> It was provided also that no consideration was to be given to any place offering less than \$100,000 and forty acres of suitable land. The commission was to meet in Oklahoma City on the first Tuesday in December, 1901, in the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, to consider the proposed matters, and the items on which they could not agree should be sent back to the respective conferences for further action.<sup>13</sup>

The Conference at Chickasha accepted this proposition and appointed a committee of ten members to act jointly in the work consummating all arrangements to carry into execution the project and to commence the work at once.<sup>14</sup> Bishop Hamilton congratulated Mr. Rankin upon the fact that his resolution was the first successful effort to unite the two great bodies of the Methodist Church since their separation in 1844. This was a history making epoch for all intents and purposes, that no longer a south and a north, but a united Methodist Church should exist. Mr. Rankin was appointed one of the University committee to complete the plans.<sup>15</sup>

Much opposition was encountered by Mr. Rankin and others who wanted to locate the university in Oklahoma City. Enid was

<sup>7</sup> Brill, *op. cit.*, p. 32.

<sup>8</sup> *The Daily Oklahoman*, (Oklahoma City) October 27, 1901.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> *The Mangum Star*, November 14, 1901.

<sup>11</sup> Bishop Hamilton at Shawnee appointed the following for the Commission: Ministers, J. T. Riley, E. B. Rankin, Marion Porter, E. B. Delaplain and J. F. Palmer; Laymen: George S. Green, Frank B. Reed, J. E. Thoburn, J. B. Callison and A. F. Rankin.—Brill, *op. cit.*, p. 29.

<sup>12</sup> Brill, *op. cit.*, p. 29.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> *The Daily Oklahoman*, (Oklahoma City) October 27, 1901.

<sup>15</sup> *The Mangum Star*, November 14, 1901.

unsuccessful in its bid for the university and the Methodist schools at Fort Worth, Texas, and Winfield, Kansas, each made determined efforts to have their schools officially recognized by the conference at Shawnee.<sup>16</sup> The president of Fort Worth University, who from interested motives had opposed the proposition also extended his hearty congratulations after Oklahoma City had received the endorsement of both conferences. He made the voluntary statement that the Oklahoma and Indian Territories were at present sending four hundred students to his institution.<sup>17</sup>

Mr. J. B. Thornburn selected the name *Epworth University*, which was adopted as that of the new institution. The commission thought that this would perpetuate the name of the great society of young people which had become an integral part of every Methodist Church in both the North and South, and the University would receive the support of the society.<sup>18</sup>

The Commission met the following December and perfected the organization, approving the name of *Epworth University* as the name of the new institution. Members accepted the proposition of the University Development Company of Oklahoma City, and the size of the campus was increased to fifty two acres through a voluntary act of Mr. Classen. The University Development Company also offered the sum of \$100,000 for the endowment, buildings and equipment and expenses for financial agencies. The money was to be raised by the sale of lots held by the University Development Company.<sup>19</sup> By the terms upon which the fifty two acre site was conveyed to the Conference, the property was not subject to sale or mortgage, but was to be devoted in perpetuity to the cause of higher education and under no condition could it revert to its donors, the University Development Company.<sup>20</sup>

The Epworth University Joint Commission<sup>21</sup> met at ten o'clock on May 6, 1902 at the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in Oklahoma City. The Reverend E. C. Delaplain having moved from the Territory, the commission asked that the Reverend E. S. Stockwell, presiding elder of the Perry District, be permitted to sit as a member of the commission, subject to the appointment of Bishop Hamilton.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>17</sup> *The Indian Chieftain*, (Viola) November 7, 1901.

<sup>18</sup> *The Weekly Times Journal*, (Oklahoma City) June 13, 1902.

<sup>19</sup> *Bill, op. cit.*, p. 23.

<sup>20</sup> *Catalog of Epworth University, 1908-09*, p. 16.

<sup>21</sup> There were present on the part of the Indian Mission Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church South: S. G. Thompson, T. M. Broyles, C. B. Ames, A. H. Classen, of Oklahoma City; M. L. Butler of Muskogee, T. P. Howell of Davis, and T. J. Lowe of Guthrie. On the part of the Oklahoma Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church: J. B. Riley and J. B. Thornburn of Oklahoma City, E. S. Rankin of Edmond, J. M. Palmer of Granite, Marion Porter of Enid, George S. Green of Guthrie and A. F. Rankin of Perkins.—*The Daily Oklahoman*, (Oklahoma City) May 7, 1902.

<sup>22</sup> *The Daily Oklahoman*, (Oklahoma City) May 7, 1902.

Under the head of "Location," the University Development Company, a syndicate of realty owners and capitalists represented by Mr. John W. Shartel, submitted a new proposition which was thoroughly discussed. After some amendments and concessions by both sides they finally agreed upon and accepted. The plans of the Development Company were studied in detail and carefully explained. The proposition in brief was that the University Development Company would furnish a site of fifty acres for a campus and \$100,000 in addition for buildings, endowment and soliciting purposes.<sup>23</sup>

The site accepted was on the Colcord, Zeigler, and Smith tracts, a mile and three-fourths northwest of the business center of the city. The Metropolitan Street Car Company agreed to build a line to the college grounds, making the University readily accessible to the city. The street car line from the University gate to the business center of the city was to be eight minutes. A boulevard, now called Classen Boulevard, was to be constructed one hundred feet in width from the center of Tenth and Walker Streets to the college campus.<sup>24</sup> The Executive Committee was constituted a building committee<sup>25</sup> with the instructions to begin work on the building at the earliest practicable time and a competent architect was to be employed to prepare the plans.<sup>26</sup>

Both conferences agreed that in the year of 1902, the sum of \$75,000 each would be expended in buildings and equipment in addition to that contributed by Oklahoma City. The sale of 1,100 lots adjoining and surrounding the site of the campus was conducted on June, 17th, 18th, and 19th, 1902 for the purpose of raising the \$100,000 which was the gift of Oklahoma City to the University.<sup>27</sup>

Work on the first building was begun in October, 1902, and on April 1, 1903, Oklahoma City put on its gala attire in honor of laying the cornerstone of the first building of Epworth University. Except for the wind, the day was ideal and brought out a large crowd. In honor of the occasion, the banks and many of the business houses were closed to allow their employees to attend the ceremonies. Long before the hour set for the program, all cars leading to the grounds were packed with Oklahoma City people and others from throughout the Territory. Preceding the ceremonies there was music by the band, after which an invocation by the Reverend W. F. McDowell, followed by an address delivered by Bishop Hamilton in which he laid great stress upon the unity of the Methodist churches in the effort to build one of the greatest institutions in the United States

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>25</sup> The executive committee was composed of: J. B. Riley, S. C. Thompson, E. S. Rankin, C. F. Roberts, George S. Green, C. E. Amos and J. E. Thebara.—*The Daily Oklahoman*, (Oklahoma City) May 7, 1902.

<sup>26</sup> *The Daily Oklahoman*, (Oklahoma City) May 7, 1902.

<sup>27</sup> *The Weekly Times Journal*, (Oklahoma City) June 13, 1902.

in Oklahoma City. He stated that this would meet with great success from the start. There was also an excellent address by Bishop Haas after which the corner stone was laid.<sup>28</sup>

The first building of brick and sandstone was completed in September, 1903, at a cost of \$40,000, and contained thirty five rooms, including an auditorium, library and laboratories with all conveniences.<sup>29</sup>

The incorporators of the University<sup>30</sup> were granted a charter on September 5, 1903, which declared the object of the corporation to be the, "maintaining of higher Christian institution of learning for the purpose of giving instruction in all sciences, literature, the arts, theology, law, medicine and the other professional schools." It was to be a group of colleges united under one corporate organization, and twenty representative men from the two territories were named to constitute its first Board of Trustees, no denominational tests were required for membership on this board.<sup>31</sup>

At the meeting of the Board in November, 1903 an agreement was made with C. M. Strong, representing the United States Weather Bureau, whereby the Weather Bureau agreed to erect its meteorological observatory (the old Classen Weather Station) on a site on the university campus, ceded by the University to the Federal government for that purpose. Dr. W. McDowell, Educational Secretary of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and Dr. J. D. Hammon, Educational Secretary of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, were invited to submit a nomination for the president of the University.<sup>32</sup>

The Trustees of Epworth University met at the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in Oklahoma City on April 22, 1904, for the purpose of selecting a president. The deliberations finally resulted in the selection of the Reverend R. B. McSwain,<sup>33</sup> a member of the faculty of Southwestern University of Georgetown, Texas. The Trustees also decided to open Epworth for the reception of students in September. Professor Edgar S. Vaught and P. E. Day

<sup>28</sup> *The Weekly Times Journal*, (Oklahoma City) April 3, 1903.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, *op. cit.*, p. 33.

<sup>30</sup> The charter was granted to the following incorporators: S. G. Thompson, L. M. Broyles, Anton Clasen, C. B. Ames, J. T. Riley and J. B. Thornburn of Oklahoma City; T. L. Rippey, G. S. Green and T. J. Lowe of Guthrie; J. F. Palmer of Granis; E. S. Stockwell of Perry; E. B. Rankin of Edmund; F. B. Reed of Shawnee; J. R. Collison of Enid; Marion Porter of Norman; T. P. Howell of Davis; M. L. Butler of Muskogee; J. M. Cross and J. F. Quillen of Vinita.—*Calendar of Epworth University, 1908-09*, p. 16.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 16.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 16.

<sup>33</sup> The Reverend R. B. McSwain was a native of Arkansas and received his first college training in that state, later graduating from Vanderbilt University. He was a member of the faculty of Polytechnic College, Ft. Worth, Texas and served as acting president for a time. He had also taken courses at the University of Chicago toward a Ph.D. degree.—*The Daily Oklahoman*, (Oklahoma City) April 23, 1904.



**EPWORTH UNIVERSITY. ADMINISTRATION BUILDING, 1903.**





were appointed as a special committee to purchase equipment for the University building and to act with the approval of the executive committee.<sup>24</sup> On July 6, 1904 a faculty of twenty seven instructors were elected for the first session of the university which was set for September 7, 1904.<sup>25</sup>

In the summer of 1904 the Department of Agriculture erected a two story building of brick on the northeast corner of the campus as a meteorological observatory, on a lot donated by the university and it would be available to the students for instruction. A power plant was also erected at a cost of \$6,000 and was located just west of the main building. This furnished heat and hot and cold water to the Girl's Hall and the Administration Building. The Girl's Hall was located a few yards north of the main building and was a frame structure two stories high, having thirty two rooms with steam heat, electric lights, baths, and a large dining hall.<sup>26</sup>

The Oklahoma City Chamber of Commerce pledged the raising of \$20,000 which was deemed necessary to enable the school to open its doors in September.<sup>27</sup> The first session of Epworth University opened at 10:00 a.m., September 7, 1904. The occasion was not a formal one as the only exercises contemplated was an introduction of the faculty to the students and any of the friends of the University who might be present. A large number from the city gathered to witness the interesting occasion and among these visitors were a number of prominent business and professional men. The students and visitors filled the large lower floor of the college chapel. On the platform were assembled the faculty, trustees and several ministers from the city.<sup>28</sup>

Dr. Day, pastor of the First Methodist Church and a Trustee of the University opened the exercises with the reading of the Nineteenth Psalm, followed by a prayer for the blessing upon the school. At the conclusion of the religious exercise, Dr. Thompson, President of the Board of Trustees addressed the audience, briefly outlining the history of the movement by which the two branches of the Methodist Church had undertaken the establishment and conduct of a university up to the hopes of many present. He concluded by introducing the President of the University, The Reverend R. B. McSwain. After a few words of greeting, President McSwain introduced to the audience the faculty and friends of the college.<sup>29</sup>

One of the most appropriate speakers of the occasion was Mr. Graham of the Presbyterian Church, in which he expressed his faith in the future of the enterprise and his good will toward

<sup>24</sup> *The Daily Oklahoman*, (Oklahoma City) April 23, 1904.

<sup>25</sup> *Catalog of Epworth University*, p. 17.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, *op. cit.*, p. 33.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 78.

<sup>28</sup> *The Daily Oklahoman*, (Oklahoma City) September 8, 1904.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*

it. Vigorous and enthusiastic speeches were made by Mr. McSwain, Mr. Broyles and Dr. Riely. Mr. Classen spoke with great earnestness of the infinite possibilities of the University and its great importance to the community, and paid tribute to the ability and modesty of the President. After these speeches, President McSwain proceeded immediately to give directions to the students as to a few fundamental regulations of the school and the method of enrollment. The exercises were closed with the singing of a hymn and the benediction by Dr. Thompson.<sup>40</sup>

President McSwain tendered his resignation as President and Professor of Biblical Literature in the spring of 1905 due to a nervous breakdown brought on by many unforeseen difficulties in conducting the new institution. Professor Jones of the Chair of Chemistry, became president until a successor to Mr. McSwain could be selected.<sup>41</sup>

At a meeting of the Board of Trustees in Oklahoma City, on July 13, 1905, George H. Bradford, D.D.<sup>42</sup> of Kansas City, Missouri was elected Chancellor of the University and Professor Jones was chosen as Vice Chancellor. By this adjustment of the executive function in the institution, the Methodist Episcopal Church was represented in the person of the Chancellor and the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in that of Vice Chancellor. President McSwain was of the South Methodist Church. The report of the executive committee was conservative, but showed the institution to be in excellent condition at the close of the first year with splendid prospects for the future. The work of the medical department was given considerable attention and the report showed that this department would have a larger attendance in the coming term. The executive board was authorized to proceed with the necessary steps for the organization of a law school.<sup>43</sup>

At the opening of the University in September 1904, the equipment was meager in all departments but, in 1906, it was very favorable in comparison with that of older and larger institutions. The chemical, physical and biological laboratories were furnished with the necessary equipment to carry work in these departments to a successful conclusion. The more advanced work could be carried on successfully. The work in physics was done largely by the laboratory plan where each student was required to perform all the experiments illustrating the theories discussed in class. In chemistry the student was also required to perform all the experiments under the direction of the professor. The equipment in the department

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>41</sup> *The Daily Oklahoman*, (Oklahoma City) April 7, 1905.

<sup>42</sup> George H. Bradford, D.D., was born in Illinois and received his A.B. degree from Missouri Wesleyan University at Warrenton, Missouri. He then entered the University of Denver where he received advanced degrees. He served a leading church in St. Joseph, Missouri and later the Oakley Avenue Methodist Mission at Kansas City, Missouri where he increased the membership from 200 to 750.—*The Daily Oklahoman*, (Oklahoma City) July 14, 1905.

<sup>43</sup> *The Daily Oklahoman*, (Oklahoma City) July 14, 1905.

of mathematics and astronomy would enable the student to get a practical knowledge of the use of surveying instruments and a study of the heavens. The museum contained many valuable collections of minerals besides the collection of Mr. Carrico of Oklahoma City, by whose generosity the museum of the university was largely increased. The University boasted of a well selected library of about 2,000 volumes.<sup>44</sup>

The Board met in June, 1906, and Dr. Jones tendered his resignation as Vice Chancellor and Ernest T. Bynum, Ph.D. of the University of Oklahoma was elected to the position.<sup>45</sup>

The first yearbook of the university was issued in June, 1907 and was called, *The Campus*, and was dedicated to Dr. Bradford. There were several student organizations on the campus at this time such as the "Athenian Society," the "Classen Debating Club," the "Clio Society," the "Zeta Gamma Society," the "Kappa Theta Sorority," the "Girl's Glee Club," the Y. M. C. A. the Y. W. C. A., the "Dormitory Girls" and the football, basketball and baseball teams.<sup>46</sup>

Epworth's football, baseball and basketball teams made a good record for themselves, when they played many of the smaller colleges in Oklahoma and Kansas. They also played Oklahoma A. & M. College, Kansas State College and the University of Oklahoma where they also made a good record. In the season of 1906-07, Epworth ranked second, being outclassed in this section only by the University of Oklahoma.<sup>47</sup>

Dr. Bynum resigned his position as Vice Chancellor on May 1, 1908 and by the action of the Board of Trustees the position of Vice Chancellor was abolished and George H. Crowell, Ph.D. of High Point, North Carolina was elected Dean of the faculty.<sup>48</sup> Epworth University was reaching its peak of importance in 1908, and it looked as if it was securely established. Its grounds had been beautified by trees, shrubbery, walks and drives. Grounds were set aside for football, baseball, tennis, etc., and in addition there was a quarter mile of graded athletic track. The new interurban line from Guthrie would soon pass the campus.<sup>49</sup>

The attendance had greatly increased and ample dormitory facilities were available for the young ladies. An additional story with a new roof to the main building had been constructed and definite steps were being taken toward erecting a science hall. Schools of medicine, law, dentistry, engineering and pharmacy had

<sup>44</sup> Brill, *op. cit.*, pp. 37-38.

<sup>45</sup> *Catalog of Epworth University*, p. 17.

<sup>46</sup> Brill, *op. cit.*, pp. 45-46.

<sup>47</sup> *The Campus*, 1907, p. 60.

<sup>48</sup> *Catalog of Epworth University*, p. 17.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*

been added. The Weather Bureau, under the direction of J. P. Slaughter offered courses of instruction to students of the University. A four year course was being arranged in civil engineering upon the completion of which the degree of B. S. would be conferred. A kindergarten training school had been established as a part of the College of Arts and Science.<sup>50</sup>

Under Dr. Bradford's able leadership the school grew rapidly and its influence was exerted in many ways for the advancement of Christian education in Oklahoma and other states. The efforts to secure a substantial endowment had met with little success. Many obstacles were met but few were overcome. Bishop Quale, President of the Annual Conference called the Annual Conference in Special session in 1911. After organization he stated the business of the Conference, was to hear recommendation of the Joint Board of Trustees of Epworth University. Mr. Burt presented the recommendation from the Joint Board of Trustees. It was in substance that the Annual Conference grant them power to return the property of Epworth University to the University Development Company, to which the Annual Conference voted unanimously to concur in this recommendation.<sup>51</sup>

Then a dissolution of the joint relationship of the two denominations occurred and whatever interest was held by the Methodist Episcopal Church, was merged with Fort Worth University to create the Methodist University of Oklahoma at Guthrie.<sup>52</sup>

#### THE EPWORTH COLLEGE OF MEDICINE

The Board of Epworth University without consulting the medical profession, decided to make their beginning in the teaching of medicine at once, and with the election of their general faculty on July 6, 1904, elected to that faculty as members of the College of Medicine, the following physicians and surgeons: A. K. West, H. Coulter Todd, Lea A. Riely, U. L. Russell, F. C. Hoops, J. A. Ryan and W. J. Jolly.<sup>53</sup>

The faculty of the medical school met on September 7, 1904 in the faculty room of the university as the faculty of the College of Medicine of Epworth University. Dr. A. K. West was elected

<sup>50</sup> Miss Lucy Gage was Professor of Kindergarten Training in the College of Arts and Sciences, Epworth University. She had appeared before the Territorial Legislative Council at Guthrie, in 1903, and through her own well-directed efforts had secured the enactment of the law providing for the establishment of kindergartens in Oklahoma Territory. This law is still a part of the laws of the State of Oklahoma. See "Lucy Gage: Founder of Oklahoma's Kindergartens" by Ethel McMillan (Appendix A), in "A Romance of Pioneering" by Lucy Gage, *The Chronicle of Oklahoma*, Vol. XXIX, No. 3 (Autumn, 1951), pp. 284-313.—Ed.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, op. cit., pp. 45-46.

<sup>52</sup> *Catalog of the Methodist University of Oklahoma, 1915* pp. 13-14.

<sup>53</sup> H. Coulter Todd, *History of Medical Education in Oklahoma From 1904-1910*, (Norman), p. 14.



KINDERGARTEN TRAINING CLASS, KEWDETH UNIVERSITY



Dean, and Dr. H. Coulter Todd was chosen secretary of the faculty. The Medical School opened with three students, but none of them were ever fortunate enough later to obtain a degree in medicine.<sup>54</sup>

At a meeting held in the law offices of C. B. Ames on the afternoon of April 6, 1905, the Executive Committee of Epworth University concluded the negotiations which would establish a regular four year medical department. Based upon this action of the executive board which gave the physicians interested in the enterprise, nominating power, a faculty of the medical department was named.<sup>55</sup> The experimental medical first year work had met with such gratifying success that the organization for the four year course was rendered absolutely necessary. Several members of the faculty were experienced medical instructors, among whom were: Doctors A. K. West, W. J. Jolly, L. A. Riely, H. C. Todd and L. H. Buxton. They also planned the construction of a building on the campus for laboratory purposes, and to establish a dissecting room.<sup>56</sup>

The Epworth College of Medicine became a separate corporation in 1907 from Epworth University, however the connection between them remained very close. Each member of the corporation<sup>57</sup> paid \$1,000 with which the Virginia Hotel on the northwest corner of North Broadway and Sixth Street was purchased for \$19,000 and was rebuilt and equipped for the medical school. The Medical School grew with great rapidity after its removal to its new location. None of the students' tuition was paid as salary to any of the teachers. Their services were given free. All money from the tuition was put into equipment so that the school became well equipped in its laboratories and other facilities.<sup>58</sup>

The Medical School was the only one in Oklahoma, giving a four year course, and the efficiency of its work is shown by its membership in the Southern Association of Medical Colleges. All the classroom and laboratory work was given on the campus of Epworth University, but beginning with October 1908 a large portion of the work was transferred to the new building on the corner of Sixth

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>55</sup> The new medical faculty consisted of the following physicians and surgeons: W. J. Jolly, A. K. West, J. B. Bolster, U. L. Russell, J. A. Ryan, Carl H. Lund, L. A. Riely, A. D. Young, R. T. Richards, R. F. Schaefer, L. H. Buxton, F. C. Hoopes, W. T. Boyd, J. M. Postelle, H. Coulter Todd, E. S. Ferguson, W. T. Salmon and J. A. Reck.—*The Daily Oklahoman*, (Oklahoma City) April 7, 1905.

<sup>56</sup> *The Daily Oklahoman*, (Oklahoma City) April 7, 1905.

<sup>57</sup> The following physicians and surgeons entered the corporation of the Epworth College of Medicine: A. D. Young, R. F. Schaefer, A. K. West, E. F. Davis, A. L. Blesh, L. H. Buxton, H. Coulter Todd, L. A. Riely, C. W. Williams, U. L. Russell, J. W. Riley, E. S. Ferguson, W. J. Jolly, R. M. Howard, J. M. Postelle, F. C. Hoopes and W. J. Boyd. A. H. Cluses and C. B. Ames were also members of the corporation. The Directors were: L. H. Buxton, President, W. J. Jolly, Vice President, A. K. West, Dean, and U. L. Russell, Treasurer. The publication committee was Drs. White, Young, and Todd. —Todd, *op. cit.*, p. 14.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 14.

and Broadway.<sup>59</sup> Although the Epworth College of Medicine had become a separate corporation, the University did not draw any line of distinction between it and any other department of the university. Its courses were listed in the University Catalog and the medical school had a section in Epworth's Annual.

Free clinics for the benefit of the medical school were established by the leading physicians and surgeons of the city and these afforded abundant clinical material for the complete demonstration of all classes of medical and surgical work. St. Anthony Hospital had on its staff several members of the faculty, and it was splendidly equipped for student instruction.<sup>60</sup>

The College of Dentistry was organized under a full quota of instructors and preparation was made for its formal opening in October, 1908. It was closely correlated with the colleges of medicine and pharmacy in their new building on North Broadway.<sup>61</sup>

The task of operating the Medical School became a great burden to the men who had given it so much of their time and effort. A partial two year course was still being maintained at the University of Oklahoma at Norman, while the Epworth College of Medicine was graduating students with their M. D. degrees. To the credit of Epworth College of Medicine, not one of its graduates ever failed to pass any state board examination. A committee of Doctors L. H. Burton, A. K. West, and H. Coulter Todd was named to confer with the authorities of the University of Oklahoma in 1910 to ascertain if the Epworth College of Medicine could be affiliated with or taken over by the University of Oklahoma. Such an arrangement was consummated by the Board of Regents of the University of Oklahoma, and the Epworth College of Medicine became the School of Medicine of the University of Oklahoma in 1910. The property of Epworth College of Medicine thus reverted to the original incorporators and was sold for \$30,000 and the corporation was dissolved. The Medical School turned over to the University of Oklahoma more than twenty trained medical teachers, and a student body numbering forty-seven.<sup>62</sup>

The Medical School of Epworth University has had a continuous existence from the day of its opening on September 7, 1904 until its present existence as an important part of the University of Oklahoma School of Medicine.<sup>63</sup>

<sup>59</sup> Catalog of Epworth University, pp. 98-99.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 100.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 134.

<sup>62</sup> Todd, *op. cit.*, pp. 25-26.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 14.