2019

UA1C2/79 Van Meter Hall Photos

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Administrative History: Artificial collection created by WKU Archives to group Van Meter Hall images together. The majority of the photos are from WKU sources, but some donated by individuals.

Other Names - Administration Building
Date Built - 1901, 1911
Cost of Construction - $147,000
Architect - Brinton B. Davis
Contractor - J. Bornstein, Louisville

Namesake:
The original Vanmeter Hall was named for Captain Charles J. Vanmeter. He was one of the oldest native citizens of Bowling Green. At the former Normal School, the old Vanmeter Hall was made possible by his generosity.

Capt. Charles J. Vanmeter, who died recently at his home, in Bowling Green, Ky., was a man widely known for his broad-minded philanthropy. He was one of the oldest, if not the oldest, of the native citizens of Bowling Green.

After being educated in the schools of his native town, Captain Vanmeter began life as a clerk under his father. Soon becoming tired of a mercantile life, he went to and conducted one of his father's farms. In 1886, together with his brother and Captain Leiter, he built a steamboat. On its maiden trip the boat was frozen up at Carrollton for seven weeks. But the business soon became a very remunerative one, Captain Vanmeter having charge of the office in Bowling Green. The business grew, and subsequently the Bowling Green Navigation Company was formed. This old company is well remembered by the older citizens, and they often speak of that period as the halcyon days of the city.

Captain Vanmeter had been living a retired life for a number of years. He was much interested in educational work, and it was through his generosity that old Vanmeter Hall at the former Normal school was made a possibility, he furnishing the funds for its erection. When the State took charge of the school and bought the Potter College property and erected a handsome, stately building, it was named in his honor. It is one of the most substantial buildings in the State. In all public enterprises Captain Vanmeter had always been a leader, and many projects through his untiring energies have been made possibilities.
Obituary printed in Confederate Veteran, Vol. 21, March 1913

History:
The existing Van Meter Hall was named after Vanmeter Hall which was part of the Southern Normal School & Business College in order to show the continuity of the Southern Normal School in the newly established Western Kentucky State Normal School.

The current Van Meter Hall is the second so named in WKU's history. It was dedicated on Friday, May 5, 1911, The building as first built had an auditorium with a seating capacity of 2,000 wherein WKU students attended chapel daily. Van Meter also contained classrooms and administration offices.

The original Vanmeter Hall was constructed to replace the main building of the Southern Normal School & Business College which burned on November 16, 1900. It was a castle-like structure and was completed in 1901 using remains of the burned building. Vanmeter Hall was located between College and Center Street and was over 15,000 square feet. The building contained the President's Office, a library, classrooms, the Business Hall, Chapel Hall, College Reception room and living quarters for the college president, After the creation of WKU in 1906, the building was part of the Bowling Green Business University until 1963.

Van Meter Hall Vertical File - available upon request

Additions - WKU Van Meter Hall

1954 - $25,000 new seats, lights and curtains for auditorium

1957 - addition of room for business office

1967 - auditorium stage made larger, air conditioning in offices

Description: Images of Van Meter Hall

Dates: 1911-present

Extent: 11 folders, oversize, 6 glass plates, 8 negatives, 32 negatives

Subject Analytics:
Van Meter Hall (WKU)
Western Kentucky University

Digital Commons:
Architecture
Photography

Accession Information: These records transferred to WKU Archives upon its creation.
UA1972-3 donated by Mrs. Frank Bates

Access Restrictions: none

Allied Materials:
Images with UA1C2/79 prefix
Preferred Citation: UA1C2/79 Van Meter Hall Photos, WKU Archives, Bowling Green, Kentucky, USA.

Processing Information: Records processed and collection inventory created 2019.
### UA1C2.79

**Level**

Print, Photographic

**Subseries**

UA1C WKU Archives Photograph Collection

**Series**

2 Buildings & Structures

**Subseries**

79 Van Meter Hall Photos

**Creator**

WKU Archives

**Date**

Linked to UA1C2

**Title**

Collection

Series 2 Buildings & Structures

Subseries 79 Van Meter Hall Photos

**Scope & Content**

WKU Archives

Images of Van Meter Hall

### Container List

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