

The
Presidents
of
Princeton University



1746 to the present

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Jonathan Dickinson
1746-47

Jonathan Dickinson was the leader of the little group that, in his words, “first concocted the plan and foundation of the College.” After graduating from the Collegiate School of Connecticut (later known as Yale), Dickinson studied theology and became minister of the Presbyterian Church in Elizabeth, New Jersey. He served this church all his life, ministering to his flock as pastor, lawyer, physician, and, in later years, instructor of young men preparing for professional careers.

In 1739, Dickinson became one of the leaders of a movement to found a “seminary of learning” for the middle colonies. He was disappointed by Harvard’s and Yale’s opposition to the “New Lights” of the Church and by Yale’s harsh treatment of his young friend, David Brainerd, a student who was dismissed because of outspoken opposition to the faculty’s conservative religious views.

He considered the only other college in the colonies, William and Mary of Virginia, too Anglican and too far away. So, with the help of three fellow pastors (Ebenezer Pemberton, Aaron Burr, Sr., and John Pierson) and three laymen from (New York City) William Smith, Peter Van Brugh Livingston, and William Peartree Smith), he secured a Royal Charter for the College of New Jersey dated October 22, 1746. Princeton’s founding charter made no reference to any specific faith or denomination. From the beginning, the college was open to students of all persuasions.

Classes began in Dickinson’s parsonage in Elizabeth, with eight or ten students. the only decent library in town was Dickinson’s; his parlor was probably the classroom and his dining room was probably the refectory. Upon his death, the College moved to the Newark parsonage of his friend, Aaron Burr, Sr.



Aaron Burr, Sr.
1747-57

*D*uring Aaron Burr, Sr.'s decade as Princeton's president, a curriculum was devised, the student body was increased tenfold, and the College's permanent Princeton home was established. Burr presided over the first commencement exercises in his Newark Church (November 9, 1748). According to the *New York Gazette*, the president spoke to the graduating class in Latin, reminding them of "the manifold Advantages of the liberal Arts and Sciences...and rendering them useful Members of the Church and State." Five members of the Class became Presbyterian ministers; the sixth, Richard Stockton, became a lawyer and signed the Declaration of Independence.

Burr served for three years without salary. He filled the offices of both pastor and president until finally, at the request of the Church, he was relieved of his pastoral duties to devote full time to the College. He drew up the first entrance requirements, the first course of study, and the first set of rules and regulations; in 1756, he led the move to Princeton into the College's first building, Nassau Hall.

Nassau Hall was named for King William III, England's Prince of Orange-Nassau. The largest stone building in the colonies, it housed the entire College: classroom, dormitory, chapel, library, and refectory. President Burr occupied Room 1; his successors still do.

Sadly, Aaron Burr, Sr. had little opportunity to enjoy the fruits of his endeavors. Borne down by the multiple duties of administrator, teacher, and fund-raiser, he died at the age of 41, a year after moving into Nassau Hall. His son, Aaron, Jr. graduated from Princeton in 1772 and became the third vice-president of the United States.



Jonathan Edwards
1757-58

*J*onathan Edwards, elected president five days after the death of his son-in-law, Aaron Burr, Sr., was a popular choice. A friend of the College since its inception, he was the most eminent American philosopher-theologian of his time. Edward was reluctant to take on “such a new and great business in the decline of life,” explaining he considered himself deficient in health, in temperament, and in some branches of learning.

His fears proved unfounded. As author of the celebrated work, *The Freedom of the Will*, he was respectfully received by the undergraduates, who spoke of the “light and instruction” he communicated.

He died only two months after taking office, of a fever following an inoculation for smallpox. He was buried in a special corner of the Princeton cemetery called “the Presidents Lot.”



Samuel Davies
1759-61

*S*amuel Davies of Virginia was an advocate of civil and religious liberties. His association with College of New Jersey began when, at the age of 28, he helped raise funds for the school's move from Newark to Princeton. During his first assignment -an 11-month trip to Great Britain and Ireland in search of donations -he helped raise enough money to build Nassau Hall and a house for the president, with enough left over to endow a charitable fund "for the education of pious and indigent youth."

Davies' election to the presidency was greeted with joy."I believe there was never a College happier in a president," said one trustee. "You can hardly conceive what prodigious, uncommon gifts the God of Heaven had bestowed on that man." But the joy was short-lived. Eighteen months later, Davies died of pneumonia after being bled for "a bad cold."

During his brief tenure, Davies drew up the first catalog of the College library, then housed on the second floor of Nassau Hall-1,281 books in all. He was an ardent promoter of the library "A large and well-sorted collection of books is the most ornamental and useful furniture of a college," he said. He urged students to go beyond the "narrow limits" of their assigned reading and encouraged them to continue to read widely after graduation so they would continue to "investigate Truth; and guard against the stratagems and assaults of Error."He also believed that reading good books by authors with differing points of view would keep them modest.



Samuel Finley
1761-66

*S*amuel Finley, a Scots-Irishman who came to the United States with his parents when he was 19, attended the “Log College” in Neshaminy, Pennsylvania, a school for ministers (1726-45) and a precursor of Princeton. His early career as an evangelical preacher was marked by an energetic, contentious, and sometimes acrimonious spirit that was not uncommon in the 18th-century religious revival known as “The Great Awakening.” As one of his students said later, his sermons “were calculated to inform the ignorant, to alarm the careless and secure, and to edify and comfort the faithful.”

During his pastorate in Nottingham, Maryland, he also headed an academy renowned for its standards of scholarship. In recognition of his work, he was given an honorary degree by the University of Glasgow, making him the second American divine to receive an honorary degree abroad. His interest in higher education led him to become one of the original trustees of the College of New Jersey; when he was elected its president in 1761, he was regarded as “a very accurate scholar, and a very great and good man”. Finley’s presidency was marked by steady growth in enrollment.

During his presidency, Finley planted two sycamore trees in front of the President’s house (now called Maclean House). According to Princeton legend, they were ordered by the trustees in 1765 and planted in 1766 to commemorate repeal of the Stamp Act. They still stand today.



John Witherspoon
1768-94

*J*ohn Witherspoon was the only clergyman and the only college president to sign the Declaration of Independence.

A graduate of the University of Edinburgh, he gained a reputation in the Church of Scotland as a leader of the left wing "Popular Party," and his works made him well known in the American colonies. He first declined the call to Princeton but eventually he sailed for America, bringing his wife, five children, and 300 books for the College library. The students welcomed him by "illuminating" Nassau Hall with a lighted tallow dip in each window.

Despite the warmth of his reception, Witherspoon soon found a number of disturbing conditions in the College. Many students were inadequately prepared; the enrollment from the southern colonies had declined; and, most worrisome of all, the College's finances were in a sorry state.

Witherspoon began a series of highly successful trips throughout the colonies to preach, recruit students, and gather funds. While traveling through Virginia, he encouraged the Madisons of Montpelier to enroll their son James; later, he persuaded his friend George Washington to give 50 gold guineas to the College. (Washington was a longtime advocate of the place. "No college has turned out better scholars or more estimable characters than Nassau," he said in a letter to his adopted son, a member of the Class of 1799.)

Witherspoon called the College's pastoral setting a "campus," thereby introducing that word into the American vocabulary.

In addition to managing the College's affairs and preaching twice on Sundays, Witherspoon had a heavy teaching load. To the College's faculty of five (three tutors and two professors), he added a professor of mathematics and natural philosophy, leaving him responsible for providing instruction in moral philosophy, divinity, rhetoric, history, and French. He introduced English grammar and composition and added to the teaching equipment of the College, especially books for the library and laboratory apparatus for science instruction.

Witherspoon saw no conflict between faith and reason; he encouraged students to test their faith by experiment and experience. He applied the test of common sense to any proposition, reducing it to its simplest terms. His name is identified with certain attitudes and assumptions known as the "Common Sense Philosophy," which was important in the development of our national character.

Witherspoon was careful not to protect students from exposure to ideas that were in conflict with his own strong convictions. The many books he added to the library gave access to a wide range of contemporary literature, including works by authors with whom he had engaged in public dispute.

Witherspoon's administration was a turning point in the life of the College. He put fresh emphasis on the need for a broadly educated clergy. He did not hesitate to teach both politics and religion, and he gave wholehearted support to the national cause of liberty and became a leading member of the Continental Congress; many of his students entered government service. In addition to a president and vice-president of the United States, he taught nine cabinet officers, 21 senators, 39 congressmen, three justices of the Supreme Court, and 12 state governors.

Largely because of him, Princeton became known as the "seedbed" of revolution. Six months after he signed the Declaration of Independence, the College became the site of a strategic victory. Washington surprised the British in the Battle of Princeton. Six years later, Washington was again in Princeton, at the invitation of Congress assembled in Nassau Hall to accept the official thanks of the nation for the successful conclusion of the war. During the visit, he also attended commencement exercises for the Class of 1783.



Samuel S. Smith
1795-1812

*S*amuel Stanhope Smith, salutatorian of the Class of 1769, was the first alumnus of the College to become its president. After graduation, Smith became a teacher and preacher in Virginia and took a leading part in the founding the two academies that became Hampden-Sydney College and Washington and Lee University. Through sermons and writings, he helped prepare the way for the “separation of church and state,” a radical doctrine then being advanced by his fellow Princetonian James Madison, Class of 1771. Smith returned to Princeton as professor of moral philosophy and as President Witherspoon’s son-in-law. Fifteen years later, when Witherspoon died, he succeeded him.

During his presidency Smith increased his reputation as a scholar. Elected to the American Philosophical Society, he delivered “An Essay on the Causes of the Variety of Complexion and Figure in the Human Species” in which he argued that all mankind belongs to the same family, and that diversity within the species should be attributed to environmental influences. He firmly believed in the compatibility of science and religion.

Smith promoted the study of science and modern languages, without challenging the place of classical languages and literature, as disciplines important to training for the ministry. His early appointments to the faculty included John Maclean, the first professor of chemistry to teach on a college campus in the United States.



Ashbel Green

1812-22

Ashbel Green, valedictorian of the Class of 1783 (the year George Washington and members of the Continental Congress attended the Commencement ceremony), was the second alumnus to serve as president of Princeton. Green was a prominent clergyman, serving as minister of the Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia and chaplain to the United States Congress.

As a trustee of the College, representing the conservative “Old Side” and took a leading role in the opposing liberal drift in the faculty and curriculum. He became president in 1812, after helping engineer the removal of his predecessor. That same year, believing that Princeton was no longer serving the church as it should, he helped establish a theological seminary next door.

Green approached his presidential duties as a stern but kindly pastor. He introduced vigorous disciplinary rules and imposed a heavy religious tone on the College. From his raised dais, he took a lordly view, often saying, “I consider every member of the faculty a younger brother, and every pupil a child.”

“My first address to the students,” he later wrote, “produced a considerable impression, insomuch that some of them shed tears. This greatly encouraged me; but the appearance was delusive or fugitive. Notwithstanding all the arrangements I had made, and all the pains I had taken to convince them that their own good and the best interests of the institution were my only aim, I had the mortification to find that the majority of them seemed bent on mischief.”



James Carnahan
1823-54

*J*ames Carnahan, a member of the class of 1800, served Princeton no longer than any other president. After graduation, he was as a tutor in the College, studied theology with President Smith, and then preached for six years. He left the pulpit because of a throat ailment that troubled him all his life and established a classical seminary in Georgetown, D.C. He had been there for 11 years when he was elected president.

Carnahan was unprepared for his new task. A courtly schoolmaster, he didn't know what to make of the near anarchy that had resulted from the conflicting views of students, faculty, and trustees. He watched sadly as enrollment dropped from 148 to 66. He became so discouraged that he considered closing the institution; his young vice-president, John Maclean, saved the day by proposing a plan for strengthening the faculty with the help of the alumni.

Under this plan, the venerable James Madison, Class of 1771, was invited to become the first president of the alumni association. Many years later, remembering that Madison had stayed on for a year of graduate work, the Alumni Council gave his name to medal awarded annually to an outstanding alumnus of the graduate school.

With the funds raised by the alumni, Carnahan strengthened the faculty. Modern languages became permanent features of the curriculum. Student enrollment doubled, and the faculty tripled. The College prospered again.



John Maclean, Jr.

1854-68

*J*ohn Maclean, Jr., the son of America's first professor of chemistry, was born in Princeton and served the College all his life. Princeton's only bachelor president, he gave the time and energy a father ordinarily expends on his children to the students of the College for whom he stood, quite literally, in *loco parentis*. He outlawed Greek fraternities that, in his opinion, had begun to have an injurious effect on campus life.

Maclean added more distinguished scholars to the faculty, including Swiss geographer Arnold Guyot. As a general policy, he sought a balanced curriculum, believing there was a fundamental body of cultural studies that every educated person should be required to pursue before preparing for a chosen profession.

Just before the Civil War began, after Nassau Hall had been gutted by a fire a second time, Maclean rallied alumni and friends contribute funds toward rebuilding it. He augmented these funds by operating the College on an austerity budget during the war years, and helped liquidate the debt that remained by giving up part of his own salary.

When the Civil War began, Maclean was anguished by the sight of students leaving the campus to join the armies of the North and South. The toll of 70 Princetonians lost in battle was borne equally by the Federals and Confederates -and borne doubly by Maclean because he knew and loved each one. In this bitter time, Princeton offered the degree of Doctor of Law to Abraham Lincoln. In accepting the degree, Lincoln wrote Maclean: "The assurance conveyed by this high complement that the course of the government which I represent

has received the approval of a body of gentlemen of such character and intelligence in this time of public trial is most grateful to me.”

Although his main concern was the College, Maclean is credited with a major role in founding New Jersey’s public school system. The state legislature adopted his plan for a state normal school, local boards of education, and a nonsectarian common school system supported by public taxation. He also took an active interest in the state’s penal system. As a member of the New Jersey Prison Association, he sometimes walked 10 miles to Trenton on Sundays to conduct services in the State Prison.

When he retired, Maclean wrote a two-volume history of the College. (Typically, he assigned the royalties to a fund “for the aid of indigent and worthy students engaged in seeking a liberal education.”) Since that history does not cover the years of his own administration, it does not mention the fact that he saw the beginning of baseball at Princeton, heard the first singing of the alma mater, “Old Nassau”; and voted to adopt orange as the official color of the College - soon to be joined with black. (He could never have imagined these colors would be carried to the moon a century later by Charles F. (“Pete”) Conrad ’53, commander of Apollo XII.



James McCosh
1868-88

James McCosh took office exactly a hundred years after his fellow Scot, John Witherspoon. He came to Princeton from Queens College, Belfast, and was already well known throughout the English-speaking world as an author, philosopher, and Free Churchman.

One alumnus, who had been a freshman in 1870, compared the new president's influence to "an electric shock, instantaneous, paralyzing to the opposition, and stimulating to all who were non paralyzed." McCosh gathered a distinguished faculty; revised and modernized the plan of study; developed elective course options; and instituted graduate work. He founded schools of science, philosophy, and art, and began an ambitious program of building and planting that greatly enhanced the formerly bare campus. A strong proponent of the Greek idea "sound body, sound mind," he included a gymnasium and a library in his building program.

He was a teaching president, holding regular classes in the history of philosophy and in psychology. He conducted seminars in "Prospect," the new presidential mansion. When Darwin's *Origin of Species* threatened to overturn age-old beliefs in God's creation and government of the world, McCosh stood out almost alone among American clergymen in defending evolutionary doctrine, insisting that the Darwinian hypothesis, far from denying the existence of God, only served to "increase the wonder and mystery of the process of creation."

Like John Witherspoon, McCosh took a common-sense position on the curriculum of the College, one that was liberal yet firm.

Students were encouraged to choose a wide range of electives to be taken side by side with obligatory and disciplinary courses, mathematics “to solidify the reasoning powers” and classics “to refine the taste.”

McCosh enriched the extracurricular life of the campus, making the “four long years” more enjoyable. During his time, many undergraduate activities began to assume their present form. The Glee Club the Dramatic Association (later known as the Triangle Club), and the first intercollegiate football team were born under his benevolent gaze. And, although he disapproved mightily of secret Greek fraternities, he allowed a group of upperclass students to form the first permanent eating club.

Throughout his life, McCosh shared credit with his wife Isabella. “She advised and assisted me in all my work,” he said. Daughter of an eminent physician, Mrs. McCosh was Princeton’s unofficial nurse, the one and only medical presence on the campus. Later, when the trustees built an infirmary, they named it for her.

In his parting words to the College, McCosh said, “I am reminded keenly that my days of active work are over. But I take the step firmly and decidedly. The shadows are lengthening, the day is declining. My age, seven years above the threescore and ten, compels it, Providence points to it, conscience enjoins it, the good of the College demands it...I leave it with the prayer, that the blessing of Heaven and the good-will of men may rest upon it, and with the prospect of its having greater usefulness in the future than even that which it has had in the past.”



Francis L. Patton

1888-1902

*F*rancis Landey Patton, a native of Bermuda, began his teaching career at McCormick theological Seminary in Chicago. He was called to the seminary in Princeton, where his reputation as a teacher and a theologian - and his popularity as an after-dinner speaker - grew rapidly. Even those who disagreed with his rigid conservative Presbyterian views admired his intellect and wit.

His election as McCosh's successor did not meet with unanimous enthusiasm. Many had hoped not only for a devout educator, but also for an experienced administrator who would bring efficiency to the expanding College.

Faculty accounts indicate that Patton lacked initiative in important policy matters, resisted meaningful curriculum reform, was lax in matters of discipline and in scholarly standards - in short, as one colleague said kindly, he was "a wonderfully poor administrator." But the students of the nineties were unanimous in their affection for him.

In the fall of 1896, Patton proclaimed a three-day holiday to celebrate the Sesquicentennial of the College and to confirm its new official name, "Princeton University." In the process, he changed the wording of the seal from *Collegii Neo-Caesariensis* to *Universitatis Princetoniensis*, retaining the open Bible at the center and returning to the ancient motto: *Dei sub numine viget* (Under God's power she flourishes).



Woodrow Wilson
1902-10

W Woodrow Wilson entered Princeton as a member of the Class of 1879. “Tommy,” as his classmates called him, was an eager student and an acknowledged leader. Not satisfied with the courses offered by the College, he supplemented the formal curriculum with an ambitious program of independent reading. Still feeling less than fully occupied, he became managing editor of the *Daily Princetonian* and organized a student club for discussion of public affairs. His classmates elected him speaker of the American Whig Society, one of two principal campus groups. Pursuing athletic interests, he became secretary of the Football Association and president of the Baseball Association.

After graduation he went to law school at the University of Virginia and practiced in Atlanta. Disillusioned by the tedium and materialism of legal damage suits, he enrolled in John Hopkins for graduate work in political science and history. His doctoral dissertation, “Congressional Government,” led to teaching positions at Bryn Mawr, Wesleyan, and finally Princeton.

As a professor of jurisprudence, Wilson built up a strong prelaw curriculum. He was soon voted most popular teacher and became friend and counselor to countless students attracted by his warmth and high-mindedness. During the sesquicentennial celebration of 1896, he delivered the keynote address: “Princeton in the Nation’s Service.”

When the trustees elected him president Wilson proposed a \$12.5 million program to transform Princeton into a full-scale university.

At that time, this was a staggering sum, almost 25 times greater than the annual budget, but the trustees approved it immediately.

He began by creating an administrative structure - departments of instruction with heads directly responsible to him. In place of the aimless elective system, he substituted a unified curriculum of general studies during freshmen and sophomore years, capped by concentrated study in one discipline (the academic “major”) during junior and senior years. He also added an honors program for able and ambitious students. Wilson tightened academic standards so severely that enrollment declined sharply until 1907.

Supported by the first all-out alumni fund-raising campaign in Princeton’s history, he doubled the faculty overnight through the appointment of almost 50 young assistant professors, called “preceptors,” charged with aiding students through guided reading and small-group discussion. With a remarkable eye for quality, he assembled a youthful faculty of unusual talent and zest for teaching.

In strengthening the science program, Wilson called for basic, unfettered, “pure” research. In the field of religion, he made biblical instruction a scholarly subject. He broke the hold of conservative Presbyterians over the board of trustees, and appointed the first Jew and the first Roman Catholic to the faculty.

Before the end of his term, he authorized fellow members of the Class of 1879 to cast two heroic bronze tigers for the front steps of Nassau Hall. (Tigers appeared as mascots during the McCosh tenure).

After modernizing the administration, curriculum, and teaching methods, Wilson proposed the creation of quadrangles, or “colleges,” in which undergraduates of all four classes would live with their own recreational facilities and resident faculty masters. Membership would be by assignment or lot.

Twenty-five years after his death, the trustees named the School of Public and International Affairs after him. Sixty years after the defeat of his “quad plan,” they carved out an area of the campus - six dormitories and a dining and social center—as a distinct residential complex known as Woodrow Wilson College. And they created the Woodrow Wilson Award — highest honor the University can bestow upon an alumnus in recognition of distinguished public service.



John G. Hibben

1912-32

*J*ohn Grier Hibben, from Peoria, Illinois, was valedictorian and president of the Class of 1882. He continued his studies in Berlin and at Princeton Theological Seminary and after four years as a parish minister, he returned to the University as a graduate student in philosophy. Later, he became professor of logic and also taught psychology and the Bible.

The search for a successor to Woodrow Wilson was long and painful. Hibben's election came at the hands of trustees who had most resisted Wilson's reforms.

"My administration must make for peace," he said. "I represent no group or set of men, no party, no faction, no past allegiance or affiliation—but one united Princeton!". Hibben practiced what he preached. One of his first acts was to seek out faculty members who belonged to the Wilson faction.

Soon after taking office, he presided over the opening of the new Graduate College, the monastic compound for scholars set on a hill beyond the golf course. At the dedication ceremony, he made special reference to the high-soaring Gothic tower built by popular subscription as the nation's memorial to Grover Cleveland—who, after leaving the White House, retired to Princeton and became a trustee of the University.



Harold W. Dodds
1933-57

*H*arold Willis Dodds, son of a professor of Bible studies at Grove City College in Pennsylvania, grew up in the company of teachers and students. After receiving his bachelor's degree at Grove City and teaching public school for two years, he did graduate work in politics at Princeton and Pennsylvania. During World War I, he served in the U.S. Food Administration and afterwards became secretary of the National Municipal League. An expert in the problems of local government, with experience as a troubleshooter in Latin America, Dodds joined the Princeton faculty in 1925 as professor of politics and was later appointed the first chairman of the School of Public and International Affairs (now the Woodrow Wilson School). He had been a leader in the establishment of the school, a cooperative enterprise of the history, politics, economics, and later sociology, departments.

Dodds became president during the depths of the Great Depression and served through the Second World War and the Korean conflict. During the war years, Princeton adopted an accelerated program to give students an opportunity to graduate before entering the armed forces. At the same time, the Army and Navy sent hundreds of young men to the campus for general or specialized training. The number fluctuated widely from month to month. A faculty depleted by enlistments or calls to government service had to teach unfamiliar subjects at top speed. When peace came, the University absorbed the flood of students returning under the G.I. Bill.

The 200th anniversary of the founding of Princeton was celebrated over a two-year period (1946-1947) with an almost continuous series of scholarly conferences and three major convocations. More than a thousand scholars and leaders from all over the world attended, including three presidents of the United States (present, past, and future): Truman, Hoover, and Eisenhower. As a continuing memorial of the anniversary, Bicentennial Preceptorships were established to enable promising young members of the faculty to spend a year in uninterrupted research.

Despite wars and the Depression, Dodds doubled the size of the faculty, adding 30 endowed professorships. This permitted an increase in the size of the student body (graduate and undergraduate) by more than a thousand while maintaining the University's distinctively high ratio of faculty to students. Music and the creative arts were introduced into the curriculum. The Office of Population Research was established. Three new departments were added: religion, aeronautical engineering, and Near Eastern studies.

A new intellectual center for the University, Firestone Library, was opened in 1948 as a "laboratory for the humanities and social sciences." In Princeton's "open stack" tradition, it brought books and readers together with particular grace and efficiency.

Not forgetting the constraints and uncertainties of the depression years, Dodds felt the need for an additional, ongoing source of funds. Beginning in 1940, with his encouragement, Princeton alumni began to go out to their classmates each year seeking "unrestricted" funds for the University. Their first appeal netted \$80,000 in cash. Their 16th appeal—the year Dodds retired—netted 16 times as much. Since then, Annual Giving has steadily to increase.



Robert F. Goheen

1957-72

*R*obert Francis Goheen came to Princeton from India, where his father was a medical missionary. He graduated with the Class of 1940, Phi Beta Kappa, with highest honors in the humanities. Scholar, athlete, and campus leader, he was co-winner of the Pyne Prize, the highest general distinction conferred on an undergraduate.

After completing a year of graduate study in the Department of Classics, Goheen entered the Army. He served in the Pacific with the First Cavalry Division, reaching the rank of lieutenant colonel. When the war was over, Goheen returned to Princeton to continue his studies in classics. After additional work at the American Academy in Rome, he became a member of the Princeton faculty and, at the same time, director of the Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Program, a nationwide effort to encourage young men and women to pursue careers in higher education.

In 1956, while an assistant professor of classics, he was elected to the presidency by unanimous vote of the trustees. When he assumed office at the age of 37, he was the third youngest president in the history of the University (after Aaron Burr, Sr., and Samuel Davies).

Although he repeatedly disclaimed any ambition to be known as a “building president,” Goheen saw more additions to the physical plant during his administration than any of his predecessors. During his first years in office, backed by a spirited campaign for capital funds, all the pent-up energies of Princeton—long constrained by depression and war—were released in a massive program of expansion. All told,

Goheen nearly doubled the square footage under roof.

Among the more important additions were the Princeton University Art Museum, the Woolworth Center of Musical Studies, the Architecture Building, Woodrow Wilson School, the Engineering Quadrangle, the Jadwin Gymnasium, the Computing Center, and the complex of Fine, Jadwin, and Peyton Halls constructed for the mathematical, physical, and astrophysical sciences. With these came a parallel growth in student housing.

Physical expansion was accompanied by a proportionate increase in the financial resources of the University. The annual budget quadrupled, from approximately \$20 million to \$80 million. More than 20 endowed chairs were added.

The faculty grew from just under 500 to more than 700. There were more than two and a half times as many applicants for admission to the College in Goheen's last year than there were during his first. Undergraduate enrollment increased by a third, from nearly 3,000 to almost 4,000; the number of graduate students more than doubled.

The undergraduate program of study responded to what the president described as "an exploding, booming, shifting world of knowledge and ideas." Provision was made for sophomore concentration, a reading period at the end of each term, a University Scholar Program that offered exceptional flexibility to carefully selected undergraduates, and student-initiated seminars.

In the area of student life, a number of social facilities were established to complement existing options. One of the new facilities combined two former club buildings into one University-managed hall named for Adlai Stevenson '22. (It became the home of the first kosher kitchen on the campus.) Two major residential colleges, Princeton Inn and Woodrow Wilson, offered dormitory, dining, and social facilities for 400 to 500 students each.

Among the most momentous changes to be made during Goheen's tenure was Princeton's transition to coeducation. During the 1960s the University began to actively encourage minority students to attend. Princeton's long-range commitment to ethnic and racial diversity was symbolized in the creation of a Third World Center on Prospect Avenue, dedicated by Goheen in 1971.



William G. Bowen

1972-88

*W*illiam Gordon Bowen came to Princeton's Graduate School from Denison University, where he was Phi Beta Kappa, co-chairman of the student government, and Ohio Conference tennis champion. After taking his Ph.D., he joined the faculty as a member of the Department of Economics.

In addition to teaching several courses, he continued his scholarship and research. He prepared a definitive report on the effects of Princeton's involvement with the government, "The Federal Government and Princeton University." Following a research trip to England, he published *Economic Aspects of Education*, an analysis of university financing in the United States and Great Britain. With Professor William J. Baumol, he began a study of the economic foundations of American theater, opera, orchestra, and dance. Their book, *Performing Arts: The Economic Dilemma*, is a landmark study of the economics of culture. Finally, on leave of absence before taking over the recently established office of provost, he joined T. A. Finegan of Vanderbilt University in writing *The Economics of Labor Force Participation*.

As provost, Bowen was general deputy to Goheen. During his five-year term—five tumultuous years in planning and overseeing the move to coeducation, efforts to reach out to minority students, and the defense of open inquiry and free speech.

Under his guidance and as part of the Council of the Princeton University Community (CPUC), a broadly representative Priorities

Committee was formed to study the manifold needs and capabilities of the University in an age of financial restraint. The budget was brought back into balance, thanks in part to increased financial support from alumni and friends.

Princeton's approach became a model for other educational institutions in the private sector. The American Council on Education circulated Bowen's reports throughout the nation. He was widely respected for his commitment to quality as well as economy, and for his strong devotion to the special characteristics of Princeton. He was a natural successor to Goheen.

During Bowen's 15 years as president, he was noted for his seemingly endless energy and capacity for work. One hallmark of his administration was his attention to detail—Bowen was directly involved in every major decision made during his tenure and stayed abreast of all issues confronting the University. He took particular satisfaction from the many excellent faculty members who came to Princeton during his presidency and the University's increasing diversity.

Bowen presided over many changes on campus. The residential college system was created during his tenure. Under this system, freshmen and sophomores live together in one of five residential colleges. During the Bowen years, five new buildings went up, a dozen others were expanded, and numerous facilities, including dorms, were renovated.

He was also a superb money manager and fund-raiser. Princeton's endowment grew from \$625 million in 1972 to more than \$2 billion at the time of Bowen's departure. During his tenure, a major fund-raising drive known as "A Campaign for Princeton," met its original goal of \$275 million halfway through its five-year schedule and easily passed its revised goal of \$330 million. When the campaign ended in July of 1986, \$410.5 million had been raised.

After leaving Princeton, Bowen became the president of the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.



Harold T. Shapiro

1988-

*H*arold T. Shapiro, an alumnus of Princeton's Graduate School, came to Princeton from the University of Michigan, where he had been president for eight years.

A native of Montreal, with dual American and Canadian citizenship, Shapiro received his bachelor's degree from McGill University in 1956. As a student of McGill's Faculty of Commerce, he won its highest academic honor, the Lieutenant Governor's Medal. He spent five years in business before enrolling in Princeton's Graduate School in 1961. As a graduate student, he was a Harold Helm Fellow and a Harold Dodds Senior Fellow. He received a doctorate from Princeton in 1964.

Shapiro then joined the faculty of the University of Michigan as an assistant professor of economics. He was promoted to associate professor in 1967 and to full professor in 1970, he was named vicepresident for academic affairs in 1977, and elected president in 1980.

Shapiro's areas of expertise include economic forecasting; his colleagues at Michigan recall that when he appeared before the Michigan legislature to make budget requests for his university, the chamber was turned into a classroom as the legislators questioned Shapiro about his economic predictions for the state.

During his inaugural address, Shapiro said that he had "consulted" with his 17 predecessors by reviewing their inaugural addresses and other works before preparing his own remarks.

“I feel that through these conversations I have begun to establish a certain collegiality with my predecessors. The rewards of these new friendships have been very satisfying as I have been able to bear witness to the evolutionary interplay of tradition and change—the process of selective adaptation—that has characterized Princeton’s history. Our conversations provided a distant mirror reflecting the constant dialogue among tradition, continuity, discovery, and change that has shaped the ever-changing nature of the University itself....

“As my conversations with my predecessors continued, I informed them that we wrestle with these same tensions today, although from a somewhat different perspective. I told them that at its core the modern university has a deep and abiding belief in the product of the intellect and an optimistic view regarding the continuing prospects for human development. We continue, therefore, to be morally energized—as they were—by a vision of a better future. Indeed, the deepest excitement of contemporary university life comes from the opportunity—for both students and faculty—to participate in new ideas and discoveries, to communicate new understandings with clarity and expertise, and to contribute to the advancement of our society. It is this excitement of new possibilities, built on a Princeton tradition now 241 years old, that cements our loyalty to the institution.”

*The story
of
Princeton University
continues...*

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