

Campus Names Committee
Report on
Current Campus Building Names
September 2020

Charge:

Review named spaces on our campus to ensure each illuminates a legacy that continues to reflect positively on our campus. Conduct an historical review of every named building and major outdoor space to ensure the names are not associated with the confederacy or racist groups such as the KKK.

Metric:

In consultation with other universities reviewing this type of campus information, the majority are focusing the scope of their review to the individual(s) and/or families for which the building or campus spaces were named. Limiting the investigation to that individual(s) and/or family name and not expanding the research to extended relatives, who were not involved with the campus donation or contribution. Except in the case where the individual or family's contribution to the university were in direct relation to profiting from enslaved individuals or racist activities.

General Recommendations:

- Be intentional when renaming spaces, look for opportunities to recognize marginalized individuals or groups contributions to campus.
- Investigate other marginalized groups that also may have been impacted by the growth of the university.
- Address, and educate about, UT's segregated past and relationship with HBUCs Fisk and Knoxville College.
- Ensure that the name change process and *Taskforce on Naming's* reports to the Office of the Chancellor are acknowledged and documented within the University Archives.

Overall Spaces Recommendations:

The committee found the three building names that warranted additional action:

- Recommended for renaming: Ames Plantation partnership UTIA- Ames Plantation is privately owned by Hobart Ames Foundation. UT should only reference its partnership with the official name, Hobart Ames Foundation, in its signage and on the website.
- Tyson Alumni House- There are some additional concerns with L. D. Tyson's treatment of Native Americans and child labor issues in the Knoxville Cotton Mills (Brookside Mills) Not recommending renaming at this time with our current evidence. This case would benefit from further contextualization and education through physical signage and on the university website.
- Dabney Hall- UT President Charles Dabney, in many ways was progressive in his ideas on the education of women and African Americans in the 1910s/20s. However, during his career, he made disparaging statements concerning the education Black Southerners. This case could benefit from renaming or at least further contextualization and education through physical signage and on the university website.

Background Information - Building Names Knoxville Campus

Areas highlighted in yellow show issues of concern

Areas highlighted in green show opportunities to educate

Ames Plantation (Partnership with UTIA) *Recommended for Renaming

Built: 1820

Summary: Settlement of the Ames Plantation area began about 1820 when John T. Patterson established a homestead on the North Fork of the Wolf River. Settlement was rapid, particularly during the 1830's and 40's with many settlers coming from the Carolinas, Virginia, Alabama and Middle Tennessee. The official legal name of the Ames Plantation is Hobart Ames Foundation. The recommendation is for the University to recognize the official legal name and not the name associated with a racist history.

Additional Information: The estate commonly known as the Ames (after Hobart Ames) plantation lies on the Fayette County and Hardeman County line approximately fifty miles east of Memphis and just above the Mississippi/Tennessee border. The house at its center was built in 1847 under the ownership of John Walker Jones (*Hardeman County, Tennessee: Family History*. United States, Turner Publishing Company, 2001, p. 10)

The Ames plantation was not only a space of enslavement before Emancipation. Afterward, as early as the 1880s (but likely for years beforehand) it was worked by sharecroppers, and continued as such after the land's purchase by Massachusetts industrialist Hobart Ames purchased the land (and expanded it by buying adjacent properties) to be used for his own purposes as a quail-hunting preserve in the early 20th century. What was by then known as the "Ames Plantation" became the site of a national bird dog competition in 1915 (*Kingsport Times-News*, January 20, 1980). Under his ownership it also took on a semi-public role as an experimental farm specializing in beef cattle breeding. According to one source, over 200 sharecropping families worked the property in the early 20th century. After his death the Hobart Ames Foundation founded by his wife began a relationship with the University of Tennessee College of Agriculture. (West, Carroll Van. *Tennessee's Historic Landscapes: A Traveler's Guide*. University of Tennessee Press, 1995, p. 397)

The University of Tennessee set up a "pilot farm" on a portion of the estate in the 1950s under the supervision of UT agriculture professor Thomas Watley (*Jackson Sun*, March 23, 1950). It remained a place of tenant labor until the 1960s, growing cotton, corn, wheat, and eventually soybeans, with an emphasis on diversified agriculture in an area that had been exhausted by over-production of cotton. (*Jackson Sun*, July 3, 1959)

Although sharecropping and tenantry were far from enslavement, they were in combination a continuation of the plantation setting of agricultural production that had been established during enslavement. Furthermore, plantation tenantry was an oppressive and exploitative economic form that bolstered and upheld a political economy based around segregation and political disenfranchisement. However, university studies of tenant farming there concentrated solely on

crop yield rather than political and social inequality (see for instance *Johnson City Press*, March 8, 1955 and *Sullivan County News* [Blountville, Tennessee], March 20, 1958)

During the period when the property was owned by the Ames family there were as many as 100 separate tenants, the majority African American, who paid rent with yearly cotton yield, i.e., a traditional postbellum sharecropping arrangement. After World War II the number of tenants decreased substantially, and their arrangement eventually became based on wages rather than crop payments. The new arrangement was estimated at \$1400 per year in the 1950s when the Ames property was switched to university oversight and assigned with a farm manager hired by UT (in 1956). Between 1954 and 1968 the number of tenant families on the property reduced from fifty-four to ten, a decrease that accelerated after mechanized cotton picking was introduced in 1957 and a plan for agricultural diversification was put forward. At the conclusion of a 1968 UT-conducted study, the majority of farm labor was still conducted by wage-earning tenants, but in numbers drastically reduced from the previous decade (T.J. Whatley, R.J. Goddard, C. F. Lard; "Reorganization and Development of Tenant Farms on the Ames Plantation, West Tennessee 1956 thru 1968," *BULLETIN* 459 [Nov., 1969], pp. 4-46) The essential top-down *plantation* style of production had been maintained albeit under the oversight of UT agricultural scientists using the Ames property as a case study with expectations that advancements in crop yield would be imitated on nearby farms not owned by the Hobart Ames foundation. In conclusion, the history of the Ames plantation offers an ironic twist on the usage of the word "plantation," and its associations, in the 20th century. During the days of enslavement, it is very possible that the property of John Walker Jones was never referred to as a "plantation"; many property-owning enslavers of the era reported themselves as "farmers" on census reports. The "Ames Plantation" came into being long after Emancipation as an investment and place of recreation for a businessman from a northern state, Hobart Ames, although during his ownership it operated as a cotton-producing estate worked by sharecroppers- hence the term "plantation" as it survived as a nomenclature well into the 20th century. It was only after his posthumous foundation turned the property over to UT oversight as an experiment station after World War II that it became once again a rural space dedicated primarily to agriculture (as opposed to a hunting preserve).

Tyson Alumni House (On National Historic Building Registry)

Built: 1880s, remolded in 1909

Summary: First built in the 1880s and then remodeled in 1909 by architect George F. Barber to create a "Colonial Classic" in the form of a Neoclassical single family house that was once the home of General Lawrence Davis Tyson (1861-1929). Tyson helped organize the Knoxville Cotton Mills in the early 20th century and served as president of the second Appalachian Exposition in 1911. A graduate of West Point, Tyson first saw military action during the Apache Wars in the 1880s. He moved to Knoxville in 1891 to teach military science at the University of Tennessee, and commanded the 6th Regiment, Tennessee Volunteer Infantry during the Spanish–American War. From 1902 to 1908, Tyson served in the Tennessee House of Representatives, and was Speaker of the House from 1903 to 1905. General Tyson served as the university's professor of military science (1891-1895), was a lawyer (law degree from UT, 1894), the military governor of Puerto Rico following the Spanish American War, Knoxville's US representative, and a US senator from Tennessee. He was married to Bettie McGhee, a

descendant of the founder of Knoxville. Donated to the University in 1935. There are some additional concerns with L. D. Tyson's treatment of Native Americans and some child labor issues in the Knoxville Cotton Mills (Brookside Mills).

Dabney Hall

Built: 1929, addition 1954

Summary: Originally known as Chemistry Hall was renamed in honor of 11th UT President Charles Dabney (1855–1945) in 1935. Under the auspices of President Charles Dabney, UT raised enrollment to more than 700, created a graduate school, expanded infrastructure, and brought in new faculty from around the country. Also under his tenure, in 1891, the first female students were admitted and housed in the first women's dormitory, Barbara Blount Hall.

However, during his presidency Charles Dabney made statements reflecting the enforced white supremacy of the Plessy v. Ferguson era. Unlike many other white southerners Dabney did believe in public education for Black southerners, but he considered their presence a hindrance to the advancement of the region and like many other southern leaders at the time, did not honor the "equal" in separate but equal. In speeches he referred to Blacks as "a child race, at least two thousand years behind the Anglo-Saxon in its development" (James D. Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South, 1860-1935* -UNC Press, 2010-, p. 85) and "a millstone about [the South's] neck" (Nashville American, January 3, 1902) when it came to increasing schooling for impoverished states.

Additional Information: Charles Dabney was one of the most influential theorists of education in the South at a time when the region lagged far behind most of the rest of the country in terms of primary, secondary, and higher education. His imprint on the University of Tennessee (UT) is undeniable since it was under his presidency the school began embracing an identity as a research institution. Even though the school had become the *University of Tennessee* years before his presidency began, Dabney's presidency comprises the 1st full presidency under that name. UT made an arrangement with Fisk University (c. 1882) in Nashville, Tennessee to fulfill requirements made by the 2nd Morrill Act for federal funding of land grant institutions that mandated funding for Black education. Knoxville College was established in 1875, and sometime later (c. 1888), UT terminated its arrangement with Fisk and entered into a similar arrangement with Knoxville College. In 1890, UT incorporated Knoxville College as its "colored department" to continue to fulfill requirements of the Act. Dabney's handling of Knoxville College reflected his statements. Dabney asserted that efforts by "churches and benevolent people at the North" to give Black students "a literary education which would qualify [them] to teach or preach" had been "carried too far." "Industrial education," he believed, was a better alternative. ("Colored Department of the University at Knoxville College" President's Papers, AR-0001 https://trace.tennessee.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1049&context=utk_dabn)

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In short, Charles Dabney was a southern white paternalist, and like many of his time treated African Americans with the condescension of lowered expectations, expectations lowered not by an acknowledgement of their forced social status, but rather by a belief that the Black race was biologically and socially inferior. His dismissal of literary education for Black students reflected his general attitude toward the importance of industrial and agricultural education, but it also reflected a racism common to his generation of educators.

Blount Hall

Built: 1971

Summary: Originally called the White Ave. Building was built as an addition to the George C. Taylor Law Building, being connected to the older building by a 12-foot-high, glass-walled-interior walkway. This designation became confusing when a White Avenue Biology Annex was constructed a block away, and in 2010 the names of both buildings were changed. The White Avenue Building became Blount Hall, preserving the original name of the institution and recalling the enrollment of Barbara Blount, daughter of Territorial Gov. William Blount. **Barbara Blount is recognized as one of the five coeds whose names appeared on the rolls of the institution as pupils from 1804-1807.**

Additional Information: **There has been some confusion if the building was named after Barbara Blount or for her father William Blount. Ensure that all building signage and website reference the official name as Barbara Blount Hall.** Included William Blount information below: William Blount (1749-1800), first territorial governor of (1790-1796) and later one of the first two U.S. senators from Tennessee (1796-1797). Blount served in the North Carolina militia during the Revolutionary War. His record as US senator and land speculator were matters of controversy in the early republic not very long after he was one of the signatories to the US Constitution (one of Tennessee’s only direct connections to the Constitutional Convention). In Congress Blount sponsored a bill in the 1780s that opened Cherokee territory in what is now Tennessee up for white settlement. Later, Blount was the primary American negotiator in the Treaty of the Holston signed with the Cherokee in 1791, a treaty that relinquished a large segment of Cherokee land south of the French Broad River to the US, and established the United States as having a “protective” role over the Cherokee nation (Tennessee became a state five years later). Aside from taking Cherokee land at a time when the tribe was in a disadvantaged position of negotiation, the Treaty of the Holston encouraged American expansion westward, and gave unspoken license to new settlers who were unconcerned with the technical parameters of Cherokee land usage in areas they still controlled; in short, Blount’s treaty on behalf of the United States was a major vehicle of settler colonialism and a step in the direction of outright removal of the Cherokee from eastern North America in the 1830s. William Blount was an enslaver in his original home of North Carolina as well as further westward, and according to information provided by the Blount Mansion, was one of the first Americans to bring enslaved people into what is now east Tennessee.

Cowan Gardener Cottage

Built: 1879

Summary: Purchased from Lucy Gillespie White (1862-1943) in 1919 after his husband Daniel Briscoe Sr. (1843-1918) passed. Briscoe Sr. was a member of the Confederate Army joining in 1861. Cowan Estate was the original residence of local businessman James Cowan, co-owner of a successful grocery and dry goods wholesale business- Cowan, McClung, and Dickinson. UT purchased the Cowan Estate/Briscoe property in 1920 with a portion of the Benjamin Rush Strong bequest in order to have a site upon which to build the women's dormitory named for his mother Sophronia Strong. Cowan Cottage was a university purchase and not a gift. No further action necessary at this time.

Additional Information: According to UT archaeologists who investigated the property in 2000 and 2001, the house at 701 Sixteenth Street was probably the gardener's home because of the three large greenhouses (which were found to have been next to it) and was built in 1879. It is a one-and-a-half-story house built in the Folk Victorian style with a cross-gabled roof, constructed of handmade, possibly repressed brick. When Vice Chancellor Philip Scheurer indicated that the house was not useful to the university because of its small size and the difficulty of bringing it up to code and that it would therefore be razed, strong community sentiment and efforts by UT archaeologists led to its being boarded up until such time as it was feasible to restore it. Its restoration was included as part of the project to convert Sophronia Strong Hall from a residence hall to a major academic facility. Renovation on the cottage was completed in 2018.

Sophronia Strong Hall

Built: 1925, 2016

Summary: No evidence was found at this time that Sophronia Strong (1817-1867) or land/estate donor Benjamin Rush Strong (1848-1915) had ties to the Confederacy. Benjamin Rush Strong, son of Sophronia Marrs Strong, was a wealthy financier and local business owner who attended UT. He was the father-in-law of Anna Monroe Strong, who had been on the Home Economics faculty from 1902 to 1906 and the brother of Robert N. Strong, who had been a UT professor of mathematics.

Austin Peay Building

Built: 1911(Carnegie Library, 1911), 1954

Summary: The original part of the Austin Peay Memorial Building was built in 1910 (opened May 1911) as the Carnegie Library. Austin Peay was Tennessee's governor between 1923 and 1927, and regarded by historians as one of the state's most influential executives. He was the state's first governor since the Civil War to win three consecutive terms, and the first to die in office. Prior to his election as governor, he served two terms in the Tennessee House of Representatives (1901-1905) In 1925, Peay signed into law the Butler Act, which barred the teaching of the Theory of Evolution in public schools. The enactment of this law led to the Scopes Trial, which took place later that year. Peay was unusual among Tennessee governors of his era in that he resisted the influence of the political machine run by Edward "Boss" Crump. Crump was notable for, among other things, maintaining Tennessee's poll tax.

Clement Hall

Built: 1965

Summary: Named for Former Tennessee Governor Frank Goad Clement (1920-1969), who served from 1953 to 1959 and from 1963 to 1967. Governor Frank G. Clement who was governor during some As governor, Clement oversaw the state's economic transformation from a predominantly agricultural state to an industrial state. He increased funding for education and mental health, and was the first Southern governor to veto a segregation bill. In 1956, he dispatched the National Guard to disperse a crowd attempting to prevent integration at Clinton High School.

Carriage House

Built: 1881

Summary: Purchased by UT in 1926, the carriage house on White Avenue, was and was used first as a women's dormitory. Designed by Joseph Baumann and built in 1880-1881 as an appurtenance of the William Wallace Woodruff (1849-1926) house a few years after the house itself was built. The Woodruff house, a Victorian mansion, It was razed to allow construction of Hoskins Library. W.W. Woodruff, a native of Louisville, Kentucky, first became acquainted with Knoxville as a soldier for the Union forces during the Civil War. He took part in most of the battles fought in and around Knoxville as a member of Company D of the Thirteenth Kentucky Infantry. Woodruff moved to Knoxville and opened his Woodruff Store on April 3, 1865. The Carriage House was renovated in 1950,1984 and 2004.

South College Building

Built: 1872

Summary: The four-story dormitory building was designed to accommodate 96 men in 24 rooms that housed four each. The architect was A. C. Bruce. The building was extensively renovated in 1907, at which time the roofline was changed, porches were added, classrooms were enlarged, and the old lodging rooms eliminated. In 1934 Acting President James D. Hoskins decided against razing South College, stating that it "is appropriate to keep a link with the past, and South College is worthy of that link." Not named for any individual.

Neyland Stadium

Built: 1921

Summary: Named for coach General Robert R. Neyland (1892-1962) on October 27, 1962. In 1926 Neyland was assigned to the University of Tennessee as R.O.T.C. commandant and also served as assistant to the district engineer for the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers in Chattanooga. In 1931 Neyland became district superintendent and supervised the dredging of the Tennessee and Cumberland Rivers. He also oversaw the preliminary surveys for Norris Dam, which was built later by the Tennessee Valley Authority. Neyland served in WWI and WWII and was sent to the Panama Canal Zone, China and India. No evidence was found at this time that Robert Neyland had ties to the Confederacy or racist groups.

Ayres Hall (On National Historic Building Registry)

Built: 1921

Summary: Brown Ayres (1856–1919) served as UT president from 1904 until his death on January 28, 1919. During his administration, the university received its first \$1 million appropriation in 1917 from the legislature. During his administration the College of Liberal Arts and the College of Business were founded. Ayres recruited Harcourt Morgan to UT to head the Agricultural Experiment Station. Morgan rose through the ranks and followed Ayres as UT's 13th president. Ayres also presided over UT's recognition by the American Association of Universities and the provision of scholarships for each electoral district in Tennessee to attract students outside of Knoxville. No evidence was found at this time that Brown Ayres had ties to the Confederacy or racist groups.

Morgan Hall

Built: 1921

Summary: Named for President Harcourt Morgan (1867–1950) in 1937. John Harcourt Alexander Morgan was born in Strathroy, Ontario, Canada, and was a Canadian citizen when he assumed the presidency of the university, a violation of a 1919 Tennessee law prohibiting schools from hiring teachers who were not US citizens. He was made Tennessee's state entomologist in 1905. He was president of the Association of Economic Entomology in 1907. In 1913 he was offered, and declined, the presidencies of the University of Virginia and the University of Maryland. He served UT as director of the Experiment Station, state entomologist, and dean of the college, and was sworn into office as president of UT on July 10, 1919. He coined the phrase and advocated strongly for the concept that "the State Is the Campus of The University of Tennessee" and encouraged the state to utilize the research capabilities of faculty at the university for the benefit of state government. Morgan became well known for his philosophy "The Common Mooring," by which he meant mankind's relationship to the environment and the responsibility to improve and conserve it. In 1927 he served as president of the Association of Land-Grant Colleges and Universities. No evidence was found at this time that Harcourt Morgan had ties to the Confederacy or racist groups.

The Rock

Date: Late 1970s

Summary: The Rock serves as the unofficial message board for the institution. At first, graffiti and messages appeared, and the Physical Plant Department was instructed to clean the Rock regularly. The removal process became a daily effort, and by 1982 the decision had been made not to remove paintings from the Rock unless they were obscene or offensive. Shortly thereafter, the issue was raised about whether selective removal of messages and paintings constituted abridgement of freedom of speech, and the policy now in effect was adopted—the Rock is not repainted by the university; anyone who finds a message or painting offensive may paint over it.

Oldest Buildings:

With the purchase of the Hill in 1826, our institution began building and expanding. Post-Civil War many of the original university buildings on the hill were razed and replaced. Here are the oldest buildings that are still standing on campus today.

Constructed Date	Building	Notes	Additional Info
1872	South College	South College originally served as a dormitory and campus armory for East Tennessee University. South College was converted into classrooms and meeting halls in 1890.	Oldest university-built building, not named for an individual.
1879	Cowan "Gardener" Cottage	Victorian-era Cowan/ Strong estate.	Purchased from the Estate of Daniel Briscoe Sr. former Confederate soldier and local business owner.
1881	Carriage House	Built as part of the privately owned Woodruff estate.	Purchased from the estate of W.W. Woodruff, former Union soldier and local business owner.
1895	Tyson Alumni House	Originally a two-story Queen Anne-style house, Tyson House was rebuilt in 1907 as a three-story Colonial classic (Historic Registry)	Some additional concerns with Tyson's treatment of Native Americans and some child labor issues in his business interest in the Knoxville Cotton Mills (Brookside Mills).
1908	Facilities Services Complex	Not originally constructed by University. Purchased by Gray Knox Marble Company	Purchased in 2013.
1911	Austin Peay Memorial Building	Began as the Carnegie Library. It was extensively remodeled and renamed for TN Governor Austin Peay.	In 1925, Peay signed into law the Butler Act, which barred the teaching of the Theory of Evolution in public schools. This law led to the Scopes Trial. Peay rebelled against segregationist machine politics.

1920	Ceramics Annex	University built in 1920.	Not named for an individual.
1921	Ayres Hall	Named for Pres. Brown Ayres.	On the National Historic Buildings Registry.
1921	Morgan Hall	Named for Pres. Harcourt Morgan.	Built with state funds.

Resources:

University Archives Collections <https://scout.lib.utk.edu/>

Volopedia <https://volopedia.lib.utk.edu/entries/>

Tennessee Encyclopedia <https://tennesseeencyclopedia.net/>

University of Tennessee Timeline <https://225.utk.edu/#timeline>