The commemoration of the laying of the cornerstone of the Southwestern Louisiana Industrial Institute marks a new epoch in the history of the town and parish of Lafayette. It is earnestly hoped our people will recognize the importance of making Thurs., June 21st a gala day that will reflect credit upon the people who have done so much to secure an Institute that will stand as an everlasting monument to the spirit of progress and enlightenment.

One side of the cornerstone was engraved as follows: "Robert Martin, vice-president of the Board of Trustees of the Institute, spoke next. He was followed by Dr. Lee, who announced that the Legislature had appropriated $50,000 for the Institue, more than expected, and which with the municipal and parochial tax would make the total available revenue $100,000."

A telegram from Sen. Cade went to Algiers, La., where he stated he was on a fast train to Lafayette, bringing the news of the appropriation to Lafayette.

The Board of Trustees, with Bishop Rouxel in the rear, added the white marble cornerstone which came to light when the cornerstone was removed in Oct., 1901, prior to raising old Martin Hall to make way for the parking lot in front of the new Martin Hall.

USL's third president, J. L. Fletcher, and vice-president Joseph Riehl, were administration leaders on the occasion, along with George Bennett, then in charge of buildings and grounds, as well as students and faculty.

Two copies of newspapers, "The Lafayette Advertiser" and "Lafayette Gazette" dated Jan. 9, 1900, had published the cornerstone victory in obtaining the Institute at the meeting which had been placed in the cornerstone. Also found was an 1897 silver dollar, which represented the first money raised by the people for the benefit of the school. This money was raised by the Ladies Industrial School Association which was presented to the Board to be placed in the cornerstone. The envelope containing the coin was signed by Mrs. T. M. Biossat, president of the association.

In Envelope
A jeweler, H. K. Ruger, an

Contents Of Cornerstone

It is interesting to note what had been placed in the cornerstone on this occasion and which came to light when the cornerstone was removed in Oct., 1901, prior to raising old Martin Hall to make way for the parking lot in front of the new Martin Hall.

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First USL Cornerstone Laying Is Recalled

(Continued from Page 8)

employe for the Blossart Jewelry store, contributed an 1809 half-dollar on which he engraved his name, which was also placed in the box. The coin was placed in an envelope the store used for items of jewelry to be repaired. At the place where charges were to be indicated he wrote "In Love." Within the envelope containing his coin he inserted a page giving his family's background. The reverse side of the business envelope for the jewelry store contained a map of the city of Lafayette and other data, which revealed the city's population to be 3,509 people on that day; and that the population of Lafayette parish to be 16,684. Other information revealed that Lafayette had an opera house, a tannery, and a soap factory, and 31 public schools. Other contents included the telegram from Cade announcing the appropriation, an historical item about the school written by Dr. Stephens, a copy of the program for the laying of the cornerstone, and a copy of the brochure giving the reasons why the Southwestern Louisiana Industrial Institute should be located in Lafayette. This is dated Jan., 1900.

Now yellowed and brittle, the documents found in the cornerstone of that first building on the USL campus, nevertheless tell an eloquent story of how Southwestern came to be and how once the decision was made to build the school in Lafayette, leaders in Southwestern Louisiana then joined together to assure the continued development of Southwestern Louisiana's institute.