



Charles W. Dabney, 1887-1904

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1940

Correspondence Between Presidents' Dabney & Hoskins Concerning UT's Loss in the Rose Bowl, 1940

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Dr. Dabney
58

January 15, 1940.

Dr. Charles William Dabney,
388 East Lyman Avenue,
P. O. Box 236,
Winter Park, Florida.

Dear Dr. Dabney:

When I came into my office this morning I picked up your letter and have read it with a great deal of interest as I always read your letters with interest.

I am glad to know that one of your Cincinnati students was elected president of Ohio State University. You will never know, my dear friend, how much your students owe to you, and how much they appreciate the wonderful influence that you have had, and have yet and will always have, over their lives.

I did not go to California. I was urged to make the trip but I felt that my duty demanded that I remain here at the University. There were several reasons that I have not made public as to why I did not go. One of the reasons was that I did not care to go out there and have my picture published. The newspaper men have a way of getting a man lined up with movie stars and others, taking their pictures and publishing it all over the country. This to me is very repulsive.

I am glad our boys went to the Rose Bowl but I am very much delighted that the event is over. They got licked and I think that after all the licking was a good thing. The licking had to come sometime and perhaps in the Rose Bowl was the best place for it to come. I can see a wonderfully good effect as a result. Last year when we won at the Orange Bowl the victory was somewhat demoralizing.

I refused to allow them to take the band to California. In the first place, we were not invited to send the band. In the second place, and this is still more important, if the members of the band had gone they would have spent all of their money aside from the legitimate expenses paid by the Athletic Association and would have come back to the University without sufficient money to pay their matriculation fees. This would have caused trouble. It would have taken them a week or ten days to get down to work. Since they did not go things have been moving along smoothly.

My dear Sir, you express my views precisely when you doubt the using of football to advertise universities and make spectacles

for the people. There is entirely too much of this. The demoralization of ideals and standards in the whole student body caused by excessive football ballahoo is indeed bad. It gives a wrong impression to the public.

Athletics, in my opinion, have served a good purpose in times past but the enthusiasm has been carried too far. We all enjoy a good football game as a sport but when people say the advertisement of the institution coming through football is the best that we have I do not agree with them. I have noted with interest the action of the University of Chicago and I am expecting other institutions to follow suit. I think football has about reached its peak and there will be considerable reaction, in my opinion, in the next few years.

As to scholarships, I think it is better to be honest and come out in the open and above board and give scholarships than it is to deny the scholarships and have the subsidizing of football carried on sub rosa. The pretended purity in athletics became somewhat disgusting to some of us, and if the scholarships are controlled by a faculty committee and the funds used for that purpose are not taken out of the university funds I think the scholarship can serve a good purpose. We at least under the circumstances do not claim to be saints when we are without doubt sinners. I wish I could see you this morning and talk this over with you. There is a long story following this football business. I hope we shall be able to work it out in the future on a more satisfactory basis.

All of this that I have written you about football is confidential. I think we have reached the peak here at the University of Tennessee, and let me repeat, the licking that we got out West is just about the thing that we needed at this time. I would not say this in public just now but I am delighted over the good results that followed our trip to California.

Instead of going out there, I asked the Governor to represent the University and the State as you know he is an ex officio member of the Board of Trustees. I asked our Faculty Chairman of Athletics, our Dean of Students and the Secretary of the Alumni Association to represent the University in an official capacity. When I take a trip to California I do not want it to be in the capacity of a sports game. I would rather go out there free to visit the country quietly and without any publicity.

I sincerely hope that you will enjoy good health during this winter season and that you will visit us again. Mrs. Hoskins is fairly well- not so well as I should like to see her. We both speak of you frequently, and we are always glad to hear from you.

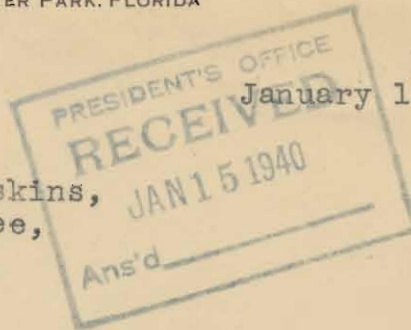
I am

Always with highest and most affectionate regards,

Cordially your friend,

JDH/R

CHARLES WILLIAM DABNEY
388 EAST LYMAN AVENUE
WINTER PARK, FLORIDA



President James D. Hoskins,
University of Tennessee,
Knoxville, Tennessee

My dear Hoskins:

I am proud that another one of my old students has been elected to the presidency of a university. Howard Bevis, as you know, has been recently elected to the presidency of Ohio State University.

He entered the University of Cincinnati the fall that I went there; graduated in the Academic College; took the law course and graduated in law two years later. He went right along up and up and finally became Justice of the Supreme Court and Professor in Harvard Law School. So his career resembles yours somewhat.

I am glad also to know that it was a member of his class in college, who became instructor and did fine education work for the public schools of Cincinnati and was appointed a member of the Board of Trustees of Ohio State, who advocated his election and finally accomplished it. It is gratifying to know that my old students are serving the cause of state education in such eminent positions.

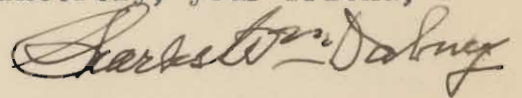
I did not see your name mentioned; therefore suppose you did not go with your boys to California. For your sake, I am glad they reached the Rose Bowl and sorry that they got licked there. You know I am very doubtful about this business of giving scholarships to football players and using foot-ball to advertise universities and make spectacles for the people.

I am told that the canvass of the Alumni of the great foot-ball colleges shows that the foot-ball graduates do not measure up at all well with other graduates in service to their country. There are a few exceptions. But Chicago decided that the system of intercollegiate games militated against the interest of the kind of scholarship which universities are founded to promote.

I expect to see some of the other big universities follow the example of Chicago in time. They are all realizing that the product in men and citizens made through foot,ball is not worth the expense paid for it -- not to speak of the demoralization of ideals and standards in the whole student body.

Of course, I am not advising you, but I would like to know what the results of your experience are. I am fairly well and I hope you and Mrs. Hoskins are. With affectionate regards for you both.

Sincerely, your friend,



CWD/tg