TEMPLE UNIV.

Temple University

125 Years of Service to Philadelphia, the Nation, and the World

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Temple University Press
Philadelphia

hapter 1
he Man, the Speech,
he "Temple Idea"

Temple University did not spring from the generosity of a captain of industry or the munificence of a financial wizard. Unlike other multi-purpose universities of today, Temple was not the creation of the state or the beneficiary of federal land grants. Neither did it have roots extending back scores of decades with connections to America's aristocracy; nor was it the vehicle of a religious order or an offshoot of a training institute, as were so many colleges founded in the latter part of the nineteenth century during America's Gilded Age.

Conwell begins program of evening study.

Temple College receives its Charter of Incorporation.

The Temple (aka the Baptist Temple) opens.

College Hall, Temple's first building, opens at 1834 North Broad Street. The football and basketball programs start.

The Law School of Temple College is introduced.

Conwell opens the School of Medicine.

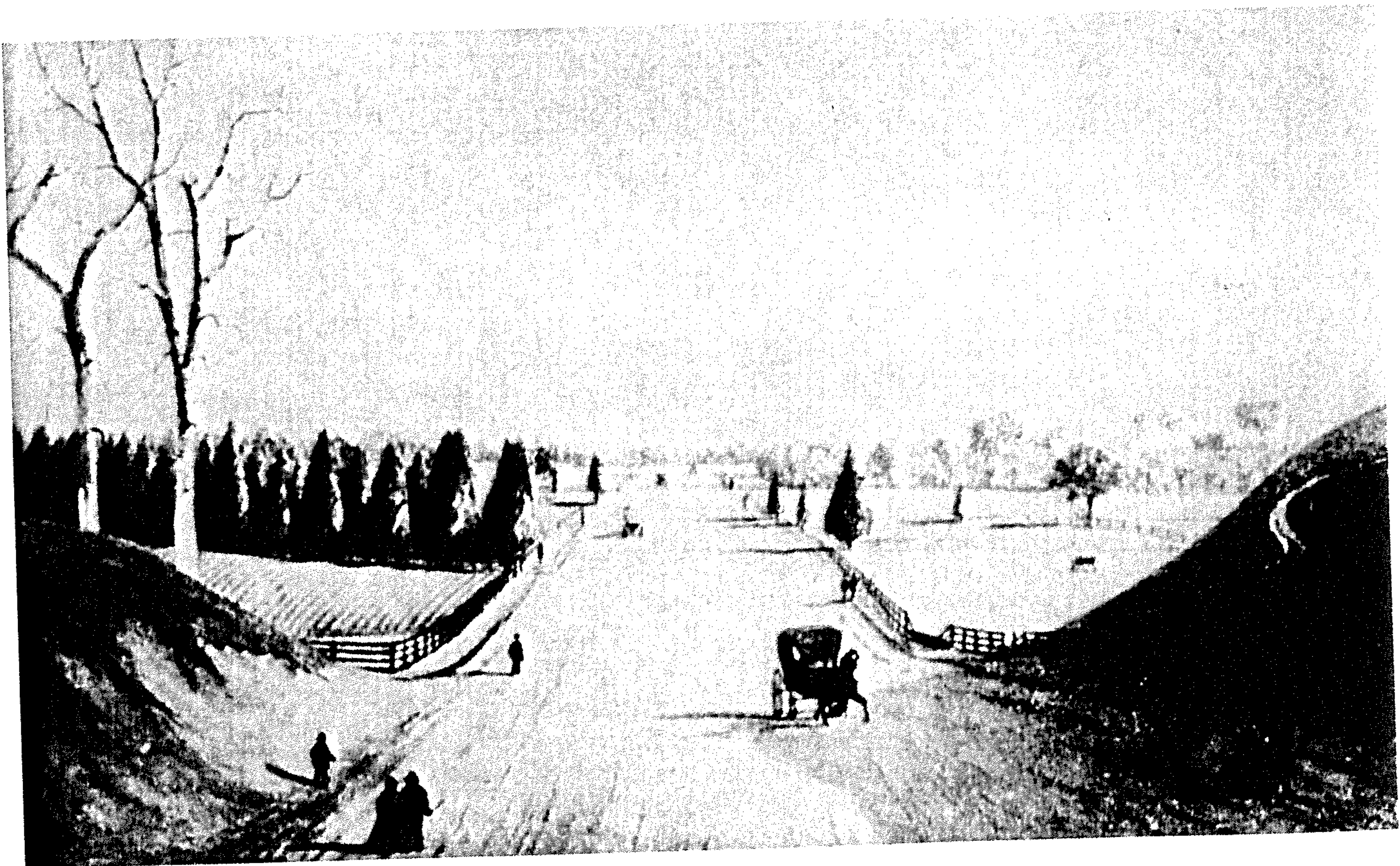
Opposite page 1 *The Temple University seal on the entrance gates at Broad and Berks streets.*

Indeed, Temple's founding was principally the work of one man—not a captain of industry, but a captain of erudition, an educational entrepreneur—who sought to democratize, diversify, and widen the reach of higher education. He challenged prevailing values and norms regarding the purposes of higher education and who should benefit. Rather than serve America's affluent classes, he provided deserving working men and women right of entry to an education otherwise denied them by circumstances of birth or life's station. Rather than provide only the esoteric classic curriculum, he prepared students for life's vicissitudes and for success in the modern world.

Universities are among the Western world's oldest and most stable institutions with continuous histories. Only the Roman Catholic Church, the law courts of certain European countries, some army regiments, and a few town and craft corporations can claim similar longevity. But, once Temple was begun, its survival and growth were far from certainties. Over the 125 years of its existence Temple has faced many precarious moments, considerable adversity, and more than its share of financial difficulties.

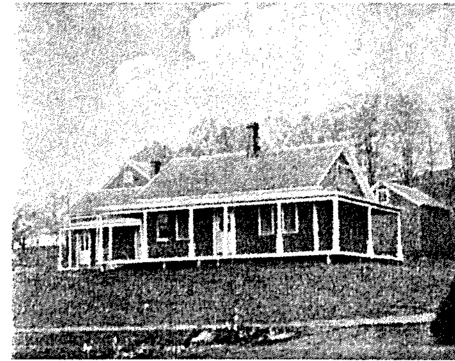
In those 125 years, as it has grown physically and intellectually, Temple has evolved the ideals and purposes of its founder into a simple, compelling mantra: "Access to Excellence." By *access* we mean maintaining allegiance to the founder's pledge to serve deserving students from all stations in life, keeping an open mind on academic issues, and maintaining diversity in the student body, faculty, and staff. By *excellence* we mean providing the highest-quality education possible, advancing and disseminating knowledge and new discoveries through research and scholarly inquiry, developing and applying new approaches to learning, and sustaining an unshakable commitment to serve the community, the city, and the world.

Before there was Temple: This sketch from 1839 is looking north on Broad Street from just above Girard Avenue, which was the city limit at the time. The location of the covered wagon is approximately Cecil B. Moore Avenue (formerly Columbia Avenue). The fourth carriage is about where Mitten Hall is today. Approximately three blocks north of that was Lamb's Tavern, where winter sleigh parties would go to dance at night. It was demolished in 1894.



The Man and the Vision

Russell Herman Conwell's life story and his aspirations for Temple University resonate with the personal life narratives of Temple University's students, faculty, staff, and alumni. He is connected to us all. Conwell played many roles—as an actor, showman, brilliant orator, journalist and editor, lawyer, minister, educator, real estate speculator, promoter, entrepreneur, and founder of Temple University. Most compellingly, Conwell grasped the meaning of his time, understood the moving forces of his generation, and demonstrated the courage to capture and control those forces and, in effect, bend history. His greatest contribution was the "Temple Idea"—the conviction that a great university must do more than discipline the mind and conscience, expand knowledge, and prepare students for the workplace. It must also serve its community, uplift its people, and be a vehicle for social justice.



The Conwell birthplace in the Berkshires, South Worthington, Massachusetts. His modest background would make Conwell feel ill at ease socially when he enrolled at Yale College in 1861, but it did not restrain his ambition throughout his adult life.

Conwell was a complex man, a mingling of myth and reality, and details of his early life remain unclear despite several biographies and despite Conwell's many autobiographical insertions in his lectures and writings. For whatever reasons, Conwell embellished significant episodes in his young adult life. Perhaps Professor J. Douglas Perry explained it best: Conwell understood intuitively that "to gain support for a cause or an institution, one must give to people an image on which they would look with wonderment, yet one with which they also could identify."

Born February 15, 1843, Russell Conwell was reared on a 350-acre hardscrabble subsistence farm in the Berkshires in western Massachusetts, near South Worthington, about fifteen miles from Westfield, Massachusetts. He attended Wilbraham Academy for two years and then taught school in South Worthington. Alas, most of Conwell's descriptions of his early adult life cannot be independently corroborated or verified through written records, although several historians have put considerable effort into the task.

Piecing together major elements of Conwell's early life, we learn that at a young age he developed exemplary elocutionary skills and a wondrous capacity for extemporaneous speaking, combined with an exceptional ability to attract attention. Conwell left home in 1861 to enroll at Yale University, where he planned to study law. To earn money for tuition he held several jobs near campus but apparently spent only a few months actually enrolled in classes. In later years Conwell freely admitted that he felt humiliated by the Yale students, many of whom mocked his shabby clothing, rural manners, and ungentlemanly resort to menial labor in a New Haven hotel.

When Civil War broke out, Conwell returned to Massachusetts, where he proved a persuasive recruiter for the Union cause, giving rousing patriotic speeches that made young men enlist on the spot. Credited with recruiting an entire company of volunteers, though only nineteen, he was elected captain, Company F, Forty-sixth Massachusetts Volunteer Militia. His men presented him with a fancy dress sword inscribed *Vera Amicitia Est Sempiterna* ("True friendship is eternal"). Company F was mustered out in July 1863, after seeing light action. Conwell reenlisted in August and was commissioned captain of Company D, Second Regiment, Massachusetts Heavy Artillery.

FACT

One in every eight Greater Philadelphia college graduates holds a Temple University degree.

Conwell's personal orderly was a slight young man and a neighbor of the Conwell family named Johnny Ring. Johnny greatly admired Russell Conwell, served as his personal servant, and shared his tent. A staunch Christian, Ring read the Bible daily and nightly, to the great annoyance of Conwell, who, even though raised in a devout Methodist home, boasted of being an atheist.

According to Conwell, Ring sacrificed his life for him during a Confederate attack when the unit was overrun and Ring ran across a burning bridge and through enemy fire to retrieve Conwell's ceremonial sword from his tent. In Conwell's various versions of the story, Ring's last full measure of devotion evoked an epiphany, bringing Conwell to kneel in prayer at the side of Johnny's cot when the young man died a few days later. Conwell pledged to work sixteen hours a day from then on—"eight hours for myself and eight hours for Johnny Ring who died for me." He repeated the story in sermons, books, and a motion picture script.

Unfortunately, war records indicate the place and circumstances of Ring's death were not as Conwell later described them. Nor was Conwell even present. Records reveal instead that Conwell was absent from his post during the attack, subsequently court-martialed (later expunged by President Ulysses S. Grant), and separated from the service on May 20, 1864. Conwell claimed to have served beyond that date, telling biographers that a private, unrecorded high-level arrangement allowed the twenty-one-year-old to remain in the service to serve on General James McPherson's staff as a lieutenant colonel. Conwell maintained that he was severely wounded at the Battle of Kennesaw Mountain on June 27, 1864, but no evidence exists of his presence on McPherson's staff or at the battle, other than his word. One simply does not know what to make of the contradictions. Conwell possessed photographs of himself in the uniform of a lieutenant colonel, and in speeches he frequently referred to his role as a staff officer in the war. Later in life, according to several sources, Conwell sought treatment for a recurring war wound that could not have been imagined.

The statue of Johnny Ring was sculpted by Boris Blai, founding dean of Temple's Tyler School of Art, and placed in the garden setting north of Mitten Hall and west of Beasley Walk (formerly Watts Walk). The statue commemorates Conwell's Civil War orderly, whose piety and devotion Conwell credited for his work ethic of sixteen-hour days—"eight hours for himself and eight hours for Johnny Ring who died for me."

Conwell often said he was so moved by Johnny Ring's devotion to duty and to his God that he decided to devote his life to being a minister. The decision to enter the ministry, however, was not confirmed until 1876. In the meantime Conwell lent his hand to journalism, filing a series of graphic stories depicting the horrors of war that earned him a position as a reporter and a round-the-world trip as correspondent for the *New York Tribune* and *Boston Traveler*. In 1869 he revisited the Civil War battlefields and described the battles in a series of reports and vignettes later assembled by Temple professor Joseph C. Carter and published as a book.

One thing is certain about Conwell's Civil War service: He never abandoned his love of books and learning. He carried books with him everywhere, studying the law and the classics every spare moment. Conwell earnestly believed that "there are no real scholars but those who have fought with circumstances while they studied books." Returning home, Conwell read the law with a local lawyer, entered law school at the University of Albany, and earned a bachelor of laws in the spring of 1865.

That summer he married Jennie P. Hayden, his childhood sweetheart, moved to Minneapolis, and was baptized in the First Baptist Church. He practiced law, worked as a correspondent for the *St. Paul Press,* published two weekly newspapers, ran a real estate business, and served in a host of local civic organizations. When a devastating fire burned his home and all of his possessions, including his voluminous library, Conwell, his wife, and their two small children returned to the Boston area and settled in Somerville, where he practiced law, served as a Baptist lay preacher, and wrote articles for the *New York Tribune*. In 1872 Conwell's wife, Jennie, died suddenly. The stricken Conwell immersed himself in theological studies, mission work, and his law practice.

Two years later Conwell married Sarah F. Sanborn, a devout Baptist and member of a patrician Boston family. They formed a strong, purposeful union, melding common sense and duty with

Russell H. Conwell (1843–1925)
Soldier, journalist, lawyer, minister, orator on the Chautauqua circuit, and founder of Temple University

Conwell and his wife Sarah (née Sanborn) married in 1874 in Massachusetts. Sarah was instrumental in Conwell's Philadelphia Baptist ministry, which he began in 1882. From this position he extended beyond the spiritual needs of the community into the intellectual and medical well-being of his congregation and neighborhood. At one time Sarah served as head of the Women's Department in the young college.

the virtues of their faith. Meanwhile, Conwell's law practice thrived. He was admitted to the bar and served as counsel to banks and railroads. Yet these successes gave him small satisfaction. In 1876 he formally committed to the ministry, becoming the full-time pastor of a frail Baptist church in Lexington, Massachusetts, immediately reviving it and putting it on its feet financially. Conwell was formally ordained in 1879 at the Newton Seminary.

Many elements contributed to his decision to enter the ministry, but Conwell frequently singled out Johnny Ring's devotion and sacrifice as the reason for his decision, pledging to rededicate his life in compensation for Ring's death. Conwell retold his version of the Ring story countless times. It became officially enshrined in Temple University's lore in 1964 when a statue of Ring sculpted by Boris Blai, founding dean of the Tyler School of Art, was placed in a garden just north of Mitten Hall, thereafter to be called Johnny Ring Garden.

In November 1882 Russell Conwell accepted the pastorate of the Grace Baptist Church in Philadelphia and moved his family into the parsonage at 2004 North Park Avenue (now the site of Peabody Hall). The congregation was small, with only ninety persons, and it carried a heavy debt from a new building at Berks and Mervine streets, where the courtyard of Gladfelter Hall now stands. Conwell's energy, organizational skills, and gifted oratory attracted many new parishioners, and soon there was not enough room to accommodate all who wished to worship at the church and to listen to the brilliant, entertaining, and motivating pastor. He had barely arrived before the parishioners were discussing the need to build yet another, larger church.

The Speech

By the time Conwell arrived in Philadelphia he had gained fame as a lecturer on the Chautauqua circuit, a traveling tent show that visited towns in America's heartland, presenting musical performances, plays, political speeches, and spellbinding orations, such as Conwell's "Acres of Diamonds" lecture, part sermon, part dramatic recitation, part autobiographical recounting, and always entertaining. By Conwell's count he gave the speech 6,152 times, a fact included in *Ripley's Believe It or Not.* Tirelessly delivered in conversational style, "Acres of Diamonds" was a morality tale of the value of education, devotion to the Protestant ethic, and the importance of family and community service.

In 1870, while traveling near Baghdad along the Tigris river in what is modern-day Iraq, Conwell heard the tale of a wealthy Persian farmer, Ali Hafed, who spent years wandering in search of a mythical field of diamonds. Ali Hafed died far from home a disillusioned pauper. Soon after, the acres of diamonds were discovered in his own land. "Your diamonds are not in far distant mountains or in yonder seas," Conwell concluded, "they are in your own back yard, if you but dig for them."

Conwell molded the tale of Ali Hafed to fit modern times and urged listeners to "do what you can with what you have where you are today." Greatness, he insisted, "consists not in holding some

office; greatness really consists in doing some great deed with little means, in the accomplishment of vast purposes from the private ranks of life. . . . To be great, one must be great here and now in Philadelphia. He must give to this city better streets and sidewalks, better schools, more colleges, more happiness, more civilization, more of God."

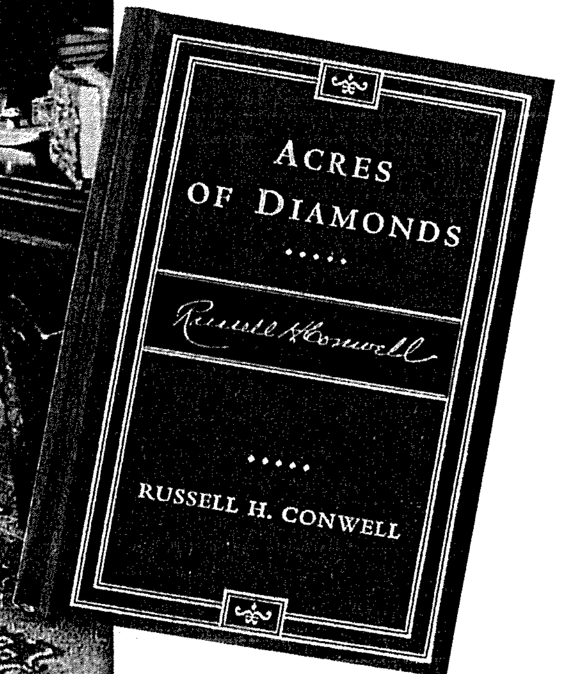
FACT

Temple's libraries boast 3 million volumes, 10 million images, 50,000 print and online subscriptions, and 35,000 linear feet of manuscripts.

Conwell believed that Christian living would surely yield material success. Money, Conwell often repeated, was not evil, only the love of money was. "I say you ought to be rich; you have no right to be poor. To live in Philadelphia and not be rich is a misfortune, because," as he put it, "Philadelphia furnishes so many opportunities. . . . Money is power, money has powers; and for a man to say, 'I do not want money,' is to say, 'I do not wish to do any good to my fellowmen.'"

Conwell's speech reinforced much of the contemporary wisdom of the day. He endorsed the doctrine of the secular calling, the obligation to serve both God and community through a chosen profession or simply through hard work. He also espoused the then-fashionable tenets of the "Gospel of Wealth," as articulated by Andrew Carnegie, the steel-magnate-turned-philanthropist who urged that wealth not be passed on to heirs but be used, instead, to accomplish great things for the common good. He promoted the ideas of democratic capitalism and the theory of the

Conwell seated at his desk, holding a volume of his famous "Acres of Diamonds" sermon, reportedly delivered 6,152 times.



A modern reproduction of the sermon.

self-made man made popular by Horatio Alger's "rags to riches" novels. Truly great people, he said, were simple, approachable people of common origins. Mixed in with all of these beliefs was an unabated sense of progress and national destiny.

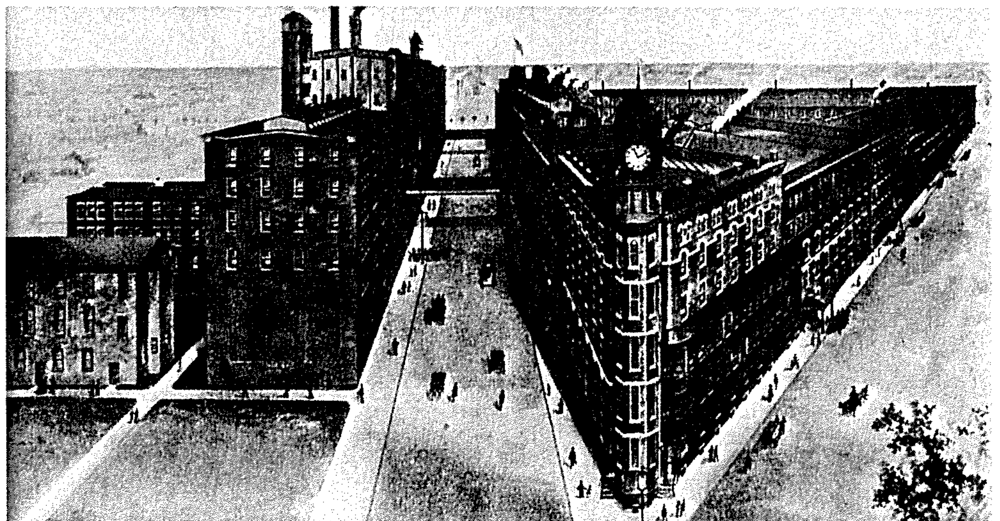
Conwell's message had a larger purpose transcending contemporary wisdom. The pathway to personal success, he stressed, was largely education. Educated persons, in turn, were obligated to serve the less fortunate and to help them realize their full potential. Further, it was the duty of all to meet the needs of the community. "We must know what the world needs first," said Conwell, "and then invest ourselves to supply that need, and success is almost certain." To meet those needs Conwell initially used his church to reach out to all peoples of North Philadelphia— many of them poor and many of them recent immigrants—offering spiritual sustenance, recreation, social life, economic assistance, and instruction in basic life skills. Gradually he channeled his energies into meeting what he considered the foremost of those needs, namely education.

Conwell's Philadelphia

Conwell arrived in 1882 to a thriving, throbbing Philadelphia, known then as the Workshop of the World. Philadelphia and the United States were in the midst of a huge industrial expansion. Philadelphia's expansion differed from that of other large industrial centers whose huge plants produced mass quantities of steel. The city focused instead on mid-sized industries engaged in flexible specialization, relying on batch and custom operations rather than mass production.

At the heart of this specialized production process was the skilled worker, making hats, glass, linoleum, pianos, or other custom goods; cutting fabrics; rolling cigars; stitching baseballs; working in a machine shop; assembling locomotives and ships; brewing beer; or tanning leather. Conwell's new church lay near what amounted to the western border of an industrial village that housed a large segment of working-class Philadelphia; the areas east of the church teemed with industry and with the homes of skilled workers and their families.

Textiles was the city's largest industry, with 60,000 jobs and 800 mills at its peak. Broad and Lehigh was the textile center of the United States. Frankford and Kensington housed mills and factories of varied descriptions. The Baldwin Locomotive Works, at one time the region's largest single



The Stetson Hat Company, circa 1900. At the time it was the largest hat manufacturuer in the world, employing more than 5,400 men and women and producing more than one million hats per year in its five-acre facility at Fourth Street and Montgomery Avenue, within walking distance of Temple College.

The Pennsylvania Railroad North Broad Street Station, circa 1895.

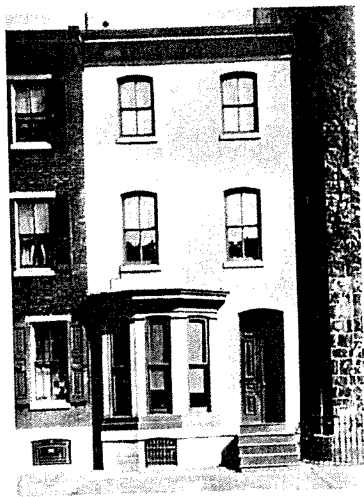
employer, was located at Broad and Spring Garden streets. The Baldwin production process did not rely on mass production techniques; instead the company used skilled craftsmen to build and assemble each part of the locomotive, relying on an apprentice-training program to enlarge skill levels for custom work. Henry Disston & Son Saw Works was at Front and Laurel streets. John B. Stetson operated the nation's largest nonunion hat business at Fourth Street and Montgomery Avenue. Nicetown was home to the Midvale Steel Works. All were within walking distance of Grace Baptist Church.

Philadelphia was called a paradise for skilled workmen whose abilities were highly respected. Most of the skilled workers were of northern European, Irish, or Anglo descent, with ancestors who immigrated to America generations earlier. The worst jobs, the most dangerous and deadening unskilled industrial jobs, went to the "new" immigrants from southern and eastern Europe, who received the lowest pay and the least respect. Between the time of Conwell's arrival in Philadelphia in 1882 and the onset of World War I in 1914 approximately one million "new" immigrants arrived in the United States each year.

By 1920 Philadelphia was the third-largest metropolis in the United States, with two million people. However, it never became the center of new immigrant life comparable to New York or Boston. Unlike New York, Philadelphia did not concentrate its population in tenements or high-rise multi-family buildings. Known as The City of Homes for its proportion of single-family and owner-occupied homes, Philadelphia possessed relatively inexpensive land and accessibility that permitted the construction of low-rise housing and single homes. It also featured the row house, which multiplied prodigiously after the Civil War.

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries the areas around Conwell's church (and the future Temple campus) blended the best and the worst of living conditions. The industrial village stretched from around Tenth and Berks streets eastward toward the Delaware River into Northern Liberties and Kensington to the mills, shops, and factories that served as the backdrops for block after block of workers' row houses. Westward, however, the scene changed dramatically to one of elegant row houses and impressive, well-constructed town houses with brick facades, mansard roofs, and granite stoops, such as those buildings still standing on Temple's campus along Park Avenue (now Liacouras Walk). Just beyond lay the grand tree-lined boulevard that was North Broad Street, home until the 1920s of Philadelphia's new business and professional classes and many nouveau riche entrepreneurs.

When Conwell arrived, the old-money Philadelphia elite lived in a pocket of grandeur around Rittenhouse Square. In the 1870s center city congestion, combined with the demand for larger showcase homes of conspicuous consumption, brought new-money classes to build magnificent mansions and palatial four-story town houses along North Broad Street. Two of Philadelphia's richest men, the street railway and trolley car magnates P.A.B. Widener and William Elkins, lived at Broad and Girard in splendid mansions across the street from each other. Henry Disston, who owned the mammoth saw works in Tacony, built a mansion at Broad and Jefferson. In 1892, as a sign of his growing status and success, Conwell moved to a larger, more luxurious home at 2020 North Broad Street (across the street from where Johnson-Hardwick Hall currently stands).



1919 Mervine Street was the first building in which Conwell conducted class meetings when the number of students grew to overflow the capacity of his study.

Russell Conwell's relationships with the wealthier classes and the working classes are critical factors in understanding the contexts within which Temple University originated. Conwell arrived in Philadelphia in the midst of a redefining moment in the city's social and cultural history. The huge Centennial celebration had just concluded, and cultural institutions were preparing for the 1887 Constitution Centennial, just as immigrants poured into the city. Philadelphia's affluent classes promoted an image of the city as a cosmopolitan center of cultural and historical importance; they were wedded to its historical imagery, to its importance to the national character and the nation's meta-narrative. In those days the belief was widespread, as historian Gary Nash revealed, that "historical memory would nourish sacred values, that remembrances of the dead white heroes would sustain a country of immigrants." Such images benefited and sustained the identity and importance of Philadelphia's dominant white majority and its cultural and political leaders.

In reality, though, such images and remembrances resonated weakly among immigrants and the working classes, because they stood in marked contrast to the stark reality of the industrial city, differing as they did with the desperation and starkness of the lives of the working-class families, new immigrants, and migrating Southern blacks, the city's working-class backbone.

Conwell found himself caught in the tension between Philadelphia's old elite—the remnants of the founding Quaker oligarchy and the old established commercial crowd that dominated Philadelphia

Row houses on Park Avenue, now Liacouras Walk, were once working-class homes, then classrooms and office spaces for Temple. They have been refurbished for administrative offices and commercial properties as part of "Temple Town."

economic and cultural life for more than a century—and the new, defiantly un-elite class of working men, skilled craftsmen, and immigrants striving for ascendancy. Conwell was philosophically and sentimentally aligned with the working classes, yet reliant on the elites for donations and social acceptance. For the working classes, his sermons on the "success gospel" fed their dreams and aspirations; for the affluent classes, those same words were taken as license or rationalizations for keeping what was theirs.

Conwell donated the proceeds from his "Acres of Diamonds" lectures to Temple College and spent his remaining years appealing to the affluent elites, beseeching them for money and approval. Conwell proved marvelously adroit at fund-raising among the middle and business classes, but he was not nearly as successful with the truly super rich and the old-line Philadelphia elite. He won their personal appreciation and esteem, but rarely their ultimate approval in the form of institution-shifting, large-scale philanthropic gifts. His hopes for substantial gifts to the college, he often said, were pegged on elevating Temple's students into the middle class, where they in turn would help their alma mater.

Temple College

One Sunday evening in 1884, Charles M. Davies, a young printer, approached Conwell to ask for advice on preparing for the ministry. Davies had little money or formal education. Conwell offered to teach him. Davies brought along six friends, and Conwell tutored them all in his study. Shortly

after, the number grew to forty. Conwell found volunteer teachers and moved classes from his study into the church basement. Extensive tutorials or short courses continued until the fall of 1887, when Conwell announced from the pulpit the official formation of Temple College and set a formal schedule of classes.

Oddly enough, given all that transpired later, the name *Temple College* was not Conwell's idea. According to a reliable account provided many years later by Orlando T. Steward, one of the first students to seek tutoring in Conwell's study and later the secretary of the Baptist Union of Philadelphia, it was the students who first suggested that what they were experiencing ought to be thought of as "college." As Steward remembered, "We began to call it a 'college' and felt it should have a name." They decided to name the college after the new church building, which, although not yet built, they knew would be called The Temple. And for this reason, said Steward, "the name 'Temple College' was selected." Conwell suggested another name, but "[h]e finally yielded to our desire," said Steward, "and Temple College it was called."

With the aid of pamphlets prepared by Davies, word was sent throughout center city and the working-class neighborhoods describing Grace Baptist Church and Temple College as within "easy walking distance to factories employing 30,000 workmen" and within a half hour's ride by horse car from where "180,000 working men and working women" were employed. Two hundred prospective students signed up in the first month.

A temporary board of trustees, drawn mostly from the membership of Grace Baptist Church, elected Conwell president. Conwell then invited representatives from Philadelphia's thirty-two Baptist churches to join the effort. However, they insisted on restricting admission to Baptist men and to limiting the courses to preparation for the Baptist ministry, which Conwell rejected. He did not envision a college based exclusively on Christian principles like so many of America's existing sectarian liberal arts colleges. Conwell doubted that instruction based exclusively on Christian ethics and piety could sustain colleges if they failed to prepare young people for success in the real world. Sensing the temper of his times, realizing what motivated and concerned young working-class people, Conwell set out to create a non-denominational college to open the way for social and economic advancement and awaken the untapped talents and potential of all citizens, especially those for whom higher education was otherwise beyond reach.

On May 14, 1888, Temple College was chartered and incorporated by the state. Its stated purpose was "the support of an education institution, intended primarily for the benefit of Working Men." In 1891 the charter was amended to read "primarily for the benefit of Working Men; and for men and women desirous of attending the same." "The regular tuition," according to the college catalogue, "is free." Moreover, "No special grade of previous study is at present required for admission, as the purpose of the faculty is to assist any ambitious young man, without especial reference to previous study." Free tuition and open enrollments attracted more than the basement of the Grace Baptist Church could accommodate. Some classes were moved to the two houses next to the church on Mervine Street, one rented and one owned by the church.

No distinct legal connection existed between Temple College and Grace Baptist Church, but they were closely linked. The church publicly acknowledged taking a "special interest" in Temple College. Indeed, the college could not have survived in its early years without the support of the church. But within just three short years of Conwell's arrival, both the college and the church were in desperate need of space. Together they resolved to meet those needs.

The Temple (aka the Baptist Temple)

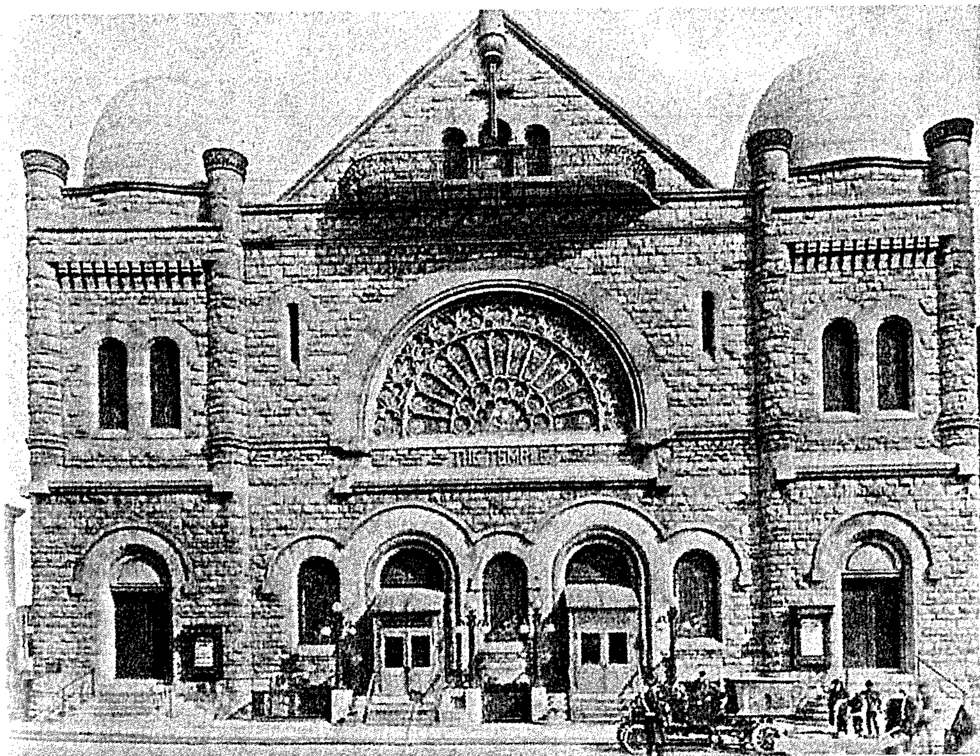
Conwell's popularity as a mesmerizing lecturer and sermonizer was so great and the crowds so large that the congregation resorted to printing tickets for Sunday services. The Grace Baptist Church simply could not hold all who wanted to attend. The church wanted to move from Berks and Mervine to Broad and Berks streets, up on the main thoroughfare and nearer to the center of residential wealth and influence, but it lacked money enough.

Ever the innovator and opportunist, Conwell contrived several ingenious methods to raise funds for the new church. The most often cited example of that prowess is the story of Hattie May Wiatt. One Sunday, as Conwell tells it, he encountered Hattie outside the church. She had been denied entrance into the Sunday school because it was filled. Children were being turned away. Conwell said, "I took her up in my arms, lifted her to my shoulder, and then as she held on to my head—an embrace I never can forget—I carried her through the crowd in the hall." The next day, according to Conwell, he met Hattie on the street and told her, "Hattie, we are going to have a larger Sunday school room soon," one "large enough to get all the little children in."

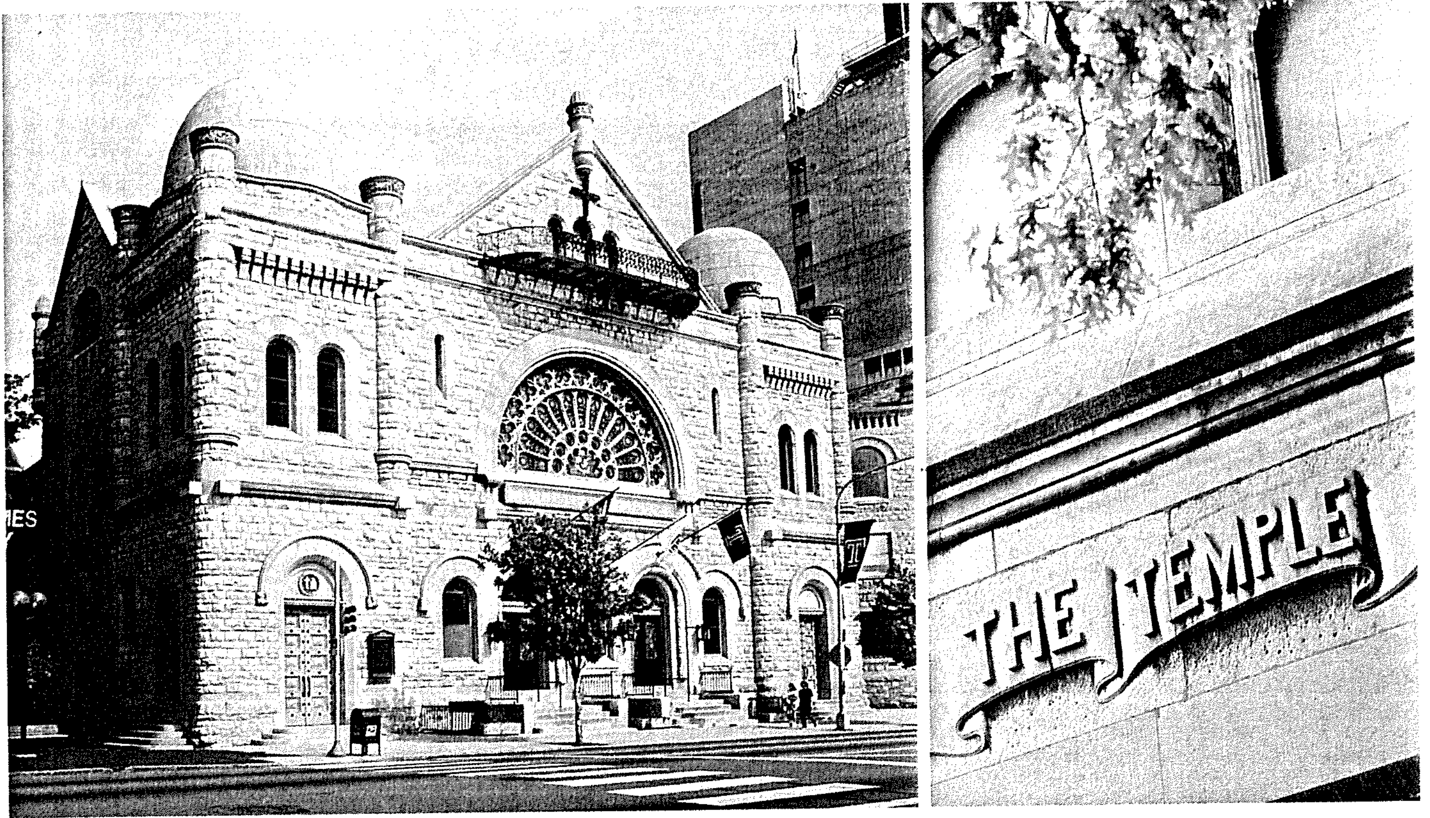
Hattie May Wiatt died soon after. She had saved fifty-seven pennies in a small purse, which Hattie's mother gave to Conwell after the funeral. Conwell auctioned off each of the pennies, raising $250, which was used to buy the house next door to the church on Mervine Street to serve initially as a Sunday school and eventually as the place where Temple College first organized. When fifty-four of the pennies were returned to Conwell, he persuaded the owner of the lot at Broad and Berks to accept the fifty-four cents (along with other funds and collateral) as a down payment on the lot.

In 1886 the land was acquired, and a year later Thomas P. Lonsdale was selected as the architect. Ground was broken in 1888. William Bucknell, a prosperous real estate and utilities investor,

Hattie May Wiatt was the subject of Conwell's "Fifty-seven Cents" sermon, which he delivered numerous times in fund-raising for the new church. Her fifty-seven cents were auctioned off penny by penny by Conwell to raise additional funds for what became The Temple.



Conwell's Temple in 1926.



Conwell's Temple, circa 2005.

contributed $10,000 to the campaign on condition that the building would not be dedicated as a church until the mortgage was paid. To comply with Bucknell's wishes, Conwell designated the new building as simply "The Temple," and until the mortgage was paid it was technically only the meetinghouse of Grace Baptist Church. The power and simplicity of the name *The Temple* appealed to Conwell, and so, even after the mortgage was paid, he declared, "It will always be known as The Temple."

Conwell intended The Temple to be a multi-purpose spiritual, educational, and community facility where "entertainments" could be held for the "mutual and spiritual advantage" of the people of Philadelphia and also for help in paying off the mortgage. He was once warned: "Russell, you'll never make a success of this Temple as a religious and educational institution." To which Conwell the showman replied, "If we don't make it a success as a Temple, we'll turn it into a theater."

The building opened March 2, 1891, to a joyful and spectacular day of services, addresses, and musical performances. The *Philadelphia Inquirer* reported that 15,000 people flocked to the church for one or another of the services held throughout the day. Considered an architectural marvel of its time, The Temple sanctuary was designed with four support columns and the balconies were hung by cables, thus affording clear sight lines to the choir loft and pulpit from virtually every one of the 4,108 seats. With the addition of camp chairs the total seating capacity could be expanded to 4,600, giving The Temple the largest seating capacity among Protestant churches in the United States.

The building's exterior is a fine example of the Romanesque Revival style in America. The most prominent feature of the front, or west-facing, facade is the stained-glass half-rose

window, thirty feet in diameter. Beneath the window, THE TEMPLE is carved in relief. By 1894 the building was commonly referred to as Grace Temple (Baptist). Sometime thereafter (date uncertain but after Conwell's death), the carving of THE TEMPLE on the front of the building was covered over by a metal sign reading The Baptist Temple, which was how the building came to be known to almost everyone. In 2008 the metal sign was removed, restoring the original appearance.

The Temple soon became a Philadelphia landmark, a popular and frequent venue for major civic meetings, musical performances, and cultural events, including Russell Conwell's delivery of "Acres of Diamonds" for the 6,000th time on October 25, 1921. The Temple attracted visitors and tourists; its likeness even appeared on postcards and travel circulars.

The Temple was Conwell's personal showcase. Sunday services were extravaganzas with Conwell at center stage. The productions featured the huge, booming Robert Hope-Jones organ and a spirited choir (sometimes with a hundred or more trained voices), framed in theatrical lighting, with every element of the program produced and directed by Conwell. Conwell's majestic stentorian baritone resonated throughout the hall in this pre-loudspeaker era. His large physical presence and animated antics charmed and captivated congregants. "He was a big man," Kathryn F. Bovaird, a church member, recalled, "large of frame with rather unruly black hair, which stayed black until he was an old man.... His voice was rich and deep." Conwell's granddaughter, Jane Conwell Tuttle, later wrote that the baptismal ceremony in particular "was something no one ever forgot." Her grandfather, she said, had a special hold on the audience: "Personally, I have always felt he was a combination of psychiatrist, magician, and hypnotist."

President Harry S Truman is shown here with General William J. Donovan at the unveiling of the mural painted by Nils Hogner for the 1951 dedication of the Chapel of the Four Chaplains within Conwell's Temple. The four chaplains gave up their life vests when the USAT Dorchester *was sunk off the coast of Greenland by a German submarine on February 3, 1943.*

The Temple met the needs of the Grace Baptist Church, but what of Temple College? The church had already provided temporary space for classes, raised money to aid the college, loaned money to meet the monthly payroll, and paid Conwell's salary. Prodded by Conwell, the church offered to sell its old building at Berks and Mervine to Temple College. But the college, still in its infancy, lacked the funds and the credit to follow through on the purchase. The church needed to recover some of its investment in the old building, and so it sold the original church at Berks and Mervine streets to the Christian Church. Again encouraged by Conwell, the church purchased land on Broad Street immediately south of The Temple and deeded it to the college corporation as a site for its own building.

The Temple (aka the Baptist Temple and Grace Baptist Temple) also became a regular venue for Temple College events, including the first commencement in 1892 and all thereafter until 1932, when the graduating classes became too large for the church auditorium to accommodate and commencement exercises were transferred to the Municipal Auditorium. Even then, mid-year commencements, convocations, and other special events were held in the Baptist Temple well into the 1960s.

In 1951 the Chapel of the Four Chaplains was installed in the west end of The Temple's lower level. The multi-denominational chapel was constructed to honor the heroism of four World War II army chaplains of different faiths (one of whom was the son of Grace Baptist Church pastor the Rev. Daniel K. Poling) who gave up their life vests to save others on a sinking army transport ship, the USAT *Dorchester*, which had been torpedoed off the coast of Greenland. The chapel was officially dedicated in 1951 by President Harry Truman. It remained until the 1980s, when the officers of the chapel decided to end their relationship with Temple University and move away, first to Valley Forge, Pennsylvania, and subsequently to the naval yard in South Philadelphia.

Over the years many distinguished figures visited the Baptist Temple, including President Franklin D. Roosevelt, General Dwight Eisenhower (when he was president of Columbia University), the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., the Rev. Billy Graham, presidential candidate Senator George McGovern, anthropologist Margaret Mead, and Anne Sullivan and her famed pupil Helen Keller. Alistair Cooke and Edward R. Murrow delivered commencement addresses at the Baptist Temple.

By the 1970s the congregation of Grace Baptist Church had dwindled, and in 1972 the church trustees voted to relocate to Blue Bell, Pennsylvania. In 1974 they sold the building to Temple University for $550,000. The university continued to use the building as an auditorium and for academic offices for another few years. However, in the 1980s the truss system supporting the roof failed, causing a great deal of water damage to the building's interior. Scaffolding and emergency repairs paid for by the commonwealth stabilized the building, but it was effectively condemned and unusable thereafter. A 1983 university planning study recommended renovating the building and converting it to a performing arts center. In 1984 the Philadelphia Historical Commission certified the Baptist Temple as a historic building.

Two years later the board of trustees voted to demolish the building, citing the high cost of renovation, finding no clear reuse for it, and declaring its inadequacy as a performing arts space. The Historical Commission denied the demolition request. In 1998 the university performed further work to stabilize the building. Shortly after his arrival at Temple, President David Adamany declared in his 2001 "Self-Study and Agenda" that "this historically important and aesthetically fine building should be carefully studied both for potential University uses and for historic preservation." Major repairs to fix the roof and facade and to correct structural deficiencies were begun in 2002. Plans were once again developed for the restoration and adaptive reuse of the building as a performing arts center. In 2003 the American Institute of Architects designated the structure a landmark building, recognizing its historical significance, its contribution to the architectural character of North Broad Street, and the work of its architect, Thomas Lonsdale.

Exciting new plans call for $29 million in expenditures to resurrect and completely renovate the building, expected to reopen in 2010 with room for a 100-piece orchestra and flexible seating for as many as 1,200 people. When completed, The Temple will again take its place as one of Philadelphia's premier venues for arts and cultural productions, international speakers, and symposia. As a northern anchor of Philadelphia's Avenue of the Arts, the new Temple will reclaim its place as a magnificent setting for education and entertainment, reviving and restoring Russell Conwell's grandest aspirations.

The "Temple Idea"

Temple College was more than a place, more than just a gathering of teachers and students: It was a bold new idea, a transforming concept. "The Temple Idea," Conwell explained, is to educate "workingmen and workingwomen on a benevolent basis, at an expense to the students just sufficient to enhance their appreciation of the advantages of the institution." Benevolence, said Conwell, "was the motive when 'the Temple College idea' was conceived and from its foundation to its present fame every step has been governed by this one central idea."

When Conwell saw a need, he stepped forward to fulfill it. He understood that the skilled crafts necessary to propel the Workshop of the World and to move Philadelphia's commerce depended

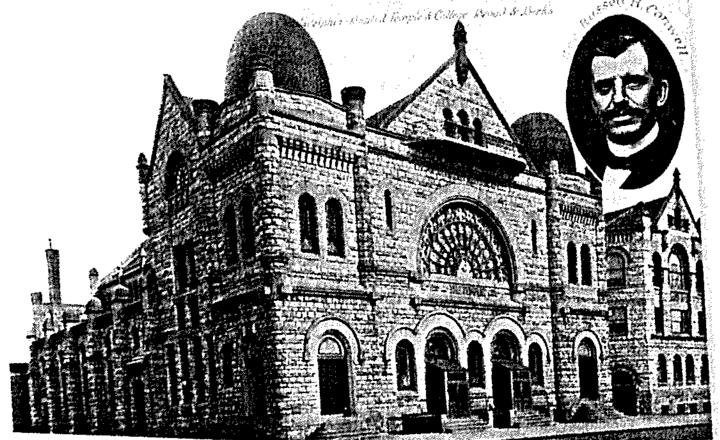
on continuing education. He also knew that the aspirations of the working classes for themselves and their children could ultimately be met only through more education. "Everywhere the call for some useful education to aid in the daily toil of the people was loud and sincere. Into that duty," wrote Conwell, "the Temple College rushed with promptness and care."

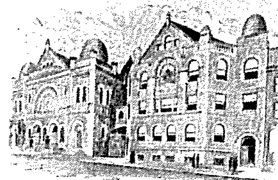
The gist of the Temple Idea was summarized in an early advertisement, which stated, "Temple College is the pioneer in the work of providing an education for working people. In the evening from 7:45 to 9:45 it provides thorough instruction in all branches of practical education." The advertisement summarized the mission of Temple College thusly: "Temple College does not exist as a private enterprise for the purpose of gain but as a 'Peoples' University' to give all possible help to those who enter its walls."

Open admissions and free tuition brought increasing numbers into Temple's walls but cost the college the respect of the state accrediting agencies. But like many of his entrepreneurial breed who risked all to realize their visions, Russell Conwell accepted the risks and operated with little regard for government or public opinion. In many respects, as one historian noted, higher education during the Gilded Age was the "ultimate unregulated industry." In 1891 Conwell bypassed the state education agencies and went to the Court of Common Pleas, which granted Temple College the authority to award degrees. The first commencement was held in June 1892. Eighteen graduates of Conwell's class in oratory were awarded the bachelor of oratory. Four women were among those receiving degrees. The college also received authority to award honorary degrees, and one of the earliest recipients was Conwell, who received doctor of divinity and doctor of laws degrees.

By 1893 the Temple faculty had grown to forty, almost all of whom were personally recruited from students and recent graduates of the University of Pennsylvania, the Philadelphia school district, or area businesses. Early in Temple's history the majority of faculty members were volunteers. Very few, if any, during the college's infancy relied exclusively on Temple for employment. Conwell called them "self-sacrificing philanthropists." Faculty salaries were very low, no more than token honorariums. Moreover, Temple's chronic financial problems meant the faculty members were underpaid and sometimes not paid at all. There was no gradation in faculty ranks; all faculty members were "professors." None were recognized as noted scholars, but all were able teachers. Because of negative public opinion about evening schools and Temple's non-accredited status, highly credentialed, well-published, and accomplished faculty trained at accredited universities shied away. The majority of classes were conducted on weekday evenings, and most of the faculty taught classes after working at their day jobs. Governance and the setting of academic policy were strictly the purview of Conwell and the board of trustees and did not involve faculty.

An early advertisement for Temple College, showing the Temple College Academies located throughout the Philadelphia area and also in Camden, New Jersey, and South Worthington, Massachusetts (Conwell's hometown). A "nominal fee of $5 entitles a student to the privileges of any three branches for the entire year."





The - Temple - College

Broad and Berks

RUSSELL H. CONWELL, President.
FORREST E. DAGER, Vice-President.
REV. FRANK LAMBADER, Ph. D., Dean.
JAMES AUMAN, Manager.

TEMPLE COLLEGE ACADEMIES

West Academy, 3844 Lancaster Avenue.
East Academy, 1918-1940 North Front Street.
South Academy, 1400 South Broad Street.
South-West Academy, 20th and Wharton streets.
Pine Street Academy, 944 Pine Street.
Tioga Academy, 20th and Tioga Streets.
Camden Academy, 531 Penn Street, Camden, N. J.
Falls of Schuylkill Academy, 35th St. and Sunnyside Avenue.
Logan Academy, Logan Station.
Massachusetts Academy, South Worthington, Mass.

ARE YOU SEEKING —AN EDUCATION?

Temple College— Broad and Berks Sts.

OFFERS YOU THE BEST POSSIBLE OPPORTUNITY

Day Department, 9.30 A. M. to 1.30 P. M.

Full College Course, Theological Course, Business Course, College Preparatory, Academic, Boy's School, Girl's School, Intermediate and Kindergarten.

Unequalled advantages—complete buildings; a large Gymnasium; an experienced corps of thorough teachers. The special attention of parents is called to the various branches of our Day Department. A visit to the Institution, and a glance at the catalogue will convince you that Temple College offers just what your sons and daughters need.

Night Department.

Temple College is the pioneer in the work of providing an education for working people. In the evening from 7.45 to 9.45 it provides thorough instruction in all branches of practical education. The nominal fee of $5 entitles a student to the privileges of any three branches for the entire year.

Temple College does not exist as a private enterprise for the purpose of gain, but as a "Peoples' University" to give all possible help to those who enter its walls

The Fall Term of the Day Department began September 16th.

The Night Department opens September 30th.

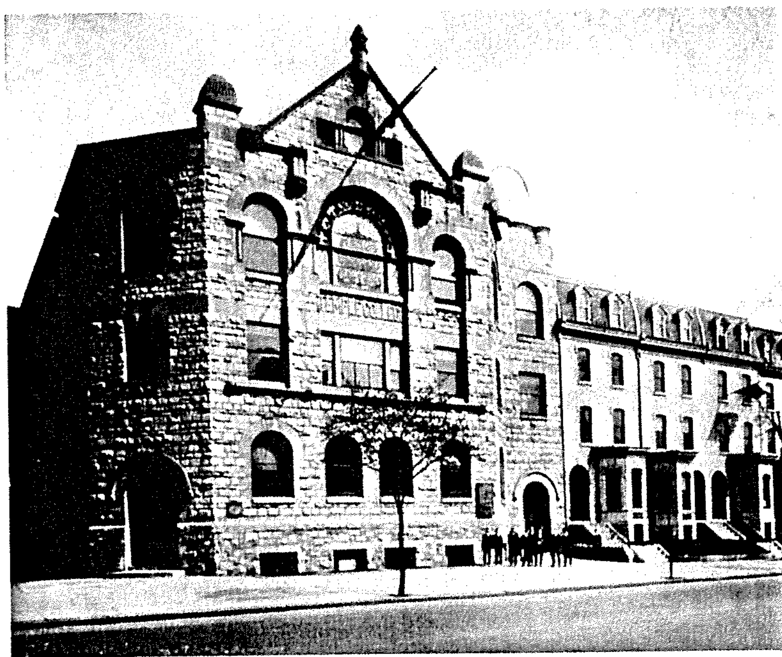
Call or write for Catalogue or further information.

RUSSELL H. CONWELL, PRESIDENT.

As enrollments increased and Conwell's ambitions for the college grew, he needed help managing its affairs. Conwell was not a detail person, and so the position of dean was created to recruit and manage the faculty, keep records and accounts, solicit funds, and prepare reports. The dean was expected to arrive early and attend to administrative duties from 3:00 to 5:00 P.M. before teaching evening classes. Five deans came and went between 1888 and 1891. When Conwell threatened to resign in 1891, the board of trustees changed the dean's job description to shift more of the administrative burdens away from Conwell. Dr. Frank Lambader accepted the position under those terms, joined by James M. Lingle, the business manager, and a bright-eyed, young Philadelphia schoolteacher named Laura Carnell, who took care of just about everything else.

The range of academic programs offered in the early years of Temple College ran the educational gamut. No curricular planning was evident. Courses were developed on the basis of need and interest. Laura Carnell was under orders from Conwell to provide classrooms and teachers for any group of six or more students who wished instruction in any subject, no matter what it was. This approach required a remarkable amount of flexibility and energy. Conwell himself offered classes on an astounding array of subjects, including Greek, Latin, French, German, rhetoric and logic, surveying, newswriting, English composition, and Bible training.

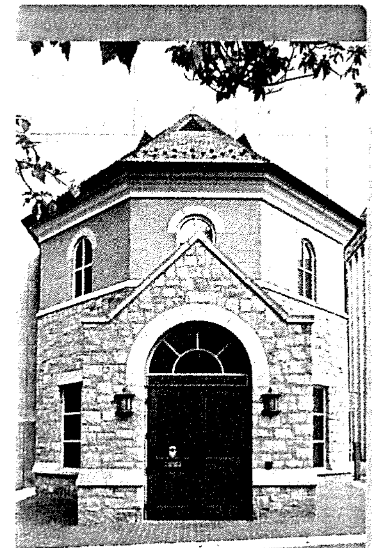
By 1891 the outlines of a liberal arts program appeared, along with the first day classes. To earn a baccalaureate degree, students were required to pass examinations in the following subjects: Greek (Homer's *Iliad* and Xenophon's *Anabasis*), Latin (Cicero's *Oration*, Virgil's *Aeneid* and *Bucolics*), German or French (general written correspondence), logic (a comprehensive review), composition (a comprehensive review), geography and history (ancient and modern), elocution (general examination), geometry (plane and solid), and hygiene. Clusters of theology and business courses were added in 1893. A group of education courses were organized into a kindergarten training department in 1894. That same year a ladies' department opened with Mrs. Sarah F. Conwell as principal; this led to a department of household science that offered courses in cooking, embroidery, millinery, and dressmaking.



College Hall, circa 1895.

By 1893, close to 3,000 students of all grades, kindergarten to college, attended Temple College. Enrollment increases meant additional demands for classroom space. After the Grace Baptist Church was sold, the college moved some classes into The Temple basement and also rented row houses at 1831–1833 Park Avenue (now Liacouras Walk). Still growing, it rented two large halls, one at 1235 Columbia Avenue (now Cecil B. Moore Avenue) and one at 2107 North Broad Street. When those spaces proved insufficient, the only alternative was to build on the lot next to The Temple. And so Conwell again hired Thomas Lonsdale as the architect and launched the first capital campaign for Temple College. Unable to secure a large lead gift from a benefactor, Conwell gladly accepted any and all contributions, regardless of size. Two of the largest came from John B. Stetson (owner of the hat company) and Charles E. Hires (maker of root beer); they each gave $1,000 toward the total building costs of $100,000.

College Hall was dedicated on May 3, 1894, with the governor and other dignitaries in attendance. The building contained thirty-five classrooms, a large lecture hall known as the Forum, and a gymnasium in the basement. A passageway above the street connected the building via a bridge to The Temple. In fairly short order the Forum was taken over by the Library, where it remained until 1936. The opening of College Hall encouraged Conwell to think again of expanding the Temple Idea.



College Hall / Barrack Hall

Recently refurbished and refitted to include a new turreted entryway, the interior of College Hall has been reconfigured for use by the Law School, providing classrooms, seminar rooms, lounges, and administrative offices. Renovations were made possible by a $2.5 million gift from university trustee Leonard Barrack, a Law School graduate, and his wife, Lynne Barrack, who earned a degree from the College of Education. In January 2002 the building was renamed Morris and Sylvia Barrack Hall in honor of Leonard Barrack's parents.

Conwell, like his counterparts in industry and big business, sought always to expand. He proposed to extend the Temple Idea to create a totally comprehensive educational institution with instruction from kindergarten through professional schools. In business parlance, he sought to "vertically integrate," from the bottom to the top, and thus control a significant portion of the market. A bold step was taken in 1894 when he opened "Temple Academies" spread across the region—to the west on Lancaster Avenue, to the east on Frankford Avenue, to the south on South Broad Street, Wharton Street, and Pine Street, and to the north at Twentieth and Tioga streets—enrolling approximately 2,000 students in rented classroom facilities. The academies were basically high school–level evening programs for adults. The intention, as Conwell explained, was for the academies "to act as feeders for the college," receiving any person of any grade. Conwell once considered placing a Temple academy in each of the city's wards, thus creating a kind of shadow secondary school system to supplement the school district.

Conwell's exuberant haste to fill an education need with the Temple Academies was one instance in which he should have taken greater care before rushing in, for the demand on Temple College was too great. Tuition was too low (five dollars per year) and the costs too high for the college to support. With no alternative, Conwell closed the academies. Still, his experiment with them demonstrated the existence of a huge demand among immigrants and working adults to commence or complete their high school educations. Moreover, Conwell's initiative brought the city school district to respond to those needs by opening the first evening schools.

Conwell's experiment in secondary education left Temple with "a most dangerous debt," which, according to Conwell, was paid by "some enthusiastic friends" who "gave all their property to enable the college honorably to draw out of the academies and pay all bills." Conwell also had no other option than to begin raising tuition. Tuition started at five dollars per year for the evening division (for those employed during the day) and at fifty dollars for the day division. By 1907 those fees increased respectively to forty dollars and seventy-five dollars "for the whole year of nine months."

In founding Temple College, Conwell had hoped to strike a blow, as Douglas Perry wrote, "to free higher education from the fetters of the aristocratic ideal." Conwell worried that unless the working classes "could be educated further, the wealthy classes alone would form an educational aristocracy dangerous to our American democracy." Yet, in many respects Conwell's association with Philadelphia's working class bound him and the college to a mission resisted by the well-born and moneyed classes. The large, spectacular philanthropic gifts thrust at other institutions eluded Temple for all its early history.

Looking back, Conwell regretted that there were "no large donations in the first thirty years of the college life." But he regretted most "the gifts that never came," the pledges of prospective donors that were not kept. Conwell's neighbors who lived in the mansions and luxury town houses along Broad Street may have occasionally worshipped in Conwell's church, but by and large they sent their children and their money to other colleges.

TEMPLE NOTABLE

Leigha Swayze Miller

Teachers College, class of 1896, employed at the Kensington Neighborhood House through 1952, pictured here with her great-granddaughter.

At times Conwell seemed to doubt whether Temple College could be more than a momentary social experiment, a seed for others to cultivate and nurture to fruition. He ignored taunts that Temple was a "sham" college, and he stoically dismissed those who called it "Conwell's Folly." But at various times when facing dire financial straits he attempted to coax others into assuming Temple's responsibilities and debts. Among others, he tried offering Temple College to the Baptists, the Philadelphia School Board, and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Conwell desperately tried to persuade men of great fortunes to endow Temple College with enough funds to guarantee its continuation. He and his fellow captains of erudition—William Rainey Harper (University of Chicago), David Starr Jordan (Stanford), G. Stanley Hall (Clark), Andrew White (Cornell), Seth Low (Columbia)—all became "honorable beggars" in search of large-scale philanthropic gifts. By 1900 most major donors became less inclined to undertake the building of a new campus; there was recurrent worry that American higher education had become overextended with too many immature institutions. The super rich sought new strategies to influence higher education; one such means was the philanthropic foundation.

All of this must have been greatly frustrating to Conwell because he knew many men of means capable of such gifts. For example, he spent years attempting to bring the like-minded, seemingly sympathetic John Wanamaker to support Temple College with a large gift. Wanamaker, the creator of the modern department store and a civic activist and philanthropist, sometimes attended Conwell's services, even though he was a Presbyterian. Conwell wrote a flattering biography of Wanamaker, who spoke glowing praise for Conwell's church and educational work, but to Conwell's disappointment, Wanamaker never offered a substantial gift.

Anthony J. Drexel, head of Drexel & Company, so appreciated Conwell's idea of serving the unmet educational needs of the city and was so moved by Conwell's passionate advocacy of the Temple Idea that he decided to emulate it. Drexel put more than $2 million toward establishing the Drexel Institute of Art, Science and Industry, now Drexel University. On the one hand, Drexel's decision was a great symbolic victory for the Temple Idea, but on the other hand, it was yet another rebuke by the affluent establishment.

Fellow Baptists John D. Rockefeller and William Bucknell were at the top of Conwell's prospect list. Rockefeller contributed $35 million to revive the University of Chicago, but he ignored two decades of appeals and detailed proposals from Conwell. Finally, he sent Conwell a check for $1,000 as a personal gift. When Conwell sent Rockefeller a note acknowledging the gift on behalf of Temple University, Rockefeller sent another $1,000 check, pleading, "Won't you keep this for yourself this time?"

FACT

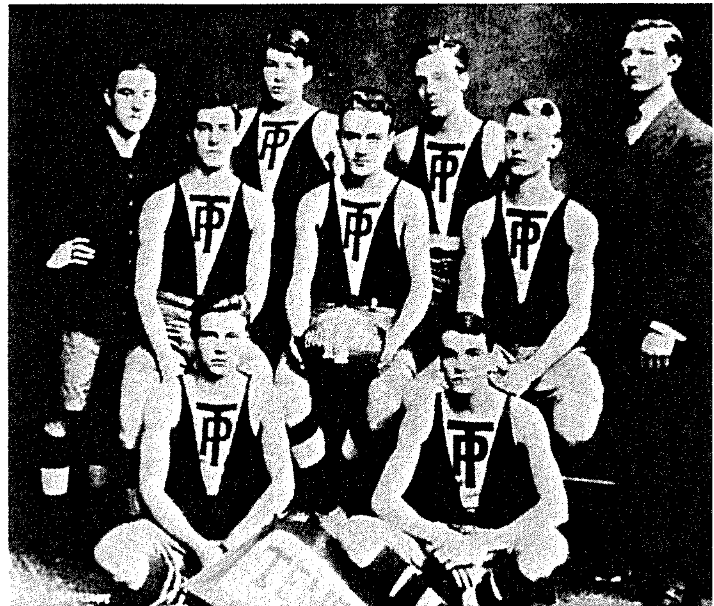
Temple University was one of the first institutions in the United States to sponsor extracurricular athletics, establishing football and basketball programs in 1894.

William Bucknell's large donation saved the University at Lewisburg from financial ruin in 1881, and so in 1886 the Lewisburg trustees changed its name to Bucknell University. In 1889 Conwell offered to change the name of Temple College to Bucknell University of Philadelphia if William Bucknell would assume Temple's debts. Bucknell contributed $10,000 to The Temple, but his death in 1890, with nothing bequeathed to Temple, ended the matter.

Temple also suffered by comparison with the University of Pennsylvania. A preeminent university during Revolutionary times, Penn had declined in stature. Except for its Medical and Law schools, still among the most prestigious in the country, Penn had slipped, and by 1870 it was described as hardly more than a "parochial academy for the more conservative Old Philadelphians." But in

1872 Penn purchased part of the Andrew Hamilton estate (the Woodlands), sold its center city campus at Ninth and Chestnut, and moved to its current location in West Philadelphia, experiencing a brilliant "academic blossoming" with new buildings and inspired leadership, plus a huge infusion of donations.

Conwell and all of his Temple successors have since faced inevitably unflattering comparisons of their school with the powerful Ivy League university "across the river." However, one seminal study of the distinctions between American colleges and universities in the 1880 to 1910 era indicates that prospective students may not have differentiated between Penn and Temple in terms of a hierarchy of prestige. Affordability was an issue but not reputation. American higher education had not yet crystallized into "universities versus colleges." Back then, Philadelphia students behaved as consumers who opted for one program over another for varied, pragmatic reasons, rather than differences in reputation and prestige. Temple's rise to university status in 1907 both helped attract more students and contributed to a rise in status.



The 1910-1911 School of Pharmacy basketball team. University athletics started in 1894, but many early records were lost or destroyed as offices moved from College Hall to Conwell Hall in 1923. Temple's first director of athletics was Charles M. Williams, who graduated from Springfield College and coached all sports at Temple. The first collegiate basketball opponent was Haverford College, whose team defeated the Owls 6–4 on March 23, 1895. Temple's home court was the College Hall gym.

Until 1910, when interest in and demand for college admission increased, few universities (Temple included) did much planning; when demand increased, universities (Temple included) simply admitted more students. Some universities instituted entrance (more properly placement) exams to screen applicants and place them in majors, but few applicants were turned away. As the lure of collegiate life descended on America's middle class, entrance exams began to be used to exclude applicants. It is at this point that the hierarchy of prestige among American colleges took hold; thereafter the reputational differences between Temple and Penn were more often noticed and asserted.

By World War I the most materially successful colleges, such as Penn, catered to the urban Protestant upper and upper-middle classes, drawing on their new wealth to build institutions for them. These colleges successfully positioned themselves to place students on the path to the most desirable professional opportunities in business, medicine, and law. Temple University found itself struggling to compete in that market. But one sweet, ironic consequence Conwell observed from offering a "thorough university training" to "busy people" was that "many sons of wealthy men who could not be spared" from their offices or businesses found it convenient to enroll at Temple in the evening. "So that the institution which was founded for the poor," Conwell said with undisguised satisfaction, "soon became a university for all classes."

Looking at Temple within the broader context of American higher education leaves one all the more impressed by Russell Conwell's daring. Founding a college in nineteenth-century America, according to one distinguished historian of American higher education, "required courage and vision, if not foolhardiness." No European precedent existed for creating small institutions of higher education; this was truly an American enterprise. Many colleges, however, were doomed to fail or become secondary schools. Temple's situation was more precarious than most since it benefited from neither the Morrill Act, which fostered the establishment of the great land-grant universities (Cornell, Penn State, Michigan), nor large-scale philanthropy, yet Conwell somehow managed to keep Temple afloat. The future was by no means guaranteed and the most difficult of times lay ahead, but Conwell had plans to make Temple College into Temple University.