

This Is The Mansfield That Was

By PAUL L. WHITE

One of the very earliest concerns of Mansfielders was to provide educational facilities within the community. Public schools were established just as soon as enough settlers arrived in the area to support them. In the immediate post Civil War era a school building program was launched that carried through the 1880's affording public school education on the elementary and secondary level for all children in the community.

Very early in Mansfield history there was also an intense interest in providing education beyond the scope of the public schools, particularly in the area of business training. This interest culminated in the establishment of a private business school in 1866.

Mansfield was a fast growing business and commercial community. Railroads were serving the community and commerce was the lifeblood. The need for trained persons in the business and commercial field sparked the establishment of this first Mansfield Business College at the close of the Civil War.

Over the past hundred years a number of business schools entered and then disappeared there have been mergers and changing of names throughout the years. The one surviving school, The Mansfield Business College now located at 30 East Cook Rd., can trace its lineage back to a business school established about thirty years ago by local people.

The Ohio Business College which in 1904 merged with the Mansfield Business College came to the Mansfield scene in the early 1880's and established the first night school in the community.

A broadside describing the Ohio Business School's night classes, curriculum and the school facilities published in 1898 is a classic in private school promotion. The broadside describes the night school as a "hummer." It points out that pupils are taught "to write as business calls for writing — not a slow, dead, out-of-date method such as you would find doled out by an incompetent."



College on South Park St.—1931

Joseph W. Sharp was the administrator of the school when this information was published. Sharp had a Masters and Doctors degree and was affiliated with the school for a number of years.

The Mansfield Business College classes met at 6 West Fourth Street until the merger in 1904. P. W. Frederick was the administrator of that school.

Old records show that in 1871 John K. Wilder was president of a Business College located at 213-215 East Market

(Park Avenue East) St. A Dickinson Secretarial School was located in the Richland Trust Building in the early 1903's.

After the merger of the Ohio and Mansfield Business Colleges in 1904 the school was named the Mansfield-Ohio Business College. Around 1930 the school was sold to the Massillon Commercial Institute interests and renamed the Mansfield Commercial Institute.

The Mansfield Business

Training School was organized under the leadership of D. L. Burns and again students were hiking up the long and steep stairways of the old Stoodt building on South Park St.

Mrs. Rhediar Jones is the present Director of both day and evening classes with a total enrollment of 111 students in commercial courses.

(Photos from the files of the Mansfield Business College courtesy Richland County Historical Society.)