



**A Normal School to “*The Finest Place We Know*”  
1922 - 2022**

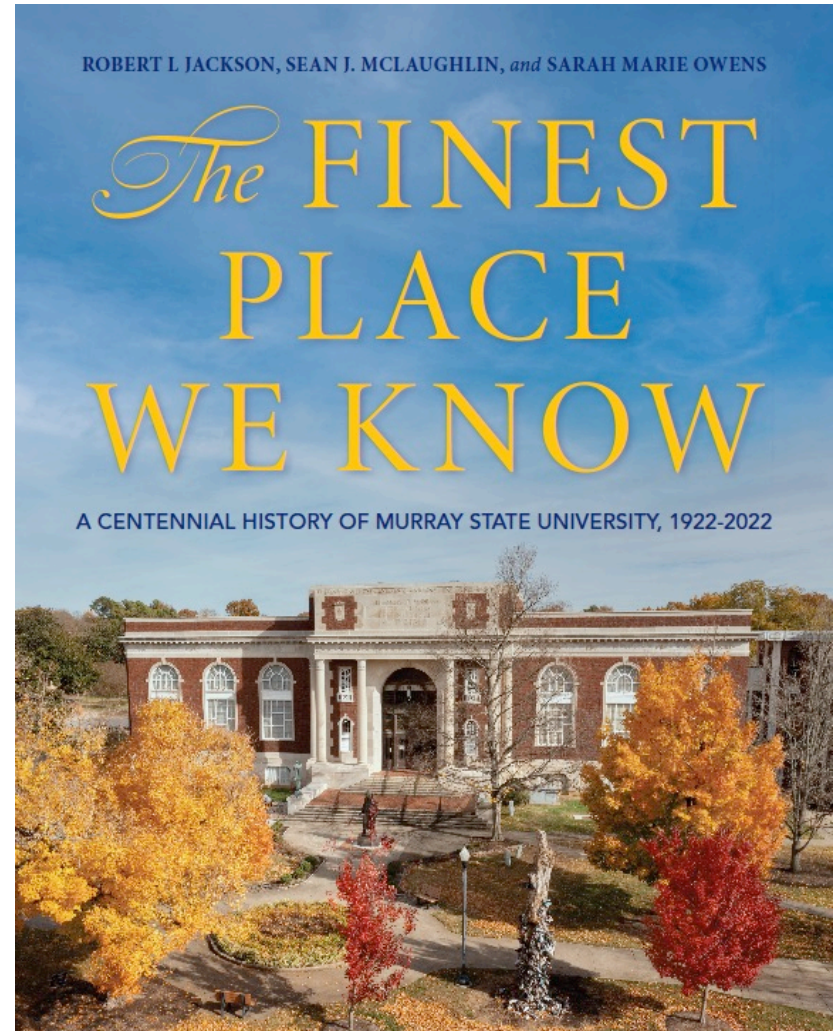
May 3, 2022

# Thank You

- Dean Whaley, Provost Todd, faculty and staff
- Happy National Teacher Appreciation Day!
- Dr. Harry Sparks
  - President: 1968-73
  - Educator, Superintendent
  - State School Superintendent
  - Faculty member at MSU



Cris Ferguson (Co-Chair)  
Jordan Smith (Co-Chair)  
Dr. Tina Bernot  
Jackie Dudley  
Cami Duffy  
Jill Hunt  
Ashley Ireland  
Minae "Mia" Ishijima  
Dr. Robert L Jackson  
Chelsea Jones  
Molly Logsdon  
Carrie McGinnis  
Dr. Jeff McLaughlin  
Kim Newbern  
Sarah Marie Owens  
Shawn Reynolds  
Dr. Don Robertson  
Darren Russell  
Dr. Tim Todd  
Shawn Touney  
Dave Winder



# Think about 1922...

- Our region and state...isolated – very rural
  - Approx. 2,500, Approx. 20,000, Approx. 2.4M
- 87 (approx. 850) vehicles/1,000 people...speed
- Roads
- Train service
- Rivers
  - Bridges
    - Not until 1932
- Introduction





# Barriers



# Normal Schools/Teachers Colleges

- Dr. Horace Mann
  - Legislator, Educator, College President
  - Father of Common Schools
    - Common School Movement
    - Secretary of Massachusetts Board of Education
  - Horace Mann Schools/Buildings
  - Mid 1800s – early 1900s
- Today, there are 272 public, comprehensive universities rooted in Normal Schools



Source: Boston Public Library Massachusetts Digital Collections

# Rural Kentucky

- Miller School
  - Calloway County
  - Typical “public” school





# Rainey T. Wells

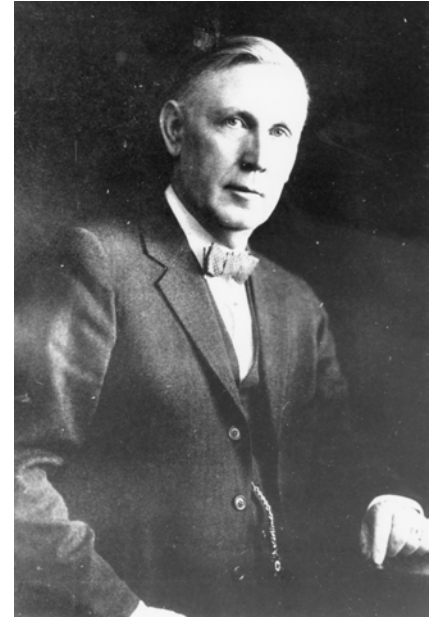
- 1875 – 1958
  - Dr. Ralph Woods described him as “Dynamic, talented, humane and farseeing”
  - Southern Normal School, Huntingdon, TN
    - Degrees - Law and education, 1890-1898
  - University of Kentucky
    - 1927, LL.D.
  - Married Tennessee “Tennie” Daniel
    - Three children
  - Edgewood - 1918

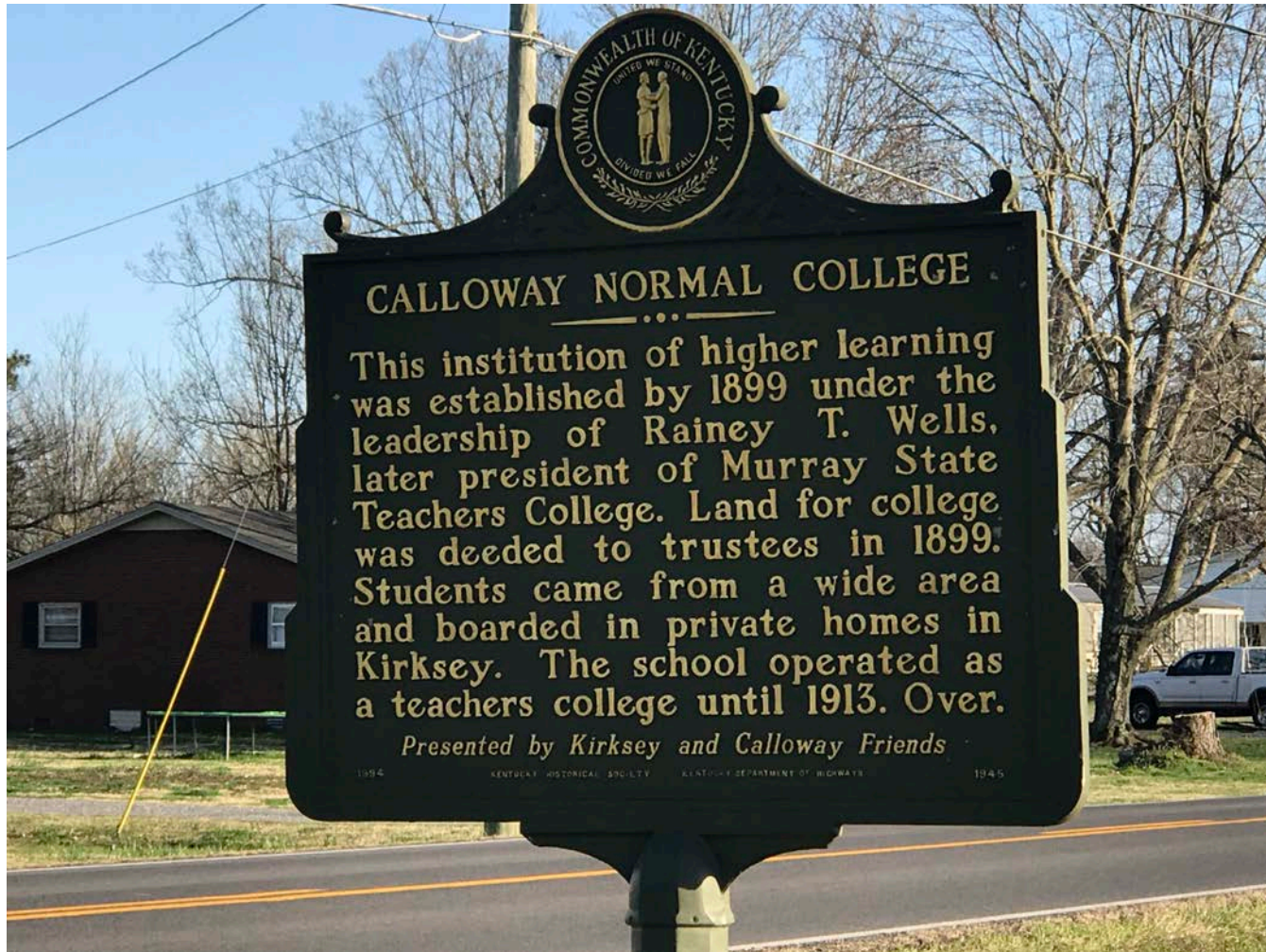




# The Early Roots

- Calloway Normal College
  - Kirksey, KY
  - Founded by Rainey T. Wells
    - 1899
    - Age 24
    - Murray to practice law
  - Closed 1913
- Legislator (1902-1904), State Tax Commissioner, statewide contacts



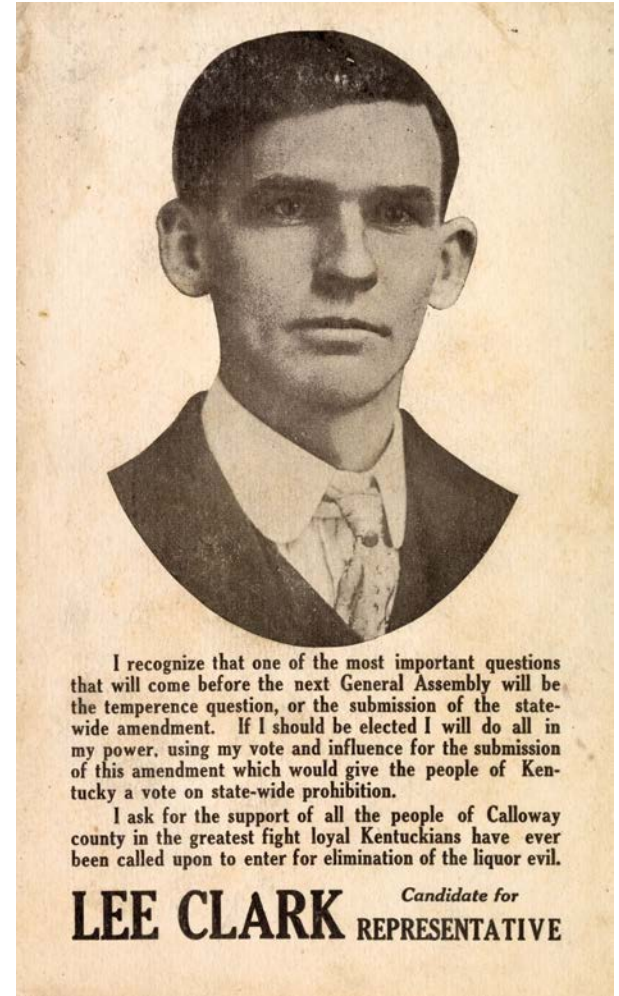


# The Beginning

- 1920 General Assembly...1921 Report
  - Formed an “Educational Commission”
  - Governor Edwin Morrow
  - Two new sites...far eastern and western parts of state
  - “More and better teacher-training schools”
- Dr. Wells saw an opportunity...
- Towns in Pennyrile and Purchase Regions expressed interest...
  - Benton, Clinton, Hopkinsville, Mayfield, Murray, Owensboro, Paducah, Princeton and others

# Representative Lee Clark

- Farmer, Legislator
- Close ally of Dr. Wells
- Legislature:
  - 1922-26
  - 1930-32





# The Beginning

- Governor Morrow's Charge – 1922:
  - “It is time for grim determination and a high resolve to remedy educational conditions in Kentucky.  
**Education is an investment. Ignorance is a tax.**  
Hold fast to the good. Take no backward steps.”
- Senate Bill 14
  - Senator Brig Harris (Ashland)
  - Two new Normal Schools



# Next steps...

- Dr. Rainey T. Wells went to work...
- A major campaign:
  - March 8, 1922
    - “county-wide canvas”
  - \$117,000
  - Approx. \$1.8 million today
  - 1,352 Donors
    - \$1 to \$2500
  - Guaranteed pledges
    - Bank of Murray
    - First National Bank









**MURRAY STATE**  
UNIVERSITY



# The Commission decided...

- May 31, 1922...Dr. Wells made the presentation...last...
  - Something no one else had...
    - *“It is not what the people of Murray have promised to do but what they have already done that counts.”*
      - Presented two checks – \$100,000 to start the campus
      - 350 homes were secured for up to 2,000 students
      - 18 acres purchased – an option for 12 more...
      - Classroom arrangement with Murray City Schools
  - Friday, September 17, 1922, Murray was chosen
    - Western State Normal School
      - Murray State Normal School

- August 1, 1923, Dr. John W. Carr was hired as the first President
  - Retired in 1940
- State Supervisor of High Schools
  - Department of Education

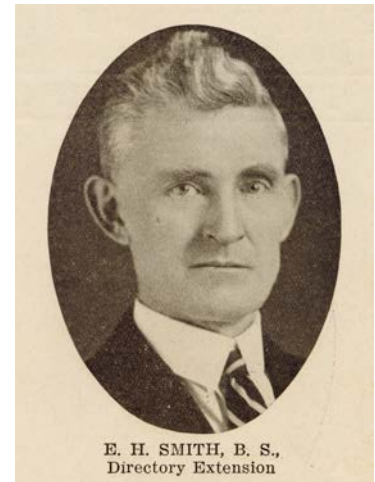


# The Challenges...

- *“When he (Dr. Carr) arrived in the summer of 1923, he was the only visible asset that Murray State Normal School had. There was no building, no faculty, there were no students, no facilities.”*

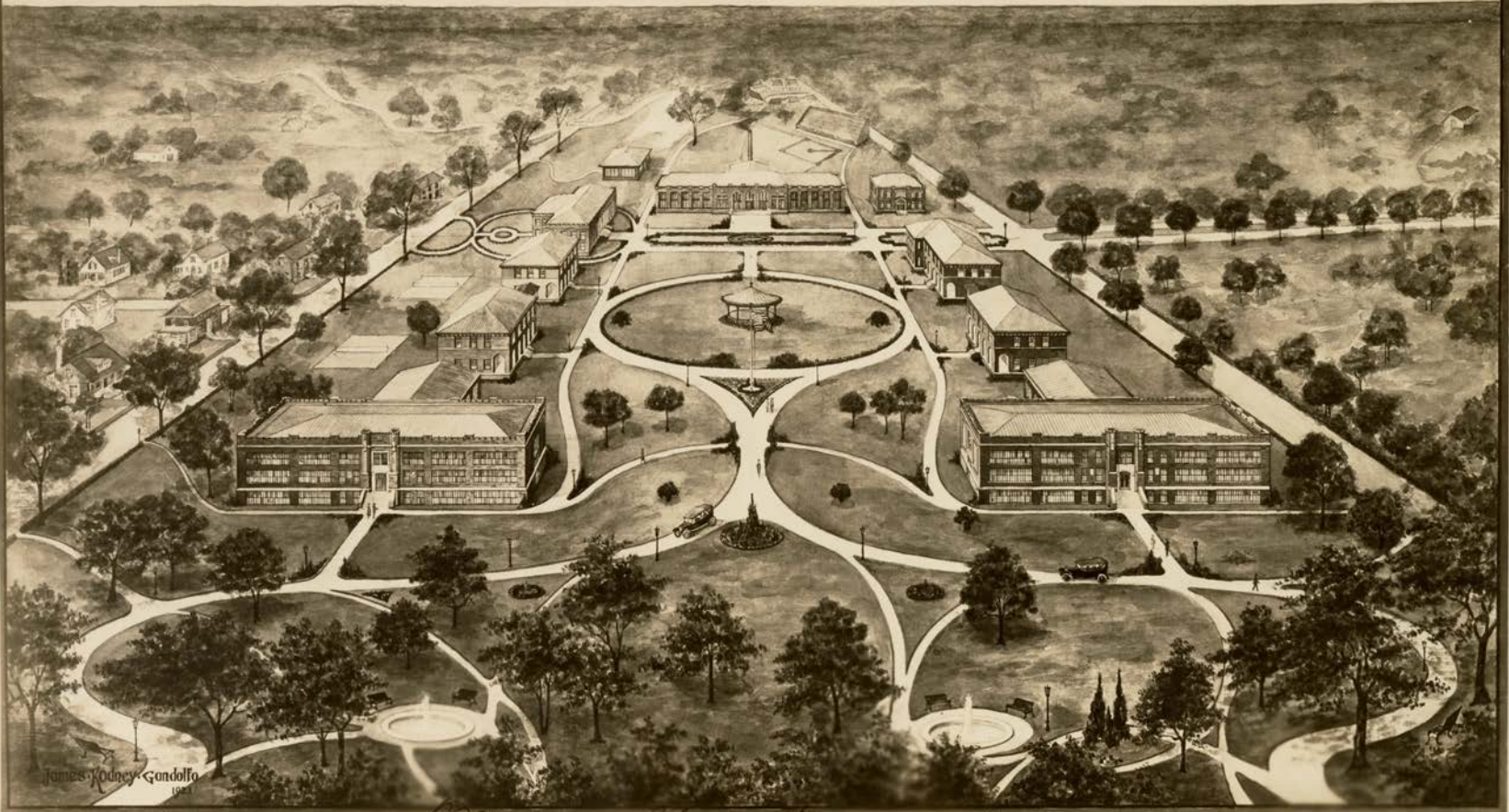
– Paducah Sun-Democrat, 1959

- First classes
  - September 24, 1923
    - 202 students





Joseph · and · Joseph ·  
· Architects · & · Engineers ·



*Murray State Normal School*



**MURRAY STATE**  
UNIVERSITY



# First Board of Regents

- Dr. John W. Carr
- Laurine Wells Lovett, Benton
- Thomas Stokes, Murray
- Prentice Thomas, Cadiz
- James Wilson, Mayfield
- Dr. McHenry Rhoads
  - Not pictured
  - State School Superintendent and Chair







Blanche Y. Martin



Murrell K. Moody



Margaret Lucile Glasgow



Walter B. Moser



Reba B. Miller



Emma J. Helm



Evelyn Linn



Mary C. Williams



William E. Morgan



Martha S. Carter



Marvin O. Wrather



Robbie Tinsley

**First Senior Class**  
**Murray State Teacher's College**  
**1926**

# Dr. John W. Carr

April 1, 1926

***“The work of this institution has only begun....I want to see this faculty continue to develop in not only teaching ability, but heart power – the ability to lead and inspire....I want to see the fullest opportunities furnished to students...and [for them] to express themselves in science, art, music, literature, play, work, religion and especially in the teaching of children....I want to see young men and women who will become effective leaders....I want to see all of these things and more.”***



- University Press of Kentucky
- [www.kentuckypress.com/](http://www.kentuckypress.com/)
- Wrather West Kentucky Museum
  - Centennial Exhibit
  - Thursday, April 21, 2022, opening

