

The first University of Chicago originated in a gift of land by Senator Stephen A. Douglas in 1856. Instruction was begun in 1858 and nearly five thousand students attended the preparatory, college, and law courses of the institution before it was forced to close in 1886 following financial difficulties during a period marked by the Chicago fire and financial

panics. A new university, first conceived of as a Baptist college, was incorporated on September 10, 1890, as the result of efforts of a group headed by Thomas Wakefield Goodspeed and Frederick Taylor Gates which was successful in persuading John Davison Rockefeller to found an educational institution in Chicago. Professor William Rainey Harper of Yale University became the first president of the University of Chicago, July 1, 1891, and instruction was begun October 1, 1892.

A school of law and jurisprudence was contemplated in President Harper's original plan for the University of Chicago. The school should, he stated, be far more than a training institution for admission to the bar. An education in law, President Harper said, "implies a scientific knowledge of law and of legal and juristic methods. These are the crystallization of ages of human progress. They cannot be understood in their entirety without a clear comprehension of the historic forces of which they are the product, and of the social environment with which they are in living contact. A scientific study of law involves the related sciences of history, economics, philosophy—the whole field of man as a social being." Consequently, the law school was not to be an institution which had a merely nominal connection with the University, and was not to be separated either by location or spirit from the University at large. It should be, the President felt, an organic part of the University, in close touch with the other divisions, embodying the spirit and purpose of University life and, in turn, contributing to that life.

In 1902 President Harper's plan was approved by the Trustees, and the Law School was opened in October of that year.\* The first Dean was Professor Joseph Henry Beale of Harvard University, who had been granted a leave of absence for two years to inaugurate the School. In 1904, Professor Beale was succeeded by James Parker Hall, who continued as Dean until his death in 1928. In 1929, Harry Augustus Bigelow, a member of the Faculty since 1904, became Dean of the School.

The goal of the School as stated in the first *Announcements* was "to afford adequate preparation for the practice of law as a profession in any jurisdiction in which the common law prevails, and to cultivate and encourage the scientific study of systematic and comparative jurisprudence, legal history, and principles of legislation." The original program was one of three years preceded by at least three years of collegiate training.

The curriculum included one year of prelegal studies composed largely of history, economics, logic, political theory, ethics, and sociology, and the three-year course of professional study leading to the degrees of Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Philosophy and Doctor of Laws. Administrative, comparative, and international law were included in the professional curriculum.