CHAPTER FIVE

Early Years, World War I
1915-1918
WORLD WAR I HAD a comparatively small effect upon the fortunes of the new school. Enrollments remained about the same throughout the period, since there were very few men in college to be affected. There was some talk of the College getting an ROTC unit, but this proved to be impossible because of the small number of men. The principal effect of the war was to delay the building program.

Classes in Toledo were abandoned at the beginning of the second year, although there was considerable pressure for the establishment of a permanent Toledo branch. During this year, the superintendent of the Toledo schools was appointed to the Bowling Green Board of Trustees. He was very anxious to have the normal school offer classes in Toledo for the training of teachers for the city schools. However, the trustees and President decided against the Toledo branch. The pressure for such a branch continued for several years, until it was relieved by the development and growth of the University of Toledo.

First Buildings

By September, 1915, the new Administration Building was near enough to completion to be used for the first time. This building contained an auditorium, gymnasium (now the Joe E. Brown Theater), Library, general classrooms, and special quarters for home economics, industrial arts and music. Until the new Science Building was completed, the Administration Building also housed all classes, laboratories and shops, and the six grades of the elementary training school.

The heating plant, although not completed, was put into operation late in the fall of 1915, just in time to prevent suffering from cold classrooms and dormitory. Early in the spring of 1916, the new Science Building (now Moseley Hall) was nearing completion, and agriculture, science, industrial arts and the four upper grades of the training school were transferred to this building. The first and second grades remained in the Administration Building.

The contract for the Elementary School Building (now Hanna Hall) was let in July, 1916, and the third annual catalog contained the statement that the building would be ready for use at the opening of the next regular academic year in September, 1917. Events were to prove that this prediction was overly optimistic. Many delays occurred including shortage of materials due to the war and the bankruptcy of the contractor. The building stood half-finished for several years. A careful observer can still detect the line on the walls where
construction was finally resumed, since the new brick did not quite match the old. The building was not completed and ready for use until November, 1921. In the meantime, the six grades of the training school continued to be housed in the Administration and Science buildings.

The completion of the Elementary School completed the school plant as originally planned, with the exception of a second dormitory. It soon became evident, however, that the original plans were inadequate and that additional buildings would be needed in the not too distant future. As early as 1918, a plan was drafted for future development. This plan showed 11 new buildings in addition to the six (including the President's home) then completed or under construction. These included a high school, a gymnasium, a library, a classroom building, an auditorium, a museum, a woman's building, a dormitory for men, and three additional dormitories for women.

It had already become apparent that the original quarters for the Library, on the third floor of the Administration Building, were entirely inadequate, so the proposed plan showed a library building where the second dormitory had been originally planned. Only three of the proposed buildings were actually constructed on the planned sites. They are the Library, Men's Gymnasium and Shatzel Hall. The plan also included an athletic field which was later constructed.

The Emerging Campus

During the years 1915-18, little money was available for improving the campus. However, during the summer of 1915, the grounds around Williams Hall and the Administration Building were graded and seeded, and temporary wooden walks were built. These were to be the only campus improvements for some time.

The buildings had been planned to face a circle, but as yet no circle existed. A north and south street, known as Wayne Street, was located just in front of the Administration Building, where it was met by the east end of Court Street. Both of these were public streets, and the citizens of Bowling Green for a number of years were very jealous of this fact, since they afforded the easiest access to the cemetery just north of the college. Funeral processions were a common campus sight during these years.

Finally, on October 1, 1917, the Bowling Green City Council passed an ordinance vacating Court Street, east of Thurstin, and Wayne Street, from Wooster to Ridge. This opened the way for the campus improvements which followed in 1918.

The College Catalogue

During the first year of classes, the President and faculty planned the detailed curricula and courses. These were described in the first annual catalogue, which was dated May, 1915, but not published until the fall of that year. No catalogue was published in the spring of 1916. However, when the third
annual catalogue, dated May, 1917, was being printed, Dr. Williams decided, for the record, to change the calendar, Board of Trustees, and lists of students and graduates, add a new cover and title page, and print a few copies as the second annual catalogue, dated May, 1916. These two catalogues were identical except as noted above. They were both issued in the early fall of 1917.

During the early days of the College, the actual date of publication of the catalog was often later than that shown, although the delay was never again as long as a whole year. The chief cause was the fact that President Williams would never publish a new catalogue until the supply of the previous one was exhausted. Sometimes he would wait too long, and the college would be without catalogues to send to prospective students. Often not enough copies were left for the files, and some numbers became so scarce as to be collector's items. These delays are apt to be confusing to one who is unaware of the above circumstances. Thus, most of the early catalogues contained the lists of students attending the summer sessions, although the cover stated that they were published in May. The faculty list was not always for the current year. A new faculty member hired before the actual publication was usually included. All of this sometimes makes it difficult to determine exactly when certain additions and changes were made. In most cases, however, the author has been able to resolve such questions by consulting the minutes of the trustees' meetings and other sources (including his memory). In a few cases, it has been impossible to locate the exact time of an event.

Early Faculty

Six additional members were appointed for September, 1915. These were: C. J. Biery, rural education; F. G. Beyerman, physical education; Robert Cummins, extension; Harriet S. Hayward, Supervisor of Practice Teaching; W. P. Holt, geography; and J. W. Zeller, history.

A few courses in the above fields had been taught during the first year by members of other departments, but these new appointments made it possible to increase the offerings. J. W. Zeller, instructor in history, had been State Commissioner of Elementary Schools in 1910 and influential in securing the passage of the Lowry bill of that year. His appointment to the Bowling Green faculty was a fitting recognition of his contributions to the cause of education and teacher training in Ohio.

In the fall of 1915, the fifth and sixth grades were added to the training school, and two additional critic teachers were employed. These were: Estelle Rich, fifth grade, and Erma Ferguson, sixth grade. Arrangements were also made to use the entire Bowling Green school system and several rural schools for observation and practice teaching. These combined facilities were at least the equal of any in Ohio at that time.

Six additions were made to the faculty in the fall of 1916. These were in English, extension, foreign language, home economics, industrial arts, and music. No additions were made for the 1917-18 school year.
Administrative Appointments

In the summer of 1915, Marie E. Simpson was appointed librarian (relying the author of these duties). The work of selecting and cataloging books for the new Library soon became too heavy for one person, and an assistant librarian was appointed in 1916. Two additional appointments to administrative positions were made during the first summer. These were Calvin J. Biery, who, in addition to his teaching duties, was to be Director of Practice Teaching in Rural Schools, and W. F. Shaw, who became high school inspector.

At this time, each of the five state teacher-training institutions was required to employ an individual to devote full time to the inspection of high schools. Before the opening of school in September, 1914, the trustees appointed a Mr. Boone to this position, but he resigned before school started, and no successor was employed at that time. Mr. Shaw, who had been superintendent of the Bowling Green schools, taught courses in education in the summer, and during the academic year devoted full time to the inspection of high schools in northwestern Ohio.

Bowling Green State Normal College secured its first dean in 1916, when Mr. Walker was appointed Dean of the Faculty. This position was created to relieve the President of some of the details of planning and administering the academic program. Mr. Walker also continued as Director of Extension Teaching.

The last administrative appointment during this period came in 1918 when Maud F. Sharp became the first Dean of Women. Until this time the President had performed the duties of both dean of women and dean of men. Since the number of men in college was so small, the President continued to act in the latter capacity, and no dean of men was appointed until 1930.

Curricula Established

Teaching was not the only task for members of the faculty during the first year. They also had to work with the President on the curricula and course offerings for the future. Certain basic decisions had already been made, as we have seen, but much more remained to be done. The results of the year’s work by the President and faculty are contained in the first annual catalogue, dated May, 1915. It contained the following statement of the Functions and Scope of the Normal College:

In order to furnish adequate training for all classes of teachers, the State Normal College will maintain the following courses:

(1) A one-year professional course for college graduates.
(2) Four-year courses leading to the B.S. degree in Education for supervisors, superintendents, principals, and teachers in secondary schools.
(3) A two-year diploma course for grade teachers in city and village schools, permitting emphasis on primary or grammar grade work in accordance with the needs of teachers.

(4) A two-year diploma course for rural teachers.

(5) A two-year diploma course for teachers of each of the following special subjects: agriculture, industrial arts, home economics, and music.

(6) A one-year course for rural teachers.

The catalogue outlined the above curricula in detail. They all had two characteristics in common. In the first place, each was planned to meet the requirements for a teaching certificate in a particular field. In the second place, they contained few or no electives. This was partly due to the requirements for teacher certification, but even more to the limited course offerings during the first few years.

The trustees had adopted an outline of courses to be offered for the first year on August 25, 1914. This included no four-year degree courses, but did end with the statement that the diploma courses will be extended into four-year degree courses whenever sufficient demand arises. When preparing the copy for the first catalogue, the President and faculty decided that there was already sufficient demand to warrant the offering of four-year degree courses for high school teachers and supervisors.

The four-year curricula for the training of secondary teachers were limited to four combinations, each in two subject-matter fields. These were the teaching combinations commonly found in the small high schools of the region. These first curricula were in agriculture and science, English and history, English and Latin, and mathematics and science. No other combinations of teaching fields were possible. This was the result of President Williams' feeling that it was useless and unfair to permit a student to prepare for a teaching combination in which he would probably be unable to secure a position.

The second, third and fourth annual catalogues outlined only two new curricula. These were four-year courses in home economics and industrial arts for the preparation of high school teachers in these subjects. These curricula were in addition to the two-year courses previously offered.

These catalogues also announced a significant change in the curricula for secondary teachers. Although they outlined courses in agriculture and science, English and Latin, and mathematics and science, they prefaced the outlines with the following statement:

The following outlines of courses exhibit several possible groupings of subjects. Other groupings may be made . . . For example, a student may make a combination of Latin and History, or of German and English, etc., but in doing so, care should be taken to group subjects that are frequently combined in the practice of assigning work to teachers in secondary schools.

When the first catalogue was published, several faculty members had
argued that prospective high school teachers should be allowed perfect freedom in their choice of fields of primary and secondary specialization. President Williams was strongly opposed to this point of view. However, by the time the second and third catalogues were published, the faculty succeeded in gaining his somewhat reluctant approval of the compromise described above. The sole purpose of the new school was still to supply students with the training needed in and demanded by the schools of northwestern Ohio.

From the beginning, the trustees, President, and faculty all planned the new school is a degree-granting college. However, it was to be a teachers' college only. Liberal arts courses were offered, starting with the first summer, but for years they were only those which were needed for the preparation of teachers. However, high school graduates interested in fields other than teaching soon found that these liberal arts courses were numerous enough and of a high enough quality to permit them to study for one or two years at Bowling Green, and then transfer to a liberal arts or professional school. Even during the first year, there were a few students who enrolled with this in view and, in succeeding years, an increasing number of students took advantage of this opportunity.

Bowling Green State Normal College was indeed fortunate in the fact that its first President and the majority of its early faculty, while primarily interested in the training of teachers, felt very strongly that knowledge of subject matter was the first essential for good teaching. This led to the early development of strong departments in the traditional liberal arts fields, and paved the way for the ultimate transformation of the institution from a teachers' college to a university.

Departments and Courses

The first annual catalogue announced courses in 13 departments: agriculture, biological science, education, English, geography, history, home economics, industrial arts, library, mathematics, music, physical education, and the physical science.

The Library Department offered only one course. This was designed to enable the student to employ the resources of the library readily and effectively. This course was considered necessary, since most students entering the College at that time had had little or no experience in the use of a library. The course was taught by the librarian.

The chief expansion in offerings during this period was in the number of courses for high school teachers and school administrators. These were in both education and subject-matter fields. Such offerings were to show a slow but steady increase in the years to come. The President and faculty never wavered in their conviction that Bowling Green State Normal College had an obligation to train teachers and administrators for all levels of the public schools of northwestern Ohio.

In 1916-17 a Department of Foreign Language was added, and the cata-
logue for that year announced 12 courses in German and 12 in Latin. In addition, seven preparatory courses in Latin were prescribed for students with less than four years of that subject in high school. Increased offerings were also made in home economics and industrial arts, and in the courses for secondary teachers in other departments.

**Fees and Expenses**

Tuition continued to be free throughout these years. However, pressure grew for a change in this policy. At the meeting of the Board of Trustees, held on April 29, 1916, President Williams read a letter from W. L. Tobey suggesting that the presidents and representatives of the five state-supported institutions hold a conference concerning means of securing larger state appropriations. He quoted members of the state administration as stating that Ohio had reached the limit of support of educational institutions, and new ways would have to be provided for financing these institutions. The author remembers that several conferences were held at about this time to consider this question. Bowling Green, however, continued its free tuition policy for several years, although it became increasingly apparent that it was only a question of time until it would have to be abandoned.

Bowling Green State Normal College also made every effort to keep the necessary expenses of a student to a minimum. President Williams himself had to struggle to obtain an education. He wanted to make one available to all high school graduates of northwestern Ohio at the least possible expense. As a result, for a good many years, a college education cost less at Bowling Green State Normal College than at any other comparable institution in the country.

During these first years, rooms in the dormitory for girls were $1.25 a week and board was $3. The first annual catalogue estimated that total expenses for a year need not exceed $203. This figure included $30 for washing and incidentals and $20 for books and stationery. Theoretically, expenses were slightly higher for men, since there was no men's dormitory. In practice, however, most of the men lived more cheaply than the girls, since they brought food from home and did their own cooking. The cost of this food was relatively small, since most of the parents lived on farms. Both men and women also saved by sending their laundry home to mother, so many a student's yearly expense was actually less than $200.

**Record Blizzard**

On December 8, 1917, Bowling Green was hit by the worst blizzard on record. Even now, when a bad storm occurs, the newspapers and the weather bureau often describe it as the worst since 1917. During the storm, the author was on his way to a class in the Administration Building. He entered the campus at the corner of Ridge and Thurstin Streets. At that time, a foot path led
through the grove of trees from that corner to the Administration Building. The falling and drifting snow was so thick that the author soon lost the path and his way. He wandered around through the trees until he finally emerged near the Elementary School Building, then under construction. This gave him his bearings, and he reached the Administration Building with badly frosted ears and nose, and too late for class. However, most of the students had also failed to arrive.

As a result of the storm, all railroad traffic came to a standstill, and coal shipments in transit failed to arrive. Since the supply on hand was almost exhausted, classes were dismissed until after the Christmas holidays. The County Fuel Committee was asked for enough coal to keep a small fire in the boilers. The request to this committee was necessary, since coal was rationed as a result of the war. Enough coal was obtained to keep a small fire in the boiler and furnish sufficient heat to prevent freezing. No damage resulted to buildings, plumbing, or contents. Sufficient coal finally arrived to permit the resumption of classes after the Christmas recess, but the supply was limited, and class and dormitory rooms were only partially heated.

The winter of 1917-18 continued to be unusually severe. The College received enough fuel to operate, but coal was rationed to the citizens of Bowling Green and Wood County. Residents could secure only a half a ton at a time, and the dealer was not permitted to deliver that until the previous supply was exhausted.

The Weekly Assembly

Weekly assembly exercises continued to be a feature of the College for many years, and both students and faculty were expected to attend. These assemblies usually opened with a brief devotional service, followed by announcements. After that almost anything could happen, ranging from a talk by the President, some faculty member, or an outside speaker, to a pep rally for an athletic or other student event. These exercises also furnished a forum for the discussion of student problems and affairs. The assembly periods served a useful purpose in the early years, and were usually well attended by both students and faculty.

Organizations and Activities

Only one new organization was started during these years. This was the Country Life Club, which was organized in 1915 by George W. Beattie, instructor in agriculture. The catalog of May, 1915, stated:

This club is open to the entire student body. It is conducted on the plan proposed by the National Society. ... The regular programs are given by club members who have investigated some interesting phases of country life. Specialists in rural life subjects appear before the club from time to time.

The popularity of this organization for a number of years reflects the fact that the majority of the students at that time came from rural homes. However,
as time went on, its programs and activities ceased to be entirely rural in character, and it was discontinued in 1933. By that time, the student body was more urban and cosmopolitan. This club made many real contributions to student life during its existence and one that was permanent. In 1920 it started the college paper, the BeeGee News, and was responsible for its publication for several years.

The first purely social group for students was organized in either 1916 or 1917. A small group of men formed a secret fraternity and called it by the Greek name of Theta Delta Chi. The organization was not officially recognized by the College. Indeed, its very existence was unknown until later. The group soon suspended operations as a result of the shortage of men due to World War I.

During 1917-18, Calvin J. Biery, Director of Rural Education, organized the first college orchestra. It was small, but represented a beginning. In addition to Prof. Biery, who played first violin, the group consisted of three other violinists, a cornetist, a clarinetist, a trombonist, a drummer, and a pianist. The primary purpose of the organization was to furnish suitable music for many college functions, including basketball games. However, it was not a dance band, and a record player continued to furnish dance music.

The year 1917-18 also brought two additions to the growing list of activities at Bowling Green. The first was a course of lectures, entertainments, and musical events. Ever since the first year, Prof. Hesser and the author had talked about this need and, finally, a proposal was submitted to President Williams that such a course be started. He agreed to the need. However, he was afraid that it would not be possible to finance the course, since no state or other funds were available. Prof. Hesser, however, from his experience with the Spring Festival thought it would be possible to sell enough season tickets to the faculty and citizens of Bowling Green and Wood County to cover all expenses, at least for the first year. The course was introduced on a trial basis. President Williams appointed Prof. Hesser as chairman of a committee to arrange and manage the course. The author and one other faculty member (name forgotten) completed the committee.

The course for the first year (1917-18) included the Oratorio Artists (four singers and accompanists), the Zoelner String Quartet of Brussels, the Ben Greet Shakespearian Players, and a lecture by Dr. Edward A. Steiner. The course continued throughout President Williams' administration. Each year it brought well-known artists and lecturers to the campus. After Prof. Hesser left Bowling Green in 1920, the author became chairman of the committee.

The Spring Musical Festival, started in 1915, continued for several years. The first festival was produced entirely by local talent. Later, however, the chorus was assisted by artists and orchestras of national reputation. An amusing incident occurred at one of these concerts during a program by the New York Symphony Orchestra, with Walter Damrosch conducting. These concerts were
held in the Methodist Church, and the temporary platform was rather small for the large orchestra. During one number, the author was appalled when he saw one of the double bass players disappear off the back of the platform, taking his instrument with him. He was relieved when, before the end of the selection, he saw the player climb back and resume playing. Mr. Damrosch paid no attention to the incident, and apparently did not even see it. Such was not the case, however, as he later, in an article in the Saturday Evening Post, mentioned the amusing incident that had occurred at Bowling Green, Ohio.

Other well-known orchestras also played at the Spring Festival in the years that followed. Among these the author recalls the Minneapolis and Detroit symphonies. The chorus was assisted by well-known soloists, who sang choral works such as Haydn’s Creation, Greig’s Olaf Trygrason, Gaul’s Holy City, and Handel’s Messiah. Unfortunately, the Spring Festival was discontinued in 1920, when Prof. Hesser left Bowling Green.

The year 1916-17 also saw the beginning of an athletic program. The fact that such a program had not been started sooner was due to two things. In the first place, President Williams, although he became an ardent fan in later years, did not feel that athletics were important in the development of the new college. In the second place, the number of men in school was small, and dropped almost to zero during the war. The first official interest in the development of athletics resulted from the appointment of F. G. Beyerman, in 1915, as instructor in physical education. Although he was hired, primarily, to teach courses in physical education and conduct gymnasium classes, he was interested in the development of an athletic program at the first opportunity.

Although some baseball and basketball had been played by college students before that time, the first organized college team to play a regular schedule appeared in 1916-17. In that year, a team in basketball, coached by Mr. Beyerman, played a schedule of eight games, and won two and lost six. The first successful season was in 1917-18, when Bowling Green played a schedule of 10 games, with six wins and four losses. Games were played with Bluffton College, Ypsilanti Normal, Adrian College, Findlay College, Defiance College, and The University of Toledo. It is interesting to note that Toledo is Bowling Green’s oldest athletic rival, and that the first year of competition set the pattern that has been frequently repeated to the present. Bowling Green won in Bowling Green and Toledo won in Toledo. A baseball team representing the College played two games in the spring of 1918 and lost both.

Bowling Green State Normal College found it difficult to maintain athletic teams during the early years, since the number of men in college was small in the beginning and was reduced further during the war period. At one time the basketball schedule was maintained with only six men on the first team and, of these, only two had ever played before. Three of the remaining four had never seen a game of basketball before entering college.

The spring of 1918 was marked by the issuance of the first student publi-
cation at Bowling Green State Normal College. For several years, Prof. Winslow had been interested in starting a college annual. In the fall of 1917, he decided to undertake this task with the assistance of a board of students from the sophomore and senior graduating classes. The board was composed of Elsie C. Meyer, editor-in-chief; Stella Canright, business manager; Clair W. Wilkinson, art editor; and eight associate editors. The result of the combined efforts of this board was a book of 174 pages with numerous illustrations. The publication was financed by the sale of copies to faculty and students, with additional aid from a group of 27 sponsors and 16 pages of advertisements.

The title page of the BeeGee contained the statement, "Issued Annually by the Students of the State Normal College, Bowling Green, Ohio." Unfortunately, these plans for annual publication were not realized for a number of reasons. Not the least of these was the fact that Prof. Winslow left Bowling Green to become supervisor of art in the public schools of Baltimore, Maryland. A college annual was not published again until 1924. In the meantime, the college paper was started, and took the name of BeeGee News. When an annual was started for the second time, a new name had to be found.

Extension Courses

These years also saw a change in the character of the extension work offered. The first catalog contained the following:

The extension work as conducted by this school is not entertainment; it is not a series of lectures; it is the usual classroom work brought to the community.

This statement was included in the catalog because the extension work offered by many colleges in the region had, before this time, been more like Chautauqua offerings than college courses.

However, the demand for the type of extension service to which the communities of northwestern Ohio had been accustomed in the past continued. The second and third catalogs announced, in addition to credit courses for teachers, offering of lectures and entertainments designed for communities, clubs, and school organizations. This change of policy was the first indication, and the only one for some time, that Bowling Green State Normal College was interested in anything but teacher training.

Summer Sessions

In 1916 the special spring quarter was renamed the first session, and was reduced from eight to six weeks. It again paralleled the last weeks of the second semester. The courses offered were all from the curricula for elementary teachers. No additional faculty members were hired for this session.

The second session, also of six weeks, offered 90 courses in 11 different departments. These included, in addition to a few preparatory courses, a wide selection for elementary and secondary teachers, and school administrators. The faculty for the second summer session numbered 36 individuals, 23 from
the Bowling Green faculty, and 13 from other colleges and from the public schools of Ohio.

Two sessions were announced for the summer of 1917, but some questions were raised. The minutes of the trustees' meeting of May 5, 1917, show that President Williams was called to Columbus by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction to consider the advisability of cancelling the second summer term. It will be recalled that the United States entered World War I on April 6, 1917. The state superintendent feared that so many men would enter the military service, and so many women would work in war plants, that the enrollment would be too small to warrant the expense of maintaining the term. President Williams opposed the proposition as announcements were already out. He also believed there would be no great shrinkage in the enrollment. Both the first and second summer terms were offered, as planned, and proved President Williams was right. Indeed, the enrollment in the second term showed an increase of 67 over the corresponding term of 1916.

The third annual catalog, dated May, 1917, again announced two terms for 1918. However, a change of plans occurred during the year, and three terms were held. These included a five-week term, six days a week, in addition to the two previously offered. This third term reflected the increased demand from teachers in service who wished to complete the equivalent of 12 weeks, and whose schools did not dismiss in time for them to attend the first summer session.

No significant changes were made in the courses offered. These were still mainly for teachers in the elementary grades, plus a few courses for administrators and high school teachers.

Enrollments

The enrollments for the first four years of classes are summarized below:

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<td>403*</td>
<td>274</td>
<td>257</td>
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<td>Extension</td>
<td>598</td>
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<td>713</td>
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<tr>
<td>First Summer Term</td>
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<tr>
<td>Second Summer Term</td>
<td>615</td>
<td>638</td>
<td>739</td>
<td>806</td>
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<tr>
<td>Third Summer Term</td>
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<td>1,517</td>
<td>1,288</td>
<td>1,796</td>
<td>2,517</td>
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</table>

The above figures seem to show an increase of almost 100 students, or over 30 per cent in the attendance for the second academic year; and a decrease of over 100, or 32 percent, for the third year. However, these figures are misleading. This is due to the fact that, for the first two years, the enrollment for the first summer term was included in that of the academic year. No record is now available, but the author remembers that the enrollment in this

*These figures include the enrollment for the first summer term.
term, during the spring of 1915, was comparatively small, and that it was larger in 1916. This probably means that there was only a small increase in attendance during the second academic year, and this is in accordance with the author's recollection. In fact, the attendance during the academic year was quite stable for several years, and did not again exceed 300 until 1920-21.

Even World War I had little effect on attendance, because Bowling Green was predominantly a girls' school. There were only 58 men in school in 1914-15, 64 in 1915-16, 24 in 1916-17 and 28 in 1917-18. Even after the war, Bowling Green State Normal College did not attract many men until it increased the offerings in courses for high school teachers, and for those interested in fields other than teaching.

Enrollments in extension classes dropped from 598 in 1914-15 to 247 in 1915-16, a decrease of almost 59 per cent. This was largely due to diminishing enthusiasm, on the part of teachers in service, to meet the new professional requirements. However, renewed pressure by superintendents and school boards soon forced teachers back into extension classes, and the enrollment mounted to 578 in 1916-17 and to 713 in 1917-18.

Summer enrollments followed somewhat the same trends as those in extension, and for the same reasons. The summer of 1916 showed a slight increase, but this was followed by bigger increases in 1917 and again in 1918, when the combined attendance at the three sessions reached a total of 1,547. Teachers in service could no longer postpone taking the additional education required for renewal of their teaching certificates.

The number of two-year diplomas and four-year degrees conferred during the first four years are summarized below:

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<tr>
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<th>1915</th>
<th>1916</th>
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<th>1918</th>
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<td>Home Economics</td>
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The summer of 1917 was made notable by an important first in the history of Bowling Green State Normal College. The determination of the trustees, President, and faculty to develop a four-year, degree-granting college bore its first fruit, when, at the end of the second summer term, the degree of Bachelor of Science in Education was conferred on Miss Margaret L. Grant of Bellevue, Ohio. This first degree was followed by eight more in June, 1918. No outsider can possibly realize the great satisfaction the granting of these degrees gave to all who had helped make it possible. Bowling Green State Normal College had proved (at least to itself) that it was more than a two-year school. However, the opposition to the development of a four-year college did not cease for several years. In fact, the actual conferring of degrees served to increase this opposition.