

In truth, a diploma from Ward Seminary equaled that of a high school education until after 1910, but the school never made false claims. As early as 1892 the *Annual Announcement* stated, "We make no claim to a *university curriculum*, only modestly calling our work COLLEGIATE; still, we do say that our course of study is as comprehensive as any school in the South."⁷⁰ Perhaps because of the challenge of accreditation, as well as the growth of curriculum, faculty, and student enrollment, John D. Blanton prepared for the possibility of a move or merger in 1912.

By that point, Nashville had grown considerably, and many new schools and colleges had opened. Belmont College for Young Women, Vanderbilt University, Peabody College for Teachers, Nashville Bible School (David Lipscomb University), Meharry Medical College, and Fisk University were all located west of downtown. As both were all-female academies, Ward Seminary began talks with Belmont College for Young Women in 1911. It considered the move because Belmont's large campus had greater potential for physical growth. In 1913 the two schools joined forces, and Ward Seminary relocated to Belmont (located within a mile of Vanderbilt University and Peabody College for Teachers). This development further cemented West Nashville as an attractive destination for higher education and middle/upper class

neighborhoods that served and benefitted from local colleges and universities.

Ward-Belmont educated young women on college preparatory and collegiate levels until after World War II. In the spring of 1951, the Tennessee Baptist Convention purchased the school. Belmont College reopened the following school year under the auspices of the Tennessee Baptists as a four year, co-educational institution. Presently, Belmont University continues the musical tradition of the conservatories of Ward Seminary and Ward-Belmont. The college preparatory division of Ward-Belmont, which closely resembles the mission and purpose of Ward Seminary, reopened as the Harpeth Hall School, in Nashville. The Harpeth Hall School has matured to become one of the most prestigious all-girls prep schools in the nation. It celebrates and recognizes Ward Seminary as its primary institution, and therefore will observe 150 years of excellence in women's education in 2015.

1. *The Nashville Tennessean Magazine*, "A Quiet, Even Growth," 28 November 1948, 6.

2. From 1865 to 1913, the school had three variations on its name: W.E. Ward's Seminary, Ward's Seminary, and Ward Seminary. For the purposes of consistency, Ward Seminary will be used throughout the text; however, the name used at the time will be reflected in footnoted sources.

3. W.E. Ward, "The Coming Woman," *Annual Commencement of W.E. Ward's Seminary for Ladies* (1885-1886), 25.

4. Don Doyle, *Nashville and the New South, 1880-1930* (Knoxville, 1985) and Don Doyle, *New Men, New Cities, New South: Atlanta, Nashville, Charleston, Mobile, 1860-1910* (Chapel Hill, 1990). Other prominent works on Nashville exist but are written largely as a biographical sketch of the city's history. William Waller has contributed the most with two texts, *Nashville in the 1890s* (Nashville, 1972) and *Nashville, 1900-1910* (Nashville, 1970).

5. Also see Lawrence Larson, *The Urban South: A History* (Lexington, 1990), Gabriel Kolko, *Railroads and Regulation, 1877-1916* (New York, 1965), and Maury Klein, *History of the Louisville and Nashville Railroad* (New York, 1972).

6. The Parthenon built for the Centennial Exposition of 1897, which celebrated the state's 1896 centennial anniversary of statehood, was only a semi-permanent structure. The original structure stood until 1920 when the city decided to erect a permanent structure made of concrete. The entire structure was completed in 1931, and the Parthenon continues to serve as a monument to classical architecture as well as home to one of Nashville's premiere art museums.

7. Such developments in Nashville represent an era of "University Transformation," a term coined by Arthur M. Cohen. Cohen argues that between 1870 and 1944 institutions of higher education endured what he terms a "University Transformation" because of population growth, land grants, rise in women's enrollment, accreditation institutions, admission requirements, and the professionalization of faculty. J.H. Warf, Tennessee Commissioner of Education from 1963-1971, affirmed this "transformation" in Nashville as each of the city's major colleges and universities attained accreditation by 1920. Furthermore, Nashville's institutions of higher education all accepted women by 1892, and Warf also recognized the regional, if not national, prestige of Ward Seminary and later Ward-Belmont (1913). Arthur M. Cohen, *The Shaping of American Higher Education: The Emergence and*

Growth of the Contemporary System (San Francisco, 1998), 97-174. For more on the history of education consult: Warren H. Button and Eugene F. Provenzo (eds.), *History of Education and Culture in America* (2nd ed.) (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1989). Many colleges and universities still did not accept women as traditional students until after 1900. For a closer look at the changing status of education in Tennessee through the reports and bureaucratic assessments of the state see: J.H. Warf, *Tennessee State Department of Education, 1900-1968* (Nashville, 1968).

8. The University of Nashville was founded in 1826, but its medical department merged with Vanderbilt University in 1875. The literary arts program merged with Peabody College, renamed Peabody Normal College, the same year. The college preparatory division of the University of Nashville was acquired by the newly formed Montgomery Bell Academy in 1867. Montgomery Bell Academy, an all-male institution, remains a premier college preparatory school in Nashville. The lone public institution of higher education began as Tennessee Agricultural and Industrial State Normal School (1909). It became a four-year university in 1951 and was renamed Tennessee State University in 1968. Many historians cite the lag of state funding for public schools as a reason for the rapid increase in the number of private schools. Such private schools helped to meet the growing demand from middle/upper class students.

9. An excerpt from an 1895 issue of the periodical *Bachelor of Arts* reveals an interesting position on women's education. The article notes that women's colleges were sound investments—better, in fact, than the financial speculation in men's colleges. The author points to a lower faculty budget and higher tuitions because "women professors, it seems, get lower salaries than men professors, while the yearly bills that students pay the college are usually much larger when the students are girls than if they are men." As Ward Seminary emerged as a premier school for young