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125 YEARS OF TENNESSEE LAW

The 125th Anniversary Issue

UT LAW. 125 YEARS.

Tennessee Law

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1890

The beginning

The majority of American lawyers in the 1890s "had seen the inside neither of a college nor of a law school."

Until a state examining board was established by the legislature in 1903, admission to the bar in Tennessee was open to anyone twenty-one years of age, of good moral character, and who either received certification by the faculty of a law school or could satisfy two state judges that the aspiring lawyer was qualified.

The idea of establishing a law department at the University of Tennessee came from its first dean, Thomas J. Freeman, who served as a justice of the Tennessee Supreme Court from 1870 to 1886. Freeman was admitted to the bar in 1843 and practiced law in Trenton, Tennessee, before serving in the Confederate Army during the Civil War. According to a 1941 *Tennessee Law Review* article, Freeman was a "tall, angular man with a long beard" who had a passion for books and a character that "was above reproach." By reason of his vigor and independence of thought, which some regarded as "stubbornness," Dean Freeman became known as "the great dissenter."

On October 11, 1889, Freeman wrote a letter to the university's new president, Charles W. Dabney, proposing to organize and conduct a law course for the university. Freeman proposed that the department follow a semi-independent financial life with the fees being used to pay instructional salaries. This idea appealed to Dabney, for as much as he was interested in expanding the professional offerings of the university, funds were limited. The fee was $50 per term or $100 per year, plus a $12 incidental fee and a $2 library fee. The dean's salary was the total of the tuition fees collected, up to a maximum of $2,500 per year.

With the sounds of Knoxville's first streetcar clanging outside the windows of a downtown office, Freeman held the Law Department's first meeting on February 13, 1890. The class was attended by nine students. In September 1890, the department's operations moved to North College on the Hill, and Freeman devoted himself to full-time teaching. Unfortunately, Dean Freeman's ill health forced his resignation early in 1891, before the end of the academic year.—*Julia P. Hardin*

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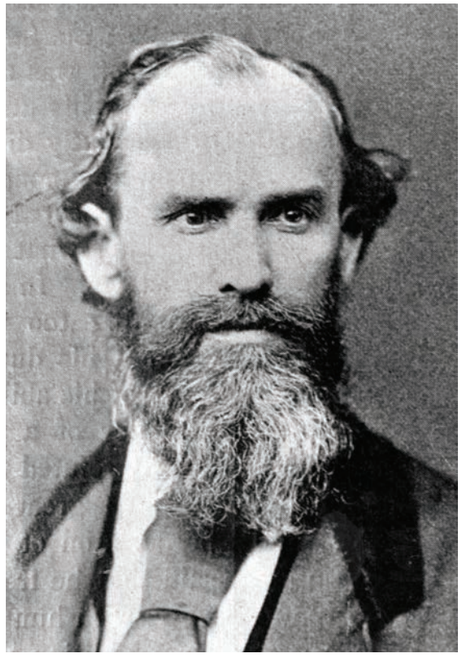
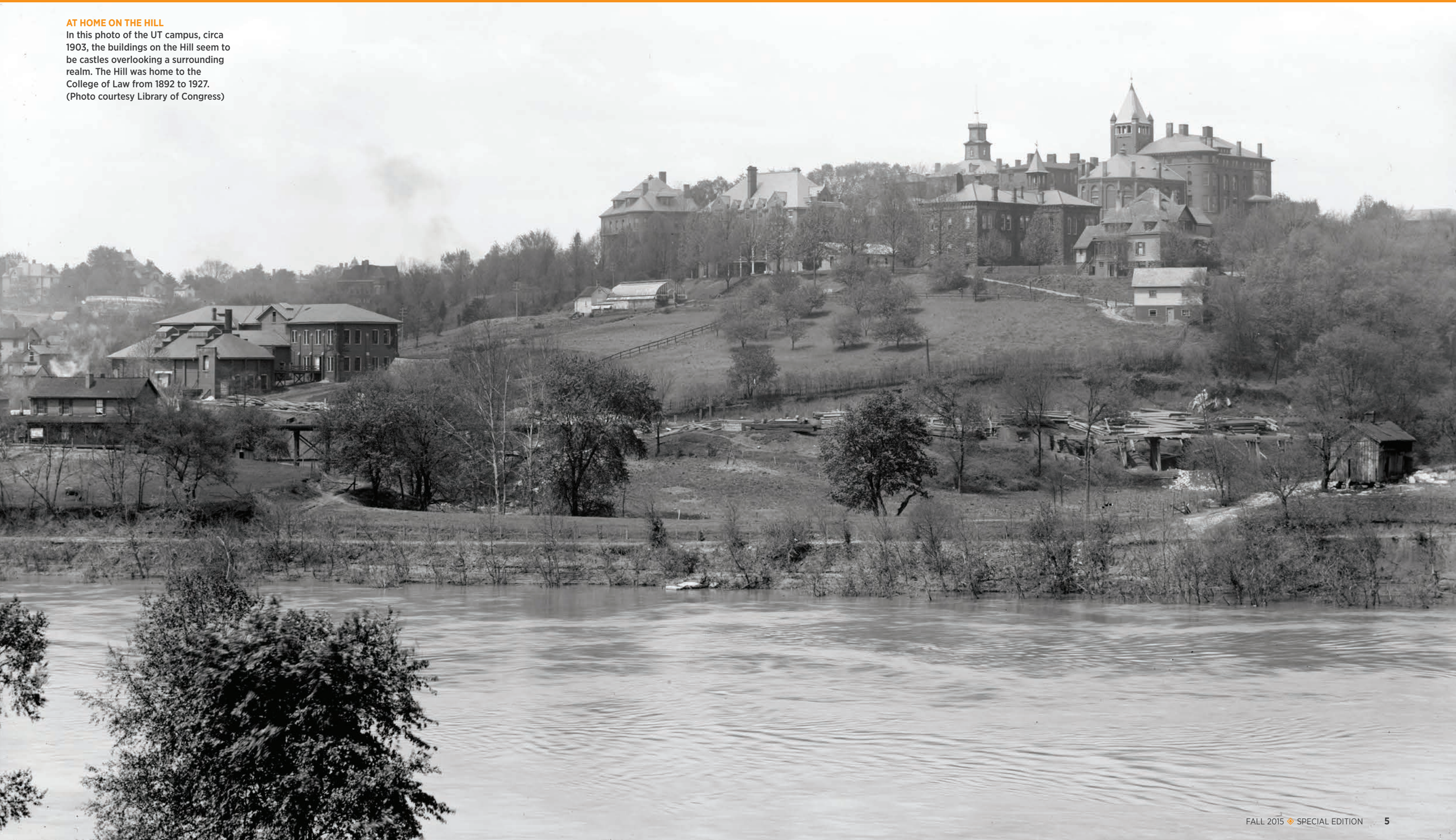


OUR FIRST DEAN (1890–1891)

Thomas J. Freeman

Freeman was admitted to the bar in 1843 and practiced law in Trenton, Tennessee, before serving in the Confederate Army during the Civil War. Freeman then served as a justice of the Tennessee Supreme Court from 1870 to 1886 before proposing in 1889 to organize UT's first law course.

AT HOME ON THE HILL
In this photo of the UT campus, circa 1903, the buildings on the Hill seem to be castles overlooking a surrounding realm. The Hill was home to the College of Law from 1892 to 1927. (Photo courtesy Library of Congress)



NOTABLE LATE ALUMNI

Senator Lawrence D. Tyson (1894)

US Senator Lawrence D. Tyson (1894) was well known for his military service in the Ninth Infantry in Wyoming, the Sixth United States Volunteer Infantry, and the Fifty-ninth Brigade of the Thirtieth Division, as well as his civic leadership and industrialism and generous philanthropy upon returning to civilian life in Knoxville.

As a state senator, Tyson was notable for securing the first state appropriation for the University of Tennessee in 1905. As a United States senator, Tyson was notable for co-authoring the Tyson–Fitzgerald Act, which extended full pay to disabled temporary officers of World War I.

Tyson was all too familiar with the trauma of World War I, having lost his only son, Charles McGee Tyson, in air combat over the North Sea in October of 1918. Tyson and his wife, Betty, donated a large tract of land to be used as an airfield in West Knoxville a little over a decade later, with the contingency of the airfield being named in honor of their late son. Although McGhee Tyson Airport was later moved south of Knoxville to Alcoa in 1935, it retained the name of the late Tyson son.

Tyson purchased his home, situated at the corner of Volunteer Boulevard and Melrose Avenue, from its first owner, James M. Meek, in 1885. Under the direction of renowned architect George F. Barber, the home was extensively remodeled for the Tysons in the Beau Arts style and given many of its stately exterior features, which have endured for more than a century.

When the home was given as a gift to St. John's Episcopal Church in 1934 to be used as a student center, the gift was contingent on the recipient preserving the grave of the Tysons' puppy, Bonita. The church honored this proviso and included it in the deed of sale when the property was sold to UT in 1954. To date, the grave of the Tysons' beloved pet is the only grave on campus. Today the Tyson House is home to the Office of Alumni Affairs and the University of Tennessee Alumni Association.

Lawrence D. Tyson, an 1894 graduate of the College of Law (photo courtesy Library of Congress)

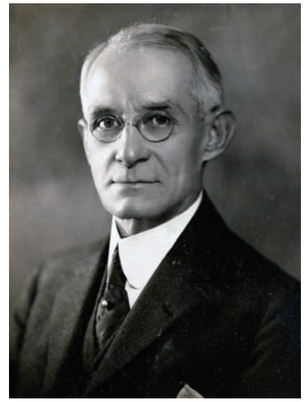
NOTABLE LATE ALUMNI

UT President James D. Hoskins (1897)

As a student, James D. Hoskins (1897) was one of the most prolific scholars in his class and was awarded a scholarship—one of UT's first—in his junior year and a medal of excellence for debating in 1890. Hoskins acquired a Bachelor of Science degree in 1891 and a Master of Arts degree in 1893. He then decided to work as an educator in Ft. Jesup, Louisiana, and Knoxville for several years before returning to UT to acquire his law degree, which was his original educational goal. Throughout his lifetime, in addition to his three UT degrees, Hoskins was awarded honorary doctorates from Maryville College, Cumberland University, and the University of Chattanooga (now UT Chattanooga).

Hoskins began his career at UT in 1900 as an assistant professor of history. By 1907 he had full professorship status, and four years later he was made dean of the College of Liberal Arts. From that point until the end of his career, Hoskins served the university in numerous administrative capacities—including president—so much so that he once referred to himself as UT's "general utility man." Throughout his tenure as dean and president, Hoskins oversaw the establishment of the College of Education (1926) and the School of Business (1938), as well as a number of now iconic UT facilities, such as Ayres Hall (1921), Sophronia Strong Dormitory (1925), and the Hesler Biology Building (1935).

Hoskins retired as president in June 1946, as popular among students then as he was at his prime. The library built during his tenure was given his name in 1950. On April 3, 1960, Hoskins died at the age of ninety, leaving behind a legacy of impacting thousands of UT students.



James D. Hoskins, an 1897 UT Law graduate who served as president of the university

September 1890
The Law Department finds its first official home in North College on the Hill.

1891
Five students become the first UT law graduates.

1892
The Law Department is relocated to **South College** on the Hill.

South College

OUR SECOND DEAN (1891–1915)

Henry H. Ingersoll

Due to poor health, Dean Freeman resigned before the end of the law school's first academic year. Henry Hulbert Ingersoll, a former judge, succeeded him to become the second dean. Ingersoll was notable for keeping tuition at UT Law low, at $50 per year, which drastically increased enrollment through the end of the nineteenth century.

NOTABLE LATE ALUMNI

Maude Riseden Hughett (1909)

When she was admitted in 1907, Maude Riseden Hughett (1909) became the first woman to study law at UT.

A native of Wartburg, Tennessee, Hughett was born from legal stock, her father having served as the first judge of Morgan County, Tennessee. While Hughett's three brothers opted to move to California, Hughett, along with her sister, Mae, made the decision to stay in Tennessee. Like Hughett, Mae would also go on to become a lawyer.

When Hughett graduated from the College of Law in 1909, she was not only the first woman to graduate with a law degree from UT, but also the first female law graduate in the South. Women nationwide would not be granted the right to vote until a decade later.

Upon passing the bar exam, Hughett moved to Louisville, Kentucky, and founded her own practice, Hughett & Hughett, with her husband, John. The couple was later joined by their daughter, Josephine, who followed a nearly identical path as her mother, and the practice was later renamed Hughett, Hughett, & Hughett.

Hughett's legacy paved the way for female law school students both at the College of Law and throughout the South. To honor this legacy, on behalf of the College of Law, the Class of 1999 commissioned a portrait of Hughett painted by nationally renowned artist Steve Moppert. The class gift was dedicated to the college on November 9, 2013, during Homecoming Week. The painting can be found on the first floor of the college, where it serves as a testament to Hughett's trailblazing life and career.

Maude Riseden Hughett (1909)

Old College

1894
The Law Department relocates again, this time to **Old College** (located where Ayres Hall stands today). The high $100 tuition keeps enrollment low, forcing the department to reduce tuition to $50 per year.

1900
UT becomes a charter member of the Association of American Law Schools (AALS).

1905
AALS requires member schools to offer three years of study. The new requirement suspends UT's membership until 1913, when UT adds a third year of law study.

Ayres Hall

OUR THIRD DEAN (1915–1920)

Charles W. Turner

As a professor, Turner was known for having given "all instructions in the school except a few informal lectures" between 1892 and 1900. With Dean Ingersoll, Turner established the college's Alumni Association.

1911
The Law Department becomes the College of Law.

1920
The college moves back to South College.

1921
The college moves to **Ayres Hall**.

1922
The first issue of the *Tennessee Law Review* is published.

1926
The American Bar Association grants accreditation to UT Law.

1927
The college moves to **Tennessee Hall** in downtown Knoxville.

Tennessee Hall

OUR FOURTH DEAN (1921–1930)

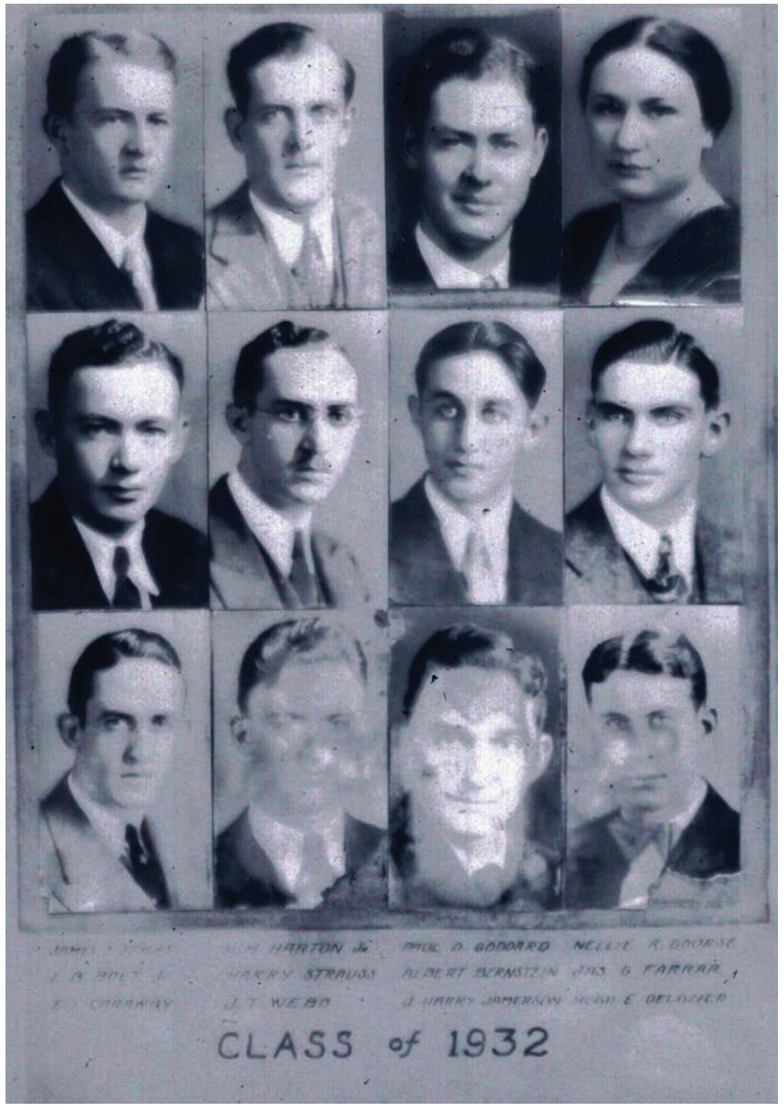
Malcolm A. McDermott

During McDermott's tenure, UT Law joined the list of law schools approved by the American Bar Association. He also formally adopted the case method of instruction for all courses taught at the college.

OUR FIFTH DEAN (1931–1944)

Henry B. Witham

Witham was notable for advocating for higher standards for law schools and admission to the bar in Tennessee, so much so that he led efforts at UT to experiment with an unsuccessful admissions test for law school, approximately two decades before the adoption of the Law School Admissions Test in 1958. Witham successfully kept UT Law open during World War II, despite enrollment dropping from 102 students to nineteen during the height of the war.



The Class of 1932's composite photo

The law professor who rarely bathed, got fired from UT, and was lead counsel in the Scopes Monkey trial

Former UT Law professor John Randolph Neal Jr. (left) and his client, John Scopes, during the historic "Scopes Monkey Trial" (photo courtesy Library of Congress)

Once referred to as "the epitome of the absent-minded professor," John Randolph Neal Jr., a member of the UT Law faculty from 1909 to 1923, garnered a notorious reputation among his peers as one of the most eccentric figures the university had ever known. In contrast, among students he was both revered and respected, despite his highly unorthodox pedagogy.

Neal's eccentricities, such as rarely bathing, sleeping in his suits, and lecturing on current events instead of law, as well as his staunch advocacy for liberal causes, made him a sage-like figure among students and alumni. However, he eventually met his match in Dean Malcolm McDermott. Although the two had once been contemporaries as instructors at the college, McDermott was eventually appointed to the position of dean in 1920 and would come to develop a highly contentious relationship with Neal for his forgetfulness and lax grading standards.

The situation reached its boiling point in 1923 when McDermott testified at a public hearing before the UT Board of Trustees that in Neal's classroom, "it was not unusual for an entire class to receive 95 on an exam; needless to say, the examination was never really graded." Despite Neal's considerable popularity and support among students and alumni, in 1923 he was ousted with six other professors by the board in what came to be known as the "Slaughter of the PhDs."

Taking his dismissal in stride, in 1925 Neal founded the John Randolph Neal School of Law, named in memory of his father, only minutes away from his former place of employment. The school was immensely popular for its part-time and night class offerings, graduating more students in its first few years than even UT Law. However, in 1943 the school was forced to close due to declining enrollment and new state regulations requiring full-time attendance.

The true milestone of Neal's career was also in 1925, when he served as chief counsel for defendant John Scopes during the so-called "Scopes Monkey Trial" (*State of Tennessee v. John Thomas Scopes*). Although Scopes never actually asked Neal to act as his counsel, Neal didn't give him much choice in the matter, telling Scopes that he would act as his counsel whether he was wanted or not.

In the years between the Scopes Monkey Trial and his death in 1959, Neal was instrumental in the creation of the Tennessee Valley Authority and continued to staunchly advocate for liberal causes of the day, such as worker's rights. After his death, a eulogy published by the Associated Press read, "Known over the state for his eccentricities, Dr. Neal was nonetheless beloved. It was conceded by all that he was endowed with a brilliant mind. [He] was a friend alike of the great and humble, a helper of the helpless."

Dissent and decline during the Great War

Dissent at the College of Law

At the onset of World War II, the College of Law and the University of Tennessee at-large remained neutral about US foreign policy. However, one anit-war letter written by a faction of UT Law students set off an unprecedented firestorm.

In the spring of 1940, as reported by the *Knoxville News Sentinel*, thirty-five UT Law students (out of a class of approximately 100) wrote a letter addressed to President Franklin D. Roosevelt asking him to "be less belligerent," to avoid embroiling the United States in the escalating war. Their letter was in direct response to the president's public commentary on Adolf Hitler, who the president accurately believed harbored goals of world domination.

The students argued that "the emotions of man are highly inflamable [sic] and dangerous and should not be needlessly or unduly aroused, for it is of such hates and fears that wars are born." While the students attempted to emphasize that they did not speak for the College of Law or UT at-large, their letter nevertheless sparked considerable controversy and public debate on its appropriateness and resulted in extensive withdrawal of alumni support for the college. Reaction to the letter was so vitriolic that Dean Henry B. Witham, who publicly defended the students' right to free speech, even received an assumedly facetious, anonymous letter signed with a swastika that asked the dean post a notice of a "German Bund" (an American Nazi sympathizer group) meeting.

The Decline Before the Boom

After the United States entered the war following the bombing of Pearl Harbor in December 1941, the writing was on the wall for enrollment at the College of Law. While enrollment in the years preceding the war hovered around 100 students, once America entered the war, enrollment dropped to a low of nineteen.

While the College of Law was certainly not alone in facing historically low enrollment during the height of US involvement in the war, Dean Witham was nevertheless faced with the difficult task of fighting against the suspension of operations during the war years, as many other institutions of higher education were forced to do.

In a letter, Witham asked UT President James D. Hoskins—who happened to be an 1897 graduate of the college—to look at the continuation of the college in far-sighted terms. Hoskins conceded. Despite increasing the burden on the university's already strained finances, the College of Law remained open throughout the duration of the war.

In the long run, this continuation better equipped the college to accept the surge of veterans enrolling in droves at the college after the conclusion of the war. When Witham retired in 1944, enrollment was at twenty-three students. Five years later, enrollment skyrocketed, with 304 students seeking to become the next generation of lawyers in the new Atomic Age.

Top, American soldiers land on the coast of France during the D-Day invasions. Above, women war workers assemble the fuselage section of an aircraft. (Photos courtesy National WWII Museum)

NOTABLE LATE ALUMNI

Senator Howard H. Baker Jr. ('49)

Despite losing his first attempt at public office in 1964, Howard H. Baker Jr. ('49) successfully ran again in 1966, collecting 56 percent of the popular vote to become Tennessee's first popularly elected Republican senator.

Baker—the son of fellow UT Law alumnus Howard Baker Sr. ('24)—was known as "the Great Conciliator" during his time in the US Senate (1967-1985) and was lauded for his ability to bring lawmakers from both political parties together to resolve pressing issues. He was also famous for his question as vice chairman of the Senate Watergate Committee in 1973: "What did the president know and when did he know it?" Baker served as both Senate majority leader and minority leader during his tenure.

After his retirement from the Senate, Baker remained involved in public affairs, serving as President Ronald Reagan's chief of staff. He was later appointed ambassador to Japan in 2001 by President George W. Bush. He retired from public service in 2005 to return to Tennessee and to his law firm, Baker Donelson, before passing away in 2014.

Baker harbored an intense, lifelong passion for photography. His photographs have been exhibited across the United States and in Japan and have appeared in *LIFE* magazine and *National Geographic*.

He also received numerous awards and honors for his unwavering, lifetime dedication to public service, including the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the nation's highest civilian award, and the Grand Cordon of the Order of the Paulownia Flowers, Japan's highest civilian honor. In 2003 the Howard H. Baker Jr. Center for Public Policy was founded at UT through a congressionally funded endowment in honor of Baker's long career of public service.

Howard Baker (left) and President Ronald Reagan aboard Air Force One in 1987

OUR SIXTH DEAN (1945–1963)

William H. Wicker

Grading and exclusion standards were a high priority for Wicker, and throughout his deanship, admissions standards became more selective. Wicker also expanded the Law Library's holdings to more than 50,000 materials for the first time.

1958

UT Law adds the Law School Admissions Test to its admissions requirements.

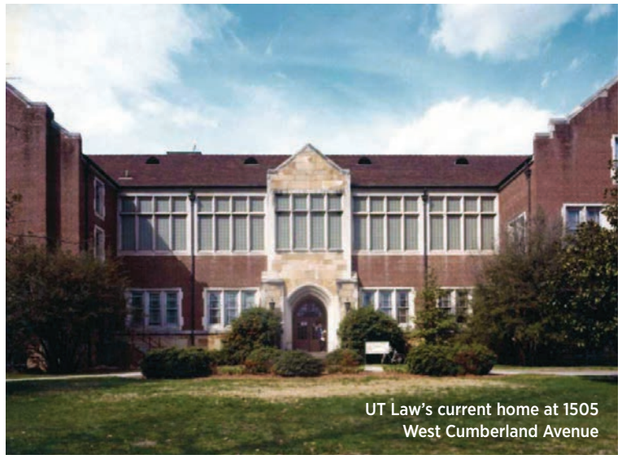
Home sweet home

The College of Law never had its own home until 1927, when the Home Economics Department vacated Tennessee Hall at 720 West Main Street, which had formerly served as the location of the defunct East Tennessee Female Institute.

The building was remodeled and would serve its purpose well for nearly two decades. However, near the middle of the century it became apparent that the rapidly deteriorating building could not sustain the influx of matriculating World War II veterans. The building was in such dire straits that near the end of its use, Professor Elvin "E.O." Overton said, "Students were not allowed on the top floor because of the fire hazard...faculty were deemed more expendable or at least more fire resistant."

As a result, a state-of-the-art facility was designed and built (in the Collegiate Gothic style) for the law school for less than $781,000. In 1950, the college moved into its new home on the 1500 block of West Cumberland Avenue.

Over the next several decades, as enrollment and the college's programs grew, the building—named the George C. Taylor Law Center in 1966, in honor of a 1908 graduate—felt increasingly small. An annex was added in 1971, and a renovation in 1997 connected the original building and the annex while adding a new wing for the Law Library and additional classroom space.



UT Law's current home at 1505 West Cumberland Avenue

Charles Miller and the first legal clinics

The college's Legal Clinic has always operated as a "teaching law office" where students learn to practice law through direct contact with real clients and real cases. The clinic's philosophy was perfectly stated by its founder, Professor Charles H. Miller: "To study the phenomena of law in society without books is to sail an uncharted sea, while to study books without clients is not to go to sea at all."

At the time of its establishment in 1947, UT's Legal Clinic was only the second legal clinic in the United States. Miller modeled the clinic after the nation's first clinic at Duke University, which he had also helped establish.

In its first year, UT's clinic received 222 cases, handled by twenty-three students, one part-time attorney, one secretary, and Miller, as director.

Under Miller's leadership, the clinic flourished, and its resources grew immensely. By the mid- to late 1970s, the clinic had three offices collectively handling more than 6,000 cases each year. Fourteen attorneys, nine support staff, and seventy-five students managed the staggering caseload each quarter.

Miller led the clinic to great heights, reflected still today. In 2015, the clinic stands as the nation's longest-running legal clinic and is ranked sixteenth among all US law schools by U.S. News and World Report.

> To study the phenomena of law in society without books is to sail an uncharted sea, while to study books without clients is not to go to sea at all.
>
> CHARLES H. MILLER
> FOUNDER, UT LEGAL CLINIC

Trailblazer Lincoln Blakeney

Lincoln Anderson Blakeney, the College of Law's first black law student, paved the way for generations of students and educators to follow in his footsteps.

In September 1950, Blakeney applied to UT Law with another black student, Josephy Hatch Patterson. In addition to the two law applicants, Gene Mitchell Gray and Jack Alexander applied to the UT Graduate School during the same month.

The four applicants knew the odds were stacked against them, despite their Knoxville residency and successful record of academic achievement (Blakeney was valedictorian of his high school class and graduated cum laude from Knoxville College). Since 1870, the Tennessee constitution had prohibited the "coeducation of separate races," and only a decade earlier, in 1939, the university had denied admission to six black applicants who had been backed by the NAACP.

Several months later, the UT Board of Trustees denied all four students' applications, citing the coeducation prohibition in the state constitution. The board "felt [they] didn't have authority to decide on applications—[it was a] matter for [the] courts to decide or [the] legislature. The Board felt [they] had no discretion, save to conform to state statutes."

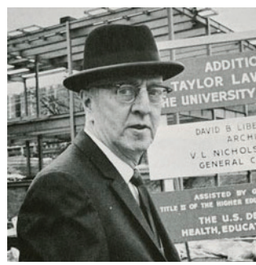
The four students then filed suit against the university (*Gray v. Board of Trustees of University of Tennessee*) in 1951, arguing they were qualified for admission and "willing and able to pay all lawful charges and fees, and to comply with all lawful rules and regulations, requisite to their admission." A district court was persuaded by their arguments and ruled in favor of the applicants, invoking the Fourteenth Amendment of the US Constitution.

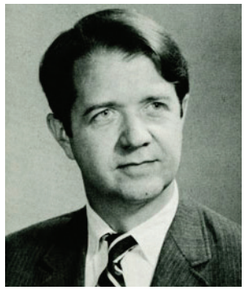
With the law on his side, Blakeney became UT Law's first black law student, just a few years before 1954's landmark *Brown. v. Board of Education* ruling to end racial segregation in public schools. Blakeney's role in desegregating the College of Law would open the doors for future students and educators, such as RBJ Campbelle ('56), the college's first black law graduate; J. Otis Cochran, the college's first black faculty member; and N. Douglas Wells ('80), the college's first black administrator.

OUR SEVENTH DEAN (1964–1971)

Harold C. Warner

Warner was the first dean to institute minimum admission standards: a 2.0 pre-law GPA or a score of at least 400 on the Law School Admissions Test. During Warner's tenure, UT Law's building was renamed the George C. Taylor Law Center, with the objective of providing both primary and continuing legal education—hence the title "Law Center."





OUR EIGHTH DEAN (1972–1987)

Kenneth L. Penegar

Penegar doubled the number of full-time faculty positions while improving the faculty–student ratio from 33:1 in 1971 to 19:1 in 1985. By the end of Penegar's tenure as dean, the College of Law had experienced its greatest period of growth in faculty, budget, private support, and national influence up to that point.

OUR NINTH DEAN (1987–1991)

Marilyn Virginia Yarbrough

Yarbrough was both UT Law's first female dean and the first and only person of color to lead the college. As of 1989, she was the only black woman dean of an ABA-approved law school. She was one of the first women to become dean of a major American law school and was the first black woman to serve as dean of a Southern law school. During her tenure, Yarbrough persuaded UT to secure funds to renovate and structurally unify the college's facility.

1968
The college begins conferring JDs to graduates.

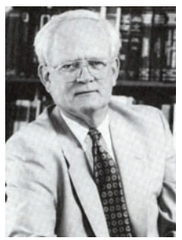
1971
Due to continued growth of the college, an annex is added to the building.

1973
Upon graduating, Martha "Marty" S. L. Crow Black ('73) joins the college's faculty. She becomes the first woman to become a tenured member of the law faculty.

1980–1981
Dean Penegar takes a one-year leave of absence. James C. Kirby Jr., a UT professor since 1978, serves as acting dean.

OUR TENTH DEAN (1992–1998)

Richard S. Wirtz



Wirtz, UT Law's first Elvin E. Overton Distinguished Professor of Law, helped establish both the Center for Advocacy and the Clayton Center for Entrepreneurial Law during his tenure. He also oversaw the extensive renovation of UT Law, which resulted in a new wing for the Law Library and additional classroom space.

Two centers for advocacy and business law

Advocacy Center

In the 1990s, giants in the Tennessee legal community envisioned a law school curriculum that would better prepare students for a career in advocacy. Together, they founded the Center for Advocacy and Dispute Resolution. Professor Paul Zwier became the center's first director.

The development of the center's curriculum was a collaborative effort between Zwier, Dean Richard Wirtz, and professors Doug Blaze and Jerry Black. The curriculum continues to be unique to UT Law, with no similar programs at other law schools.

After Zwier stepped down, Blaze became the center's second director and served from 2004 to 2006. Professor Penny White ('81), a former Tennessee Supreme Court justice, is the third and current director of the center.

In 2012, the third-floor suite housing the center was completed. The suite was later named for alumnus Jerry H. Summers ('66), one of the Legal Clinic's strongest supporters. Thanks to Summers's generosity, the center began awarding the annual Summers–Wyatt Trial Advocacy Scholarship in 2008.

Clayton Center for Entrepreneurial Law

Professor Thomas Davies, who felt that students did not understand the importance of transactional practice, laid the foundations in the early 1990s of what would become the Clayton Center for Entrepreneurial Law, named for James L. Clayton ('64), founder of Clayton Homes. Professor Robert Lloyd, who had the most practice experience of anyone on the faculty at the time, was chosen to head the center at its establishment in 1995.

In 1998 Professor Carl Pierce took over as director, and in the same year, the center's students began the process of creating a new law journal, *Transactions: The Tennessee Journal of Business Law*, that would address issues of business law in the Southeast and nationwide.

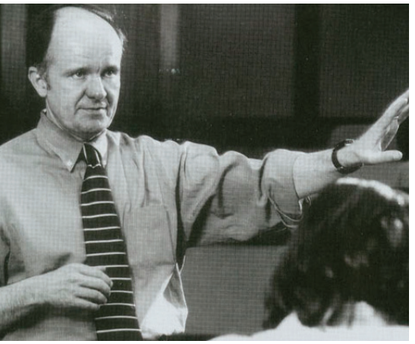
In 2001, Professor George W. Kuney became the center's third director and continues to lead the center today. Under Kuney's leadership, the center has expanded to include a visiting professor program and the addition of the Wills Clinic, the Business Law Clinic, and the Trademark Clinic among the college's clinical programs.

1982
J. Otis Cochran becomes the college's first black faculty member. N. Douglas Wells ('80) is hired as the college's first black professional administrator, serving as assistant dean and responsible for recruiting minority students.

1985
Personal computers are introduced at the college.

1986
Following Dean Penegar's departure, Professor John A. Sebert Jr. serves as acting dean for the 1986–1987 academic year.

1988
Individual computers are added to faculty and staff offices.



OUR ELEVENTH DEAN (1999–2006)

Thomas C. Galligan

Galligan significantly expanded UT Law's commitment to public service, particularly for the disadvantaged, through vigorously supporting students and faculty involved in pro bono work, as well as research and scholarship on issues related to pro bono and public interest law. Galligan was known to regularly accompany students participating in the Homeless Legal Assistance Project on their monthly visits to local shelters to provide legal assistance.

OUR TWELFTH DEAN (2008–2015)

Douglas A. Blaze

Blaze ensured that the caliber of matriculating students remained consistent throughout his tenure, despite nationwide decreases in law school enrollment, due in part to the Great Recession. UT Law also experienced significant increases in national prestige and rankings under Blaze's leadership. He stepped down as dean in June 2015 to return to teaching and to direct the college's new interdisciplinary Institute for Professional Leadership, which he helped co-found with Buck Lewis ('80) in 2014.

John Sobieski

1997
The Taylor Law Center is renovated to connect the original building and the annex and to build a new wing for the Law Library and additional classroom space.

2006
Following Dean Galligan's tenure, **John Sobieski**, associate dean for academic affairs and a member of the UT Law faculty since 1972, agrees to serve as interim dean during the search for a new dean.

2015
The College of Law celebrates its 125th anniversary.

2015
and beyond...

OUR THIRTEENTH DEAN (2015–PRESENT)

Melanie D. Wilson

Wilson is UT Law's current dean, having taken office in July 2015. However, before even starting her tenure as dean, Wilson met individually with each faculty and staff member, as well as several alumni and friends of the college. During her first few months as dean, Wilson has already made strides to enrich and promote greater diversity in the college, most notably by creating the post of director of diversity and inclusion and naming Katrice Morgan (who also serves as assistant dean for student affairs) to the new position.

From the Dean

UT Law is amazing.

Before arriving at the College of Law a few short months ago, I already knew this was a special law school. And coming to UT Law during its 125th anniversary has allowed me to learn that this college has always been a special school with a history of forward thinking.

Our college has been ahead of its time in many ways: In the early 1900s, we enrolled and graduated the first female law student in the South—a *decade* before women won the right to vote in the United States. In the '40s, the man who founded the country's first legal clinic came to UT Law to found the country's second legal clinic, which today stands as the longest-running of its kind. In 1952, we enrolled one of UT's first black students, two years before the end of racial segregation in public schools. And in the 1980s, we appointed the first female dean of color in the South.

It's this pioneering history that guides us now. We already enjoy a close-knit community here at UT Law, and we're taking steps to be more welcoming to every person who traverses our halls, regardless of his or her race, background, beliefs, or identity. We study and practice the law, but we're also a family. Every student, professor, employee, alumnus, and friend of the college should feel—and be—included in our family.

We're also building on our strong tradition of excellent legal education at a great value. In fact, U.S. News and World Report ranks us seventh this year for graduating students with the least debt. We're generations ahead in clinical education, offer unique curricula in advocacy and transactional law, and emphasize experiential learning and community service. But we can't rest on our laurels. We are examining what we do, how we do it, and how we can improve and soar higher, all while showing the world what an amazing law school we have here at UT.

Our future is as bright today as it was 125 years ago. Let's not see what tomorrow will bring, but let's live up to our history and see what *we* will bring to tomorrow.

Go Vols!

MELANIE D. WILSON, DEAN

To the next 125 years...