

Excerpt from *Transactions of the Tennessee Academy of Science I (1912-1913): 5-7.*

History of the Organization

To Dr. George H. Ashley, who became State Geologist in 1910, the Tennessee Academy of Science probably owes its existence. Soon after his arrival in the State, Dr. Ashley suggested such an organization, and the matter was taken up by him with members of the faculties of several educational institutions and with other men interested in scientific work. The suggestion met with ready response, and Professor C. H. Gordon, of the University of Tennessee, took the initiative in preparing a call and securing the signatures of several of the members of the faculty of the University of Tennessee. Other names representing Vanderbilt University and the State Geological Survey were soon added to the call and the letter was sent to about one hundred persons engaged in or interested in scientific work in the State.

The original call prepared by Prof. Gordon was dated February 5, 1912, and was signed by C. H. Gordon, Samuel M. Bain, Maurice Mulvania, Asa A. Schaeffer, Ernest Shaw Reynolds, E. C. Cotton, J. A. Switzer, Chas. A. Perkins, H. A. Morgan, Chas. O. Hill, J. T. Porter, L. C. Glenn, J. T. McGill, John Daniel and Geo. T. Martin.

On March 4, 1912, the letter was duplicated and sent to interested persons, the following additional signatures being affixed: Geo. H. Ashley, A. H. Purdue and W. A. Nelson.

Following is a copy of the original call for the organization of the Academy:

"NASHVILLE, TENN., March 4, 1912.

"Dear Sir—Believing there is urgent need of a closer association of those interested in the study of the sciences and related branches in the State of Tennessee, and that the time is ripe for an organization that will promote these interests, the undersigned ask your coöperation in the establishment of a State Academy of Science.

"The field to be occupied by this organization will correspond to that of similar organizations now in successful operation in other States. It is proposed to meet annually for the reading and discussion of papers related to scientific work or achievements of the members and for the furtherance of the scientific interests of the State of which, in its corporate capacity, the Academy will stand as representative.

“The general advance in education, the establishment of the State Geological Survey, and the splendid achievements of the workers in the field of agricultural education, all point to this as a propitious time for the establishment of an institution which shall have for its object the interchange of ideas and the coördination of the various scientific interested of Tennessee.

“It is proposed to have a meeting of those interested at the office of the State Geologist in Nashville on March 9, 1912, for the purpose of forming such an institution as herein proposed. You are cordially and urgently invited to attend and contribute by your presence and advice to the success of the undertaking. Please fill out and mail at once the inclosed card indicating whether we may count on your support in this movement. Very truly yours,”

(Signed)

Geo. H. Ashley, Geological Survey.

A. H. Purdue, Geological Survey.

W. A. Nelson, Geological Survey.

L. C. Glenn, Geology, Vanderbilt University.

J. T. McGill, Vanderbilt University.

John Daniel, Physics, Vanderbilt University.

Geo. W. Martin, Biology, Vanderbilt University.

Chas. A. Perkins, University of Tennessee.

Chas. O. Hill, University of Tennessee.

C. H. Gordon, Geology, University of Tennessee.

S. M. Bain, Botany, University of Tennessee.

Maurice Mulvania, Bacteriology, University of Tennessee.

Asa A. Schaeffer, University of Tennessee.

D. S. Reynolds, University of Tennessee.

E. C. Cotton, University of Tennessee.

J. A. Switzer, C. E., University of Tennessee.

H. A. Morgan, Exp. Sta., University of Tennessee.

J. T. Porter, Physics, University of Tennessee.

The result of this letter was the formation of the Tennessee Academy of Science, on Saturday, March 9, 1912, in the Hall of the Representatives at the State Capitol, by a representative gathering of persons, among whom were the following: Mrs. C. L. Fraley, Nashville High School; L. C. Glenn, Vanderbilt University; Watson Selvage, University of the South; Colin M. Mackall, University of the South; James A. Lyon, Southwestern Presbyterian University; A. H. Purdue, State Geologist elect; P. H. Manning, Nashville; E. J. McCroskey, Lebanon; V. L. Minehart, Cumberland University; L. Junius Desha, Chemist, Tennessee Food Inspection Bureau; Geo. H. Ashley, State Geologist; C. H. Gordon, University of Tennessee; Wilbur A. Nelson, Assistant State Geologist.

At this meeting, March 9, 1912, Dr. Geo. H. Ashley presided. A committee, consisting of Prof. C. H. Gordon, Dr. Geo. H. Ashley and Wilbur A. Nelson, was appointed to draw up a constitution and by-laws. The committee reported at the afternoon session and the constitution and by-laws were adopted.

Wilbur A. Nelson was appointed temporary secretary and treasurer. A committee, composed of Doctors L. C. Glenn and L. Junius Desha and the secretary, was appointed to make arrangements for a continuance of the meeting on April 6, 1912, for the election of officers and the transaction of other business.

The first general meeting of the Academy was accordingly held on April 6, 1912, in the hall of the Carnegie Library of Nashville, at which time the following officers were elected:

President, C. H. Gordon, University of Tennessee, Knoxville
Vice-President, J. I. D. Hinds, Cumberland University, Lebanon
Secretary, Wilbur A. Nelson, State Geological Survey, Nashville
Treasurer, S. M. Barton, University of the South, Sewanee
Editor, E. S. Reynolds, University of Tennessee, Knoxville

The Executive Committee (which consists of the officers and two additional members appointed by the President) was completed by the appointment of Prof. A. W. Prince, Union University, Jackson, and Dr. L. C. Glenn, Vanderbilt University, Nashville.

The complete organization of the Tennessee Academy of Science was thus consummated on April 6, 1912.