Northwestern University was the fifth institution of higher liberal education to be established in Illinois. It received a charter in 1851, eight years earlier than the medical college with which it was to become associated, but the first class of ten students at Northwestern did not assemble until 1855. Four years later, when the Medical Department of Lind University opened its doors, the enrollment of this school was 33 as against Northwestern’s 36. Unlike the adventurous unconformity of the medical college, which had set out to establish a new order in education, the founders of the University were stolidly orthodox. Upholding the tradition that religion and learning should walk hand-in-hand, they aspired to nothing more than satisfying “the interests of sanctified learning [which] require the immediate establishment of a university in the Northwest under the patronage of the Methodist Episcopal Church.” Besides similar attributes of courage, faith and devotion, the two founding groups possessed one other common characteristic: they were all young men, the oldest only 42 years of age. Both institutions were the products of the daring of relative youth, not the darling projects of the elderly. And the launchings of both institutions were vibrant with youth and energy.

The financial panic of 1857, and its aftermath, were not favorable either to Northwestern University just started, or to the Medical College about to open. In the initial year of the new medical school, the struggling University could raise donations amounting to only $155; the medical group, on its part, was the recipient of makeshift quarters alone in the way of sponsored help.
At the time of affiliation of these two institutions, in 1870, neither had attained affluence. The University operated on an annual expenditure of $28,000, whereas the budget of the Medical College was about $4,000.

Neither the University nor the College had solved its problems sufficiently by 1870 to be at all complacent. It was obvious that each could offer something that the other needed. Since dissolving its initial ties with Lind University, the Medical College had luckily failed in having its conditions of affiliation met by the ill-starred, original University of Chicago. Yet the Medical College was still willing to be adopted on favorable terms by an institution in which it had faith.

THE MEDICAL DEPARTMENT OF NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY: 1870-91

The first “Circular” (that is, Announcement) of Northwestern University, published in 1856, sought to justify the apparent oversight in confining the organization to a single department, the College of Literature, Science and Arts, on the basis that this limitation was judged to be best adapted to the wants of the country since the various colleges of medicine, “already established, particularly Rush Medical College, will doubtless keep pace with the demands of the profession. For the present, at least, this precludes the necessity of such a department in the university.” It may be wondered if Trustees John Evans and N. S. Davis, both professors at that time in Rush Medical College, did not influence this decision! The promise that a “department of law will be organized at no distant day” would not have led one to predict that a medical college would, in fact, become the first affiliate to start the “University” toward really becoming such. Perhaps the decision, one year previous to the medical affiliation, to admit women into the College of Arts was an omen of a generally expanding vision and progressive liberalization of the Trustees.

When Erastus Otis Haven came to the University in the summer of 1869 as its third President, he was already favorably disposed toward medical education as a desirable field of academic activity. In his inaugural address he said: “All learned professions should be
prosecuted [and] the medical school and law school should be departments.” Hence, shortly after his arrival, he encouraged the Trustees of the University to instruct its Executive Committee to act on “the matter of negotiating with some one of the medical colleges of Chicago with reference to union with the University.”

Conversations immediately ensued with N. S. Davis, who was a trustee of Northwestern University through most of the span from its foundation in 1851 until his death in 1904, and two days later Davis reported to his Faculty on the possibility of an alliance between the two institutions. This information resulted in a resolution “that a union of this College on just and satisfactory terms with the North Western University would be desirable; . . . that a committee be appointed to confer on the subject with the Executive Committee of the Trustees of North Western University [and this committee be] instructed to consent to a proper arrangement on the basis of receiving at least $15,000 from the University.”

Within a short time a proposal in two parts was drawn up. The first section offered union with the University if the latter contributed $15,000; in return, the Medical College would agree to permit students of the University to receive free instruction in analytical and practical chemistry and, as a stimulus to better premedical preparation, would admit Northwestern students with two or more years of college training into the full medical course, free of tuition. Secondly, the Medical College offered to transfer all of its property (medical building and contents valued at $15,000) to the University and become a permanent, but corporate, department of it if the University would agree to the following conditions: (1) hold the property in trust for the perpetual use of the Medical Department; (2) continue the present Medical Faculty and make future appointments and removals only on the recommendation of the Faculty; (3) permit all fees collected by the Medical Department to be used by it for maintenance and salaries, no other salaries being claimed from the University; (4) appropriate such additional sums, beyond the $15,000, as might be necessary to erect and furnish a new medical building not to cost more than $30,000.

The Trustees of Northwestern University approved the first proposal but not the second one (presumably because of clause no. 4). Negotiations of a compromise nature were completed on March 10, 1870, when the following terms of a somewhat loose union were agreed to: (1) the Chicago Medical College, although officially
becoming the Medical Department of Northwestern University, would retain its corporate name, hold title to its property, manage its finances and control its Faculty and curriculum; (2) the University would confer the medical degrees on the recommendation of the Medical Faculty, and these must be the only degrees conferred; (3) undergraduate students of the University would be permitted to receive instruction in chemistry at the Medical College without charge for the tuition [and the University separately promised $1,000 annually toward the salary of the Professor of Chemistry, who would also do teaching for a time on the Evanston campus]; (4) tuition charges would be waived for all graduates of the Literary Department and for such students as had spent two years in that Department, who wished to register as regular medical students [tuition was subsequently interpreted as lecture fees only, and in 1896 the privilege was rescinded by mutual agreement]; (5) the University would contribute $15,000 to aid in the erection of a medical building on a new site already arranged for with the Sisters of Mercy; (6) at any time, on the further contribution of $5,000 in aid of the College, the latter would consent to transfer and surrender its charter and corporate rights, and become in all respects a Department of the University, it being understood that in such case the University would assume all the obligations of the College and offer autonomy in matters of curricula, calendar, fees and recommendations for appointments and removals.

This agreement was essentially a commercial contract that resulted in little more than a simple business alliance. The University gained no control over the Medical College, and committed itself to the somewhat questionable privilege of granting medical degrees under these conditions. It also reserved the right to buy the better housed College for $5,000. The College, on its part, received $15,000 (which it needed desperately for a new building) and obtained the use of the University name. Mutual advantages were claimed from the deals involving the partial subsidization of medical chemistry, on the one hand, and free medical tuition for University students, on the other hand. It was the first of two contractual agreements of association, before the final complete merger would take place. Apparently none of these stages of union gained public attention through publicity in the daily press.

Incidentally, the time of this first union has been misdated as 1869 in all previous historical accounts and University publications.
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To be sure, the Executive Committee of the University Trustees reviewed the revised contract and gave approval to it in the autumn of 1869, but the matter was not acted upon by the Board until March 10 of the following year.

At the end of the 1869-70 session President Haven, of Northwestern University, conferred the medical degrees and thus ritualized the union of the two institutions. Addressing the graduating class, he said:

Your profession is as old as the clergy, and has its regular succession of doctors of medicine from early times. Doctors are the great prosecutors of science and free thought. The principles of your profession should be better understood by the public. When a true physician discovers a new remedy or the cause of any malady, . . . he is to publish it as free as the air to all the profession. This is philanthropic and noble. A physician must be a gentleman. He should, I think, in the highest sense of the word be a Christian.

In conformity with the new University relation, the Chicago Medical College, at the next annual meeting, changed the designation of its presiding officer to "Dean," although the President of the Board of Trustees retained his corporate title. The installing of a Dean was not a novel move. The first official use of this title by an American medical college was made by the College of Physicians and Surgeons (Columbia University) in 1791; and this was the first organized medical faculty, with its own presiding officer, within a collegiate institution. For more than twenty years, until 1891 when a closer union was effected between the University and its Medical Department, the affiliated school was to operate under the cumbersome name of "Chicago Medical College, the Medical Department of Northwestern University." Possibly a record for changes in affiliation had been made since, within slightly more than a decade, the College had become the Medical Department of three different universities.
The Chicago Medical College at its third location, Twenty-Sixth Street and Prairie Avenue; 1870-93.

A SECOND BUILDING PROJECT: 1870

In 1868 a municipal ordinance authorized the widening of State Street in a way that would cut off the front part of the medical building and render it useless as a school. In this impending crisis, a new site had to be found and a new building erected. Probably the steadily increasing enrollment (113, in 1867-68) and the forecast of eventual outgrowth of the modest, present building tempered any dismay over the short tenure of the recently acquired quarters. In May, 1868, the Faculty appointed a committee "to investigate the subject of providing a new site for the College." A year later (July, 1869) the Trustees were directed to "lease a lot from the Sisters of Mercy [at the north-east corner of Prairie Avenue and Twenty-Sixth Street, adjoining Mercy Hospital], giving hospital services in lieu of rent, [and] a committee was appointed to prepare plans for a
new building.” A contract for a lease of 99 years was obtained in return for staffing the hospital and making it a teaching institution. It was not, however, until the following February that plans were drawn and accepted, and authorization was given “to procure estimates, not to exceed $30,000, for all expenses of building and fitting up, ready for occupation.”

The new college building was erected on the acquired lot in remarkably short time, and it became ready for occupancy for the 1870-71 session in early October. It was, for the times, a somewhat pretentious building, facing on Twenty-Sixth Street and “possessing more of an element of permanency about it than any in which the institution had hitherto been established.” More specifically, it was judged to be “commodious, attractive and as good as the buildings of any of its older eastern competitors, and for convenience and elegance superior to any similar buildings in this region.” It was substantially built of brick, with stone trim, and was architecturally pleasing in conformity with the style of Mercy Hospital; there were two and one-half stories above a basement entered at street level. The cost was slightly more than $30,000; of this amount, $15,000 had been exacted from Northwestern University as one of the conditions of affiliation, and an additional sum toward the total requirement resulted from the sale of the State Street property, which the College had appraised at $10,000.

This new building contained: two large lecture halls or amphitheaters, seating 240 and 260 students; well-lighted dissecting rooms; adequately appointed laboratories for chemistry and microscopy; a museum to display the expanding collections of anatomical and pathological specimens; and a library and reading room. The basement soon housed the free dispensary, with separate rooms assigned to different categories of patients and instruction. After some years of continued dissatisfaction with makeshift methods of preserving anatomical material, the basement finally incorporated a deadroom, called the “ice house” or “anatomical vault,” that was the particular pride of the College. It was built in 1878, and the next Announcement bragged that “the special facilities for the preservation of material are such that the supply is absolutely unfailing.” The vault had a double wall of logs; in the interspace, tons of ice were poured each season. But the logs eventually became so saturated and moldy that insulation failed, and the cadavers often reached the students poorly preserved and moss-
covered. It was a hardy soul who would pursue anatomical dissec-
tion beyond the bare requirements. The problem of proper preser-
vation and storage of bodies would plague the Faculty until a new
medical building was erected and refrigeration was employed on
bodies that had been adequately embalmed. Dr. Arthur E. Hertzler,
in *Horse and Buggy Doctor*, remarks that as late as his student days
(1894) "The dissecting room was a mess. The preservation of
material was then not understood, certainly not by our custodian."
The records supply no further details as to financing, other than
that at the end the Trustees reported a deficit of about $2,200 in the
building fund, met by advances from Professor Byford, who was to
be reimbursed from college receipts. This building was destined to
serve for 23 years as the home of the College. Free ground rent was
guaranteed to the College for twenty years certain, and as much
longer as the adjacent building might be used as a hospital, payment
consisting of such clinical instruction in the hospital wards as the
interests of the College required. By the terms of the contract the
medical officers of the Hospital came from the Faculty of the Col-
lege, the Sisters subsequently gaining the privilege of suggesting
preferences for appointees to the attending staff.
In an address at the opening of the new building and the begin-
ning of the annual session, Professor Johnson said:

> The location and relations [of the college building] to the hospital are
such, that for all practical purposes, that institution becomes a part of
the college organization. Each Didactic Chair has its corresponding
Clinical Chair in the Hospital, where the theories of the lecture room
are daily tested at the bedside of the patient. In this respect also it
differs materially from most schools of this country, and, to the same
extent, approximates in its means, as well as its modes of teaching, the
best institutions of the Old World.

The *Times* and the *Evening Mail* took cognizance of the new build-
ing and its opening ceremony, and the *Times* gave a complete di-
gest of the address. The *Tribune*, well engrossed with the encircle-
ment and siege of Paris by the German Army, allotted no space to
the local incident, but did announce that:

> Dr. N. S. Davis, of this city, lectures this evening on temperance in
the new Congregational Church at Oakland. There will be music on the
organ by an accomplished pianist. The Band of Hope will sing.
Anatomy class in amphitheater at the Twenty-Sixth Street building; 1885.

Microscopical laboratory in the Twenty-Sixth Street building.
So it was that at the beginning of the twelfth annual session, in 1870-71, the College found itself in a rather solid and enviable position. It had dared to strike out and challenge the united front of orthodoxy in medical education. It enjoyed reasonable prosperity in spite of departures from the standard pattern, and had demonstrated to all the timorous educators of the land that a rational curriculum and higher standards would attract students even at greater cost to their time and money. It had, as Professor Johnson said, “from the period of its inception . . . been both growing and developing, [while] for the last eighty years other medical schools had only grown.” It had made an alliance with a University that gave present benefits, both tangible and intangible, and would become increasingly advantageous in the years to come. It had acquired a college building, physically imposing and well adapted to its present purposes; this was located in conjunction with a new teaching hospital, staffed by the Faculty and, in effect, an integral part of the teaching unit. In addition, the Cook County Hospital, with representatives of the College on its staff, was only a short walk distant; St. Luke’s Hospital, soon to become used, was equally near.

As Dean Davis emphasized: “In all of its requirements as to period of study, graded curriculum, number and length of annual terms, and number of branches taught, including laboratory, didactic and clinical, the College had already attained the full standard of education subsequently demanded by the Illinois State Board of Health, [and] seven years before the law creating that Board had been enacted by the State Legislature.” Also, seventeen years before the organization of the American Medical College Association (1876), the College had far exceeded the stipulations concerning reform that were incorporated into the articles of confederation of that body.

THE GREAT FIRE: 1871

Almost exactly one year after occupying the new medical building, occurred the Great Fire of October 8 and 9, 1871. This holocaust burned out the business section of the City, extended south to Harrison Street, and locally even to Twelfth Street (now Roosevelt
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Road); westward, it was restrained by the north and south branches of the Chicago River; crossing the Chicago River proper, it consumed buildings to the north, even to Fullerton Avenue. Seventeen thousand buildings were destroyed, and 98,000 persons made homeless.

No damage was incurred by the Chicago Medical College or the Mercy, County and St. Luke's Hospitals, since they were well beyond the southern limits of destruction, and all of the students escaped without injury or loss. Of the Faculty Drs. Isham and Byford suffered most heavily, losing both residence and office. The minutes and files pertaining to the Trustees, in the hands of Dr. Hollister, were destroyed in his office, whereas the more important Faculty Minutes, kept by Dr. Andrews, were unharmed. Among Dr. Byford's losses was a note for $3,000 against the College, representing advances made to cover an overrun in cost on the new college building, which note was reissued. Classes at the College were suspended for one day only, when the conflagration was at its height. Even so, Dr. Andrews, believing that the best policy was to proceed with the work at hand, maintained his scheduled clinical hours at Mercy Hospital and performed several operations in the presence of a large part of the class, mirabile dictu.

The Woman's Hospital Medical College, organized just a year before the Fire by Dr. Byford and others, and later (1892) to become affiliated with Northwestern University, was burned out of its temporary rooms on Clark Street, and the Woman's Hospital, near by, was destroyed as well. Although three-fourths of the faculty members lost their homes, these personal calamities did not deter the Faculty from convening on the day after the Fire and deciding that the College should go on. The losses of this school were not great because it had accumulated relatively little physical equipment. Classes were resumed for the ensuing year in quarters on West Adams Street, and the hospital reopened a short distance away.

On the other hand, Rush Medical College was left destitute. A few years previously it had erected a wholly adequate college building at Dearborn and Indiana (now Grand Avenue) Streets, north of the Chicago River. It lay directly in the path of the spreading fire and became totally destroyed, along with its contents; even the lot was a liability since it was mortgaged for more than its present worth. The majority of the faculty suffered severe losses, and many
students lost books and clothing when their lodgings burned. Many physicians in the city were impoverished and a national appeal brought aid to them in the form of money, books, instruments and other commodities.

On the day following the Fire, the Rush faculty was informed that all enrolled students might attend classes, without charge, at the Chicago Medical College until teaching could be resumed in new quarters, either presently or at the next annual session. Use of the ample dissecting room for practical anatomy was accepted, whereas lectures were transferred to a little clinical amphitheater on top of the County Hospital, then located within walking distance at Eighteenth and Arnold (now La Salle) Streets. The greater part of the class returned to work and was started afresh on a new school year. This was the beginning of a profitable association of Rush Medical College with the County Hospital, which continued when both institutions moved to the West Side in 1878.

The Fire did not affect the holdings of the University to any great extent, although all of its Trustees suffered financially from the disaster. Orrington Lunt, one of the three dominant spirits in the founding of the University, played a heroic role on the day of the conflagration. When it became evident that the advancing flames would soon engulf his office, he took the records of the University from the vault and drove with them to a place of safety. This done, he returned to the building to save his personal books and papers. A Northwestern historian wrote: "So great was the fear of the spread of the flames through the woods and fields to Evanston, that furrows of defense were ploughed up and a corps of students stood with pails of water at guard between the two cities."

THE UNION IN RETROSPECT

The arrangement between College and University was unquestionably a marriage of convenience, the way of life of neither contracting party being materially altered. The University gained appreciably by expanding into professional territory for the first time and thereby laying better claim to the title of "University," which it had assumed; better chemical instruction and laboratory facilities in chemistry were obtained for it at a time when one professor at
Diploma, issued in 1882, with the treasured Faculty signatures.
Evanston was offering courses in general science, zoology, botany, physics, chemistry, geology, mineralogy and astronomy, and serving also as director of the University Museum, in which he classified and labeled 72,000 specimens; certain perquisites for students and graduates in the Literary Department were arranged; and provision was established for a more complete merger at the option of the University.

The Medical Department, in turn, attained some additional prestige by associating itself with a recognized educational institution, since a university alliance placed it a cut above the private school without such connection. Most practical was its mercenary gain of $15,000, which would help meet an immediate building emergency. Also payments toward the salary of the chemical chair removed a worry because the compensation of nonpractitioners presented a recurring problem to the College, and especially so in years of lowered registration when lecture fees were small and 'dividends' could not be declared.

The timing of this loose affiliation, with its attendant benefits, was fortunate. Had it been delayed, the continued operation of the Chicago Medical College might have been seriously threatened, for the lack of a suitable home, and its further immediate progress surely would have been hampered. One year later occurred the Great Fire, which fortunately did not affect the University greatly, although the aftermath carried far-reaching side effects. Still recovering from this nearly mortal blow, Chicago, like the nation at large, was enveloped in the panic of 1873 and its sequelæ. The University found that its income, though increased, failed to keep pace with its growth and expansion. As if this were not enough, during the Seventies the University became enmeshed in its first great tax case, instigated by Cook County and extending to the Supreme Court of the United States (p. 284). Although finally won by the University, and freedom from all taxation was guaranteed, the years of litigation led to temporary impoverishment and hardships.

So it happened, for several decades after the alliance, that the University was not in a position to offer its new affiliate much additional help of any kind. Actually, such aid was not solicited or even contemplated. For the present the Medical College, happy in its new home and filled with enthusiasm and confidence, desired nothing other than to be let alone and to renew its campaign of reform.