RISE OF THE ADMINISTRATOR IN HIGHER EDUCATION: FOCUS ON PROFESSIONALIZATION OF THE REGISTRAR AT THE UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY FROM 1910 TO 1937

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RISE OF THE ADMINISTRATOR IN HIGHER EDUCATION:
FOCUS ON PROFESSIONALIZATION OF THE REGISTRAR
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY FROM 1910 TO 1937

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DISSERTATION
_____________________________________________
A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the
College of Education
at the University of Kentucky

By
Nancy D. Taylor

Lexington, Kentucky

Director: John R. Thelin, Ph.D., Professor of Educational Policy Studies and Evaluation

Lexington, Kentucky

2015

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ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION

RISE OF THE ADMINISTRATOR IN HIGHER EDUCATION: FOCUS ON PROFESSIONALIZATION OF THE REGISTRAR AT THE UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY FROM 1910 TO 1937

The decades following the Civil War saw a tremendous growth in the number of colleges and universities, both public and private, due in large part to funds provided by federal legislation under the Morrill Act of 1862 and a surge in philanthropy on the part of wealthy industrialists. In the early colleges and universities, administrations were typically run by the president alone. With increased enrollment and the demand for expanded services, one man could no longer handle all the administrative functions, and thus was born the administrative professional in higher education. Due to the increased demand for record-keeping, one of the earliest of these positions was the registrar.

The object of this dissertation is to study the early evolution of administrators in higher education, with emphasis on the role of registrar, and then focus on how that position evolved at the University of Kentucky. Did the role progress at the University of Kentucky in the same manner as other colleges and universities? Did it develop into an actual profession? The primary focus of the study in relation to the University of Kentucky is on the historical period beginning with the time leading up to the first official registrar (1910) through the end of his tenure as registrar (1937).

Data for the study came from books about organization theory and higher education administration, institutional histories, and biographies; proceedings of the American Association of Collegiate Registrars; materials from the University Archives’ Special Collections, such as catalogues, annual reports, Board of Trustee minutes, Report of the Investigating Committee of 1917, and personal recollections of Ezra Gillis, the first officially recognized registrar.

The dissertation consists of an overview of organization theory in relation to higher education, a historical perspective of early administrators, the rise of the registrar and the attempts toward professionalization of the role, and the origin and evolution of the earliest registrars at the University of Kentucky.
KEYWORDS: Organization Theory, Higher Education Administration, Institutional History, Professionalization, Registrar

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March 2, 2015
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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Two months after graduating with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in English, I became a full-time employee of the University of Kentucky. Twenty years later, I decided to try my luck at graduate school. My first graduate course was History of Higher Education, taught by Dr. John R. Thelin. While I had always been interested in the history of my alma mater and employer, it was this course and this professor that ignited my interest in the history of higher education. Dr. Thelin was gracious enough to consent to be my advisor, then chair of my Master’s committee, and ultimately Director of Dissertation. It has been a long, slow road to this point, as pursuing advanced degrees while working a demanding full-time job has proven to be quite challenging. I owe Dr. Thelin my deep gratitude for his patience, assistance, and support.

I also owe thanks to the other professors on my dissertation committee, Dr. Richard Angelo, Dr. Jack Blanton, and Dr. Terry Birdwhistell. It was their challenging qualifying examination assignments that provided me with the foundation of the dissertation, introducing me to organization theory, past University administrators, institutional histories of other colleges and universities, and the most valuable resource of all, the Special Collections Library of the University Archives. I am so grateful for the support of Mr. Frank Stanger, Senior Library Technician in the Special Collections Research Center, for helping me locate information and bringing me cart after cart of boxes filled with history. I believe that Mr. Stanger knows every piece of history stored in the University Archives. I am also grateful to Sean Cooper, Ed. S., Senior Associate Registrar for the University of Kentucky, for allowing me access to actual transcripts from the University’s earliest days.
Finally, I must acknowledge my wonderful, intelligent mother, Virginia Clarys Thomas Taylor. She never attended college, although she graduated from high school in the top of her class. Instead, she chose to be a homemaker and mother to four children, all of whom went on to succeed in college. My mother instilled in me the love of reading and writing, and the drive to succeed academically. Her health is rapidly failing and it is my hope that she will know what I have achieved and understand how much she has contributed to my success.
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Introduction

It was not until the period after the Civil War that the young people of America fully understood the value of a college education. With the expansion of industrialization came the realization that there were opportunities beyond the farm, and to take advantage of those opportunities, a college degree was the ticket. The decades following the Civil War saw an explosion in the number of public colleges and universities, due in large part to the funds provided by the Morrill Act of 1862, and in the number of private colleges founded through the philanthropy of wealthy industrialists. In the early colleges and universities, administrations were typically run by the president alone. But with increased enrollment and the demand for expanded services, one man could no longer handle all the administrative functions.

Thus was born the administrative professional in higher education. Due to the necessity of increased record-keeping, one of the earliest of these administrative positions to emerge was the registrar. Duties originally performed by the president, with assistance from a secretary, were first delegated to faculty members. When the time constraints of increased demands for teaching and research became too onerous, then positions such as vice presidents, academic deans, business officers, deans of men and women, and the registrar were established.

The object of this dissertation is to study the early evolution of the registrar in American higher education, and then focus on how that position evolved at the University of Kentucky in particular. Did the role progress at the University of Kentucky in the same manner as other colleges and universities? Did it develop into an actual profession?
The primary focus of the study in relation to the University of Kentucky is on the historical period beginning with the time leading up to the first official registrar (1910) through the end of his tenure as registrar (1937). Data for the study came from books written about organization theory, higher education administration, institutional history, and biographies; proceedings of the American Association of Collegiate Registrars; and materials from the University Archives’ Special Collections, such as catalogues, annual reports, Board of Trustee minutes, Report of the Investigating Committee of 1917, and personal recollections of Ezra Gillis, the first recognized registrar.

The dissertation consists of seven chapters, summarized as follows:

- Chapter One provides an overview of the origin of organization theory and how it relates to the hierarchy of administrative professionals in higher education.
- Chapter Two gives a brief historical perspective of the rise of the administrator in higher education.
- Chapter Three highlights the ascent of one particular administrator, the registrar.
- Chapters Four and Five focus on steps taken nationally and locally toward professionalization of the role of registrar. Chapter Four presents an early history of the American Association of Collegiate Registrars, while Chapter Five discusses educational requirements and training opportunities for registrars.
- Chapters Six and Seven focus on the origin and evolution of the registrar at the University of Kentucky in particular. Chapter Six
provides a history of the creation of the position at the University of
Kentucky, with documents from the University Archives, while
Chapter Seven focuses on the University’s first recognized registrar,
Ezra L Gillis, including his own impressions recorded in diaries.
Chapter One
Organization Theory and the University

Introduction to the Organization

The basic elements of organizations have remained constant throughout history. Organizations are (1) social entities that (2) are goal-directed, (3) are designed to be structured and coordinated activity systems, and (4) are linked to the external environment. Organizations have purposes, attract participants, acquire and allocate resources to accomplish goals, use some form of structure to divide and coordinate activities, and rely on certain members to lead or manage others. They are made up of people and how those people relate to each other. The organization can only exist when people interact with each other to attain goals. While there are important distinctions between for-profit businesses, where the goals are directed toward earning money, and non-profits where managers direct their efforts toward generating some sort of social impact, the core of both is the people. In general, universities, particularly public institutions, fall into the non-profit category, but are faced with many complications that often give them the appearance of being for-profit. According to James Perkins, the earliest mission of the university was the teaching or transmission of knowledge, and that is how the university was designed. However, Perkins views the two newer functions of research and public service as in conflict with the first. By the end of the nineteenth century, scholarly attention had turned from teaching to searching for new knowledge, with ensuing organizational problems. The public service function also reduced the spotlight on teaching, with requirements of faculty support and measurable results satisfactory to the public. Thus autonomy was compromised, as the performance in these
new areas was measured by external forces outside the university, such as the government and the public.4

Public universities meet the prevailing characteristics of non-profit organizations in that financial resources typically come from government appropriations, grants, and donations as opposed to the sale of products and services to customers. University managers, like other non-profits, are committed to serving “clients” with limited funds, keeping organizational costs as low as possible, and demonstrating a highly efficient use of resources. As with any type of organization, they are charged with setting goals and measuring effectiveness, coping with environmental uncertainty, implementing effective control mechanisms, satisfying multiple stakeholders, and dealing with issues of power and conflict.5 While an argument could be made that charging tuition to students is an attempt to sell a product to customers, it can also be argued that students are the “products” and that no university can charge its students enough to completely cover the costs of their education.6

Comparison of the University to the Corporation and the Government Bureau

In The University as an Organization, a report prepared for the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education, the university was compared to other types of organizations, such as the corporation and the government bureau, among others. In his essay on comparison to the corporation, Ralph M. Besse notes the most important area of comparison is the structuring of authority and the accountability for use of such authority. It has always been popular to suggest that universities should be managed as businesses, but Besse points out that this would be applicable in only a few of the functions of the
university, with good cost accounting as the most transferable corporate element. Corporations have an advantage when it comes to structuring authority. There is one overriding goal for the corporation: making money. There is one group with ultimate power over the corporation: the shareowners/board of directors. There is a well-defined process of decision-making, leading to unity of action. If there is dissent, the majority vote has control, with dissenters’ interests sold. The hierarchy is well known to all members of the organization and is accepted.

Public universities have no parallel to shareowners, but they do have authority-granting sources: boards of trustees. However, according to Besse, this is often fragmented because of how they are appointed – governors (political), churches (reward), alumni (popularity), board selected (financial), students and faculty (activism). In other words, many are selected for reasons that have little do with management skills. In the corporate world, the board is selected because of ownership, which gives them strength of purpose in their management responsibilities. Another obstacle faced by a university board is its lack of complete authority over the academic structure, a major piece of the university structure. Whereas there is unity in the corporate board setting, there is a lack of unity in academic activity, divided into faculty and students, faculty among departments, undergraduate and graduate levels, and graduate levels divided by research and teaching.7

In the area of accountability, business has one quantifiable measure of performance: making a profit. There are identifiable areas of responsibility for measuring success or lack thereof, through accounting, cost control, reporting, analysis, and an understanding by employees. Besse feels accountability is blurred at the
university. There are no clear and precise methods for measuring performance. Results of research can be measured, but those measurements are geared toward results, rather than cost, and most associated profits do not go to the university. There is more opportunity to apply corporate accountability techniques to university administrative matters, things that are measurable and controllable, such as construction and operation of buildings, purchasing of supplies, control of costs, selection/retention/training/promotion of employees, investment of funds, designation of control centers, and use of cost accounting. Besse concludes that universities fail to benefit from industry’s efficiency model due to necessarily loose control of academic affairs, no motivation to show a profit, but to eliminate deficits, a lack of funds to compete for the best talent and provide incentive compensation, and different considerations for expenditure of capital funds.

Structure of authority, measures of accountability, and profit motivation are the main categories that distinguish a corporation from a university, but there are a few others such as how leaders are selected and how decisions are made regarding facilities. A business leader can be chosen by a variety of methods: professionally trained people that move up through the ranks, talent bought on the market, family ownership, and mergers and affiliations. In the college or university, the chosen president normally starts out as a teacher and proceeds through the ranks to administration. He or she can be sought from the entire field of higher education, not just the one institution. According to Besse, it is unreasonable to expect that presidents with an academic career could be as well trained in business administration as presidents of business corporations. In regards to facilities, corporations base their decisions on cost-justification, functionality, and
efficiency. They calculate the price impact on the rate of return on the product, investing in building a facility only if it will result in an increase in profits. At universities, a range of factors go into the decision process: dictates of donors, architectural display, aesthetics, planning for capital expenditures, provision for the costs of operation and maintenance. Expansion may be compelled by competition, demands of students and faculty, and alumni pride. Corporate facilities are geared toward maximum use, whereas university buildings are unused for many hours each day.  

Another essay in *The University as an Organization* compared the university with a government bureau. Stephen K. Bailey found both similarities and differences in his comparison. In the areas they had in common, he found that both universities and government bureaus formulate and supervise budgets, hire and sustain personnel, manage space and facilities, are induced by events or external threats to come up with plans, and pay lip-service to monitoring performance. Both must lobby government for financial support, competing with others like themselves. Both devote time to making rules and then making judgments based on those rules. Both are multidivisional, with elaborate hierarchical structures of those in control (boards, supervisors, legislatures, stock holders), those in subordinate roles (divisions, branches, departments, units), and those who do the work (professional and scientific, managerial, clerical, manual). Both have external clientele who shape procedures and structures (farm groups, labor unions, alumni, parents, professional societies). Both suffer from up and down financial largesse and from changing leadership styles. Both require highly skilled and independent labor, in most positions of responsibility and both have fairly strict personnel systems, with academic tenure in universities and a civil service system in government bureaus. Both
universities and bureaus compete for government grants and are subject to publicity. Both are subject to competing interests of governors and legislators.

While there are the above similarities, there are certainly differences as well. Government bureaus are distinct from universities in several areas. They face divided accountability, where they are pulled between political executives (presidents, governors, mayors) and legislators (congressmen, councilmen). In policy issues, the powers of federal, state, and local governments may overlap. They are more vulnerable to the impact of elections and changing politics. Governments can employ force when it comes to the simultaneous accomplishment of multiple goals. Universities, in most cases, have more autonomy as a result of academic freedom, with the most powerful example that of tenure. They exhibit what Bailey refers to as a “flat” organizational pyramid, where there is loose control at the top and a bottom-heavy concentration of power over important matters. It is Bailey’s assertion that universities conduct a great deal of their business through councils and committees. As a result of this comparative administrative looseness, there is limited accountability. Another distinction of the university is its clientele and purpose. University clientele is predominantly young, whereas government bureaus deal with a broad distribution of age groups. According to Bailey, the basic mission of the university is discovery and transmission of knowledge, while government bureaus cover a wide spectrum of purposes.

The Beginnings of Organization Theory

What is organization theory? According to Daft, “Organization theory is not a collection of facts; it is a way of thinking about organizations...based on patterns and
regularities in organizational design and behavior… and insights into organizational functioning.”\textsuperscript{11} Shafritz and Ott state, “There is no such thing as the theory of organizations. Rather, there are many theories that attempt to explain and predict how organizations and the people in them will behave in varying organizational structures, cultures, and circumstances.”\textsuperscript{12} Each of the nine perspectives of organization theory is associated with a period of time, with the first, classical theory, in its prime during the 1920s and 1930s. This just tells the story of periods officially labeled. Although the university as an organization came into its own in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries in places such as Paris, Cambridge, Oxford, Bologna, and Salamanca, organizations in general, and associated theory, have been noted by experts dating back centuries earlier. Two thousand years before the birth of Christ, one hundred thousand Egyptians spent twenty years building the pyramids. The Egyptians administered enterprises that required planning, complex organization, skilled leadership, and detailed coordination.\textsuperscript{13} In 1491 BC, during the exodus from Egypt, Moses’ father-in-law urged him to delegate authority. Sun Tzu, in 500 BC, recognized the need for hierarchical organization and staff planning. In 400 BC, Socrates argued for universality of management. Xenophon, in 370 BC recorded the first description of the advantages of division of labor. In 360 BC, Aristotle asserted that executive powers and functions cannot be the same for all organizations, but must reflect their cultural environment.\textsuperscript{14}

While it is true that organizations have existed for many centuries, Shafritz and Ott assert that most analysts of the origin of organization theory view the beginning of the factory system in eighteenth century Great Britain as the birthplace of complex economic organization and of the field of organization theory.\textsuperscript{15} Since that time,
organization theory has passed through nine phases: classical, neoclassical, human resource theory, “modern” structural, systems theory and organizational economics, power and politics, organizational culture and sense making, organizational culture reform movements, and postmodernism and the information age. The most important of all of these is the very first, classical theory, because organizational theory is cumulative. An understanding of classical theory is imperative because theorists learn from and build on each other’s works. The classical school has its roots in the Industrial Revolution in Great Britain in the late eighteenth century, with the development of machine-based manufacturing, a mechanized textile industry, iron-making techniques, increased use of refined coal, and improved roads and railways, and the introduction of steam power, and in the first two decades of the nineteenth century, all-metal machine tools. The effects spread to the United States during the nineteenth century, and gained momentum around 1850 with the development of steam-powered ships, railways, the internal combustion engine and electrical power generation. The factory system brought about changes in how managers worked. They now had to worry about obtaining heavy infusions of capital, planning and organizing large-scale production, coordinating the activities of large numbers of people and functions, keeping track of costs, and maintaining a trained and motivated workforce. The classical theory dominated into the 1930s, reflecting such fundamentals as: (1) organizations exist to accomplish production-related and economic goals, (2) one best way to organize for production, and that way can be found through scientific inquiry, (3) production is maximized through specialization and division of labor, and (4) people and organizations act in accordance
with rational economic principles. The first theories of organizations were primarily concerned with structure, things such as centralization of equipment and labor, division of specialized labor, and economic paybacks on factory equipment. Shafritz and Ott attribute these ideas to Adam Smith (above left), considered the father of the academic discipline of economics, in his 1776 work *Wealth of Nations*, in which he said, “The greatest improvement in the productive powers of labour, and the greater part of the skill, dexterity, and judgment with which it is anywhere directed, or applied seem to have been the effects of the division of labour.”

In his annual report of 1856, Daniel McCallum, the general superintendent of the New York and Erie Railroad, described six general principles of organization including division of responsibilities and associated authority to perform them, and reporting systems to identify if goals are accomplished and pinpoint weaknesses for correction. McCallum is known for systematizing America’s first big business (railroads) before the Civil War. He is acknowledged as the father of the first modern organization chart. Henri Fayol (above right), a French executive engineer, developed the first comprehensive theory of management in 1916. It centered around six basic principles that he felt were universally applicable to every type of organization: (1) technical – production of goods, (2) commercial – buying, selling, exchanging, (3) financial – raising and using capital, (4) security - protection of property and people, (5) accounting, and (6) managerial – coordination, control, organization, planning, command of people. Fayol’s primary emphasis was on managerial functions, such as division of work, authority and
responsibility, discipline, unity, subordination of individual interest to general interest, remuneration of personnel, centralization, and esprit de corps. 23

One of the most prominent and influential figures during the classical theory period was Frederick Winslow Taylor (left) 24, known as the father of the scientific management movement. His book of 1911, *The Principles of Scientific Management*, outlined four basic principles for systemically controlling decisions about organizations and job design for the individual worker: (1) after scientific study of individual situations, develop standard procedures for each job, (2) select workers with suitable skills and compensate them appropriately, (3) establish a clear division of responsibility between managers and workers, i.e. goal setting and planning versus task, and (4) establish the organizational assumption that top managers do the thinking and workers do what they are told. 25

The German sociologist, economist, and political scientist Max Weber (below) 26 made a study of bureaucratic organizations and published his analysis in 1922. His work remains the single most influential statement and the point of departure for all further analyses on the subject. Bureaucracy refers to a specific set of structural arrangements, or to specific patterns of behavior. 27 W. Richard Scott defines bureaucracy as the “existence of a specialized administrative staff.” 28 This is a concept that remains part of administrative structures today. In his book, Scott discusses Max Weber’s theory of bureaucracy in detail. Weber defined three types of authority: (1) traditional – an established belief in the sanctity of immemorial traditions and the legitimacy of those exercising authority under them, (2) rational-legal – resting on a belief in the “legality” of patterns of normative rules and the
right of those in authority to issue commands, and (3) charismatic – resting on devotion to the specific and exceptional sanctity, heroism or exemplary character of an individual person.\textsuperscript{29} Weber defined a list of administrative characteristics present in bureaucratic forms:

- A fixed division of labor among participants
- A hierarchy of offices – each lower office is controlled and supervised by a higher one
- A set of general rules that govern performance, rules that are relatively stable and exhaustive, and can be learned; decisions are recorded in permanent files.
- A separation of personal from official property and rights
- Selection of personnel solely on the basis of technical qualifications – appointed to office, not elected; compensated by salary.
- Employment viewed as a career by participants – full-time employees that can look forward to a life-long career. The employee gains tenure, and is protected against arbitrary dismissal.\textsuperscript{30}

The dominating themes in the above ideas presented by Smith, McCallum, Fayol, Taylor, and Weber are the principles endorsed by the classical theory: division of labor, specialization within the workforce, and hierarchy of authority. This theory was the dominant one until the 1930s. Although other theories developed post-1930s, such as the neoclassical organization theory which lasted until the 1950s, the historical analysis stops here for the purpose of this paper, as my interest lies in developments that took place in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in regards to the emergence of the role of administrators in universities.
The Life Cycle of the Organization

In his book, Daft outlines the four stages of life cycle development of an organization: entrepreneurial, collectivity, formalization, and elaboration. The evolution of a university organization can be seen to follow along these same life cycle stages.

Entrepreneurial Stage

In the entrepreneurial stage, the founders devote their full energies to all activities, working long hours. The organization is informal and nonbureaucratic. Control is based on the owner’s personal supervision. Growth is from a creative new product or service. The problem with this stage is the need for a leadership strategy. As the organization grows, there will be a larger number of employees, and ensuing management issues. The structure of the organization needs to be adjusted to accommodate growth and the addition of strong managers. The characteristics of this stage are that, initially, it is small, nonbureaucratic, and a one-person show. The top manager provides structure and the control system. The manager’s energy is devoted to survival and the production of a single product or service.\(^{31}\)

In the typical college from 1836 to 1872, the president presided as the paternal head of a small and personal college family, and was seen as a principal with more responsibility for campus conduct and morality than for academics.\(^{32}\) During these early periods, the president was still the primary person in charge of day-to-day details. The smaller the institution, “the more likely the president might act as chief disciplinarian, watch over books in the library, keep the vital records of the college, take charge of business details, invest the funds of the institution, and act as secretary of both faculty
and governing board.” Before the Civil War, most institutions managed with a president, a treasurer, and a part-time librarian. In 1878, the newly-emancipated Agricultural and Mechanical College of Kentucky (later University of Kentucky) personnel consisted of President James K. Patterson (above left), six professors, one of which was also appointed treasurer (James G. White), four tutors, and one janitor. During the first half of the nineteenth century, the mission of the university was simply transmission of knowledge, based on a fixed and very limited curriculum.

*Collectivity Stage*

During this stage, the organization begins to develop clear goals and direction. It is considered the organization’s “youth”. Growth is rapid. Departments are established, along with a hierarchy of authority, job assignments, and the beginning of division of labor. Employees identify with the mission and spend long hours helping the organization succeed. They are excited and committed to the mission. Communication and control are mostly informal, although a few formal systems begin to appear. The problem with this stage is the need for delegation. Lower level employees gradually find themselves restricted by strong top-down leadership. Lower level managers begin to acquire confidence in their own functional areas and want more discretion.

At the turn of the century, two shifts in organizational structure took place in universities: (1) departments and professional schools became the basic units for academic affairs and (2) the beginning of a constantly increasing rate of college attendance. With the advent of graduate and professional schools, the shift began from the liberal arts curriculum to one based in science and technology, and from teaching to research as the higher professional status. Also making its appearance was the elective
system, with students taking courses in areas of interest outside their majors and gaining more flexibility in creating their degree curricula. An increase in enrollment meant more professors, buildings, facilities and equipment, and potentially more money from private and public sources. The president had to take on responsibility for securing support and managing a more complex environment. At first, those few professors and a vice president mentioned above assisted him with the basic functions of registrar, bursar, and librarian on a part-time basis.37

By 1900, this was not enough – and thus began the administrative bureaucracy. “Seen historically, bureaucratization may be interpreted as the increasing subdivision of the functions which the owner-managers of the early enterprises had performed personally in the course of their daily routine.”38 In 1878, President Andrew White of Cornell appointed a history professor, William C. Russel, as vice president to take on routine tasks of answering correspondence, hiring/dismissing faculty, and acting as head in White’s absence. President Eliot of Harvard appointed Professor Ephriam W. Gurney as dean of the college of faculty, with the primary responsibility “to relieve the president of the burden of contacts with students.”39 At the University of Kentucky, John Shackelford, professor of English language and literature, was named as vice president of the college in 1899, to be succeeded shortly after by Dean of the Classical Course John H. Neville. The early 1900s saw the advent of an elective system at the University of Kentucky, with freshmen all required to enroll in the same courses; sophomores free to take a few electives, and upperclassmen with a wider range of choices.40

By the early 1900s, general administration in American higher education had developed fully. Nicholas Murray Butler assumed the presidency of Columbia in 1902
with clerical staff and well-established offices for the registrar and bursar. University of North Carolina administration included a registrar, bursar, librarian, and part-time secretary. Alumni secretary positions were established at many universities. Business officers commonly served as collectors of fees. Offices of vice president, assigned to specific functions (relations, academic affairs, medical affairs, etc.) appeared in some numbers by World War I. By 1900, the title of Dean was used for delegation of academic and student service responsibilities; two-thirds of colleges and universities had academic deans.\(^{41}\)

**Formalization Stage**

The formalization stage is considered the “midlife” of the organization’s life cycle. More bureaucratic characteristics emerge, with the installation and use of rules, procedures, and control systems. A clear hierarchy and division of labor are established. Communication is less frequent and more formal. Engineers, human resource specialists, and other staff may be added. Top management becomes concerned with strategy and planning, and leaves the operations of the organization to middle management. Problems encountered in this stage: too much red tape, proliferation of systems and programs may begin to strangle middle-level executives, innovation may be restricted, and the organization seems bureaucratized.\(^{42}\)

In the university setting, three major thrusts took place that altered university organization: (1) expansion in numbers of both personnel and administrative units, (2) consolidation of departmental control over academic matters, and (3) diffusion of participation in government, with a lessening of influence by boards and presidents.\(^ {43}\) Elective curricula, specialized knowledge, an emphasis on research, and graduate and
professional programs made the orientation of faculty more intellectual and pushed into secondary importance their concern with students. This void had to be filled by other administrative roles, such as student personnel services, deans of women, deans of men, and directors of student unions. Although the first Dean of Women is said to have been a principal at Oberlin College in 1834, the first “fashionable” dean was Alice Palmer at the University of Chicago in 1887. The first Dean of Women at Indiana University, Mary Bidwell, was hired in 1901. Mrs. Florence Offutt Stout was appointed dean at the University of Kentucky in 1908 and James G. White, Vice President, as Dean of Men in 1912, to be replaced upon his death in 1914 by Professor C. R. Melcher. The University of Kentucky Office of Publicity and Alumni Affairs was created in 1926 and the Personnel Bureau in 1927. The UK Student Union was not built until 1938.

Governing boards and presidents withdrew from active involvement in the day-to-day affairs of the university. Academic organization expanded, with a multitude of colleges and departments, each with a director or head who reported to a chairman, dean, or vice president, and each with professional staff, clerical support, and research assistants. Departments were given a certain degree of autonomy. Faculty involvement in administrative affairs moved to a structure of senates, councils, and committees. Students’ drive for direct participation on governing councils and boards did not gain real momentum until the 1960s.

Elaboration Stage

The elaboration stage is considered “maturity” in the organization’s life cycle. The organization is large and bureaucratic, with extensive control systems, rules, and procedures. Managers develop skills for confronting problems and working together in
teams and task forces. The organization is split into multiple divisions. The problem at this stage is the need for revitalization and renewal. Organizational stature and reputation are important.\textsuperscript{51}

As with other types of organizations, the university is pressured by coercive, normative, and mimetic forces. Coercive forces are the external pressures to adopt structures, techniques, or behaviors similar to other organizations. These techniques may not make the university more effective, but it will give the appearance of effectiveness and be accepted as legitimate in the environment. Normative forces are pressures to actually make changes to achieve standards of professionalism, and to adopt techniques that are considered by peers to be up to date and effective. Consulting firms, training institutions, and professional associations develop the appropriate norms. Universities compete with each other in the recruitment of talent for skilled students, faculty, and professional staff, and for financial resources. Mimetic forces are the pressures to copy or model other organizations, the clearest example of which is the technique of benchmarking as part of the total quality movement. Benchmarking means identifying who is best at something in an industry, in this case in higher education, and then duplicating the technique(s) for creating excellence.\textsuperscript{52} It is standard procedure for universities, especially those who aspire to be bigger or better in some area, to have short lists of benchmark institutions. An example is the University of Kentucky’s goal, established in 1997, to become a Top 20 Public Research Institution by the year 2020. As part of the plan to achieve this lofty goal, the University chose nineteen public research institutions with which to compare itself. Beginning 2009-2010, the University started using a list known as the Top 20 Business Plan Benchmark Institutions.
According to the UK Office of Institutional Effectiveness web site, “comparisons of benchmark institutions are used to assess UK's standing in such areas as tuition, student recruitment, faculty salaries, diversity, and employee health benefits. Analysis of benchmark institutions informs decision-making to promote program change and enhancements.”

Universities operate in a complex environment. They are faced with constant pressures from social, cultural, and value changes. Universities must be able to consistently adapt to change. They must cope with ever-changing government regulations, and compete for quality students and highly educated employees, and scarce financial resources. Universities deal with granting agencies, professional and scientific associations, parents, alumni, foundations, community residents, legislators, international agencies, corporations, donors, and the nuances of athletic teams. As complexity increases, so does the number of positions and departments within the university, which in turn increases internal administrative complexity. As the environment becomes more uncertain, planning and forecasting become necessary. During the elaboration stage, universities are faced with this complex environment on a daily basis.

In summary, the evolution of the university as an organization can be seen to follow Daft’s four stages of life cycle development: (1) entrepreneurial (president as paternal head, responsible for all tasks, focused on a basic mission), (2) collectivity (rapid growth, formation of specialized departments), (3) formalization (expansion of personnel and administrative units, departmental control over academic matters, and diffusion of participation in government, and (4) elaboration (large, bureaucratic, control systems and procedures, importance of stature and reputation, pressures of external forces).
Chapter Two  
Rise of the Administrator in Higher Education

The term “administration” originally referred to the president, deans, business staff, and senior professors, all of whom were in agreement with the president on nearly all matters. According to Veysey, “administration” also connoted a certain state of mind; it meant those people in the university who thought in terms of institutional management or organizational planning. Although American colleges had possessed presidents since the seventeenth century, “administration” represented a new force after the Civil War.1 The growth of administration and the corresponding proliferation of administrators was a response to enrollment increases and to demands for new services. Administrators proved to be a solution to the problem of freeing research-minded scholars from the detailed and mundane work that went into management. Before the Civil War, most institutions managed with a president, a treasurer, and a part-time librarian. After the Civil War, administration splintered into “first a secretary of the faculty, then a registrar, and then in succession a vice president, a dean, a dean of women, a chief business officer, an assistant dean, a dean of men, a director of admissions, and in time a corps of administrative assistants to the president who were in charge of anything and everything.”2

In his work about the evolution of administrative offices, originally submitted as a dissertation at the University of Chicago in 1936, Earl McGrath selected thirty-two American institutions of higher education that had existed continuously from 1860 to 1933. His survey consisted of four groupings: eight state universities in the mid-west, eight large eastern institutions with enrollments of more than two thousand, eight small
eastern institutions with enrollments of one thousand or fewer, and eight small western institutions. McGrath ultimately had to include a few institutions founded a few years later than 1860, but stated this did not interfere with his study, as the administrative offices were established later than the foundation date. It was McGrath’s intent to study the evolution of the following offices: the office of the president, the vice-president, the dean, the dean of women, the dean of men, the assistant dean, the librarian, the secretary of the faculty, the registrar, the alumni secretary, and the business officer.

According to Veysey, academic administration came into being in two stages. The first occurred in the late 1860s and early 1870s, when Andrew White (Cornell), Charles Eliot (Harvard), and James Angell (Michigan) came to power with their new style of worldly sophistication and aggressiveness, and a concern for budgets, public relations, and the statistics of their institutions. The second stage of administrative growth began during the early 1890s and has yet to stop today. The most influential and ground-breaking presidents of this decade were William Harper (Chicago) and Nicholas Murray Butler (Columbia). Only a few decades back, the college president wrote all his official correspondence longhand and a president like Angell was registering entering students as well as teaching them, in addition to his presidential duties. By 1900, the administration had developed something like its full measure of force in American higher education, with deans becoming prominent figures. Typewriters appeared and typists began flooding correspondence files. When Butler took over at Columbia in 1902, he had a clerical force of three secretaries, five stenographers, two office boys, and separate offices of the registrar and the bursar, each with its own staff. Tracing the roles of secretaries and stenographers at what is now the University of Kentucky proved to be
challenging, as they were evidently not considered subjects of interest in the typical institutional history books. However, with a great deal of patience and hours of digging through materials in the University Archives, information can be gleaned. The first acknowledgment of a stenographer is a listing of Miss Mary Hodges in the Catalogue of the State College of Kentucky for 1893-1894 when the institution was still known as the Agricultural and Mechanical College of Kentucky.  

Confirmation of this information can be found in the University Archives’ Faculty/Staff Card File, where Miss Hodges is listed as stenographer and clerk in 1893, with an annual salary of $600.00 ($15,325 in 2013 dollars). Today, that would place Miss Hodges’ 1893 income just between the poverty level for a family of one ($11,670) and a family of two ($15,730).

Just after the Civil War, the administration of higher education was still mostly dominated by one person. The smaller the institution, “the more likely the president might act as chief disciplinarian, watch over the books in the library, keep the vital records of the college, take charge of business details, invest the funds of the institution, and act as secretary of both faculty and governing board. In larger institutions, some differentiation of these functions had already been occurring, but from this period onward expansion of the administrative function was little short of phenomenal.” The administrative organization that characterized colleges and universities of the nineteenth century became more complex as institutions increased in size. The following is an excerpt from a 1924 address to the American Association of Collegiate Registrars by Charles H. Judd. At the time, Judd was Head of the Department of Education and the Chairman of the Department of Psychology at the University of Chicago.

…Our higher institutions of learning have moved steadily in their recent evolution in the direction of decentralization of administration. This is a
natural consequence of the specialization which is characteristic of modern times and of the rapid increase in the size of universities and colleges. There is little or nothing left today of the old-fashioned type of personal administration about which one reads in the records of the college of two generations ago where the president was a kind of patriarchal overlord with full knowledge of the student body and of the personal traits and academic doings of each of the members of the faculty.12

The following comment was made at a meeting of the same association, but four years earlier in 1920, by Samuel Capen, who at the time was employed by the Bureau of Education, with the directive to conduct numerous fact-gathering surveys on the administration of higher education institutions. Capen later went on to lead the University of Buffalo for twenty-eight years.

The future historian of American higher education will be impressed by the development of administrative organization and administrative technique. In a short generation, American universities and larger colleges have grown from one-man concerns, which presidents handled without assistance and often without advice, to large and complicated enterprises. In the same period, one administrative function after another has been delegated to special officers – deans, comptrollers, directors and registrars. An administrative hierarchy has grown up which has no counterpart in the university organization of any other country.13

During the first two or three decades after the Civil War, the head of a university continued to try to fulfill two roles: spokesman for education and manager of a business enterprise. By the 1890s, it was becoming clear that one man could not do both effectively. With so many duties – teaching, fund-raising, record-keeping, collecting and disbursing funds, maintaining discipline – the president’s position had become burdensome. Richard Jess, president of the University of Missouri, admitted in 1904, “Few men can be really effective at one time in several spheres of activity. A man
profoundly intellectual, profoundly spiritual, and able in administration is exceedingly rare.”

Samuel Eliot, noted historian, was prophetic when he wrote in 1848:

Gentlemen almost exclusively engaged in the instruction and discipline of youth are not, usually, in the best condition to acquire that experience in affairs, and acquaintance with men, which, to say the least, are extremely desirable in the management of the exterior concerns of a large literary institution. Arrangements for instruction must be adapted to the state of the times, and to that of the world around, as well as of that within, the College walls; and of this state men engaged in the active business of life are likely to be better judges than the literary man, and the student.

Presidents turned to the faculty to absorb many of the burdensome administrative duties in the early days. In particular, the duties of registrar, librarian, and secretary to the president were the ones most typically added to the professors’ workload. In 1873, a rule was adopted by the Iowa State University Board providing “that all Professors and annual employees of this Institution be required to perform all duties without extra pay.” They were subject to this rule at any time during the year. In 1876, the librarianship was added to the duties of a professor of zoology, and to a professor of physics from 1879 to 1884. After that period, the duties were added to those of women teachers in mathematics and modern language. Professor George Jones held the important position of cashier in addition to heading mathematics work and teaching civil engineering. A young professor of chemistry was assigned the duties of dormitory proctor. Other faculty members at Iowa State were also business managers, recorders and registrars, secretaries, and treasurers during the late 1800s.

The rise of administration after 1890 brought with it “an alarm in many quarters that managerial staffs were running away with the American university”.

Even the most ardent of critics of business influence had to admit that bureaucracy could not be
eliminated altogether. If that were to occur, then faculty would have to collect tuition payments themselves, pay for buildings and equipment, raise funds, compile and file reports, keep accounts, supervise student admissions and course registrations, and attend to all the other bothersome tasks - functions that would take away time from teaching and research. This change in the role of faculty would eventually lead to changes in faculty governance and participation on decision-making committees. When Charles Eliot came to office at Harvard in 1869, he emphasized that a president must be allowed to concentrate on oversight of the college. He regarded the president as chief executive officer of the governing boards and of the faculties. His first duty was supervision. Although the development of subordinate offices varied from institution to institution, it is generally accepted that the first specialization of the presidential function to occur was the appointment of a librarian. When David Starr Jordan became President of Indiana University in 1884, he altered the administrative functions of the president and the faculty, taking his cue from Andrew White of Cornell. Jordan (above right) recommended that the joint office of registrar-librarian be created, telling the Board, “I submit that the President should not be required to spend any large part of his time in purely clerical work. Much of the work of registration is now done by Mr. William W. Spangler, & all should be under his direction.” Spangler (above left) had been IU librarian since 1880. Before this, the president of IU had not only kept the records, collected the fees, and registered students, but had also looked after the petty financial transactions and prepared all his correspondence personally in longhand. In order to
relieve Jordan of the more bothersome details, the administrative organization was expanded internally by adding Amzi Atwater as vice president. In 1888, a full-time registrar’s office was created, with purchasing and business agents also added. Jordan had brought about a reorganization which placed various administrative responsibilities in the hands of competent assistants.

Historical research of when appointments or position creation actually took place can be a challenging process. Sources within a single university’s documents can provide conflicting information. For example, nearly all the history books and archival information at the University of Kentucky state that Margaret I. King was the first librarian, appointed in 1910 per Board of Trustee’s Minutes of May 31, 1910 and her Faculty/Staff Card File, but appointed in 1912, according to other sources such as her personnel record and a pictorial history. This could possibly be explained by the multiple hats she wore during her early career: stenographer/secretary/registrar/librarian. However, even more disconcerting is additional information published in the Annual Catalogue for the Session of 1872-73, which lists Gano Kennedy as librarian. A possible explanation for this could be that the Agricultural & Mechanical College of that time was still considered a part of Kentucky University. The next time a librarian was listed in the catalogue was for the State University for the session ending June 1, 1911. McGrath’s survey of thirty-two institutions for the period 1860 to 1933 produced results that seem to confirm the early emergence of the librarian. The following chart (Table I) compiled by McGrath illustrates that the three oldest administrative officers are the president, the librarian, and the secretary of the faculty, followed by the registrar. As evidenced by the chart, there is quite a disparity in dates of establishment of the registrar.
McGrath’s explanation for this is that some institutions may have established the office of registrar early, but this officer usually performed the functions of the secretary of the faculty as well.
Table I Date and Order of Establishment of Administrative Offices in Thirty-two Institutions, 1860-1933; Source: McGrath Survey

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Offices</th>
<th>Eight State Institutions</th>
<th>Eight Large Eastern Institutions</th>
<th>Eight Small Eastern Institutions</th>
<th>Eight Small Eastern Institutions</th>
<th>All Institutions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Median</td>
<td>Order of Establishment</td>
<td>Median</td>
<td>Order of Establishment</td>
<td>Median</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President</td>
<td>1860</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-1860</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Before 1860</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Librarian</td>
<td>1864</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1860</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1860</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secretary of Faculty</td>
<td>1867</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1866</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1874</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registrar</td>
<td>1887</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1884</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1897</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice-President</td>
<td>1863</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1891</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1891</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dean</td>
<td>1896</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1900</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1898</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dean of Women</td>
<td>1904</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1905</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1906</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chief Business Officer</td>
<td>1910</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1919</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1919</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alumni Secretary</td>
<td>1910</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1919</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1920</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Dean</td>
<td>1910</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1919</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1920</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dean of Men</td>
<td>1910</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1919</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1920</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Background - The Earliest Registrar

Historians have traced the origin of the registrar back to the medieval university, approximately the 13th century. At that time, the structure of early universities was influenced by the organizational pattern at the University of Paris. The University was divided into four “nations” of arts, theology, medicine, and law. The rector, or proctor, was the head of the nation and the dean served as assistant to the proctor. Deans had the assistance of bursars (receptors), a secretary (notarius), a treasurer, and beadles in completing their tasks. The responsibility for drafting statutes, methods of teaching, examinations, and granting of degrees fell to the dean and his council (concilia facetatis). Just as in university business today, the assistants and clerks actually kept the nations in operation. Nations had their own bursars and beadles. At the University of Paris, two beadles were elected annually, the major beadle (bedellus major), the proctor’s man, and bedellus minor to assist the major.¹

The major beadle is the office that is generally accepted to be the precursor of the registrar. He performed a number of functions, including informing faculty members of meetings, helping faculty members with discipline, ringing bells for chapel, walking at the head of academic processions, and keeping a register of all graduates. The major beadle’s salary was paid from fees assessed to prospective graduates, licentiates, and masters of the university. Before he could assume his position, the major beadle was required to swear allegiance to the nation, the faculty, and the rector of the university. If
he were to disclose confidential university matters, his salary was not paid. Later, major beadles were given the additional title of “Grapharins”, which translates to clerk or registrar. They were assigned the responsibility for keeping the official graduation register and the matriculation list of the university.2

In the United States, at the first institution of higher education (Harvard College, est. 1636), the academic record-keeping function was initially a part-time duty assigned to a faculty member.3 Today, similar to the “nations” system of the University of Paris, each of the schools of Harvard has its own registrar. Reference to the registrar at Yale College (est. 1701) can be seen in documentation from 1745 noting, “The ‘Fellows’ of Yale might appoint, and at their discretion remove, ‘a Scribe or Registrar, a Treasurer, Tutors, Professors, Steward, and all such other Officers and Servants, usually appointed in Colleges or Universities’.”4 In a speech presented to the seventh annual meeting of the American Association of Collegiate Registrars at Columbia in 1916, Nicholas Murray Butler, president of Columbia University (King’s College, est.1754), gave a brief history of the beginnings of the registrar at his institution and others of that time:

The Registrar here at Columbia was at first the President, and you will find here in these old records which are assembled in this room, original entries in the handwriting of the President of the College. That was true in New England, it was true also in the Middle West, when the first colleges, generally under the auspices of an ecclesiastical organization, were founded during the first three or four decades of the nineteenth century. Then it was usual to assign these duties to a professor, who was the recording officer of the Faculty. That happened next here at Columbia, and there are in the safe downstairs – which some of you might have occasion to examine - the records of the latter part of the eighteenth century or the early half of the nineteenth century that show that the duties now devolving on the Registrar were performed here by the Secretary of the Faculty. Then later a clerk was provided; not a Registrar, but a clerk. He assisted the President in writing letters, in keeping records, in checking up the very small and insignificant accounts of those days. He wrote up
the minutes of the Faculty meeting, at the dictation, perhaps, or under the guidance of the professor who was the Secretary of the Faculty.

That officer developed eventually into the Registrar with his group of assistants, with his clerical staff, and with all the modern paraphernalia of an office of record and account. That illustrates two things: first, it illustrates how extensive and in a way how rapid this evolution has been; and it illustrates in the second place what I want most to insist upon, how personal the relationship of this work is, and how it grew out of the most intimate personal relationship in American college life, that is the original relationship between the eighteenth century or early nineteenth century president, and the students who were committed to his care. Because, as you know very well, in those days the President himself stood in loco parentis to every student. He admitted the student, he passed upon his personal and educational qualifications, he was his personal adviser in matters not only of scholarship, but of moral conduct and religious life and a hundred and one other things.⁵

One of the difficulties encountered during research for this paper was obtaining reliable information about when the position of registrar first began at various institutions in the United States. While reference to a registrar or the functions of a registrar is made in various writings that imply the role existed at Harvard from its beginning and at Yale by at least 1745, a survey conducted in the late 1930s indicates that Brown University (est. 1764) actually had the first registrar (1828) of eight large eastern institutions surveyed, including both Harvard and Yale.⁶ A possible inference is that someone may have been performing the functions of the registrar prior to 1828, but not under the specific title of registrar. While there are a number of sources that discuss the emergence of the registrar, very few give specific dates and examples, but rather talk in general terms, or in the case of the McGrath report from 1936, conclusions are reached, but few details specific to the thirty-two institutions surveyed are included in the publication.

The notion that colleges should teach subjects of practical utility for students entered mainstream American higher education from two primary sources: Morrill Act
of 1862 and the introduction of the “elective system.” The growth of graduate education followed thereafter. All three sources combined played a role in awakening individual interest and the subsequent growth in college enrollment, a growth that propelled higher education administrators, including the registrar, into necessity.

*Morrill Act of 1862*

With the advent of the industrial revolution, the building of railway systems, and the phenomenon of the “booster college”, America saw a dramatic increase in the number of colleges by the coming of the Civil War, however most lacked the ability to provide needed training in technical disciplines. Dissatisfaction with the traditional liberal arts college grew in the second quarter of the nineteenth century. In 1850, President Wayland of Brown stated that the United States had 120 colleges, 47 law schools, 42 theological seminaries, but not one single institution “designed to furnish the agriculturist, the manufacturer, the mechanic, or the merchant with the education that will prepare him for the profession to which his life is to be devoted.” Individual states lacked sufficient resources to push forward educational developments in utilitarian fields, therefore a number of movements for federal support were launched. It was not until the introduction of a bill by Justin Morrill of Vermont in 1857 that these movements finally took hold. After several years of sectional differences and the timing of the Civil War, the Morrill Act was passed in 1862 and signed by President Lincoln.

The Land-Grant or Morrill Act of July 2, 1862 provided a grant of public lands or land scrip to each state in the amount of 30,000 acres for each representative and senator the state had as of 1860. Proceeds from the land or scrip sale invested in safe stocks
yielding at least 5 percent were to form a permanent “endowment, support, and maintenance of at least one college where the leading object shall be, without excluding other scientific and classical studies, and including military tactics, to teach such branches of learning as are related to agriculture and the mechanics arts, in such manner as the legislatures of the States may respectively prescribe, in order to promote the liberal and practical education of the industrial classes in the several pursuits and professions in life.”  

The main condition was the states had to maintain the capital fund undiminished, except not more than 10 percent could be used to purchase land. Acceptance was required within two years and establishment of the college within five years.

Key to the expansion of such colleges were the passage of the Hatch Experiment Station Act of 1887 which provided a growing body of scientific subject matter, the formation of the Association of Land Grant Colleges which served as a lobbying organization in Congress, and the second Morrill Act of 1890 which increased federal aid.

_Elective System_

In addition to all the arguments already presented, the emergence of one particular administrator, the registrar, has been attributed to the revolutionary “elective system”. The elective system gradually spread, allowing students to choose the courses that best fit their own future needs. Although the elective system actually had its earliest origins elsewhere in faltering attempts (Virginia, Amherst, Transylvania, Nashville, Union, West Point), the most dramatic development of the elective curriculum in the immediate post-Civil War period came at Harvard, when Charles Eliot took charge in 1869. It was Eliot’s assertion that a true university or college should give its students three essentials:
freedom of choice in studies, opportunity to win distinction in special lines of study, and a system of discipline which imposes on the individual himself the main responsibility for guiding his conduct.\textsuperscript{10} The elective system flourished from 1870 to 1910 because it met the needs of the American culture of that period, a time when America was transforming from rural society to an industrialized, competitive, materialistic nation. In 1890, 80 percent of the curriculum was required in the average college. By 1901, curricula in more than one-third of American colleges were at least 70 percent elective.\textsuperscript{11} Some, like Harvard, made their whole curriculum elective, others were half prescribed and half elective, and still others used the “major-minor” system in which a student chose at the beginning of his junior year his major field of study. These initial forays into the elective system were followed by modifications that introduced requirements of a “concentration” of a number of courses in one major field, with other courses distributed over remaining fields.\textsuperscript{12}

The results of the elective system were an expansion of the curriculum, the rise of scientific and utilitarian courses, the development of subject-matter and department specializations, and an explosion in all types of courses. College catalogues became so fat they resembled those of mail-order houses, with such a variety of short, patchwork courses that Stanford’s David Starr Jordan suggested in 1903 that the appropriate degree for such work should be a B.S., “bachelor of surfaces.”\textsuperscript{13} The college catalogue was but one of the tedious tasks that had to be delegated to an administrator.

\textit{Graduate Education}

After the Civil War, with the expanded freedom of the elective system and the resulting specialization for both students and faculty, the next reality for American higher
education was the lack of opportunities for advanced students to specialize in the arts or sciences. It was to Germany that America turned for guidance. The essence of the German university system was *Lernfreiheit* (freedom of learning) which meant students should be able to take whatever courses they liked, and *Lehrfreiheit* (freedom of teaching) with the professor free to investigate, research, and reveal his findings. The result was new instructional techniques such as the seminar, the specialist’s lecture, the laboratory, and monographic studies. German universities were famous for their success in joining teaching and research to produce productive practitioners and creative scholars. Between 1815 and the First World War, more than ten thousand American students enrolled in German universities, the majority at the University of Berlin, and many subsequently brought their new knowledge back to America.\(^\text{14}\)

It was not until the 1870s that the effect of this transferred knowledge made its impact in American higher education, with the founding of Johns Hopkins University and the addition of graduate level programs to older liberal arts institutions, converting them from colleges to full universities (Harvard, Yale, Columbia). This was followed by the establishment of brand new universities such as Clark University and University of Chicago. All of these advanced institutions advocated the new instructional techniques and led to greatly expanded scholarly activities, such as great libraries, university presses, learned societies, and scholarly journals.\(^\text{15}\)

In 1850, there were only eight graduate students in the whole United States. By 1900, this number increased to 5,668 and to 47,255 by 1930. In 1876, 44 Ph.D. degrees were awarded at 25 institutions. By 1918, there were 562 Ph.D.’s being awarded annually. This figure increased to 1,064 in 1924. With the expansion of university
instruction during the 1870s, the master’s was transformed into an earned degree. Yale offered its first earned M.A. in 1876, with other institutions following suit. In 1890, only 70 such degrees were awarded, but 14,495 were given by 1930. The tracking and validation of these degrees became the responsibility of higher education administrators, namely the registrar.

The Nineteenth Century Registrar

It was Earl McGrath’s hypothesis that the rapid increase in the number of registrars in the 1880’s and 1890’s has a direct correlation to the increased record-keeping necessary due to the appearance of the elective system in the college curriculum:

The first year in which any election of courses was permitted was taken as the beginning of the system although the choices in the first years were not wide, being limited generally to a few hours in the senior year. The median year for the introduction of electives into the curriculum of these institutions is 1880-1881, and the median year for the establishment of the office of registrar in these institutions is 1888-1889. Therefore, there are eight years between the two medians. Considering the fact that the elective system developed from the senior year downward, and each step was taken at an interval of several years, there seems to be a relationship between the two events. Hence the hypothesis advanced in view of the above facts is that the recording of student’s election of subjects, and achievement in them, became an administrative burden which could no longer be carried by other administrative officers, generally the secretary of the faculty, and consequently a new part-time office was added.

In the early days, student records were kept by the president with some assistance from his secretary. Later, it was commonplace for the duties of registrar to be combined with those of other officers. McGrath’s survey of the thirty-two institutions over the period 1860 to 1933 found that, while “Registrar” had been used as the title at one time for all the schools, over time, there had been twenty-seven combinations of this title with
other administrative and secretarial titles. The most frequent combinations were “Registrar and Secretary of the Faculty”, “Registrar and Librarian”, “Registrar and Secretary to the President”, and “Registrar and Assistant Librarian”. The fact that duties were combined implies that the office of registrar usually only took up a portion of that person’s time. In some of the smaller schools, the registrar held as many as three other offices. For the period 1915 to 1933, McGrath discovered a trend toward a decrease in the number of registrars with combined duties.\textsuperscript{18} The following is another excerpt from Capen’s 1920 address:

In the beginning, the registrar’s office was concerned with the simplest kind of recording. The office was generally treated...as an adjunct of the president’s office, or of a dean’s. Sometimes the duties of the registrar were performed by an experienced clerk. Sometimes they constituted a kind of supererogatory task for some professor whose schedule was not heavy and whose salary might by this device be increased. The next stage in the evolution of the office shows it as a large clerical undertaking demanding the full time of a trained man and several assistants.\textsuperscript{19}

Another indication that the duties of the office were not time-consuming in the early days is the fact that a vast majority of the officers also had teaching obligations. McGrath’s data shows that of those who taught, their courses were predominantly in the physical and social sciences. Over time, the numbers of registrars who also taught decreased significantly, from a high of 75 percent in 1860 to 21.4 percent in 1933. Table II below shows the gradual decrease.\textsuperscript{20}
As the numbers of registrars who also taught declined, it was unavoidable that the highest degree held by registrars would correspondingly decline. According to McGrath’s survey data, about 40 percent of the registrars holding office from 1860 to 1933 held a Master’s degree as their highest degree. Over that period of time, that percentage decreased from 75 percent to 25 percent, and the percentage of those holding a Bachelor’s degree increased from 25 percent to 57 percent (see Table III below). According to McGrath, of those holding Bachelor’s degrees, 77 percent did not teach. This is evidence that the registrar’s office slowly became purely administrative, requiring

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training different from that of a scholar. The office became one that required the full time services of a person not necessarily possessing advanced academic training.

Table III Highest Degrees Held by Registrars; Source: McGrath Survey

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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>No Degree Number</th>
<th>Bachelor's Number</th>
<th>Master's Number</th>
<th>Doctor's Number</th>
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<tr>
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<td>2.2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>99.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At Iowa Agricultural College, early faculty members were subject to “other duties as assigned” at any time during the year, a rule adopted by the Board in 1873 providing “that all Professors and annual employees of this Institution be required to perform all duties without extra pay.” In 1876, the librarianship was added to the duties of a professor of zoology, and to a professor of physics from 1879 to 1884. After that period, the duties were added to those of women teachers in mathematics and modern language. Professor George Jones held the important position of cashier in addition to heading mathematics work and teaching civil engineering. A young professor of chemistry was assigned the duties of dormitory proctor. According to a table in the back of the Ross
history, other faculty members were also business managers, recorders and registrars, secretaries, and treasurers during the late 1800s.

On January 1, 1885, David Starr Jordan was inaugurated as the seventh president of Indiana University. He was a noted scientist, a popular professor, and the first layman to be named president of the university. He had stated that he did not really want the job, but would accept it temporarily for one year, in fact submitting a letter of resignation at the same he accepted.23 His first priorities were to secure more financial support from the state, modernize the curriculum, put more emphasis on graduate studies, and select a younger and better-trained faculty. Jordan coordinated subjects into departmental relationships (with department heads), revised the curriculum to accommodate the elective system, modified the teaching schedule, and altered some of the administrative functions of the president and the faculty. He took his cue on structural and curricular changes from Andrew White of Cornell. Jordan (above right)24 recommended that the joint office of registrar-librarian be created, submitting to the Board that the President should not be required to spend time on clerical work.25 William Spangler had previously been just the librarian (at least officially) for IU. Prior to this action, the president had kept the records, collected the fees, and registered students. In 1888, a full-time registrar’s office was created, with appointment made to Henry S. Bates. In reality, the work of registrar was done by Sophie May Sheeks (left)26 from 1888 to 1893, for which she was paid fifteen cents an hour the first three years.27 She later went on to become Assistant
Librarian from 1893 to 1896. Jordan had successfully reorganized the administrative duties of registration and recordkeeping by delegating them to competent assistants.
Alfred Parrott did not ask to be Registrar of North Dakota Agricultural College. Like so many other registrars of the time, he was drafted. When the previous registrar was caught revealing secrets of the football team to a rival school, he was fired. In 1904, Mr. Parrott was informed he was no longer just the Professor of Mathematics, but the Registrar as well – a position he held for 48 years. Without the benefit of experience or professional training, Parrott was unsure of the duties of a registrar or the best ways to accomplish the work. When he transferred a classroom from one department to another, the upset department retaliated by lobbying for a faculty resolution: “Resolved, that the duties of the registrar are purely clerical”.

After trying to cope for several years, the frustrated Parrott is quoted as saying, “I’ve got to know where I’m standing.” During the winter of 1909-10, Parrott sent out about “forty or fifty” letters to other registrars across the country, proposing a meeting to talk about their mutual problems. In fact, he sent more, as he got 53 replies, most in favor of the meeting, even though the majority of those positive respondents expressed their regrets in being unable to attend, predominantly because of finances. Ezra Gillis, State University of Kentucky, responded on July 21, 1910, “I assumed the duties of Registrar of the State University July the first of this year, consequently I do not feel competent to offer for consideration any questions at the coming meeting, but I am looking forward with interest to the discussion of the questions that will be brought before that meeting.”

The invitation to the meeting also encouraged them to bring
samples of forms used on their campuses, and invited them to submit discussion questions. All expressed an interest in receiving any minutes or published outcomes. The invitations were sent not only to registrars, but to secretaries and accountants at the institutions. Parrott explained his methodology later in the following manner:

When I had the preliminary correspondence in regard to this first meeting to the point where it really looked as if the meeting would materialize, I got to wondering how I could finance the proposed trip to Detroit. Any institutional financing for such a purpose would have to be approved by the Secretary of the College who in such affairs could over-ride the President. Out of this line of thinking came the idea of a joint meeting of registrars and financial agents. Our secretary swallowed that piece of bait and dug up the expenses for both of us. And so that meeting at Detroit was the birthplace of two collegiate organizations.4

On this same subject of funding, in his 1960 paper on the early history of the American Association of Collegiate Registrars, W.C. Smyser, Executive Registrar, Miami University, stated:

Expense money was hard to come by, so Mr. Parrott went to his business manager, Mr. Yoder, and told him, “A bunch of college officials will meet in Detroit in August to talk over common problems, and I think we ought to hear what they have to say.” Said Mr. Yoder, “Let’s go.” That took care of that, and when the call for the meeting went out, it invited not only registrars, but secretaries, accountants, and business managers as well, and it was signed by both Parrott and Yoder.5

While the majority of the responses to the invitation were positive, there were two that expressed disagreement vehemently. Mr. David Hoy of Cornell and Mr. Hiestand of Wisconsin had been meeting informally with Mr. Arthur Hall of Michigan each summer for a number of years to discuss professional problems. They had talked of sending out circulars to some select institutions in regards to an informal gathering. It was felt by this trio that Parrott and Yoder had stolen their idea (even though they had not followed through on it). In a letter to David Hoy, Hall expressed his dissatisfaction with Parrott’s
invitation as “too broad as regards vocation and too narrow as to institutions” and his desire to hold the meeting at a college town, limited to prominent universities and colleges. He stated that he was in a quandary as to his answer to Parrott, and was anxious to know what Mr. Hoy and Mr. Hiestand were going to do. Mr. Hoy promptly responded, “The Association of Registrars, Secretaries, etc., has come to mean to me somewhat of a joke.” Hoy went on to say, “My sole objection to allowing North Dakota to dictate to us is that they do not stand for the same thing and it was never my intention to join an association made up of everybody in the United States. It was always our plan to pick a few institutions where the registrars had similar duties and go get them together and gradually take in others whether they might be registrars, secretaries, etc., depending entirely whether or not their work would interest those already in.” Hoy went so far as to write to Parrott suggesting that he step aside and let Mr. Hiestand organize the meeting, and asserted that such a meeting should be limited to a smaller number of select institutions. In a letter to Ezra Gillis in 1952, Parrott recollected that he forwarded Hoy’s letter on to others with whom he had been corresponding, and the general reaction was one of opposition to the idea of limitation, particularly from Mr. Pierce of Minnesota and Mr. Espenshade of Pennsylvania State College. The consensus, according to Parrott, was that “the general thought was for a thoroughly democratic association, where each institution, large or small, private or public, religious or sectarian should find equal opportunity of expression, with domination by none.” Hoy then declared, “I would decline to join the association or attend the meeting.” While Mr. Hall readily accepted the idea of the meeting, and Parrott later stated he actually attended that first meeting.
(although his name is not listed in the minutes), it would be several years before Hoy and Hiestand acquiesced. Hall and Hiestand would later become officers in the association.

Despite the very few holdouts, most were favorable of such a meeting to talk over the problems of their respective offices. Therefore, the first recognized meeting of an association of registrars was held at 9:00 a.m. in Detroit, Michigan on August 15, 1910. The minutes of this meeting show there were 24 in attendance, most identified by first initials and last name. Of this number, 15 were college registrars and 9 were college accountants or secretaries:

A.J. Hare, West Virginia University - Registrar
Walter Humphreys, Massachusetts Institute of Technology - Registrar
M.W. Andrews, University of Vermont – Registrar and Accountant
C.M. McConn, University of Illinois – Registrar
J.D. Woods, University of North Dakota – Registrar
J.O. Miller, New Mexico Agricultural College – Registrar
A.H. Espenshade, Pennsylvania State College – Registrar and Accountant
Elida Yakeley, Michigan Agricultural College – Registrar
Mrs. E.A. Balentine – University of Maine – Registrar and Accountant
J.L. Coburn, Agricultural College of Utah – Registrar
Fred C. Kenney, Massachusetts Agricultural College – Accountant
A.H. Parrott, North Dakota Agricultural College – Registrar
J.M. Drew, Minnesota Agricultural College – Registrar
J.G. Babb, Missouri University – Accountant
Shirley W. Smith, University of Michigan – Accountant
Carl E. Steeb, Ohio State University – Accountant
W.E. Baker, Ohio – Registrar
W.A. Yoder, North Dakota Agricultural College – Accountant
A.J. Moore, Mississippi Agricultural College – Accountant
E.B. Pierce, Minnesota University – Registrar
A.M. Brown, Michigan Agricultural College – Accountant  
E.W. Stanton, Iowa State College – Accountant  
J.E. Neelly, Arkansas State University – Accountant  
L.L. Wooten, Arkansas State University – Registrar

It is unclear why the location of Detroit was chosen, as at the time, Detroit had no college or university as a laboratory for inspection. E.B. Pierce hazarded a guess, perhaps in humor, that it was because Henry Ford was planning to launch his new model 1911 car and the expected price was not too far beyond the possibilities of a registrar’s meager income. One thing about the Detroit meeting that stood out for Pierce was being startled by the $4.00 per day cost of the Cadillac Hotel, but he was nevertheless impressed with the importance of the gathering. The physical conditions of the first meeting were well recalled by several attendees. A.H. Espenshade stated, “My most vivid recollection of our first meeting is that most of us perspired copiously as we sat on the steps of the Detroit High School on that memorable mid-summer morning, waiting for someone with authority to assign us a room for our first meeting.” McConn recalled, “The meeting was held in a classroom in one of the graded schools in Detroit, and although none of us except Mr. Hare were very large persons, we found the children’s seats somewhat small for us.”

It soon became apparent that the work of accountants and secretaries differed greatly from that of the registrars. They decided to withdraw to separate rooms for their discussions. The first half of the meeting adjourned at noon, and then reconvened in the two separate groups at 2:00 p.m., adjourning at 5:00 p.m. In this separate venue, the accountants секретaries decided to form their own independent association going forward.
When it was moved by Mr. McConn that another meeting of registrars, secretaries, accountants, and bursars of educational institutions of college rank be held between the 20th of July and the 10th of August, 1911 (later amended to 1st of September), Mr. Yoder reported that the secretaries had formed a separate association. This action has been noted historically as a precursor of the present day National Association of College and University Business Officers (NACUBO). Thus, two professional organizations were “born” in August 1910. The registrars elected Albert Parrott as their first Chairman and Miss Elida Yakeley as Secretary.¹⁶

There were no formal presentations, just informal discussion, but some attendees came prepared with questions, as had been requested in the meeting invitation. One attendee, Max McConn, then Registrar at the University of Illinois, described the proceedings as “an extended and very pleasant and useful ‘bull session’, in which most of the topics which have been staples at the meetings of the Association ever since came up for some preliminary discussion.”¹⁷ According to the published proceedings of the 1910 meeting, in the form of a brief historical memorandum prepared by A. Howry Espenshade, Registrar of the Pennsylvania State College:

The most important topics and questions discussed at this first meeting were the duties or functions of a college registrar; the form and content of an academic transfer from one college to another; the best and fairest method of reckoning the relative standing of students when the letter system of grading is used; how to secure from instructors a prompt record of students’ grades; the new system of faculty advisers for students; how to get in touch with prospective students; the problem of late registration; and the question whether the exact numerical grades should be disclosed to students. The whole forenoon was given to a discussion of the first two subjects; and Mr. C.M. McConn, Registrar of the University of Illinois, contributed a very detailed study of college registrars in ten representative “land grant” institutions.¹⁸

E. B. Pierce described the agenda as follows:
The chief concern of that first meeting was to find out just what each registrar did to earn his salary, and each in turn regaled the rest with a detailed account of his task. While each bewailed loudly the burdens that had been heaped upon him, he secretly gloated over his power and importance and wouldn’t have surrendered any of his responsibilities for a kingdom or a horse. Eventually we toned down and began to talk sense, seeking seriously to attempt to delimit the functions of the registrar. After that, we tried to find ways and means of getting our salaries boosted, more modestly speaking, to “improve the professional status of the registrar”. If passing motions means progress, then we certainly advanced by leaps and bounds. When intelligence ran low, we appointed a committee, and that procedure invariably salved our consciences.19

Still other topics suggested in letters from those unable to attend, but seeking assistance, were “uniformity in the division of administrative work of the universities in positions other than that of president,”20 “best method of procedure for drawing Appropriation Monies from States…methods of purchasing goods and supplies…best methods of collecting, handling and refunding student fees,”21 “how other schools keep a record of the student’s entrance credits,”22 “what are generally conceded to be the duties of the registrar, or what is the scope of his work,”23 “best method of getting returns of students standings from the instructors…..arrangement of work so as to avoid these crowds (on registration day)”24 and “manner in which, and by whom, students upon registering are assigned to different classes…what system is used in checking attendance of students; does certain per cent of absences bar them from examinations… good system of keeping a publication mailing list”.25 In all, twenty-five questions were compiled for discussion. Some others of interest were in relation to devising standard forms for transcripts and what should be included on the transcript, whether or not grades should be disclosed to students and/or parents or high school principals, and if the school’s catalog bears the name of the institution and the year on its back. The group was successful in addressing two of the questions dealing with the duties of a registrar and standardization
of transcripts in the morning session, then “waded through the balance of the list” in the afternoon.\textsuperscript{26}

It was suggested by Mr. McConn that the identified duties of the various registrars present be put in a table. Under the category of Admissions was listed Examinations, Approval of certificates, and Advanced standing. Under Registrar, Recording of students’ credits, Correspondence, Attendance records, Preparation of class schedules, Preparation of bulletins and catalogs, Disciplinary regulations and administration, and Secretary of faculties and trustees. That table was included in the minutes of the first meeting as displayed below:\textsuperscript{27}

Table IV Duties of Registrars in Attendance at First Meeting of AACR 1910

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>College University</th>
<th>Admissions</th>
<th>Records of Credits</th>
<th>Examinations</th>
<th>Approval of Certificates</th>
<th>Advance Standing</th>
<th>Registrar</th>
<th>Recording of Credits</th>
<th>Correspondence</th>
<th>Attendance Records</th>
<th>Preparation of Class Schedules</th>
<th>Preparation of Bulletins and Catalogs</th>
<th>Disciplinary Regulations and Administration</th>
<th>Secretary of Faculties and Trustees</th>
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<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>N. Dakota Agr. Coll.</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table demonstrates that only one of the twelve respondents was responsible for all these functions, but many of them performed a major portion of them.
In 1941, more than 30 years after the first meeting, E.B. Pierce was asked to write a paper for the association documenting his memories of the early days. His recollections differed slightly from the original minutes, but certainly included some memories of individuals that were not in those very basic minutes:

- A.J. Hare of West Virginia, whose head belied his name, was the largest person in attendance, thus elected temporary chairman.
- A.H. Parrott, as “instigator of the dire plot”, was elected permanent chairman.
- McConn, then of Illinois, had a genius for saying things gracefully, and had a perennial urge to “put a registration card for every student into the hands of every professor on the first day of classes or wreck the institution in the effort.”
- A.H. Espenshade of Pennsylvania State College was a Professor of English with the capacity for couching ideas in intriguing sentences, so he was put on the constitution committee. Espenshade was described as “the atlas who carried the registrarial world on his shoulders, and as a reward they made him president of the infant organization two years in a row.”
- A.G. Hall of Michigan was a good looking rosy cheeked chap who claimed he was a registrar in name only because all of the colleges at Michigan University at that time…had secretaries who served as registrars of their particular units. Although Hall is not listed in the minutes as an attendee, Parrott insisted he was there and was even assigned the task of delivering a paper on transcripts at the second meeting.

There were two female registrars in attendance at that first meeting, Miss Elida Yakeley, Michigan Agricultural College and Mrs. E.A. Balentine, University of Maine. In keeping with roles traditionally assigned to females, Miss Yakeley was appointed Secretary of the meeting. Pierce described Yakeley as a “charming and delightful acquisition. Contrary to feminine prerogative, she let us do all the talking. Surely, it was
not for record purposes that all speakers directed their remarks her way.” Miss Yakeley would recall, in a 1938 letter to Ezra Gillis, that “the entire time was devoted to discussion, the leaders as I recall being Messrs. McConn, Humphreys, Espenshade, and Pierce. The group was small but all seemed intensely interested in the matters discussed. In looking over the program of the day, you will note that several of the questions will seem very familiar to you from having heard them discussed many times. One thing that impressed me was the fact that representatives came from so wide an area; Maine to Utah and North Dakota to New Mexico.”

There was no mention of feeling isolated due to her gender.

On the other hand, Mrs. E.A. Balentine of Maine was very much aware that as a female registrar, she was in the minority. In her response to the invitation (below), Balentine defended her fifteen-year record and asserted she was the most qualified person to attend the meeting on behalf of her institution. She even stated in the letter below, “I hope that the fact that I am a woman will not debar me from membership in the organization that you are suggesting.”

In his later comments, Pierce would say that Mrs. Balentine was a surprise, as she had signed her letters E.A. Balentine, with no indication of her femininity. Given her concern over being debarred because she was a woman, one can understand her standard signature. Pierce said “her letters sounded just as hard boiled as those of the rest of us.” In keeping with the stereotypical tradition of the time, Balentine was appointed Secretary of the association in its 2nd year.
At the close of the first meeting, it was moved by Mr. Woods that the next year’s meeting be held in a city on the east coast, to be determined by a committee of three, Messrs. Price, Espenshade, and McConn. Boston was volunteered as a host city. The second annual meeting did in fact take place on August 7, 1911, at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. A letter was sent on June 12, 1911 by C.M. McConn, on behalf
of the Committee on Permanent Organization, to all known registrars across the country. This letter gave a brief synopsis of the first meeting and announced the date and location of the second meeting. It also contained three enclosures: a list of some of the questions proposed for discussion (to be ranked for top 6 in preference or additions), a brief program, and a proposed organization constitution. The letter asked for feedback and whether or not they would be attending.

Year Two

The 1911 meeting in Boston, with 30 people in attendance, gave birth to a standard practice that would continue to the present, one of having a speaker expound on a pre-assigned topic of interest to the group. In 1911, there were no special effects or tools such as Power Point. The speaker would simply stand before the group and read a paper. The topic of interest in 1911 was “The Proper Delimitation of the Functions of the Registrar’s Office,” delivered by Wm. Addison Hervey, Registrar of Columbia University, New York. This topic would continue to be addressed for many years to come. At that time, the Registrar often wore many hats, including Registrar, Secretary to the President, Alumni Secretary, University Editor, and Recorder of the Faculties, among others. It was Hervey’s contention that “it is the primary function of the Registrar’s office to record and report all matters that have to do with the student’s admission, residence and graduation” and should never be assigned the function of Accountant or Bursar. He felt the other “hats” should be distinct from the Registrar, stating the “surest way to minimize the academic
usefulness of the Registrar is to make him a factotum, not because the business assigned may impair his official dignity, but because his value as a specialist will be perforce diminished.” 36  Another paper entitled “How We College Registrars Can Promote Our Common Welfare” (later referred to as a euphemism for “How to Get Our Salaries Raised”) 37 was read by A. Howry Espenshade of Penn State (bust above right 38). The papers read at the 1911 meeting were just the first of many speeches and publications with an emphasis on gaining respect and professionalism for the role of the Registrar. The 1911 meeting also gave birth to two other important concepts: committee assignments and publication of annual meeting presentations (proceedings). The first two committees were devoted to devising a uniform blank for the student’s record and to investigating the salaries and status of College Registrars, the latter further evidence of seeking professionalism for the role.

Year Three

The third annual meeting, held on July 9 and 10, 1912 in Chicago expanded to a two-day affair at a hotel. The presiding officers were President A. Howry Espenshade of The Pennsylvania State College, Vice-President John W. Cravens of Indiana University, and Secretary E.A. Balentine of the University of Maine. The first day consisted of papers on “The Distribution of the Administrative Functions in Some American Universities”, later retitled “The Organization of Administrative Routine in Twelve American Universities,” by Charles McConn of Illinois and “The System of Registration Used by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology” by Walter Humphries of MIT, followed by informal discussion of such items as the best time of year for association
meetings, a uniform system of statistics, how to keep in touch with alumni, dealing with absences, and whether or not it was desirable to disclose exact numerical grades to students. A paper by Walter Humphreys, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, brought forth a concrete recommendation for a uniform transcript blank. The McConn paper was important to the infant association because, for the first time, registrars were learning how varied their duties were on different campuses, and what responsibilities were given them. This proved to be groundwork for attempts to professionalize and standardize the registrar’s work. The following are the results, taken directly from the published 1912 proceedings, of McConn’s survey of twelve universities:

Table V Assignment of Responsibilities – Source: McConn Survey published 1912
Table V (continued) Assignment of Responsibilities – Source: McConn Survey published 1912

III. THE RECORDING AND REPORTING OF GRADES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University</th>
<th>Official Records to Students</th>
<th>Sending Reports to Parents</th>
<th>Sending Reports to Preparatory Schools</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Registrar</td>
<td>Recorder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COLUMBIA</td>
<td>Recorder</td>
<td>Registrar</td>
<td>Recorder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HARVARD</td>
<td>Recorder</td>
<td>Registrar</td>
<td>Recorder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CALIFORNIA</td>
<td>Registrar</td>
<td>Registrar</td>
<td>Registrar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ILLINOIS</td>
<td>Registrar</td>
<td>Registrar</td>
<td>Registrar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MICHIGAN</td>
<td>Registrar</td>
<td>Registrar</td>
<td>Registrar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MINNESOTA</td>
<td>Registrar</td>
<td>Registrar (on request)</td>
<td>Registrar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MISSOURI</td>
<td>Registrar</td>
<td>Registrar</td>
<td>Registrar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEBRASKA</td>
<td>Registrar</td>
<td>Registrar</td>
<td>Registrar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OHIO STATE</td>
<td>Registrar</td>
<td>Registrar</td>
<td>Registrar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WISCONSIN</td>
<td>Registrar</td>
<td>Registrar</td>
<td>Registrar</td>
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IV. SECRETARIAL AND FINANCIAL FUNCTIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University</th>
<th>Keeping Minutes of Trustees</th>
<th>Keeping Minutes of General Faculty</th>
<th>Handling Purchases</th>
<th>Handling Payroll and Bills</th>
<th>Keeping Accounts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Registrar</td>
<td>Auditor</td>
<td>Comptroller</td>
<td>Auditor</td>
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<td>COLUMBIA</td>
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<td>Secretary of Faculty</td>
<td>Clerk of Trustees</td>
<td>Controller</td>
<td>Bursar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HARVARD</td>
<td>Secretary of Corporation and Overseas</td>
<td>Register</td>
<td>Register</td>
<td>Controller</td>
<td>Controller</td>
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<tr>
<td>ILLINOIS</td>
<td>Register</td>
<td>Secretary of Faculty</td>
<td>Purchasing Agent</td>
<td>Controller</td>
<td>Controller</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INDIANA</td>
<td>Register</td>
<td>Secretary of Faculty</td>
<td>Purchasing Agent</td>
<td>Controller</td>
<td>Controller</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MICHIGAN</td>
<td>Register</td>
<td>Secretary of Faculty</td>
<td></td>
<td>Bookkeeper</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>Registrar (on request)</td>
<td>University Editor</td>
<td>Secretary of Regents</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MISSOURI</td>
<td>Registrar</td>
<td>Secretary of Regents</td>
<td>University Editor</td>
<td>Secretary of Regents</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Registrar</td>
<td>Registrar</td>
<td>Purchasing Agent</td>
<td>Secretary of Regents</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>Registrar</td>
<td>Purchasing Agent</td>
<td>Secretary of Regents</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WISCONSIN</td>
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<td>Registrar</td>
<td>Purchasing Agent</td>
<td>Secretary of Regents</td>
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V. EDITING THE CATALOG

<table>
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<tr>
<th>University</th>
<th>The University Press (under the Dean of the Faculties)</th>
<th>University Press (under the Dean of the Faculties)</th>
<th>Publications Agent</th>
<th>Publications Agent</th>
<th>Publications Agent</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>University Press (under the Dean of the Faculties)</td>
<td>Publications Agent</td>
<td>Publications Agent</td>
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<tr>
<td>COLUMBIA</td>
<td>University Press (under the Dean of the Faculties)</td>
<td>University Press (under the Dean of the Faculties)</td>
<td>Publications Agent</td>
<td>Publications Agent</td>
<td>Publications Agent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HARVARD</td>
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<td>University Press (under the Dean of the Faculties)</td>
<td>Publications Agent</td>
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<tr>
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<td>University Press (under the Dean of the Faculties)</td>
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<td>Publications Agent</td>
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<tr>
<td>MINNESOTA</td>
<td>University Press (under the Dean of the Faculties)</td>
<td>University Press (under the Dean of the Faculties)</td>
<td>Publications Agent</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Publications Agent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>University Press (under the Dean of the Faculties)</td>
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<td>Publications Agent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>University Press (under the Dean of the Faculties)</td>
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<td>Publications Agent</td>
<td>Publications Agent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WISCONSIN</td>
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<td>University Press (under the Dean of the Faculties)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Summary: Catalog edited by the secretary of the university, 1 case; by the registrar or corresponding officer, 5 cases; by a university editor or publisher, 6 cases.

VI. ALUMNI RECORDS AND THE APPOINTMENT OF GRADUATES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University</th>
<th>Keeping Alumni Records</th>
<th>Handling Appointment of Graduates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Board of Recommendations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COLUMBIA</td>
<td>Secretary of Alumni Association</td>
<td>Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HARVARD</td>
<td>Secretary of Alumni Association</td>
<td>Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CALIFORNIA</td>
<td>Secretary of Alumni Association</td>
<td>Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ILLINOIS</td>
<td>Registrar</td>
<td>Committee on Appointments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MICHIGAN</td>
<td>Secretary of Alumni Association</td>
<td>Committee on Appointments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MINNESOTA</td>
<td>Secretary of Alumni Association</td>
<td>Committee on Appointments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MISSOURI</td>
<td>University Publisher</td>
<td>Committee of Deans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEBRASKA</td>
<td>Secretary of Alumni Association</td>
<td>Department of University Extension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OHIO STATE</td>
<td>Secretary of Alumni Association</td>
<td>Committee of Faculty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WISCONSIN</td>
<td>Alumni Recorder</td>
<td>Committee of Faculty</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

58
Many conclusions can be drawn from McConn’s accumulated data. The results showed that the standard administrative functions were assigned to different officers, and officers of the same title tended to have assorted duties. The historical reason for this is that the majority of institutions started out on a small scale, with the president as the entire administration. Over time, it became inconvenient for the president to perform all the clerical work (functions outlined in the above results) in addition to a heavy teaching schedule. Accordingly, a clerical assistant to the president, or stenographer, was employed and that person generally took over keeping student records. From there, positions were created to take over various categories of the president’s administrative work. In a 1960 report on the first fifty years of the organization, W. C. Smyser, then Registrar at Miami University (OH), stated of the 1912 survey, “For the first time, registrars were seeing themselves and their jobs in a mirror, and glimpsing the possibilities of professional growth.”

A fourth paper at that meeting, “Salaries and Status of College Registrars,” by Arthur Tarbell of The Carnegie Institute of Technology, gave further impetus to the movement. Tarbell served as Vice President of the association in 1916-17, then served two terms as President in 1917-18 and 1918-19. In his thorough examination, Tarbell mailed surveys to 189 institutions and received 107 responses. Of those 107, 12 were deducted for not having the title of Registrar. The survey gathered information on number of students registered, size of office staff, duties in addition to those of registrar, salaries, and whether or not the position also taught classes. The following are snapshots (showing 35 of the 107 returns) of actual excerpts from the survey results, indicating all respondents had more than one function:
Table VI Student Enrollment—Registrar Salary—Teaching Duties 1911-12

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students Registered in 1911-12</th>
<th>Regular Assistants</th>
<th>Functions*</th>
<th>Salary</th>
<th>Teaching</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>1, 3, 8</td>
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<tr>
<td>92</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>1,500</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>176</td>
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<td>1, 3</td>
<td>......-4</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>1</td>
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<td>500—3</td>
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</tr>
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<td>800</td>
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<td>300—3</td>
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<td>1,500</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

1. Also house.
2. Salary as Registrar. Receives major part of salary as Secretary of the Board of Trustees.

*KEY TO FUNCTIONS*

1. Registrar.
2. Secretary of College.
4. Secretary of Alumni.
5. Cashier, Bursar or Accountant.
6. College Editor.
7. Publicity Man.
8. Chief Mailing Clerk.
9. Dean.
10. Secretary of Corp., or Board of Trustees.
11. Treasurer.
12. Purchasing Agent.
16. Filing Clerk.
17. Corresponding Secretary with Prospective Students.
18. Examiner.
19. Adviser of Freshmen.
20. Secretary of Faculty.
21. Secretary to President.
22. Room Assignments.
23. Member of Appointments Committee.
25. Vice-President.
26. Assistant to Treasurer.
27. Supervision of students in dormitories.
28. Secretary, Academic Council.
29. High School Visitor.
30. Assistant to Chaplain.
The salary table below disclosed that the average annual salary of American college registrars in 1911-12 was $1,718.31, an equivalent of $40,912.14 one hundred years later.43

Table VII Registrar Average Annual Salary 1911-12

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>$000</th>
<th>4*</th>
<th>$1,300</th>
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<tr>
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<td>2***</td>
<td></td>
<td>95</td>
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* Teaching salary only, no specific allowance made for work as Registrar.
** Receives a teaching salary in addition.
*** Receives a house in addition.

The following table contained data on the previous position, predominantly teachers, held by the responding registrar, reinforcing that registrars were recruited from various sources without any special previous training for the work. It was Tarbell’s assertion that the growth of colleges and the increasing importance of administrative work made more and more demands for efficiency upon the registrar’s office, and that the incumbent of that office should be trained for his work, and not simply drafted into service from other unrelated positions. He also stated that the position of assistant registrar should be made more attractive to groom individuals to become registrars.

When asked if the association should maintain a central appointment agency to which colleges needing registrars or assistant registrars could apply, 71 of 95 responded yes.44 Providing such a databank of trained registrars was yet another indicator of the movement toward professionalization of the role.
The Humphries and Tarbell papers were basically the committee reports on assignments made in 1911. More round table discussions took place in the afternoon on such issues as providing class rolls to instructors, the timing of whole or half day holidays, the relationship between the Registrar and various Deans, how much summer school or tutored courses should count, and “follow-up” correspondence strategies. Although the attendance in 1912 had increased to 38 from 30 in 1911, President Espenshade asked the participants for suggestions on how to get more people to attend. Those in attendance at the previous year’s conference had voted to approve an annual membership fee of $1.00, but Espenshade raised concerns on how to secure funds for printing the papers presented at the meetings, a practice begun in 1912 and continued through 1924, when a quarterly publication was initiated in 1925, originally called the *Bulletin*. Those printed Proceedings included the principal papers presented, summaries of the business meetings, and the membership listing of the growing association. Correspondence during this time period asking for copies of Proceedings demonstrates how hungry the registrars across the country were for knowledge and also points to the financial barriers many experienced in gaining access to travel funds. This 1912 meeting was noteworthy because it was joined by two men who would subsequently exert powerful influence for many years on the development of the association: E.J. Mathews,
Edward Jackson Mathews had a long and distinguished career at the University of Texas, beginning as an assistant to the Registrar in 1907, while still a student. After serving as Secretary to the President from 1909 to 1911, he became University Registrar and Secretary of the Board of Regents in 1911. Mathews (right) was also made Assistant Dean of the College of Arts in 1914, carrying all three responsibilities until 1924, when he dropped the Board of Regents position. With the increasing size of the university and specialization of the registrar’s work, Mathews’ position was changed in 1935 from Registrar and Assistant Dean to Registrar and Dean of Admissions. In the summers of 1936 and 1938, he taught a course entitled “Some Functions and Problems of College Registrars.” In 1949, he “retired” but continued to serve as Dean of Admissions, Emeritus, until his full retirement in 1959. Mathews was so impressive and almost autocratic that he was selected the 1st Vice President of the American Association of Collegiate Registrars in 1912-13, the first year of his attendance, then was elected as the association’s fourth president in 1913-14.

Ezra L Gillis (no period after the L, per Gillis, as he did not actually have a middle name) was appointed as the first “official” Registrar of State University, Lexington, Kentucky in 1910 and held that position until 1939. Gillis (left) was originally hired as an Assistant Professor in education in 1908. He is quoted as saying of his first association meeting experience, “I got everybody to take his coat off except one Southern gentleman;
that was my contribution to the meeting.” Over the course of the next fifty years of the association, Gillis would become known as the Dean of Registrars, the Abraham Lincoln of the group. He served as Secretary and Treasurer from 1914 to 1919, and as the ninth president in 1919-20. Gillis was noted as the teacher of registrars, conducting extensive summer training courses from 1923 to 1929. For more on Ezra L Gillis, see the section of this paper devoted to Gillis.

Year Four

The fourth annual meeting took place in Salt Lake City on July 8-9, 1913, with only 22 in attendance. The topic of “The Business Side of the Registrar’s Office,” was presented by J.C. Christensen of The Kansas State Agricultural College, in which the speaker stated that the same plan that centralized all the business matters and financial accounts in a business office could be applied to the educational administration by centralizing all academic bookkeeping and recording in the registrar’s office. He bemoaned the lack of uniformity across institutions in this regard, and called for systematic organizational planning to group closely related functions in one office. Christensen particularly noted that ten functions should be under the general supervision of the registrar, acknowledging that some may be segregated in large institutions:

- Correspondence with prospective students;
- Passing on certificates and advanced standing, in conjunction with faculty committees;
- Supervision over registration;
- Recording grades;
- Secretary of the general faculty;
- Secretary of faculty committees;
- Alumni records;
- Alumni appointment office;
- Editor of catalogue; and
General information office.

In his paper “The College Registrar,” A. G. Paul of Occidental College addressed some points directly related to professionalization of the role of registrar on the college level (as opposed to university level). He stated:

Unless a position is recognized as carrying with it certain professional privileges, it fails to enlist the proper kind of men in its service. It is utterly foolish to tell a man to go into a position that has never been recognized as being anything more than a mere clerical one, and if he does the work well he will receive professional recognition. The members of the faculty and the other administration officers who have full standing with the faculty must recognize the registrar as their peer by common consent or he will never gain such recognition. I am sure that any one who has served in the capacity of college or university registrar feels quite the equal, if efficiency is to be measured by the character of the mental work done and the usefulness of that work, to the head of any department in the institution. In fact, we have departments in universities which teach or attempt to teach the principles of the college administration, and surely no one is better fitted to teach this subject than an experienced registrar. Thus he should be entitled to equal recognition with instructors dealing with the subject of education.\(^{54}\)

Paul also addressed the question of whether or not a registrar should teach, determining that it depended on the view of the administration toward the work of the registrar. According to Paul, if the administration viewed the work as strictly clerical, then teaching would not likely be one of his activities. If, however, the administration viewed the registrar as of such sufficient importance to require a man of adequate training and experience, one capable of chairing important committees, then such a man should teach a few hours a week. Teaching gives the registrar recognition among students and keeps him familiar with problems of the classroom.\(^ {55} \) Data from the McConn survey the previous year revealed that, in general, the larger the institutional enrollment, the less likely the registrar had teaching responsibilities. Paul was fully cognizant that university
registrars were not likely to have time to teach, but nevertheless rated them as highly as department heads.56

**Year Five**

The fifth annual gathering was held on February 24-25, 1914 in Richmond, Virginia, at the Grace Street Baptist Church, as part of the meeting of the National Educational Association. When the treasurer’s report revealed a balance of only $43.92, the membership agreed to raise the annual dues to $3.00.57 During the meeting, the membership adopted a resolution stating that transcripts issued for transfer of records to another college should include nine specific points, including such items as how a student was admitted, complete college record, nature of withdrawal, among others. This was an attempt to standardize the transcript across the country so that institutions could more easily determine eligible transfer credits. Below is the earliest known group photo of the registrars group.58

![Registrars Group at National Educational Association 1914](image)
Year Six

The sixth annual meeting was held in Ann Arbor, Michigan, April 20-22, 1915, the first expansion to a three-day event. Below is the first group photo taken at an American Association of Collegiate Registrars meeting. It was a common practice to number the people in the photo, then include a hand-written numerical listing. Ezra Gillis is #53.

Figure 4.3 American Association of Collegiate Registrars Meeting 1915

Year Seven

The seventh annual meeting was held at Columbia University in New York, New York on April 18-20, 1916. The 69 attendees were treated to a luncheon at World Famous Delmonico’s, sponsored by the Carnegie Foundation. With the advent of sponsors, the Association meeting had truly arrived. For the first six years, the speakers at the convention were mostly drawn from the Association’s membership. The most notable exception to this point was Nicholas Murray Butler, President of Columbia
University, who addressed the attendees at the seventh meeting. His was a memorable speech and is often quoted in Association historical accounts. His second sentence spelled out succinctly the current trends in higher education when he stated, “It is rather significant of what is going on in the administration of higher education in this country, not only that this Association should be in existence at all, but that it should be so largely attended and that it should have problems of such real importance to discuss.”

President Murray must have been assured of an ovation when he said, “We must not look upon the office of Registrar as primarily a clerical post.” He went on to say, “The Registrar is classed with the Provost, with the Deans, with the Comptroller, with the Bursar, as a major administrative officer… He is one of a group of men, or men and women, whose business it is to see that the work of the University runs smoothly. This means that scholars shall be free to teach and to investigate.” This recognition of the importance of the work of the Registrar and the status of the position was heartily welcomed.

Murray described the evolution of the Registrar at Columbia University, pointing out the common threads at other universities. The Registrar at Columbia was at first the President, then, as was the norm, these duties were assigned to a professor, one who was the recording officer of the Faculty. Later a clerk was provided to assist the President in writing letters, keeping records, and checking accounts. This same clerk went on to write up the minutes of the Faculty meeting, under the guidance of the Secretary of the Faculty, then eventually developed into the Registrar with a group of assistants, a clerical staff, and modern paraphernalia. Murray stressed not only how rapidly the evolution took place, but how personal the work is and how it grew out of the intimate personal
relationship between the eighteenth or early nineteenth century president and the students committed to his care. It was Murray’s view that the records themselves were secondary to the personal service to officers and students. The Association members wished that more presidents felt the same as Murray regarding the professional status of the Registrar. Below are the attendees for the meeting in 1916.

![Figure 4.4 American Association of Collegiate Registrars Meeting 1916](image)

**Year Eight**

The eighth annual conference was held April 25-27, 1917 in Lexington, Kentucky, hosted by Ezra L Gillis, Registrar of the University of Kentucky. The previous year, the Kentucky state legislature had changed the name of the institution from State University, Lexington, Kentucky to University of Kentucky. Gillis was serving his third consecutive year (of what would be five) as Secretary/Treasurer of the Association. Continuing the precedent set by Murray the year before, the opening speaker was University of Kentucky President Henry S. Barker. In his remarks of greeting, Barker
seemed particularly aware of the female registrars when he said, “I am very happy to be able to say in greeting you, ladies and gentlemen. Ordinarily when I address conventions of this character they are composed of men only, but it seems that the intellectual institutions of this country, at least some of them, have sense and good taste enough to pick women registrars and therefore I am able to say, ladies and gentlemen. I believe firmly in the equality of the sexes; I am a women’s rights man.” He then went on to basically diminish his praise of women registrars by backing up his stance with an anecdote about knowing how to obey his wife’s orders.

The agenda of 1917 was filled with timely topics, such as grading systems, admissions, attendance and absences, tuition and other fees, permanent records, registration processes, reports of standing, and war issues – all in an effort to learn from others and standardize solutions. There were some insightful papers presented on the history of the first Association meeting and the relationship between high grades in college and success in later life. Even though these presentations contained useful information, the remembrances of attendees even years later centered around the entertainment agenda during this conference. It has been noted that the first appearance on the program of definite arrangements for convention recreation occurred in the eighth meeting, held at Lexington. The agenda for the second day simply stated:

Noon
12:15 p.m., Luncheon

Afternoon
Tour of the University of Kentucky and trip to points of interest around Lexington

Evening
8:00 p.m.
Informal personal conferences on matters which are of special interest to individuals. Advice and counsel from the more experienced to the less.
President Barker had written to Colonel E.H. Taylor, Jr., a cattle breeder and whiskey maker, that the registrars from all the agricultural colleges in the country were to be in Lexington. Colonel Taylor invited the entire convention to an elegant lunch (complete with distillery products), then a tour of his farm and his distillery. Dressed in silk hat, cutaway coat, striped trousers, and a flowing necktie, the perfect Kentucky Colonel, Taylor was quite a hit with the conference attendees, who voted to confer upon him an honorary degree of Master of Hospitality. In the picture at the end of this chapter, the Colonel stands noticeably in the center. President Barker is to the right, and Ezra Gillis five spots to the right of Barker. To further compound the folly, a formal degree-granting ceremony was held a month later in Frankfort, including a flowery speech by Governor Stanley. Recreational plans would be included on conference agendas from that time forward.

**Year Nine**

Due to the constraints of World War I, there was no association meeting in 1918.

**Year Ten**

The ninth annual meeting was held in Chicago, Illinois on April 24-26, 1919. Attendees held a vote on whether or not to have *all* meetings in central United States, preferably in Chicago, but occasionally in “such extreme foreign parts as Boston.” The vote was 36 against, 43 in favor of a “modified” version which would allow for conferences to be held in more easily accessed states. At this meeting, Ezra L Gillis, currently still Secretary/Treasurer, was elected as President for 1919-20.
The formation of the American Association of Collegiate Registrars was a key element in the efforts to professionalize the occupation of Registrar. Its original purpose was to just gather together and discuss how they performed their duties. This soon evolved into an all-out effort to change the perception from that of a clerk to an administrative officer, and to command the stature and salary the members felt they deserved. Certain key individuals, such as Parrott, Espenshade, McConn, Mathews, Tarbell, and Gillis stepped up into leadership roles and guided the Association in its earliest years – years that showed continued growth. Two factors led to that early growth and exposure: initiation of the publication *Bulletin* in 1925, later to become a journal of higher education and renamed *Journal* in 1937, then *College & University* in 1947, and the branching out of the national association into regional and state organizations, beginning as early as 1921. It was during the 1922 Annual Meeting in St. Louis that registrars were urged to organize by states and regions. The initial reason for this was the plan to hold the national meetings every other year (there was no meeting in 1921 or 1923), but the annual national meetings resumed in 1924. The Kentucky Branch of the American Association of Collegiate Registrars was one of the earliest formed, in 1924. The state and regional branches all survived and grew, providing more local, less expensive educational opportunities for many.
Figure 4.5 American Association of Collegiate Registrars, Lexington, Kentucky, 1917. Ezra Gillis is labeled #12 in this photo, with Mrs. Gillis #84. UK President Barker is #2.
Chapter Five
Steps toward Professionalization of the Registrar
Educational Requirements and Training

There is no record of anyone at Pennsylvania State College who bore the title of Registrar prior to 1895, when Miss Harriet McElwain, lady principal and professor of history, became Secretary of the Faculty and Registrar, positions she held until her retirement in 1901. Over the proceeding five years, her successor was an associate professor of mathematics until 1906, then a vice-president/financial agent until 1908. For the year of 1908-09, only a Registration Clerk was noted. Meanwhile, the College was growing rapidly, necessitating an overhaul of registration procedures and greater attention to record keeping. This led, in 1909, to the appointment of Professor A. Howry Espenshade, of the English Department, as Registrar of the College.\(^1\) The position also required that he keep the minutes of the general faculty and the Council of Administration. Espenshade served as Registrar for half time from 1909 until 1919, when the work of his office had increased to the extent that he was relieved of his teaching duties to devote his whole time to the office.\(^2\) A. Howry Espenshade was present at the inaugural meeting of the American Association of Collegiate Registrars in 1910. His leadership skills and eloquence quickly moved him to the forefront of the organization, resulting in service as President for two of the earliest years, 1911 and 1912.

Espenshade’s background as Professor of English made him the obvious candidate to draft the organization’s first constitution, defining its purpose, membership eligibility, dues, and executive committee responsibilities. A colleague described him as
having the “capacity for couching ideas in the most intriguing sentences. We put him on
the constitution committee. …He was the atlas who carried the registrarial world on his
shoulders, and as a reward they made him president of the infant organization two years
in a row, which attests his political acumen as well as his popularity.”\(^3\) Espenshade was
responsible for the language in the constitution related to organizational purpose, “to
promote the professional welfare of its members.”\(^4\) That phrase has been interpreted to
mean not only how to bring about a higher rate of compensation for services rendered,
but also how to prepare candidates for the responsibilities of the position instead of
having them just grow into them.

Calls for professional training came early. In his survey and resulting paper
presented in 1912, Arthur Tarbell of The Carnegie Institute of Technology presented data
demonstrating that registrars were recruited with no previous experience in registrar
work. The growth of colleges and resultant administrative work created more demands
for efficiency in the registrar’s office. Tarbell asserted that the registrar should be trained
for his work, and not simply drafted into service from other academic roles.\(^5\) In a paper
presented to the Eleventh Annual Meeting of the American Association of Collegiate
 Registrars in 1922, Marshall Adams, Secretary and Registrar of Georgetown College
(Kentucky), stated:

The office of registrar has evolved…from the part-time work of a teacher,
or librarian, or a treasurer, a secretary to the president, or even a student
employee. The work has developed into a profession in spite of the fact
that there are varying ideas of the place that the registrar holds in an
institution. He still exists in some places unevolved. As yet there are no
training schools for registrars, as there are for other professions. However,
you will notice that on the program of this meeting there is a class for new
registrars, and one of the prominent members of this Association has told
me that he is thinking of asking his university for three fellowships, two
undergraduate, and one graduate, to be given to students who wish to learn the profession.\(^6\)

The statement about a class for new registrars was in reference to a new concept of an Open Forum for new registrars, but also referred to the work being done by an Association committee called Class for New Registrars on Fundamentals of the Registrar’s Work. The committee members were Ezra L Gillis, University of Kentucky, and James A. Gannett, University of Maine. In the committee report, Gillis stated the following:

Mr. Chairman, the training of registrars has been discussed in this Association a number of times. I was asked last year by the secretary of the Southern Teachers’ Training Association to conduct a school from the University of Kentucky, somewhere in the South, to give a week or two, work in training the registrars. I do not know whether that could be done successfully or not, but in thinking of that I have talked it over with the president of the university and the dean of the graduate school, and professors who would be interested in that. They have approved, offering scholarship in the University of Kentucky, one graduate and one undergraduate scholarship. No credit is to be allowed for the work they do in the registrar’s office unless it may be used for some student course given in the university. You see we will not necessarily offer any new course, either economic or educational. I have had a number of calls from other universities to recommend statisticians. The time is coming when a college of any size is going to have a trained statistician. When that happens we will get data of real value.\(^7\)

After membership discussion, a motion carried that Gillis should proceed with plans for development of the class and that the Association officers would constitute the committee. Gillis later conducted a survey of 105 registrars to collect a consensus of opinion on what courses should be included in the training of registrars. The chart below, although unpublished, was prepared by Gillis and included in a thesis prepared by a UK graduate student in 1931. It was part of a paper by Gillis entitled “A Graduate Program for Registrars”, and presented at the Association’s annual conference in Buffalo in 1931.\(^8\)
The results ranked Statistics, College Administration, Psychology, Test and Measurements, and Technique of Registrar’s Office as the top five subjects that should be addressed, followed closely by Personnel Administration and Curriculum Making.

Table IX Proposed Curriculum for Training Registrars Suggested by 105 Registrars

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</tbody>
</table>

In his presentation to the 1923 First Annual Institute for Registrars, W.C. Bower, Dean, College of the Bible (now Lexington Theological Seminary), expounded on the training of the registrar and emphasized the following:

…when the function of recording passes over into the function of interpretation, the function of the registrar is moving into the field of educational research.

For the discharge of this higher function the registrar should be specifically and technically trained. Given the personal qualities of a dynamic, imaginative, and creative mind, he should first of all be trained as an educator. He should know the history, theory and practice of education. Without such thorough scientific training he will not know how to look for educational problems. Neither will he know how to analyze them and to search for significant educational data.
Against a background of educational training, he should have careful training in the science of statistics. He should understand how to tabulate data, how to subject it to the treatment of statistical technique involving all the tendencies of distribution, and how to manage correlation. He should also have training in the use of graphs and charts, that will make the data clearly and impressively available to the administration. In other words, he should be trained as a skilled statistician.

In the degree in which the registrar conceives his function in these higher educational terms and brings to his profession a high degree of technical training his status as an officer of administration will increase in dignity and honor and his office will come to be recognized as one of the most important in administration.\(^9\)

In a 1926 presentation, and subsequent paper, from the Fourth Annual Institute for Registrars, J.R. Robinson, Registrar of Eastern State Teachers College, listed 44 specific duties of the Registrar, including such tasks as awarding scholarships to prospective student-teachers, maintaining admissions records, keeping records of withdrawals, maintaining academic records, checking on student attendance, handling placement of graduates, preparing statistical data and official reports, and many others. He also included the qualifications necessary for the performance of each duty, including knowledge of a broad range of subjects and ability to evaluate details. It was Robinson’s conclusion that the minimum amount of training for registrars should include:\(^10\)

1. A four-year college course;
2. Post-graduate work in education for at least one year with major in supervision and training in research; and
3. A course in office work, keeping of records, office management, and person-management.

It was also brought up for discussion that the Association Secretary should function as a placement office for promising young men and women seeking work as registrars. The current Secretary at that time, Raymond Walters, Swarthmore College, indicated he had received a number of such applications over the past two years and had done his best
to match them with known registrar offices with openings. 11 The placement of young recruits with potential mentors followed the pattern of other roles in higher education that lacked organized professional training. For example, in a survey of deans of men conducted in the early 1930s, a majority held to the belief that the best deans of men were born, not made or, in other words, not trained through graduate education. It was generally accepted that the best avenue to success was to find a mentor. At that time, much of the tone of the work was not set by professional standards or an accreditation process, but by the incumbent in office. However, by the late 1930s, attitudes changed and survey respondents stated that courses in psychology, education, liberal arts, and sociology were valuable in preparation for their work as deans of men. 12

In a paper read at the meeting of Ohio Registrars held in Columbus on November 2 and 3, 1928, and published as an article entitled “Executive Duties of the Registrar” for the Bulletin of the American Association of Collegiate Registrars, April 1929, G.P. Tuttle, Registrar, University of Illinois, emphasized the evolving perception of the Registrar as an executive of real worth when he quoted a couple of administrators: 13

Today the Registrar has become not only a recording officer, but a statistician skilled in the meaning of grades and enrollments. He can be of great assistance to a President and make it possible for that officer to see the development, needs and tasks of the institution over which he presides.
– President McVey, University of Kentucky, 1923

A Registrar is more than a recording and a rating officer. In a sense he sits at the center of the University’s administrative life. His office should become the center for a continuous survey of the educational work and administrative procedure in the institution. He must be an educational leader and a research officer. He must not be a follower. Clear-minded, far-seeing statesmanship in the conduct of his office in relation to the functions and purposes of the University must characterize his administration. It has become a profession equal in dignity and standing and worth to the other professions of the University.
– President Coffman, University of Minnesota, 1926
Tuttle closed by summarizing three chief immediate needs of the profession:

1) Push sturdily forward to make the records of vital use in determining the policies of the institution and at the same time minimize and simplify the mechanics of offices, forms, procedures, and “red tape”;

2) Build up a store of professional literature, not only in amount but in quality, as there have been too few contributions by Registrars to the current educational journals; and

3) Develop and standardize opportunities for the training of Registrars. One of the first was the establishment of the University of Kentucky Institute and the offering there of graduate courses that use the Registrar’s Office as a laboratory. There have been summer courses offered at the University of Chicago and the University of Minnesota. However, there is not much at present offered by institutions looking toward the professional training of young men and women in this line of work. There should be more.

A study of the 602 American members of the American Association of Collegiate Registrars was undertaken by George Peabody College in 1929 to determine background information on those members. Of the 602, data was found for 589. Of interest was the result that of those 589 registrars, 478 (81%) bore the title of Registrar and some other title, 209 (35%) had teaching duties, 202 (35%) held a Master’s Degree, 164 (28%) Bachelor’s, 58 (10%) Doctor’s, 107 (18%) no degree, and of those who taught, 151 (72%) held the rank of Professor (Table X).
A survey of thirty-two institutions, performed by Earl James McGrath in his unpublished dissertation for the University of Chicago in 1936, revealed that registrars were largely teaching members of the faculty in the early years. Dr. McGrath would later serve as Commissioner of Education from 1949 to 1953. For the period 1860 to 1933, McGrath discovered that 56.1% of registrars continued to have teaching duties. However, that percentage steadily declined from the high of 85.7% in 1880 to just 21.4% in 1933 (Table XI). McGrath concluded this was because in the earliest days, the
registrar duties were not as time-consuming. A larger percentage of those who taught were in the field of physical sciences than any other field.

Table XI Percentage of Registrars Teaching 1860-1933

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Eight State Institutions</th>
<th>Eight Large Eastern Institutions</th>
<th>Eight Small Eastern Institutions</th>
<th>Eight Small Western Institutions</th>
<th>All Institutions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1860</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>55.7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>74.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1870</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>80.0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>75.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1880</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>80.0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>70.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1890</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>60.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>71.4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>70.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>42.9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>55.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>71.4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>80.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>22.5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>71.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1933</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>70.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Grath found the highest degree held over the period was Master’s (45.1%) over Bachelor’s (34.7%). However, he also found that over time, the percentage of those holding the Master’s Degree fell from a high in 1880 of 85.7% to just 25% in 1933. At the same time, the percentage of those holding the Bachelor’s Degree increased from 0 in 1880 to 57.1% in 1933 (Table XII).
McGrath further broke down his data on the Bachelor’s Degree to determine that of that population, 77.2% had no teaching duties. He concluded, as a result, that the registrar’s office was becoming a purely administrative one requiring a type of training different from that of a scholar (Table XIII).
Registrars themselves took umbrage with any type of comparison with faculty that put them in a negative light. They were insistent that the importance of the registrar’s duties required that the position be a recognized member of the faculty, equal to the dean, dean of men, dean of women, and other administrative officers as members of the president’s cabinet. C.M. McConn, University of Illinois Registrar, completed an exhaustive study of twenty-one university registrars, comparing the functions and salaries of 1910 to 1920. He found the tasks of the registrar at those institutions had increased 27.2% between 1910 and 1920, not taking into consideration increase in enrollment. While the salary of the registrar had increased 64.8% over that period, it was only half as much as the increase in salaries of deans, professors, or instructors.\footnote{19} It was the

Table XIII Highest Degrees Held by Teaching vs. Non-teaching Registrars 1860-1933

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degrees</th>
<th>Registrars with Teaching Responsibility</th>
<th>Registrars without Teaching Responsibility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor’s</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>22.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master’s</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>70.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctor’s</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>90.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Degree</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>53.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
contention of the American Association of Collegiate Registrars that the registrar should have the rank of full professor in both status and salary.

During the 1927 meeting of the American Association of Collegiate Registrars in Atlanta, Dr. Thomas Jackson Woofter, Dean of the Peabody School of Education, University of Georgia, gave a presentation entitled, “Education Moves Ahead.” In it, he tackled the question of whether or not the registrar’s field was a profession. Per Woofter, the three characteristics of a profession were (1) the rise of experts to address the need for a special service, (2) the gradual accumulation of a creditable body of professional literature, and (3) provisions for preparation of experts, i.e. professional schools with standards and methods of admission. Dr. Woofter tested the registrar’s field against these three criteria and found there was a need for specialized registrars with increasing numbers of assistants, that there was not yet a large body of creditable literature, although developing, and that the third characteristic found the registrars short of professional standing. There was no institution for special preparation of registrars, although a few of the larger universities were beginning to offer courses in that direction.20

In 1923-24, Teachers College of Columbia University offered the first systematic instruction in college administration for graduate students interested in the problems of the American college. Over the course of the next nine years, the variety and scope of the courses steadily increased at Teachers College, with 540 instructors and administrative officers as participants over that span of time – including college presidents, deans, department heads, professors, librarians, treasurers, business managers and others. The summer vacation became the most popular time for these courses. In 1932 alone, twenty-seven institutions, including the University of Kentucky, offered
summer courses on college administration. The regular teaching staffs of these institutions were augmented by experienced specialists in administrative fields. Among those experts were Registrars Ezra L Gillis of Kentucky and J.R. Robinson of George Peabody College. While the offerings at most institutions were limited to a single course or two on selected topics, some were more comprehensive, particularly those available at the University of Chicago, Teachers College of Columbia University, University of Michigan, Ohio State University, and the University of Pittsburgh. General courses on the professional duties of the various administrative officers were also offered at the University of Colorado, Indiana University, University of Kentucky, University of Minnesota, New York University, Duke University, and Western Reserve University. Courses of particular value to those interested in the work of the college registrar were offered at the Universities of Chicago and Kentucky, at George Peabody College for Teachers, and at Teachers College. The summer sessions conducted on these campuses provided professional growth and opportunities for in-service improvement.\(^{21}\)

Specific training opportunities were announced during the 1927 meeting of the American Association of Collegiate Registrars:\(^{22}\)

Peabody College for Teachers – credit-bearing graduate courses designed especially for training of registrars arranged to run throughout the year, with special attention given to registrars of small colleges. The work consisted of selected topics with laboratory work in the office and assigned problems for term papers and individual reports. A summer Institute for Registrars and other college administrators was also planned.

University of Chicago – series of courses entitled “The Financial Administration of Higher Institutions” and “Professional Duties of Registrars and Deans” during the first term of the summer quarter, to be given by administrative officers from Buffalo and Kentucky, with laboratory work. A summer Institute for the second quarter was also planned, to include addresses by prominent leaders in higher education. Fellowships were awarded annually.
University of Minnesota – a four-week summer institute was planned to cover three main problems: college student personnel, college curricula and instruction, and college administration and organization. This was offered as graduate credit toward the Master’s Degree. The University also offered four fellowships, one for each in the Registrar’s Office, Comptroller, Dean of Women, and Dean of Men, with a stipend of $1200 for eighteen months’ service, with the agreement to give half time to the assigned office and a master’s thesis in connection to the work of that office.

University of Kentucky – provision was made for students interested in registrars’ work with courses emphasizing present day trends, organization, and administration; laboratory work to study procedures and techniques; additional courses necessary in the College of Education and Department of Psychology to complete the program. These courses related to educational psychology, organization and administration, measurements, statistical procedures, and student personnel.

A resolution was passed by the membership at that same 1927 Atlanta meeting, addressing the need for advanced professional education and training:\(^{23}\)

In view of the rapid development, in recent years, of the work of the Registrar in American colleges and universities to the place it now holds as a major administrative post, and in view of the necessity of properly training men and women for that important position, the American Association of Collegiate Registrars respectfully requests the leading institutions of higher learning in the United States to create fellowships in the administration of higher education, which shall be open especially to Registrars who desire to specialize in that field, particularly as it relates to their own work, and who are candidates for the higher degree.

It was the brainchild of Ezra L Gillis, University of Kentucky Registrar, to establish an Annual Institute for Registrars. He built the institute from the ground up, holding them annually for seven years each April from 1923 through 1929. Below is a picture of the first class held April 4-13, 1923.\(^{24}\)
Figure 5.1 First Class of the Institute of Registrars held April 4-13, 1923
University of Kentucky
Founder Ezra L Gillis is #17 – middle top row
In the beginning, the course ran for ten days but was later shortened to one week. The President of the University gave one or two talks each time on the registrar’s work from the president’s viewpoint. There were special lecture courses on administrative topics, survey techniques, psychological testing, registrar procedures, statistical analysis and data presentation, practical demonstrations, and at least one afternoon trip. Gillis provided a variety of experts as speakers, from both within the University of Kentucky and registrars from other states. Over the seven year period, 183 attendees representing 119 institutions participated in the University of Kentucky Institutes.25

Below is the program/agenda for the Fifth Annual Institute for Registrars in 192726.
FIFTH ANNUAL INSTITUTE FOR REGISTRARS
April 4-9, 1927

PROGRAM

Registration—Monday, April 4, 10:00 to 10:30 a.m.—Register's Office
Greetings—10:30 a.m.—President McVey, of the University of Kentucky

OUTLINE OF COURSES AND ROUND TABLE CONFERENCES

9:00 a.m.—The Register As An Administrative Officer, by Ezra L. Miller, Register of the University of Kentucky

Tuesday, "The Register and His Program of Work"
Wednesday, "The Register's Office a Laboratory for Administrative Officers"

(With special reference to interpretation a president should have for use in making his budget)

Thursday, "The Register's Office a Laboratory for the Department of Education"
Friday, "The Training of the Registrar"

10:30 a.m.—Special Lecture Course
TUESDAY, "Operation Data for the Register's Office," M叙us Monroe, Secretary to the Register, University of Kentucky
WEDNESDAY, "Academic simplicities," by Edward C. Maxon, Register of the University of North Dakota
THURSDAY, "Student Mortality," Ivan A. Stanley, Professor, University of Kentucky
FRIDAY, "Five Data Views for Determining Administrative Budget," Pitzer & McVey, President of the University of Kentucky

11:00 a.m.—Techniques Employed in Staff Surveys of Colleges and Universities, by Professor W. B. Ray, Professor of Education, University of Kentucky

Monday, "Problems Relating to the Staff Survey of Colleges and Universities"
Wednesday, "The Instructional Load"
Friday, "The Computation of Unit Costs"

*For fourth lecture on this subject, see Thursday evening

UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY
LEXINGTON

Program
OF THE
FIFTH ANNUAL INSTITUTE
FOR REGISTRARS
April 4-9, 1927

THE ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
UNIVERSITY CAMPUS

11:00 a.m.—Mental Tests, J. B. Minor, Head of Department of Psychology, University of Kentucky

Tuesday, "Securing Credit by Mental Tests"
Wednesday, "Development and Profit Use of Mental Tests"

2:00 p.m.—Series of Conferences on the Technique of the Office, Ezra L. Miller, Register of the University of Kentucky, presiding

Monday, "Registration Procedure"
Tuesday, "Admissions," (Accrediting Agencies, Conditional Credit, Definite Courses)
Wednesday, "Records and Transcripts"
Thursday, "Data That Should Be Kept in the Register's Office"

2:30 p.m.—Statistical Analysis and Graphical Presentation of Data, C. C. Ross, Professor of Education, University of Ky.

Monday, "Nature and Purpose of Statistics and Graphs. The Tabulation of Data. Frequency Tables and Graphs"

Tuesday, "Purpose and Calculation of Averages or Measures of Central Tendency. The Median and Mean. Comparison"

Wednesday, "Purpose and Calculation of Measures of Variability. Various Kinds of Deviation. Types of Curve"

Thursday, "Occupational Distribution of Students in Kentucky College," Carl Taylor, Secretary College of Education, University of Kentucky

3:00 a.m.—Thursday, Trip through the Blue Grass

3:00 p.m.—Statistics for Registrars, F. L. Easley, Professor of Economics, University of Kentucky

Monday, "Measures of Central Tendency"
Tuesday, "The Significance of Averages"
Wednesday, "Measure of Correlation"

*Publication of material from the registrar's office will be used in selecting those courses

Figure 5.2 Fifth Annual Institute for Registrars Program 1927

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In addition, the University of Kentucky was in the forefront in establishing the first regular college courses for registrars. The first were created, but without credit given, in 1924-25. Two years later, a course entitled “Technique and Professional Work of the Registrar” was given for credit on the lower level, but was raised to graduate level in 1928-29. A second course “Problems in the Registrar’s Field of Administration” was added in 1930-31. The courses were listed under the Education Department in 1937 as follows:27

EDUCATION 290a – TECHNIQUE AND PROFESSIONAL WORK OF THE REGISTRAR. A comprehensive study of admissions including the literature, history and present-day tendencies; the rules of the University; recommendations of the American Association of Collegiate Registrars; special problems in the administration of the office. Limited to six students. Lecture 1 hour; laboratory, 2 hours a week. Prerequisite: Consent of instructor. 2 credits.

EDUCATION 290b – TECHNIQUE AND PROFESSIONAL WORK OF THE REGISTRAR. A comprehensive study of permanent records and transcripts, including the history, literature and present-day tendencies; rules of the University; recommendations of the American Association of Collegiate Registrars. Special problems in the administration of the office. Limited to six students. Lecture 1 hour; laboratory 2 hours a week. Prerequisite: Consent of the instructor. 2 credits.

EDUCATION 291a, b, and c – PROBLEMS IN THE REGISTRAR’S FIELD OF ADMINISTRATION. Independent work. The purpose of the course is to give experience and training in the analysis and interpretation of data; organization of source material, so as to make the office an effective laboratory for the study of problems in administration and education. A committee will conduct the final oral examination to determine the administrative value of the study. Prerequisites: Ed. 290a and b or equivalent. 2 credits.

Although Ezra Gillis retired as University of Kentucky Registrar in 1937, the graduate courses continued for a period of time under the leadership of his successor, Leo Chamberlain. The courses were offered in the field of higher education, with an emphasis on present day trends, organization, and administration. Laboratory work
continued to be provided to study procedures and techniques of the registrar’s office. To complete the program, courses were required in the areas of educational philosophy, statistical procedures, student personnel, and other education and psychology courses.

While there were special courses, institutes, and fellowships offered across the country for a couple of decades, gradually more emphasis was placed on organization and administration of higher education as a whole, and not so much on tasks specific to the registrar, except in training provided at annual and regional meetings. While the University of Kentucky did offer graduate courses on registrar procedures, those courses were part of a Master’s Degree in “something else”. Was it necessary to have formal educational training in registrar procedure? Probably not, but the students who participated in those graduate courses or in the annual Institute for Registrars gained valuable knowledge. Testimonials from former students who either improved their existing skills as registrars or gained employment as such sang the praises of the “Gillis Experience.”

In a paper written for a dinner presentation during the 1927 national conference, the St. Louis University Registrar, Elma Poole, summarized the training of a registrar as:

Have a broad college education on which to build. In your graduate work, get all courses possible bearing on your line. Read regularly and systematically professional publications. Get a leave of absence for study or travel whenever possible. When we have taken advantage of all opportunities to prepare ourselves professionally let us bear in mind that all this is lost unless it is vitalized with human sympathy, and filled with the desire to render the greatest service possible for the registrar is the person afforded one of the greatest opportunity [sic] for influence through personal contacts.
Chapter Six
Historical Perspective of the Role of Registrar at the University of Kentucky

In 1862, Congress passed the Morrill Act which apportioned 30,000 acres of public land to each State for each of its senators and representatives – for the purpose of establishing and endowing a college, chiefly for instruction in agriculture and the mechanic arts. In 1865, the General Assembly of Kentucky accepted the conditions of the Morrill Act and established the Agricultural and Mechanical College, a land-grant institution, making it one of the departments of Kentucky University. The State had realized only $165,000 in proceeds from the sale of its apportioned 330,000 acres, but with the assistance of donations from the city of Lexington, were still able to open the College in 1866. When it opened, the College had a President, four professors, a commandant, and 190 students.\(^1\) James K. Patterson (left)\(^2\) was named the presiding officer of A&M in 1869. He is generally known as the first president of what would later become the University of Kentucky, and served in that capacity until 1910.

After a long factional battle, the General Assembly severed the connection with Kentucky University in 1878 and A&M was on its own, barely surviving on income from the Morrill Act until 1880, when a state property tax was enacted to assist the school. A&M would achieve university status in 1908, changing its name to State University, Lexington, Kentucky. It was not until 1916 that the state legislature officially changed the name to its current version, University of Kentucky.

When it comes to the emergence of administrators and the factors that influenced their growth, did the University of Kentucky differ from other colleges and universities of
the late 1800s and early 1900s? One of the factors cited for this growth was an increase in the number of students. As Table XIV below shows, Kentucky experienced this type of increase. Although the numbers may be difficult to read on the chart, UK’s enrollment rose from 190 students (all male) in 1866 to a total of 582 (male and female) in 1911.\textsuperscript{3} There was also a corresponding rise in the number of courses and teachers. Before 1880, the University offered a single course of study leading to a degree. In 1909, seven were offered. Before 1880, the University had six professors. In 1909, there were twenty-seven professors and forty-three assistants.\textsuperscript{4}
What is unclear from searching through more than fifty years of University Catalogues (from 1866 to 1919) is whether or not the “elective system” had an impact at UK. It was during this period of time that the elective system was said to have
flourished. In reviewing the catalogues of the early 1900s, it appeared that each college had very specific requirements, but it was not clear if students were allowed to pick and choose or make substitutions. There was a change in the Schedule of Studies for the Degree of B.S. in Agriculture between 1906-07 and 1908-09 in the outline of courses in the College of Agriculture. Although it appears in both years that a strict schedule is set by year for each hour of the day, in 1908-09, there is a reference to electives: “As previously stated, certain of the subjects placed in the preceding schedule are elective and these are arranged at the beginning of the year by conference with the Dean and with the professor under whom the student takes his major study.”

Whether or not the University of Kentucky offered the most liberal type of elective system that was endorsed by Eliot at Harvard is a subject of interest for a more in-depth study.

As was the case with most early colleges and universities, initially the administration was handled almost single-handedly by the president. From research of the catalogues, this is the case in the area of matriculation. In 1866, the student was instructed to report promptly to the Regent (president) first before being directed to the Presiding Officer of the college he wished to enter. From there, he was instructed to secure boarding without delay and report to the professors for admission examination. The following is an example of examination questions for the session of 1902-03, most of which would be difficult for modern day students to correctly answer.
(3) In what ocean are most of the islands of the world? What large islands between Asia and Australia? What large island east of Africa? What group southeast of the United States? What group encloses the Bering Sea?

(4) Name in order, from North to South, the States touching the east bank of the Mississippi and give chief town in each.

(5) Boundaries, California, Massachusetts, Ohio, Florida, and name the capital of these four States.

(6) What are the chief mineral products of Eastern Kentucky? Of Central Kentucky? Of Western Kentucky?

(7) Do the island possessions acquired by the United States since 1898 lie north or south of the Tropic of Cancer?

(8) What European Nations have possessions in Asia. Give the location of these possessions.

(9) Name the constitutional monarchies of Europe and give their capitals.

(10) Locate Manchuria, Cape Colony, Venezuela, Oklahoma.

SPELLING.

It is necessary for every citizen to accommodate himself to the common form of words used in the United States. We are obliged to acknowledge that mistakes are often made for which it is difficult to find a parallel.

Any of the italicized words required to be spelled correctly on examination.

These examination questions are for the exclusive use of County Superintendents and their County Boards of Examiners. Their use by any other person is absolutely forbidden.

Appointments to any of the courses must be made between June 1 and August 1.

Appointments to the shorter Normal Courses must be made between July 1 and December 31.

The attention of superintendents is specially called to the amendments to Sections 14 and 15 of the College Charter, approved March 21, 1902, a copy of which is hereon enclosed.

Sections 14 and 15 of College Charter will be found on pages 129 and 130 of the Common school laws, session of 1903. To this your attention is most earnestly requested.

Prepared and sent out by the College under authority of Law.

Figure 6.1 Examination Questions 1902-1903
ARITHMETIC.

(1) Find the greatest common divisor and also the least common multiple of 2172 and 3184.
(2) Simplify $\frac{5}{8} \times 15 + \frac{9}{10} - \frac{7}{15}$.
(3) $\frac{3}{8}$ of A's money equals $\frac{1}{3}$ of B's and both together have $84$. How much has each?
(4) A dairyman’s quart measure is too small by $\frac{3}{8}$ gill and he sells daily 100 of these defective quarts of milk at 1 cent a quart. Out of how much does he cheat his customers in one year of 365 days?
(5) A merchant bought a bill of goods amounting to $800 and accepted a discount of 15% and 10% off in return for a single discount of 20%. Did he gain or lose by the choice and how much?
(6) A and B can mow 10 acres of grass in 3 days, B and C can mow 15 acres in 5 days, A and C can mow 11 acres in 4 days. How many acres can they all mow in 15 days?
(7) A, B, and C bought a house for $8000. They paid $1200, $2500, and $4300. B occupied the house for one year agreeing to pay a rent of $729. After B had paid the tax of $2.15 on the $100 for the year, how much rent does he still owe to A and C?
(8) The base of a triangular field is 236 rods and the altitude is 188 rods. Find the length of one side of a square field of equal area.
(9) A man sold two horses for the same price. On one he gained 10% and on the other he lost 29%. His loss on both was $17.40; find the value of each horse.
(10) Each side of the base of a pyramid is 16 feet and the altitude is 18 feet; find the area of the surface of a cube whose volume equals the volume of the pyramid.

ENGLISH GRAMMAR.

(1) Write a synopsis of the verb “to be” in all its moods and tenses.
(2) Write examples of “has” used as an adjective, a conjunction, a preposition; also examples of “this” used as the same parts of speech.
(3) Parse the words in this sentence: Being the multitudes, he went up into a mountain.
(4) Analyze the following sentence: Sixteen years later, on a dark and terrible day, he was again called upon to save the state, brought to the very brink of ruin by the same perjury and dishonesty.

UNITED STATES HISTORY.

(1) Give a brief account of the first settlement in each of the original thirteen colonies.
(2) Give the dates, causes, and results of each of the colonial wars.
(3) Describe the Declaration of Independence, its causes, and two important battles of the War of the Revolution.
(4) Give the boundaries of the United States at the time of the adoption of the Constitution, and indicate briefly the time, manner and extent of each subsequent acquisition of contiguous territory.
(5) Indicate the causes and results of the war of 1812, and give an account of the battles of Lake Erie and of New Orleans.
(6) Indicate the causes of the Civil War and describe the following battles: Antietam, Gettysburg, Atlanta.
(7) Give a full account of two naval battles of the Spanish-American War.
(8) Give a brief account of each of the great Political Parties since the adoption of the Constitution indicating their prominent principles.
(9) Write a brief account of Benjamin Franklin, John Quincy Adams, Andrew Jackson, Daniel Webster, John C. Calhoun, James G. Blaine.

MENTION THE MOST IMPORTANT LITERARY CHARACTERS WHO LIVED IN THE UNITED STATES DURING THE NINETEENTH CENTURY, GIVING THE TITLE OF ONE PRODUCTION BY EACH.

GEOGRAPHY.

(2) What great lakes of the Western Hemisphere? Where is the Amazon River? The Mississippi? In what direction do these rivers flow? Where is the Nile?
If successful with the examination step, he was directed to the Secretary of the Faculty for registration and receipt of a permit. The student presented the permit to the Treasurer (who was also the Regent/President) to pay any required fees. He would then receive a copy of the Laws of the University and was required to sign the following declaration: “I enter the University with a sincere desire to enjoy the benefits of its instructions, and with a determined resolution to conform to its laws.” After signing this declaration, the student reported to the professors for further instructions on textbooks and recitations. This same process would appear in proceeding catalogues until 1909 when, after first reporting to the president, the student would receive two cards, one addressed to the Business Agent regarding fees, and the other addressed to the Dean of the College the student desired to enter. The Dean would then issue to the student a card with the names of the courses he was to pursue. This card was taken to each professor, where the student would be assigned to a class and section. Below are samples of such cards for two students, including one payment receipt, from 1910:

Figure 6.2 Enrollment Cards 1910
Source: University Archives
Figure 6.3 Personal and Registrar’s Information Cards
1910
Source: University Archives
The card had to be returned to the Dean, who filed it for future reference. As noted on the above card (#636) for Juliette Gaines, fees had to be settled before students
could be assigned to classes. Interesting to note is that the Dean filed and kept track of the enrollment card, even though a “registrar” had been formally recognized in catalogues since 1902. Interested applicants for admission were directed to write to President Patterson for information or a catalog, as evidenced by a 1908 pamphlet.\textsuperscript{10}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{figure6_5.png}
\caption{Requirements for Entrance, 1908}
\end{figure}

Source: University Archives
Although the catalogues do not imply that the president was personally involved in setting students’ schedules, Ezra Gillis, who some consider to be the first true University Registrar (1910), stated that “Patterson had looked after the smallest details in my department as in others; he interviewed all students during registration and personally supervised all schedules. When a member of Patterson’s staff learned that I was to be in charge of registration, he said to me, ‘Who ever heard of a registrar being in charge of registration? That will make you bigger than the president that day!’” It was not until the 1914-1915 Catalogue that students were told to report to the Registrar to schedule classes, as opposed to the President.

According to Earl McGrath’s survey data, the four oldest administrative officers are president, librarian, secretary of the faculty, and registrar – in that order. Following are two tables that contain data from charts compiled by Ezra Gillis. They provide a historical look (from his perspective) of those officers at the University of Kentucky. The chart detailing Registrars is included as Table XV. Although there is record of a librarian in 1872-1873, as previously noted, Gillis’s chart that includes the librarian only begins with 1878. The first official record of a librarian was Margaret King in 1910, also indicated in Table XV. Conspicuously absent from both charts is the Secretary of the Faculty, McGrath’s third oldest officer. It is not clear why Gillis chose to omit this officer as there are detailed records of this position and the men who held it, in the catalogues going back to 1893-1894, when Ruric Roark was listed as such, and up until about 1914 when the Secretary of the Faculty and the Registrar were combined.

The first year for listing the stenographer, Mary Hodges, was also 1893-1894. In the early days, it was common for the President’s secretary to assist him with
recordkeeping. An example of such recordkeeping would be the following academic update from 1895, found in an old grade book in the University Archives:\textsuperscript{16}

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{recordkeeping1895.png}
\caption{Written recordkeeping 1895; Source: University Archives}
\end{figure}
Miss Hodges continued to be listed as stenographer until 1901-1902, when she was inexplicably listed as Registrar. This is confirmed on her Faculty/Staff Card File in the Archives, but there are no further details regarding how she came to be called the Registrar. She was regularly mentioned in Board of Trustees Minutes, but only under the schedule of salaries for employees. There was one paragraph in the BOT Minutes dated June 4, 1902, stating, “Be it resolved that all resolutions heretofore passed regulating the hours and work of Miss Mary Hodges, be rescinded, and that hereafter her duties be prescribed by the President, embracing such stenographic work as the President may require, and such other work for the College as the President may designate, during the usual college hours.”\textsuperscript{17} It would be logical to translate this as “other duties as assigned” in today’s terminology – in this case, a role as part-time secretary, part-time registrar. The next person to be designated as Registrar was Miss Hariette Claiborne Hodges, but this was just for one year 1904-1905. A relationship between the two women could not be determined, as there are no biographical or correspondence files on either Mary or Hariette Hodges. From 1905 to 1910, Margaret Isadora King (above left)\textsuperscript{18} was the acknowledged Registrar, although her Biographical File indicates she was Secretary to the President and Registrar during those years.\textsuperscript{19} Records relating to Miss King’s time as secretary/registrar are essentially nonexistent. She is better known for her work as librarian from 1910 to 1949. King was born in 1879 and graduated from A&M of
Kentucky in 1898 with a B.A. degree. She died in 1966 at the age of 87. The King Library at the University of Kentucky was named in her honor. Although these three women were the first to be acknowledged in the Catalogue and Gillis’s charts as Registrar, official University history recognizes only Ezra Gillis, a male professional faculty member. Further exploration of the topic of women who were considered “real” registrars of that time, and not just clerical help, would be of interest.

Table XV General Administrative Officers 1866 – 1960
Source: Gillis Charts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>President</th>
<th>Vice President</th>
<th>Controller or Business Agent</th>
<th>Dean of the University</th>
<th>Registrar</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1866</td>
<td>John B. Bowman</td>
<td>John Shackleford</td>
<td>John B. Bowman, Business Agent Kentucky University</td>
<td>1866 – 1878</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1870</td>
<td>***</td>
<td>John Shackleford</td>
<td>James G. White 1893 – 1900</td>
<td>***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1870</td>
<td>***</td>
<td>John H. Neville</td>
<td>Victor Maney, 1900 – 01</td>
<td>***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1870</td>
<td>#</td>
<td>James G. White, 1909 – 13</td>
<td>David C. Fray, 1901 – 11</td>
<td>***</td>
<td>Mary Hodges, 1902 – 06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>#</td>
<td>John Shackleford</td>
<td>W.T. Lofter, 111 – 13</td>
<td></td>
<td>Harry Hodges, 1904 – 05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>#</td>
<td>Henry B. Barker</td>
<td>Henry H. Hill, 1909 – 13</td>
<td></td>
<td>Margaret King, 1905 – 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>#</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940</td>
<td>#</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940</td>
<td>#</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>#</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>#</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>#</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Kentucky follows the pattern of other American institutions in that the President was the primary administrator until increased enrollment and demands for services necessitated delegation of the day-to-day functions. Referring back to Table I of this document, in the chapter about the rise of the administrator, McGrath’s survey data for the eight state institutions indicated that the Registrar was established fifth, behind the Dean, as opposed to the order of fourth for all institutions. In this regard, Kentucky was
like its state institution counterparts, however Kentucky lagged well behind the median year of establishment of 1887. The recognition of the title of Registrar at UK did not occur until 1902, and the official "real" Registrar in 1910. The following is one of the earliest communications addressed to the newly appointed Registrar:\textsuperscript{20}

![Figure 6.7 Communications to Registrar, 1909-10. Source: University Archives](image_url)
Otherwise, the development of the Registrar at Kentucky perfectly fit the pattern articulated in Capen’s 1920 speech. It evolved from an experienced clerk (Hodges, Hodges, and King) to a professor whose teaching schedule was not heavy (Gillis) to a full-time trained man with a clerical staff (Gillis became full-time Registrar and added a staff). The biennial, and later annual, reports submitted by the Registrar paint the picture of how the Registrar’s Office at the University evolved over the next three decades.

The *Biennial Report of the State University of Kentucky to His Excellency the Governor and the General Assembly of Kentucky 1909-1911* listed Gillis under the section for Lecturers, but in this manner:

**EZRA L. GILLIS, A.B., 287 South Lime. 
Assistant Professor of Education and Registrar.**

In this publication, little was mentioned about the Registrar, other than directing transfer students to the Registrar for a blank form to be completed by the student’s previous school. Of more interest was that tuition was $40.00 for engineering students, $25.00 for Arts, Science, or Agriculture, there was a fee of $5.00 for the gymnasium, and board in clubs was about $2.25 per week for men, while young women paid $3.00 per week to stay in Patterson Hall (napkins not included).

Eight years later, the *Report of University of Kentucky to Superintendent of Public Instruction for the biennium 1917-1919* told a much different and detailed story. The Registrar’s section expanded to sixteen pages, including breaking down the enrollment (1,272 for 1917-18; 2,284 for 1918-19) in a variety of ways: by college and class, by candidates for degree versus non-candidates, by enrollment of women by college for the past twelve years, by numbers of administrators and teachers, and with geographical
distribution of students by Kentucky county (112), by state (24 other), and by foreign
country (4 including Bulgaria, Portugal, Russia, and Turkey). The report detailed the
occupation of students’ parents and guardians (largest numbers were physicians and
merchants; smallest included a baker, a liveryman, and a dispatcher, among others).
Gillis’s document also detailed all degrees issued since 1908, undergraduate, advanced,
and honorary. Commencement honors were listed, as well as individual scholarships and
prizes. There were several pages devoted to listing all the Kentucky high schools (and
numbers of students) in which freshmen were prepared, as well as high schools from
other states, and other colleges from which students transferred. Gillis compared the
scholarship of fraternities by organization and percentage with passing grades, and the
scholarship of fraternity versus non-fraternity students – and the non-fraternity students
won by a hair.23

The next year, the report to the Superintendent changed to an annual submission.
The report for 1919-1920 contained all the information of the previous one, but expanded
to include historical information back to 1866, as well as an analysis of students who had
graduated on schedule, the enrollment of “girls” by college class, and the number of
University men who had served in the military forces of the United States. Gillis further
expanded by providing a list of the seventy-six institutions represented in the
instructional staff (led by University of Kentucky and University of Chicago) and the
forty-two institutions represented in the Experiment Station staff (dominated by
University of Kentucky). In addition, Gillis included statistics on the use and non-use of
instructional space by building, as well as the size of classes by college. The
Administration Building used 19% of its capacity 51% of the time, while Mining used
2% of capacity 34% of the time. Gillis calculated that “the per cent of time that a building is used is estimated on the basis of 34 hours per week as the maximum number of hours that a class room may be used. The capacity of the room, or the student hour capacity is estimated as follows”:\(^{24}\)

\[\text{The square feet of floor \times 34} \text{ – student hour capacity}\]

20

In a communication dated October 12, 1931 to Mr. R.F. Thomason, Registrar of the University of Tennessee, Gillis provided some background on the preservation of permanent records. In that letter, he stated that the University of Kentucky started using class cards in 1919 and that those old cards were being stored in labeled wooden trays, and stacked in a store room. The policy in 1931 was to keep class cards of students who had graduated at least two years, and all class cards of undergraduates who had not graduated. Students’ classification and schedule cards were all kept on file in perpetuity. Correspondence with new and prospective students, such as requests for catalogues and general information, was moved to transfer files after one year, then destroyed after another year. Correspondence related to a student’s record was kept permanently in a 4 x 6 envelope for that student.\(^ {25}\)

The Registrar’s Report for 1921-1922 saw a shift from simply reporting interesting data to analysis of that data to project future enrollment numbers and formulate courses of action. Gillis presented a chart that formed a relationship between the size of the University freshman class and the number of graduates of accredited high schools in Kentucky, both categories showing marked increases over the period 1918 to
1922. With this information, Gillis predicted an estimated increase of 19% to 21% in the University freshman class for 1922-1923, an increase of about 250 students over the previous year. Gillis pointed out the challenge of arranging class schedules for these additional numbers, as there was no increase in faculty. He predicted that the University would either have to limit the number of acceptances, or face the proposition of “allowing freshman sections to be crowded beyond the point where work of college grade can be done,”26 particularly as the University was currently teaching six days a week and had added another hour to the daily schedule the previous year.

After Gillis and the University of Kentucky introduced college courses on the work of the registrar, the Report of the Registrar not only included the usual statistics, but also focused on projects being researched by the graduate students holding fellowships or scholarships for laboratory work in the Registrar’s Office. In his report of 1925-1926, Gillis described a special study being conducted by Miss Mary Page Milton on the use of University space, and one by Miss Mary Agnes Gordon on the marking system of the University over the previous fifteen years. Gillis included these studies as attachments to his report. He would frequently arrange for his students’ research to be published in the Proceedings of the Annual Institute for Registrars, or as presentations or source materials for the American Association of Collegiate Registrars.27

Gillis also reported on the changes in personnel in the Registrar’s Office, particularly highlighting the current status of former scholarship holders. Gillis was proud of the accomplishments of his pupils/employees, particularly those who had gone on to take positions at other colleges or universities. From the 1925-1926 report, Miss Mary Elma Poole became the registrar of St. Louis University, while Mr. Cannon took
the position at Western State Teachers College at Bowling Green, Kentucky. While
Gillis was always sure to thank the administration for its support of his programs, “Your
support of this phase of our program has made a contribution to administration in this and
other institutions,” it was also an opportunity for Gillis to gain attention. Gillis was not
one to shy away from a spot in the limelight.

In the same 1925-1926 report, Gillis described his efforts to reorganize the system
of records, combining the student’s grades in separate sessions (regular, summer,
extension) previously kept in three separate places, on one record on a single sheet. This
change, he felt, would be a savings in filing work and in time needed to furnish
information quickly. Gillis was always quick to emphasize that the professional staff of
the Registrar’s Office should all be college graduates, preferably with advanced degrees.
In his report, he made it a point to mention that three recently added staff members were
all college graduates and had received special training in the work of the registrar. At
the end of each report, Gillis would put forth ideas for future projects should funds
permit. In this particular report, he pushed for funds to compile 1880-1900 student
records from the departmental books of professors’ class rolls, and convert them to the
transcript format. Gillis was never hesitant to state his case and even estimate the amount
of time and personnel needed, in this case “a good clerk for at least four months.”

Below are samples of a Class Record Book from 1894 and a transcript created from
class rolls of 1887 (student name redacted):
Figure 6.8 Class Record Book, 1894. Source: University Archives
Figure 6.9 Sample of transcript created late 1920s from earlier handwritten class rolls
Source: University Archives
The Report of the Registrar for 1926-1927 contained the usual meticulous statistics, including numbers for the University High School, with a total University enrollment of 5,128. Of that number, there were 2,485 in the regular session, 1,615 men and 870 women. In this report, Gillis included work done by Miss Taylor on a study of the occupations of students’ parents. Her study showed “that while more than fifty per cent of Kentucky’s population was supported by agricultural pursuits in 1920, only about thirty per cent of the students at the University come from farm homes.” While Gillis again praised the work of graduate students’ work on reports, and listed eleven trainees that had gone on to successful careers at other institutions, he noted that the work done in the Institute for Registrars and by students with fellowships and scholarships had aroused an interest that had grown beyond anything expected. The demand for trained clerks had been so great that the regular employees of the Registrar’s Office were somewhat handicapped by taking in so many new trainees. At this point, Gillis began to call for more permanent employees, particularly at least one trained in statistics. The University administration turned more and more to the Registrar to supply data and reports on various areas, thus Gillis opined that a trained statistician would be a good investment, followed by establishment of a Research Bureau. Working space for the Registrar’s Office continued to be a topic, with Gillis never hesitating to suggest how space around him should be rearranged to his benefit and the benefit of other departments.

Correspondence dated December 1927 from Gillis and Maple Moores, Secretary to Registrar Gillis, to Mr. J.G. Quick, Registrar, University of Pittsburgh, in response to his request for information about a particular photo corporation, describes how the
University of Kentucky incorporated a photo of the student into the transcript. Miss Moore replied on December 3:

We have used the camera for one full year and two summer sessions and have found it a very satisfactory method of identification for students. The operator is usually a student who is carefully trained prior to registration. We have one person to operate the camera, one to seat the students before the camera. We have two or three students from the Engineering department, who are trained in lettering rapidly to write the names of the students on the slates, and another to clean the slates as they are used. This enables us to take the photographs of the students at the rate of two per minute. The film is changed in the vault of our office in which a dark lantern is arranged. We then mail the film to the Company and receive the prints in from a week to ten days. We have two prints of each picture, one for the office of the Registrar and one for the office of the Dean. We also have a print of women students made for the Dean of Women. We get the prints in strips and they are cheaper than the individual prints with the black borders. We have found the Company to be courteous and accommodating at all times. I presume they would be willing to give us quicker service in the printing of the pictures if we should require it. We paste the picture on the back of the student’s permanent record sheet in about the center of the sheet. Mr. Holter at Bucknell University states that he applies the pictures with photographer’s tape which prevents wrinkling the pictures. However, we have found that pasting them is very satisfactory.35

Gillis followed up on December 13 with some clarifications:

The first year we had to take pictures of all students. This year we had freshmen week and it was only necessary to take the new students which made very little trouble to handle. The question of having photographs on the permanent records has been much more satisfactory than we anticipated. We have two pictures of each student at the cost of 2 ½ cents per picture. This does not include the cost of film which will produce five hundred pictures at a cost of $6.00.36

Below is a sample of a permanent record (name redacted), complete with photo, for a student who entered the University in 1930:37
In the 1927-28 report, Gillis expanded on previous reports with data on ages of students, training of the faculty, and teaching load. The Sixth Annual Institute for Registrars was held, with thirty-seven registrants, and courses on both professional and technical work. Institute proceedings were published and there was talk of a text book. Internally, Gillis initiated courses of instruction for all of his staff, spending fifteen minutes every work day morning reviewing rules and regulations, with an actual exam at the end of each semester. Each person was expected to master at least one particular work and have general knowledge of all work. In his report, Gillis lobbied for more space, investment in new labor-saving devices, upgrades to the status and salaries of staff,
and a full-time statistician. He also requested a special advisory committee, consisting of two men in the graduate school majoring in administration, to critique the work and annual report of the Registrar’s Office, with the suggestion that at least one of them be assigned a thesis on the annual report. In addition to the work routinely done, the Registrar’s work was increased by the Land Grant Survey, requiring data on the University alumni.  

The Annual Report for the year 1928-1929 boasted a student enrollment larger than at any time in the history of the University, reported as 2,959. For the first time, the course in the Techniques of the Registrar’s Office was given as a graduate course, with an enrollment of three graduate students and one senior. During the year, the Registrar’s Office adopted a new policy governing employment in that office: “Persons who do not hold the master’s degree will be employed for one year only. At the end of the year, these people will be encouraged to begin work for the master’s degree, or possibly transferred to some other institution. This new policy does not affect persons already employed at the time it was adopted.” Gillis also advocated for salary increases in an effort to both professionalize the office and to retain the most highly trained staff:

I think probably there should be some improvement in our policy of increasing college graduates from $60 to $100 per year when they start at $85 or $90 a month. It is to the interest of the institution to increase them for $150 to $200 a year, according to their training, until they reach the level for their department. Under our present schedule they are leaving us faster than is good for them, for they are inclined to leave before they receive the training they should have when they go to another institution.

For 1929-1930, while the employment policy initiated the previous year had not been in effect long enough to report on results, it did identify a need to expand the new
definitions and apply them to mid-level employees as well. It also revealed that while the new salary scales were beneficial to upper level employees, the staff in the lower groups had been overlooked, particularly stenographers. The registrar training courses Education 190a and 190b had a total enrollment of nineteen during the year. Gillis proposed limiting enrollment in the summer section of Education 190a to only six or seven graduate students, preferring this class be small to allow for quality laboratory work within the Registrar’s Office.\textsuperscript{41} In correspondence dated May 15, 1930 to the Vanderbilt University Registrar, the Secretary of the University of Kentucky office communicated:

Our office is organized in two departments, the department of admissions and the department of records. The head of each department holds the same rank and is on the same salary schedule, $2400 a year. The head of the admissions department is also the secretary. The first assistant in each department is on a salary scale of $1500. The other positions in the office do not pay more than $1200 and the persons holding them do not expect promotion in this office, but work for the training and experience, with the expectation of obtaining better positions in other institutions. For that reason we do not employ anyone without a college degree and persons with less than the master’s degree are employed for only one year. The budget recommendations are submitted to the President each year, but he has given his approval to the schedules mentioned above.\textsuperscript{42}

During 1929-30, five former trainees were placed in positions at other colleges, including Morehead State, Stanford, and Ohio Northern. Gillis reported on the year’s improvements of additional space and new metal furniture, and the cost savings that would be realized by the special committee’s recommendation to eliminate daily absence reports, while continuing to lobby for funds to assemble old records from 1900 to 1910, classify students by their high schools or previous colleges, and purchase labor-saving
devices such as the Photostat.\textsuperscript{43} Below are samples of class logs from 1908\textsuperscript{44} and 1910\textsuperscript{45}, along with a sample of a converted transcript for 1909.\textsuperscript{46}

![Figure 6.11 Sample Class Roll 1908; Source: University Archives](image-url)
Figure 6.12 Sample Class Roll 1910; Source: University Archives
Figure 6.13 Sample of transcript created from class rolls 1910-12; Source: University Archives
The Annual Report to the Superintendent of Public Instruction for the year 1931-1932 was grim as the effects of the Depression impacted the University, with drastic decreases in receipts from state taxes. While the close of the financial year found the University with no bank debt, the staff was owed $194,000 for back salaries. A salary reduction of ten percent in February 1932 was followed by $100 per month payments in March and April, then passes for May and June. A cooperative financial union was set up with the assistance of the business men of the city to help employees with short-term loans. The University planned to resume regular salary payments for 1932-33, but at a reduced level. To offset the loss of state tax revenue, student fees were increased fifty percent, realizing there would likely be a drop in enrollment. For the Registrar’s Office, in addition to salary cuts, appropriations for extra help were reduced from $2600 to $1000, resulting in work backlogs. The Office was forced to reduce expenses. The installation of the photostat enabled the Registrar’s Office to produce transcripts on a timely and less costly basis. In an effort to increase the collection rate on transcript fees, the Registrar initiated a policy of only sending transcripts upon request, and Deans agreed to copy the records of their own students.47

In an aforementioned letter dated October 12, 1931, to the University of Tennessee Registrar, Gillis described the “add and drop” processes and record retention period:

The add and drop lists are kept about four years. At present with us this is not important. We do not make out the class tickets until all changes have been made. I have reference to the time a student can be admitted to an organized class. But we do have a number of cases where students drop a course. That system is proving very satisfactory, at least to the registrar’s office. The Dean approves a student’s schedule of work at registration time and the departments are all located in the gymnasium. A student goes to the department and gets his assignment approved, so that the
departments are responsible for keeping the sections down to the proper number. They make out their class rolls during registration and for ten days during the period when a student is allowed to change, it is made direct from the Dean’s office to the department. Then the permanent class cards are turned over to the registrar’s office and the class ticket is made out and sent to the instructors. The official class roll, of course, is made out by the registrar’s office after all changes are supposed to be made.\textsuperscript{48}

The predicted decrease in enrollment became a reality the following year, 1932-1933. Gillis reported on the results of an American Association of Collegiate Registrars study of 857 educational institutions, revealing an average loss in enrollment in universities for the two years, 1931-32 and 1932-33, of 5.2 percent. There was a gain in enrollment at junior colleges of 9 percent.\textsuperscript{49} The loss in enrollment at the University of Kentucky was much greater than the loss exhibited by the national survey. While the national average was 5.2 percent, the University of Kentucky reported 17.7 percent. The highest losses were experienced by Engineering, the Graduate School, and Extension. In his report, Gillis offered the following explanation:

The increase in junior colleges appears to be accounted for by the depression. Students attend college near their homes. This may account for some of the loss in enrollment at the University. The big loss, I think is due to the difference in expenses at the University and at the Teachers Colleges. This should receive careful consideration.\textsuperscript{50}

For the year 1932-1933, the budget of the Registrar was cut from $20,700 to $16,900, resulting in the loss of the equivalent of 2.5 clerks. The addition of the Photostat, on the other hand, proved to be a successful investment. Gillis stated in his report, “In addition to the amount of money it has saved it has enabled us to give prompt service, and no
transcripts come to this office that I consider superior to the ones made at the University.\textsuperscript{51}

The year 1933-1934 saw a loss in resident enrollment of an additional 5.8 percent, with the largest suffered by Engineering, Education, and the Graduate School. As a result, one of the major interests that year for the Registrar was to increase enrollment, taking precedence over everything else.\textsuperscript{52} Correspondence with prospective students was the primary drive. Examples of such communications are pictured below:\textsuperscript{53}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{correspondence_samples.png}
\caption{Samples of correspondence with prospective students, 1933}
\end{figure}
As part of opening channels for recruitment, the Registrar initiated the custom of reporting to high school superintendents the names of their graduates receiving degrees at the University’s June commencement, with special mention given to those finishing with honors. Due to financial constraints, Registrar fellowships, new equipment, filing, and binding of reports had all been put on hold. For the coming year, Gillis requested funds for three new typewriters, filing equipment, binding of reports, and the continuation of the fellowship.

In the report for 1935-1936, President McVey summarized the Morrill Act of 1862 and the annual interest earned on the perpetual endowment established by Kentucky’s sale of 330,000 scrip acres. “For more than sixty-five years this payment has been made, but on the first of July, 1935, the payment was not made, so there is due at the present time $12,966.75 in back payments upon this endowment fund… For the State to repudiate its solemn obligation would be very unfortunate, and would give the State a publicity that would be highly detrimental.”

Despite the still flagging economy, all University colleges showed an increase for 1935-1936, with four – Graduate, Commerce, Agriculture, and Law – passing former peaks. The Registrar’s Office fellowship produced a unit cost study by student Miss Florrie Mathis, a study labeled by Gillis as one of the most valuable made by anyone majoring in the registrar’s field. The study focused on comparing teaching loads among departments on different levels as well as the associated functional budgets.

As part of his annual report and evidence of further efforts at increasing retention, Gillis recommended the establishment of an adviser for probation students:

Every year we have a number of students who have done poor work in other colleges and who make application for admission to the University.
In many cases these students were not well adapted to the work they had been assigned and are really capable of doing a high grade of work in certain fields. It is common for people to advise students to take certain courses without any reference to the abilities and the interests of the student, but rather the interest of the one who gives the advice. We have been experimenting for a number of years with these cases and the number that has done good work is encouraging and leads me to suggest that more careful attention should be given to this group. Someone might be assigned the task of making a study of each individual case and helping the student to adjust his college course to his needs and interests.\textsuperscript{56}

A \textit{Kentucky Kernel} article dated August 13, 1936, announced a new system of registration to take effect that fall. For many years, the previous system had brought complaints from students of “extreme inefficiency”, disorder, and delay. Under the new system, students were admitted by class, then alphabetically. The first day of registration was solely for freshmen. The following days were for all upperclassmen with designated time slots assigned alphabetically. This new plan was instigated by the executive board of \textit{The Kernel}, in cooperation with Gillis, deans of men and women, and representatives from the business office. The new system was introduced with advance warning that its success depended on the cooperation of students. It was stated up front that students who entered the wrong alphabetical divisions would not be allowed to complete registration until the time specified for them.\textsuperscript{57}
Below are pictures of the organized chaos of class registration in Alumni Gym at the University of Kentucky:

Figure 6.15 Lines form for registration at Alumni Gym in 1939.\textsuperscript{58}

Figure 6.16 Mass registration at Alumni Gym in 1946\textsuperscript{59}
Chapter Seven

Professionalization of the Registrar at the University of Kentucky

Ezra L Gillis

Ezra L Gillis (right)\(^1\) was born January 1, 1867 in a log house on Beaver Creek in Anderson County, Kentucky. He attended public schools and the Central Normal College of Camden, Kentucky. Gillis began his teaching career in 1886 in public schools. In 1888, he married Sallie Sullivan, also of Anderson County, and in 1899 brought his wife Sallie and two daughters, Cleo and Inis, to Lexington, where he attended the Normal College of Kentucky University, later known as Transylvania College. In 1902, Gillis became president of Minerva College, a combined elementary and high school in Minerva, Kentucky, Madison County. Details about this period are scarce, but after receiving the A.B. degree from Central Normal College of Danville, Indiana, he was appointed instructor in education in 1907 at the University of Kentucky, then known as State College of Kentucky.\(^2\) He is listed in the Catalogues of 1908, 1909, and 1910 as either Assistant or Assistant Professor in Education. By an act approved March 16, 1908, the General Assembly of the State of Kentucky established in the State University of Kentucky a Department of Education with collegiate rank, leading to degrees of Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science in Education.\(^3\) As a result of this act, the Normal School was abolished. With the establishment of the Teachers College, a large part of the sub-freshman work Gillis had been teaching was eliminated, leaving him with little to do. He volunteered to help Professor Arthur Miller, Dean of the Arts & Sciences College, with some reports for the Carnegie Foundation. In July 1909, Gillis
was also tasked by President Patterson to find accommodations for a professor. He promptly wrote to Dr. Louis Snow, Dean of the Department of Education, that he would take care of his shipped belongings and that he could stay with the Gillis family until he found suitable accommodations. His diligence and perceived willingness to take on any task would ultimately earn him praise and a recommendation from Professor Miller to be Registrar. It was the opinion of Gillis that the current Registrar of the time (King) was a registrar in name only, as she was the President’s secretary and simply entered grades when they were turned in.

1910 was a pivotal year in the history of the University of Kentucky. It signaled the end of the Patterson era, as the long-serving president reluctantly retired, and the beginning of a period of both progress and strife as a controversial “non-academic” President Henry Stites Barker would take over in January of 1911. In the meantime, Vice President James White was Acting President at the Board of Trustees Meeting of May 31, 1910. White addressed the need to relieve the strapped Margaret King of her duties as Registrar to devote more time to her librarian duties. While never coming right out and stating that Gillis should be Registrar, the implication was there, as he included the following remarks about Gillis in his overview of the year’s activities in the Teacher’s College:

Assistant Prof. Gillis has been an untiring worker. He has, in addition to classes assigned him by Dean Snow, taught some classes in the Academy, and he has worked early and late in gathering statistics by which we may advertise the institution more advantageously than in the past. He is one of the most faithful workers we have. He has during the last month and a half given me much assistance.

This remark was immediately followed by:
One of our most pressing needs is a Registrar. For several years Miss King has discharged some of the duties of a Registrar but her services as private Secretary to the President, and recently as Librarian, have rendered it impossible for her to keep the University records as they should be. With the present enrollment of students, the duties of Registrar will require the services of a competent person on an average of about two hours per day, but it is highly important that this service be provided. I recommend therefore that I be authorized to arrange, with the approval of the Executive Committee, for the services of a Registrar. 7

Miss King was highly educated, having earned an AB from the University of Kentucky (then Agricultural & Mechanical College of Kentucky) in 1898. Given the assertion that the registrar duties would only require two hours a day, and that a full-time professor could spare that time, why was Miss King seemingly unfairly passed over? Later that same day, the above directive was followed up by these excerpted statements in the Report of Committee on Budget:

4. – Miss King to serve as librarian, and stenographer to Dr. Patterson. One half of her salary to be paid out of the appropriation for the Carnegie Library, and the other half out of the funds of the University.

5. – That the office of Registrar be filled out of the present University staff by the President or Acting President. 8

There was no official appointment in minutes of subsequent Executive Committee or Board of Trustees Meetings, but in a letter written by Gillis on July 21, 1910, in response to an invitation to attend an inaugural national Registrar’s Meeting, he responded in part, “I assumed the duties of Registrar of the State University July the first of this year, consequently I do not feel competent to offer for consideration any questions at the coming meeting…” 9 Gillis was subsequently listed as Registrar in the Catalogues of 1910-1911, 1911-1912, and 1912-1913. He ceased to be listed as Faculty in 1912-
1913, as he was no longer teaching in Education and had not been listed under that department since taking the Registrar position. This reinforces McGrath’s survey results that showed a gradual decline over time in Registrars who also taught classes. The 1912-1913 Catalogue provides evidence of the growth and professionalization of the Registrar’s Office, with the first listing of office staff.\textsuperscript{10} In addition to the Registrar, there was an Assistant Registrar (a woman) and two clerks, one full-time, one part-time. The clerks, both women, each had earned Bachelor’s Degrees. While clerical support in administrative offices was dominated by women, full-time female registrars were few and far between. In response to that same invitation to attend the first national meeting of registrars in 1910, E. A. Balentine, Secretary and Registrar for the University of Maine, said “I hope that the fact that I am a woman will not debar me from membership in the organization that you are suggesting.”\textsuperscript{11} Beginning 1913-1914, Gillis took on the role of Secretary of the Faculty, in addition to his position as Registrar. In 1917-1918, the title changed from Secretary of the Faculty to Secretary of the Senate.

From his earliest days at State College of Kentucky, Gillis demonstrated his affinity for recruiting students and for documentation of the slightest detail. As part of his duties as an Assistant Professor in Education, Gillis was charged with traveling throughout the state and visiting with prospective students. While on these business trips, he documented his expenses down to the penny and made detailed notes on prospects. On one occasion, he met with Mr. Mickle, a potential candidate or source of information in Hancock County in July 1907, in a cornfield plowing, and noted he was a small man with a black moustache. On another occasion in Henry County, Gillis met with “a special friend to the school” who provided him with names of prospective students (Figure
Details of his expense account were kept in a small book, listing such items as meals, car fare, laundry, livery, railroad fare, and even a bath (Figure 7.1). Such attention to detailed recordkeeping (and the fact that he kept the records indefinitely) was surely a foretaste of his future career.
Figure 7.1 Gillis expense account notes from August 1908; Source: University Archives
Figure 7.2 Gillis notes from recruiting trips across the state of Kentucky, 1907
Source: University Archives
Gillis took his duties as Registrar seriously. One of the first things he did was to visit several offices at other schools, such as Purdue, Indiana, and Ohio State.\textsuperscript{14} He gathered resources (samples of forms and cards) and knowledge by taking advantage of every opportunity to network with other registrars, as he became actively involved in the newly formed American Association of Collegiate Registrars. In his diaries, Gillis makes particular note of Max McConn, University of Illinois, for his early advice. It was McConn’s small chart listing the names of the presidents and some important events that led to Gillis’s exhaustive historical chart of 1956, cited several times in this paper. Gillis has said that during his first years of attending the AACR conference, he would ask particular well-known registrars, such as McConn, E.B. Pierce (Minnesota), and W.D. Heistand (Wisconsin), questions about all phases of registrar work, finding those talks more profitable than the formal meetings.\textsuperscript{15} He strived to collect all the past University of Kentucky catalogues. According to Gillis’s diaries, in 1910, Professor James G. White gave him the first three volumes covering 1865 to 1890.\textsuperscript{16} This practice of collecting and archiving information would continue until practically the day he died. As a result of the Report of the Investigating Committee of 1917, and due to their recommendations, the Registrar was given full charge of admission, including admissions with advanced standing and to the Graduate School, and full charge of the schedule of classes. While recommending the Faculty retain the charge of establishing regulations, the committee stated the Registrar should be the administrative agent of the Faculty (Figure 7.3). The Committee also recommended the Registrar be given additional clerical assistance to enable him to maintain and expand his series of statistics.\textsuperscript{17}
Gillis attributed the success of his early years as Registrar and thus the accolades his office received in the 1917 Report of the Investigating Committee, to President Henry Stites Barker (right), University president from 1911 to 1917. According to Gillis, although Barker’s presidency was overshadowed by conflict and dissension, his achievements should be acknowledged. In Gillis’s opinion, Barker’s first and greatest work was to delegate responsibility for conduct to the head of each department, something the previous president, James K. Patterson, did not allow. Patterson maintained domination of the minutest detail, restricting initiative and development, behavior particularly detrimental during periods of growth in
enrollment and expansion of services. Patterson was said to have treated his relationship with staff as a high school principal to his teachers, instead of a college president to his professors. Several faculty members discovered that criticism of Patterson led to instant dismissal.20

When Barker first visited Gillis in his office, he said “You are the Registrar. I will support you in everything you do. If you succeed, your stock will go up; if not, it will go down.”21 For Gillis, “the atmosphere of freedom for ideas and initiative which developed in Barker’s first days was like opening the window of a stuffy room to a fresh breeze.”22 Gillis thrived under Barker’s policy of giving guidance and assistance when called upon, but leaving Gillis free to organize his work in his own way. Gillis’s early initiatives were rewarded by the Investigating Committee’s report: “We have found in the Registrar’s Office an organization, a set of records, and a system of administration which, given the possibilities of the situation, are not in our judgment surpassed by any other state University.”23 While Gillis surely appreciated such accolades, the growth in the stature of his position and University-wide influence far outweighed mere words. This was a turning point for Gillis. This surge in power locally surely led to his confidence to stand up for his beliefs, to pursue recognition nationally, and to ultimately become the “go-to” person for inquiries from other colleges and universities.

At the request of President Frank McVey, a faculty committee, later including Ezra Gillis, was instructed to codify faculty rules and make recommendations to adopt a Constitution to define governing regulations. The Minutes of the University Senate for December 7, 1917, Page #9-A, under X. Other Administrative Officers, provided the following duties of the Registrar:
The Registrar has charge of the registration and the permanent records of the students. He conducts correspondence with prospective students, and subject to the rules of the Senate, examines and passes upon entrance credentials, including entrance with advanced standing and as special students. He has full charge of the schedule of classes and of examinations. He edits the institution directory and compiles institution statistics, and in cooperation with a committee of the Senate, has charge of the editing and distribution of the University catalog and announcements. He presents to the Senate in October the list of students eligible for degrees in June, and at the close of the second semester those who have completed the requirements for degrees, or are eligible for degrees in the following December. He furnishes a list of the candidates for degrees to the Senate for recommendation to the Board of Trustees. He prepares diplomas and certificates and delivers them to the President for award at the Commencement Exercises. He is ex-officio secretary of the Senate and of the Council.  

In his diaries, Gillis recalled his first meeting with President McVey in 1917. At that time, the Registrar, in addition to their regular working space, had possession of two outer offices next to the President as Gillis had been secretary to President Barker and had given one office to a stenographer. Dr. McVey said he wanted both those office spaces and that Gillis was relieved of any secretarial duties. Gillis commented that McVey’s attitude toward the Registrar at first seemed cold in comparison to Barker’s freedom and complimentary way of talking. He attributed this attitude of initially excluding Gillis from decision-making roles to the fact that at McVey’s previous institution, North Dakota, the Registrar’s duties seemed to be just clerical. Gillis mentioned in his diaries that he felt rather uneasy for a year or two but as the years passed, the Registrar’s Office was given more and more work, along with the recognition.

Gillis seized on every opportunity to promote the work of the Registrar’s Office. In a letter to Dr. McVey dated October 16, 1917, he took advantage of the favorable report of the Investigating Committee to applaud the efforts of his staff, Miss Graddy,
Assistant Registrar, and Miss Owens, Assistant in charge of current records, and at the same time asked for raises for them: “In view of the fact that both have had an opportunity to go into other offices, at an increase of salary, I recommend that an additional $5.00 per month be paid to each of them.” Salaries for both himself and his staff were always a sore point with Gillis, both in comparison to the same positions at other institutions and to University faculty. In a letter to President McVey, dated April 16, 1924, Gillis, through his affiliation with the American Association of Collegiate Registrars, provided survey statistics from 1924, comparing registrars’ and assistants’ salaries at the University of Kentucky to other institutions. Gillis was quick to point out that forty-one registrars made an average of $1000 more than he did, and that twenty-three registrars averaged $1600 per year more. In the letter, he noted that University of Kentucky professors that taught in the summer session and did some extension work received from $1000 to $1600 in addition to their regular salaries. Gillis felt it only fair the Registrar be granted a corresponding increase due to the extra work caused by the growing summer sessions.

Gillis continued to campaign for equity in the Registrar’s Office long after he left it in 1937. In a New Year’s greeting on January 1, 1947, to President Herman Donovan, Vice President Leo Chamberlain, and Dean and Registrar Maurice Seay, he said:

My dream of a registrar’s office will not be fully realized until that part of the staff charged with supervision and interpretation of data is on a par, as to status and salary, with the average instructional staff. What I failed to fully accomplish I would be just as happy to see brought about under your administration. Under present conditions if the office is to live up to its possibilities for service, in addition to earning it, the responsible members of the staff should be given the suggested recognition to attract proper replacements.

President Donovan responded on January 2, 1947, saying:
I realize fully what you say about the registrar’s office and I pledge you that we will see that the quality of the staff which you have had does not deteriorate, and that they shall be upon a professional basis, adequately compensated for the work which they do. Please rest assured that so long as I have anything to do with the University we will continue to see that the great office which you established continues to serve the University in the future as it has in the past.  

Throughout his career as Registrar, Gillis continued to subscribe to the idea that the Registrar of the University ranks as high in his profession as the professors of the University do in their respective fields, and that considering the service rendered to the University in comparison to other registrars and University professors, the Registrar deserved equal pay. This perceived inequity carried beyond monetary compensation. During the 1934-35 year, Gillis was asked to serve on a committee to evaluate the registrar’s division of the Survey of the University System of Georgia. The institutions studied were the University of Georgia, Georgia Institute of Technology and Women’s College at Milledgeville. Gillis was given free rein to recommend the duties of the registrar and assistance needed at each institution. From his diaries, it bothered Gillis that no mention of this ever made the papers and he could only imagine what might have been in the papers if some other faculty members had served on such a committee.  

Gillis was also quick to defend his office when he perceived it to be under attack, no matter the rank of the individual. In 1929, Gillis strongly objected in writing to veiled accusations by Dean W.S. Taylor of the College of Education that the Registrar’s Office had not properly certified a particular student for a degree, even though the Dean had recommended it. When the student in question attempted to apply to a graduate school, it was found he actually had insufficient credits for a University of Kentucky degree. Gillis went so far as to say “No doubt you enjoyed securing your friend a degree and he
enjoyed it temporarily, but the good name of the University has certainly not been enhanded.”

The aftermath of this blowup was a report to the President and a University Council Committee on Accredited Relations decision that the Registrar had full authority.

In 1937, coincidentally the final year as Registrar for Gillis, a survey of various departments of the University was conducted by former President of Iowa State College, Dr. R. M. Hughes. President Frank McVey forwarded the findings regarding the Registrar’s Office to Gillis. Hughes was critical of the format of the catalogues in some minor ways, but those comments did not catch the eye of Gillis. It was the statement that the staff seemed large and well paid, in comparison to that of Iowa State College, which drew an immediate response from Gillis, complete with studies and statistics. At that time, the Registrar’s Office consisted of nine full-time employees and salaries of $4,100 for the Registrar, $11,000 for all clerks and assistants, and $3,300 for students. Gillis provided the following rebuttal:

From a study made in 1928, the average salary of deans in fifteen institutions was $6000; professors, $4224; associate professors, $3261; assistant professors, $2707; instructors, $1971. The average salary of the registrar in the same institutions was $4880, which is between the average of the professors and that of the deans. There are three registrars with an average salary of $6000. The range is from $4000 to $6000, with eight of them receiving $5000 or more. A good registrar might reasonably expect a salary approaching that of a dean.

Gillis, of course, provided similar data for other office salaries. Regarding the statement that the staff seemed large, Dr. Hughes had added a comment that Mr. Gillis was undoubtedly doing work and keeping records beyond any registrar, and that upon his impending retirement, an audit should be made to determine how much was worth continuing. Hughes even remarked that part of Gillis’s work was being done for and by
his students, and that a reduction in work would follow discontinuance of the graduate course. Gillis responded:

It has been my purpose to make the office a laboratory for the analysis of problems in administration and instruction. An academic laboratory in a university is just as essential as a laboratory for a scientific business corporation. It should pay for itself in the improvement of administration and instruction.

As to the number in the office, in a study of 51 institutions of from 1000 to 3000 enrolment, the average number of clerks per 500 students was 1.35, and that would entitle us to one more clerk than we have. The eight regular members of the staff and the extra help are equivalent to nine associates, about the average of the 51 institutions.\textsuperscript{32}

Dr. Hughes had also pointed to too many classes of only 1 to 10 students. In response to that criticism, Gillis immediately formed a University Council committee to study the matter, with meticulous data provided by the Registrar’s Office, and offer recommendations for minimum size of classes:\textsuperscript{33}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class Type</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Junior College Classes</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior College Classes</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strictly Graduate Classes</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Gillis had no problem accepting criticism of University policies or procedures, in fact seemed to thrive on putting together data and detailed reports, but took perceived attacks against himself, his Office, or his staff quite personally.

There is little documentation of Gillis’s reaction to early attempts by African Americans to enroll at the University. When the University of Kentucky hosted the annual meeting of the American Association of Collegiate Registrars in 1917, one attendee commented to Gillis that he was surprised at how they treated the “negroes” in the South, such as janitors in the building, with the kindness of parents rather than with
an attitude of speaking to slaves. Gillis does not expound on his own viewpoint regarding registration in his own notes, however reference was made to an incident in 1926 when an African American student from Paris, Kentucky, persisted in asking Wellington Patrick, director of university extension, to enroll in correspondence courses at the University. Patrick told President McVey that he usually responded that the University “would be very happy to be of service to the colored people of the state but…there is a law on the Statute Books of Kentucky which prohibits white and colored people from receiving instruction in the same institution.” He would then refer such inquiries to the “Colored Normal School at Frankfort”. McVey and Patrick debated on how the request could be accommodated, but noted the difficulty the University would face when the student presented their credits from UK to schools in the North. They debated it if would be appropriate to allow African Americans to take correspondence courses as “special students” not enrolled in the university, with special explanations noted on their transcripts. Patrick noted that Ezra Gillis preferred “not to deal with them.” Although Patrick did conclude the policy was “rather cold, if we can legally help them,” ultimately, the Board of Trustees declined to rule, and such students were referred to the school in Frankfort. It was not until 1949 that the University admitted its first African American student, Lyman T. Johnson.

In 1916, Gillis was elected secretary and treasurer of the Southern Atlantic Conference. The eight schools represented were University of Kentucky, Auburn, Georgia, Georgia Tech, Tennessee, Clemson, Mississippi A&M, and South Carolina. In his diaries, Gillis discusses a time when he was chairman of the University’s Athletic Committee and it was his responsibility to check the students’ status before each game.
If the student was not passing all his classes, he would be taken off the team. Apparently, this applied only to athletics, not other competitions such as the debate team. The 1917 Report of the Investigating Committee recommended that each student’s record be evaluated once, prior to the semester in question, and that no exceptions be granted. Gillis noted that in meetings with schools, those men were worse than faculty would be when the question of softening the rules was discussed. It was Gillis’s opinion that the serious problem came from alumni and gamblers, noting that if an alumnus wanted to “give a boy money” on the side, he could always find a way. He also expressed that he thought they could have a good school without athletics. 40 Even so, in a letter dated November 10, 1931, Gillis thanked the football coach at that time, Harry Gamage:

I should like at this time to express my appreciation of you and your administration at the University of Kentucky. Our teams have not only been respected, but as Registrar of the University I have especially appreciated your attitude toward scholarship in the Institution. There has been no attempt, so far as I know, through you or any of the Athletic Committee, to influence the admission of students who were not eligible. This has not always been the case at the University. Your support of scholastic standing in the University deserves special mention. Your deep interest in athletics has not allowed you to emphasize that department at the expense of the educational spirit of the Institution. 41

In 1919, Gillis became president of the American Association of Collegiate Registrars, after serving for six years as its secretary. In 1924, he started a nationally recognized summer institute at the University of Kentucky for the training of registrars. Over his twenty-seven year career as Registrar, he became a national leader and the “go-to” source of information for registrars across the country, a status he enjoyed. In 1930, Gillis shared his wealth of knowledge on registration procedures, including how to draw up the physical plant and numbering of points where students are required to stop, with Oklahoma A&M; gathering information for faculty data cards with Ward-Belmont
School in Nashville; permanent records by photostat with Muskingum College in Ohio; practice of keeping records for colleges with Mercer University in Georgia; methods of handling absences with West Virginia University; and the advisability of cards versus loose leaf binders with Bradley Polytechnic in Illinois. In 1931, he disclosed the University’s procedure for setting up new courses in the curriculum to Registrar S. R. Doyle of the Florida State College for Women; retention policy for class cards to Thomason of the University of Tennessee; and determination of degree candidates, complete with a commencement calendar, to the Registrar of the University of Arizona. In correspondence dated December 1, 1936, with University of Maryland Registrar Alma Preinkert, he provided an exhaustive list of books and publications he had found useful, a list comprised of more than 100 books, journals, and bulletins, complete with publication information and cost, and a few helpful notes thrown in. These are just a few of the hundreds of requests for information that Gillis routinely received and to which he responded. In addition, Gillis would routinely get inquiries from institutions looking for recommendations in hiring a registrar or assistant registrar. Likewise, his former students would inquire of him if he knew of any vacancies.

Gillis was compelled to retire as Registrar in 1937, per University policy, when he reached the age of 70, but continued to work for the University as organizer and director of the Bureau of Source Materials in Higher Education, the predecessor of the University Archives. Gillis referred to this as a change of work, not retirement. While Director of the Bureau, he spearheaded efforts to acquire and preserve source
material on educational institutions for the use of graduate students and historians. He directed the county-by-county compilation of over 9,300 Kentuckians who died in World War II. This information was used to inscribe their names for display in Memorial Coliseum.

Since 1927, the University of Kentucky has been one of several southern universities that present the Algernon Sydney Sullivan award to recognize those faculty, staff or students who exhibit Sullivan's ideals of a spirit of love for and helpfulness to other men and women. In 1950, Ezra Gillis was awarded the Sullivan Medallion. Also in 1950, the Bureau fittingly became the repository for the collection of the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers, a responsibility held until 1967. He remained active until his death September 18, 1957 at the age of 91, having previously stated, “I am going to stay on this campus as long as I can even if the only thing left to do is to walk around admiring the trees and buildings.”

Gillis is considered by many to be the father of the registrar profession, with the major accomplishment of being one of the early members of the AACR. Today, that organization is the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO), with more than 10,000 admissions and registrar professionals representing 2,500 institutions from more than 30 countries.

Ezra L Gillis was a popular speaker, known for his humorous, sometimes off-color story-telling, and those stories usually illustrated a philosophical point. He especially liked to repeat stories of his early days as Registrar. He spoke of this in comments to the Tenth Annual Meeting of the American Association of Collegiate Registrars (1920) in Washington, D.C.:
I remember looking over just a short time ago the minutes of the board of directors when I was made a registrar. The president told the board that I would need two hours a day; that I was not allowed any help, and I could teach the rest of the time. They assigned me a table and a chair in the corner of another man’s office. In a short time I noticed in the daily paper that the university had been reorganized. I looked over the membership, the council of administration and the university assembly and I looked in vain for any mention of the registrar. In a short time, one of the deans in talking with me on some administrative problem said, “I expect you should have been a member of the council in planning reorganization. I never thought about you, and I do not suppose anybody else did.”

They had been working on the administration building for some time and the foreman said, “They are going to give you an office all to yourself,” and so I went with him to see that office. It was a room 10 by 12. He was a tall man and as he waved his arm and said, “You are going to have all this to yourself,” his fingers nearly touched the walls. I noticed hardwood floors were in the other rooms and I asked him how they were going to finish my office floor. He told me what I heard a number of times afterwards. He said, “We are short of money.” I looked about at the heating system, and I saw no method of heating that office except by friction. I asked him about the heating system and he said, “We are short of money.” …He said – “We talked about this. We thought since you would not be in the office but for a little while every day, but teaching most of the time, that you could get along without any heat, but if it did get cold you could just open the door to the office of the dean and allow some heat to come in from there.” I was ignorant of the possibilities of heat from that section at that time.48

It should be noted that throughout this document the name Ezra L Gillis has no period after the L. If you have an occasion to see his signature, you will see no period there. He was named Ezra Gillis at birth, with no middle initial. As a young man, he took care of that oversight by adopting the letter L – not the initial – and inserting it between Ezra and Gillis. He insisted that since the middle letter was not an initial, there should be no period after it.49 Such was the character of the man dedicated to his career as teacher and registrar, to his family, and to higher education. Both his daughters graduated from the University of Kentucky. One daughter, Cleo Gillis Hester, was the
first full-time Registrar at Murray State University, where she served in that role for thirty-three years, 1927-1960.\textsuperscript{50} Ezra L Gillis was of the post-Civil War generation that saw the beginnings of the explosion of administrative offices in higher education. Gillis not only documented the history of the University of Kentucky, he was a legendary figure in making some of that history himself. The long-standing original Experiment Station building on campus, completed in 1889, then rebuilt in 1892 after a fire, was named in his honor in 1978 (right).\textsuperscript{51}

Gillis Building
Chapter Eight

Conclusion

Organization theory draws from a lengthy list of disciplines, including sociology, psychology, social psychology, cultural anthropology, political science, economics, business administration, public administration, mathematics, statistics, systems theory, industrial engineering, philosophy, ethics, history, and computer sciences. The university is organizationally one of the most complex structures in modern society, with its multiple (sometimes competing) goals of teaching, research, and public service. As with other organizations, the university has gone through a life cycle and exemplifies Daft’s four stages of life cycle development. It started out as an administration run by just one man (entrepreneurial stage), rapidly grew in size and formed departments and professional schools (collectivity stage), increased bureaucracy with expansion of personnel and administrative units, consolidated departmental control over academic matters, and diffused participation in government (formalization stage), and ultimately evolved into a large bureaucracy with extensive control systems, rules, and procedures, dealing with pressures from outside forces, concern for stature, and competition with peer institutions (elaboration stage).

As the university grew over time, the classical organizational theory concepts espoused by early pioneers such as McCallum, Taylor, Fayol, and Weber took hold – such concepts as delegation of tasks, division of labor, scientific management of best practices in job completion, hiring, and remuneration, reporting mechanisms, written regulations and procedures, and a formal hierarchy of authority. Universities operate in a very complex environment, with a whole range of stakeholders to satisfy: students,
parents, accrediting agencies, federal, state, and local government, alumni, foundations, granting agencies, professional and scientific associations, donors, and the surrounding community. Although technically not a business, as it is a non-profit institution, the public university must often act like one, as it competes with other universities for talented students, faculty, and staff, and for scarce financial resources from state government, donors, and research contracts.

According to Earl McGrath’s survey data, the median number of all administrative officers listed in his thirty-two institutions of higher education increased from 4 in 1860 to 30.5 in 1933.\(^1\) The registrar’s academic record-keeping was initially a part-time duty assigned to a faculty member or clerk. As student enrollment in colleges grew, that status changed rapidly. Evidence points to some key sources for this enrollment growth: Morrill Act of 1862, elective system, and graduate education. By 1880, 10 percent of the institutions of higher learning had full-time registrars, 42 percent by 1900, 76 percent by 1910, and over 90 percent by 1920.\(^2\) Today, the historical functions of record management, registration, and institutional data reporting have expanded to enrollment planning, student information technology, and enrollment management services.

My study of the rise of the Registrar at the University of Kentucky was focused on the earliest days up until the retirement of Ezra Gillis in 1937. The University of Kentucky followed the pattern of other American institutions in that the President held sole authority over academic and business processes until increased enrollment and demands for services necessitated, although reluctantly on the part of President Patterson, delegation of the day-to-day functions. McGrath’s data indicated, for the eight state
institutions in his survey, that the Registrar was normally established fifth, behind the Dean. In this regard, the University of Kentucky was like its state institution counterparts, however UK lagged well behind the median establishment year of 1887. Recognition of any kind of registrar did not occur at the University of Kentucky until 1902, with the appointment of the publicized Registrar, Ezra Gillis, in 1910. The position fit the standard pattern of evolution from an experienced clerk (Hodges, Hodges, and King) to a professor with a light teaching schedule (Gillis) to a full-time trained man with a clerical staff.

Establishing and filling the Registrar position in 1910 were just the first steps in the progression in student recordkeeping at the University of Kentucky, moving from handwritten ledger entries and bound books to typed record cards and an elaborate filing system. The Registrar’s Office grew in size and moved from just registering students and entering grades to providing meticulous data and reports to the administration, invaluable in decision-making processes. The progress over the next three decades from establishment could not have been achieved without three elements: support from the administration and faculty, a network of outreach and communication with other collegiate registrars, and a strong individual to spearhead staff, policy, and procedural changes. Ezra Gillis took advantage of carefully built relationships with University presidents, keeping in constant contact with them, forcefully advocating for the budget, personnel, and training of his office. His relationship with faculty was often contentious, but Gillis was unwavering in his defense of policies. Gillis and his staff reached out to other schools and formed life-long bonds with peers. He participated wholeheartedly in the newly formed national association of registrars, becoming a long-time leader of that
group, and the person all registrars would consult, even long after he retired. Gillis surrounded himself with highly-trained staff, instituting policy changes requiring they have graduate degrees, thus ensuring he would have qualified people to take on research and reporting projects. He lobbied hard for respect and salary increases for his position and those that reported to him, an effort he continued long after he had left the office.

With the birth and rapid growth of the American Association of Collegiate Registrars, and the subsequent networking opportunities and publication of reports and speeches, combined with increased enrollment and expected services, all college registrar offices across the country developed at a rapid pace. However, it is my opinion that the strong, sometimes stubborn, leadership of Ezra Gillis put the University of Kentucky at an advantage.

In 1910, Ezra Gillis was in just the right place at just the right time to step in to the officially recognized Registrar position at what was then State College. When his teaching position hours were reduced due to reorganization, he voluntarily took on some tedious tasks for professors and administrators, activity that got him noticed at just the right time. Gillis spent his long 51-year career making sure he was always in the right place at the right time, drawing attention to the hard work and progress of both the Registrar’s Office and the Bureau of Source Materials in Higher Education (predecessor of University Archives). He was active in every facet of the University, serving on a broad range of committees, taking on additional tasks whenever asked, and participating in decision-making processes. Gillis understood early on that a highly trained staff was the key to the success of the Registrar’s Office and spent his career endorsing and conducting graduate work in the field, and advocating for respect for the “profession”
from the administration and the faculty. The birth of the American Association of Collegiate Registrars in 1910 was a step in the right direction for professionalization, with its formal network of communications, publication of papers and reports, and training programs. Gillis enthusiastically joined the association in 1912, eventually becoming its most powerful member and the “Father of Registrars.”

The 1917 Report of the Investigating Committee brought praise for Gillis’s efforts and added to his influence and power base. He created and operated an institute for training registrars, running from 1923 to 1927. Graduate courses in registrar work were added to the University curriculum, and graduate fellowships were established for students with the Registrar’s Office as a lab. Institute and University graduates went on to serve in Registrar’s Offices across the country. It seemed, during that time, that the work of the Registrar finally met the definition of a profession. However, when the shift in graduate work moved toward more general courses in higher education administration, the emphasis on the registrar work diminished. The national and state/regional associations continued to thrive with increased memberships, publications, presentations, and isolated training at conference sites, but there was no longer an education track or degree specifically for the Registrar.

Is the Registrar a profession? While there is no doubt that Ezra Gillis would vehemently shout “yes” and it seemed it was on its way during his day, the above evidence points to “no.”
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Chapter Eight: Conclusion

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CAREER SUMMARY
2008-Present  Associate Director, University of Kentucky Student Account Services
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1986-1988  Loans Collection Officer, University of Kentucky Student Billing Services
1981-1987  Account Clerk, University of Kentucky Billings & Collections/Student Billing Services

SIGNIFICANT ACHIEVEMENTS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY
The University of Kentucky has maintained very low default rates on campus-based federal student loan programs, lower than the national average and lowest of other comparably-sized institutions in the state of Kentucky.

The University of Kentucky converted from the Guaranteed/Federal Family Education Loan Program to the William D. Ford Federal Direct Student Loan Program in 1995, enabling students to borrow from a single lender. After extensive research and planning over an 18-month period, the University began participation in the program in only the second year of its existence.

PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITY
Founding member of the Kentucky Association of Student Receivable Officers, 1991, serving as the organization’s Secretary 1999-2003, 2011-2016
Recipient of the KASRO Distinguished Service Award, 2012
University of Kentucky Staff Senator, 2011-2017
Member, Kappa Delta Pi, International Honor Society in Education, 2006-present
BOOK REVIEWS
