

"THE COWBOY WHO FOUNDED A COLLEGE"

A Radio Drama on the Life of

REV. J. WILL HARRIS

Written by: GAL DE MIER

Produced by:

for

Board of National Missions

of the

Presbyterian Church U.S.A.

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MUSIC: THEME UP AND UNDER FOR  
ANNCR: And God said....  
MUSIC: OUT  
ANNCR: Let There Be Light!  
MUSIC: TWO CHORDS AND HOLD  
ANNCR: An there was a light  
MUSIC: "Let There Be Light" is the transcribed story of the church in action. It is the story of what men and women all over the world are doing - because they believe in the teachings of Christianity. It is the story of what you can do to help!

MUSIC: THEME UP AND UNDER FOR  
ANNCR: Today's story comes to you from the Board of National Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., and is called, "THE COWBOY WHO FOUNDED A COLLEGE"

MUSIC: THEME UP AND OUT BEHIND.....  
SOUND: TYPEWRITERS CLACKING, TELEPHONE RINGING, NEWSPAPER PRESS ROOM NOISES.  
PEREZ: (TALKING ABOVE TYPEWRITER NOISE).... And all the elements in him so mixed, that nature might at last stand up and say: "this is a man." (SHOUTING) Copyboy!

COPYBOY:

Here, Mr. Pérez

SOUND:

PAPER BEING PULLED OUT OF A TYPEWRITER

PEREZ:

Here is today's editorial son, take it to the composing room.

COPYBOY:

What is it about, Mr. Pérez?

PEREZ:

It is about a man, a great man, Dr. J. Will Harris.

COPYBOY:

Oh, sure, I remember him. I have seen his picture in the morgue many times. There is one of him wearing an academic gown and a cowboy hat. YES son, that was Dr. Harris, the Cowboy Who Founded a College.

COPYBOY:

Was he a real cowboy, Mr. Pérez, like those you see in the movies, I mean. He sure was. He spent the first twenty years of his life riding the range in his native state of Texas. Following what he called the Persian curriculum, "riding, shooting and telling the truth."

COPYBOY:

What made him come to Puerto Rico?

PEREZ:

God did, son.

COPYBOY:

What do you mean, Sir?

PEREZ:

Well in 1905 he was ordained to the Presbyterian Ministry and the following year he traveled to Puerto Rico to herd Our Lord's flock here.

COPYBOY: Was that when you met him?

PEREZ: Yes, I was about your age living in my native town of San Germán with my poor parents when one day when I was playing barefooted on the street with my friends.....

MUSIC: UP AND UNDER

SOUND: VOICES OF CHILDREN PLAYING

PEREZ: (YOUNG) Throw me the ball, José

JOSE: (YOUNG) There it goes. Catch it!

SOUND: RUNNING FEET ENDED BY NOISE OF BALL HITTING BODY

VOICES OF CHILDREN: El Americano. El Americano. It hit the Americano, Lets Run.

PEREZ: (SHOUTING): Hey Cobardes, wait for me!

HARRIS: Wait son. Here is your ball.

PEREZ: (MOMENTLY): I am Señor, I did not mean to hit you, The ball, she escaped my hands.

HARRIS: That is alright. But tell me how come you are not at school.

PEREZ: School Señor! That is only for the rich. We have no school for the poor children in San Germán.

HARRIS: Would you like to go to school?

PEREZ: Oh, Sure. But I told you, my family she is poor. It is impossible.

HARRIS: I wonder.....

MUSIC: UP AND UNDER

ANNCR: Then followed several attempts to start a school for poor children.

MUSIC: QUICK BRIDGE SLIGHTLY HIGHER

ANNCR: First attempt, San Germán, 1907... Failed

MUSIC: QUICK BRIDGE

ANNCR: Third attempt, San Germán, 1909... Failed

MUSIC: QUICK BRIDGE SLIGHTLY HIGHER

ANNCR: Fourth attempt, San Germán, 1912..... Succeeded.

MUSIC: UP AND UNDER

SOUND: SCHOOL BELL

HARRIS: Let us end our School Day with a prayer.  
"Dear Lord, We thank you for having given us the opportunity of improving our minds through our course of learning in this Institution so that we might be of better service to you."

STUDENTS: CHORUS Amen.

HARRIS: So far today we have covered two of the three principles of education in our institution, the education of the head and the education of the heart. Let us now proceed to the education of the hand.

MUSIC: UP AND UNDER

SOUND:

BUILDING CONSTRUCTION NOISES OFF MIKE

ANNCR:

Through the Program of Work Experience education all the buildings in the Campus except two were erected by the student themselves. The Polytechnic Institute lies on a one hundred acre tract of land covered with tropical trees and flowers near the town of San Germán, Puerto Rico's oldest city. Geographically, taking the college as a center in a circle of a thousand mile radius it will touch or include sixteen different nations. To all these Christian Institution of learning like the Polytechnic Institute is not only a place to educate their children, but also as a model of the highest type after which all these countries may pattern, an honor to the Christian people of North America.

MUSIC:

UP AND UNDER

ANNCR:

No advertising for students was done, yet the number of applicant was never less than twice the number of place available....

MUSIC:

QUICK BRIDGE

SOUND:

Typewriters off mike

HARRIS:

What can I do for you, Sir?

OLD MAN:

My chest is crushed in. I am no good any more. My boy must do better. I want to give him an education. I have sold my pony and will pay five dollars monthly until the money is gone. Won't you take him?

MUSIC:

UP AND UNDER

ANNCR:

The growth of the school kept pace with Puerto Rico's needs. To the Grammar School classes which were started in 1912 a high school course was added in 1916. The Legislature of Puerto Rico by Act Number 37 in 1919 authorized the Polytechnic Institute to grant university degrees, becoming the first institution of higher learning recognized in Puerto Rico.

MUSIC:

UP AND UNDER

ANNCR:

At Commencement Exercises in 1923 we hear the Commissioner of Education in Puerto Rico say.....

COMMISSIONER:

(SLIGHTLY OFF MIKE) In 1912 there was one little school with just one student the first day. A constant stream of criticism was heaped upon the pioneer of this progressive idea. People said, "You can never succeed." Now it is seen that he could succeed.

MUSIC: UP AND UNDER  
ANNCR: At a meeting of the Carnegie Corporation Board in 1923 it was resolved...  
OFFICIAL: ...that the sum of not more than two hundred thousand dollars be, and it hereby is, appropriated to the Polytechnic Institute of Puerto Rico for use as permanent endowment or in the erection of necessary buildings.....

MUSIC: UP AND UNDER  
SOUND: NEWSROOM CLATTER HOLD UNDER  
COPYBOY: Gee, that is a great story, Mr. Pérez.  
PEREZ: Yes, it is a great story, but it did not end in 1923. By the time Dr. Harris left the school in 1937 to go back to further missionary work in Texas the college had graduated ten classes of men and women prepared to lead Puerto Rico into its greatest period of prosperity.

COPYBOY: Well there is the Head of the Puerto Rico Planning Board, Cándido Olivéras, An Assistant Secretary of Labor, the Head of the Workers Unions, Two State Hospital Directors, teachers, businessmen.



COPYBOY:

Dr. Harris must have been proud of them. Yes, he was son, during his last visit to Puerto Rico last May at a meeting of the Alumni he told us.....

SOUND:

HALL FULL OF PEOPLE WHICH BECOMES QUIET

HARRIS: (OLD)

My children, members of the Polytechnic Family, as I stand here and look into your faces which bring out the success you have attained in life I can not but feel proud of you, and the institution which we all helped to build with our Heads, Hearts, and Hands. I only pray that more and more will join you as time passes by, young men and women who will honor our Christian education.....

MUSIC:

UP AND UNDER

PEREZ:

That was the last time many of us last saw him, for he left for Texas the following day.

COPYBOY:

How did he die?

PEREZ:

Doing his work son. While visiting friends to secure their aid in one of His Christian projects he had an automobile accident.

MUSIC:

UP AND UNDER

SOUND:

TELEGRAPH

GOVERNOR OF P.R.:

Please receive the heartfelt sympathy of the people of Puerto Rico, my family and myself for the loss of your father who rendered such distinguish service to Puerto Rico in the field of education. Signed the Governor of Puerto Rico.

RODRIGUEZ:

In the name of the Puerto Rico Superior Council of Education our condolence for the loss of Dr. J. Will Harris to whom education of Puerto Rico owes so much.

PEREZ:

Thousands of telegrams were received. And at a meeting of the Alumni it was decided...

SOUND:

ASSEMBLY HALL

SPOKESMAN:

Be it resolved;...That the Alumni of the Polytechnic Institute loyal to the ideals of its Founder will dedicate all its efforts into making the Institution which gave us an Education a leading one in the Hemisphere to further the work of the man who gave his live so that many of us could live better.

MUSIC:

UP AND UNDER

ANNOR:

About the future growth of the Institution lets hear from its present president Dr. Ronald C. Bauer.

DR. BAUER:

We intend to re-establish and re-orient the Polytechnic's program so that it more effectively serves this island with its dynamic program, beginning with Operation Bootstrap and continuing until operation Serenity is achieved. Furthermore, we intend to help this great Commonwealth and the United States in every possible manner to serve the world more effectively. Forty four years ago, Dr. J. Will Harris had a vision clearly before him. With faith, consecration, and an unwavering conviction of the importance of his mission, he pioneered in the establish of this Institution. We have the opportunity to pioneer also, to pioneer in the further development of an institution that meets the challenge of a twentieth century world. We must create at the Institution a Center for Religious Education and Christian Service, a School of Interamerican Developmental Studies, a Center for the Study of the Teaching of English and Spanish, improve and expand our Program of Teacher Education and give an increased emphasis on the Study of Economics and Business Administration.

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MUSIC:

UP AND UNDER INTO THEME

ANNOUNCER:

You have just heard "Let There Be Light"-  
the transcribed story of the church in  
action. Today's program was brought to  
you by the Board of National Missions of  
the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.  
"The Cowboy Who Founded a College" was  
written by Cal de Mier and produced by  
\_\_\_\_\_ for the National  
Council of the Churches of Christ in the  
United States of America.

MUSIC:

THEME UP AND END